

1/2P vs 3P splits: A view from Romance and Balkan non standard languages

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Outline. We illustrate 1/2P vs 3P splits in the pronominal paradigms of (mostly non-standard Romance and Balkan languages. We argue that they find an explanatory treatment in the syntax, in terms of Case (Differential Object Marking, DOM) and Agree – joining another well-known syntactic pattern namely the PCC (Person Case Constraint).

DOM. We begin with Geg Albanian and Arbëresh (Italo-Albanian) pronominal paradigms, as in (1)-(2). In (1), 1st and 2nd person (1/2P) present a syncretism between accusative (Acc) and oblique (Gen/Dat); 3rd persons (3P) have distinct direct and oblique cases. In (2), the syncretism of Acc and Gen/Dat can still be seen in the 1st person singular.

(1) Geg Albanian: Full pronouns in the variety of Shkodër (Albania)

	<i>1sg</i>	<i>2sg</i>	<i>3sg</i>	<i>1pl</i>	<i>2pl</i>	<i>3pl</i>
<i>Nom</i>	un	ti	a'i/a'ja	na	ju	a'ta
<i>Acc</i>	mu	ty	a'te	ne	ju	—
<i>Gen/Dat</i>	mu	ty	a'tii/asai	ne	ju	atyne
<i>Abl</i>	mejet	tejet	—	nef	juf	—

(2) Arbëresh: Full pronouns in the variety of Greci (Campania, Italy)

	<i>1sg</i>	<i>2sg</i>	<i>3sg</i>	<i>1pl</i>	<i>2pl</i>	<i>3pl</i>
<i>Nom</i>	u	ti	a'i/a'jə	na	ju	a'ta
<i>Acc</i>	mua	—	a'tə	ne	—	—
<i>Gen/Dat</i>	mua	—	a'tia/asaita	neui	juvui	atirua/i

Syncretism can be accounted for in morphological terms, by means of Impoverishment (Distributed Morphology), constraint ranking (OT) or other – but as far as we can tell, such an account encodes the facts without explaining them. We propose a syntactic account. Though Albanian is not normally recognized as a DOM (Differential Object Marking) language, we propose that it does have DOM in the 1/2P, as revealed precisely by the case pattern in (1) or, to a limited extent, (2).

To see the point, one must keep in mind that Indo-European languages, DOM is externalized by oblique morphology, most often coinciding with dative, e.g. Romance *a*. Recent literature argues that this is not a matter of surface syncretism, but of deep syntactic embedding. Thus the essence of DOM is that highly ranked referents must be embedded in VP by means of an adposition P or oblique Case OBL, as in (3) – and eventually move to Spec, Appl (Torrego 2010, Pineda 2016).

(3) DOM: [V *(P) DP], where DP is referentially highly ranked

Against this background, the case pattern of Albanian (1)-(2) is predicted if we assume that Albanian does have DOM, albeit restricted to 1/2P (or 1SG). In this way, we do not just encode the Person split, but we predict the form it takes, namely identity between the 1P dative *mu* in (4b) and the 1P DOM object *mu* in (4a). We come back to clitics below.

- (4) a. ε/mə ʃɔfin ate/**mu**
 3ACC/1SG see.3PL 3ACC/1SG.OBL ('They see him/me')
- b. j/m a japin atii/**mu**
 3DAT/1SG 3ACC give.3PL 3OBL/1SG.OBL ('They give it to him/me')

DOM of 1/2P pronouns is also widespread in Romance. In (5), we consider a Romansh variety (of the Surselva). Here 3P pronouns do not display any Case differentiation. 1/2SG on the other hand differentiate Nom, Acc and Dat (attested as the object of the *a* Preposition, see (6b)):

(5) Romansh: Full pronouns in Vella (Grisons, Switzerland)

	<i>1sg</i>	<i>2sg</i>	<i>3sg</i>	<i>1pl</i>	<i>2pl</i>	<i>3pl</i>
<i>Nom</i>	jau	ti	el/ε:la	nu:s	vu:s	els/ε:las
<i>Acc</i>	mai	tai				
<i>Dat</i>	mi	ti				

We construe (5) as another surface manifestation of DOM, whereby 1/2P pronouns embedded in the VP have a specialized mark as in (6a), though here it does DOM does not overlap with Dat in (6b).

