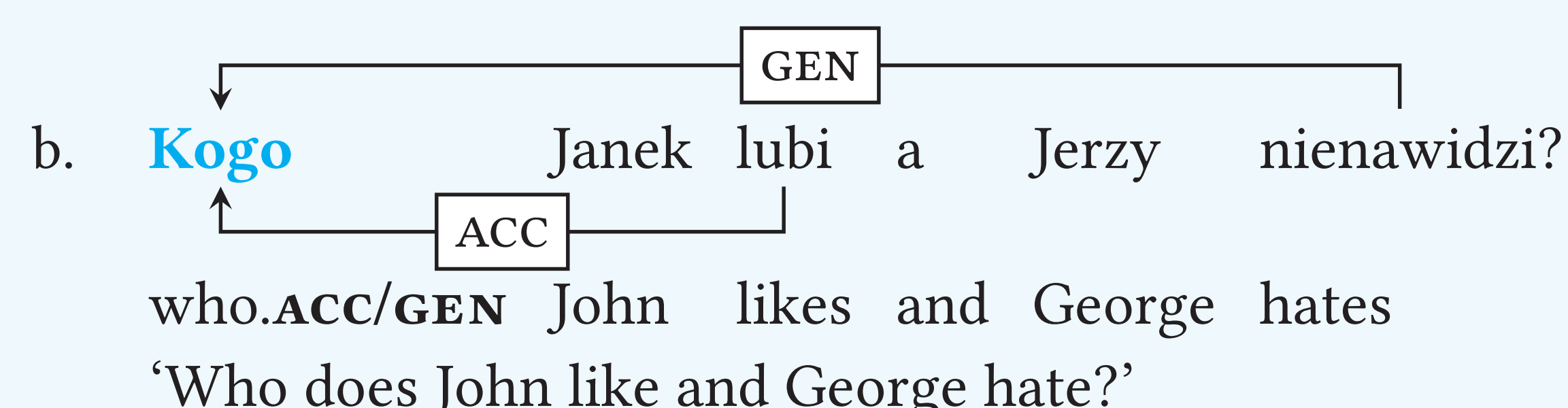
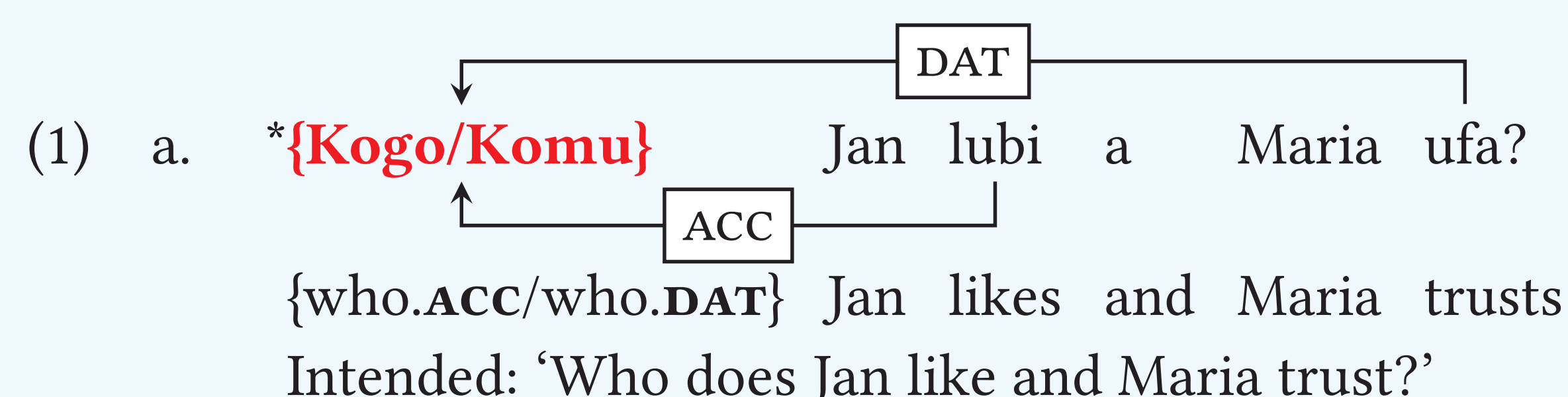


Ameliorative effects of syncretism

Some constructions place conflicting feature requirements on syntactic heads (e.g. ATB-movement, Right Node Raising).

