

# Silencing the PCC

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**Abstract:** Basque displays what is known as the Strong Person Case Constraint (PCC): an absolutive DP may generally not be 1st or 2nd person if it is c-commanded by a dative DP. We make the novel observation that this restriction is obviated under verbal ellipsis, even if this ellipsis does not affect the DPs whose cooccurrence is normally ruled out. We then explore the consequences of this generalization for accounts of the PCC. First, it indicates that the PCC arises from properties of the verbal agreement, not of the DP arguments. Second, a comprehensive account of the Basque PCC must be sensitive to both narrow-syntactic and PF properties (in particular whether or not the verb agreement is pronounced). We then develop an account of the Basque PCC based on Coon and Keine’s (2021) feature-gluttony proposal. On this account, the PCC results from an irresolvable conflict that arises in the morphological realization of a probe that has agreed with two DPs. We show that such an account offers a principled explanation of both the syntactic factors and the PF factors that condition the Basque PCC, in particular its interaction with verbal ellipsis.

## 1. Introduction

The Person Case Constraint (PCC) is a crosslinguistically common restriction on possible person combinations, typically observed between direct and indirect objects in ditransitive constructions (Perlmutter 1971, Bonet 1991, 1994, Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Béjar and Rizac 2003, Nevins 2007, Adger and Harbour 2007, Ormazabal and Romero 2007, Baker 2008, 2011, Pancheva and Zubizarreta 2018, Preminger 2019, Stegovec 2020, Foley and Toosarvandani 2022, Deal to appear, among many others; see Anagnostopoulou 2017 for an overview). Basque exhibits what is known as the “strong” version of the PCC, which prohibits a 1st and 2nd person direct-object absolutive DP in the presence of a dative DP (with some refinements to be discussed below); see Laka (1993a), Albizu (1997), Ormazabal and Romero (1998, 2001, 2007), Ormazabal (2000), Arregi and Nevins (2008, 2012), Rizac (2008, 2010, 2011), Preminger (2011b, 2019), Odria (2017, 2019), and Coon and Keine (2021). The classical configuration in which such restrictions have been observed are ditransitive constructions, illustrated in (1).<sup>1</sup>

(1) *Strong PCC in Basque*

- a. Zu-k     *harakina-ri*   **liburu-a**   saldu d-i-o-zu.  
you-ERG   butcher-DAT   book-ABS   sold   3ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
‘You have sold the book to the butcher.’     (✓3DAT > 3ABS)
- b. Zu-k     *ni-ri*   **liburu-a**   saldu d-i-da-zu.  
you-ERG   I-DAT   book-ABS   sold   3ABS-AUX-1DAT-2ERG  
‘You have sold the book to me.’     (✓1DAT > 3ABS)

<sup>1</sup> Unless noted otherwise, the Basque data are by Jon Ander Mendia.

- c. \*Zu-k *harakina-ri* **ni** saldu n-ai-o-zu.  
 you-ERG butcher-DAT I.ABS sold 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
*Intended*: ‘You have sold me to the butcher.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)
- d. \*Ni-k *harakina-ri* **zu** saldu z-aiti-o-t.  
 I-ERG butcher-DAT you.ABS sold 2ABS-AUX-3DAT-1ERG  
*Intended*: ‘I have sold you to the butcher.’ (\*3DAT > 2ABS)
- e. \*Haiek *ni-ri* **zu** saldu z-ai-da-te.  
 they.ERG I-DAT you.ABS sold 2ABS-AUX-1DAT-3ERG  
*Intended*: ‘They have sold you to me.’ (\*1DAT > 2ABS)
- f. \*Haiek *zu-ri* **ni** saldu n-ai-zu-te.  
 they.ERG you-DAT I.ABS sold 1ABS-AUX-2DAT-3ERG  
*Intended*: ‘They have sold me to you.’ (\*2DAT > 1ABS)

Much recent work has documented that the precise combinations that are ruled out differ across languages and speakers, resulting in different types of the PCC (e.g., Bonet 1991, 1994, Anagnostopoulou 2005, Nevins 2007, Doliana 2013, Pancheva and Zubizarreta 2018, Yokoyama 2019, Stegovec 2020, Coon and Keine 2021, Foley and Toosarvandani 2022, Deal to appear; see Anagnostopoulou 2017 for an overview). Because we focus on Basque in this paper, which has the Strong PCC, we will for the most part put this crosslinguistic variation aside.

In addition to the basic Basque PCC facts in (1), the previous literature has uncovered a curious case of PCC obviation. In Basque nonfinite clauses, the PCC systematically disappears (see Laka 1993a, 1996, Bonet 1994, Albizu 1997, Ormazabal 2000, Preminger 2011b, 2019, Arregi and Nevins 2012, Coon and Keine 2021). That is, combinations of direct and indirect objects that are normally ruled out by the PCC are surprisingly allowed if they occur in a nonfinite clause. An illustrative example is provided in (2), based on Laka (1993a:27). Here, the combination of *harakina-ri* ‘butcher-DAT’ and *ni* ‘I.ABS’ that violates the PCC in simple finite clauses (see (1c)) is grammatical within the nonfinite clause.

(2) *PCC disappears in nonfinite clauses*

- Gaizki irudi-tzen z-ai-t [ zu-k *harakina-ri* **ni** sal-tze-a ].  
 wrong look-IMP 3ABS-AUX-1DAT you-ERG butcher-DAT I.ABS sell-IMP-ART.ABS  
 ‘It seems wrong to me for you to sell me to the butcher.’ (✓3DAT > 1ABS)

This effect is general and can also be observed in other nonfinite clauses. What these nonfinite clauses have in common is that they lack verb agreement. In other words, neither *harakina-ri* ‘butcher-DAT’ nor *ni* ‘I.ABS’ controls agreement on a verb in (2), in contrast to (1c), and this seems to be what underlies the PCC obviation. Assuming that the nonfinite clause in (2) lacks a  $\phi$ -probe, recent work on the PCC that incorporates the fact in (2) has therefore concluded that the PCC only arises in clauses that contain a  $\phi$ -probe (Preminger 2011b, 2019, Coon and Keine 2021, see also Anagnostopoulou 2003).

In this paper, we argue that the effect in (2) is in fact just one manifestation of a broader, novel generalization, stated in (3). We demonstrate that Basque PCC effects also disappear whenever the

verb and the agreeing auxiliary are elided, and we conclude that the PCC is abrogated in the absence of overt verb agreement. This generalization includes nonfinite clauses, which never contain overt  $\varphi$ -agreement, but it also holds for ellipsis structures in which the agreeing verb is not pronounced. On standard assumptions about ellipsis, such clauses syntactically contain a  $\varphi$ -probe that is not overtly realized. As we will see, in such configurations PCC effects systematically disappear as well.

- (3) Basque PCC effects disappear in clauses that do not contain an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe.

What (3) shows is that the Basque PCC is not only affected by the syntactic presence or absence of a  $\varphi$ -probe but also by whether a  $\varphi$ -probe is overtly realized or not. We then explore the analytical ramifications of (3) and in particular what it teaches us about the source of PCC effects. On the one hand, we argue that (3) provides strong evidence against purely syntactic approaches to the PCC, such as approaches relying solely on person licensing or the Case Filter. On the other hand, earlier work on the Basque PCC has shown that an entirely morphological account is insufficient as well, in that the PCC is sensitive to syntactic distinctions that are neutralized in the surface morphology. We instead propose an analysis based on Coon and Keine's (2021) feature-gluttony approach to the PCC, which we show derives both the syntactic conditions underlying the PCC and, in conjunction with independently-motivated assumptions about ellipsis, the role of the overt realization of the  $\varphi$ -probe (3). This enables a comprehensive account of the Basque PCC and the configurations in which it is obviated.

This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 demonstrates the Basque PCC in four configurations and then demonstrates that across these configurations, the PCC disappears in various ellipsis configurations in which the verb goes unpronounced. This motivates the generalization in (3). Section 3 then discusses the implications of this generalization for accounts of the PCC, motivating in particular the need for an account of the PCC that spans both syntax and PF. Section 4 then develops a feature-gluttony analysis of the Basque PCC and the environments in which it is obviated. Section 5 concludes.

## 2. Overt agreement and the PCC in Basque

Basque exhibits PCC effects in a number of configurations in which a dative DP asymmetrically c-commands an absolutive DP, namely:

- (i) ditransitive constructions,
- (ii) psych-predicates,
- (iii) possessor-dative constructions, and
- (iv) applicative-dative constructions.

In all of these configurations, the absolutive DP is standardly prohibited from being 1st or 2nd person, regardless of the person of the dative DP. This restriction is independent of the surface word order. In this section, we illustrate these constructions and then show that across all of them,

the PCC disappears whenever the verb and agreeing auxiliary undergo ellipsis. We illustrate this effect of ellipsis using:

- (i) gapping,
- (ii) stripping,
- (iii) fragment answers,
- (iv) split questions, and
- (v) comparative deletion.

This systematicity in PCC obviation under verbal ellipsis calls for an explanation, which motivates our account in section 4.

## 2.1. PCC configurations

As stated in section 1, the standard generalization about the Strong PCC in Basque is that in the presence of a dative DP, a structurally lower absolutive DP cannot be 1st or 2nd person. This restriction is not affected by the surface order of the two DPs (that is, the PCC arises regardless of whether the dative DP linearly precedes the absolutive DP or the other way around); in other words, what matters is the base configuration. We already demonstrated the PCC in ditransitive constructions in (1); relevant examples are repeated in (4).

### (4) PCC in ditransitive constructions

- a. \*Zu-k *harakina-ri* **ni** saldu n-ai-o-zu.  
you-ERG butcher-DAT I.ABS sold 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
*Intended:* ‘You have sold me to the butcher.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)
- b. \*Haiek *zu-ri* **ni** saldu n-ai-zu-te.  
they.ERG you-DAT I.ABS sold 1ABS-AUX-2DAT-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They have sold me to you.’ (\*2DAT > 1ABS)

While the PCC has traditionally been observed in ditransitive constructions, it also arises in other configurations that contain an absolutive DP and a dative DP. A second configuration is psych-predicates (Albizu 1997, Rezac 2008, Arregi and Nevins 2012). These predicates take a dative argument and an absolutive argument, and, as Rezac (2008) shows, the dative DP asymmetrically c-commands the absolutive DP. As illustrated in (5), the absolutive DP cannot be 1st or 2nd person.

### (5) PCC with psych-verbs

- a. *Ni-ri* **Mikel** gusta-tzen z-ai-t.  
I-DAT Mikel.ABS like-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-1DAT  
‘I like Mikel.’ (✓1DAT > 3ABS)
- b. \**Mikel-i* **ni** gusta-tzen n-atzai-o.  
Mikel-DAT I.ABS like-IMPF 1ABS-AUX-3DAT  
*Intended:* ‘Mikel likes me.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

- c. \**Ni-ri zu* gusta-tzen z-atzaizki-t.  
 I-DAT you.ABS like-IMPF 2ABS-AUX-1DAT  
*Intended:* ‘I like you.’ (\*1DAT > 2ABS)

Third, PCC effects also arise with possessor-dative constructions (Rezac 2010), in which the dative DP is interpreted as the possessor of a PP constituent. An example is provided in (6a). As (6b), taken from Rezac (2010:775), illustrates, the absolutive DP may not be 1st or 2nd person.

(6) *PCC in possessor-dative constructions*

- a. *Miren-i haur-ak* beso-etara bota d-izki-o-te.  
 Miren-DAT children-ABS arms-into thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘They threw the children into Miren’s arms.’ (✓3DAT > 3ABS)
- b. \**Miren-i zu* beso-etara bota z-aituz-te.  
 Miren-DAT you.ABS arms-into thrown 2ABS-AUX-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They threw you into Miren’s arms.’ (\*3DAT > 2ABS)

Fourth, the PCC also arises in applicative-dative constructions, in which the dative is interpreted as “affected”. Here too the absolutive DP may not be 1st or 2nd person, as shown in (7), from Rezac (2010:774–775).

(7) *PCC in applicative-dative constructions*

- a. *Lami-ek Miren-i Pello eta Mona* jan-go d-izki-o-te.  
 lamias-ERG Miren-DAT Pello and Mona.ABS eat-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘The lamias will eat Pello and Mona on Miren.’ (✓3DAT > 3ABS)
- b. \**Lami-ek Miren-i zu* jan-go z-aituz-te.  
 lamias-ERG Miren-DAT you.ABS eat-FUT 2ABS-AUX-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘The lamias will eat you on Miren.’ (\*3DAT > 2ABS)

The next sections make the novel observation that across a variety of constructions in which the lexical verb and the agreeing auxiliary are elided, the PCC restriction systematically disappears in all four PCC contexts.

## 2.2. Gapping

(8) demonstrates that the PCC in ditransitive configurations disappears under gapping, a process that elides the lexical verb and the agreeing auxiliary but leaves the nominal arguments unaffected. With gapping, an otherwise illicit 1st or 2nd person absolutive DP (see (4)) becomes grammatical. Here and throughout, we indicate elided material with “Δ”.

(8) *PCC obviation under gapping: Ditransitives*

- a. Jon-ek alkatea-ri Mikel saldu d-i-o, eta zu-k harakina-ri  
 Jon-ERG mayor-DAT Mikel.ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT and you-ERG butcher-DAT  
**ni** Δ.  
 I.ABS  
 ‘Jon sold Mikel to the mayor, and you me to the butcher.’ (✓3DAT > 1ABS)
- b. Jon-ek alkatea-ri Mikel saldu d-i-o, eta haiek zu-ri  
 Jon-ERG mayor-DAT Mikel.ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT and they.ERG you-DAT  
**ni** Δ.  
 I.ABS  
 ‘Jon sold Mikel to the mayor, and they me to you.’ (✓2DAT > 1ABS)

Gapping likewise lifts the person restriction with psych-predicates (see (5)), as shown in (9).

(9) *PCC obviation under gapping: Psych-predicates*

- Zu-ri Pello gusta-tzen z-ai-zu, eta ni-ri **zu** Δ.  
 you-DAT Pello.ABS like-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-2DAT and I-DAT you.ABS  
 ‘You like Pello, and I you.’ (✓1DAT > 2ABS)

The person restriction in possessor-dative constructions (see (6)) is also lifted under gapping, as (10) shows.

