Dative = DOM*

Syntactic identity or syncretism?

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1 Introduction: DOM and dative case

Some languages with differential object marking (DOM) have homophonous exponents of DOM and dative. (1) illustrates this for Spanish.

(1) a. *Yo veo el libro.* — No DOM, monotransitive
I see the book.
'I see the book.'

b. *Yo veo a la mujer.* — DOM, monotransitive
I see DOM the woman.
'I see the woman.'

c. *Yo doy el libro a la mujer.* — No DOM, ditransitive
I give the book DAT the woman
'I give the book to the woman.'

Other languages exhibiting this homophony are **Hindi** (Mohanan 1990), **Kashmiri** (Wali & Koul 1997), **Basque** (Odria 2014), most of Romance with DOM (Manzini & Franco 2016), varieties of Arabic (Aoun 1999) etc. (see also Bossong 1991).

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Is this homophony of DOM and DAT due to syntax or morphology?

DOM=DAT is syntax The homophony could be due to DOs with DOM and IOs with DAT having **the same syntactic representation**. Manzini & Franco (2016), for example, suggest that both IOs and DOM are introduced by the same prepositional head (see also Torrego 2010, Ormazabal & Romero 2013). If DOM and IOs are syntactically identical, we expect identical behaviour w.r.t.

- movement and syntactic position,
- passivisation,
- reduced relative formation,
- controlling secondary predicates,
- nominalisations, etc.

In sum, DOM objects and IOs **should pattern together**, to the exclusion of morphologically unmarked DOs.

DOM=DAT is morphology A morphological alternative is that DOM and DAT are **syncretic** in some languages, but not others. On this view, DOM is an allomorph of ACC which happens to be syncretic with DAT. On this view, DOs with DOM and IOs with DAT **are not predicted to form a natural class in syntax**:

- IOs and DOs with DOM can behave differently w.r.t. movement, passivisation, reduced relatives, etc.

Thus, DOM objects and morphologically unmarked DOs **should pattern together**, to the exclusion of morphologically IOs.

Claim

In Spanish, Hindi, Kashmiri and Basque **unmarked and marked DOs** behave alike syntactically, to the exclusion of IOs. In these languages, the DOM=DAT overlap is morphological. In other languages however, e.g. the Uralic languages Khanty and Mansi, an argument structure alternation shows real syntactic identity of theme and recipient objects w.r.t. differential marking.

2 Testing syntactic identity

The logic of the following tests is to determine whether morphologically unmarked, marked DOs and IOs show identical syntactic behaviour or not.

2.1 Passivisation

Passivisation involves a reduction of arity and (generally) the absorption of ACC to a direct object. If DOM objects are indirect objects, DOM should not be affected by passivisation.

2.1.1 Spanish

In Spanish, theme objects can be passivised independently of whether they trigger DOM in an active sentence or not, cf. (2a) and (2b). Recipients (marked DAT) cannot be passivised, (2c).

(2) a. *El libro fue visto.* theme passive
the book was seen.M
'The book was seen.'

b. *La mujer fue vista.* theme passive
the woman was seen.F
'The woman was seen.'

c. **La mujer fue dada el libro.* *recipient passive
the woman was given.F the book
intended: 'The woman was given the book.'

2.1.2 Hindi

Some varieties of Hindi behave like Spanish (Mohanan 1990, Bhatt 2007). DOs with, (3a), and without DOM, (4b), can be passivised. DOM DOs (generally) lose their case-marking, while recipients retain it.

(3) a. *raam anil-ko uṭʰaaegaa* [Hindi]
Ram.NOM Anil-ACC lift/carry.FUT
'Ram will carry Anil.'

b. *anil (raam-se) uṭʰaayaa jaaegaa.*
Anil.NOM Ram-INS carry.PFV go.FUT
'Anil will be carried by Ram.' (Mohanan 1990: 120)

(4) a. *ram-ne Anil-ko haar bhej-aa.* [Hindi]
Ram-ERG Anil-DAT necklace.M send-PFV.M
'Ram sent Anil the necklace.'

b. *anil-ko haar bhej-aa gay-aa.*
Anil-DAT necklace.M send-PFV.M go-PFV.M
'Anil was sent a/the necklace.'

