ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ROMANIAN TO RELATE A LOW APPLICATIVE TO A DP INSIDE PP COMPLEMENTS OF UNERGATIVE VERBS

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Case Theory (Chomsky 1981; Chomsky 1995) introduces the distinction between structural cases which are assigned in certain syntactic configurations and no θ-role is associated with a case which is assigned structurally, and non-structural cases whose assignment depends on their association with certain θ-roles.

The assignment of the Dative is problematic, i.e. it has been assumed to be assigned either structurally (Pylkkänen 2002; Cuervo 2003) or non-structurally (Woolford 2006, Landau 2010).

This paper focuses on the structural assignment of the Dative and tries to show that Romanian data goes against Pylkkänen's (2002) assumption that *have*-languages cannot relate a low applicative to a DP inside a PP complement of an unergative verb.

Pylkkänen (2002) builds upon Marantz (1984) and Kratzer (1996) and argues that verbs can have 'non-core' arguments, such as Dative arguments. She proposes that Dative arguments are applied arguments which are introduced by a functional head which she calls the Applicative head.

Applicative heads can be either high or low, i.e. functional heads which introduce Dative arguments can be merged either above the VP (high) or below the VP (low).

Moreover, low applied arguments bear a transfer of possession relation between two individuals, a relation which asserts that the direct object is *to* / *from* the possession of the indirect object: this relation distinguishes between Low Recipient Applicatives (low applicative TO) and Low Source Applicatives (low applicative FROM).

In light of such assumptions, it is important to notice that contemporary Romanian has both Low Recipient (as in *Ion i-a dat Mariei cărțile)* and Low Source Applicatives (as in *Ion i-a furat Mariei cărțile)* to express a possession relation.

Moreover, Romanian can also express a possession relation by means of possessor Dative DPs as low applied arguments with unergative verbs, such as in example (1):

(1) *Ion (îi) muncește Mariei în casă.*
(intended meaning: Ion's work is about a house and the house is to the possession of Maria).

The purpose of this paper is to investigate such Romanian data which is a puzzle to Pylkkänen's (2002) transitivity restriction and verbal semantics restriction on low applicatives, i.e. only transitive verbs can occur with low applied arguments in the sense that

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the direct object cannot be missing since these configurations show a transfer of possession of the direct object *to/from* the indirect object; as far as verbal semantics is concerned, Pylkkänen (2002) proposes that the transfer of possession is dynamic. Cuervo (2003) introduces the stative relation of possession, i.e. the low applicative AT.

While considering the possibility of languages to relate a low applicative to a DP inside a PP complement of unergative verbs, Pylkkänen (2002) proposes that such constructions are only possible in be-languages. Against Pylkkänen's (2002) assumption, Romanian allows low applicatives which relate to a PP – internal DP, though Romanian is not a language that lacks *to have* to express possession. Our investigation of such constructions in contemporary Romanian needs to shed some light on the relation expressed by such Dative DPs which are PP – internal related.

Section 1

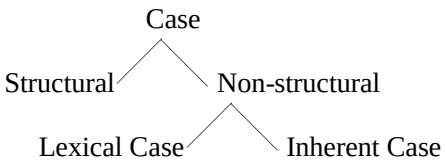
This first section of the paper deals with some recent minimalist approaches to the assignment of the Dative.

It is divided into two subsections which are concerned with two opposite view points: the Dative is non-structural or the Dative is structurally assigned in applicative configurations.

1.1. *The Dative is non-structural*

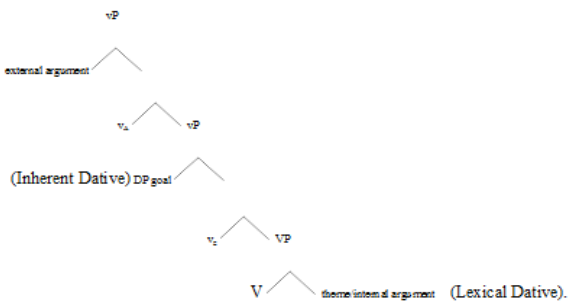
Woolford (2006) starts from the Case typology in (2) and accounts for the distribution of the Dative in terms of vP structure which allows not only Agents, but also (shifted) DP Goals to occupy a position outside the VP proper:

(2)



According to Woolford's (2006) analysis of the Dative, DP Goals which occupy a spec vP position bear Inherent Dative case; on the other hand, Lexical Dative case may appear on Theme arguments and it is licensed by lexical heads (V, P) as in Woolford's (2006: 6) configuration which is given in (3) below:

(3)



Moreover, the similarities and differences between these two types of non-structural Datives are pointed out below:

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> "what the two types of non-structural Case have in common is that they are both licensed to θ-positions in vP structure. What distinguishes the two types of non-structural Case is the kind of head that licenses them: the more regular inherent Cases are licensed by little / light v heads in vP projections above the VP proper, while the idiosyncratic lexical Cases are licensed by V, inside the VP proper" (Woolford 2006: 6).

