

The Person-Case constraint and repair strategies

Eulàlia Bonet [May 2007]

To appear in: Roberta d’Alessandro, Susann Fischer, Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson (eds.) *Person Restrictions*, Mouton de Gruyter.

1. The Person-Case constraint¹

Sentences like (1), from Catalan, are ungrammatical.²

- (1) **Al director, me li ha recomanat la Mireia*
to-the director, 1Sg 3Sg.Dat has recommended the Mireia
‘As for the director, Mireia has recommended me to him’

Crucial to the ungrammaticality of (1) is the fact that it contains two clitics, which correspond to the direct object, Direct Object (*me*), and the indirect object, Indirect Object (*li*), and where the Direct Object clitic is first person and the Indirect Object clitic is third person. If the roles were reversed (first person corresponding to the Indirect Object and third person corresponding to the Direct Object), no conflict would arise, as illustrated in (2).

- (2) *El director, me l’ ha recomanat la Mireia*
the director, 1Sg 3Sg.Acc has recommended the Mireia
‘As for the director, Mireia has recommended him to me’

If (1) did not contain a left dislocated element (*al director*) no resumptive clitic pronoun with the function of Indirect Object would be required and the sentence would also be grammatical.

- (3) *La Mireia m’ ha recomanat al director*
the Mireia 1Sg has recommended to-the director
‘Mireia has recommended me to the director’

The ungrammaticality of (1), noticed for Spanish and French by Perlmutter (1971), is attributed in Bonet (1991) to the **Me-lui*/I-II Constraint, later called

the Person-Case constraint (PCC). This constraint, claimed there to be universal, is present in languages that have pronominal clitics, like the Romance languages, languages with weakened pronouns, like English, and languages that have a rich agreement system, like Southern Tiwa. The constraint, thus, affects complexes of φ -features related to the argumental structure of the verb. The most common context for the Person-Case Constraint is ditransitive clauses, even though other constructions that can trigger it are causative constructions, and constructions with datives of inalienable possession, for instance.

In (1) the effects of the Person-Case Constraint are shown with a first person clitic corresponding to the Direct Object, but ungrammaticality would also arise with a second person clitic (singular or plural). Combinations of two third person clitics do not usually lead to ungrammaticality, even though they often trigger changes not relevant here. The judgements on combinations of first and second person clitics, illustrated in (4), seem to vary a lot. In some languages, these combinations are ungrammatical, while in others, like Catalan, they are grammatical for some speakers, and plainly ungrammatical for others. An additional set of speakers of Catalan accept them in only one of the possible readings, but the judgements as to which one is preferable seem to vary from speaker to speaker.^{3,4}

- (4) (*) *Te m' ha recomanat la Mireia*
 2Sg 1Sg has recommended the Mireia
 a. 'Mireia has recommended me to you'
 b. 'Mireia has recommended you to me'

This difference in behavior led Bonet (1991) to posit a strong version of the constraint, for speakers who do not accept sentences like (4), and a weak version of it, for speakers who do accept such combinations. These two versions were stated as follows ((5) corresponds to Bonet 1991: 182, (11)).

- (5) **Me lui* / I-II Constraint
 a. STRONG VERSION: the direct object has to be third person
 b. WEAK VERSION: if there is a third person it has to be the direct object

In recent years much work has been devoted to the constraint, mostly in its strong version. Here I will also assume it only in the strong version (for an account of the differences between the strong and the weak version of the Person-Case Constraint, see Ormazábal and Romero 2007; Nevins 2007). Most of the proposed accounts of the Person-Case Constraint that have been made are syntactic (see, among the more recent ones, Anagnostopoulou 2003, Ormazábal and Romero 2002, 2007, Adger and Harbour 2007), even though morphological approaches also exist (see, for instance, Miller and Sag 1997 or Boeckx 2000).⁵ Another line of research has related the Person-Case Constraint to other constructions, like Icelandic quirky subjects (see, for instance, Taraldsen 1995, Sigurðsson 1996, Boeckx 2000, or Hrafnbjargarson 2001).

The goal of this paper is neither to take a stand on the morphological or syntactic nature of the Person-Case Constraint (which partially depends on the framework assumed) nor to concentrate on environments sensitive to the constraint, but to focus on the repair strategy that Catalan uses in ditransitives to avoid it and to see how well it can be accounted for in three recent syntactic proposals that have been made on the nature of the Person-Case Constraint. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: in section 2, the Catalan strategy to overcome the effects of the Person-Case Constraint in ditransitives is described, and it is suggested that the resulting clitic is related to the Indirect Object; it is not a locative clitic, as it could seem at first sight, given the shape the clitic has. It is also argued that this clitic is devoid of all features except case. Section 3 contains a summary of three different recent accounts, namely Ormazábal and Romero (2007), Anagnostopoulou (2003), and Adger and Harbour (2007); the Catalan strategy is contrasted with each one of these syntactic accounts, and it is shown that it poses serious problems especially for the proposal by Adger and Harbour (2007). Finally, section 4 includes some concluding remarks.

2. Change of clitic as a repair strategy in Catalan

Many languages overcome the effects of the Person-Case Constraint by avoiding one of the clitics or agreement elements that enter the constraint. For instance, Spanish uses a strong pronoun instead of one of the clitics (the one

corresponding to the Indirect Object), as is illustrated in (6). (6a) does not present any problems because only one pronoun is present (the Indirect Object being a full Determiner Phrase); (6b) violates the Person-Case constraint and is therefore ungrammatical; finally, (6c) has a strong pronoun preceded by a preposition, *a él*, which avoids the presence of a conflicting Indirect Object clitic.

- (6) a. *Me recomendó a Pedro*
 1Sg recommended to Pedro
 ‘S/he recommended me to Pedro’
 b. **Me le recomendó*
 1Sg 3Sg.Dat recommended
 c. *Me recomendó a él*
 1Sg recommended to him
 ‘S/he recommended me to him’

The strategy used by Catalan in ditransitives is very different: two clitics are kept, but one of them, the one corresponding to the Indirect Object changes its shape; instead of the third person clitic *li* /li/ the clitic *hi* /i/ shows up.⁶ (7a) illustrates the change of clitic; (7b) is ungrammatical because it contains a third person dative pronoun, the expected one, and thus causes a violation of the Person-Case Constraint.