c. *haar Anil-ko bhej-aa gay-aa.*
necklace.M Anil-DAT send-PFV.M go-PFV.M
'The necklace was sent to Anil.' (Mohanan 1990: 121)

This is not absolute, however. Some varieties of Hindi allow retaining DOM under passivisation:

(5) *anil-ko* (*raam-se*) *uṭʰaayaa jaaegaa.* [ACC preserving Hindi]
Anil.ACC Ram-INS carry.PFV go.FUT
'Anil will be carried by Ram.' (Mohanan 1990: 122)

Retaining *-ko* under passivisation likens DOM DOs to IOs, but things might not be fully equal. While Mohanan (1990) suggests that retaining *-ko* is a matter of different varieties, single speakers can also allow both options, with a difference in meaning (see also Baker & Vinokurova 2010 on ACC retaining passives in Sakha):

(6) a. *Ram bhuukamp-mẽ maaraa gayaa.*
Ram.NOM earthquake-in kill.PFV go.PFV
'Ram was killed in an earthquake.'

b. *Ram-ko bhuukamp-mẽ maaraa gayaa.*
Ram-ACC earthquake-in kill.PFV go.PFV
'Ram was murdered during the earthquake.' (Rajesh Bhatt, p.c.)

Interim summary: Passivisation in Spanish and Hindi

- In Spanish and Hindi, DOs & DOM-DOs passivise and (can) become NOM subjects
- IOs cannot

2.2 Reduced relative clauses

English allows themes and recipients to head reduced relatives — based on the PDC, (7a), and the DOC, (7b), respectively.

(7) a. the book [given to the woman]
b. the woman [given the book]

2.2.1 Spanish

Spanish allows forming reduced relatives headed by a theme, both in monotransitives and ditransitives, irrespective of whether that argument triggers DOM or not, (8). Recipients cannot head a reduced relative, (9a).

(8) a. *el libro visto en la calle*
the book seen.M in the street
'the book seen in the street'

b. *la mujer vista en la calle*
the woman seen.F in the street
'the woman seen in the street'

(9) a. **la mujer dada el libro*
the woman given.F the book
intended: 'the woman given the book'

b. *el libro dado a la mujer*
the book given.M to the woman
'the book given to the woman'

2.2.2 Hindi

Hindi shows the same pattern as Spanish. Themes can head reduced relatives, recipients cannot:

(10) a. [*us mahila-ko dii gayii*] *kitaab*
that woman-DAT give.PFV.F PASS.PFV.F book.F
'the book given to the woman'

b. *[*kitaab dii gayii*] *mahilaa*
book give.PFV.F PASS.PFV.F woman.F
intended: 'the woman given the book' (Rajesh Bhatt, p.c.)

Interim summary: Reduced relatives in Spanish and Hindi

- In Spanish and Hindi, DOs & DOM-DOs can head reduced relatives
- IOs cannot

2.3 Controlling secondary predicates

In English, themes are generally able to control a depictive secondary predicate, while recipients show more restrictions (see Harley & Jung 2015).

(11) a. I_i have seen you_j $drunk_{i, j}$.

b. I_i have given the book to the $woman_j$ $drunk_{i/*j}$.

c. I_i have given the $woman_j$ the book $drunk_{i/*j}$.

2.3.1 Spanish

(12) a. *Mi madre compró la lavadora$_i$ rota$_i$.*
my mother bought the washing machine broken
'My mother bought the washing machine broken.' (Demonte 1988: 1)

b. *Juan*$_i$ *le*$_j$ *habló a María*$_j$ *borracho/a*$_{i/*j}$
Juan CL.DAT.3SG talk.PST to María drunk.M/F
'Juan talked to María drunk.' (Odria 2014: 295, cf. Demonte 1987: 148)

c. *Juan*$_i$ *le*$_j$ *encontró a María*$_j$ *borracho/a*$_{i/j}$
Juan CL.DAT.3SG find.PST DOM María drunk.M/F
'Juan found María drunk.' (Odria 2014: 295, cf. Demonte 1987: 148)

d. *Pedro no (la) azota a su mujer*$_i$ *sobria*$_i$, *la*$_i$ *azota borracha*$_i$.
Pedro NEG CL.ACC.3SG.F beat DOM his wife sober.F, CL.ACC.3SG.F beat drunk.F
'Pedro does not beat his wife sober, he beats her drunk.'

e.*??Pedro no le da azotes a su mujer*$_i$ *sobria*$_i$, *se*$_i$ *los da*
Pedro NEG CL.3SG.DAT give lashes DAT his wife sober CL.DAT CL.ACC.3PL.M give
borracha$_i$.
drunk
'Pedro does not give lashes to his wife sober, he gives (to her) them drunk.'
(Demonte 1987: 151f.)

