Conjunct Case in Insular Scandinavian
A corpus study[*]

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1 INTRODUCTION

This paper examines case variation in Icelandic and Faroese coordination through a corpus study. The results indicate that there is a preference for dative case objects in Faroese, even when the closest conjunct assigns accusative case. Previous research shows a similar inclination in genitive-accusative coordination in Icelandic. I compare the observed patterns with previous case variation studies for these languages and discuss the implications for case and syntax.

2 BACKGROUND ON CASE AND COORDINATION

Generative grammar usually assumes two types of grammatical case, i.e., an abstract (or syntactic) *Case* and a *morphological*, or overt, *case form.* Further, *abstract Case* is divided into three (see e.g. Woolford 2006), (1).[1]

(1) a. *Structural Case* determined by syntactic position

 b. *Inherent Case* determined by thematic role

 c. *Lexical Case* occurs with specific lexical items, e.g., certain verbs

Some (minimalist) syntaticans assume that case is syntactic (see e.g. Woolford 2006) while others argue that it is morphological, i.e., post-syntactic (see e.g. Marantz 1991/2000, Bobaljik 2008). I follow the assumption that at least some (but not necessarily all) case marking is morphological (see e.g. Wood, Barros & Sigurðsson 2020).

In this paper, I focus on conjunctive coordination of two verbs with a shared object. I assume that case, like agreement, can be realised after a syntactic relation has been established between the verb and object (see e.g. Arregi & Nevins 2012). This explains why case in conjunction seems to obey the logic of linearity rather than hierarchy, compare *closest conjunct case* where the closest verb determines the case of the object.

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[*] Many thanks to Theresa Biberauer who supervised this work during my MPhil degree at the University of Cambridge. I also thank my Icelandic and Faroese informants.

[1] Barðdal (2011) (and others), argues, on the other hand, that all case assignment is lexical.

3 Case Variation in Insular Scandinavian

3.1 Case in Icelandic and Faroese

Modern Icelandic has four cases (nominative, accusative, dative and genitive) which all productively occur with both subjects and objects.[2] The nominative and accusative are structural cases whereas the dative is an inherent case. The genitive is assumed to be a lexical case (see e.g. Zaenen et al. 1985). A featural account of the Icelandic case system is given in Table 1 (based on Rögnvaldsson 2013: 150). The only distinguishing feature between the nominative and accusative is [±Oblique] while the genitive and dative are distinguished by [±Genitive].

	NOM	ACC	DAT	GEN
Oblique	−	+	+	+
Word Governed	−	−	+	+
Genitive	−	−	−	+

Table 1 Morphological case features in Icelandic.

Modern Icelandic retains all of the cases of Old Norse, although case variation is widespread. Most prominently, there is dative substitution of accusative subjects (Jónsson 2013, Thráinsson, Eythórsson, Svavarsdóttir & Blöndal 2015) and dative/accusative substitution of the genitive (Jónsson 2017).

Modern Faroese has three productive cases (nominative, accusative and dative). The nominative and dative occur as subject cases and the accusative and dative as object cases.[3] The genitive case is no longer productive and has mostly been replaced by other cases, prepositions or clitics (Thráinsson, Petersen, í Lon Jacobsen & Hansen 2012: 248). The Faroese case system can thus be accounted for with two features, i.e., [±Oblique] and [±Word Governed], see Table 2.

	NOM	ACC	DAT
Oblique	−	+	+
Word Governed	−	−	+

Table 2 Morphological case features in Faroese.

Icelandic and Faroese are both traced back to Old Norse and they were likely identical up until the 13th century. Little is known about the history of Faroese, however, as few written sources pre-date the latter half of the 18th century (Karlsson 1993: 20). The comparison with Icelandic and the documentation available for

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[2] For Icelandic oblique subject tests, see e.g., Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson (1985) and Thráinsson (2007).
[3] See e.g., Galbraith (2018) for Faroese oblique subject tests.

Faroese both indicate that accusative subjects have been replaced by the dative and genitive objects by the accusative (Thráinsson et al. 2012: 248–265). Both nominative substitution of dative subjects (Jónsson 2009a) and accusative substitution of dative objects (Jónsson 2009b) are common in Modern Faroese.

