

Historical Changes in Basque Dative Alternations: evidence for a derivational analysis*

Javier Ormazabal^{1 2} & Juan Romero^{2 3}

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Abstract

North-Eastern Basque in historical times undergo two interrelated changes in the properties of dative constructions: i) the use of the dative expands to include the marking of spatial functions of different sorts, as well as the aspectual status of the event as unbounded; and (ii) dative-agreement with the auxiliary becomes optional, an innovation that comes together with important word order alterations. The properties and internal chronology of these changes are of great theoretical relevance to elucidate issues on the architecture of grammar and the place and form of parametric variation. In this paper we argue that standard non-derivational approaches to dative alternations, which assume that the agreement/agreementless alternation reflects a new situation where an emerging adpositional construction coexists with an independent applicative strategy, fail to account for important generalizations concerning the interaction of the changes. Instead, a derivational approach based on the incorporation of an adpositional head accounts naturally for the distribution of facts and conforms to the properties of dative variation crosslinguistically. Following the same line, we also argue for a revision of the "High/Low Applicatives" distinction that approaches them to the situation of subjects, where elements of a very different origin occupy the same structural position.

1. Introduction

North-Eastern dialects of Basque in historical times undergo some changes in the properties of dative constructions that have been the focus of much recent attention among Basque grammarians. In a nutshell, i) the scope of the dative case suffix expands to include the marking of spatial functions of different sorts, as well as the aspectual status of the event as unbounded; ii) agreement of the dative case-suffix with the auxiliary becomes optional, an innovation that comes together with iii) important word order alterations. The majority of the works in the literature have focused mostly on the optionality of agreement in these dialects. Pikabea and, very especially, Etxepare (2014) connect the two properties, also linking the expansion of the dative to new syntactic and semantic contexts to the external influence of French. Following the majority of the literature on the topic, Etxepare also assumes that the alleged agreement/agreementless alternation rather reflects a new situation where the emerging agreementless adpositional construction coexists with an independent applicative strategy common to all dialects of Basque. The most immediate goal of this paper is to show that Etxepare's last assumption is incompatible with the diachronic analysis of the changes he proposes. In order to do so, we first present a cursory chronology of the phenomena and some of its intricacies. We argue that a derivational approach to dative alternations based on the incorporation of an adpositional head accounts most naturally for the distribution of facts and conforms to the properties of dative variation crosslinguistically. To

¹ University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)

² Basque Group of Theoretical Linguistics (HiTT)

³ University of Extremadura (UNEX)

finish, we also propose that the "Low/High Applicatives" distinction that postulates two types of dative objects, involving different agreement mechanisms and different structural positions, should be revised. Instead, adapting an hypothesis originally due to Odria (2014, 2015), we propose a derivation in which indirect objects are generated in different positions--hence, have fundamental differences in origin--but converge in the same final agreement position. This situation is basically the same as in subject position, where a wide range of syntactic constituents of very different origin may end up occupying the same structural position, which yields the properties associated to that grammatical function.

The theoretical relevance of these microparametric changes goes far beyond the particular case of the Basque dialectal differences described here. For one thing, one of the interests of our discussion on the Basque diachronic changes is that it shows that once we abandon the realms of English *DOC/to*-constructions or similar languages with a very restricted group of applicative constructions, the semantic motivation--which was quite weak and inconclusive in the first place--becomes untenable. The only way to save it would be by unrestrictively multiplying the ontology of applicative structures, hence abandoning any hope for a unified account both language-internally and crosslinguistically. In contrast, a derivational analysis of applicative alternations provides a powerful tool to account for their variation, both at the typological level and in diachrony, at the same time constituting a very restrictive hypothesis on the form and substance of parametric variation.

The first two sections of the paper present a first description of the phenomena to be analyzed. Section 2 briefly presents the general properties of dative constructions in Basque. Since North Eastern dialects share these common properties in earlier stages, the properties presented in that section are also to be considered, minimal details aside, as the initial stage of the dialects on which the diachronic changes have operated. Section 3 presents the main changes that occurred in North Eastern dialects; we base our description on Etxepare (2014) and extend it to incorporate some important diachronic/historical observations that will play an important role in our discussion later on in the paper. Section 4 presents the basic tenets of Etxepare (2014), which we take to be the most articulated account of the historical changes from a non-derivational approach to dative alternation. We also show that this explanation runs into serious problems precisely because of the general assumption on applicative constructions as basic, non-derived ones, which makes the proposal fail to explain many important correlations. In section 5 we argue that the distribution of changes in North-Eastern dialects favors a derivational connection between agreementless dative PPs and agreement dative DPs, and we present the details of our analysis following Ormazabal & Romero's (2015) general proposal, framed within a cross-linguistic

perspective on applicative constructions. Section 6 sketches a way to deal with the "high applicative"/"low applicative" distinction.

2. Datives in Central and Western Basque

2.1. Types of verbs

Dative marking appears in a variety of contexts in Basque (see Fernández & Ortiz de Urbina 2007 and references for a throughout description of datives in Basque and for discussion of some of the prominent issues under discussion). That includes ditransitive constructions encoding different θ -relations, especially goal, benefactive and source (1), and unaccusatives denoting “movement to[wards]” (2). Furthermore, as in many languages of the world, dative also appears in possessor raising constructions (3a), causees in causative constructions (3b), and subjects of psychological predicates of the *piacere* ('please') class (3c), as well as with some non-participant roles such as ethical datives and datives of interest (3d), allocutives, etc.⁴

- (1) a. Jonek Mikeli eskutitz bat bidali dio
Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT letter one(ABS) sent AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon sent Mary a letter'
- b. Jonek Mikeli autoa konpondu dio
Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT car(ABS) fixed AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon fixed the car for Mikel'
- c. Jonek Mikeli euskara irakatsi dio
Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT basque(ABS) taught AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon taught Mikel Basque'
- d. Jonek Mikeli pilota kendu dio
Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT ball(ABS) take away AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon took away the ball from Mikel'
- (2) a. Egunero joa-ten zaizkie galdezka emakumea-k soldaduei
everyday go-HAB AUX[(3pA)-3pD] asking women(ABS) soldier.DAT
'Every day the women go to the soldiers asking'
- b. Bidaia-n zehar hainbat lagun batu zaizkie
Trip-INN through many friend(ABS) join AUX[(3plA)-3plD]
'Many friends joined them through the trip'
- (3) a. Jon-ek Mikel-i besoa hautsi dio
Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT arm(ABS) break AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon broke Mikel's arm'

⁴ ERG / DAT / ABS = ergative/dative/absolute case-marking; E, D, A = ergative/dative/absolute agreement; AUX = auxiliary, DET = determiner ; 1 / 2 / 3 = 1st / 2nd / 3rd person agreement; s / pl = singular, / plural agreement; ALLOC = allocutive agreement; S = Subject, IO = Indirect Object, DO = Direct Object, PST/PRES = past /present tense; IMP = imperative; HYP = hypothetical mood; ASP = aspect; HAB / PROG / FUT = habitual / progressive / future aspect marker; APPL = applicative marker/applicative head; DFLAG = dative flag (pre-dative marker); REL = relative marker; GER = gerund marker; COMP = complementizer; REL = Relative complementizer; NOM = nominalization; ALL = allative marker; INESS = inessive marker; CL = clitic; INCH = inchoative; DOM = Differential Object Marking.

- b. Jon-ek Mikel-i liburua irakur-arazi dio
 Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT book(ABS) read -CAUSE AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
 'Jon has made Mikel to read a book'
- c. Jon-i liburuak gustatzen zaizkio
 Jon-DAT books(ABS) like-HAB AUX[(3plA)-3sD]
 'Jon likes books'
- d. Semea joan zait
 Son(ABS) go AUX[[(3sA)-3sD]
 'My son went away (and it affected me)'

Observe that, as illustrated in (1)-(3), in Central and Western dialects of Basque dative marked DPs trigger obligatory verbal agreement.

2.2. Structural and semantic properties: “dative constructions”

There is plenty of syntactic and morphological evidence that the dative argument agreeing with the verbal complex is a DP and not a PP (Elordieta 2001, Oyharçabal 2010, Etxepare 2014, Odria 2014, and references there). There is also general consensus that the canonical hierarchy among the three arguments agreeing with the verb in ditransitive constructions is the one observed in (4a). In particular, quite a lot of arguments have been presented in the literature showing that the dative indirect object in ditransitive constructions c-commands the absolutive direct object (Fernández 1997, Montoya 1998, Elordieta 2001, Arregi 2003, Oyharçabal 2010, Odria 2014, among others). Thus, for instance, the anaphoric direct object in the subordinated clause may be bound by the silent pronominal IO in (4b) but not the reverse (Oyharçabal 2010):

- (4) a. **Subject**_{ERGATIVE} > **Indirect Object**_{DATIVE} > **Direct Object**_{ABSOLUTIVE}
- b. Jon_i ez zen ohartu pro_i **bere.burua**_i aipatzen niola.
 Jon(ABS) not AUX realize REFLEX(ABS) mention AUX[(3sA)-3sD-1sE]-comp
 Lit.: 'Jon_i didn't realize that I was mentioning him_i himself_i'
- c. * Jon_i ez zen ohartu pro_i **bere.burua-ri**_i aipatzen niola.
 Jon(ABS) not AUX realize REFLEX-DAT mention AUX[(3sA)-3sD-1sE]-comp
 Lit.: 'Jon_i didn't realize that I was mentioning himself_i him_i'

Concerning semantic effects traditionally discussed in the literature associated to dative constructions, dative DPs with verbs of the SEND- (5a), THROW- (5b), GIVE- (5c) and TEACH-types (5d) show animacy effects in Basque, as in many other languages.