2.3.2 Basque

(13) a. *Ni-k*$_i$ *amona-ri*$_j$ *umea*$_k$ *pozik*$_{i/*j/k}$ [Standard Basque]
I-ERG grandmother-DAT child.ABS happy
eraman d-i-o-t
carry TM(3ABS)-(root)-DF-3SGDAT-1SGERG
'I have carried the child to the grandmother [happy].' (Odria 2014: 294)

b. *Ni-k zu-ri*$_i$ *pozik*$_i$ *ikusi d-o-t-zu-t.* [Oñati Basque]
I-ERG you-DOM happy see TM-root-DF-2DAT-1SGERG
'I have seen you happy.' (Odria 2014: 295)

Interim summary: Depictive secondary predicates in Spanish and Basque

- In Spanish and Basque, DOs & DOM-DOs can control depictive secondary predicates
- IOs cannot

2.4 Nominalisation, clitic doubling, agreement

2.4.1 Spanish nominalisation

In Spanish nominalisations, DOM is not retained for theme/patient arguments, (14). DAT, however, is, as the ditransitive nominalisation in (15) shows.[1]

[1] López (2016) discusses what he calls "n-DOM", i.e. the appearance of *a* in nominalisations. He shows, however, that the conditions on verbal DOM and n-DOM differ so that the two phenomena should not be equated.

(14) a. *El perro capturó **a** Juan.*
the dog captured DOM Juan
'The dog captured Juan.' (López 2016: 2)

b. *La captura **de** Juan por el perro fue sorprendente.*
the capture GEN Juan by the dog was surprising
'The dog's capture of Juan was surprising.' (López 2016: 1)

c. **La captura **a** Juan por el perro fue sorprendente.*
the capture DOM Juan by the dog was surprising

(15) a. *María le entregó el paquete a Susana.*
María CL.DAT delivered the package DAT Susana
'María delivered the package to Susana.'

b. *la entrega del paquete a Susana*
the delivery GEN.DEF package DAT Susana
'the delivery of the package to Susana' (López 2016: 11)

2.4.2 Spanish clitic doubling

Varieties of Spanish show a great amount of variation in the morphology of object clitics in (*loísmo*, *leísmo*, etc.) as well as the triggers of clitic doubling (Suñer 1988). In Standard (Peninsular) Spanish, there are different sets of of ACC and DAT clitics, used for direct and indirect objects, respectively.

(16) a. *Le hablaron a ella.*
CL.DAT.3SG spoke.3PL DAT her
'They spoke to her.'

b. *La llamaron a ella.*
CL.ACC.3SG.F call.3PL DOM her
'They called her.' (Suñer 1988: 394)

2.4.3 Kashmiri case-alternations

Kashmiri also has DOM that is homophonous with DAT. W.r.t. passivisation, it is similar to Hindi in that some varieties allow retaining DOM under passivisation while others do not. W.r.t. object agreement, however, Kashmiri distinguishes DOM and DAT arguments.

With pronominal objects, a person hierarchy (1>2>3) determines whether the direct object's case is DAT or NOM. If the object's person is equal or higher on the hierarchy than the subject's, the object's case is DAT, otherwise NOM.

(17) a. **1⟶2: NOM** [Kashmiri]
bɨ *chu-s-ath* *tsɨ* *parɨna:va:n*
I.NOM be-1SG.SBJ-2SG.OBJ you.NOM teaching
'I am teaching you.'

b. **3⟶2: DAT/DOM**
su *chu-y* *tse* *parɨna:va:n*
he.NOM be.M.3SG.-2SG.OBJ you.DAT teaching
'He is teaching you.'

