How Abstract is the Abstract Noun? Gender Agreement in Russian Restrictive Relative Clauses

Daria Bikina*

1 Introduction

Mixed gender agreement has been widely discussed in Russian linguistics. Most work on this topic considers hybrid nouns - animate nouns that can refer to both male and female individuals and can bear the agreement patterns reflecting either the initial gender value of these nouns or the gender value of their context referent (Wechsler and Zlatić 2003, Pereltsvaig 2006, Matushansky 2013, Pesetsky 2013, Rappaport 2013, Landau 2015). However, agreement with other elements that can refer to both male and female individuals, such as non-gendered pronouns, has not received much theoretical attention. This paper analyses mixed agreement in constructions involving the interrogative/relative pronoun *kto* 'who'. Although in most cases, *kto* 'who' triggers default masculine agreement, sometimes the agreement target reflects the initial gender of the referent of the pronoun. This phenomenon is illustrated by (1):

(1) a. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG
b. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who solved the problem.'

The contrast above is theoretically challenging: the agreement is variable on the same type of target. I show that there is always a null head noun in such type of relative clauses (RCs) in Russian. However, this null head element can have either interpretable or uninterpretable gender features, hence two different patterns of agreement. If the gender feature is interpretable, agreement mismatch is dispreferred. The agreement on the quantifier itself does not depend on the null head and comes from a c-commanding nominal of the main clause (which would be the subject *Anya* in (1-2)).

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 summarizes the accounts proposed for syntactic vs. semantic agreement in different syntactic environments and discussed previous research on agreement with *kto* 'who'. In Section 3, I provide empirical data on the agreement with *kto* 'who' in relative clauses and formulate the hypothesis. In Section 4, I describe the experiment that I conducted to test this hypothesis and outline its results. I discuss agreement with *kto* 'who' in relative clauses and provide an analysis for the two agreement patterns. In Section 5, I discuss the semantic restrictions brought up by the quantifiers I tested, and label them as Strawson downward entailing quantifiers (von Fintel 1999). In Section 6, I analyse the syntax of the relative clauses with the two quantifiers I tested. I postulate a null head in such structures and a head noun raising analysis for this type of RCs. I further propose that the gender feature of the null head does not have to be interpretable, which influences the choice of the agreement pattern. Section 7 concludes.

2 Mixed Agreement in Russian and Beyond: Theoretical Background

2.1 Agreement Hierarchy and its Explanations

Many researchers distinguish between two types of agreement: *formal agreement*, which reflects the formal features of the target, and *semantic agreement* reflecting semantic features of the agreement target. The distribution of formal and semantic agreement has been shown to be dependent on the

*My deepest gratitude goes to Luke Adamson – this research started in his Morphosemantics class at Harvard, and benefited from multiple discussions with him. I would also like to thank Jonathan Bobaljik, Gennaro Chierchia, Kate Davidson, and the audience of PLC for their comments. All mistakes are my own.

properties of the controller and the target, as well as the type of agreement dependency. These correlations have been represented in the form of implicational hierarchies. The Agreement Hierarchy proposed by Corbett (1979) arranges different types of agreement targets according to how likely they are to allow semantic agreement. The further right an element on the hierarchy the more likely it is to agree semantically.

(2) Agreement Hierarchy (Corbett 1979:p. 204)
attributive – predicate – relative – personal pronoun
formal agreement ⟵ – ⟶ semantic agreement

A similar hierarchy was proposed for different types of predicates:

(3) Predicate Hierarchy (Comrie 1975)
verb – participle – adjective – noun
syntactic agreement ⟵ – ⟶ semantic agreement

Wurmbrand (2017) associated the two types of agreement with two sets of gender features. Based on the analysis of gender mismatches in German, she proposed that semantic agreement is associated with interpretable φ-features, whereas formal agreement is associated with uninterpretable φ-features. She proposed the refined Agreement Hierarchy that also takes into account agreement with null nominal heads and predicate DPs:

(4) Refined Agreement Hierarchy (Wurmbrand 2017:p. 35)
attributive – predicate – relative – personal pronoun – $\varnothing_N$/predicate DP
formal agreement ⟵ – ⟶ semantic agreement

Another interpretation of the Predicate Hierarchy was proposed by Wechsler and Hahm (2011). They associate adjectival and verbal predicates with two types of targets features - Concord and Index, correspondingly. They claim both Concord and Index agreement to be syntactic. However, Concord feature assignment is rooted in the formal properties of the noun, while Index feature assignment is rooted in meaning, which results in different agreement patterns.

