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Abstract

This paper examines the case properties of causees in Gipuzkoan Basque and proposes a syntactic model to explain these case properties. In Gipuzkoan Basque, the subjects of transitive and unergative predicates receive dative case when embedded in a causative, whereas the subjects of unaccusatives receive absolutive (de Rijk 2008). This pattern differs from other dialects of Basque, with the consequence that syntactic models of causatives used for other Basque dialects do not capture this alternation well. I look at two of these models used for other dialects and show that they can't correctly explain the case properties of Gipuzkoan causees, before proposing my own model. In particular, I propose that in Gipuzkoan causatives external arguments are introduced in an applicative phrase (AppIP), where they receive inherent dative case, whereas internal arguments are introduced as the complement of the verb root, where they receive structural absolutive case from *v*.

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1 Introduction

This paper examines the case of DPs embedded in morphological causatives in the Gipuzkoan dialect of Basque. Gipuzkoan exhibits an interesting case alternation for causees: external arguments in transitive and unergative predicates receive dative case when embedded in a causative, whereas internal arguments in unaccusative predicates receive absolutive case (de Rijk 2008).

This pattern differs from other dialects of Basque. In the southwestern dialects all causees receive dative, whereas in the standard and Northeastern dialects only transitive causees receive dative, with all intransitive causees showing up as absolutive (Odria 2017, de Rijk 2008). This difference makes Gipuzkoan a challenge for many syntactic models of how case is assigned in Basque causatives, since they have so far focused mostly on southwestern or Standard Basque. While they work well for their respective dialects, neither Odria's applicative analysis, applied to southwestern Basque, nor Arregi's dependent case analysis for standard Basque can fully capture the pattern seen in Gipuzkoan (Odria 2017, Arregi 2018). In this paper, I will argue instead for a split case-assignment mechanism for causees in Gipuzkoan. In particular, I propose that external arguments, when embedded in a causative, are introduced in an applicative phrase, in which they receive inherent dative case. Internal arguments, on the other hand, are introduced in an object position in an embedded root phrase (\sqrt{P}), where they receive structural absolutive case from v_{ABS} (Rezac et al. 2014). In this way, Gipuzkoan morphological causatives have a structure similar to that seen in Korean (Kim 2011).

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 lays out the basic verbal architecture I use to model morphological causatives. Section 3 examines the data for Gipuzkoan Basque, showing the basic case patterns causees exhibit when transitive, unergative and unaccusative predicates are embedded in a causative. Section 4 discusses two models for causatives applied to other dialects of Basque – Odria's applicative analysis for southwestern Basque, and Arregi's dependent-case analysis for standard Basque – and shows that neither can completely model the case alternation in Gipuzkoan (Odria 2017, Arregi 2018). Section 5 presents my alternative analysis, in which only external arguments are merged in ApplP, with internal arguments being merged in \sqrt{P} . Section 6 concludes.

2 A Basic Framework for Causatives

In analyzing causee case in Gipuzkoan Basque, I work within a framework where morphological causatives are built in the syntax. At the basic level, I utilize a tripartite model of verbal structure (Harley 2013, 2017). Internal arguments merge directly with the verb root, which projects to a root phrase (\sqrt{P}).¹ This merges with a little *v* head that introduces causative and eventive semantics and verbalizes the head of \sqrt{P} . Following Kratzer (1996), I assume that external arguments are separate from this structure, and are instead merged in the specifier of a voice phrase (VoiceP) above *vP* (Harley 2013, 2017). The structure below captures this.

- (1) [_{VoiceP} External Argument ... [_{vP} ... [_{\sqrt{P}} Internal Argument]]]

Fully productive morphological causatives are formed by layering further projections on top of this structure. Following Harley (2017), I assume that causative morphology can be introduced in the head of its own phrase: CausP. Caus can either be phase-selecting, merging with the entire structure in (1), or verb-selecting, merging with just *vP* (Pylkkänen 2008). Causer DPs constitute external arguments introduced in a further VoiceP. The following structure demonstrates.²

¹This is not an uncontroversial claim, as several people within the field of Distributed Morphology argue that roots cannot take complements. See Harley (2014) and Alexiadou (2014).

²Whether or not Caus is 'bundled' with Voice in Basque (see Pylkkänen 2008) is not addressed here.

- (2) [VoiceP Causer ... [CausP ... [VoiceP/vP ...]]]

