

Romance reflexives, past participle agreement and the PCC

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Overview

- Preverbal direct objects control past participle agreement and indirect object don't, in both French and Italian.
- Reflexive direct objects accordingly always trigger past participle agreement in both languages. **French past participles do not agree if the indirect object is reflexivized, while in Italian agreement surfaces in those cases.**
- French and Italian differ in another aspect, namely the Person Case Constraint (PCC, Bonet (1991)). French obeys the strong version of the PCC (*IO > 1/2.DO) whereas Italian only bans *3.IO > 1/2.DO combinations, in virtue of the weak version of the PCC.
- The difference between French and Italian can be derived via the availability of Multiple Agree: French does not allow Multiple Agree while Italian does (Anagnostopoulou 2005). I argue that the asymmetry between French and Italian participle agreement facts in dative reflexives follows from this as well.

1 Data

(1) *Agreement with preverbal objects*

	French	Italian
Accusative pronouns	yes	yes
Accusative reflexives	yes	yes
Dative pronouns	no	no
Dative reflexives	no	yes

1.1 Past participle agreement with accusative pronouns

- In complex tenses (AUX+past participle), past participles agree with **direct objects** in **number and gender** if they are preverbal (e.g. clitics) or moved (e.g. passives, unaccusatives), in French and in Italian (D'Alessandro & Roberts 2008; Kayne 1989).

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(2) *Past participle agreement paradigms in French and Italian*

<i>French</i>	M	F
SG	décrit- \emptyset	décrit- e
PL	décrit- s	décrit- es

<i>Italian</i>	M	F
SG	descritt- o	descritt- a
PL	descritt- i	descritt- e

(3) *No agreement with an in-situ object*

Jean a décrit- \emptyset Marie.
 Jean.NOM AUX.3SG describe.PTCP-MSG Marie.ACC.

‘Jean has described Marie.’

French

(4) *Agreement with pronominal direct object clitics*

a. Les anglais **I'** ont détruit-**e**. (la ville).
 the British it(F) AUX.3PL destroy.PTCP-F.SG the city.F.
 ‘The British destroyed it (the city).’

French

b. **Le** abbiamo salutat-**e**.
 them.FPL have.1PL greeted-F.PL
 ‘We have greeted them.’

Italian

1.2 Past participle agreement with accusative reflexives

(5) *Agreement with accusative reflexives*

a. Elle s' est décrit-**e** comme timide.
 She REFL.ACC AUX.3SG describe.PTCP-F.SG as shy
 ‘She described herself as shy.’

French

b. Le ragazze si sono guardat-**e** allo specchio.
 the girls.FPL REFL.ACC are looked-F.PL in.the mirror
 ‘The girls have looked at themselves in the mirror.’

Italian

1.3 No past participle agreement with dative pronouns

(6) *No agreement with pronominal indirect object clitics*

a. Tu **lui** as écrit- \emptyset /***e**.
 2SG 3SG.DAT have.2SG written.PTCP-M.SG/***F.SG**
 ‘You have written to her.’

French

b. (Tu) **le** hai scritt- \emptyset /***a**.
 (2SG) 3SG.DAT have.2SG written.PTCP-M.SG/***F.SG**
 ‘You have written to her.’

Italian

1.4 The dative reflexives puzzle: a French/Italian asymmetry

(7) *Dative reflexives*

a. *No participle agreement: French*

Lucie s' est remis- \emptyset /***e** le prix.
 Lucie.NOM REFL.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG/***F.SG** the prize.ACC
 ‘Lucy gave herself the prize.’

b. *Participle agreement: Italian*

Lucia si è dat-**a**/***o** un premio.
 Lucia.NOM REFL.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-F.SG/***M.SG** a prize.ACC
 ‘Lucy gave herself the prize.’

- In **French** past participles **do not agree** if it is the *indirect object* that is reflexivized (7a), while in **Italian**, **agreement surfaces** in those cases (7b).
- This difference between French and Italian past participle agreement in dative reflexive constructions is unexpected.

1.5 Roadmap

- French and Italian differ in another aspect pertaining to Case, namely the Person Case Constraint (PCC, Bonet 1991) (section 2).
- I argue that these differences can be connected and that Anagnostopoulou's (2003, 2005) approach to the PCC can be applied to the participle agreement facts in reflexive predicates (section 3).
- Sections 4 and 5 address consequences of this proposal.

2 The Person-Case Constraint

2.1 Weak vs strong PCC

- The Person Case Constraint (Bonet 1991) is a generalization about person restrictions in ditransitive constructions.