(5) An agreement hierarchy in terms of grammatical mechanisms
Concord targets – Index targets – Targets finding no trigger feature
formal agreement ⟵ – ⟶ semantic agreement

Both Wechsler and Hahm's and Wurmbrand's proposals derive different agreement patterns from the feature structure of the target.

2.2 Previous Study of *kto* 'who': Corbett (1979)

The most detailed description of the agreement patterns with *kto* 'who' is represented in (Corbett 1979). According to Corbett's data, in most interrogative contexts, default masculine agreement is chosen. However, "the nounier the predicate, the more likely is feminine agreement (given the feminine referent of *kto*)" (Corbett 1979:p. 44). Corbett claims that verbs, short form adjectives, and long form adjectives show default agreement morphology. Feminine agreement is consistently banned:

(6) Kto iz sestër vam ob ét-om **skaza-l-∅**?
who from sister.PL.GEN 2PL.DAT about this-PREP.SG tell-PST-SG.M
'Who of the sisters told you about that?'(Corbett 1979:p. 44) finite verb target

(7) *Kto **nedovol'n-a**?
who dissatisfied-SG.F
Intended reading: 'Who is dissatisfied?' (when addressing a group of women)
(Corbett 1979:p. 45) short form adjective target

(8) *Kto **poslednj-aja?**
who last-NOM.SG.F
Intended reading: 'Who is the last one?' (when addressing a group of women)
(Corbett 1979:p. 45) long form adjective target

In contrast, noun targets show semantic (feminine) agreement:

(9) Kto iz vas **učitel'nic-a** moej dočer-i?
who from 2PL.GEN female.teacher-NOM.SG my.GEN.SG.F daughter-GEN.SG
'Who of you is my daughter's (female) teacher?' (Corbett 1979:p. 45) noun target

If the predicate is modified by a depictive noun or adjective, the agreement is feminine again:

(10) Kto iz lyžnic priš-l-a perv-oj?
who from female.skier-GEN.PL come-PST-SG.F first-INSTR.SG.F
'Who of the female skier came first?' (Corbett 1979:p. 45)

For relative clauses with *kto* 'who', Corbett mentions two patterns of agreement on the verb within the relative clause: plural verb form (11) and masculine singular verb form (10). The latter is attested even in contexts where the relative clause restricts a set of female individuals, as in (12).

(11) Vy, kto **prizyva-l-i** k porjadk-u, naruša-ete ego.
2PL who call-PST-PL to order-DAT.SG break-PRS.2PL 3SG.ACC.M
'You, who called to order, break it.' (Corbett 1979:p. 47)

(12) ..i tex ženščin, kto **osta-l-∅-sja** tjan-ut' srok...
and those.ACC/GEN.PL woman.ACC/GEN.PL who remain-PST-SG.M-REFL drag.out-INF term.NOM/ACC.SG
'And those women who remained to drag out (their) term...'
(Corbett 1979:p. 48), after Solzhenicyn's *Arkhipelag Gulag*

Again, Corbett conlcudes that the nounier the predicate, the more likely the plural ("semantic") agreement.

3 Agreement with *kto* 'who' in Relative Clauses: Same-gender and Mixed-gender Sets

In Russian, relative clauses are externally headed. They can be formed with relative pronouns *kotoryj* 'which', *kto* 'who', and *čto* 'what'. Lyutikova and Tatevosov (2019) showed that relative clauses with *kotoryj* 'which' show connectivity effects, while relative clauses with *kto* 'who' and *čto* 'what' do not. They proposed a raising account for *kotoryj*-relative clauses. They also claim that this difference between *kotoryj* and *kto/čto* relative clauses is consistent with their distribution at earlier stages of diachronic development: *kotoryj* is a D head embedding an NP, whereas *kto/čto* are DP proforms.

