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Syntactic and semantic agreement in Eegimaa (Banjal): an account of lexical hybrids in an African noun class system¹

Abstract

Typological research on agreement systems recognises syntactic and semantic agreement as the two main types of agreement, with the former considered to be more canonical. An examination of different manifestations of semantic agreement found in the Gújjolaay Eegimaa² noun class (non-sex-based gender) system is proposed in this paper from the perspective of Canonical Typology, and the findings are related to the Agreement Hierarchy predictions. The results show that Eegimaa has hybrid nouns and constructional mismatches which trigger semantically based agreement mismatches, both in gender and number between controller nouns and certain targets. This paper shows that Eegimaa has two main subtypes of semantic agreement: human semantic agreement and locative semantic agreement. The data and the analysis proposed here reveal novel results according to which these two types of semantic agreement behave differently in relation to the Agreement Hierarchy.

Keywords: Agreement mismatches; noun class; Canonical-typology; Jóola; Atlantic; Niger-Congo

1 Introduction

Agreement may be defined as the “systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element and a formal property of another” (Steele 1978 quoted in Corbett 2006: 4). Typological research on agreement systems recognises two main types of

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²² Gújjolaay Eegimaa (Eegimaa hereafter) is a member of the Jóola cluster of languages which belong to the Northern Atlantic family of the Niger-Congo language Phylum. Jóola languages are spoken in three different countries: The Gambia, Senegal (The Basse-Casamance) and the North of Guinea-Bissau. Eegimaa is spoken in ten villages which are located in the South-West of Ziguinchor, the capital city of the South-western region of Senegal.

***Abbreviations:** AGT = agentive; CPL = completive; COP = copula; DEF = definite; EXCL = exclusive; FUT = future; HAB = habitual; MED = medial demonstrative; NEG = negative; OBJ = object; Part-Obsv = participant observation; PASS = passive; PL = plural; POSS = possessive; PREP = preposition; PRO = pronoun; PST = Past; REDUP = reduplication; REL = relative prefix (for relative clauses); Roman numerals = gender; SG = singular; SUBORD = subordination marker; VEN = venitive.

agreement. On the one hand there is *Syntactic or formal agreement* in which agreement targets are marked with formal properties of their controller (Corbett 2006: 155). For example, in the English sentence the *committee has decided to hire a new coach*, the controller noun *committee* triggers syntactic agreement in number on the singular inflected verb form *has*. Syntactic agreement is contrasted with *Semantic agreement* where targets agree with the semantic properties of the noun. This is illustrated, for instance in English, with the sentence *the committee have decided to hire a new coach*, where the verbal agreement target *have* agrees in number with the meaning of the noun *committee*. Because agreement is usually primarily understood as a syntactic phenomenon, syntactic agreement is considered more canonical whereas semantic agreement is seen as less canonical.

This paper investigates syntactic and semantic agreement in the Eegimaa noun class system. An example of syntactic agreement in Eegimaa is illustrated in (1) below³ where the controller noun *fi-ffilo* ‘sleeping place’ triggers agreement in gender (Gender IV) and number (singular) with its targets⁴.

(1) Syntactic agreement with a noun from Gender IV

fi-ffilo	fafu	fu-lo-lof
CL fu -/gu-sleeping.place(IV.SG)	IV.SG.DEF	IV.SG-be.close-REDUP
‘The sleeping place is close.’		

Semantic agreement as found in Eegimaa manifests itself in two different patterns. The first pattern by which semantic agreement manifests itself is with nouns of the *committee* type, which are referred to as *Hybrid nouns* (see e.g. Corbett 1991; 2006; 2015). These kinds of noun control different agreements on different targets as exemplified in (2) below, where the

³ The sources of the examples given here are indicated between parentheses on the same line as the free translation. Examples whose sources are not indicated come from my own native speaker intuition.

⁴ In this paper a distinction is made between the morphological/inflectional class of a noun and its gender/agreement class as detailed in Section 3. The former is represented in glosses using the phonological forms of the singular and plural pair of nominal class prefixes following a growing tradition in Atlantic linguistics, whereas for the latter, the Roman numerals are used. Atlantic noun class systems do not have an established convention for marking noun classes as it is the case in Bantu noun class systems in these languages, even the same language can have different conventions for marking noun classes since authors do not necessarily agree on what constitutes a class. Note that in the glossing convention used here, the agreement class/gender number that noun controls is put between brackets after the gloss.

controller nouns trigger different feature values on different targets, namely the singular for Gender II on the definite determiner and the plural on the of Gender I on the adjective and its dependent⁵. As will be shown in detail in Section 4 below with data from Eegimaa, there is a competition between syntactic and semantic agreements at different levels of the agreement hierarchy.

(2) Semantic agreement with a plural hybrid – mismatch in gender and number

é-jjola	yayu	gu-vvugul	gagu
CLa-/e-jóola(II.SG/I.PL)	II.SG.DEF	I.PL-new	I.PL.DEF

‘The new jóola people.’ (ss20130920_AmT)

A second manifestation of semantic agreement is found in *Constructional Mismatches* (Corbett 2006: 220-204). Instances of constructional mismatches are found in conjoined noun phrases like in the Eegimaa example (3) below, where a noun of human denotation and a non-human noun from different singular class pairs/genders (Genders I and II) control human plural agreement on the verb (Gender I plural). The plural number value indicates that semantically, more than one entity is involved, whereas Gender I agreement indicates agreement with the entity higher in the animacy hierarchy.

(3) Constructional mismatch in an Eegimaa conjoined noun phrase.

a-kkoñ-a	ni	e-joba-ol	gú-ggal-e
CLa-/u-shepherd-AGT(I.SG)	and	CLe-/su-dog(II.SG)-3SG.POSS	I.3PL-pass-CPL

‘A shepherd and his dog have gone past.’

The main goal of this paper is to draw attention to different types of semantic agreement in Eegimaa from the perspective of canonical typology. I examine the instances of semantic agreement triggered by lexical hybrids, as well as constructional mismatches (see Section 5 for a definition), which are found in relative clauses and which arise from human collectivity nouns and location nouns of the ‘village’ and ‘house’ types. In addition to triggering syntactic

⁵ In an Eegimaa definite noun phrase containing and an adjectival modifier, the definite article appears twice; first, following the controller noun with which it agrees, and then following the adjective which modifies that noun agreeing with it. Whenever there is agreement mismatch at the attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy (see example (2)), the repeated definite article appears twice in two forms while still referring the same entity.

agreement as illustrated in (4) below, these nouns also control human and locative semantic agreement on their targets depending on the sense of the controller noun as exemplified in (5) and (6).

(4) Syntactic agreement

é-suh yayu y-o na-juh me e-tos-ut
CLE-/su-village(II.SG) II.SG.DEF II.SG-PRO.REL REAL.I.3SG-see SUBORD II.SG-move-NEG
'The village that s/he saw has not moved.'

(5) Human semantic agreement.

é-suh yayu bug-o na-juh me gu-tos-ut
CLE-/su-village(II.SG/I.PL) II.SG.DEF I.PL-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-see SUBORD I.3PL-move-NEG
'Lit: the village (people) that s/he saw have not moved.'

(6) Locative semantic agreement.

é-suh yayu b-o⁶ nú-pul-lo me e-tos-ut
CLE-/su-village(II.SG/III.SG) II.SG.DEF III.SG-PRO.REL REAL.2SG-come.out-VENSUBORD II.SG-move-NEG
'The village where you came out from has not moved.' (ss20130801_MNS)

One of the main goals of this paper is to investigate the relation between different kinds of semantic agreement and Agreement Hierarchy constraints (Corbett 1979; 1983; 2006). Corbett argues that semantic agreement follows a hierarchy which is composed of the four levels as shown in Figure 1 below. The prediction is that if semantic agreement is attested at a level on the left of the hierarchy (e.g. the attributive level), it will also be attested at all levels on the right.

Figure 1: The Agreement Hierarchy, based on (Corbett 1979; 1983; 2006).

Attributive > predicate > relative pronoun > personal pronoun

⁶ The pronoun *o* takes agreement markers (*C-*) from all the genders. It can function as a personal pronoun or an object relative pronoun (see (5)), hence the glosses PRO and PRO.REL respectively. The agreement marker it takes shows the gender of its controller noun. With locative genders, which are used to form adverbs, the pronoun *o* combines with locative agreement markers to form locative adverbs and adverbial relativizers as shown in example (6) (see also Section 5). But its adverbial functions are imposed by the locative markers it combines with. Since all instances of *C-o* belong to the same morphological paradigm and are only different in gender and in syntactic functions, especially between locatives and non-locative genders, I will use the gloss PRO for instances where it functions as a personal pronoun and a locative adverb, and the gloss PRO.REL for instances where it functions as an object relative pronoun or an adverbial relativizer.

Research on the types of mismatches illustrated in (5) and (6) above are not prominent in the typological literature and their relation to the Agreement Hierarchy is very poorly investigated in African linguistics. In this paper, I will argue that there are two main types of semantic agreement in Eegimaa: human semantic agreement and locative semantic agreement. I will show that these two types of semantic agreement corroborate claims made in the Agreement Hierarchy but behave differently in relation to the hierarchy.

This paper begins with a definition of terms in Section 2. Section 3 summarises the Eegimaa noun class/gender system and includes a discussion of properties of syntactic agreement. In Section 4, I examine agreement with Eegimaa lexical hybrids. Section 5 investigates agreement in constructional mismatches⁷, and Section 6 summarises the discussion.

2 Definition of terms

2.1 A working definition of agreement

As pointed out in the introduction, agreement may be defined following Steele as the “systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element and a formal property of another” (Steele 1978: 610 quoted in Corbett 2006: 4). This definition of agreement includes aspects of what is both syntactic and semantic agreement outlined above and captures the idea that “a word carries morphological features that originate somewhere else” (Bickel & Nichols 2007: 229) and is fully compatible with the Canonical Agreement approach used in this paper. As will be explained in the next section, the canonical approach includes within its definition instances that are considered to be the best examples of agreement and those that are said to be less good examples. The latter include verbal bound person forms which are called cross-references or cross-indexes and anaphoric pronominal expressions whose treatment as agreement markers is rather controversial (Haspelmath 2013 for a detailed discussion). Based on the canonical typological approach used here, the term

⁷ Agreement with conjoined noun phrases, one of the main instances of constructional mismatches, will not be investigated here. For an overview of gender resolution see Sagna (2008: 210-211).

agreement will be used to describe the sharing of features between a controller noun and its targets from the most local domain (the noun phrase) to the least local (anaphoric pronoun).

2.2 Canonical typology

As stated above, the Eegimaa agreement⁸ data discussed here is analysed from a canonical typological point of view. The idea is that agreement occurs on a scale between the most canonical instances and the least canonical ones. Canonical instances of agreement are, in Corbett's terms, those that are considered to be the best, the clearest and most indisputable ones and which match the canon as a result (Corbett 2006; 2007; 2010a).

The notion of best example in canonical typology, as (Corbett 2010a: 142) points out, differs from that of a prototype, which is also a kind of best example used in Prototype Theory. A prototype is generally defined as the most central or most representative member of a category. It has a psychological reality in the sense that it is represented in the minds of the speaker. The degree of centrality of the best example in Prototype Theory can be revealed by its Goodness Of Exemplar rating in an experiment. Furthermore, a prototype is a culture-specific construct in that the best example of category in one culture may not be the same in another culture (Croft & Cruse 2004; Rosch 1978; Taylor 2003 for further details).