- (7) a. *Al president, m’ hi ha recomanat en Miquel*
 to-the president, 1Sg *hi* has recommended the Miquel
 ‘As for the president, Miquel has recommended me to him’
 b. **Al president, me li ha recomanat en Miquel*
 to-the president, 1Sg 3Sg.Dat has recommended the Miquel
 Miquel
 ‘As for the president, Miquel has recommended me to him’

As far as I know, in the recent literature on the Person-Case Constraint this repair strategy is only taken into consideration in Anagnostopoulou (2003), discussed in section 3.2, and Nevins (2007). Both of them interpret the clitic

hi as a locative, a non-agreeing clitic that avoids the effects of the constraint. The clitic *hi* is in fact used as a locative clitic in Catalan, as (8) illustrates.

- (8) *A Matadepera, avui no hi seré, però hi aniré demà*
to Matadepera, today not *hi* will-be, but *hi* will-go tomorrow
'As for Matadepera, I will not be there today, but I will go there tomorrow'

But is the *hi* used in (7a) really a locative clitic, like the ones that appear in (8)? Rigau (1978), (1982) has argued that the clitic *hi* is also an inanimate dative.⁷ When an animate Indirect Object is represented by a clitic, the clitic is *li*, as shown in (9b) (Rigau 1982, (3a)); but when, in the same construction, the Indirect Object is inanimate it can be represented by the clitic *hi*, as shown in (10b) (Rigau 1982, (5a)).

- (9) a. *En Joan donà cops a la Maria*
the Joan gave blows to the Maria
'Joan struck Maria'
b. *En Joan li donà cops*
the Joan 3Sg.Dat gave blows
'Joan struck her'
- (10) a. *En Joan donà cops a la porta*
the Joan gave blows to the door
'Joan struck the door'
b. *En Joan hi donà cops*
the Joan *hi* gave blows
'Joan struck it'

Even though *li* can also be used for inanimate datives, *hi* cannot be used with animates, as shown in (11).

- (11) a. *En Joan li donà cops (a la porta)*
the Joan 3Sg.Dat gave blows (to the door)
'Joan struck it'

- b. **En Joan hi donà cops (a la Maria)*
 the Joan *hi* gave blows (to the Maria)
 ‘Joan struck her’

The difference between (10b) and (11a) is that (10b) has an interpretation of goal plus location, while (11a) is interpreted more like an affected goal. The *hi* present in Person-Case Constraint environments, as in (7a), does not have at all the interpretation of a location; it is interpreted only as a goal.

It is not always the case that *hi* with inanimates is used with a locative interpretation, as illustrated by (12b) and (13b); again (12b) and (13b) differ from (12a) and (13a) only in terms of animacy of the Indirect Object and the use of the clitic ((12) corresponds to Rigau 1978, (7); examples very similar to the ones in (12) and (13) can be found in Rigau 1982).

- (12) a. *A la meva filla, li dedico molt de temps*
 to the my daughter, 3Sg.Dat devote lot of time
 ‘As for my daughter, I devote lots of time to her’
 b. *A això, hi dedico molt de temps*
 to this, *hi* devote lot of time
 ‘As for this, I devote lots of time to it’
- (13) a. *Als empresaris, el Govern els concedeix molta importància*
 to-the businessmen, the Government 3Pl.Dat give
 lot importance
 ‘As for the businessmen, the government gives them a lot of importance’
 b. *A les crítiques, el Govern hi concedeix molta importància*
 to the criticisms, the Government *hi* gives lot
 importance
 ‘As for the criticism, the Government gives them a lot of importance’

Rigau (1978), (1982) also argues that inanimate Indirect Objects like the one in (10b) have a very different behavior from real locatives in other respects. For instance, when *donar cops* ‘give blows’ is replaced by the verb

colpejar ‘to strike’, the Indirect Object becomes a Direct Object, and this happens regardless of the animacy of the Indirect Object, as shown in (14) and (15); notice that (14b) and (15b) are identical.

- (14) a. *En Joan colpeja la Maria*
the Joan strikes the Maria
‘Joan strikes Maria’
b. *En Joan la colpeja*
the Joan 3Fem.Sg.Acc strikes
‘Joan strikes her’
- (15) a. *En Joan colpeja la porta*
the Joan strikes the door
‘Joan strikes the table’
b. *En Joan la colpeja*
the Joan 3Fem.Sg.Acc strikes
‘Joan strikes it’

Real locatives can never become a Direct Object when a light verb plus a noun is replaced by a verb. (16) shows that the locative argument *a Roma* ‘to Rome’ is replaced by the clitic *hi* ((16a) corresponds to Rigau 1982, (7a)). In (17) (Rigau 1982, (7b,c)), with the verb *viatjar*, the locative *a Roma* stays a locative and is replaced by *hi*, not by an accusative clitic.

- (16) a. *En Joan fa un viatge a Roma*
the Joan makes a journey to Rome
‘Joan makes a journey to Rome’
b. *En Joan hi fa un viatge*
the Joan *hi* makes a journey
‘Joan makes a journey there’
- (17) a. *En Joan viatja a Roma*
the Joan travels to Rome
‘Joan travels to Rome’

- b. *En Joan hi viatja*
 the Joan *hi* travels
 ‘Joan travels there’

Finally, Rigau (1978), (1982) shows that in *wh*- questions inanimate datives receive a different pronoun than real locatives (inanimate datives receive *a què* ‘to what’, while real locatives receive *on* ‘where’).⁸

An additional difference between the clitic *li* and the clitic *hi* is that *li* is inflected for number (not gender), while *hi* has no inflection at all. The normative form of the plural of *li* is *els* (identical to a third person accusative masculine plural clitic), while its colloquial form in most dialects is *(e)lzi*.

