‘Agreement of structural obliques’ parameter

'Agreement of Structural Obliques' Parameter: DOM and Pseudopartitives.

M. Rita Manzini - Ludovico Franco
Università di Firenze

Abstract: We consider two sets of facts. The first is that DOM objects may or may not agree with perfect participles in Indo-Aryan. The second is that (pseudo)partitive subjects may agree with the verb in the plural or not. We account for the DOM parameter, basing on the assumption that DOM corresponds to embedding of a DP under an oblique adposition: if P projects, the DOM object is labelled PP and does not agree; if D projects, it is labelled DP, projecting like any other DP. On the contrary, inherent datives, where P/K is lexically selected, must project P/K and are therefore not goals for Agree. We extend this labelling account to (pseudo)partitives, as well as to optionally agreeing oblique clitics in Romance.

Keywords: DOM, Pseudopartitives, Agreement, Oblique, Labelling.

1. (Pseudo)partitives

The syntactic structure exemplified by Italian (1a) is usually labelled as 'pseudopartitive' in the literature. The term 'pseudo' highlights the fact that the relation between *a lot* and *senators* does not express a clear subset relation, and more properly involves a measurement relation (Selkirk 1977, Schwarzschild 2006). On the contrary, proper partitive DPs, as in (1b), express a relation between two extensionally defined DPs, involving a definite embedded DP, interpreted as a 'whole', and a DP head interpreted as 'part' of this whole (Barker 1998, Chierchia 1998, Zamparelli 2008 among others). Both in partitives and in psedopartitives the embedded NP is a bare mass noun or a plural count noun. Partitives can be headed by quantifiers that are excluded from pseudopartitives.

(1) Italian

a.	*un*	*sacco*	*di*	*senatori*	*ha/hanno*	*votato contro*
	a	lot	of	senators	has/have	voted against
	'A lot of senators has/have voted against'					
b.	*un*	*sacco*	*dei*	*senatori*	*ha/hanno*	*votato contro*
	a	lot	of-the	senators	has/have	voted against
	'A lot of the senators has/have voted against'					

What we are interested here in is that in Italian (1), the presence of a (pseudo)partitive DP in subject position triggers optionality in agreement with the finite verb. Specifically, the verb may agree with *un sacco* 'a lot', i.e. the head of (pseudo)partitive, showing up in the singular. Alternatively, it may agree with the embedded genitive/*of* NP, showing up in the plural. Due to space limitations, we

concentrate on (pseudo)partitives, leaving partitives for further research.[1]

Lorusso & Franco (2017) show that there are Romance varieties that have only one of the two agreement possibilities, as illustrated in (2a) for Barese (Apulia) and in (2b) for Sardinian. These examples are reproduced here in that they seems to show that the optionality in (1) depends on the coexistence of two slightly different grammars, which can be told apart in (2a)-(2b).

(2) Barese

a. *na croscka d puèrcə s' ha mangiatə/*han*
a gang of pigs REFL has eaten/have
mangiatə i bastenacə
eaten the carrots
'A gang of pigs ate the carrots'

Sardinian

b. *un arei de canis *at/ant assartau su*
a pack of dogs has/have attacked the
koili
farm
'A pack of wolves attacked the farm'

Alternations of the type in (1) have first been studied in the formal literature in connection with Russian examples of the type in (3), where the verb agrees either with the genitive NP *studentov* in the plural, or else shows up in the neuter singular form.

(3) Russian (Franks 1994: 615)

Neskol'ko studentov pročitali/pročitalo ètu knjigu
several students.GEN read.PL/read.SG this book
'Several students read this book'

Pesetsky (1982: 89) suggests that "in a phrase of the form [$_{XP}$ Q N], X must be either Q or N … A no-agreement numeral phrase is a QP; an agreement numeral phrase is an NP". In other words, "if we assume that a verb agrees with an NP, but not with a QP, we account for the agreement facts".

Franks (1994) elaborates on this idea. He proposes that in the singular agreement condition, the subject nominal in (3) is a QP; the quantifier is in the Spec of QP while an empty Q head assigns genitive to the embedded NP, as in (4a). In

[1] At least in Italian, partitives display the double agreement possibility when they are headed by the same measure phrases that can head pseudopartitives. Partitives headed by quantifiers only have head agreement, as in (i).

(i) *Uno/ciascuno dei senatori ha/*hanno votato contro*
one/each of-the senators has/have voted against
'One/each of the senators has voted against'

the plural agreement condition, the QP is embedded under a DP, as in (4b).

(4) a. [$_{QP}$ neskol'ko [$_{Q'}$ Q [$_{NP}$ studentov]]] QP
b. [$_{D}$ D [$_{QP}$ neskol'ko [$_{Q'}$ Q [$_{NP}$ studentov]]]] DP

Belletti & Rizzi (1996) note that optional agreement with the perfect participle also characterizes the Romance partitive clitic. In Italian (5b) many speakers allow both agreement in the plural and non-agreement in the singular. Two slightly different grammars are involved, as proved by the fact that normative French only allows lack of agreement, resulting in masculine singular inflection on the participle, as in (5a). In Italian agreement is the normative choice.