Syncretism is widespread in both the Icelandic and Faroese nominal paradigms. Realisations of the dative are most important for our purposes. The majority of Icelandic nouns have clearly marked dative singular endings, in most cases either masculine or neuter nouns. Nonetheless, non-overt dative endings are also common (see Svavarsdóttir 1993: 100–107). Syncretism is more common in Faroese. All feminine nouns lack a distinguishing dative ending in the singular and so do many neuter nouns. Most masculine nouns, however, have an *–i*-ending in the dative (Thráinsson et al. 2012: 77–91). Both Icelandic and Faroese have the same overt case form for all instances of a plural dative, i.e., *–um.*

3.2 Case in conjunction

The target of agreement in coordination is often the one which is linearly closest to the agreeing argument. This is known as *closest conjunct agreement* (see Nevins & Weisser 2019). It is typically claimed that this is the default strategy for conjunct case (CC) in Icelandic (e.g. Rögnvaldsson 1990) and, by extension, in Faroese. See examples of CC in Icelandic (2a) and Faroese (2b) in the coordination of accusative-(*sá* 'see') and dative-assigning verbs (*hjálpa* 'help').

(2) CC in Icelandic and Faroese

    a. *Ég sá   og hjálpaði   **Jóni.***   [Icelandic]
        I   see.1SG.PST.IND and help.1SG.PST.IND Jón.**DAT**

        'I saw and helped John.'

    b. *Eg sá   og hjálpaði   **Absaloni.***   [Faroese]
        I   see.1SG.PST and help.1SG.PST Absalon.**DAT**

        'I saw and helped Absalon.'

However, there are other case patterns. It has been observed in many case languages that if coordinated verbs assign different cases to their object, the sentence is only grammatical if the case form is syncretic for both cases. Dalrymple, King & Sadler (2009) claim that this applies to German. According to Zaenen & Karttunen (1984: 3–4) some Icelandic speakers only accept syncretic forms in such instances. In the coordination of the dative-assigning verb *stela* 'steal' and the accusative-assigning *borða* 'eat,' the sentence is degraded with an overt accusative case (3).[4] By contrast, a case form syncretic for the accusative and dative is fully acceptable (?? indicates a questionable sentence).

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[4] Some of my informants disagree with these judgements but many speakers do find this contrast.

(3) Ameliorative syncretism in Icelandic coordination

a.?? *Hann stal og borðaði **kökuna***
he   steal.3SG.PST.IND and eat.3SG.PST.IND cake.**ACC**.DEF

'He stole and ate the cake.'

b. *Hann stal og borðaði **köku**.*
he   steal.3SG.PST.IND and eat.3SG.PST.IND cake.**ACC/DAT/GEN**

'He stole and ate a cake.'   ([Zaenen & Karttunen 1984](): 3–5)

Mixed case marking has also been observed in Icelandic and Faroese with an interesting case asymmetry ([Jónsson 2013]()). What is most relevant here is that mixed case marking can occur with coordinated subjects in Icelandic. The first noun in Icelandic can be accusative although the second is dative (4) but not vice versa (* indicates ungrammaticality; [4b]).[5]

(4) Icelandic coordinated subjects

a. **Manninn** og **konunni** *langar að eignast*
man.ACC.DEF and woman.DAT.DEF want.3SG.PRS.IND to have.INF
barn.
baby.NOM/ACC

b. * **Manninum** og **konuna** *langar að eignast*
man.DAT.DEF and woman.ACC.DEF want.3SG.PRS.IND to have.IND
barn.
baby.NOM/ACC

'The man and the woman want to have a baby.'   ([Jónsson 2013](): 14)

This is less clear in Faroese subject coordination ([Jónsson 2013](): 16) but a similar case mismatch, and asymmetry, occurs in agreement between dative subjects and their emphatic pronouns. If *dáma* 'like,' which normally has a dative subject, has a nominative instead, the emphatic pronoun *sjálvur* 'self' must also be nominative, see (5).