- (5) a. * Jon-ek Kutxi kalea-ri eskutitz bat bidali dio
 Jon-ERG Kutxi street-DAT letter one(ABS) sent AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
 'Jon sent Kutxi street a letter'
- b. * Jonek Kutxi kalea-ri zakarra bota dio
 Jon-ERG Kutxi street-DAT garbage(ABS) throw AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
 'Jon throw Kutxi street the garbage'

- c. * Jonek Kutxi kaleari etxea eman dio
Jon-ERG Kutxi street-DAT house(ABS)give AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon gave Kutxi street the house'
- d. * Jonek Kutxi kaleari euskara irakatsi dio
Jon-ERG Kutxi street-DAT basque(ABS)taught AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon taught Basque to Kutxi street'

However, as we have argued elsewhere (see Ormazabal & Romero 2010, 2015 and references there for a more extensive discussion), the animacy restriction is a property of a certain subset of dative-taking predicates only. Typically the beneficiary and the goal must be animate, but languages with a richer range of dative constructions, including Basque, often include predicates that allow non-animate datives:

- (6) a. Udaletxeak Kutxi kalea-ri argiak aldatu dizkio
City Hall-ERG Kutxi street-DAT lights(ABS) change AUX[(3plA)-3sD-3sE]
'The city hall changed the lights in Kutxi street'
- b. Jonek aulkia-ri hanka konpondu dio
Jon-ERG chair-DAT leg(ABS) fix AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon fixed the the chair's leg'
- c. Jonek liburua-ri hitzaurrea kendu dio
Jon-ERG book-DAT preface(ABS) take out AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'Jon took away the preface from the book'

Some authors propose to treat animacy as a byproduct of a more general requirement according to which the relation between the two internal arguments in a dative construction must be an integral one (Romero 1997, Harley 2002, 2004, Folli & Harley 2013, Bleam & Lidz 2014, among others). For instance, *the book* and the *preface* in (6c) stay in a sort of part/whole relation. However, there are two general problems with that view. First, a very loose notion of "integral relation" is required to cover some cases. We must stretch quite a lot the notion of "integral" to make it fit in the relation between the goal and the theme with verbs of the SAY/TELL- (7a), PROMISE- (7b), SHOW- and ASK-type (7c) verbs, including verbs like *galdetu* ('ask, question'), *aitortu* ('acknowledge'), and verbs of manner of speech such as *oihukatu* ('shout'), among many others (see Arregi 2003):

- (7) a. Jon-ek Miren-i arazoa aipatu dio
Jon-ERG Mary-DAT problem(ABS) mention AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'John mentioned the problem to Mary'
- b. Jon-ek Mireni lana eskeini/prometitu dio
Jon-ERG Mary-DAT job(ABS) offer/promise AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'John offered/promised Mary the job'
- c. Jonek Mireni etorriko de -n galdetu dio
Jon-ERG Mary-DAT come-FUT AUX[(3sA)]- REL ask AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
'John asked Mary whether she will come'

Furthermore, the problem is even more obvious for many datives denoting location--most clearly in unaccusative+dative combinations (8a), but also in ditransitives (8b)--, etc., that do not show any possible integral/possession relation, not even a loose, figurative one:

- (8) a. Jon Mireni kale erdia-n hurbildu zaio
 Jon(ABS)Miren-DAT street half-INN approach AUX[(3sA)-3sD]
 ‘John approached Mary in the middle of the street’
- b. Sarjentuak errena-ri labana sartu zion bizkarrean
 Sargent-ERG lame-DAT knife(ABS)introduced AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE] back.the-on
 ‘The Sargent stabbed the lame on the back’

We will come back to this issue below when we analyze North-Eastern dialects, where the use of dative for pure locative, non-integral, relations is systematically extended.

2.3. Morphological properties: “applicative constructions”

As described in many previous works (Trask 1997, Albizu 1998, Hualde & Ortiz de Urbina 2000, Rezac 2008, Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2012, Ariztimuño 2013, Etxepare 2014, among others), the presence of a dative argument in a Basque finite sentence is associated to three morphological characteristics: (i) a **dative suffix** shows up in the agreeing DP; (ii) person and number **agreement** appears in the auxiliary or the synthetic (conjugated) verb, and (iii) in the case of synthetic verbs a **dative flag** is inserted, a morpheme in the position immediately preceding dative agreement that indicates the presence of an applied argument.⁵

- (9) a. Zuek txapela da- -kar -zue
 You-ERG bonet(ABS) (3ABS)-bring-2p ERG
 ‘You are bringing the bonet’
- b. Zuek guri txapela da- -kar -ki -gu -zue
 You-ERG we-DAT bonet(ABS)(3ABS)-bring-DFLAG -1p DAT-2p ERG
 ‘You are bringing us the bonet’

That is the general situation in Western and Central dialects of Basque, as well as in Standard Basque, and it is also the basic state of affairs in previous stages of the Labourdin dialect in the North-East of the Basque Country we analyze in the following section.

⁵ As is usually the case in many languages, auxiliary verbs (e.g. (1)) are irregular and do not show the dative flag morphologically in a clear way, although there are some remains of its historical presence in all the forms (see Ariztimuño 2013, and references there).

3. Datives in North-Eastern Dialects⁶

North-Eastern dialects undergo a series of syntactic changes that have brought some amount of attention in recent Basque studies. As will be argued, these changes and their interaction are particularly interesting because of their theoretical contribution to elucidate issues of parametric variation. Specifically, North-Eastern varieties make three basic innovations: (i) new uses are assigned to dative Case, (ii) dative agreement becomes optional in most contexts, and (iii) there is a concomitant change in word order. Section 3.1. describes the expansion of the dative suffix to include the marking of spatial functions of different sorts that are not possible in the other dialects. Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) and Etxepare (2014) observe that, as a result of this expansion, there is a reorganization of the space between the allative, which restricts its semantic scope to denote “bounded paths”, and new uses of the dative, which will be associated to “unbounded path” contexts. Related to that, dative marking is also required on certain P complements and on complements of some atelic predicates. In section 3.2, we discuss the optional loss of dative agreement in the auxiliary and show how it becomes optional in most contexts. As will be shown, this optionality extends both to the old dative contexts and to the ones that resulted from the expansion in the use of the dative. Concomitantly, the unmarked word order and the hierarchical structure also change. Thus, while agreement datives show the standard unmarked order and the $IO_{\text{DATIVE}} > DO_{\text{ABSOLUTIVE}}$ c-command relations, in the agreementless construction the absolutive DO tends to precede and c-command the dative-marked DP.

3.1. Extensions of the dative to new contexts

In North-Eastern dialects the dative expands to mark spatial goal of the event where only spatial postpositions or complex postpositional phrases are possible in Western and Central dialects. Compare, in that respect the use of dative in NE examples like (10) with the use of allative or complex postpositions in WC in the same contexts (11):

- (10) a. Alemanen tankak oldartzen zirela Maginot harresia-ri
German-GEN tank(ABS) charge AUX[(3plA)]-COMP Maginot fence-DAT
'As the German tanks charged against the Maginot line' [Larzabal 1991-98]

⁶ The description of the phenomenon and many of the examples in section 3.1 follow Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) and Etxepare's (2014) presentation. Most of their examples are from XIX and XX Labourdin authors and from native speakers of the same dialect. In the next subsections, our description differs from theirs in a few but important respects; in those cases, we completed the description with examples gathered in Ormazabal (2015) from *Euskal Klasikoen Corpusa* (<http://www.ehu.eus/ehg/kc/>), the most complete corpus on Basque classical texts to date. We also bring to the description a few examples from Pikabea (1993) and from Fernández & Landa (2008) and Fernández, Ortiz de Urbina & Landa (2009), as well as some observations in Mitxelena/Sarasola's (1987-2005) *Diccionario General Vasco-Orotariko Euskal Hiztegia*, the closest to a Basque historical dictionary. See these references for more detailed description and discussion of the text sources.