(5) French
a. *Il* *en* *a repeint/*repeintes* *deux*
he of.them has repainted.SG/repainted.PL two
'He has repainted two of them'
Italian
b. *Ne* *ha* *ridipinte/ridipinto* *due*
of.them has repainted.PL/repainted.SG two
'He has repainted two of them'

Belletti & Rizzi propose that before clititicization, the structure of a partitive phrase containing *ne/en* is as in (6), where the *en/ne* corresponds to an oblique KP. The crucial difference between agreeing and non agreeing grammars consists in whether φ-features are or are not associated with the KP node. Once KP moves out of QP (via the Spec, QP position), this triggers agreement with the perfect participle or lack thereof.

(6) a. [$_{QP}$ [deux [$_{KP}$ en]] *French*
b. [$_{QP}$ [due [$_{KP\text{-}\varphi}$ ne]] *Italian*

The approaches schematized so far are essentially labelling approaches. This is explicit enough in the earliest discussion, that of Pesetsky (1982), where agreement depends on whether Q labels the (pseudo)partitives or N does. In Belletti & Rizzi's version the crucial issue is whether the KP label is associated with φ-features (as the NP label is for Pesetsky). [2]

The recent literature contains alternative proposals on (pseudo)partitives.

[2] Lorusso & Franco (2017) argue that languages like Barese (2a) which only have head agreement in pseudo-partitives are characterized by a phasal genitive/*of* phrase; vice versa the non-phasal character of the embedded genitive/of phrase allows embedded agreement. It is not obvious that there is a conceptual differentiation from labelling approaches, since the crux of the matter is whether the embedded φ-features are or are not legible at the root DP node. Here we shall pursue the labelling alternative, because under the phase alternative, extra assumptions are required anyway to force embedded agreement, as in Sardinian (2b).

Danon (2013) adopts the idea that there are two types of φ-features, namely Concord features, more closely related to the noun's morphology, and relevant to NP-internal concord – and Index features which are taken to be relevant to pronoun binding and subject-predicate Agreement. According to Danon (see also Demonte & Perez-Jimenez 2015), in (pseudo)partitives, Q and N bear different Concord features. However what governs subject-predicate agreement is Index features, and Q may bear itself such features or it may copy them from N. This determines two agreement possibilities, as schematized in (7).

(7)	a.	Q	[concord: α] [index: α]	N	[concord: β] [index: β]	*Head agreement*
	b.	Q	[concord: α] [index: __]	N	[concord: β] [index: β]	*Embedded agreement*

An approach of the type in (7) is richer than what we take to be standard approaches, unifying sentential and DP-internal agreement under Chomsky's (2001) Agree (Carstens 2000, Manzini and Savoia 2018 and many others). Leaving this aside, consider how it would fare with respect to the *ne/en* sentences in (5). In (5) the QP in object position is inert with respect to agreement. It is the *en/ne* clitic that determines the agreement parameter, and under (7) the clitic has index features by definition. Of course, it remains to be shown that a unification between (1)-(2) and (5) is possible or desirable, but we raised this point as an indication of the fact that labelling approaches seem to have a potential for unification that escapes other analyses. We will come back to this point in the conclusions.

In section 2, we present a set of data concerning Differential Object Marking (DOM), which are connected to the data in this section just by the fact that agreement and lack of it alternate in the same contexts. We argue that the two sets of data are connected by recent theories of (Indo-European) DOM as involving obliquization of the highly ranked object.

2. Differential Object Marking

In many Indo-Aryan languages, including Punjabi (8) (see Manzini et al. 2015), direct objects are split into two different classes: if the object is human and/or definite (including pronouns), the internal argument bears a Differential Object Marking (DOM) morpheme (*-nu* in (8b)); other objects are in the absolutive form, as in (8a). What is relevant for present purposes is that in Punjabi (Hindi, etc.), DOM arguments in ergative alignments do not agree with the perfect participle, contrary to absolutive objects. In (8a) the absolutive internal argument triggers agreement; the DOM internal argument in (8b) triggers an invariant (masculine, singular) inflection on the perfect participle.

(8) Punjabi

a. *o-ne* *kutt-e* *peddʒ-e*
s/he-ERG dog-MPL.ABS send.PERF-MPL
'S/he sent the dogs.'

b. *mɛː* *o-nu/una-nu* *dekkh-ea*
I s/he-DOM/they-DOM see.PERF-MSG
'I saw him/her/them.'

Importantly for present purposes, in Punjabi, as in Hindi and in many other Indo-European languages, the morphological expression of DOM coincides with that of the dative, as illustrated by the comparison between (8b) and (9).