- (18) a. *Li donaré un cop (a la noia)*
 3Sg.Dat will-give a blow (to the.Fem.Sg girl.Fem.Sg)
 ‘I will strike her (the girl)’
 b. *Els / elzi donaré un cop (a les noies)*
 3Pl.Dat will-give a blow (to the.Fem.Pl girl.Fem.Pl)
 ‘I will strike them (the girls)’
- (19) a. *Hi donaré un cop (a la taula)*
hi will-give a blow (to the.Fem.Sg table.Fem.Sg)
 ‘I will strike it (the table)’
 b. *Hi donaré un cop (a les taules)*
hi will-give a blow (to the.Fem.Pl table.Fem.Pl)
 ‘I will strike them (the tables)’

Linguists like Viaplana (1980), and Mascaró (1986) (also Bonet 1991, using a different set of features) have interpreted the colloquial form *(e)lzi* of the the third person plural dative clitic as expressing dative case through the morph /i/, the same morph that appears in the singular *li*; the morph /l/ expresses third person both in the dative and the accusative.

- (20) Dative clitics *li* and *(e)lzi*
 a. /l/: third person
 b. /z/: plural
 c. /i/: dative

Under this view, the clitic *hi* that appears in (19) and other sentences, which has been argued to be an inanimate dative, is the /i/ morph corresponding to dative case in (20c). *Hi* /i/ expresses case, but not gender, number or person.

3. Three recent syntactic approaches to the Person-Case constraint and their compatibility with the *hi* strategy

In this section I review three recent accounts of the Person-Case Constraint and contrast them with the strategy to the Person-Case Constraint that has been presented in section 2. These three accounts are Ormazábal and Romero (2007), Anagnostopoulou (2003), and Adger and Harbour (2007). It will be shown that two of them could accommodate it, while the third one runs into very serious problems.

3.1. Ormazábal and Romero (2007)

The aim of Ormazábal and Romero (2007) is to arrive at more adequate generalizations concerning the Person-Case constraint, rather than to give a detailed technical account of their findings. They do argue in favor of a syntactic approach, as opposed to a morphological account, based on several observations.

Even though most approaches to the Person-Case Constraint make crucial reference to person (with first person and second person being banned in object position), Ormazábal and Romero (2007) give evidence that what is relevant to the constraint is rather the feature [animate]. The feature [animate] is inherently present in first and second person, and only third person can make a distinction between [+animate] and [-animate].⁹ The evidence that Ormazábal and Romero (2007) give comes mostly from *leísta* dialects of Spanish, which are spoken in different areas of Spain. Contrary to Standard Spanish, in which the accusative clitic is *lo/la/los/las* for both animates and inanimates, in some *leísta* dialects *lo/la/los/la* is reserved for inanimates, while animates have the clitic *le/les* (homophonous with the third person

dative clitic). The examples in (21) correspond to Ormazábal and Romero (2007), (15).

- (21) a. *Lo* *vi*
 3Sg.Acc_[-animate] saw.1Sg
 ‘I saw it’
- b. *Le* *vi*
 3Sg.Acc_[+animate] saw.1Sg
 ‘I saw him/her’

In ditransitive contexts with a third person accusative clitic and a first or second person dative clitic, *leísta* dialects show a clear contrast between inanimate and animate objects, as shown in (22), which corresponds to Ormazábal and Romero (2007), (16).

- (22) a. *Te* *lo* *di*
 2Sg.Dat 3Sg.Acc gave
 ‘I gave it to you’
- b. **Te* *le* *di*
 2Sg.Dat 3Sg.Acc gave
 ‘I gave him/her to you’

If the Person-Case Constraint were about person, the contrast between (22a) and (22b) would be a mystery, since in both cases the accusative clitic is third person. If one assumes that animacy and not person is relevant, the ungrammaticality of (22b) can readily be attributed to the constraint.

As mentioned earlier, Ormazábal and Romero (2007) do not provide a fully-fledged analysis of the Person-Case Constraint but they propose that the Person-Case Constraint should actually be split into one generalization, the Object Animacy Generalization, reproduced in (23), and a constraint called the Object Agreement Constraint, reproduced in (24).¹⁰

- (23) *Object Animacy Generalization*: Object relations, in contrast to subject and applied object relations, are sensitive to animacy.

- (24) *Object Agreement Constraint (OAC)*: If the verbal complex encodes object agreement, no other argument can be licensed through verbal agreement.

In order to account for the ungrammaticality of (1), with a typical Person-Case Constraint violation, an additional claim is made: Direct Object agreement takes place only if the Direct Object is animate; if it is inanimate it does not agree (and this is fine).¹¹ Given the generalization in (23), animacy is irrelevant for the Indirect Object; for that argument (the applied object), agreement always has to take place. In sentences like (2), in which the Direct Object is third person (not specified for animacy), there is no Direct Object agreement and therefore the Indirect Object can agree freely; this situation appears schematized in (25a). Examples like (1) are ruled out because, since there must be agreement with the Direct Object (it is [+animate]), the Indirect Object cannot agree and the derivation crashes, as the bomb indicates in (25b).

- (25) a. PCC / OAC satisfied:
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>object</i>
(DO) | <i>applied object</i>
(IO) |
| [−animate] | ↑ |
| √ | agreement |
- b. PCC / OAC violated:
- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>object</i>
(DO) | <i>applied object</i>
(IO) | |
| [+animate] | ↑ | |
| ↑ | ✗ | ●* |
| agreement | agreement | |

Notice that the situation schematized in (25b) is applicable also to sentences like (22b), **Te le di* ‘I gave him to you’, from *leista* dialects, in which there is a Person-Case Constraint / Object Agreement Constraint violation in spite of the fact that the accusative clitic is third person: the presence of the [+animate] feature in the Direct Object, which causes the presence of the *le* clitic, forces agreement with the Direct Object and therefore blocks the also necessary agreement with the Indirect Object, and the derivation crashes.

Ormazábal and Romero (2007) prefer not to include animacy in the constraint itself, and include it in a separate generalization, (23), because “from a theoretical perspective it is hard to see why animate agreement should behave so differently from inanimate agreement” (Ormazábal and Romero 2007: 24); they leave this issue unresolved. The Object Animacy Generalization in (23) comes from the observation that in several languages there is only agreement with animates (like in KiRimi or Mohawk) and that in many other languages there are specific relations between the verb and animate internal arguments.

The empirical evidence for excluding applied objects (the Indirect Object) from the generalization in (23) comes from Spanish data, and they use these data to argue against analyses of the Person-Case Constraint based on competition, such as Anagnostopoulou (2003), to be discussed in section 3.2. As shown in (26) (Ormazábal and Romero 2007, (54)), the clitic *le* is also used for inanimate applied objects in Spanish.