Crucially, this process only happens with *direct* objects. The person of DAT objects does not vary with the other arguments' person:

(18) a. *su* *kariy* *tse* *me* *hava:lɨ.* [Kashmiri]
he.NOM do.FUT.2SG you.SG.DAT I.DAT hand over
'He will hand you over to me.' (Wali & Koul 1997: 208)

b. *bɨ* *chu-s-an-ay* *su* *tse* *hava:lɨ* *kara:n.*
I.NOM be-1SG-3SG-2SG s/he.NOM you.DAT hand over doing
'I am handing him over to you.' (Wali & Koul 1997: 253)

Interim summary: Syntactic properties of DOM-DOs and IOs

Passive

- In Spanish and Hindi, DOs & DOM-DOs passivise and (can) become NOM subjects
- IOs cannot

Reduced relatives

- In Spanish and Hindi, DOs & DOM-DOs can head reduced relatives
- IOs cannot

Depictive secondary predicates

- In Spanish and Basque, DOs & DOM-DOs can control depictive secondary predicates
- IOs cannot

Nominalisations, agreement, etc.

- In Spanish, DOs & DOM-DOs in nominalisations are GEN (*de*), IOs are DAT (*a*)
- In Spanish, there are different sets of ACC and DAT clitics
- In Kashmiri, case of DOs is sensitive to a person hierarchy, case of IOs is not

3 Object agreement in Khanty and Mansi

In the Uralic family, a number of languages have *differential object agreement*: in Khanty and Mansi (Ob-Ugric), the verb agrees with a proper subset of direct objects in number (see Nikolaeva 1999a,b, 2001, Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011, Virtanen 2012, 2014, 2015).

Analogy to DOM=DAT

In Spanish, Hindi, etc. R(ecipient) and T(heme) can have homophonous *case*-marking. Case-marking is **obligatory for R** and **differential for T**.

In Ob-Ugric, R and T can have homophonous *agreement.* Agreement is (in some varieties) **obligatory for R** and **differential for T**.

But Khanty and Mansi have a **productive syntactic alternation**: either T and R can be marked ACC — both behave alike w.r.t. object agreement and the tests introduced above.

Khanty and Mansi ditransitives show an alternation between so-called **secundative and indirective alignment** in case-marking and agreement (Dryer 1986, Haspelmath 2005, Malchukov *et al.* 2010).

(19) a. Indirective case, no object agreement [Northern Khanty]

ma [$_T$ *a:n*] [$_R$ *Pe:tra e:lti*] *ma-s-əm.*
I cup Peter to give-PST-1SG.SBJ
'I gave a/the cup to Peter.'

b. Indirective case and object agreement

ma [$_T$ ***a:n***] [$_R$ *Pe:tra e:lti*] *ma-s-**e:m**.*
I cup Peter to give-PST-**1SG.SBJ>OBJ**
'I gave a/the cup to Peter.'

c. Secundative case and obligatory object agreement

ma [$_R$ ***Pe:tra***] [$_T$ *a:n-na*] *ma-s-**e:m*** /**ma-s-əm.*
I Peter cup-LOC give-PST-**1SG.SBJ>OBJ** give-PST-1SG.SBJ
'I gave a/the cup to Peter.', cf. 'I provided Peter with a cup.'

(Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011: 148)

(20) a. Indirective case and object agreement (theme null) [Mansi]

moot sõõn-toågøl keeløp-mø wø-s-tø, kõõp-posøm-øt
other bowl-full blood-ACC take-PST-**3SG>SG** boat-stern-LOC

[$_R$ *püw-ətään*] *tow-mø-s-tø.*
son-LAT.SG.3SG VM-give-PST-**3SG>SG**

"He took the other bowl full of blood and gave it to his son …"

b. Secundative case and object agreement

am [$_{R}$ ***nää-n***] *tat-øs-løm* [$_{T}$ *nee-l*].
1SG 2SG-SG.2SG bring-PST-**1SG>SG** woman-INS
'I brought you a wife.', cf. 'I provided you with a wife.' (Virtanen 2012: 125f.)

3.1 Syntactic behaviour

There is evidence that ACC arguments in Khanty and Mansi are unique, i.e. either direct objects (when themes) or primary objects (when recipients; Dryer 1986). Both types of objects can

- agree with the verb, see (19), (20),
- be in the same syntactic position outside VP, see (21),
- passivise, see (22), (23),[2]
- head reduced relatives, see (24).