- b. Hurbiltzen da poliki-poliki boneta-ri
 approach AUX[(3sA)] slow-slow beret-DAT
 ‘He slowly approaches the beret’ [Larzabal, 1991-98]
- c. Erretora badoa eliza -ko atea-ren gako-ri
 priest(ABS) go[(3sA)] church-GEN door-GEN lock-DAT
 ‘The priest goes to the door-lock of the church’ [Larzabal, 1991-98]
- d. Balkoin bat, bidea-ri emai-ten du -en -a
 balcony one, road-DAT give-HAB AUX[(3sA)-3sE]-REL-DET
 ‘A balcony that looks onto the road’ [J.B. Etcheberry 1969]
- (11) a. Alemanen tankeak oldartzen zire -la Maginot harresia-**ren kontra**
 German-GEN tank(ABS)charge-HAB AUX[(3plA)]-COMP Maginot fence -GEN against
 ‘As the German tanks charged against the Maginot line’
- b. Hurbiltzen da poliki-poliki txapela-**ren inguru -ra**
 APPROACH-HAB AUX[(3sA)] slow-slow beret -GEN vicinity-ALL
 ‘He slowly approaches the beret’
- c. Erretora badoa eliza -ko ate gako-**ra**
 priest(ABS) go[(3sA)] church-GEN door-lock-ALL
 ‘The priest goes to the door-lock of the church’
- d. Balkoin bat, bide-**ra** ematen du -en -a
 balcony one, road-ALL give-HAB AUX[(3sA)-3sE]-REL-DET
 ‘A balcony that looks over the road’

Datives also appear in these dialects in complex postpositions in contexts where other dialects would make use of the locative or the genitive:

- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|--|
| (12) a. | Mendia - ri gora
mountain-DAT up
‘Up the mountain’ | b. | Pareta- ri kontra
wall -DAT against
‘Against the wall’ |
| d. | Mendia - ri behera
mountain-DAT down
‘Down the mountain’ | e. | Jujea- ri bisean-bis
judge-DAT vis-à-vis
‘Vis-à-vis the judge’ |
| (13) a. | Mendia - n gora
mountain-INCESS up
‘Up the mountain’ | b. | Pareta- ren kontra
wall -GEN against
‘Against the wall’ |
| c. | Mendia - n behera
mountain-INCESS down
‘Down the mountain’ | d. | Jujea- ren aurrez-aurre
judge-GEN vis-à-vis
‘In front of the judge’ |

Similarly, datives show up as complements of aspectual verbs of the atelic sort and with a small group of atelic verbs such as *pentsatu* (‘think’) and *jo* (‘knock’):

- (14) a. Eta horren ahul -tzea -ri ari zirezte
 and that-GEN weaken-NOM-DAT PROG AUX[(3plA)]
 ‘And you are weakening that’
- b. Jos-tea -ri lotu da
 sew-NOM-DAT tied AUX[(3sA)]
 ‘He started sewing’

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(15) Eta horren ahul -tze -n ari zirezte
and that-GEN weaken-NOM-INNESS PROG AUX[(3plA)]
'And you are weakening that'

(16) a. Horr-i pentsatu b. Atea-ri jo
that-DAT think door-DAT knock
'To think about that' 'Knock on the door'

(17) a. Horreta-n pentsatu b. Atea-n jo
that-INN think door-INN knock
'To think about that' 'To knock on the door'

Etxepare (2014) proposes a partition in the set of Path exponents in Basque Northern dialects between the allative and this directional dative, roughly as in (18):

(18) a. Allative -> Bounded Path (Spatial Goal, TO)
b. Dative -> Unbounded Path (Oriented Path, TOWARDS)

Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) and Etxepare (2014) present a considerable number of minimal pairs that confirm this semantic partition. So, for instance, the predicate *erori* has a different meaning depending on whether it appears with dative or with allative: *erori* + *allative* means 'fall accompanied by a PP that denotes the location of the physical space where the falling ends (19a); in contrast, *erori* + *dative* means 'fall under' or 'be inclined to/towards' with no motion entailed (19b).

(19) a. Lurre-ra erori da
floor-ALL fallen AUX[(3sA)]
'He/she fell on the floor'

b. Jainkoa-ren nahi saindua-ri erortzen diren arima jenerosak
god -GEN will holly-DAT fall-HAB AUX[(3plA)]-COMP spirit generous(PL)
'Those generous spirits who are inclined towards god's holly will'[J.B.Etcheberry,1980]

An important point to be stressed is that this semantic extension of the dative and the applicative construction to denote locative relations is not at all uncommon from a crosslinguistic perspective. In fact, Pikabea (1993) and Etxepare (2014) argue that this change in the North-Eastern dialects is linked to the influence of French.

3.2. *Optional agreement, word order and hierarchical relations*

The other changes observed in the North-Eastern dialects are chronologically and causally independent (see section 4.3 below and Ormazabal 2015), but they interact with the previous one in very interesting ways. Unlike Western and Central dialects, where agreement is obligatory, in North Eastern dialects dative agreement becomes optional. Consequently, while (20a) is grammatical in all dialects, (20b) is only available in North Eastern ones.

- (20) a. Ama -k semea-ri ogia igorri dio
 mother-ERG son -DAT bread(ABS) sent AUX[3sE-3sD-3sA]
 'The mother sent (the) bread to the son'
- b. Ama -k ogia igorri du semeari
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) sent AUX[3sE-3sA] son-DAT
 'The mother sent (the) bread to the son'

Morphologically, agreementless constructions involve loss of the entire dative-marking in the auxiliary or the conjugated verb: that is, not only dative agreement, but also the dative flag of synthetic verbs disappears, and the non-dative auxiliary is selected. Agreementless constructions (20b) resort to the same auxiliary form as regular transitive verbs such as *ikusi* ('see') in (21):

- (21) Ama -k ogia ikusi du
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) see AUX[3sE-3sA]
 'The mother saw the bread'

Concerning the structural hierarchy, when agreement is expressed in the auxiliary, as in Western and Central Dialects (see sec. 2.2), the IO precedes and is higher than the DO. However, the non-agreeing cases favor the order DO-IO with the indirect object often in postverbal position; this superficial change correlates with a deeper structural change in the hierarchical order (Albizu 2001, Etxepare and Oyharçabal 2009b).

A property of this change that will be important in our discussion is that the new agreement/agreementless alternation extends to old as well as new contexts. Concerning "old" datives, ditransitive constructions appear in agreementless contexts since the late XVIII century, and the same is true for datives in unaccusative constructions. The examples in (22)-(23) illustrate that point:

- (22) a. Ez duzu nihor-i eginen, bertze-k zu-ri egi-tea nahi ez
 zinduke-nik
 not AUX[(3sA)-2plE] anybody-DAT do-FUT others-ERG you-DAT do-NOM want not
 AUX[(2plA-3sE-HYP)-COMP]
 'You won't do to others what you wouldn't have them do to you' [Lapeire 1891]
- b. Ez diote soldaduek minik eginen
 not AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3plE] soldiers pain--PART do-FUT
 'The soldiers will not cause pain to her' [Daskonagerre 1870]
- (23) a. ... ta berrogoi egun he -tan agertu zen Maria Madalena-ri
 and forty day those-INN appear AUX[(3sA)] Mary Magdalene-DAT
 'And in those forty days he revealed himself to Mary Magdalene' [Joanategi 1890]
- b. Erraten diote, gau hartan agertu zaiola Andre Dena Maria
 tell AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3plE] night that-INN appear AUX[(3sA)-3sD] LadyMary
 'They tell him that that night Our Lady Mary revealed herself to her' [Zaldubi 1877]

Similarly, the following examples show that the new “unbound path” locative datives also alternate, appearing in agreementless contexts as well as in agreement ones; in particular, (25) presents the two options with the same verb in a single sentence:

- (24) a. Aleman-en tankak oldar -tzen zire -la Maginot harresia-ri
German-GEN tanks(ABS)charge-HAB AUX[3plA]-COMP Maginot fence -DAT
‘As the German tanks charged against the Maginot line’ [Larzabal 1991-98: 53]
- b. Beha! Lurra-ri uhain zabalak azkar oldar-tzen zaizkio.
Look! earth-DAT wave wide(ABS) fast charge-HAB AUX[(3plA)-3sD]
‘Watch out! The wide waves attack the earth fast’ [Iratzeder 1920-41]
- (25) Otoi, ate horri hurbil zaite, ni hurbil-tzen nitzaion bezala
Please, door that-DAT approach AUX[(2plA-1NP)], I approach-HAB AUX[(1sA)-3sD-past] as
Please, approach that door as I approached it’ [Larzabal 1930-1964]

To finish our tour, examples in (26)-(28) illustrate the case of atelic aspectual verbs and of atelic verbs mentioned in section 3.1.

