On *se* syncretism in Spanish
From syntax to the interfaces

Abstract This paper focus on a pattern of systematic syncretism in Spanish *se* constructions. Detailed morpho-syntactic and semantic analyses are provided with the aim to sustain three main thesis. First, the common property behind this pattern is a syntactically unsatisfied subcategorization feature present in the Voice head, which is satisfied at PF through the introduction of the clitic *se*. Second, θ-roles are syntactic primitives that can be assigned in a long-distance fashion up to argument activity (aka syntactic visibility) plus some locality conditions. Third, at LF, θ-roles are semantically realized as functions from entities to event predicates (i.e., $< e, < s,t >>$) on K(ase) heads. This last thesis conceives of structural K as an argument introducer mediating between predicates (pure event properties) and arguments, whose particular semantics is syntactically determined; i.e., via allosemy.

1   Introduction

The clitic *se* (or its agreeing variants: *me*, *te*, *nos*, etc.) occurs in a set of different syntactic and semantic contexts. Well-studied cases in the generative tradition involve the following four:

(1)   **Ergative** *se*

    a.   La tormenta hundió al   barco.
        the storm   sank   DOM.the ship
        'The storm sank the ship.'

    b.   **Se** hundió el   barco con la   tormenta.
        SE sank   the ship   with the storm
        'The ship sank with the storm.'

(2)   **Passive** *se*

    a.   La policía cerró   las puertas para bloquear   la   salida.
        the police closed the doors   for   block.INF the exit
        'The police closed the doors in order to block the exit.'

       b.   **Se** cerraron   las puertas para bloquear la salida.
           SE closed.3PL the doors   for   block.INF the exit
           'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

(3)   **Impersonal** *se*

       a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
           Juan criticized DOM Ana
           'Juan criticized Ana.'
       b.   **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
           SE criticized DOM Ana
           'One criticized Ana.'

(4)   **Reflexive** *se*

       a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
           Juan criticized DOM Ana
           'Juan criticized Ana.'
       b.   Ana **se** criticó.
           Ana SE criticized
           'Ana criticized herself.'

Yet, as it is also well-known, this pattern doesn't exhaust all the occurrences of the clitic *se* in Spanish. Aspectual *se* is another well-studied case:

(5)   a.   Juan comió la   manzana.
           Juan ate   the apple
           'Juan ate the apple.'
       b.   Juan **se** comió la   manzana.
           Juan SE ate   the apple.
           'Juan ate the apple.'

The same clitic and its agreeing variants occur obligatory with a subset of verbal predicates. This is the so-called "inherent *se*":

(6)   a.   Juan **se** quejó.
           Juan SE complained.
           'Juan complained.'
       b. *Juan quejó.
           Juan complained
       c. *Juan lo   quejó.
           J.   him/it complained

Much less explored in the literature are cases of what Di Tullio (2005) calls "diacritic *se*", in which the presence or absence of the clitic changes the basic meaning and valence of the verbal predicate. This set is very broad and, at first glance, there are no systematic meaning connections among the different verbal predicates that combine with this type of *se*. For instance, the verb *acordar* means 'to agree' but 'to remember' when it combines with the clitic. Crucially, the occurrence of *se* modifies the Case frame of the sentence, at least in the general case:

(7)   a.   Juan acordó las condiciones.
              Juan agreed the conditions
              'Juan agreed the conditions.'
        b.   Juan **se** acordó   de Ana.
              Juan SE rememebered of Ana
              'Juan remembered Ana.'

Again, the entire paradigm doesn't exhaust every use of the clitic *se* in Spanish, but it suffices to show what is one of my main points in this paper, namely, that these cases constitute a pattern of systematic syncretism. If this is correct, we should look for the common property that accounts for such a syncretism. Following original insights in Embick (2004) and the particular implementation in Pujalte & Saab (2012), I defend the view that this common property boils down to the syntactic absence of an external argument in Spec,Voice position. Put differently, *se* is a (PF) expletive whose sole function is to satisfy a selectional property of the Voice head. On this view, *se* is not the surface realization of a particular semantic flavor of Voice, a valence reducer, a case absorption device, or a syntactic pronominal/anaphora serving different syntactic or semantic purposes. Each of these analytic options have been indeed proposed for one or another subset of the paradigm at hand. If *se* is just an anaphora, part of the syncretism can be derived if the anaphora is generated in different positions. For instance, if it is base-generated in object position, then it can be bound by the external argument giving rise to a reflexive reading. If, instead, the anaphora itself is the external argument then it would be unbound and a LF procedure would force the impersonal reading (see Schäfer 2008 for an analysis along these lines). This approach leaves many other instances of *se* out of the syncretism pattern. It clearly doesn't generalize to inherent/diacritic *se*. The same conclusion extends to an approach in terms of Voice flavors (for instance, see Embick 2004 and Labelle 2008 for radically different implementations of this idea). Again, this analysis cannot generalize to the entire paradigm. Of course, it could be the case that, after all, the paradigm at hand doesn't constitute a pattern of systematic syncretism. Yet, I think that there are strong reasons to believe that it does.

As I said, I claim that the unifying feature behind *se* syncretism is the absence of an external argument. Now, on my view, this notion of *external argument* must be dissociated from the notion of external θ-role. In other words, *se* is the surface realization of a purely formal syntactic tree, in which Voice requires a DP in a specified position but such a requirement is not satisfied in the syntax. Just to give a preliminary illustration, the common property behind an impersonal *se* sentence and a reflexive one is the presence of an unsatisfied subcategorization feature in the Voice head:

(8)   [$_{\text{VoiceP}}$ Voice$_{[D]}$ [$_{\text{VP}}$ criticar Juan]]

Here, the internal DP is interpreted as just the theme or as both the theme and the agent of the event depending on other conditions that give rise to an impersonal or to a reflexive interpretation. As argued in Pujalte & Saab (2012), the clitic *se* is the way in which PF repairs the subcategorization failure that syntax provides. On this account, there is no nominative vs. accusative *se* (against Cinque's 1988 influential proposal for Romance); what is more, *se* has nothing to do with syntactic Case, either because it has no Case at all or because its Case is determined entirely at PF. Yet, syntactic Case, as we will see, does play a crucial role in the distinction between impersonals and reflexives. I will argue that what makes the difference between these two types of sentences is the fact that the internal argument in reflexives, but not in transitive impersonals, is still active when the agent θ-role of Voice is discharged. A crucial principle of θ-role assignment is then related to Case valuation. I state this as follows:

(9)   Unvalued Case is visible for θ assignment in the syntax.

The hypothesis in (9) a restatement of the Visibility Condition (Chomsky 1986), according to which Case and θ-roles are closely related. In Chomsky's original formulation Case assignment was a precondition for thematic interpretation at LF, although concrete implementations remain rather vague. In the restatement in (9), the connection between structural Case and θ-assignment is derived from the Activity Condition (Chomsky 2000; 2001), a general principle of syntactic computation that constraints successful application of certain syntactic operations (e.g., Agree) by making reference to unvalued features. This study is an attempt to explicitly show how Activity connects with semantic interpretability of θ-roles at LF.

Now, one of the main contribution of this study is that the same common property underlies in the rest of the paradigm discussed so far. Crucially, the analysis cover in a simple way sentences involving inherent *se*, so, for a sentence like (6a) the agent DP is also generated as the sister of V:

(10)   [$_{\text{VoiceP}}$ Voice$_{[D]}$ [$_{\text{VP}}$ quejar Juan]]

Here V subcategorizes for the object DP, although it doesn't θ-mark it. This implies abandoning some standard assumptions regarding the connection between subcategorization and θ-assignment, in particular, Chomsky's stipulation that "subcategorization entails θ-marking" (Chomsky 1981: 37; see also Williams 1994: 78 for another type of criticism). More generally, if I am on the right track with respect to the underlying factor triggering *se* syncretism, we are lead to a more radical reconsideration of θ-theory such as it is conceived in different syntactic approaches (from Chomsky 1981 to Hornstein 1999; see also Williams 1994 for a different syntactic approach) and in semantic approaches (Kratzer 1996, Heim & Kratzer 1998, Pylkkänen 2008, among many others), according to which θ-roles are not syntactic primitives but just the result of functional application (or other axioms of semantic composition). Both mainstream syntactic and semantic approaches share a strong locality view of predicate-argument relations that reduces thematic relations to sisterhood. Another crucial property shared by mainstream approaches is the disconnection between Case and thematic relations. The Case Filter is mostly considered as a purely formal phenomenon related to legibility at PF. Here, I will dispense with both the strong locality view of θ-Theory and the formal version of the Case Filter and show the syntactic and semantic implications of such a move regarding the proper nature of θ-roles and syntactic Case. I claim that (a) θ-roles are syntactic primitives that can be assigned in a long-distance fashion up to argument activity (aka syntactic visibility, cf. (9)) plus some locality conditions, and that (b) at LF, θ-roles are semantically realized as functions from entities to event predicates (i.e., as $<e,<s,t>>$ types) on K(ase) heads. I assume here that Case projects a KP, whose head starts its syntactic life as a semantically empty head. Syntactic θ-assignment to the K head provides the proper input for semantic realization at LF. Thus, given a syntactic configuration like (11), LF will interpret the K head as function from entities to event predicates, as shown in (12):

(11)

VP

V   KP

K$_\theta$ DP

(12) $[\![KP]\!]_{<s,t>} = [\![K]\!]([\![DP]\!])$ by FA

$[\![K]\!]_{\theta<e,<s,t>>}$ $[\![DP]\!]_e$
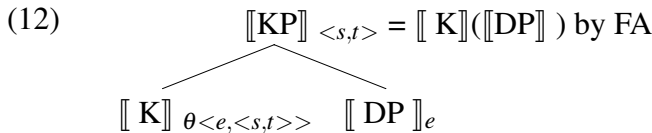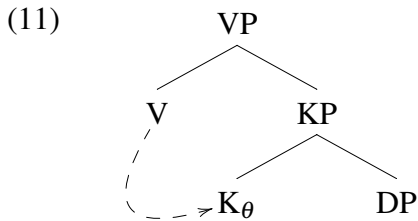
On this theory, structural K is conceived of as an argument introducer mediating between predicates (pure event properties) and arguments, whose particular semantics is syntactically determined.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2, I discuss the main aspects of Pujalte & Saab's theory of *se* insertion (Pujalte & Saab 2012; 2014) in order to make explicit some of the syntactic assumptions that lead to the semantic analyses in section 3. In these two sections, I only focus on impersonals/passives and reflexives and, in section 4, I extend the approach to the rest of the paradigm. The final picture is an explicit theory of *se* constructions at the syntax-interface connection with clear theoretical implications.

2   The morphosyntax of impersonals and reflexives

Let's then start with sentences involving the clitic *se* in impersonals/passives and reflexives. As mentioned in the introduction, the constructions listed in (13) and (15) constitute a pattern of systematic syncretism:

(13)   **Passive** *se*

    a.   La policía cerró las puertas para bloquear la salida.
         the police closed the doors   for   block.INF the exit
         'The police closed the doors in order to block the exit.'

    b.   **Se** cerraron   las puertas para bloquear la salida.
         SE closed.3PL the doors   for   block.INF the exit
         'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

(14)   **Impersonal** *se*

    a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
         Juan criticized DOM Ana
         'Juan criticized Ana.'

    b.   **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
         SE criticized DOM Ana
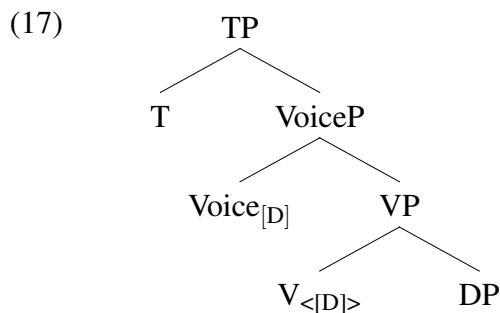   'One criticized Ana.'

(15)   **Reflexive** *se*

    a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
         Juan criticized DOM Ana
         'Juan criticized Ana.'

       b.   Ana **se** criticó.
           Ana SE criticized
           'Ana criticized herself.'

According to Pujalte & Saab (2012), these three cases of syncretism are the superficial manifestation of the following PF condition:

(16)   At PF, insert a clitic when Voice has a unsatisfied [D] feature.

That is, *se* is inserted when the syntax produces the following configuration (<...> = deleted feature):

(17)

```
            TP
          /    \
        T       VoiceP
              /      \
        Voice[D]      VP
                    /    \
                V<[D]>     DP
```

Pujalte & Saab (2012) propose a theory for answering the two following questions:

(18)   A.   Under what syntactic scenarios is the absence of an external argument allowed?
       B.   How is clitic insertion implemented at PF?

Question (18A) is about the syntax of *se* constructions; whatever answer we provide obviously affect answers to question (18B). This is evident in a model in which syntax feeds morphology (Distributed Morphology; Halle & Marantz 1993). Here, I would like also to introduce a third question which is at the heart of the distinction between impersonals/passives and reflexives:

(19)   Why do reflexive structures trigger a reading of double θ-assignment for the same argument, but impersonals/passives trigger arbitrary readings?[1]

I claim that a good answer to the questions in (18)-(19) requires a departure of some standard assumptions in current theories of argument structure. In particular, we must abandon sisterhood as the locality condition for θ-assignment and allow

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[1] This question or variants of it is at heart of many important analyses about Voice syncretism (see, for instance, Chierchia 2004, Embick 2004 and Schäfer 2008)

θ-roles to be assigned in a long-distance fashion. The conceptual reason for this is that if θ-relations are syntactic in nature, then there is no reason to suppose that such relations departs from well-known activity and locality conditions in the A-domain. Looking for a conceptual motivation for sisterhood reverses incorrectly the burden of proof. E. Williams (1994), for instance, claims that sisterhood is an inherent ingredient of his theory of junctures and suggests that there are empirical reasons that make θ relations different from other type of A-relations.[2] Concretely, he claims that "although there is a close parallel between Case marking and the "argument of" relation, there is no analogue of "exceptional Case marking" in the theta system" (Williams 1994: 29). So, in a configuration like (20), V cannot assign a θ-role to the subject of the embedded clause:

(20)   *[V [NP VP]$_S$]

[Williams 1994: 30]

However, this is exactly one of the basic configurations for which it as been claimed that long-distance θ-assignment can proceed. The clearest illustration of a legitimate instance of (20) is provided by *se* reflexivization in ECM configurations (Marantz 1984, Reinhart & Siloni 2005 and Saab 2015, among others):

(21)   a.   Juan se considera inteligente.
              Juan SE considers intelligent.
              'Juan considers himself intelligent.'
        b.   [V [Juan inteligente]$_S$]

Williams doesn't demonstrate what it is supposed to be demonstrated, namely, that it is indeed the case that (20) is an illegitimate instance of long-distance θ-role assignment. The fact that *Juan* in (21a) can indeed receive a θ-role from V follows under a theory that dispenses with sisterhood and derives θ-relations from other conditions at play in the A-domain. These conditions are activity and locality/intervention. Modifying Saab's (2014, 2015) theory, I formulate the relevant conditions as follows:

(22)   **Principle of θ-role assignment:**
        An argument DP A receives a θ-role from a thematic head, $x_{[D]}$, in the
        domain of xP if and only if:[3]

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[2] Williams's theory is a good example of the theoretical cost any syntactic theory of θ-relations have in trying to keep sisterhood at the core of the theory. In his system, sisterhood only works by percolation from heads to maximal projections.
[3] The notation $x_{[D]}$ stands for a head with a subcategorization feature of the [D] type that makes that head a potential θ-role assigner.

A.   **Activity:** A has an unvalued K feature at the point of the derivation where the θ-role of $x_{[D]}$ is being evaluated/assigned.

B.   **Locality:** There is no other (active) DP argument A', such that A' is closer to $x_{[D]}$ than A. (X is closer to $x_{[D]}$ than Y if both X and Y are in the domain of xP and X c-commands Y.)

The condition in (22A) is taken from Chomsky's idea that in order for a DP to be manipulated by the computational system, it must have unvalued Case (Chomsky 2000; 2001). In turn, the condition in (22B) is adapted from Chomsky (1995), who uses closeness as a core ingredient of his Minimal Link Condition. Θ-relations are subject, then, to the same conditions that constraint other A-dependencies. In the next two subsections, I illustrate the theory with reference to reflexives and impersonals and, then, I conclude this section with a discussion on the working of clitic insertion at PF.

2.1   On Activity

Let's start with the double θ-assignment effects that are attested in reflexives. The syntax of a reflexive sentence with *se* is exactly like a transitive sentence with a crucial difference: Voice, which like in any transitive simply subcategorizes an external argument through the specification of a [D] feature, does not assign accusative case in reflexive environments. According to Pujalte & Saab (2012), this follows if Voice can enter the syntax with or without unvalued ϕ-features. If it has ϕ-features, then it values them through *Agree* against the internal object like in simple transitives. If Voice is fully ϕ-defective, then there is no accusative valuation by Voice and the internal argument values nominative with C/T through inheritance (Chomsky 2008).[4] Because of the formal defectiveness of Voice, the internal argument of a *se*-reflexive is active and local with respect to Voice and can, consequently, receive two θ-roles. In the following tree, then, Voice is not merged with an external argument and the internal argument receives the agent θ-role from Voice and nominative Case from C/T (only surviving subcategorization features are illustrated here):[5]

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[4] According to Pujalte & Saab (2012), inheritance from C/T to V is allowed if there is no other probe in the way. Whenever Voice has unvalued ϕ-features, inheritance stops in the head immediately above Voice.