(5) Faroese mixed case marking

a. **Sjálfum** *dámar* **honum** *ikki at lurta eftir*
self.3SG.**DAT** like.3SG.PRS.IND he.**DAT** not to listen.INF to
tónleiki.
concert.PL.ACC

b. **Sjálvur** *dámar* **honum** *ikki at lurta eftir*
self.3SG.**NOM** like.3SG.PRS.IND he.**DAT** not to listen.INF to
tónleiki.
concert.PL.ACC

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[5] Note, however, that some Icelandic speakers find the example in ([4b]) degraded but, nevertheless, acceptable.

c. *__Sjálvum__ *dámar* __hann__ *ikki at lurta eftir*
self.3SG.**DAT** like.3SG.PRS.IND he.**NOM** not to listen.INF to
tónleiki.
concert.PL.ACC

d. __Sjálvur__ *dámar* __hann__ *ikki at lurta eftir*
self.3SG.**NOM** like.3SG.PRS.IND he.**NOM** not to listen.INF to
tónleiki.
concert.PL.ACC

'He himself does not like to listen to music.'   (Jónsson 2013: 14–15)

Rögnvaldsson (1990: 377) claims that in Icelandic coordination case mismatches improve if the missing object is in the accusative rather than the dative or genitive. Similarly, Snorrason & Sigurðardóttir (2021) find that in the coordination of accusative- and genitive-assigning verbs, some speakers only accept sentences where the closest conjunct contains the genitive verb (6). These speakers could not accept sentences where the accusative-assigning verb was closer to the object. Some, in fact, preferred a genitive object even though the accusative-assigning verb was the closest conjunct.

(6) Icelandic lexical case preference

a. *Ég elska* *og sakna* __Jóns/*Jón.__
I love.1SG.PRS.IND and miss.1SG.PRS.IND Jón.**GEN**/**ACC**

'I love and miss John.'

b. *Ég sakna* *og elska* *??__Jón__/??__Jóns.__*
I miss.1SG.PRS.IND and love.1SG.PRS.IND Jón.**ACC**/**GEN**

'I miss and love John.'   (see Snorrason & Sigurðardóttir 2021)

No previous research discusses this type of case preference in Icelandic. As Faroese is the closest relative of Icelandic, it is interesting to examine whether the two languages pattern alike. My corpus study found that in line with previous research, CC is the most common strategy in both languages. However, I found many examples of a case preference in Faroese but only one in Icelandic. The corpus study is discussed in the next section.

4 Study

4.1 Introduction

In order to study Icelandic and Faroese case in conjunction, I gathered data from the Icelandic corpus, *Risamálheildin* (http://malheildir.arnastofnun.is.), and the Faroese corpus, *Teldni* (http://teldni.fo/tekstasavn). My focus is on the conjunctive coordinator *og* 'and.'[6] Verbs which are subject to case variation are indicated as, e.g., ACC|DAT, and syncretic case forms as, e.g., NOM/ACC. Since data from a corpus study can contain spelling or production errors I also collected speaker judgements from Faroese and Icelandic speakers. These speakers could point out simple errors and verify actual variation (Schütze & Sprouse 2013: 29–30). I initially assumed that a case preference would be more common in Icelandic than Faroese as the Faroese dative is losing ground (Jónsson 2013). In fact, a dative case preference was common in the Faroese corpus while there was only one occurrence in the Icelandic corpus.

4.2 Conjunct case in Icelandic

Icelandic verbs can govern four cases which means that in coordination sixteen (4x4) different combinations are possible in principle. However, as verbs with genitive or nominative objects are rare, most occurrences are either accusative- or dative-assigning verbs. The *Risamálheildin* (RMH; Steingrímsson, Helgadóttir, Rögnvaldsson, Barkarson & Guðnason 2018) corpus contains around 1.500 million lexemes of Icelandic written sources, e.g., newspaper articles, parliamentary speeches, literature, mostly dating from the 20th and 21st century. Due the corpus size, it was necessary to limit the search to a subpart of the corpus, i.e., the highest-circulation Icelandic newspaper, *Fréttablaðið*. Due to high occurrences of the copular verb *vera* '(to) be,' it was eliminated from the search query. I collected one thousand search results with the input in (7).

(7) [lemma != "vera" %c & pos = "s" %c] [ ] {0,0} [word = "og" %c] [ ] {0,0} [lemma != "vera" %c & pos = "s" %c] [ ] {0,0} [pos = "n" %c]
(Verb (not '(to) be') + and + Verb (not '(to) be') + Noun)

The word *Lemma* in the query refers to a word in all its possible forms, and *pos* refers to the lexical category. Out of 1000 search results, 395 were actual examples of coordinated objects. The different coordination patterns in RMH are shown in Table 3.