- (26) a. Otso gazte baten gosea-rekin ausiki-an lotu zitzaion filosofia -ri
wolf young one-GEN hunger-WITH bite-INN clung AUX[(3sA)-3sD] philosophy-DAT
‘He clung to philosophy with the hunger of a young wolf’ [Laffite 1934-67]
- b. Jos -tea -ri lotu da
sew-NOM-DAT tied AUX[(3sA)]
‘He started sewing’
- (27) a. Nola erretirantza-ri, othoitza-ri, ixiltasuna-ri, [...] ematen ez naiz?
How retirement-DAT, pray-DAT, silence-DAT, give-HAB not AUX[1sA]?
‘How come I do not devote my time to retirement, pray, silence [...]?’ [Duvoisin 1856]
- b. Bere-bereala Jerusalemenerako bidea-ri eman zitzaion
Immediately Jerusalem-ALL-GEN.LOC way-DAT give AUX[(3sA)-3sD-past]
‘He set in his way to Jerusalem immediately’ [Lardizabal 1855]
- (28) a. Ez zioten deus bertze-ri pentsatzen
Not AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3plE] nothing other -DAT think-ASP
‘They weren’t thinking about the other at all’ [Jauretche 1840: 187]
- b. Lagun batzue-ri pentsatzen zuen
Friend some-DAT think-ASP AUX[(3sA)-3sE]
‘He was thinking about some friends’ [J-B Etchepare 1963]

There are a few exceptions to the agreement/agreementless alternation. Among newly created datives, complex postpositions like (12) do not alternate. This is an expected result, since the dative is internal to the complex PP-construction and, consequently, there is no possible auxiliary that could host agreement morphology. More important are the obligatory agreement contexts, very specially, experiencer (29a) and possessor (29b) datives, as well as ethical datives, which never ever show up in the agreementless construction (Fernández & Landa 2008, Fernández, Ortiz de Urbina & Landa 2009, Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2012a,b, Odria 2014, and references there).

- (29) a. Joni liburuak gustatzen zaizkio /*dira
 Jon-DAT books(ABS) like-HAB AUX[(3plA)-3sD]/AUX[(3plA)]
 ‘Jon likes books’
- b. Jonek Mikeli besoa hautsi dio /*du
 Jon-ERG Mikel-DAT arm(ABS) broken AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]/AUX[(3sA)-3sE]
 ‘Jon broke Mikel’s arm’

4. An *Alternate Underlying Configuration Hypothesis (AUCH!)* approach⁷

4.1. *Etxepare’s (2014) Hypothesis: the birth of a new postposition*

Etxepare (2014) argues that Navarro-Labourdin Basque adds to its lexical inventory of adpositions a new silent but semantically contentful directional adposition modeled on the basis of the French dative preposition *à*. This borrowing is preceded, according to Etxepare, by a reanalysis of the French dative preposition as directional. Morphologically, this new directional adposition licenses a dative case in the ground DP. According to his analysis, unlike previously existing lexical adpositions in Basque (allative, inessive, etc.), which merge both Path and Place features, this silent adposition is not complex, and stands in an elsewhere relation with the lexical adpositions, which explains the “unbounded path” interpretation associated to it. In general terms, this hypothesis covers all the semantic new contexts of the dative in North-Eastern dialects, and we assume it with a few changes to which we return.⁸

Etxepare also argues that the emerging adpositional form coexists with two applicative strategies common to all dialects of Basque: an ApplP structure where general dative agreement would take place and a second applicative strategy that would involve a structurally high ApplP where dative possessors and experiencers sit, as in Pylkkänen (2008) and in most recent works on datives among Basque grammarians.

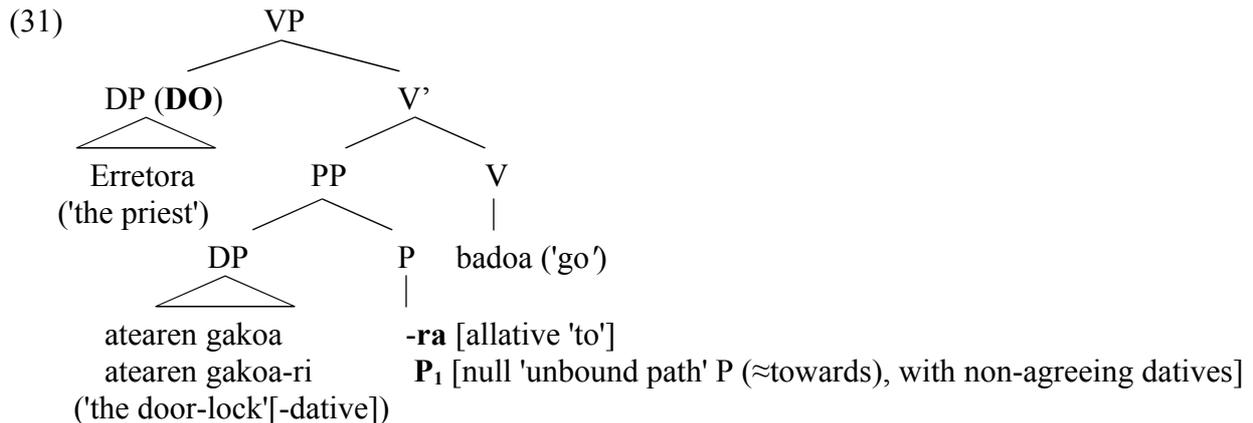
The result is a three-way structural distinction in the analysis of dative constructions. The first structure corresponds to the agreementless dative construction. Restricting our attention to the projection of arguments in the verbal complex, the new agreementless datives in (30a) would have the same PP-structure as the allative in (30b), represented in (31) [modified from Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2008]. The only difference between the allative and the dative structure is the postpositional head that takes the DP complement *elizako atariaren gako* (‘the door-lock of the

⁷ The term was introduced by Bleam & Lidz (2014) to refer to analyses of dative alternations that postulate different syntactic base-structures for dative constructions and PP-constructions, as opposed to derivational approaches (see next section). Etxepare’s version—following Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2008, 2009, 2012), Oyharçabal (2010), Rezac (2008, 2013), Fernández & Ortiz de Urbina (2009, 2010), Fernández (2010, 2014), among others—is based on Pylkkänen’s high/low applicative analysis, and our criticism will be framed in those terms. However, as far as we can see, our discussion equally extends to other AUCH! approaches in the literature more generally. See Ormazabal & Romero (2015) for detailed discussion.

⁸ Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) and Etxepare (2014) extensively argue that the dative is not the prepositional element but the case assigned by the presence of the directional, unpronounced postposition.

church'): a phonologically null dative assigning postposition P_1 in (30a), and an overt allative postposition *-ra* ('to') in (30b):⁹

- (30) a. Erretora badoa eliza -ko atea -ren gako**a-ri**
 priest(ABS) go[(3sA)] church-GEN door-GEN lock-DAT
 'The priest goes to(wards) the door-lock of the church'
- b. Erretora badoa eliza -ko atea-ren gako**-ra**
 priest(ABS) go[(3sA)] church-GEN door-GEN lock-ALL
 'The priest goes to the door-lock of the church'



As mentioned above, in Etxepare's hypothesis the Navarro-Labourdin innovation consists in adding to the lexical inventory of adpositions a specific lexical entry for the feature (unbounded) [d(irectional)-Path]. Although not explicitly stated, the generalization of the PP strategy to ditransitive dative contexts such as (32a) must also resort to the originally more restricted mechanism in (31) derived from the French-like empty preposition.

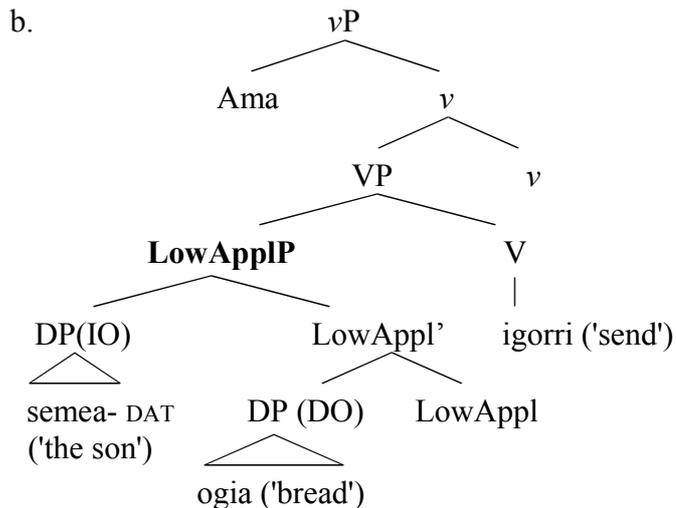
- (32) a. Ama -k ogia igorri du semea-ri
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sgA)] son-DAT
 'The mother sent bread to her son'
- b. Ama -k ogia igorri du merkatu-ra
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sA)] market-ALL
 'The mother sent bread to the market'

The second structure corresponds to agreement dative constructions. According to E&O, in this case dative arguments are generated in a Low ApplP (structures from Oyharçabal 2010):

(33) *Low Applicatives*

- a. Ama -k semea-ri ogia igorri dio
 mother-ERG son-DAT bread(ABS) sent AUX[3sE-3sD-(3sA)]
 'The mother sent bread to her son'

⁹ The two PPs also differ in their internal structure, which is more articulated in the case of the allative adposition. See Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2009, 2012, Etxepare 2014 for extensive discussion of axial parts in PP structures.