For a canon, on the other hand, the notion of Goodness Of Exemplar is irrelevant, and no claim is made about its psychological status. Most importantly, a canon is a theoretical construct which is "ideally invariant" (cross-cultural variation is irrelevant) and constitutes an anchoring point from which less canonical instances of the phenomena under study are examined (Corbett 2010a: 142). There are important terms used in canonical typology and which I adopt for the analysis of the different kinds of agreement in Eegimaa presented here, and which need to be presented first.

⁸ Agreement is used as a cover term for what some linguists refer to as concord and agreement (see Corbett 2006: 5-6 for a detailed discussion of the use of these terms).

Following Corbett (1991; 2006), elements that participate in agreement are divided between *controllers* and *targets*. Controllers are elements which determine agreement, whereas targets are agreeing elements whose feature values are specified by the controllers. The agreement between controllers and targets occurs in syntactic environment such as the noun phrase and the clauses. These are the *domains* of agreement. Another crucial term for the analysis presented here is *features*. Features are “partial descriptions of linguistic object [allowing] to capture regularities” (Corbett 2010b: 18). Features have *values* as their components. For example, the feature ‘gender’ includes, in sex-based gender systems, values such as masculine and feminine while the ‘number’ feature may include among other values singular and plural. As shown in the investigation of the Eegimaa noun class system in the next section, biological gender distinctions are irrelevant to the analysis of agreement systems of the Eegimaa type investigated here.

3 Summary of the Eegimaa noun class system

3.1 The noun class system

Eegimaa has a noun class system of the Niger-Congo type. From a broader typological perspective, Niger-Congo noun class systems and gender systems of the Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European types are qualitatively similar because both are agreement-based. The term gender is often used as a cover term for both types of nominal classification, where African noun class systems are referred to as non-sex-based gender systems (Greenberg 1978; Corbett 1991; 2011). In the typological literature the term noun class is also used as a cover term for both noun class and sex-based gender systems (Aikhenvald 2000; Seifart 2010); this has the advantage of excluding the common assumption that gender refers to sex-based distinctions. I use the term “noun class system” to refer to African noun class systems, while “gender system” will be used to refer to systems of nominal classification which make a biological sex distinction in their grammar. The term “gender” will appear in this paper in two main

contexts. First, as pointed out above, “gender” in the term “gender system” will simply refer to a system of nominal classification where biological sex distinctions are present. Second, in my account of the classification of nouns into sets, “a gender” will be used to mean “an agreement class”, where singular and plural number values are analysed together.

Niger-Congo noun class systems like Eegimaa are typically overt systems of nominal classification with a large number of classes or genders, and in which affixes - prefixes in the case of Eegimaa⁹ - attach to nouns and function as nominal (morphological) class markers. Almost every noun in the language is morphologically classified using these noun class markers. There are a few nouns that take a zero prefix and for count nouns, zero noun class marking tend to appear only in the singular. As is typical in Niger-Congo noun class systems, noun class prefixes (NCPs) jointly express number and gender information¹⁰ (see Di Garbo 2014 for a study of how gender and number interact in African noun class systems). For example, the prefix *e-* in *e-vval* ‘stone’ indicates singular number and shows membership in traditional class 3, or Gender II singular in the approach used in this paper. Its plural correspondent *si-* in *si-vval* ‘stones’ indicates plurality and membership in class 4, or Gender II plural.

Nouns control agreement on agreement targets. Agreement targets mostly take prefixes as agreement markers, and in most cases, agreement markers are phonologically related to prefixes on the controller nouns, which trigger the same feature values on those targets. But there are many instances where NCPs are not phonologically related to agreement markers,

⁹ Eegimaa agreement markers can also be infixes as in the question word *u-AGR-ela* ‘where is x?’, where the agreement markers *AGR* occurs in the middle of the root element *u* and *ela*. The agreement consonant changes depending on the gender and number of the referent. For example, in *u-m-ela* ‘where is he/she’ the agreement marker *-m-* refers to a human from Gender I singular, whereas in *u-bug-ela* the infixed agreement marker *-bug-* indicates that the speaker refers to humans from Gender I plural. The only time where agreement markers occur as suffixes is when the definite article is suffixed to the noun. An example is when the definite article *yayu*, which has double agreement marking with *y*, occurs as *-ay* when attached to a noun as in *e-vven-ay* ‘the paddle’. In general, however, agreement markers are prefixes in Eegimaa.

¹⁰ The expression of gender (agreement class) information can be more complex as will be shown below with hybrid nouns. Furthermore, prefixes on nouns that have different NCPs but trigger the same agreement do not give information on the gender of the noun.

even though their feature values are the same (see example (4) above). There are also other instances where NCPs on nouns are phonologically unrelated to agreement markers, and control different inflectional feature values on different targets. These are hybrid nouns, which will be examined in detail in the section on semantic agreement (Section 4 below).

Agreement is the fundamental criterion used to identify classes of nouns in a noun class and in a sex-based gender system. But notice that agreement is used differently to identify classes or genders in the Niger-Congo noun class systems as compared with sex-based gender systems. Moreover, the term “agreement class”, which is used in both traditions does not mean the same thing. It is traditional in studies of Niger-Congo noun class systems to treat singular and plural nouns as belonging to different classes (de Wolf 1971; Welmers 1973; Heine 1982; Creissels 1999; Schadeberg 2001). A noun class, in this approach, is a set of nouns that trigger the same agreement patterns in the singular or the plural. From this perspective, the singular and the plural agreement patterns are considered to be manifestations of distinct agreement classes. Thus, all the singular nouns that control the same agreement patterns constitute a singular agreement class, whereas their plural counterparts will constitute a single agreement class because they control different agreements pattern than the singular counterparts. For example, the different agreement markers triggered by the noun *-soddali* ‘soldier’ in (7) and (8) below¹¹ indicate, in the traditional approach, that its singular and plural forms belong to different classes, namely the traditional classes 1 and 2, also known as the human class pair.

¹¹ I use the traditional Niger-Congo notation convention with Arabic numbers to show the class membership of nouns. According to this notation, the noun ‘soldier’ takes NCP *a-* (class 1) in the singular and NCP *e-* (class3), the singular default class marker in the plural. Mismatches like these will be examined in detail in the discussion on lexical hybrids.

207 (7) The noun ‘soldier’ belongs to traditional Class 1 in the singular

208	a-soddali	anur	a-jog-om
209	CL1-soldier	CL1.one	CL1.3SG-catch-1SG.OBJ
210	‘One soldier caught me.’		

211 (8) The noun ‘soldier’ belongs to traditional Class 2 in the plural

212	e-soddali	gú-uba	gu-jog-om
213	CL3-soldier	CL2-two	CL2.3PL-catch-1SG.OBJ
214	‘Two soldiers caught me.’ (ss20090510_Batings-Gal)		

215 In the traditional approach, the class membership of a noun is decided based on the
 216 agreement it triggers rather than being based on the form of the prefix on the controller noun.
 217 Consequently, when two nouns with the same number value - e.g. singular - have different
 218 prefixes, as is the case for ‘panther’ and ‘hyena’ in examples (9) and (10), but trigger the
 219 same agreement, they are treated as members of the same class.

220 (9) The noun ‘panther’ triggers traditional Class 3 agreement

221	ji-ggaj	uyu	babe
222	CL11-panther	CL3.COP	around.here
223	‘There is a panther around.’		

224 (10) The noun ‘hyena’ triggers traditional Class 3 agreement

225	é-mundumo	uyu	babe
226	CL3-hyena	CL3.COP	around.here
227	‘There is a hyena around.’		

228 If two nouns have the same prefix but different agreement markers (cf. examples (8) and
 229 (10)), they are treated as members of different classes, whether their number feature values
 230 are the same or not. However, prefixes on nouns are also referred to as class markers, even
 231 though class membership is determined by agreement. For example, both ‘soldier’ and
 232 ‘hyena’ in examples (8) and (10) above will be said to take the class 3 NCP *e-*, though these
 233 nouns would be classed as members of classes 2 (human plural) and 3 (default singular)
 234 respectively, based on the agreement they trigger. Note that for the majority of Eegimaa
 235 nouns the shape of the nominal prefix matches that of the agreement marker on agreeing

elements. Thus, for most nouns, it is possible to predict the form of the agreement from the form of the nominal prefix.

A key criticism of the traditional approach is that the use of “noun class” does not clearly indicate whether the term refers to the morphological form of the noun or the agreement it controls (Corbett 1991: 45). Corbett (1991: 47) proposes to distinguish morphological/nominal inflection classes, that is the set of lexemes whose members each select the same set of inflectional realizations from genders – the agreement classes (see also Aronoff 1994). In this approach, agreement class is defined as a set of nouns which, whenever “they stand in the same morphosyntactic form” (e.g. singular) and “occur in the same agreement domain” (e.g. the noun phrase) and “have the same lexical item as agreement target” (e.g. adjective), they have the same morphological realization on their targets , (Corbett 1991: 147; 2007: 243). This proposal stems from the idea that syntax and morphology are autonomous linguistic levels and that one level is not entirely reducible to another level but instead follows principles of its own (Aronoff 1994). This approach distinguishes the morphological classes which are indicated by the morphological markers on the nouns from the genders themselves, which are established based on the agreement in features on targets in both the singular and plural forms.

The analysis of the Eegimaa agreement system proposed in this paper follows this approach and treats singular and plural agreement forms triggered by the same lexemes as manifestations of one category, called an agreement class or gender. In other words, lexemes are used as the primary units of analysis. A distinction is therefore made between noun classes, i.e., the morphological category membership of a noun as revealed by the prefix it takes, and its gender, that is, its agreement class category membership, as revealed by the agreement morphology on targets, regardless of the nominal morphological marking.

Consequently, what is referred to as two separate singular and plural agreement classes in traditional presentations of Niger-Congo noun class systems will be analysed as one agreement class or gender. Further details are given in the next section, which deals with syntactic agreement. Notice that some studies in Niger Congo noun class systems do take the “gender approach” by treating the singular and plural agreements together as a gender. But this way of presenting data is currently less established than the noun class approach.

Eegimaa has 15 noun classes based on the traditional approach, but 10 main genders according to the approach used here and two additional inqorate genders, i.e. genders which have only one or two members and thus do not constitute an agreement class (see the dashed lines in Table 1). In Table 1, Arabic numbers are used to indicate the noun classes, as is traditionally done in the description of Niger-Congo noun class systems, whereas Roman numbers are used to present the genders (agreement class pairs of singular and plural). The nominal prefixes corresponding to singular and plural NCPs are also provided in the table. It is important to bear in mind that the lines in the table show agreement correspondences rather than correspondences of the singular and plural forms of nouns. Eegimaa has four dedicated locative classes/genders, three of which are not involved in singular plural pairings. The fourth one is formed using Class 5/Gender III as explained in Section 5.1 below. For a full discussion of the singular-plural correspondences and a detailed analysis of the Eegimaa noun class system using the traditional approach to Niger-Congo languages, see Sagna (2008; 2010).

Table 1: The main noun classes and genders in Eegimaa

SG trad. class		Gender	PL trad. class	
a-	1	I	2	bug-
e-/y-	3	II	4	su-/si-
bu-/bi-	5	III	6	u-/w-
fu-/fi-	7	IV	8	gu-
		V		
ga-	9	VII		
ju-/ji-	11	VI	10	mu-
ñu-/ñi-	12			
ti-/t-	13	VIII		
d-	14	IX		
n-	15	X		

Note that the idea of analyzing morphological classes (nominal paradigms) separately from agreement markers, which I adopt here following Corbett (1991) and Aronoff (1994), has recently been suggested in typological works on African noun class systems (Pozdniakov 2010) and in the analyses of individual Atlantic languages (Cobbinah 2013; Watson 2015). Pozdniakov's work focuses on morphological paradigms, not agreement. In Cobbinah (2013) and Watson (2015), noun class paradigms are analysed separately from agreement. However, singular agreement patterns are analysed separately from plural agreement, as in the traditional approach, and the criterion to determine agreement is the form of the agreement markers and alliteration rather than features and their values.

