

French vs Italian datives: participle agreement, reflexives and the PCC

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1. DATA French and Italian behave mostly similarly for agreement of past participles, which in complex tenses agree in number and gender with preverbal accusative direct objects. We can also observe that neither in French nor in Italian is there past participle agreement with a preverbal dative pronominal clitic.

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| <p>(1) Tu nous as écrit-Ø/*s.
 2SG 1PL.DAT have.2SG written.PTCP-M.SG/*PL
 ‘You have written to us.’</p> | <p>(2) (Tu) ci hai scritt-o/*i.
 2SG 1PL.DAT have.2SG written.PTCP-M.SG/*PL
 ‘You have written to us.’</p> |
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In reflexive constructions however, a different pattern obtains. In French the participle does not agree if it is the indirect object that is reflexivized (4), while in Italian agreement surfaces in those cases (5). Although dative and accusative reflexive clitics have the same form, SE in the following examples is nevertheless taken to be dative, as it is interpreted in the same way as the overtly dative forms (3), i.e. as a goal, and it is generally assumed that only one accusative can be assigned.

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| <p>(3) Lucie lui a remis-Ø le prix.
 Lucie.NOM 3SG.DAT have.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG the prize.ACC
 ‘Lucie gave him/her the prize.’</p> | <p>(4) Lucie s’ est remis-Ø/*e le prix.
 Lucie.NOM SE.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG/*F.SG the prize.ACC
 ‘Lucie gave herself the prize.’</p> |
| <p>(5) Lucia si è dat-a/*o un premio.
 Lucia.NOM SE.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-F.SG/*M.SG a prize.ACC
 ‘Lucie gave herself the prize.’</p> | |

This is an unexpected difference, especially under the assumption that Romance reflexives are unaccusatives.

2. BACKGROUND Following much of the existing literature (Marantz 1984, Grimshaw 1990, Embick 2004, Sportiche 1998), we take French and Italian reflexive constructions to be detransitivized predicates, and assume that they are unaccusative rather than unergative constructions (e.g. Chierchia 1989, 2004, Reinhart & Siloni 2004, Sportiche 2014). A substantial amount of evidence exists in favour of such an analysis, among which the use of the auxiliary *be*, the presence of *se* in other unaccusative constructions such as middles or inchoatives, and last but not least the requirement that the past participle agree when the direct object is reflexivized, since past participle agreement in French and Italian only occur if a direct object moves to subject position (Kayne 1989, D’Alessandro & Roberts 2008). Constructions in which the dative argument is reflexivized as in (4)/(5) can thus be construed as ‘undatives’, in which the indirect object gets promoted to subject. Under an unaccusative analysis, however, the difference between the French and Italian agreement facts with dative reflexives remains unaccounted for. If past participle agreement is indeed triggered by a moved object, then either as in (1)/(2) the case marking of the indirect object would somehow make it an inactive goal for agreement (then the Italian pattern in (5) is unexpected) or the derived nominative subject is a possible goal for past participle agreement (and then the French pattern in (4) is unexpected).

3. A NEW LINK TO THE PCC French and Italian differ in another aspect pertaining to Case, namely the Person Case Constraint (PCC, Bonet 1991). French obeys the strong version of the PCC, stating that ‘in a combination of a weak direct object and an indirect object, the direct object has to be 3rd person’ (Bonet 1991: 182), thus banning all 1/2 ACC > DAT combinations, whereas Italian only bans 1/2 ACC > 3 DAT combinations, in virtue of the weak version of the PCC (‘if there is a 3rd person it has to be the direct object’).

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| <p>(6) *Ils me te présentent.
 3PL.NOM 1SG.ACC 2SG.DAT introduce.3PL
 ‘They introduce me to you.’</p> | <p>(7) Mi ti presentano.
 1SG.ACC 2SG.DAT introduce.3PL
 ‘They introduce me to you.’</p> |
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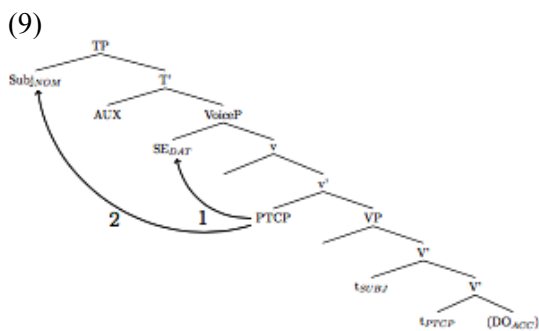
Anagnostopoulou (2005) proposes to derive the difference between French and Italian via the availability of Multiple Agree. PCC effects stems from a configuration where two objects (direct and indirect) are checked against one functional head ν , allowing split feature checking (Taraldsen 1995, Anagnostopoulou 2003). She crucially assumes that datives are defective (they have only person features, no gender or number features), and that they are closest to ν and therefore Agree first. So the dative object enters in an agreement relationship with ν and checks person, leaving the accusative object to check remaining number/gender features. French does not allow Multiple Agree, therefore