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[6] I exclude the disjunctive *eða*, *ella* 'or' and adversative *en*, *men* 'but' coordinators. Coordination with these coordinators is an interesting topic in its own right and warrants further research.

Type	Number	%
ACC + ACC	330	≈ 83.5%
ACC + DAT	31	≈ 7.8%
ACC|DAT + DAT	1	≈ 0.25%
ACC + GEN	1	≈ 0.25%
DAT + ACC	13	≈ 3.3%
DAT + DAT	16	≈ 4%
GEN + ACC	1	≈ 0.25%
GEN + DAT	2	≈ 0.5%
Total	395	100%

Table 3   Coordination patterns in RMH.

Unsurprisingly, the majority consists of accusative-assigning verbs, the most common object case in Icelandic. The low number of genitive-assigning verbs is also anticipated as the genitive is very infrequent.[7] The results for case resolution are shown in Table 4.

Type	Accusative	Dative	Genitive	Syncretic
ACC + DAT	0	20	0	11
ACC|DAT + DAT	0	0	0	1
ACC + GEN	0	0	1	0
DAT + ACC	9	1	0	3
GEN + ACC	1	0	0	0
GEN + DAT	0	2	0	0
Total	10	23	1	16

Table 4   Case resolution in RMH.

There is only one example of a dative case preference, out of a total of 50, which indicates that it is rare in Icelandic. The example, which is shown in (8), is acceptable to me and my informants.[8]

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[7]   See Jónsson (2005: 402–406) for an overview of Icelandic verbs and their case assignment.
[8]   My three Icelandic informants were all in their mid-to-late twenties at the time of writing.

(8) Dative case preference

og   spurði   hvort ekki mætti   einfaldlega eyða
and ask.3SG.PST.IND whether not can.3SG.PST.SBJV simply   destroy.INF

*og   brenna   **listaverkunum** af   öræfunum.*
and burn.INF artwork.DEF.**DAT** from highland.PL.DEF.DAT

'And asked whether one could not simply destroy and burn artwork from the highlands.'

Most of the examples are either occurrences of closest conjunct case (33/50) or syncretic case matching (16/50). Below I show a few examples of syncretic case matching (9–11).

(9) *Epal er   í Skeifunni 6, þar   sem hægt   er*
Epal be.3SG.PRS.IND on Skeifan 6 where it possible be.3SG.PRS.IND

*að kynnast   og prófa **Jensen**   í   návígi.*
to get.know.INF and try.INF Jensen.**ACC/DAT** up close

'Epal is in Skeifan 6 where you can get to know and try Jensen up close.'

(10) *Það er ríkisins,   sem eiganda   bankanna,*
it is government.SG.DEF.GEN, as owner.SG.DEF.GEN banks.PL.GEN.DEF,

að beita sér   fyrir því að hagræða   og auka
to use self.3SG.DAT for it.DAT to simplify.INF and increase.INF

skilvirkni   í bankaþjónustu.
productivity.**ACC/DAT** in banking service.SG.ACC

'The government is supposed to simplify and increase productivity in banking services as it owns the banks.'

(11) *Tillögur   [um]   að borgin   kaupi   og*
Proposal.PL.NOM [about] that city.NOM.DEF buy.3SG.PRS.SBJV and

*breyti   **húsnæði**   sem ekki sé   í*
change.3SG.PRS.SBJV housing.PL.**ACC/DAT** which not be.3SG.PRS.IND in

notkun í   íbúðir.
use into flat.PL.NOM/ACC

'Proposals that the city bought and changed housing, which is not in use, into flats.'

Firstly, I note that all the syncretic examples are arguably instances of CC. However, the sheer number of syncretic objects, as opposed to clearly marked objects, is interesting. While these examples are all grammatical with an overt case my informants and I find (9) and (10) slightly degraded with a non-syncretic form.