In my account of the Eegimaa syntactic and semantic agreement presented in this paper, morphological classes or paradigms are treated separately from agreement paradigms¹². Simply put, singular and plural agreement patterns are treated together as expressions of one gender based on the feature values they show. I show that this is the best way to account for agreement matches, which are examined in the next section, and agreement mismatches between controllers and targets, which I analyze in Section 4.

¹² It is generally reported in Niger-Congo noun class studies that singular-plural correspondences are complex. This is especially true when the term class does not clearly distinguish nominal class morphology is not analysed distinctly from agreement class morphology. One of the goals of this paper is to show that when morphological classes are separated from agreement classes, the complexity of the singular-plural correspondence poses less problems in the description.

3.2 Syntactic agreement in Eegimaa

This section describes the main characteristics of syntactic agreement, and in doing so it sets the scene for the discussion of the different kinds of semantic agreement provided in the next sections.

Table 2, which presents agreement classes, where singular and plural agreement patterns are treated as one unit referred to as a gender, also shows the patterns of syntactic agreement in Eegimaa. Genders are labelled using roman numerals as can be seen in the Gender column. Agreement targets used for illustration are demonstratives, pronouns, adjectives and verbal predicates. Genders VIII to Gender X are locative genders and do not have singular-plural oppositions. Genders VIII and IX refer to spatial location whereas Gender X, which has a lacunary distribution for most targets locates events time. The Eegimaa inqorate genders are V/IV and VI/IV. They take the singular of one gender and the plural of another gender. Table 2 also shows that agreement targets are mostly alliterative. However, for some genders, there is no phonological relation between the different agreement targets (cf. Gender I and Gender II). Several singular gender markers have the same plural correspondence. Examples are Genders III and V. However, since the agreement class approach used here combines both singular and plural into one agreement class or gender, rather than treating singular and plural separately, the plural marker is not treated as a separate class. Consequently, a syncretic plural like that of Genders III and V is treated as a manifestation of the same gender as its singular correspondent (cf. Genders III, V and VII in Table 2).

316 Table 2: The main agreement classes/genders of the Eegimaa noun class system

Gender	SG				PL			
	DEM	PRO	ADJ	VP	DEM	PRO	ADJ	VP
I	<i>m-</i>	<i>m-</i>	<i>a-</i>	<i>(n)a-</i>	<i>bug-</i>	<i>bug-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>
II	<i>y-</i>	<i>y-</i>	<i>e-</i>	<i>e-</i>	<i>s-</i>	<i>s-</i>	<i>su-/si-</i>	<i>su-/si-</i>
III	<i>b-</i>	<i>b-</i>	<i>bu-/bi-</i>	<i>bu-/bi-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>u-</i>	<i>u-</i>
IV	<i>f-</i>	<i>f-</i>	<i>fu-/fi-</i>	<i>fu-/fi-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>
V/IV	<i>g-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>
V	<i>g-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>u-</i>	<i>u-</i>
VI	<i>j-</i>	<i>j-</i>	<i>ju-/ji-</i>	<i>ju-/ji-</i>	<i>m-</i>	<i>m-</i>	<i>mu-</i>	<i>mu-</i>
VI/IV	<i>j-</i>	<i>j-</i>	<i>ju-/ji-</i>	<i>ju-/ji-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>g-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gu-</i>
VII	<i>ñ-</i>	<i>ñ-</i>	<i>ñu-/ñi-</i>	<i>ñu-/ñi-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>w-</i>	<i>u-</i>	<i>u-</i>
VIII	<i>t-</i>	<i>t-</i>	<i>tu-/ti-</i>	<i>tu-/ti-</i>				
IX	<i>d-</i>	<i>d-</i>	<i>d-</i>	<i>du-/di-</i>				
X	-	<i>n-</i>	-					

317 The discussion of the Eegimaa syntactic agreement provided here is based on what will be
318 referred to as non-human collective nouns. Eegimaa distinguishes two semantically distinct
319 collective expressions: human collective expressions and non-human collective ones. The
320 former are hybrid nouns and can control both syntactic and semantic agreement, whereas the
321 latter can only trigger syntactic agreement on their dependents. Collectives are defined
322 following Corbett (2000: 119), as nouns that ‘indicate that [the entities] they denote are to be
323 construed together as a unit.’ Since hybrid nouns are also referred to as collective nouns in
324 the literature (Hundt 2006; Levin 2001; Levin 2006), it is important to show that in Eegimaa
325 not all collectives are hybrids and not all hybrids are collectives. I begin with a description of
326 non-human collectives in this section and examine human collectives in the next sections.

327 Non-human collectives are formed by class and gender alternation through the selection of
328 different NCPs and their corresponding gender agreement markers on targets. This is
329 exemplified in (11) and (12) below, where the singular NCP *ga-* alternates with NCP
330 *bu-/bi-* on the noun root *-ssit* ‘feather’, distinguishing singular and collective meanings

respectively. In both cases, the controller nouns trigger Gender V and Gender III syntactic agreement respectively on all their targets.

(11) Singular expression of ‘feather’ with NCP *ga-*.

gá -ssit	gagu	g -al	e-hulol	yayu
CL ga / u -feather(V.SG)	V.SG.DEF	V.SG-of	CLe-/su-chicken(II.SG)	II.SG.DEF

‘The feather of the chicken.’

(12) Expression of assemblage collectives for ‘feather’ with NCP *bi-*.

bí -ssit	babu	b -al	e-hulol	yayu
CL bu / bi -feather(III.SG)	III.SG.DEF	III.SG-of	CLe-/su-chicken(II.SG)	II.SG.DEF

‘The plumage of the chicken.’

Non-human collectives are formed using four NCPs, which in other contexts function as singular markers, yielding four semantically distinct subcategories of collectives. One of these collectives uses a singular NCP *bu-/bi-* and the resulting collective noun triggers Gender III agreement. Collectives that use NCP *bu-/bi-* are referred to as collective for assemblages (Sagna 2011; 2012). This subcategory of collectives includes a limited number of nouns denoting body parts such as the nominal root *-fal* ‘body hair’ (realised *ga-fal* ‘body hair (SG)’, *u-fal* ‘body hair (PL)’, *bu-fal* ‘body hair (collective)’) and *-ssít* ‘feather’ illustrated in (12) above.

Another kind of non-human collective expression is that of diminutive collectives formed using NCP *ba-*. Diminutive collective means that entities that are construed as a unit, are naturally small, or they are conceptualised or described as such. Collective nouns of this category trigger Gender III as exemplified in (13) below¹³.

¹³ Note that the difference in the shape of the prefix in examples (12) and (13) indicates a difference in morphological class within nouns of Gender III. This morphological difference also reflects a semantic difference in that only the prefix *ba-* is used as a diminutive collective prefix. In previous work I analysed these differences as expressions of morphological and semantic subclasses of class 5 and labelled them classes 5a *bu-/bi-* and 5b *ba-*, based on the traditional approach.

(13) Diminutive collectives expression with NCP *ba-*.

ba-hola **bu-rum-ol**
CL**ba**-midge(III.SG) III.SG-bite-3.SG.OBJ
'Midges bit him/her.' (Part-Obsv)

The third type of collective is formed with NCP *fa-*. It only includes nouns denoting insects that live in swarms and have similar life and predatory patterns of behaviour. Such insects are exemplified with *ya-aj/sa-aj* 'bee/s' in example (14) which triggers Gender IV agreement.

(14) Collective for swarms.

fa-aj **ufu** **ni** **bu-lago** **babu**
CL7**fa**-bee(IV.SG) COP.IV.SG.MED PREP CLbu/u-road(III.SG) III.SG.DEF
'There are bees on the road.' (Part-Obsv)

The fourth and last subcategory of non-human collectives is formed with the singular default NCP *e-* and is referred to as collective for colonies (Sagna 2008; 2011) because it is used as a collective for plants that grow as a colony or the refer to other entities like some fruits when they are conceived as non-count or mass. These plants, which are illustrated with *ga-rarah/u-rarah* 'Ipomea asarifolia plant/s' in (15) below, tend to eliminate other small plants and take over the environment they grow in.

(15) Collective for colonies of plants with NCP *e-*.

e-rarah **yayu** **e-ggoñ-e** **e-mmano** **yayu**
CLe-Ipomea.asarifolia(II.SG) II.SG.DEF II.SG-dominate-CPL CLe-/su-rice(II.SG) II.SG.DEF
'The Ipomea asarifolia colony of grass has dominated the rice.' (ss20040412_AS)

Like all non-human collective expressions, collectives for colonies control syntactic agreement only with the same feature values appearing on all agreement targets as illustrated from examples (12) to (15) above. Nouns that take NCP *e-* in the singular also trigger syntactic agreement on their dependents as can be observed in example (16). Thus, syntactic agreement occurs both in the singular and the collective illustrated above.

379 (16) Collective for colonies of plants with NCP *e-*.

380 **e-kkar** **yayu** **é-ggal-e**
381 **CLe-bus(II.SG)** **II.SG.DEF** **II.SG-dominate-CPL**

382 ‘The bus has passed.’

383 Interestingly, NCP *e-* is also used as a plural (see example (18) below) and collective marker
384 (see example (17)) on a subcategory of nouns of human denotation. These nouns are human
385 collectives and as a result, differ from the non-human collective discussed above. They are
386 hybrids which control agreement from two different gender and number feature values as
387 illustrated with the noun *a-banjall/e-banjall* ‘inhabitant/s of Banjall’ in examples (17) and (18).
388 Hybrid nouns of the type illustrated in (17) are discussed in Section 4.

389 (17) Human colonies ‘identity groups’ with NCP *e-*.

390 **e-banjall** **yayu** **g-a-jo-ulo** **me** **figen** **gu-ol-e**
391 **CLa-/e-banjall(II.SG/I.PL)** **II.SG.DEF** **I.3PL-REL-go-VEN** **SUBORD** **yesterday** **I.3PL-go.home-CPL**

392 ‘The people from Banjall who came yesterday have gone home.’

393 (ss20060420_HB)

394 (18) Plural for human ‘identity groups’ with NCP *e-*.

395 **e-banjall** **gúuba** **gu-jo-ulo**
396 **CLa-/e-banjall(II.SG/I.PL)** **I.PL.DEF** **I.3PL-go-VEN**

397 ‘Two people from Banjall have come.’

398 4 Hybrid nouns in Eegimaa

399 Hybrid nouns are, as pointed out in the introduction, nouns which control different agreement
400 patterns on different targets (Corbett 1991; 2006; 2015). Lexical hybrids have been
401 investigated in various languages especially in Indo-European languages like German and
402 English (Corbett 1979; 2015; Hundt 2006; Levin 2001). In African languages, though the
403 existence of hybrids has been reported (see Corbett 1991 for references), research on hybrid
404 nouns is rare, and their relation with the Agreement Hierarchy has been even less
405 investigated. This section investigates ‘full’ and ‘split’ lexical hybrids in Eegimaa and their

relation to the Agreement Hierarchy constrains. These terms are borrowed from Corbett (2015) to describe nouns which are hybrids both in the singular and the plural (full hybrids) and those that are hybrids in only one number value like the plural (split hybrids). Full hybrids are a typologically rare phenomenon which has been reported for Old High German and Icelandic (see Corbett 2015). In the next section I examine full and split lexical hybrids in 4.1 as well as what may be referred to as contextual mismatches in Section 4.2.