the accusative object cannot subsequently check its own person features against *v*, if it has any, therefore deriving the strong version of the PCC. Italian on the other hand allows Multiple Agree and an accusative object can check its person feature against *v*, iff there are no conflicting feature specifications, thus disallowing 1/2 ACC > 3 DAT.

4. PROPOSAL If Anagnostopoulou’s (2005) analysis in terms of Multiple Agree is correct, then the asymmetry between French and Italian participle agreement facts in ‘dative reflexives’ follows from it as well. The following structure for reflexives is assumed (see (9)): SE cliticizes to a Voice head that checks an argument in Spec, VoiceP or Spec, TP (Labelle 2008, Sportiche 2013, Déchaine & Wiltschko 2017). Although reflexive SE is not an argument at the semantic level, it is nevertheless a goal for agreement in the morphosyntax and carries dative case. It has been shown to be specified for (at least some) ϕ -features: this is evidenced by the fact that French and Italian reflexives all contrast person and 1st and 2nd person also contrast number (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2017), as shown in (8) for French.

- (8) a. Je **me** vois. b. Tu **te** vois. c. Elle **se** voit.
 I REFL.1SG see You REFL.2SG see She REFL.3 see
 d. Nous **nous** voyons. e. Vous **vous** voyez. f. Ils **se** voient.
 We REFL.1PL see You.PL REFL.2PL see They REFL.3 see

If datives are underspecified for number and gender, as proposed by Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005), they leave these features unvalued on the participle. French not having the possibility of Multiple Agree, the participle in *v* cannot further Agree with the indirect object when it (Re-)Merges in Spec, TP, and the participle surfaces with default agreement. In Italian, on the other hand, the participle can further Agree with the moved indirect object in Spec, TP for remaining gender and number features, thus deriving (5). So in the tree below, 2 is an Agree relation in Italian that is not allowed in French, while Agree relation 1 is fine in both.



How can the (non-)availability of Multiple Agree be accounted for? I propose that datives in French and Italian have different feature specifications, namely, French datives would be fully specified for [3;M;SG], whereas Italian datives would only be specified for person [3;—]. Rezac (2008) argues for instance that datives are defective targets for agreement because datives are embedded in a PP or KP shell with its own set of features (e.g. only 3rd person), which prevent the features of the complement DP to be visible for agreement, while still being interpretable (see also Bjorkman &

Zeijlstra (t.a.)). Different feature specifications have the desirable result to do away with the parametrization of Multiple Agree and simply derive its effects as an epiphenomenon by saying that French datives entirely value their probes’ uninterpretable features, leaving no further features for subsequent goals, while Italian datives only incompletely value their probe, which thus remains available for further Agree relations. This has equally correct results for past participle agreement, which then always surfaces as [3;M;SG] default agreement in French (\emptyset -morpheme), the dative controlling agreement in disguise. Such an analysis, although still speculative, could interestingly derive further properties of French and Italian, such as the presence of a gender distinction on 3rd person dative pronouns in the latter, but again not the former (10).

(10)	French	Italian
3SG		
ACC	le (M), la (F)	lo (M), la (F)
DAT	lui (M/F)	gli (M), le (F)

5. CONCLUSION This proposal has accounted for unexpectedly different agreement facts in French and Italian dative reflexives by arguing that datives may have different featural specifications, based on the new observation that past participle agreement and PCC effects are related.

6. SELECTED REFERENCES Anagnostopoulou, E. 2005. ‘Strong and Weak Person Restrictions: A feature checking analysis’. In Lorie Heggie and Francisco Ordoñez (Eds.) *Clitic and Affix Combinations* 199-235. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. Déchaine, R.M. & Wiltschko, M. 2017. ‘A formal typology of reflexives’. *Studia Linguistica*, 71(1-2): 60-106. Rezac, M. 2008. ‘The syntax of eccentric agreement: The Person Case Constraint and Absolutive Displacement in Basque’. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 26: 61-106.