Monotransitivization in Catalan and Spanish dialects

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DAT/ACC alternations

- verbs of transfer of communication (*telefonear* ‘phone’, *escribir* ‘write’, *contestar* ‘answer’);

- verbs of transfer of possession (*pagar* ‘pay’, *robar* ‘steal’);

- verbs of contact (*pegar* ‘hit’, *disparar* ‘shoot’, *seguir* ‘follow’)


(Pineda 2013b)
Dialectal and intergenerational variation

Theme + Goal:

(1) \( \text{La Maria (li) telefona [ACC un missatge] [DAT a la seva mare]} \)
\( \text{Maria (CL}_{\text{DAT}} \text{) phones [ACC a message] [DAT her mother]} \)

(2) Only Goal:

Grammar 1

a. \( \text{La Maria telefona [DAT a la seva mare]} \rightarrow \text{Ella li telefona} \)
\( \text{Maria phones [DAT her mother} \rightarrow \text{She her}_{\text{DAT}} \text{phones} \)

Grammar 2

b. \( \text{La Maria telefona [ACC la seva mare]} \rightarrow \text{Ella la telefona} \)
\( \text{Maria phones [ACC her mother] } \rightarrow \text{She her}_{\text{ACC}} \text{phones} \)

Monotransitivization
Proposal
Catalan dialects

- **G1**: always DAT
  Most of Valencian, Balearic varieties

- **G2**: always ACC
  Part of Central Catalan (Lluçanès, Ripollès, Osona, Garrotxa..)

- **G3**: access to DAT and ACC
  Part of Central Catalan + some Balearic varieties
  + Standard Catalan (normative dictionary)

What must we account for?

- As for $G_2(=\text{ACC})$, what is monotransitivization?

- In what do $G_1(=\text{DAT})$ and $G_2(=\text{ACC})$ actually differ? Syntax? Semantics?

- As for $G_3(=\text{DAT/ACC})$, what does it consist of? What do speakers do with two encoding options?
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What is monotransitivization?

- DIOM:
  Differential IO Marking, Differently marked Goals
  (Goals marked with ACC case, but still Goals)
  (Bilous 2011 for Fr, Ukrainian)

(3) a. Uns desgraciats han robat \([\text{ACC} \text{ la meva àvia}]\)
    b. El portaveu ha respost \([\text{ACC} \text{ la senyora ministra}]\)
    c. Avui encara no \([\text{ACC} \text{ l’} \text{he telefonada, } \text{ACC} \text{ la mare}]\)

Not patients in the strict meaning; not highly/prototypically transitive events
(phone, rob, shoot, pay...)

Still Goals, but differently marked
More examples

(4) a. Com està la teva mare? Fa temps que ni **la truco** ni **l’escric**

b. Yo cuando tengo algún problema **la escribo** a ella  (non-laïsta speaker)

c. Duran va apuntar ahir en una entrevista a El Periódico que CiU estava perdent la centralitat. **El va respondre** també ahir el secretari d’organització de Convergència, Josep Rull, que li va dir que no era moment de la vella política de l’ambigüitat

d. Li demanen si **l’han robat** i diu que no, que no eren lladres els qui l’han agredit

e. Potser convindria cuidar-lo més. Ja **el pagueu** prou bé?

f. Llavors l’agent **el va disparar** i el va matar

g. No es pot **servir** dos amos alhora

h. El gos **lladrava** el nen
Still Goals (but differently marked)

- **Evidence**
  - Semantics (theta-role): whether they are DAT or ACC marked, the most appropriate thematic role is usually Beneficiary (or Maleficiary), or Recipient – generic term Goal.
  - Cross-linguistic behavior (Blume 1998, Troberg 2008, Bilous 2011)
  - Secondary Predication (IO vs DO)

As any other Goal, ACC-marked Goals are introduced by a LowApplP (Pylkkänen 2002, Cuervo 2003a)
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In what do G1 and G2 actually differ?

- If both ACC-marked and DAT-marked complements are Goals (IOs), and both are licensed by an Appl...

- ... the difference is to be found in the Appl.
The structure

- The Goal (ACC- or DAT-marked) originates in the Spec position of a LowAppl Phrase and this is why it acquires the Goal interpretation.

- Hidden ditransitives

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Telefona [GOAL el mestre/al mestre] [GOAL Li / El ] telefona
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But... what Theme?

Cognate Theme

‘phone’ = fer una telefonada, dar un telefonazo, dei egin
‘rob’ = fer robatori, hacer robo, lapurtu egin

Torregro’s (2010) proposal for «Spanish transitive accusative predicates with dative morphology», true IOs (hablar a alguien) and DOs with DOM (contratar a alguien).
La Maria telefona [ACC la seva mare] → La Maria [ACC la] telefona
Maria phones [ACC her mother ] → Maria phones [ACC her]
The question: Why ACC case is assigned to the Goal instead of DAT case?
Because...