(10) *PCC obviation under gapping: Possessor-dative constructions*

- a. Mona-ri Pello beso-etara bota d-i-o-te, eta Miren-i  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS arms-into thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and Miren-DAT  
**ni/zu** Δ.  
 I.ABS/you.ABS  
 ‘They threw Pello into Mona’s arms, and me/you into Miren’s.’ (✓3DAT > 1/2ABS)
- b. Mona-ri Pello beso-etara bota d-i-o-te, eta { ni-ri  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS arms-into thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and I-DAT  
**zu** Δ / zu-ri **ni** Δ }.  
 you.ABS you-DAT I.ABS  
 ‘They threw Pello into Mona’s arms, and you/me into mine/yours.’  
 (✓1DAT > 2ABS / ✓2DAT > 1ABS)

Finally, gapping also obviates the PCC effect in applicative-dative constructions (see (7)), as demonstrated in (11).

- (11) *PCC obviation under gapping: Applicative-dative constructions*

Lami-ek Miren-i Pello jan-go d-i-o-te, eta otso-ek *Mona-ri*  
lamias-ERG Miren-DAT Pello eat-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and wolfes-ERG Mona-DAT  
**zu/ni** Δ.  
you.ABS/I.ABS  
‘The lamias will eat Pello on Miren, and the wolfes you/me on Mona.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

In summary, gapping systematically rescues structures that would otherwise be ungrammatical due to the PCC. This rescuing effect holds for all configurations that are otherwise subject to the PCC.

### 2.3. Stripping

PCC violations are also obviated by stripping, a process that elides all elements in a clause except for one. As before, this effect holds for ditransitive constructions (12), psych-predicates (13), possessor-dative constructions (14), and applicative-dative constructions (15).

- (12) *PCC obviation under stripping: Ditransitives*

Jon-ek *harakina-ri* Mikel saldu d-i-o, eta **ni/zu** Δ ere bai.  
Jon-ERG butcher-DAT Mikel.ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT and I.ABS/you.ABS too yes  
‘Jon sold Mikel to the butcher, and me/you too.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

- (13) *PCC obviation under stripping: Psych-predicates*

*Ni-ri* Mikel gusta-tzen z-ai-t, eta **zu** Δ ere bai.  
I-DAT Mikel.ABS like-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-1DAT and you.ABS too yes  
‘I like Mikel, and you too.’ (✓ 1DAT > 2ABS)

- (14) *PCC obviation under stripping: Possessor-dative constructions*

*Mona-ri* Pello beso-etara bota d-i-o-te, eta **ni/zu** Δ  
Mona-DAT Pello.ABS arms-into thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and I.ABS/you.ABS  
ere bai.  
also yes  
‘They threw Pello into Mona’s arms, and me/you too.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

- (15) *PCC obviation under stripping: Applicative-dative constructions*

Lami-ek *Miren-i* Pello jan-go d-i-o-te, eta **zu/ni** Δ ere  
lamias-ERG Miren-DAT Pello eat-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and you.ABS/I.ABS also  
bai.  
yes  
‘The lamias will eat Pello on Miren, and you/me too.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

## 2.4. Fragment answers

PCC effects are also obviated in fragment answers (see Merchant 2004 and Weir 2014 for arguments that fragment answers contain full syntactic structure plus ellipsis of everything except for the fragment answer). This can be seen most clearly in fragment answers to multiple questions. As with gapping and stripping, otherwise ungrammatical combinations of DPs are then permitted. The effect again holds for all four PCC configurations, as shown in (16)–(19). In these examples, the subexamples in (a) contain the question and the subexamples in (b) contain the corresponding fragment answers.

### (16) PCC obviation in fragment answers: Ditransitives

- a. Nor saldu d-i-o Koldo-k nor-i? —  
 who.ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT Koldo-ERG who-DAT  
 ‘Who did Koldo sell to whom?’ —
- b. (i) Alkatea-ri Jon Δ eta harakina-ri **ni/zu** Δ.  
 mayor-DAT Jon.ABS and butcher-DAT I.ABS/you.ABS  
 ‘Jon to the mayor and me/you to the butcher.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)
- (ii) Alkatea-ri Jon Δ eta { *ni-ri zu* Δ / *zu-ri ni* Δ }.  
 mayor-DAT Jon.ABS and I-DAT you.ABS you-DAT I.ABS  
 ‘Jon to the mayor and {you to me / me to you}.’  
 (✓ 1DAT > 2ABS / ✓ 2DAT > 1ABS)

### (17) PCC obviation in fragment answers: Psych-predicates

- a. Nor gusta-tzen z-ai-o nor-i? —  
 who.ABS like-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-3DAT who-DAT  
 ‘Who likes whom?’ —
- b. Mona-ri Pello Δ eta { *ni-ri zu* Δ / *zu-ri ni* Δ }.  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS and I-DAT you.ABS you-DAT I.ABS  
 ‘Mona (likes) Pello and {I (like) you / you (like) me}.’  
 (✓ 1DAT > 2ABS / ✓ 2DAT > 1ABS)

### (18) PCC obviation in fragment answers: Possessor-dative constructions

- a. Nor bota d-i-o-te nor-i beso-etara? —  
 who.ABS thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG who-DAT arms-into  
 Who did they throw into whose arms? —
- b. (i) Mona-ri Pello Δ eta Mikel-i **ni/zu** Δ.  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS and Mikel-DAT I.ABS/you.ABS  
 ‘Pello into Mona’s and me/you into Mikel’s.’ (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)



- (ii) Mona-ri Pello  $\Delta$  eta { *ni-ri* **zu**  $\Delta$  / *zu-ri* **ni**  $\Delta$  }.  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS and I-DAT you.ABS you-DAT I.ABS  
 ‘Pello into Mona’s and {you into mine / me into yours}.’  
 ( $\checkmark$ 1DAT > 2ABS /  $\checkmark$ 2DAT > 1ABS)

(19) *PCC obviation in fragment answers: Applicative-dative constructions*

- a. Nor jan-go d-i-o-te lami-ek nor-i? —  
 who.ABS eat-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG lamias-ERG who-DAT  
 Who will lamias eat on whom? —
- b. (i) Mona-ri Pello  $\Delta$  eta *Mikel-i* **ni/zu**  $\Delta$ .  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS and Mikel-DAT I.ABS/you.ABS  
 ‘Pello on Mona and me/you on Mikel.’ ( $\checkmark$ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)
- (ii) Mona-ri Pello  $\Delta$  eta { *ni-ri* **zu**  $\Delta$  / *zu-ri* **ni**  $\Delta$  }.  
 Mona-DAT Pello.ABS and I-DAT you.ABS you-DAT I.ABS  
 ‘Pello on Mona and {you on me / me on you}.’  
 ( $\checkmark$ 1DAT > 2ABS /  $\checkmark$ 2DAT > 1ABS)

## 2.5. Split questions

Split questions provide another configuration in which PCC restrictions are obviated (see Arregi 2010 for arguments that split questions involve clausal structure plus ellipsis). As shown in (20)–(23), it is possible for the tag to contain combinations of arguments that would be ungrammatical due to the PCC in the absence of ellipsis. The scenario for these sentences is one where two actors in a play are discussing the plot of that play. The speaker remembers a specific plot point happening but does not remember who does what. For example, in (20), the speaker remembers that one of them is sold to the other but does not remember whether it is the speaker that is sold to the addressee or vice versa.

(20) *PCC obviation in split questions: Ditransitives*

- Nor-i saldu-ko d-i-o-te nor, [ *zu-ri* **ni**  $\Delta$  ] ala [ *ni-ri*  
 who.DAT sell-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG who.ABS you-DAT I.ABS or I-DAT  
**zu**  $\Delta$  ]?  
 you.ABS  
 ‘Who will they sell to whom, me to you or you to me?’ ( $\checkmark$ 2DAT > 1ABS /  $\checkmark$ 1DAT > 2ABS)

(21) *PCC obviation in split questions: Psych-predicates*

- Nor-i gusta-tzen z-ai-o nor, [ *zu-ri* **ni**  $\Delta$  ] ala [ *ni-ri*  
 who-DAT like-IMP 3ABS-AUX-3DAT who.ABS you-DAT I.ABS or I-DAT  
**zu**  $\Delta$  ]?  
 you.ABS  
 ‘Who likes whom, you me or I you?’ ( $\checkmark$ 2DAT > 1ABS /  $\checkmark$ 1DAT > 2ABS)

(22) *PCC obviation in split questions: Possessor-dative constructions*

Nor-i bota-ko d-i-o-te nor beso-etara, [ zu-ri ni Δ ]  
 who-DAT throw-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG who.ABS arms-into you-DAT I.ABS

ala [ ni-ri zu Δ ]?

or I-DAT you.ABS

‘Who will they throw into whose arms, me into yours or you into mine?’

(✓2DAT > 1ABS / ✓1DAT > 2ABS)

(23) *PCC obviation in split questions: Applicative-dative constructions*

Nor-i jan-go d-i-o-te nor, [ zu-ri ni Δ ] ala [ ni-ri  
 who-DAT eat-FUT 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG who.ABS you-DAT I.ABS or I-DAT

zu Δ ]?

you.ABS

‘Who will they eat on who, me on you or you on me?’ (✓2DAT > 1ABS / ✓1DAT > 2ABS)

## 2.6. Comparative deletion

The final ellipsis process that we will illustrate PCC obviation with here is comparative deletion (see, e.g., Kennedy 2002, and Lechner 2004, 2018 for discussion of comparative deletion in general). (24) illustrates this for ditransitive constructions. (24a) provides the baseline configuration; (24b) illustrates the PCC. (24d) then shows that comparative deletion obviates the PCC violation. (24c) demonstrates that this effect arises only in the clause that is elided, not in the antecedent clause in which no ellipsis takes place.<sup>2</sup>

(24) *PCC obviation under comparative deletion: Ditransitive*

a. *Baseline: no PCC*

Politikari eskuindar-ei **Koldo** maiz aurkez-ten d-i-e-te.  
 politician rightwing-DAT Koldo.ABS often introduce-IMP 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘They often introduce Koldo to rightwing politicians.’ (✓3DAT > 3ABS)

b. *Baseline: PCC*

\*Politikari ezkertiar-ei **ni** maiz aurkez-ten n-ai-e-te.  
 politician leftwing-DAT I.ABS often introduce-IMP 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They often introduce me to leftwing politicians.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

<sup>2</sup> (24c,d) pose some parsing difficulty due to the center embedding. This difficulty impacts both examples equally and is hence independent of the PCC. It can be alleviated by extraposing the *than*-phrase, as shown in (i):

(i) Politikari eskuindar-ei Koldo maiz-ago aurkez-ten d-i-e-te ni/zu politikari  
 politician rightwing-DAT Koldo often-er introduce-IMP 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG I.ABS/you.ABS politician  
 ezkertiar-ei baino.  
 leftwing-DAT than  
 ‘They introduce Koldo to rightwing politicians more often than me/you to leftwing politicians.’

c. *Baseline: PCC configuration not targeted by ellipsis*

\*Politikari ezkertiar-ei **ni** [ politikari eskuindar-ei Koldo  $\Delta$  ] baino  
 politician leftwing-DAT I.ABS politician rightwing-DAT Koldo.ABS than  
 maiz-ago aurkez-ten n-ai-e-te.  
 often-er introduce-IMPf 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They introduce me to leftwing politicians more often than Koldo to rightwing politicians.’  
 (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

d. *PCC obviation in comparative deletion*

Politikari eskuindar-ei Koldo [ politikari ezkertiar-ei **ni/zu**  $\Delta$  ]  
 politician rightwing-DAT Koldo.ABS politician leftwing-DAT I.ABS/you.ABS  
 baino maiz-ago aurkez-ten d-i-e-te.  
 than often-er introduce-IMPf 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘They introduce Koldo to rightwing politicians more often than me/you to leftwing politicians.’  
 (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

Next, (25) illustrates this effect of comparative deletion with psych-predicates.

(25) *PCC obviation with comparative deletion: Psych-predicates*

Mikel-i Mona [ ni-ri **zu**  $\Delta$  ] baino gehi-ago gusta-tzen z-ai-o.  
 Mikel-DAT Mona.ABS I-DAT you.ABS than more-er like-IMPf 3ABS-AUX-3DAT  
 ‘Mikel likes Mona more than I (like) you.’  
 (✓ 1DAT > 2ABS)

Possessor-dative constructions are illustrated in (26). We provide the baseline for the construction in (26a), an illustration of the PCC in the same construction in (26b), and the obviation of the PCC under comparative deletion in (26c).

(26) *PCC obviation with comparative deletion: Possessor-dative constructions*

a. *Baseline: no PCC*

Guraso-ei **haur-ak** beso-etatik maiz ken-tzen d-izki-e-te.  
 parents-DAT children-ABS arms-from often take.away-IMPf 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘They often take children away from their parents’ arms.’  
 (✓ 3DAT > 3ABS)

b. *Baseline: PCC*

\*Guraso-ei **ni** beso-etatik maiz ken-tzen n-ai-e-te.  
 family-DAT I.ABS arms-from often take.away-IMPf 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They often take me away from my parents’ arms.’  
 (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

c. *Obviation in comparative deletion*

Guraso hori-ei haur-ak beso-etatik [ **ni/zu** ama-ri  $\Delta$  ]  
 parents those-DAT children-ABS arms-from I.ABS/you.ABS mother-DAT  
 baino maiz-ago ken-tzen d-izki-e-te.  
 than often-er take.away-IMPf 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘They take children away from those parents’ arms more often than me/you from my/your mom’s.’  
 (✓ 3DAT > 1/2ABS)

Finally, (27) shows this effect for applicative-dative constructions.