- (26) *Le pongo la pata a la mesa*
 3Sg.Dat put the leg to the table
 ‘I assemble the leg to the table’

In (forced) contexts in which the Direct Object is replaced with a first or second person clitic, the sentence becomes ungrammatical ((27) corresponds to Ormazábal and Romero 2007, (55)).

- (27) CONTEXT: I'm fed up; if you mention that the table is missing a leg once again and do nothing to fix it...
- a. *...te pongo a ti (de pata) en la mesa*
 ...2ACC put-1sgSUBJ A you (as leg) in the table
 ‘I assemble you as a leg in the table’
- b. **...te le pongo a ti (de pata) a la mesa*
 ...2ACC 3DAT put-1sgSUBJ A you (as leg) to the table
 ‘I assemble you as a leg in the table’

The crucial difference between (27a) and (27b) is that in (27a) *en la mesa* is a locative and therefore the sentence has only one clitic (one agreement element), *te*, while, according to them, in (27b) *a la mesa* is an Indirect

Object, which is doubled by an (inanimate) clitic *le* (similarly to what is found in (26)) and which cooccurs with a second person Direct Object clitic. Their explanation for the ungrammaticality of (27b) is that the agreement of the Direct Object with the verb (necessary because it is animate) prevents agreement with the Indirect Object, regardless of its animacy feature, and that causes the derivation to crash. However, it is very dubious that the ungrammaticality of (27b) is due to the constraint (in whatever version). As illustrated in (26), colloquial Spanish has clitic doubling with the Indirect Object. This is illustrated again in (28) with the verb *recomendar* ‘to recommend’.

- (28) *Le recomendaron el salmón a Pedro*
 3Sg.Dat recommended the salmon to Pedro
 ‘They recommended the salmon to Pedro’

When the Direct Object is a first or second person clitic a Person-Case Constraint / Object Agreement Constraint conflict arises (see (29a)); one of the most common repair strategies in those cases is to omit the doubled clitic, as in (29b); with only one clitic, no conflict arises.

- (29) a. **Te le recomendaron a Pedro*
 2Sg 3Sg.Dat recommended to Pedro
 ‘They recommended you to Pedro’
 b. *Te recomendaron a Pedro*
 2Sg recommended to Pedro
 ‘They recommended you to Pedro’

However, this omission strategy does not render the sentence in (27b) better, as shown in (30). The presence or absence of the strong pronoun *a ti* (compare (30a) with (30b)) does not make any difference.¹²

- (30) a. **Te pongo a ti a la mesa*
 2Sg put to you to the table
 ‘I assemble you to the table’

- b. **Te pongo a la mesa*
 2Sg put to the table
 ‘I assemble you to the table’

If the ungrammaticality of (27b) were due to the Object Agreement Constraint, one would expect the sentences in (30) to be grammatical because only one clitic is present and this clitic should be able to agree with the verb, no other agreement being needed in the verbal complex. The ungrammaticality of the sentences in (30) has to be found elsewhere. Notice that the sentences in (30) become much more acceptable if the phrase (*de pata*) which appears in parentheses in the two examples in (27), and which was omitted on purpose in (30), is present, as shown in (31a); they are fully acceptable if the phrase *a la mesa* is replaced with *de mesa*, as shown in (31b).¹³

- (31) a. ?*Te pongo a ti de pata a la mesa*
 2Sg put to you of leg to the table
 ‘I assemble you as a leg to the table’
 b. *Te pongo a ti de pata de mesa*
 2Sg put to you of leg of table
 ‘I assemble you as a leg of a table’

If the ungrammaticality of the sentence in (27b) lies beyond the Person-Case Constraint, and if the interpretation given to the Catalan strategy discussed in section 2 is also correct, then it means that the Object Animacy Generalization in (23) has to be modified: applied objects (Indirect Objects) are sensitive to animacy. In Catalan, the use of the inanimate dative *hi* for the Indirect Object avoids a Person-Case Constraint conflict. This strategy is not completely different from the one used in *leïsta* dialects to avoid the effects of the Person-Case Constraint, which was illustrated in (22b), and is repeated below as (32b); in these varieties, and precisely in these contexts, the otherwise inanimate clitic *lo* can be used to refer to animates, as would be the case in (32a), a slightly modified version of (22a) with respect to the translation.

- (32) a. *Te lo di*
 2Sg.Dat 3Sg.Acc gave
 ‘I gave it / him to you’
- b. **Te le di*
 2Sg.Dat 3Sg.Acc gave
 ‘I gave him/her to you’

The main difference between the *leïsta* repair strategy and the Catalan repair strategy is that the former targets the animacy of the Direct Object, while the latter targets the animacy of the Indirect Object.

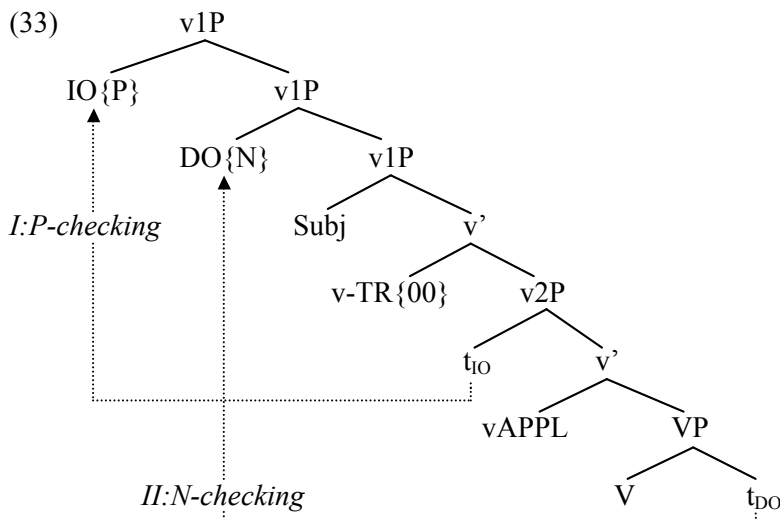
With respect to the Object Agreement Constraint (OAC), recall that, according to it, “if the verbal complex encodes object agreement, no other argument can be licensed through verbal agreement” (see (24)). Given the Catalan strategy, one would have to conclude that *hi* does not show any agreement, because only a first or second person Direct Object will be able to encode agreement, being animate. However, if, as Ormazábal and Romero (2007) assume, case is a by-product of agreement, it might be difficult to account for the presence of *hi*, if it encodes, as claimed, dative case.