4.1 Lexical hybrids

4.1.1 One full lexical hybrid

In Eegimaa the noun *bá-jur* ‘young woman’ is the only full lexical hybrid because it occurs as a hybrid in both the singular and the plural. All other nouns denoting humans which function as hybrids do so only in the plural as will be shown in 4.1.2 below. In its singular form, both syntactic and semantic agreements are possible with the full hybrid noun *bá-jur* ‘young woman’¹⁴. Example (19) below illustrates a case of syntactic agreement where it controls Gender III agreement on all its agreement targets.

(19) Syntactic agreement with *bá-jur* ‘young woman’.

bá-jur	babu	bu-vvugul	babu	bu-kka-e
CL ba -su-young.woman(III.SG)	III.SG.DEF	III.SG-new	III.SG.DEF	III.SG-go-CPL
‘The new young woman has left.’ (ss20131221_AmT)				

Semantic agreement with the noun *bá-jur* ‘young woman’ is exemplified in (20) and (21) below taken from a folktale. In (20) the noun *bá-jur* ‘young woman’ controls syntactic agreement using Gender III markers on the definite determiner, but semantic agreement on the demonstrative determiner *umu* ‘that’ and the verb ‘go’ with Gender I singular agreement because the denotatum is a human. Here there is a mismatch in gender at the attributive and predicate level of the Agreement Hierarchy. In example (21), syntactic agreement is also

¹⁴ The occurrence of the prefix *ba-* with *bá-jur* ‘young woman’ does not indicate collective meaning, but a culture-specific semantic aspect of the categorisation of the entity denoted by that noun (see Sagna, 2012 for a detailed explanation).

430 triggered on the definite determiner while semantic agreement with Gender I occurs on the
431 verb. The attributive level of the Hierarchy is also split.

432 (20) Split syntactic and semantic agreement at the attributive level.

433 **bá-jur** **babu umu nakk-a-juh á-pur...**
434 **CLba-/su-young.woman(III.SG/I.SG) III.SG.DEF I.SG.MED REAL.I.3SG-go-I.SG-see CLa-/u-boy(I.SG)**
435 ‘That young woman went to see a young man...’ (ss2004Oct13_baluten)

436 (21) Split syntactic and semantic agreement with *bá-jur* ‘young woman’.

437 **na-re-ol, min bá-jur babu a-at**
438 **I.SG-stop-3SG.OBJ so.that CLba-/su-young.woman(III.SG) III.SG.DEF I.3SG-go.home**
439 ‘He stopped (accompanying) her and the young woman went home’
440 (ss2004Oct13_baluten).

441 Notice that semantic agreement is impossible with the definite determiner which must take
442 syntactic agreement with the NCP. We can therefore argue, based on the above discussion,
443 that when semantic agreement is triggered in the singular form of the noun *bá-jur* ‘young
444 woman’, the attributive position is split. However, this is not the case for all other positions in
445 the Agreement Hierarchy since either syntactic or semantic agreement is possible. The
446 possibility to split the attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy is further illustrated with
447 the adjective ‘new’ in (22) where the intended referent is either a stranger or a bride.

448 (22) Split syntactic and semantic agreement at the attributive level.

449 **bá-jur babu a-vvugul ahu na-kka-e**
450 **CLba-/su-young.woman(III.SG/I.SG.) III.SG.DEF I.SG-new I.SG.DEF REAL.I.3SG-go-CPL**
451 ‘The new young woman (bride/stranger) has left.’ (ss20130722_MT)

452 Semantic agreement with *bá-jur* ‘young woman’ corroborates the claims made by the
453 Agreement Hierarchy. The rule is, as the examples above show, that if semantic agreement is
454 possible at one level on the left of the Agreement Hierarchy, it is also possible with other
455 level on the right (see Figure 1 above).

456 In the plural, *sú-jur* ‘young women’ triggers syntactic agreement in gender and number on
457 the definite determiner only, as exemplified in (23). Syntactic agreement beyond the definite

determiner as in (24) below is extremely odd and judged as unacceptable¹⁵. This shows that as with the singular, the attributive level of the hierarchy is by rule also split between syntactic and semantic agreement in the plural. It also shows a difference between singular and plural in that the tendency towards semantic agreement in the plural is much greater.

(23) Syntactic and semantic agreement with *sú-jur* ‘young women’.

sú-jur	sasu	gu-vvugul	gagu	gu-kka-e
CLba-/su-young.woman(II.PL/I.PL)	II.PL.DEF	I.PL-new	I.PL.DEF	I.3PL-go-CPL

‘The new young women have left.’ (ss20130722_MT)

(24) Ungrammaticality of consistent agreement with *sú-jur* ‘young women’.

*sú-jur	sasu	su-vvugul	sasu	si-kka-e
CLba-/su-young.woman(II.PL)	II.PL.DEF	II.PL-new	II.SG.DEF	II.PL-go-CPL

‘The new young women have left.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

4.1.2 Hybrids in the plural only

Most hybrid nouns in Eegimaa are, as pointed out above, plural nouns of human denotation. This means that their singular correspondents are not hybrids. In Sagna (2012) the agreement mismatches with plural hybrids are analysed as manifestations of multiple morphosyntactic and semantic categorisation of humans. We can distinguish hybrid nouns which in the singular, control Gender I singular agreement (the human gender), and those that control non-human gender agreements such as Genders II and V. We discuss the former first.

Nouns which control Gender I agreement in the singular do not all trigger the same agreement in the plural. Rather, they control plural agreement forms from different plural genders, of which one is lexically determined (Sagna 2010). Plural hybrid nouns whose singular correspondents belong to Gender I control obligatory syntactic agreement on determiners as can be seen in examples (25) to (28) below. However, semantic agreement is

¹⁵ Syntactic agreement of the type illustrated in (24) is never found in natural speech e.g. in conversational data or narratives, nor is it produced when speakers are asked to translate sentences where *sú-jur* ‘young women’ is a controller noun from French to Eegimaa. Moreover, when these types of sentences are proposed to speakers in the context of grammaticality judgement, they are described as ungrammatical sentences produced by non-fluent speakers. The explanations given for rejecting such constructions is that syntactic agreement suggests that these ‘young women’ are not humans. I have no explanation why syntactic agreement is attested in the singular for ‘young woman’ but not in the plural.

obligatory on adjectives, verbs and the relative pronouns as shown in (25) and with the ungrammaticality of (26). In example (25) we have a mismatch in gender agreement between the definite determiner on the one hand, and the adjective, the verb and the pronoun on the other hand.

(25) Syntactic and semantic agreement with Gender V.PL and Gender I.

u -añ-a		wawu		gu -vvugul	gagu	bug -o
CLa -/u-cultivate-AGT(V.PL/ I.PL)		V.PL.DEF		I.PL-new	I.PL.DEF	I.PL-PRO
ni-juh	me	gu -kka-e				
REAL.1SG-see	SUBORD	I.3PL-go-CPL				

‘The new farmers whom I saw have left.’ (ss20130722_MT)

(26) Ungrammatical syntactic agreement on the adjective with Gender V.PL.

*u -añ-a		wawu		u -vvugul	wawu
CLa -/u-cultivate-AGT(V.PL)		V.PL.DEF		V.PL-new	V.PL.DEF
bug -o	ni-juh	me	gu -kka-e		
I.PL-PRO	REAL.1SG-see	SUBORD	I.3PL-go-CPL		

‘The new farmers whom I saw have left.’ (ss20130722_MT)

There are other hybrid nouns from Gender I singular which, in the plural control Gender II singular agreement on some targets, but control Gender I plural agreement on other targets. As can be seen on the agreement targets in example (27), there is an agreement mismatch in both gender and number. The morphological marker on the noun and the agreement marker of the definite determiner are the singular markers for Gender II. However, the agreement markers on the verb and the relative pronoun are plural markers from Gender I, and syntactic agreement is not an option at these levels of the Agreement Hierarchy. Human hybrids from this plural subcategory describe human collectivities such as those that share the same geographical, ethnic, linguistic and professional background, and thus constitute a colony or identity group. I have shown in Section 3.2 above that the nominal prefix of Gender II is used in the formation of collective meaning for nouns denoting plants and human ‘identity groups’. Nouns denoting plants, as argued in that section, trigger syntactic agreement on all targets. However, nouns of human denotation which in the collective and plural trigger

syntactic agreement on determiners with Gender II singular agreement marker, but obligatory semantic agreement on other targets indicates a strong difference between human and non-human entities.

(27) Semantic agreement (mismatch) in Gender and number with ‘identity groups’.

é-jjola yayu bug-o ni-juh me gu-kka-e
CLa-/e-jóola(II.SG) II.SG.DEF I.PL-PRO.REL REAL.1SG-see SUBORD I.3PL-go-CPL
‘The Jóola people whom I saw have left.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

(28) Ungrammatical use of syntactic agreement with ‘identity groups’.

*é-jjola yayu y-o ni-juh me gu-kka-e
CLa-/e-jóola(II.SG) II.SG.DEF II.SG-PRO.REL REAL.1SG-see SUBORD I.3PL-go-CPL
‘The Jóola people whom I saw have left.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

It should be noted that nouns of the human plural subcategory illustrated in (27) above only control semantic agreement with adjectives as exemplified in (29) and (30) below, where the use of syntactic agreement on the adjective produces an ungrammatical noun phrase.

(29) Semantic agreement on the adjective with ‘identity groups’.

é-jjola yayu gu-vvugul gagu
CLa-/e-jóola(II.SG) II.SG.DEF I.PL-new I.PL.DEF
‘The new Jóola people.’ (ss20130920_AmT)

(30) Ungrammatical syntactic agreement on the adjective with ‘identity groups’.

*é-jjola yayu e-vvugul yayu
CLa-/e-jóola(II.SG) II.SG.DEF II.SG-new II.SG.DEF
‘The new Jóola people.’ (ss20130920_AmT)

As pointed out earlier in this section, Eegimaa has nouns of human denotation whose singular do not belong to the human Gender I. These include nouns from Gender II which denote special humans (humans having special attributes) and those of Gender V which denote ‘weak’ humans. Human nouns from Gender II should not be confused with the hybrids labelled ‘identity groups’ and illustrated from examples (27) to (30).

As pointed out above, most nouns of human denotation are assigned to gender I based on semantics. There are however other nouns of human denotation in other genders. Those

found in Gender II normally control syntactic agreement in the singular and the plural, but they may also function as hybrids, in which case they trigger semantic agreement in the plural only (Bassène 2012; Sagna 2008: 229; Sagna 2012: 140). The noun *é-mbiro* ‘champion’ for example, is not a hybrid in the singular as shown in example (31) where it triggers syntactic agreement on all its targets. In the plural syntactic agreement is generally the preferred option as illustrated in (32). However, it is possible, though less natural (according to speakers’ judgement), for this noun to trigger semantic agreement from the attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy as illustrated in (33) below. Note as shown in (33), that whenever semantic agreement is possible in with human nouns of Gender II, the attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy is split between syntactic agreement which is obligatory on the definite determiner (*sasu*) and semantic agreement which is found with the demonstrative (*ubugu*).

(31) Syntactic agreement with a human-denoting noun from Gender II singular.