- (6) a. els kloman mai/els
they call-3pl me/them 'They call me/them'
b. els daton a mi/els
they give-3pl to me/them 'They give it to me/them'

Agreement. In Romance languages generally, 3P clitics have a separate form for Acc and Dat, while 1/2P clitics have a single exponent, cf. standard Italian in (7); Geg Albanian in (4) also opposes 3P *e* (Acc) to *i* (Dat), while the 1P clitic has a single form *m(ə)*. Following the discussion of full pronouns, we take the morphological syncretism in 1/2P to externalize a syntactic DOM pattern, whereby 1/2P clitics are realized as OBL even when corresponding to the internal argument of the verb.

(7) Italian: object clitics

	<i>1sg</i>	<i>2sg</i>	<i>3sg</i>	<i>1pl</i>	<i>2pl</i>	<i>3pl</i>
Acc	mi	ti	lo/la	ci	vi	li/le
Dat			gli/le			(loro)

Next, in Italian and French internal arguments agree with the perfect participle when they are moved to the left (Kayne 1989). Thus 3P Acc clitics agree in (8a). However 1/2P clitics may or may not agree, as in (8b). Importantly, this has nothing to do with the intrinsic specifications of 1/2P, since 1/2P internal arguments raised to subject position obligatorily trigger agreement as in (8c). We will supply data from Italo-Romance varieties where only one of the two patterns in (8b) is allowed.

- (8) a. La ho vista/*visto b. Mi ha vista/visto
her I.have seen-FSG/*MSG me.F he.has seen-FSG/MSG
c. Io sono andata/*andato
I.F am gone.FSG/*MSG

Under a morphological account, it is difficult to see how the syncretism pattern in (7) could be connected to the optional agreement in (8b). However if 1/2P clitics in Romance are DOMed, the alternation in (8) falls under an independently known parameter. Indeed DOMed internal arguments in Indo-Aryan may or may not agree with perfect participles: they do not agree in Hindi, but they agree in Gujarati (Patel and Grosz 2014), cf. the VIVA Parameter of Anand & Nevins (2006).

Intermediate conclusions and extensions (the PCC). The point that we want to make here is that the full extent of 1/2P vs 3P splits in Case and agreement alignments can only be appreciated if what are traditionally considered as low-level morphological phenomena are reanalyzed in syntactic terms. To conclude, we point out that the presence of syntactic Person splits in Romance, in Balkan languages also clarifies the presence of the PCC (Person Case Constraint) in the same languages.

Consider French (9). The literature (Anagnostopoulou 2005, Pancheva & Zubizarreta 2017 and others in between) shares the ideas that in the relevant structures in (10), there is a Person feature (uninterpretable or unvalued) on a functional head (say Appl) which needs to uniquely agree with an object. In (10a) the 1/2P direct object and the indirect object compete for agreement with the P-feature, and ungrammaticality results, as in (9a). Vice versa, (9b) is wellformed because in (10b) the 3P direct object does not have the P-feature and the (1/2P) indirect object uniquely agree with Appl.

- (9) a. *Il me lui presente b. Il me le presente
He me him.DAT introduces he me him.ACC introduces
'He introduces me to him' 'He introduces him to me'

- (10) a. *[AppIP Appl]_{P-feature} [VP [VP presente me]_{P-feature}] lui]_{P-feature}
b. [AppIP Appl]_{P-feature} [VP [VP presente le] me]_{P-feature}

The main problem with the various theories proposed is the exact nature of the P-feature. Anagnostopoulou (2005, 2008) identifies it simply with Person, proposing that 3P indirect objects are [-person], while 3P direct objects lack [person]. Evidently, the difference between having a negative person property and lacking the person property is not obvious. Pancheva & Zubizarreta take 3P direct object to be [-proximate] and 3P indirect objects to be [+proximate], but neither interpretively nor morphologically is there a correlate of this distinction. We point out the possibility that no special P-feature is required. Simply, 1/2P need to Agree with Appl because of DOM, while indirect objects need to agree with it because of inherent oblique Case, leading to a clash.