3.2. Anagnostopoulou (2003)

Anagnostopoulou (2003), in a study about ditransitive constructions, proposes an analysis of the Person-Case Constraint based on competition in which feature checking takes place with one and the same head. She assumes, as is often done, that first and second person have a [person] feature ([1], [2]), while third person does not have one (but see below). Indirect Object clitics are defective in the sense that their number feature is not accessible for checking; Anagnostopoulou (2003) argues that evidence for this claim comes from past participle agreement, which is possible with an accusative, but impossible with a dative. Direct Object clitics can check both number and person.¹⁴ Agreement of the Indirect Object and the Direct Object takes place with one and the same functional head, v-TR, a head with [person] and [number] ({P,N}). The Indirect Object moves first, because it is closer to v-TR, and checks the person feature ({0,N}). The Direct Object agrees afterwards and it can do so only with the number feature ({0,0}). Therefore,

movement applies in a counter-cyclic fashion. If the Direct Object is third person, no problem arises because there is no [person] feature to check (she assumes that a third person Direct Object is a determiner pronoun); if the Direct Object is first or second person (or a reflexive) it is not able to check its person features and the derivation crashes. In transitive clauses the Direct Object is able to check both person and number. This accounts for the fact that Direct Object agreement with a first or second person is possible only when there is no Indirect Object.

(33), which corresponds to Anagnostopoulou (2003, (380)), illustrates the relevant part of the derivation of a ditransitive clause with non-conflicting clitics.¹⁵



Having said that third person does not have a person feature, it could seem strange that a third person Indirect Object can value the person feature of the functional head (blocking it for the Direct Object). The reason for the asymmetry in behavior between a third person Direct Object and a third person Indirect Object is related to the idea that, even when they are third person, datives have the person-related feature [participant], given that usually an Indirect Object is animate. That means that, while a third person Direct

Object does not have any person-related feature, a third person Indirect Object does have one, [participant].

Anagnostopoulou (2003) acknowledges the relevance of the *leísta* dialects of Spanish discussed in an early version of Ormazábal and Romero (2007) (Ormazábal and Romero 2002), which was also discussed in section 3.1. To accommodate the facts from *leísta* dialects and other languages that behave in a similar way she suggests that in these languages (not in others) v-TR has an active animacy feature or, rather, an active animacy / gender feature; an animate Direct Object clitic will have to check it, as well as the Indirect Object clitic. Movement of the Indirect Object clitic first will prevent the Direct Object from checking its animacy / gender feature and the derivation will crash.

Anagnostopoulou (2003), however, rejects the possibility that animacy is relevant in Person-Case Constraint environments for languages like Greek. According to her, Greek is sensitive to animacy / gender, as shown by the following facts. In Greek ditransitives, sentences with just a Direct Object clitic are acceptable only if that clitic is neuter, as is shown in (34) (Anagnostopoulou 2003, (289b)). When the Direct Object clitic is masculine or feminine, the sentences are very marginal (see (35a)), unless an Indirect Object clitic (which receives Genitive case) is also present, as shown in (35b) ((35a) and (35b) correspond to Anagnostopoulou 2003, (287b) and (287d), respectively).

(34) ?*O Gianis to edhose tis Marias*
 the Gianis.Nom Cl.Acc.Neut gave the Maria.Gen
 ‘John gave it to Mary’

(35) a. **?Tin sistisa tu adhelpu mu*
 Cl.Acc.Fem introduced the brother-Gen my
 ‘I introduced her to my brother’
 b. *Tu tin sistisa*
 Cl.Gen.Masc Cl.Acc.Fem introduced
 ‘I introduced her to him’

However, the presence of a masculine or feminine Direct Object clitic does not trigger a Person Case Constraint violation, as would have been the case in

leísta dialects of Spanish with an animate Direct Object (recall the examples in (32)). The example in (35a), grammatical, illustrates this fact. In (36) another example is given, with a second person Indirect Object clitic ((36) corresponds to Anagnostopoulou 2003, (342b)).

- (36) *Tha su ton stilune*
 Fut Cl.2Sg.Gen Cl.Acc.Masc send
 ‘They will send him to you’

Therefore, for languages like Greek, and contrary to *leísta* dialects of Spanish, she keeps the account sketched in (33), in which only the feature [person] (together with [participant] for the Indirect Object clitic) are relevant.

Nevertheless, as Anagnostopoulou herself acknowledges when discussing (35a), in chapter 4 of her book, the relevant feature to account for the ungrammaticality of (35a) could be either gender or animacy (she says that it is difficult to find examples that could tease the two options apart). Therefore, since gender could also be the relevant feature in this case, one can keep a uniform Person-Case Constraint that makes reference to the feature [animate] instead of person. As for Standard Spanish, Direct Object clitics in Greek would not be marked for animacy, while Direct Objects in *leísta* dialects of Spanish would be sensitive to this feature.

Anagnostopoulou (2003) does discuss the change from *li* to *hi* that Catalan uses to overcome the effects of the Person-Case Constraint, discussed in section 2. However she interprets the clitic as a locative; and as a locative it does not check person features. That leaves the accusative clitic free to check both number and person, thus skipping the effects of the Person-Case Constraint. She does not mention, though, what structure clauses with this locative clitic would have. Nevertheless, the conclusion reached in section 2, according to which *hi* is an inanimate dative, more concretely a clitic with dative case and no other feature (neither person nor number), can easily be accommodated to Anagnostopoulou’s (2003) account of the Person-Case Constraint. One has to assume that the Indirect Object, which has no person or number features, does not check [person]; this leaves the Direct Object free to agree both in number and person. There is no need to assume that the clitic is really a locative clitic.