é-mbiro *yanoyan* *pan* *e-taj* *ni* *e-ppal*¹⁶ *y-o*
CLe-/su-champion(II.SG) **II.SG.each** **FUT** **II.SG-fight** **PREP** **CLe-/su-friend(II.SG)** **II.SG-PRO**
‘Each champion will fight with his fellow.’ (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

(32) Syntactic agreement with a human-denoting noun from Gender II plural.

sí-mbiro *sasu* *pan* *si-taj* *ni* *si-ppal* *s-o*
CLe-/su-champion(II.PL) **II.PL.DEF** **FUT** **II.PL-fight** **PREP** **CLe-/su-friend(II.PL)** **II.PL-PRO**
‘The champions will fight with their fellows.’ (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

(33) Semantic agreement with a human-denoting noun from Gender II plural.

sí-mbiro *sasu* *ubugu* *pan* *gu-taj* *ni* *gu-ppal-il*
CLe-/si-champion(II.PL) **II.PL.def** **I.PL.MED** **FUT** **I.3PL-fight** **PREP** **CLa/gu-friend-3PL.OBJ(I.PL)**
‘The champions will fight with their fellows.’ (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

Nouns of human denotation from Gender V are never hybrids in the singular, just like those of Gender II. The singular and plural nominal prefixes of Gender V are used to express augmentative and derogative meanings as noted in Sagna (2008). Nouns of human denotation

¹⁶ When the nominal root *-pal* occurs with the abstractness suffix *-ay* as in *a-ppal-ay* ‘friend’, it belongs to morphological class *a-/gu-* of Gender I. Without this suffix, it must take a possessive suffix or occur in possessive NP as do possessed kinship term like *pay* ‘father of’ or *jaw* ‘mother of’. In this context it takes the agreement marker of the controller noun as can be seen in examples (31) to (36).

in this gender denote weak humans like very old persons who have lost most of their physical and mental abilities, and lazy and weak-minded people. Nouns from this gender control syntactic agreement as in examples (34) and (35) in the singular and plural genders respectively. However, human nouns of this gender can control semantic agreement as illustrated in (36) below where semantic agreement in the plural is attested from the attributive level on the demonstrative determiner and all other elements on the right side of the Agreement Hierarchy. The agreement mismatch is in gender only. Here again, the attributive level of the agreement hierarchy is split as in examples (33) above. The use of semantic agreement is described as a respectful way of referring to a very old person and could be described as pragmatic agreement since speaker's intention is to attenuate the derogatory reference to the old person.

- (34) Syntactic agreement with a noun of human denotation from Gender V singular.

gá-ffannum **gagu** **pan** **gu-lob** **ni** **ga-ppal** **g-o**
ga-/u-old.person(V.SG) **V.SG.DEF** **FUT** **V.SG-speak** **PREP** **V.SG-friend** **V.SG-PRO**
 'The old person will speak with his/her fellow.' (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

- (35) Syntactic agreement with a noun of human denotation from Gender V plural.

ú-ffannum **wawu** **pan** **u-lob** **ni**
ga-/u-old.person(V.PL) **V.PL.DEF** **FUT** **V.PL-speak** **PREP**
u-ppal **w-o**
V.SG-friend **V-PRO**
 'The old people will speak with their fellows.' (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

- (36) Semantic agreement with a noun of human denotation from Gender V plural

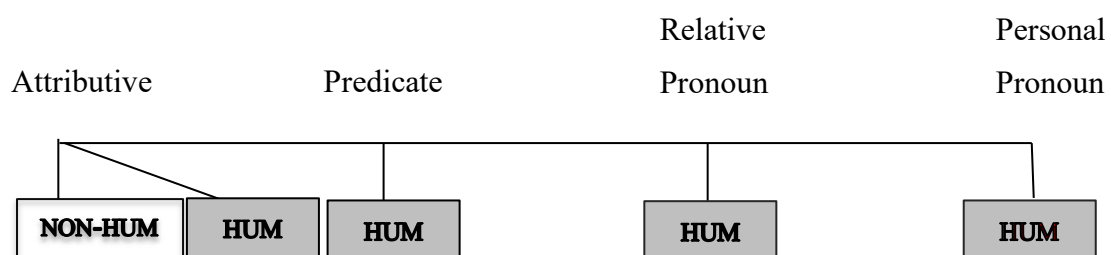
ú-ffannum **wawu** **ubugu** **pan** **gu-lob**
ga-/u-old.person(V.PL/ I.PL) **V/PL.DEF** **I.PL.MED** **FUT** **I.3PL-speak**
ni **gu-ppal-il**
PREP **V.SG-friend-3PL.OBJ**
 'The old people will speak with their fellows.' (ss20121222_MNS-JB)

In summary, nouns of human denotation that are assigned to other genders based on agreement criteria control syntactic agreement in the singular and plural, but semantic agreement is also possible. As illustrated from examples (31) to (36) above, the attributive

level of the Agreement Hierarchy is always split as is the case for the examples discussed in previous paragraphs.

Overall, the discussion of hybrid nouns of human denotation in the paragraphs above showed that there is only one noun which is a hybrid in both the singular and the plural and which allows an optional use of syntactic or semantic agreement in the singular. I have shown in the discussion above that this example of a singular hybrid shows less of a preference for semantic agreement than the plural hybrids. All other hybrids are only found in the plural. With respect to agreement marking, the examples above have shown that Eegimaa hybrids always control obligatory syntactic agreement on definite determiners, but semantic agreement is strongly preferred on demonstratives, adjectives and on agreement targets from the rightmost levels of the Agreement Hierarchy (e.g. relative clauses). The attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy is therefore split with Eegimaa hybrid nouns as summarized in Figure 2 below¹⁷. The distribution of syntactic and semantic agreement with pure hybrids corroborates predictions made by the Agreement Hierarchy that, if semantic agreement is attested on the left position in the hierarchy it will also be attested in all right positions.

Figure 2: Hybrids in the Agreement Hierarchy.



4.2 Genre-specific mismatches: proverbs, songs and generic propositions

¹⁷ The abbreviations HUM indicate that the agreement markers used at the relevant level of the Agreement Hierarchy is a marker of the ‘human’ Gender I (classes 1 & 2 in the Africanist traditional approach). NON-HUM indicates that agreement markers from non-human genders are used at the attributive level with definite determiner. In other words, human-denoting hybrids discussed above use syntactic agreement markers from other genders but their semantic agreement on targets are those of the human gender.

There are contexts in which, non-human nouns which are not hybrids, and which belong to genders other than Gender I, can optionally control semantic agreement with Gender I singular on the verb, instead of the expected syntactic agreement. These are generally situations where the non-human entity denoted by the controller noun is personified¹⁸. The use of agreement mismatch is contextual rather than required. I have found these mismatches mainly in fixed expression (some songs (cf. (37) and (38)) and in some proverbs (see (39) and (40) below)¹⁹) and in spontaneous speech when a generic proposition is asserted as in (46) below. Generic propositions, as Lyons (Lyons 1977: 194) defines them, say something about the class of entities rather than a specific individual. Bassène (2015) describes the agreement mismatches in proverbs in several Jóola languages (Kaasa Fulup, Kuwaataay, Keerak, Fogni and Eegimaa (Banjal)), and analyses the mismatches as expressions of generic expression. Creissels (2013) also analyzes the difference between syntactic and semantic agreement in cases like these, as a distinction between a reference to an individual and a reference to a kind respectively. In all the contexts in which these agreement mismatches are found, semantic agreement occurs at only the predicate level of the Agreement Hierarchy where it alternates with syntactic agreement without change in meaning. Note that in elicitation context, syntactic agreement is generally the only form produced.

Examples (37) and (38) are two consecutive lines of a song in which the first one shows a noun from Gender IV singular, ‘bull’, which triggers human Gender I singular agreement on the verb ‘chase’, but in the next line in (38), syntactic agreement is produced at the pronominal level on the object marker, with no possibility to alternate with semantic

¹⁸ Personification is done in Eegimaa by attaching NCP *ja-* to nouns denoting non-human entities e.g. *ja-jjamen* ‘Goat’ instead of *e-jjamen* ‘a goat’, and by using GI agreement on all targets in the singular and the plural. In the plural the associative suffix *-i* must be added to the noun as in *ja-jjamen-i* ‘Goat and his fellows’ to express plurality of personified entities. This kind of personification is mostly found in folktales. In instances of mismatches discussed here, only the verb takes GI agreement.

¹⁹ These proverbs were provided in written form by one of my consultants (Matar Jibas Manga) who compiled a list of proverbs and popular expressions in Eegimaa in 2004. Note that the mismatch in agreement cannot be attributed to the written register since the Eegimaa orthography was not available yet. The consultant wrote these proverbs using the French orthography.

agreement. In both lines of the song, agreement with the human singular Gender I indicates a form of personification of the bull. Such personification is however not maintained throughout the text as can be seen in examples (38). Note that the plural of Gender I is never used in this context. This form of semantic agreement, which has not been reported in previous work, does not fit the generic reference interpretation which is applicable for proverbs, since the referent is an individual entity. I analyse this as a form of genre-specific mismatches resulting from personification.

(37) Non-human semantic agreement at the predicate level in a song.

fí-jjin **a-ham** **bu-yyan**
fu-/gu-bull(IV.SG) **I.3SG-chase** **bu-/u-heifer(III.SG)**
‘A bull chases a heifer.’ (ss20040820_búhut)

(38) Non-human semantic agreement at the pronoun level.

Elubalir **gu-jo-lo** **fo**
Elubalir(I.PL/II.SG) **I.3PL-catch-VEN** **IV.SG.PRO**
‘People from Elubalir caught it and brought it.’ (ss20040820_búhut)

Examples (39) and (40) also illustrates other genre-specific mismatches in proverbs similar to mismatches in (37) above. In example (39) a noun from Gender IV singular controls Gender I singular agreement on the verb, while in (40) it is a noun from Gender VI singular that controls Gender I singular agreement at the same level of the hierarchy. As it is the case for (37) above, these mismatches in gender illustrate cases of personification of the entities described by the controller nouns in these examples. The alternation between syntactic agreement and semantic agreement with Gender I Singular is not attested in all proverbs. Agreement mismatches such as those in (39) and (40) may be termed deliberate mismatches, where a non-human entity is given human attributes, and where the speaker can choose between syntactic and semantic agreement. In proverbs such as the one illustrated in (41) there is no personification, and syntactic agreement is obligatory.

(39) Semantic agreement at the predicate level with proverbs.

fú-hun **á-bu-rit** / **fú-bu-rit** **ga-poroh**
fu-/gu-kind.of.fish(IV.SG) I.3SG-beget-HAB.NEG/ IV.SG-beget-HAB.NEG ga-/u-carp(V.SG)
'A 'fúhun' fish does not beget a carp.' (ss-Jibas2004_Proverbs)

(40) Semantic agreement at the predicate level with proverbs.

jí-çil **a-ffas-ut** / **ji-ffas-ut** **a-ssanum**
ji-/gu-eye(VI.SG) I.3SG-know-NEG / VI.SG-know-NEG a-/u-rich.person(I.SG)
'lit: an eye does not know a rich person. (The mere sight of a person does not reveal how rich they are.' (ss-Jibas2004_Proverbs)

(41) Obligatory syntactic agreement with proverbs.

f-al **ff-ssikki** **mánoman** **fu-baj-e** **e-ttam**
f-/g-river(IV.SG) IV.SG-be.deep however IV.SG-have-CPL e-/si-earth(II.SG)
'No matter how deep a river is, it has a bottom.' (ss-Jibas2004_Proverbs)

In terms of restrictions imposed by the Agreement Hierarchy, it is difficult to find a context in which semantic agreement would be acceptable at the attributive level with proverbs. However one could easily imagine a situation in which a speaker may want to restrict the general truth expressed by a proverb to a specific situation, for example by modifying the head nouns with an adjective in the proverbs illustrated in (39) and (40) above. As shown in examples (42) and (43) below, only the use of syntactic agreement at the attributive level would produce grammatical sentences.