Given that an agreement relation is postulated in the applicative phrase, the agreement asymmetry follows: PP-internal datives do not show agreement, while ApplP specifiers do. In addition, the two structures in (31) and (33) are also intended to reflect the differences in the categorial status of the two internal arguments (DP vs. PP) and in the hierarchical relation among them (IO > DO vs. DO > IO) observed in many languages since Barss & Lasnik's (1986) discussion, including Basque (see Fernández 1998, Montoya 1998, Elordieta 2002, Oyharçabal 2010, among others).

Following a long tradition in the analysis of dative alternations in many languages--very especially, Double Object/*to*-constructions in English (Jackendoff 1989, Pinker 1989, Marantz 1993, Harley 2002, Pyllkkänen 2002, Krifka 2004, Bleam & Lidz 2014, and many others)--, Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) also claim that agreement and agreementless datives not only correspond to the different syntactic frames in (31) and (33), but also have different semantic interpretations: the dative PP would correspond to a “caused motion”, as in (34b), while the applicative structure would be interpreted as a “caused transfer of possession” schema in (35b), both from Krifka (2004):

(34) Caused motion schema:

- a. Ama -k ogia igorri du semea -ri
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sgA)] son-DAT
 ‘The mother sent bread to her son’
- b. $\exists e \exists e'$ [AGENT(e, mother) \wedge THEME (e, bread) \wedge CAUSE (e, e') \wedge MOVE (e') \wedge THEME (e', (the) bread) \wedge GOAL(e', the son)]

(35) Caused transfer of possession schema:

- a. Ama -k semea-ri ogia igorri dio
 mother-ERG son-DAT bread(ABS) sent AUX[3sE-3sD-(3sA)]
 ‘The mother sent bread to his son’
- b. $\exists e \exists s$ [AGENT(e, mother) \wedge THEME (e, (the) bread) \wedge CAUSE (e, s) \wedge s: HAVE (the son, (the) bread)]

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As argued elsewhere (Rappaport-Hovav & Levin 2008, Ormazabal & Romero 2010), that is highly implausible not only for Basque but in more general terms. To begin with, *GIVE-*, *TELL-* or *PROMISE-*type Vs do enter the alternation, despite the fact that they are never found in the caused motion event schema. The pair in (36) shows that the same transfer of possession may be realized in the dative agreementless and agreement structures:

- (36) a. Sos guziak emaiten baitzituen pobreeri
 money all-pl(ABS)give-HAB cause-AUX[3plA-3sE] poor.PL-DAT
 '...because he used to give all the money to the poors" [J.B. Etcheberry 1966]
- b. De Gondi jaun andere-ek eman ziozkaten 45 mila libera urhetan
 De Gondi mr - mrs -ERG give AUX[3plA-3sD-3plE] 45 thousand francs gold-INN
 "Mr. and Mrs. De Gondi gave him 45.000 francs in gold" [J.B. Etcheberry 1966]

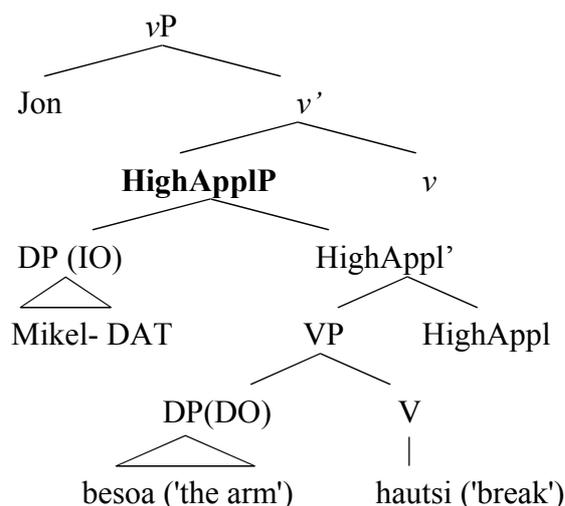
Notice, in the same vein, that the mentioned groups of verbs show the same animacy effects in both agreement and agreementless datives:

- (37) a. * Ama- -k merkatua-ri ogia eman dio
 mother-ERG market-DAT bread(ABS) give AUX[3sE-3sD-(3sA)]
 'The mother gave the market (the) bread'
- b. * Ama- -k ogia eman du merkatua-ri
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) give AUX[3sE-(3sgA)] market-DAT
 'The mother gave bread to the market'

In fact, the distribution of allative *-ra* and dative-assigning P_1 in Basque constitutes indirect support for Rappaport-Hovav & Levin (2008) and Ormazabal & Romero's (2010) argument that the English *to*-construction corresponds to both the "caused transfer of possession" and the "caused motion" frames. In particular, all the verbs that enter the DOC/PPC alternation in English (Gropen et al 1989, Levin 1993), including *GIVE-*, *THROW-* and *SEND-*type verbs enter the agreementless dative construction in Basque, alternating with dative agreement constructions with the same meaning. However, only a subset--those that are really compatible with a "caused motion" frame--allow complements headed by the allative postposition *-ra*. As we might expect, the complement of these verbs show the same animacy requirement when they are datives—in both agreement and agreementless contexts--, but not when they are allative PPs.

- (38) a. * Ogia merkatua-ri igorri diot
 bread(ABS) market-DAT send AUX[(3ABS)-3DAT-1ERG]
 'I sent the market (the) bread'
- b. * Ogia igorri dut merkatua-ri
 bread(ABS) send AUX[(3ABS)-1ERG] MARKET-DAT
 'I sent (the) bread to the market'
- c. Ogia igorri dut merkatu-ra
 bread(ABS) send AUX[(3ABS)-1ERG] market-ALL
 'I sent (the) bread to the market'

b.



In addition to their obligatory agreement properties, high applicatives are said to differ from low applicatives in that they do not contribute to the event schema of the sentence [Pylkkänen 2008, Cuervo 2003, Fernandez 2010, 2014, Oyharçabal 2010, Etxepare & Oyharçabal 2012, Etxepare 2014; but see Larson 2010]. Furthermore, High Applicatives allow secondary predication [idem; but see Ormazabal & Romero 2010, 2015, and, very specially, Odria 2014; also see section 6, below].¹¹

As we show next, even though the three-way distinction might be taxonomically appropriate, it lacks explanatory power and, as structurally stated, it is also empirically incorrect. The interaction of the semantic extension and the optional agreement strongly supports a tight derivational connection between agreement dative and agreementless ones. In the next subsection, we discuss some of the contradictory conclusion of the tripartite view when applied to the changes in North-Eastern Basque dialects in detail. An alternative explanation emerges that accommodates the dialectal differences, once a derivational relation between "low applicative" and agreementless PP-constructions is postulated. At the same time, the explanation gives an interesting result concerning the nature and form of syntactic parametric variation.

4.2. Problems in combining the historical approach with an AUCH! analysis

If the result of the North-Eastern innovation is a three way distinction –that is, if we are dealing with three different and independent structures-, a series of related and complementary questions arise with the historical evolution of these dialects:

¹¹ Etxepare (2014) completes his analysis by postulating a process of “specialization” that takes care of the well observed fact that whenever the agreement/agreementless alternation holds--and only in those contexts-- the applicative shows important restrictions constraining the presence of low referentiality elements (e.g., anaphora, Negative Polarity Items) in dative agreement structures. This *specialization* mechanism, which he attributes to a "third factor" in language design, has been observed to affect dative alternations in a large range of languages, and has important theoretical consequences. See op. cit. as well as Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012), and Bresnan et al. (2004), Bresnan & Nikitina (2008), Rappaport-Hovav & Levin (2009), Ormazabal & Romero (2010, 2015), Antilla et al (2010), Levin (2015), and references there for details and discussion.

(i) What makes “possession relations” in agreeing applicative frames (ditransitive verbs, etc.) extend and take a new frame (31) where the dative is represented as a PP with the characterization in (34) that is neither syntactically nor semantically compatible with them?

(ii) Similarly, what makes “[d-Path] relations” in the new PP extend and take a new frame (33b) where that relation is represented as a relation with an applicative head that is neither syntactically nor semantically compatible with them?

Note that there is nothing strange in either (i) or (ii) as diachronic processes: throughout redistribution of the semantic landscape among adpositions is very common in the languages of the world, many of them similar or even identical to the ones occurred in NE dialects. What makes the move suspicious is the fact that both the applicative and the agreementless dative PP strategies, in principle two completely different structures each one with a dedicated meaning, absorb each other's domains and end up extending their use to very much the same semantic fields. Generally what happens in similar situations is that one of the strategies expands at the expense of the other. In fact, if such a syntactic and semantic “plasticity” is a possibility of the system, a third question arises:

(iii) Why it doesn't become possible for (at least some) high applicatives to be framed in the new PPs in (31).