(8) *The Weak Version of the PCC*

In a combination of a weak direct object and a weak indirect object [clitic, agreement marker or weak pronoun], if there is a third person indirect object, then the direct object should also be third person. (after Bonet 1991: 182)

***3 IO > 1/2 DO: ITALIAN**

(9) *Italian*

- a. * 3 IO > 1/2 DO
 *Gli mi presentano.
 3SG.DAT 1SG.ACC introduce.3PL
 'They introduce me to him.'
- b. 1/2 IO > 1/2 DO
 Mi ti presentano.
 1SG.DAT 2SG.ACC introduce.3PL
 'They introduce me to you.'
- c. 3 IO > 3 DO
 Glielo presentano.
 3SG.DAT:3SG.ACC introduce.3PL
 'They introduce him to him.'
- d. 1/2 IO > 3 DO
 Me lo presentano.
 1SG.DAT 3SG.ACC introduce.3PL
 'They introduce him to me.'

(10) *The Strong Version of the PCC*

In a combination of a weak direct object and a weak indirect object [clitic, agreement marker or weak pronoun], the direct object has to be 3rd person. (Bonet 1991: 182)

***IO > 1/2 DO: FRENCH**

(11) *French*

a. *3 IO > 1/2 DO

*Ils me lui présentent.
3PL.NOM 1SG.ACC 3SG.DAT introduce.3PL
'They introduce me to him/her.'

b. *1/2 IO > 1/2 DO

*Ils me te présentent.
3PL.NOM 1SG.ACC 2SG.DAT introduce.3PL
'They introduce me to you.'

c. 3 IO > 3 DO

Ils le lui présentent.
3PL.NOM 3SG.ACC 3SG.DAT introduce.3PL
'They introduce him to him/her.'

d. 1/2 IO > 3 DO

Ils me le présentent.
3PL.NOM 1SG.DAT 3SG.ACC introduce.3PL
'They introduce him to me.'

(12) *The PCC in French and Italian*

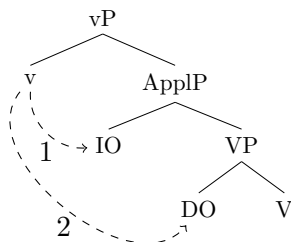
IO	DO	Italian	French
3	1/2	X	X
1/2	1/2	✓	X
3	3	✓	✓
1/2	3	✓	✓

2.2 Accounts

- PCC effects arise in configurations where **two arguments**, the direct object and the indirect object, are to check their features against **one agreeing head** (like little *v*), in a **one probe-two goals** configurations (Adger & Harbour 2007; Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005; Béjar & Rezac 2003; Nevins 2007; Stegovec to appear).

2.2.1 Background assumptions

- The base position of indirect objects is generally taken to be higher than direct objects, thus **datives are closest to *v*** and Agree first.



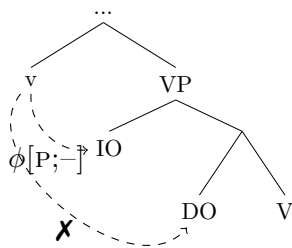
(13)

- Inherent asymmetry between the DO and the IO (Béjar & Rezac 2003, Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Adger & Harbour 2007; see Stegovec t.a. for a different position):
 - ACC 3rd person = no person feature [\emptyset]
 - DAT 3rd person = [-person]
 - (ACC/DAT 1/2 = [+person])
 → **Two 3rd persons** (Adger & Harbour 2007; Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005; Benveniste 1966; Bonet 1991; Kayne 2000; Ritter 1995; Sundaresan to appear; Taraldsen 1995).
- Béjar & Rezac (2003), Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005) further assume that datives are **defective**: they lack number and gender features.

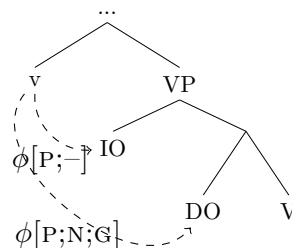
2.2.2 Deriving the PCC

- Anagnostopoulou (2005) proposes to derive the difference between French and Italian via the availability of **Multiple Agree**, i.e. the possibility to check person features multiple times.
- The availability of Multiple Agree is a matter of parametrization.