(42) Ungrammatical semantic agreement at the attributive level with proverbs.

fú-hun **fú-ttut/** ***á-ttut** **á-bu-rit** **ga-poroh**
fu-/gu-kind.of.fish(IV.SG) IV.SG.original /*I.SG.original I.3SG-beget-HAB.NEG ga-/u-carp(V.SG)
'A original 'fúhun' fish does not beget a carp.' (ss20130920_AmT)

(43) Ungrammatical semantic agreement at the attributive level with proverbs.

jí-çil **ji-rakkel/** ***a-rakkel** **a-ffas-ut** **a-ssanum**
ji-/gu-eye(VI.SG) VI.SG-nude/ *I.SG-nude I.3SG-know-NEG a-/u-rich.person(I.SG)
'lit: A naked eye cannot identify a rich person.' (ss20130920_AmT)

With respect to the positions in the Agreement Hierarchy beyond the predicate level, it is also possible to imagine a situation in which a speaker follows up the utterance of the proverbs

696 above with their explanations by adding (44) below as an explanation to (39) above and (45)
697 below as an explanation to (40) above.

698 (44) Possible semantic agreement at the pronominal level with proverbs.

699 mata e-ogil-ol e-let y-aa ga-poroh
700 because e-/su-seed(II.SG)-3SG.POSS II.SG-not.be II.SG-of ga-/u-carp(V.SG)
701 ‘Lit: Because his milt is not that of a carp.’ (ss20130920_AmT)

702 (45) Possible semantic agreement at the pronominal level with proverbs.

703 mata bu-jug-ol nahi bí-ti-ttij
704 because bu-/u-see(III.SG)-3SG.POSS HAB III.SG-stop-REDUP
705 ‘Lit: Because his sight does have a limit.’ (ss20130920_AmT)

706 In both cases, only semantic agreement is acceptable. Consequently, when semantic
707 agreement occurs in proverbs as those illustrated here, it follows the predictions of the
708 Agreement Hierarchy. Since semantic agreement is attested at the predicate level, it is, as
709 expected from the prediction also found at the personal pronoun level which is located to the
710 right of the predicate level. However, as shown in (42) and (43) above, the attributive level of
711 the hierarchy is not split as it is the case for human hybrids discussed in Section 4.1 above.

712 Example (46) below illustrates a third and previously unstudied subtype of semantic
713 agreement mismatch collected from spontaneous speech, where semantic agreement on the
714 verb is chosen over syntactic agreement²⁰ exemplified in (47). These examples illustrate
715 instances where generic propositions are asserted to describe habitual facts, experience or the
716 general truth about the characteristics of an entity.

²⁰ The speaker was describing the medicinal properties of the *Acacia albida* tree.

(46) Semantic agreement in generic propositions.

bú-taful náh-**á**-sotte-ssotten

bu-/u-Acacia.albida(**III.SG**) HAB-**I.3SG**-cure-REDUP

‘lit: The Acacia albida tree does treat illnesses.’ (ss20130930_bútaful)

(47) Syntactic agreement in generic propositions.

bú-taful nahi **bú**-sotte-ssotten

bu-/u-Acacia.albida(**III.SG**) HAB **III.SG**-cure-REDUP

‘lit: The Acacia albida tree does cure (produce medicine).’

Similar to (39) and (40) above, semantic agreement with Gender I singular in the examples above, is an instance of personification of a non-human entity in a context where something is said about the properties of a class of entities. The genericity interpretation proposed for proverbs can also be applied here. In this case it is the use of parts of a kind of tree for medicinal purposes which is explained. Example (46) shows an instance of personification where a non-human entity is conceived of as an agent performing an action like treating, normally performed by humans, hence the human agreement. Example (47) may be interpreted differently from (46) with the meaning that the tree produces medicine, and then can be used by a human for treatment, but it is not metaphorically viewed as doing the treatment. In addition to semantic agreement of the type exemplified in (46) above, it is also possible as with proverbs discussed above, to imagine a situation in which an adjective modifies the controller noun of example (47) above. However, the agreement marker in this case must show consistent agreement with the controller, and semantic agreement is not acceptable. Example (49) shows that it is possible to have semantic agreement at the position of the personal pronoun in the hierarchy if the personification of the non-human entity is expressed beyond the predicate level.

(48) Possible syntactic agreement at the attributive level with habitual expressions.

bú-taful bu-ffan/ *a-ffan náh-**á**-sotte-ssotten

bu-/u-Acacia.albida(**III.SG**) **III.SG**-old/ ***I.SG**-old HAB-**I.3SG**-cure-REDUP

‘lit: The old Acacia albida tree does cure (produce medicine).’

(49) Possible semantic agreement at the pronoun level with habitual expressions.

mata	u-pal-ol	bu-bun
because	ga-/u-bark(V.PL)-3SG.POSS	bu-/u-medicine(III.SG)
'Because 'his/her' barks are medicine.'		

In summary, this section has shown instances of agreement mismatches where the choice between syntactic and semantic agreement is motivated by personification (see example (37) above) in genres including songs, proverbs, and in the assertion of generic propositions. In terms of Agreement Hierarchy, we have seen the case of example (38) where semantic agreement occurs at the predicate level, but syntactic agreement is used on the pronoun where any attempts to use semantic agreement produces an ungrammatical sentence. We have also seen that with proverbs and expressions of generic propositions, semantic agreement occurs on the verbs.

5 Constructional mismatches

The nouns examined in this section include those which, in addition to controlling syntactic agreement can, as will be shown in 5.2 below, also function as hybrids. However, these nouns differ from 'pure' hybrids examined in Section 4 above, in that they have the property of also controlling locative semantic agreement in adverbial clauses and with adverbial relativizes, which are in the same paradigm as object pronouns. This is why they are treated in this section, along with 'pure location nouns', which also trigger locative semantic agreement, but do not all function as hybrids (see Section 5.3 below). Since the variation in agreement features in locative semantic agreement is predominantly due to the type of constructions (e.g. relative clauses) the nouns appear in, and not specific lexemes, they are analysed as kinds of constructional mismatches. I begin this section with a presentation of locative in Eegimaa.

5.1 Locatives in Eegimaa

770 Eegimaa has three types of spatial locatives which take NCPs *t(i)-*, *b-*, and *d-*
771 and express the meanings of precise location (see example (50)), general location (see (51))
772 and location inside as exemplified in (52). General location is expressed with Gender III
773 singular agreement as can be seen in (51). The nouns with which these locatives attach to are
774 *ti-nah* ‘sun/precise time’ and *t-iñ* ‘precise location’, *b-iñ* ‘general location’ and *d-iñ* ‘location
775 inside’. Spatial locatives comparable to inquorate genders in that they combine with very few
776 nouns. They all combine with one nominal root; *-iñ* ‘location’, except ‘precise location’
777 which has *ti-nah* ‘sun/precise time’ as an additional noun. There is also one temporal locative
778 gender marker *n-*. Although no lexeme is associated with it, it is used in some agreement
779 targets to indicate the time when an event occurs (see (53)). The Eegimaa locatives are
780 dedicated locative genders and do not participate in singular plural pairing. More examples of
781 locative agreement are given in the next section, supporting the argument that they behave
782 like other genders in terms of agreement. As can be seen in the examples below, locatives
783 control syntactic agreement.

- 784 (50) Precise location with *t-*.
 785 *t-iñ* *toutu* *tí-jjebi-jjebi*
 786 *t-place(VIII)* *VIII.DEF* *VIII.be.wet-REDUP*
 787 ‘That place is wet’
- 788 (51) General location with *b-* (Gender III.SG).
 789 *b-iñ* *boubu* *bu-mmo-moç*
 790 *b-place(VIII.SG)* *III.SG.DEF* *III.SG-be.dark-REDUP*
 791 ‘That place is dark’
- 792 (52) Location inside *d-*.
 793 *d-iñ* *dóutu* *dí-ssikki-ssikki*
 794 *d-place(IX)* *IX.DEF* *IX-be.deep-REDUP*
 795 ‘That place deep’
- 796 (53) Temporal location *n-*.
 797 *n-ánonan* *n-o* *nu-mañ-e*
 798 *n-whenever(X)* *X-PRO.REL* *REAL.2SG-want-CPL*
 799 ‘Whenever you want.’

800 5.2 Human collectivity nouns

801 Nouns referred to as human collectivity nouns are those which denote associations or
 802 institutions. They can control two types of semantic agreement in addition to syntactic
 803 agreement. The first type of semantic agreement which will be termed human semantic
 804 agreement occurs when these nouns function as hybrids, whereas the second one which will
 805 be called locative semantic agreement is found in adverbial relativizations. The loanword
 806 *larne* ‘the army’ is a prefixless noun in the singular. It triggers syntactic agreement as in
 807 exemplified in (54) and (55), but plural human semantic agreements as illustrated in
 808 examples (56).

(54) Syntactic agreement with human collectivity nouns.

lar_{me} **yayu** **y-aa** Senegal **e-baj-e** s-embe
[Ø-]army(**II.SG**) **II.SG.DEF** **II.SG-of** Senegal **II.SG-have-CPL** CLs-strength(**II.PL**)
'The Senegalese army is strong (lit: has strength).' (s20130801_MNS)

(55) Syntactic agreement – collective meaning.

lar_{me} **e-eg-e** u-jow
[Ø-]army(**II.SG**) **II.SG-say-CPL** 2SG-go
'The army is calling you (lit: says you go).' (s20130801_MNS)

(56) Semantic agreement (mismatch in Gender and Number).

lar_{me} **gu-og-e** u-jow
[Ø-]army(**II.SG**) **I.PL-say-CPL** 2SG-go
'The army is calling you (lit: they say you go).' (ss20130801_MNS)

Syntactic agreement as exemplified in (54) and (55) point at the entity which the noun refers to. In example (56) the singular noun *lar_{me}* functions as a hybrid, and semantic agreement is expressed by a mismatch in gender and number with the target taking human plural agreement.

In addition to cases of human semantic agreement like the one discussed in (56) above, where the referents are humans, human collectivity nouns also control semantic agreement with locative genders. Locative expressions, as discussed above, always trigger syntactic agreement in Eegimaa. However, although human collectivity nouns are not primarily locative expressions, they can trigger semantic agreement with locative genders, resulting in mismatches at the level of the adverbial relativizer pronoun. This would correspond to semantic agreement at the levels of the relative pronoun and the personal pronouns in the Agreement Hierarchy. Example (57) which expresses general location shows syntactic agreement on the noun phrase and human semantic agreement on the verb, but it controls locative semantic agreement on the adverbial relativizer. In this example, the army is conceptualised as an unspecified geographical location and the individual referred to is

836 associated with the army but may not be a member of it. Note that syntactic agreement with
837 Gender II agreement is also possible on the verb.

838 (57) Human semantic agreement (GI) on verb & locative semantic agreement (GIII)
839 on the adverbial relativizer (general location).

