Person splits in the case systems of Geg Albanian (Shkodër) and Arbëresh (Greci).

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1. Some theoretical points

The recent theoretical debate on the notions of Faculty of Language (FL) and Universal Grammar (UG) (Hauser, Chomsky and Fitch 2002) raises questions relevant for the status of the grammatical categories normally assumed in linguistic analysis. If we admit that the linguistic capability of humans has a genetic basis, FL, it remains to be seen what the notion of UG refers to. The content of UG and the adequacy of traditional categorial distinctions represent two sides of the same coin, that we can think of in terms of an 'orthodox generative synthesis'. The crucial point is that in the latter, categories correspond to real Platonic objects, entirely listed in UG. Culicover & Jackendoff (2005: 6) aptly characterize a particularly popular conception of the relation of semantics to syntax as 'Interface Uniformity'. In other words, much current theorizing assumes a picture whereby syntax includes interpretation and all relevant semantic information finds itself translated into syntactic structure. Many authors, from different perspectives, consider this solution inadequate to allow for the extent of linguistic variation, trying to endow the notion of UG with a more defensible characterization of categorial universals. Evans & Levinson (2009) get to the point of asserting that linguistic diversity makes the existence of linguistic universals and, in particular, the notion of UG into a myth, devoid of explanatory power. We think that this conclusion is frankly ideological, in turn. Rather, we agree with Culicover & Jackendoff (2006: 416) on the idea that interpretation is 'the product of an autonomous combinatorial capacity independent of and richer than syntax', 'largely coextensive with thought', which syntax (and syntactic categorization) simply restricts in crucial ways.

Let us briefly review some key conceptual points. According to Chomsky (2000: 119), 'the human language faculty and the (I-) languages that are manifestations of it qualify as natural objects'. This approach - that 'regards the language faculty as an "organ of the body"' - has been labelled the 'biolinguistic perspective' by Chomsky (2005: 1). Hauser, Chomsky & Fitch (2002: 1570) base their discussion of the key biological question of evolution on the 'biologically and individually grounded' use of the term language 'to refer to an internal component of the mind/ brain (sometimes called "internal language" or "I-language")'. They distinguish two conceptions of the faculty of language, one broader (FLB) and one narrower (FLN):

> FLB includes FLN combined with at least two other organism-internal systems, which we call "sensory-motor" and "conceptual-intentional"… A key component of FLN is a computational system (narrow syntax) that generates internal representations and maps them into the sensory-motor interface by the phonological system and into the conceptual-intentional interface by the (formal) semantics system ... Most, if not all, of FLB is based on mechanisms shared with nonhuman animals … (Hauser, Chomsky & Fitch 2002: 1571).

We may then wonder how the FLN and the FLB interact in domains such as language evolution, genetics, neurology, specifically as regards the issue of language variation, starting with the idea that:

> It may be that the computational system itself is (virtually) invariant, fixed by innate biological endowment, variation among languages and language types being limited to certain options in the lexicon; quite restricted options. (Chomsky 2000:79)

We know that there exist languages that seem to cast a shadow over the more crucial tenets of FL/UG, like recursion/embedding (Evans & Levinson 2009, Pinker & Jackendoff 2009, Everett 2005)

or fundamental categorial distinctions like noun and verb (Jelinek 1995). This suggests to us that the traditional notion that UG is a container of a fixed list of categories, must be revised; we can think that UG simply contains a conceptual (and phonetic) space which establishes the boundaries of linguistic variation. In the present study we address the issue of how the linguistically relevant conceptual space yields different languages beyond the obvious aspect of 'Saussurean arbitrariness'.

Suppose that the lexicon is the locus of linguistic variation – in the presence of an invariant repertory of interface primitives, both phonological and conceptual. Non-trivial questions arise here: how can the lexicon vary on the basis of a universal inventory of properties (or "features")? and how come that variation in the lexicon has as its consequence variation in order, agreement, selection, and other syntactically relevant relations? A possible answer which is pursued by various scholars is that there is a fundamental distinction between functional and non-functional elements. Thus within the Distributed Morphology framework, Embick (2000:187) assumes a 'distinction between the *functional* and *lexical* vocabularies of a language… functional categories merely instantiate sets of abstract syntactico-semantic features', on which the derivational component operates. Variation is the result of the different ways of lexicalizing these abstract categorial primitives – which in themselves form a (potentially) universal repertory.

In Manzini & Savoia (2005, 2007, 2008, 2011a,b) we pursue a different picture, where all morphosyntactic structure is projected from lexical terminals. There is a conceptual and grammatical space to be lexicalized and variation results from the different partition of that space. There is no fixed functional lexicon which varies only along the axis of realization (overt vs. covert, autonomous vs. syncretic, etc.) – so-called functional space is just like all other conceptual space, and all lexical entries are overt. Thus the distinction between functional, i.e. grammatical, contents and conceptual ones is an external one; as such it is at best useless, while at worst it obscures the real underlying linguistic generalizations. In short, the lexicons of the different languages are formed on a conceptual universal basis, covering slightly different extensions of it and in slightly different ways. Linguistic variation depends on which pieces of the universal conceptual space the language-specific lexicon is able to externalize. The 'externalization' process (Berwick & Chomsky 2011) creates the space of the variation.

In this line of thought, the comparison between two Albanian varieties presented in this work is meant to contribute to an understanding of the primitives underlying and feeding the morpho-syntactic component of FL/UG. We examine the distribution of case morphology in two Albanian varieties, namely the Geg variety spoken in *Shkodër* and the Arbëresh variety spoken in *Greci* (Campania). In particular we investigate the differences between the case paradigms which characterize $1^{st}/2^{nd}$ pronouns and 3^{rd} person pronouns or nouns. The differences emerging in the pronominal system with respect to phenomena like Differential Object marking (DOM) and the Person Case Constraint (PCC) will also be analysed. [1]

2. The data.

As generally in Albanian (Camaj 1984, Beci 2004), in the Geg variety of *Shkodër* indefinite nouns distinguish direct case (nominative-accusative) from oblique, and, in the plural, also an ablative-locative. Definite nouns distinguish nominative and accusative at least in the singular. The same oblique inflection covers both dative and genitive; the genitive is introduced by a specialized article (Manzini & Savoia 2011a,b). This system is schematically illustrated in (1), where each example presents the indefinite form first and the definite form last. For each of the cases in (1) there is at least a

[1] The data analyzed in this article have been collected by means of field investigations and interviews with native speakers in Shkodër and in Greci; we tank our very patient and collaborative informants. This research has benefited from the funding PRIN *Morfosintassi e lessico: Categorie della flessione nominale e verbale* (2007-2009), assigned by MIUR.

non-syncretic exponent, in particular *-n* for the definite accusative singular and *-s* for the definite oblique feminine singular. The ablative in turn is differentiated by the fact that *-t* appears in the feminine definite singular (distinguishing it in particular from the oblique) in a restricted set of locative nouns, illustrated with *ʃpi* 'house' in (2). The ablative in (2) is exemplified in prepositional contexts.

(1)

a. *Nominative* *Shkodër*

i. *sg.* ɛrði ɲi vɑjz/ vɑjz-a / ɲi burr / burr-i
he.came a girl/ girl.Def / a man / man.Def
'A girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man came'

ii. *pl.* ɛrðən ʃum vɑjz-a/ vɑjz-a-t / ʃum burr-a / burr-a-t
they.came many girl.pl / girl.pl.Def / many man.pl / man.pl.Def
'Many girls/ the girls/ many men/ the men came'

b. *Accusative*

i. *sg.* pɑ:ʃ ɲi vɑjz/ vɑjz-ɛ-n / ɲi burr / burr-i-n
I.saw a girl./ girl.Acc.-Def / a man / man.Acc.Def
'I saw a girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man'

ii. *pl.* pɑ:ʃ ʃum vɑjz-a/ vɑjz-a-t / ʃum burr-a / burr-a-t
I.saw many girl.pl / girl.pl.Def / many man.pl / man.pl.Def
'I saw many girs/ the girls/ many men/ the men'

c. *Oblique*

i. *sg.* j-a ðɑ:ʃ ɲi vɑjz-ɛ/ vɑjz-s / ɲi burri / burr-i-t
to.him.it I.gave a girl.Obl/girl.Obl.Def / a man / man.Obl.Def
'I gave it to a girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man'

ii. *pl.* j-a ðɑ:ʃ ʃum vɑjz-a-vɛ/ vɑjz-a-vɛ / ʃum burr-a-vɛ / burr-a-vɛ
to.him.it I.gave many girl.pl.Obl/girls.pl.Obl/ many man.pl.Obl / men.pl.Obl
'I gave it to many girls/ the girls/ many men/ the men'

d. *Genitive context*
mɔtra ɛ kuʃrin-i-t
the.sister Art cousin.Obl.Def'
the sister of the cousin'

(2) *Ablative singular* *Shkodër*
pɾej/ mas/ para ʃpi-ɛ-t
from/ behind/ before house.sg.Abl.Def
'from/ behind/ before the house'
Ablative plural
pun pɾej gɾɑ:-ʃ
job for women.pl.Abl
'a women's job'

The 3rd person pronouns present the same system as lexical N(P)s, as in (3).

(3) *Nom* *Acc* *Obl* *Shkodër*

i. *sg.* a-i/aˈj-a aˈt-ɛ aˈt-i-i / a-ˈs-ɑ-i
he/ she him/her to.him/ to.her

ii.	*pl.*	aˈt-a	aˈt-a	aˈt-y-nɛ
		they	them	to.them
iii.	*Genitive context*			
	mɔtra ɛ at-i-i			
	the.sister Art he.Obl'			
	'his syster'			

With 1st/ 2nd pronouns in (4), the same case (which we call oblique, for reasons to be seen later) covers the accusative, exemplified in (5i) and the dative, exemplified in (5ii), including a subset of prepositional contexts (e.g. *mɛ* 'with') as exemplified in (6ii). The oblique is different from the ablative, also associated with prepositional contexts, as exemplified in (6iii).

