Deconstructing Voice
The syntax and semantics of *u*-syncretism in Spanish

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Abstract This paper focuses on a well-known pattern of systematic syncretism in Spanish *se* constructions. Detailed syntactic and semantic analyses are provided with the aim of sustaining two main theses. First, I conceive of *se* (and its agreeing variants), as a probe for A-movement. This probe is merged with Voice in order to satisfy a subcategorization restriction. Yet, being defective, it cannot receive a θ-role from Voice. As a probe it looks for a goal in its complement domain. If there is such a goal, then it A-moves to Spec,Voice, position in which it agrees with *se* and receives an additional agent θ-role from Voice, if there is one. This results in most, if not all, instances of the so-called "paradigmatic" *se* (*se* reflexives, inherent *se*, benefactive *se* and so on). There are cases in which there is no such a goal for *se*. In those scenarios, Agree fails and the clitic receives third person singular by default. This results in the so-called "non-paradigmatic" *se* (essentially, passive/impersonal *se*). Second, at LF, these two syntactic scenarios feed two different LF realizations. Whenever *se* has a goal with which it agrees, *se* itself is realized as a λ-abstractor, but as an indefinite variable whenever Agree fails, as in the case of passive/impersonal *se*. This theory dispenses, then, with particular Voice features (e.g., Active vs. Non-active) and with different types of *se* (paradigmatic vs. non-paradigmatic) but, more importantly, it does so by appealing to well-motivated restrictions on A-dependencies, namely, Activity and Miminality.

Keywords: Case, θ-roles, *se*-constructions, Spanish, syncretism

1   Introduction

The clitic *se* (or its agreeing variants: *me*, *te*, *nos*, etc.) occurs in a set of different syntactic and semantic contexts. Well-studied cases in the Spanish tradition involve the following four:

(1)   **Ergative** *se*

    a.   La tormenta hundió al   barco.
           the storm   sank   DOM.the ship
           'The storm sank the ship.'
    b.   **Se** hundió el barco con la tormenta.
           SE sank   the ship   with the storm
           'The ship sank by the storm.'

(2)   **Passive** *se*

    a.   La policía cerró las puertas para bloquear la salida.
           the police closed the doors   for block.INF the exit
           'The police closed the doors in order to block the exit.'
    b.   **Se** cerraron   las puertas para bloquear la salida.
           SE closed.3PL the doors   for   block.INF the exit
           'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

(3)   **Impersonal** *se*

    a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
           Juan criticized DOM Ana
           'Juan criticized Ana.'
    b.   **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
           SE criticized DOM Ana
           'One/someone criticized Ana.'

(4)   **Reflexive** *se*

    a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
           Juan criticized DOM Ana
           'Juan criticized Ana.'
    b.   Ana **se** criticó.
           Ana SE criticized
           'Ana criticized herself.'

Yet, as it is also well-known, this pattern does not exhaust all the occurrences of the clitic *se* in Spanish. Aspectual/Benefactive *se* is another well-studied case:

(5) a. Juan comió la   manzana.
         Juan ate   the apple
         'Juan ate the apple.'
     b. Juan **se** comió la   manzana.
         Juan SE ate   the apple.
         'Juan ate the apple.'

The more striking difference between both sentences is that the so-called Aspectual/Benefactive *se* cannot combine with bare objects:

(6) Juan (***se**) comió pizza.
     Juan (*SE) ate   pizza
     'Juan ate pizza.'

There is a debate whether this restriction follows from aspectual restrictions on bound events (see among many others Basilico 2010) or it is a restriction on inner subjects (see MacDonald 2017b, who elaborates on ideas of Cuervo 2003; 2014). In section subsection 5.3, I will propose a benefactive analysis along the general lines of MacDonald (2017b).

The same clitic and its agreeing variants occur obligatorily with a subset of verbal predicates. This is the so-called "inherent *se*":

(7) a. Juan **se** quejó.
         Juan SE complained
         'Juan complained.'
     b. *Juan quejó.
         Juan complained
     c. *Juan lo   quejó.
         Juan him/it complained

Much less explored in the literature are cases of what Di Tullio (2005) calls "diacritic *se*", in which the presence or absence of the clitic changes the basic meaning and valence of the verbal predicate. This set is very broad and, at first glance, there are no systematic meaning connections among the different verbal predicates that combine with this type of *se*. For instance, the verb *acordar* means 'to agree' but 'to remember' when it combines with the clitic. Crucially, the occurrence of *se* modifies the Case frame of the sentence, at least in the general case:

(8)   a.   Juan acordó las condiciones.
               Juan agreed the conditions
               'Juan agreed to the conditions.'
     b.   Juan **se** acordó   de Ana.
               Juan SE rememebered of Ana
               'Juan remembered Ana.'

