

The syntax of eccentric agreement: the Person Case Constraint and absolutive displacement in Basque

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Abstract This article explores a syntactic approach to the Person Case Constraint, a ban on 1st/2nd person agreement caused by a dative. The approach proposes that the constraint is due to the interference in person Agree of a head H and its expected controller α by a dative between the two ($H > DAT > \alpha$, where $>$ is c-command). This predicts that it is absent if the dative does not intervene ($\alpha > DAT$), or if α moves past the dative ($\alpha > DAT > t_\alpha$). Both predictions are correct. The latter is developed at length from Basque “absolutive displacement” and Icelandic “long raising”, which show the predicted repair of the constraint by movement, through anomalous ergative morphology and overt displacement respectively. A further correct consequence is that the constraint is repaired undetectably in the unaccusatives of accusative languages, except when movement past the dative is unavailable. Morphology does not provide the right tools, since it collapses the required structural distinctions, and the saving effect of movement on agreement is unpredicted. Finally, an independent argument is developed to show that the Person Case Constraint is visible to “narrow syntax”.

Keywords Agreement · Case · Person Case Constraint · Ergativity

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1 Introduction

Agreement systems often exhibit contextual restrictions on the typical relationship between the controller and target of agreement, and sometimes non-canonical or “eccentric” relationships step in to fill the gap. These phenomena figure large in a foundational issue in the theory of agreement, whether agreement is accessible to the syntax or not. On one view, some agreement is a syntactic dependency, and some of its restrictions and eccentricities follow from the properties of syntactic dependencies like movement. The alternative holds that agreement is always a phenomenon of the morphological component, which is independently responsible for its expression and clearly does underlie some target-controller restrictions and repairs. This article focuses on one agreement restriction and its repairs: the *Person Case Constraint*, where the person agreement by a DP is blocked in the presence of another. I discuss evidence that the notions entering into a proper account of the constraint and the repairs are syntactic in nature, not morphological. The evidence comes from phenomena where person agreement is sensitive to differences in structure established at base-generation or derived by movement, but not reflected in the morphology. These suggest that the Person Case Constraint is due to the interference of a DP phrase-structurally between the target and controller of person agreement, and not elsewhere, and the interference disappears if the DP is by-passed by movement. This is the expected behavior of syntactic dependencies.

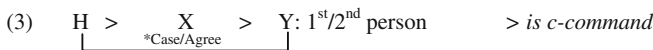
The Person Case Constraint (PCC) describes the impossibility of person agreement with a 1st/2nd person pronoun in certain contexts, and/or the impossibility of such a pronoun itself. (1) exemplifies the PCC in Basque, an ergative language. The verb *gustatu* ‘like’ has a dative experiencer and an absolutive theme, which controls agreement in person and number. A 3rd person theme is unproblematic. However, a 1st/2nd person theme cannot control the expected person agreement morphology. The morphology itself is fine: substituting *etorri* ‘come’ with a dative goal of motion and an absolutive theme yields the unproblematic (1)c. These two verbs systematically use the same agreement and case, but they differ in their syntactic structure, as discussed below (Section 3): for *gustatu* the dative is base-generated above the absolutive, while for *etorri* the reverse configuration obtains.¹

¹The target and controller of agreement are coindexed throughout. Abbreviations: ABS absolutive, ACC accusative, DAT dative, ERG ergative, GEN genitive, INF infinitive, NOM nominative, PL and PL’ plural (two distinct morphemes in Basque), PT past, SG singular, TM theme marker, X default prefix (TM and X are morphemes in the Basque verb); 1, 1’, 2, 3 for 1st, 1st plural, 2nd, and 3rd person (Basque distinguishes in person 1SG from 1PL, independently of number). In the Basque verb, $\sqrt{\quad}$ introduces a root; in most cases, the root is an auxiliary whose choice depends on what Case is assigned in addition to the absolutive; thus $\sqrt{\quad}$, \sqrt{E} , \sqrt{ED} , \sqrt{D} designate respectively auxiliaries characterized by assigning absolutive alone, ergative + absolutive, ergative + dative + absolutive, absolutive + dative. In presenting Basque data, consultants are coded according to note 13. Some low-level morphophonological reductions are regularized in line with standard Basque, when this does not affect the relevant morphological breakdown: for example, *gustatzen*, $d_i\text{-}i_j\text{-}d_k\text{-}z_u_l$ (liking X- \sqrt{ED} -1-2) is *gustatze_y\text{-}y_{i+j}\text{-}a_k\text{-}z_u_l for T1. The notation $\langle\alpha\rangle \dots \langle\beta\rangle$ indicates only one of α , β is to be realized on a particular reading.*

- (1) a. Haiek_i Itxaso-ri_j gustatzen zai-zk_i-o_j [Basque]
 they.ABS Itxaso-DAT liking √D-PL-3
 Itxaso likes them.
- b. *Ni_i Itxaso-ri_j gustatzen n_i-a-tzai-o_j.
 I.ABS Itxaso-DAT liking 1-TM-√D-3
 Itxaso likes me.
- c. Ni_i Itxaso-ri_j etortzen n_i-a-tzai-o_j.
 I.ABS Itxaso-DAT coming 1-TM-√D-3
 I am coming to Itxaso.

Syntactic approaches to the Person Case Constraint generally view it as the blocking of a syntactic dependency between the target of person agreement and the 1st/2nd person DP by another DP, the dative in (1)b. One way of working this out is to take the syntactic dependency to be the Agree of Chomsky (2000), which transmits person features to the agreement target and Case features to the agreement controller, and to take the blocking to arise because a closer DP intervenes in the locality of this relationship, as in (3). I shall refer to this as the *Case/Agree approach* to the PCC (Section 2; e.g. Anagnostopoulou 2003; Béjar and Rezac 2003).²

(2) *Person Case Constraint (Case/Agree approach)*: A 1st/2nd person DP Y cannot Agree for person and Case with H if another DP X (with certain properties) intervenes for locality between the two. If Y has no other means of getting Case-licensed, it fails the Case Filter.



The Case/Agree approach makes certain predictions about the relative configuration of H, X, and Y. These predictions are the topic of this article. First, X must be in a syntactic position where it “intervenes” between H and Y, in the relevant sense of intervention for syntactic dependencies. If X is c-commanded by Y, person agreement between H-Y is not impeded by it, although the morphological expression of this configuration may be the same as that of the one where X c-commands Y. This will make for the difference between Basque verbs like *gustatu* ‘like’, bad in (1) b because the dative intervenes between the absolutive and its agreement target, and *etorri* ‘come’, where the dative is below the absolutive which is thus fine in (1)c.

²Terminology (Chomsky 2000; on (ii), see further e.g. Béjar 2003: chapter 2, Pesetsky and Torrego forthcoming):

- (i) *Agree*: Syntactic dependencies are established by Agree between an uninterpretable feature, the *probe*, and a matching interpretable features on a *goal*.
- (ii) *Features*: Features are type-value pairs, such as “person=1”. Features *match* if identical in type. Agree *values* (among others) the φ-features of the probe from the goal, and the Case features of the goal from the probe.
- (iii) *Locality*: (a) The probe must c-command the goal, which is thus in its search space; (b) a probe cannot Agree with a goal across a matching feature c-commanding the goal (*feature-relativized minimality*). Certain categories such as case KPs do not count for c-command (cf. Pesetsky 1995: 172–180, 228ff., Rezac to appear).

Second, if Y moves past X, a configuration is established where X no longer intervenes between Y and H. Thus, movement of the 1st/2nd person Y past X should void the Person Case Constraint, provided that after movement, Y is still in a configuration to Agree with some H. This prediction is the main subject of this article. A new paradigm from varieties of Basque illustrates it, in (4). Here the lexical items and meaning of (1)b reappear without the PCC, but now the theme bears ergative case and controls ergative type agreement morphology.

- (4) Ni- k_i Itxaso- r_{ij} gustatzen d-i- o_j - t_i [Basque]
 I-ERG Itxaso-DAT liking X- $\sqrt{\text{ED-3-1}}$
 Itxaso likes me.

This is an anomaly for the canonical relations between case/agreement and theta-roles, and it occurs only where the Person Case Constraint would arise otherwise (so not in (1)a). Extending the nomenclature of Laka (1993b) and Fernández (2001), I shall call the anomalous “ergativization” of the canonically absolutive theme *absolutive displacement*. The proposed analysis will bring the theme past the dative intervener, which intervenes in its Agree with the absolutive Case locus, into a configuration to Agree with the higher ergative locus. Support for the proposal will come from Icelandic, where the Person Case Constraint also arises in analogous configurations, and it is voided by a movement past the intervener that is this time visible from surface order rather than from the morphology.

These phenomena draw their importance from the aforementioned debate about the nature of ϕ -feature agreement, agreement restrictions, and eccentric agreement like absolutive displacement: whether it is in the morphology or in the syntax (e.g. Marantz 1991; Hale 2001; Béjar 2003; Bobaljik to appear). These positions differ in the measure that syntax and morphology differ in their vocabulary and principles, and the answer determines whether objects like ϕ -features belong to syntactic vocabulary (Section 7). The argument here is that the availability of person agreement in Basque and Icelandic depends on the syntactic configuration of the target of person agreement H, its controller Y, and a potential intervener X in (3). X only interferes with person agreement if it phrase-structurally closer to H than Y. If the intervener X is c-commanded by Y, either at base-generation or through the movement of Y above X, there is no intervention. The notions of structure and locality that enter into this account are syntactic and characterize syntactic dependencies like A-movement. The Case/Agree approach predicts this correlation of person agreement with the intervention of X between H and Y; so do other syntactic approaches to agreement couch the Person Case Constraint in terms of the syntactic hierarchical relationships between H, X, and Y. On the other hand, in the phenomena at hand, overt morphology fails to reflect the varying c-command between X and Y: it conflates both intervention and non-intervention configurations. To differentiate them, morphological approaches must refer to an abstract structure that reflects the syntax rather than its visible morphological realization, and at that level the correlation seems to end up as an accident.

The article is organized as follows: Section 2 develops the Case/Agree approach and its predictions. Section 3 lays the groundwork for absolutive displacement by

presenting dative-absolutive and absolutive-dative constructions in Basque, and showing that the Person Case Constraint occurs only when the dative c-commands absolutive. Sections 4 and 5 are the heart of the article: absolutive displacement is introduced and analyzed, and the parallel of Icelandic long raising is brought in to support the proposal. Section 6 shows how the PCC in other languages fits the Case/Agree approach; in particular, the riddle of the absence of the PCC in the unaccusatives of accusative languages disappears because their analogue of absolutive displacement generally happens invisibly. Section 7 lays out the significance of syntactic configurations in restrictions on person agreement, and elaborates the argument that absolutive displacement and related PCC repairs are a syntactic rather than a morphological phenomenon.

2 The Case/Agree approach to the Person Case Constraint

The domain of investigation into the PCC here are applicative constructions, in both accusative languages like Icelandic and ergative ones like Basque.

The manifestation of the accusative-ergative difference for these languages is in the case and agreement morphology of the “core” arguments (5): the external argument of transitives (EA), the direct object of transitives (O), and the internal argument of unaccusatives (S). In accusative languages, EA and S pattern together for case and agreement morphology as nominative, and O is distinct, accusative. In ergative languages, S and O group as absolutive, and the EA differs in being ergative. Both types of languages, however, behave alike on syntactic diagnostics: EA c-commands O, and it is EA and S, not O, that pass subjecthood diagnostics. I adopt the theory of the ergative-accusative difference of Bobaljik (1993) and Laka (1993a), of which the details and motivations are presented in Section 3. The essentials are the following. Both types of languages have the same two loci of Case assignment, or *Case loci*, $T_{\text{nom/erg}}$ and $v_{\text{acc/abs}}$, so that ergative and nominative alike arise from a Case/Agree relation to T, and the absolutive and accusative, to v. The difference is in how S behaves: if it relates to v, it ends up with the same Case/Agree relation as O and the language is ergative, otherwise it relates to T and the language is accusative.³

- (5) a. Accusative languages: $\boxed{\text{EA S}}_{T\text{-nom}}$ $\text{O}_{v\text{-acc}}$ b. Ergative languages: $\text{EA}_{T\text{-erg}}$ $\boxed{\text{S O}}_{v\text{-abs}}$

Examples of the Person Case Constraint in this article come from *applicative constructions*, including *double object constructions* (Baker 1988; Anagnostopoulou 2003). An applicative construction is related to a plain unaccusative or transitive by the presence of an *applied object* (IO) at a position hierarchically below EA but above O and S, (6). The IO may have the same case and morphology as the O of simple transitives, as in English or Mohawk. More commonly in the applicatives here, it has dedicated case like the dative. Following current work (McGinnis 1998;

³EA, S, and O are typed here by their case and agreement. Talk of unaccusatives and S subsumes passives and raising structures, and their promoted/raised argument, if it has the case and agreement of S.

Elordieta 2001; Anagnostopoulou 2003; Cuervo 2003, Pyllkänen *in press*), I assume that the applied object is introduced by an applicative head Appl, but what matters here are the c-command relationships in (6) of the IO to EA, O, and S, which will be established for the constructions to be discussed. Arguments lower than S/O will not be spoken of as applied objects. The abbreviations EA, O, S, IO are used throughout.

- (6) a. Applicative unaccusative: [TP T [_{VP} v [_{AppIP} IO Appl [_{VP} V S]]]]
 b. Applicative transitive: [TP T [_{VP} EA [_V [_{AppIP} IO Appl [_{VP} V O]]]]]

Applicative constructions have been the focus of work on the PCC, because it is in them that 1st/2nd person S and O are affected by the constraint. This distribution reveals the role of person and applicativity: in the languages at hand, no restriction affects 3rd person S and O, which behave just as in plain unaccusatives and transitives, nor is there any restriction on 1st/2nd person S and O in plain, non-applicative structures. These facts are exemplified in (7) and (8).

(7) a shows an applicative transitive construction in Basque with an absolutive 3PL object and the plural agreement that it controls. It is the same when *eraman* 'bring' is used as a simple transitive with no dative, as in 'You brought them'. In (7) b, agreement with a 1st/2nd person object is ruled out by the PCC. As a consequence, the pronoun itself is also impossible, because it needs to agree in Basque finite clauses (Oyharçabal 1992: 327). If the dative *polizari* and its agreement are removed, the example is good as a plain transitive, *Zuk_i ni_j polizari_k eraman ni_j-a-u-zu_i* 'You brought me', so it is the dative that creates the constraint. (7)c illustrates that PCC in a larger domain: a causative construction where the *cause* verb and its infinitival complement form a single domain for case and agreement (Section 3). Here the dative is the causee corresponding to the external argument of the infinitive, and the PCC affects the absolutive object.