3.3. Adger and Harbour (2007)

Adger and Harbour (2007) base their analysis of the Person-Case Constraint mostly on Kiowa, a Kiowa-Tanoan language from Oklahoma that encodes agreement with the subject, the Direct Object and the Indirect Object on a verbal prefix; but in their analysis they also consider Indo-European languages. Like Ormazábal and Romero (2007), they acknowledge the relevance of animacy, but they encode it in an indirect way, through the feature [participant], a feature that is also crucial, as we have seen, in Anagnostopoulou (2003). This feature is present in first and second person ([participant: 1] for first person exclusive, [participant: 12] for first person inclusive, [participant: 2] for second person). The feature [participant], without further specifications, is also present in Romance third person reflexive clitics (which are also targets for the Person-Case Constraint), and in third person Indirect Objects; a third person Direct Object is not specified for the feature.¹⁶ These specifications appear in (37).

(37) First person exclusive:	[participant: 1]
First person inclusive:	[participant: 12]
Second person:	[participant: 2]
Romance 3rd person reflexive:	[participant:]
3rd person IO:	[participant:]
3rd person DO:	-----

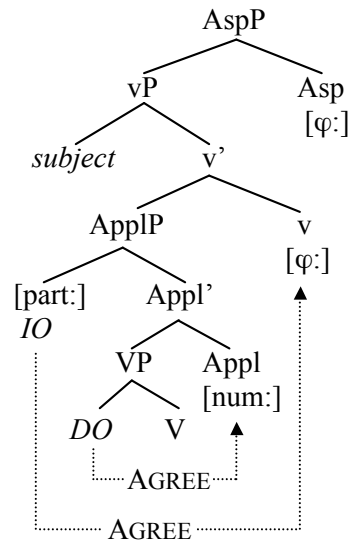
The presence of [participant] entails semantic animacy, but its absence does not entail anything (an argument could be semantically animate but not bear any specific feature related to it). Support for the indirect relation between the feature [participant] and animacy comes from the fact that in Kiowa in certain cases an animate Direct Object can coexist with an Indirect Object without triggering any Person-Case Constraint effects; Adger and Harbour (2007) argue that in these cases the relevant feature encoding semantic animacy is [empathy], not [participant] ([empathy] being a feature present in only certain nominals that comprise adult Kiowas, sometimes children and sometimes horses).

Adger and Harbour (2007) claim that the Indirect Object always bears the feature [participant:], as (37) above shows. Their evidence comes from Kiowa, where indirect objects are always interpreted as semantically animate, and also from Indo-European languages. They cite work by Fillmore and Pesetsky (Fillmore 1968; Pesetsky 1995) and they mention the fact that, in English, double object constructions are not really acceptable with an inanimate Indirect Object. In sentences like (38) the Indirect Object has to be interpreted as personified ((38) corresponds to Adger and Harbour 2007, (62)).

(38) *?We sent the conference the abstract*

Adger and Harbour (2007), similarly to Anagnostopoulou (2003), claim that the Person-Case Constraint arises from a conflict in feature checking. But, contrary to her approach, where checking for the Indirect Object and the Direct Object is done with the same functional head, here checking is done with different functional heads, namely Appl (a head which is present in ditransitives and other constructions not relevant here) and v. Their account relies crucially on two claims: (a) the Appl head is defective and only carries the feature [number:] (other functional heads being able to bear all φ -features); (b) the Appl head requires its Specifier, the Indirect Object, to bear the feature [participant:] (because, as mentioned earlier, they assume that Indirect Objects have to be animate). (39) schematically illustrates these claims plus the structure they assume for ditransitives and the relevant agreement relations (in what follows I abstract away from more technical issues).

(39)



Since, as shown in (39), the Direct Object and the Appl head have an agreement relation, and the Appl head, being defective, only bears the feature [num:], it follows that the Direct Object cannot have the feature [participant:] (it cannot be checked and the derivation will crash), which means that the Direct Object always has to be third person; first and second person, which unavoidably have the feature [participant:], always trigger a Person-Case Constraint violation.¹⁷ Indirect Objects, which also bear the feature [participant], will not have any checking problems because the functional head they agree with, v, has all φ-features.

The effects of the Person-Case Constraint are stated in (40) (Adger and Harbour 2007, (76)).

(40) Appl cannot enter into an Agree relation with a [participant:] argument in its complement domain.

In transitive clauses, the Appl head is absent, and the Direct Object agrees with the v head, which is not defective; in those cases the Direct Object can be first or second person.

The account in Adger and Harbour (2007) faces serious problems once we consider the data presented in section 2. A first problem is that the idea that an Indirect Object always bears the feature [participant:] is contradicted by the data presented from Catalan; as has been shown in section 2, this language (at least) can have inanimate datives, as argued for in Rigau (1978), (1982) (the *hi* clitic). This problem is easily solved if one assumes that an Indirect Object need not bear the feature [participant:], at least universally. A second, much more serious problem, is related to the claims concerning the Direct Object in this approach: since in this account the Direct Object cannot bear the feature [participant:] in a ditransitive, a first or second person Direct Object will never be licensed in this type of construction (it does not conform to (40)). This means that Adger and Harbour (2007) cannot account for the repair strategy used in Catalan to overcome the effects of the Person-Case Constraint. Recall that in Catalan, in these environments, the third person dative clitic is replaced by *hi*, as was illustrated in (7), repeated here as (41).

- (41) a. *Al president, m' hi ha recomanat en Miquel*
 to-the president, 1Sg *hi* has recommended the Miquel
 'As for the president, Miquel has recommended me to him'
- b. **Al president, me li ha recomanat en*
 to-the president, 1Sg.Acc 3Sg.Dat has recommended the
Miquel
 Miquel
 'As for the president, Miquel has recommended me to him'

What (41) illustrates is that, precisely, in Catalan a first or second person Direct Object is kept and what changes is the Indirect Object, which surfaces only with dative case (therefore, without any morph related to the feature [person:]). The only way out for Adger and Harbour (2007) would be to assume, similarly to Anagnostopoulou (2003), that in sentences like (41a) the clitic that surfaces is a locative; the structure of the sentence would be the one corresponding to a transitive verb (a structure without an Appl head) plus a locative argument. This is, however, not a desirable move, given the arguments given in section 2 against *hi* being a locative in the relevant constructions.

4. Concluding remarks

One of the goals of this paper was to describe and analyze the strategy that Catalan uses in ditransitives to avoid the effects of the Person-Case Constraint. The strategy involves replacing the third person dative clitic, *li* (singular) and *(e)lzi* (plural), with the clitic *hi*, a clitic that is homophonous with the locative clitic.