(4)		*Nom*	*Obl*	*Abl*	*Shkodër*
i.	*1sg.*	un	m-u	mej-ɛ-t	
		I	(to)me	prep+me	
	2sg.	t-i	t-y	tej-ɛ-t	
		you	(to)you	prep+you	
ii.	*1pl.*	n-a	n-e	ne-ʃ	
		we	(to)us	prep+us	
	2pl.	ju	ju	ju-ʃ	
		you.pl	(to)you.pl	prep+you.pl	

(5)				*Shkodër*
	i.	ɛ / mə / na ʃɔfin aˈt-ɛ / m-u / ne		
		him/to.me/to.us they.see him/to.me/to.us		
		'They see him/ me/ us'		
	ii.	j / m / n a japin at-i-i / m-u / ne		
		to.him/to.me/to.us it they.give to.him/to.me/to.us		
		'They give it to him/ me/ us'		

(6)			*Shkodër*
	i.	*P – Nominative*	
		tɛ un / ti / ai	
		at I/ you/ he	
	ii.	*P – 1/2 Oblique/ 3 Accusative*	
		mɛ m-u / ty / at-ɛ	
		with me/ you/ him	
	iii.	*P – 1/2 Ablative /3 Oblique*	
		pɾei/ poʃt/ para mej-ɛ-t/ nɛ-ʃ / at-i-i	
		from/ behind/ before me / us / him	

A slightly different distribution shows up in Arbëresh varieties, like that of *Greci* (cf. Camaj 1971), where 1st /2nd person pronouns again unify accusative and dative into a single oblique form, but also lack ablative, contrasting with the three cases system of nouns. As illustrated in (7), in the variety of *Greci* nouns distinguish oblique case from nominative-accusative in the indefinite form; definite nouns distinguish three case forms in the singular (nominative, oblique and accusative) and two forms in the plural (nominative-accusative vs. oblique) (Manzini & Savoia 2011a,b, 2012). As in (1), oblique

inflection includes genitive contexts as well.

(7)

a.	*Nominative*			*Greci*
i.	*sg.*	ɛrθ	ɲə vaz/ vaz-a / ɲə burr / burr-i	
		he.came	a girl/ girl.Def / a man / man.Def	
		‘A girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man came’		
ii.	*pl.*	ɛrðən	ʃum vars-a/ vars-a-t / ʃum burr-a / burr-a-t	
		they.came	many girl.pl / girl.pl.Def /	many man.pl / man.pl.Def
		‘Many girls/ the girls/ many men/ the men came’		
b.	*Accusative*			
i.	*sg.*	pɛ	ɲə vaz/ vaz-a-n / ɲə burr / burr-i-n	
		I.saw	a girl./ girl.Acc.-Def / a man / man.Acc.Def	
		‘I saw	a girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man’	
ii.	*pl.*	pɛ	ʃum vars-a/ vars-a-t /	ʃum burr-a / burr-a-t
		I.saw	many girl.pl / girl.pl.Def /	many man.pl / man.pl.Def
		‘I saw many girs/ the girls/ many men/ the men’		
c.	*Oblique*			
i.	*sg.*	j-a ðɛ	ɲəja vaz-ja/ vaz-ə-s /	ɲəja burri / burr-i-t
		to.him.it I.gave	a.Obl girl.Obl/girl.Obl.Def / a.Obl man /	man.Obl.Def
		‘I gave it to a girl/ the girl/ a man/ the man’		
ii.	*pl.*	j-a ðɛ	ʃum vars-ui / vars-ui-t /	ʃum burr-ui / burr-ui-t
		to.him.it I.gave	many girl.pl.Obl/girls.pl.Obl/ many man.pl.Obl /	men.pl.Obl
		‘I gave it to many girls/ the girls/ many men/ the men’		
d.	*Genitive context*			
	libr-i	(t) trim-i-t		
	the.book	Art boy.Obl.Def		
	‘the book of the boy’			

In the grammar of *Greci* a three-case system characterizes 3rd person pronouns in (8), whereas in the 1st and 2nd person a more reduced system shows up, as in (9i, ii). In particular, as in the other Arbëresh varieties of Italy, the pronominal paradigm lacks the ablative specialized form, which on the contrary we see in (3)-(4) for *Shkodër*. 1st singular person only distinguishes a nominative and an oblique case which encompasses accusative and oblique/ablative contexts; 2nd singular has a single syncretic form. 1st/2nd plural pronouns in (9ii) separate an accusative from an oblique form, whose distribution is however different from that in the 3rd person. In fact, *Greci*’s accusative *ne/ ju* are restricted to some prepositional contexts, as in (11ii). Oblique *neui/ juvui* are inserted in other verbal and prepositional contexts, as in (10i, ii) and (11iii), except for nominative context, like (11i).

(8)		*Nom*	*Acc*	*Obl*	*Greci*
i.	*3sg*	a-i/aˈj-ɔ	at-ə	aˈt-i-a / a-ˈsa-i-t-a	
		he/ she	him/her	to.him/ to.her	
ii.	*3pl*	aˈt-a	aˈt-a	aˈt-i-r-u-a/ aˈt-i-r-(v)ui	
		they	them	to.them	
iii.	*Genitive context*				
	libr-i	t at-i-a /	t asa-i-t-a/	t atir-u-a	
	the.book	Art he.Obl/	Art she.Obl/	Art.they.Obl	

'his/ her/ their book'

(9) *Greci*

		Nom	*Obl*	
i.	*1sg*	u	m-ua	
		I	(to)me	
	2sg	t-i	t-i	
		you	(to)you	
		Nom	*Acc*	*Obl*
ii.	*1pl*	n-a	n-e	ˈne-ui
		we	us	(to)us
	2pl	ju	ju	ˈju-v-ui
		you.pl	you.pl	(to)you.pl

(10) *Greci*

i. ʃɛhan atə / m-ua / ju-vui
he.sees him / to.me / to.you
'He sees him/me/you'

ii. j / m / v a jɛpan at-i-a / m-ua / ju-vui
to.him/to.me/to.you it he.gives to.him/to.me/to.you
'He gives it to him/me/you'

(11) *Greci*

i. *P – Nom*
ka a-i / u / ju
at he / I / you

ii. *P –3rd Acc/ 1st/2nd sgObl*
ma at-ə / m-ua / ne
with him / to.me/ us

iii. *P – 3rd Obl/ 1st/2nd sgObl*
para at-i-a / m-ua / ne-ui
before to.him/ me / us

3. The notion of case

As discussed in Manzini & Savoia (2010, 2011a,b, 2012), the notion of case has an uncertain status in current generative theory. In the minimalist approach of Chomsky (1995 ff.), syntactic structures are projected from lexical specifications – and the latter correspond to intrinsic properties of lexical items. For instance, number and person are features (phi-features), since they correspond to denotational properties of argumental expressions. However theta-roles, being relational, are not features at all, but are thought of as configurations. Therefore, it is potentially problematic to assimilate case, which is traditionally conceived of as a relational notion, to a feature. The fact that case is the only feature in Chomsky (1995) which is radically uninterpretable (i.e. which does not have an interpretable counterpart) is a reflex of the deeper difficulty of reconciling its relational core with its feature status. The solution of the problem at which Chomsky (2008) arrives is effectively to deny that case has a primitive feature status. In technical terms case it does not enter into any feature checking. We do not necessarily disagree with the idea that case is not a primitive of grammar. However, if case is reduced to other primitives, why do we need to keep the case label at all? In other words: what is the difference between a language which has just agreement (say, Italian) and a language like Latin which has the 'case' reflex of agreement?

Works such as Chomsky's, or Pesetsky and Torrego's (2007) consider so-called 'abstract' case, i.e. a case property independent of morphological realization, and as such found (by hypothesis) in all languages. In turn, case inflections have been the target of morphological discussion, in particular in relation to syncretic morphology. If we maintain a syntactic level including abstract case features, the effect of syncretic forms is just to conceal the semantic properties that should be expressed by them. In the standard morphological implementation of minimalist syntax, namely Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993, 1994, Calabrese 1998), case and phi-features are functional properties, hence abstract bundles of features to which Vocabulary Insertion associates lexical terminals, i.e. 'exponents', after morphological rules have applied (*Late Insertion*). One of the results of these morphological operations is the creation of syncretic surface forms.

A good illustration is provided by the analysis of the two-case system (nominative vs. objective) of Old French in Calabrese (1998). The case inflection of masculine nouns deriving from the II nominal class of Latin presents a crossed distribution, whereby the same inflection *–s* puts together nominative singular and accusative plural, e.g. *mur-s* 'wall/ walls', as opposed to ∅ of nominative plural and accusative singular, e.g. *mur*∅. According to Calabrese (1998) the syntactic representation of the *-s* forms includes a complete case specification, i.e. [+subject,+direct] for nominative and [-subject,+direct] for accusative, but vocabulary insertion registers only the [+/-plural] difference.

We differ from Distributed Morphology in assuming a unified morphosyntactic component where structure is projected from actual lexical items. In such a model there is no room for Late Insertion, hence for morphological rules applying to abstract terminals. We have argued elsewhere (Manzini & Savoia 2005, 2007, 2008a, 2009) that reasons of simplicity and restrictiveness of the theory suggest this move. For, the morphological rule component (at least its Merge rule) is redundant with the syntactic component – while it enriches it considerably by introducing rules, like Impoverishment, which multiply in a unconstrained way the possible underlying clusters of syntactic features for lexical/ morphemic exponents.