(9) Punjabi
o-ne *kita:b* *ditt-i* *(si)* *una-nu*
s/he-ERG book.FSG give.PERF-FSG be.PAST they-DAT
'S/he gave the book to them'

In other Indo-Aryan languages, such as Gujarati (Patel & Grosz 2014, Irimia 2018) or Marwari illustrated below, also displaying a morphological coincidence of DOM and dative, DOM arguments do agree with the verb, as in (10a). Thus in Marwari, the internal argument agrees with the perfect, independently of whether it surfaces as a direct case (inanimate) or as a DOM (animate), signalled with the *naiṃ* suffix. The same *naiṃ* morpheme does not trigger agreement when it attaches to goal datives, as shown in (10b). [3]

(10) Marwari (Verbeke 2013: 230)
a. *mhaiṃ śaraṇ-naiṃ* *dekh-ī*
I Sharan.F.SG-DOM see-PST.F.SG
'I saw Sharan.'

b. *bābū* *mha-naiṃ* *baiṭh* *jāv-ṇai-ro* *isāro*
boss I-DAT sit go-INF-GEN sign.M
kar-yo
make-PST.M.SG
'The boss made me a sign to sit down.'

Ergative alignments are less robust in Iranian, and do not necessarily co-occur with DOM. Nevertheless the literature contains evidence that the same parameter is attested in Iranian. Thus Eastern Baluchi allows agreement of DOM arguments with the verb in ergative alignments, as in (11b), paralleling bare objects (11a). Other varieties reported by Korn (2008) seem to display only singular agreement with

[3] The morphological coincidence of DOM and dative is a widespread feature of Indo-European (see the survey in Manzini & Franco 2016 and references cited there). More generally, DOM objects take the form of obliques, for instance locatives as in Romanian (on locatives, see Franco et al. to appear).

oblique objects as in (12b) in contrast to (12a).

(11) Eastern Baluchi (Korn 2008:253, 261)

a.	*ãhī-ā*	*kull-ẽ*	*bandī-**Ø***	*yala kuθ-aɣ-ant*
	DEM-OBL	all-ADJ	prisoner	free do- PERF-3PL
	‘He has freed all the prisoners’			
b.	*mā*	*zahm-ā̃*	*ārθ-aɣ-ant*	
	I.OBL	sword-OBL.PL	bring-PERF-3PL	
	‘I brought the swords’			

(12) Southern Baluchi, 19th c. (Korn 2008:253, 260)

a.	*ē*	*haps-ā*	*ō*	*ē*	*zahm-ā*	*killāh-ā*
	DEM	horse-OBL	and	DEM	sword-OBL	fort-OBL
	pač-ī	*gipt*				
	open-3SG	take.PST				
	“He got hold of this horse and this sword [and] the fort”					
b.	*bānuk-ā …*	*drust-Ø*	*ǰat-ant*			
	lady-OBL	all	strike.PST-3PL			
	“The lady … struck [them] all”					

Recent approaches to DOM, mostly based on the Romance languages, but taking other Indo-European languages into account, provide a theoretical framework in which DOM objects are not just morphologically syncretic with obliques (specifically datives), but are represented as obliques in the syntax. The intuition is that in a Spanish sentence like (13a) the verb *contratar* ‘hire’ can be paraphrased as ‘give/make a contract to/with’. Their second argument is therefore an Appl argument, as schematized in (13b) by Torrego (2009). A similar Appl structure for Catalan (14a) is proposed by Pineda (2014), as in (14b).

(13) Spanish (Torrego 2009)

a.	*Han*	*contratado*	**(a) una amiga/Julia/mi amiga.*
	they.have	hired	(to) a friend/Julia/my friend
	‘They hired a friend/Julia/my friend.’		
b.	[$_{vP}$ Agent [$_{v'}$ v_{DO} [$_{ApplP}$ *a* DP [$_{Appl'}$ Appl *contrato*]]]]		

(14) Catalan (Pineda 2014)

a.	*L’Anna*	*telefona*	*(a) l’Andreu*
	the Anna	phones	(to) the Andreu
	‘Anna phones Andreu.’		
b.	[$_{VoiceP}$ Agent [$_{vP}$ v_{DO} [$_{ApplP}$ (*a*) DP [$_{Appl'}$ Appl *telefonata*]]]]		

Manzini & Franco (2016) provide a different implementation for the same general idea, which we follow here. Their empirical base is represented by Italian varieties

(Manzini & Savoia 2005) of the type exemplified of Sardinian (15). The *a* adposition embeds a goal dative in (15a) and a DOM internal argument in (15b), while the referentially low ranked internal argument in (15c) is embedded bare.