With arguments from Rigau (1978), (1982), it has been shown that the clitic *hi* is also an inanimate dative, an inanimate Indirect Object. This is the clitic used in Person-Case Constraint environments. It has further been claimed that *hi* /i/ is actually the morph corresponding to dative case, a morph which is also present in the third person dative singular *li* /l+i/ and in the third person dative plural *(e)lzi* /l+z+i/. The conclusion has been that in Person-Case Constraint environments the clitic that surfaces lacks person and number features; it only has case.

For Anagnostopoulou (2003) (discussed in section 3.2), and Adger and Harbour (2007) (discussed in section 3.3.), Indirect Objects are always animate, a property that both papers encode in the feature [participant]. As for Ormazábal and Romero (2007) (discussed in section 3.1), they admit that Indirect Objects can be inanimate, but they also claim that animacy is only relevant for Direct Objects (see the Object Animacy Generalization in (23)). What this paper has shown is that Indirect Objects are also sensitive to animacy.¹⁸

An additional conclusion that can be drawn from the present paper is that the Person-Case constraint cannot be formulated focusing only on the features of the Direct Object. The problem that was pointed out in section 3.3 for Adger and Harbour (2007) was precisely that they relate the constraint to the checking relation between the Direct Object and a defective Appl head which only has number features. This defectiveness forces the presence of a Direct Object without the feature [participant:], which means that it has to be third person. The Catalan *hi* strategy, however, constitutes a counterexample to this hypothesis, because in this case the Direct Object can be first or second person, which inherently have the feature [participant:]; what changes is the Indirect Object clitic, which becomes an impoverished clitic, without person and number, and therefore without any feature related to animacy.

The Person-Case Constraint, then, arises from a conflict between animacy-related φ -features of the verbal complex. One obvious strategy to avoid the problem is to suppress at least one of the conflicting clitics or agreement markers, which implies a suppression not only of the corresponding exponent but also of all the morphosyntactic features associated to it. This strategy was illustrated in (6c) for Standard Spanish; in Kiowa an alternative construction is chosen, with postpositional phrases, which does not trigger verbal agreement (see Adger and Harbour 2007). Other strategies involve the modification of the featural composition of one of the positions involved. In *leísta* dialects of Spanish an animate Direct Object is realized as an inanimate clitic (this strategy was illustrated in (32a)). In Catalan an animate Indirect Object is realized as an inanimate clitic, a clitic devoid of all features except case.¹⁹

A complete explanation of the Person-Case Constraint not only has to integrate the strategies used to skip the conflicting feature combination. Other questions have to be addressed and answered. As we saw in section 1, there is variation in the judgements concerning combinations of a first person with a second person, while combinations with a third person trigger much sharper distinctions in judgements. What is the origin of this variation? In trying to find an answer to this question one should perform a more careful empirical study of the judgements. Another question that should be addressed is the proven lack of universality of the constraint (see Haspelmath 2004 for an overview). Here too one should study to which degree the relevant languages are insensitive to the constraint. For instance, Bonet (1991) and Anagnostopoulou (2003) mention Swiss German, which at first sight seems to be insensitive to the constraint. The fact is, though, that it is not completely insensitive to it: when the accusative is third person, the order between accusative and dative clitics is free, while in Person-Case Constraint environments the order is fixed, and the accusative has to precede the dative. Anagnostopoulou (2003) accounts for the Swiss German facts (lack of Person-Case Constraint effects in accusative > dative environments) by claiming that in this case the accusative moves first and checks person and number features; the dative moves afterwards and presumably checks only “definiteness and / or phonological features” (Anagnostopoulou 2003: 296). This movement also gives the fixed order accusative > dative. The idea is then that the order dative > accusative gives rise to Person-Case Constraint effects,

while the order accusative > dative does not. However, data from Majorcan Catalan pose a serious problem to this hypothesis. In this variety, the accusative clitic precedes the dative clitic, as is shown in (42).

- (42) *La me recomanen*
 3Sg.Fem.Acc 1Sg recommend
 ‘They recommend her to me’

Following Anagnostopoulou (2003) the order between the two clitics in (42), accusative > dative, would be obtained by checking first the features of the accusative clitic. The problem with this account is that it predicts that Majorcan Catalan should be insensitive to the Person-Case Constraint: as in Swiss German, the order accusative > dative would imply checking all φ -features corresponding to the accusative, especially person and number, and therefore no conflict should arise. However, the fact is that sentences like (43a), with a first person Direct Object and a third person Indirect Object, are ungrammatical in Majorcan Catalan (as in all other dialects of Catalan); in these cases this variety resorts to the *hi* strategy described in section 2, as shown in (43b).

- (43) a. **Me li recomanen*
 1Sg 3Sg.Dat recommend
 ‘They recommend me to him/her’
- b. *M’ hi recomanen*
 1Sg *hi* recommend
 ‘They recommend me to him/her’

If questions like the ones presented here are answered, without having to resort to crucial stipulations, we might be able to understand the exact nature of the constraint.

Notes

1. I am very grateful to Joan Mascaró, Carme Picallo, Gemma Rigau, and two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on a previous draft of this paper. Research for this paper was partially funded by grant HUM 2006-13295-CO2-01 from the Spanish Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia and FEDER, and 2005SGR-00753 from the Generalitat de Catalunya.
2. For reasons of clarity, in the glosses of the examples I specify the gender, person and number of the items only when this information is directly relevant to the discussion.
3. It might be the case that speakers that accept the grammaticality of sentences like (4) but only in one of the readings have trouble getting a second reading, independently of which one they computed first. A more detailed study should be made to reach more solid conclusions. See Ormazábal and Romero (2007) for judgements on similar sentences in Spanish.
4. Conflicting judgements are also obtained with Direct Object reflexive clitics. It seems that in most languages they are subject to the Person-Case Constraint. In Catalan the facts are not so clear (see Bonet 1991 for some discussion of this issue).
5. For a morphological approach to person restrictions see also Rivero (2007, this volume).
6. *Hi* can also replace a first or second person clitic for those speakers with the strong version of the Person-Case Constraint; that is, for those speakers who do not accept a combination of a first person and a second person. For speakers with the weak version of the constraint this replacement is also acceptable.
7. The clitic *hi*, as other clitics, has different uses. For a brief description, see Hualde (1992).
8. One property that real locatives and other uses of *hi* share is that they can never be subject to clitic doubling, not even in Person-Case Constraint environments; constructions with *li* can always surface with clitic doubling. Clitic doubling with a third person dative clitic is illustrated for Spanish in (28).
9. Even though for convenience I assume the feature [animate] to be binary, it might very well be the case that it is a monovalent feature.
10. Two anonymous reviewers wonder why Ormazábal and Romero (2007) use the terms *object relations* and *applied object relations* (see (23)), instead of simply referring to Direct Object and Indirect Object, respectively. The reason is that, even though they often concentrate on ditransitive constructions in Spanish, they also discuss some other constructions and other language families, and the terms

they use cover all cases. In the present paper, limited to ditransitive constructions, the terms are equivalent.