(27) *PCC obviation with comparative deletion: Applicative-dative constructions*

a. *Baseline: no PCC*

Politikari-ek guraso-ei **haur-ak** maiz aipa-tzen d-izki-e-te.  
 politicians-ERG parents-DAT children-ABS often mention-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘Politicians often mention their children to the citizens.’ (✓3DAT > 3ABS)

b. *Baseline: PCC*

\*Politikari-ek herritar-ei **ni** maiz aipa-tzen n-ai-e-te.  
 politicians-ERG citizens-DAT I.ABS often mention-IMPF 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 Intended: ‘Politicians often mention me to the citizens.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

c. *Obviation in comparative deletion*

Politikari-ek guraso-ei haur-ak [ **ni/zu** herritar-ei Δ ] baino  
 politicians-ERG parents-DAT children-ABS I.ABS/you.ABS citizens-DAT than  
 maiz-ago aipa-tzen d-izki-e-te.  
 often-er mention-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG  
 ‘Politicians mention children to parents more often than me/you to the citizens.’  
 (✓3DAT > 1/2ABS)

## 2.7. PCC and overt $\varphi$ -agreement

The data in the preceding sections provides converging evidence that the Basque PCC is systematically sensitive to ellipsis. What the various ellipsis configurations in this section have in common is that they elide the lexical verb and the agreeing auxiliary, and we showed that this ellipsis obviates the PCC. This finding has important implications for our understanding of PCC effects. The standard approach to ellipsis involves (PF) deletion or non-pronunciation of syntactic structure present in the ellipsis site (see, e.g., Ross 1969, Sag 1976, Merchant 1999, 2001, 2004, 2013, Fox 2000, Kennedy and Merchant 2000, Fox and Lasnik 2003, Van Craenenbroeck 2010, Bošković 2014, Wurmbrand 2017, Mendes 2020, Mendes and Nevins 2020, among many others; see, e.g., Van Craenenbroeck and Merchant 2013 and Merchant 2019 for an overview). That is, the elliptical clauses involve regular clausal syntax with partial deletion or non-pronunciation at PF. Direct support for this view within Basque comes from *case-connectivity effects* (see Ross 1969, Merchant 1999, 2001, 2004, Ott 2014, and Lechner 2018, among others, for discussion of case connectivity in various ellipsis constructions). The remnant DPs must bear the same cases they would in the absence of ellipsis. For example, gapping in (8) leaves behind an ergative DP, a dative DP, and an absolutive DP. The ellipsis site must therefore contain the syntactic structure necessary for licensing these cases, and because these cases must be identical to the non-elided counterpart of the sentence, we can conclude that the structure in the ellipsis site is the regular clause structure. Case connectivity holds for all ellipsis structures considered here.

The presence of ordinary clause structure in the ellipsis site then entails that these clauses syntactically contain the regular verbal  $\varphi$ -probe(s) as well, the only difference being that these probes are not overtly realized at PF. The fact that in this case the PCC restrictions systematically disappear

provides clear indication that the Basque PCC is tied to the overt morphological realization of this  $\varphi$ -probe. This generalization is stated in (28), which covers all of the ellipsis data in section 2.2–2.6.<sup>3</sup>

- (28) Basque PCC effects disappear in clauses that do not contain an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe.

While (28) covers all ellipsis cases discussed above, its scope is not confined to these ellipsis cases. As mentioned in section 1, PCC effects are also obviated in Basque in nonfinite clauses that lack agreement altogether. This effect too can be observed across all four PCC configurations investigated

<sup>3</sup> Two notes on PCC repairs. First, we note that for some speakers, it is possible to repair ditransitive PCC violations by dropping the dative agreement (Rezac 2010:774, 2011:184). Such speakers have the contrast in (i), which is ungrammatical with the regular agreement form *z-ait(i)-o-t* but grammatical if the absolutive and the ergative DP are agreed with (*z-aitu-t*):

- (i) Ni-k *harakina-ri* **zu** saldu { \*z-aiti-o-t / z-aitu-t }.  
 I-ERG butcher-DAT you.ABS sold 2ABS-AUX-3DAT-1ERG 2ABS-AUX-1ERG  
 ‘I have sold you to the butcher.’

For speakers who accept (i) with the auxiliary form that drops dative agreement, interpreting PCC obviation under ellipsis becomes somewhat more difficult. This is because it is then conceivable that the structure that underlies the ellipsis involves this form of the auxiliary. Since this form is grammatical even if no ellipsis applies, it is no longer clear whether ellipsis interacts with the PCC.

Fortunately, it is easy to show that this is not a general concern. PCC repair via dropping of the dative agreement is available only in ditransitive constructions, but not with psych-predicates, possessor datives, or applicative datives (Rezac 2008:81, 2010:774–775, 2011:185), as shown in (ii), (iii), and (iv), respectively. For these constructions, there is no form of the agreeing auxiliary that would make them grammatical.

- (ii) \**Itxaso-ri* **ni** gusta-tzen { n-atzai-o / n-aiz / d-u-t }.  
 Itxaso-DAT I.ABS like-IMPF 1ABS-AUX-3DAT 1ABS-AUX 3ABS-AUX-1ERG  
 Intended: ‘Itxaso likes me.’
- (iii) \**Miren-i* **ni** beso-etara bota { n-ai-o-te / n-au-te }.  
 Miren-DAT I.ABS arms-into thrown 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG 1ABS-AUX-3ERG  
 Intended: ‘They threw me into Miren’s arms.’
- (iv) \**Lami-ek* *Miren-i* **zu** jan-go { z-aiti-o-te / z-aituz-te }.  
 lamias-ERG Miren-DAT you.ABS eat-FUT 2ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG 2ABS-AUX-3ERG  
 Intended: ‘The lamias will eat you on Miren.’

The fact that PCC obviation under ellipsis holds for psych-verbs, possessor datives, and applicative datives as well despite there not being a grammatical non-elided counterpart thus provides clear evidence for (28) even for speakers who have the contrast in (i).

Second, in some varieties of Basque, psych-predicates permit repair of a PCC violation through so-called *absolutive displacement* (Rezac 2008, 2010, 2011:224–229). Here, the absolutive DP appears in ergative case and controls ergative agreement, and the absolutive agreement slot bears 3rd person default agreement. An example is given in (v), taken from Rezac (2008:81). A 2nd person absolutive DP is ungrammatical regardless of the form of the auxiliary, but if the DP appears in ergative case, the sentence is grammatical.

- (v) Itxaso-ri { zu-k / \*zu } gusta-tzen d-i-o-zu.  
 Itxaso-DAT you-ERG you.ABS like-IMPF 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
 ‘Itxaso likes you.’

Crucially for us, absolutive displacement in (v) manifests in the form of the DP (*zu-k* instead of *zu*). This means that it is possible to tell whether absolutive displacement has taken place in a given structure even if the auxiliary is elided. In all of our ellipsis examples, the form of object DP is absolutive, not ergative. The fact that these structures are grammatical therefore cannot be attributed to absolutive displacement but must be the result of ellipsis, in line with (28). Moreover, absolutive displacement is limited to psych-verbs and not available in the other PCC configurations (Rezac 2008:80).

(29) *PCC effects disappear in nonfinite clauses: Ditransitives*

- (30) *PCC effects disappear in nonfinite clauses: Psych-predicates*

- (31) *PCC effects disappear in nonfinite clauses: Possessor-dative constructions*

- (32) *PCC effects disappear in nonfinite clauses: Applicative-dative constructions*

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- b. [ Lami-ek    Miren-i    **zu**       ja-te-a ]                  nahi d-u-t.  
lamias-ERG Miren-DAT you.ABS eat-IMPf-ART.ABS want 3ABS-AUX-1ERG  
'I want the lamias to eat you on Miren.' (✓3DAT > 2ABS)

Assuming that the absence of verb agreement in these nonfinite clauses indicates the syntactic absence of a  $\varphi$ -probe, Preminger (2011b, 2019) and Coon and Keine (2021) conclude that the PCC disappears if a clause does not syntactically contain a  $\varphi$ -probe. In light of the ellipsis facts, it stands to reason that this effect is just a special case of the generalization in (28). Clauses that do not contain a  $\varphi$ -probe at all clearly also do not contain an overtly realized  $\varphi$ -probe. The disappearance of the PCC in (29)–(32) then falls under (28). Conversely, the ellipsis facts presented here strongly suggest that the overarching generalization is not about the syntactic presence or absence of a  $\varphi$ -probe, but instead about the presence or absence of an *overtly realized*  $\varphi$ -probe.

- (33) *Gapping of auxiliary obviates the PCC: Ditransitives*  
 Jon-ek harakina-ri Mikel oparitu d-i-o, eta alkatea-ri **ni** saldu Δ.  
 Jon-ERG butcher-DAT Mikel.ABS gifted 3ABS-AUX-3DAT and mayor-DAT I.ABS sold  
 ‘Jon gifted Mikel to the butcher and sold me to the mayor.’ (✓3DAT > 1ABS)

- (34) *Gapping of auxiliary obviates the PCC: Possessor-datives configurations*
- Mikel-i      ur puxika                      soine-ra bota      d-i-o-te,                      eta Miren-i  
Mikel-DAT water.balloon.ABS body-to thrown 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-3ERG and Miren-DAT  
**ni**      beso-etatik kendu      Δ  
I.ABS arms-from removed  
'They threw Mikel a water balloon, and removed me from Miren's arms.'
- (✓ 3DAT > 1ABS)

A second relevant configuration is Right-Node Raising, not illustrated here: Right-Node Raising allows omission of just the auxiliary in the first conjunct, which likewise obviates the PCC in this conjunct. Like (33) and (34), this corroborates the generalization in (28): the PCC is obviated whenever the verbal agreement is not overtly realized.

(a conclusion also supported by familiar poverty-of-the-stimulus considerations). The next section considers what analytical constraints (28) imposes on accounts of the PCC in Basque.

### 3. Implications for accounts of the PCC

The PCC has generated an empirically extensive and analytically rich literature. This section discusses the implications of the evidence in the previous sections for accounts of the (Basque) PCC. We argue that the ellipsis facts provide an argument against nominal-licensing accounts of the PCC and in general against purely syntactic approaches. At the same time, there is evidence in Basque that a purely morphological analysis of the PCC is also insufficient. The goal of this section is not a comprehensive discussion of existing accounts of the PCC, but to evaluate the significance of the generalization in (28) in the context of these accounts. This will then form the basis of our own proposal in section 4.

#### 3.1. Nominal-licensing accounts and failed Agree

Abstracting away from specifics of implementation, the most common approach to the PCC in the recent literature is to attribute the person restriction to *failed Agree* between a probe and a DP due to intervention by another DP. The source of the restriction is often attributed to failed *nominal licensing*. The general analytical intuition pursued by these approaches is that 1st and 2nd person DPs require (special) nominal licensing through Agree with a functional head. The PCC then arises in configurations in which two DPs need to agree with, or be licensed by, a single functional head but this functional head is unable to do so (see, e.g., Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Béjar and Rezac 2003, Adger and Harbour 2007, Nevins 2007, Baker 2008, 2011, Richards 2008, Preminger 2011b, 2019, Walkow 2012, 2013, Kalin 2019, Stegovec 2020, Deal to appear).

For the sake of concreteness, we illustrate this general approach with Béjar and Rezac's (2003) analysis in terms of the *Person Licensing Condition* (PLC) in (35). This condition states that 1st and 2nd person DPs are subject to special licensing requirements, which are met by Agree with a functional head.

(35) *Person Licensing Condition* (Béjar and Rezac 2003:53)

An interpretable 1st/2nd person feature must be licensed by entering into an Agree relation with a functional category.

In PCC configurations, a direct object DP is separated from its licensing head (by assumption *v*) by the indirect object. The indirect object blocks  $\varphi$ -Agree across it (more specifically Agree for person), preventing the relevant probe on *v* from agreeing with the direct object, as shown in (36). If the direct object is 1st or 2nd person, it therefore remains unlicensed, in violation of the PLC (35). Because 3rd person DPs are not subject to the PLC, the direct object may be 3rd person without incurring a licensing problem.



$$(36) \quad [_{\text{HP}} H^0 \dots [ \dots DP \dots [ \dots DP_{[1/2]} \dots ] ] ] \rightarrow \text{violates (35)}$$

In this way, the account derives the restriction that the direct object may not be 1st or 2nd person in the presence of an indirect object, which is correct for Basque.

The general approach of attributing the PCC to the failure of a nominal to  $\varphi$ -agree with a functional head has been maintained in much recent work, but this body of work offers different explanations for why certain nominals must agree in this way.<sup>4</sup> For example, Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005) reduces this requirement to the Case Filter; Adger and Harbour (2007) attribute it to an interaction between Case licensing and selection; and Stegovec (2020) suggests that  $\varphi$ -Agree is necessary in order for an argument clitic to receive interpretable  $\varphi$ -features. Despite these differences, these accounts share the core idea that the PCC arises from the failure of a nominal to  $\varphi$ -agree with a functional head. For ease of reference, we will refer to such analyses as “(nominal) licensing accounts” or “failed-Agree accounts” because on these accounts, the object (either a full DP or an argumental clitic) must  $\varphi$ -agree with a functional head in order to license its occurrence. The PCC results, on these accounts, from the inability to establish such  $\varphi$ -Agree.

As we now show, the analytical challenge that arises from the ellipsis cases is largely the same for accounts within this family, and in what follows, we will therefore abstract away from the differences between them. Let us consider the generalization in (28), according to which PCC effects disappear in the absence of an overtly realized  $\varphi$ -probe, in the context of licensing/failed-Agree accounts of the PCC. Because such accounts attribute the PCC to the presence of an unlicensed DP that arises from the failure to establish a  $\varphi$ -Agree relation with this DP, it is not at all clear on such accounts why eliding the  $\varphi$ -probe should obviate the PCC. For concreteness, let us consider the gapping case (9), adapted here in (37). For the sake of clarity, the elided material *gusta-tzen z-atzaizki-t* is struck-out. If this ellipsis does not take place, the example is ungrammatical (see (5c)), and there is no grammatical overt form of the ellipsis site in (37). This means that the PCC obviation must be directly the result of the verbal ellipsis.

- (37) Zu-ri      Pello      gusta-tzen    z-ai-zu,                      eta    *ni-ri*    **zu**      gusta-tzen  
 you-DAT   Pello.ABS   like-IMP   3ABS-AUX-2DAT   and   I-DAT   you.ABS   like-IMP  
 z-atzaizki-t  
 2ABS-AUX-1DAT  
 ‘You like Pello and I you.’ (✓ 1DAT > 2ABS)

<sup>4</sup> Another dimension along which accounts within this family differ is the structural relationship between the licensing  $\varphi$ -probe and the to-be-agreed-with nominal. Most often, the probe is located above both DPs, as in (36), but other accounts sandwich the functional head between the two DPs (e.g., Adger and Harbour 2007, Walkow 2013, Yokoyama 2019, Deal to appear), as in (i).

$$(i) \quad [_{\text{HP}} DP \quad H^0 \dots [ \dots DP_{[1/2]} \dots ] ]$$

While this difference affects which of the two DPs is the one that fails to agree, it does not affect the basic idea that the PCC results from the failure to agree with both DPs. The problem posed by the Basque ellipsis facts is therefore the same for these analyses as it is for analyses in which it is the lower DP that cannot be agreed with.