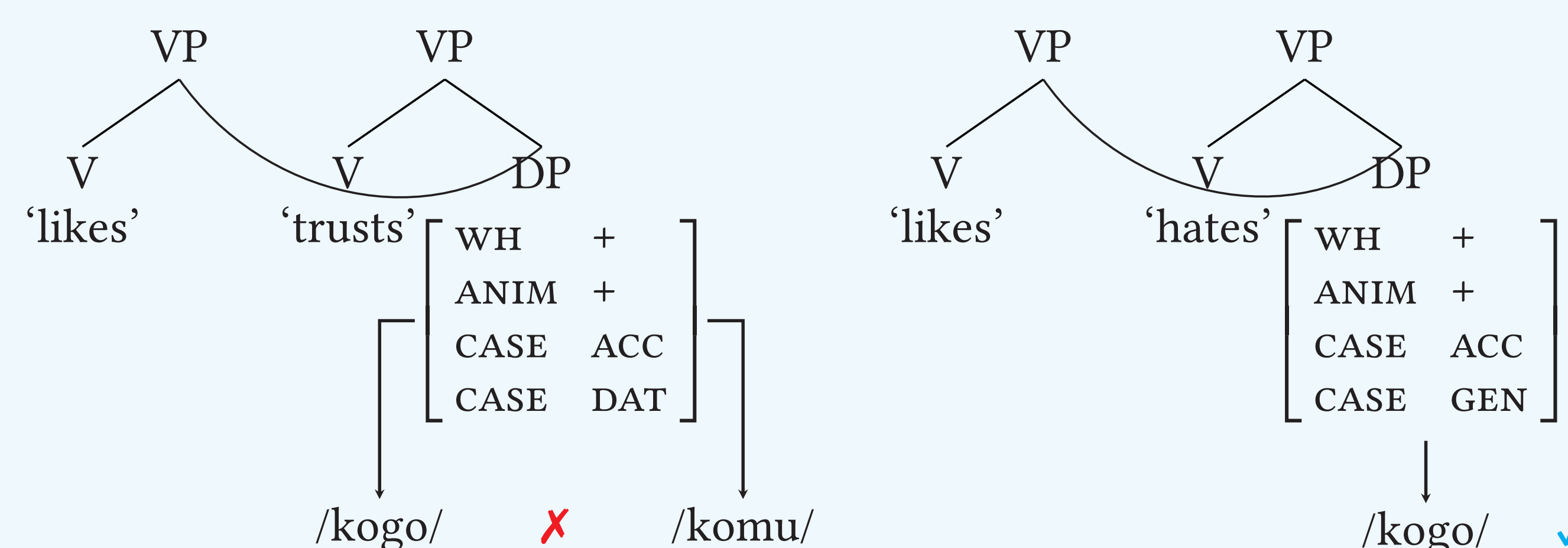
→ Syncretism can have an ameliorative effect in these constructions.

- **Polish ATB-movement:** case mismatches lead to ungrammaticality unless the exponents are syncretic (Citko 2005:485-487).



Initial intuition

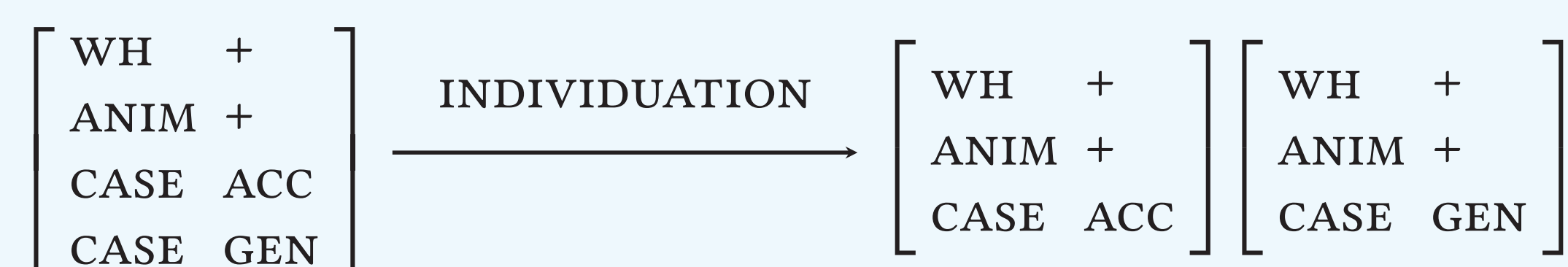
Syncretism ‘helps’ because the **same VI** can satisfy both conflicting features.



Problem

Asarina (2011) and Bjorkman (2016) provide an important piece of the answer:

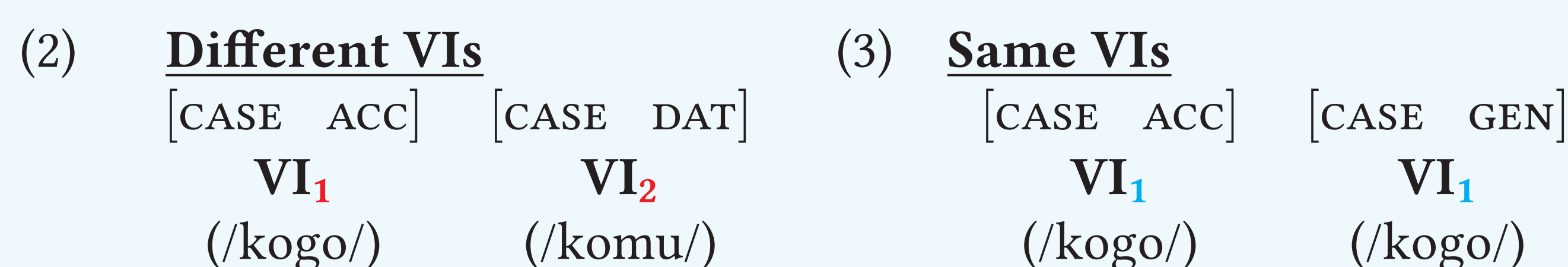
- **Conflicting features undergo Vocabulary Insertion separately.** No surprising defaults appear in these cases (e.g. ACC/DAT conflict realized as default NOM), which we would expect if all the features were spelled out together.
- **This requires splitting the initial feature bundle** (without creating a new position of exponence):



