

Breaking Agreements: Distinguishing Agreement and Clitic-Doubling by Their Failures

OMER PREMINGER[†]

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, April 2008

1. Introduction

Across many languages and constructions, it is common to come across sentences in which a verbal argument is represented twice—once by a full noun-phrase, and once by a phonologically small morpheme. This morpheme matches the ϕ -features of the full noun-phrase, and is affixed either to the verb itself, or to some member of the extended verbal projection (an auxiliary verb, a tense marker, or an aspectual marker):

- (1) host+[*agreement-morpheme*] _{ϕ_1} ... <other material> ... [*full noun-phrase*] _{ϕ_1}

Let us refer to this morpheme as the *agreement-morpheme*, and the element to which it attaches (e.g., the verb) as the *host*.

The linguistic literature of the past few decades has identified two kinds of operations that can give rise to this state of affairs. One is *agreement*, in which the host and the full noun-phrase enter into some formal relation, as a result of which features of the full noun-phrase (e.g., person, number, gender) are morphologically reflected on the host. The other operation is *clitic-doubling*, which generally refers to a situation in which a phonologically small, pronoun-like morpheme is generated on the basis of the full noun-phrase—with features (e.g., person, number, gender) that match the full noun-phrase—and affixes to the host.

In this paper, I propose a novel way to distinguish between agreement and clitic-doubling, based on examining what happens when the relation in question fails to obtain. For concreteness, I assume the accounts of *agreement* and *clitic-doubling* given by Chomsky (2000, 2001) and Anagnostopoulou (2003), respectively—though as far as I can tell, the proposal is not crucially dependent on adopting these frameworks; any framework that gives a principled account of the properties in (2–3), below, can be substituted for these accounts, without changing the substance of the current proposal.

Agreement—henceforth, the *Agree* operation—can be characterized by the following properties (Chomsky 2000, 2001, and many others):

- (2) Agree:
- a. is subject to *defective intervention*:
 - a host cannot *Agree* with a given noun-phrase if there is another noun-phrase structurally closer to the host (Chomsky 2001, McGinnis 1998, and many others)
 - b. is subject to a locality condition, that prevents it from operating across the boundaries of a tensed clause (e.g., Chomsky's 2000, 2001 *Phase Impenetrability Condition*)

[†]Thanks to Elena Anagnostopoulou, Rajesh Bhatt, Sabine Iatridou, Idan Landau, David Pesetsky, Milan Rezac, Norvin Richards, Susi Wurmbrand, and especially Andrew Nevins, for discussion, comments and ideas; thanks also to audiences at MIT's *Ling-Lunch*, and *GLOW 31* (at Newcastle University); and thanks to Ricardo Etxepare and Aritz Irurtzun, who are the source of all Basque data herein, unless otherwise noted. All errors are my own.

The characteristics of clitic-doubling are crucially different (see [Anagnostopoulou 2003](#), and references cited there):

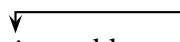
(3) Clitic-doubling:

- a. voids the status of its target as an intervener:¹
 - the “chain” formed by clitic-doubling (i.e., the syntactic object consisting of the generated clitic and the full noun-phrase that it doubles) behaves as an A-chain, whose head is the clitic ([Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1997](#), [Anagnostopoulou 1994](#), [Sportiche 1996, 1998](#))
 - only the heads of A-chains can intervene ([Chomsky 1995, et seq.](#))
- b. conforms to a locality condition which for the current purposes can be approximated as the *clause-mate* relation
 - see [Iatridou \(1990\)](#) and related literature for more precise accounts

Note that (3b) is meant to capture the locality conditions on clitic-doubling, factoring out phenomena such as *clitic-climbing*. Crucially, clitic-climbing is widely assumed to be possible only under restructuring/“clause-union” ([Burzio 1986](#), [Rizzi 1982](#), [Sportiche 1996](#))—and as will be shown in §2.3, the data examined in this paper cannot be accounted for in terms of restructuring. The formulation in (3b) is therefore sufficient for the purposes of this paper.

As mentioned earlier, the novel diagnostic proposed in this paper centers around the question of what happens when the relation in question fails to obtain. *Prima facie*, one might expect a failed attempt at establishing *Agree* to give rise to ungrammaticality; this is precisely what one finds in French dative experiencer constructions, for example:

- (4) ?* Jean_i semble à Marie [t_i avoir du talent]. (French)
 Jean seems to Marie have.INF of talent
 ‘Jean seems to Marie to have talent.’ *[Anagnostopoulou 2003, (66b)]*

- (5)  Jean_i lui_j-semble t_j [t_i avoir du talent].
 Jean her.DAT-seems have.INF of talent
 ‘Jean seems to her to have talent.’ *[Anagnostopoulou 2003, (72a)]*

In (4), the dative à Marie (‘to Marie’) intervenes, blocking *Agree* between *semble* (‘seem’)—or more precisely, the T⁰ head to which *semble* attaches—and the target noun-phrase *Jean*. However, if the dative intervener is moved out of the way (as in (5)), the aforementioned *Agree* relation can obtain (which in French, also results in movement of the target noun-phrase to [Spec,TP]). Crucially, the configuration in which *Agree* is blocked results in ungrammaticality.

Nevertheless, this is not always so: as shown by [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir \(2003\)](#), intervention effects in Icelandic do not give rise to outright ungrammaticality, but rather to the appearance of default number features on the probing head. Consider the following examples:

¹As noted by [Anagnostopoulou \(2003\)](#), Spanish may pose a counterexample to this generalization (see [Torrego 1996, 1998](#), and the discussion in [Anagnostopoulou 2003](#)).

- (6) Manninum virðast [hestarnir vera seinir]. (Icelandic)
 the.man.sg.DAT seem.pl the.horses.pl.NOM be slow
 ‘The man finds the horses slow.’ [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir 2003, (11a–b)]
- (7) það virðist/*virðast einhverjum manni [hestarnir vera seinir].
 EXPL seem.sg/*seem.pl some man.sg.DAT the.horses.pl.NOM be slow
 ‘A man finds the horses slow.’ [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir 2003, (12a–b)]

In (6), the matrix verb *virðast* (‘seem.pl’) exhibits agreement in number (albeit, optionally) with the plural nominative subject of the embedded clause (*hestarnir* ‘the.horses.NOM’). In (7), however, the structural position of the dative experiencer *einhverjum manni* (‘some man.DAT’) gives rise to intervention, blocking the aforementioned agreement relation. Crucially, this does not result in the ungrammaticality of (7); instead, the matrix verb is restricted to its default (i.e., singular) form—*virðist*—but the sentence remains grammatical.

The factors that determine whether a failed *Agree* relation results in ungrammaticality (as in the French example in (4)), or not (as in the Icelandic example in (7)), are not well-understood—nor will I provide a comprehensive account of them here. However, the behavior of such constructions when they *are* grammatical, as in Icelandic, is not altogether surprising: agreement is essentially a feature-valuation relation; thus, if it fails for some reason, those features on the host which were supposed to be valued by the target noun-phrase do not in fact get valued. Therefore, if these features were to receive any morphological realization whatsoever, it stands to reason that their realization would be that of default values. Clitic-doubling, on the other hand, refers to the very creation of a feature-matched pronominal morpheme on the basis of an existing noun-phrase; its failure should therefore result in the absence of such a morpheme altogether.

The relevant contrast can therefore be stated as follows: while failed *Agree* should result in the appearance of a morpheme with default features (if the resulting utterance is grammatical at all), failed clitic-doubling should result in the wholesale absence of the relevant morpheme.² The goal is therefore to come up with configurations in which the relevant relation between the agreement-morpheme and the host is broken, and investigate which of these two results emerges. This is formalized below:

- (8) Given a scenario where the relation \mathcal{R} between an agreement-morpheme \mathcal{M} and target noun-phrase \mathcal{X} is broken—but the result is still a grammatical utterance—the proposed diagnostic supplies a conclusion about \mathcal{R} as follows:
- a. \mathcal{M} shows up with default φ -features (rather than the features of \mathcal{X}) $\longrightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is *Agree*
 - b. \mathcal{M} disappears entirely $\longrightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is clitic-doubling

Note that the proposal does not stake a claim about the deep ontology of clitics. The underlying workings of clitic-doubling are a topic of much debate in the literature; see Anagnostopoulou (2003, pp. 211–212) for a review of the three main approaches.³ At the same time, the properties of clitic-doubling listed in (3a–b) are virtually uncontroversial. Therefore, it is still possible to *identify*

²This contrast will be undetectable if the morphological realization of default features is itself phonologically null; fortunately, this is not always so.

³The approaches discussed by Anagnostopoulou (2003) are:

- (i) the clitic and the full noun-phrase represent two pronounced copies of the same movement chain

whether a relation is clitic-doubling or not—and to determine whether a novel diagnostic correlates reliably with these established properties—which is the focus of the current paper.

The workings of the proposed diagnostic will be demonstrated using a family of constructions in dialectal Basque (Etxepare 2005). These constructions are a particularly useful testing ground for the proposed diagnostic (given in (8), above), due to the convergence of several factors: the full noun-phrase and the host are sufficiently far away from each other in this construction (structurally speaking), to allow manipulations that would otherwise be unavailable; certain aspects of Basque syntax—such as the structure of ditransitive verb-phrases—are independently well understood, and can therefore be used as a baseline; and finally, the Basque auxiliary carries multiple kinds of agreement-morphology, and thus, the results of applying the proposed diagnostic to one kind of morpheme can be contrasted with its results when applied to a different morpheme *within the same construction, in the same language*.

Besides supporting the proposed diagnostic, the analysis of Basque also provides an ancillary result, which would otherwise be unavailable: from a typological perspective, it places the Basque agreement system on a par with systems that are familiar from nominative-accusative languages (modulo the independently necessary distinctions between nominative-accusative languages and ergative-absolutive languages).

The relevant Basque constructions, as well as their analysis (largely inspired by Etxepare 2005), will be introduced in section §2. In section §3, I apply the proposed diagnostic to these constructions, and show how they line up with the well-established properties of *Agree* and clitic-doubling in (2) and (3), respectively. Section §4 is the conclusion.

2. Apparent *Long-Distance Agreement* in Dialectal Basque

2.1. A First Glance at Basque Agreement-Morphology

Consider the following Basque sentences:⁴

- (9) Gu amama-ri [bisit-a egite-ra] joan ga- tzai- zki- o.
 we(ABS) grandmother-DAT visit-ART(ABS) make-DIR gone 1.ABS- be- pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT
 ‘We have gone to grandmother to make a visit.’ [Laka 2005, (43)]
- (10) Guraso-e-k niri belarritako ederr-ak erosi d- i- zki-
 parents-ART_{pl}-ERG me-DAT earrings beautiful-ART_{pl}(ABS) bought 3.ABS- have- pl.ABS-
 da- te.
 1sg.DAT- 3pl.ERG
 ‘(My) parents have bought me beautiful earrings.’ [Laka 2005, (52)]

-
- (ii) the clitic is a sub-part of the extended projection of the noun-phrase (e.g., the D⁰ head), which has undergone head-movement and head-adjunction to the host (as in Torrego 1988, Uriagereka 1995, Rezac to appear)
- (iii) the clitic is the result of spelling out particular ϕ -features which have undergone feature-movement from the full noun-phrase to the host (as in Anagnostopoulou 1999)

⁴Legend for glosses: ABS=absolutive; ART=article; BEN=benefactive; DAT=dative; ERG=ergative; GEN=genitive; HAB=habitual; LOC=locative; NMZ=nominalizer; pl=plural; sg=singular; 1,2,3=persons.

As can be seen in the above examples, the Basque auxiliary carries agreement-morphemes that reflect the number and person features of each Case-marked noun-phrase in its clause (absolutive, dative, or ergative). Typologically, this might seem like a rather exotic agreement system. However, as I will argue in section §3, this appearance is largely misleading, as the Basque agreement system actually behaves as one would expect of an agreement system in an ergative language.

In the following sections, I will present two constructions that provide insight into the underlying nature of the various agreement-morphemes that the auxiliary carries—in particular, into discerning whether each kind of agreement-morpheme comes about via *Agree* or via clitic-doubling.