Two principal problems arise for a nominal-licensing/failed-Agree account of the PCC. First, because the licensing requirement (such as the PLC (35)) is syntactic in nature, it is unexpected that non-pronunciation of syntactic structure should interact with it and abrogate the PCC. Second, the DP arguments whose cooccurrence is normally prohibited by the PCC (i.e., *ni-ri* ‘I-DAT’ and *zu* ‘you.ABS’ in (37)) are *not* affected by gapping—they are outside of the ellipsis site. An account that attributes the PCC to the presence of an unlicensed *nominal* therefore leaves unexplained why the PCC is obviated if the *verb and auxiliary* are elided.

It is perhaps tempting to try to attribute this rescuing effect of ellipsis to the frequently-assumed (though controversial) ability of some ellipsis phenomena to repair island violations (e.g., Ross 1969, Chomsky 1972, Merchant 1999, 2001, 2008, Kennedy and Merchant 2000, Fox and Lasnik 2003, Bošković 2011). If ungrammaticality can be repaired by ellipsis more generally, then one might wonder whether its effect on the PCC can be accounted for along the same lines. In what follows, we provide two arguments that repair under ellipsis does not offer a principled explanation for (37) for a nominal-licensing-based account. First, (37) involves gapping, and gapping (like stripping) does not have the ability to repair island violations in Basque in the first place, just like it does not in English (see Merchant 2019 and the references cited there). This is demonstrated for gapping in (38) and for stripping in (39).

(38) *No island repair under gapping*

\*Batzu-ek greko-a azter-tzen duen ikertzaile-a alokatu nahi  
 some-ERG Greek-ABS investigate-IMPF have.COMP research-ABS hired want  
 d-u-te, eta beste batzu-ek Δ albaniar-a.  
 3ABS-AUX-3ERG and other some-ERG Albanian-ABS  
*Intended:* ‘Some wanted to hire the researcher who studies Greek, and others ~~the one who~~  
 studies Albanian.’

(39) *No island repair under stripping*

\*Kotxe-a lapurtu zuen gizon-a harrapatu d-u-te, baina ez Δ  
 car-ABS stolen have.PST.COMP man-ABS caught 3ABS-AUX-3ERG but not  
 bizikleta.  
 bicycle.ABS  
*Intended:* ‘They have caught the man who stole the car, but not ~~the one who~~ stole the bike.’

Gapping and stripping thus do not in general have the ability to repair ungrammatical structures in Basque. The PCC obviation under gapping and stripping therefore cannot simply be attributed to such an ability. It would therefore be entirely ad hoc to stipulate that gapping and stripping nonetheless repair nominal-licensing failures.

Second, in the cases of island repair under ellipsis discussed in the literature, the source of the ungrammaticality is located *inside* the ellipsis site. In fact, Fox and Lasnik (2003) and Merchant (2008) explicitly argue that rescue-by-ellipsis only applies to material within the ellipsis site, not to material outside of it. Importantly, on a licensing account of the PCC, the source of the ungrammaticality in (37) is the DP that has failed to agree and therefore remains unlicensed. Crucially, this DP is *not* elided and hence outside of the ellipsis site in all the examples in sections 2.2–2.6. Therefore,

even if cases such as (38) and (39) were rescued by the eliding the structure that gives rise to the ungrammaticality, a licensing account of the PCC nonetheless fails to derive the rescuing effect of ellipsis in (37) because ellipsis would apply to the “wrong” element to have a rescuing effect: the DP whose licensing failure is taken to be the source of the ungrammaticality is not elided.

We conclude that the observation that the PCC is modulated by the overt realization of a  $\varphi$ -probe poses a serious challenge to accounts that attribute the PCC to failed Agree and concomitant failure to license a DP, and repair by ellipsis is unlikely to overcome this challenge in a principled manner. This conclusion is independent of what exactly underlies the licensing requirement and which of the two DPs is the one that remains unlicensed (see fn. 4). Because PCC obviation through verbal ellipsis holds for all PCC configurations discussed in section 2, the same challenge arises for such accounts across this range of constructions.

The ellipsis cases also pose a challenge to licensing accounts that extend to PCC obviation in nonfinite clauses (see (29)–(32)). The most explicit version of such an account is developed by Preminger (2011b, 2019), who assumes that these nonfinite clauses syntactically lack a  $\varphi$ -probe and proposes a revised version of the PLC that includes a caveat for such clauses. The caveat is that only DPs that occur in the same clause as a  $\varphi$ -probe are subject to the licensing requirement. DPs in clauses without a  $\varphi$ -probe may remain unlicensed. This revised PLC is stated in (40).

(40) *Person Licensing Condition* (Preminger 2011b:931)

A 1st/2nd-person pronoun in the same clause as a person  $\varphi$ -probe must be agreed with by that  $\varphi$ -probe.

Because according to the PLC in (40), 1st and 2nd person DPs need to be licensed through  $\varphi$ -Agree only in clauses that contain a  $\varphi$ -probe, it derives the fact that nonfinite clauses in Basque do not show PCC effects.<sup>5</sup>

Coon and Keine (2021) point out that this account is ad hoc in that it does not offer an explanation for *why* DPs should require licensing through  $\varphi$ -Agree only if the clause in which they occur also contains a  $\varphi$ -probe. In addition to this objection, the revised PLC (40) also does not straightforwardly extend to the ellipsis cases presented in the preceding section and hence the generalization in (28). As just noted, while the surface form of elliptical sentences like (37) lack overt  $\varphi$ -agreement, these sentences nonetheless contain a regular  $\varphi$ -probe syntactically (given that ellipsis involves the non-pronunciation or PF deletion of otherwise regular syntactic structure). As such, the DPs in these clauses should be subject to the syntactic licensing requirement even if the  $\varphi$ -probe remains unpronounced at PF. (40) would therefore predict that the PCC is unaffected by ellipsis of the  $\varphi$ -probe, contrary to fact. It is possible, of course, to add a second caveat to (40) according to which

<sup>5</sup> A related proposal is made by Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005), whose analysis of the PCC attributes it to failure of Case licensing of the lower DP. In a nutshell, she proposes that 1st and 2nd person DPs bear a special person feature that needs to be checked through Agree. This checking requirement is itself grounded in the Case Filter. To account for the absence of person restrictions with strong pronouns instead of clitics in Greek and with non-agreeing verbs in Icelandic dative-nominative constructions, Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005) suggests that DPs that are not agreed with may be licensed through default Case assignment. A proper evaluation of this account requires a better understanding of the conditions under which default Case assignment is available—in particular an account of why lower DPs in PCC configurations cannot be rescued through default Case assignment. Moreover, this analysis does not straightforwardly extend to the Basque ellipsis cases since the syntactic mechanisms that this account attributes the PCC to (Agree, feature checking, and the Case Filter) should not be affected by verbal ellipsis.

only  $\varphi$ -probes that are overtly realized at PF count, but this would simply amount to a restatement of the empirical generalization.<sup>6</sup> In our own analysis, we will attempt to develop a more explanatory account.

We take the generalization that the PCC arises only in the presence of an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe to provide strong indication that the PCC arises from the  $\varphi$ -probe and its overt realization. Because licensing accounts of the PCC locate the source of the PCC in *syntactic* licensing needs of a DP, they do not offer a ready explanation of the role of the PF realization of the verbal agreement. Instead, (28) invites an approach to the PCC that is grounded in the  $\varphi$ -probe and its realization. Before we pursue such an account, we document another constraint on the analysis space in the next section.

### 3.2. Morphological approaches

The effect of ellipsis on the PCC could be taken as direct support for a morphological or PF characterization of at least the Basque PCC (see Perlmutter 1971, Bonet 1991, 1994, Laka 1993a, 1996, Arregi and Nevins 2008, 2012). For example, Arregi and Nevins (2008:57–58, 2012:64–69) treat the Basque agreement markers on the auxiliary as clitics, and they assume that absolutive and dative clitics appear on the same head (“H” for Arregi and Nevins 2008; “T” for Arregi and Nevins 2012). They then propose that this head can host only a single clitic, (41). This has the effect that absolutive clitics and dative clitics are incompatible with each other. Following Laka (1993a), they furthermore argue that 3rd person absolutive DPs do not generate a clitic so that it is specifically 1st/2nd person absolutive clitics that are prohibited from cooccurring with a dative clitic.<sup>7</sup>

(41) H in Basque can only host one clitic. (Arregi and Nevins 2008:57)

(41) has the effect that there is not enough room for both a dative clitic and a 1st/2nd-person absolutive clitic because the two compete for the same position. This derives the restriction that 1st and 2nd person absolutive DPs cannot cooccur with a dative DP because both would need to generate a clitic but they cannot both do so. This results in the PCC. We refer to this approach as “morphological” because it does not involve syntactic licensing of the DP arguments but rather imposes a constraint on the amount of material that the morphologically complex auxiliaries may comprise.

As Arregi and Nevins (2012) point out, this analysis offers an immediate explanation of why the Basque PCC disappears in nonfinite clauses, which lack agreement and clitics. Whether this account extends to the ellipsis facts depends on the specific assumptions about cliticization and (41). On the assumption that ellipsis suppresses the existence of the clitics, the disappearance of the PCC under ellipsis would be derived.

<sup>6</sup> Another possibility, suggested to us by Omer Preminger (p.c.), might be to assume that if the  $\varphi$ -probe is elided, it no longer counts as being a clausemate of the DP—that is, the DP then no longer counts as occurring in the same clause as the  $\varphi$ -probe. However, it is not clear why ellipsis should affect the clausemate relation in this way, and we do not know of existing definitions of the clausemate relation that would have this effect. Furthermore, we are not aware of any independent indication from other syntactic dependencies that clausematehood is destroyed by ellipsis in this way.

<sup>7</sup> The clitic that appears with 3rd person absolutive DPs, as in (1a), is analyzed as a default head inserted for morphotactic wellformedness, not an actual absolutive clitic.

While a morphological account of the Basque PCC is thus potentially better-equipped to handle the interactions with ellipsis, Albizu (1997) and Rezac (2008) point out a significant challenge to a purely morphological approach to the PCC (also see Preminger 2019). Albizu (1997) and Rezac (2008) make the important observation that the Basque PCC is sensitive to the *syntactic* configuration of the absolutive DP and the dative DP, a distinction that is neutralized in the agreement morphology: in particular, the PCC arises only if the dative is structurally higher than the absolutive DP. Most strikingly, they show that there are verbs in Basque that take only an absolutive and a dative argument and that these verbs fall into two classes, illustrated in (42), from Rezac (2008: 63). The first class involves unaccusative psych-verbs like *gustatu* ‘like’. We already saw in (5) that this class exhibits the PCC—the absolutive DP may not be 1st or 2nd person. The second class is exemplified by the verb *etorri* ‘come’. Verbs in this second class do not restrict the person of the absolutive DP.<sup>8</sup> Rezac (2008) demonstrates through a number of syntactic tests that the two verb classes differ in the hierarchical relationship between the base positions of the absolutive DP and the dative DP. With psych-verbs like *gustatu* ‘like’, the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP; with motion verbs like *etorri* ‘come’, the absolutive DP c-commands the dative DP. This distinction is not reflected in the surface word order between the two DPs, which is free.

- (42) a. *PCC with DAT > ABS verbs*  
       \***Ni** *Itxaso-ri* *gusta-tzen* **n-atzai-o**.  
       I.ABS Itxaso-DAT like-IMPF 1ABS-AUX-3DAT  
       Intended: ‘Itxaso likes me.’ (∗3DAT > 1ABS)
- b. *No PCC with ABS > DAT verbs*  
       **Ni** *Itxaso-ri* *etor-tzen* **n-atzai-o**.  
       I.ABS Itxaso-DAT come-IMPF 1ABS-AUX-3DAT  
       ‘I am coming to Itxaso.’ (✓1ABS > 3DAT)

Crucially, the difference in the syntactic relationship between the absolutive DP and the dative DP is neutralized in the morphology—that is, the form of the agreeing auxiliary is identical between the two verb classes. As a consequence, the would-be form of the auxiliary in (42a)—were it grammatical—is identical to the attested form in (42b). Thus, we conclude with Albizu (1997) and Rezac (2008) that whatever underlies the ungrammaticality of (42a) cannot be solely morphological in nature because the morphological form of the auxiliary is demonstrably permissible (42b). A purely morphological surface filter fails to make the right cut. Albizu (1997), Rezac (2008), and following them Preminger (2019) conclude that an account of the PCC that extends to the contrast in (42) must crucially involve a syntactic component and specifically be sensitive to the syntactic relationship between the two DPs. This is expressed in the generalization in (43).

<sup>8</sup> While this characterization is true for Standard Basque, which is our domain of investigation here, it is worth mentioning that there are some nonstandard varieties that restrict or rule out 1st or 2nd person absolutive DPs even with motion verbs (Rezac 2009, Arregi and Nevins 2012). For these varieties, it is conceivable that motion verbs too involve a DAT>ABS syntax, like psych-verbs. Alternatively, for these varieties, a purely morphological filter of the kind proposed by Arregi and Nevins (2008, 2012) might be the appropriate analysis. Both analyses would in principle be compatible with our own account for Standard Basque here, but they do not extend to Standard Basque for the reasons given in the main text. In the discussion that follows, the term “Basque” should be understood as “Standard Basque”, with other varieties put aside.

- (43) Basque PCC effects arise only if the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP (a relationship that is neutralized in the agreement morphology).

Arregi and Nevins (2012) offer an analysis of these two verb classes against the background of the condition in (41). They suggest that the dative DP in (42b) differs from the dative DP in (42a) in that the dative clitic in (42b) appears on a separate functional head, different from the functional head that hosts the absolutive clitics. The two clitics can therefore cooccur without violating (41). This analysis derives the contrast in (42) but we will not adopt it here for two reasons, following the argumentation in Preminger (2019:5). First, the assumption that the dative clitic is hosted on a different head in (42a) than in (42b) is not independently motivated—the surface forms of the auxiliaries in the two classes are always identical. Second, it is simply a stipulation that the dative clitic in (42a) is hosted by the same head as the absolutive clitic but the dative clitic in (42b) is not. The inverse of this situation would be equally conceivable, yielding the PCC in (42b) but not in (42a). This account therefore leaves unexplained the empirical connection between the syntactic relationship between the two DPs on the one hand and the presence or absence of PCC effects on the other—it misses the generalization in (43) that all cases of the PCC in Basque arise in configurations in which a dative DP c-commands an absolutive DP. Moreover, the syntactic condition on the PCC described in (43) is not specific to Basque either but a general property of PCC effects crosslinguistically, which generally arise whenever a dative DP intervenes between a probe and a structurally lower accusative/absolutive DP. In light of this generality and pervasiveness, (43) ought to follow from the principles of the account. But this calls for an account that is sensitive to the syntactic relationship between the two DPs.