- (7) a. Zu-_{k_i} polizi-a-ri_j haiek_k eraman d-i-zki_k-o_j-zu_i. [Basque]
 you-ERG police-the-DAT them.ABS brought X-√ED-PL-3-2
 You brought them to the police.
 b. *Zu-_{k_i} polizi-a-ri_j ni_k eraman ni_k-(a)-i-o_j-zu_i.
 you-ERG police-the-DAT me.ABS brought 1-TM-√ED-3-2
 You brought me to the police. (cf. Artiagoitia 2000: 405)
 c. Am-a-k_i (bera_j / *ni_j) etxe-ra ekarr-arazi
 mother-the-ERG him.ABS me.ABS house-to bring-make
 d-i-o_k / *ni_j-a-i-o_k anai-a-ri_k.
 X-√ED-3 1-TM-√ED-3 brother-the-DAT
 Mother made the brother bring him/*me home. (Albizu 2001: 58, note 13)

French is like Basque, save that there is no agreement to see overtly, so it is just the 1st/2nd person object pronoun itself that is barred. (8) is a causative similar to (7)c.

- (8) Je les_i / *vous_i lui_j laisserai e_j voir e_i [French]
 I them/*you.ACC her.DAT will.let see.INF
 I will let her see them/*you. (see Postal 1981: 312, Quicoli 1984: 67)

The Person Case Constraint holds in a variety of languages of unrelated affiliation and typology (Bonet 1991; Albizu 1997; Haspelmath 2004), and Bonet's discovery

of this fact leads her to propose that, if characterized correctly, it is universal (Bonet 1991: 176).⁴ In Basque it is a classical observation (e.g. de Zabala 1848: 8/§5; Azkue 1924: 572–3/§808; Lafitte 1979: 294/§574; Lafon 1944: 397–99; de Yrizar 1981: 36–7; generative treatments: Laka 1993b: 27; Albizu 1997; Artiagoitia 2001a, b: 405; Ormazabal and Romero 1998, 2007). The Case/Agree approach posits that the constraint is a problem in the relationship of a Case locus and a DP caused by the intervening dative. Four observations underlie this hypothesis.

First, nothing is wrong with the semantics of the banned ϕ -feature combinations. In Basque, non-finite clauses unlike finite ones license pronouns without agreement, and PCC combinations are fine (9) (Laka 1993b: 27; cf. (23)c; Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming for Icelandic).

- (9) gaizki iruditzen zai-t [zu-k ni harakin-a-ri saltze-a]. [Basque]
 wrong seeming $\sqrt{D-1}$ you-ERG me.ABS butcher-the-DAT selling-the.ABS
 Your selling me to the butcher seems wrong to me. (Laka 1993b: 27)

This highlights the role of either the agreement morphology (Bonet 1991), or of the syntactic mechanisms that underlie it. The second observation is that nothing is wrong with the morphology itself. The banned morpheme combinations turn up in other functions, for example when the dative clitic or agreement reflects a non-argumental coding of the addressee (the ethical dative of French. Postal (1990: 175), and the allocutive agreement of Basque, Rebuschi 1984: 659 note 4; Albizu 1997). More strikingly, the PCC only occurs when the dative c-commands the affected 1st/2nd person, even when the morphology neutralizes this with other configurations. Postal (1984: 153–7; 1990: 177) points out the role of syntax in French, although with a different proposal (see Rezac, in prep). In (10), there is a 1st/2nd person accusative + dative clitic cluster, as in (8), but unlike in (8) the pre-cliticization c-command is accusative > dative. This distinction is neutralized on the surface, where clitics occur in the order *vous / le / les* > *lui*. Speakers who permit the type of clitic climbing in (10) disallow the same clitic clusters when the dative c-commands the accusative.

- (10) Je le_i / vous_i lui_j crois e_i infidèle e_j [French]
 I him.ACC you.ACC him.DAT believe unfaithful
 I believe him/you to be unfaithful to her. (Postal 1990: 177)

Thus syntactic configurations matter, not morphological ones. The same argument is developed from Icelandic in Anagnostopoulou (2003: 276–7), and in Section 3 here for Basque. These all also bring to the fore the third observation: the constraint only arises if the affected 1st/2nd person is c-commanded by another DP, the “intervener” (cf. the argument from Swiss German in Albizu 1997: 1.2.3;

⁴I set aside the “weak PCC”, according to which some clitic (not agreement) systems permit a 1st/2nd person accusative + 1st/2nd but not 3rd person dative (Bonet 1991: 180, Nevins 2007). Ormazabal and Romero (2007: 332–4) demonstrate that the exceptional combinations do not involve two argumental clitics.

Anagnostopoulou 2003: 295–300). The 1st/2nd person is unaffected if one is not present or does not c-command it.⁵

The fourth observation localizes the syntactic mechanism underlying the PCC in the Case and agreement system by noting the relevance of Case domains. Albizu (1997) emphasizes that the PCC holds of a dative and the internal argument, S or O, never of a dative and the external argument EA of transitives (and unergatives). This, he argues, falls into place if the PCC is a restriction holding of the Case locus ν , the DP (S, O) Case-licensed by it, and the dative between them. In contrast, the EA belongs to a different Case domain, that of T, and so if the PCC is sensitive to Case domains, the EA is not expected to interact with the ν P-internal arguments. Taking Basque as an example, the PCC restricts the person of O but not of EA in the applicative transitives in (7). The morphological realization of their agreement ϕ -features does not suggest this difference: in Basque all agreement is on the same auxiliary, and ergative and dative agreement are typically closer to each other. Albizu's point links to Postal's (1981: 318; 1990: 176) observation above: in French clitic clusters, only the structural accusative is affected by the PCC, not the inherent dative, even if the dative + dative sequence is homophonous to a banned dative + accusative one as in (11). The PCC bans only 1st/2nd person bearing structural Case.

- (11) Pierre me_i lui_j semble e_i (être) fidèle e_j. [French]
 Pierre me.DAT him.DAT seems be.INF faithful
 Pierre seems to me to be faithful to her. (Postal 1981: 318)

These four observations underlie the Case/Agree approach of Anagnostopoulou (2003) and Béjar and Rezac (2003). It aims to explain the Person Case Constraint as a consequence of relativized minimality, whereby the intervening X in (13) blocks person Agree between Y and its Case locus H. This Agree failure leaves the person feature of Y unlicensed, leading to a crash due to the Case Filter if it is not licensed otherwise. The specific elements are in (12):

(12) *Case/Agree account of the Person Case Constraint:*

- (i) The PCC arises when two (or more) goals, X and Y, Agree with the same Case locus H.
- (ii) *Split Agree:* H has person and number probes that can seek to Agree independently.
- (iii) *Locality and intervention:* dative X prevents H-Y person Agree by relativized minimality, but it permits H-Y number Agree.

⁵The Person Case Constraint thus contrasts with a common class of agreement restrictions due to position alone: situations where a controller must precede, c-command, or pass through the specifier of the target of agreement independently of the presence or position of other DPs. Examples are number and gender or class agreement on past participles in French (Kayne 1989; cf. Chomsky 2001: 46 note 39); on the verb in Fiorentino and Trentino (Brandi and Cordin 1989) and in Bantu generally (Baker 2003; Carstens 2005); and person agreement in French inversion (Marandin 2001). Such a positional sensitivity is not a general property of person agreement, as witnessed clearly for example by Icelandic “Reverse Predicate Agreement” of Sigurðsson (1996: 32), Sigurðsson and Holmberg (forthcoming) or complementizer-subject agreement in West Germanic (van Koppen 2005).

- (iv) *The Case Filter*: The φ -features of DPs need Case. 1st/2nd person features need person Agree for Case licensing, while for 3rd person DPs, viewed as possessing number alone, number Agree suffices. DPs with inherent Case such as a dative are licensed by it.



The role of Case in 1st/2nd person licensing encodes observation four, and it is put forward as the culprit behind the Person Case Constraint by Baker (1996: 192–4) and Anagnostopoulou (2003: 274), rather than a special need to license person or animacy features (Ormazabal and Romero 1998; Ormazabal 2000; Béjar and Rezac 2003; Bianchi 2006). Independent syntactic dependencies for person and number, that is split Agree, are due to Taraldsen (1995), and have been postulated independently of the PCC (Laka 1993b; Béjar 2003; and the references in Section 4.4). The separation allows 3rd person to agree for number past the dative, while 1st/2nd person Agree is blocked. The Appendix discusses the nuances of (ii) and (iv).

The outstanding issue is (iii), the nature of the intervention of the dative for person Agree. A common idea is that the applicative dative X enters into some relationship with the Case locus H, and this relationship disrupts its person Agree with Y. One way to construe this H-X relationship is simply as person Agree, making the person probe of H unavailable for Y by feature-relativized locality. This works well in PCC contexts where X has structural Case from H and controls regular object agreement on it, as in Mohawk (Baker 1996: 192–4; Ormazabal and Romero 2007: 323–5), or “dative displacement” varieties of Basque not discussed here (Fernández 2001, 2004; Rezac 2006, to appear). However, this does not exhaust PCC configurations. Typically the dative does not in fact control the person agreement of H. If it does control agreement, as in Basque, it is fully independent of that of EA, S, and O, and this independence is also reflected in its independent case morphology, the dative. Moreover, only the person agreement of H is impeded by it, not number. Much work seeks to solve the riddle of this quirky partial intervention of the dative, not all through feature-relativized locality (Taraldsen 1995; Chomsky 2000: 128, 130–1; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 267–271; Boeckx and Niinuma 2004; Richards 2004a: 156–171; Rezac to appear; Ormazabal and Romero 1998, 2007; Ormazabal 2000; Adger and Harbour 2007; den Dikken 2004; Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming; Bianchi 2006; for clausal boundaries with the same effect, Richards 2005; Etxepare 2005). Most of these proposals predict the PCC only in a certain syntactic configuration like (13), and so make the predictions that I shall seek to verify.

These predictions, formulated in terms of the Case/Agree approach, are in (14):

- (14) *PCC obviation*: In the configuration $H > X > Y$, where $>$ is c-command, and X is an intervener for person Agree (here the applicative dative IO), either H-Y person Agree is impossible (PCC), or Y raises past X to a position still within the search-space of H, and then can Agree with H for person (no PCC).

Applicative unaccusatives are the basic test-bed for (14). Their dative intervenes for person Agree between ν (ergative language) or T (accusative language) and S,

just as it does between ν and O in applicative transitives, (15). In transitives, the PCC is inescapable, since the object O cannot move past the dative IO to anywhere where it could Agree again. In particular, the non-thematic [Spec, TP] “EPP” position is occupied by the external argument EA. However, in unaccusatives this position is available, and if S can raise to it, it could then Agree with T. This is shown in (16) and (17) for the paradigms that will be discussed below. The PCC is incurred between ν and O and S alike in Basque, (15) and (16). However, in the unaccusative (16), the raising of S to [Spec, TP] allows S to Agree for person with T without any intervention by the IO. This T-S Agree is detectable as ergative case and agreement on the part of S. Applicative unaccusatives in accusative languages are similar, save that T is both the head whose Agree is blocked by the IO, and the one that Agrees once S moves to [Spec, TP], in (17). Icelandic wears this dependence of person agreement on movement on its sleeve; most accusative languages do not because the movement of S is obligatory. The mechanics of EPP movement are discussed in Section 3 and that of the new agreement between T and S in Section 4.2, when the data demonstrating these processes are presented.

- (15) EA T_{ERG/NOM} t_{EA} $\nu_{\text{ABS/ACC}}$ IO O [PCC in transitives]
*person Agree
- (16) S T_{ERG} ν_{ABS} IO t_S [absolute displacement]
 $\nu_{\text{person Agree}}$ *person Agree
- (17) S T_{NOM} IO t_S [accusative languages]
 $\nu_{\text{person Agree}}$ *person Agree

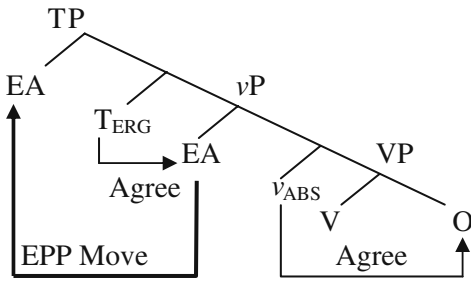
The next two sections focus on absolutive displacement in Basque, and the first introduces Basque applicative unaccusatives and the Person Case Constraint in them. It also provides an independent version of the argument discussed above as observation two, that syntax, not surface morphological realization, is crucial to stating the PCC.

3 The Person Case Constraint in Basque applicative unaccusatives

Basque has unaccusatives with dative + absolutive case and agreement morphology. This section shows that they fall into two classes: DAT-ABS or applicative structures where the dative c-commands the absolutive S, and ABS-DAT structures where S c-commands the dative. The difference parallels the one found for *give* in English, which admits either an applicative or a prepositional structure. However, in Basque the two have the same case and agreement morphology; their different structures are revealed by syntactic diagnostics such as causativization and binding, discussed in this section. The Case/Agree approach predicts that only the DAT-ABS structure is subject to the PCC, and this turns out to be correct. Moreover, it alone allows absolutive displacement.

Basque is a syntactically accusative, morphologically ergative language that codes ergative, dative, and absolutive by both case and agreement morphology. Ergative and absolutive are structural Cases. Persuasive evidence for this is Artiagoitia’s (2001a, b) demonstration that there is raising both to ergative and to

Transitive, unergative:



Unaccusative:

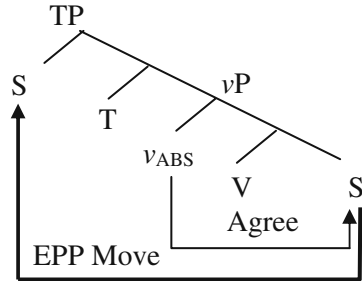


Fig. 1 Agree and EPP in Basque simple transitives and intransitives

absolutive with unaccusatives like *irudi*, *iruditu* ‘seem’; the existence of ergative expletives corroborates the conclusion (Etxepare 2003: 203, note 1; Albizu and Fernández 2006: 81–2). Such raising and expletives are explicitly unexpected if the ergative were inherent (Woolford 1997, 2006).

The approach that I adopt is based on that of Bobaljik (1993) and Laka (1993a, 2000), as adapted in Rezac (2003), and in relevant respects in Albizu (1997), and Fernández (2001). The absolutive Case locus is v_{ABS} and the ergative one is T_{ERG} . The category labels are not important; only that the conditions on syntactic dependencies ensure that T relates to EA and v to O and S. Here, this follows because in order for Agree to take place, the Case locus must c-command its goal (Fig. 1); other assumptions give somewhat different structures (e.g. Laka 1993b, 2000.) Independently of Case, the highest argument raises to [Spec, TP] to satisfy the EPP, a notion to which I return later in this section. This placement groups S and EA as “subjects” against O, yielding an accusative syntax. (Unergatives in Basque behave as if they were transitive, their core argument projected as EA and a null O to absorb the Case of v_{ABS} : Laka 1993a, 2000).