4.3 Conjunct case in Faroese

Faroese verbs can govern two cases (accusative and dative), so in principle four case coordination patterns are possible. The Faroese online corpus *Teldni* is composed of texts from the 19th century to the early 21st century, e.g., blogs, newspaper articles, literature and Bible translations. It is much smaller and less diverse than the *Risamálheild* and it is not possible to limit the search to specific subparts of the corpus.[9] As a result, the two different corpus searches might not be directly comparable stylistically, although *Fréttablaðið* does feature both formal and informal writing. The search query in *Teldni* is shown below (*pos* indicates the lexical category, V = verb, S = noun).

(12) [pos="V.*"] "og" [pos="V.*"] [pos="S.*"]
      (verb + and + verb + noun)

The query found 7704 results, most of which were not actual examples of VP-coordination. After reviewing half the results, the coordination case patterns shown in Table 5 were found.

Type	Number	%
Acc + Acc	53	≈ 44.2%
Acc + Dat	19	≈ 15.8%
Acc|Dat + Dat	7	≈ 5.8%
Dat + Acc	26	≈ 21.7%
Dat + Acc/Dat	2	≈ 1.7%
Dat + Dat	13	≈ 10.9%
Total	120	100%

Table 5 Coordination case patterns in Teldni.

Again, the accusative is the most common case. Most Faroese verbs govern that case (see Thráinsson et al. 2012), the same as in Icelandic. Very few verbs have a dative object in Modern Faroese, and the following were the only occurrences: *steðga* 'stop,' *skipa* 'organise,' *stýra* 'control,' *hjálpa* 'help,' *bjarga* 'save.' In Table 6, different types of case resolution and their frequency in the corpus are shown.

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[9] I do not have information on the exact number of lexemes in *Teldni*.

Type	Accusative	Dative	Syncretic
Acc + Dat	1	17	1
Acc|Dat + Dat	0	7	0
Dat + Acc	13	11	2
Dat + Acc/Dat	1	1	0
Total	15	29	3

Table 6   Case resolution in Teldni.

Curiously, a dative case preference was much more common than in the Icelandic corpus. In 12/28 examples of Dat + Acc the object case was a dative. Below, I show a few examples of dative case preference in Faroese (13–15), all of which are accepted by my Faroese informants.[10]

(13) *Ferðaráðið*   *skal*   *hjálpa*   *og*   *vegleiða*
      travel bureau.SG.NOM/ACC.DEF   shall.INF   help.INF   and   assist.INF

      ferðafólki*, *sum koma*   *til landið.*
      tourists.**DAT** who come.3PL.PRS to country.ACC.DEF

      'The travel bureau's purpose is to help and assists tourist coming to the country.'

(14) *At*   *vit ikki hava*   *havt*   *møguleika*   *fyri at fylgja*
      that we not have.1PL.PRS had.SUP possibility.SG.ACC for   to follow.INF

      og   *nágreina* ***lønarútreiðslunum.***
      and   study.INF   wages.cost.PL.**DAT**.DEF

      'That we haven't had the possibility to follow and study wage costs.'

(15) *Sales promotion eru*   *eisini tey*   *tiltøk,*   *ið*   *beinleiðis dugna*
      sales promotion be.3PL.PRS also   those available who actually   assist.INF

      og   *upplýsa*   ***nýtarum.***
      and   inform.INF   user.PL.**DAT**

      'Sales promotion is also avaible to those who actually assist and inform users.'

According to my Faroese informants, these sentences all have an accusative object in standard Faroese. Thus, both accusative and dative objects are acceptable to some speakers without any meaningful difference.

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[10] Both of my Faroese informants were in their late twenties at the time of writing. They note that the examples are non-standard and that *dugna* and *nágreina* are uncommon verbs. This might potentially affect case assignment for *nágreina*, although the verb usually imposes an accusative case in written text.

4.4 Summary

My results show that in Icelandic and Faroese case coordination, the object case is not necessarily determined by the closest conjunct. CC or syncretism seem to be the prefered options in Icelandic case coordination. The case preference in Snorrason & Sigurðardóttir's (2021) report was not as prominent, although that might be due to a low frequency of genitive-assigning verbs. CC is also preferred in Faroese. Surprisingly, inherent case preference is more common in Faroese than in Icelandic whereas syncretic objects rarely occur.

5 Towards an Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a preliminary analysis of the corpus study findings on case coordination in Insular Scandinavian. The questions to be answered are shown in (16).