None of these questions have a clear answer in the system described so far, beyond a simple statement of the facts. This diachronic see-saw pivots exclusively on morphological dative case. It is dative marking on an argument what makes the whole sentence eligible to enter into this structural alternation in spite of the fact that, as said, there is no syntactic or semantic relation whatsoever. According to an AUCH! analysis, (i) dative case is inherent in (31), but structural in (33); and, (ii) a different semantic interpretation (34)-(35) motivates structures in (31) and (33). In consequence, it is hard to see how one structure can alternate with the other. On the other hand, the complementarity of the questions themselves suggests some structural connections between the dative agreement and the agreementless PP strategy that the AUCH! hypothesis is unable to capture.

To that we must add that, from a diachronic perspective, a big part of the dative's semantic extension to cover unbounded path contexts is chronologically previous to the optional loss of dative agreement (Ormazabal 2015), the opposite to what we would expect if the “P-birth” hypothesis was correct. That is, the use of datives in unbounded path contexts appears earlier in applicative (obligatory agreement) structures (33), than in dative selecting P structures (31), in clear contradiction to the idea that the agreementless structure is motivated by the introduction of a new lexical item by influence of French preposition *à*. It is true that a few of the new dative

extensions Etxepare (2014) includes in his study do not show up until the end of XVIII century and the beginning of the XIX, but the majority of the predicates and aspectual verbs he considers are already constructed with dative much earlier than the dates pointed out by Pikabea (1993), as the following examples illustrate. As shown in the examples, these early records always trigger dative agreement. (see Ormazabal 2015 for discussion):

- (42) a. Eta hiri-ko portalea-ri hurbildu zaion bezala...
 And city-GEN door -DAT approach AUX[(3sA)-3sD] as
 And as he approached the door of the city..." [Leizarraga 1571]
- b. [...] nola or hauta-rik bata, bere hazkuntza-ren arauaz, lothu zaikan
 haragiari, eta berriz bertzea, iarraiki zaikan ihiziar
 [...] how dog these-PART one, its education-GEN rule-INSTR, attack AUX(3sA-3sD)
 meet--DAT, and instead other, follow AUX[(3sA)-3sD] hunt-DAT
 “How one of the dogs, according to its education, attacked the meat, and yet the
 other, kept on/continued hunting" [Axular 1642]
- c. Egundaino bezala lothu nahi izan zitzaion bigarren gudu bati
 Today.until as [again] tie want be AUX[(3sA)-3sD-past] second war one-DAT
 ‘Once again, he wanted to start a new war’ [Larregi 1777]

Pikabea and Etxepare’s hypothesis that the changes we are discussing are the primary consequence of a borrowing from a continental Romance language might still be correct given, among other things, the geographical distribution of the phenomenon.¹² However, given that the semantic extension to cover path interpretations begins to happen in the agreement dative system, considerably before the appearance of agreementless datives, the innovation in the use of new datives in locative contexts does not involve, strictly speaking, the birth of a new strategy, but the extension of the existing agreement datives to a new situation. This state of affairs requires some revisions on the internal chronology of the phenomenon and its external trigger. What is more important, the new picture is incompatible with an AUCH!-type approach to dative alternations but expected if agreement datives are derived from the incorporation—obligatory when these changes occur in North-Eastern dialects and still nowadays in Western dialects—of the postpositional head, as we show next. In section 5, we present an alternative derivational analysis based on P-incorporation, and discuss some interesting extensions. We first show that a derivational P-incorporation approach accounts most naturally for the distribution of facts if “low applicatives” are interpreted as “derived PPs”. Then we open a different structural way to integrate so-called “high applicatives” into the system that could explain why they do not alternate.

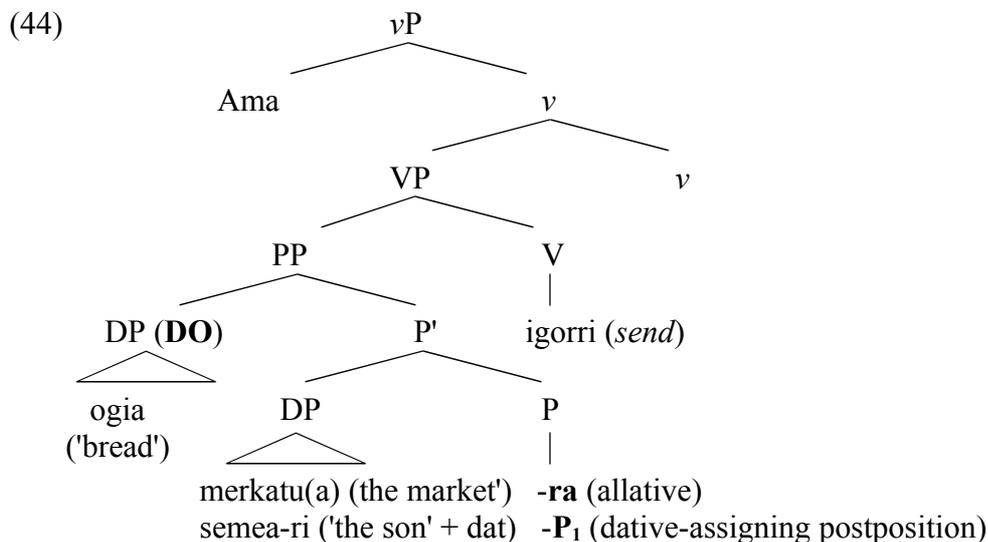
¹² Given that part of the borrowing has already taken place in the XVII century, there are more plausible candidates than French as the source language. Until XVIII century, with the French Revolution, French does not penetrate in a systematic way in these areas, not even as a *koiné language*, since Béarnese, a dialect of Gascon, was the general language for administrative purposes and most probably for trade relations. According to Coyos (2012), most Basque speakers, at least in Soule, were bilinguals in this language as well. Moreover, the influence of Gascon extends further, since it may be tracked at least in one of the complex postpositions with dative in NE dialects *-ri buruz*, a calque of *(de) cap a La casa* “towards the house”, lit. “(of/with) head to the house”, as observed by Hualde (2002).

5. A Derivational analysis of Dative Alternations: not birth but recycling

5.1. Theoretical frame: crosslinguistic variation in dative and applicative constructions.

One of the main interests of the Basque dialectal differences described in this paper lies in the fact that each and every diachronic step of the changes in NE Basque conforms to the range of diachronic change that we may expect in a derivational theory of dative alternations. In Ormazabal & Romero (2015) we argue that a derivational analysis of dative and applicative alternations involving P-incorporation provides a general framework to explain such a rich superficial variation, at the same time presenting a good model of how parametric variation may be formally constrained. We argue that PPs and Dative constructions share the same basic structure, a small clause-type structure headed by a P element, where the DO c-commands the IO, as in (44):

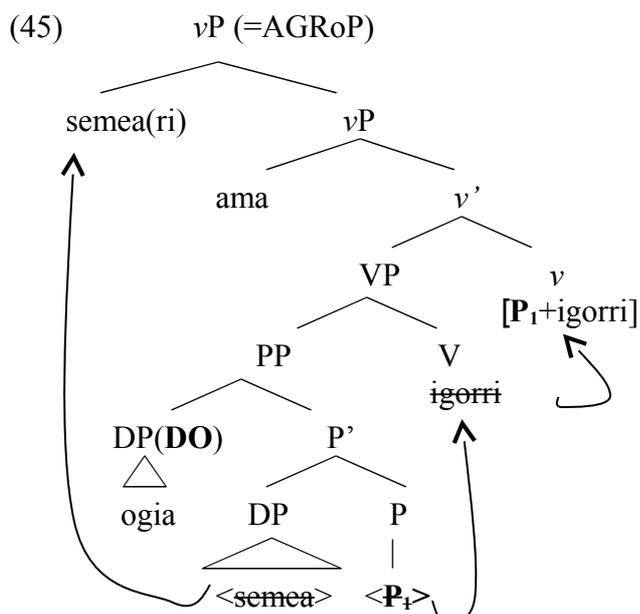
- (43) a. Ama- -k semea-ri ogia igorri dio
 mother-ERG son -DAT bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE- 3sD-(3sgA)]
 ‘The mother sent bread to her son’
- b. Ama -k ogia igorri du semea -ri
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sgA)] son -DAT
 ‘The mother sent bread to her son’
- c. Ama -k ogia igorri du merkatu-ra
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sA)] market -ALL
 ‘The mother sent bread to the market’



The second claim in Ormazabal & Romero (2015) is that applicative constructions¹³ share the same basic derivation crosslinguistically, and involve the incorporation of the P head, an operation that becomes the trigger of the “special” derivation of dative constructions and the

¹³ That includes Double Object Constructions (e.g. English *I sent Peter a letter*), dative agreement constructions of the type discussed in this paper, dative clitic constructions (e.g. Spanish *le envié un libro a Peter*), and applicative constructions (e.g. Indonesian *saya mem-bawa-kan Ali surat itu*, 'I brought Ali the letter') of different sorts, among others.

motivation for the main surface differences in the agreement, word order and hierarchical structure.