The parameter that differentiates morphologically ergative languages from accusative ones is the *Obligatory Case Parameter* of Bobaljik (1993: 50) and Laka (1993a: 166; 2000: 107), given in (18). In an ergative language, v is always a Case locus and so a VP-internal DP always gets v -Case, the absolutive, whether O or S; T is activated only secondarily to assign Case to the external argument EA if there is one. In an accusative language, T is the obligatory locus and v the dependent one; it is the T-Case, nominative, that is always assigned, and so the case of S.⁶

⁶Both types of languages need some way to deal with unaccusative and passive structures that only assign the unexpected marked case (ergative, accusative), as in Irish, Icelandic, French, and Slavic accusative-only assigning unaccusatives and impersonal passives (see e.g. Lavine and Freidin 2002 for Slavic). In Basque, the corresponding anomalies are raising-to-ergative and ergative expletive + CP intransitives like *irudi* ‘seem’, as well as intransitives with ergative themes like *irain* ‘last’. (These are two classes of mismatches between theta-roles and morpho-syntactic ergativity in Basque, the last being intransitives with absolutive agents, e.g. *borrokatu* ‘fight’ (cf. *borroka egin* ‘fight’, lit. ‘do (a) fight’): Oyharçabal 1992, 2000). See Baker (1996: 211–218) for an extensive discussion of such mismatches in Mohawk, and Artiagoitia (2001a), Albizu and Fernández (2006: 89), Oyharçabal (op. cit.) for accounts of some of the Basque structures. Extending Laka’s approach to unergatives to e.g. *irudi*, one might stipulate a null argument or “case competitor” to discharge the obligatory Case, similar to the *it* in English *I find (*it) interesting here* (Bošković 2002: 171, note 4) or the antipassive D of Bittner and Hale (1996).

(18) Obligatory Case Parameter: If there is only one active Case locus, it must be:

- (A) v (= v_{ABS}), for ergative languages;
- (B) T (= T_{NOM}), for accusative languages.

Basque morphology displays the Agree relationships between the two Case loci and DPs by agreement as well as case, which permits them to be observed even under *pro*-drop. Thus in (1)b, the prefix *n* indicates that the controller is an absolutive 1SG, while in (4), *t* indicates an ergative 1SG. Person and number control distinct exponents in certain contexts, lending support to split Agree by each (Laka 1993b; Fernández and Albizu 2000; Rezac 2003, 2006). For 3SG there is no agreement morpheme, but other morphology steps in to fill the gap. Most agreeing clauses carry agreement on an auxiliary root (Laka 1993b: 28–37), and its choice reflects whether the ergative-assigning Case locus T_{ERG} is active (roots glossed here as $\sqrt{\text{E}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{ED}}$, where D indicates that dative agreement also contributes to the allomorphy of the root) or not ($\sqrt{\text{V}}$, $\sqrt{\text{D}}$) (Rebuschi 1984; Albizu 2002). Thus (7)c has the same $\sqrt{\text{ED}}$ root as (4), and (9) has $\sqrt{\text{D}}$ like (1)b, although in (7)c and (9) the ergative and absolutive controllers are 3SG.

The Person Case Constraint in Basque occurs in applicative transitives, as had been seen in (7). On the Case/Agree account, in order to trigger the PCC the dative should be a dative IO of the applicative construction (6)b, between v_{ABS} and O. This is the structure demonstrated for the Basque transitives with a dative by Elordieta (2001).

(19)=(6)b Applicative transitive: $[_{\text{TP}} T_{\text{ERG}} [_{\text{VP}} \text{EA} [_{v_{\text{ABS}}} [_{\text{AppIP}} \text{IO Appl} [_{\text{VP}} \text{V O}]]]]]]$

The dative here, as well as in the unaccusatives to be discussed below, is coded by agreement in Basque. Dative agreement presents several asymmetries to ergative and absolutive agreement, which suggest that a different system is involved (Rezac 2003: 166, note 8, 2006, to appear, with further references). The proper analysis is tied to that of the intervention of the dative in the PCC (Section 2), and raises many of the same issues as does the analysis of dative clitic doubling in Greek and Spanish and its relationship to nominative agreement (Anagnostopoulou 2003). One proposal is discussed in note 12 (Rezac to appear); others are in Laka (1993b), Ormazabal and Romero (1998, 2007), Fernández (2001, 2004), and Albizu (2001). I eschew a choice, because here it only matters that the dative play the role of the intervener X in (13) for v -S/O Agree.

We are now in a position to examine unaccusatives with a dative argument. Here also the Person Case Constraint arises, but only with one class of verbs, as Albizu (1997) first observes, (20). Belonging to it are dative experiencer + absolutive theme or raisee verbs like *gustatu* ‘like’, *iruditu* ‘seem’, *erori* ‘seem (Spanish *caerse*)’ (cf. Artiagoitia 2000: 406–7); I will call these DAT-ABS structures. Others show no PCC: among these are motion verbs like *hurbildu* ‘approach’, *etorri* ‘come’ with dative of animate goal, and verbs like *mintzatu* ‘talk to’, with dative of addressee. These will be ABS-DAT structures. The remainder of this section shows that the DAT-ABS class base-generates the dative above the absolutive, the configuration of applicative unaccusatives, while the ABS-DAT class has the reverse c-command (also Joppen and Wunderlich 1995; Albizu and Fernández 2006: 84). This syntactic difference correctly predicts the PCC only with DAT-ABS verbs where the dative

intervenes between v and S, although both verb classes have the same case and agreement morphology.⁷

- (20) a. N_i Peru- r_j hurbildu n_i -a-tzai- o_j . [Basque]
 I.ABS Peru-DAT approached 1-TM- \sqrt{D} -3
 I approached Peru. [1:ABS-3:DAT]
- b. Pello $_i$ Miren- i_j baldarr-a iruditu zai- o_j .
 Pello.ABS Miren-DAT clumsy-ABS seemed \sqrt{D} -3
 Pello looked clumsy to Miren. [3:DAT-3:ABS]
- c. Miren- i_j gozoki- a_k gustatzen zai-zki- o_j .
 Miren-DAT sweets-the.ABS liking \sqrt{D} -PL-3
 Miren likes candies. [3:DAT-3:ABS]
- d. $*\text{??}N_i$ Miren- i_j baldarr-a iruditu n_i -a-tzai- o_j .
 I.ABS Miren-DAT clumsy-ABS seemed 1-TM- \sqrt{D} -3
 Intended: I seemed clumsily to Miren. [3:DAT-1:ABS]
- e. $*\text{??}N_i$ Miren- i_j gustatzen n_i -a-tzai- o_j .
 I.ABS Miren-DAT liking 1-TM- \sqrt{D} -3
 Miren likes me. (Albizu 1997: 21) [3:DAT-1:ABS]
- f. N_i Kepa- r_j etortzen / $*\text{gustatzen}$ n_i -a-k- o_j .
 I.ABS Kepa-DAT coming / liking 1-TM- \sqrt{D} -3
 I am coming to Kepa / *Kepa likes me. (H; n.b.: *natzai* = *nako*) [3:DAT-1:ABS]

The combinations of 1/2nd person + dative in (20) are good only in some dialects. Others lack more generally some or all of the agreement morphology that codes 1st/2nd person absolutive + dative. These are morphological gaps ranging from an arbitrary set of missing cells (as in Arrasate; Elortza 1999) to a complete absence of all such combinations (in Arretxe 1994). Such gaps are not uncommon in Basque agreement paradigms across the dialects (e.g., Fernández 2001: 156; Rezac 2006), and have the unpredictable character of the missing past participle of *stride* in English or 1PL/2PL forms of *moudre* ‘grind’ in French. In contrast, the PCC in DAT-ABS verbs is categorical. Speakers both with and without gaps in the ABS-DAT verbal paradigm differentiate the DAT-ABS / ABS-DAT structures as discussed below (e.g., consultants T1, H respectively; see note 13 for codes). Moreover, speakers such as T1 do have the missing forms available at the level of the *euskara batua* ‘unified Basque’ learned in school, but only with ABS-DAT verbs, as in (20). Finally, the phenomenon of absolutive displacement to be discussed is only available

⁷ABS-DAT verbs have been cited as evidence that the PCC does not occur in Basque unaccusatives (Bonet 1991: 198; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 254). Although traditional and dialectal grammars do not note the DAT-ABS / ABS-DAT distinction, 1st/2nd person absolutive + dative agreement combinations always seem to be exemplified by ABS-DAT verbs. The rare exceptions elsewhere (e.g. Joppen and Wunderlich 1995: 134, example 19a) may involve ABS-DAT structures where the experiencer is construed as location. Indeed, nothing prevents such alternative codings of experiencers in principle, as in English *occur to X*, *dawn on X*, *strike X*, *X realize*. In Basque, beside *gustatu* ‘like’ subject to the PCC, *atsegin izan* is not (Etxepare 2003: 168). The two have the same meaning, agreement, and Case assignment, but tellingly, the latter is literally *atsegin* adj. ‘pleasant’ + *izan* ‘be’, with the dative experiencer arguably selected by the adjective and the absolutive theme by the higher ‘be’, so an ABS-DAT configuration. Other such adjectives are *zordun* ‘indebted’, *leial* ‘faithful’, *nazkagarri* ‘disgusting’ (cf. Ortiz de Urbina 1989: 37). See Kayne (1975: 71) for the French analogues (*il leur est agréable, redevable, fidèle* ‘he is pleasant, indebted, faithful to them’), where likewise the dative clitic selected by the adjective climbs yields the same result as an applicative unaccusative (*il leur plaît* ‘he is pleasing to them’).

to them for 1st/2nd person absolutive + dative combinations with DAT-ABS, not with ABS-DAT verbs. So these speakers differentiate the PCC constraint, a syntactic intervention effect by the Case/Agree approach, from morphological gaps, even though the relevant combinations do not surface.

The principal diagnostics for the proposed structure of DAT-ABS and ABS-DAT verbs are causativisation, anaphora binding, and obligatory control. Causativisation identifies the dative experiencer as the higher of the two arguments at base-generation. Basque has a causative with the following properties (Ortiz de Urbina 2003; see Baker 1988: 162-3 cross-linguistically):

- (i) A suffix attaches to the causativized verb, and adds a causer argument.
- (ii) The result is a monoclausal, forming a single domain for agreement and anaphora.
- (iii) The causer is coded by ergative case and corresponding agreement.
- (iv) The causee is coded as a dative IO if the EA of the causativised predicate; but as absolutive O if S. The O of the causativised predicate retains regular O behavior.

One way to capture these properties is to take the causative suffix as v and the causativised predicate as its VP complement. If there is only one argument in need of Case, S, it receives absolutive from the causative v . If there are two, EA and O, EA must be introduced as an applied object, and O gets absolutive from v . The causee is the highest-projected argument of the lower predicate, S/EA (this is so also on Joppen and Wunderlich's 1995 lexicalist treatment).

Ortiz de Urbina (2003) and Joppen and Wunderlich (1995: 153–4) uncover a difference between ABS-DAT verbs like *etorri* 'come' and DAT-ABS ones like *gustatu* 'like'. In the former, the causee is S, not the dative, (21)a; in the latter, it is the dative, not S, (21)b. This indicates that the dative is projected higher than S for DAT-ABS verbs, and lower for ABS-DAT ones.

- (21) a. Beharr-a-k_i Mikel_j *pro*_k diru eske etorr-erazi d-i-t_k. [Basque]
 need-the-ERG Mikel.ABS me.DAT money asking come-make X-√ED-1
 Need made Mikel come up to me asking for money.
- b. Gose-a-k_i zopa horij izugarri gustatu-erazi z-i-o_k-n mutil-a-ri_k.
 hunger-the-ERG soup that.ABS terribly liked-make X-√ED-3-PT boy-the-DAT
 Hunger made the boy like that soup a lot. (Ortiz de Urbina 2003)

A possibly correlated difference is that the dative goal of motion of ABS-DAT structures can be omitted (Artiagoitia 2000: 406–7) or have its agreement suspended in the northern dialects, while the dative experiencer of DAT-ABS structures cannot. Albizu (1997) relates the contrast to the presence vs. absence of dative clitic doubling in Spanish with these and other verb classes. There, doubling has been interpreted as signaling an applicative dative above S/O, and non-doubling a prepositional one below S/O (Cuervo 2003: 50 ff.).⁸

The next diagnostic is binding of the *bere buru* 'his head, self' anaphor, whose properties are discussed by Elordieta (2001: 78–82), Artiagoitia (2000: 110, 2003a),

⁸It is then expected that omission of dative agreement when possible eliminates the PCC; (7)b then agrees as a plain transitive, *Zuk_i ni_j poliziarik_k eraman ni_j-a-u-zu_i* (Lafitte 1979: 294/§574; Albizu 2001: 50; Artiagoitia 2000: 405).

EA of transitives and the S of unaccusatives. Applied to the structures under inquiry, it turns out that S alone can be PRO for both DAT-ABS and ABS-DAT verbs. (23) shows this for the DAT-ABS verb *gustatu*; the judgments are the same for the ABS-DAT verb *hurbildu* ‘approach’ or *etorri* ‘come’. Joppen and Wunderlich (1995: 134) and Davison (2004) reach the same conclusion with a different control complement.¹⁰

- (23) a. K_iepa-k_i ez d-a-k_i nor-i PRO_i gustatu / hurbildu. [Basque]
 K_iepa-ERG not X-TM-√know who-DAT liked / approached
 K_iepa does not know who would/should like him. (T1, R, H)
 K_iepa does not know whom to approach. (R, I)
- b. *K_iepa-k_i ez d-a-k_i nor PRO_i gustatu / hurbildu.
 K_iepa-ERG not X-TM-√know who.ABS liked approached
 intended: K_iepa does not know who to like. (T1, R, H)
 intended: K_iepa does not know who should approach him. (R, I)
- c. Ni-k_i ez d-a-k_i-t_i nor-i_j / *nor_j PRO_i gustatu.
 I-ERG not X-TM-√know-I who-DAT/*who.ABS liked
 I don't know who should like me / *I don't know who to like. (T1, R, H, I)

The PRO diagnostic attributes a special status to the S of DAT-ABS and ABS-DAT verbs, although it is base-generated below the dative in the former. Data from unaccusative + dative psych-verbs from other languages amplify this picture. Spanish is like Basque, save that its richer set of diagnostics sharpens the conclusions: both PRO and the binding of the subject-oriented anaphor *se* single out the nominative S, but quantifier-variable binding shows that the dative has the highest A-position (Masullo 1993; Béjar and Rezac 2003). In Icelandic by contrast, all diagnostics converge on the dative (Sigurðsson 2002; Jónsson 1996). This is resumed in Table 1.

Different elements are singled out by the different diagnostics, but this is expected, because they rely on different properties (Béjar and Rezac 2003: 58–61; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 310). One group depends on the A-position(s) of the lexical content of a DP: the *A-position* diagnostics of Table 1. Here belong theta-assignment in causativization, *bere buru* binding (note 9), quantifier-variable binding (e.g. Reinhart 2006: 171), and *wh*-movement which moves the interrogative content of a *wh*-word from its highest A-position.