(14) *French: No Multiple Agree*



(15) *Italian: Multiple Agree*



- The dative object agrees first with v and checks person, leaving the accusative object to check remaining number/gender features.
- Given that they are specified for [person], datives arguments act as **interveners**, which prevent the person-probe to value its features against a second argument.
- French does not allow Multiple Agree, therefore the accusative object cannot subsequently check its own person features against v , if it has any, i.e. **if it bears a [person] specification (1/2 person)**. This derives 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**.
- That effectively bans *1/2 ACC/NOM > 3 DAT combinations in Italian, as [+person] conflicts with [-person], thus deriving the weak version of the PCC.

(16) *Conflicting feature specifications in French and Italian*

DAT	ACC	DAT	ACC	Italian	French
3	1/2	[-person]	[+person]	X	X
1/2	1/2	[+person]	[+person]	✓	X
3	3	[-person]	[-]	✓	✓
1/2	3	[+person]	[-]	✓	✓

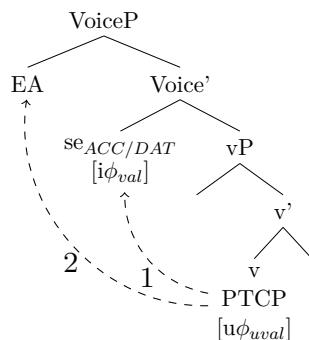
- In what follows, I argue that the asymmetry between French and Italian participle agreement facts with so-called dative reflexives follows from similar principles than the PCC, in that it involves a one probe-two goals situation.

3 Proposal

3.1 The structure of reflexive predicates

- Reflexives are taken to have **Case** and (at least some) ϕ -**features**, which makes them goals for agreement.
- However, *se* reflexives are not syntactic arguments and they are not generated inside VP like other object clitics.
- French and Italian reflexive constructions pattern syntactically like **intransitive predicates**, and that reflexive clitics do not pattern with other pronominal clitics (Chierchia 2004; Embick 2004; Grimshaw 1990; Kayne 1975; Labelle 2008; Marantz 1984; Reinhart & Siloni 2004; Sportiche 1998, 2014).
- For the purposes of this presentation I will assume that reflexives are syntactically unergative. Note that similar conclusions can be drawn assuming that reflexives are unaccusative.
- I assume *se* is headed in **Voice** (Labelle 2008; Sportiche 1996, 1998):

(17)



- In reflexive constructions, participles stand in a one probe-two goals configuration with the reflexive clitic and the subject. It is the subject that controls agreement on the participle.

3.2 Applying the Multiple Agree analysis to reflexives

- The prediction that past participles agree, both in French and Italian, when *se* is accusative is built in Anagnostopoulou’s analysis: since it is a 3rd person accusative, it has no person features, and *v* can agree with the EA, always resulting in covarying participle agreement.

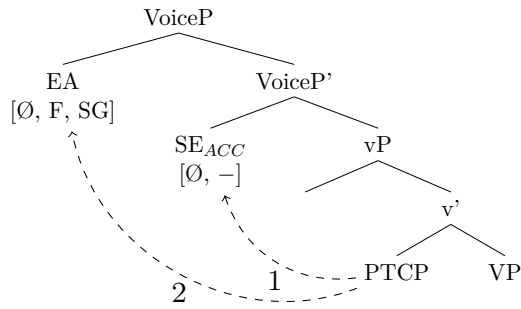
(18) *Agreement with accusative reflexives*

Elle s’ est décrit-**e** comme timide.
 She REFL.ACC AUX.3SG describe.PTCP-F.SG as shy

‘She described herself as shy.’

French

(19) *French and Italian*

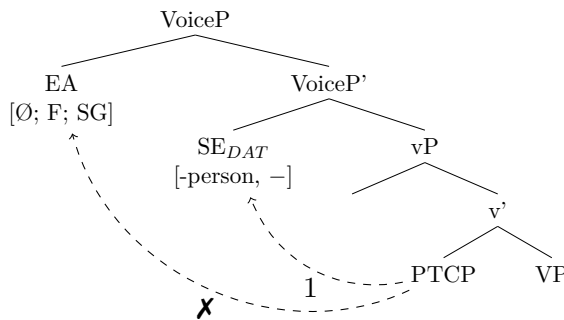


- If Anagnostopoulou's (2005) analysis of strong vs weak PCC effects in terms of Multiple Agree is correct, then the asymmetry between French and Italian participle agreement facts in dative reflexives follows from it as well.

(20) *No participle agreement: French*

Lucie **s'** est remis- \emptyset /***e** le prix.
 Lucie.NOM SE.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG/***F.SG** the prize.ACC
 'Lucy gave herself the prize.'