- Defective LowAppl
- Richardson 2007

«Surface-contact verbs» (hit, kick, slap) in Slavic languages occur with Acc-compl, although no depictive predication is allowed, contrary to standard Acc-marked arguments.

Verkuyl 1993

The ACC-compl is equivalent to an IO

I kick John → I gave a kick to John

Levin & RH 2005

I broke the window → *I gave the window a break

In many languages surface-contact verbs take oblique compl or V+N combinations

Cuervo 2003a

Juanita le pegó a la gata → Juanita le dió una puña a la gata
Defective Low Appl

- «the internal argument of surface-contact verbs appears to merge with an applicative head that does not assign case, or anomalously assigns the accusative Case»
- «This [analogy] has rendered the ApplP defective in the sense that it does not assign an inherent dative case to the goal/beneficiary argument»

- Back to our verbs:

Is it really a defective or anomalous applicative?
Excursus: Current ditransitives

- In Cat/Sp ditransitive constructions, Appl assigns DAT to its specifier (Cuervo 2003a,b, Pineda 2013a,b)

(5) \textit{La Maria (li) dóna [\textbf{ACC} el llibre] [\textbf{DAT} al Joan]}

**SP/CAT**: LowAppl assigns inherent DAT case to its Specifier

**ENGLISH**: LowAppl assigns inherent ACC case to its Complement
Back to our hidden ditransitives

- With hidden ditransitive constructions, there are 2 options, G1 and G2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>G1</th>
<th>G2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Romance Appl</td>
<td>Anomalous Romance Appl = Germanic-like Appl</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT case assigned:</td>
<td>ACC case assigned:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Maria telefona al seu pare</em></td>
<td><em>La Maria telefona el seu pare</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La Maria li telefona</em></td>
<td><em>La Maria el telefona</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case assignment

With *telefonar, robar*-verbs, the LowAppl head like in English Double Object Constructions: it assigns inherent ACC to the Theme, although it ends up conflated with V.

CONSEQUENCE: no inherent case available for the Goal, so that it must go up in order to check structural ACC case: this explains Goal passivization.

*María fue telefoneada*

Maria was phoned
Consequences

- If Cat has Germanic-like Appl heads, why do they disallow true double object / double accusative patterns?

(6) *La Maria dóna [ACC-GOAL el Joan] [ACC-THEME el llibre]

Wait!!

- We do have true double accusative constructions
(7) a. *Els parents de Madrid... ‘My relatives from Madrid...’*

\[
\text{Hòstia, encara no} \text{ els he trucat que em caso! [iO-ACC] [DO-ACC]}
\]

Hell, I have not called [iO-ACC them] [DO-ACC that I’m getting married] yet!

b. *L’has de trucar que t’agrada molt el jersei [iO-ACC] [DO-ACC]*

You must call [iO-ACC her] [DO-ACC that you like the sweater very much]

Also in Basque ABS/DAT

- Fernández & Ortiz de Urbina (2009):

(8) *Abisa nazazu [DO zer balio duen sardinak]*

Inform [ABS me] [DO how much the sardine costs]
Only with *that*-clauses

- This is a new tendency, not fixed but quite unstable
- Already found with *that*-clause
  - no danger of ambiguity (cf. DPs *Han robat la Maria el bolso*)
  - *that*-clauses can be considered caseless (cf. DPs)
Interim summary
Microvariation

- Conservative speakers (majority of Valencian, Balearic):
  \( G_1 \), DAT, Romance-like Appl

- Innovative speakers (part of Central Cat):
  \( G_2 \), ACC, Germanic-like Appl

- \( G_1 \) and \( G_2 \) differ in their syntax, but these syntactic differences do not map onto pragmatic or semantic differences.

- But an important part of speakers (specially in Central Cat and Balearic Catalan) combine \( G_1 \) and \( G_2 \), and so do Catalan prescriptive grammar (Standard Catalan). This is \( G_3 \).
What must we account for?

- As for G2(=ACC), what is monotransitivization?

- In what do G1(=DAT) and G2(=ACC) actually differ? Syntax? Semantics?

- As for G3(=DAT/ACC), what does it consist of? What do speakers do with two encoding options?
What does G3 consist of?

- G3 combines G1 and G2, since it has the Romance-like (DAT-assigning) Appl, and the Germanic-like (ACC-assigning) Appl.

What do G3 speakers do?

Do they exploit the two encoding options?