(15) Ittiri, Sardinia (Manzini & Savoia 2005)

a. *li* *ðaða* *ɣułłu* *(a iɻʂu/a iɻʂɔʐɔ)*
3DAT gives that to him/to them
'He gives that to him/them'

b. *appɔ* *ʒamaɾu* *ai* *kussa* *femina*
I.have called DOM that woman
'I have called that woman'

c. *appɔ* *ʒamaɾu* *un* *omine/zu* *ɣanɛ*
I.have called a man/the dog
'I have called a man/the dog'

In their analysis, Manzini & Franco avoid the Appl projection, in that it does not seem to correspond to the actual morphosyntactic organization of I-E languages which lack applicative verbal morphology; we will come back to this theoretical choice in the conclusions. Rather, the oblique/dative content is lexicalized by adpositions or case inflections. In their terms, the Romance *a* preposition carries inclusion content in the sense of Belvin & den Dikken (1997). They label this content ⊆; since our case studies involve adpositions, the more conventional P label suffices. Consider first the goal dative in (15a).

Following Kayne (1984) and much subsequent literature, we assume that a possession relation holds between the dative (*a iɻʂu* 'to him') and the theme of the ditransitive verb (*ɣułłu* 'that'). Thus, in (16), P endowed with the inclusion relational content takes as its internal argument its sister DP *iɻʂu* 'him' (the possessor) and as its external argument the sister to its projection, i.e. the theme of the verb *ɣułłu* 'that' (the possessee).

(16) [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ *ðaða* [$_{PredP}$ *ɣułłu* [$_{PP}$ *a iɻʂu*]]]] =(15a)

The syncretism of dative, as just defined in (16), and of DOM, is based on the fact that the same inclusion lexical content is instantiated in both contexts. In other words, object DPs which are referentially highly ranked require for their embedding the same elementary relator P introducing goals. In structure (17) for sentence (15b), the two arguments of P are its object DP and an eventive constituent. We adopt the standard minimalist assumption that transitive predicates result from the incorporation of an elementary state/event into a transitivizing *v* layer. Within such a framework, (15b) can be rendered as 'He gave/made (a) call to that woman', where 'that woman' includes/locates the call sub-event (Svenonius 2002 also uses the internal articulation of the predicate, though in a different fashion, to predict datives with unergatives, cf. Manzini & Franco 2016).

(17) [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ *ʒamaɾu* [$_{PP}$ *ai* [$_{DP}$ *kussa femina*]]]] =(15b)

This sensitivity to the two layered v-V structure is triggered only by highly ranked referents (specifically, human definite in Ittiri in (15)). By contrast, indefinite/inanimate complements are embedded as accusative themes, as in structure (18) for sentence (15c). In (18), 'call' behaves as a single predicate, while its lowly-ranked complement displays no sensitivity to the presence of sub-events/states.

(18) [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ *ʒamaɾu* [$_{DP}$ *zu ɣanɛ*]]] =(15c)

In short, languages with DOM are those where an argument with highly ranked referential properties cannot be embedded as a bare theme but must have a role at least as high as that of inclusor/locator of the event, as in (19).

(19) DOM
[$_{VP}$ ... [*(⊆) DP] ...] where DP is highly ranked
(subject to parametric variation)

On the basis of the characterization of DOM objects as *bona fide* obliques, we are in a position to go back to the agreement parameter observed in Indo-Aryan (8)-(10). The general descriptive conclusion is that the two logically possible agreement patterns for an oblique which is also an internal argument of a verb are instantiated. Specifically, such elements may pattern like other obliques, for instance goal datives, in not undergoing perfect participle agreement, as in Punjabi (8)-(9). Alternatively they may agree, patterning with direct case internal arguments, as in Marwari (10).

Other instances of variation in agreement patterns may be encompassed under the same generalization. In many Indo-Aryan languages (e.g. Hindi, Punjabi) ergative subjects do not agree with the verb, whether transitive as in (20a) or unergative, as in (20b). Because of the alignment of unergative subjects in (20b), Punjabi (like Hindi) could be more precisely characterized as an active language.

(20) Punjabi

a.	*o-ne*	*kutt-e*	*peddʒ-e*	(=8a)	
	s/he-ERG	dog-MPL.ABS	send.PERF-MPL		
	'S/he sent the dogs.'				
b.	*kuɾ-i-ne/muɳɖ-e-ne*		*hass-ea*	*si*	
	girl-FSG-ERG/boy-OBL.MSG-ERG		laugh.PERF-MSG	be.PAST	
	'the girl/the boy laughed'				

However, there are also Indo-Aryan languages in which subjects agree with the

verb, even when they are ergative, such as Nepali (21).

(21) Nepali (Verbeke 2013: 153)

ṭunṭunī-le	*āphno*	*guṃḍ*	*banā-ī*
bird.F-ERG	one's.own	nest.M	make.PERF-F

'The bird made its nest.'