Again, the entire paradigm does not exhaust every use of the clitic *se* in Spanish, but it suffices to show what is one of my main points in this paper, namely, that these cases constitute a pattern of systematic syncretism. With Embick (2004), I will call this pattern *u-syncretism* extending the use that he makes for, essentially, reflexives, unaccusatives and impersonals to all instances of *se* constructions presented so far. Such an extension is not trivial, since it includes cases in which there is an agent argument in the sentence, like in (5b) or in (7a) just to mention two relevant cases.

On the proposal to be defended in what follows, the type of *u-syncretism* involved in the relevant *se* patterns is the surface manifestation of the presence of a defective category in the external argument position. Following original insights in Embick (2004) and, in particular, in Pujalte & Saab (2012), I defend the view that *se* is a syntactic expletive whose basic function is to satisfy a selectional property of the Voice head. Unlike Pujalte & Saab (2012), who claim that *se* and its agreeing variants are inserted at PF, I contend that *se* is inserted in the syntax.[1] Conceptually, the main difference between the morphological and the syntactic views can be put in the following way: for the morphological approach, *se* syncretism is the result of the absence of a syntactic category in the standard external argument position in the syntax, whereas on the syntactic view, although deficient in a way to be explained, there *is* something in the syntax. Although it is hard to set apart both proposals on robust empirical basis, I will try to show that the syntactic approach provides a more balanced explanation of the particular behavior of impersonal/passive *se* regarding classic diagnostics for detecting the presence of syntactic material (pronominal binding, for instance). Moreover, the syntactic approach provides an interesting motivation for A-movement in Spanish, a non-trivial consequence, if correct. And finally, the syntactic approach seems to be better equipped to deal with linguistic variation in the relevant domain. At any rate, the research agenda is the same for both theories, namely, looking for a common property to *all se* construction in Spanish. As far as I know, this project has not been explicitly developed in the Spanish generative and non-generative tradition. Recent proposals by Ormazabal & Romero

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[1] This is also the position taken by Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Schäfer (2015) and Schäfer (2008; 2017) for a subset of *se* constructions in Romance, mainly, anti-causative *se*. For reflexives, these works assume a more standard approach according to which reflexive *se* is a bound variable in object position. In section 6, I conjecture that this is probably the case for Italian, but not for Spanish.

(2019; 2020) share part of this agenda, but only with respect to the passive vs. impersonal *se* distinction, for which they show that the passive/impersonal distinction can be dissolved in favor of the same underlying configuration in the syntax, an hypothesis also shared by Pujalte & Saab (2012), Pujalte (2013) andSaab (2014). Yet, a crucial difference between Ormazabal and Romero's theory and Pujalte and Saab's is precisely the status of *se*, i.e., the syntactic *vs.* the morphological approach. In this respect, as I have already advanced, I will be with Ormazabal and Romero and assume that *se* and its agreeing variants have some syntactic import. But unlike them, I will show that by "deconstructing" the formal makeup of the Voice head not only the passive/impersonal distinction can be eliminated but also the entire paradigm of *se* constructions referred so far.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section, I introduce the two basic theses to be defended in the rest of the paper, namely: (i) that *se* is a probe for A-movement and (ii) that depending on whether or not this probe succeeds in attracting a goal with which to agree the clitic itself is realized as a λ-abstractor or as an indefinite variable. The first thesis is technically implemented in section 3, where I show that there is robust evidence in favor of an analysis of *se* as a probe for A-movement. The evidence involves standard constraints on A-dependencies: Activity and Minimality. The theory is illustrated with reference to *se* reflexives and impersonal/passive *se*. In the same section, I also argue that this type of approach to reflexives and impersonals is superior to other extant analyses proposed in the literature. In section 4, I implement Thesis 2 in detail showing that whenever the clitic attracts an argument from its complement domain, the clitic is read as a λ-abstractor, but as an indefinite whenever Agree fails in the syntax. The broad picture is one in which there is only one *se* in Spanish. That this is the case is shown in section 5, where the rest of paradigm is analyzed under the umbrella of the new theory. In section 6, I briefly suggest some routes of analysis for handling aspects of linguistic variation regarding the clitic system within Spanish and across other Romance languages. Among other things, I conjecture there that a simple assumption regarding the formal makeup of clitics in Spanish and Italian can account in an interesting way why Spanish, but not Italian, has reflexive doubling. The final picture results in the following division in the clitic system: D-clitics and K-clitics. As far as *u*-syncretism is concerned, Spanish is a D-clitic language, i.e., a language in which the syncretic clitics are probes for A-movement, and Italian is a K-clitic language; concretely a language in which the relevant clitics are not syntactic probes, but bound anaphors. The final section contains a summary and some additional comments on the main empirical and theoretical contributions of this study.