- **The outcome of Vocabulary Insertion determines whether the structure can be linearized:**

- ✓ Same VI picked for both → **one form for one slot**
- ✗ Different VIs picked for each

→ But how does the grammar distinguish between these two scenarios?



- We have **two forms for one slot** in both cases.

Linearization

- **Concatenation** (\frown) establishes immediate precedence relations between heads ($X \frown Y = X$ immediately precedes Y). I assume that **concatenation statements are formal objects that form a set.**

$$- \{ \{ [WH: +], [ANIM: +], [CASE: ACC], [CASE: GEN] \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \}$$

- **Individuation** separates the conflicting features; the resulting set is then fed to Vocabulary Insertion.

$$- \{ \{ [WH: +], [ANIM: +], [CASE: ACC] \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \}, \{ [WH: +], [ANIM: +], [CASE: GEN] \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \}$$

- **Chaining** strings a set of phonological features to another set of phonological features **based on the immediate precedence relations** established in the concatenation statements.

- The set of concatenation statements must be **unambiguous** in order to be usable by PF at this stage.

- Before Vocabulary Insertion, **the set is not unambiguous:** two different heads are in an immediate precedence relation with *Janek*.

Vocabulary Insertion

We need a way to track the ‘identity’ of the VIs inserted – we can get that by modifying the way we do Vocabulary Insertion.

- I propose that Vocabulary Insertion **replaces** the synsem features of the head with **both the synsem and phonological** features of the VI inserted:

(4) Vocabulary Insertion (proposal)

For a head Y containing the set of synsem features $[A]$ and Vocabulary Item X pairing the set of synsem features $[B]$ ($[B] \subseteq [A]$) with the set of phonological features $/P/$, replace the features of Y with the features of X :

$$\{ [A] \} \xrightarrow{\text{Insertion}} \{ [B], /P/ \}$$

- **Replacing the features of the heads neutralizes the initial contrast.**

- Compare with adding only phonological content (Embick 2010):

$$(7) \{ \{ [WH: +], [ANIM: +], [CASE: ACC], /kogo/ \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \}, \{ [WH: +], [ANIM: +], [CASE: GEN], /kogo/ \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \} \quad \times$$

- The fact that the same VI was inserted for both feature bundles **makes no difference** in terms of linearization; the set of concatenation statements is still ambiguous/incompatible.

Portmanteau

What about languages that have dedicated forms for spelling out multiple features of the same type?

- The account developed so far requires splitting conflicting features into separate feature bundles. However, there are languages that realize conflicting features with portmanteau forms (e.g. Algonquin, Oxford 2019); those features are evidently spelled out together.

So what is the difference between the two?

- Portmanteau and syncretism effects arise from **different syntactic contexts**, which results in different feature structures.

- **Syncretism effects:** Given an appropriate goal, the probe (typically just 1) can be satisfied by just one cycle of probing.
- **Portmanteau:** Since the structure contains more than one probe, one cycle of probing is not enough.

Consequences for allomorphy

Prediction: Vocabulary Insertion can bleed inward-sensitive allomorphy.

- The features of the VI replace the features of the head;
- The set of features of the VI is a subset of those of the head, which means features can be lost.

Thus, given $X \frown Y$, X containing feature $[\alpha]$, and Y sensitive to $[\alpha]$ on X :

- If the VI inserted for X does not contain $[\alpha]$, then $[\alpha]$ will not be part of the context for insertion for Y , and thus no allomorphy occurs (based on $[\alpha]$).

(5) Concatenation statements *syncretic ACC/GEN*

$$\{ \{ [ANIM: +], [GOV: +], \{ /kogo/ \} \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \}, \{ [ANIM: +], [GOV: +], \{ /kogo/ \} \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \}$$

$$\downarrow \{ a, a \} = \{ a \} \quad \text{Axiom of extensionality}$$

$$(6) \{ \{ [ANIM: +], [GOV: +], \{ /kogo/ \} \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \} \quad \checkmark$$

(8) Concatenation statements *non-syncretic ACC/DAT*

$$\{ \{ [ANIM: +], [GOV: +], \{ /kogo/ \} \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \}, \{ [ANIM: +], [SUB: -], [GOV: -], [OBL: -], \{ /komu/ \} \} \frown \{ Janek, \dots \} \} \quad \times$$