It is important to note that our position is not that (43ab) and (43c) alternate, but that they share the same base-configuration (44). These PPs are headed by different postpositions, which have different lexico-functional specifications and different semantic properties, including their selectional features (see Ormazabal & Romero 2010, 2015 and references for discussion). In fact, strictly speaking there is no real dative alternation in Basque until the appearance of the agreementless dative of NE dialects. According to us, this is the new situation in which the incorporation of P becomes optional in these varieties, as we will see next.¹⁴

The general answer--extensively motivated in Ormazabal & Romero (2015)-- to the great crosslinguistic variability in dative alternations is that the only variation specific to the dative constructions resides in the properties of the incorporated P. More specifically, we argue that this crosslinguistic variation reduces to i) whether the incorporated P (the applicative head) is manifested morpho-phonologically in the verbal complex or not and, if so, how precisely; ii) the obligatoriness/optionality of the incorporation; iii) the Case/agreement feature-specifications of P and v and, perhaps, iv) the set of incorporating Ps in each language. We argue that these specifications interact with the particular mapping between the conceptual space and the linguistically relevant lexical entries--most characteristically in the verbal and adpositional domains--, and with regular Case and agreement resources in the system of the language. These

¹⁴ In that respect, our proposal departs from classical derivational analyses (Larson 1988, Baker 1988), which we adopted in some previous analyses (Ormazabal & Romero 1998, Arregi & Ormazabal 2003, also see Albizu 2001, 2009, Arregi 2003 and references therein). For a throughout motivation see discussion in Rappaport-Hovav & Levin (2008) and Ormazabal & Romero (2010).

combinations have the effect of making dative constructions look superficially very different across languages despite their common derivation and their well rooted similarities.

5.2. *The Changes in North-Eastern Dialects Reconsidered*

Given this general approach to dative alternations, the dialectal changes in Basque provides us with a very interesting experimental field to elaborate on the formal properties of parametric variation. Leaving minor changes aside, the initial stage in North Eastern dialects corresponds to the current situation in more conservative WC ones, where the semantic extension of the dative is already quite broad, including verbs of SAYING, GIVING, SENDING, etc., but also EXTRACTING, and unaccusative verbs of the GOING or the APPROACHING type. In our terms, this means that the abstract adposition that incorporates is already quite "bleached", to use a common term, void of specific content, and that its precise interpretation is contextually determined by the requirements of the verb. This yields interpretations for the dative argument as different as the ones presented in section 2.1 (see Rappaport Hovav & Levin 2009, Ormazabal & Romero 2010 and references therein). Yet, in this stage the dative has not extended to the unbounded path contexts discussed by Etxepare (2014) and presented in section 2. The latter is filled by lexical *path* postpositions such as the inessive *-ra* ('to'). Minor differences aside, the distribution is very much like clitic doubled dative and locative preposition *a* ('to') in nowadays standard Spanish (see Ormazabal & Romero 2013):

- (46) a. Ama- -k semea-ri ogia igorri dio
 mother-ERG son -DAT bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE- 3sD-(3sgA)]
 'The mother sent bread to her son'
- b. La madre le envió pan a.l hijo
 The mother-ERG Cl3DAT sent bread DOM.the son
 'The mother sent bread to her son'
- (47) a. Egunero hurbiltzen zaizkie galdezka emakumeak soldadue-i
 everyday approach AUX[(3pA)-3pD] asking women(ABS)soldier.PL-DAT
 'Every day the women approach the soldiers asking'
- b. Todos los días a los soldados se les acercaban las mujeres con preguntas
 every the days DOM the soldiers Cl Cl3plDAT approach.3p the women with questions
 'Every day the women approached the soldiers with questions'
- (48) a. * Eta hiri-ko portalea-ri hurbildu zaio
 And city-GEN door -DAT approach AUX[(3sA)-3sD]
 And he approached the door of the city"
- b. * Se le acercó a la puerta de la ciudad
 Cl Cl3lDAT approach[3s] DOM the door of the city
 'He approached the door of the city"

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- (49) a. Eta hiri-ko portale-ra hurbildu da
 And city-GEN door -ALL approach AUX[(3sA)]
 And he approached the door of the city”
- b. Se acercó a la puerta de la ciudad
 CI approach[3s] to the door of the city
 ‘He approached the door of the city”

The Basque abstract adposition that yields the dative construction must incorporate obligatorily in Standard and WC Basque up to our days, and that was also the situation in NE dialects.

Consequently, dative agreement was obligatory:

- (50) * Ama -k ogia igorri du semea-ri
 mother-ERG bread(ABS) send AUX[3sE-(3sgA)] son -DAT
 ‘The mother sent bread to her son’

In contrast, the allative postposition *-ra* ('to') never incorporates in any dialect and, consequently, never shows agreement with the auxiliary.

Chronologically, the first innovation in NE dialects is the redistribution of the semantic fields, in the direction proposed by Etxepare: the dative extends to express "unbounded path" in contexts where previously the allative appeared. Descriptively speaking, the process is the mirror image of the one attested in the change from Latin dative to Romance prepositional phrases headed by Lat. *ad* (Romance *a/à*); in that case, it is the directional preposition *ad* ('to') that expands to cover grammatical relations previously covered by the dative: goal, recipient, etc. (for a detailed analysis of the change from Latin to Romance see Fedriani & Prandi 2014, and references there). We may assume with Etxepare that the change basically reduces to a redistribution of semantic fields among postpositions. The distinguishing property of our derivational analysis, as compared to Etxepare's, is that in that stage of the language the postposition is not created from the void, but it is just an extension of the existing adposition that incorporates obligatorily and induces dative agreement. Compare especially the ungrammatical status of (48) in Standard Basque and, by hypothesis, in the initial stage of the Labourdin dialect with the example (51a) in Classical Labourdin:

- (51) a. Eta hiri-ko portalea-ri hurbildu zaion bezala...
 And city-GEN door -DAT approach AUX[(3sA)-3sD] as
 "And as he approached the door of the city..." [Leizarraga 1571]
- b. [...] nola or hauta-rik bata, bere hazkuntza-ren arauaz, lothu zaikan
 haragiari, eta berriz bertzea, iarraiki zaikan ihizari
 [...] how dog these-PART one, its education-GEN rule-INSTR, attack AUX(3sA-3sD)
 meet--DAT, and instead other, follow AUX[(3sA)-3sD] hunt-DAT
 “How one of the dogs, according to its education, attacked the meat, and yet the
 other, kept on/continued hunting" [Axular 1642]
- c. Egundaino bezala lothu nahi izan zitzaion bigarren gudu bati
 Today.until as [again] tie want be AUX[(3sA)-3sD-past] second war one-DAT
 ‘Once again, he wanted to start a new war’ [Larregi 1777]

As noted in the previous subsection, a worth-pursuing way to deal with the linguistic variation of applicative alternations crosslinguistically is to reduce this variation to differences in the morphological feature specifications of the adpositional phrases involved. In particular, according to Ormazabal & Romero (2015), one of the axes that determine the big superficial variability of applicative/dative contexts is the obligatoriness or optionality of the process of P-incorporation. From a diachronic perspective, we therefore expect historical changes also to conform to the same strict parametric restrictiveness. In our case, the shift from a stage of the language where dative agreement is obligatory to one where it becomes optional reduces to a change in the morphological properties of the incorporating P, which becomes optional,¹⁵ yielding a real dative alternation. Consider, in that respect, example (25), repeated in (52), with an agreement and an agreementless instance of the same verb:

- (52) Otoi, ate horri hurbil zaite, ni hurbil-tzen nitzaion bezala
 Please, door that-DAT approach AUX[(2plA-*INP*)], I approach-HAB AUX[(1sA)-3sD-past] as
 Please, approach that door as I approached it' [(=25) Larzabal 1930-1964]

Remember that--with the exception of so-called "high applicatives" to which we come back in the next section-- once the incorporation of P₁ becomes optional the totality of the contexts where dative agreement was obligatory begin to show optional agreement and enter the dative alternation, as our hypothesis predicts. It is also predicted that neither agreement nor agreementless datives are allowed in what Etxepare & Oyharçabal (2012) and Etxepare (2014) consider "bounded path" contexts, which remains the realms of the non-incorporating allative postposition, as these authors note:

- (53) a. Mirenek pilota zelai-**ra** bota du
 Mary-ERG ball(ABS) field-**all** throw AUX[(3sA)-3sE]
 'Mary threw the ball to the field'
- b. Eskale bat etorri da etxera
 beggar one(ABS) come AUX[(3sA)] house-ALL
 'A beggar came home/to the house'
- (54) a. * Mirenek pilota zelaia-**ri /-ra** bota dio/du
 Mary-ERG ball(ABS) field -**DAT/-ALL** throw AUX[(3sA)-3sD-3sE]
 'Mary threw the field the ball'
- b. * Eskale bat etorri da /zaio etxea-ri
 beggar one(ABS) come AUX[(3sA)] / AUX[(3sA)-3sD] house-DAT
 'A beggar came home/to the house'

¹⁵ Perhaps, the extension of the unbounded path interpretation to complex postpositions such as *mendiari gora* ('up the mountain') is the trigger for the non-incorporation strategy more generally. It is worth mentioning that these complex postpositions appear quite late in the chronology of unbound path datives. Note also that in these structures, and only here, the lack of overt agreement is independent of whether P₁ incorporates to the higher postposition, since the incorporation is internal to the complex PP, a context where Basque does not have functional heads that could host agreement morphology. At the same time, morphological reanalysis of the lack of agreement in these constructions as not involving P₁ incorporation might be the trigger for further extension to the verbal domain, yielding the system described in this paper. See Ormazabal (2015) for discussion.