The *subjecthood diagnostics* of being PRO and binding subject-oriented anaphora are different. In English and French, it is the nominative that passes them and counts as a *subject*, but in ergative languages it is the EA (ergative) of transitives and the S (absolutive) of unaccusatives. Bobaljik (1993: 66–73) encodes the separation of subjecthood from case by taking the subject to be the element that satisfies the EPP requirement of T by moving to [Spec, TP], and this element is simply the highest among EA, S, and O, the DPs with structural Case. Adding a dative bifurcates the situation. In Icelandic, the dative and other DPs with clearly inherent, theta-related Case group with the EA, S, and O: the highest argument counts as subject (Sigurðsson 2002). Not so in Basque and Spanish, where S is the subject despite its

¹⁰(23)c is a control clause whose PRO is 1SG. The PCC would rule out the finite version, but as discussed for (9), non-finite clauses in Basque do not show the PCC (T1, R have absolutive displacement and I, H do not). The ABS-DAT verb *joan* ‘go’ does not permit even (23)a for unclear reasons (T1, R, H, I), but other ABS-DAT structures like *zordun* / *leial izan* ‘be grateful / loyal’ (see note 7) pattern with *hurbildu* (H, R).

Table 1 EPP vs. A-position diagnostics

| Diagnostic | Icelandic (acc) | Spanish (acc) | Basque (erg) |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Subject-or. anaph. bind. | IO > S, *S > IO | *IO > S, S > IO | N/A |
| Obligatory control PRO | IO, *S | *IO, S | *IO, S |
| A-position diagnostics | IO > S, *S > IO | IO > S, *S > IO | IO > S, *S > O |
| Agreement on T | weak: S | strong: S, IO | strong: S, IO |
| PCC for S agreement | yes | No | yes |

A-position being below the dative. Béjar and Rezac (2003) propose that the nominative S of Spanish passes subjecthood diagnostics because it satisfies the EPP through the “strong” agreement that it controls on T. This is viewed as a D° head that licenses *pro*-drop and counts for the special configurational requirement of T, variously coded as an N/D, OCC, or EPP feature, independently of the position of the lexical content of the nominative (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998). The account can be extended to Basque (cf. Uriagereka 1999), where the absolutive can be *pro* in both finite and non-finite clauses (Ortiz de Urbina 1989; San Martín 1999). By contrast, “weak” agreement in Icelandic or English does not license *pro*-drop or count for the EPP in any sense, involving perhaps just Agree with an interpretable ϕ -set and not its movement to T (Rezac 2004: 4.2).¹¹

Thus, in a weak agreement language satisfying the EPP of T requires movement of the DP to [Spec, TP]; in a strong agreement language like Spanish and Basque, the rich agreement D° moved to T suffices. It remains to uncover what permits DPs with inherent Case to satisfy the EPP (count as the subject) in Icelandic but not in Spanish or Basque. Table 1 shows this to be independent of ergativity, of whether the dative counts for the PCC in unaccusatives (contra Béjar and Rezac 2003 and Anagnostopoulou 2003: 309), and likewise of whether the dative controls agreement (clitic or affix) on the same morphological complex as S. There seems to remain for now only the raw fact about two types of datives (e.g. Davison 2004).

All the elements are now in place for the derivation of DAT-ABS verbs, in Fig. 2:

- (i) The argument structure up to ApplP is Merged.
- (ii) v Merges with ApplP.

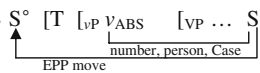
¹¹The role played by the local relationship of a ϕ -set to T for subject-oriented anaphora binding is clear in theories where they move to T to pick up their ϕ -features (Pica 1987; Cole et al. 1990; Reinhart and Reuland 1991: 301ff.); in Icelandic dative-nominative verbs, it is the non-agreeing dative subject in [Spec, TP] and not the agreeing nominative object that counts as binder (Jónsson 1996: 123). Its role in control is suggested in theories where obligatory control and obviation access the PRO ϕ -set in the C/T layer of the lower clause (Borer 1989; Landau 2000; and Watanabe 2000).

An anonymous reviewer suggests that PRO is determined by T-PRO Agree for null Case assignment, rather than the local relationship created by movement. Suppose so: there is an Agree for a feature K that identifies the same goals as satisfy the EPP in the text. Crucially, Agree-K picks out the same set of goals in finite agreeing clauses too, because this is the set of subject-oriented anaphora binders as well. Therefore, Agree-K establishes a relationship between T and the DP that in the text satisfies the EPP. Below, EPP movement is used feed Agree with the person probe of T. Agree-K can serve as its surrogate, because its goal can Agree with T for any features as free riders (Chomsky 1995: 265–270, 275). The role of Agree-K in control and binding shows it to be quintessentially syntactic. Nothing of essence changes, only talk of movement is replaced by talk of feature movement / valuation.

- (iii) v 's person probe is blocked by the dative IO.
 (iv) v 's number probe Agrees with the closest DP with number, S, and assigns it absolutive.

Up to the vP , the derivation is as in (i)–(iv), which parallels that of Basque applicative transitives (19). The PCC arises in (iii)–(iv), where v Agrees with S for number but not for person because of the intervening dative IO. The next step in the derivation is the movement of the D° head of S, as rich agreement or PRO, to satisfy the EPP of T. I assume for concreteness that it does so by moving through [Spec, TP] in the syntax (cf. Matushansky 2006; Chomsky 1995: 249), although other options such as head-adjunction or feature movement / valuation (note 11) yield the same results. As mentioned above, there exist various proposals about the feature that triggers EPP movement, such as the categorial N/D feature or the positional EPP/OCC/EF feature (Chomsky 1995, 2000, 2001, 2005; Holmberg 2000). Excluded on the present proposal are only the \emptyset -features of the ergative Case locus, T_{ERG} . In Basque S satisfying the EPP controls only absolutive (v_{ABS}) and not ergative (T_{ERG}) agreement, setting aside the limited context of the absolutive displacement phenomenon in some varieties to be studied below.¹²

Details of the structure of ABS-DAT verbs are not relevant in what follows; it is pertinent only in showing that S is base-generated and remains above the dative throughout, so the dative cannot intervene for v_{ABS} -S Agree. The Case/Agree account thus predicts absence of the Person Case Constraint (see Rezac to appear, for Abaza, building on O'Herin 2001), in spite of the identity of the resulting case and agreement morphology to that of DAT-ABS verbs.

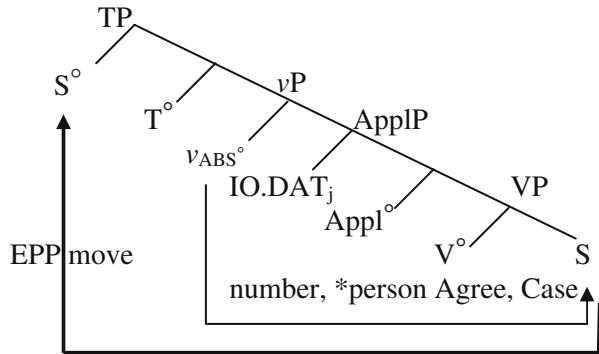
- (24) ABS-DAT verbs: $[_{TP} S^\circ [T [_{VP} v_{\text{ABS}} [_{VP} \dots S] \dots [\dots \text{DAT} \dots]]]]$


¹²In moving, S crosses the IO. This is a recurrent feature of the analyses of applicative unaccusatives, often modelled using the proposal that terms that are sufficiently close or “equidistant” are indistinguishable for locality (Chomsky 1995: 177–186, 298–299, 356–358, 2000: 122–3; cf. note 22). Specifically, α is not closer than β to the target τ of movement or Agree if α and β , or α and τ , are in the same minimal domain, where the minimal domain of H is the set of terms immediately contained in the projections of H. On the first option, S and IO might both occupy the minimal domain of Appl (McGinnis 1998; Anagnostopoulou 2003) or V (Davison 2004; Collins 1997: 23, 27).

The second option is explored particularly by Anagnostopoulou (2003) for cliticization in Greek. In Greek, S Agrees with T for person and number and passes subjecthood diagnostics, but the relation requires the cliticization or clitic doubling of the IO, (i). Anagnostopoulou proposes that the IO intervenes for Agree with T, but its D° head becomes equidistant to T by cliticizing to it. The same mechanism operates in transitives to enable Case assignment to O, with v instead of T. The idea transfers well to Basque, with dative agreement substituted for clitics (Rezac to appear): the dative D° attaches to v_{ABS} , the Case locus for both S and O, and v -to-T raising renders it equidistant from T as well. The proposal must ensure that the equidistance of the IO to the Case locus for S/O, in Basque v_{ABS} , does not void the PCC by eliminating the intervention effect of the dative for person Agree. Anagnostopoulou's solution is that person Agree is the very trigger for dative cliticization (pp. 287–291). Alternatively, the limited contexts of clear equidistance phenomena seem compatible with construing it as a principle enabling movement across an intervener, not Agree alone.

- (i) O Gianis_i ?*(tis_j) fenete tis Marias_j [_i eksipnos].
 the Gianis.NOM her.GEN seems the Maria.GEN intelligent
 John seems to Mary to be intelligent. (Greek, Anagnostopoulou 2003: 27;
 IOs are genitive in Greek)

Fig. 2 The structure of Basque DAT-ABS verbs



The derivation in Fig. 2 resembles the proposals made within the Case/Agree approach to explain why accusative languages have no PCC in applicative unaccusatives, by Albizu (1997), Ormazabal and Romero (1998), and Béjar and Rezac (2003). The common idea is that at some point there obtains a c-command relation between IO and S that should give rise to the PCC (here $v_{ABS} > IO > S$), but S gets out of it by moving to T. DAT-ABS verbs in Basque show that mere movement is insufficient; S satisfies the EPP of T, but the PCC remains. Indeed, the Case/Agree approach predicts that to avoid the PCC, person Agree with S must ensue (Béjar and Rezac 2003; cf. Baker 1996: 443–4). This is what happens in absolutive displacement.

4 Absolutive displacement in Basque

4.1 Introduction

In the derivation of DAT-ABS verbs, v -ABS Agree occurs across the dative intervener, and the Person Case Constraint arises: person Agree with 1st/2nd person S is impossible. In place of such combinations of arguments, speakers resort to a paraphrase. For example, the meaning of *gustatu* ‘like’ with 1st/2nd person S is typically expressed using the adjective *gustuko* ‘pleasing’ in secondary predication (25) (the “implicative” construction of Basque, see Rebuschi 1984: 569ff.), which is possible for any person combination:

- (25) (ni-ki) (zu) gustuko z_j-a-it_j-u-t_i. [Basque]
 I.ERG you.ABS pleasing 2-TM-PL-√have-1
 I like you, *lit.* I have (i.e. find) you pleasing / likeable. (I)

This kind of paraphrase is unrelated to PCC contexts themselves. It is of the same type as *I like you – You appeal to me*, or to pick an example with a morphological gap due to the absence of the past participle of *stride* in English, *He strode / *had stridden across the desert – He walked / had walked across the desert*. Neither of the two alternatives refers to the syntax of the other.

For some speakers, the story stops here. For others, there exists *absolute displacement*:¹³

(26) *Absolute Displacement*: In PCC contexts, the banned 1st/2nd person S is encoded by:

- (i) agreement otherwise only controlled by ergative DPs, and
- (ii) ergative or absolutive case on S, according to speaker and context.

I shall keep at first to speakers who fully ergativize S with respect to case as well as agreement, returning to others in Section 4.3. The outcome is agreement and case morphology that is identical to that of applicative transitives with 3SG absolutive and to applicative unergatives, for example *izua eman* ‘X (ergative) gives (*eman*) the fright (*izua*) to Y (dative), X frightens Y’. In this absolutive displacement recalls argument coding alternations of the *spray/load* kind or paraphrase of the *like/appeal to* kind, and might seem to involve using an applicative unergative structure with a root that also supports an applicative unaccusative one.

However, absolutive displacement has a remarkable property that sets it apart: it occurs only in PCC contexts, namely in DAT-ABS structures with 1st/2nd person S. It cannot occur with DAT-ABS verbs when S is 3rd person; with ABS-DAT verbs at all; or with plain unaccusatives. There is also no analogue by which the object of applicative transitives could escape the PCC, because these already have an ergative. There are few DAT-ABS verbs in any dialect that make sense with a 1st/2nd person S; but those that do, seem to behave as a class in being subject to the PCC and to absolutive displacement: e.g. *gustatu* ‘like’, *erori* in the sense ‘seem’, *iruditu* ‘seem’.

The following examples illustrate absolutive displacement, all from a single speaker (T1). (27) shows a DAT-ABS verb in non-PCC contexts; only absolutive case and corresponding canonically absolutive-type plural agreement (glossed PL) are legitimate. PCC blocks this when the theme is 1st/2nd person. Instead, in (28), the theme controls canonically ergative agreement on the verb (suffix), otherwise reserved to the EA, and the choice of the verbal root (*i*) indicates ergative assignment by T_{ERG}. Moreover, S actually bears ergative case. (29) shows that absolutive displacement is unavailable to ABS-DAT verbs.

¹³Absolutive displacement has apparently been noted only in Arregi (2004), for a speaker of Bizkaian (Ondarroa) Basque; Arregi treats it as a morphological phenomenon, because case is not affected in his data. The data reported here focus on three native Basque speakers (T1, T2, T3) from Tolosa (central Gipuzkoan), brought up from birth in a Basque-speaking community and with Basque as their primary language. I have confirmed the phenomenon with speakers from other dialects: L (Legazpi), R (Errenteria), Z (Zarautz). There seems to be a generational split. My consultants have all been born after 1975. There are native speakers of the same generation who do not have absolutive displacement, from varieties geographically close (I: Itxasondo, central Gipuzkoan) or remote (H: Hazparne, Low Navarrese). Some speakers (F: Hondarribia; R) have absolutive displacement combined with the “dative displacement” phenomenon discussed in Fernández (2001, 2004), Rezac (to appear), as observed in Agirre (2004). I add that both being colloquial, they seem to reinforce each other, and the combinations where both are possible (with 1SG.DAT) tend to beat those with absolutive displacement alone.