Our proposals merely represent a particular instance of a more general perspective we take in rethinking the minimalist framework. In this perspective, current models are restricted by rejecting abstract terminals in favour of projection from the lexicon. The analysis of Albanian phenomena in this article aims to demonstrate that the sharp divide between the functional and substantive lexicons that current generative literature often takes for granted does not have any real empirical motivation. Rather, the syntactic computation is built on the properties of the actual lexical terminals – and it does not necessarily register every component of what we call the meaning of a sentence (cf. Culicover & Jackendoff 2005).

The primary purpose of our work is in a sense to implement the eradication of case, since we assume with the minimalist program that features of lexical items must be bona fide properties, not concealed devices reconstructing relational primitives. We attack the problem at the PF interface, with a study of morphological case in Geg Albanian and Arbëresh, as illustrated in (1)-(11). We argue that the traditional label of case attaches to morphological entries which in reality correspond to denotational primitives as different as nominal class (gender), definiteness, quantification, predication. As well known, the relevant morphology has been taken to correspond to a lexicalization of a specialized relation of case both in the historical/ typological tradition, and in the generative tradition adopting 'abstract case' (Vergnaud 2008 [1977], Chomsky 1981). If we assume that the case consists entirely of more primitive properties, including nominal class, definiteness, predication and quantification, it is these properties that enter into the projection of the syntactic tree. The traditional notion of case can be reconstructed by reference to the fact that different sets of these primitive properties satisfy different syntactic environments, defined by agreement, theta-assignment and in general by the primitive relations of minimalist theory. Case is just the name traditionally given to satisfaction of the latter by the former. If we are on the right track, by cutting away a lot of abstractness

(including the supercategory 'case'), our approach ends up being simpler than other possible solutions to what is by and large a commonly perceived problem, including reduction of 'case' to checking of agreement features in Chomsky (2001, 2008):

The data in (1)-(11) lay out the basic distribution of case morphology in the nominal system of *Shkodër* and *Greci*. In particular, they illustrate the existence of inflectional endings which yield instances of so-called syncretism – or, as we will assume here, are ambiguous, i.e. associate with two or more interpretations. In our examples we find two types of syncretism: (i) some inflections correspond to two (or more) cases; (ii) some inflections correspond to both a case interpretation and a nominal class interpretation (the traditional gender and number). For instance the *-a* inflection lexicalizes the nominative definite (for the feminine singular class) and the plural nominal class (eventually followed by the case ending proper) in (1) and (7). Thus *vajz-a/ vaz-a* is ambiguous between 'the girl (Nom def)' and 'girls (Nom/Acc indef)'. At the same time the *-a* morphology appears as a nominal class inflection in plural formations involving specialized consonantal/ syllabic case endings, for instance the oblique (definite and indefinite) in (1c.ii) and the nominative/accusative definite in (1a.ii,b.ii)/(7a.ii,b.ii).

Similarly, the *-i* inflection, corresponding to the nominal class inflection for the masculine singular, alone lexicalizes the oblique indefinite in (1c.i)/(7c.i) and the nominative definite in (1a.i)/(7a.i). The *-t* inflection is associated with the oblique (singular masculine) in (1c.i)/(7c.i), with the nominative/ accusative (plural) in (1a.ii,b.ii)/(7a.ii,b.ii) and with the ablative (feminine singular) in (2), (4). The *–vɛ/ ui* inflection is uniquely associated with the oblique plural in (1c.iu)/ (7c.ii). The exponent *-vɛ* includes both the definite and the indefinite reading, as in (1c.ii). In the *Greci* variety the inflection *–ui* only introduces the indefinite interpretation, (cf. Manzini & Savoia 2011a,b, 2012), whereas the definite forms require the *–t* definite inflection, like illustrated in (7c.ii). The inflection *-ui* occurs also in 1st /2nd plural person in (9ii), as in *neui* 'to us', and alternates with *–ua*, in 3rd person plural pronouns.

The comparison between the systems of *Shkodër* and *Greci* evidences some minor differences. For example, in the *Greci* variety in (7b.i) the *-a* morpheme appears between the base and the *–n* definite accusative inflection. Besides, the indefinite article presents a specialized inflection *jə-ja* in the oblique, including the *–(j)a* inflection which characterizes the indefinite feminine singular oblique in (7c.i) and the oblique singular of 3rd person pronouns in (8i). The occurrence of *–a* in the plural characterizes the plural oblique of 3rd person pronouns/demonstratives, like *atir-u-a* '(to/of)them' in (8ii). Finally the base for 'girl' alternates between a singular form *vaz* and a plural form *vars-a*; this type of stem alternations is of course independently found in Albanian varieties.

If we consider the lexicon that the Distributed Morphology model ends up with, its logic is that if a vocabulary item inserts under different terminals, with properties incompatible among them, then the vocabulary item cannot be specified for any of these properties. In other words a given lexical element is able to occur in several environments (corresponding to a traditional syncretism) to the extent that it has no property incompatible with them. In the limit, the lexical item can be void (i.e. a default). Our lexicon differs from that of Distributed Morphology in crucial respects. Since structure is projected from actual lexical entries, the latter can hardly be devoid of properties; rather they must have the necessary and sufficient information to determine syntactic structure. Therefore in instances where a given lexical element can appear in different syntactic environments, as in all of the instances just listed, we must conclude that those environments have some fundamental property in common – that will form the positively specified core of the lexical element.

3.1. DOM and discourse-linking properties.

Let us focus now on the split between case systems of 1st /2nd person pronouns and of nouns/ 3rd person pronouns. In particular, we have seen that paradigms (4) and (9) unify accusative and oblique, with the effect that 1st/ 2nd person direct objects are not distinguishable from datives. This split can in fact be

thought of as related to the existence of different case systems for definite and indefinite DPs, where the indefinite set is typically less differentiated. The latter split holds, for instance, in Albanian, where nominative and accusative may be differentiated in the definite paradigm, but not in the indefinite one (Manzini & Savoia 2011a,b, 2012). In other words the difference between the case systems of 1st/2nd person pronouns in (4)/(9) and of nouns/ 3rd person pronouns/demonstratives in (3)/(8) – and the difference between definite and indefinite declensions – can be conceptualized in terms of a split which opposes definiteness and animacy, including that intrinsic to person pronouns to indefinite/inanimate reference.

In the typological literature this distribution, as it regards objects, is known as Differential Object Marking (DOM) (cf. Aissen 2003). Following Manzini and Savoia (in press), the gist of DOM is that certain types of referents, of which discourse participants are the fundamental subset, cannot be embedded as themes of V (i.e. 'accusative'), but must be embedded either with the agent role (i.e. 'nominative') or else with the possessor role (i.e. 'dative' or 'oblique'). For instance, in Albanian varieties 1st/ 2nd person cannot be accusative (theme embedding), but rather they require the oblique form – which is associated with a different role, namely the possessor role.

Descriptively, it is fairly clear how the participant/animacy/definiteness hierarchy works. DOM morphosyntax can be connected with the 'referential/ person/ animacy hierarchy' (Nichols 2001): 1st person > 2nd person > 3rd person animate > 3d person inanimate. Furthermore, in many languages the Object cannot outrank the Subject in the hierarchy, in the sense that for example a sequence 3rd subj – 1st object is either excluded or morphologically marked. Therefore our data, in particular the externalization of 1st/2nd person as dative/ oblique, can also be connected with the hypothesis that dative is a last resort strategy aimed at avoiding the configuration in which a 1st/2nd person object combines with a 3rd person (or an equally ranked) subject (Nichols 2001 on Kashmiri).

As for the theoretical status of the hierarchy, it is clear that 1st and 2nd person referents (speaker and hearer) are separate from other referents in that they are directly anchored at the universe of discourse, while 3rd referents (and also possibly 1st/2nd plural, which involve reference to 'others' besides the 'speaker' and 'hearer') are not. Human referents are also a potential set of speakers and hearers – i.e. of potential discourse-anchored participants. In such terms, the prominence of animates does not involve their potential agentivity (pace Dixon 1979), but rather their referential saliency, or their potential control over discourse/the flow of information (cf. DeLancey 1981). Definiteness and indefiniteness establish a different scale of referential saliency. Less salient referents are able to satisfy sentential attachment by anchoring to the structure of the event via simple complementation – more salient referents require a more complex structure of attachment provided in effect by the oblique.

The problem posed by the data in section 2 is not only why 1st/2nd singular referents split away from others, but also why their split presents the particular forms it does. The major question raised by the examples in (1)-(11) is why 1st/2nd person referents (speaker, hearer) are associated with a specialized array of 'cases' with respect to other (3rd person) referents. In particular, we have seen that paradigms (4) and (9) unify accusative and dative. If we think of this distribution as a manifestation of the classical 1st /2nd vs. 3rd split, three principal types of split show up: 3rd person (nouns included) vs. 1st and 2nd person; 1st and 2nd singular vs. 1st and 2nd plural (*Greci*); 1st vs. 2nd (*Greci*). In general, 1st and 2nd person pronouns unify all types of verbal objects (first arguments of transitives and goals of ditransitives) as well as arguments of prepositions.

As hinted by our glosses, we conclude that there is no specialized morphological exponent for 1st/2nd accusative; on the contrary the first argument of a transitive is marked as a dative complement, as an instance of DOM. In other words, DPs higher in the referential scale require a specialized manner of inserting them into the argumental structures, making them into possessors rather than simple themes. Despite the strong split between 3rd person and 1st/2nd singular that we observe in *Greci*, 1st/2nd plural at least partially pattern with 3rd person. This can be derived from the fact that 1st/2nd plural, like

3rd person, involve individuals which are different from speaker and hearer ('speaker and others', 'hearer and others'). On the other hand the coincidence of 1st/2nd plural with the noun/3rd person system is only apparent, since the oblique forms in (6iii) appear as the internals argument of transitives as well, thus contrasting with nouns/ 3rd person pronouns, which select the specialized accusative in this context.