(21) a. *[*xul*$_i$ *uːn* *uːl-m-al* *pata*] *xul*$_i$ / *pro*$_i$ *nox* *an* *taːl-s-əm* [Northern Khanty]
fish large be-AN-3SG because fish out not carry-PST-1SG.SBJ
intended: 'I didn't take out the fish because the fish/it was large.'

b. [*xul*$_i$ *uːn* *uːl-m-al* *pata*] *xul*$_i$ / *pro*$_i$ *nox* *an* *taːl-s-eːm*
fish large be-AN-3SG because fish out not carry-PST-**1SG.SBJ>OBJ**
intended: 'I didn't take out the fish because the fish/it was large.'

c. [*pasaːn* *eːlti* *oːməs-t-al* *sis*] *Ɉuwan* *aːn-na* *ma-seːm*
table at sit-AN-3SG when John cup-LOC give-PST-**1SG.SBJ>OBJ**
'I gave John a cup when he was sitting at the table.'
(Dalrymple & Nikolaeva 2011: 150)

(22) a. Theme passive [Surgut Khanty]

εβi *ɬəβɐti* *mə-s-i.*
girl 3SG.DAT give-PST-PASS.3SG
'The girl was given to him.' (LMU Ob-Ugric Database ID 1316)

b. Recipient passive [Northern Khanty]

Peːtraːj-eːn *xoːp-na* *moːjl-əs-a.*
Peter-2SG boat-LOC give-PST-PASS.3SG
'He was given a boat by Peter.' (or 'Peter was given a boat.'?) (Nikolaeva 1999b: 31)

[2] Thanks to Katalin Gugán for Khanty-ng down example (22a).

(23) a. Theme passive [Tavda Mansi]

äm täťä̈-m-ən íl-pārt-ú-s-əm kompä̈ləŋ-ən

I.NOM father-SG.1SG-LAT VM-sell-PASS-PST-1SG goblin-LAT

'I was sold by my father to the goblins …' (Szilágyi 2013, Munkácsi/4/73)

b. Recipient passive

tå̈rəm-ən mətär-əl ä̈-li möw-ú-n

god-LAT something-INS NEG-Q give-PASS-FUT.2SG

'Will you not be given anything by God?', cf. 'Will you not be provided with anything by God?' (Szilágyi 2013, Munkácsi/4/8)

(24) a. Reduced relative headed by theme [Surgut Khanty]

[*ńewrem-a məj-əm*] *kəńika tŏŋqə tinəŋ.*

child-LAT give-PTCP.PST book very expensive

'The book given to the child is very expensive.'

b. Reduced relative headed by recipient

[*kəńika-ɣat məj-əm*] *ńewrem jis-łəɣ jeɣ*

book-INS give-PTCP.PST child cry-PTCP.NEG turn.PST.3SG

'The child given the book stopped crying.' (Márta Csepregi, p.c.)

Interim summary: Khanty and Mansi ACC themes and recipients

Khanty and Mansi ACC themes and recipients behave alike syntactically.

4 Modelling the syncretism

Modelling the syncretism is straightforward using case decomposition and assuming DM-style spell-out rules and the subset principle (features based on Bierwisch 1967 for German, see also Keine & Müller 2008, Glushan 2010):

(25) ACC and DAT in Hindi

a. [ACC] ↔ [+gov, −obl]

b. [DAT] ↔ [+gov, +obl]

(26) Spell-out rule for *-ko*

-ko ↔ [+gov]

4.1 An ABA syncretism?

A potential issue arises with a DAT/ACC syncretism, however. On some versions of case hierarchies, e.g. (27b,c), DAT and ACC are not adjacent, and their syncretism could lead to an ABA pattern:

(27) a. NOM > [ACC > DAT] > ABL > GEN (Blake 2001: 89)

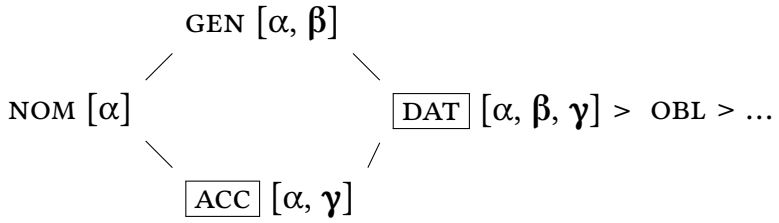
b. NOM > [ACC]/ERG > GEN > [DAT] > LOC > ABL/INS > … (Blake 2001: 156)

c. NOM > [ACC] > GEN > [DAT] > INS > COM (Caha 2009: 30)