- (27) Dative + 3rd person: Absolutive displacement impossible [Basque, Tolosa]
- a. Itxaso-ri_i hura / *hark gustatzen zai-o_i / *d-i-o_i.
 Itxaso-DAT him.ABS/*ERG liking √D-3 X-√ED-3
 Itxaso likes him.
- b. Itxaso-ri_i liburu-ak/*ek_j gustatzen zai-zki_j-o_i / *d-i-o_i-te_j.
 Itxaso-DAT books-the.ABS/ERG liking √D-PL-3 X-√ED-3-PL'
 Itxaso likes the books. (T1)
- (28) DAT + 1st/2nd present of *gustatu* 'like': Absolutive displacement obligatory
- a. Itxaso-ri_i zu-k / *zu_j gustatzen d-i-o_i-zu_j.
 Itxaso-DAT you-ERG/ABS liking X-√ED-3-2
 Itxaso likes you. (NB: no agreement form at all available with *zu*)
- b. Itxaso-ri_i gu-k / *gu_j gustatzen d-i-o_i-gu_j.
 Itxaso-DAT we-ERG/ABS liking X-√ED-3-1'
 Itxaso likes us.
- c. Zu_i-k / *zu_i ni-ri_j gustatzen d-i-da_j-zu_i.
 you-ERG/ABS me-DAT liking X-√ED-TM-1-2
 I like you. (T1)
- (29) *Zu_i / *zu-k_i Itxaso-ri_k etortzen d-i-o_k-zu_i.
 you-ABS/ERG Itxaso-DAT coming X-√ED-3-2
 You are coming to Itxaso. (T1)

The resulting case and agreement morphology is identical to that found with applicative transitives and unergatives (with null 3SG O) under the mapping S=EA, as in (30), to be compared to (28)a. This identity is maintained through the various phenomena that can affect the realization of ergative-type agreement. In (31) for example, the past tense form *zenidan* has the prefix *z* tracking the ergative *zuk*, rather than the suffix *zu* as in the present tense (28)c. Such “ergative displacement” (Section 4.4) occurs equally with regular applicative transitives and unergatives. Some Basque varieties like that of Tolosa have arbitrary gaps in ergative displacement, so that T1 uses *zi(d)azum* beside *zenidan* as in (31), where the ergative S *zuk* is coded by the suffix *zu* as in the present tense. Again, this is the form found with applicative transitives and unergatives as well.

- (30) Zu-k_i Itxaso-ri_j maite d-i-o_j-zu_i. [Basque, Tolosa]
 you-ERG Itxaso-DAT love X-√ED-3-1
 You love Itxaso. (T1)
- (31) Zu-k_i ni-ri_j gustatzen z_i-en-i-da_j-n / z-i-da_j-zu_i-n. [Basque, Tolosa]
 You-ERG me-DAT liking 2-TM-√ED-1-PT X-√ED-1-2-PT
 I like you. (T1)

Absolutive displacement is then an alternation between two structures for the same verb, one that is an applicative unaccusative and one that looks like an applicative unergative. Yet the conditions of the second structure make crucial reference to the ungrammaticality of the first by the Person Case Constraint. This comparison with an alternative structure makes it impossible to subsume absolutive displacement under a lexical alternation of the *spray-load* type.

Even augmenting argument structure projection with sensitivity to ϕ -features is insufficient. To achieve the alternation, the theme would have to be projected as the external argument if it is 1st/2nd person and there is a dative, and as an internal argument otherwise. However, among DAT-ABS verbs is the raising-to-absolutive *iruditu* ‘seem’ (Artiagoitia 2001a, b; Rezac 2006). *Iruditu* selects a dative experiencer and a small clause, from which its S raises. Absolutive displacement occurs with *iruditu* as with other DAT-ABS verbs: only in PCC contexts where an absolutive S is ungrammatical (see (20)) can it be ergative, (32) (see further note 18). Since S is a raisee and not an argument of *iruditu*, the verb cannot project as unergative if S is 1st/2nd person.

- (32) *pro*_i [*pro*_j nekatuta] iruditzen d-i-da_i-zu_j. [Basque, Errenteria]
 me.DAT you.ABS tired seeming X-√ED-1-2
 You seem tired to me. (R)

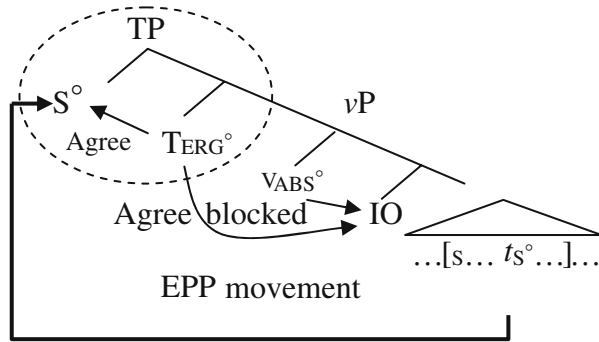
I shall start from the assumption that DAT-ABS verbs cannot manipulate their argument structure according to the person of S, so that sensitivity to ϕ -features belongs to the Case/Agree and movement components of syntax, as in other syntactic approaches to person-sensitive alternations (e.g. Laka 1993b; Rice and Saxon 1994; Hale 2001; Nichols 2001; Béjar 2003; Rezac 2003; Carnie and Jelinek 2003; Bianchi 2006). In doing so, I eschew the alternative of putting such phenomena outside the syntax and into the morphology. One reason for a syntactic approach to absolutive displacement is that it changes case morphology; change in agreement but not case has been one reason advanced for dealing with “eccentric” agreement in the morphology alone. A better reason is that the conditions of absolutive displacement are not recoverable in the morphology: the DAT-ABS – ABS-DAT distinction appealed to by the PCC is neutralized there, and for many dialects even the PCC is conflated with distinct morphological gaps for 1st/2nd + dative combinations (Section 3). These and other arguments are developed in Section 7.

4.2 The ergativity of S

The most conspicuous property of absolutive displacement is ergativity of the agreement and the case of the S of an unaccusative in a PCC context, in stark contrast to its absolutivity elsewhere.

The ergativity of a DP reflects an Agree relationship to T_{ERG}. The point of departure for understanding this is structure of DAT-ABS verbs: as just discussed, absolutive displacement is not an argument structure modification, (32) in particular indicating dative > absolutive c-command, and its speakers pass the PRO subjecthood diagnostic for S in (23). This creates the configuration in Fig. 3, where S is in a local relationship to T, and the IO does not intervene for person Agree between them. The only further step needed to derive absolutive displacement is Agree between T and S. The configuration involved (circled in Fig. 3) is extremely local, specifier-head or head-head depending on the landing site of S, and Agree is legitimate here under a variety of specific assumptions. Two apply to Fig. 3 directly. One is that Agree is generally possible in a minimal domain, including the spec-head

Fig. 3 T_{ERG} - S Agree in absolutive displacement



relationship (Chomsky 1995). Alternatively, Agree is possible when a goal c-commands a probe if there is no satisfactory goal in the c-command domain of the probe, perhaps under the further limitation that the goal be within the maximal projection of the probe, as is the case in Fig. 3 (Rezac 2003, 2004: 102–8; Richards 2004b). A third possibility is that Agree restricts a probe to goals in its complement (Chomsky 2000), but that the ergative Case locus is in fact distinct from and higher than T_{EPP}, that is AgrS_{ERG} (or Fin_{ERG}) as in Bobaljik (1993), which is immaterial for the approach to ergativity here. Whatever the details, Section 5 brings clear evidence from Icelandic that it is specifically the movement of S past the IO that allows it to Agree with T.

However, Agree of a potential Case locus and a DP only occurs when the Case locus is “active”, that is when it has a ϕ -probe under the present assumptions. In Basque, an ergative language, the sole Case locus in unaccusatives is normally v_{ABS}, and only in transitives is T_{ERG} activated as well. Yet in absolutive displacement T_{ERG} is manifestly active, as agreement, case, and auxiliary root choice show. In this resides the most unusual aspect of the phenomenon: the anomalous activation of a Case locus in a PCC context. Odd as it is, it is simply the distribution of absolutive displacement, and some portion of the grammar must bear the burden. And despite the strangeness of it, it fits naturally into the conception of Case here.

In the theory of ergativity and accusative adopted in Section 3, the difference between the two types of languages resides in the Obligatory Case Parameter. It determines which of the two potential Case loci, T and v, must be activated as the *obligatory Case locus*. In constructions where there is only one argument in need of Case, unaccusatives par excellence, only the obligatory locus is active, (33)a. In transitives there are two such DPs, (33)b. The obligatory locus Agrees with the closest, T_{NOM}-EA and v_{ABS}-O in the two types of languages, and the other Case locus is activated to assign “dependent” Case to the remaining DP, v_{ACC}-O and T_{ERG}-EA. The *dependent Case locus* is thus active in transitives but not in accusatives because only transitives have a DP that the obligatory locus cannot Case-license. This logic of the deployment of dependent Case is stated in (34). It is a cornerstone of the proposal; in accusative languages it derives Burzio’s Generalisation, which restricts active v_{ACC} to transitives (Laka 1993a, 2000). The same logic suggests the activation of the dependent locus in absolutive displacement. A PCC context is one where the 1st/2nd person feature of S cannot Agree with and get Case

from v_{ABS} , (33)c. For it to be Case-licensed, the dependent locus must be active, and T_{ERG} -S Agree Case licenses the person feature of S, (33)d.

- (33) (obligatory locus relations superscripted ¹, dependent locus ²)
- | | | | | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. | T | v_{ABS}^1 | S^1 | (unaccusatives -- erg. system) | | |
| | T_{NOM}^1 | v | S^1 | (unaccusatives -- acc. system) | | |
| b. | T_{ERG}^2 | EA^2 | $v_{ABS/ACC}^1$ | O^1 | (transitives -- erg. system) | |
| | T_{NOM}^1 | EA^1 | $v_{ABS/ACC}^2$ | O^2 | (transitives -- acc. system) | |
| c. | T_{ERG} | v_{ABS}^1 | IO | 1/2:S | (PCC -- erg. system) | |
| d. | 1/2:S ² | T_{ERG}^2 | v_{ABS}^1 | IO | t_S | (Abs. disp. -- erg. system) |

- (34) A dependent Case locus is active if and only if its activation provides Case for a DP that would not receive Case otherwise.

In a system where parameters are coded in the functional lexicon, the distribution of Case is a property of lexical items such as transitive v . The proposal (34) that dependent loci are active only as needed requires both a differentiation of primary and dependent loci, and the potential of dependent loci to activate according to the needs of the structure where they exist. Laka (2000: 108–113) formulates one approach. All Case loci bear probes (uninterpretable features) responsible for Case assignment, but probes on obligatory loci need to Agree, while dependent ones do not: a [+active] property of probes. Thus, a dependent locus like T_{ERG} always has a probe, but a derivation where it Agrees converges only if the obligatory locus has satisfied its need to Agree. Adding the assumption that a feature cannot be assigned Case twice, [-active] probes Agree only if there is a feature that cannot Agree with a [+active] probe.

An alternative without this assumption and with undifferentiated Case probes is advanced in Rezac (2007), for phenomena like absolute displacement where Case is available only as needed. It develops the proposal of Chomsky (1995: 377, 294; 2000: 109–110; 2001: 34), that optional operations, like Object Shift and QR, rely on a probe that is present only if it has an effect at the interface. These play the role of Laka's [-active] probes. Adding one to a Case locus invokes comparison with an alternative derivation without it that crashes at the interface, or “reference set computation” (Fox 2000; Reinhart 2006). Obligatory Case loci bear a probe in the lexicon.

On either proposal, the configuration of T and S reached in Fig. 3 automatically leads to Agree in PCC contexts and only there. A PCC context is one where the 1st/2nd person feature of S is not Case-licensed by v_{ABS} , so the dependent Case locus is active by (34). Both proposals need a way to differentiate speakers who do and who do not allow absolute displacement, in otherwise identical structure. An unrevealing possibility is parametrizing whether the T selecting an unaccusative v is a dependent Case locus (Rezac 2007: 116). The next section ends by suggesting alternatives based on what happens to S earlier in the derivation.

4.3 The absolutivity of S

1st/2nd person S in absolute displacement not only gains ergativity, it also loses an aspect of canonical absolutivity not predicted so far: a plural S fails to trigger canonical absolute plural agreement, glossed PL. One may contrast *zaizkio* of (27)b,

with PL *zki* controlled by the 3PL.ABS S, with *diogu* of (28)b, where the 1PL.ERG S *guk* controls 1' *gu* but no PL. This absence does not have a trivial explanation. The expected form *dizkiogu* does exist, for 1PL.ERG (*gu*) > 3SG.DAT (*o*) > 3PL.ABS (*zki*), and the 1PL.ABS S of a plain unaccusative does control PL. So under absolutive displacement S not only loses person Agree with *v*, through the PCC, but also number Agree, which is not sensitive to a dative intervener (cf. the [Appendix](#)).

This calls into question whether absolutive displacement includes the step of Agree between *v* and S at all. Its absence could be derived by adopting the following hypotheses, which articulate a version of the proposal that Agree and Case assignment go together (Chomsky 2000, 2001), relative to split Agree: (i) a feature can Agree once only (Rezac 2003), and (ii) Case assignment requires Agree by all the features of the DP getting Case (Anagnostopoulou 2003: 274). Number Agree between *v* and S would block number Agree between T and S by (i), and thus by (ii) the ergative assignment needed to license S's person feature. However, evidence to be considered directly suggest (ii) is incorrect and that *v* does assign Case to S in absolutive displacement. An alternative is that the impossibility of person Agree between *v* and S, due to the Person Case Constraint, blocks also the valuation of the number probe. The required hypothesis is that Agree for number is not possible if Agree for person fails, that is with 1PL/2PL.¹⁴ Finally, the absence of the expected PL could be trivial: there is a known morphophonological tendency to realize a given ϕ -feature of a controller in one agreement complex once only, even when contributed by multiple agreement relationships (Hale et al. 1991: 267–8; Carstens 2005: 252–5; Rezac 2006).

The evidence alluded to for *v*-S Agree is case. So far I have kept to absolutive displacement from speakers for whom S gets ergative case. Others have the phenomenon with exactly the same distribution, and ergative-type agreement and auxiliary root selection, but the case of S need not be ergative. Table 2 shows the variation among five speakers. Some require the ergative, some the absolutive (as in Arregi 2004), and for some it vacillates according to properties of the context that

¹⁴The hypothesis is the reverse of disallowing person-without-number Agree for 1st/2nd person (Taraldsen 1995: 310–2; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 268–9). This is untenable in Basque, where 1PL/2PL agree for person without number in “ergative displacement” (references in Section 4.4), but where the reverse never clearly occurs (Rezac 2006, inter alia correcting the analysis of 2PL in Rezac 2003). Yet the two ideas are related, and work on the former does end up preventing 1PL/2PL from agreeing for number alone. The envisaged dependence of number on person for 1PL/2PL could be responsible for asymmetries where 1PL/2PL but not 3PL control otherwise expected number agreement, with no other correlated differences such as weak / strong pronoun status: object agreement in Georgian, though not in all varieties nor in Old Georgian (Harris 1981: 213–5, 301, note 5; Béjar 2003: 124, note 14, who also cites Dakota); subject agreement in Poch'er Breton, but not in say Leon Breton (Trevidig 1987: 72 s.v. *kwit*).