2.2. The Data

[Etxepare \(2005\)](#) discusses a dialect of Basque where certain constructions exhibit apparent *Long-Distance Agreement* (henceforth, *LDA*). Consider (11–12), below:

- (11) Uko egin d- i- ϕ - [e]- ϕ [[agindu horiek]_{DP_T}
 refusal(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- 3sg.ERG orders those_{pl}(ABS)
 bete-tze-a-ri]_{DP_C}.
 obey-NMZ-ART-DAT
 ‘(S)he has refused to obey those orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG]) [*Etxepare 2005*, (99)]
- (12) Muzin egin d- i- ϕ - [e]- ϕ [[horrelako liburu-ak]_{DP_T}
 frown(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- 3sg.ERG such books-ART_{pl}(ABS)
 argitara-tze-a-ri]_{DP_C}.
 publish-NMZ-ART-DAT
 ‘(S)he has frowned on publishing such books.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG]) [*Etxepare 2005*, (86b)]

The examples in (11–12) conform to the following structural description:

- (13) [[[[DP_T V⁰]-tze-a]_{DP_C} V⁰]_{VP} ... aux]_{auxP}

I will refer to this construction as *the Case-marked construction*.

DP_T refers to the noun-phrase whose plurality determines the plural morphology on the auxiliary, while DP_C refers to the entire nominalized embedded clause—including the article (*/-a/*), as well as whatever Case-marking is appropriate (*/-ri/*, when the Case is dative).⁵ Interestingly, the agreement-morpheme whose plurality is determined by DP_T is the dative agreement-morpheme on the auxiliary. This corresponds to the Case-marking on DP_C (which is dative), rather than the Case-marking on DP_T (which is absolutive).

These two Case-markings can be the same, of course:

- (14) [[Nobela erromantiko-ak]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a]_{DP_C} gustatzen ϕ - zai- [zki]- o.
 novels romantic-ART_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART(ABS) like(HAB) 3.ABS- be- pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT
 ‘(S)he likes to read romantic novels.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.DAT]) [*Etxepare 2005*, (1b)]

⁵“T” is short for *Target*, “C” is short for *Clausal*.

In (14), both DP_C and DP_T are marked with absolutive Case, and not surprisingly, it is the absolutive agreement-morpheme on the auxiliary whose plurality is determined by the plurality of DP_T.

While the examples in (11–12) and (14) exhibit what appears to be LDA in number features, comparable effects involving person features are unattested in the Case-marked construction:

- (15) * [[zu]_{DP_T} gonbida-tze-a]_{DP_C} baztertu za- it- u- zte.
 you(ABS) invite-NMZ-ART(ABS) refused 2.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have refused to invite you.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (117b)]

Expressing the intended meaning of (15) is only possible by means of a paraphrase (e.g., by using a construction in which the embedded clause is a CP, rather than a nominalized clause).

Note that the ungrammaticality of (15) is not a *Person-Case Constraint* (henceforth, *PCC*) effect; *za-it-u-zte* is a possible auxiliary form, just not in (15). PCC effects in Basque are restricted to combinations involving dative agreement-morphemes (see Laka 2005, Rezac 2006, 2007, among others).

Unlike the Case-marked construction, in which the nominalized clause is introduced by the article and its associated Case morphology (null, when the Case is absolutive), this dialect of Basque has a construction which exhibits similar LDA-like effects, but in which the nominalized clause is introduced by the adposition */-n/*:⁶

- (16) [[Harri horiek]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
 stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to lift those stones.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (85a)]
- (17) Jon-i [[kopla horiek]_{DP_T} kanta-tze-n] entzun d- i- zki- o- t.
 Jon-DAT songs those_{pl}(ABS) sing-NMZ-LOC heard 3.ABS- have- pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT- 1sg.ERG
 ‘I have heard/listened to Jon singing those songs.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (88a)]

The examples in (16–17) conform to the following structural description:

- (18) [[[[DP_T V⁰]-tze-n]_{PP} V⁰]_{VP} ... aux]_{auxP}

I will refer to this construction as *the adpositional construction*.

Given (16–17), in which the embedded clause contains a single overt argument marked with absolutive Case, one might expect to find comparable instances of apparent LDA into an

⁶There is a similar construction involving the adposition */-ko/*, rather than */-n/*:

- (i) [[Liburu-ak]_{DP_T} itzul-tze-ko] eskatu d- i- zki- da- te.
 books-ART_{pl}(ABS) return-NMZ-GEN.LOC asked 3.ABS- have- pl.ABS- 1sg.DAT- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have asked me to return the books.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG], experiencer argument is [*pro*-1sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (114b)]

However, the status of */-ko/*-phrases with respect to the presence or absence of the article is far more difficult to ascertain. I will therefore leave the */-ko/*-construction—as exemplified by (i)—aside for the purposes of this paper.

adpositional clause that contains a single overt argument marked with dative Case. Interestingly, this expectation is not realized—targeting a dative DP_T in the adpositional construction is impossible:

- (19) * [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tzai- ϕ - \bar{e} - n.
 orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1.ABS- be- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

In contrast to the Case-marked construction, the adpositional construction does allow for the person features of the agreement-morphemes on the auxiliary to be determined by the person features of DP_T (on par with its ability to reflect the number features of DP_T). There is a slight complication here, which is that the morphological paradigms for three-place auxiliaries (i.e., auxiliaries that simultaneously carry agreement-morphemes corresponding to absolutive, dative, and ergative noun-phrases) lack entries corresponding to 1st/2nd-person absolutive (a fact that has been analyzed as an instance of the *PCC*; see [Rezac 2006, 2007](#)); and as shown above, only absolutive noun-phrases can be targeted in the adpositional construction. Therefore, if the configuration calls for a three-place auxiliary, there is no morphological way to realize the person features of DP_T on the auxiliary. As a result, one must construct examples that call for a two-place auxiliary; fortunately, this is possible, even within the confines of the adpositional construction:

- (20) [[Ni]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu \bar{n} a- ϕ - u- te.
 me(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 1.ABS- sg.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They attempted to lift me.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG])

As (20) shows, when one controls for the availability of morphological forms, the auxiliary in the adpositional construction will reflect the person features of DP_T, as well as its number features.

Note that in both the Case-marked construction and the adpositional construction, we find the morpheme /-tze/—which is widely considered to be a nominalizer, on par with English gerund morphology ([Trask 2003](#)). I will therefore consider it a head of category *n*⁰ (due to its nominalizing function), which projects a phrase of category *nP*.

2.3. The Prospects for a Restructuring Account

In this subsection, I address the possibility of providing a restructuring account for the LDA-like effects in the Case-marked construction and in the adpositional construction—in other words, for the presence of agreement-morphemes on the upstairs auxiliary that reflect the ϕ -features of an argument of the downstairs predicate. If restructuring is indeed “clause-union”, such an analysis makes the prediction that arguments of the downstairs verb would behave—for Case/agreement purposes—as if they were part of the upstairs clause.

Recall that in simple, mono-clausal constructions, the Basque auxiliary carries agreement-morphemes that match both the number features and the person features of its clause-mate arguments—be they absolutive, dative, or ergative (see §2.1). In the Case-marked construction, however, only the number features of DP_T—the argument of the embedded verb—are reflected by

the agreement-morphemes of the upstairs auxiliary (as in (14), repeated below), to the exclusion of its person features (as shown (15), repeated below):

- (14) [[Nobela erromantiko-ak]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a]_{DP_C} gustatzen ϕ - zai- zki- o.
 novels romantic-ART_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART(ABS) like(HAB) 3.ABS- be- pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT
 ‘(S)he likes to read romantic novels.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (1b)]
- (15) * [[zu]_{DP_T} gonbida-tze-a]_{DP_C} baztertu za- it- u- zte.
you(ABS) invite-NMZ-ART(ABS) refused 2.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have refused to invite you.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (117b)]

Thus, arguments of the downstairs verb do not behave—for Case/agreement purposes—as if they were part of the upstairs clause. This is contrary to the expectation that a restructuring/“clause-union” account would generate.

One may seek to salvage a restructuring account for the Case-marked construction, by assuming that it is an instance of partial restructuring—namely, that the embedded domain contains the functional layer relevant to person agreement, but lacks the functional layer relevant to number agreement. Thus, the number features of DP_T would be able to trigger agreement on the upstairs number agreement layer, whereas the person features of DP_T will already have triggered agreement on the embedded person agreement layer, rendering the person features of DP_T inactive and invisible to the upstairs person agreement layer. However, this requires separate ϕ -features of the same noun-phrase to be activated and inactivated independently of each other—and in particular, it requires the person features of DP_T to become inactivated (and therefore invisible) at the same point in the derivation where the number features of the very same noun-phrase are still active and visible. This conflicts with the established mechanics of defective intervention: it is the noun-phrase as a whole (i.e., its complete set of ϕ -features) that is either active or inactive (see the discussion in Chomsky 2000, p. 124; and in Chomsky 2001, p. 15).

In the adpositional construction, though both the number features and the person features of DP_T can be reflected by the agreement-morphemes of the upstairs auxiliary, both sets of features can only be reflected if DP_T is absolutive (as in (16), repeated below), not if it is dative (as in (19), repeated below):

- (16) [[Harri horiek]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
 stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to lift those stones.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (85a)]
- (19) * [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tzai- ϕ - e- n.
orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1.ABS- be- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

Thus, in the adpositional construction, dative arguments of the downstairs verb do not behave—for Case/agreement purposes—as if they were part of the upstairs clause. Again, this is contrary to the expectation that a restructuring/“clause-union” account would generate.

Again, one may seek to salvage a restructuring account by assuming that this is an instance of partial restructuring—in particular, that the embedded domain contains the functional layer relevant to dative agreement, but lacks the functional layer relevant to absolutive agreement. Thus, an absolutive DP in the embedded domain will be able to trigger agreement on the upstairs absolutive agreement layer, whereas a dative DP in the embedded domain will already have triggered agreement on the downstairs dative agreement layer, rendering its own φ -features inactive and invisible to the upstairs dative agreement layer. There are two main reasons to reject such an account. First, it is not clear why such dative agreement in the embedded clause would lack any overt manifestation—in stark contrast to the general pattern of dative agreement in Basque. More importantly, however, section §3 will show converging evidence that the dative agreement-morpheme in Basque is not a reflex of *Agree* at all, but rather the result of clitic-doubling; as such, it should not be subject to the logic of activation and inactivation, needed for a partial restructuring account.

It therefore appears that both in the Case-marked construction and in the adpositional construction, the presence of agreement-morphemes on the upstairs auxiliary that reflect the φ -features of an argument of the downstairs predicate cannot be accounted for in terms of restructuring. This does not entail, however, that the embedded domain (containing the downstairs verb) is not a restructuring domain—in other words, it does not entail that the embedded domain in fact contains the functional projections typical to a matrix clause. In fact, the analysis in §2.4, below, will assume the embedded domain is in fact a bare VP; the point of this subsection has been to show that this alone would not be sufficient to account for the distribution of agreement-morphemes on the upstairs auxiliary.

Note that the same facts preclude an analysis of either the Case-marked construction or the adpositional construction in terms of movement of the embedded argument (i.e., DP_T) into the matrix clause (along the lines of *Object Shift* in Scandinavian languages). If DP_T in the Case-marked construction occupied a position in the matrix clause, the auxiliary would be able to reflect its person features, as well as its number features—contra (15). Similarly, if DP_T in the adpositional construction occupied a position in the matrix clause, the auxiliary would be able to reflect its features even if it were dative—contra (19).

2.4. Analyzing the Two Constructions

In this section, I present an analysis of the two LDA-like constructions introduced in §2.2. The analysis—particularly, of the Case-marked construction—is very much inspired by the analysis in Etxepare (2005).