840 *lar*me *yayu* *b-o* *na-am-en* *me* *gu-ham-ul-ol-ham*
841 [Ø-]army(II.SG) II.SG.DEF III.SG-PRO.REL I.SG-COP-PST SUBORD I.PL-chase-VEN-3SG.OBJ-REDUP
842 ‘(People in) the army where he was have chased him away.’ (Part-Obsv)

843 In example (58), the controller noun *lar*me also triggers syntactic agreement on the definite
844 determiner, but human semantic agreement on the verb, and locative semantic agreement on
845 the adverbial relativizer. Here, the army is conceived of as a location inside a place. The
846 sentence describes a situation in which the individual referred to is a member of the army,
847 conceived of as an entity with an inside.

848 (58) Human semantic agreement on the verb and locative agreement on adverbial
849 relativizer (location inside).

850 *lar*me *yayu* *d-ó* *na-am-en* *me* *gu-ham-ul-ol-ham*
851 [Ø-]army(II.SG) II.SG.DEF IX-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-COP-PST SUBORD I.PL-chase-VEN-3SG.OBJ-
852 REDUP
853 ‘(People in) the army of which he was part have kicked him out.’
854 (ss20130801_MNS)

855 Precise location is odd with human collectivity nouns of the ‘army’ type as exemplified in
856 (59) below, probably because of nouns like ‘army’ do not refer to entities that are confined to
857 a precise place.

858 (59) Ungrammatical use of human collectivity nouns with precise location.

859 **lar*me *yayu* *to* *na-am-en* *me* *gu-ham-ul-ol-ham*
860 [Ø-]army(II.SG) II.SG.DEF VIII-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-COP-PST SUBORD I.PL-chase-VEN-3SG.OBJ-
861 REDUP
862 ‘(People in) the army where (precise location) he was have kicked him out.’
863 (ss20130801_MNS)

864 Examples (57) to (59) show that with human collectivity nouns, human semantic agreement
865 always occurs at the predicate position of the Agreement Hierarchy, whereas locative
866 semantic agreement is only attested with the adverbial relativizer. As predicted by the

Hierarchy when semantic agreement is attested at the level of the relative pronoun, it is also found at the level of the personal pronouns. Here these levels of the Agreement Hierarchy are illustrated with adverbial relativizers exemplified above, and locative adverbs shown in example (60) below. Note that these adverbs occur in the same paradigm as relative pronouns and personal pronouns, hence the gloss PRO.

(60) Semantic agreement with locative adverbs.

na-ag-e mati a-bbañ **b-o/d-ó**
REAL.I.SG-say-CPL FUT.NEG I.SG-return **III.SG-PRO/IX-PRO**
'He said he will not go back there/in there.' (ss20130801_MNS)

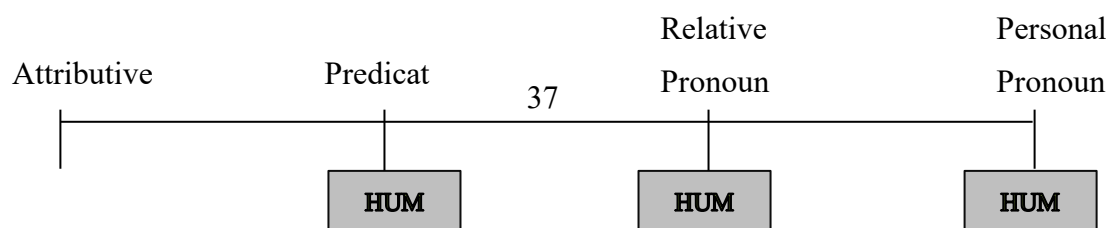
Human collectivity nouns of the army type cannot control locative semantic agreement on the verb as shown in (61), or at a higher level as would be expected following the Agreement Hierarchy predictions.

(61) Ungrammaticality of locative semantic agreement with verbs.

*larme yayu **du-ham-ul-ol-ham**
[Ø-]army(**II.SG**) **II.SG.DEF** **IX-chase-VEN-3SG.OBJ-REDUP**
'(People in) the army where he was have chased him away.' (Part-Obsv)

In summary, human collectivity nouns can control both syntactic and semantic agreement. There are two kinds of semantic agreement which can be controlled by human collectivity nouns; human semantic agreement and locative semantic agreement. The discussion above showed that whenever semantic agreement occurs, syntactic agreement is obligatory at the attributive level of the Agreement Hierarchy, but it is not split as it is the case for the hybrids discussed in Section 4 above. Human semantic agreement is only found from the predicate position of the hierarchy whereas locative agreement only occurs from the relative pronoun positions, on the adverbial relativizers and the locative adverbs as shown in Figure 3 below. A key observation with human collectivity nouns is that these two types of agreement behave differently in the Agreement Hierarchy.

Figure 3: Semantic agreement with human collectivity nouns



NON HUM

5.3 Pure location nouns

Location nouns are nouns that denote spatial or temporal locations. We can distinguish three semantic subcategories of what is referred to as *pure location nouns*. The first subcategory includes nouns like ‘village’ which denote places and additionally, human referents who are associated with those places. The second subcategory describes nouns like ‘forest’ which denote places but cannot have human referents, and third subcategory of pure location nouns are those describing time location.

5.3.1 Pure location nouns describing human collectivities

The nouns investigated in this section are those which can function both as *location* nouns and collective nouns of the *committee* type. These nouns denote places where humans live or congregate. Examples include *village* and *house*, which denote physical location as well as groups of people. The different uses of these nouns to describe either a location of a group of peoples have consequences for the agreements they trigger on some of their targets. When a location noun triggers syntactic agreement on all its dependents it refers to the physical location denoted by the noun as in (62) and (63) below. Thus, the nouns in these examples denote a village as a geographical location and a house as a building respectively.

913 (62) Syntactic agreement with the location noun *é-suh* ‘village’.
 914 *é-suh* *yayu* *y-o* *si-bandi* *sasu* *su-fum* *me*
 915 *e-/su-village(II.SG)* *II.SG.DEF* *II.SG-PRO.REL* *e-/su-bandit(II.PL)* *II.PL.DEF* *II.PL-break* *SUBORD*
 916 *ga-jow* *y-o* *Faṇot*
 917 *ga-name(V.SG)* *II.SG-PRO* *Faṇot*
 918 ‘The village which the bandits have destroyed is called Faṇot.’
 919 (ss20130801_MNS)

920 (63) Syntactic agreement with the location noun *y-aṇ* ‘house’.
 921 *y-aṇ* *yayu* *y-o* *na-ttep* *me* *e-mmo-moç*
 922 *y-/s-house(II.SG)* *II.SG.DEF* *II.SG-PRO.REL* *REAL.I.3SG-build* *SUBORD* *II.SG-dark-REDUP*
 923 ‘The house which he built is dark.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

924 As can be seen in the examples above, when nouns denote physical locations they trigger
 925 syntactic agreement on all targets. This is evident from the agreement markers on the definite
 926 determiners and the relative pronouns in both examples (62) and (63), but also on the
 927 independent pronoun in (62) and the agreeing verbal target in (63), which all take Gender II
 928 singular agreement consistently. Notice that the change in the form of the agreement marker
 929 is phonologically conditioned, with the semi-vowel *y-* occurring before vowels, whereas the
 930 vowel *e-* occurs before consonants.

931 In addition to syntactic agreement, locative nouns of the ‘village’ and ‘house’ types can also
 932 trigger semantic agreement on adverbial relativizers and locative adverbs using Gender III
 933 singular agreement marker, and the agreement markers of the non-pairing locatives Gender
 934 VIII and IX to express general location as exemplified in (64), precise location as in (65), and
 935 location inside a place as in (66), respectively. However, semantic agreement using locatives
 936 is not acceptable with targets at the attributive level and with verbs as shown by the
 937 ungrammaticality of example (67) below, where the agreement markers from Gender III, VIII
 938 are attempted at the predicate level.

- 939 (64) Locative semantic agreement with Gender III - General location.
 940 **é-suh** **yayu** **b-o** **e-soddali** **yayu** **g-oom me**
 941 e-/su-village(**II.SG**) II.SG.DEF III.SG-PRO.REL e-/su-soldier(II.SG/I.PL) II.SG.DEF I.3PL.be SUBORD
 942 ‘The village where (general location) the soldiers are.’ (ss20130801_MNS)
- 943 (65) Locative semantic agreement with Gender VIII - Precise location.
 944 **é-suh** **yayu** **t-o** **e-soddali** **yayu** **g-oom me**
 945 e-/su-village(**II.SG**) II.SG.DEF VIII-PRO.REL e-/su-soldier(II.SG/I.PL) II.SG.DEF I.3PL.be SUBORD
 946 ‘The village where (precise location) the soldiers are.’
- 947 (66) Locative semantic agreement with Gender IX - location inside a place.
 948 **é-suh** **yayu** **d-ó** **e-soddali** **yayu** **goom me**
 949 e-/su-village(**II.SG**) II.SG.DEF IX-PRO.REL e-/su-soldier(II.SG/I.PL) II.SG.DEF I.3PL.be SUBORD
 950 ‘The village in which the soldiers are (location inside)’ (ss20130801_MNS)
- 951 (67) Ungrammatical locative semantic agreement on the verb.
 952 **é-suh** **yayu** ***bu-mmo-moç** / ***ti-mmo-moç** / ***dí-mmo-moç**
 953 e-/su-village(**II.SG**) II.SG.DEF III.SG-dark-REDUP / VIII-dark-REDUP / IX-dark-REDUP
 954 ‘The village is dark.’ (ss20130801_MNS)
- 955 Location nouns also describe human collectivities as pointed out earlier. In this context, a
 956 noun like *é-suh* ‘village’ would refer to the inhabitants of the place, while *yay* ‘house’ refers
 957 to the members of a family or a lineage. When used in a collective sense for humans, locative
 958 nouns of the ‘house’ and ‘village’ types control two types of agreement. Syntactic agreement
 959 as in (68), where the controller noun triggers Gender II agreement on the verb and semantic
 960 agreement as in (69), where there is a mismatch in gender and number with the singular noun
 961 *yay* ‘house’ triggering human Gender I plural agreement on the verb. Semantically, example
 962 (68) can be interpreted as describing a group of individuals conceptualised as a unit.

963 (68) Syntactic agreement with collective meaning.

964 **y-áŋ-oli** **e-joj-erut**
 965 **y-/s-house(II.SG)-1PL.EXCL** **II.SG-meet-FUT.NEG**
 966 ‘Our house (family) has not met yet.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

967 (69) Semantic agreement with a mismatch in gender and number.

968 **y-áŋ-oli** **gu-joj-erut**
 969 **y-/s-house(II.SG)-1PL.EXCL** **I.3PL-meet-FUT.NEG**
 970 ‘Our house (family) have not met yet.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

971 When location nouns are used as collectives for humans, semantic agreement is only
 972 permissible on verbs (see example (71)), and as a result it is also permissible at the level of
 973 the relative pronoun and personal pronoun, but not with attributive modifiers as shown in
 974 examples (70) and (72) below where only syntactic agreement is possible with the
 975 adjective *-ámah* ‘big’.

976 (70) Syntactic agreement with adjectives triggered by *yay* ‘house’.

977 **y-áŋ-oli** **yayu** **y-ámah** **yayu** **e-joj-erut**
 978 **y-/s-house(II.SG)-1PL.EXCL** **II.SG.DEF** **II.SG-big** **II.SG.DEF** **II.SG-meet-FUT.NEG**
 979 ‘Our big family has not met yet.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

980 (71) Semantic agreement on predicate triggered by *yay* ‘house’.