### 3.3. Interim summary

Let us take stock. On the one hand, we saw evidence from ellipsis and nonfinite clauses that the PCC in Basque is crucially sensitive to the overt realization of a  $\varphi$ -probe. At the same time, the contrast in (42) shows that a non-stipulative account ought to be sensitive to the syntactic arrangement of the dative DP and the absolutive DP. These two conclusions are repeated in (44).

- (44) a. Basque PCC effects disappear in clauses that do not contain an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe.  
 b. Basque PCC effects arise only if the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP (a relationship that is neutralized in the agreement morphology).

These generalizations strongly suggest that a comprehensive account of the Basque PCC must be sensitive to *both* the syntactic configuration of the DPs *and* the PF realization of the verbal  $\varphi$ -agreement. (44) imposes significant constraints on the analysis space. Nominal-licensing accounts are sensitive to the syntactic relationship between the DPs but because nominal licensing is crucially syntactic in nature, the role of the PF realization of the  $\varphi$ -probe in (44a) remains unexplained. On the other hand, morphological accounts of the Basque PCC are potentially better equipped to derive the role of overt  $\varphi$ -agreement, but they do not lend themselves to a principled account of the

role that the syntactic arrangement of the two DPs plays, hence (44b). Both types of approaches therefore miss important, if complementary, generalizations.

As a result, a comprehensive account of the Basque PCC should be cross-modular in the sense that it is conditioned by both narrow-syntactic factors (in particular the syntactic relationship between the two DPs) and PF factors (in particular whether the verbal  $\varphi$ -probe is pronounced or not). Moreover, the sensitivity of the PCC to the pronunciation of the  $\varphi$ -probe encourages an account that attributes the PCC to verbal agreement rather than to nominal licensing. The challenge is to develop an account that has these properties. We undertake this task in the next section, where we develop an analysis based on Coon and Keine's (2021) feature-gluttony approach to hierarchy effects that, we argue, allows us to understand these generalizations.

#### 4. A feature-gluttony account

Coon and Keine (2021) develop a theory of the PCC and other hierarchy effects that does not involve nominal licensing or failed Agree. In a nutshell, while licensing/failed-Agree analyses of the PCC attribute the PCC to *too little Agree* (i.e., DPs that need to agree but fail to do so), Coon and Keine's (2021) account attributes the PCC to *too much Agree*. More concretely, they propose that hierarchy effects arise if a single probe agrees with more than one goal DP. Such double Agree takes place when, after an articulated goal has agreed with one DP, there is a second DP that bears features that are sought after by the probe but that are not present on the higher DP. Coon and Keine (2021) refer to configurations in which one probe has agreed with multiple goals *feature gluttony* or simply *gluttony* and to the probe as *gluttonous*. As will become important, feature gluttony is not itself ungrammatical, but it may result in irresolvably conflicting requirements for subsequent operations. These conflicting requirements may then result in ineffability and hence ungrammaticality. We show that this enables a principled explanation of the generalizations in (44). In this section, we develop a detailed analysis of the Basque PCC within Coon and Keine's (2021) general approach to hierarchy effects. Our analysis differs from Coon and Keine's (2021) general account of the PCC in some respects; most importantly, we treat the Basque PCC as arising from a  $\varphi$ -agreement probe rather than from cliticization (see section 5 for some general comments).

##### 4.1. Verbal $\varphi$ -agreement in Basque auxiliaries

Basque auxiliaries exhibit a rich agreement system, including agreement with absolutive, dative, and ergative DPs. Ignoring other aspects of their morphology (for which see, e.g., Hualde 2003b and Arregi and Nevins 2012), the general agreement template is given in (45).

$$(45) \quad \text{Basque auxiliary-agreement template} \\ \text{ABS-}\sqrt{\text{AUX-DAT-ERG}}$$

Recent work has argued that Basque agreement markers on auxiliaries are not uniform in that some involve genuine  $\varphi$ -agreement while others are clitics. Preminger (2009) argues that the prefixal (absolutive) agreement slot realizes genuine  $\varphi$ -agreement while the dative and ergative markers are instances of clitic doubling. The most direct evidence for this difference comes from con-

figurations in which agreement fails. Preminger (2009) shows that genuine agreement and clitic doubling behave differently when they are unsuccessful: failed agreement results in default agreement, whereas failed clitic doubling results in the wholesale absence of the clitic. As shown in (46), clauses that lack an absolutive DP show 3rd person singular agreement on the auxiliary (*d-*). By contrast, (47) shows that clauses that lack a dative or ergative DP simply lack ergative and dative marker on the auxiliary altogether. See Preminger (2009) for much additional discussion and evidence.<sup>9</sup>

(46) *No absolutive argument* → *default agreement*

Ni-k dantzatu **d**-u-t.  
I-ERG danced 3ABS-AUX-1ERG  
'I danced.'

(47) *No ergative/dative argument* → *absence of "agreement"*

Ni joan n-aiz.  
I.ABS go 1ABS-AUX  
'I went.'

Preminger (2009) concludes that absolutives control genuine agreement in Basque, while dative and ergative "agreement" is clitic doubling.<sup>10</sup> We adopt this conclusion and assume that the  $\phi$ -probe that underlies the prefixal absolutive agreement is located on v. Ergative and dative "agreement" is clitic doubling that targets heads other than v. Because our analysis will attribute the PCC to the probe on v, we will focus on this probe in what follows but we return to how the clitics fit into our overall account in section 4.2.3.

## 4.2. Feature gluttony in Basque agreement

Taking the view that absolutive agreement in Basque is genuine  $\phi$ -agreement as our starting point, we now develop an account of the Basque PCC within Coon and Keine's (2021) gluttony approach.

### 4.2.1. Features and Agree

Following much recent work, Coon and Keine (2021) assume that  $\phi$ -features are internally complex and organized in feature geometries (see Harley and Ritter 2002, Béjar 2003, Béjar and Rezac 2009, Preminger 2014, among many others). The relevant feature geometry for person is given in (48). Following the terminology in Béjar and Rezac (2009) and Coon and Keine (2021), we will refer to the individual subfeatures in (48) as *segments*. Different person values differ in the number of

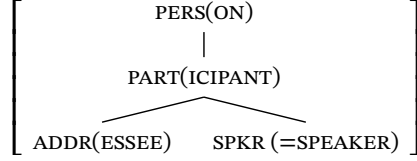
<sup>9</sup> All else equal, it is conceivable that the 3rd person absolutive agreement in (46) is agreement with a 3rd person implicit object, rather than default agreement (see Bobaljik 1993, Hale and Keyser 1993, Laka 1993b). We refer the reader to Preminger (2009, 2012) for arguments that this is not the case.

<sup>10</sup> A similar but somewhat more nuanced conclusion is reached by Arregi and Nevins (2008, 2012). They propose that the absolutive marker is a clitic alongside the ergative and dative markers, but that the absolutive DP controls genuine  $\phi$ -agreement with T, which is realized on the auxiliary root. In other words, they argue that the absolutive controls both a clitic and genuine agreement. This view is in principle compatible with our analysis here as well. What is crucial is that the absolutive controls genuine agreement (possibly in addition to clitic doubling) while the dative is clitic-doubled.



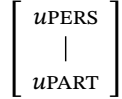
segments they bear. 3rd person DPs bear only the [PERS] segment; 2nd person bears [PERS [PART [ADDR]]]; 1st person bears [PERS [PART [SPKR]]].

(48) *Person-feature geometry*



Building on work by Béjar (2003), Béjar and Rezac (2009), and others, Coon and Keine (2021) assume that  $\varphi$ -probes may be internally complex as well and contain uninterpretable counterparts of the segments in (48). The amount of internal articulation is subject to parametrization across languages. Following Rezac (2003, 2004, 2008, 2011), Béjar and Rezac (2009), and Preminger (2009: 655–663), we assume that agreement with the absolutive DP is triggered by a probe in the vP region; for the sake of concreteness, we place the probe on v itself, though the precise identity of the head does not matter for our concerns here. This  $\varphi$ -probe has the specification in (49). Because we focus exclusively on Basque here, we will not discuss variability in the articulation of the  $\varphi$ -probe. Our analysis is also compatible with specifying the probe for either [SPKR] or [ADDR] or both. What is crucial is that the probe contains both [PERS] and [PART] and as such is fully matched only by 1st and 2nd person DPs.

(49) *Basque person probe on v*



Agreement with v is realized in the prefix slot of the Basque auxiliary in (45). As noted above, we assume that the suffixal agreement slots (controlled by ergative and dative DPs) are the result of clitic doubling to heads other than v, triggered by probes separate from (49). Because we locate the source of the PCC in the  $\varphi$ -Agree by v, we will focus primarily on the Agree behavior of v. We offer a brief discussion of how agreement with dative DPs fits into this system in section 4.2.3. In what follows, we will also largely put aside number agreement, which we take to be established by a separate probe that operates independently of the issues that are at stake here.

The operation Agree is defined in (50), from Coon and Keine (2021:665). The individual segments of the probe search independently, each agreeing with the closest matching counterpart on a DP. When a probing segment agrees with a DP, it *interacts* (in Deal’s 2015, to appear terms) with the entire person-feature geometry of the DP, and *all* person segments of the DP are copied over to the probe. As such, copying is by assumption more granular than probing: probing applies at the level of the individual segment, whereas copying is “coarse” and applies at the level of the feature geometry as a whole (see also Béjar and Rezac 2009:45–46 and Preminger 2011a:36–37, 2014: 47–48).<sup>11</sup>

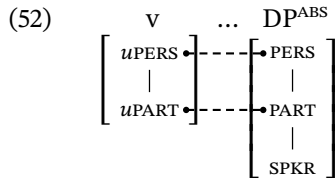
<sup>11</sup> This coarseness of copying is motivated independently of PCC effects. The reason is that probes can be underspecified relative the feature geometry on a DP. For example, the probe in (49) lacks [uADDR] and [uSPKR], hence the distinction between 1st and 2nd person. But the agreement morphology that realizes v distinguishes between 1st and 2nd person

(50) *Agree*

A probe segment [*uF*] agrees with the closest accessible DP in its c-command domain that bears [*F*]. If Agree is established, the hierarchy of segments containing [*F*] is copied over to the probe, valuing and thus removing [*uF*].

In simple transitive clauses, *v*'s search space contains only the object DP, and agreement is established in the standard way. To illustrate, in a sentence like (51), absolutive agreement is established through Agree between *v* and the object DP. The two segments [*uPERS*] and [*uPART*] independently search for a matching segment, and both agree with the object, as shown in (52). As a result, for each agreeing segment, the entire person-feature matrix of the DP ([*PERS* [*PART* [*SPKR*]]]) is copied over onto the probe. Given the set-theoretical axiom that  $\{A, A, \dots\} = \{A, \dots\}$ , this representation is equivalent to there being only a single 1st person value on *v*, which is morphologically realized as *n-* in (51).<sup>12</sup> The reason for letting each agreeing segment initiate its own copying step will become clear when we consider configurations with more than one DP in *v*'s search space.

- (51) Mona-k ni ikusi n-au.  
 Mona-ERG I.ABS seen 1ABS-AUX  
 ‘Mona has seen me.’



(53)  $\varphi$ -value on *v* in (52)

$$\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \\ | \\ PART \\ | \\ SPKR \end{array} \right], \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \\ | \\ PART \\ | \\ SPKR \end{array} \right] \right\} \right] = \left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \\ | \\ PART \\ | \\ SPKR \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$$

Following Preminger (2009, 2011a, 2014), we assume that Agree must be attempted but failure to find a goal does not lead to a crash. This holds at the level of the segment as well as at the level of the probe as a whole. Thus, if the absolutive object is 3rd person, as in (54), [*uPART*] fails to find a matching segment, which is unproblematic. The relevant Agree configuration is given in (55) and the resulting probe value in (56). If the structure lacks an absolutive DP altogether, neither segment on *v* finds a goal, resulting in 3rd-person singular default agreement (see (46)).

in Basque, and consequently it is clear that these segments must be copied over from the DP even if the probe is not specified for them. The same reasoning applies to all probes whose segments do not completely mirror the segments on DPs, including flat [*uPERS*] probes, which do not result in hierarchy effects at all.

<sup>12</sup> Though see fn. 16 for a possible alternative that is compatible with the rest of our account.

- (54) Mona-k Mikel ikusi d-u.  
 Mona-ERG Mikel.ABS seen 3ABS-AUX  
 ‘Mona has seen Mikel.’

(55) 
$$\begin{array}{c} v \quad \dots \quad DP^{ABS} \\ \left[ \begin{array}{c} uPERS \\ | \\ uPART \end{array} \right] \text{---} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ PERS \end{array} \right] \end{array}$$

- (56)  $\varphi$ -value on  $v$  in (55)  

$$\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ PERS \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$$

#### 4.2.2. PCC, gluttony, and morphological ineffability

We now turn to constructions in which  $v$ ’s search space contains two DPs. Here, the potential arises for  $v$ ’s segments to agree with different DPs. This, we suggest, is what underlies the PCC in ditransitive constructions, psych-verbs constructions, possessor-dative constructions, and applicative-dative constructions. These constructions have in common that  $v$ ’s search space contains a higher dative DP and a lower absolutive DP. For the sake of concreteness, we illustrate here with ditransitive constructions but the relevant derivations hold equally for the other PCC configurations in section 2.1. As noted above, we will for now focus only on the behavior of the  $\varphi$ -probe on  $v$ , which is realized in the prefixal agreement slot. The additional clitic doubling of dative DPs is taken up in section 4.2.3.