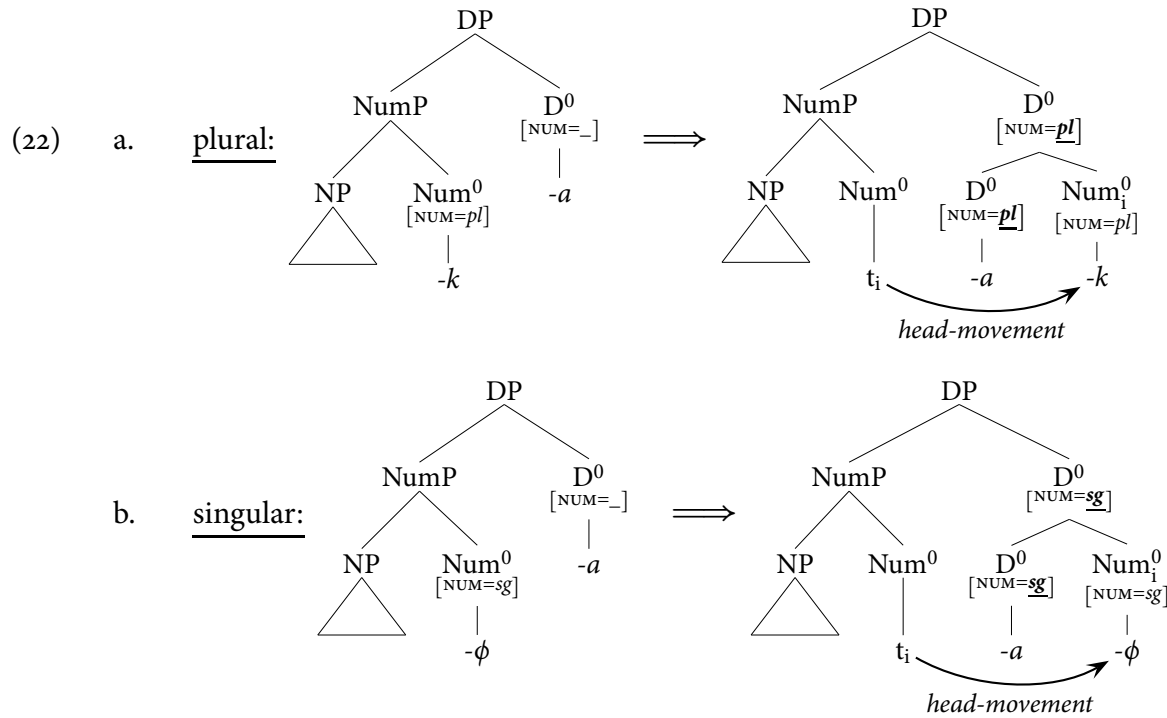
As discussed earlier, the distinctive feature of the Case-marked construction is the appearance of the article, along with its associated Case-marking morphology (which is null, when the Case is absolutive). Let us therefore take a closer look at the morphology of the Basque article:

(21)

NUM	article
sg.	-a
pl.	-ak

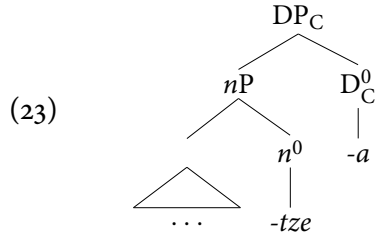
It seems plausible that the Basque article is in fact composed of two independent parts: an invariant */-a/* morpheme, and a number morpheme, which is */-k/* when $[NUM=pl]$, and either null or missing when $[NUM=sg]$ (see [Etxepare 2003](#), who adopts a similar analysis for Basque).

Based on this observation, I propose the following general structure for noun-phrases in Basque (in the interest of keeping to a uniform analysis, I assume that the structure is essentially the same when $[NUM=pl]$ and when $[NUM=sg]$, and that the Num^0 morpheme is simply null in the latter scenario; see [Borer 2005](#) and [Sauerland 2003](#), among others, for arguments that in the nominal domain, number features are always checked by a separate syntactic head):



The Basque D⁰ enters the derivation bearing an unvalued number feature (marked $[NUM=_]$ in (22a–b)). This feature probes for a valued counterpart with which it can establish an *Agree* relation, and finds one on Num⁰. Since D⁰ and Num⁰ are in an immediate c-command relation, Num⁰-to-D⁰ head-movement is triggered (see [Pesetsky and Torrego 2001](#), who argue that this is a general property of such a syntactic configuration). This results in the fusing of the */-a/* morpheme (associated with D⁰) and the */-k/* or */-ϕ/* morpheme (associated with Num⁰) into what we might call “the article” (i.e., */-a(k)/*). On this view, the */-ak/* variant of the article is not the direct realization of a $[NUM=pl]$ feature on D⁰, but rather the result of head-adjunction of a Num⁰ head with a $[NUM=pl]$ feature (realized by */-k/*) to D⁰ (realized by */-a/*).

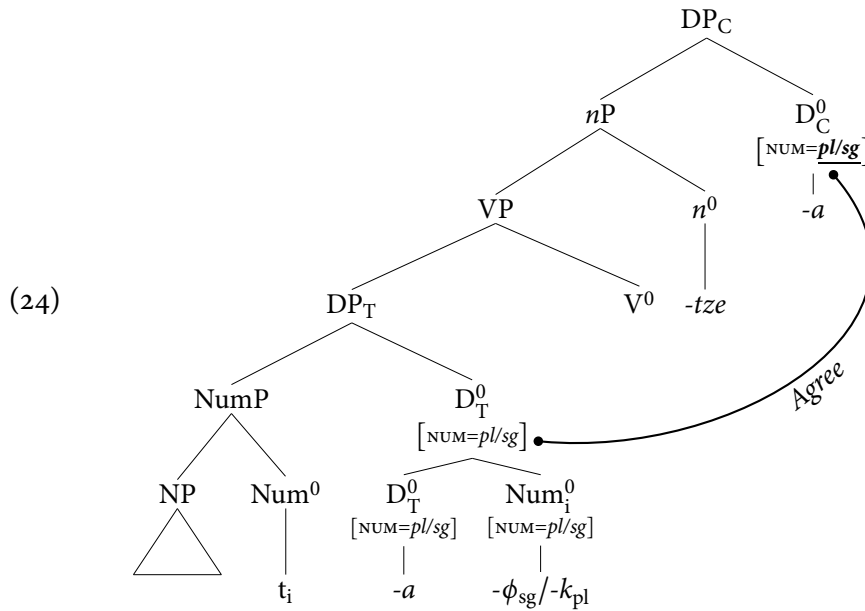
In the Case-marked construction, however, only the */-a/* form of the article is attested on the Case-marked nominalized clause (DP_C), to the exclusion of the */-ak/* form. This suggests that in the Case-marked construction, D_C⁰ selects *nP* (the phrase headed by */-tze/*; see §2.2) directly—rather than selecting a NumP:



By hypothesis, D_C^0 carries an unvalued number feature ($[NUM=_]$), as any other D^0 head would. As usual, this feature will probe in search of a valued number feature with which to establish an *Agree* relation. In this situation, however, there is no number feature on the category that is the immediate complement of D^0 (the */-tze/-*phrase, labeled nP). In fact, there is arguably no closer number feature than the one on DP_T (the argument of the embedded verb).⁷

The nominalized embedded clauses in question (both in the Case-marked construction and in the adpositional construction) exhibit the characteristics of obligatory control (Ettxepare 2005). Thus, following Wurmbrand's (2001) analysis of obligatory control complements, Ettxepare (2005) argues that the complement of $[-tze]_{n^0}$ in these constructions is a bare VP. The unvalued number feature on D_C^0 is therefore able to probe into that VP, and establish an *Agree* relation with an argument within it (i.e., with DP_T , an argument of the downstairs V^0).

This is schematized below:



In (24), there are intervening heads between D_C^0 and D_T^0 —namely, V^0 and $[-tze]_{n^0}$. Hence, head-movement of the kind shown in (22a–b) cannot arise here (due to the *Head-Movement Constraint*; Travis 1984). The morpheme in D_T^0 (*/-a/* if DP_T is singular, */-ak/* if it is plural) is therefore unable to move to D_C^0 . This derives the fact that the article that introduces DP_C is always */-a/*, and in particular, that it never carries the */-k/* morphology.

⁷This valued number feature on DP_T will itself have come about by virtue of an unvalued number feature ($[NUM=_]$) on D_T^0 (the head of DP_T) having agreed with a valued number feature on the head of the $NumP$ complement of D_T^0 —in the same manner shown in (22).

On this view, apparent LDA in the Case-marked construction is in fact comprised of two separate relations, “stacked” on top of one another. The first is *Agree* between D_C^0 and DP_T , as outlined above. The second is the relation between the auxiliary and DP_C . Let us refer to the Case-marking on DP_C as \mathcal{CM}_C . Since DP_C occupies a canonical argument position, whatever mechanism gives rise to agreement with \mathcal{CM}_C -marked noun-phrases in straightforward mono-clausal constructions in Basque (whether it is *Agree* or clitic-doubling) will operate here as well. Thus, the agreement-morpheme corresponding to \mathcal{CM}_C -marked arguments will reflect the number feature that has been transmitted from DP_T to D_C^0 via *Agree* in (24).

In contrast to number features, and their morphological realization as /-k/ when [NUM=pl], Basque has no sign of person-morphology on the article. Therefore, an analogous story involving person features is far less plausible. The existence of number-morphology on the Basque article, and the absence of comparable person-morphology, thus derives the lack of comparable LDA-like effects in person features—as exemplified by the contrast between (14) and (15) (repeated below):

- (14) [[Nobela erromantiko-ak]]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a]_{DP_C} gustatzen ϕ - zai- zki- o.
 novels romantic-ART_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART(ABS) like(HAB) 3.ABS- be- pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT
 ‘(S)he likes to read romantic novels.’
 (subject is [pro-3sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (1b)]
- (15) * [[zu]]_{DP_T} gonbida-tze-a]_{DP_C} baztertu za- it- u- zte.
you(ABS) invite-NMZ-ART(ABS) refused 2.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have refused to invite you.’
 (subject is [pro-3sg.DAT]) [Etxepare 2005, (117b)]

Further support for the crucial role of D_C^0/DP_C , as an “intermediary” in the transmission of number features from DP_T to the auxiliary, comes from the comparison with the adpositional construction, in which the auxiliary is able to reflect the person features of DP_T (a point to which I will return shortly). Briefly, the adpositional construction lacks a DP layer (as will be shown), and therefore lacks a comparable “intermediary” in the transmission of features from the embedded noun-phrase to the upstairs auxiliary; consequently, there is no asymmetry between the transmission of number features and person features (also demonstrating that there is nothing inherently problematic with agreement in Basque targeting the person features of a noun-phrase that is in an embedded clause).

This analysis of the Case-marked construction shares with Etxepare’s (2005) account the pivotal role of D_C^0/DP_C in the transmission of number features in the Case-marked construction. Unlike the current account, however, Etxepare argues that the ϕ -features on the auxiliary/agreement-morpheme enter into two *Agree* relations: once with DP_C in its entirety, and a second time with DP_T (on the issue of a single probe entering into multiple *Agree* relations, see Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Bhatt 2005, Richards 2005). DP_C , in Etxepare’s account, has 3rd-person features, but no number features; it therefore values the person features on the probe, but does not value its number features. Subsequent *Agree* by the same probe must therefore target goals with the same person value (namely, 3rd-person; see Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Richards 2005). Thus, we get the appearance that the auxiliary/agreement-morpheme can agree in number, but not in person, with DP_T .

Under the current account, in contrast, there are two probes—namely, the auxiliary/agreement-morpheme and D_C^0 —each of which probes exactly once. The role that D_C^0 plays in the current

account—a probe that initiates its own *Agree* operations with DP_T —allows a straightforward account for the susceptibility of the LDA-like effects in the Case-marked construction to intervention, even when the relation between the upstairs auxiliary/agreement-morpheme and DP_C is a kind of relation that is clearly not susceptible to intervention (such as dative agreement-morphology; see §3.3).

In the adpositional construction, the nominalized clause (i.e., the nP headed by the nominalizing morpheme, $[-tze]_{n^0}$) is not selected by the article; rather, it is selected by the adposition $[-n]_{p^0}$ directly (see also [Laka 2006a,b](#)). Recall (16), repeated below:

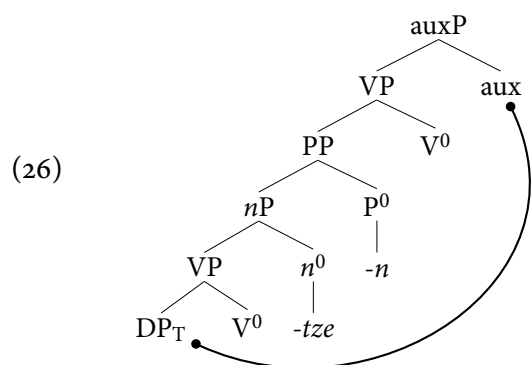
- (16) [[Harri horiék] $_{DP_T}$ altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
 stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to lift those stones.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (85a)]

The fact that the article is indeed absent between the nominalizer (*/-tze/*) and the adposition (*/-n/*) can be seen by examining the behavior of the same adposition with regular lexical noun-phrases:

- (25) a. etxe-n
 house-LOC
 ‘at home (*lit.*: in a house)’
 b. etxe-a-n
 house-ART-LOC
 ‘in the house’

As shown in (25), the article (*/-a/*) is discernible before */-n/*, even in post-vocalic position. Crucially, the adpositional construction (e.g., (16)) is on a par with (25a), rather than (25b). The nominalizing morpheme (*/-tze/*) and the adposition (*/-n/*) appear adjacent to each other, without the article (*/-a/*) in between them.