981 **y-áŋ-oli** **yayu** **y-ámah** **yayu** **gu-joj-erut**
 982 **y-/s-house(II.SG)-1PL.EXCL** **II.SG.DEF** **II.SG-big** **II.SG.DEF** **I.3PL-meet-FUT.NEG**
 983 ‘Our big family have not met yet.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

984 (72) Ungrammatical semantic agreement with adjectives triggered by *yay* ‘house’.

985 ***y-áŋ-oli** **yayu** **bug-ámah** **bugagu** **gu-joj-erut**
 986 **y-/s-house(II.SG)-1PL.EXCL** **II.SG.DEF** **I.PL-big** **I.PL.DEF** **I.3PL-meet-FUT.NEG**
 987 ‘The big family have not met yet.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

988 Locative nouns denoting humans behave like human collectivity nouns in the Agreement
 989 Hierarchy (see Figure 3 above), in that they can control locative semantic agreement on the
 990 adverbial relativizers and locative adverbs, but they also trigger human semantic agreement
 991 which is only attested from the predicate position of the Agreement Hierarchy.

992 5.3.2 Pure location nouns with no human referents

‘Pure’ location nouns are those that trigger syntactic agreement and locative semantic agreement only. They never control human semantic agreement. Syntactic agreement is illustrated by the consistent use of Gender III agreement in all dependents of the controller noun *ba-ha* ‘forest’ in example (73) below. The form of the agreement markers on targets in example (74) is similar to those of example (73). However, example (74) is a case of semantic agreement because the adverbial relativizer denotes a location rather than the forest itself. As in example (64) above the agreement on the adverbial relativizer is a semantic agreement which expresses general location with Gender III singular.

(73) Syntactic agreement with Gender III.

ba-ha babu b-o ná-ggat me bi-çi-ccin
ba-/u-forest(III.SG) III.SG.DEF III.SG-PRO.REL REAL.I.3SG-pass SUBORD III.SG-inhabit-REDUP
‘The forest which he passed is haunted.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

(74) Semantic agreement with Gender III – General location.

ba-ha babu b-o ná-mmori me bi-çi-ccin
ba-/u-forest(III.SG) III.SG.DEF III.SG-PRO.REL REAL.I.3SG-sleep SUBORD III.SG-inhabit-REDUP
‘The forest where s/he slept is haunted (general location).’ (ss20130801_MNS)

The other cases of semantic agreement found with pure location nouns as those exemplified in (75) and (76), express precise location and location inside a place. Location nouns of the *ba-ha* ‘forest’ types cannot control locative semantic agreement on the verb.

(75) Semantic agreement with Gender IX - location inside.

ba-ha babu d-ó ná-mmori me bi-çi-ccin
ba-/u-forest(III.SG) III.SG.DEF IX-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-sleep SUBORD III.SG-inhabit-REDUP
‘The forest in which s/he slept is haunted.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

(76) Semantic agreement with Gender VIII - precise location.

ba-ha babu t-o ná-mmori me bi-çi-ccin
ba-/u-forest(III.SG) III.SG.DEF VIII-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-sleep SUBORD III.SG-inhabit-REDUP
‘The forest where he slept is haunted (precise location).’ (ss20130801_MNS)

In terms of Agreement Hierarchy, only the levels of the relative pronoun and the personal pronoun can take locative semantic agreement. Semantic agreement with attributive

1022 modifiers is not possible as illustrated by the ungrammaticality of (77) where the precise
1023 location is used with the adjective and the definite determiner.

1024 (77) Ungrammatical semantic agreement at the attributive level with location nouns.

1025 ***ba-ha** **babu** **t-ámah** **tatu**
1026 ba-/u-forest(III.SG) III.SG.DEF VIII-big VIII.SG.DEF
1027 ‘The big forest...’ (ss20130801_MNS)

1028 5.3.3 Agreement with nouns denoting containers

1029 Nouns denoting containers such as utensils also show both syntactic and semantic agreement.
1030 Semantic agreement is only possible with adverbial relativizers and locative adverbs as
1031 exemplified in (79) and (80) below. In all other cases, only syntactic agreement illustrated in
1032 (78) is attested. Notice that the only kind of semantic agreement attested with containers is
1033 with Gender IX which expressed location inside a place. Precise location and general location
1034 are not acceptable with nouns denoting containers. Similarly, to the other instances of
1035 semantic agreement discussed above, semantic agreement with containers follows the
1036 predictions made by the Agreement Hierarchy.

1037 (78) Syntactic agreement with container nouns.

1038 **ga-rilon** **gagu** **g-ámah** **gagu** **g-a-pos-i** **me** **u-g-u**
1039 ga-/u-pot(V.SG) V.SG.DEF V.SG-big V.SG.DEF V.SG-REL-wash-PASS SUBORD COP-V.SG-MED
1040 ‘Here is the cooking pot that was washed.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

1041 (79) Semantic agreement at the attributive level with Gender IX - location inside.

1042 **ga-rilon** **gagu** **d-ó** **nú-ssil** **me**
1043 ga-/u-pot(V.SG) V.SG.DEF IX-PRO.REL REAL.2SG-cook SUBORD
1044 ‘The cooking pot in which you cooked.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

1045 (80) Semantic agreement on locative adverbs with Gender IX – location inside.

1046 **pan** **i-tiñ** **d-ó,** **ni** **ga-rilon** **gagu**
1047 FUT 1SG-eat IX-PRO.REL PREP ga-/u-pot(V.SG) V.SG.DEF
1048 ‘Lit: I will eat inside, in the cooking pot.’ (ss20130801_MNS)

1049 In summary, pure location nouns differ from those which can also be used as collective nouns
1050 for humans in that they cannot trigger human semantic agreement. However, they are similar

to the latter in that they can control locative semantic agreement in which case semantic agreement is only attested at the level of the relative pronoun and the personal pronoun in the Agreement Hierarchy.

5.3.4 Time location nouns

Nouns denoting time location trigger syntactic agreement on their dependents using the agreement markers of the gender to which they belong. This is illustrated in (81) below where the loanword *e-taŋ* ‘time’ controls Gender II agreement on all its dependents. Syntactic agreement indicates that the speakers is saying something about a particular time location rather than locating an event in a precise time.

(81) Syntactic agreement with Gender II - time location.

e-taŋ *yayu* *y-o* *na-lob* *me* *e-çig-erut*
e-/su-time(II.SG) II.SG.DEF II.SG-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-say SUBORD II.SG-arrive-FUT.NEG
‘The time he talked about has not come yet.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

Nouns denoting time location also trigger semantic agreement to express precise time location when an event took place. With this category of nouns, only semantic agreement with Gender X is acceptable. As one would expect, they are not compatible with human semantic agreement or locative semantic agreement. Semantic agreement with time location nouns only occurs with adverbial relativizers at the level of the relative pronoun in the Agreement Hierarchy and with the locative adverb at the level of the personal pronouns as illustrated in (82) and (83) below. This confirms the Agreement Hierarchy predictions that if semantic agreement is acceptable in one position on the left of the hierarchy, it will also be accepted on the positions on the right.

1073 (82) Semantic agreement with Gender X - precise time location.
 1074 e-taŋ yayu n-o na-lob me é-ggal-e
 1075 e-/su-time(II.SG) II.SG.DEF X-PRO.REL REAL.I.SG-say SUBORD II.SG-arrive-FUT.NEG
 1076 ‘The time when he spoke has passed.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

1077 (83) Semantic agreement with a locative adverb *no*.
 1078 n-o may ni-jug-ol
 1079 X-PRO also REAL.I.SG-see-3SG.OBJ
 1080 ‘That is also when I saw him.’ (ss20131221_AmT)

1081 In short, nouns denoting time location can only trigger semantic agreement using Gender X.
 1082 They are not compatible with human semantic agreement or other expression locative
 1083 semantic agreement.

1084 5.4 Conjoined noun phrases

1085 When the controller is a conjoined NP, resolution rules are needed to specify the form of the
 1086 targets (see Corbett 1991; 2006 for a typology). In Eegimaa (see Sagna 2008), different
 1087 agreement mismatches occur when conjoined NPs belonging to the same or different genders
 1088 control agreement. When one of the conjuncts denotes a human as in (84), the plural of
 1089 Gender I is used as the agreement marker from the predicate level of the Agreement
 1090 Hierarchy. If the two conjuncts belong to the same non-human gender as in (85), the default
 1091 plural (Gender II) is used as an agreement marker on the verbs and the targets to its right in
 1092 the Agreement Hierarchy. If two conjuncts denoting non-humans belong to different genders
 1093 as in (86) the default agreement is also used. In the three cases of agreement mismatches,
 1094 only the first, namely (84), is a case of semantic agreement according to the meaning of one
 1095 of the conjuncts. The other two exemplified are instances default agreement.

1096 (84) Agreement mismatch in a conjoined NP - one conjuncts denotes a human.

1097 a-ssa-a ahu ni e-joba-ol **gú-ggal-e**
1098 a-/u-hunt-AGT(I.SG) I.SG.DEF and e-/su-joba (II.SG)-1.SG.POSS **I.3PL-pass-CPL**
1099 ‘The hunter and his dog have passed.’

1100 (85) Agreement mismatch in a conjoined NP - conjuncts from the same gender.

1101 m-al mamu ni mú-hum mamu **sú-uyyo-e**
1102 m-water-(VI.PL) VI.PL.DEF and mu-honey(II.PL) VI.PL.DEF **II.PL-spill-CPL**
1103 ‘The water and the honey spilled.’

1104 (86) Agreement mismatch in a conjoined NP – conjuncts from different genders.

1105 m-al mamu ni bu-nuh babu **sú-uyyo-e**
1106 m-water-(VI.PL) VI.PL.DEF and bu-palm.wine(III.SG) III.SG.DEF **II.PL-spill-CPL**
1107 ‘The water and the palm wine spilled.’

1108 6 Conclusion

1109 Research on different manifestations of semantic agreement is rare in noun class system.

1110 There are however interesting observations to be made in a language like Eegimaa, especially

1111 when the analysis of semantic agreement is related to the Agreement Hierarchy. In this paper

1112 I examined both syntactic and semantic agreement in the Eegimaa noun class system. I

1113 showed that Eegimaa has collectives which are formed by nominal class and gender shift and

1114 which trigger syntactic agreement only. The investigation of various instances of semantic

1115 agreement revealed that there are two main types: human semantic agreement and locative

1116 semantic agreement. Human semantic agreement occurs with lexical hybrids, human

1117 collectivity nouns and location nouns of the ‘house’ and ‘family’ types which can also

1118 describe human collectivities. The data discussed in the paper demonstrates that most hybrids

1119 are split in that they behave as hybrids in the plural (there is only one noun that is a hybrid in

1120 both the singular and the plural). In this paper, I showed that human hybrids from Gender I

1121 and those from other genders (Gender II and V) trigger split syntactic and semantic

1122 agreement at the attributive level. However human collectivity nouns and location nouns do

1123 not trigger such a split when they control human semantic agreement in this case is only

1124 attested from the predicate level of the Agreement Hierarchy. The discussion in this paper
1125 also showed that locative semantic agreement which includes expressions of general location,
1126 precise location and location inside a place, only trigger locative semantic agreement on
1127 adverbial relativizers and locative adverbs, but never at the predicate level of the agreement
1128 hierarchy. The distribution of syntactic and semantic agreement on different levels of the
1129 hierarchy corroborates predictions made by the Agreement Hierarchy. An important finding
1130 presented in this paper is that human semantic agreement and locative semantic agreement
1131 behave differently in the Agreement Hierarchy.

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