[5] This doesn't mean that reflexivity in Spanish or other languages requires Voice defectiveness as a precondition. In English, there are both inherent reflexive verbs (e.g., *John washes.*) and reflexive pronouns in object position (e.g., 'John criticizes himself.'). In Spanish, for instance, prepositional verbs can only be reflexivized through a syntactic anaphora (e.g., *Juan depende de sí mismo.* 'Juan depends on himself.'). The same anaphora can co-occur with *se* in emphatic contexts (e.g., *Juan se ama a sí mismo* 'Juan loves himself.'). For these case, I assume that the doubling anaphora is an
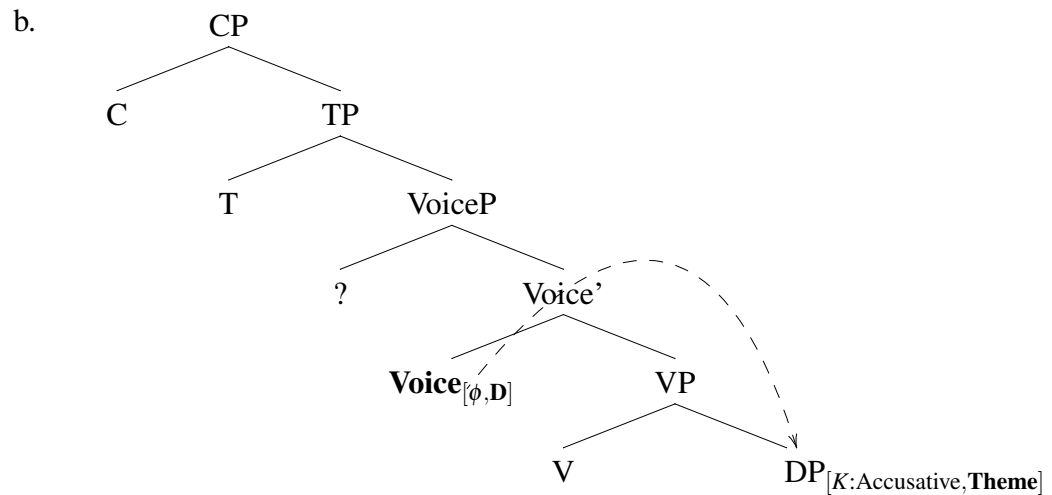
(23)   a.   Ana se criticó.
        b.
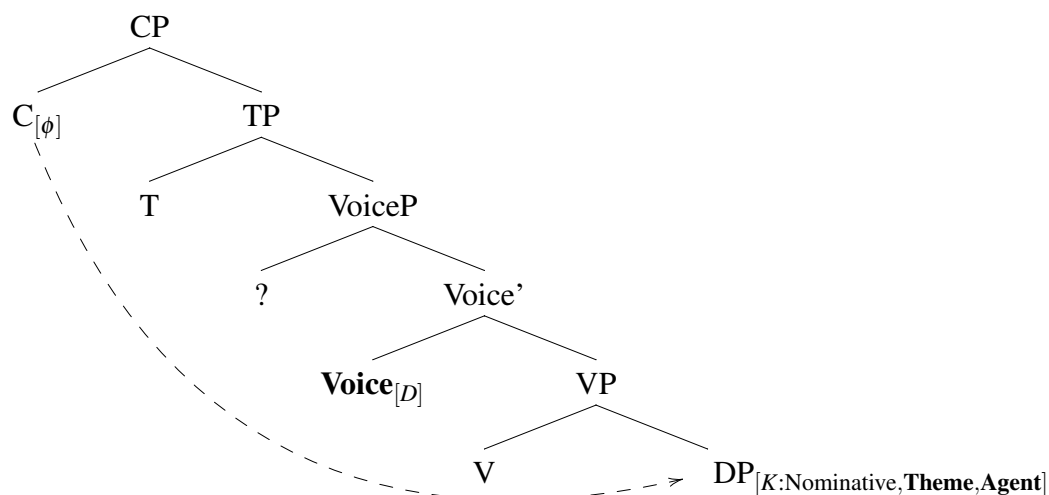
The next prediction is that accusative Case valuation between Voice and the internal DP prevents θ-role assignment of the external θ-role to the accusative DP. This is precisely the case of impersonal/passive structures with *se*, because Voice enters the derivation with unvalued ϕ-features. Note that the complementarity between reflexives and impersonals/passives is quite parsimonious, since that in impersonals/passives, absence of an external argument follows if C/T does not value nominative, i.e., here C/T, unlike reflexive sentences, enters the derivation without ϕ-features:[6]

(24)   a.   Se criticó a Ana.

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adjunct (see Kaminszczik & Saab 2016 for discussion). For a general theory of parametric variation in reflexives, I refer to Reinhart & Siloni (2005).

[6] A reviewer wonders why Case valuation necessarily precedes θ-assignment. The formulation in (22A) implies that θ-role assignment is blocked whenever this operation and Case valuation apply to the same DP concomitantly . Alternatively, one could conjecture that Case valuation applies before than θ-assignment because Case valuation requires deletion of uninterpretable features in the syntax. Yet, there are other alternatives, some of which are discussed at some length in Saab (2015).

b.

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{CP} \\
\diagup\quad\diagdown \\
\text{C}\qquad\text{TP} \\
\diagup\quad\diagdown \\
\text{T}\qquad\text{VoiceP} \\
\diagup\quad\diagdown \\
?\qquad\text{Voice'} \\
\diagup\quad\diagdown \\
\textbf{Voice}_{[\phi,\textbf{D}]}\qquad\text{VP} \\
\diagup\quad\diagdown \\
\text{V}\qquad\text{DP}_{[K:\text{Accusative},\textbf{Theme}]}
\end{array}
$$

The agentive interpretation of sentence (24a) obtains through the following repair strategy at the semantic-pragmatic interface, which is one of the central aspects of the theory to be developed in the next section (Saab 2014):
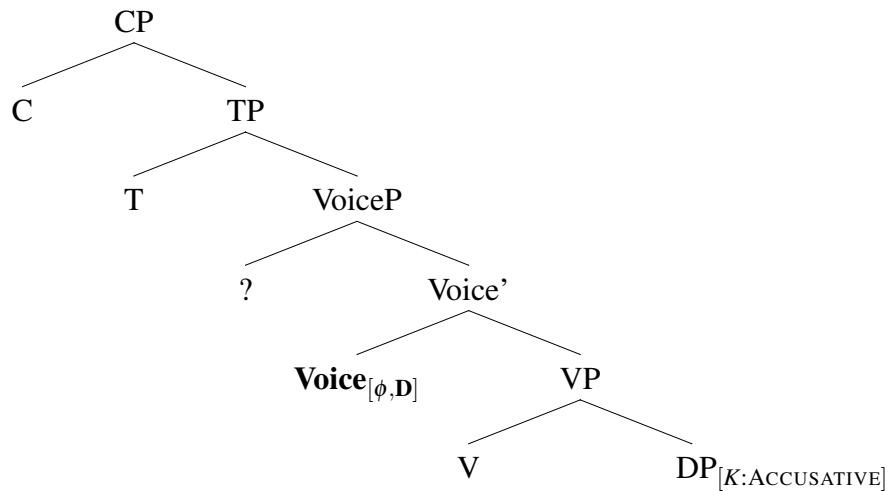
(25)   **Default agents (at the C-I interface):** For any agentive Voice$_{[D]}$, assign *arb* in absence of a nominative subject in the C-domain of Voice$_{[D]}$.

At first glance, the statement in (25) seems to make an incorrect prediction with respect to passive *se* constructions, where the internal argument agrees with the verb (cf. (13) above):

(26)   **Se** cerraron las puertas para bloquear la salida.
         SE closed.3PL the doors for block.INF the exit
         'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

A way of conciliating this fact with (25) is assuming that passives and impersonals involving the clitic *se* do not differ regarding their abstract Case structure. Concretely, both constructions are instances of the structure in (27); i.e., a radically defective C/T, but a ϕ-complete Voice head , i.e., one that values accusative Case:

(27)

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                        CP
                    ┌────┴──────┐
                    C          TP
                           ┌────┴──────┐
                           T         VoiceP
                                  ┌────┴──────┐
                                  ?         Voice'
                                        ┌────┴──────┐
                                  Voice_{[φ,D]}      VP
                                                 ┌────┴──────┐
                                                 V        DP_{[K:ACCUSATIVE]}
```

That is, in passive *se* configurations there is no nominative Case assignment. This can be corroborated in contrasts as the following ones, in which passive *se* does not admit nominative pronouns or proper names in subject position:

(28)   a.   Se encontraron cadáveres.
            SE found.3PL   bodies
            'Bodies were found.'
       b.   *Se encontró   Juan/él.
            SE found.3SG Juan/he
            Intended: 'He was found.'
       c.   *Me   encontré   yo.
            CL.1SG.ACC found.1SG I
            Intended: 'I was found.' (b-c OK as reflexives; see Pujalte & Saab
            2012)

Crucially, accusative pronominalization or differential object marking must be used here. This always results in an impersonal *se* sentence:

(29)   a.   Se lo   encontró.
            SE CL.MASC.3SG.ACC found.3SG
            'He was found.'
       b.   Se me   encontró.
            SE CL.1SG.ACC found.3SG
            'I was found.'
       c.   Se encontró   a   Juan.
            SE found.3SG DOM Juan
            'Juan was found.'

The right generalization seems to be that only those objects that are not explicitly marked as accusative show subject-verb agreement effects. In Pujalte (2013) and Pujalte & Saab (2014) this agreement difference between passives and impersonals is considered as purely morphophonological. If this is correct, we have to dissociate morphological case from morphological agreement. We refer the reader to those works for details. For our purposes here, it is enough stressing that (25) holds.

In summary, I have illustrated the role that the Activity Condition in (22B) plays in the derivation of reflexives and impersonals/passives. It is easy to see now how and why θ-role assignment applies in ECM environments (against Williams 1994). In effect, like in the simple cases analyzed so far, forming an impersonal *se* sentence or a *se*-reflexive one in those environments only requires manipulation of the Voice head. If Voice enters the derivation without ϕ features, then a reflexive ECM sentence obtains (see (30a)). If, instead, Voice has unvalued ϕ-features, the result is an impersonal *se* sentence (see (31a)):

(30)   a.   Juan se considera inteligente.
           Juan SE considers intelligent
           'Juan considers himself intelligent.'
       b.   [$_{VoiceP}$ Voice$_{[D]}$ [$_{SC}$ Juan$_{experiencer}$ inteligente]]

(31)   a.   Se considera inteligente a   Juan.
           SE considers intelligent DOM Juan
           'Someone/one considers Juan intelligent.'
       b.   [$_{VoiceP}$ Voice$_{[D,\theta]}$ [$_{SC}$ Juan$_{[accusative]}$ inteligente]]

In the next subsection, I turn my attention to the Locality Condition in (22B) and illustrate how it accounts for certain intriguing reflexivization patterns in Spanish ditransitives. I also show why the present analysis is superior to other alternatives in competition.

2.2   On Locality

A crucial ingredient of this theory is its reference to the intervention effects formulated in (22B). The empirical motivation for the introduction of this constraint comes from a contrast observed in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016, 2017) involving *se* reflexivization in ditransitive sentences. It is well-known that Spanish has a dative alternation in which the goal DP can surface as a PP headed by *a* 'to' or as *a*-marked DP doubled by a dative clitic (see Masullo 2003, Demonte 1995, Cuervo 2003, and Pujalte 2013 for another approach):

(32)   a.   Juan entregó el libro a María.
   Juan gave   the book to María

   b. Juan le   entregó el libro a María.
     Juan CL.3SG.DAT gave the book to María
     'Juan gave the book to María.'

The example (32a) illustrates the prepositional variant of the alternation whereas (32b) illustrates what I will call without any theoretical commitment *the double object construction*. Following main insights in the literature, I assume that the dative alternation reverses the c-commanding relations between the two internal arguments: [7]

(33) *Prepositional construction*
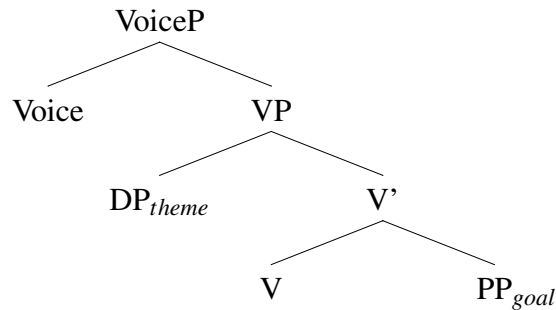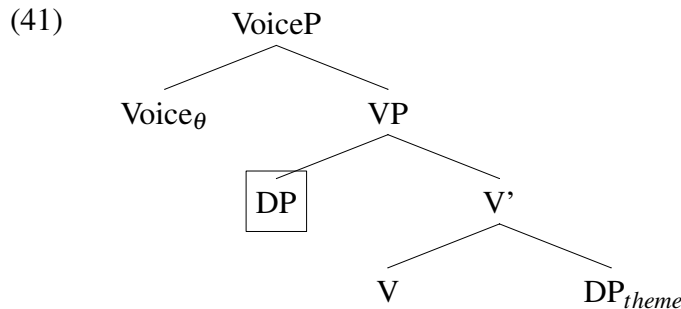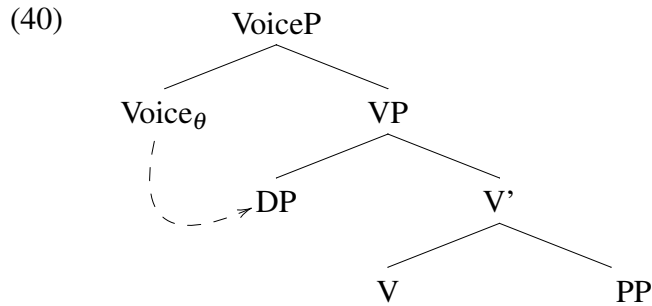

(34) *Double object construction*
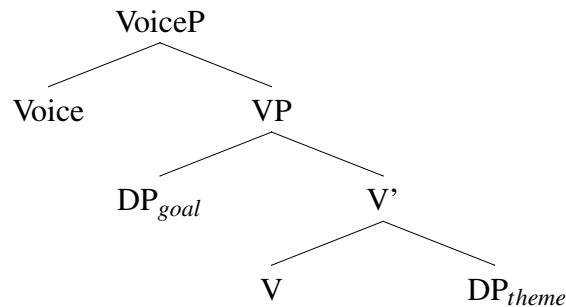
As discussed in detail in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016, 2017), on this analysis of the dative alternation, the following prediction arises with respect to *se* reflexivization: only the theme DP in the prepositional variant can receive the agent θ-role from the Voice head, assuming that in both variants the theme respects Activity. This prediction is correct. In the following examples, reflexivization of the theme DP is only allowed in the prepositional construction. In the double object construction, the result of reflexivizing the theme DP either is ungrammatical (marked with *) or gives rise to an idiomatic reading (marked with #). In the latter case, *se* is not reflexive, but inherent/diacritic (more on this below):

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[7] I also follows Pujalte (2013), according to whom true ditransitives like *recomendar* doesn't project a low applicative phrase (against Cuervo 2003). Yet, I think that the point I make in the body of the text is orthogonal to this issue.

(35)   a.   Juan se entregó a la policía.
            Juan SE delivered to the police

        b.   #Juan se le   entregó a la policía.
            Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to the police
            'Juan turned himself in/over the police.'

(36)   a.   Juan se recomendó   a su jefe para ese trabajo.
            Juan SE recommended to his boss for   that job

        b.   *Juan se le   recomendó   a su jefe para ese trabajo.
            Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT recommended to his boss for   that job
            'Juan recommended himself to his/her boss for that job.'

(37)   a.   Juan se presentó   a María.
            Juan SE introduced to María

        b.   #Juan se le   presentó   a María.
            Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT introduced to María
            'Juan introduced himself to María.'

(38)   a.   Juan se regaló   a María envuelto en un paquete.
            Juan SE give-a-present to María wrapped in a   package

        b.   #Juan se le   regaló   a María.
            Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT give-a-present to María
            'Juan gave himself as a present to María wrapped in a package.'

(39)   a.   Juan se ofreció a María para ayudar.
            Juan SE offered to María for   helping

        b.   #Juan se le   ofreció a María para ayudar.
            Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT offered to María for   helping
            'Juan offered himself to María for helping.'

The locality clause in (22B) accounts for why this contrast exists. Concretely, only in the prepositional construction the theme DP is local in the favored sense (see (40)). In the double object construction, the goal DP is closer to the Voice head than the theme DP and, consequently, it cannot receive a θ-role from the Voice head (see (41)):

(40)

```
                    VoiceP
              ╱              ╲
        Voice_θ               VP
           ┆              ╱        ╲
           ┆          ⟶ DP          V'
                                ╱      ╲
                               V        PP
```

(41)