Consider first PCC-violating configurations with a 3rd person dative DP and a 1st or 2nd person absolutive DP. An example is repeated from (1c) in (57). In this case,  $[uPERS]$  agrees with the 3rd person DP (the closest DP that matches  $[PERS]$ ) but  $[uPART]$  agrees with the lower, 1st person DP because only this DP contains a  $[PART]$  segment, as shown in (58). This configuration instantiates gluttony because a single probe has agreed with multiple DPs. As a result of these Agree dependencies, the full geometries of both DPs are copied over onto  $v$ , in line with (50). Because of Agree with  $[uPERS]$ , the dative DP’s feature geometry ( $[PERS]$ ) is copied onto  $v$ ; and because of Agree with  $[uPART]$ , the absolutive DP’s complete feature geometry ( $[PERS [PART [SPKR]]]$ ) is copied onto  $v$ .  $v$ ’s  $\varphi$ -probe therefore acquires a *pair of distinct values*, as shown in (59).

- (57) \*Zu-k harakina-ri ni saldu n-ai-o-zu.  
 you-ERG butcher-DAT I.ABS sold 1ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
*Intended:* ‘You have sold me to the butcher.’ (\*3DAT > 1ABS)

(58) 
$$\begin{array}{c} v \quad \dots \quad DP^{DAT} \quad \dots \quad DP^{ABS} \\ \left[ \begin{array}{c} uPERS \\ | \\ uPART \end{array} \right] \text{---} \left[ \begin{array}{c} \bullet \\ PERS \end{array} \right] \quad \text{---} \quad \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \\ | \\ \bullet \\ PART \\ | \\ SPKR \end{array} \right] \end{array}$$

(59)  $v$  in (58): two distinct  $\varphi$ -values

$$\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \text{PERS} \right], \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{PERS} \\ | \\ \text{PART} \\ | \\ \text{SPKR} \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$$

Coon and Keine (2021) argue that gluttonous probes such as (59) are not themselves ungrammatical, but the coexistence of two person values can create an irresolvable conflict in the morphological realization of the gluttonous head. Following this guiding idea, we adopt a *realizational* view of morphology (in the terminology of Stump 2001), according to which morphology realizes syntactic feature structures. More specifically, we assume a *late-insertion* model like Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994, et seq.). On this model, narrow syntax operates on abstract feature structures that are not associated with phonological properties. These abstract feature structures are given overt exponence post-syntactically through a *vocabulary-insertion* process. In a nutshell, we attribute the ungrammaticality of (57) to a conflict that arises for vocabulary insertion given the gluttonous probe in (59). To develop this idea, and adopting proposals by Lumsden (1992), Schütze (2003), Citko (2005), Kratzer (2009), Asarina (2011, 2013), and Bjorkman (2016), we take vocabulary insertion to be subject to the two requirements in (60). The condition in (60a) demands that for every feature value, the most specific vocabulary item (VI) compatible with this value is inserted into the head. In standard configurations in which a feature has a single value, (60a) amounts to the standard Subset Principle. In gluttony configurations, in which several distinct feature values coexist, (60a) has the effect that vocabulary insertion applies in several *cycles*, each determining a VI for one of the values. The restriction in (60b) states the common assumption in Distributed Morphology that only a single VI may be inserted into any given head (e.g., Halle and Marantz 1993, 1994, Arregi and Nevins 2012).

(60) *Constraints on vocabulary insertion*

- a. For every feature value  $\Sigma$ , insert the maximally specific vocabulary item that is compatible with  $\Sigma$ .
- b. Only one vocabulary item may be inserted per head.

It is precisely in cases in which a single probe has acquired more than one value that the two requirements in (60) may conflict. To develop this idea in greater detail, we must briefly consider the VIs involved in realizing the prefixal agreement slot in Basque. The relevant paradigm for the agreement prefixes is provided in (61) (e.g., Hualde 2003b:206). As shown, the 3rd person prefixes display sensitivity to tense and mood: in the present tense, the 3rd person prefix is *d-*; in the past tense, it is *z-*; in the hypothetical, it is *l-*; and in 3rd person imperative (“May he/she/it ...”), it is *b-*.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Not included in (61) are the exceptional present-tense forms of auxiliaries that bear 3rd person absolutive agreement and in addition dative agreement, but not ergative agreement (see Hualde 2003b:214). These forms all start with *z-*, which Hualde (2003b:214) hypothesizes might derive from historic palatalization of the regular underlying 3rd person prefix *d-* (e.g., \**d-i-a-gi-t* > *zait*). Their proper synchronic treatment is not clear to us, and immaterial for our concerns here. It

(61) *Basque absolutive agreement prefixes*

|              | SINGULAR  | PLURAL    |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1            | <i>n-</i> | <i>g-</i> |
| 2            | <i>z-</i> | <i>z-</i> |
| 2.FAMILIAR   | <i>h-</i> | <i>h-</i> |
| 3 present    | <i>d-</i> | <i>d-</i> |
| past         | <i>z-</i> | <i>z-</i> |
| hypothetical | <i>l-</i> | <i>l-</i> |
| imperative   | <i>b-</i> | <i>b-</i> |

Furthermore, the 3rd person forms also appear in the absence of an absolutive agreement controller (Preminger 2009, 2012), as we already saw on the basis of (46). In line with the analysis of default agreement proposed in Preminger (2009, 2014, to appear), we treat such cases as the realization of an unvalued  $\phi$ -probe. This entails that the 3rd person forms are actually underspecified for person, and we therefore treat the vocabulary items that are inserted in 3rd person environments as lacking a morphosyntactic person specification altogether.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, to account for the tense/mood sensitivity of the VIs that appear in the 3rd person, we adopt Arregi and Nevins’s (2012:287) analysis in terms of context specifications for the structurally adjacent T head. Putting these pieces together, we arrive at the VIs in (62). The VIs in (62e–h) do not carry a person-feature specification.

(62) *Vocabulary items for v*

|    |   |                                    |
|----|---|------------------------------------|
| a. | <i>n-</i> ↔ [PERS [PART [SPKR]]] <sub>v</sub>               | / ____ [SG]                        |
| b. | <i>g-</i> ↔ [PERS [PART [SPKR]]] <sub>v</sub>               | / ____ [PL]                        |
| c. | <i>z-</i> ↔ [PERS [PART [ADDR]]] <sub>v</sub>               |                                    |
| d. | <i>h-</i> ↔ [[PERS [PART [ADDR]]], [FAMILIAR]] <sub>v</sub> |                                    |
| e. | <i>d-</i> ↔ [ ] <sub>v</sub>                                | / ____ [PRESENT] <sub>T</sub>      |
| f. | <i>z-</i> ↔ [ ] <sub>v</sub>                                | / ____ [PAST] <sub>T</sub>         |
| g. | <i>l-</i> ↔ [ ] <sub>v</sub>                                | / ____ [HYPOTHETICAL] <sub>T</sub> |
| h. | <i>b-</i> ↔ [ ] <sub>v</sub>                                | / ____ [IMPERATIVE] <sub>T</sub>   |

We will refer to the feature(s) that a VI realizes as that VI’s *content specification* and to the features that a VI requires to be present in the context as that VI’s *contextual specification*. For example,

could be analyzed either as the result of a readjustment rule that converts *d-* into *z-* in this environment, or alternatively one could treat this *z-* as an additional agreement VI.

<sup>14</sup> This underspecification analysis also offers a way of implementing Trask’s (1981:297) intuition that the 3rd person prefixes are markers of the absence of 1st or 2nd person, rather than markers of the presence of 3rd person.

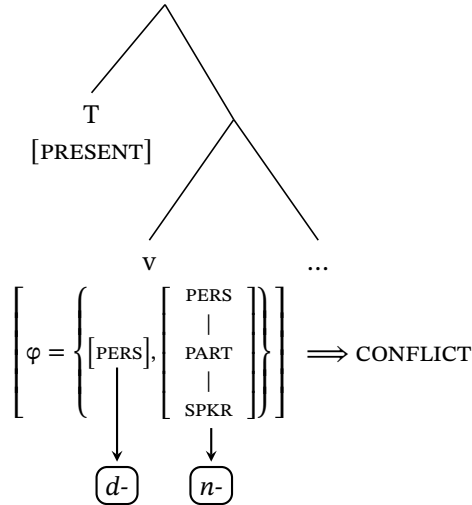
We note that it would also be possible to specify the VIs in (62e–h) for 3rd person (rather than leaving them altogether underspecified for person). The reason we adopt the specifications in (62) is that it offers a straightforward account of why the VIs in (62e–h) appear if there is no absolutive DP at all, and hence no absolutive agreement (see (46) for an example and Preminger 2009, 2012 for arguments). Assuming that these configurations end up with an unvalued person probe on *v*, the VIs in (62e–h) nonetheless match and are hence inserted (further conditioned by the tense/mood specification of T). If (62e–h) were specified for 3rd person, a more involved account would be required.

the content specification of *n-* in (62a) is “[PERS [PART [SPKR]]]”, and its contextual specification is “[SG]”. The contextual specification of *d-* (62e) is “[PRESENT]” on T. The VIs in (62e–h) have a contextual specification, but because they are underspecified for person (and features of *v* more generally), they lack a content specification.

We assume that, within cycles of vocabulary insertion, content specifications take precedence over contextual specifications in the resolution of competition between VIs.<sup>15</sup> Thus, a 1st or 2nd person feature on *v* in the context of, e.g., [PRESENT] on T will trigger insertion of the respective 1st or 2nd person VI among (62a–d) rather than insertion of *d-* (62e) because *d-* (being underspecified for person) lacks a content specification (the tense/mood feature itself is realized separately in T). This has the consequence that the VIs in (62e–h) are inserted only in configurations in which *v* agrees with a 3rd person DP or does not agree at all (i.e., default-agreement configurations), as desired.

In light of the VIs in (62), we now consider how the vocabulary-insertion algorithm applies to the gluttonous *v* head in (59). The T bears a [PRESENT] feature in (59), and the absolutive controls singular agreement (not shown in (63)). This singular agreement could be established either with another head, or with a separate probe on *v*. By (60a), vocabulary insertion must apply to each feature value separately, hence in two cycles in (59). The first cycle of insertion finds the most specific matching VI for the first value, [PERS], namely *d-* (given the [PRESENT] feature on T). In the second cycle, the second value, [PERS [PART [SPKR]]], in conjunction with the singular specification of the number probe, demands the 1SG VI *n-*. This creates an irresolvable conflict: inserting either *d-* or *n-* violates (60a) for the respective other value; and inserting both *d-* and *n-* violates (60b). There is, in other words, *lethal competition* (Mendes 2020, Mendes and Nevins 2020) between the two VIs, which leads to ineffability. The head cannot be morphologically realized, and as a result the entire structure is ungrammatical. This derives the PCC in (57).

(63) Vocabulary-insertion conflict in (59) (in context of [SG] absolutive agreement)



<sup>15</sup> Alternatively, one could impose a feature hierarchy that ranks person over tense/mood.

An important feature of this account is that it attributes the ungrammaticality of the Basque PCC not to the syntactic configuration per se but rather to its overt realization at PF. As we show in section 4.4, this allows us to explain why ellipsis of the relevant structure obviates the PCC. The idea that a head that bears two distinct values for the same feature may lead to irresolvable morphological conflicts that result in ungrammaticality is not novel, and has been motivated based on Right Node Raising and ATB constructions (Citko 2005, Asarina 2011, 2013), free relatives (Lumsden 1992), Icelandic dative–nominative constructions (Schütze 2003), and the English *go-get* construction (Bjorkman 2016), and a closely related analysis is proposed by Kratzer (2009) for syncretism effects on the available interpretations of fake indexicals. This means that not only is the key assumption that simultaneous specification for two feature values may lead to morphological ineffability and hence ungrammaticality independently motivated, our analysis furthermore assimilates the Basque PCC to the various constructions just mentioned.

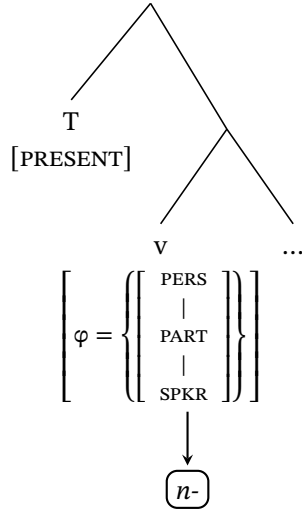
Our analysis of the PCC in terms of the lethal competition in (63) gives rise to an important question. Virtually all modern theories of morphology employ underspecification of and competition between vocabulary items (or rules of exponence in inferential frameworks), which raises the issue under what conditions competition between VIs is resolvable and under what conditions it is not. Basque provides a specific instance of this question. Let us contrast the situation in (63) with a simple transitive configuration in the present tense T and a 1st person absolutive object, such as (51), repeated in (64). In this example, *v* agrees only with the 1st person absolutive DP, and T bears a [PRESENT] feature.

- (64)   Mona-k    ni       ikusi n-au.  
          Mona-ERG I.ABS seen 1ABS-AUX  
          ‘Mona has seen me.’

As shown in (52) and (53), *v* acquires only a single person value in (64) (i.e., [PERS [PART [SPKR]]]), and hence there is only one cycle of vocabulary insertion.<sup>16</sup> Among the VIs in (62), only *n-* and *d-* match the syntactic features of *v* and T, and hence compete for insertion. Because content specifications take priority over contextual specifications and *d-* lacks a content specification, the competition is resolved in favor of *n-*, as desired.

<sup>16</sup> In principle, because two of *v*’s segments agree with the absolutive DP in (64) (see (52)) and the person value of the absolutive DP is therefore copied over twice, it is conceivable that vocabulary insertion applies in two cycles. This would require that collection of values are not sets but multisets (so that  $\{A, A, \dots\} \neq \{A, \dots\}$ ). If so, vocabulary insertion into [PERS [PART [SPKR]]] would apply twice but converge on the same VI. Insertion of this VI obeys the requirements in (60) since (i) only a single VI is inserted, and (ii) this VI is the maximally specific VI for each value (trivially, since the values are identical). See Lumsden (1992), Schütze (2003), Citko (2005), Kratzer (2009), Asarina (2011, 2013), Bjorkman (2016), and Coon and Keine (2021) for evidence that no conflict arises if two values call for the same VI. As far as we can tell, this alternative is fully compatible with everything we say here. But since we do not see a benefit of this alternative, we will retain the assumption that collections of feature values are standard sets and that vocabulary insertion into *v* applies only once in (64).