Since there is no evidence of a DP layer between the auxiliary and the embedded verb and its arguments, it is plausible to handle the adpositional construction in terms of straightforward infinitival embedding (along the lines proposed by [Wurmbrand 2001](#)):



The subordinating verb takes a PP complement headed by $[-n]_{p^0}$, which itself takes as its complement an nP headed by $[-tze]_{n^0}$, which itself takes a VP as its complement.

Since in (26), there is no locality boundary (DP, CP, or ν P) in between the auxiliary and DP_T , the relation between the two is on par with agreement in the English expletive-associate construction, as far as locality is concerned:

- (27) There were likely [to appear [to be arrested [_{DP} three men]]].

In (27), agreement on the auxiliary (*were*) is determined by the plurality of *three men*. This relation, just like the one proposed in (26), does not span across the boundaries of a DP, a CP, or an active-transitive ν P.

This analysis of the adpositional construction makes a further prediction, regarding person features. Recall that in the Case-marked construction, what appeared to be a single long-distance agreement relation was in fact broken down into two relations, each of which is perfectly local, which are “stacked” on top of one another: the relation between D_C^0 , the head of the enclosing DP layer, and DP_T (which was analyzed as an *Agree* relation), and the relation between the auxiliary and DP_C . The presence of an unvalued number feature on D_C^0 is what allows the number features that originated on DP_T to show up on the auxiliary.

In the proposed analysis of the adpositional construction, however, there is no comparable “intermediary”. Under the current proposal, the adpositional construction is an instance of the upstairs auxiliary agreeing with DP_T directly; and in simple, mono-clausal constructions, the Basque auxiliary carries agreement-morphemes that match both the number features and the person features of its clause-mate arguments. Thus, we predict that the auxiliary would reflect the person features of DP_T , as well as its number features. As shown in (20) (repeated below), this is indeed true:⁸

- (20) [[Ni]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu na- ϕ - u- te.
me(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 1.ABS- sg.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They attempted to lift me.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG])

The example in (20) also demonstrates that when one controls for interfering factors (such as the PCC; see §2.2), one finds that there is nothing inherently wrong with agreement in person (as well as in number) between the auxiliary and a noun-phrase in an embedded clause in Basque.

As mentioned earlier, the impossibility of determining person agreement-morphology in the Case-marked construction (as opposed to the facts shown here for the adpositional construction) supports the notion that it is indeed D_C^0 , the so-called “intermediary”, whose features are responsible for transmitting feature values from DP_T to the agreement-morphemes in the Case-marked construction. The fact that D_C^0 (like any other D^0) has number features but no person features, accounts for the asymmetry between number and person in the Case-marked construction.

On this account, there is no difference in the syntax of the */-tze/*-phrase (i.e., the n P), between instances where it is selected by the article (i.e., the Case-marked construction), and instances where it is selected by an adposition (i.e., the adpositional construction). In both constructions, $[-tze]_{n^0}$

⁸See §2.3 for why the distribution of agreement-morphemes in this construction cannot be analyzed in terms of restructuring (or partial restructuring) alone.

selects a VP as its complement; the differences between the two constructions follow from the difference in the category that selects the */-tze/-* phrase.

3. *Agree* and Clitic-Doubling in Basque

As outlined in §1, the goal of this paper is to demonstrate a novel diagnostic for distinguishing *Agree* from clitic-doubling—summarized in (8), repeated below:

- (8) Given a scenario where the relation \mathcal{R} between an agreement-morpheme \mathcal{M} and target noun-phrase \mathcal{X} is broken—but the result is still a grammatical utterance—the proposed diagnostic supplies a conclusion about \mathcal{R} as follows:
- a. \mathcal{M} shows up with default φ -features (rather than the features of \mathcal{X}) $\rightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is *Agree*
 - b. \mathcal{M} disappears entirely $\rightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is clitic-doubling

In the following subsections, I apply this diagnostic to the various agreement-morphemes found on the Basque auxiliary, using the constructions introduced in section §2 (and in particular, their limitations) to generate configurations in which the relation between the agreement-morpheme and the full noun-phrase whose φ -features it matches breaks down. I show that systematically, the verdict that this new diagnostic produces lines up with the characteristics of *Agree* and clitic-doubling identified in (2) and (3), respectively, and repeated below:

- (2) *Agree*:
- a. is subject to *defective intervention* (Chomsky 2001, McGinnis 1998, and many others)
 - b. is subject to a locality condition, that prevents it from operating across the boundaries of a tensed clause (e.g., Chomsky’s 2000, 2001 *Phase Impenetrability Condition*)
- (3) Clitic-doubling:
- a. voids the status of its target as an intervener (Anagnostopoulou 2003)
 - b. conforms to a locality condition which for the current purposes can be approximated as the *clause-mate* relation (see Iatridou (1990) and related literature)⁹

3.1. *Agree* vs. Clitic-Doubling in the Adpositional Construction

As shown in §2.2, the adpositional construction can target an absolutive DP_T , but not a dative one—recall the contrast between (16) and (19), repeated below:

- (16) [[Harri horiek] _{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
‘They have attempted to lift those stones.’
(subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG]) [Ettxepare 2005, (85a)]

⁹As noted in the INTRODUCTION, (3b) is meant to capture the locality conditions on clitic-doubling, factoring out phenomena such as *clitic-climbing*. Crucially, clitic-climbing is widely assumed to be possible only under restructuring/“clause-union” (Burzio 1986, Rizzi 1982, Sportiche 1996)—and as will be shown in §2.3, the data examined in this paper cannot be accounted for in terms of restructuring. The formulation in (3b) is therefore sufficient for the purposes of this paper.

- (19) * [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tzai- ϕ - e- n.
orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1.ABS- be- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

Whatever the reasons for this may be, it is quite clear that the relation that gives rise to the dative agreement-morpheme breaks down in the adpositional construction. It is therefore crucial, within the framework of the current proposal, to determine which of the following two repairs would render (19) grammatical: employing a dative agreement-morpheme with default features (which would indicate that the dative agreement-morpheme comes about by virtue of *Agree*), or eliminating the dative agreement-morpheme altogether (which would indicate that the dative agreement-morpheme comes about by virtue of clitic-doubling).

As shown in (28), below, using an auxiliary whose dative agreement-morpheme reflects default features (i.e., 3rd-person singular)—rather than the features of the dative DP_T—does not salvage this construction:

- (28) * [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tzai- ϕ - O- n.
orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1.ABS- be- sg.ABS- 3sg.DAT- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

On the other hand, using an auxiliary that lacks a dative agreement-morpheme altogether (i.e., an auxiliary that carries only absolutive agreement-morphemes) renders the sentence grammatical:

- (29) [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tze- n.
orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1sg.ABS- be- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

In other words, the relation between the dative agreement-morpheme and the dative noun-phrase behaves—according to the proposed diagnostic—as a clitic-doubling relation.

Crucially, the conclusion that the dative agreement-morpheme on the Basque auxiliary is the result of clitic-doubling (rather than *Agree*) fits well with the aforementioned well-established properties of clitic-doubling.

One such diagnostic has to do with locality restrictions. Recall that clitic-doubling is expected to adhere to the clause-mate restriction (since in these contexts, clitic-climbing is ruled out; see the discussion in the [INTRODUCTION](#)). Looking again at the ungrammaticality of (19), it appears that the clause-mate restriction is indeed operative:

- (19) * [[Agindu-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-n] saiatu nin- tzai- ϕ - e- n.
orders-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-LOC start 1.ABS- be- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- PAST
 ‘I started obeying the orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-1sg.ABS])

In (19), the dative DP_T and the auxiliary are in separate clauses. If the dative agreement-morpheme is indeed the result of clitic-doubling (and therefore, subject to the clause-mate restriction), it is to

be expected that generating a dative agreement-morpheme based on the φ -features of DP_T (in (19)) would be impossible.¹⁰

Another source of corroborating evidence that the dative agreement-morpheme is indeed the result of clitic-doubling (rather than *Agree*) is its behavior with respect to defective intervention. This will be discussed in §3.2.

An immediate consequence of the same approach is that unlike their dative counterpart, absolutive agreement-morphemes cannot be the result of clitic-doubling. That is because absolutive agreement-morphemes in the adpositional construction are able to reflect the φ -features of an absolutive DP_T located in the embedded clause—as in (16), repeated below:

- (16) [[Harri horiek]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
 stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to lift those stones.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG]) [Ettxepare 2005, (85a)]

Since the auxiliary and DP_T are not in a clause-mate relation in (16), and the relation responsible for generating absolutive agreement-morphemes can still be established, the relation must be one of *Agree* (rather than clitic-doubling).

3.2. Ditransitive Verb-Phrases and Defective Intervention

Section §3.1 ended with the conclusion that absolutive agreement-morphemes are the reflex of *Agree*. As discussed in the INTRODUCTION, this leads to an expectation that the relation between these morphemes and the full absolutive noun-phrase would be subject to intervention effects.

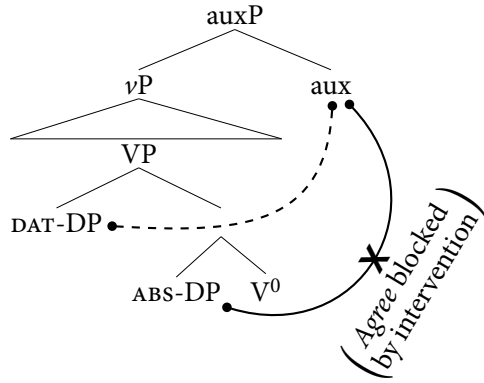
Consider ditransitive constructions in Basque—for example, (10), repeated below:

- (10) Guraso-e-k niri [belarritako ederr-ak] erosi d- i-
 parents-ART_{pl}-ERG me-DAT earrings beautiful-ART_{pl}(ABS) bought 3.ABS- have-
zki- da- te.
pl.ABS- 1sg.DAT- 3pl.ERG
 ‘(My) parents have bought me beautiful earrings.’ [Laka 2005, (52)]

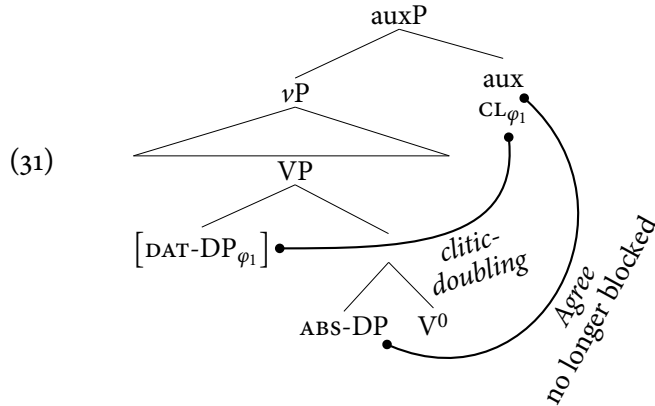
As (10) shows, the auxiliary is perfectly capable of bearing absolutive agreement-morphemes that match the φ -features of the full absolutive noun-phrase, even in ditransitive constructions. This may seem rather surprising, since it is rather well-established that in Basque, the dative argument of a ditransitive verb occupies a higher structural position than the absolutive argument (Elordieta 2001, among others). Given such a structural configuration, one might expect the dative noun-phrase to give rise to defective intervention (on par with the Icelandic constructions mentioned in the INTRODUCTION), preventing *Agree* between the auxiliary and the absolutive DP from obtaining:

¹⁰Note that there cannot be a locality boundary (e.g., a phase) in between the auxiliary and DP_T in (19) (and in the adpositional construction in general)—if there were, no LDA-like effects would ever show up in the adpositional construction (since *Agree* would be blocked by the locality boundary, and clitic-doubling would be blocked by the clause-mate restriction), contra the attested state of affairs (e.g., in (16), above).