(21) *French*

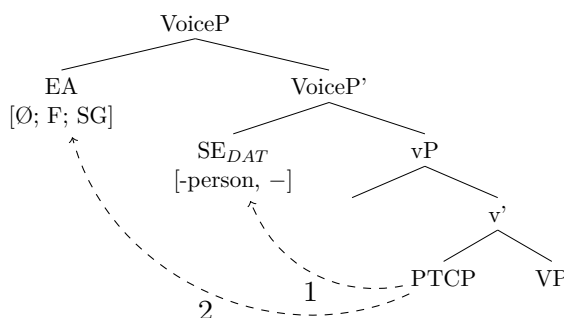


- French does not have the possibility of Multiple Agree \rightarrow the participle in *v* cannot further Agree with the subject (Agree relation 2) \rightarrow the participle surfaces with default agreement.

(22) *Participle agreement: Italian*

Lucia **si** è dat-**a**/***o** un premio.
 Lucia.NOM SE.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-F.SG/***M.SG** a prize.ACC
 'Lucy gave herself the prize.'

(23) *Italian*

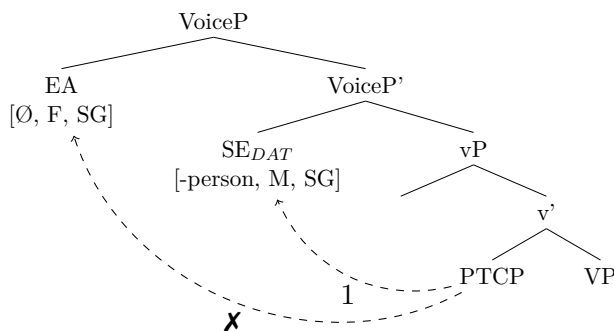


- In Italian, on the other hand, the participle can further Agree with the subject in Spec,TP for remaining gender and number features (Agree relation 2), deriving (22).
- The participle agreement facts thus come for free when we apply an analysis in terms of Multiple Agree such as the one proposed by Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005) for PCC effects.
- However, two issues arise at this point.

4 Parametrized Multiple Agree

- For Anagnostopoulou (2005) the availability of Multiple Agree is a matter of parametrization.
- How can the (non-)availability of Multiple Agree be accounted for, i.e. can a Multiple Agree parameter be encoded featurally?
- I propose that datives in French and Italian have **different feature specifications**:
 - French datives: [-person;M;SG]
 - Italian datives: [-person;-]
- Rezac (2008): 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 and Zeijlstra (to appear)).
- Similarly to the idea that 3rd person can be encoded by a \emptyset -feature or a [-person] in different languages, default agreement with datives could be the result of either a lack of specification or [-person;M;SG].
- Doing away with the parametrization of Multiple Agree:
 - French datives entirely value their probes' uninterpretable features, leaving no further features for subsequent goals

(24) *French*



→ Italian datives only incompletely value their probe, which 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.
- In Italian, *v* probes further up for the nominative, valuing gender and number.

5 The featural content of *se*

- Taking accusative *se* to have no person features, like other accusative 3rd persons, is an easy and elegant solution that derives past participle agreement for free if we apply Anagnostopoulou's original account.
- However, this appears to be at odds with the behavior of *se* in other aspects.
- The behavior of *se* reflexives in French with respect to the PCC, suggests that it must always be **specified for person**. Indeed *se* reflexives pattern like 1/2 person:

(25) *3.IO > REFL/1/2.DO

Elle *se/*me lui donne entièrement.
 She *REFL/*1SG.ACC 3SG.DAT gives entirely

She gives herself/me to him entirely.

(26) *1/2.IO > REFL/1/2.DO

Ils *se/*te me présentent.
 They *REFL/*2SG.ACC 1SG.DAT introduce

They introduce themselves/you to me.

(27) REFL/1/2.IO > 3.DO

Elle se/me l' offre.
 She REFL/1SG.DAT 3SG.ACC offers

She offers it to herself/me.

(28) *REFL/1/2.IO > 1/2.DO

Elle *se/*te me décrit.
 She *REFL/*2SG.DAT 1SG.ACC describes

She has described me to herself/you.