One theoretical interpretation of the hypothesis is the following, in a system where Agree operates on features-geometric structures (Béjar 2003; Béjar and Rezac 2007), and the geometry is such that the presence of the number node entails that of the person node: A probe specified to look for the feature-geometric tree containing both person and number cannot copy number without copying the structure that number entails, namely person (the reverse being fine, as is copying of number alone by a probe looking only for the number sub-tree). If dative intervention in the PCC comes down to some minimal valuation of the person probe from the dative (Boeckx 2000; Rezac to appear; Richards 2004a), then the person from the dative and the one copied via number Agree with 1PL/2PL absolutive would conflict, and only the personless 3PL could agree for number (cf. Boeckx 2000).

Table 2 Case of S in absolutive displacement

| IO dative > S | Tense | Form | T1 | T2 | T3 | L | R |
|------------------------------------|---------|---|------------|------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| 2SG _i >1SG _j | present | d-i-da _j -zu _i | (ERG) | (ERG) | * | ABS | ?ERG/?ABS |
| 2SG _i >3SG _j | present | d-i-o _j -zu _i | ERG | ERG | ABS | ERG | ERG |
| 2SG _i >1SG _j | past | z _i -en-i-da _j -n | ERG | <i>pro</i> | ABS | ABS | ?ERG |
| 2SG _i >3SG _j | past | z _i -en-i-o _j -n | <i>pro</i> | ERG | ABS | ERG | ?ERG |

The sentences tested for this table are those of (28). ERG = *zuk*; ABS = *zu*; absence of ERG or ABS means it is ungrammatical (* when both are); (ERG) means *pro*-dropped S is preferred but ERG is possible.

include tense and ϕ -features.¹⁵ Particularly noteworthy are those cells, signaled by *pro*, where absolutive displacement is only possible only if S is *pro*-dropped.

The variation seems to show no interesting correlations with properties of the context.¹⁶ Elsewhere in Basque, case is stable for 1st/2nd person pronouns: EA is ergative, S absolutive.

I suggest that the variation be interpreted as the morphological resolution of v -assigned absolutive and T-assigned ergative Case, and thus fall under the phenomenon of multiple case resolution studied by Young (1988). (35) is an example from classical Greek: *oida* 'I know' assigns accusative to the relative pronoun *ha* 'which', but the latter can also assume the genitive case borne by the relative head *kakōn* 'evils'. Young discusses the different options languages take, allowing to surface one or either of the cases, or only forms syncretic for both. The latter occurs in the Norwegian topicalization (36), which is of particular interest because like absolutive displacement, it involves two structural Cases. Taraldsen (1981) argues that the topicalized NP is assigned nominative in the downstairs clause at t_i , and accusative by the upstairs verb in the intermediate position t'_i . The net result is that only DPs syncretic for nominative and accusative can topicalize. This recalls examples where absolutive displacement is possible only if S is *pro*-dropped; 1st/2nd person pronouns in Basque are not syncretic for case.

- (35) Pro \bar{t} ōn kakōn ha / hōn oida. [Classical Greek]
 instead the.GEN evils.GEN which.ACC / which.GEN know.1SG
 Instead (+GEN) of the evils which I know (+ACC). (Young 1988: 86)

¹⁵Similarly in (i), from a brief text by a single speaker, with 1SG S under absolutive displacement (by agreement) being ergative in the present and absolutive in the past; 3SG S in the text does not undergo absolutive displacement.

- (i) Bera-ri_i ere \bar{n} i- \bar{k} j gustatzen d-i-o_i- \bar{t} j [...] \bar{n} i_i *pro*_j gustatzen \bar{n} i-i-o_j-la.
 him-DAT also I-ERG liking X- $\sqrt{\text{ED}}$ -3-1 I.ABS him.DAT liking I- $\sqrt{\text{ED}}$ -3-that
 He also likes me. (... he told me) that he likes me (and I told him that I like him).

(http://diariovasco.hator.com/kupidoren-txokoa.php?id_indice=134&erag=ikusi&id=1525, retrieved 29/07/2007.)

¹⁶Factors other than ϕ -features and tense bear on the case of S; using the perfect form *gustatu* 'liked' rather than the progressive *gustatzen* 'liking' of (28), and combining absolutive displacement with dative displacement (note 13).

- (36) Per / dere / *jeg / *meg hadde de trod. [Norwegian]
 Per / you / *me.NOM / *me.ACC had they thought
 [CP' [TP t_i ville komme forsent]]
 would come too.late]]
 Peter / you / *me, they had thought would come too late. (Young 1988: 30)

Multiple Case assignment allows an understanding the case oscillation of S under absolutive displacement between ergative and absolutive. Both are assigned to it, and which (if any) surfaces depends on the component resolving multiple Case at spell-out, such as the specification of individual lexical items (but see Sobin 1997; Quinn 2005 for more powerful mechanisms).¹⁷

The step of ν -S Agree in absolutive displacement opens two interesting avenues for understanding the difference between speakers with and without the phenomenon, left unresolved at the end of the least section. One is that those who do not allow it might simply lack a way to spell-out elements with multiple case, even *pro*. The other departs from the observation that despite the ν -S Agree indicated by absolutive case, the number probe of ν seems to go unvalued, as discussed above. Theoretically, an unvalued probe should crash a derivation because it fails Full Interpretation at the interfaces. Empirically, such “Inverse Case Filter” violations are nuanced (Rezac 2004: 333–344). One context where the probe of the obligatory Case locus would remain unvalued are unaccusatives with no nominative / absolutive argument, found in Irish and Icelandic, but not in English or Basque. This suggests that the Basque ν does not normally tolerate an unvalued probe, and that the parameter yielding a grammar with absolutive displacement is the existence of a default valuation mechanism.

4.4 Absolutive displacement and ergative displacement

Absolutive displacement interacts with a phenomenon known as *ergative displacement*:

- (37) *Ergative displacement*: In non-present tense, if the absolutive is 3rd person, 1st/2nd person ergative controls absolutive-type person (not number) agreement morphology, i.e. a prefix, rather than, or in addition to, ergative-type morphology, i.e. a suffix.

Table 3 exemplifies for plural ergatives. Ergative displacement is subject in some varieties to arbitrary gaps (Rezac 2006); in Tolosa (including for T1), it fails to apply for 2nd person in Table 3. Section 4.1 notes that the S undergoing absolutive displacement behaves exactly like the ergative of transitives for agreement, including for ergative displacement and its gaps.

Most accounts try to cash out the intuition that 1st/2nd person has something “person-like” that 3rd person lacks, like a person feature (Laka 1993b: 52) or an

¹⁷One other piece of evidence supports absolutive assignment in absolutive displacement, relying on (32). For speakers like R, *irudi(tu)* ‘seem’ with a dative experiencer does not allow raising to ergative, and a 3rd person raisee in (32) would be absolutive for case and agreement. If this is a syntactic constraint (Albizu and Fernández 2002; Rezac to appear); (32) proceeds via raising to absolutive followed by absolutive displacement. (If it is rather the result of a morphological constraint (Albizu and Fernández 2006), absolutive displacement in the syntax bleeds it.)

Table 3 Ergative displacement (shaded cells)

| ERG | Typical (+ dialectal variant) | | Tolosa |
|-----|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Present | Past | Past |
| 1PL | d-i-o- <u>gu</u> | g-en-i-o-(<u>gu</u> -)n | g- <u>in</u> -i-o-n |
| 2 | d-i-o-zu | z-en-i-o-(<u>zu</u> -)n | z-i-o- <u>zu</u> -n |
| 3PL | d-i-o- <u>te</u> | z-i-o- <u>te</u> -n | z-i-o- <u>te</u> -n |

Forms are given for ergative (underlined) + 3SG dative (*o*) + 3SG absolutive. Other morphemes: $\sqrt{\text{ED}}$ *i*, default prefix *d* (present), *z* (past).

overt exponent for it (Azkue 1924: 556, §791). The ergative supplies the lack. Both syntactic and morphological proposals exist (Laka 1993b; Fernández and Albizu 2000; Fernández 2001; Rezac 2003, 2006; Albizu and Eguren 2000; Albizu 2002; Arregi and Nevins forthcoming). All evidence known to me, reviewed in Rezac (2006), is inconclusive. On a morphological approach to ergative displacement, the syntax of absolutive displacement simply feeds it and there are no complications; but if ergative displacement is syntactic, the interaction of the two needs spelling out.¹⁸

The basic idea of recent syntactic analyses is that ergative displacement occurs because the person probe of v_{ABS} is not satisfied by a 3rd person internal argument, which permits it to Agree with the external argument. One version of the details is worked out in Rezac (2003). (38) illustrates for a 1st person EA and 3rd person O, with 3rd person by hypothesis unspecified for [person]. The person probe on v seeks a goal as soon as possible: first in the complement which Merges with v first, and only if it does not find one there, in [Spec, $v\text{P}$] once added.

$$(38) \quad \frac{\text{Second cycle}}{[v\text{P} \text{ [person} = 1]_{\text{EA}} \leftrightarrow_{\text{Agree}}]} \quad \frac{\text{First cycle}}{[v \text{ [person probe}]_v \leftrightarrow_{\text{Agree fails}} [\text{no person}]_O]}$$

This story is silent about how the search space of v “expands” to include the EA, and this is where interaction with absolutive displacement occurs. The S of absolutive displacement undergoes ergative displacement, but it is not the external argument of v ; it raises from within the complement of v to [Spec, TP]. However, it is independently necessary that such raisees undergo ergative displacement exactly like external arguments. The evidence comes from raising-to-ergative structures with ‘seem’ (Artiagoitia 2001a, b). In (39), *zuk* ‘you’ raises from within the small clause for ergative case and agreement, and this extends to undergoing ergative displacement (prefix *z*). The configuration of T, v , and the ergative raisee here is precisely the same as in absolutive displacement, (40), and whatever story works for (39) works for both.

¹⁸The cited approaches discuss how to capture the properties of ergative displacement that hold independently of absolutive displacement, such as the person-number difference and the limitation to non-present tense.

- (39) Baina zu-ki_i [t_i kaiola har-tan horren pozik eta zoriontsu] [Basque]
 but you-ERG cage that-in so glad and happy
 z_i-en-irudi-en!
 2-TM-√seem-PT
 But you seemed so glad and happy in that cage! (Rezac 2006)
- (40) [TP raisee_i T [_{νP} (t'_i?) ν [... t_i ...]]] [raising-to-erg. / abs. displ.]

The following options have been entertained for expanding the search-space of ν to the EA (Rezac 2003: 157–9; 2004: 94, note 114, 102–8; 2006): expansion is automatic because there is no intrinsic restriction on search-space; search-space is restricted by c-command, and expansion occurs through raising to a higher head like T that c-commands the EA; the same restriction, and expansion occurs when ν projects because the projection c-commands the EA. The first two options allow ν to Agree with a DP in [Spec, TP], if there is no lower goal for its person probe, which is the situation in (40). The last does so only if S passes through a [Spec, ν P] on the way, t' in (40), as argued for English raising by Sauerland (2003).

5 Movement and agreement in Icelandic

The core components of the analysis of absolutive displacement are the following:

- (i) S moves past an intervener that creates the Person Case Constraint.
- (ii) After movement, an otherwise impossible Agree with T can be established.
- (iii) The new Agree relation obviates the Person Case Constraint would otherwise be incurred.

Much of the interest of the Case/Agree approach to the Person Case Constraint lies in these proposals. Through (i) and (ii), the syntax plays a key role in conditions on person agreement, because movement is part of syntax. Through (ii) and (iii), one stage of the derivation repairs a problem incurred at an earlier one. I return to these points in Section 7. This section supports (i)–(iii) with evidence from Icelandic “long raising” (Holmberg and Hróarsdóttir 2003; Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming), which overlaps and extends that of absolutive displacement.

The Person Case Constraint is found in Icelandic applicative unaccusatives (Taraldsen 1995; Sigurðsson 1996; Boeckx 2000; Anagnostopoulou 2003). The argument structure is the same as in Basque, with the dative IO c-commanding the nominative S. In the functional architecture there are two differences. First, Icelandic is an accusative language, so T_{NOM} rather than ν_{ABS} is the Case locus of unaccusatives. Second, it is the (non-agreeing) dative IO that passes all subjecthood diagnostics and satisfies the EPP, not the (agreeing) nominative S (see Section 3):

- (41) [TP IO.DAT [T_{NOM} [_{νP} [_ν [_{AppIP} t_{IO} Appl [_{νP} V ... S.NOM]]]]]]
 ↑ agreement, Case, number
 EPP move

On the Case/Agree approach to the PCC, the dative IO between T and S blocks their person Agree. This is seen in (42) and (43). The first constituent is in [Spec, CP], the inflected verb is in C, the [Spec, TP] or EPP position is immediately post-verbal (boxed). The verb must not agree with the nominative S (bold), whether the dative (underlined) remains overtly between it and T, (42)a, or not, (42)b. A 3rd person S, (42)c, can Agree for number, although it need not. The non-agreeing versions seem to Case-license the nominatives in-situ within the infinitive (Appendix).

- (42) a. *Liklega mundi/*mundum_j henni_i þá ξ virðast **við_j** vera hæfir.* [Icelandic]
 probably would.3SG/*1PL her.DAT then seem we.NOM
 be competent
 We would then probably seem to her to be competent.
- b. *Hverjum_i mundi/*mundum_j t_i þá ξ virðast **við_j** vera hæfir?*
 who.DAT would.3SG/1PL then seem we.NOM. be competent
 To whom would we then seem to be competent?
- c. *Hvaða knapa_i mundi/mundum_j t_i þá ξ finnast **þessir hestar_j** vera fljótir?*
 what jockey.DAT would.3SG/3PL then seem these horses.NOM be fast
 To what jockey would these horses then have seemed to be fast?
 (Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming, annotations and translations added)

Since the dative satisfies the EPP, there would seem to be no room for an analogue of absolutive displacement to repair the PCC: there is no position above the IO to which S could move and Agree with T. However, if the dative moves to an \bar{A} -position, somehow one becomes available, and S may undergo “long raising” past the in-situ position of the dative, (43). This long raising has a consequence of paramount importance here: it feeds person and number agreement with T. With (42) c transformed to (43) by long raising, full agreement of S with T is required, and the Person Case Constraint disappears (Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming).¹⁹

- (43) *Hverjum_i mundum_j/*mundi við_i þá ξ virðast t_j vera hæfir?* [Icelandic]
 who.DAT would.1PL/3SG we.NOM then seem be competent
 To whom would we then seem to be competent? (Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming)

The syntax of long raising and agreement is sketched in (44), based on Holmberg and Hróarsdóttir (2003). On their proposal, the dative moves to [Spec, CP] without passing through the [Spec, TP] EPP position, and the nominative raises there past the dative’s trace. This derivation has the three components of absolutive displacement: raising past an intervener (the dative’s trace), a new T-S Agree relation, and disappearance of the Person Case Constraint. The nature and the exact landing site of long raising are unclear, but it clearly targets a vP -external position above the sentential adverb *þá* in (43), and so above the in-situ position of the dative. The Case/Agree approach predicts that as soon as the nominative by-passes the dative, it can Agree with T without its interference, provided it remains within the search-space

¹⁹Moreover, some speakers do not allow agreement of 3rd person S in (42)c, requiring *mundi*, but do allow it if long raising occurs (Holmberg and Hróarsdóttir 2003: 671).

applicative unaccusatives, including passives of transitives, yet it is fine (Béjar and Rezac 2003: 56, 58; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 254). Absolutive displacement suggests why this might be: if S raises past IO to satisfy the EPP and Agree with T for person, the PCC disappears. This is the prediction in (14), repeated below.