(30) (unattested in mono-clausal ditransitives)



However, as (10) clearly shows, such intervention does not arise; the absolutive agreement-morphemes on the auxiliary are in fact able to reflect the φ -features of the absolutive noun-phrase. Nevertheless, as mentioned in the [INTRODUCTION](#), clitic-doubling of a noun-phrase has been cross-linguistically found to obviate subsequent intervention effects by that noun-phrase ([Anagnostopoulou 2003](#)); and as argued in §3.1, the dative agreement-morpheme—which is carried by the auxiliary in (10)—is the result of clitic-doubling. Therefore, in (10), one would in fact predict no intervention effects would arise, because clitic-doubling has rendered the full dative noun-phrase incapable of intervening:

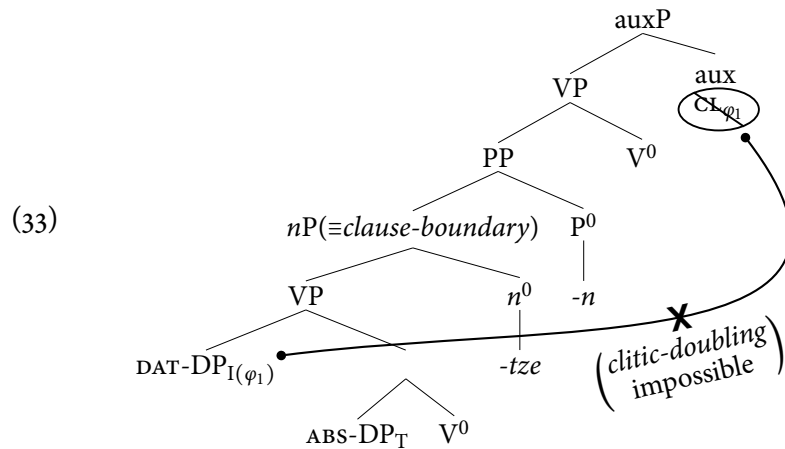


We have already seen, however, a situation that would be analyzed—on the current proposal—as an instance of failed clitic-doubling of the dative noun-phrase—namely, when the latter is contained within the embedded clause in the adpositional construction; and one can, in fact, select a ditransitive predicate as the embedded verb in this construction:¹¹

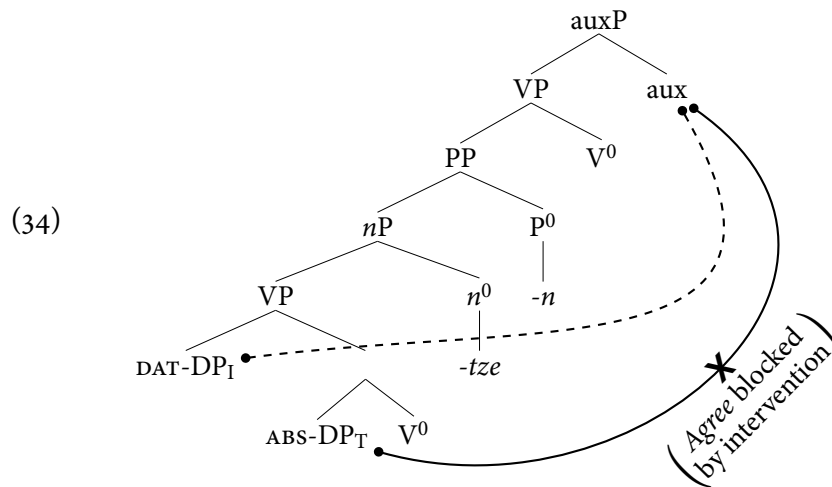
- (32) [[Lankide-e-i]_{DP_I} [liburu horiek]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-n] probatu d- ϕ/*it-
 colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT books those_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- sg.ABS/*pl.ABS-
 u- te.
 have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to read those books to the colleagues.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG])

¹¹The dative noun-phrase in (32) is labeled DP_I, where “I” stands for *Intervener*.

In (32), there is no dative agreement-morpheme on the matrix auxiliary. On the current proposal, this is expected—the dative DP_I and the matrix auxiliary are not clause-mates, therefore clitic-doubling of DP_I onto the auxiliary is blocked (see the discussion in §3.1):



Crucially, as the example in (32) demonstrates, this blocks the relation between the auxiliary and the absolutive DP_T—the absolutive agreement-morphemes on the matrix auxiliary in (32) can only reflect default features (i.e., 3rd-person singular), not the φ -features of DP_T:



Note that while the absolutive agreement-morphemes in (32) must reflect default φ -features (i.e., 3rd-person singular), they cannot be omitted. In other words, the relation between the absolutive agreement-morpheme and the absolutive noun-phrase behaves—according to the proposed diagnostic—as an *Agree* relation.

Further support for viewing the effect in (32) as syntactic intervention per se comes from the fact that not just any left-peripheral constituent disrupts the relation between the absolutive agreement-morphemes and the absolutive noun-phrase—as shown by Etxepare (2005):

- (35) [Miren-entzat [harri horiek]_{DP_T} altxa-tze-n] probatu d- it- u- zte.
 Miren-BEN stones those_{pl}(ABS) lift-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to lift those stones for Miren.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3pl.ERG])

While Case-marked noun-phrases such as the dative *lankide-e-i* (‘colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT’) in (32) can disrupt the aforementioned relation, adjuncts such as *Miren-entzat* (‘Miren-BEN’) in (35) cannot—precisely the behavior that one would expect an *Agree* relation to exhibit.

The support that (32) provides for the proposal is thus twofold: first, it shows that the relation between the auxiliary and the absolutive noun-phrase is indeed susceptible to intervention effects (as one would expect of an *Agree* relation); second, when juxtaposed with (10) (repeated below), it shows that the dative agreement-morpheme behaves in a way that is typical of clitic-doubling—in that its absence creates a situation in which the dative noun-phrase counts as an intervener, while its presence suppresses the ability of the dative noun-phrase to intervene.

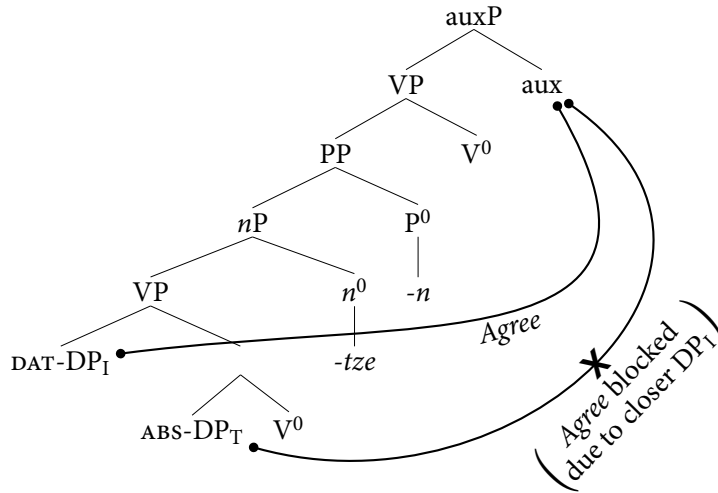
- (10) Guraso-e-k [niri]_{DP_I} [belarritako ederr-ak] erosi d- i-
 parents-ART_{pl}-ERG me-DAT earrings beautiful-ART_{pl}(ABS) bought 3.ABS- have-
zki- da- te.
pl.ABS- 1sg.DAT- 3pl.ERG
 ‘(My) parents have bought me beautiful earrings.’ [Laka 2005, (52)]

The established properties of *Agree* and clitic-doubling thus line up in accordance with the verdicts that the new proposed diagnostic supplies, regarding absolutive agreement-morphology and dative agreement-morphology, respectively.

Finally, note that the dative noun-phrase behaves as a true *defective intervener*—while it is capable of obstructing the *Agree* relation between the auxiliary and the absolutive noun-phrase, the dative noun-phrase itself cannot be the target of this *Agree* operation. I have been referring to the head that probes in this *Agree* relation as the “absolutive agreement-morpheme(s)”, a term that presupposes¹² that it can only target absolutive noun-phrases. In (32) (repeated below), the dative intervener is itself a plural noun-phrase (*lankide-e-i* ‘colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT’); if the probing head were able to target the dative noun-phrase, one would expect an *Agree* relation to be established with the dative noun-phrase instead of the structurally lower absolutive noun-phrase, resulting in the transmission of the plural number features from the dative noun-phrase to the probing head. This would give rise to plural features on the so-called “absolutive agreement-morpheme(s)”:

¹² Albeit correctly, as will be shown below.

(36) (unattested)



This is not, however, the attested state of affairs—as evinced by (32), repeated below:

- (32) [[Lankide-e-i]_{DP1} [liburu horiek]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-n] probatu d- ϕ/*it-
 colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT books those_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-LOC attempt 3.ABS- sg.ABS/*pl.ABS-
 u- te.
 have- 3pl.ERG
 ‘They have attempted to read those books to the colleagues.’
 (subject is [pro-3pl.ERG])

As (32) demonstrates, the ϕ -features of the dative DP₁ do not matter; it intervenes, blocking the relation between the auxiliary and the absolutive DP_T, but it cannot itself be the target of *Agree*. The term “absolutive agreement-morpheme(s)” is therefore justified: the *Agree* operation that gives rise to these morphemes can only target absolutive noun-phrases. As will be shown in §3.3, this restriction is not specific to the *Agree* operation that gives rise to absolutive agreement-morphemes, but rather a general property of *Agree* in Basque.

To summarize, sections §3.1 and §3.2 have shown converging evidence that the relation between the dative agreement-morpheme and the dative noun-phrase is a clitic-doubling relation, while the relation between absolutive agreement-morphemes and the absolutive noun-phrase is an *Agree* relation. The evidence comes from the different locality restrictions that apply to the two relations; from the susceptibility of the absolutive relation to intervention (as one would expect of *Agree*), the defective nature of these intervention effects (i.e., the failure of dative interveners to transmit their own features to the probing head), and the expected distinction between intervening DP arguments and intervening PP adjuncts; and from the fact that the presence of dative agreement-morphemes obviates intervention by the dative noun-phrase (as one would expect of clitic-doubling). This, in turn, supports the reliability of the proposed diagnostic (when obstructing the relation between a given agreement-morpheme and the associated noun-phrase, the appearance of default ϕ -features indicates an *Agree* relation, while a missing morpheme indicates a clitic-doubling relation).

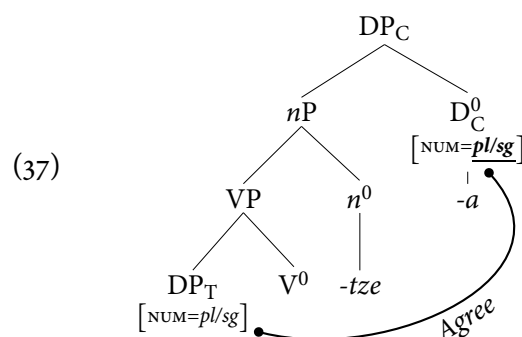
3.3. Agree in the Case-Marked Construction

In the Case-marked construction, the number features of the agreement-morphemes corresponding to the Case-marking on the nominalized clause are determined by the plurality of an argument within the nominalized clause—for example, recall (11), repeated below:

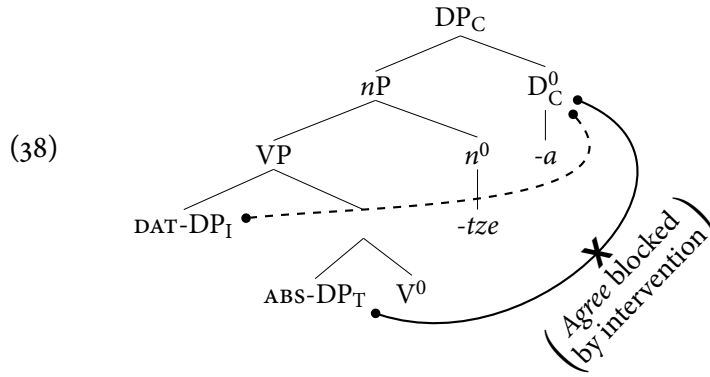
- (11) Uko egin d- i- ϕ - [e]- ϕ [[agindu horiek]_{DP_T}
 refusal(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- 3sg.ERG orders those_{pl}(ABS)
 bete-tze-a-ri]_{DP_C}.
 obey-NMZ-ART-DAT
 ‘(S)he has refused to obey those orders.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (99)]

In (11), the plurality of the dative agreement-morpheme is determined by the plurality of the absolutive DP_T within the dative nominalized clause, DP_C.