They do, but not always.
Diccionari de l’IEC 2: explicit exploitation

- Robar + DAT → ‘appropriate wrongfully, with violence, with deception, secretly (what is the property of somebody else)’

  (9) Això és robar als pobres
  This is robbing [DAT PREP the poor]

- Robar + ACC → ‘dispossess (somebody) of the things which belong to him/her, wrongfully, with violence, with deception, secretly’

  (10) El van robar a la sortida del cinema
  They robbed [ACC him] at the exit of the cinema
Same author, same book

(11)

a. - A qui vas confiar els diners? (Who did you give the money to?)


To a reliable man. They killed him. And they.robbed [ACC him].

b. Vostè és un canalla. (You are a swine)

Li va robar el violí. I també va robar [DAT al desgraciat Adrià Ar.]

You stole his violin. And also you.robbed [DAT the unfortunate Adrià Ar.]

(Jo confesso, Jaume Cabré)
One single definition: ‘take something from someone committing robbery’

**Ex.**  Això és robar [DAT als pobres]

**P. ext.** Pobre home, [ACC l’]han maltractat, insultat i robat
Ginebra & Montserrat 1999: no exploitation

- Only ACC pattern

(12) *Han robat el teu germà? Sí que l’han robat i ara farà la denúncia del robatori*

‘Did they rob your brother?’ ‘Yes, they robbed him\textsubscript{ACC} and now he will report the robbery

- This reflects what’s going on in G2(=ACC) (innov. dial.):

(13) *Finalment em van portar a una oficina sota terra i em va entrevistar un policia.*

‘They finally carried me to an office below ground and a policeman interviewed me’

-¿[ACC l’] *han robat* a l’estació de tren? ‘

Did they rob [ACC you] at the train station?‘

-No, a l’hotel. ‘No, in the hotel.’

-¿Què ha perdut? ‘What did you lose?’

-Unes 100 lliures. ‘About 100 pounds.’
Not all verbs allow exploitation

- Compare:
  (14) *Lo telefonearon* = *Le telefonearon*

  (15) *Lo dispararon* ≠ *Le dispararon*  
  (Romero & Ormazabal, p. c.)

(16) a. A veure, truca-li, truca-li i així sabem què passa. Va, truca’l
    b. Per què li hem de trucar a la nit si hem estat no sé quants dies
       sense trucar-lo?

(17) a. *Le dispararon pero no le dieron.*
    b. *Lo han disparado, está muerto.*
More questions

- Why is it possible for some speakers to exploit the two options with some verbs?

- Temptative answer
  
  Are case differences in G3 linked to aspectual differences?
  
  - Svenonius 2002 – Icelandic (temporal overlap)
  - Richardson 2007 – Slavic languages (quantization)
  - And so many others (Borer, Kratzer, Travis...)
Temptative 1: Case & Aspect

- Svenonius 2002: «case is properly seen as reflecting (interpretable) tense, aspect, or Aktionsart features»

- ACC is licensed when a particular relationship obtains between v and V. This relationship is defined using an aspectual notion: temporal overlap.
Temptative 2: Not in the syntax

- With some verbs, the use of ACC vs DAT appears to be related to differences in meaning (specially affectedness), but there are no systematic correspondences between case and meaning.
- It is not in the syntax because...
  - differences are not systematic (even Truca-li. Va, truca’l)
  - it is not true that G1(=DAT) speakers always have a non-affected meaning and G2(=ACC) speakers an affected meaning.

Then, it is in the interpretative component

- with some verbs:
  - context-dependent
  - pragmatics-semantic implications
What happens in the interpretative component?

• Only in certain cases speakers will exploit the ACC/DAT opposition.

*Basing on what?*

*An option:*

**Scale:** holistic affectedness .......................... potentially partial affectedness

L’han apallissat i l’han robat, li han pres tot. Els bancs lì roben cada dia.

**Scale:** impingement ................................. no necessary impingement

L’han disparat, ara és mort. Li han disparat, però no l’han tocat.
Event conceptualization: the verb does not necessarily imply a holistic effect

Event conceptualization: the verb implies a holistic effect of an action on the person, a change of state occurs
Conclusions

- Behind DAT/ACC alternations there is DIOM
- Behind DIOM there is a Germanic-like accusative-assigning LowAppl head
- Catalan dialects variation can be accounted for by positing the existence of G1, G2 and G3 and the existence of two sorts of LowAppl heads.
- Syntactic differences (Romance-like vs Germanic-like Appl) are not always mapped onto meaning differences.
- Exploitation is only allowed for some verbs, for some speakers. It has to do with semantic-pragmatic implications.
Moltes gràcies!

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References