```
                    VoiceP
              ╱              ╲
        Voice_θ               VP
                          ╱        ╲
                      ┌─────┐       V'
                      │ DP  │    ╱      ╲
                      └─────┘   V        DP_theme
```

A further prediction is that the goal DP can be reflexivized in the double object construction. This is also borne out:

(42)   Juan se entregó el   libro.
        Juan SE gave   the book
        'Juan gave the book to himself.'

Before entering into comparison with alternative analyses, two clarifications regarding the mechanism of θ-assignment in ditransitives are in order. First, I assume here that dative Case is structural (at least in ditransitives), but, unlike nominative and accusative, it is not assigned by Agree with a given functional head, but through a PF mechanism that inserts the preposition a to an argument that has not valued its Case feature in the syntax. Pujalte (2013) motivates this operation by properties of the inheritance mechanism and the particular distribution of dative arguments in the syntax. I refer the reader to that work for details. Second, assuming that in double object constructions V enters the syntax with two θ-roles to assign, we should wonder why are not both θ-roles directly assigned to the object DP once V and this DP are merged,i.e., before the introduction of the indirect object:

(43) $[_{V'} \text{ V } DP_{[theme,goal]}]$

If this happens, the indirect object would not receive a θ-role and, consequently, the resulting sentence would violate the Θ-Criterion. It seems then that the VP

projection must be completed by External Merge of the indirect object before θ-assignment of the goal θ-role:

(44) $[_{VP}\,\text{DP}_{goal}\,[_{V'}\,\text{V}\,\text{DP}_{theme}]]$

Yet, this is not necessarily so. In principle, one could let (43) to take place in the syntax and to filter the result at LF. Alternatively, the step in (43) is blocked in the syntax by principles that regulate the timing of External Merge and θ-assignment. This second strategy is discussed in detail in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016). Any decision in this respect would crucially depend on the assumption that a given thematic head can have more than one θ-role and, obviously, on assumptions about the proper analysis of double object constructions. Space limitations prevent further inquiry in this technical issues.

The facts discussed so far are crucial because they permit to distinguish among different analytic options on empirical grounds. Consider first Reinhart & Siloni's (2005) approach. According to them, long-distance θ-role assignment is allowed by the system whenever certain conditions apply. First, a given DP can receive more than one θ-role through the operation of reflexivization bundling:

(45)   **Reflexivization bundling:**
        $[\theta_i]\,[\theta_j] \rightarrow [\theta_i]\text{-}[\theta_j]$, where θ_i is an external θ-role.

                                                              [Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 400]

Bundling is an operation that applies in syntax or in the lexicon depending on parametric options. French and Spanish are languages in which reflexivization is syntactic and subject to the following conditions:

(46)   **Reflexivization in syntax**
        a.   Case: Case is reduced by the appropriate morphology (such as the clitic *se*).
        b.   Bundling: Operation (45) applies to unassigned θ-roles, upon merger of the external θ-role.

                                                              [Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 404]

Then, for a simple reflexive sentence like (47a), the unsaturated theme θ-role is bundled with the external θ-role once the external argument is merged:

(47)   a.   Jean se lave.
              Jean SE washes
              'Jean washes.'
        b.   VP: $[\text{se lave}_{\theta i-Agent,\theta k-Theme}]$
        c.   IP: $[\text{Jean}_{<\theta i,\theta k>}\,[\text{se lave}_j\,[_{VP}\,\text{t}_j]]]$

According to Reinhart & Siloni, languages in which reflexivization takes place in the syntax, like French and Romance in general, allow dative or accusative reflexivization depending on the specific Case the clitic *se* reduces. If the clitic reduces dative Case we get (42), but (35a) when accusative Case is reduced (see Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 412). The question, then, is how to rule out examples like (35b) where the theme argument cannot be reflexivized in presence of a c-commanding DP goal. Since that a theme θ-role is never realized as a dative argument (Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 412), we must assume that the clitic here reduces accusative and that the goal argument receives dative. This results in a configuration in which the theme θ-role remains unassigned. If this is correct, then reflexivization bundling would apply upon merger of the external argument. However, this is impossible.

Ditransitives present a more serious challenge to Labelle (2008). On her view, *se* is the realization of a Voice head, whose semantic definition requires combination with an open predicate. This is possible if, for instance, the verbal predicate, defined as function from entities to even predicates, doesn't have an internal argument. The denotation of Voice*se* is then as follows:
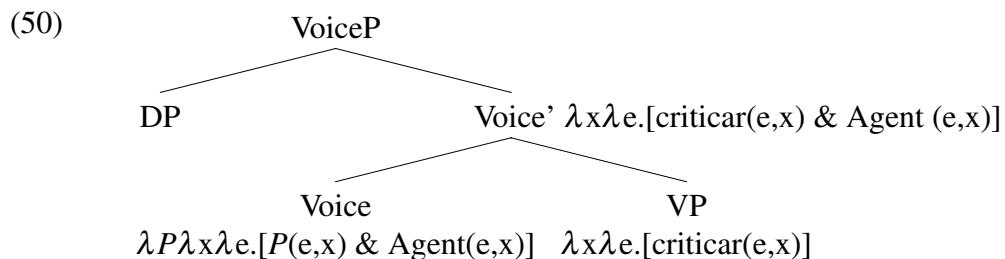
(48) $[\![\text{Voice}]\!] = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$

So, for a reflexive sentence like the following one:

(49)   Juan se critica.
         Juan SE criticizes
         'Juan criticizes himself.'

Labelle proposes the analysis in the tree below (adapted from Labelle 2008: 838):

(50)   VoiceP
              _____
             | |
            DP   Voice' $\lambda x \lambda e.[\text{criticar}(e,x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
                                  _____
                                 | |
                               Voice   VP
              $\lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$ $\lambda x \lambda e.[\text{criticar}(e,x)]$

Crucial to this analysis is the relation between the Voice head and its complement. It is required that an open predicate obtains before combination through functional application with the Voice head. Added arguments are of particular importance here. Such as Labelle suggests, aspectual *se* (see example (5) repeated below) could
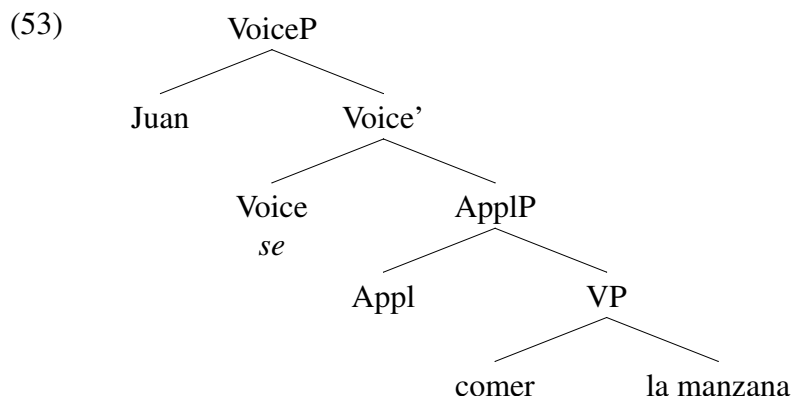
be derived under a high applicative analysis in which the benefactive argument that the high applicative head requires remains unsaturated leaving this applicative head open (see subsection 4.3 for more details):

(51)   Juan se comió la   manzana.
       Juan SE ate   the apple
       'Juan ate the apple.'

Let's see how the argument proceeds in more detail. Following Pylkkänen (2008), Labelle adopts the following denotation for high applicatives:

(52) $\llbracket \text{Appl}_{high} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{Benefactive}(e, x)]$

Syntactically, high applicatives merge above VP and below Voice and, semantically, they relate an individual and an event predicate. If the entity argument is not saturated before Voice introduction, an open predicate obtains, one that can legitimately combine with Voice$_{se}$, as defined in (48):

(53)

```
                  VoiceP
               /         \
           Juan          Voice'
                       /        \
                  Voice          ApplP
                   se          /       \
                           Appl          VP
                                       /     \
                                  comer    la manzana
```

The denotations of the relevant nodes is provided below. Note that the Appl head combines with the VP through Event Identification (Kratzer 1996, Pyllkänen 2008, and the next section):

(54)   a. $\llbracket \text{VP} \rrbracket = \lambda e. [\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana})]$
       b. $\llbracket \text{Appl}_{benef} \rrbracket = \lambda z \lambda e.[\text{Benefactive}(e, z)]$
       c. $\llbracket \text{ApplP} \rrbracket = \lambda z \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana}) \,\&\, \text{Benefactive}(e, z)]$ By Event Identification
       d. $\llbracket \text{Voice}_{se} \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x) \,\&\, \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
       e. $\llbracket \text{Voice'} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana}) \,\&\, \text{Benefactive}(e, x) \,\&\, \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
       f. $\llbracket \text{VoiceP} \rrbracket = \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana}) \,\&\, \text{Benefactive}(e, \text{Juan}) \,\&\, \text{Agent}(e,\text{Juan})]$

Labelle also suggests tentatively that her analysis could be extended to low applicatives. According to Pyllkänen, low applicatives relate two individuals and are generated below V as shown below:

(55)
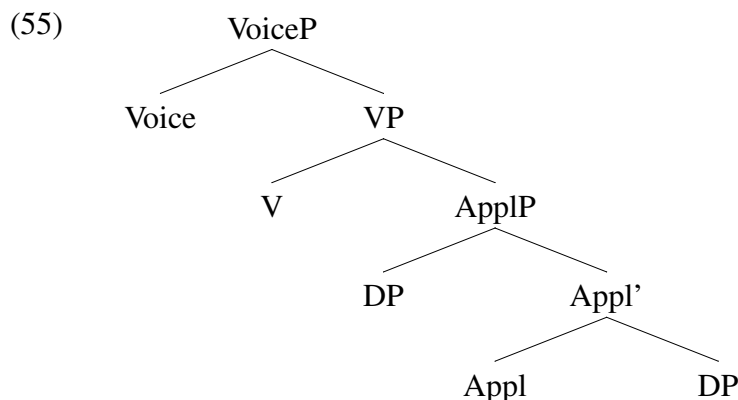
Pyllkänen recognizes two semantic flavors for low applicatives, one expressing a recipient relation and another one denoting a source relation:

(56) a. $[\![\text{Appl}_{recipient}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.[f(e, x) \text{ \& theme }(e, x) \text{ \& to-the-possession}(x, y)]$
      b. $[\![\text{Appl}_{source}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.[f(e, x) \text{ \& theme }(e, x) \text{ \& from-the-possession}(x, y)]$
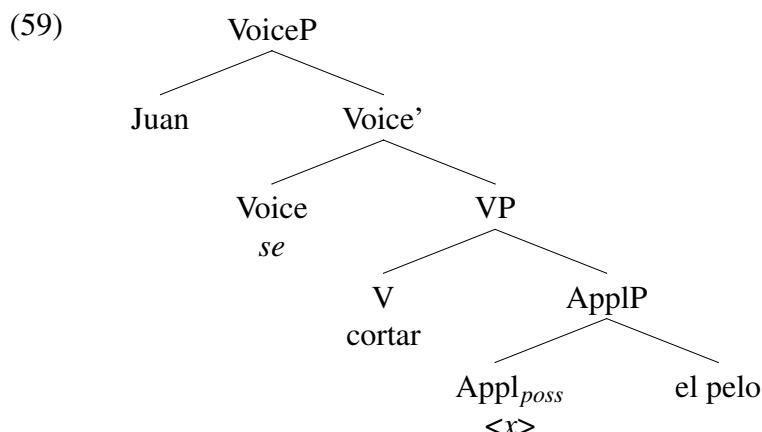
Labelle extends the low applicative analysis to account for inalienable possession sentences involving *se*:

(57) Juan se corta el   pelo.
      Juan SE cuts the hair
      'Juan cuts his hair.'

Inalienable possession is expressed by a lexical variant of a low applicative head denoting an *in-the-possession-of* relation:
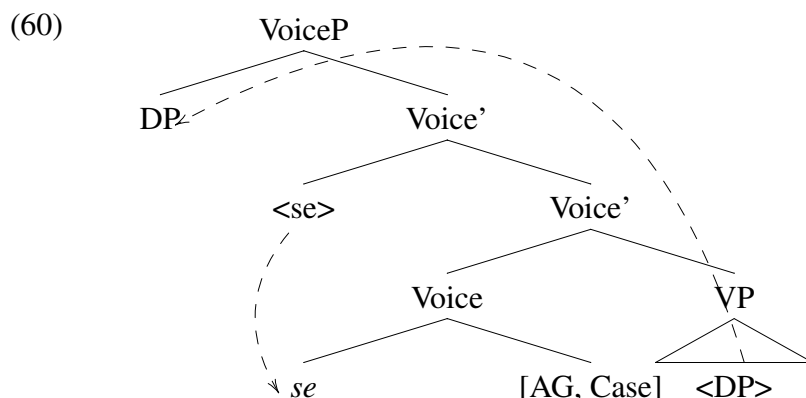
(58) a. $[\![\text{Appl}_{poss}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>} [f(e, x) \text{ \& theme }(e, x) \text{ \& in-the-possession}(x, y)]$

With these assumption in mind, the analysis for a sentence like (57) can be represented as follows (adapted from Labelle 2008: 853):

(59)

```
                    VoiceP
              _____|_____
             |             |
           Juan         Voice'
                     ____|____
                    |         |
                  Voice       VP
                   se      ___|___
                          |       |
                          V      ApplP
                        cortar  ___|___
                               |       |
                          Appl_poss  el pelo
                             <x>
```

Labelle doesn't provide more details. As far as I can tell, as it stands, this analysis fails, since V and Appl cannot combine by any of the semantic axioms we have (functional application, predicate modification or event identification; see the next section for definitions). In effect, absence of a dative argument would produce a type mismatch, in which the semantic type of $V_{<e,<s,t>>}$ cannot saturate the individual argument of $Appl_{<e,<e,<s,t>>>}$. Put differently, the syntax proposed in (59) doesn't give the required open predicate at the VP level; the derivation is indeed cancelled when V is introduced. Concerning the paradigm from (35) to (39), these are not entirely bad news if we assume a low applicative analysis for ditrasitives. Reflexivization of the theme role in the double object sentences is correctly ruled out. The problem is that the theory also rules out sentences where the applied argument is reflexivized. As the grammaticality of the sentence in (42) shows this prediction is not borne out. And of course, the sentence in (57) is not properly ruled in.

The contrast discussed in this section also presents a problem for Embick's 2004 analysis, according to which *se* is generated in Spec,Voice and then cliticizes onto the Voice head. This approach requires movement of the internal argument in order the anaphora *se* to be properly bound by the subject DP:

(60)

```
                              VoiceP
                     ┌──────────┴──────────┐ ⌐ ⌐ ⌐ ⌐ ⌐
                    DP                    Voice'
                                   ┌────────┴────────┐
                                 <se>             Voice'
                                          ┌──────────┴──────────┐
                                        Voice                    VP
                                   ┌──────┴──────┐            ╱  ╲
                                         se   [AG, Case]   <DP>
```

One could speculate that the ungrammaticality of sentences like (35b) is the result of a minimality effect, where the DP in complement position illicitly crosses the goal DP. A simplified representation of how this analysis should proceed is illustrated below:

(61)   *[$_{VoiceP}$ DP$_i$ Voice [$_{VP}$ DP$_{goal}$ V t$_i$]]

Yet, object to subject movement crossing a dative goal is attested in passive sentences:
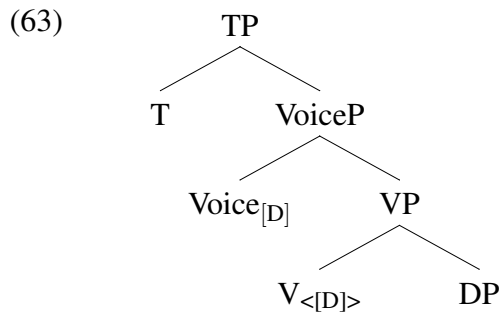
(62)   El   libro le   fue entregado a Juan.
        the book CL.3SG.DAT was given   to Juan
        'This book was given to Juan.'

This basic fact makes the analytical option in (61) implausible. As shown by Kaminszczik & Saab (2017), the same problem extends to the movement theory of reflexivization, according to which the *se* is a residue of A-movement (Hornstein 2001 and Boeckx, Hornstein & Nunes 2008).

    In summary, in this section I have illustrated the working of the locality clause in (22B) with reference to certain reflexivization patterns in Spanish ditransitives. In addition, I have argued that this pattern is crucial when it comes to evaluating theories of *se*-reflexivization in competition. To complete the set of morpho-syntactic assumptions which are at the core of my analysis of *se*-syncretism, I turn my attention now to the repair mechanism that inserts *se* at PF.
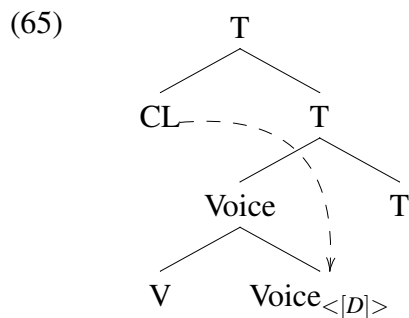
2.3   On clitic insertion

Recall that the syntactic property that triggers *se* syncretism is a uncancelled [D] feature on the head Voice. In (63) I repeat the basic tree in (17):

(63)

```
              TP
           /      \
          T        VoiceP
                  /      \
            Voice[D]      VP
                        /     \
                    V<[D]>      DP
```

After head movement from V to T, PF receives the following complex head:

(64)