As argued in §2.4, this comes about by virtue of two separate relations, “stacked” on top of one another. The higher of the two is the relation between the auxiliary and DP_C (the precise nature of this relation—whether it is *Agree* or clitic-doubling—depends on the Case of DP_C; see §3.1). The lower of the two is the relation between D_C⁰ (the article heading the nominalized clause) and DP_T. Since the latter relation involves feature-valuation of the number features on D_C⁰, it is necessarily an *Agree* relation:



As such, this relation should be susceptible to intervention effects (on par with those discussed in §3.2). As mentioned earlier, the dative argument in Basque ditransitive constructions occupies a structurally higher position than the absolutive one (Elordieta 2001, among others). Therefore, given a ditransitive embedded within the Case-marked construction, one would expect the relation between D_C⁰ and DP_T to be disrupted:



This prediction is borne out:

- (39) Uko egin d- i- ϕ - o/*e- ϕ [[lankide-a-ri]_{DP_I}
 refusal(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3sg.DAT/*3pl.DAT - 3sg.ERG colleague-ART_{sg}-DAT
[liburu horiek]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a-ri]_{DP_C}.
 books those_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART-DAT
 ‘(S)he has refused to read those books to the colleague.’
 (subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG])

The fact that the dative agreement-morpheme is present but singular (as opposed to being entirely absent, as in the examples discussed in §3.1) is a result of the fact that it is not the relation between the dative agreement-morpheme and the dative DP_C which breaks down—the auxiliary and DP_C are in a clause-mate relation, and thus obey the necessary locality conditions on clitic-doubling, the mechanism responsible for generating the dative agreement-morpheme (as argued in §3.1).¹³ The relation that breaks down in (39), due to intervention by the dative DP_I, is the relation between D_C⁰ and DP_T—which as argued above, is one of *Agree*, rather than clitic-doubling. Thus, the proposed diagnostic indeed predicts that the failure in (39) will give rise to a dative agreement-morpheme bearing default features, rather than the absence of a dative agreement-morpheme.

Just as with the adpositional construction, above, further support for viewing the effect in (39) as syntactic intervention per se comes from the fact that not any left-peripheral constituent will disrupt the relation between D_C⁰ and the absolutive DP_T—as shown by Etxepare (2005):

- (40) Jon-ek [Miren-entzat [traste zahar-rak]_{DP_T} bota-tze-a]_{DP_C} pentsatu d-
 Jon-ERG Miren-BEN things old-ART_{pl}(ABS) discard-NMZ-ART(ABS) plan 3.ABS-
[it- u- ϕ .
pl.ABS]- have- 3sg.ERG
 ‘Jon has planned to discard the old things for Miren.’

¹³The auxiliary and DP_C also obey the locality restrictions on *Agree*; we know this from the fact that the Case-marked construction allows the ϕ -features of absolutive agreement-morphemes to be determined by DP_C, if the latter is absolutive; and by the fact that in general, absolutive noun-phrases in object position can determine absolutive agreement-morphology in this way. However, DP_C in (39) is dative, and therefore the relevant locality restriction is the clause-mate relation.

While Case-marked noun-phrases such as the dative *lankide-a-ri* (‘colleague-ART_{sg}-DAT’) in (39) can disrupt the aforementioned relation, adjuncts such as *Miren-entzat* (‘Miren-BEN’) in (40) cannot—precisely the behavior that one would expect an *Agree* relation to exhibit.

Finally, as in §3.2, the behavior of the intervener is precisely what one would expect of *defective intervention*—the dative DP_I disrupts the *Agree* relation between D_C⁰ and the absolutive DP_T, but it cannot itself serve as the target of *Agree*—as evinced by (41), below:

- (41) [[lankide-e-i]_{DP_I} [liburu [horiek]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a]_{DP_C} gustatzen ϕ - zai-
colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT books those_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART(ABS) like(HAB) 3.ABS- be-
 ϕ /*zki- o.
sg.ABS/*pl.ABS- 3sg.DAT
‘(S)he likes to read those books to the colleagues.’
(subject is [*pro*-3sg.DAT])

If *Agree* by D_C⁰ could target dative noun-phrases, the number features of DP_I in (41) would themselves be transmitted to D_C⁰, and this would give rise to a plural absolutive agreement-morpheme on the matrix auxiliary (corresponding to the Case-marking on DP_C, which in (41) is absolutive), contrary to fact.¹⁴

¹⁴There is one instance of a ditransitive Case-marked construction with a plural downstairs argument DP, in which for some speakers, using a plural agreement-morpheme on the auxiliary is marginal, rather than outright ungrammatical. This is an instance of the Case-marked construction in which the nominalized clause appears in the dative Case, and both internal arguments of the embedded ditransitive verb are plural:

- (i) */? Uko egin d- i- ϕ - [e]- ϕ [[lankide-e-i] [opari-ak]
refusal(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- 3sg.ERG colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT presents-ART_{pl}(ABS)
egi-te-a-ri]_{DP_C} haien urtebetzea-n.
do-NMZ-ART-DAT their birthday-LOC
‘(S)he has refused to make presents for the colleagues for their birthday.’
(subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (i), fn. 28]

As observed by Etxepare (2005), this is arguably an entirely separate phenomenon—since changing the plurality of *either* the absolutive *opari-ak* (‘presents-ART_{pl}(ABS)’) or the dative *lankide-e-i* (‘colleagues-ART_{pl}-DAT’) renders use of the plural dative agreement-morpheme on the upstairs auxiliary (/e-/) completely ungrammatical, even for those speakers who marginally tolerate (i).

Similarly, a dative DP_C that embeds a monotransitive verb that takes a sole dative argument is judged marginal by the same speakers who accept (i) (speakers who do not accept (ii) do not accept (ii), either):

- (ii) */? Uko egin d- i- ϕ - [e]- ϕ [[buruzagi-e-i]_{DP_T} obedi-tze-a-ri]_{DP_C}.
refusal(ABS) done 3.ABS- have- sg.ABS- 3pl.DAT- 3sg.ERG chiefs-ART_{pl}-DAT obey-NMZ-ART-DAT
‘(S)he has refused to obey the chiefs.’
(subject is [*pro*-3sg.ERG]) [Etxepare 2005, (105)]

Since the acceptance of (ii) is restricted to those speakers who accept (i), both are plausibly the result of a “dative harmony” effect, which can be characterized as follows: for these speakers, a plural dative DP_T can marginally transmit its number features to D_C⁰ provided that (a) DP_C is itself dative, and (b) there are no singular noun-phrases within DP_C (not even absolutive ones). This sensitivity to the plurality of other noun-phrases in the embedded clause (as well as the marginality of the construction, even for those speakers who accept it) suggests that “dative harmony” is some kind of processing effect, rather than a grammatical effect per se. Note that even for these speakers, targeting a dative noun-phrase in the adpositional construction (as in (19) in §2.2) is completely ruled out.

We therefore have converging evidence that *Agree* in Basque can only target absolutive noun-phrases, not dative ones¹⁵—both from *Agree* between the so-called “absolutive agreement-morpheme(s)” on the auxiliary and the absolutive noun-phrase (where dative noun-phrases can intervene, but not be targeted; see §3.2), and from *Agree* between D_C^0 and DP_T in the Case-marked construction.

To summarize, this subsection has shown evidence that the relation between D_C^0 and DP_T is an *Agree* relation. The evidence comes from the susceptibility of this relation to intervention (as one would expect of *Agree*), the defective nature of these intervention effects (i.e., the failure of dative interveners to transmit their own features to the probing head), and the expected distinction between intervening DP arguments and intervening PP adjuncts. This further supports the reliability of the proposed diagnostic (when obstructing the relation between a given agreement-morpheme and the associated noun-phrase, the appearance of default ϕ -features indicates an *Agree* relation).

3.4. Ergative Noun-Phrases and Ergative Agreement-Morphemes

In §3.1–§3.3, I have been looking at noun-phrases in the absolutive Case and in the dative Case, and the associated agreement-morphology on the auxiliary. In this subsection, I will examine the status of ergative agreement-morphemes, and in particular, whether they are the reflex of *Agree* or of clitic-doubling.

Consider an instance of the Case-marked construction, where the downstairs argument is an ergative noun-phrase:

- (42) Jon-ek [[lehio-ko [kristal-a-k]] $_{DP_T}$ distira-tze-a] $_{DP_C}$ pentsatu d-
 Jon-ERG window-GEN.LOC glass-ART-ERG shine-NMZ-ART(ABS) plan 3.ABS-
 ϕ /*it- u- ϕ .
 sg.ABS/*pl.ABS- have- 3sg.ERG
 ‘Jon has planned for the glass in the window to shine.’

Interestingly, there is evidence of a very similar effect with respect to intervention in Icelandic. As noted in the INTRODUCTION, a dative experiencer in Icelandic gives rise to intervention, blocking *Agree* between the matrix tensed verb and an embedded nominative subject (see (6–7), in section §1), resulting in default (i.e., singular) number agreement on the matrix verb. However, if both the dative experiencer *and* the embedded nominative subject are plural, plural agreement on the matrix verb becomes marginally tolerable, for some speakers:

- (iii) ? það finnast mörgum stúdentum [tölvurnar ljótar]. (Icelandic)
 EXPL find.pl many students.pl.DAT the.computers.pl.NOM ugly
 ‘Many students find the computers ugly.’ [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir 2003, (i), fn. 6]

Crucially, as in the Basque “dative harmony” effect exemplified by (i–ii), the effect is dependent on the plurality of *both* the dative experiencer and the nominative embedded subject. Compare (iii) with (iv), below:

- (iv) * það finnast mörgum stúdentum [tölván ljótar].
 EXPL find.pl many students.pl.DAT the.computer.sg.NOM ugly
 ‘Many students find the computer ugly.’ [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir 2003, (iii), fn. 6]

It therefore appears that an effect very similar to Basque “dative harmony” is also attested in certain dialects of Icelandic.

¹⁵See §3.4 regarding the status of ergative noun-phrases with respect to this distinction.

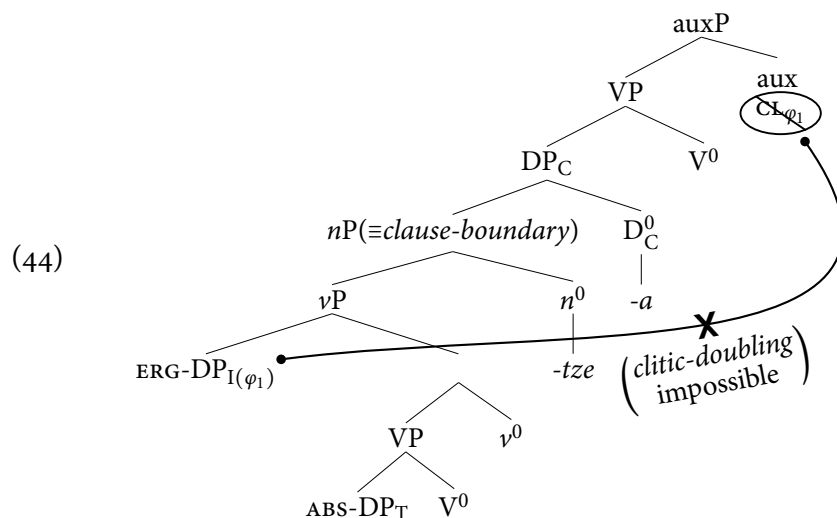
Given that D_C^0 probes for a noun-phrase with which it can establish an *Agree* relation (as argued in §2.4, and reinforced in §3.3)—and that in (42), there is no potential intervener in the downstairs clause that could block *Agree* with the ergative noun-phrase—the failure to transmit the plural number features of DP_T in (42) indicates that ergative noun-phrases cannot be targeted for *Agree* (on par with the behavior of dative noun-phrases, and in contrast to the behavior of absolutive ones).