In short, DOM morphosyntax appears to be a reflection of the intrinsic denotational force of arguments. The reference of 3rd person lexical elements (or referentially less salient 3rd person elements, i.e. indefinites, inanimates) is only weakly anchored at the universe of discourse, and mediated by anchoring in the event structure (cf. Manzini & Savoia 2005, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011a). By contrast, the denotation of 1st/2nd person (and by extension of referential salient arguments, i.e. humans, definites) is strongly anchored at the universe of discourse (of which spear and hearer are two coordinates), without necessarily making reference to the structure of the event.

In Romance varieties that have 'prepositional accusatives', like Spanish, Romanian and Southern Italian dialects, DOM is externalized by means of a dative preposition *a/pe* 'to'. These also introduce an oblique form associated with 'possession' or 'inclusion' in the sense discussed in Manzini & Savoia (2011, 2001a,b). In particular, Manzini & Savoia (2011a,b) argue that all types of possession, including inalienable and psych state possession, fall under the same basic relation. Their proposal as to the nature of this relation is close to that advanced by Belvin & den Dikken (1997:170) according to whom 'entities have various zones associated with them, such that an object or eventuality may be included in a zone associated with an entity without being physically contained in that entity… The type of zones which may be associated with an entity will vary with the entity'. Hence possession is 'zonal' inclusion;

In conclusion, a single property, namely inclusion/superset-of, which we formalize here as Q($\subseteq$), is associated with the conceptual cluster just reviewed. In other words, 1st and 2nd person intrinsically are sources/agents of the event ('nominative') or 'possessors' 'including' (a part of) the event ('oblique').

4. What does case inflection externalize within a lexicalist model?

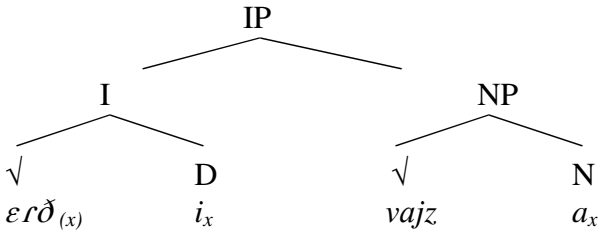
In the present approach, syntactic and semantic content is directly imputed to morphological entries. They specify a mapping between sound and meaning (cf. Jackendoff 2002), without having recourse to a morphological buffer (as in DM) between syntax and the exponents that instantiate it. Nominal lexical items (pronouns, determiners and quantifiers of nouns, nouns themselves) are associated in the lexicon just with the denotational properties that characterize them independently of their position of insertion. Properties which are theoretically relevant for case include at least N(ominal class), Q(quantification), D(efiniteness). Q($\subseteq$) inflections are responsible for the so-called oblique case – effectively a dyadic operator yielding a 'zonal inclusion' (possession) relation between the element to which it attaches and the internal argument of the verb (dative) or the head of a noun phrase (genitive). Q inflections are further responsible for plurality (Number), while N inflections (nominal class) may be sufficient to satisfy direct complementation contexts (accusative) and D characterizes EPP contexts in the sense of Chomsky (1995) (nominative) .

In a language with no 'case' on nouns, like Italian, a noun with a so-called agreement inflection can be analysed as a structure in which the lexical base, indicated as $\sqrt{}$ (root), expressing predicative content, combines with a nominal class (gender) N inflection, associated with the internal argument of the predicative base, as in [[*macchin*$_{\sqrt{}}$]a_{N}]. Languages like Latin or Albanian/Arbëresh are not qualitatively different systems with respect to Italian but only slightly richer. More precisely, their so-called case inflection is an inflection with more highly articulated denotational content (nominal class, quantification etc.) specialized for the satisfaction of particular syntactic junctures (agreement, theta-

configuration, or other). Case is but a name given to inflectional items which in virtue of certain denotational properties specialize for the satisfaction of certain syntactic environments.

Let us begin with Albanian *-i* and *-a* as the singular definite nominative endings in the masculine and feminine respectively, in (1) and (7). We assume that the finite inflection of a verb does not represent a bunch of uninterpretable properties (Chomsky 1995), but is akin to a verb-internal pronoun, to which we associate the categorial signature D. This assumption yields structures like that in (12) for the sentence *ɛɾðiˈ vajza* 'the girl came' exemplified in (1), where the noun (phrase) is embedded as the sole argument of the unaccusative verb *ɛɾðiˈ* '(she) came'. The latter is analyzed as consisting of a predicative base *ɛɾðˈ-* and of an *-i* verbal inflection that lexicalizes the argument (D) of the predicate.

(12) *Shkodër*

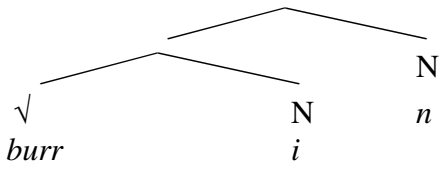


Saying that in (12) the verbal inflection *-i* agrees with the nominal class inflection *-a* is equivalent to saying that they concur to the satisfaction of the argument slot of the verb, namely *(x)*. In other words, the argument slot notated by the *x* variable in (12) is satisfied by the pair (*-i, -a*) (a construct akin to that of chain). Thus *-a* satisfies the internal role of its nominal base (cf. the discussion of [[*macchin*$_{\surd}$]a_{N}] at the end of the preceding section) and at the same time concurs to the satisfaction of the argument role of the verb. Saying that Albanian *-a* is a nominative translates into the fact that the nominal class morphology *–a* concurs with the verb inflection to the satisfaction of Chomsky's (1995) EPP, yielding agreement as surface effect. Nominal class inflections are sufficient to satisfy this context in the singular; except that indefinite *-ɛ* cannot occur with a definite interpretation. Hence only *–i* (masculine singular) and *–a* (feminine singular) can surface as definites.

Consider now the accusative. For the plural, we can assume that the *–t* ending adding to the nominal class morphology is a Q specification with number interpretation, being found also in the nominative. Thus it is fundamentally the nominal class morphology (N) that satisfies the so-called accusative and nominative contexts in the plural. Recall from the discussion of [[*macchin*$_{\surd}$]a_{N}] at the end of the preceding section that we assume that the N nominal class morphology lexicalizes the internal argument of the noun (or rather its predicative base). Therefore we are not surprised to find that the same morphology can satisfy the internal argument of the verb.

If we apply these conclusions to the *-n* morphology of the singular definite forms of the nouns, we are led to conclude that the *-n* ending simply has N properties. In other words, it is a nominal class inflection, further specialized for definiteness, as illustrated in (13). In these terms *-n* introduces reference to a specialized nominal class - specialized both in that it is definite and in that it is contextually restricted to the class of the themes of the event. In short, accusative is nothing but the traditional name given to the satisfaction of an internal argument slot by specialized nominal N morphology.

(13)



The oblique in the nominal paradigms (1c.i)/(7c.i) raises the question of the syncretism between the so-called dative (the second argument of ditransitives) and the genitive. The syncretism between dative and genitive is attested also in the 3rd person pronouns *at-i-i / as-a-i / at-y-nɛ* in (3) for *Shkodër* and *at-i-a / asa-i-ta /at-i-r-u-a* in (8) for *Greci*. Manzini & Savoia (2011a,b) explain it by assuming that the same content, namely inclusion/superset-of Q(⊆) in the sense of Belvin & den Dikken (1997:170), is associated with the different syntactic contexts.

In particular, we can take all types of possession, including inalienable possession and psychological state possession to fall under this relation. In turn, the conceptual closeness of the notions of possessor to 'dative' and 'locative' is well-known in the typological literature. This conceptual closeness, mirrored by the syncretic 'oblique', corresponds in present terms to Q(⊆). Therefore, the syncretism of dative and genitive, seen in the Albanian oblique, points to an inclusion characterization for the relevant morphology, in particular for *-t* in nouns. This appears to be compatible with the Q quantificational characterization that we have assumed for *–t* as the plural definite. In this perspective, we propose that there is no primitive oblique case, exactly as we tried to suggest that there really is no primitive accusative case or nominative case. All there is, is a Q(⊆) element *-t* denoting a superset-of/ inclusion relation (roughly a possessive one) between the argument it attaches to and some other argument. The syncretism of the oblique *-t* inflection with (nominative/ accusative) plural *–t* is independently attested in the Romance pronominal system (cf. *–i* as inflection of Italian *gl-i* 'to him' and *l-i* 'them', Manzini & Savoia in press). We derive the coincidence of oblique singular and non-oblique plural readings on Albanian *–t* from its quantificational nature. When *-t* is read as plural, it takes in its scope the nominal class specifications of the noun, namely *–a* in the plural. When it is read as superset-of/possessor, its scope is either sentential, applying to the internal arguments of the verb, or, in genitives, DP-internal.

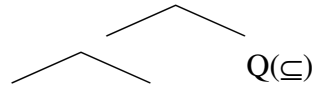
In the plural, all nominal classes and both definites and indefinites are associated with the *-vɛ* oblique in the *Shkodër* variety. In the variety of *Greci* the *–ui* inflection lexicalizes the oblique interpretation, while definiteness requires *–t*, yielding *–ui-t* for the oblique definite plural as in (7c.ii). Since we have proposed that oblique singular definite (masculine) *-t* is able to lexicalize the second argument of ditransitives etc. in virtue of its superset-of/Q(⊆) denotation, then *-vɛ/-ui* are characterized by essentially the same denotation, projecting the Q category as well. The same will be true of the specialized oblique feminine singular *–s*. The form *at-ir-u-a* '(to/of) them' of Greci in (8ii) combines the *-u-* oblique morpheme, occurring in nouns, with the *–a* plural inflection; definite interpretation is intrinsically introduced by the lexical entry *at-* of the demonstrative.