The relative pronoun *kotoryj* 'which' agrees in gender and number with the head of the relative clause. However, agreement mismatches are possible even with this type of relative clauses. Such relative clauses have hybrid nouns as their heads. While hybrid nouns can be modified with a masculine attributive modifier that reflects the morphological gender of the noun, the relative pronoun *kotoryj* 'which' follows the gender of the referent (Pereltsvaig 2007).

(13) Éto **edinstvenn-yj** vrač, **kotor-aja** menja nastoroži-l-a.
this only-NOM.SG.M doctor which-NOM.SG.F 1SG.ACC concern-PST-SG.F
'This is the only (female) doctor who concerned me.' (Pereltsvaig 2007:p. 56)

The head-raising analysis explains examples like (13) as well, as King (2015) notices. The head NP has internal syntactic agreement, while the relative pronoun is a D head that introduces semantic gender reference. This reference is further shared with the predicate of relative clauses.

The data from *kto* 'who' relative clauses is more controversial. With certain determiner-like elements, agreement mismatches are possible. To my knowledge, these elements are *edinstvennyj* 'only', *tot/ta* 'that', *každyj* 'every', and superlatives (like *pervyj* 'first' or *samyj talantlivyj* 'the most talented'). If a relative clauses has an element from the list above embedding a relative clause, and the relative clause denotes a female referent, three agreement patterns are attested:

- Feminine-inflected modifier + feminine-inflected verb (16a);
- Feminine-inflected modifier + masculine-inflected verb (16b);
- Masculine-inflected modifier + masculine-inflected verb (more marginal, 16c).

The fourth logically possible combination (masculine-inflected modifier + feminine-inflected verb) is banned.

(14) a. Anja – **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG
b. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
c. ??Anja - **edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
d. *Anja - **edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who solved the problem.'

However, if we look at sentences with predicates that are typically true for female individuals, such as 'give birth', the feminine agreement on the verb is the only one available:

(15) a. Anja - edinstvenn-aja, kto včera **rodi-l-a** mal'čik-a.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who yesterday give.birth-PST-SG.F boy-ACC.SG
b. *Anja - edinstvenn-aja, kto včera **rodi-l**-∅ mal'čik-a.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who yesterday give.birth-PST-SG.M boy-ACC.SG 'Anya is the only one who gave birth to a boy.'

The facts above allow us to draw the following hypothesis:

(16) *Hypothesis*
If a downward entailing element heading a restrictive RC quantifies over a set of same-gender individuals, the agreement within the RC is semantic (e.g., feminine if the set only consists of female individuals). If it quantifies over a mixed-gender set of individuals, the agreement is default (masculine).

In this study, I tested the Hypothesis proposed in (16) experimentally. The following section discusses its methods and results.

4 The Experiment

4.1 Methods

I conducted a grammaticality judgment experiment using the Qualtrics platform. I tested the following two Strawson-DE quantifiers that can embed a relative clause with *kto* 'who': *edinstvennyj* 'only' and *perv-* 'first'. Each modifier was tested in two syntactic positions: a predicative position (17), and an argument position (18). I tested three combinations of quantifier-verb agreement:

a. feminine agreement on both the quantifier and the verb (F + F),
b. feminine agreement on the quantifier and masculine agreement on the verb (F + M),

c. masculine agreement on the quantifier and masculine agreement on the verb (M + M).