```
              T
           /      \
        Voice       T
       /      \
      V      Voice[D]
```
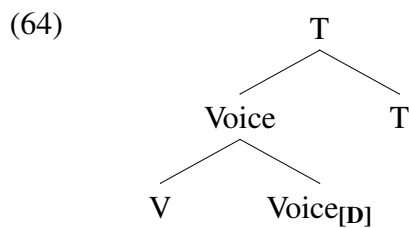
In this scenario, clitic insertion is implemented in order to delete the relevant categorial feature:

(65)

```
              T
           /      \
        CL-- - -   T
                  /      \
              Voice       T
             /      \
            V      Voice<[D]>
```

The clitic enters the derivation as a purely D feature, i.e., it encodes no other inherent feature specification. Now, I assume that it has unvalued ϕ features.[8] Such features are, then, valued against the inflectional features that the T node acquired in the syntax:

---

[8] This assumption is, however, rather trivial. Other implementations could be consistent with this general approach.

(66)

```
                    T
                 /    ⁀ 
              /          \
           CL            T
                      /      \
                  /              ⌝
              Voice            T_φ
             /     \
          /           \
        V         Voice_{<[D]>}
```
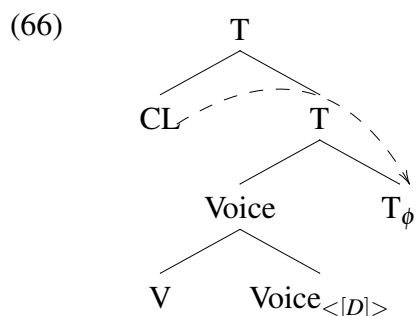
This analysis correctly predicts the two basic behaviors of *se* regarding agreement, namely, non-paradigmatic and paradigmatic *se*. Non-paradigmatic *se* is the invariable form of the clitic that occurs in passive and impersonal *se* constructions. That the form is invariable is accounted for because the T node in passives and impersonals doesn't agree with any DP in the syntax; T shows default agreement, which in Spanish, as in many languages, is the third singular form. As for paradigmatic *se*, which occurs in the rest of the paradigm, its agreeing features are the result of an agreement relation with the T node, which in this case has valued ϕ-features in the syntax with the subject DP. So, the clitic will surface as *se*, *me*, *te*, *nos* etc. depending on the feature specification of T. Category and inflectional features are the only set of features expressed by the clitic. On this analysis, the clitic doesn't realize either syntactic or morphological case. This is consistent with one version of the so-called "unaccusativity hypothesis" for reflexives, according to which the clitic "absorbs" the Case feature of the relevant functional node. Of course, absorption here means no Case at all. A less radical option, also consistent with the present analysis, would be to assume that the clitic does show case, but determined entirely at PF. I don't know how to set apart both options. And I don't know either if there is any empirical consideration that distinguishes any of these two options from a more or less standard view according to which the clitic can receive any Case in the syntax (dative, accusative, nominative, etc.; see, for instance, Cinque 1988 and Reinhart & Siloni 2005). In principle, the extended syncretism pattern seems to favor a "no Case" approach. Recall that *se* appears in transitive and unergative contexts, where either accusative is assigned to the internal argument of the relevant predicate (aspectual *se*) or there is no accusative feature in the syntactic configuration like in inherent *se* constructions:

(67)   a.   Juan comió la   manzana.
                Juan ate   the apple
                'Juan ate the apple.'

  b. Juan **se** comió la manzana.
      Juan SE ate   the apple.
      'Juan ate the apple.'

(68) a. Juan **se** quejó.
          Juan SE complained.
          'Juan complained.'
      b. *Juan quejó.
          Juan complained
      c. *Juan lo   quejó.
          J.   him/it complained

For aspectual *se* we have already seen that Labelle (2008) suggests that the clitic stands for dative case. Inherent *se* is more challenging for those who think that *se* has Case. But again, conclusions in this respect would suppose to take a particular stance regarding the syncretism pattern.

This late insertion approach to *se* syncretism makes a set of different predictions. I will review some of them here before moving to the semantic side of my analysis. First, this view correctly predicts that *se* and its inflectional variants are located in the topmost position in the clitic cluster. Recall that examples like (35b) cannot be interpreted as reflexives. The sentence at hand is acceptable under an idiomatic meaning, clearly related to a sexual or love event. A minimal modification of the relevant example makes this point clearer:

(69) Juan se le   entregó   a Ana.
      Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to Ana
      'Juan turned himself in/over Ana.'

An indication that the sentence is not reflexive is that it is incompatible with the doubling anaphora *a sí mismo* but it is compatible with the idiomatic modifier *en cuerpo y alma* 'in body and soul':

(70) Juan se le   entregó   a Ana *a sí-mismo / en cuerpo y   alma.
      Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to Ana *to himself   / in body   and soul

      'Juan turned himself in/over Ana completely.'

Impersonal *se* is another case where *se* always precedes other clitics in the cluster:

(71) Se te   criticó.
      SE CL.2SG.DAT criticized
      'Someone criticized you.'

For any clitic cluster involving *se*, the pattern is always the same: *se* is the topmost clitic.[9] This fact fits straightforwardly with the late insertion approach and presents a further challenge for those approaches that treats *se* as a syntactic anaphora.

Additional evidence for PF-insertion is provided by the absence of impersonal or passive *se* in non-pro-drop varieties in Romance, such as French and Brazilian Portuguese. Consider the latter. It is well-known that, together with the lost of the pro-drop property, this language is also replacing impersonal *se* for a null generic, a typical property of partial pro-drop languages (Holmberg 2005; 2010):

(72)   a.   Aqui pode fumar.
              here can   smoke
              'You/can smoke here.'
        b.   Aqui conserta sapatos.
              here repairs   shoes
              'One repairs shoes here.'

                                                                              [Kato 1999: 5]

Why should this be the case? A reasonable answer would be to attribute this to the fact that both consistent non-null subject languages and partial pro-drop ones require EPP checking in the syntax (see Saab 2016). If this is correct, then clitic insertion at PF could not satisfy the EPP property of the T node and another syntactic mechanism should be at play. A null generic in Brazilian Portuguese or an overt expletive/ pronominal in French solve this requirement. It is not a surprise then that these languages retain other types of *se* at the same time that impersonal/passive *se* disappears.

A final consideration regarding the PF nature of clitic insertion has to do with the timing of the operation. As shown by Pujalte & Saab (2012), clitic insertion is restricted by morphological phases. They adopt a strong version of the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC), which, they assume, is also operative at morphology. This is the version of the strong PIC formulated by Marvin (2002) (see Chomsky 2000 for another well-known version of strong PIC):
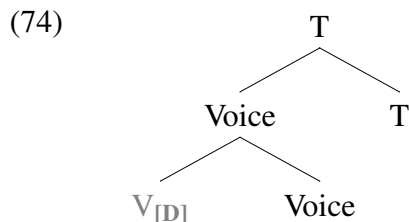
(73)   H and its edge are spelled out at the next (strong) phase. The domain of H
        is spelled out at the phase of HP. A head h adjoined to H is in the domain
        of H.

                                                                           [Marvin 2002: 26]

This makes the crucial prediction that clitic insertion cannot repair surviving category features in the V node or below. In the tree in (74) the gray area represents

---

[9] There are dialects in which sequences as *me-se* are legitimate strings. I assume that this reordering applies at PF.

an invisible zone for operations affecting the head phase or material above it (by assumption, Voice):

(74)

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{T} \\[2pt]
\diagup\;\diagdown \\[2pt]
\text{Voice}\qquad\text{T} \\[2pt]
\diagup\;\diagdown \\[2pt]
\text{V}_{[\mathbf{D}]}\qquad\text{Voice}
\end{array}
$$

There is evidence that corroborates this prediction. Concretely, impersonal *se* cannot occur in object position. Thus, a sentence like (75) can only have a reflexive meaning and not an impersonal one:

(75)   Juan se escondió.
        Juan se hid
        #'Juan hid someone.'
        'Juan hid himself.'

Arbitrary objects, whatever the right analysis, cannot be associated with the clitic *se*:

(76)   a.   El psicoanálisis   (*se) cura.
              the psychoanalysis (*SE) cures
              'Psychoanalysis cures (someone).'
        b.   Esto no (*se) limpia.
              this not (*SE) cleans
              'This doesn't clean (something).'

   This basic fact follows, then, as a deviation of strong PIC. It is not obvious at all how these facts could be derived if *se* was generated as a syntactic anaphora. This is exactly the type of evidence that favors the general approach I am pursing here for *se* constructions in general. The assumption is that *se* stands in some way for marking the absence of an external argument (whatever the proper implementation of this idea). Yet, there is no principled reason why this should be the case. Clitic insertion at PF restricted by strong PIC provides this reason.

2.4   Interim summary

In this section, I have shown how a version of θ-theory looks like with activity and locality conditions at play. I have abandoned sisterhood as a precondition for θ-role assignment and show that θ-role assignment can be properly restricted to operate

in a long-distance fashion once other operations (Agree, clitic insertion, etc.) are also properly constrained. A θ-theory with (22) and (25) as core ingredients opens a set of relevant questions regarding the nature of θ-roles and implicit arguments, the principles that regulate their distribution in the sentence and the way in which the interfaces operate with the information syntax provides. In the next section, I focus on the last point, in particular, on the syntax-LF interaction in the particular empirical domain we are concerned with.

3   Semantic implementations

3.1   Basic assumptions

In this section, I propose that, at LF, θ-roles are semantically realized as functions from entities to event predicates (i.e., objects denoting in $< e, < s, t >>$), like V and Voice in Kratzer (1996). At least for the basic cases, these are the only semantic objects of this type, given that I assume a radical nonprojectionist view on thematic relations, according to which verbal predicates only denote predicate of events (see Pietroski 2005 and Williams 2005, among others). A DP then cannot be combined directly with the verbal predicate for semantic reasons. For simple e-denoting DPs, direct combination with $V_{<s,t>}$ would produce a noninterpretable object at LF:

(77)   ? Type Mismatch

                V$_{<s,t>}$ DP$_e$
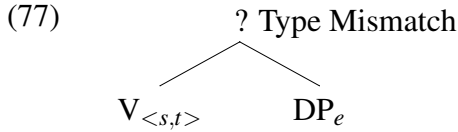
In order to see the problem more clearly, let's first assume the following three axioms for semantic composition of binary nodes:

(78)   **Functional Application (FA)** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ is a function whose domain contains $[\![\gamma]\!]$, then $[\![\alpha]\!] = [\![\beta]\!]([\![\gamma]\!])$.

[Heim & Kratzer 1998: 44]

(79)   **Predicate Modification for event properties (PM):** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ and $[\![\gamma]\!]$ are both in D$_{<s,t>}$, then $[\![\alpha]\!] = \lambda e \in D_{event}. [\![\beta]\!](e) = [\![\gamma]\!](e) = 1$.

[adapted from Heim & Kratzer 1998: 65]

(80)   **Event Identification (EI):** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ is in <e, <s,t» and $[\![\gamma]\!]$ is in <s,t>, then, $[\![\alpha]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e_s.[[\![\beta]\!](e, x)\ \&\ [\![\gamma]\!](e)]$

[adapted from Kratzer 1996: 122]

Notice now that, given our syntax for reflexive sentences, it follows that none of our semantic axioms for binary branching provide the relevant interpretation:

(81)   a.   Ana se criticó.
        b.

```
                    CP
                  /    \
               C_φ      TP
                      /    \
                     T    VoiceP
                          /    \
                         ?     Voice'
                              /      \
                        Voice_[D]     VP
                                    /    \
                                   V    DP_[K:Nominative,Theme,Agent]
```

Assuming Kratzer's (1996) lexical entry for Voice makes things even worse:

(82) $[\![\text{Agent}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{Agent}(e,x)]$

(83)   a.   Ana se criticó.
        b.