In pronouns the syncretism between plural and oblique is not present. Nevertheless they reproduce the same overall distribution of case inflection as nouns. There are furthermore morphological correspondences between nominal and 3rd person pronouns where we find the *-t-* element for definiteness, the *-a* plural inflection, the masculine singular morphology *-i* and the feminine singular oblique morphology *-s-*.

In the variety of *Shkodër*, a syncretic 3rd singular pronoun inflection *–i-i* lexicalizes the oblique, as illustrated in (3i), namely a superset-of reading corresponding to different conventional cases according to the context of insertion. We recognize in the sequence *-i-i* the nominal class formative *–i* which occurs in the morphology of (masculine) nouns as well, and a copy *–i* of it. As in (14), we

suggest by analogy with structures like *burr-i-t* 'to/of the man' that the more external *-i* instantiates Q(⊆). A different morphology characterizes 3rd person singular oblique pronouns in *Greci*, where a vocalic element *–a* is inserted, like in *at-i-a* 'to him' – ostensibly the same as the nominal class element *–a* of the definite feminine and plural. We have to conclude that in *at-i-a / asa-i-t-a* 'to him/ to her' it lexicalizes the quantificational slot, as suggested in (14).

(14)



Skodër
Greci

In the dative interpretation, we take the superset-of reading of *–i* to depend on the sentential scope of Q(⊆). In the genitive reading, exemplified in (1d)/(3iii) and (7d)/(8iii), the Q(⊆) specifications of *-i* take in their scope the head noun of the phrase. With pronouns it can be seen particularly clearly that the oblique also encompasses a locative reading (the traditional 'ablative') which has a distinct lexicalization in 1st/2nd person, at least in *Shkodër*. We take it that in the locative interpretation the scope of Q(⊆) is the (stative) sub-event introduced by the preposition. Correspondingly an 'ablative' is a Q(⊆) inflection specialized for the P/locative context of insertion.

In conclusion, the notion of case reduces to more primitive denotational notions (person, nominal class, definiteness, quantification), associated with the relevant lexical entries in accordance with the general theory of the lexicon in a projectionist model (projection of the syntax from lexical items). Different denotational properties satisfy different environments, yielding different interpretations. The lexical elements are not treated as an emergent property of underlying abstract distributions – on the contrary whatever distributional regularities are observed are treated as an emergent property of the lexicon in its interaction with the computational system.

4.1. Case and denotation (DOM again)

Keeping the overall analysis in the previous section in mind we will linger somewhat longer on the contrast between accusative and oblique, characterizing DOM. For the sake of the exposition, we repeat here the examples illustrating the distribution of case inflection in nouns/ 3rd person pronouns and in 1st/2nd person pronouns. (15a) includes accusative specialized forms of nouns and of 3rd person pronouns. (15b) shows the occurrence of oblique inflection in the indirect object of ditransitive verbs. Finally, (15c) shows the occurrence of the oblique forms of 1st/2nd person pronouns as direct objects of transitives, i.e. in the same context where nouns and 3rd person pronouns select accusative in (15a).

(15) a. *accusative – direct object*

pɑ:ʃ burr-i-n — *Shkodër*
I.saw man.def.acc
'I saw the man'
ɛ ʃɔfin a't-ɛ
him they.see him
'They see him'

ʃɛhan trim-i-n/ at-ə — *Greci*
he.sees boy.def.acc/ him
'He sees him/ the boy/ him'

b. *oblique – indirect object (3rd person)*

j a ðɑ:ʃ at-i-i / burr-i-t *Shkodër*
to.him it I.gave to.him/ to.man.def.obl
'They give it to him/ to the man'
j / m / n a japin at-i-i / m-u / ne
to.him/to.me/to.us it they.give to.him/to.me/to.us
'They give it to him/ me/ us'

j/ m / v a jɛpan trim-i-t/ at-i-a / m-ua / ju-vui *Greci*
to.him/to.me/to.you it he.gives to.boy.def.obl/him/to.me/to.you
'He gives it to the boy/ him/me/you'

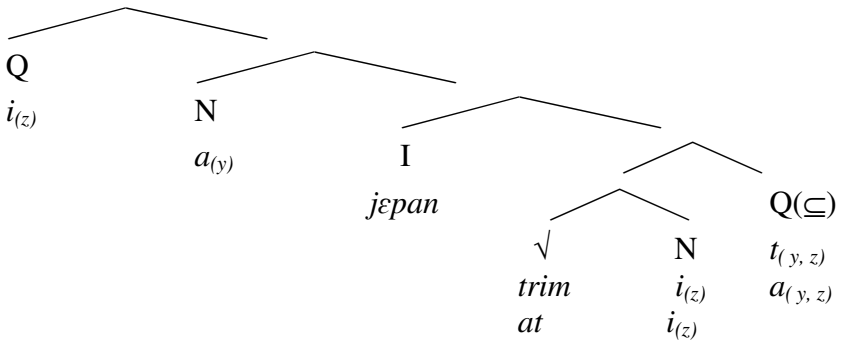
c. *1st/ 2nd person direct object* *Shkodër*

mə ʃi'koin m-u
to.me they.look to me
'They look at me'

ʃɛhan m-ua / ju-vui *Greci*
he.sees to.me / to.you
'He sees me/ you'

Consider first the contexts which embed the noun phrase as a traditional dative, as in the sentences in (15b). We assume that clitics instantiate in the inflectional domain of the sentence the same kind of specifications that are taken by inflections inside the noun. Thus the dative clitic corresponds to a Q position and the accusative clitic to an N position. In the discussion in section 3 and 4, we have proposed that the so-called dative interpretation accruing to *trimit* is a superset-of interpretation (roughly a possessor one) depending on the Q(⊆) inflection *-t*. More specifically this interpretation arises when *-t* takes sentential scope, defining a relation between the argument it attaches to and the internal argument of the predicate, i.e. the pair (y, z) in (16), so that the former (z) 'includes' the latter (y), in the way of 'zonal' inclusion. In view of this fact, rather than speaking of 'sentential' scope of the Q(⊆) operator, it is more appropriate to characterize Q(⊆) as taking scope over VP (as opposed to Chomsky's (1995) vP), i.e. over the elementary event resulting from the combination of the predicate with its internal argument(s), prior to the composition with the external argument.

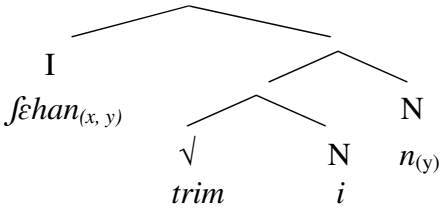
(16) *Greci*



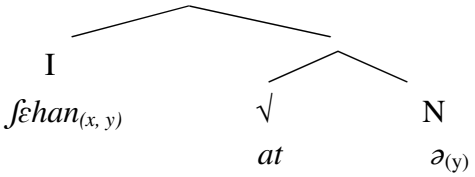
In discussing accusative interpretation, we have proposed that in the definite plural, the same operator Q(⊆) responsible for the reading of (zonal) inclusion, i.e. the oblique, when taking sentential scope, corresponds to the plural reading when taking just the nominal base in its scope. In this latter

instance the Q(⊆) operator selects a subset out of the lattice (set of sets) denoted by the predicate. We further suggested that the *–n* inflection of the definite singular is a specialized nominal class morphology which lexicalizes the internal argument of the event, as in (17a); the pronominal inflection is even simpler (nominal class morphology - *ə*) since definiteness is independently carried by the pronominal base *at-*.

(17) a. *Greci*

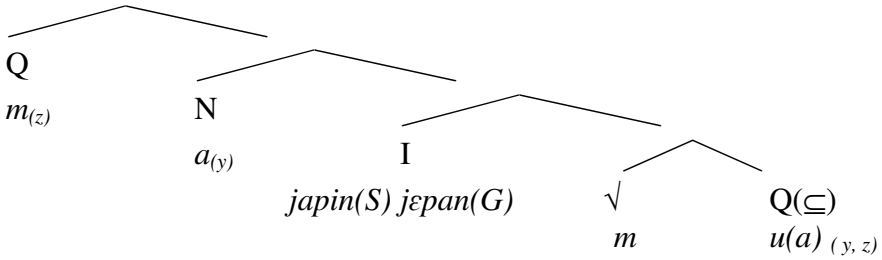


b.



The occurrence of 1st/ 2nd person oblique forms in both contexts in (16)-(17) remains to be considered. Naturally, oblique forms in dative contexts in (18) can be thought of as lexicalizing the same interpretive properties as datives in nouns and 3rd person elements in (16). As suggested in the discussion of (16), in (18) the oblique *–u(a)* inflection takes scope over VP, i.e. the elementary event resulting from the combination of the predicate with its internal argument(s), prior to the composition with the external argument. From its scope position it introduces an inclusion relation between the denotatum of the base to which it attaches ('speaker') and the pronominal possessee 'it' (represented by the N clitic *a*).

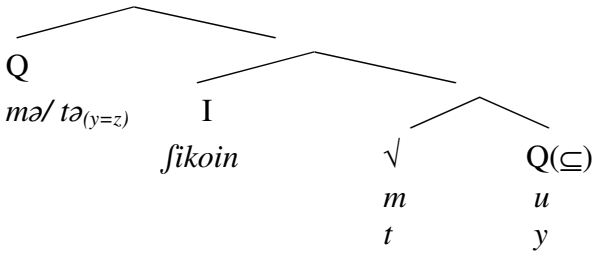
(18) *Shkodër/ Greci*



Examine now the contexts where oblique 1st/ 2nd person forms externalize the internal argument of a transitive clause, as in (19). Our idea is that lexical bases denoting elements of the universe of discourse participate in the event only as agents (nominative) or as possessors/location (oblique morphology). In this latter instance a discourse participant is represented as including either another DP (a possessee, as in ditransitive structures) or in the absence of the latter as including the VP (sub)event. Indeed the morpho-syntactic properties of *mu/ mua, ty/ ti* show that 1st / 2nd person forms require the presence of the Q(⊆) operator for inclusion, externalized by the oblique morphology. Semantically our proposal should be understood in terms of the considerable formal literature, including Chomsky (1995), that treats transitive predicates as consisting of a double structural layer, as if 'look' in (19) really was 'take a look' or 'have a look' In such paraphrases even English inserts a dative argument

'They had/took a look at me'. We surmise that this is exactly what obligatorily happens in Albanian with a 1st/2nd person internal argument, as schematized in (20).