Variation in the agreement properties of both DOM and ergative arguments has been recognized in the formal literature, notably by Anand & Nevins (2005) whose Visibility of Inherent-Case to Verbal Agreement (VIVA) Parameter states that "a language will differ as to whether the verb can agree with an inherently case marked DP". In other words, it confirms the generalization we just arrived at. Our first aim in the next section will be to assess whether there is a possible unification of the VIVA descriptive parameter with the structural parameter(s) concerning the different class of obliques (partitives) discussed in section 1.

Before concluding this section, we focus briefly on one last phenomenon, concerning Romance clitics. In Italian, accusative 3P clitics obligatorily agree with the perfect participle, as in (22a-b). On the other hand, obliques (datives) do not agree, as in (22c), independently of whether they are 1/2P or 3P. Interestingly, 1/2P clitics corresponding to an internal argument can either agree with the perfect participle, as in (22a), or not agree with it, as in (22b). We know that two different grammars are involved in the double agreement pattern displayed by 1/2P clitics, because there are Northern Italian varieties which systematically display lack of agreement, as in (23) (Manzini & Savoia 2005).[4]

(22) Italian

a.	*Mi/la*	*hanno*	*chiamata*
	me.F/her	they.have	called.F
	'They called me/her'		
b.	*Mi/*la*	*hanno*	*chiamato*
	me.F/her	they.have	called.M
	'They called me/her'		
c.	*Mi/le*	*hanno*	*parlato/*parlata*
	to.me.F/her	they.have	spoken.M/spoken.F
	'They spoke to me/her		

(23) Modena

a.	*a*	*l*	*ɔ*	*tʃa'mɛ:/tʃa'mɛda*
	I	him/her	have	called.M/called.F

[4] It should be noted that given to the nature of the Manzini and Savoia (2005) corpus, whence the Modena data are taken, the asterisk stands not for negative evidence (i.e. a grammaticality judgement), but rather for indirect negative evidence (i.e. lack of the relevant attestation in the corpus).

‘I called him/her’

b. *a* *t* *ɔ* *ʧa'mɛ:/*ʧa'mɛda*
I you have called.M/called.F
‘I called you’

Manzini & Franco (2016) argue that the variation observed in the agreement of Italian 1/2P clitics depends on the fact that they undergo DOM – which in Indo-European takes the form of dativization/obliquization (cf. fn. 3). Their morphological shape is compatible with this conclusion, since there is a single 1/2P clitic for both direct objects (22a-b) and goal datives (22c). Syntactically, 1/2P *vs.* 3P is generally accepted as one of the fundamental cuts in the referential hierarchy governing DOM (cf. the D-hierarchy of Kiparsky 2008).

What is more Manzini and Savoia (2005) document in detail that this cut in the hierarchy is instantiated in Italo-Romance with full pronouns. We dwelled on the paradigm in (22) in some detail because it provides a rather striking parallel to the *ne* clitic paradigm in section 1. We shall return to both in section 3.

3. The Agreement of Structural Obliques Parameter

Summarizing so far, in section 2 we have argued that DOM in Indo-Aryan involves obliquization of the internal argument, along the lines of (24), where the internal argument of the verb bears the postpositional markers *nu* and *naiṃ* for Punjabi and Marwari respectively. 1/2P Italian clitics undergo DOM, morphologically surfacing as oblique, hence bearing an oblique K inflection as in (25).

(24) a. … [$_{DP}$ *o-/una-*] [$_{P}$ *nu*] [$_{VP}$ *dekkh-ea*] Punjabi (8b)
b. … [$_{DP}$ *śaraṇ-*] [$_{P}$ *naiṃ*] [$_{VP}$ *dekh-ī*] Marwari (10a)

(25) … [$_{1/2P}$ *m*] [$_{K}$ *i*] [$_{VP}$ *chiamato/chiamata*] Italian (22a-b)

DOM is the focus of the present discussion. Nevertheless, since in typological and formal work, the same agreement parameter is taken to hold for DOM and for ergatives, we will briefly sketch a structure for ergatives. Following Laka (2006), we take ergative alignments to involve a simpler syntax than nominative alignments, notably in languages like the Indo-Aryan ones which display a contrast between perfects (ergatives) and progressives (nominative). Following Nash (2017), we may implement the relevant contrast as involving Voice; Manzini et al. (2015) keep closer to the observed morphological structure by postulating the presence or absence of an Asp layer. In any event, the external argument is attached under Voice/Asp in the progressive, yielding a nominative alignment. In the absence of this structural layer, in the perfect it is forced to merge as an oblique, yielding the ergative alignment, illustrated in (26) for both Punjabi and Nepali.