The ergative agreement-morpheme therefore appears to be the result of clitic-doubling.¹⁶ One would therefore predict that given an ergative noun-phrase, the absence (or presence) of a corresponding ergative agreement-morpheme will correlate with intervention (or lack thereof) by the ergative noun-phrase—on par with the effects of absence/presence of a dative agreement-morpheme on the status of the dative noun-phrase as an intervener (as demonstrated and discussed in §3.2). This is indeed borne out; consider the contrast between a simple, mono-clausal construction involving an ergative noun-phrase—such as (10), repeated below—and an instance of the Case-marked construction in which the embedded clause contains an ergative noun-phrase—such as (43), below:

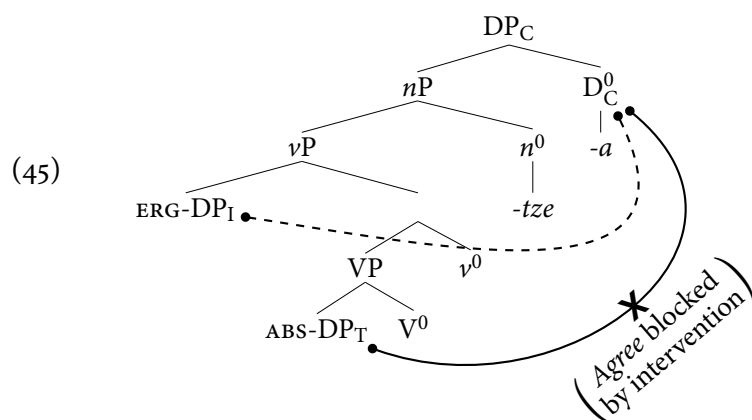
- (10) [Guraso-e-k]_{DP_I} niri [belarritako ederr-ak] erosi d- i-
 parents-ART_{pl}-ERG me-DAT earrings beautiful-ART_{pl}(ABS) bought 3.ABS- have-
 zki- da- te.
 pl.ABS- 1sg.DAT- 3pl.ERG
 ‘(My) parents have bought me beautiful earrings.’ [Laka 2005, (52)]
- (43) [[Mikel-ek]_{DP_I} [nobela erromantiko-ak]_{DP_T} irakur-tze-a]_{DP_C} proposatu d-
 Mikel-ERG novels romantic-ART_{pl}(ABS) read-NMZ-ART(ABS) propose 3.ABS-
 φ/*it- u- t.
 sg.ABS/*pl.ABS- have- 1sg.ERG
 ‘I have proposed that Mikel read romantic novels.’
 (subject is [pro-1sg.ERG])

In (10), the ergative noun-phrase (*guraso-e-k* ‘parents-ART_{pl}-ERG’) has undergone clitic-doubling, obviating its status as an intervener. Therefore, *Agree* between the auxiliary and the absolutive noun-phrase can obtain, resulting in the transmission of the φ -features of the absolutive *belarritako ederr-ak* (‘earrings beautiful-ART_{pl}(ABS)’) to the absolutive agreement-morphemes. In (43), however, the downstairs ergative noun-phrase *Mikel-ek* (‘Mikel-ERG’) has not undergone clitic-doubling (the ergative agreement-morpheme on the upstairs auxiliary is the result of clitic-doubling of the upstairs ergative noun-phrase, *pro*-1sg.ERG, and indeed bears 1sg φ -features); there is no clause-mate cliticization site in the downstairs clause that clitic-doubling of the ergative noun-phrase would be able to target:

¹⁶The dative and ergative agreement-morphemes bear a striking resemblance to each other, and to the relevant strong pronouns in Basque. Therefore, in terms of morphology, accounting for both in terms of clitic-doubling is quite plausible. Moreover, absolutive agreement-morphology is decidedly different in its shape; in many of the sub-paradigms, absolutive agreement-morphology has separate morphemes for person features and for number features, which sometimes appear on opposite sides of the auxiliary root. This further supports the current proposal, since the absolutive agreement-morphemes are accounted for in terms of *Agree*, and are therefore expected to exhibit different morphological properties than those exhibited by clitic-doubling. See Arregi and Nevins (2007), Rezac (to appear) for similar conclusions, reached on entirely independent grounds.



As a result, *Mikel-ek* ('Mikel-ERG') retains its status as an intervener, and is able to disrupt the *Agree* relation between D_C^0 (the article heading the nominalized clause) and the absolutive *nobela erromantiko-ak* ('novels romantic-ART_{pl}(ABS)'):



Since *Agree* between D_C^0 and the absolutive DP_T cannot obtain, D_C^0 bears default (i.e., singular) number features. The upstairs auxiliary then establishes an *Agree* relation with DP_C (as DP_C in (43) is absolutive), resulting in singular number features on the absolutive agreement-morpheme, as attested in (43).

Again, this supports the proposed diagnostic, since agreement-morphemes bearing default feature values are precisely what the diagnostic predicts for failed *Agree* relations.

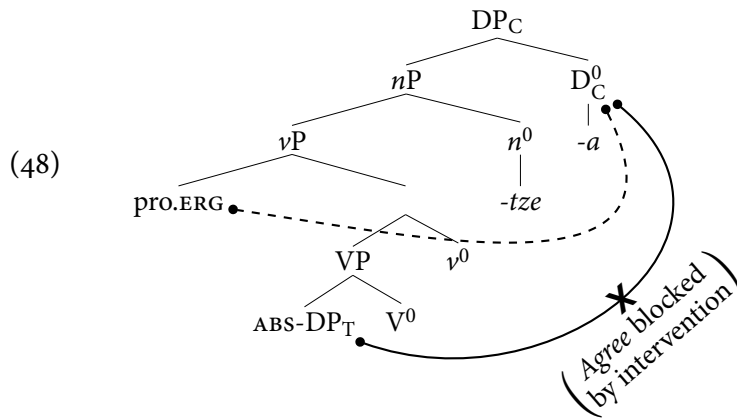
Finally, consider instances of nominalized clauses as sentential subjects. As noted by Etxepare (2005), sentential subject clauses exhibit the characteristics of non-obligatory control (Hornstein 2001, Martin 1996, San Martin 2001)—in particular, they allow an obviative reading of their subject even when it is not overt:

- (46) [[liburu batzuk]_{DP_T} eros-te-ak]_{DP_C} ikasle-ak harritu d- it-
 books some_{pl}(ABS) buy-NMZ-ART-ERG students-ART_{pl}(ABS) surprised 3.ABS- pl.ABS-
 u- ϕ /*zte.
 have- 3sg/*3pl.ERG
 ‘Someone’s/his/her buying some books surprised the students.’ [Etxepare 2005, (95)]

Recall that $[-tze]_{n^0}$ (the nominalizer morpheme) was argued to take a bare VP as its complement based on the fact that the nominalized embedded clauses in the Case-marked construction and in the adpositional construction exhibit the characteristics of obligatory control (§2.4). Given that sentential subject clauses (as in (46)) are instances of non-obligatory control, the complement of $[-tze]_{n^0}$ in this construction must be (at least) a ν P—and obviative readings of non-overt subjects would come about as a result of contra-indexed *pro* in subject position of this ν P:

- (47) [[[liburu batzuk]_{DP_T} eros $pro_{i/*j}$.ERG] _{ν P-te-ak}]_{DP_C} ikasle-ak;
 books some_{pl}(ABS) buy-NMZ-ART-ERG students-ART_{pl}(ABS)
 harritu d- it- u- ϕ /*zte.
 surprised 3.ABS- pl.ABS- have- 3sg/*3pl.ERG
 ‘Someone’s/his/her buying some books surprised the students.’ [Etxepare 2005, (95)]

Given that the subject is realized (either overtly or by *pro*), these constructions should behave on a par with examples like (43), above: the ergative embedded subject should fail to undergo clitic-doubling (as a result of not being in the same clause as the auxiliary), and therefore retain its status as an intervener, precluding *Agree* between D^0_C and the absolutive DP_T , and in turn preventing the number features of DP_T from being transmitted to the upstairs auxiliary:



As shown in (46), above, this is precisely the result that one finds: even if the absolutive DP_T is plural, the ergative agreement-morpheme on the upstairs auxiliary can only reflect default (i.e., singular) number features.

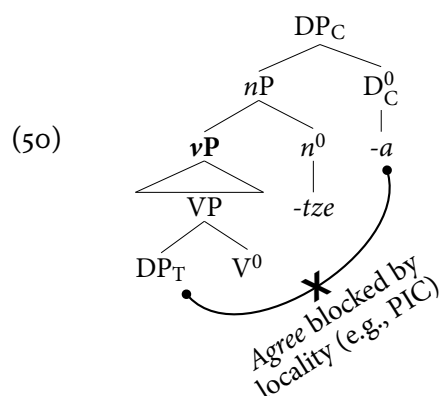
3.5. The Locus of Cross-Dialectal Variation

As mentioned at the outset (and discussed extensively by Etxepare 2005), the LDA-like effects under discussion are restricted to a particular dialect of Basque. Other dialects do not allow the features of agreement-morphemes in the upstairs clause in the Case-marked construction and the adpositional construction to be determined by noun-phrases in the embedded clause.

Within the current proposal, this cross-dialectal variation can be captured in terms of categorical selection by $[-tze]_{n^0}$:

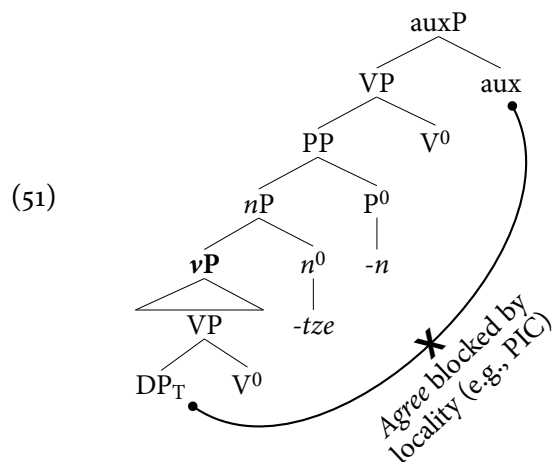
- (49) a. dialects without LDA-like effect: $[-tze]_{n^0}$ always selects νP
 b. dialects with LDA-like effect: $[-tze]_{n^0}$ can select VP (in obligatory control contexts)

To see why (49a) would block the LDA-like effects under discussion, let us first consider the Case-marked construction:



As shown in §2.4 and §3.3, transmitting the features of DP_T (the argument of the downstairs verb) to the upstairs auxiliary in the Case-marked construction is crucially dependent on establishing an *Agree* relation between D_C^0 (the article heading the nominalized clause) and DP_T . However, if the complement of $[-tze]_{n^0}$ is a νP , such an *Agree* relation would span across a locality boundary (e.g., a phase), and would therefore be illicit.

Next, consider the adpositional construction:



In the adpositional construction, the features of DP_T can only be transmitted to the upstairs auxiliary by means of *Agree* (since clitic-doubling would violate the clause-mate restriction; see §3.1). Again, however, if the complement of $[-tze]_{n^0}$ is a νP , such an *Agree* relation would span across a locality boundary (e.g., a phase), and would therefore be illicit.

Just like the analysis of the dialect that exhibits LDA-like effects, the proposed account of the dialect that lacks them does not require any difference between the Case-marked construction and the adpositional construction, as far as the syntax internal to nP is concerned (cf. §2.4).

To summarize, within the current proposal, variation in the category selected by $[-tze]_{n^0}$ accounts for the attested dialectal variation on whether the Case-marked construction and the adpositional construction exhibit LDA-like effect.

3.6. Unergatives in Basque—Not Underlying Transitives, After All?

In previous sections, we have seen the effects of disrupting clitic-doubling of the dative noun-phrase (§3.1–§3.2), as well as clitic-doubling of the ergative noun-phrase (§3.4); we have also seen the effects of disrupting *Agree* by D_C^0 (the article heading the nominalized clause) by embedding a ditransitive verb in the Case-marked construction (§3.3); and we have seen the effects of disrupting *Agree* by the auxiliary (in particular, *Agree* by the absolutive agreement-morpheme) by embedding a ditransitive verb in the adpositional construction (§3.2).

There is one more way to disrupt *Agree* by the auxiliary, which has not been examined so far. In §3.2, *Agree* by the auxiliary was disrupted by introducing an intervener (a dative noun-phrase that has not undergone clitic-doubling) in a position that is structurally in between the auxiliary and the absolutive noun-phrase; but what would be the fate of the absolutive agreement-morphemes in a derivation that simply lacked an absolutive noun-phrase altogether? In other words, what if *Agree* with the absolutive noun-phrase failed not due to a locality/minimality violation (i.e., intervention), but because there simply was no absolutive noun-phrase to be targeted?

On the current proposal, the prediction is that in a derivation where there is simply no absolutive noun-phrase to be found, the auxiliary will bear the hallmark of failed *Agree*: absolutive agreement-morphemes reflecting default ϕ -features—which in Basque would be realized as 3rd-person singular. Interestingly, this is precisely what one finds with “true” (i.e., non-analytic) unergative predicates in Basque:

- (52) [Lehio-ko kristal-a-k] distiratu d- ϕ - u- ϕ .
 window-GEN.LOC glass-ART-ERG shine 3.ABS- sg.ABS- have- 3sg.ERG
 ‘The glass in the window has shined.’ [Ettxepare 2003, (93b)]

In (52), the ergative agreement-morpheme on the auxiliary exhibits ϕ -features corresponding to the ergative noun-phrase (*lehio-ko kristal-a-k* ‘window-GEN.LOC glass-ART-ERG’), and crucially, additional absolutive agreement-morphemes corresponding to 3rd-person singular—despite the fact that there is no 3rd-person singular absolutive noun-phrase to be found (and in fact no absolutive noun-phrase at all).