There are a few options of solving this issue (other than not using a case hierarchy):

- **Switching DAT and GEN** Harðarson (2016) argues that Caha's (2009) case contiguity should be weakened: in some languages, DAT and GEN switch places, such that ACC and DAT are adjacent. This makes DOM/DAT systematic, and GEN/ACC accidental (see below).
- **Split hierarchies** ACC and GEN could be on the same level of a hierarchy. The idea is that ACC and DAT are both assigned by verbs, but GEN is not and falls out. For example, we do not find ACC but GEN in nominalisations in a number of languages (Benveniste 1971, Krapova & Cinque 2014). There might not be "real" GEN objects? GEN of negation assigned by a silent quantifier (Bailyn 2012; cf. Kiparsky 2001 on the Finnish partitive)?

(28) Partially ordered set:



(25′) ACC and DAT in Hindi

a. [ACC] ↔ [α, γ]

b. [DAT] ↔ [α, γ, δ]

(26′) Spell-out rule for *-ko*

-ko ↔ [α, γ]

- **GEN/ACC syncretism in Slavic?** Triggered by animacy, not a case feature (cf. Wiese 2011)?

(29) $-a_{GEN}$ ↔ [α, β, +anim] $-a_{ACC}$ ↔ [α, γ, +anim]

- **GEN/ACC syncretism in Finnish/Finnic?** Due to sound change: *-n* < **-m*, distinct entries:

(30) $-n_{GEN}$ ↔ [α, β] $-n_{ACC}$ ↔ [α, γ]

5 Conclusions

DOM=DAT is morphological in Spanish, Basque, Hindi, Kashmiri

- Syntax sees differences between DOM and DAT objects
- If DOM-DOs and IOs are syntactically identical, we expect identical syntactic behaviour: this is not what we find
- Distinct syntactic behaviour suggests that we are dealing with syncretism: DOM-DOs are DOs, IOs are IOs

DOM (ACC) and DAT objects in Spanish, Basque, Hindi and Kashmiri show distinct syntactic behaviour despite their homophonous spell-out.

Object agreement in Ob-Ugric

Themes and recipients in Ob-Ugric *are* syntactically identical. Both themes and recipients

- can be ACC,
- agree with the same head,
- passivise,
- appear in reduced relatives.

ACC objects in Ob-Ugric show identical syntactic behaviour irrespective of their theta role.

Finally: In the English DOC/PDC alternation, themes and recipients

- can be ACC,
- passivise,
- appear in reduced relatives.

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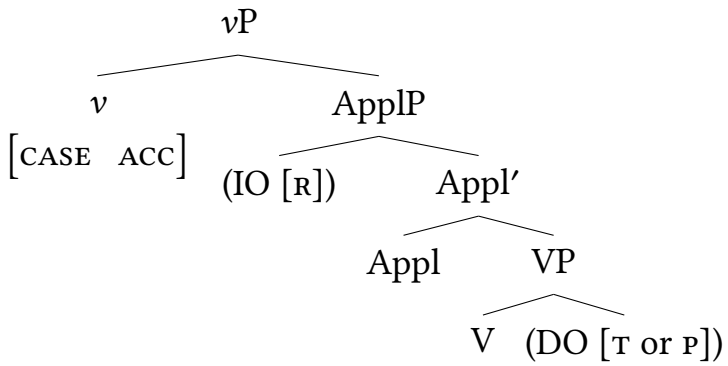
A The syntax of Ob-Ugric object agreement

Structures based on the following assumptions derive (most of) the patterns of Ob-Ugric object agreement shown above.