3 Causees in Gipuzkoan

3.1 Basic Case Alignment in Gipuzkoan

Before moving directly to causee case, it is worth briefly going over the basic case alignment system in Gipuzkoan Basque. Gipuzkoan displays a basic system of split ergativity (Aldai 2009). In simple clauses, transitive subjects consistently receive ergative case-marking with the suffix *-k*. Looking at intransitives, external argument subjects in unergatives also pattern with transitives, receiving ergative case, but internal argument subjects in unaccusatives receive the zero-marked absolutive case. The following examples demonstrate.³

- (3) a. *Transitive*
Seme-ak medizina har-tu du
Son-ERG medicine.ABS take-PRF AUX
 ‘The son took the medicine’
- b. *Unergative*
Euskara-k noiz arte iraun-go du?
Basque-ERG when until last-FUT AUX
 ‘Until when will Basque last?’
 (de Rijk 2008:265)
- c. *Unaccusative*
Jon garaiz etorri da
Jon.ABS on-time arrive AUX
 ‘Jon arrived on time’
 (Ortiz de Urbina 2019:298)

Although this at first seems reflective of the fact that the ergative and the absolutive constitute inherent cases in Gipuzkoan Basque, Rezac et al. (2014) provide ample evidence to show that both cases are structural in split dialects. In particular, they claim that absolutive case is assigned through the v/Voice system, whereas ergative case is assigned in the tense system, particularly through raising to [Spec, T_{ERG}]. I adopt their analysis here, proposing that in simple clauses internal arguments are assigned absolutive through v_{ABS}, only raising to the specifier of T to satisfy an EPP feature. External arguments, merged in a position above v, agree with T_{ERG} and raise to its specifier to receive ergative case (Rezac et al. 2014).

3.2 Case Alignment in Causatives

Morphological causatives in Basque are formed by adding the causative suffix *-arazi* to the verb root. The new argument, the causer, receives ergative case (de Rijk 2008). When transitive or unergative predicates are placed in the causative, the causee DP receives dative case-marking with the suffix *-i* (de Rijk 2008, Ortiz de Urbina 2019). Examples (4a) and (4b) show embedded predicates with the same transitive and unergative verbs above, *hartu* ‘take’ and *iraun* ‘last.’⁴ When unaccusatives are embedded, the case of the causee DP remains absolutive, the same as it is when not embedded by a causative (de Rijk 2008).

- (4) a. *Transitive*
 Jon-ek **semea-ri** medizina harr-araz-i dio
 Jon-ERG **son-DAT** medicine.ABS take-CAUS-PRF AUX
 ‘Jon made the son take the medicine’
 (Ortiz de Urbina 2019: 278)

³Do note that none of these examples are explicitly taken from Gipuzkoan. Rather, they simply serve to demonstrate the pattern claimed by linguists for Gipuzkoan (de Rijk 2008, Aldai 2009)

⁴(4a) also is not explicitly taken from Gipuzkoan, but again demonstrates the pattern claimed for it.

- b. *Unergative*
 Norbait-ek eta zerbait-ek iraun-araz-i dio **hizkuntza-ri**
 Someone-ERG and something-ERG last-CAUS-PRF AUX **language-DAT**
 ‘Someone and something caused the language to last’
 (de Rijk 2008:380)
- c. *Unaccusative*
 Etzan-arazi nuen **Ines**
 lie-CAUSE AUX **Ines.ABS**
 ‘I made Ines lie down’
 (de Rijk 2008:378)

This case alternation, specifically the alternation between the dative case and the absolutive case for unergative and unaccusative causees, is not easily captured by current models of causatives used for other dialects of Basque, and warrants its own independent explanation. Below, I summarize the proposals for causatives in other dialects of Basque, before introducing my own proposal for Gipuzkoan.

4 Modeling Causatives in Other Dialects

4.1 Applicative Causees

The applicative analysis, proposed by Ippolito (2000) for Romance FI causatives, claims that causees are introduced in an applicative phrase (ApplP), where they receive inherent dative case from the Appl head. Looking at Basque, Odria (2017) adopts the same analysis for the southwestern dialects of Basque, where all causees – transitive, unergative, and unaccusative – receive dative case. Incorporating this into the basic model for causatives laid out in Section 2, one could propose a structure whereby the Caus head selects for an ApplP that introduces the causee, with the Appl head selecting for a vP where the embedded verb and any internal arguments are introduced.

- (5) [VoiceP Causer...[CausP... [ApplP Causee... [vP...]]]]

This model works well for transitive and unergative causees in Gipuzkoan Basque. Both are introduced in the specifier of an ApplP and receive inherent dative case from the Appl head. Moreover, the fact that these causees – external arguments of the embedded predicate – are introduced in a phrase outside vP is predicted within a model where external arguments are not introduced in vP (Kratzer 1996).

Looking at unaccusative causees in Gipuzkoan, however, the applicative analysis fails to make the right prediction. Unaccusative causees are absolutive, and clearly do not receive inherent dative case. Ultimately, while there may be aspects of this analysis worth keeping for Gipuzkoan causatives, applicatives alone cannot explain the case alternation. I now consider the dependent case analysis (Arregi 2018).

4.2 Dependent Case

Dependent case, first proposed by Marantz (1991), has undergone several modifications since the original proposal, and here I consider Baker’s (2015) theory as applied to dative case. Whereas dependent case was originally applied to the ergative and accusative, Baker proposes that the dative can sometimes function as a dependent case, assigned to the higher of two DPs within the verbal domain (Baker 2015). Arregi (2018) applies a similar analysis to causatives in standard Basque, claiming that V_{CAUSP} (analogous to CausP in my model) acts as a domain for dependent dative. This works well to capture the pattern in Standard Basque, where only transitive causees, which c-command an object DP within CausP, receive case, with all intransitive causees receiving absolutive.