This property has been used elsewhere (e.g., by Hale and Keyser 1993) to argue, based on Basque, that all unergatives are underlyingly transitive—interpreting the 3rd-person singular absolutive agreement-morphemes as agreement with a tacit object which is not phonologically realized (or alternatively, an overt object which has been incorporated into a phonologically-null lexical verb). However, given the conclusions in §3.1–§3.4, an auxiliary with 3rd-person singular absolutive agreement-morphemes is precisely what one would expect if an absolutive noun-phrase were completely absent (syntactically and phonologically)—in other words, it is precisely what one would expect if unergatives were underlyingly *intransitive*.

Given that the conclusions in §3.1–§3.4 were motivated independently of issues of argument-structure or the underlying nature of unergatives, and that these conclusions provide an alternative account for the appearance of 3rd-person singular absolutive agreement-morphemes in such

environments, the appearance of these agreement-morphemes with unergative verbs cannot be taken as a decisive argument for the underlying transitivity of these verbs.

3.7. Summary and Typological Implications

In the preceding subsections, I have argued that the various agreement-morphemes on the Basque auxiliary differ with respect to the mechanism by which they are generated—and in particular, that they come about according to the following classification:¹⁷

(53)

agreement-morpheme	underlying mechanism
ABS	<i>Agree</i>
DAT, ERG	clitic-doubling

Arguments for this classification have come from observing well-established properties of *Agree* (Chomsky 2000, 2001) and clitic-doubling (Anagnostopoulou 2003)—such as their susceptibility (or lack thereof) to intervention, their effects (or lack thereof) on the subsequent status of their target as an intervener, and their differing locality restrictions—but also from the new diagnostic proposed in (8), repeated below:

- (8) Given a scenario where the relation \mathcal{R} between an agreement-morpheme \mathcal{M} and target noun-phrase \mathcal{X} is broken—but the result is still a grammatical utterance—the proposed diagnostic supplies a conclusion about \mathcal{R} as follows:
- a. \mathcal{M} shows up with default φ -features (rather than the features of \mathcal{X}) $\longrightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is *Agree*
 - b. \mathcal{M} disappears entirely $\longrightarrow \mathcal{R}$ is clitic-doubling

Crucially, this diagnostic was shown to reliably correlate with the well-established properties of *Agree* and of clitic-doubling, respectively, which were mentioned earlier.

Furthermore, it was shown that being able to target absolutive noun-phrases, but not other noun-phrases, was a general property of *Agree* in Basque—rather than just a property of the so-called “absolutive agreement-morpheme(s)” on the auxiliary. Evidence for this came from instances of *Agree* in the Case-marked construction between the article heading the nominalized clause (D_C^0) and a noun-phrase within that clause (DP_T).

From a typological perspective, this is a particularly interesting result. As discussed in §2.1, Basque may appear at first glance to be a language that exhibits agreement with all Case-marked arguments in a given clause. However, when the agreement-morphemes generated by clitic-doubling are factored out, one is left with a system in which agreement (i.e., *Agree*) targets only absolutive noun-phrases.

As Boeckx (2000), Bobaljik (to appear), Holmberg and Hroarsdottir (2003), Schutze (1997), and others have shown, φ -feature agreement in Icelandic consistently targets only nominative noun-phrases—despite the fact that Icelandic does have non-nominative subjects. Basque, on the current proposal, is precisely the mirror image of Icelandic through the “NOM-ACC/ERG-ABS looking-glass”:

¹⁷ As stated in the INTRODUCTION, no deeper claim regarding clitics and the underlying workings of clitic-doubling has been made here. Nevertheless, the existence of a nearly uncontroversial list of properties of clitic-doubling (listed in (3a–b), in §1), has made it possible to test whether a given morpheme is the result of clitic-doubling or not, and whether the novel diagnostic proposed here reliably correlates with these established properties.

in both languages, *Agree* targets noun-phrases in the unmarked Case (nominative for Icelandic, absolutive for Basque), and only those noun-phrases—regardless of the inventory of Case-marked noun-phrases that happen to be present in a given clause. Interestingly, Basque may also exhibit the mirror image of Icelandic predicates that take quirky subjects—namely, predicates that take an ergative argument but no absolutive one (see §3.6).

Recently, other proposals have appeared in the literature on Basque morpho-syntax, which draw similar conclusions about the distinction between absolutive agreement-morphemes and dative/ergative agreement-morphemes, on entirely independent grounds (see [Arregi and Nevins 2007](#), on the morphology of Bizkaian variety of Zamudio; and see [Rezac to appear](#), on the behavior of datives with respect to *agreement displacement*, across different dialects). I take this convergence to be indicative that the aforementioned distinction—at least in broad terms—is on the right track.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed a novel diagnostic for distinguishing between *Agree* and clitic-doubling, based on the behavior of constructions in which the relation between an agreement-morpheme and the relevant full noun-phrase breaks down. In particular, if the construction can be salvaged by using replacing the agreement-morpheme with one that reflects default φ -features, this is taken to indicate that the relation is an *Agree* relation; on the other hand, if the construction can be salvaged by eliminating the agreement-morpheme altogether, this is taken to indicate that the relation is a clitic-doubling relation.

The workings of the proposed diagnostic were demonstrated using a family of LDA-like constructions in dialectal Basque ([Etxepare 2005](#)). The verdict reached using the new diagnostic was shown to correlate reliably with the verdicts generated by well established properties of *Agree* ([Chomsky 2000, 2001](#)) and clitic-doubling ([Anagnostopoulou 2003](#)).

The particular analysis of Basque facilitated by these diagnostics places Basque on a par with familiar agreement systems: once the agreement-morphemes generated by clitic-doubling are factored out, one is left with a system in which *Agree* targets only absolutive noun-phrases—precisely the ergative-absolutive mirror image of familiar nominative-accusative agreement systems, in which *Agree* targets only nominative noun-phrases (e.g., Icelandic; see [Boeckx 2000](#), [Bobaljik to appear](#), [Holmberg and Hroarsdottir 2003](#), [Schutze 1997](#), among others).

References

- Alexiadou, Artemis, and Elena Anagnostopoulou. 1997. Towards a uniform account of scrambling and clitic-doubling. In *German: Syntactic problems—problematic syntax*, ed. Werner Abraham and Elly van Gelderen, 142–161. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
- Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 1994. Clitic dependencies in Modern Greek. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Salzburg.
- Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 1999. On clitics, feature movement and double object alternations. In *Proceedings of the 29th Conference of the North East Linguistic Society (NELS 29)*, ed. Pius N. Tamanji, Masako Hirotani, and Nancy Hall, 41–55. Amherst, MA: GLSA.
- Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 2003. *The syntax of ditransitives: Evidence from clitics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Anagnostopoulou, Elena. 2005. Strong and weak person restrictions: A feature checking analysis. In *Clitics and affix combinations*, ed. Lorie Heggie and Francisco Ordonez, 199–235. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Arregi, Karlos, and Andrew Ira Nevins. 2007. Agreement and clitic restrictions in Basque. URL <http://ling.auf.net/lingBuzz/000366>, Ms., Urbana, IL and Cambridge, MA: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Harvard University.
- Bhatt, Rajesh. 2005. Long-distance agreement in Hindi-Urdu. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 23:757–807.
- Bobaljik, Jonathan David. to appear. Where's phi? Agreement as a post-syntactic operation. In *Phi-theory: Phi features across interfaces and modules*, ed. David Adger, Susana Bejar, and Daniel Harbour. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Boeckx, Cedric. 2000. Quirky agreement. *Studia Linguistica* 54:354–380.
- Borer, Hagit. 2005. *In name only*, Vol. 1 of *Structuring Sense*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burzio, Luigi. 1986. *Italian syntax: A government-binding approach*. Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The minimalist program*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: The framework. In *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik*, ed. Roger Martin, David Michaels, and Juan Uriagereka, 89–155. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Michael Kenstowicz, 1–52. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Elordieta, Arantzazu. 2001. Verb movement and constituent permutation in Basque. Ph.D. dissertation, Leiden University, Utrecht: LOT Dissertation Series.
- Ettxepare, Ricardo. 2003. Valency and argument structure in the Basque verb. In *A grammar of Basque*, ed. Jose Ignacio Hualde and Jon Ortiz de Urbina, 363–426. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ettxepare, Ricardo. 2005. Number long distance agreement in (substandard) Basque. *International Journal of Basque Linguistics and Philology (ASJU) Special Volume in Honor of Larry Trask*:303–350.
- Hale, Kenneth, and Samuel Jay Keyser. 1993. On argument structure and the lexical expression of syntactic relations. In *The View from Building 20: Essays in linguistics in honor of Sylvain Bromberger*, ed. Kenneth Hale and Samuel Jay Keyser, 53–110. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Holmberg, Anders, and Thorbjorg Hroarsdottir. 2003. Agreement and movement in Icelandic raising constructions. *Lingua* 113:997–1019.
- Hornstein, Norbert. 2001. *Move! A minimalist theory of construal*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Iatridou, Sabine. 1990. Clitics and island effects. In *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics*, Vol. 2, 11–30. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania.
- Laka, Itziar. 2005. A brief grammar of Euskara, the Basque language. URL <http://www.ehu.es/grammar/>, Ms. (ISBN: 84-8373-850-3), Vitoria-Gasteiz: Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (University of the Basque Country).
- Laka, Itziar. 2006a. Deriving split ergativity in the progressive: The case of Basque. In *Ergativity: Emerging issues*, ed. Alana Johns, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije, 173–196. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Laka, Itziar. 2006b. On the nature of Case in Basque: Structural or inherent? In *Organizing grammar*, ed. Hans Broekhuis, Norbert Corver, Riny Huybregts, Ursula Kleinhenz, and Jan Koster, 374–382. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Martin, Roger. 1996. A minimalist theory of PRO and control. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.
- McGinnis, Martha. 1998. Locality in A-movement. Ph.D. dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Pesetsky, David, and Esther Torrego. 2001. T-to-C movement: Causes and consequences. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Michael Kenstowicz, 355–426. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Rezac, Milan. 2006. Agreement displacement in Basque. Ms., Vitoria-Gasteiz: Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea (University of the Basque Country).
- Rezac, Milan. 2007. Escaping the Person Case Constraint: Reference-set computation in the φ -System. In *Linguistic variation yearbook*, ed. Pierre Pica, Johan Rooryck, and Jeroen van Craenenbroeck, Vol. 6, 97–138. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Rezac, Milan. to appear. Phi-Agree and Theta-related Case. In *Phi-theory: Phi features across interfaces and modules*, ed. David Adger, Susana Bejar, and Daniel Harbour. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, Norvin. 2005. Person-Case effects in Tagalog and the nature of long-distance extraction. Ms., Cambridge, MA: MIT.
- Rizzi, Luigi. 1982. *Issues in Italian syntax*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- San Martin, Itziar. 2001. On subordination and the distribution of PRO. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.
- Sauerland, Uli. 2003. A new semantics for *number*. In *Proceedings of the 13th Semantics And Linguistics Theory conference (SALT 13)*, ed. Robert B. Young and Yuping Zhou, 258–275. Ithaca, NY: CLC Publications.
- Schutze, Carson T. 1997. INFL in child and adult language: Agreement, Case, and licensing. Ph.D. dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Sportiche, Dominique. 1996. Clitic constructions. In *Phrase structure and the lexicon*, ed. Johan Rooryck and Laurie Zaring, Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory, 213–287. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Sportiche, Dominique. 1998. *Partitions and atoms of clause structure: Subjects, agreement, Case and clitics*. London: Routledge.
- Torrego, Esther. 1988. A DP analysis of Spanish nominals. Ms., Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts.
- Torrego, Esther. 1996. Experiencers and raising verbs. In *Current issues in comparative grammar*, ed. Robert Freidin, 101–120. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Torrego, Esther. 1998. *The dependencies of objects*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Trask, R. L. 2003. The noun phrase: Nouns, determiners and modifiers; pronouns and names. In *A grammar of Basque*, ed. Jose Ignacio Hualde and Jon Ortiz de Urbina, 113–170. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Travis, Lisa. 1984. Parameters and effects of word order variation. Ph.D. dissertation, MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Uriagereka, Juan. 1995. Aspects of the syntax of clitic placement in Western Romance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 26:79–124.
- Wurmbrand, Susi. 2001. *Infinitives: Restructuring and clause structure*. New York, NY: Mouton de Gruyter.