```
                        VoiceP
                      /        \
              [[Voice]]=         VP
            λxλe.Agent(e, x)    /    \
                               V    [[DP]] = Ana
                                       △
                                      Ana
```

We could, of course, introduce stipulations both at the level of lexical specification or at the level of syntactic structure; or, alternatively, we could introduce a new semantic axiom. I will not pursue any of these strategies here. In the first place, I will assume that θ-roles have a specified denotation at LF; concretely, they denote functions from entities to event predicates:

(84)   a. $[\![\theta_{Theme}]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x\lambda e.\text{Theme}(e, x)$
        b. $[\![\theta_{Agent}]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x\lambda e.\text{Agent}(e, x)$

This removes the predicative import from Voice. Generalizing proposals in Myler (2014), Wood (2015), and Wood & Marantz (2017), I adopt the idea that Voice denotes the following identity function (maybe partial, if we want to introduce aspectual conditions, for instance):

(85) $[\![\text{Voice}]\!]_{<<s,t>,<s,t>>} = \lambda f.f$

The logic of the argument leads us to conceive of θ-features as functions that are assigned/discharged on arguments in order to produce a predicative structure to the interior of those arguments. As a concrete implementation, I assume that DPs project in the syntax a K head that will be the receptor of a given θ-role. Verbal predicates are purely event predicates and not internal argument introducers, an idea in accordance with Pietroski (2005) and A. Williams (2005), among others. Put differently, on this view, K heads are derived argument introducers. In this way, we motivate the need for an argument to have Case through a condition at play at the LF interface. In the abstract, K must receive a θ-role for interpretability considerations at LF and for producing a semantically well-formed combination:[10]

(86)
$$[\![\text{KP}]\!]_{<s,t>}$$

$[\![\text{ K }]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>}$ $[\![\text{DP}]\!]_e$

VP and KP cannot be interpreted by FA but by PM:

(87)
$$[\![\text{V}]\!]_{<s,t>}$$

$[\![\text{V}]\!]_{<s,t>}$ $[\![\text{KP}]\!]_{<s,t>}$

$[\![\text{K}]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>}$ $[\![\text{DP}]\!]_e$

Again, the idea is not a novelty; it is at the heart of Pietroski's 2005 event semantics, according to which Merge is semantically equivalent to conjunction and not FA. Here, I will not go as far as Pietroski, because I assume that Merge can indeed have as semantic correlates both FA and PM. At any rate, I do agree that this approach brings much more advantages than problems. In particular, it avoids to stipulate

---

[10] I assume with Williams (2005: 13, footnote 10) that "it will be convenient to assume that Quantifier Raising applies to all DPs of quantificational type, $<<e,t>,t>$, leaving a trace in type $<e>$". This move is well known in models where QR is motivated by LF considerations (Heim & Kratzer 1998).

conjunction as part of the predicate denotations and to deduce it directly from PM. Moreover, and this is crucial, this reconsideration of the predicate-argument relation perfectly fits with long-distance θ-role assignment. In what follows, I show how the theory in (22) and the assumptions about the semantic architecture just discussed offer an alternative to standard event semantics that it is extensionally equivalent to it in a number of cases, but superior in others. But before entering into detailed analyses, a clarification is in order.

As conceived here, structural K starts its syntactic life just as an empty semantic node. There are two initial points to make with respect to this. First, if K does not receive a θ-role, then either K is treated as an empty node at LF or it denotes the identity function. The move is well-known in contemporary formal semantics. The crucial consequence is that this avoids some of the criticisms that the Visibility Condition has received in the past (see Lasnik 2008 for an important overview). Expletives are a case at point.[11] If expletives are K projections - perhaps with an empty semantic D head encoding, say, person features or other relevant category or inflectional properties- merged in Spec,TP, then K would not receive any θ-role, as desired, and would have no LF import at all:

(88)   a.   It seems that John is here.
         b.   There are many guests in the party.

Second, other circumstances are also worth mentioning. It could be the case, for instance, that KP occurs in syntactic-semantic configurations in which it does not receive any θ-role because it is the argument of an <e,t> predicate. If its DP complement denotes, for instance, in e then, K either is empty at LF or denotes the identity function:

(89)   a.   John is crazy.
         b.   LF: $[\![_{AP}\ crazy]\!]_{<e,t>}\ ([\![_{KP}\ [_{DP}\ John]]\!]_e)$

Of course, a proper analysis of copular or expletive sentences largely exceeds the limits of this study. These briefs comments only aim to show what I believe is the correct way of thinking the different semantic realizations of K, namely, that K is an allosemic category in the sense of Marantz (2013) and Wood & Marantz (2017). That is to say, its semantic realization is contextually determined by the syntactic environment in which it is allowed to occur. Of course, allosemy should be properly

---

[11] In the GB days, the Visibility Condition was also criticized for considerations involving PRO, a category with θ but without Case. Chomsky & Lasnik's 1993 theory of Null Case avoids this problem for the Visibility Condition although introduces new ones. The movement theory of control proposed by Hornstein (1999) and others also avoids the issue.

restricted and I will do it in section 4, where I exploit this aspect of the theory in order to fill a gap in the syntax and semantics of *se*: inherent *se* constructions.

## 3.2   Deriving simple transitives

Let's start with a transitive sentence:

(90)   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
        Juan criticized DOM Ana.
        'Juan criticized Ana.'

The relevant steps of the syntactic derivation are the following ones. First, V merges with its internal argument, a KP that has unvalued K features:
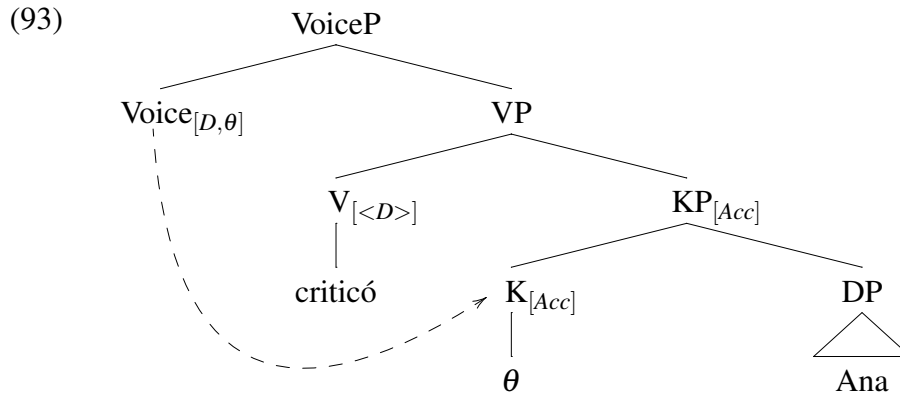
(91)

$$V_{[<D>,\theta]} \quad VP \quad KP$$

criticó   K   DP
                                     Ana
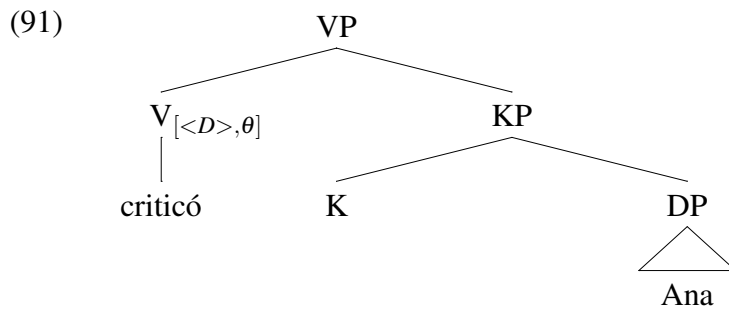
Now, given that this K head is active and local with respect to V, V can assign its theme θ-role to the internal argument:[12]

(92)

$$V_{[<D>]} \quad VP \quad KP$$

criticó   K   DP

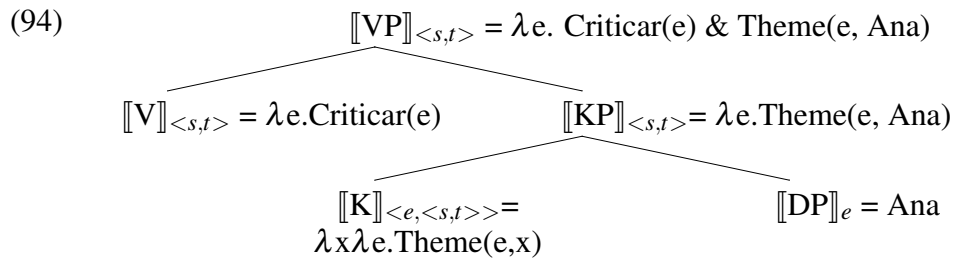 θ Ana
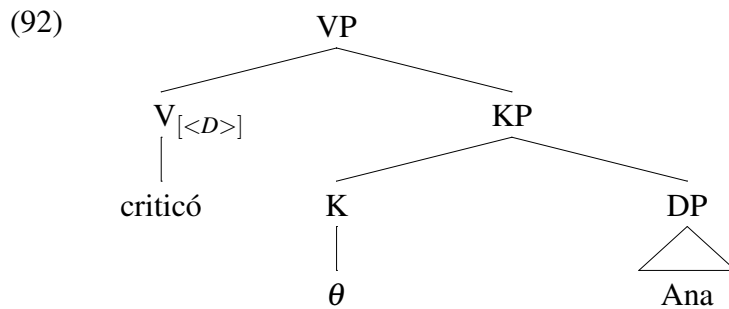
In the next step, Voice is introduced and values accusative Case with KP:

---

[12] In occasions, I annotate the result of θ-role assignment via a subscript, i.e., K_θ.

(93)

VoiceP
├── Voice$_{[D,\theta]}$
└── VP
    ├── V$_{[<D>]}$
    │   └── criticó
    └── KP$_{[Acc]}$
        ├── K$_{[Acc]}$
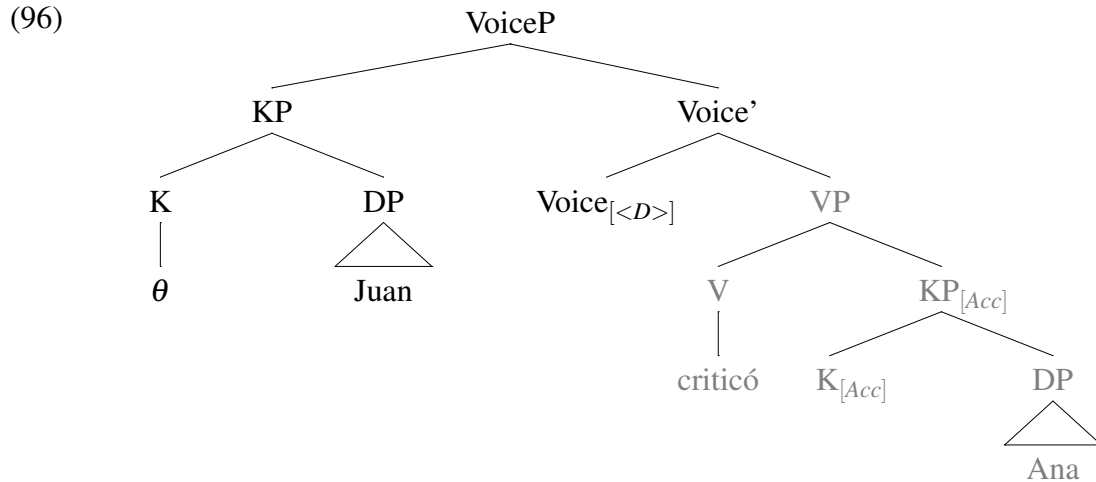   │   └── θ
        └── DP
            └── Ana

I assume now that accusative Case Valuation licenses cyclic interpretation in the VP area. Put another way, Voice$_\phi$ counts as a cyclic head. This implies that its complement, the entire VP, is sent to both interfaces for interpretation. Thus, at LF, VP is properly interpreted:
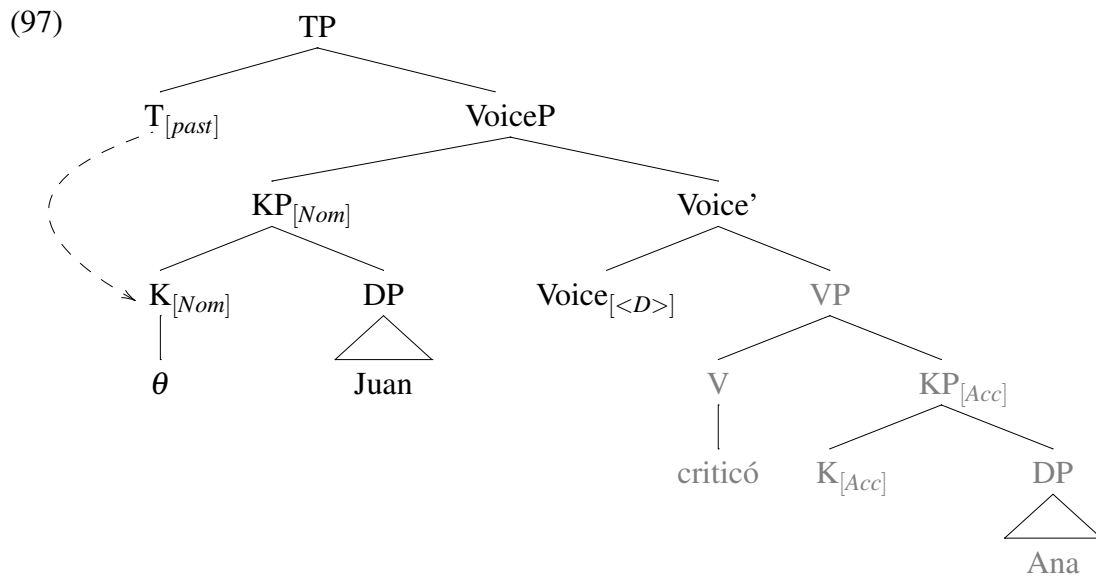
(94)

$\llbracket VP \rrbracket_{<s,t>} = \lambda e.$ Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana)
├── $\llbracket V \rrbracket_{<s,t>} = \lambda e.$Criticar(e)
└── $\llbracket KP \rrbracket_{<s,t>} = \lambda e.$Theme(e, Ana)
    ├── $\llbracket K \rrbracket_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x \lambda e.$Theme(e,x)
    └── $\llbracket DP \rrbracket_e = $ Ana

In the syntax, the external argument is merged in Spec,VoiceP. Here, the grey part of the tree indicates that this chunk of structure is inaccessible for further syntactic computations (deleted categorial features in the VP area are omitted from now on):

(95)

VoiceP
├── KP
│   ├── K
│   └── DP
│   └── Juan
└── Voice'
    ├── Voice$_{[<D>,\theta]}$
    └── VP
        ├── V
        │   └── criticó
        └── KP$_{[Acc]}$
            ├── K$_{[Acc]}$
            └── DP
                └── Ana
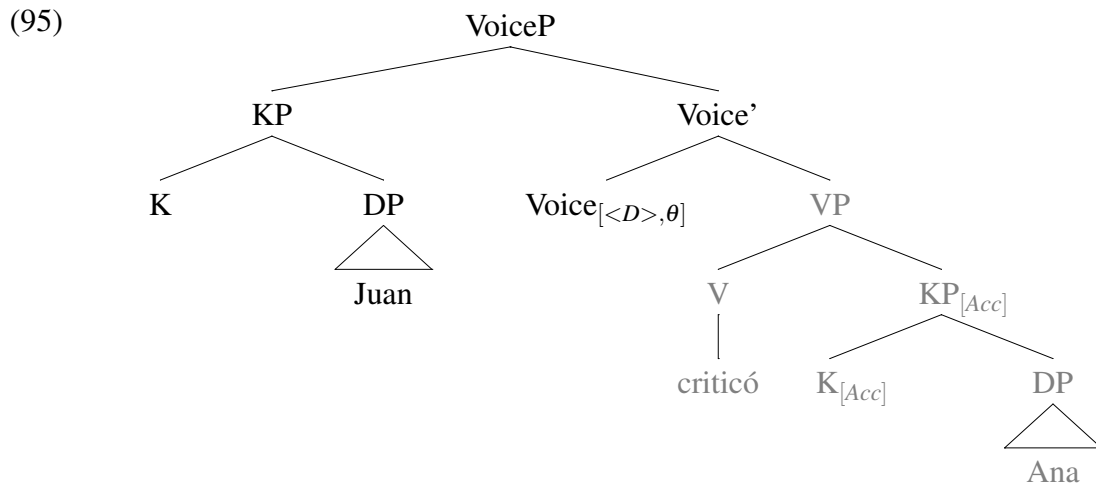
Again, given that the KP in Spec,VoiceP is active and local with respect to the Voice head it receives the agent θ-role from it:

(96)

```
                              VoiceP
                  ┌─────────────┴─────────────┐
                 KP                          Voice'
           ┌─────┴─────┐              ┌────────┴────────┐
          K           DP         Voice_{[<D>]}          VP
          │          ╱▵╲                          ┌─────┴─────┐
          θ          Juan                         V          KP_{[Acc]}
                                                  │       ┌────┴────┐
                                               criticó  K_{[Acc]}   DP
                                                                   ╱▵╲
                                                                   Ana
```

Once T enters the derivation, it deactivates the external KP through nominative Case Valuation. For our purposes here, it is irrelevant whether C is the head that assigns nominative, as in inheritance models (Chomsky 2008, for instance):

(97)

```
                        TP
              ┌──────────┴──────────┐
          T_{[past]}              VoiceP
          ┌┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┘    ┌──────────┴──────────┐
          ┊            KP_{[Nom]}             Voice'
          ┊        ┌─────┴─────┐        ┌───────┴───────┐
          ↘     K_{[Nom]}      DP    Voice_{[<D>]}      VP
             │         ╱▵╲                        ┌─────┴─────┐
             θ         Juan                       V         KP_{[Acc]}
                                                  │      ┌────┴────┐
                                               criticó K_{[Acc]}   DP
                                                                  ╱▵╲
                                                                  Ana
```

In (98), I provide the denotations node-by-node in a top-down fashion (omitting the nodes contained in the VP). Following the simplification in Kratzer (1996), I assume that [past], in addition to existentially close the event variable, is also a predicate of such a variable:

(98)   **LF denotations:**

a.   ⟦TP⟧ = ∃e[Agent(e, Juan) & Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana) & Past(e)] by FA

b.   ⟦T$_{[past]}$⟧ =λP.∃e[P(e) & Past(e)]

c.   ⟦VoiceP⟧ = λe.[Agent(e, Juan) & Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana)] By PM

d.   ⟦KP⟧ = λe.[Agent(e, Juan)] by FA

e.   ⟦Voice'⟧ = λe.[Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana)] by FA

f.   ⟦K⟧ = λxλe.Agent(e, x)

g.   ⟦DP⟧ = Juan

h.   ⟦Voice⟧ = λf.f

i.   ⟦VP⟧ = λe.[Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana)]

3.3   SE reflexives

Let's see now how the derivation of a reflexive sentence proceeds (cf. (15)). I use AG and TH as abbreviations for the θ-roles of Agent and Theme:

(99)   **Reflexive *se***

a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
Juan criticized DOM Ana
'Juan criticized Ana.'

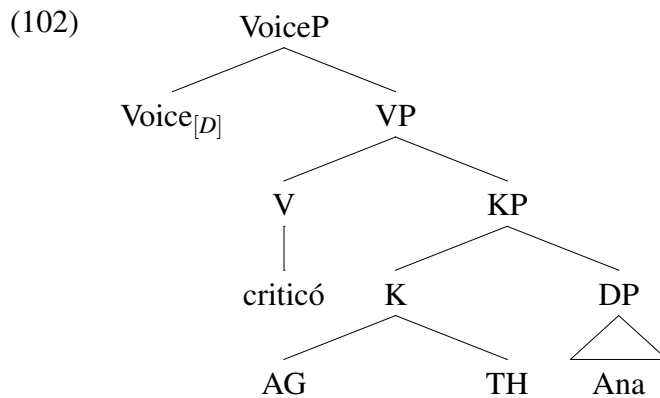b.   Ana **se** criticó.
Ana SE criticized
'Ana criticized herself.'

Recall from section 2 that Voice enters the syntax without ϕ-features and, consequently, does not value accusative Case:
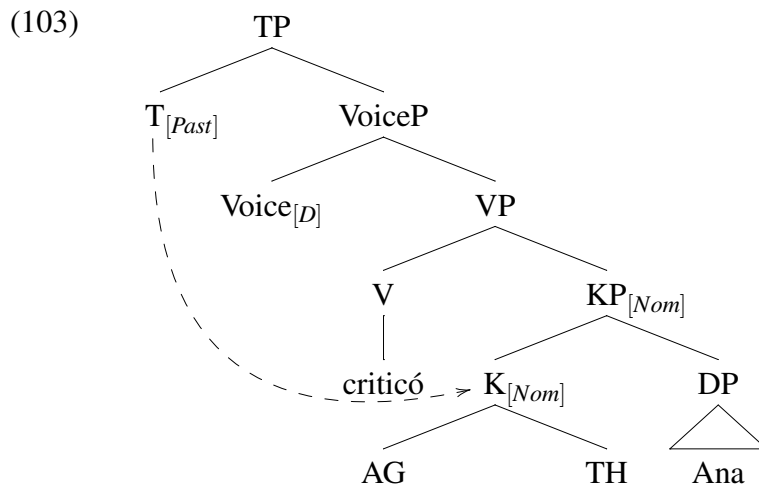
(100)
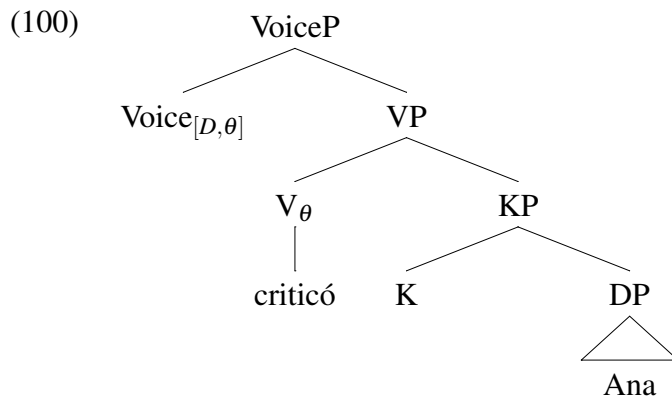
The Activity Condition for θ-assignment, repeated below, licenses, then, double θ-role assignment (cf. (22A)):

(101)   **Activity:** A has an unvalued K feature at the point of the derivation where the θ-role of $x_{[D]}$ is being evaluated/assigned.

Let's suppose that whenever more than one θ-role is assigned to the same K head a complex head is created, as illustrated below. This syntactic assumption simplifies the semantic computation for the said complex node:

(102)