- (14) PCC obviation: In the configuration $H > X > Y$, where $>$ is c-command, and X is an intervener for person Agree (here the applicative dative IO), either H-Y person Agree is impossible (PCC), or Y raises past X to a position still within the search-space of H, and then can Agree with H for person (no PCC)

In light of this, the following is a key property of accusative languages: because the Case locus of unaccusatives is T_{NOM} , not v , it is not possible to determine from surface case and agreement whether S Agrees with T for person before or after moving out of the vP to satisfy the EPP, (45). In Basque this was possible because the Case locus prior to the movement is v_{ABS} , and after it is T_{ERG} . So an accusative language obscures whether a derivation like absolutive displacement has taken place, as far as case and agreement go. Since S generally does satisfy the EPP in applicative unaccusatives (Section 3), the Person Case Constraint is mostly undetectably repaired. To make it surface, S must be prevented from Agreeing intervener-free with T – for example, by having the IO satisfy the EPP, as in Icelandic (42). This is the proposal of Béjar and Rezac (2003) and similar to those of Albizu (1997) and Ormazabal and Romero (1998). It seems to carve out exactly the right empirical domain for the PCC to fail in: applicative unaccusatives in accusative languages where S satisfies the EPP, as the rest of this section outlines.²¹

- (45) S T (v) [_{AppIP} IO Appl [_{VP} V t_S]]
 ↑_{person} | _____
 EPP movement

(45) combines the following properties: the IO is base-generated above S; S raises past it to pass the EPP-related subjecthood diagnostics of Section 3; and Agree between T and S ensues automatically, obviating the Person Case Constraint. French, Spanish, and Greek are accusative languages with these properties. French, which is not *pro*-drop, overtly shows the movement of S, as in (46) (cf. Postal 1984, 1989: 37–8; Legendre 1989; Roberge and Troberg 2007: 317). The dative clitics signal an IO in the applicative construction (Kayne 1975: 154–160, Anagnostopoulou 2003: 281–5). The nominative S *je* satisfies the EPP, letting it and it alone bind subject-oriented anaphors like *me*, and it manifests no person agreement restrictions.

- (46) Je me/lui plais $t_{me/lui}$ t_{je} avec les cheveux longs. [French]
 I.NOM me.DAT/him.DAT please.1SG with the hair long
 I like myself with long hair. / She likes me with long hair.

²¹“Accusative” means with respect to (person) agreement. Consider Georgian (Harris 1981), where the PCC occurs in applicative transitives but not unaccusatives. Case morphology is ergative or accusative according to tense; but agreement is always accusative, grouping EA and S against O (Béjar 2003: 129–131). Whatever lets person Agree treat S as EA should also allow S to Agree without intervention of the IO; it might involve S passing through [Spec, vP], since S does not necessarily end up as the subject (Harris 1981: chapters 8, 14, 15; McGinnis 1995).

Reviewing oblique subjects in Himalayan languages, Bickel (2004) shows that in Kashmiri and Nepali dative-nominative constructions, only the nominative S has the subjecthood properties of raising and being PRO. Hence no PCC is expected, correctly:²²

- (47) a. malāi timī man par-ch-au. [Nepali]
 1SG.DAT 2.M.HON.NOM liking occur-NPT-2.M.HON
 I like you. (Bickel & Yādava 2000: 348)
- b. me o:su-kh ts+ seṭha: pasand. [Kashmiri]
 1SG.DAT be-2SG.NOM 2SG.NOM very liking
 I liked you very much. (Wali and Koul 1997: 253)

Not all accusative languages behave in this way. Icelandic is the counter-example already discussed in Section 5, and it fits the predictions of (14). In this language the Person Case Constraint does occur in applicative unaccusatives, (48).²³ The Case/Agree accounts entails that S does not satisfy the EPP. Instead, the dative IO does, the well-known “quirky subject” property of Icelandic (Section 3). The derivation in (49) shows that there is no configuration where S could Agree with T without interference by the dative. Quirky dative subjects let the Person Case Constraint emerge in an accusative language even in applicative unaccusatives – only to be repaired when the “long raising” of Section 5 brings S above the dative.

- (48) a. Henni_j hafði / höfðu_i t_j fundist [pær_i vera duglegar] [Icelandic]
 her.DAT had.3SG/3PL found they.NOM be industrious
 They seemed to her to be industrious.
- b. Henni_j hafði / *höfðuð_i t_j fundist [þið_i vera duglegar]
 her.DAT had.3SG/*2PL found you.NOM be industrious
 You seemed to her to be industrious. (Icelandic, Sigurðsson 1996: 39)

- (49) IO T (v) [_{AppP} t_{IO} Appl[_{VP} V S]]
 ↑ |-----|
 EPP movement

Icelandic is somewhat lonely as a quirky subject language. Other candidates for the derivation in (49) occur in Finnish (Rezac 2007), Tamil (Sigurðsson 2004; Ura 2000: 117–125), Central Catalan (Rigau 2005), and Breton (Rezac 2004: 313–7). Each restricts nominative agreement to 3rd person in the presence of an oblique subject.

There is another person restriction that fits the predictions of (14) in a different way. It occurs in the mediopassive *se/si* construction from transitive verbs in Romance, such as Italian (50). In these structures, the external argument is an impersonal pronoun whose presence is detectable by syntactic diagnostics but that has no overt realisation, unless it is the clitic *si* itself. The object bears nominative case and controls agreement on T, so it behaves like the S of unaccusatives, but it is restricted to 3rd person. D’Alessandro (2004) develops an analysis explicitly

²²Glosses from the source: HON honorific, M masculine, NPT non-past.

²³There is no PCC in Icelandic applicative transitives (Anagnostopoulou 2003: 259), but there is no overt agreement to judge by, and pronouns are weak and strong, not clitics (Jónsson 1996), so not affected by the PCC (Appendix).

analogous to that of the Person Case Constraint, (51)a. There is only one Case locus, T_{NOM}; the impersonal external argument Agrees with it for person, and thus prevents further person Agree with the object. Beside the mediopassive *si*, Italian also has the “nominative” *si* impersonal construction in (50)c, where the object is a regular accusative and carries no person restriction. This is a normal transitive, (51)b, and the impersonal argument in [Spec, vP] does not intervene for Agree between v_{ACC} and the object.

- (50) a. I Rossi/?loro *si* inviterebbero volentieri [Italian]
 the Rossi's/they *se* would.invite.3PL willingly
 The Rossi's/they would be eagerly invited. [mediopassive *si*]
 b. *Tu *si* inviter-ai volentieri [mediopassive *si*]
 you.NOM *se* will.invite-2SG willingly
 c. Ti *si* inviter-à [nominative *si*]
 you.ACC *se* will.invite-3SG
 You will be (eagerly) invited. (Italian, Burzio 1986: 49)
- (51) a. EA_i/*si*_i + T_{NOM} [vP t_i [v [VP V O.NOM_j]]] [mediopassive *si*]
 a. EA_i/*si*_i + T_{NOM} [vP t_i [v_{ACC} [VP V O.ACC_j]]] [nominative *si*]

The mediopassive *si* contrasts with applicative unaccusatives (including passives) in Italian, which impose no person restriction on S (D'Alessandro 2004: 137–8; Burzio 1986: 49). D'Alessandro's analysis suggests why the Person Case Constraint arises only in mediopassives. Their impersonal argument has a person feature that irrevocably values the person probe of T, perhaps to license its own “impersonal” person feature. In contrast, a dative IO intervenes for person Agree, but it does not actually value a person probe, and so does not prevent person Agree once S moves past it. The mediopassives thus instantiate a new way to create the Person Case Constraint that fits (14): a valuation of the relevant person probe, rather than the mysterious intervention caused by the dative IO.^{24,25}

7 Agreement in syntax and morphology

The main effect studied in the foregoing paradigms is PCC obviation (14), schematized in (52): person Agree between H and Y is impossible if X intervenes,

²⁴D'Alessandro's analysis seems suitable to the PCC in *se*-impersonals elsewhere, including the type discussed in Rivero (2005: 1094–8). Rivero (2004) shows that the Person Case Constraint also turns up in Spanish “inherent” *se* + dative + nominative unaccusatives, and depends on *se* being specified for person. The role of person on impersonal *se* extends naturally to these (cf. D'Alessandro 2004: 156).

²⁵The Case/Agree account predicts that the set of options discussed here for unaccusatives should also be found for transitives where EA is a dative-like intervener for Agree and O is a nominative agreeing with the Case locus T rather than v, an analysis proposed for example for Hindi-Urdu (see Mahajan 1989; Davison 2004; Bhatt 2006; Woolford 1997, 2006 for discussion). Unless O raises past the EA, the EA should block person agreement between T and O. In Hindi-Urdu this cannot be tested, since 1st/2nd person O bears the dative-like “differential” case marker *ko* that prevents agreement (cf. the Appendix for such non-Agree Case licensing). Data appearing to show the expected PCC effect in Gujarati are discussed in Bhatt (2006: 801), Rezac (to appear).

but fine if Y moves over X while remaining in the search-space of H (> indicates c-command, >> search-space).

- (52) H-Y person Agree: a. *H >> X > Y b. \sqrt{H} >> Y > X > t_Y

A syntactic approach to the Person Case Constraint, like the Case/Agree approach, fits PCC obviation on two general grounds. First, it correlates the (im)possibility of person Agree with a certain phrase-structural configuration of H, X, and Y, rather than a morphological or theta-theoretic one. In the most pertinent examples of the Person Case Constraint and its obviation, X and Y need not be coarguments, and the morphology systematically conflates the banned configuration (52)a with others that have no agreement restriction and/or no repair, for example DAT-ABS with ABS-DAT structures in Basque. Second, a syntactic approach predicts the saving role of movement in PCC obviation (14)/(52), since it is an expected property of syntactic dependencies that movement past a barrier to a dependency repairs it, or rather allows a new dependency of the same type. Movement is argued to have the same effect in recent work on intervention for number agreement in Icelandic varieties (Holmberg and Hróarsdóttir 2003; Sigurðsson and Holmberg forthcoming; Kučerová to appear). A morphological approach does not make the same prediction: there might be a feature to trigger “long raising”, and a morphological approach can state that its presence enables otherwise impossible person agreement, but the correlation is a stipulation no more expected than its reverse.²⁶

Syntactic “intervention” accounts thus dispose of the right notions of structure, locality, and movement to account for (51). The specific choices of Case, a person probe, and the EPP here, and of the mechanism of intervention, are secondary. I return below to the more general question of how much the syntax needs to see or implement of the mechanics of person agreement itself.²⁷

The argument that morphology lacks the right notion of structure depends on how abstract a morphological account can be and still be morphological. By morphology I mean the component responsible inter alia for contextual allomorphy and

²⁶It is not in fact clear that in morphology the format of intervention (52)a, *target (H) - intervener (X) - controller (Y) vs. \sqrt{H} -X, should be more expected than *H-X-Y, *Y-H-X, etc., to judge by allomorphy (cf. Bobaljik 2000 for discussion).

²⁷The derivational terminology is inessential. The notions of “earlier” and “later” positions linked by “movement” can be replaced by those of configurations obtaining lower and higher in the representation, as in Brody’s (1995: 39–40) approach to violations the Proper Binding Condition by remnant movement: A DP chain is not subject to the PCC if it contains some link in a configuration where there is no intervention effect on its person Agree. However, while it is indeed expected that “movement” past a dependency barrier repairs it, Brody (2002: 25–6) observes an empirical gap here: the familiar interactions of operations feed constraints that render a derivation ungrammatical, but they do not seem to repair a constraint once one is incurred at a particular derivational step. For example, A-movement from the object position to [Spec, TP] feeds the ban on extraction out of subjects in (i) (Chomsky 1995: 328), but there is no repair by later movements. This is as expected for this example: a subject is opaque to extraction because it is in a left branch, and raising it to a right branch would mean that the constituent it raises out of is itself a left branch. However, a systematic gap in such interaction of operations is a concern. Movement that repairs agreement restrictions furnishes an example; Hornstein (1995: 137) provides another one, A-movement repairing superiority violations.

(i) a Who_i did Bill take a [picture of t_i].

b *Who_i was [a picture of t_j]_i taken t_i by Bill.

“arbitrary” gaps, as in the English past (*yell - yell-ed*, *dwell - dwel-t*, *tell - tol-d*, *forgo - gap*), for it is the properties of this component that are invoked in analyses that argue persuasively for placing a certain agreement or clitic phenomenon in the morphology (e.g. Bonet 1991; Noyer 1997; Bobaljik 2000). This component can be functionally distinguished from syntax because: (i) its vocabulary is partly different, including phonological and diacritic features; (ii) its operations and structures have partly different properties, such as sensitivity to adjacency; (iii) and it does not affect the mapping to LF, or “narrow syntax”. I shall speak in terms of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993; Harley and Noyer 1999; Bobaljik 2000; Embick 2000; Embick and Noyer 2001), but these properties hold generally of frameworks that seek to account architecturally for the encapsulation of syntax from morphophonological features and their manipulations (e.g. Sproat 1985; Ackema and Neeleman 2005). On such a view, the touchstone that would put a phenomenon into narrow syntax is an effect on the mapping to LF, and I shall return to it at the end this section.