(19)



Shkodër

(20) EA [CAUSE/*v* [look [$_{Q(\subseteq)}$ me/ you]]]

In a nutshell, the split between 1st/2nd person pronouns and 3rd person can be related to different manners of embedding the participants of the event. The embedding of 1st/2nd person participants requires the splitting of the predicate into subevents; the embedding of 3rd person includes a treatment of the structure causative predicate + stative event ('take a look') as an incorporated whole. (19b) therefore is the essence of DOM embedding under the present approach – we already discussed in previous sections what we take to be the essence of the referential prominence hierarchi(es) that regulate(s) the DOM embedding.

5. Prepositional contexts and the ablative

Prepositional contexts, no less than verbal ones, are not restricted to a single case, as for instance in German, where prepositions select either accusative or dative, and in Latin, where they select accusative or ablative. In reality, prepositions in Albanian assign all the cases that are independently found in sentential contexts, as detailed in examples in (21)-(25) which expand and clarify the data in (2), (6), (11). Thus there are preposition like *ka, tɛ*, which select nominative, as in (21). The data in (22) illustrate the prepositions selecting the accusative with nouns and 3rd person elements. The oblique inflection of nouns and 3rd person elements is selected by a subset of prepositions, as exemplified in (23). The same prepositions which require accusative with 3rd person elements in (22) are accompanied by the syncretic oblique of 1st/2nd pronouns in (24). Finally, in (25) we present the data of *Shkodër* concerning the prepositions that select the ablative in a subset of the contexts where in other varieties – here that of *Greci* – the generalized oblique is selected. In the singular definite the ablative ending *-t* for the feminine is restricted to a set of locative nouns, besides being found with 1st/2nd person pronouns, as in (25a). Similarly in the plural the specialized *-ʃ* ablative ending occurs only with 1st/2nd person in (25b) or as the indefinite in semantically restricted contexts, as in (25b').

(21) *Preposition - Nominative*

ai ʃkan tɛ vɑjz-a/ diɑl-i *Shkodër*
he goes to girl.Nom.Def/ boy.Nom.Def
'He goes (close) to the boy/ the girl'
ai vien tɛ un/ ti/ a-i
he comes to me.Nom/ you.Nom/ he.Nom
'He comes (close) to me/ you/ him'

kjɛ i bən ka trim-i/ u/ ti/ a-i/ na *Greci*

he.was PRT made by boyNom.Def/ I.Nom/ you.Nom/ he.Nom/ we.Nom
'It has been made by the boy/ me/ you/ him/ us'
ai vjɛn ka u
he comes at I.Nom
'He comes to my place'
u vɛta ka a-i
I go at he.Nom
'I go to his place'

(22) *Preposition – Accusative (3rd person elements/ nouns)*

ɛ vuna mi/ nɛn kmiʃ-ɛ-n/ kmiʃ-a-t / at-a *Shkodër*
it I.put on/under shirt.Acc.def /shirt.Acc.def / them
'I put it on/under the shirt/ shirts/ them'
kam ɑ:rð mɛ vɑjz-ɛ-n / diɑl-i-n
I.have come with girl.Acc.Def/ boy.Acc.Def
ɛ bɐna pəɾ at-ɛ
it I.made for him.Acc
'I made it for him'

ai ɛrða ma vaz-a-n/ at-ə *Greci*
he came with girl.Acc.Def/ him-Acc
'He came with the girl/ him'

(23) *Preposition – Oblique (3rd person elements/ nouns)*

ɐʃt bɐ: pɾej diɑl-i-t/ diɛm-vɛ *Shkodër*
it.is done by boy.Obl.Def/ boys.Obl
'It has been done by the boy/boys'
ɛ kam vu: paɾa/ poʃt/ sipəɾ libr-i-t/ karig-ɛ-s / ati-i-i
it I.have put before/behind/ on book.Obl.Def/ chair.Obl.Def/ him.Obl
'I have put it before/ behind/ on the book/ chair/ him'

a vura para trim-i-t / trim-ui-t / at-i-a/ atir-vui *Greci*
it I.put before boy.Obl.Def/ boys.Obl.Def/ him.Obl/ them.Obl
'I put it before the boy/ the boys / him/ them'

(24) *Preposition – Oblique (1st/2nd person pronouns)*

ai vien mɛ m-u/ ty / at-ɛ *Shkodër*
he comes with me.Obl/ you.Acc / him. Acc
'He comes with me/ you/ him'

ai vjɛn ma m-ua/ nɛ *Greci*
he comes with me-Obl/ us-Obl
'He comes with me/ us'

(25) *Preposition – Ablative*

. pɾei/ poʃt/ para ʃpi-ɛ-t/ ðɔm-ɛ-t / mɛ-jɛ-t / tɛ-jɛ-t *Shkodër*

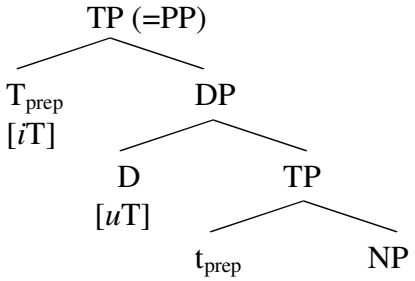
from/ behind/ before house.Abl.Def / room.Abl.Def / me.Abl.Def /you.Abl.Def
'from/ behind/ before the house/ the room/ me/ you'

b. pɾei/ poʃt/ para nɛ-ʃ
from/ behind/ before us-Abl.def
'from/ behind/ before us'

b'. pun pɾej gɾɑ:-ʃ
job for women
'a women's job'

The fact that prepositional phrases licence all cases that sentences do, would appear to be incompatible with the idea that prepositions assign a specialized Oblique case in the sense of Chomsky (1995). If on the contrary we assume that prepositions are not uniquely associated with Oblique, the question arises which properties govern the selection of different cases by different prepositions. Pesetsky & Torrego (2004), suggest that the selection of specific cases by certain subsets of prepositions must be connected with particular features associated with the varying properties of the event, in a structure of the type in (26). In (26) the preposition T_{prep}, endowed with an interpretable *i*T feature checks the uninterpretable *u*T features associated with the D head of the noun phrase.

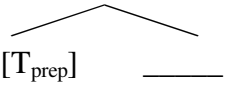
(26)



One can also object that the incompatibility of data such as (21)-(25) with the Oblique case proposal of Chomsky (1995) disappears if the morphological component is taken into account. In the framework of Distributed Morphology it could be assumed for instance that the insertion of at least some of the cases that prepositions select is due to impoverishment rules. Thus we could assume that an Impoverishment rule deletes oblique case specifications from the object of prepositions, like *nɛn, mi*, which take the accusative, as in (27a). Suppose that what is descriptively called the specialized accusative morphology for the singular, namely *-n*, in reality is only a definite singular, i.e. N as in the discussion in section 4. If so, *-n* is compatible with insertion in the impoverished prepositional contexts, as in (27b); in fact the insertion of other endings specified for case (e.g. oblique) is not possible.

(27) a. [oblique] → ∅ / [$_P$ nɛn, mi] ____

b. [singular, definite] → V-n /



Now, prepositions in Albanian can select also nominative, i.e. they can select not one, but two different non-oblique cases. For the nominative context, we can postulate a rule of oblique impoverishment parallel to that formulated in (27a). We can further attribute to the nominative morphology an underspecified entry which allows it to be inserted under an impoverished node. But the problem is that the system now has two different underspecified entries (i.e. the nominative and the accusative) whose

distribution in prepositional contexts can no longer be described. The fact that the nominative is selected by prepositions is equally problematic for syntactic models that construe nominative as a reflex of agreement with the finite verb, like Chomsky (2001, 2008), or Pesetsky & Torrego (2004, 2007). As for the latter, it is far from clear that T_{prep}, as in (26), can instantiate properties parallel to those of sentential T, since a stipulation to this effect would appear to contradict obvious semantic facts.

Morphological treatments like (27), based on Impoverishment, have an interesting consequence from the present point of view – namely that the existence of morphemes associated with more than one case context (i.e. of syncretic case morphemes) requires them to be treated as elements deprived of case properties, and therefore endowed only with referential properties, such as number or gender (nominal class). This is the point at which our proposals steps in, since we combine the same conclusions about the actual content of lexical items with the minimalist postulate of projection from the lexicon. This means that the properties made available by the lexicon must be sufficient to project syntactic structure, without the intervention of abstract functional structures to be impoverished by morphological rules.

Let us consider what can be said about cases selected by prepositions within the present approach. Prepositions are two place predicates whose internal argument is independently lexicalized, while the external argument is controlled by some argument of the matrix predicate. For instance the external argument of 'on'/'under' in *ɛ vuna mi/ nɛn kmiʃ-ɛ-n/ kmiʃ-a-t* 'I put it on/under the shirt/ shirts' in (22) for *Shkodër*, is controlled by the matrix accusative clitic *ɛ* 'it'. What 'on'/'under' denote is a spatial relation between 'it' and 'the shirt(s)'. Thus, in present terms the prepositions that determine contexts requiring the so-called accusative, as in (22), behave like transitive active verbs. Their internal argument is satisfied, if definite, by the specialized nominal class morphology *-n* in the singular and by the nominal class + quantificational inflection *-(V)t* in the plural.