Crucially, it follows correctly from our analysis that the shift from obligatory dative agreement to dative alternations extends to all contexts across-the-board because it is just the reflex of a morphological readjustment in P, whose incorporation becomes optional. The consequence is that this process does not discriminate between "old" and "new" datives, which are affected equally by the change.

Finally, as in many other cases of true dative alternation crosslinguistically (see references in footnote 14), the dative agreement structure underwent a process of specialization and, associated to this, a recent tendency to prime the non-incorporated version, which is driving the progressive loss of locative applicative incorporation in some contexts, most probably under the influence--this time truly-- of French prepositional structures, where *à* never incorporates.

Given all the above, the only case that remains unexplained is the lack of alternation in so-called "high applicatives", that is, experiencer, possessor and ethical datives, which always show obligatory agreement. Extending a proposal by Odria (2014, 2015), in the next section we sketch a possible alternative.

6. Some observations on the *High/Low Applicative* distinction

Strictly speaking, no extra assumption is needed to deal with "high applicatives", other than a minimal adaptation of the "High/Low applicative" analysis to our proposal. Unifying agreementless PPs and low applicatives does not necessarily mean that high applicatives could not be a different structural relation altogether. However, the same conceptual arguments that motivated eliminating the ontological distinction between dative PPs and "low applicatives" in the first place also suggest that we should try to apply the same reductionist view to the special status of "high applicatives", and analyze them in terms more in accordance with our derivational approach. As in the case of "low applicatives", a distinctive "high applicative" projection *per se* lacks explanatory power; moreover, even as a descriptive tool, the properties attributed to this group, as opposed to low applicatives, do not seem to make the right cut once additional evidence is considered in detail (see Ormazabal & Romero 2010, 2015, Odria 2014, 2015 for discussion).

It is not our goal in this paper to present a detailed syntax of "high applicatives", but just to point at some directions that we think could help us reduce their special properties. Odria (2014, 2015) already opens a way for unification. She proposes that the ApplP locus for high and low applicatives is the same projection, but while "low applicatives" reach that position by internal merge, moving from lower structural positions, "high applicatives" are base-generated directly in the specifier of the applicative projection. Odria presents extensive empirical evidence related to secondary predication, agreement restrictions of the Person-Case Constraint type, repair strategies

in contexts of competing dative arguments, and the distribution of dative DOM (Differential Object Marking) in WC dialects showing that dative arguments do not all share the same category, and that the standard criteria do not cut across the high/low line, but across categorial properties of the position of origin.

Our proposal is to go one step further. Theoretically speaking, the situation pictured by Odria is very similar to the analysis of subjects in the early and middle eighties, before the first VP-internal Subject Hypotheses were articulated (Kuroda 1988, Koopman & Sportiche 1991, etc.). At that time, the standard view was to assume that the subject of transitive predicates was base-generated in the Specifier of IP (Spec, TP), but the subject of unaccusatives, raising predicates, passives, etc. moved from a lower position to end up occupying the same specifier position. One of the innovative forces of the VP-internal hypothesis was that it generalized the derived nature of all subjects and associated them structurally to a functional projection where they all would end up at some point of the derivation, contributing to further dissociate the Case and agreement properties and the functional relations from properties related to argument structure and selection. A consequence of that was that the different structural properties different subject types show could be derived, not from their "subjecthood", but from their diverse origin, while the properties associated to "subjecthood" might be associated to them sharing the structural property of being in the (Spec, IP) position.

In the same vein, our proposal is that all applied/dative arguments are derived, and that the distinction points to different base-positions from which dative shift occurs. In fact, the elements standardly classified as belonging to the class of "high applicatives", (i) possessor raising, (ii) experiencers, and (iii) ethical datives of all sorts constitute a very heterogeneous group, each of them presenting different and specific syntactic and semantic properties, what makes them hard to unify under a single High Applicative label, which would become a bric-a-brac.¹⁶

This is already standard for causee datives in causative constructions, which are generally assumed to be generated in the external argument position of the verb embedded under the causative (Baker 1988 and much subsequent literature including most AUCH! approaches). This accounts, for instance, for the fact that causee datives, unlike PP-alternating ones, allow secondary predication. The same general strategy may be extended to high applicatives as well. Let us suppose, for instance, that some version of the raising analysis of possessor datives is on the right track. In that case, if the dative originates within some position internal to the object DP (see, e.g. Landau 1999, Arregi 2003b, and references), we would not expect it to ever show up in an

¹⁶ In fact, apart from the fact that they do not alternate with the agreementless PP construction, there are no clear criteria to group them together. Thus, for instance, Pyllkkaanen extensively argues that possessor datives are "reversed" low applicatives. If that is the case, the fact that they do not alternate while all the other low applicative do is even more mysterious.

agreementless dative frame, because there is no possible PP source in VP from which the non-incorporating P and the dative argument would originate. If the dative alternates at all, it would be with some genitive argument in the DP-internal position. On the other hand, experiencers are arguments selected by a specific set of verbs, they are universally associated to specific syntactic structure alternations and, in many languages, they are the only dative arguments that may act as subjects. However to account for their complex syntax, it is necessary to take into account the fact that they are subject to lexical selectional conditions (Belletti & Rizzi 1988, Landau 2010, among many others). In a radically different situation, ethical datives are non-argumental items restricted to pronominal forms. They differ from the rest of the datives in important respects such as the fact that they do not trigger PCC effects, or that they cannot be doubled, what makes them clitic-like elements instead of agreement relations (see Romero 2014).

7. Concluding Remarks

Dative spreading in North Eastern dialects of Basque provides a privileged spot to analyze parametric variation in applicative syntax. In the XVI century, dative use in these dialects expands to cover unbounded path relations. We have shown that this spreading was achieved without altering dative syntax. This fact questions analyses built upon different base structures: The same structure encodes unrelated and, in many cases, incompatible senses. Later on, in the XVIII century, a new form, an agreementless dative construction, arises which is used for both unbounded path and ditransitive, and unaccusative constructions. Again, the same syntax expresses different semantics.

From a linguistic variation point of view, several lessons can be learnt from this process. First, once we broaden the scope of our data to languages where dative shift is richer than English, semantic generalizations on these constructions prove unuseful. They are already weak in this language, where many verbs do not exhibit any semantic contrast in the dative alternation (verbs of GIVING, PROMISING, etc.). Furthermore, other verbs do not enter into this alternation in spite of the fact that they fit its alleged semantics (*contribute, transport*), or in spite of the fact that they are similar to other verbs that regularly do it (*say, explain*). In these cases, dative shift must be blocked by other means, what raises the question if semantics is actually doing any job, or if whatever these other means are suffice to explain dative alternations. Historical variation in NE dialects of Basque clearly support this latter view.

Parametrically, dative spreading gives us a hint on how dative shift is constrained. Etxepare (2014) links the innovative forms in NE dialects to the appearance of a new preposition by influence of French. This hypothesis is consistent with crosslinguistic data (Peterson 2007)

showing that applicative constructions mirror the meaning of prepositional constructions (see also Rappaport & Levin 2008). Derivative analysis capture this relation straightforwardly, making applicative constructions a by-product of P incorporation.

Finally, the birth of a new construction, a dative agreementless construction, is very interesting because it allows us to see some aspects of the applicative syntax usually hidden. Specifically, restrictions in the alternation between the agreementless and the agreement construction highlights the derivational nature of dative shift. Since cases where alternation obtains do not exhibit any semantic change, we have proposed that applicative phrases end up in a position with similar properties than subject position. This way we can derive that certain datives cannot appear in an agreementless structure as a consequence of the fact that they are originated in different position, a DP internal position in the case of possessive raising (see also Georgala 2011 for a similar proposal).

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Javier Ormazabal

University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)
Department of Linguistics and Basque Studies (HEIS)
Unibertsitateen Ibilbidea 5
01006 Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain

javier.ormazabal@ehu.eus
<http://hitt-linguistics.net/javier.ormazabal>

Juan Romero

University of Extremadura (UNEX)
Department of Hispanic Philology
Avenida de la Universidad s/n
10071 Cáceres, Spain

juantxoromero@gmail.com