(26) a. [$_{DP}$ *o-*] [$_{P}$ *ne*] [$_{vP}$ *kutt-e peddʒ-e*] Punjabi (20a)
b. [$_{DP}$ *ʈunʈunī-*] [$_{P}$ *le*] [$_{vP}$ *āphno guṃḍ banā-ī*] Nepali (21)

Following Manzini et al. (2015) we may take the P relator involved in ergative structures like (26) to have the same fundamental inclusion content as the oblique/dative P in DOM alignments. Thus the external argument is inserted in the structure as including/locating the result event lexicalized by the perfect participle, essentially in the way originally described by Johns (1992) for the ergative subject in Inuktikut (a genitive possessor). However the discussion to follow goes through if the ergative is conceptualized as an instrumental or other elementary relator (cf. Franco & Manzini 2017).

Going finally back to the (pseudo)partitive structures of section 1, recall that they involve a genitive/partitive adposition or case inflection. Manzini & Franco (2016) treat genitive 'of' and dative 'to' as very much the same relator, except that 'to' specializes for V contexts and 'of' for N contexts.[5] Thus in structure (27a) for Italian (1), *di* 'of' introduces an inclusion relation whereby there is *un sacco* 'a lot' included in the *senatori* 'senators' set. The *ne* partitive clitics (27b) is in turn conceptualized as consisting of a relator lexical base *n-* though provided with a nominal inflection *-e*.

(27) a. *un sacco* [[$_{P}$ *di*] [$_{NP}$ *senatori*]] Italian (1)
b. … [[$_{P/K}$ *n*] [$_{\varphi}$ *e*]] [$_{VP}$ *ridipinto/ridipinte due*] Italian (5b)

On the basis of the structures in (24)-(27), it is possible to formulate a descriptive parameter capturing the facts regarding agreement. Recall that the VIVA of Anand & Nevins is formulated for Inherent Case. However we adopt Chomsky's (1986), who identifies inherent case with case selected by a V and assigned together with a θ-role. If so, it is evident that inherent case, for instance goal dative, seems to systematically exclude agreement. Therefore, as stated in (28) the parameter must involve structural cases, specifically structural obliques. The parameter is very simple. Depending on the language and on the context a structural oblique may be targeted by Agree or not.

(28) *Agreement of Structural Obliques Parameter (ASOP)*
Structural obliques (a) are goals for Agree;
(b) are not goals for Agree

The notion of structural obliques will turn out to be important in explaining why

[5] The idea that *of* and *to* are instances of the same relator (sensitive to a nominal and sentential context of embedding respectively) is supported by the fact that many Indo-European languages have a single oblique case for both genitive and dative contexts, e.g. Romanian, Albanian, Kurdish (Franco et al. 2015). The clitic *ne* also externalizes both genitive/partitive and dative in some Italo-Romance varieties (Manzini & Savoia 2005).

such a parameter as (28) should hold in section 3.1. Let us therefore dwell on it briefly. The distinction between inherent datives (goals) and structural datives (DOM) is discussed at length by Manzini & Franco (2016). The reason why both the descriptive and the formal literature have resisted the structural unification of Goal and DOM datives, despite their shared morphology, has to do with their different behaviours notably under passivization.

Pineda (2014) provides evidence that the boundary is not so clear cut (for instance in some South Italian varieties). Nevertheless it is true that if we want to claim that 1/2P clitics are always dative in the active structures in (22), we must explain why passivization of 1/2P is possible with 'call' but not with 'talk', as in (29).

(29) Italian

a. *Sono stata chiamata*
I.am been called
'I was called'

b. **Sono stata parlata*
I.am been talked
'I was talked to'

The reason for the contrast in passivization is precisely that the Goal dative is selected by a verb like 'talk (to)'; therefore any operation that might apply to the arguments of 'talk' must preserve the dative/*to* preposition. In English preposition stranding in an option, impersonal passive is the preferred option in other languages. However straight passivization as in (29b) countervenes the selection properties of 'talk'. The reason why DOM datives do not interfere with passivization is that they are structural, and specifically they are merged in the structural context defined in (19). Since passive has the effect of voiding the relevant context, DOM does not apply – and DOM/structural dative arguments passivize exactly as accusatives do.

Apart from DOM, we want genitive/partitive and ergative to fall into the structural oblique class in (28). The former is treated as structural by a long tradition of studies in generative grammar going back to the *of* Insertion rule of Chomsky (1981) (Alexiadou 2001, Longobardi 2001 and many others). When it comes to ergative, the literature contains proposals that ergative is the inherent case of agents (Woolford 2006). However, for Punjabi, Manzini et al. (2015) document the possibility of ergative extending to the sole argument of unaccusatives in necessity constructions; see Rezac et al. (2014) for a recent discussion of Basque. Thus the overall empirical picture suggests that even in active languages, the coincidence of ergative with external arguments is not necessary and does not imply the inherent status of ergative case/adpositions.

At this point, assuming that the parameter in (28) adequately describes the data, we still need an explanation as to why it holds. Recall that in the conception

of Berwick and Chomsky (2011) parameters are essentially degrees of freedom left open by Universal Grammar (UG). In this perspective we expect to find that no parameter, whether (28) or other, is encoded in grammar, but its consequences follow from the possibilities inherent in UG. We sketch an analysis that complies with these desiderata in section 3.1.