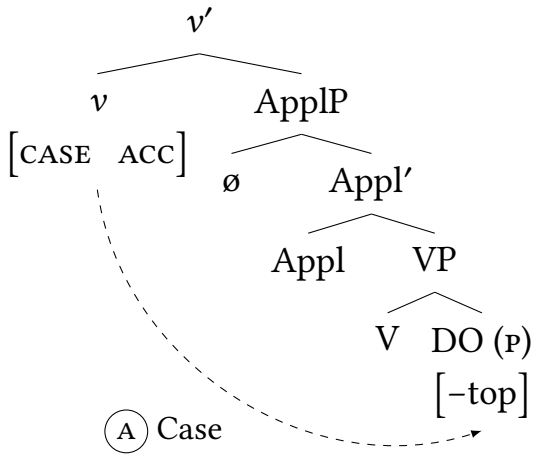
1. *v* selects an ApplP that cannot assign Case
2. SpecApplP can serve as a landing site for [+topic] themes *or* introduce recipients
3. *v* assigns ACC, which is necessary but not sufficient for agreement
4. Appl agrees with whatever is in its specifier, SpecApplP

(31)



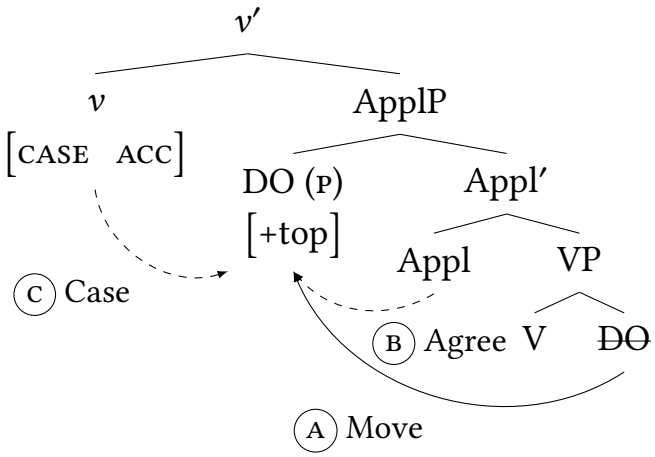
Monotransitive, [–top] DO The only internal argument is a non-topical P argument. It will not raise to SpecApplP and therefore not trigger agreement with the verb.

(32)



Monotransitive, [+top] DO The DO is again generated as the complement of V, but it is [+top]. Therefore, it moves up to the specifier of ApplP and enters an Agree relation with *v*.

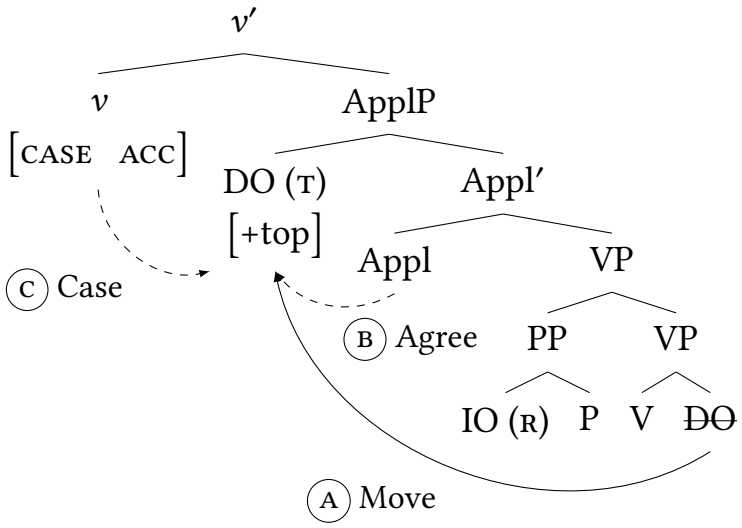
(33)



Ditransitive, [+top] DO In (34b), the theme object *aːn* 'cup' is topical, so it moves up to SpecApplP. This means that the recipient argument cannot be introduced in SpecApplP and has to be licensed by a postposition.

(34) a. *ma* [$_{T}$ ***aːn***] [$_{R}$ *Peːtra eːlti*] *ma-s-**eːm**.* [Northern Khanty]
I cup Peter to give-PST-**OBJ.1SG.SBJ**
'I gave a/the cup to Peter.'

b.



Ditransitive, [–top] SO A [–top] theme does not move to SpecApplP. The recipient/goal is merged there, gets Case and triggers agreement. The theme is licensed by a postposition or oblique case.

(35) a. *ma* [$_{R}$ ***Peːtra***] [$_{T}$ *aːn-na*] *ma-s-**eːm*** /**ma-s-əm.* [Northern Khanty]
I Peter cup-LOC give-PST-**OBJ.1SG.SBJ** give-PST-1SG.SBJ
'I gave a/the cup to Peter.', cf. 'I provided Peter with a cup.'

b.