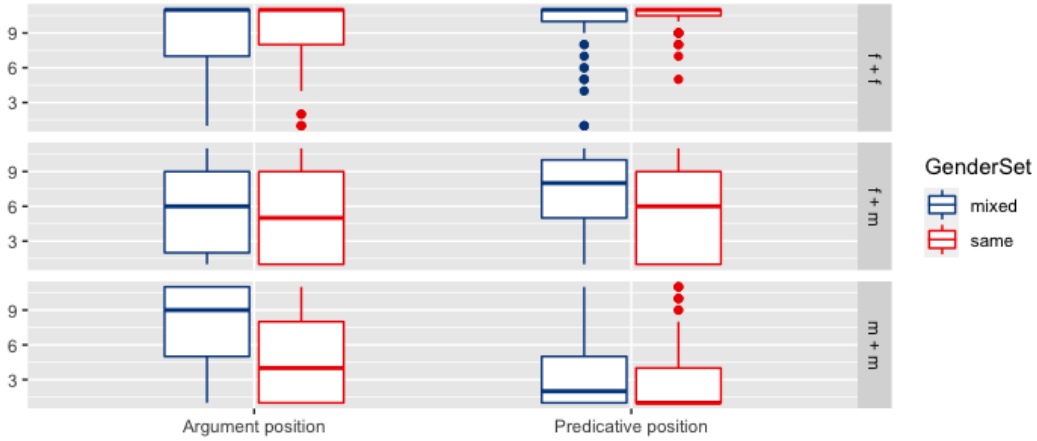
(17) a. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG
b. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
c. Anja - **edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who solved the problem.'

(18) a. **Edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u, ne smog-l-a poex-at' na olimpiad-u.
only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG NEG can-PST-SG.F go-INF to olympiad-ACC.SG
b. **Edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u, ne smog-l-a poex-at' na olimpiad-u.
only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG NEG can-PST-SG.F go-INF to olympiad-ACC.SG
c. **Edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u, ne smog-l-a poex-at' na olimpiad-u.
only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG NEG can-PST-SG.F go-INF to olympiad-ACC.SG
'The only one who solved the problem could not make it to the olympiad.'

For each modifier-position combination, two scenarios were set up: such that the relative clause quantifies over a set of women and the one without such inference. The participants were exposed a scenario and three sentences representing the three agreement patterns illustrated in (17-18), and were asked to rate each of these sentences on a scale from 1 to 10. 59 self-identified monolingual Russian speakers were recruited for this experiment through the Yandex.Toloka service.

4.2 Results

The statistical analysis of the results has been conducted using a cumulative linear mixed model. The results showed that the agreement patterns depend on both gender presuppositions and syntactic position. Specifically, the F + F agreement pattern is highly rated in any syntactic position. The F + M agreement pattern is significantly better rated in the head of the relative clause is the predicative position and if the quantification is drawn over a mixed-gender set ($p < 0.05$). In argument position, the difference between the two scenarios forcing different gender presuppositions is not statistically significant ($p = 0.422$). The M + M pattern is only acceptable in argument positions if the quantification is drawn over a mixed-gender set. The effect of gender presuppositions is significant for argument positions ($p < 0.01$) and non-significant for the predicative position ($p = 0.462$).



The most theoretically challenging result is that the F + M pattern and the M + M pattern are mirroring each other. The former is sensitive to gender presuppositions in predicative position, while the latter is sensitive to gender presuppositions in argument positions.

5 Approaching Pragmatics: Why these Quantifiers?

Before proceeding to any syntactic analysis, let me formulate what differentiates quantifiers like *edinstvenn-* 'only' and superlatives like *perv-* 'first'. Their semantic properties can be described in terms of Strawson Downward Entailment (Strawson DE), proposed in (von Fintel 1999):

(19) A function f of type $\langle \sigma, \tau \rangle$ is Strawson-DE iff for all x, y of type σ such that x⇒y and f(x) is defined: f(y) ⇒ f(x). (von Fintel 1999:104)

Strawson entailment is an entailment that only takes place if all the conventional implicatures and presuppositions of both premises and conclusion are met. This kind of entailment has been introduced as being involved in the semantics of certain English operators, including *only* and superlatives:

(20) a. Kale is a vegetable.
b. John ate kale for breakfast.
c. Only John ate vegetables for breakfast.
———————————————
∴ Only John ate kale for breakfast.

Only can only be DE if all the presuppositions of *Only John ate kale for breakfast* are met (namely, if *someone ate kale for breakfast* is either true or false). Russian *edinstvenn-* 'only' and Russian superlatives show the same behavior.

Consider (1) again, repeated here as (21):

(21) a. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-a** zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.F problem-ACC.SG
b. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **reši-l-∅** zadač-u
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who solved the problem.'