It follows that the assignment of the Dative accounts for the existence of different Dative constructions, i.e. the Dative Goal in spec vP occurs in DOCs and the Dative DP which is the complement of a lexical head (V or P) occurs in other types of Dative constructions.

Experiencer Dative constructions are basic examples of Datives which are licensed by a lexical head. This lexical head is P in Landau's (2010) analysis of the Dative. In fact, Landau (2010) treats Dative Experiencers as PPs, in the sense that such Experiencers are Mental Locations.

Landau (2010) assumes that the case that P assigns is universally inherent, which means that the Dative on Experiencers is inherent, too.

As far as P is concerned, Landau (2010) considers two possibilities: P can be lexical (such as in English) or null (in languages with case morphology such as Romanian), as in the following examples:

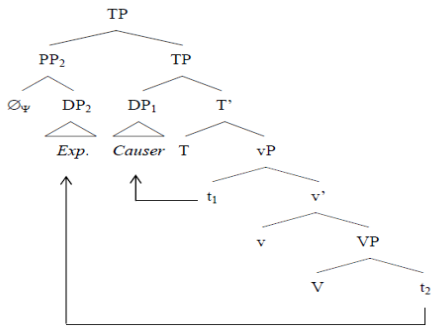
(4) The show.Nom$_{[THEME]}$ appealed to Mary.$_{Dat[EXPERIENCER]}$

(5) a. Filmele.Nom$_{[THEME]}$[1] îi plac Mariei.Dat.$_{[EXPERIENCER]}$
Movies.Nom cl.Dat like.3rd.pl.pres Maria.Dat

b. Mariei îi plac filmele.
Maria.$_{Dat[EXPERIENCER]}$ cl.Dat like.3rd.pl.pres movies.$_{[THEME]}$
'Mary likes movies'.

Landau (2010) treats the Dative as an instance of inherent case which marks Experiencer PPs; Experiencer PPs undergo locative inversion, i.e. in languages such as Romanian which allow quirky Dative subjects, Experiencers are PPs which raise to specTP to get spatio-temporal interpretation as in (6) and (7) below[2]:

(6) Eventive psych verbs: LF

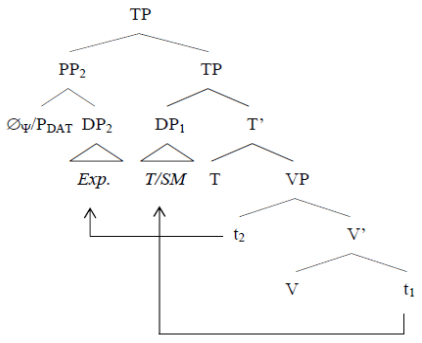


[1] Pesetsky (1995) proposes that ObjExp predicates take a Causer in subject position and an Experiencer in object position while SubjExp predicates take an Experiencer in subject position and a Target of Emotion or Subject Matter of Emotion in object position.

[2] Landau (2010) points to the fact that his type of raising which he calls LF – quirkiness is only possible if a functional head such as T licenses one overt specifier and several covert ones.

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(7) Stative psych verbs: LF



(Landau 2010: 83–84)

Configurations (6) and (7) show that unlike standard psych constructions of the form Nom-V-Acc / Dat where the Nominative DP occupies [spec TP], Dative subject constructions allow the Dative argument to raise to a second [spec TP] at LF.

Example (5b) is illustrative of the fact that *Mariei* is an Experiencer which can occupy subject position; this DP bears the Dative, the Dative being inherently assigned in such configurations, according to Landau's (2010) locative syntax of Experiencers.

It becomes obvious from Landau's (2010) locative syntax of Experiencers that location, a thematic concept is employed to account for the syntax of Dative Experiencers. In subsection 1.2., we will briefly present a totally different account for the assignment of the Dative, i.e. the Dative is assigned in an applicative configuration.

1.2. *The Dative is structural*

Pylkkänen (2002) deals with the topic of argument introducing heads and proposes the applicative functional head to be the head which introduces Dative arguments.