With Distributed Morphology as model, the matter of abstractness can be formulated concretely. Basque agreement conflates the expression of dative + absolutive unaccusative structures for both of the hierarchical relationships of these arguments at base-generation, DAT-ABS and ABS-DAT structures. This neutralization is a profound fact about the surface morphology of Basque, not to be attributed to poverty of expression, as the same conflation might be in Icelandic (see discussion of ex. (10)), where only a single nominative-controlled agreement slot appears. The Basque agreement complex includes separate and ordered slots for the absolutive person, number, dative person+number, and the root indicating the presence of a dative, an absolutive, but no ergative. It is this structure, never the syntactic DAT-ABS – ABS-DAT distinction, to which all that is clearly allomorphy pays attention. An example in conspicuous contrast with absolutive displacement is the merger of the agreement complexes for dative + absolutive with those for dative + absolutive + ergative structures, which is in progress in some dialects (Fernández 2004; Rezac 2006). The vagaries of morphology are such that the net effect on agreement is often the same as that of absolutive displacement: dative + 3SG (and sometimes 3PL) absolutive comes to look like 3SG absolutive + dative + 3SG (3PL) ergative.²⁸ Beyond the agreement complex however, the two phenomena are remarkably different. First, auxiliary merger respects the neutralization of the DAT-ABS – ABS-DAT, and

²⁸Some concrete examples are as follows (data from de Yrizar 1992: 381ff.). The earlier stages in the dialects concerned paradigmatically differentiate the two case regimes (Hondarribia, Azkue) 3PL.ABS_i + 3SG.DAT_j *zai_i+j-zki_i-yo_j*, versus 3PL.ABS_i + 3SG.DAT_j + 3SG.ERG_k *ti_i-i_v+j+k-o_j*; differences are in the choice of allomorphs for the root (*zai*, *i*) and PL (*zki*, *ti*). A later stage replaces the former by the latter (Hondarribia Marina, Artola). If we now consider now 3SG.ABS_i rather than 3PL.ABS_i in the above combination, the PL morpheme *zki/ti* is missing, and the change turns *zai-o* to *d_{default}-t-o*, a form “proper” to 3SG.ABS + 3SG.DAT + 3SG.ERG. Because 3SG.ABS and 3SG.ERG both have \emptyset exponence, this is ambiguous between the 3SG.ABS of the unaccusative looking like it’s being coded in the same way as the 3SG.ABS or 3SG.ERG of the transitive. A further step has for effect the latter (Irún Meaca, Artola): 3PL.ABS_i + 3SG.DAT_j is *d-i_v+j-o_j-te_i*, replacing the PL *ti* exponent of 3PL.ABS with *te*, the canonical exponent of 3PL.ERG, thus yielding a form “proper” to 3SG.ABS + 3SG.DAT_j + 3PL.ERG_i. The absolutive is being coded like an ergative. This apparent ergativization is just allomorphy (Fernández 2004: 103–4), but on the surface it looks like the syntactic ergativization of absolutive displacement.

applies in both structures (e.g. Letamendia and Sagarzazu 1992: 528; de Yrizar 1992: 449). Second, auxiliary merger does not repair the Person Case Constraint. The relevant varieties have the general morphological gap for dative + 1st/2nd absolutive S combinations discussed in section 3, and auxiliary merger alone does not help 1st/2nd person S be coded by agreement (Fernández 2004: 102). Absolutive displacement does, including in some of the same varieties, but only for DAT-ABS structures. Third, the absolutive case of S is untouched by auxiliary merger (Fernández 2004: 101–2; cf. de Yrizar 1992: 449). The latter two properties lead Fernández (2004) to analyze auxiliary merger as allomorphy, and the first confirms her conclusion.

These differences are consistent with putting absolutive displacement into the syntax and auxiliary merger into the morphology. However, they could also be obtained within Distributed Morphology, for which morphology is the transformation of a structure provided by narrow syntax to PF. There exists a stage in this mapping that is already outside narrow syntax, but where the full narrow-syntactic structure is still present, prior the adjustments that take it to the structure manifested by surface morphology. Here the Person Case Constraint and its repairs could reside: sensitive to the still unadjusted narrow-syntactic structure reflecting the DAT-ABS – ABS-DAT contrast, and capable of influencing case morphology either under a post-syntactic approach to Case assignment in general (Marantz 1991), or through a mechanism of the type posited in Sobin (1997), Quinn (2005).²⁹ Auxiliary merger would occur further downstream in the mapping to PF. Each would end up correlated with the right effects.

In evaluating this option, explanatory adequacy plays a role. On the syntactic approach, the two chief conclusions about the Person Case Constraint and its repairs follow immediately: the constraint is sensitive to syntactic rather than (overt) morphological structure, and it is repaired because movement past a problem for agreement is expected to remedy it. The first point is a stipulation on a morphological account: the Person Case Constraint and its repairs are farther “upstream” in the morphological derivation than those agreement restrictions and transformations that have the signal traits of allomorphy. The second breaks down into two cases. For absolutive displacement as a repair of the constraint, there is a plausible morphological story: if a c-commanding dative makes unavailable the absolutive agreement node to a 1st/2nd person absolutive, displace its features to the ergative agreement node if empty.³⁰ Icelandic long raising on the other hand looks haphazard: a c-commanding dative makes unavailable the nominative agreement node, unless there is a feature that triggers a movement of the nominative. On a syntactic account the two go together as independently verifiable movements past the dative.

The virtues of the syntactic approach could be imported into the morphology of Distributed Morphology, which is just the syntax-to-PF mapping and not restricted to domains like words or prosodic phrases. One possibility lies in exploring the post-syntactic algorithms for case and agreements of Marantz (1991), Bobaljik (to appear),

²⁹Morphology already plays a role in multiple Case resolution in Section 4.3. As an anonymous reviewer suggests, no complexity is added by a mechanism that favours ergative case on a DP controlling ergative-type agreement.

³⁰This adapts an anonymous reviewer’s suggestion; see Albizu (1997: 2.4.1) for a proposal along these lines.

already sensitive to the mutual hierarchical relationship of the two DPs without inherent Case in a particular syntactic domain, in such a way that movement obviates the Person Case Constraint and assigns the case/agreement associated with the higher DP: the dependent ergative in Basque and the obligatory nominative in Icelandic. Going down this road seems to duplicate in the morphology the property of narrow-syntactic dependencies in question, the saving effect of movement past an intervener, and calls for weighty justification.

The justification lies in the foundational reason for placing case and agreement outside narrow syntax: it has proven difficult to show that narrow syntax refers to the features obtained through agreement or structural Case assignment. If no phenomenon in the mapping to LF depends on a DP being nominative rather than accusative, independently of its A-position, or an agreement target being plural rather than singular, independently of its controller, then there is good reason to insulate narrow syntax from this information as a matter of architecture (Marantz 1991; Bobaljik *to appear*).³¹

The missing argument for the syntactic visibility of case and agreement is supplied by a repair of the Person Case Constraint not discussed so far (Rezac *in prep.*). The repair occurs only where the constraint would arise, like absolutive displacement, and yet it has a consequence for narrow syntax, one without the dubious status of a change in case morphology. Therefore, narrow syntax must know about the Person Case Constraint. More generally, some agreement and / or non-inherent case must also be in narrow syntax, insofar as the Person Case Constraint is a condition on their distribution (the very reason for seeking a morphological account).

The repair occurs in French. The Person Case Constraint applies to combinations of dative and accusative clitics, as in (53)b vs. (53)a (cf. (8), (10)). (53)b also shows the repair: the pronoun corresponding to the dative clitic surfaces inside a PP headed by the preposition *à* ‘to’ (Kayne 1975: 174–5; Bonet 1991: 201–2; Postal 1990). Like absolutive displacement, this strategy is limited to PCC contexts; elsewhere unfocussed pronouns cannot appear in *à* ‘to’ PPs. This is so not only when cliticization is available, (53)a, but also when problems other than the PCC ban the resulting clitic sequence, like (53)c.

- (53) a. Elle la <leur> a présentée (*à eux). [French]
 she her.ACC them.DAT has introduced to them
 She has introduced her to them. (*à eux* is fine as focus ... TO THEM)
- b. Elle me <*leur> a présentée (à eux).
 she me.ACC them.DAT has introduced to them
 She has introduced me to her. (no focus on *à eux* necessary)
- c. Elle me <*te> semble infidèle (*?à toi).
 she me.DAT you.DAT seems unfaithful to you
 She seems to me unfaithful to you. (Kayne 1975: 175)
- d. Elle la <leur> a tous présentée (*à EUX).
 she her.ACC them.DAT has all introduced to them
 She has introduced her to all of them. (*à eux* bad even with focus)
- e. Elle m’ a (*tous)présentée à eux.
 she me.ACC has all introduced to them
 She has introduced me to (*all of) them.

³¹One probably unsuccessful argument for control contingent on agreement is reviewed in Rezac (2004: 222–8).

There are both morphological and syntactic analyses of the repair. Representing the former, Bonet (1991: 201–2) proposes that the repair is lower copy spell-out, while representing the latter, Rezac (2007: 121–5) treats it as enrichment of the *à* 'to' PP with an extra Case licenser for the weak pronoun, parallel to the activation of T_{ERG} in absolutive displacement (Section 4.2). The two proposals make distinct predictions for their consequences in narrow syntax: the choice of which copy to spell out should not affect it (cf. Polinsky and Potsdam 2006; Bobaljik and Branigan 2006), while licensing a pronoun in a PP keeps it from the syntax that underlies dative cliticization, e.g. the applicative construction (Kayne 1975: 154–160; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 281–5; Rezac op. cit.).

This turns out to be testable. In French, dative clitics and accusative clitics license bare floating quantifiers like *tous* 'all', while PPs and pro-PP clitics do not (Kayne 1975: 154–160). Concretely, one may suppose that floating quantifiers are licensed by DPs in c-commanding A-positions, which the syntax leading up to accusative and dative cliticization provides. Thus *tous* added to (53)a yields (53)d. However, *tous* may not be added when an *à* 'to' PP substitutes for a clitic to repair the Person Case Constraint, (53)e. Therefore, the repair affects the syntax in such a way that floating quantifiers are no longer licensed, for example by eliminating the c-commanded A-position provided by the applicative construction.³²

This seems to put the Person Case Constraint into narrow syntax, since it is visible there to condition its repair. The constraint is in striking contrast to morphophonological gaps like the missing past participle of *stride* (Embick and Marantz 2006), including gaps in clitic clusters (cf. (53)c; Rezac in prep.), which cannot be repaired by otherwise unavailable syntactic structures. The inertness of these gaps for narrow syntax underlies its encapsulation from the morphology that underlies them. In turn, it is not encapsulated from the Person Case Constraint, and thus from some aspect of agreement and non-inherent case.

Appendix: pronouns, case licensing, and split agree

Evidence about the Person Case Constraint here comes from agreement. Where no agreement is visible, certain subtleties arise concerning (12)(iv), the proposal that 1st/2nd person must be Case licensed by Agree. Some 1st/2nd pronouns, such as Romance and Greek clitics, are banned in PCC contexts, whereas others, such as Greek strong pronouns, are fine (Anagnostopoulou 2003: 317).³³ The Case licensing of independent pronouns in PCC contexts interacts with (12)(ii), split Agree for person and number. I review the issues in this Appendix.

Absolutive pronouns in Basque finite and non-finite clauses suggest an initial hypothesis. Both use the same pronouns, *pro* and strong pronouns, but finite clauses require full agreement, with no default or partial agreement option for a 1st/2nd

³²Also affected are Condition B and right dislocation (see Rezac in prep.). A different argument from another PCC repair is in Rezac (2007: 122)

³³The situation is more complex for the pronouns in-between; for the situation in Germanic, see Bonet (1991: 185–6), Haspelmath (2004: 41–2), note 25 here, and Anagnostopoulou (2003: 317–320, and esp. forthcoming); in Slavic, Migdalski (2006).

person absolutive in a PCC context, while non-finite clauses have no overt agreement and a 1st/2nd person absolutive is fine ((7), (9); cf. for Georgian, Bonet 1991: 190; for Icelandic, Sigurðsson and Holmberg *forthcoming*). The finite clauses indicate that Agree is required either to Case license absolutes (Case Filter) or to value the corresponding person and number probes (“Inverse” Case Filter, cf. Section 4.3). Both seem necessary. The Case Filter (or an analogous person licensing requirement) is needed to explain why 1st/2nd person clitics cannot survive in a PCC context where strong 1st/2nd person pronouns can, as in Greek, since an unvalued probe should have the same status whether the goal with which it fails to Agree is a clitic or a strong pronoun. The strong 1st/2nd person pronouns in this context must then be Case licensed autonomously of the person Agree blocked by the PCC, for example through their richer DP structure which provides internal Agree (Béjar and Rezac 2003: 54), or by default Case (Schütze 2001 for “Mad Magazine” infinitives). Absolutes in Basque non-finite clauses have recourse to such autonomous Case licensing, explaining the absence of the PCC and tallying with the lack of overt agreement. However, it cannot be available in finite clauses, which require agreement. Since both types of clauses have the same types of pronouns, the unavailability is not to be attributed to the pronoun itself. The Inverse Case Filter derives it: a pronoun licensed without Agree in a finite clause could not value the clause’s ϕ -probe.

Icelandic supports this correlation of autonomous Case licensing with failure to Agree and immunity to the Person Case Constraint. In configurations where a non-finite clause boundary separates a nominative from the target of agreement, of the type *Him.DAT seem [they/we.NOM (to.be) tired]*, full non-agreement of 3rd person is possible, and that of 1st/2nd person is required (cf. ex. (42)). Thus the nominative is assigned autonomously of matrix Agree, and it both prevents the pronoun from Agree with the matrix clause, and allows it to survive where the PCC blocks such Agree for person (Taraldsen 1995; Schütze 1997: 118–121; Anagnostopoulou 2003: 279–280; Boeckx 2003; Rezac 2004: 323–332). The Inverse Case Filter of the matrix probe is plausibly satisfied by the non-finite clause itself (Chomsky 2000: 148, note 88; cf. den Dikken 2001: 33). Where no clausal boundary intervenes, of the type *Him.DAT like they/we.NOM*, agreement with a 3rd person nominative is required, and 1st/2nd person pronouns are out with or without agreement. This is expected: either the autonomous nominative above is comes from the non-finite clause, or it is in principle available generally but it does not help, because its use would leave the ϕ -probe without a goal and incur a violation of the Inverse Case Filter.

There is an important quirk in the data: in *Him.DAT like 1st/2nd.NOM*, non-agreement is not fully ungrammatical. Sigurðsson (1996: 31–6) shows that acceptability correlates with appearing to control number but not person agreement through available paradigm syncretisms. Sigurðsson concludes that the dative blocks specifically person agreement, which tallies with split Agree, (12)(ii). Basauri Basque supports Sigurðsson’s proposal. In Basque, the PCC bans dative + 1st/2nd person absolutive for *gustatu* ‘like’, but this dialect is unusual in permitting non-agreement for person. In (54)a, the overt 1SG.ABS controls no agreement, and the resulting agreement is one proper to 3SG.ABS-3SG.DAT. (54)b has 1PL.ABS, and here person but not number agreement is suspended, yielding agreement proper to 3PL.ABS-2PL.DAT. Unlike Icelandic, Basque does not fuse the exponence of

person and number agreement, permitting a more direct verification of Sigurðsson's hypothesis.

- (54) a. N_i bera- r_{ij} et-xak- o_j gustetan. [Basque, Basauri]
 I.ABS him-DAT not- \sqrt{D} -3 liking
 He does not like me.
- b. Gu_i gustetan ya-tzu $_j$ -e- s_i suro- r_{ij} .
 we.ABS liking \sqrt{D} -2-PL'-PL you-DAT
 You like us. (Arretxe 1994: 143, note 26)

These examples raise no problem for the Inverse Case Filter (the number probe agrees with the absolutive, and the person probe is arguably content with the dative intervener), but it is not clear how the person of the absolutive is Case-licensed. One might modulate the autonomous Case licensing mechanism to affect just person, e.g. a DP-internal person but not number probe.

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