I assume that the existential presuppositions of relative clauses in (21a) and (21b) are different. (21a) presupposes *someone female solved the problem*, while (21b) only presupposes *someone solved the problem*. The experiment showed that this difference can be reflected in agreement. If the presupposition is (feminine) gender-specific, the semantic (feminine) agreement is preferred. If the presupposition is not gender specific, both semantic and syntactic agreement are available, as in (21a-b). The two kinds of presuppositions are not logically independent: *someone female solved the problem* implies *someone solved the problem*. Our next goal is to find out how these presuppositions interfere with syntax.

6 Handling the Syntax-pragmatics Interface

There are two syntactic issues in our results that need to be explained. First, the fact that the same syntactic item (whatever it is – the subject, the null head noun, some null resumptive pronoun, or the quantifier itself) can trigger both default and feminine agreement depending on presuppositions. Thus, in (21) both F + F and F + M patterns are fine given that the class does not have to consist of girls solely. In contrast, (22) only favors the F + F agreement, since *edinstvenn-* 'only' quantifies over a set of women:

(22) a. Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **rodi-l-a** včera mal'čik-a.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who give.birth-PST-SG.F yesterday boy-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who gave birth to a boy yesterday.'
b. *Anja - **edinstvenn-aja**, kto **rodi-l-∅** včera mal'čik-a.
Anya only-NOM.SG.F who give.birth-PST-SG.M yesterday boy-ACC.SG
('Anya is the only one who gave birth to a boy yesterday.')

The second problem is that there is a specific agreement pattern (M+M) that depends not only on gender presuppositions but also on the syntactic position. This pattern is good in the subject position and bad in the predicative position. Consider (23) below. There is no gender presupposition. However, the M + M pattern is only good in the subject position:

(23) a. **Edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-**∅ zadaču, éto Anya.
only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-3SG.M problem-ACC.SG this.is Anya
'The only one who solved the problem is Anya.'
b. *Anya – **edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-**∅ zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
('Anya is the only one who solved the problem.')

In this way, we need to approach (i) the optionality of the "transmission" of agreement from the main clause into the relative clause, (ii) the dispreference of the M + M agreement pattern by the predicative position.

6.1 Postulating a Null Head

It is generally assumed that Russian long adjectives in predicative position modify a null noun bearing a gender feature (Babby 1975, Bailyn 1994). Bailyn associates the agreement morphology with a Mod(ification)P. The agreement marker is stored in Mod^{o} and cliticizes to the Adj^{o} of the AdjP modifying the null nominal head.

(24) Anya smel-aja $\varnothing_{[+FEM,\ +ANIM]}$
Anya brave-NOM.SG.F female.person
'Anya is brave.'

I partially adopt this view and claim that the examples with matching agreement involve a gender-specified null noun. I also assume that the null noun is borne within the RC and then raised to the matrix clause. My analysis for RCs with *kto* 'who' is parallel to the one proposed for RCs with *čto* 'what' (Szczegielniak 2005, Lyutikova and Tatevosov 2019), and stands on a similar evidence from anticonnectivity. In Russian, there is an idiom *babuška nadvoe skazala* (lit. 'the granny said two different things') that expresses one's uncertainty. This expression loses its idiomatic (and probably any) reading if it is within a *kto*-RC, but not within a *kotoryj*-RC:

(25) a. Éto babuška, kotor-aja nadvoe skaza-l-a.
this granny which-NOM.SG.F in.two.parts say-PST-SG.F
'No one can be certain about this.' (lit. 'This is a granny who said two different things.')
b. *Éto babuška, kto nadvoe skaza-l-a.
this granny who in.two.parts say-PST-SG.F

Another evidence for *kto*-RCs being head-raising structures comes from binding. Binding a reflexive pronoun from within a *kotoryj*-RC is fine, while binding from within a *kto*-RCs is ungrammatical:

(26) a. prizrak sebj-a$_i$, kotor-yj ran'še byl Ivan-om$_i$
ghost self-GEN.SG which-NOM.SG.M before was Ivan-INSTR.SG
'a ghost of himself which used to be Ivan'
b. *prizrak sebj-a$_i$, kto ran'še byl Ivan-om$_i$
ghost self-GEN who before was Ivan-INSTR.SG

In this way, I adopt the view that Russian *kto*-RCs are derived via head noun movement, and this head noun is silent. The Strawson-entailing element is a determiner.