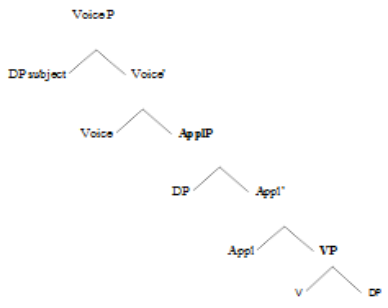
The Applicative head, either high or low, is a functional head which introduces Dative DPs in specifier position. The distinction between high and low applicatives is made on semantic grounds:

(i) High applicatives are functional heads which introduce Dative arguments in spec ApplP, ApplP being licensed above the VP proper.

This configuration expresses a thematic relation between an applied argument and the event described by the verb; thematically, the applied argument is a Benefactive, an Experiencer, a.o

The configuration below is relevant here:

(8)

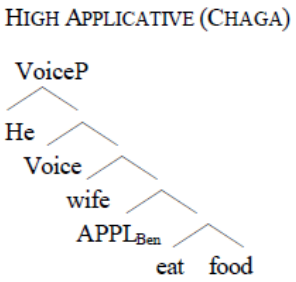


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It can be noticed that the applied argument is merged between VoiceP and VP, a position where the Dative can be assigned.

Pylkkänen (2002) gives the following example in Chaga:

(9) N-ä-ï-lyì-í-à **m- kà** k-élyá
FOC-1SG-PRES-eat-APPL-FV **1–wife** 7-food
'He is eating food for his **wife**'

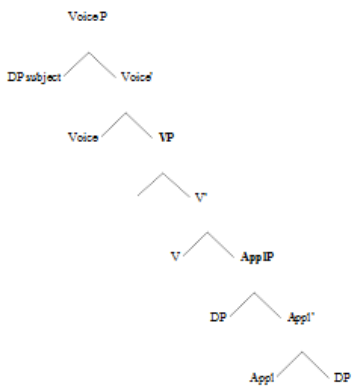


(ii) Low applicatives are functional heads which introduce Dative arguments in spec ApplP, ApplP being licensed below the VP proper.

This configuration expresses a relation of transfer of possession between two individuals; if the transfer of possession of the direct object is **to** the possession of the indirect object, Low Applicatives are Low Recipient Applicatives (the Low Applicative TO); if the transfer of possession of the direct object is **from** the possession of the indirect object, Low Applicatives are Low Source Applicatives (the low Applicative FROM)

Low Applicatives are illustrated in (10) below:

(10)

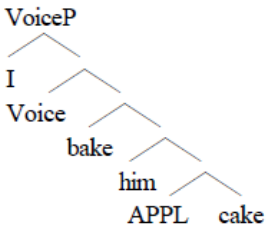


Configuration (10) shows that the Dative is assigned to a DP in spec ApplP, the ApplP being below the VP. Pylkkänen (2002) gives the following English example:

(11) I baked **him** a cake.

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LOW APPLICATIVE (ENGLISH)



English DOC in (11) above is only relevant for Low Recipient Applicatives.

As far as Low Source Applicatives are concerned, the following Romanian example is relevant:

(12) Ion i-a furat **Mariei** cărțile.
Ion.Nom cl.Dat steal.3rd.sg.past Mary.Dat books.Acc.
'Ion stole Mary's books'
(intended meaning: Ion stole some books from the possession of Mary).

Moreover, Pylkkänen (2002) discusses two restrictions on Low Applicative configurations:

1. The transitivity restriction[1]
2. The verbal semantics restriction

1. The transitivity restriction requires the existence of a direct object, since such low applicative configurations express the transfer of possession of the direct object to / from the possession of the indirect object

This transitivity restriction is illustrated in (13) and (14) below:

(13) John gave Mary a flower. (intended meaning: *John gave a flower and the flower was to the possession of Mary*)
(14) *I ran him (unergative verb).

2. The restriction on verbal semantics refers to the fact that states cannot enter a transfer of possession relation since transfer of possession is necessarily dynamic.

Pylkkänen (2002) gives the following example of a state verb which fails to occur in Low Applicative configurations:

(15) *I held him the pencil.

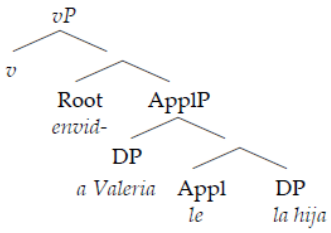
But, Cuervo (2003) builds upon Pylkkänen's (2002) analysis and introduces the Affected Applicative in a static configuration (the Low Applicative AT).

[1] The observation here is rather scholastic, but the matter of transitivity needs to be traced back to Burzio's (1986) Generalization which refers to the fact that a verb can assign the Accusative to its object only if it θ-marks its subject. Thus, the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs was taken one step further, i.e. intransitive verbs are further divided into unaccusatives (they cannot assign the Accusative to their object which is why it raises to subject position) and unergatives (they project their subject and θ-mark it).