When applied to Gipuzkoan, a dependent case domain within CausP would correctly predict dative case on transitive causees and absolutive case on unaccusative causees. It cannot, however,

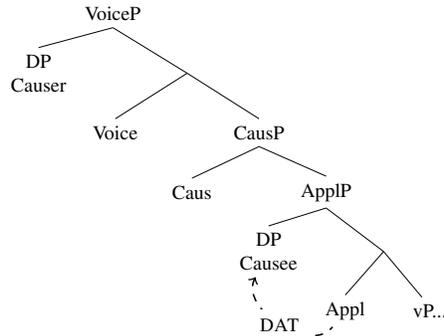
provide an explanation for the fact that unergative causees, which do not c-command any lower object DP, also have dative case.

5 Applicatives for External Arguments Only

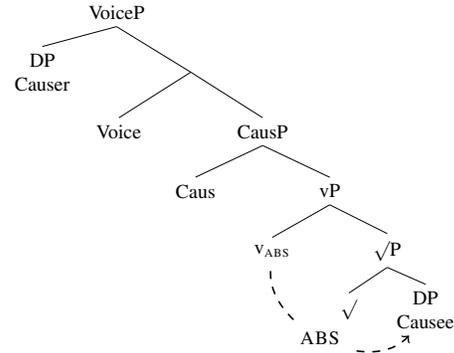
In choosing an analysis that accounts for causee case in Gipuzkoan Basque, I ultimately propose a model mostly along the lines of the applicative analysis above (Ippolito 2000, Odria 2017), with a few modifications. While Arregi's (2018) dependent case model works well for standard Basque, there is no way to modify it for Gipuzkoan such that unergative causees could receive dependent dative in a domain where they don't c-command another DP. Although one could potentially propose that unergatives in Gipuzkoan c-command implicit objects, Preminger (2012) provides ample evidence against this for Basque.

To model the case alternation in Gipuzkoan, I therefore propose that causees are introduced by two separate mechanisms. When embedded in a causative, *external arguments* – transitive and unergative causees – are introduced in the specifier of an applicative phrase, where they receive inherent dative case from Appl. *Internal arguments* – unaccusative causees – are merged directly with the verb root in \sqrt{P} , an internal argument position where they receive structural absolutive case from v_{ABS} (Rezac et al. 2014). The structures are demonstrated below.

(6) Transitive and Unergative Causees



(7) Unaccusative Causees



This model essentially proposes that in Gipuzkoan Basque, external arguments can have (at least) two merge positions: the specifier of Voice in a matrix position, or the specifier of Appl in a causative. This fits well within a model of syntax where external arguments are introduced outside of the verbal phrase where internal arguments are introduced (Kratzer 1996). Internal arguments, on the other hand, are merged in the same position in simple clauses and in causatives: the complement of the verb root. Within the broad syntactic structure for causatives proposed in Section 2, this proposal entails that the Caus head in Gipuzkoan can select for two different complements, either a vP that introduces the verbal syntax of the embedded verb and an internal argument, or an external argument-introducing ApplP followed by a vP.

Although this differs from the frameworks outlined in Section 4, this is not a novel syntactic model for morphological causatives. Kim (2011) proposes the same model for Korean morphological causatives, claiming that transitive and unergative causees are introduced by a high applicative phrase selected for by Caus, whereas unaccusative causees are not (although she does not detail how they are introduced).

6 Conclusion

In this paper, I modeled the case of causees in Gipuzkoan Basque by claiming that they are introduced in two different ways depending on their argumenthood properties. External arguments are introduced in an applicative phrase, and are assigned inherent dative, whereas internal arguments

are introduced as the complement of the verb root, and are assigned absolutive case from *v*. This proposal neatly captures the fact that transitive and unergative causees are dative, whereas unaccusative causees are absolutive. Within the context of Basque dialectology, this model indicates that causatives in Gipuzkoan Basque are largely similar to those in southwestern Basque, where all causees are introduced in an applicative (Odria 2017). The main difference between the two, however, is the fact that in Gipuzkoan unaccusative causees pattern the same way they would in a simple clause.

This proposal also has interesting implications for a broader theory of causatives. Looking at Korean, Kim (2011) notes that causative heads selecting for ApplP could be characterized as phase-selecting, as an applicative merged above *v*P constitutes a phase in terms of A-movement (McGinnis 2001). However, Korean morphological causatives fail the diagnostics for phase-selecting causatives, being unable to have agent-oriented adverbs modify the action of the causee, and thus pattern instead with *v*P selecting causatives instead (Kim 2011). Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, it would be worthwhile to apply these same diagnostics to Gipuzkoan. If they also pattern with *v*P selecting causatives, it would be good evidence for the fact that the way in which external argument causees are merged without Voice needs to be further refined cross-linguistically.

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