3.1 Analysis: Labelling

Recall that in section 1 we saw how the literature connects the varying agreement properties of (pseudo)partitives ultimately with labelling (Pesetsky 1982). In this final section our aim is two-fold. First, we want to refine the labelling approach in such a way as to cover not just (pseudo)partitives but all obliques that display agreement alternations. Second, we want to be able to exclude obliques which do not display agreement alternations without stipulating it.

Let us consider DOM objects, again with the structure in (24). We propose that upon Merge with a DP, a P relator may either label the resulting constituent, i.e. behave more like a traditional adposition, or not label the resulting constituent. In the latter case, the resulting constituent is labelled by D so that the P relator behaves more like a traditional inflection. We further propose that given the different labels, a DOM object labelled DP will undergo Agree like any bare object DP, while a DOM object labelled PP will not undergo Agree, like any other PP. Thus the structures for Punjabi (24a) and Marwari (24b) are to be refined as in (30). Punjabi projects PP, which therefore does not trigger agreement, as in (30a). Marwari projects DP, which triggers agreement, as in (30b).

(30) a. … [$_{PP}$ [$_{DP}$ *o-/una-*] [$_{P}$ *nu*]] [$_{VP}$ *dekkh-ea*] Punjabi (24a)
b. … [$_{DP}$ [$_{DP}$ *śaraṇ-*] [$_{P}$ *naiṃ*]] [$_{VP}$ *dekh-ī*] Marwari (24b)

Optionality in agreement is observed in (25) with Italian 1/2P clitics. This corresponds to third logically open possibility namely the availability of both a D(P) or a K(P) projection within a given language.[6] This pattern is illustrated in (31), which refines and completes the structure in (25).

(31) a. … [$_{KP}$ [$_{1/2P}$ *m*] [$_{K}$ *i*]] [$_{VP}$ *chiamato*] Italian (25)
b. … [$_{1/2P}$ [$_{1/2P}$ *m*] [$_{K}$ *i*]] [$_{VP}$ *chiamata*]

One non-obvious property of the ASOP in (28) is that it only affects structural oblique cases and not the same cases when they are inherent, e.g. dative goals as opposed to syncretic DOMs. The labelling analysis in (30)-(31) allows us to predict

[6] A fairly obvious intuition is that oblique cases K are the inflectional equivalent of prepositions P (cf. Fillmore 1968). A preposition is a predicate introducing a relation between the argument it selects and another argument/event; the same is true of oblique cases (Manzini & Franco 2016) – whence our equivalent use of the P and K labels.

this fact. We propose that labelling by D as opposed to labelling by P is impossible with inherent obliques, because they need to project the P content as part of their inherent status, i.e. as part of the fact that their P properties are selected by a verb. Hence ASOP only affects structural obliques such as DOM and not the same cases when they are inherent. In other words, only a structure like (32) is possible for goal datives in Marwari, contrasting with (30b).

(32) [$_{PP}$ [$_{DP}$ *mha-*] [$_{P}$ *naiṃ*]] … [$_{VP}$ *isāro kar-yo*] Marwari (10b)

What we have just said about the need for inherent obliques to project PP/KP also allows us to conclude that as for structural obliques, labelling choices amount to the logically possible choices open in the absence of UG constraints. In other words, variation reflects the absence of any UG constraints and not the existence of some set parametric choices. The ASOP in (28) depicts the results of observed variation, it does not determine them.

Considering the remaining data, there is no reason why the same labelling and Agree alternations should not characterize ergative context. In the terms developed above for DOM, DP labels the ergative in Nepali (33b) allowing agreement, while PP labels the ergative in Punjabi (33a), blocking agreement.[7]

(33) a. [$_{PP}$ [$_{DP}$ *o-*] [$_{P}$ *ne*]] [$_{vP}$ *kutt-e peddʒ-e*] Punjabi (26a)
b. [$_{DP}$ [$_{DP}$ *ṭunṭunī-*] [$_{P}$ *le*]] [$_{vP}$ *āphno guṃḍ banā-ī*] Nepali (26b)

We are now in a position to go back to (pseudo)partitive structures. We begin with Italian clitic *ne*, which can be dealt with in terms largely paralleling the 1/2P clitic in (31). Following Belletti & Rizzi (1996), *ne* may either have φ-features or not. We translate this into the idea that *ne* may be labelled by φ-features (ultimately plural φ-features consistent with the numer quantifier *due* 'two') – or it may be labelled by oblique P/K properties as in (34a) and (34b) respectively. The two structures correspond to agreement with the perfect participle or lack thereof.