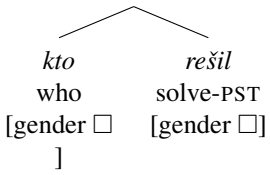
(27) $[_{DP}$ *edinstvenn-* $\varnothing_{[+ANIM]_i}$ $[_{RC}$ *kto* $[_{TP}$ t$_i$ *rešil-*]]]

Potentially, we could assume that the both matching and non-matching examples also involve a null head bearing a gender features that is somehow acquired from the context. In this way, if the context of the RC is [+FEM], feminine agreement arises. The problem is that feminine agreement is available even in mixed-gender scenarios. This means that our model should allow feminine agreement with either gender specification of the null head and prefer feminine agreement if the null head is [+FEM]. In order to account for this, I claim that the null head element is versatile, and its gender features can be interpretable or uninterpretable, and this is what explains the pragmatic and syntactic restrictions we observe in Russian.

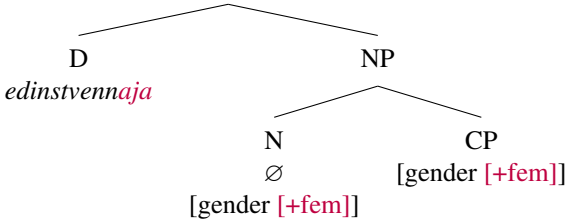
6.2 Interpretable Gender Feature: Presupposition Strengthening

I claim that if the existential presupposition of the RC is gender-specified (*Anya is the only one who gave birth to a boy yesterday*), than it is reflected in syntax as an interpretable gender feature on the null noun. The transmission of this feature into the RC follows from the cyclic nature of long-distance agreement between the head noun and the finite verb within the relative clause. Following Heck and Cuartero (2012), I assume that φ-agreement within relative clauses applies cyclically and involves feature sharing. First, T and C establish Agree within the relative clause (28a). Then the head noun values the features of C (28b). Since these features are located at the edge of the CP phase, they are accessible to the head noun. Due to the coalescence on the previous Agree-cycle, this also values the φ-features on T within the CP.

(28) a.



b.



6.3 Uninterpretable Gender Feature: Purely Syntactic Agreement

If the existential presupposition of the RC is not gender-specified (*Anya is the only one who solved the problem*), the agreement within the RC can be either semantic (feminine) or syntactic (masculine). This can be explained as the uninterpretability of the gender feature on the null head element. Such null head is not a full-fledged nominal head, and therefore it cannot establish agreement relations with the C of the embedded clause, since only N can bear interpretable gender features. The gender features of the quantifier are uninterpretable, too. Therefore, the uninterpretable gender features on T of the embedded clause do not find any interpretable gender features to value them, and default morphology arises.

As for the agreement on the determiner-like element, I postulate that it comes from the subject of the matrix clause. I adopt the approach proposed by Borik (2014). I assume that in this case, the adjectival morphology (*-aja* (NOM.SG.F)) is only needed to enable the adjective to carry Case morphology. This also explains the most striking contrast we observed – the fact that the M + M pattern is only felicitous in the subject position:

(29) a. **Edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-**∅ zadač-u, ne smog-∅ poex-at' na olimpiad-u.
only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG NEG can.PST.SG.M go-INF to

olympiad-ACC.SG
'The only one who solved the problem could not make it to the olympiad.'

b. *Anja – **edinstvenn-yj**, kto **reši-l-**∅ zadač-u.
Anya only-NOM.SG.M who solve-PST-SG.M problem-ACC.SG
'Anya is the only one who solved the problem.'

This follows exactly from the fact that if *edinstvennyj* 'only' is a subject, there is no higher element with an interpretable gender feature in the structure that would trigger feminine agreement on it. Therefore, the feminine agreement on the quantifier is never presupposition-dependent, it's dependent on the higher c-commanding noun. In example (29), it's the null noun with no gender specification.

