

Datives as “concordial” case: evidence from Spanish and Galician

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Puzzle: Languages with pronominal clitics often exhibit not only a nominative and accusative series, but also a dative series. Spanish and Galician are particularly challenging because the range of meanings associated with dative clitics is very broad. Datives can be argumental (1) and non-argumental (2), Ethical dative (2a) and Solidarity Allocutive dative (2b). How can we account for the uses of datives in these languages?

Dative as a “concordial case”: Larson and Harada (2008) study *ni*-phrases in ditransitive constructions in Japanese and find that the *ni*-marked goal must take scope and bind the o-marked theme. This binding and freezing behavior is not found simply with ditransitives, but with *ni*-marked phrases including transitive and intransitive locatives and possessives. L&H suggest that the correct empirical generalization covering all these instances of *ni*-phrases is that ‘*Ni*-phrases must occur higher in structure than a structurally case-marked phrase’. To explain this generalization, they suggest that *ni* isn’t a dative case-marker, but rather a form of “concordializing element” allowing phrase bearing it to obtain case by agreement. The basic idea behind this proposal is familiar from the nominal system. The Nominative case in (3) is “real” on the nominal head *kennigar* ‘theories,’ but present simply as agreement on the other elements. One way of understanding this is to see the interpreted, but unvalued source of Nominative case - T-probing for a valued instance of NOM below it. “On the way” to the noun head, T’s search encounters “concordial” elements (D, Dem, AP) that cannot provide a case value of their own but can agree with whatever case is ultimately found (4a). Assuming that concordial elements must bear a case feature, an unvalued, uninterpreted case feature (μ Case[]) that allows a higher, interpreted probe to agree with it, it follows that they must position themselves between the probe (T) and the goal (N). If they do not, the probe will find its goal before they are reached, search will end, and the concordial elements will fail to undergo agreement (4b). L&H propose that this is also available in vP/VP as well. For a language to make use of this strategy, two elements are needed in its grammar: a dative marker and a movement mechanism in order to place the Dat phrase in the appropriate Probe Goal relation. L&H conclude that there are two possibilities for dative in Japanese: the realization of true oblique case of the sort checked by a prepositional governor (5a), or it can be the realization of a concordializing element (5b).

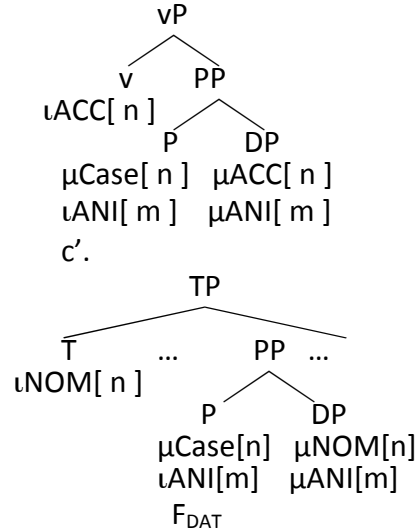
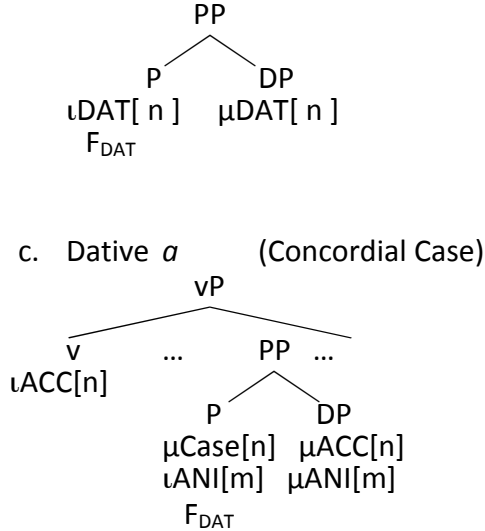
Spanish and Galician: This approach is appropriate for SP and GL, where the range of meanings associated with dative clitics is very broad. I propose that SP and GL are similar to Japanese. The dative can be either the realization of true oblique case checked by a prepositional governor (non-clitic doubling) or the realization of a concordializing element (clitic-doubling). These languages show the two elements required to make use of this strategy, specifically, a preposition - that might be analyzed as concordial element, and movement options that are related to the presence of clitics. I will explore the idea that Spanish ‘*a*’ derives its constellation of properties from its status as a concordial element in some instances. More exactly, I want to argue that there are in fact three *a*’s differing slightly, but systematically, in their feature make-up shown in (6). The picture of dative-licensing is then a flexible one: dative phrases are expected anywhere that appropriate probe-goal relations on structural case are found. They are expected in vP, between *v* and an accusative (7); they are expected in TP, between T and a nominative

subject and between a higher functional head X and a vocative marked phrase, which I will suggest is also an instance of structural case licensing (7c). **References:** LARSON, R. & N. HARADA. 2008. Datives in Japanese. Unpublished manuscript. Stony Brook.

- (1) a. *A Susana_i le_i gustan/apasionan/encantan las manzanas*
 To Susana **her.cl.Dat** like/be passionate about/adore the apples SP
 ‘Susana likes/is passionate about/adores apples’ (Experiencer)
- b. *Susana (le) mandó una carta a Pablo*
 Susana **her.cl.Dat.** sent a letter to Pablo SP
 ‘Susana sent a letter to Paul’ (Goal)
- c. *Susana le cortó el pelo a Pablo*
 Susana **her.cl.Dat.** cut the hair to Pablo SP
 ‘Susana cut Pablo’s hair’ (Possessive)
- (2) a. **Me** le arruinaron la vida al niño *a mí
me.cl.dat him.cl.dat ruined the life of the child to me SP
 ‘They ruined the child life and this has an effect on me’ (Affective Dative)
- b. *As mazás que merquei hoxe estan-che boísimas *a ti*
 the apples that I-bought today are-**you. cl.dat** very good to you GL
 ‘The apples that I bought today are very good, you know’ (Solid. Allo. Dat.)
- (3) *allar pessapr prjár nyju kennigar*
all.fem.pl.nom these.fem.pl.nom three.fem.pl.nom new.fem.pl.nom theories.fem.pl.nom
 ‘all these three new theories’ (Larson and Harada 2008, taken from Sigurdson)

- (4) a. T **D Dem AP N-NOM** b. T N-NOM *AP
 AGREE SEARCH ENDS SEARCH ENDS

- (5) a. P DP-DAT b. Probe DP-DAT XP
 CHECK AGREE
- (6) a. Prepositional *a* b. Accusative *a* (Concordial Case)



- (7) a. v DP-DAT DP-ACC
 AGREE

b. *AGREE*
T DP-DAT DP-NOM
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c. *AGREE*
X DP-DAT DP
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