(34) a. … [$_{φ}$ [$_{P}$ *n*] [$_{φ}$ *e*]] [$_{VP}$ *ridipinte due*] Italian (27b)
b. … [$_{P/K}$ [$_{P/K}$ *n*] [$_{φ}$ *e*]] [$_{VP}$ *ridipinto due*]

Finally consider Italian (1), which allows the embedded NP in (pseudo)partitive structures to agree with the verb – though the latter may also display agreement with the singular head of the structure. Let us begin with this second possibility. In

[7] Polinsky (2016), based on a series of diagnostics, proposes that a major parameter concerning ergativity opposes languages whose ergatives are PPs to those that are DPs. Needless to say, one of the crucial tests applied by Polinsky to discriminate between PP and DP ergatives is agreement. The possibility of a unification, however partial, with Polisky's approach is beyond the scope of the present article. We leave this matter (whose importance was pointed out by an anonymous reviewer) for future research.

present terms, the P elementary relator *di* 'of' labels its projection as PP. The latter is read as a complement of the D-N structure it is merged with. Agree with the embedded PP is impossible for structural reasons and the matrix D determines singular agreement with the verb, along the lines of (35).

(35) [$_{DP}$ *un* [$_{NP}$ *sacco* [$_{PP}$ *di* [$_{NP}$ *senatori*]]]] *ha votato* Italian (27a)

The other structural option allowed by present assumptions is given in (36). In (36) as in (35), the adposition *di* 'of' has an elementary relator content which establishes the part/whole, inclusion relation between the set denoted by the NP 'senators' and its part 'a lot'. In the absence of other constraints, *di* however is not construed as heading its own projection. This means that NP must be merged with an empty D of which *un sacco* 'a lot' is construed as Spec.

(36) [$_{DP}$ [$_{DP}$ *un sacco*] D [$_{NP}$ [$_{P}$ *di*] [$_{NP}$ *senatori*]] *hanno votato*
Italian (27a)

A considerable number of questions are opened by (36), the most important of which is why this structural possibility is not open with genitive, as opposed to partitive embeddings. We surmise that a true genitive requires the structure in (35) because the genitive is embedded under a predicative N – unlike in the (pseudo)partitive in (36). We expect that the same alternation as in (35)-(36) will apply to Russian quantifications structures, where a K genitive inflection takes the place of the Italian P.

Before concluding we may also briefly consider whether the phenomena under discussion (i.e. the various context of agreement with structural obliques) are expected to co-vary under the present approach. Nevertheless, we may find that the same parameter setting applies. Thus Italian is a language in which pseudo-partitives, partitives and DOM (1/2P) are all allowed to agree or not. By contrast, French disallows plural agreement with (pseudo)partitives (Lorusso & Franco 2017) and with partitive clitics. Further empirical research is needed to establish the extent to which such a correlation may hold.[8] The question is empirical, because we have no reason to assume that a given parametric choice, for instance concerning labelling, could not be made just for a local set of enviroments, in line with recent fractal views of parametrization (Biberauer et al 2014, Manzini 2019 for different

[8] For instance, we know that in Persian (i), the complement of the pseudopartitive structure is able to trigger agreement in the plural. Alternatively, the head of the structure may trigger agreement in the singular; that it is singular is attested by the fact that it bears the indefinite *-i* (cf. Toosarvandani & Nasser 2017). But Persian does not have ergative alignments, which would allow us to check agreement with DOM objects.

(i) Persian
Baz-i *ruz-â* *xeyli* *shuluq-e/-an*
part-INDEF day-PL very busy-is/-are
'(A) part of the days is/are hectic'

approaches).

4. Conclusions

We argued that optional agreement in the context of pseudopartitives, partitive clitics, DOM, participant clitics and Ergatives fall together on the basis of labelling algorithms interacting with standard Agree. Apart from the unification in itself, the theoretical interest of a single account is that it tendentially excludes a number of hypotheses that may be entertained for the each phenomenon in isolation. Thus an Appl analysis may be entertained for DOM (Torrego 2009) but to our knowledge, it has not been proposed for pseudopartitives. Vice versa, an Agree vs. Concord analysis may be invoked for pseudopartitives (Danon 2013) but DOM, being in the verbal domain, presumably excludes Concord.

Here we propose that the merger of P/K with a nominal constituent may in principle lead to either one projecting. If P/K projects then the resulting constituent is not a possible goal for Agree; if it does not project then the result is a constituent labelled by D/N and hence a possible goal for Agree. This range of structural possibilities is open only for structural obliques. Inherent obliques, where P/K is lexically selected, must project P/K and therefore are not goals for Agree.

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Authors' address:

M. Rita Manzini
DILEF, Lettere e Filosofia
Università degli Studi di Firenze
Via della Pergola, 58-60
50122, Firenze
Italy
rmanzini@unifi.it

Ludovico Franco
DILEF, Lettere e Filosofia
Università degli Studi di Firenze
Via della Pergola, 58-60
50122, Firenze
Italy
ludovico.franco@unifi.it