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Cuervo (2003) argues that Dative arguments can appear with state verbs in Spanish; the core meaning of such configurations is static possession, where the Dative is understood as the possessor of the direct object:

(16) Pablo le envidia la hija a Valeria
Pablo CL.DAT envies the daughter.ACC DAT Valeria
'Pablo envies Valeria the daughter'



This configuration shows that the possession is static in the sense that the indirect object is the possessor of the direct object as in: the daughter is at Valeria's possession.

Cuervo (2003) further explores Spanish data with low applicative configurations; in fact, Pylkkänen (2002) supports her transitivity restriction with evidence from languages such as Spanish and German, Spanish being indeed a *have*-language (Freeze 1992) which does not relate low applicatives to a DP inside PP complements of unergative verbs:

(17) *Juan (le) vivió a María en el patio.
Juan cl.Dat lived to Maria in the patio
'Maria had Juan living in the patio' (Pylkkänen 2002: 63).

In fact, the following quote accounts for such constructions:

> "The HAVE-languages German and Spanish both have possessor Datives (i.e., low source applicatives), but neither allows such a Dative to be added to an unergative with a PP modifier. In contrast, Hebrew and Finnish, which both lack the verb HAVE, allow a Dative, or an adessive argument, to be added to a PP-modified unergative" (Pylkkänen 2002: 62).

If we take Pylkkänen's (2002) observations above as a starting point, we can hypothesize that Romanian should pattern like Spanish and German, concerning the impossibility to relate a low applicative to a DP inside PP complements of unergative verbs (Romanian is a have language which uses a avea 'have'to express possession). In fact, Romanian data shows that our hypothesis would be wrong. Section 2 explores such Romanian examples and tries to point to a possible solution.

Section 2

Against our hypothesis, Romanian is a have-language which allows a Dative DP to be added to a PP – modified unergative, such as in (18) below ((1) above is repeated here as (18)):

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(18) Ion (îi) muncește Mariei în casă.
Ion.Nom (cl.Dat) work.3rd.sg.pres to Maria.Dat in house.
'Ion works in Maria's house' (intended meaning: Ion's work is about a house and the house is to the possession of Maria).

Example (16) shows that Romanian is against Pylkkänen's (2002) prediction that have-languages cannot relate a low applicative to a DP inside a PP complement of an unergative verb.

One available proposal which might account for such constructions in Romanian deals with the θ-role that the Dative DP bears: instead of showing any kind of possession, it might be a Benefactive which is licensed by a high applicative head.

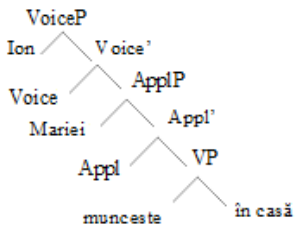
Remember that only low applicatives are restricted from the point of view of transitivity.

Thus, the intended meaning of (18) above can be re-written as in (19):

(19) John works the house for Mary$_{[BENEFACTIVE]}$ (i.e. John's work is about a house and Mary benefits from John's work, in the sense that John works instead of her).

It follows that the high applicative configuration in (20) could account for such examples in Romanian:

(20)



The analysis here is only a tentative analysis of Romanian examples such as (16) which is why it seems safe to conclude that this problematic construction needs further investigation in light of more data from more languages.

Conclusions

This paper focuses on a particular problematic construction in Romanian, i.e. Romanian can relate a low applicative to a DP inside PP complements of unergative verbs. This construction is problematic in the sense of Pylkkänen (2002) who argues that only be-languages such as Finnish and Hebrew can have such constructions.

Nevertheless, Romanian is a have-language which allows constructions such as *Ion (îi) muncește Mariei în casă.*

After introducing some basic theoretical assumptions on the assignment of the Dative, we focus on Pylkkänen's (2002) discussion of such constructions and propose that they are allowed in Romanian just because they are not instances of possessive Datives in low applicative configurations, but these Dative DPs are, in fact, Benefactives which are licensed in high applicative configurations.

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ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ROMANIAN TO RELATE A LOW APPLICATIVE TO A DP INSIDE PP COMPLEMENTS OF UNERGATIVE VERBS

(*Abstract*)

Romanian examples such as *Ion îi muncește Mariei în casă* are intricate enough to deserve closer attention. Pylkkänen (2002) uses crosslinguistic evidence and points to the fact that Dative DPs in such constructions are possessive Datives. Her analysis shows that only be-languages can relate low applicatives to a DP inside PP complements of unergative verbs. Romanian is a have-language; nevertheless, it allows such constructions. Our tentative proposal is that such DPs are not possessive Datives; we try to show that they are Benefactives which are licensed in high applicative configurations.

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