(65) Vocabulary insertion in (64)



Why is competition between VIs successfully resolved in the non-gluttonous configuration in (65) but not in the gluttonous configuration in (63)? What distinguishes the two configurations is that the probe contains only a single value in (65) but two values in (63). We have assumed, building in particular on the proposals in Schütze (2003), Asarina (2011, 2013), and Bjorkman (2016), that each feature value gives rise to a separate cycle of vocabulary insertion in the sense of (60a). We propose furthermore that such cycles are informationally insulated from each other. In other words, vocabulary insertion is a *strictly local* process that does not have simultaneous access to information about two separate cycles. As a result, competition between two VIs may be resolved within a cycle of insertion, but not across two cycles because doing so would require comparing the output of the two insertion cycles. Vocabulary insertion, being confined to individual cycles, is too local a process to have access to this kind of information. This consequence is stated in (66).

(66) Vocabulary insertion is strictly local, and cycles of insertion are insulated from each other. As a result, competition among VIs is resolved *within* cycles of vocabulary insertion but not *across* cycles of vocabulary insertion.

(66) correctly distinguishes between (63) and (65). (63) involves two values ([PERS] and [PERS [PART [SPKR]]]) and hence two cycles of vocabulary insertion (by (60a)), each of which arrives at a different VI (*d-* and *n-*, respectively). Due to the locality of competition (66), competition between these two VIs is not resolvable, creating an irresolvable conflict and hence ineffability. By contrast, (65) contains only a single value and therefore only a single cycle of vocabulary insertion. Because *d-* and *n-* thus compete within a cycle, this competition is local enough to be resolved in favor of *n-*, as discussed. Lethal competition therefore arises only if there is more than a single cycle of vocabulary insertion, hence only if there is more than one feature value. It is thus precisely in gluttony contexts that the regular mechanisms for resolving competition break down, resulting in ineffability.

Finally, our analysis also explains why ditransitive constructions are permitted if the absolutive DP is 3rd person, as shown in (67). Here, *v*'s probe agrees only with the dative DP since [*u*PART] is not matched by the lower DP. The probe hence acquires only a single value, which, given the



presence of [PRESENT] on T, is realized by inserting the VI *d-*. The dative clitic is the result of a separate clitic-doubling process.

- (67) Zu-k      *harakina-ri liburu-a*    saldu d-i-o-zu.  
 you-ERG butcher-DAT book-ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT-2ERG  
 ‘You have sold the book to the butcher.’ (✓3DAT > 3ABS)

(68) 
$$\begin{array}{c} v \quad \dots \quad DP^{DAT} \quad \dots \quad DP^{ABS} \\ \left[ \begin{array}{c} uPERS \\ | \\ uPART \end{array} \right] \quad \dots \quad \left[ \begin{array}{c} \bullet PERS \end{array} \right] \quad \dots \quad \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \end{array} \right] \end{array}$$

- (69)  $\varphi$ -value on *v* in (68)  

$$\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \begin{array}{c} PERS \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$$

It is a perhaps surprising consequence of our analysis that the 3rd-person prefix agreement in (67) (glossed descriptively as “3ABS”) is actually agreement with the dative argument rather than the absolute argument. As far as we can tell, this consequence is unproblematic. The dative agreement clitic on the auxiliary in (67) is produced by a different probe and hence independent of our account of the PCC, though we will return to it in the next section.

#### 4.2.3. Datives, KP structure, and the Strong PCC

To complete our account of the Strong PCC in Basque, we need to consider configurations in which the dative DP is 1st or 2nd person. As it stands, the analysis so far predicts that such configurations are grammatical, with *v* agreeing only with the dative DP. This would correspond to the Weak PCC, attested in, e.g., varieties of Catalan and Italian (Bonet 1991, 1994, Bianchi 2006). But Basque has the Strong PCC and such configurations are ungrammatical, as (1e), repeated here as (70), shows.

- (70) \*Haiek      *ni-ri zu*      saldu z-ai-da-te.  
 they.ERG I-DAT you.ABS sold 2ABS-AUX-1DAT-3ERG  
*Intended:* ‘They have sold you to me.’ (\*1DAT > 2ABS)

We adopt the idea in Coon and Keine (2021) that the Strong PCC arises if the dative DP is encapsulated under a dummy 3rd person specification.<sup>17</sup> For an outside probe, dative DPs thus behave

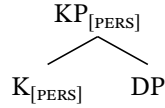
<sup>17</sup> Coon and Keine (2021) in fact envision two paths to the Strong PCC. One involves encapsulation of the dative DP; the other involves the highly-articulated  $\varphi$ -probe in (i):

(i) 
$$\left[ \begin{array}{c} uPERS \\ | \\ uPART \\ \swarrow \quad \searrow \\ uADDR \quad uSPKR \end{array} \right]$$

This probe will result in gluttony in 1>2 and 2>1 configurations as well, even if the dative DP is not encapsulated. As Coon and Keine (2021) point out, the two analyses of the Strong PCC make different predictions for configurations in which the dative is the *lower* of two DPs. If the dative is encapsulated as in (71), configurations in which the higher (accusative or absolutive) DP is 1st, 2nd or 3rd person and the lower dative DP is 1st or 2nd person should not result in gluttony and hence be grammatical. On the other hand, if the dative DP is not encapsulated and the probe has the form in (i), then 1/2/3.ABS/ACC > 1/2.DAT configurations should result in gluttony. The latter prediction corresponds to the

like a 3rd person DP regardless of their actual, semantically interpreted person feature (see Boeckx 2000, Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005 Richards 2008, Sigurðsson and Holmberg 2008, and Atlamaz and Baker 2018 for related proposals for datives in other languages). Specifically, we assume that dative DPs in Basque are embedded under a KP layer, which bears a dummy [PERS] specification and insulates the DP’s person features from an outside probe. This shielding may be derived in several ways, for example by KP being a phase, or by K constituting a *horizon* (Keine 2020) for v’s person probe, which allows Agree with KP but not anything dominated by KP.

(71) *Structure of dative DPs*



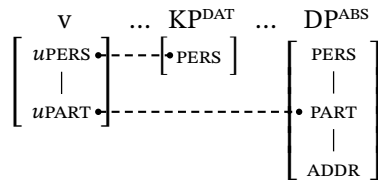
By contrast, absolutive DPs are not encapsulated under a KP layer and therefore their full person specification is visible to outside probes. The view that dative DPs in Basque are structurally larger than absolutive DPs is not novel (see Rezac 2011, Arregi and Nevins 2012, Odria 2017, 2019), and it finds support in the surface morphology of these case forms. As shown in (72), the dative form of a personal pronoun is formed by attaching the suffix *-ri* to the absolutive form in most cases (in the case of *zuek* ‘you.PL’, additional allomorphy applies).<sup>18</sup> We can understand this pattern if *-ri* is the realization of the dative KP. Because absolutive DPs lack a KP, they lack a corresponding case suffix.

(72) *Basque personal pronouns*

|            | 1SG          | 1PL          | 2SG          | 2PL          | 2.FAMILIAR   |
|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| absolutive | <i>ni</i>    | <i>gu</i>    | <i>zu</i>    | <i>zuek</i>  | <i>hi</i>    |
| dative     | <i>ni-ri</i> | <i>gu-ri</i> | <i>zu-ri</i> | <i>zue-i</i> | <i>hi-ri</i> |

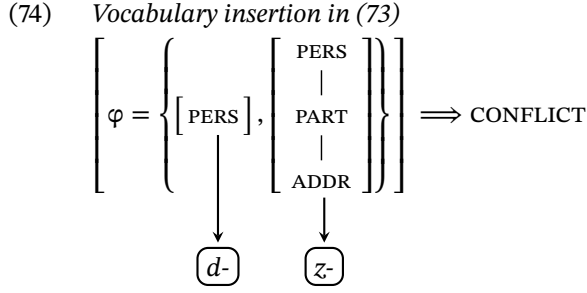
With this view of dative DPs, a 1DAT > 2ABS configuration like (70) essentially amounts to a 3DAT > 2ABS configuration as far as the behavior of the  $\varphi$ -probe on v is concerned. This is shown in (73), and the resulting  $\varphi$ -probe in (74). Vocabulary insertion results in an irresolvable conflict in the way just discussed, and ungrammaticality results in (70).

(73) *v-Agree in (70)*



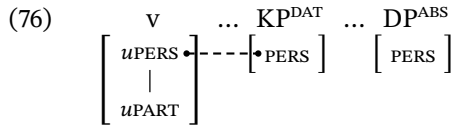
“reverse PCC” in Slovenian (Stegovec 2020). The former situation corresponds to Basque, where configurations in which the dative DP is the lower DP do not result in the PCC (Rezac 2008, Coon and Keine 2021). We will therefore assume that both paths to the Strong PCC are indeed attested empirically, and we will adopt the encapsulation approach for Basque given the absence of reverse-PCC effects.

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., Hualde (2003a:179) and De Rijk (2008:111–114) for a fuller exposition of Basque personal pronouns and the forms of other cases.



By contrast, our analysis permits grammatical 1/2DAT>3ABS configurations, as in (75). Due to KP encapsulation of the dative DP, these effectively behave like 3DAT>3ABS configurations as far as the  $\varphi$ -probe on *v* is concerned. No gluttony results and the structure is grammatical.

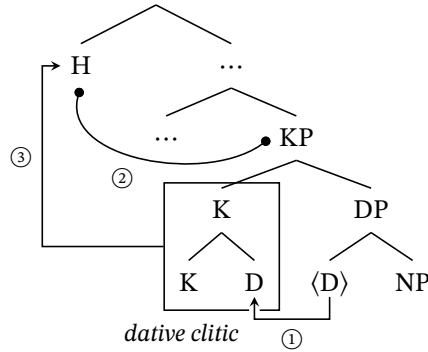
- (75) Zu-k      *ni-ri*    **liburu-a**    saldu    d-i-da-zu.  
 you-ERG I-DAT book-ABS sold    3ABS-AUX-1DAT-2ERG  
 ‘You have sold the book to me.’ (✓1DAT > 3ABS)



- (77)  $\varphi$ -value on *v* in (76)  
 $\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \text{PERS} \right] \right\} \right]$

As noted above, we have so far focused on Agree by *v*, which is realized in the prefixal agreement slot in (45). To complete our account, we now briefly discuss how suffixal agreement with the dative DP is established, and why this agreement slot reflects the actual, semantically interpreted person features of the dative DP rather than the dummy 3rd person specification of the KP. As already noted, we assume following, e.g., Laka (1993a), Arregi and Nevins (2008, 2012), and Preminger (2009) that the suffixal dative agreement is an instance of clitic doubling, demonstrated by the fact that in the absence of a dative DP, this agreement slot disappears altogether rather than showing default agreement (see (47)). We also assume with Arregi and Nevins (2012), Preminger (2019), and others that clitic doubling is (long) movement of a nominal head that the clitic is the overt realization of. This clitic-doubling process targets and is triggered by a head different from *v* and hence does not affect our account of Agree by *v*. The relevant derivation is schematized in (78). DP-internally, the D head undergoes movement to K (①).  $\varphi$ -Agree between some functional head H and KP (②) then induces movement of the K head (including D) to H (③), where D and K are jointly pronounced as the clitic. Due to the inclusion of D, this clitic reflects the  $\varphi$ -features of the D head, not the dummy [PERS] feature of K. Note that if K corresponds to the dative case suffix *-ri* on a DP, as we suggested above, then this analysis entails that the lower copy of K (and possibly D as well) is pronounced as well.

(78)



The “agreement” behavior of dative DPs thus crucially depends on whether the “agreement” involves  $\varphi$ -Agree or clitic doubling, which Preminger (2009) has shown the prefixal agreement slot and the suffixal agreement slot differ in. Because the prefix agreement slot, and hence  $v$ , involves  $\varphi$ -Agree rather than clitic doubling, it is sensitive only to the dummy [PERS] feature of the KP. For  $\varphi$ -probing by  $v$ , dative DPs thus behave like 3rd person DPs, resulting in gluttony if a lower absolutive DP is 1st or 2nd person. On the other hand, because the suffixal dative-agreement slot involves clitic doubling rather than  $\varphi$ -Agree, it realizes the features of the K+D complex, and hence the actual person features of the dative DP.

This concludes our exposition of the gluttony account of the Basque PCC. We now examine the central question arrived at in sections 2 and 3. We concluded there that a comprehensive account of the PCC must be both syntactic and morphological in nature. It must be syntactic in being sensitive to the hierarchical syntactic arrangement of the DPs involved; it must be morphological in being sensitive to whether  $\varphi$ -agreement is overtly realized or not. The next two sections demonstrate how the analysis developed in this section satisfies these two requirements.

#### 4.3. The syntactic side of the PCC: Hierarchical arrangement of DPs

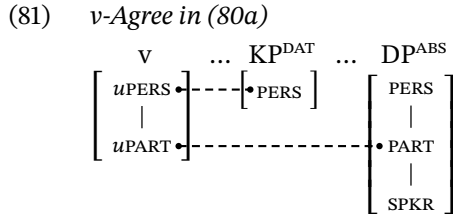
As reviewed in section 3, Albizu (1997) and Rezac (2008) show that the PCC in Basque cannot be reduced to surface morphology but must make crucial reference to the syntactic relationship between the absolutive and the dative DP, as stated in (44b), repeated here as (79).

- (79) Basque PCC effects arise only if the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP (a relationship that is neutralized in the agreement morphology).

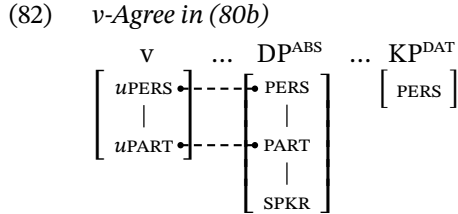
To reiterate, the argument for (79) is based on the observation that the PCC arises only in configurations in which the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP—such as with psych-verbs (80a)—but not if the absolutive DP c-commands the dative DP—such as with motion verbs (80b). Because the surface morphology of the auxiliary neutralizes the distinction between the two verb classes, a successful account of (80) cannot be solely in terms of the surface morphology.