```
                VoiceP
               /      \
        Voice[D]       VP
                      /   \
                     V     KP
                     |    /   \
                 criticó  K     DP
                        /  \    /\
                      AG   TH  Ana
```

As before, T introduction deactivates the internal argument , which values nominative Case against this head:

(103)

```
                 TP
               /    \
         T[Past]    VoiceP
            |      /      \
            |  Voice[D]    VP
            |            /    \
            |           V     KP[Nom]
            |           |     /     \
            '--- criticó → K[Nom]    DP
                         /    \      /\
                       AG    TH    Ana
```

Denotations node-by-node are detailed below:

(104)   **LF denotations:**

a. $\llbracket$TP$\rrbracket$ = $\exists$e[Criticar(e) & Agent(e, Ana) & Theme(e, Ana) & Past(e)] by FA

b. $\llbracket$T$_{[past]}\rrbracket$ = λP.$\exists$e[P(e) & Past(e)]

c. $\llbracket$VoiceP$\rrbracket$ = λe.[Agent(e, Ana) & Criticar(e) & Theme(e, Ana)] By FA

d. $\llbracket$Voice$\rrbracket$ = λf.f

e. $\llbracket$VP$\rrbracket$ = λe.[Criticar(e) & Agent(e, Ana)& Theme(e, Ana)] By FA

f. $\llbracket$V$\rrbracket$ = λe. Criticar(e)

g. $\llbracket$KP$\rrbracket$ = λe.[Agent(e, Juan) & Theme(e, Ana)] by FA

h. $\llbracket$K$\rrbracket$ = λxλe.Agent(e, x) & Theme(e,x) By PM

i. $\llbracket$DP$\rrbracket$ = Ana

j. $\llbracket$AG$\rrbracket$ = λxλe.Agent(e, x)

k. $\llbracket$TH$\rrbracket$ = λxλe.Theme(e, x)

To complete the analysis, I sketch the way in which *se*-insertion applies at PF in order to cancel the unsaturated D feature on Voice (see subsection 2.3 and Pujalte & Saab 2012 for details):

(105) a.

b.
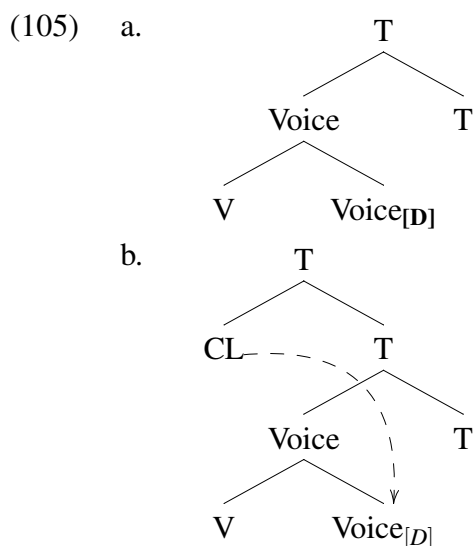
In sum, we see that a reflexive *se* sentence is the byproduct of the interactions of many syntactic, semantic and morphological factors. Importantly, our assumptions on the proper nature of Case/θ-interactions can be supported with an explicit semantic derivation couched in model-theoretical terms.

Before closing this subsection, I would like to consider briefly some arguments that have been provided in the literature against one of the aspects of my analysis, namely, its "unaccusative part". In effect, my analysis shares with an important part of the recent literature on the topic the idea that in *se* -reflexivization the DP

that gets two θ-roles doesn't originates as an external argument. The idea comes originally from Marantz (1984) and has been dubbed as the "unaccusative hypothesis" for reflexives, a misleading term, in my view. As already discussed in Embick (2004), to claim that the subject of a reflexive is not the external argument (i.e, a DP in Spec,Voice) doesn't imply to claim that reflexives are unaccusatives. They are not, indeed. The basic functional structure of a reflexive is identical to the functional structure of, say, a transitive sentence (or ditransitive, of course) and not identical to that of an unaccusative sentence, which arguably has as a minimum a different flavor of Voice (see Folli & Harley 2005). Besides this, since its original formulation, arguments have been provided in favor or against the alleged unaccusative nature of reflexives. Reinhart & Siloni (2005) offer two well-known arguments against the unaccusative nature of reflexives in French connected to the (im)possibility of impersonal constructions with inverted subject, and to the (im)possibility of *en*-placement from this inverted subject. Whereas unaccusative sentences allow for both constructions, reflexive sentences reject them. This kind of argument has been shown as inconclusive by Rooryck & Wyngaerd (2011) and by Sportiche (2014). I refer the reader to those works for detailed discussion. Sportiche, however, claims that, while Reinhart & Siloni's arguments doesn't show what it has to be shown, there is still another argument that makes the unaccusative hypothesis untenable. This involves association with focus in reflexives and middles. The basic fact is related to the ambiguity of the sentence below:

(106)   Solo Juan se considera inteligente.
         only Juan SE considers intelligent
         'Only Juan considers himself intelligent.'

                                                    [adapted from Sportiche 2014: 311]

This sentence has a sloppy reading, according to which Juan is the only one that has the reflexive property, and a strict reading, according to which Juan is the only one that considers Juan intelligent:

(107)   a. λx (x considers x smart)
         b. λx (x considers Juan smart)

                                                    [Sportiche 2014: 312]

The following denials allow to disambiguate the sentence in one way or another:

(108)   a.   No, yo también me   considero inteligente.
               no, I   too   CL.1SG consider inteligente
               'No, I consider him intelligent too.'

b. No, yo también lo   considero inteligente.
    no, I   too   CL.3SG.ACC consider   intelligent
    'No, I consider him inteligent too.'

Crucially, denial of the theme argument is impossible:

(109) #No, Juan también me   considera a   mí inteligente.
       No, Juan also   CL.1SG considers DOM me intelligent
       'No, Juan considers me intelligent, too.'

This contrasts with middles, which, according to Sportiche, have a clear unaccusative syntax:

(110) a. En la India, solo el arroz se come con los dedos.
           in the India, only the rice   SE eats   with the fingers
           'In India, only rice is eaten with the fingers.'
       b. No, en la India, el pan   también se come con los dedos.
           no, in the India, the bread also   SE eats   with the fingers
           'No, in India, bread too is eaten with the fingers'
       c. No, los indios   comen también el pan   con los dedos.
           no, the Indians eat   also   the bread with the fingers
           'No, Indian people too eat bread with the fingers.'

Sportiche's reasoning goes as follows. If reflexives were unaccusative, we would expect association with focus exclusively with the theme argument, i.e., the reading Juan considers only Juan intelligent should be available as it is in (110). But as the infelicity of (109) indicates this is not borne out. I think that this reasoning is misleading since the focus structure in both cases is different. Note that from the focus marking in (106) we can derive two questions under discussion (QuD, see Roberts 2012), namely, *Who considers himself intelligent?* for the sloppy reading or *Who considers Juan intelligent?* for the strict one. Both (106) and the denials in (108) are congruent with one or another QuD, but (109) is not, as the alternatives in this case are computed over the theme object and not the agentive subject as required by the focus marking of the original assertion in (106). The sentence (109) is congruent with a radically different QuD, namely, *Who does Juan consider intelligent?*. In the example involving a middle construction, both denials are congruent with the QuD that the original assertion tries to answer, i.e., *What is eaten with the finger in India?*. Certainly, the sentence in (110c) seems to presuppose another QuD, namely, *What does Indian people eat with the fingers?*. However, this QuD

and the original one entail each other, so the discourse is perfectly congruent. Of course, a full exploration of the interesting connections between focus and reflexivization would take me too far from the original goals of this study, but I think that these considerations suffice to show that there is no expectation that middles and reflexives behave in the same way when it comes to evaluating their behavior under focus. In subsection 4.1, I will also reject another argument that has been adduced against the unaccusative hypothesis. But for the time being, I complete my analysis turning my attention to the semantics of impersonals.
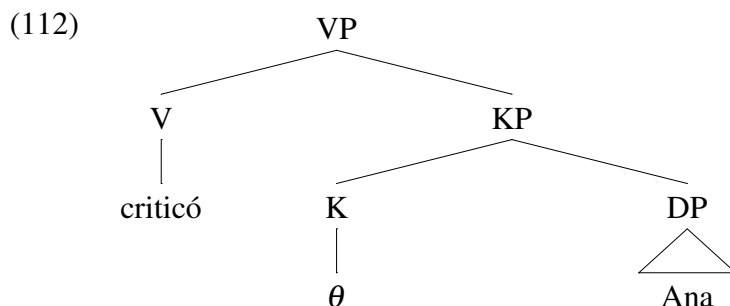
3.4 Impersonal SE

We are ready to provide an explicit syntax and semantics for the more complex case, impersonal *se* constructions (cf. (14)):
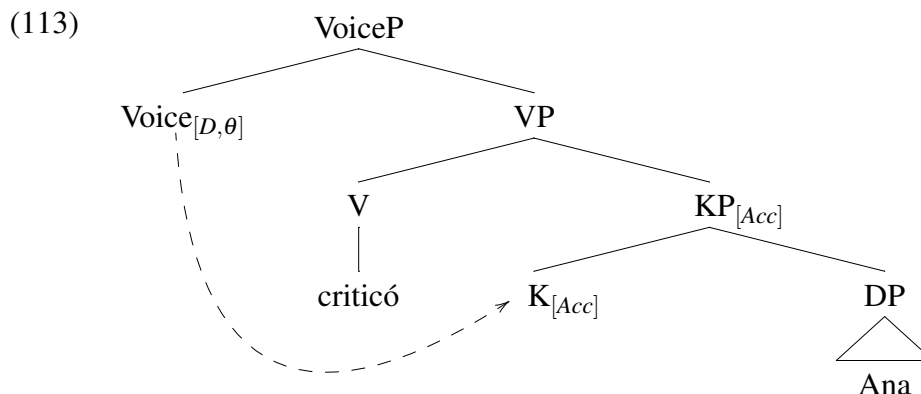
(111) **Impersonal** *se*

    a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
            Juan criticized DOM Ana
            'Juan criticized Ana.'

    b.   **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
            SE criticized DOM Ana
            'One criticized Ana.'

The routine is already known: first, the internal argument merges with V and, second, V assigns its θ-role to it:

(112)

```
                    VP
           ┌─────────┴─────────┐
           V                   KP
           │            ┌──────┴──────┐
        criticó         K             DP
                        │            ╱◥
                        θ           Ana
```

The next step makes the difference with respect to reflexives, because here Voice has unvalued ϕ-features that deactivate the internal KP for entering into further thematic relations. Given this, the agent θ-role cannot be assigned to the internal argument, which remains invisible for any other A-dependency:

(113)

```
                         VoiceP
              ┌────────────┴──────────────┐
        Voice_[D,θ]                        VP
           ┊                    ┌──────────┴──────────┐
           ┊                    V                   KP_[Acc]
           ┊                    │              ┌───────┴────────┐
           ┊                 criticó        K_[Acc]            DP
           ┊                                   ↗                △
            └ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─ ─                   Ana
```

Note that the derivation gives us the configuration that licenses arbitrary subjects in the sentential domain (cf. (25)):

(114)   **Default agents (at the C-I interface):** For any agentive Voice$_{[D]}$, assign *arb* in absence of a nominative subject in the C-domain of Voice$_{[D]}$.

The more obvious implementation of (114) in the present framework is deriving the existential force of certain impersonals through an allosemy rule that reads a non-discharged θ-role on Voice as an existentially closed agent:[13]

(115) $[\![\text{Voice}_\theta]\!] = \lambda e.\exists x \ [\text{Agent (e, x)}]$

[Pyllkänen 2008: 26]

As shown in Saab (2014), the absence of an implicit argument in the syntax of existential *se* constructions would account for the ban of secondary modification, reflexivization and pronominal binding:

(116)   a. *Ayer   se besó   a   María borracho.
            yesterday SE kissed DOM María drunk.SG.MASC
            Intended: 'One$_i$/someone$_i$ kissed Mary drunk$_i$.'
        b. *Aquí se lava   (a   sí-mismo).
            here SE washes DOM himself
            Intended: 'One washes oneself.'
        c. *Aquí se puede dejar   su saco.
            here SE can   leave.INF his coat
            Intended: 'One$_i$ can leave his$_i$ coat here.'

---

[13] The semantic and syntactic derivation for a passive *se* construction would proceed exactly in the same way, with the agreement differences between both types of sentences being determined morphophonologically.

MacDonald (2017a), however, argues that inalienable possession constructions in impersonal *se* sentences empirically justify the presence of an arbitrary *pro* in the syntax. The following example is adapted from MacDonald (2017a):[14]

(117)   Se levantó la   mano para hacer una pregunta en clase.
         SE raised   the hand for make a   question in class
         'One raised their hand to ask a question in class.'

In order to account both for (116) and (117), Ormazabal & Romero (2017) propose then that the subject of an impersonal *se* sentence is a minimally specified syntactic category. Assuming that this subject lacks inflectional features like gender or person directly accounts for all the cases in (116), given that syntactic binding requires inflectional matching. At the same time, they would also account for (117), because the implicit possessor in the DP *la mano* matches the ϕ-features of the subject.
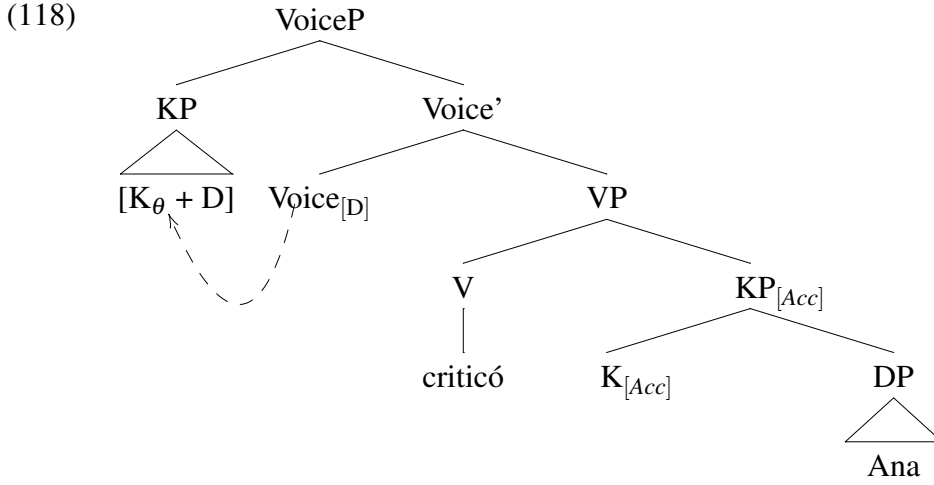
Ormazabal & Romero's approach can be adapted to the present framework if we stipulate that the defective implicit argument they propose is inserted at LF under a variety of the operation that Chung, Ladusaw & McCloskey (1995) call *sprouting*. This is a type of LF repairing strategy that can introduce material which is not present during the syntactic computation. One could then conjecture that the way in which *arb* is resolved at LF is the counterpart of the rescue strategy for the non-cancelled [D]-feature at PF (cf. (105)). Concretely, the LF counterpart of this PF operation is the insertion of what I will call a *minimal KP*, i.e., a structure in which the K head only takes a D head as a complement.[15] Before entering into the semantic details of this defective KP, note that its insertion allows that Voice discharges its θ-role at LF:

---

[14] MacDonald's original example is a generic *se* sentence. However, as shown in Saab (2014), generic impersonals behave differently with respect to some of the tests that detect syntactic activity. For instance, secondary predication is licensed in generic *se* sentences:

(i)   Cuando se vive borracha,   se muere feliz.
         when   SE lives drunk.FEM.SG se dies   happy
         'When one lives drunk, one dies happy'

This indicates that generic *se* sentences require a different syntactic analysis, one that perhaps includes a generic operator in the syntax.

[15] The idea of a defective impersonal subject in impersonal *se* constructions is already present in Rivero (2001) and others, and it is also at the heart of the PRO theory in Chomsky & Lasnik (1993) (see Lasnik (2008) for further discussion). The innovation here is that this minimal KP is introduced only at LF.

(118)