(16) a. Why must an inherent/lexical case-assigning verb be closer to an object than the structural case-assigning verb for some speakers of Icelandic and Faroese?

b. Why is there a dative case preference in Faroese but a genitive case preference in Icelandic?

I assume that formal, non-semantic, case variation is not encoded in the syntax as the argument structure is the same whether or not an object is e.g., in the dative or substituted by an accusative (Wood et al. 2020: 424–427).[11] I suggest that the accusative and dative case are allomorphic for some Faroese speakers and realise the same feature. In Icelandic, these cases are featurally different. The analysis supports a post-syntactic view of case where the difference between (some) case forms is morphological (see Wood et al. 2020).

5.2 Theoretical framework

I assume the general framework of Distributed Morphology (e.g. Halle & Marantz 1993 and Embick 2010) where words as well as sentences are syntactic constructions composed of morphemes. Most importantly for our purposes, morphemes do not have phonological content, this is only realised post-syntatically (see Embick 2010). A morphological case is a morpheme made up of features, such as [±Oblique], whose eventual phonological form does not affect the syntax. The different possible phonological outputs of features are called *vocabulary items*. The vocabulary item *-i* for the dative case is represented as in (17).

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[11] It is different from e.g., semantic case alternations between accusative patient roles and dative themes in Icelandic (see Jónsson 2013).

(17)   **Realisation of Icelandic dative case:**
[+Oblique, +Word Governed, -Genitive] ↔ *-i*

This framework makes an important distinction between different case forms which do not affect the syntax or semantics and case alternations which have different thematic roles. Icelandic fragment responses, for instance, have mandatory thematic case matching (see Wood et al. 2020: 418). The case differences dealt with in this paper, on the other hand, never show semantic contrasts, they display formal case variation.[12] The main intuition is that the accusative-dative variation in Faroese is allomorphic while the case differences in Icelandic reflect morphological distinctions.

5.3 Case and conjunction in Insular Scandinavian

My results show that there is a structural-inherent/lexical case division between the accusative on the one hand and the dative and genitive on the other.[13] When an accusative-assigning verb is coordinated with a dative-assigning verb, there is an inclination in Faroese to assign the dative case no matter which verb is closer to the argument. This finding is novel and unexpected. Similarly, some Icelandic speakers prefer a genitive object even though an accusative-assigning verb is the closest conjunct. Both might conceivably be processing effects, but the following analysis assumes this asymmetry is part of the grammar of a subset of speakers.

As I noted earlier, Faroese dative objects are often substituted by the accusative (see Jónsson 2009b). The high proportional number of case preference in my corpus data, as well as my informants' judgements, suggests that these cases can be interchangeable. In fact, there are some Internet examples of verbs such as *vegleiða* and *upplýsa* assigning a dative case instead of the accusative in structures without verb coordination, see (18).[14]

(18)   a.   *Eisini fær   tú   amboð   at finna   litkjarnuna*
Also   receive.2SG.PRS you   instrument.ACC to find.INF core colour.ACC.DEF

*hjá   kundanum   og   at vegleiða **honum** at finna*
of   client.DEF and   to assist.INF him.DAT to find.INF

røttu   litirnir.
right.DEF.NOM/ACC colours.DEF.NOM/ACC

'You will also receive an instrument to find the client's core colour and to help him find the right colours.'
http://www.syran.fo/eindir

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[12] This analysis does not depend on the framework of Distributed Morphology. Other realisational frameworks, e.g., Nanosyntax (Caha 2009), could use a similar analysis, but theories of case licensing (e.g. Woolford 2006) might require a different approach.

[13] *Pace* a non-structural view of case (Barðdal 2011).