- (80) a. *DAT > ABS verbs*  
 \***Ni** *Itxaso-ri* gusta-tzen **n-atzai-o**.  
 I.ABS Itxaso-DAT like-IMPf 1ABS-AUX-3DAT  
*Intended: 'Itxaso likes me.'* (\*3DAT > 1ABS)
- b. *ABS > DAT verbs*  
**Ni** *Itxaso-ri* etor-tzen **n-atzai-o**.  
 I.ABS Itxaso-DAT come-IMPf 1ABS-AUX-3DAT  
*'I am coming to Itxaso.'* (✓1ABS > 3DAT)

This role of the syntactic arrangement of the DPs is predicted by the gluttony account. Whether or not a configuration results in gluttony is crucially conditioned by the structural relationship between the two DPs. In DAT>ABS constructions like (80a), a 1st or 2nd person absolutive DP leads to gluttony, as shown in (81), and hence to ineffability.



By contrast, no gluttony arises if the 1st or 2nd person absolutive DP is structurally higher than the dative DP because in this case both segments on v agree with the absolutive DP, as shown in (82). The probe is therefore not gluttonous, and vocabulary insertion into it applies successfully.<sup>19</sup>



Because word order is free in Basque, the surface order of the two DPs does not necessarily correspond to the base order. The PCC is determined solely by the base order of the two DPs. This follows straightforwardly if scrambling applies after probing by v, so that it does not have an effect on whether v is gluttonous or not.

In sum, because whether or not a configuration leads to gluttony is determined by the syntactic operation Agree, our account is crucially sensitive to solely syntactic factors like the relation structural relationship between two DPs relative to the probe on v. In this respect, then, the gluttony account is crucially syntactic in nature and this provides a principled account of (79) and the contrast in (80).

<sup>19</sup> Due to the KP insulation of the dative DP, this analysis makes the additional prediction that there should be no person restriction on the dative argument in ABS>DAT constructions like (80b). This prediction is borne out (see fn. 17).

#### 4.4. The morphological side of the PCC: Obviation under ellipsis

The clear role of purely syntactic factors in the PCC notwithstanding, the ellipsis evidence presented in section 2 provided strong indication that the PCC cannot be conditioned solely by syntactic factors either. Instead, it must be sensitive to whether a syntactically present  $\varphi$ -probe is overtly realized or not, a generalization repeated in (83).

- (83) Basque PCC effects disappear in clauses that do not contain an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe.

We now show that the gluttony account provides a principled explanation of (83) given independently motivated interactions between ellipsis and vocabulary insertion. Merchant (1999, 2001, 2015), Kennedy and Merchant (2000), Abels (2019), Mendes (2020), Mendes and Nevins (2020), and Privizentseva (2021) all argue that ellipsis bleeds the morphological realization of nodes in the ellipsis site and that, as a result, morphological problems and conflicts disappear under ellipsis. Within the morphological framework adopted here, we formulate this claim as (84):

- (84) Vocabulary insertion does not apply to elided syntactic structure.

The crucial consequence of (84) is that problems in the morphological realization of a node do not arise under ellipsis because the process that results in these problems (i.e., vocabulary insertion) does not apply. Merchant (1999:219–273, 2001:163–200) develops an account along these lines for several island contexts that are obviated under sluicing (also see Kennedy and Merchant 2000). For example, to derive that sluicing structures may violate the ban against left-branch extraction in English, Merchant (1999, 2001) and Kennedy and Merchant (2000) propose that such extraction is not itself illicit but requires a DP-internal head that cannot be morphologically realized and thus ordinarily leads to morphological ineffability of the structure it appears in. Ellipsis bleeds the morphological realization of this head, in which case the morphological problem no longer arises, rescuing the structure.

Merchant (2015), Abels (2019), Mendes (2020), Mendes and Nevins (2020), and Privizentseva (2021) likewise argue for (84) based on morphological defectivity that is repaired under ellipsis. An illustrative example of the latter type is provided by Russian, which has a number of verbs that lack a 1st-person singular non-past form (Abels 2019, Mendes 2020, Mendes and Nevins 2020). Examples are provided in (85).

(85) *Non-past inflection of three Russian defective verbs*

|     | <i>buzit</i> ‘make a fuss’ | <i>šelestet</i> ‘rustle’ | <i>oščutit</i> ‘to sense’ |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1SG | —                          | —                        | —                         |
| 2SG | <i>buzišʹ</i>              | <i>šelestišʹ</i>         | <i>oščutiš</i>            |
| 3SG | <i>buzit</i>               | <i>šelestit</i>          | <i>oščutit</i>            |
| 1PL | <i>buzim</i>               | <i>šelestim</i>          | <i>oščutim</i>            |
| 2PL | <i>buzite</i>              | <i>šelestite</i>         | <i>oščutite</i>           |
| 3PL | <i>buzʹjat</i>             | <i>šelestʹjat</i>        | <i>oščutʹjat</i>          |

(Abels 2019:1249, Mendes and Nevins 2020:4)

Crucially, the ineffability of a 1st person singular form disappears when the verb is elided. This is exemplified in (86), where the 1st person singular verb form is elided and the structure is grammatical. Mendes (2020) shows that the effect arises with gapping, stripping, comparative deletion, and fragment answers.

(86) *Morphological-gap obviation under ellipsis in Russian*

- a. On { *buzit* / *šelestit* }, a *ja* net  $\Delta$ .  
 he makes.a.fuss rustles but I not  
 ‘He {makes a fuss/rustles} but I don’t.’

(Mendes 2020:154, adapted from Abels 2019:1249)

- b. Na veršine étoj gory ty oščutiš radostʹ, a *ja*  $\Delta$  strakh.  
 on top this mountain you sense happiness.ACC but I fear.ACC  
 ‘At the top of this mountain, you will sense happiness, and I fear.’

(Mendes and Nevins 2020:5)

Based on evidence of this kind and others, Merchant (2015), Abels (2019), Mendes (2020), Mendes and Nevins (2020), and Privizentseva (2021) all propose analyses that involve ellipsis bleeding morphological realization and thereby circumventing a morphological problem that would otherwise arise. To illustrate, in their analysis of the Russian defectivity repair under ellipsis, Mendes (2020) and Mendes and Nevins (2020) analyze the ineffability of the 1SG form of *oščutit* ‘sense’ as arising from the competing processes of  $t \rightarrow \text{šč}$  (/t/  $\rightarrow$  /ɕ/) mutation and  $t \rightarrow \text{č}$  (/t/  $\rightarrow$  /tʃ/) mutation, each observable in other verbs. They implement these competing pressures by means of the VIs in (87). The VIs /ɔfʊɕ/ and /ɔfʊtʃ/ each represent the VI for 1SG but with a different mutation process having applied. /ɔfʊt/ represents the elsewhere form, where neither mutation process has applied. Because (87a) and (87b) are equally specific, vocabulary insertion fails to resolve the competition between them. This results in lethal competition, and hence ineffability.

- (87) a.  $\sqrt{\text{SENSE}}$   $\leftrightarrow$  /ɔfʊɕ/ / [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v</sub> \_\_\_\_ v] 1SG.NPST]  
 b.  $\sqrt{\text{SENSE}}$   $\leftrightarrow$  /ɔfʊtʃ/ / [<sub>T</sub> [<sub>v</sub> \_\_\_\_ v] 1SG.NPST]  
 c.  $\sqrt{\text{SENSE}}$   $\leftrightarrow$  /ɔfʊt/

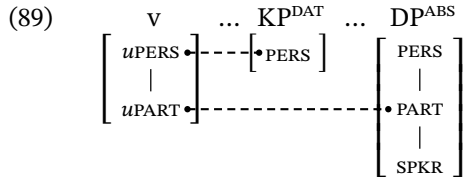
The rescuing effect ellipsis in (86) then follows from (84). Because the source of the ineffability of the 1SG forms lies in the failure of vocabulary insertion to determine a VI to insert, it follows that the structures are grammatical if vocabulary insertion does not apply. As mentioned, Merchant (1999, 2001), Kennedy and Merchant (2000), Merchant (2015), Abels (2019), Mendes (2020), Mendes and Nevins (2020), and Privizentseva (2021) argue for similar effects of ellipsis on morphological conflicts in other languages and constructions, all of which support (84).

In conjunction with the independently motivated view in (84), the gluttony account immediately explains why verbal ellipsis obviates PCC violations in Basque. A representative example of this effect using a ditransitive constructions and gapping is repeated from (8a) in (88).

(88) *PCC obviation under gapping in ditransitives*

Jon-ek alkatea-ri Mikel saldu d-i-o, eta zu-k harakina-ri  
 Jon-ERG mayor-DAT Mikel.ABS sold 3ABS-AUX-3DAT and you-ERG butcher-DAT  
**ni** Δ.  
 I.ABS  
 ‘Jon sold Mikel to the mayor, and you me to the butcher.’ (✓3DAT > 1ABS)

Syntactically, the elliptical sentence in (88) has the same structure as the non-elliptical counterpart in (57), in line with the view that ellipsis amounts to non-pronunciation of otherwise regular syntactic structure. Consequently, v’s  $\varphi$ -probe agrees with both DPs, resulting in gluttony.



Ordinarily, the gluttonous  $\varphi$ -probe on v would create a fatal conflict for vocabulary insertion. But if v is elided, it is not targeted by vocabulary insertion as per (84), and no conflict between VIs arises in (89). The coexistence of two  $\varphi$ -values on the gluttonous probe in (89) is thus harmless if v is elided.

(90)  *$\varphi$ -value on v in (89) → no vocabulary insertion → no conflict*

$$\left[ \varphi = \left\{ \left[ \text{PERS} \right], \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{PERS} \\ | \\ \text{PART} \\ | \\ \text{SPKR} \end{array} \right] \right\} \right]$$

This analysis derives the pervasive effect of verbal ellipsis on the PCC documented at length in section 2: constructions that ordinarily exhibit the PCC no longer do so whenever the agreeing auxiliary is elided. By locating the problem that underlies the PCC in the morphological realization of verbal agreement (rather than in failed DP licensing or in gluttony itself), this analysis explains why verbal ellipsis interacts with the PCC even if it leaves the argument DPs unaffected. This derives the generalization in (83), and it attributes it to the same, more general mechanism that also explains



the effect of ellipsis on defective verbs in Russian and other languages. (83) is thus explained as an instance of a more general pattern.

The generality of (84) also explains the pervasiveness of the effect. Because *any* ellipsis process that includes the verb will suspend vocabulary insertion into it, all such ellipsis processes obviate the PCC, including gapping, stripping, fragment answers, split questions, and comparative deletion. This derives the full range of the generalization in (83) and of the evidence in section 2.

It is worth noting that our analysis does not appeal to literal repair of ungrammaticality under ellipsis and that it does not require granting ellipsis the ability to retroactively undo violations of syntactic constraints (though of course it is compatible with such an ability). In this respect, our proposal is in line with the analyses in Merchant (1999, 2001), Kennedy and Merchant (2000), Merchant (2015), Abels (2019), Mendes (2020), and Mendes and Nevins (2020). Our account attributes the ungrammaticality of PCC-violating configurations to their PF realization (i.e., vocabulary insertion) rather than to the narrow-syntactic structure per se. PF processes like ellipsis that bleed PF realization therefore do not retroactively *repair* the violation of a grammatical constraint but rather *prevent* such a violation. See Abels (2019) for discussion of this important difference between (84) and accounts of island repair under ellipsis that grant ellipsis the ability to undo ungrammaticality.

Finally, this analysis also derives the absence of PCC effects in nonfinite clauses that lack verb agreement altogether (see (29)–(32)). Our account derives this fact in two conceivable ways, which are not necessarily in opposition to each other. One is to assume that these clauses simply lack a  $\varphi$ -probe (see Preminger 2011b, 2019, Coon and Keine 2021). Without a  $\varphi$ -probe, no gluttony—and hence no morphological conflict—will arise. Alternatively, it is conceivable that these clauses syntactically do contain a  $\varphi$ -probe but that this  $\varphi$ -probe is simply not morphologically realized (contra Preminger 2019). In this case, gluttony would obtain without any morphological conflict. In either case, the account predicts such structures to be grammatical, as indeed they are.

## 5. Conclusion and outlook

We showed that the Basque PCC is subject to the two empirical generalizations in (91), and we argued that these generalizations emerge from the interplay of  $\varphi$ -Agree and its PF realization. The key empirical contribution of this paper is the generalization in (91a), instantiated by a wide range of ellipsis phenomena. In order to derive (91a), the analysis must be sensitive to the overt realization of a  $\varphi$ -probe, hence to PF properties. On the other hand, to derive (91b), the analysis must be directly sensitive to the syntactic relationship between the DP arguments. In order to derive *both* conditions in (91), the analysis needs to be conditioned by both syntactic and morphological/PF factors. In this sense, it must be cross-modular in nature.

- (91) a. Basque PCC effects disappear in clauses that do not contain an overtly realized verbal  $\varphi$ -probe.
- b. Basque PCC effects arise only if the dative DP c-commands the absolutive DP (a relationship that is neutralized in the agreement morphology).

We then developed a specific version of Coon and Keine's (2021) feature-gluttony proposal for Basque, which offers a principled account of both sides of (91). The crucial property of this account is that the Basque PCC is unrelated to nominal licensing and instead due to morphological ineffability that results if a probe agrees with more than one DP. It is this specific constellation of properties that enables an account of (91). Ineffability results if a gluttonous  $\varphi$ -probe is targeted by vocabulary insertion. Whether or not a probe is gluttonous is conditioned by the syntactic arrangement of the DPs, deriving (91b). Whether a probe is targeted by vocabulary insertion is conditioned by whether it is overtly realized or not, deriving (91a).

The Basque evidence presented here thus provides an empirical argument in favor of a gluttony approach to PCC effects, at least for Basque. To what extent this argument extends to the PCC in other languages remains to be investigated. Because the PCC has traditionally been observed in the combinations of clitics rather than  $\varphi$ -agreement in the more narrow sense, the predictions of a gluttony account are intricately linked to the analysis of cliticization. Coon and Keine (2021) treat cliticization as syntactic head movement. For them, gluttony creates a *syntactic* problem with cliticization (in particular, which DP to cliticize). As such, the predictions of Coon and Keine's (2021) analysis crucially depend on whether ellipsis suspends cliticization in the same way it suspends vocabulary insertion. If it does (perhaps in conjunction with ungrammaticality repair under ellipsis), the PCC is predicted to be obviated by ellipsis in such cases as well. If it does not, the PCC is predicted to persist even under ellipsis in such languages. Our results thus point to a new direction for future work—i.e., how hierarchy effects behave under ellipsis—that has the potential to provide an important novel analytical tool to advance our understanding of the PCC and the principles that underlie it.

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