Thus, the scenario where a RC quantifies over a set of female individuals is not compatible with an agreement mismatch between the quantifier and the T of the RC. In that case, the gender feature on the null head noun is interpretable and cannot be ignored within the RC.

7 Conclusion

In this paper, I analysed mixed gender agreement in relative clauses with the pronoun *kto* 'who' and quantifiers *edinstvenn-* 'only' or *perv-* 'first'. Using experimental data, I showed that Russian is more variable in this respect than it has been thought before. I showed that there is variability in gender marking in such relative clauses. In particular, they sometimes allow for agreement mismatch: while the modifier can be feminine, the agreement on the T within the relative clause can be either masculine or feminine. I showed that the both contextual restriction and syntactic position influence the choice of the agreement pattern. Specifically, if the existential presupposition introduced by the quantifier is also a gender presupposition, agreement mismatch is dispreferred. I postulated a null head noun in such relative clauses. I further proposed that this null element can have either interpretable or unintepretable gender feature. If the feature is interpretable, the matching agreement arises. If the feature is uninterpretable, the agreement is default.

Further agenda for this research includes a closer look into the syntax-pragmatics interface. What is special abour Strawson downward-entailment that it can influence such a core characteristics as the interpretability of features? Do hybrid nouns behave the same way as null heads in Russian? These questions are left for future research.

References

Babby, Leonard H. 1975. *A Transformational Grammar od Russian Adjectives*. The Hague: Mouton.

Bailyn, John Frederick. 1994. The syntax and semantics of russian long and short adjectives: an x'-theoretic account. In *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 1, 1992. The Ann Arbor Meeting*, ed. J. Toman, 1–30.

Borik, Olga. 2014. The argument structure of long and short form adjectives and participles in russian. *Lingua* 149:139–165.

Comrie, Bernard. 1975. Polite plurals and predicate agreement. *Language* 51:406–418.

Corbett, Greville G. 1979. The agreement hierarchy. *Journal of Linguistics* 15:203–224.

von Fintel, Kai. 1999. Npi licensing, strawson entailment, and context dependency. *Journal of Semantics* 16:97–148.

Heck, Fabian, and Juan Cuartero. 2012. Long distance agreement in relative clauses. In *Local Modelling of Non-Local Dependencies in Syntax*, ed. Artemis Alexiadou, Tibor Kiss, and Gereon Müller, 49–84. Berlin: de Gruyter.

King, Katherine E. 2015. Mixed Gender Agreement in Russian DPs. Doctoral dissertation, University of Washington.

Landau, Idan. 2015. Dp-internal semantic agreement: a configurational analysis. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 34:1–46.

Lyutikova, Ekaterina, and Sergey Tatevosov. 2019. On the structure of russian relative clauses. *Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie* 75:65–94.

Matushansky, Ora. 2013. Gender confusion. In *Diagnosing Syntax*, 271–294. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pereltsvaig, Asya. 2006. Small nominals. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 24:433–500.

Pereltsvaig, Asya. 2007. *Copular Sentences in Russian: A Theory of Intra-Clausal Relations*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer.

Pesetsky, David. 2013. *Russian Case Morphology and the Syntactic Categories*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rappaport, Gilbert. 2013. Determiner phrases and mixed agreement in slavic. In *The Nominal Structure in Slavic and Beyond*, ed. Lilia Schürcks, Anastasia Giannakidou, and Urtzi Etxeberria, 343–390. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Szczegielniak, Adam. 2005. Relativization that you did. *MIT Occasional Papers in Linguistics* 24.

Wechsler, Stephen, and Hyun-Jong Hahm. 2011. Polite plurals and adjective agreement. *Morphology* 21:247–281.

Wechsler, Stephen, and Larisa Zlatić. 2003. *The Many Faces of Agreement*. Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of Language and Information.

Wurmbrand, Susanne. 2017. In *Language Use and Linguistic Structure: Proceedings of the Olomouc Linguistics Colloquium 2016*.

Harvard Linguistics Department
Boylston Hall, 3rd floor
Cambridge, MA 02135
dbikina@g.harvard.edu