```
                          VoiceP
                  _____/_____
                 /                   \
               KP                   Voice'
             __/\__              ___/\___
            /      \            /         \
      [K_θ + D]  Voice_[D]     V           VP
                            ___|___    ___/\___
                           /       \  /         \
                        criticó   K_[Acc]    KP_[Acc]
                                           __/\__
                                          /      \
                                       K_[Acc]    DP
                                                  /\
                                                 Ana
```

Now, we need a lexical entry for this null D head. The idea is to conceive of D as a second order predicate, whose functional argument is K:

(119) $[\![D]\!] = \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.\lambda e \exists x.f(x)(e) = 1$

This implementation captures the existential force of this type of sentences. The denotations node-by-node for the entire VoiceP in (118) is as follows (omitting the nodes contained in the VP):

(120)   a. $[\![\text{VoiceP}]\!] = \lambda e.\exists x[\text{Agent}(e,x) \,\&\, \text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana})]$
        b. $[\![\text{KP}]\!]^{16} = \lambda e.\exists x.[\text{Agent}(e, x)]$
        c. $[\![\text{Voice'}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana})]$
        d. $[\![K_{AG}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{Agent}(e, x)]$
        e. $[\![D]\!] = \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.\lambda e \exists x.[f(x)(e) = 1]$
        f. $[\![\text{Voice}]\!] = \lambda f.f$
        g. $[\![\text{VP}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana}])$

As mentioned, my minimal KP subject is similar to Ormazabal & Romero's defective subject, the difference being in the timing of insertion. On this account, this minimal KP is a purely LF object. My move is motivated for morphological

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[16] Here is a more detailed derivation for this minimal KP:

(i) $[\lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}\lambda e.\exists x.[f(x)(e)] = 1](\lambda y.\lambda e'.\text{Agent}(e', y))$ by FA

(ii) $\lambda e.\exists x.[\lambda y \lambda e'.\text{Agent}(e,y)](x)(e)=1]$ By λ-conversion

(iii) $\lambda e.\exists x.[\lambda e'.\text{Agent}(e', x)](e) = 1$ By λ-conversion

(iv) $\lambda e.\exists x.\text{Agent}(e,x)$ By λ-conversion

reasons, namely, to keep an elegant explanation of the syncretism pattern observed in *se* constructions. But it is worth noting that at the present it is hard to distinguish between this particular implementation and the more standard analysis in (115), in which the existential force comes directly from the semantic realization of the Voice head. As noted by a reviewer, the minimal KP approach opens a set of conceptual issues regarding its deviation from inclusiveness considerations, the exact nature of this minimal K head, and so on. I will then leave the two alternatives open in the hope that future research can help us to distinguish them on conceptual and empirical grounds.

In sum, in these two sections I have provided a detailed syntactic, morphological and semantic derivation of a set of argument alternation involving the clitic *se*. Taking this set as a case study has been proved useful as a way of illustrating the research agenda of this study, namely, providing an explicit theory of Case/θ interactions in syntax and semantics. Importantly, I have brought new theoretical considerations for a positive reconsideration of the Visibility Condition, according to which the role of Case in natural languages is producing interpretable objects at LF.

4   Extensions

4.1   Inherent se

An important consequence of the model developed here is its structural flexibility. In other words, in principle there is no ban for an agent θ-role to be derived within the domain of VoiceP. Among other important consequences, this implies abandoning principles such as UTAH (Baker 1988) that impose strict correlations between θ-roles and syntactic positions. This view has also important empirical consequences in the domain of Spanish *se* constructions. As is well known, there is subset of quasi-reflexive sentences that seems to resist any principled account. I am referring to inherent *se* constructions. Here is a list of such verbs taken from Di Tullio (2005):

(121)   **Inherent *se***: quejarse 'to complain', arrepentirse 'to regret', dignarse 'to deign', adueñarse 'to take possesssion', vanagloriarse 'to plum', jactarse 'to brag', regodearse 'to deligth', atreverse 'to dare', enterarse ´to find out´, desperezarse 'to stretch', atenerse 'to keep', percatarse 'to notice', estremecerse 'to shudder', desentenderse 'to disengage', etc.

As noted in the introduction, the two main properties of these predicates are that they cannot occur without the pronominal element, and that they reject transitive uses:

(122)   a.   Juan se quejó.
               Juan SE complained.
               'Juan complained.'
         b.   *Juan quejó.
               Juan complained
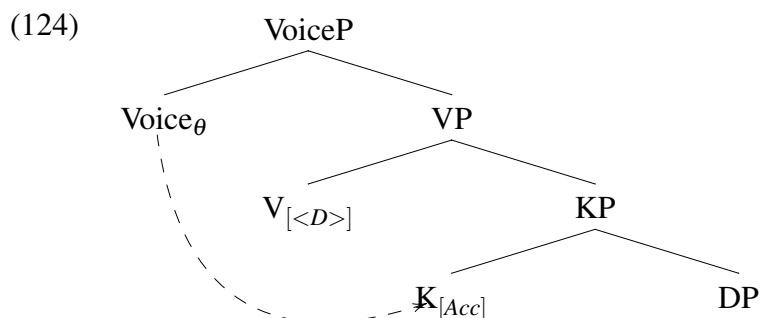   c.   *Juan lo   quejó.
               J.   him/it complained

In the previous section, we make explicit the hypothesis that K is subject to allosemy, i.e., to syntactically conditioned polysemy. There are, of course, contexts in which a derivation crashes just because syntax does not provide a good output for LF interpretation. Consider the following situation. The category V selects a KP, but it does not have any θ-role to assign. Recall that being specified for a [D]-feature is a precondition for being a θ-role assigner (see footnote 3). The reverse does not hold: having a [D]-feature does not force the bearer of such a feature to be a thematic assigner.[17] In other words, nothing in the formal system prevents this configuration, where V is not a thematic head:[18]

(123)
```
                     VP
                  /      \
           V_[<D>]         KP
                        /      \
                       K        DP
```
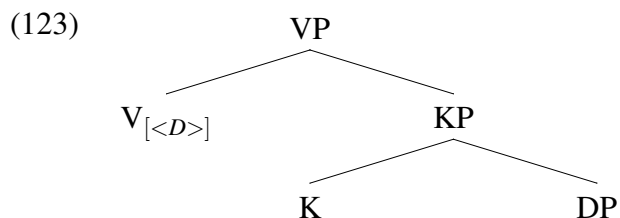
In the next step, if Voice is introduced with ϕ-features, the internal KP would be automatically deactivated:

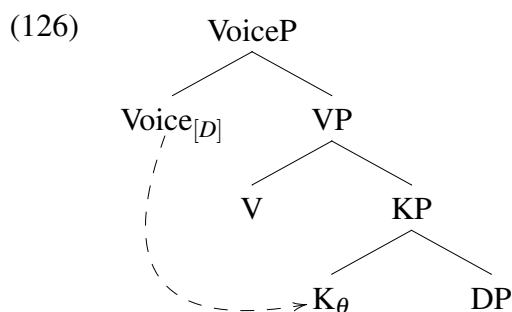[17] This is obvious for functional heads like, say, T.

[18] A reviewer wonders whether this predicts that all instances of inherent *se* results in a unaccusative syntax. As mentioned in subsection 3.3 in connection with the "unaccusative hypothesis" for reflexives, there is no expectation that this should be the case, since that unaccusatives do not have an agentive syntax in the first place. I do think that this approach would predict a mixed behavior of the subject of reflexives or inherent *se* constructions. This seems to be correct. Consider, for instance, the fact that inherent *se* verbs, like unaccusatives, are incompatible with *-dor* nominalizations (e.g., *trabajador* 'worker' vs. **quejador* 'complainer'), but, unlike unaccusatives, they cannot participate in absolute constructions (e.g., *Llegado Juan...* 'Once Juan arrived...' vs. **Quejado Juan...* 'Once Juan complained...').

(124)

```
                        VoiceP
            Voice_θ                   VP
                           V_[<D>]              KP
                                      K_[Acc]         DP
```

Here, K is invisible for receiving the θ-role from Voice, which would then assign it to a potential external KP, if any. Either way, the VP cannot receive a proper denotation at LF. If the DP denotes in e and K is empty or the identity function, we obtain a type mismatch at LF (cf. (77)):

(125)

```
                 ? Type Mismatch
        V_{<s,t>}        DP_e
```
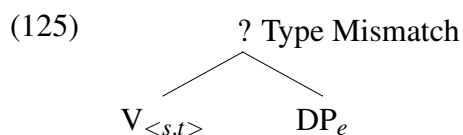
This is how we can reinterpret a violation of the θ-Criterion. A KP without θ-role in the relevant domain cannot provide the relevant denotation for semantic computation at LF. Now, suppose that Voice is φ-defective. Under this circumstance, Voice assigns its θ-role to the internal KP:

(126)

```
                    VoiceP
        Voice_[D]            VP
                         V          KP
                                K_θ        DP
```

At LF, this produces a legitimate output. Thus, the relevant interpretation of the VP area for a sentence like (122a), repeated below, would be as in (127b):

(127)   a.   Juan se quejó.
             Juan SE complained
             'Juan complained.'
        b.   ⟦VP⟧ = λe. Quejar(e) & Agent(e, Ana)

The remaining routine for the LF computation until TP is trivial. At PF, in turn, *se* is inserted to cancel the [D] feature on Voice through the also well-known routine (cf. (105)).

The proposed system provides thus a principled reason as to why inherent *se* sentences show the transitivity restriction commented above: if Voice valued Case with the internal argument, this argument would remain without a proper denotation and a type mismatch would obtain at LF. At the same time, the theory also explains why clitic insertion is unavoidable here; i.e., why they are inherently pronominal verbs. The reason is that the internal KP receives the θ-role associated with the Voice head preventing thus the introduction of another KP in Spec,Voice. In true reflexive sentences, none of these restrictions show up because V is a thematic head; therefore, Voice can occur with or without ϕ-features giving rise to the reflexive alternation.

I think that this approach to inherent *se* generalizes to diacritc *se*. Recall the example in (7) from the introduction:

(128)   a.   Juan acordó las condiciones.
             Juan agreed the conditions
             'Juan agreed the conditions.'
        b.   Juan **se** acordó   de Ana.
             Juan SE rememebered of Ana
             'Juan remembered Ana.'

The crucial difference with inherent *se* is that in cases like these there is an alternation between the variant with the clitic and the one without it, i.e., there is some sort of competition between both variants that results in a meaning change. One way of making sense of this competition consistent with the present framework is encoding the difference in the formal make up of the verbs that participate in this alternation. The non-pronominal variant enters the syntax with a θ-role which is absent in the pronominal variant:

(129)   a. $[_{VP} \text{V}_{[D,\theta]} \text{ DP}]$
        b. $[_{VP} \text{V}_{[D]} \text{ DP}]$

For a transitive verb, the analysis in (129a) has nothing special, i.e., the relation between V and the internal DP is mediated through θ-assignment and its meaning is compositionally determined at LF. Instead, the relation between V and the internal DP in (129b) is not derived through principles of thematic assignment and semantic composition, but it is stored in memory and interpreted by accessing the Encyclopedia. In other words, determination of the meaning in cases like (129b) requires access to arbitrary lists and lot of lexical and world knowledge. One of the most

interesting consequences of this way of approaching the issue is that it provides a solution to the problem of metonyminc readings in fake reflexives:

(130)   Juan se explica bien.
         Juan SE explains well
         'Juan explains his words / his actions well.'

According to Labelle (2008), this type of constructions introduces a serious challenge for the "unaccusative hypothesis" of reflexives at the time that supports her own approach. Recall that she treats *se* as a realization of a particular realization of a Voice head, which requires an open predicate as argument. On this view, in a sentence like (130), the verb introduces a variable making reference to Juan's words or actions, which is not syntactically satisfied. As a result, the predicate remains open and can combine with Voice:

(131) $[\![\text{explicar}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e[\text{explicar } (e, x_{words})]$

                                                          [adapted from Labelle 2008: 864]

There are two main problems with this analysis. First, the individual variable in (131) comes from a dubious parahrase of the original sentence, based exclusively on certain meaning intuition connected to the verb meaning. The most obvious meaning of sentence (130) is just that Juan is clear. This concrete meaning is exclusively based on some encyclopedic knowledge about the verb at hand and the syntactic environment in which it appears. Second, Labelle's strategy doesn't generalize. As she acknowledges, there are other predicates whose meaning cannot be resolved introducing the type of denotation proposed in (131). Consider the following Spanish examples translated from the French example in Labelle (2008, footnote 24):

(132)   Juan se trata.
         Juan SE treats
         'Juan looks after his health.'

Here, the meaning of *tratarse* is related to medical care. This is fully unpredictable and, consequently, must be listed in the Encyclopedia. Myriads of verbs participate in the type of alternation we are discussing and, for each case, accessing to lexical and world knowledge is unavoidable.

    Now, according to Embick & Marantz (2008), special meanings pertain to the low domain of the clause (in their terms, the lowest category-defining head and the Root). If Labelle's examples are particular instances of inherent/diacritc *se*, as I am proposing, then we can make sense of the particular meanings that these predicate

have when they occur as pronominal verbs. Both sentences in (130) and (132) would receive the same analysis:

(133)   a.   [$_{VoiceP}$ Voice$_{se}$ [$_{VP}$ explicar$_{[D]}$ Juan]]
           b.   [$_{VoiceP}$ Voice$_{se}$ [$_{VP}$ tratar$_{[D]}$ Juan]]

The data discussed so far show not only that Labelle's argument against the "unaccusative" hypothesis doesn't hold, but that her theory fails to account for many instances of inherent/diacritic *se*, including standard cases like *quejarse*, for which an open predicate analysis doesn't seem plausible.

4.2   Ergative *se*

The sentences in (1), repeated below, has received much attention in the literature:

(134)   **Ergative** *se*

        a.   La tormenta hundió al   barco.
              the storm   sank   DOM.the ship
              'The storm sank the ship.'

        b.   **Se** hundió el barco con la tormenta.
              SE sank   the ship with the storm
              'The ship sank with the storm.'

Unlike impersonals or reflexives, ergatives have no agentive meaning. For this sentence, the sinking event can be related to an internal or an external cause. The *con*-phrase in (135) introduces an external cause. Internal causes in Spanish can be introduced by adjectives like *solo* 'solo'.

(135)   El barco **se** hundió solo.
        the ship SE sank   only

Interestingly, ergatives are also compatible with a non-agentive participant who is an unintentional responsible of the event. This participant is realized as a *dativo de interés*, a variety of the ethical dative:

(136)   A Juan se le   quemó el asado.
        to Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT burned the barbecue
        'The barbecue burned on Juan.'

Space reasons prevent me from providing a detailed analysis of *se*-ergative constructions and comparing it with the huge literature on the topic, but some consid-
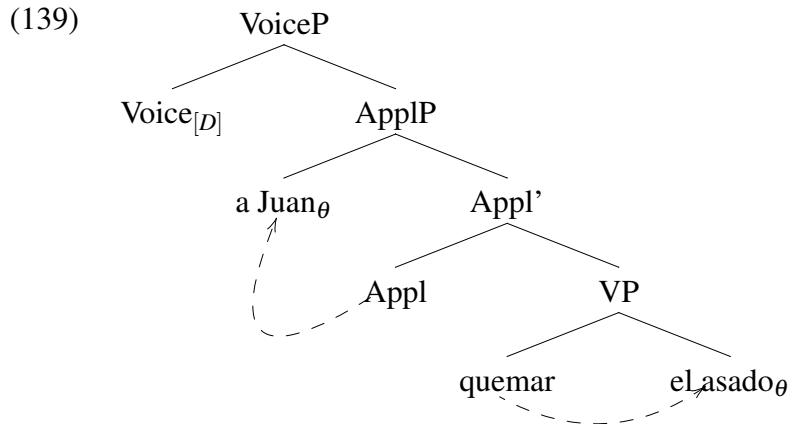
erations are worth mentioning. First, the analysis proposed for inherent *se* in the previous section has obvious consequences for the proper analysis of ergatives. A core ingredient of my approach to inherent *se* is abandoning Chomsky's assumption that subcategorization entails θ-marking. An inherent *se* configuration is one in which the verb subcategorizes for a DP that it is θ-marked by Voice and not by V. The logic of this system allows for a situation in which V has subcategorization and θ-features both Voice only has a [D] feature, i.e., it is not a θ-assigner. I suggest that this logical option is indeed instantiated by *se*-ergative constructions:
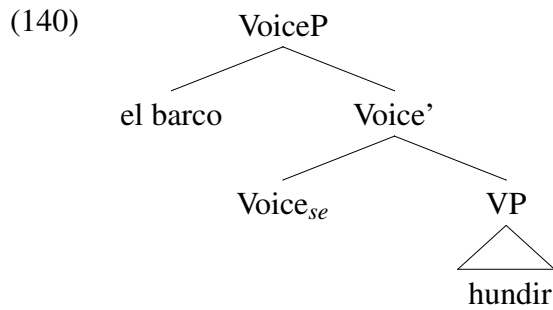
(137)
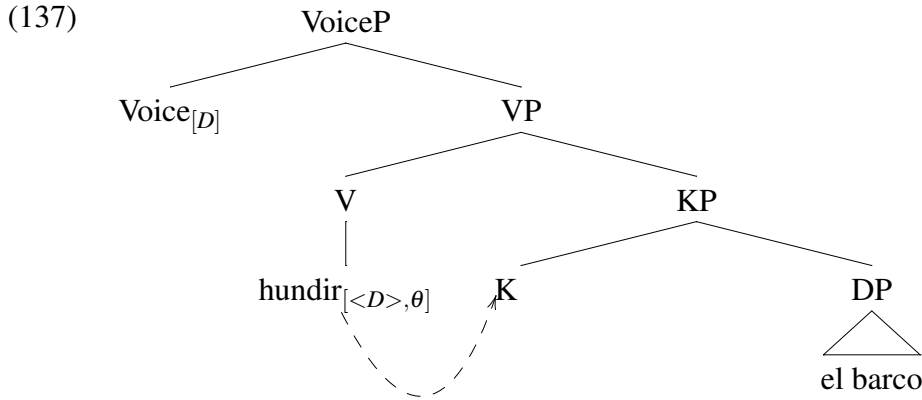
Here, the internal DP receives a θ-role from the verb and Case from C/T, since that Voice doesn't have ϕ-features. The semantic computation at LF is trivial, given that in this particular scenario the semantic contribution of Voice is null. It doesn't introduce any θ-role, so it is unique contribution reduces to the identity function it denotes (cf. (85)):

(138) $[\![\text{Voice}]\!]_{<<s,t>,<s,t>>} = \lambda f.f$

This analysis captures in a direct way the non-agentive property of ergatives. Moreover, it also explains in a simple way the compatibility of *se*-ergatives with the *dativo de interés* illustrated in example (136). The reasonable strategy here would be to adopt a high applicative analysis for this special dative (see subsection 2.2):

(139)