11. Later in the paper Ormazábal and Romero (2007) argue that third person Direct Object clitics are clitic determiners, as opposed to first and second person Direct Object clitics and all Indirect Object clitics, which are agreement markers.
12. The sentences in (30) are grammatical under the interpretation 'I set you at the table'.
13. Carme Picallo (personal communication) suggests that in sentences like (31a,b) the sequences *a ti de pata a la mesa* or *a ti de pata de mesa* can be analyzed as a small clause in which *de pata* is a predicative element and *a ti* is the subject.
14. The evidence based on past participle agreement might not be decisive, given some facts concerning Catalan: in most dialects where this phenomenon is found agreement is indeed possible only with accusatives, not with datives. But with accusatives it is only possible with third person clitics; never with first or second person. Following the line of reasoning in the main text, one would have to conclude that Direct Object clitics cannot always check number.
15. In the structure in (33) vAPPL is a light applicative head present in all double object constructions (Romance ditransitives with clitics being considered double object constructions).
16. The feature [participant] with the additional 1, 2 values is actually a shorthand for a complex of features, which include [=participant], [=author] and [=hearer]. Third person (non-reflexive) with [participant] has actually the value [-participant].
17. The *leísta* dialects of Spanish discussed by Ormazábal and Romero (2002), (2007), which appear illustrated in (21) and (22), do not pose a problem for this approach: a *le* clitic has the feature [participant:], and therefore behaves like first and second person clitics with respect to the Person-Case Constraint; a *lo* clitic does not have this feature, and therefore behaves like third person clitics or third person agreement in other languages.
18. Taking into account the discussion on the interpretation of sentences with *hi* and sentences with *li* (see the paragraph after (11)), maybe, rather than animacy, the relevant feature should be related to affectedness; a door is an inanimate object, but it can be affected.
19. Rezac (2006) studies the theoretical implications of several strategies used to avoid the Person-Case Constraint. His conclusion is that trans-derivational comparison is essential in accounting for them. Resorting to paraphrases is impossible given that many of them are unavailable in any other context. As we saw for Catalan, the clitic *hi* can be related to animate goals only in Person-Case

Constraint environments; in any other context this is impossible (see the ungrammatical example in (11b)). In Standard Spanish non-subject strong pronouns have to be doubled by a clitic, except in Person-Case Constraint environments, where the clitic has to be absent.

References

- Adger, David, and Daniel Harbour
2004 The Syntax and Syncretisms of the Person Case Constraint. To appear in *Syntax*.
- Anagnostopoulou, Elena
2003 *The Syntax of Ditransitives: Evidence from Clitics*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Boeckx, Cedric
2000 Quirky agreement. *Studia Linguistica* 54:354–380.
- Bonet, Eulàlia
1991 Morphology after syntax: Pronominal clitics in Romance. Ph. D. diss., Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Fillmore, Charles
1968 The case for case. In *Universals in Linguistic Theory*, Emmon Bach, and Robert T. Harms (eds.), 1–81. New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.
- Haspelmath, Martin
2004 Explaining the ditransitive person-role constraint: A usage-based approach. *Constructions* 2/2004.
- Hrafnbjargarson, Gunnar Hrafn
2001 An Optimality Theory Analysis of Agreement in Icelandic. Unpublished Manuscript, University of Stuttgart. Available at <http://www.hum.uit.no/a/hrafnbjargarson/pub>.
- Hualde, José Ignacio
1992 *Catalan*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mascaró, Joan
1986 *Morfologia* [Morphology]. Barcelona: Enciclopèdia Catalana.
- Miller, Philip H., and Ivan A. Sag
1997 French Clitic Movement without Clitics or Movement, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 15: 573–639.
- Nevins, Andrew

- 2007 The representation of third person and its consequences for person-case effects. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 25, to appear.
- Ormazábal, Javier, and Juan Romero
- 2002 Agreement restrictions. Manuscript, University of the Basque Country (EHU/Basque Center for Language Research (LEHIA), and University of Alcalá/Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
- 2007 The Object Agreement Constraint. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 25, to appear.
- Perlmutter, David M.
- 1971 *Deep and Surface Structure Constraints in Syntax*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Pesetsky, David
- 1995 *Zero Syntax: Experiencers and Cascades*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.
- Rezac, Milan
- 2006 Escaping the Person Case Constraint: Reference-set computation in the φ -system. To appear in *Linguistic Variation Yearbook* 6.
- Rigau, Gemma
- 1978 “Hi” datiu inanimat [“Hi” inanimate dative]. *Els Marges* 12: 99-102.
- 1982 Inanimate Indirect Object in Catalan. *Linguistic Inquiry* 13: 146-150.
- Rivero, María Luisa
- 2007 Oblique subjects and person restrictions in Spanish: A morphological approach. This volume.
- Sigurðsson, Halldór Ármann
- 1996 Icelandic finite verb agreement. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 57: 1-46.
- Taraldsen, Knut Tarald
- 1995 On Agreement and Nominative Objects in Icelandic. In *Studies in Comparative Germanic Syntax*, Hubert Haider, Susan Olsen, and Sten Vikner (eds.), 307-327. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Viaplana, Joaquim
- 1980 Algunes consideracions sobre les formes clíiques del barceloní [Some considerations on the clitic forms of Barceloní]. *Anuario de Filología* 6: 459-483.