[14] A search in the prescriptive Faroese Facebook group *Føroysk rættstaving* shows that examples of dative substitution for traditionally accusative objects are a common complaint among Faroese speakers, see https://www.facebook.com/groups/185932738087033/search/?q=hv%C3%B8rjumfall.

b. *Men í morgun kundi Eigil upplýsa **honum***
   But in morning.SG.ACC can.3SG.PST Eigil.NOM inform.INF him.DAT

   at hetta var 11. november í tí
   that this be.3SG.PST 11. November in Lord.SG.GEN.DEF

   Harrans árinum 1957.
   year.SG.DAT.DEF 1957

   'But this morning, Eigil could inform him that it was the 11th of November in the year of our Lord 1957.'
   https://www.in.fo/news-detail/ll-yvir-ein-kamb

Based on these findings, I assume that for some Faroese speakers, the accusative and dative are allomorphic as object cases similar to dative-nominative mixed case marking (Jónsson 2013). Parrott (2009) argues on similar grounds that Danish pronoun declension is allomorphic (following Emonds (1986) analysis of English pronouns). I propose that these grammars should be modelled with only one binary feature, not two, i.e., [±oblique]. The difference between e.g., *ferðafólk* and *ferðafólki* in (19) is, therefore, allomorphic.

(19) a. *Ferðaráðið skal hjálpa og vegleiða*
     travel bureau.SG.NOM/ACC.DEF shall.3SG.PRS help.INF and assist.INF
     ferðafólk
     tourist.SG.**ACC**

   b. *Ferðaráðið skal hjálpa og vegleiða*
     travel bureau.SG.NOM/ACC.DEF shall.3SG.PRS help.INF and assist.INF
     ferðafólki
     tourist.SG.**DAT**

   'The travel bureau's purpose is to help and assists tourists.'

I assume that the vocabulary items for the case system of these Faroese speakers is as in (20).

(20) **Vocabulary items in Faroese case system:**
   [oblique] ↔ -i, -Ø
   [ ] ↔ -Ø

This leads us to suspect that the dative will lose its privileged position as an inherent case in Faroese. Indeed, the dative is often lost in e.g., passivisation, although this varies between verbs (see Thráinsson et al. 2012: 267–269). Other speakers might, however, still have a [±Word Governed] feature and reliably distinguish the accusative and dative.[15]

In Icelandic there is a general rule of CC but there does seem to be a preference for the genitive case (see Snorrason & Sigurðardóttir 2021) rather than a dative case

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[15] This requires further research, preferably a speaker judgement test.

preference. Interestingly, the genitive is often substituted in Icelandic whereas the dative is typically retained or used as a substitution for other cases (see Jónsson 2017). I propose that the genitive-accusative asymmetry is due to the fact that the accusative and genitive have a more distinct featural composition than the accusative and dative, see Table 7 below.

	Acc	Dat	Gen
Oblique	+	+	+
Word Governed	-	+	+
Genitive	–	–	+

Table 7   Accusative, Dative and Genitive case features in Icelandic.

The table shows that the accusative lacks the common denominator of the dative and genitive, i.e., [+Word Governed]. The accusative thus lacks two features of the genitive. On the other hand, the accusative and dative share all but one feature and so do the dative and accusative. This is reflected in Icelandic morphology as the accusative and genitive are only marked with the same case form if the dative shares the form as well (see e.g. Rögnvaldsson 2013: 158–173). This predicts that dative-genitive coordination should not display the same asymmetry. My, and my Icelandic informants', intuition is that this prediction is correct (21).

(21)   *Ég sakna   og gleymi   **Jóni**/??**Jóns**.*
      I   miss.1SG.PRS and forget.1SG.PRS Jón.**DAT**/**GEN**

      'I miss and forget John.'

This suggests that case features need to be minimally different in order to allow Closest conjunct case, at least for some speakers.

     These findings are preliminary and further research is required to determine whether this analysis makes the correct predictions for Icelandic and Faroese case coordination. This paper mainly employs naturalistic, i.e., corpus, data but experimental tests, e.g., judgement tests, could be more revealing as regards genitive-assigning verbs, which are infrequent in *Risamálheildin*.

6   Conclusion

This corpus study indicates that an inherent case preference is more common in Faroese than Icelandic. The preferred option for both languages, however, is closest conjunct case. I provided a morphological analysis for the case patterns in which some Icelandic speakers require case matching with accusative- and genitive-assigning verbs, and Faroese speakers conflate the accusative and dative object cases.

Abbreviations

NOM	Nominative	ACC	Accusative
DAT	Dative	GEN	Genitive
DEF	Definite Article	1/2/3	First/Second/Third Person
INF	Infinitive	SG	Singular
PL	Plural	REFL	Reflexive
PRS	Present tense	PST	Past tense
IND	Indicative mood	SBJV	Subjunctive mood
SUP	Supine		

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