```
                    VoiceP
               ╱            ╲
        Voice_[D]            ApplP
                        ╱          ╲
                   a Juan_θ         Appl'
                      ↑          ╱        ╲
                      ┊       Appl          VP
                      └ ┈ ┈ ┈ ┘          ╱      ╲
                                      quemar   el asado_θ
                                         └ ┈ ┈ ┈ ┈ ┈ ┘↗
```

Compare this analysis with Labelle (2008), which is in turn based on Doron (2003). The relevant tree is given in (140) and their associated denotations in (141):

(140)

```
               VoiceP
           ╱            ╲
      el barco          Voice'
                    ╱          ╲
               Voice_se          VP
                                 △
                               hundir
```

(141) a. $[\![\text{hundir}]\!] = \lambda y \lambda e\ [\text{hundir}(e, y)]$
       b. $[\![\textbf{Voice}]\!] = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e [P(e,x)]$
       c. $[\![\text{Voice'}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e [\text{hundir}(e,x)]$
       d. $[\![\text{VoiceP}]\!] = \lambda e [\text{hundir}\ (e, \text{el barco})]$

On this account, there are two flavors of Voice_{se}. In reflexives, Voice takes an open predicate as argument while also requiring an agentive argument (see (48) repeated below). As shown in (141b), ergative Voice also requires an open predicate but, unlike reflexives, there is no agentive meaning present:

(142) $[\![\text{Voice}]\!] = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e\ [P(e,x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
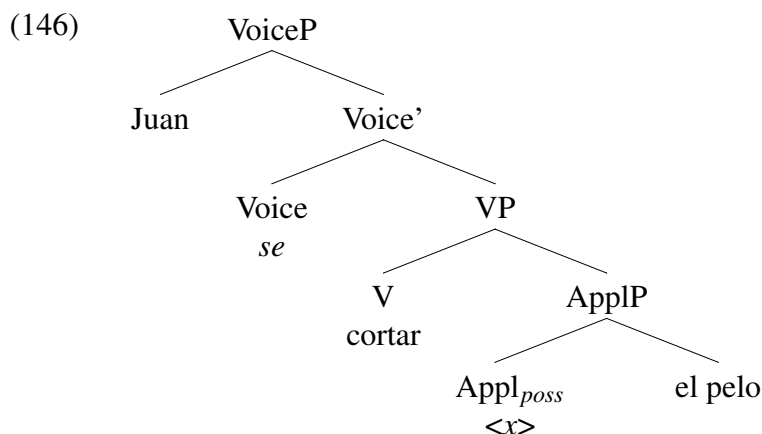
[Labelle 2008: 838]

In principle, my analysis and Labelle's seem to be equivalent in a number of basic cases. For instance, I think that both can be easily extended to sentences where *se* is associated with an inherent unaccusative verb:

(143) a. Juan murió.
           Juan died
       b. Juan se murió.
           Juan SE died
           'Juan died.'

(144) a. Cayó una persona al   río.
           fell a   person to.the river
       b. Se cayó una persona al   río.
           SE fell a   person to.the river
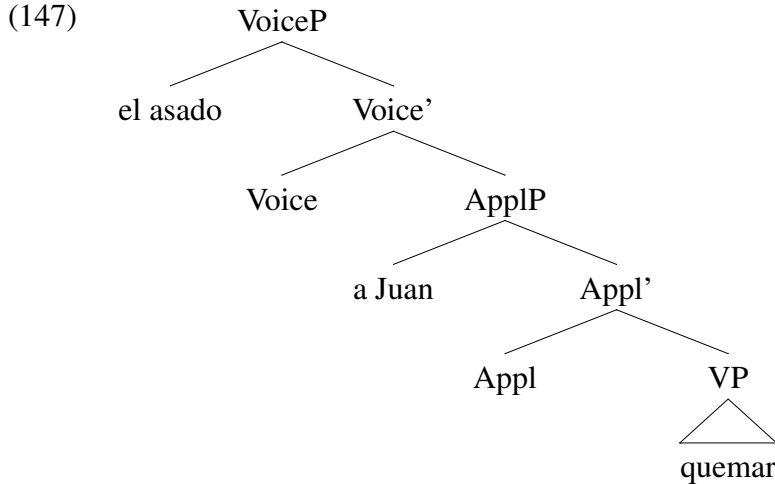   'A person fell into into the river.'

For those members of each pair in which the clitic is used, Labelle's analysis would
be the same as in (141), while on my approach the relevant basic representation
would be the same as in (137). Yet, I also think that both analyses could be dis-
tinguished on the basis of examples like (136), where an additional argument is
introduced into the structure. As I have already shown, my approach to ergatives
extend to these cases without any particular complication. However, Labelle's ana-
lyis runs into the same type of problem we discussed regarding low applicatives
and reflexivization. Recall from subsection 2.2, that inalienable possession con-
structions involving *se* are taken by Labelle as an instance of a low applicative
syntax:

(145) Juan se corta el   pelo.
       Juan SE cuts the hair
       'Juan cuts his hair.'

(146)

```
                VoiceP
               /      \
           Juan       Voice'
                     /      \
                 Voice        VP
                  se        /    \
                           V      ApplP
                        cortar   /     \
                             Appl_poss   el pelo
                               <x>
```

As discussed in that section, it is far from evident that a low applicative analysis
is indeed compatible with Labelle's open predicate approach. In principle, the tree
in (146) crashes at the VP level because of a semantic mismatch between the verb

and the ApplP. Assuming the analysis in (147) for sentences like (136), a similar problem arises:

(147)

```
                    VoiceP
                   /      \
            el asado      Voice'
                         /      \
                    Voice        ApplP
                                /      \
                           a Juan       Appl'
                                       /      \
                                   Appl        VP
                                               /\
                                              /  \
                                           quemar
```

Here, given that the Appl head and the VP are of the same type (i.e., both are <e, <s,t»), they can only be combined by PM. At the Appl' level, we obtain then the following formula, where *On* stands for the θ-role that Appl introduces:

(148) $[\![Appl']\!] = \lambda x \lambda e$ [quemar(e, x) & On(e, x)]

Now, when the dative DP *Juan* merges with Appl', it saturates the individual variable giving rise to the absurd meaning that this DP is a the same time the theme and applied argument of the sentence:

(149) $[\![ApplP]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e$ [quemar(e, Juan) & On(e, Juan)]

Of course, this result cannot be combined with Voice just because it is not an open predicate, but this is irrelevant; the result in (149) is already something that must be ruled out. I am not claiming here that this is a fatal problem for Labelle, but it is indicative of the type of challenges that her approach faces in the abstract. Her analysis requires that when Voice is introduced, its complement is open. However, there are many instances in which this simply doesn't happen.[19]

4.3 Aspectual *se*

Recall the basic alternation that gives rise to the so-called aspectual *se*:

---

[19] A possible fix would involve a syntactic operation capable of opening formulas when necessary (say, a type of relativization operation), but I will not explore this issue here.

(150) a. Juan comió la   manzana.
           Juan ate   the apple
           'Juan ate the apple.'
       b. Juan **se** comió la   manzana.
           Juan SE ate   the apple.
           'Juan ate the apple.'

A high applicative analysis, along the lines of Labelle's approach with the corresponding modifications, seems to be a good analytical option, which fits the expectations of my analysis. Here is a tentative analysis:[20]

(151)
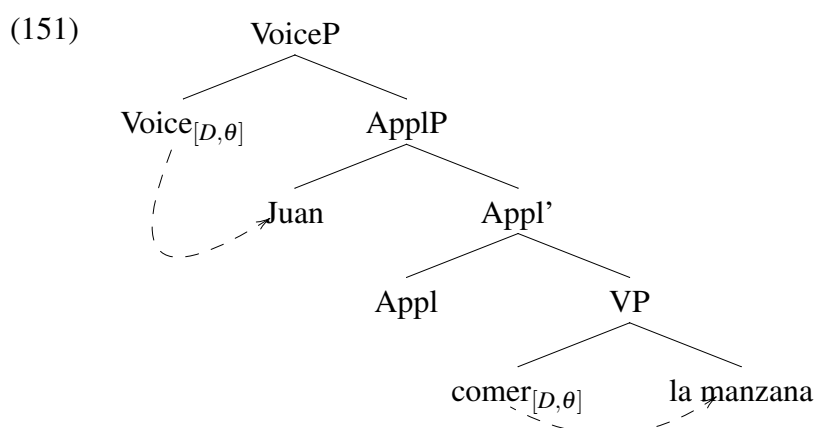
The applied argument receives two θ-roles, one from Appl and another one from Voice. This second θ-role is assigned in a long-distance fashion if the applied DP is local and active with respect to Voice. Locality is obviously satisfied, but it remains to be seen why activity is satisfied as well. This is connected to the general question about Case assignment for applied arguments. In Spanish, they are syncretic with dative Case in ditransitves and other related environments. It seems reasonable, then, to assume here the proposal in Pujalte (2013), according to which dative arguments receive its Case value at PF, so they remain active during the syntactic derivation (see section 2.2).

Of course, the tree in (151) is an oversimplification; in particular, it says nothing related to well-known facts about the behavior of direct objects in aspectual *se* environments (for instance, the incompatibility with bare objects). But I think that these issues are orthogonal to my point here and, for this reason, I leave them open for future investigation. I also leave open discussion with other alternatives that are compatible with my general theory, as well. In principle, my analysis seems to be

---

[20] For Spanish, MacDonald (2017b) has proposed a similar analysis, but like Labelle, he also generates the subject DP in Spec,Voice. Given the arguments I have given regarding the need of accounting for the syncretism pattern, I don't see any reason to proceed in this way.

consistent with Campanini & Schäfer (2011), according to whom aspectual *se* is not an instance of a high applicative syntax but of a low one.

The considerations made in this section had the main goal of making explicit how to proceed methodologically given any occurrence of the clitic *se* in Spanish. The crucial methodological step is this: unless empirical evidence dictates otherwise, assume that *se* is a PF expletive that satisfies the uncancelled [D]-feature in Voice. Given the θ-system proposed here, there is *a priori* no reason to suppose that an Agent DP is also a Voice specifier. Yet, that this is or is not the case is a purely empirically matter. For the *se* constructions analyzed in this paper, this methodological move has brought the important empirical result of making sense of the apparent chaos in the realm of *se* constructions. If this strategy can be generalized requires a case-by-case study. As mentioned in the introduction, the paradigm explored here doesn't exhaust all the attested uses of *se*. As far as I know, the paradigm from (1) to (7) is indeed attested in all Spanish varieties. There are, however, uses of *se* restricted to particular dialects. Di Tullio (2005) recognizes a "stylistic" use of *se* in the youngest generations of Rioplatense Spanish. Here are some examples:

(152)   a.   Juan **se** trabajó todo / la vida.
             Juan SE worked all   / the life
             'Juan worked a lot.'
        b.   Juan **se** tocó todo / la vida.
             Juan SE sang all   / the life
             'Juan sang terrific.'

This kind of *se* only combines with unergatives or, more generally, intransitive and agentive predicates and requires the obligatory co-occurrence of *todo* o *la vida*. Its meaning depends to some extent on the verbal predicate as the translations above show. Crucially, unlike aspectual *se*, which only combines with transitive verbs, stylistic *se* can only combine with intransitive forms, a fact that doesn't follow from any semantic restriction:

(153)   a.   Juan se tocó   la vida.
             Juan SE played the life
             'Juan played (an instrument) terrific.'
        b.   *Juan se tocó   la guitarra la vida.
             Juan SE played the guitar   the life
             intended: 'Juan played the guitar terrific.'

This type of intransitive restriction could be taken as an indication that there is material present in the V complement position. In turn, given the above-mentioned methodological advise, the occurrence *se* should be taken as evidence that the agent

DP of these sentences is not in Spec,Voice. A tentative analysis consistent with these facts would be as follows:

(154) $[_{VoiceP}$ Voice$_{[D,\theta]}$ $[_{VP}$ tocar $[_{XP}$ la vida Juan]]]

The verb and its XP complement are listed through some process of grammaticalization. Clearly, neither XP nor its sub-constituent *la vida* are true direct objects of the verb. This is particularly evident in the latter case, in which replacement for an accusative pronoun results in strong ungrammaticality:

(155)   *Juan se la   tocó.
         Juan SE CL.3.SG.FEM.ACC played
         *'Juan played (the guitar) terrific.'

Sentences involving uses of stylistic *se* are related in meaning to light verb constructions that also make use of *todo* or *la vida*:

(156)   Juan puso / dio   la vida / todo.
         Juan put   / gave the life / all
         'Juan did his best.'

In both type of sentences, a metaphorical process seems to be at play. This process involves a basic whole-part relation connected to the agent of the event in a way such that from *la vida de Juan* 'Juan's life' or *todo de Juan* 'all of Juan', we get a meaning closely related to the interpretation that Juan did his best. This seems to be plausible from a semantic point of view, but is there any evidence in favor of the analysis in (154), which *la vida* and *Juan* form indeed a syntactic constituent? In order to answer this question, consider first the following alternatives to (156), in which a possessive article or an emphatic anaphora can occupy the possessor position:

(157)   a.   Juan puso su vida.
              Juan put   his life
              'Juan did his best.'
         b.   Juan dio   todo de sí.
              Juan gave all   of himself
              'Juan did his best.'

The fact that these sentences are acceptable indicates that the subject doesn't generate in the possessor position. This is obvious for the example in (157b), in which the anaphora occupies the relevant position, but it can also be corroborated for (157a) comparing it with the well-known unacceptability of DPs in which the possessor is doubled with a possessive article (e.g., *su_i vida de Juan$_i$ 'his life of Juan' vs.

la$_i$ vida de Juan$_i$ 'Juan's life'). Taken for granted that these tests can detect constituency within the nominal domain, consider now how they apply to sentences involving stylistic *se*:

(158)   a.   *Juan se trabajó su vida.
                  Juan SE worked his life
         b.   *Juan se trabajó todo de sí.
                  Juan SE worked all   of himself
                  'Juan worked a lot.'

The strong ungrammaticality of both examples suggests that the analysis in (154) could be on the right track. These brief considerations about the syntax of stylistic *se* are made with the sole purpose to illustrate how to proceed under the methodological statement that tells us that whenever an occurrence of the clitic *se* is detected in a given sentence, the possibility that that sentence lacks an external argument must be taken seriously.

5   Concluding remarks

In this study, I have discussed the main properties of *se* constructions in Spanish with the aim of sustaining three main thesis on the syntax-interface connection of such constructions. First, I have defended the thesis that *se* is the surface realization of a PF repair strategy. This operation applies when a subcategorization feature in the Voice head is not properly deleted in the syntax. Second, I have argued that absence of an external argument in the syntax creates the scenario for long-distance θ-role assignment under activity and locality conditions. The theory dispenses, thus, with the strong locality view on θ-assignment, according to which θ-marking must obey sisterhood. Third, I have defended the thesis that θ-roles are semantically realized on K nodes as functions from entities to event predicates, i.e., they are argument introducers.

On the empirical side, the theory I have defended allows for unification of many instances of *se* syncretism in Spanish. In particular, I have detected what I think is the common property in those scenarios in which the clitic *se* occurs, namely, impersonal/passive *se*, reflexive *se*, ergative *se*, inherent *se* and aspectual *se*, among others. On the theorical side, I think that this study makes a contribution to the debate about the proper nature of abstract Case. A great deal of generative theorizing in the last 40 years has been devoted to elucidate the proper nature of Case, a category resistant to extra linguistic (or more properly, extra syntactic) considerations or motivations (although see Hinzen 2014 for a recent reconsideration). Case Theory, as conceived in the GB era, was considered under two views in competition:

(a) The Case Filter and (b) The Visibility Condition. At that time, there were reasons to call the Visibility Condition into question (PRO theory, expletives, etc) and, perhaps this was the reason that led us to favor a more formal approach within the Minimalist Program (Checking Theory, Valuation Theory, among other important alternatives). A flavor of redundancy, however, persisted in the formal approach, as lucidly argued in McFadden (2004). The redundancy boils down to the basic fact that formal Case can in principle being derived from licensing considerations. McFadden's strategy was relegating case determination to morphology, a move that implied abandoning abstract Case Theory. I agree with McFadden's criticism but not with the way in which Case Theory is resolved. In my view, any version of the (syntactic or morphological) formal approach only deals with Case/case interactions; i.e., with the syntax-morphology interaction. And that is, without a doubt, an essential part of Case Theory. There is, however, another aspect at the core of the theory, which is -as it should be evident at this point- Case/θ interactions, and this is, again without a doubt, another essential aspect of the theory, but one that connects the syntactic properties of Case with its semantic effects. Here is where the Visibility Condition enters into the picture again. On the reconsideration of such a condition made in this study, Case is syntactic, θ-roles are also syntactic, but the associations between Case and θ that are syntactically determined (via allosemy) have a crucial impact in the semantic derivation.

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