In our view, prepositions requiring so-called nominative in (21) provide a clue that there really are no case inflections conceived as realizations of primitive case features, but only denotational properties capable of satisfying argument reference in certain syntactic contexts – i.e., as already stated 'case' lies at the intersection of denotational (referential, predicative) primitives and of syntactic contexts of insertion. Unlike Chomsky (1995 ff.) we do not tie the satisfaction of the EPP to checking of the uninterpretable features of the predicative head by the corresponding interpretable features of the subject. Rather we consider that the referential (person and number) content of the finite verb inflection defines a D elements satisfying the EPP (Manzini and Savoia 2005, 2007). So-called nominative arguments associate with contexts where they are in the scope of the D (EPP) argument of the sentence (the finite verb inflection). Correspondingly we do not need to postulate empty agreement properties on prepositions, that are systematically absent in the overt morphology of Albanian, to justify nominative case on P objects. We conclude from the facts that the same denotational properties that satisfy subject, i.e. D/EPP contexts, also satisfy the sub-event introduced by prepositions like *ka/ tɛ* in (21) – without implying that there is a primitive notion of nominative case at play in the two contexts. In particular, in the 1st/ 2nd person, the pronominal bare forms like *u(n), ti, ju, na* show up, suggesting that their deictic properties alone are able to lexicalize these contexts. 3rd person pronouns and nouns introduce specialized definite inflections.

As for prepositional contexts selecting the oblique, in (23), in present terms they require the satisfaction of their internal argument by morphology with Q(⊆) specifications. According to the analysis in sections 3-4, these Q(⊆) specifications correspond to a superset-of interpretation. Indeed there is considerable independent evidence that prepositions cross-linguistically select superset-of (possessor, partitive) specifications. Thus in Italian (and in many Romance languages) several prepositions are obligatorily followed by *di* 'of', e.g. *prima di* 'before/ in front of'. Recall that 1st/ 2nd

singular person pronouns on the other hand are characterized by DOM (i.e. oblique) morphology even when occurring in simple transitive contexts, i.e. where 3rd person arguments display accusative (i.e. N) morphology. The insertion of oblique forms in these contexts, illustrated in (24), externalizes the prepositional predicate as being 'possessed'/'included' by 1st/ 2nd person. Note furthermore that in traditional terms 2nd plurals present a nominative – accusative syncretism, in other terms the *ju* form simply lexicalizes a direct (non-oblique, non) case.

5.1. The ablative

We come to the prepositional contexts selecting ablative in (25). As noted in introducing these data, the specialized *-t* ablative morphology for the feminine singular definite in the *Shkodër* variety is found only on a subset of nouns denoting locations. In (25a) we exemplified 'house', 'room'; other relevant nouns include 'door', 'chair' etc. The same specialized morphology appears on the 1st/2nd person singular pronouns, as again illustrated in (25a). A first question stands out: what do 1st and 2nd person singular referents, i.e. speaker and hearer, share with nominal basis denoting locations? As already discussed, speaker and hearer are two necessary coordinates of the universe of discourse. A locative specification, roughly 'here' must also be among such coordinates, in order for instance to allow the fixing of denotation of demonstratives. We propose therefore that what 1st and 2nd person have in common with locatives, specifically with definite locatives, is precisely this connection with the universe of discourse.

It should be noted that roughly the same subset of lexical nouns relevant for the specialized ablative in Albanian is significant cross-linguistically. For instance, in Italian singular counts nouns must generally be preceded by determiners (as in English). This does not hold for nouns denoting locations (roughly the same subset as in Albanian) introduced by locative prepositions, which can appear without determiner, as in (28). The lack of determiner corresponds to the fact that the locative specification is anchored at the universe of discourse. In particular in (28a) 'house' or 'bag' tend to be interpreted as possessed by the matrix agent, while in (28b) depending on the context 'home' might be interpreted as possessed by the matrix internal argument. Note however that 'ground' in (28a) is interpreted as simply being 'close to' the agent – i.e. in terms of more loosely defined 'inclusion'[2].

(28) a. L' ha messo in casa/ borsa/ terra
it he.has put in house/ bag/ ground
'He put it in the house/ in the bag/ on the ground'

b. L' ha portata a casa
her/it he.has brought to house
'He has brought her/it home'

We propose that the *-t* morphology in (25a) externalizes Q(⊆) superset-of specifications – exactly as it does in the oblique (dative/genitive) masculine singular. Now, the conceptual closeness of the notions of possessor and location is well-known in the typological literature. Thus cross-linguistically possessive constructions can involve a descriptive genitive, or a descriptive dative, or a descriptive locative (Freeze 1992). In present terms this conceptual closeness, and therefore the syncretisms it may lead to, correspond fundamentally to superset-of properties, which, when spatially defined lead to the locative interpretation. The latter is what we find externalized by specialized morphology in (25a).

We then come to the *-ʃ* inflection which is specialized for the so-called ablative, in particular for

[2] As far as we can tell, there is no formal literature on this topic, with the exception perhaps of Longobardi's (2001) work on the peculiar properties with respect to the distribution of determiners of a noun like 'home'.

the plural. If our general approach is correct, -ʃ will have intrinsic referential properties which restrict its contexts of occurrence. In turn, the latter provide the basic evidence in terms of which we fix the denotational context of -ʃ. Now, the examples in (25b) show that -ʃ is associated with so-called 1st and 2nd person plural, namely with lexical elements denoting sets inclusive of the speaker and the hearer respectively. On the other hand, the same morphology is present in prepositional contexts of the type in (25b'). In essence, saying 'a job for women' in Albanian (25b') amounts to introducing a property holding of 'job', as in English 'a women's job, a womanly job'. Therefore the reference of the indefinite plural 'women' is generic, i.e. close to a universal, roughly 'a job for any woman/ all women'. On the basis of these observations, we tentatively construe -ʃ as a quantificational Q element. Specifically the quantificational properties it is associated with, are satisfied by generic closure, which we suggest represents the core of the interpretation contributed by -ʃ to examples like (25b').

It might appear problematic that -ʃ also combines with 1st and 2nd person bases for 'we' and 'you (plural)'. In reality, generic uses at least of 'we' are independently attested as in *we are on earth for a brief time* (referred to the human species of which the speaker is part) and similar utterances. In other words, as far as 'we' is concerned, the generic interpretation coexists in natural languages with the deictic ('here and now') interpretation. This goes some way in explaining why both indefinite plurals and 'we' combine with the same quantificational -ʃ specification. Chierchia (1995), Manzini & Savoia (2005, 2007) discuss in some detail the coincidence of two different referential values on the Italian *si* clitic – namely the generic (near universal) and what Chierchia calls episodic (i.e. restricted by the universe of discourse). Along the same lines we may surmise that the same quantificational properties that allow for the generic reading with nominal bases, allow for what is fundamentally a deictic reading with 1st/2nd person plural. The occurrence in so called ablative contexts depends on a restriction of the relevant morphology to locative contexts.

The particular shape that the person split takes in our data has different case specifications associated with the lexical bases denoting elements of the universe of discourse (i.e. 'hearer' and 'speaker') and other lexical bases. A final point to be emphasized is the difference between a variety like *Shkodër*'s characterized by the split oblique/ablative, and an Arbëresh variety like *Greci*'s one devoid of ablative inflection. This variation corresponds to two subtly different ways to introduce DOM. Recall that 1st/2nd person singular lexicalize an uninflected form for 'nominative' and one or two Q(⊆) form(s) for 'dative', DOM 'accusative' and 'locative'. The two varieties both externalize 1st/2nd person internal arguments by the oblique morphology (cf. (19)) and represent them as including the elementary sub-event. The variety of *Shkodër* introduces a second divide, by distinguishing a locative inclusion interpretation, externalized by the ablative, from other inclusion interpretations, expressed by the oblique.

In general, there is a strict correlation between the referential content of lexical bases and the range of so-called cases they are associated with – which we take to indirectly argue in favour of our overall construal of case, in terms of elementary denotational properties satisfying contexts of lexical insertion.

6. Person Case Constraint (PCC) phenomena.

The case syncretism between accusative and dative in 1st/2nd pronouns, exemplified in (24), feeds the Person Case Constraint (PCC). The constraint usually observed in literature is restricted to clitic or inflectional elements and prevents 1st/2nd person accusative from combining with 3rd person datives (Bejar & Rezac 2003, 2009, Adger & Harbour 2007). The PCC is at work also in Albanian, as for instance in (29i)-(29ii). In the variety of *Shkodër*, 1st/2nd singular clitics have an accusative/dative syncretic form *mə/tə*, while 3rd person clitics distinguish singular Accusative *ɛ/a* from Dative and Acc.

plural *i*. The co-occurrence of a 1st/2nd clitic with a 3rd person dative or another 1st/2nd clitic is excluded. A similar exclusion is in force in *Greci*, where the accusative/dative syncretic form *mə/tə* contrasts with the distinct 3rd sg. forms for accusative *a* and dative *i*.

(29) i. *ai m i kɑ prezanˈtu: *Shkodër*
*ai m i prəzəntuacən *Greci*
he to.me to.him (has) introduced
ii. *m tə kɑ prezanˈtu: *Shkodër*
to.me to.you he.has introduced

In this connection, we can consider the variation between Geg data and Arbëresh data. In *Shkodër* the combination between full 1st/2nd pronouns is only marginally possible, as in (30i). The sequence 1st/2nd pronouns - 3rd dative is excluded also with full pronouns, as in (30ii).

