

If you were me, would you agree?
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Copular constructions with nominal predicates present a relatively unusual configuration for agreement, with potentially two different nominals with which the verb could agree. While the two nominals most frequently do not differ, it is quite possible to find cases of mismatch for both number and person.

1. a. Amanda is the problem
- b. The Browns are our biggest problem.
- c. Our biggest problem is the Browns.
- d. L'état, c'est moi.
- e. I wouldn't do that, if I were you.
- f. For a moment there before she turned round, I thought your mother was you!

There is remarkable and interesting variety within Germanic as to how these mismatches are resolved - or not resolved. In this talk I will report on work, much of it done jointly with Jutta Hartmann of Tübingen University, that sets out some of the possible and apparently impossible agreement patterns in these cases of mismatch, and discuss the implications for our understanding of the syntax of predication, as well as constraints on verbal syntax itself.