(29) *PCC effects with reflexives in French*

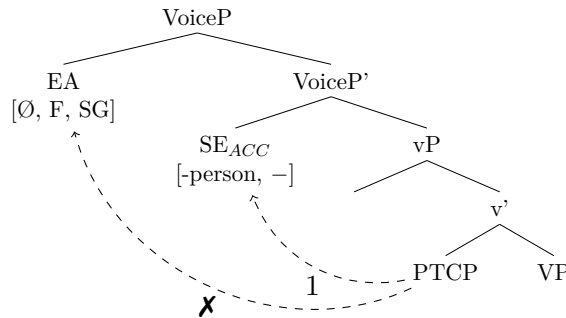
IO	DO	French
3	1/2	X
3	REFL	X
1/2	1/2	X
1/2	REFL	X
REFL	1/2	X
1/2	3	✓
REFL	3	✓

- However, French *se* is restricted to 3rd person antecedents, as illustrated in (30), which makes it unlikely that it should be specified [+person].

(30) *Je/*tu/elle s' admire.
 *1SG/*2SG/3SG REFL admires
I/you/she admires.

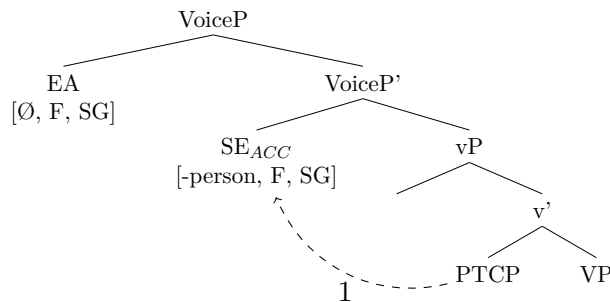
- This converges to suggest that French *se* is specified for person, and specifically [-person] (Adger & Harbour 2007; Sundaresan to appear).
- If so, the present analysis needs to accommodate the fact that accusative *se*, unlike other 3rd person accusatives, might act as an intervener for agreement, which would result in default agreement in the participle with an accusative reflexive, contrary to facts.

(31) [-person] accusative ‘*se*’ intervenes



- A possibility would be that *se*'s complete set of ϕ -features value the *v* probe completely and *v*'s relation with the EA does not involve ϕ -feature checking. This in turn raises the question of how and when *se* gets its ϕ -features but that is beyond the scope of this paper.
- This would come as an exception to the Anaphor-Agreement Effect (Rizzi 1990; Woolford 1999) that states that anaphors cannot trigger regular ϕ -covarying agreement.

(32) Agreement with accusative ‘*se*’



6 Conclusion

- Unexpectedly different past participle agreement facts with French and Italian dative reflexives can be accounted for based on a new parallel with PCC effects.
- The past participle agreement puzzle can be derived by simply applying the principles that underly weak vs strong PCC effects along the lines of Anagnostopoulou (2003, 2005), namely the availability of Multiple Agree.
- This analysis raises the issue of whether the parametrization of Multiple Agree might be due to different featural specifications of the datives cross-linguistically.
- It also raises further questions as to the featural composition of *se* anaphors.

7 Appendix: Reflexives have Case

- Although dative and accusative reflexive clitics have the same form, *se* reflexives are taken to have case.
- When the non-reflexive argument corresponding to *se* arises, it is overtly dative (34):

(33) Lucie s' est remis- \emptyset /**e* le prix.
 Lucie.NOM SE.DAT be.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG/**F.SG* the prize.ACC
 'Lucy gave herself the prize.' *French*

(34) Lucie lui a remis- \emptyset le prix.
 Lucie.NOM 3SG.DAT have.3SG give.PTCP-M.SG the prize.ACC
 'Lucy gave him/her the prize.' *French*

- It is interpreted in the same way as overtly dative forms, i.e. as a goal (Macdonald 2015).
- It is generally assumed that only one accusative per clause can be assigned, and *se* can cooccur with an accusative object as in (34), suggesting that it is indeed a dative.
- *Se* is only compatible with VPs where the missing object would bear accusative or dative case. It does not appear in a reflexive clause if the internal complement coreferential with the subject would bear a case different from accusative or dative (Labelle 2008).

<p>(35) <i>Partitive</i></p> <p>a. Luc a peur de son voisin. Luc has fear of his neighbour 'Paul is afraid of his neighbour.'</p> <p>b. Luc en a peur. Luc PART has fear 'Paul is afraid of him.'</p> <p>c. *Luc s' a peur. Luc REFL has fear 'Paul is afraid of himself.'</p>	<p>(36) <i>Locative</i></p> <p>a. Luc pense à sa famille. Luc thinks of his family 'Luc thinks about his family.'</p> <p>b. Luc y pense. Luc LOC thinks 'Luc thinks about it.'</p> <p>c. *Luc se pense. Luc REFL thinks 'Luc thinks about himself.' (Labelle 2008: 839)</p>
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