(30) *Shkodër*
i. ai m/ t kɑ prezanˈtu: ?mu ty / ?? ty mu
he to.me/to.you has introduced me to.you/ you to.me
ii. ai kɑ prezanˈtu: *mu / ty atii /asɑi
he has introduced me/ you to.him/to.her

Normally two 1st/2nd objective arguments are admitted only if the goal argument is introduced by a locative element, as in (31i). The same is true in (31ii) of the combination 1st/2nd person pronoun - 3rd person pronoun.

(31) *Shkodër*
i. m/ t kan prezanˈtu: mu tɛ ti / ty tɛ un
to.me/to.you they.have introduced me at you/you at I
ii. m/ t kan prezanˈtu: mu/ ty tɛ ai
to.me/to.you they.have introduced me/you at he

The insertion of a 1st/2nd pronoun is allowed in the context of a 3rd person internal argument, as in (32), where the locative is correspondingly excluded.

(32) *Shkodër*
m/t a kan prezanˈtu: aˈtɛ mu/ ty /*tɛ un/ ti
to.me/to.you him they.have introduced him to.me/you/at I/you

In (32) it is the presence of 1st/2nd clitics associated to the goal/ possessor argument that calls for the oblique form of the strong pronouns. if the 1st/2nd person clitic is not inserted, locative is realized, as in (33). This is consistent with the fact that locative occurs in (31), where the clitic cluster $1^{st}/2^{nd}/3^{rd}{}_{Dat} - 1^{st}/2^{nd}{}_{Acc}$ is banned.

(33) *Shkodër*
ɛ kan prezanˈtu: aˈtɛ tɛ un/ ti
him they.have introduced him at me/ you

By contrast, in *Greci*, the combination between strong pronouns, as in (34i,ii), is normally accepted.

(34) *Greci*

i. mə prəzəntɔci mua ti
me he.introduced me to.you

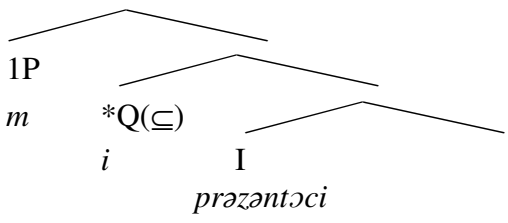
ii. mə / a prəzəntɔci mua atirui / atə mua
me/him he.introduced me to.them / him to.me

Referential hierarchy phenomena, and the constraints on the distribution of case morphology (PCC) related to the referential hierarchy entail referring to intrinsic denotational properties of the involved elements (pronouns, agreement morphemes). In the literature, the PCC is accounted for as an effect of the competition between two forms in person feature checking. Adger & Harbour (2007) assume that in the internal argument position of a ditransitive verb, only a 3rd person can occur, because devoid of [participant] features – while 1st/2nd person pronouns, which have such feature, are excluded. This is because datives always have a [participant] feature (including 3rd person ones), determining a competition that can only result in failure. To reiterate, the PCC entails reference to intrinsic denotational properties of the elements involved (pronouns, agreement morphemes), while the notion of case is effectively not involved.

We noted that there is a link between referential hierarchy phenomena and case inflection syncretism. As we have seen, 1st/2nd person pronouns exclude the canonical transitive event structure comprising an agent and a theme, and require instead the oblique creating the DOM distribution. Only 3rd person elements, as in (1)-(3), (7)-(8), yield a canonical transitive event structure comprising an agent and a theme. In general, we have seen that 1st/2nd person singular and 3rd person have different way for lexicalizing different argumental contexts (subject vs. object vs. argument of prepositions). We have argued that these morphological differences are not surface phonetic labels of abstractly identical categories. On the contrary, they correspond to truly different types of conceptualization, within the same universal space of interface primitives. We have construed the split between 1st/2nd person pronouns and 3rd person one as a different manner of lexicalizing the participants of the event. In particular, lexical bases denoting elements of the universe of discourse participate in the event as agents or possessors/locations (corresponding to nominative or oblique/locative morphology). Their embedding inside the predicate requires the presence of the Q(⊆) operator for inclusion, externalized by the oblique morphology of 3rd persons as well, as in (2) and (6i), but only for goals.

In this perspective, we may also pursue an explanation for the PCC, as seen in the clitic combinations in (29)-(34). 1st and 2nd person clitics make the superset-of Q(⊆) operator unavailable for 3rd person clitics, as suggested in (35) for *Greci* – in the absence of which the event cannot be read as involving a 3rd person goal. This is because 1st/2nd person, in virtue of their intrinsic speaker/hearer denotations, take priority for Q(⊆) attachment, depriving a 3rd person referent of the necessary means for anchoring at the event.

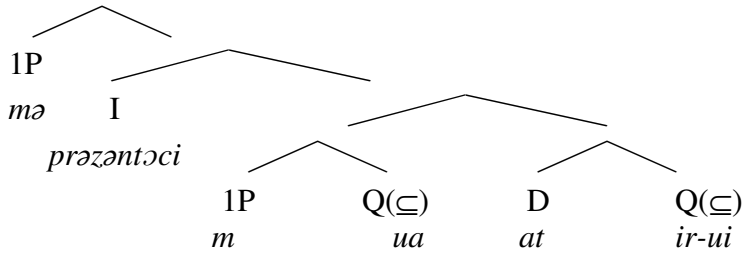
(35)



Unlike the incompatibility between 1st/2nd person and 3rd person dative clitics, in Arbëresh the combination of the full 1st/ 2nd person pronouns with quantificational (⊆) properties of and of the 3rd

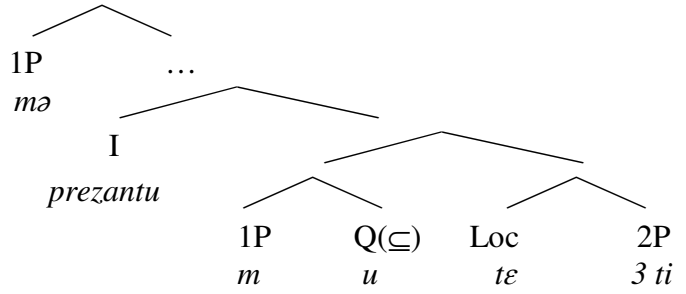
person dative is interpretable, as in (36). We take it that this is possible to the extent that the two Q(⊆) elements take two logically different scopes. The lower Q(⊆), i.e. the one attached to the goal *at-*, introduces an inclusion relation between the 3rd person argument (the abstract 'possessor') and the 1st/2nd person argument. The higher Q(⊆), i.e. the one intrinsically attached to the non-subject speaker *m-* takes scope over the 'introduction' sub-event. Recall that 'he introduced me to them' is paraphrasable roughly as 'He made a presentation of me to them' – and this is exactly how the LF or (36) is construed. In other words in *Greci*, only in the clitic domain does the referential hierarchy interact with argument attachment – imposing the unique association of Q(⊆) with the 1st/2nd person referent (roughly no 3rd person referent can be associated with Q(⊆) if there is a 1st/2nd person referent around).

(36)



The structural possibility illustrated in (36) opposes Arbëresh to *Shkodër,* where an equivalent combination is normally rejected. Naturally, we may expect that in *Shkodër* two objective forms of strong 1st/2nd person pronouns are incompatible in turn; indeed, none of the sequences *mu ty/ ty mu/ mu atii/ ty atii* occur. Therefore, in *Shkodër* with full pronouns as well the same overall principles holds as with clitics in (35). On the other hand with full pronouns *Shkodër* solves the incompatibility deriving from the PCC by introducing a locative, which allows the 1st/2nd person, as Q(⊆) elements, to combine with a 3rd person goal, externalized by the locative, as in (37).

(37)



The variation between the morphosyntactic behavior of *Greci* and *Shkodër* can be accounted for by assuming that in the grammar of *Shkodër* 1st/2nd person elements deprive the other argument from the superset-of Q(⊆) reading in virtue of a referential hierarchy effect which does not allow any argument (in a given domain) to associate with Q(⊆), if a referentially higher element is present (in the same domain).

8. Concluding remarks.

This article presents an account of case morphology in Albanian varieties, proposing in particular that DOM follows from deeper referential properties, namely that only nouns and 3rd person pronouns yield a canonical transitive event structure comprising an agent and a theme. Deictic referents are introduced not as themes, but as possessors/locatives. This corresponds to the fact that the denotation of 1st and 2nd

person is fixed in virtue of their being coordinates of the universe of discourse, without necessarily making reference to the structure of the event. In general, we have examined case phenomena from a lexicalist viewpoint, whereby each lexical entry is a function from sound to interpretation (and vice versa). The notion of case reduces to denotational primitives (person, nominal class, definiteness, quantification), associated with the relevant inflectional entries – where different denotational properties satisfy different syntactic environments. In this perspective, we can think of morphological differences as authentically different conceptualizations, within a single universal space of interface primitives. In the same framework, we also proposed an approach to the PCC, pointing out once again its strict link to the referential properties of the lexical items involved.

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Summary
The central aim of this article is an in-depth rethinking of the notion of case, assuming with Chomsky (1995) that features of lexical items must be bona fide properties, not concealed devices reconstructing relational primitives. We base our discussion on Albanian varieties which exhibit a rich case system; we attack the problem at the PF interface, with a study of morphological case in Geg Albanian and Arbëresh (Greci). We argue that the traditional label of case is associated with morphological entries which in reality correspond to denotational primitives as different as nominal class (gender), definiteness, quantification, predication. If we assume that the case consists entirely of more primitive properties, including those just mentioned, it is these properties that enter into the projection of the syntactic tree. The traditional (relational) notion of case can be reconstructed by reference to the fact that different sets of these primitive properties satisfy different syntactic environments, defined by agreement, theta-assignment and in general by the primitive relations of minimalist theory. Case is just the name traditionally given to satisfaction of the latter by the former.