2   On the syntactic nature of *se* and its LF import

Before entering into particular implementations, its convenient to have a broad picture of the basic ingredients of the proposal. As is known, particular implementations might require auxiliary assumptions which, on occasions, might, in turn, obscure the general theses. As I have already advanced, my research agenda is essentially the same as Embick (2004), namely, to have an account of *u*-syncretism. However, the pattern I am concerned with is broader since it includes cases in which an agent argument is indeed present in the syntax. This could opaque the "unaccusative" part of this type of syncretism. Yet, I will keep the term *u*-syncretism for two reasons, mainly. On the one hand, I would like to stress what my research agenda is about and, on the other hand, I would like to stress what *u*-syncretism is about in the sense I favor in this study; esentially, about having some sort of derived subjects whenever it is possible. On Embick's and Pujalte and Saab's proposals, the common property behind patterns of *u*-syncretism is the absence of an external argument in Spec,Voice position. In the terms I favor here, the common property behind the relevant patterns of *u*-syncretism is the presence of a formally defective category in the regular external argument position. This argument is realized as *se* (or its agreeing variants). As we will see in detail, the clitic *se* does part of the job that any argument does, i.e., it satisfies subcategorization features of lexical or functional heads. But unlike regular arguments, *se* is not a θ-role receptor. This implies that the notion of *external argument* must be dissociated from the notion of external θ-role.

Just to give a preliminary illustration, let us consider the contrast between impersonal *se* and *se* reflexives, a contrast which is at the heart of *u*-syncretism.

(9)   a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
            Juan criticized DOM Ana
            'Juan criticized Ana.'

        b.   **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
            SE criticized DOM Ana
            'One/someone criticized Ana.'

(10)   a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
            Juan criticized DOM Ana
            'Juan criticized Ana.'

        b.   Ana **se** criticó.
            Ana SE criticized
            'Ana criticized herself.'

The common portion of structure in both cases is the presence of a defective DP (i.e., *se*) whose basic function is deleting the subcategorization feature in the Voice head ($< \ldots >$ deleted material):

(11)   [$_{\text{VoiceP}}$ *se* Voice$_{[<D>]}$ [$_{\text{VP}}$ criticar Ana]]

Now, the internal KP is interpreted as having the theme θ-role (like in (9)) or as having both the theme and the agent θ-roles (like in (10)) of the event depending on other conditions that give rise to an impersonal or to a reflexive interpretation. The crucial ingredient is syntactic (and structural) Case. As extensively argued in Pujalte & Saab (2012), Pujalte & Saab (2014), and Saab (2014; 2015), what makes the difference between these two types of sentences is the fact that the internal argument in reflexives, but not in transitive impersonals, is still active when the agent θ-role of Voice is discharged. A crucial principle of θ-role assignment is then related to Case valuation. I state this as follows:

(12)   Unvalued Case in K makes K visible for θ-assignment in the syntax.

The hypothesis in (12) a restatement of the Visibility Condition (Chomsky 1986), according to which Case and θ-roles are closely related. In Chomsky's original formulation Case assignment was a precondition for thematic interpretation at LF, although concrete implementations remained rather vague. In the restatement in (12), the connection between structural Case and θ-assignment is derived from the Activity Condition (Chomsky 2000; 2001), a general principle of syntactic computation that constrains the application of certain syntactic operations (e.g., Agree) by making reference to unvalued features. This study is in part an attempt to explicitly show how Activity connects to semantic interpretability of θ-roles at LF.

With this in mind, let us consider the reflexive and the impersonal derivations with (11) as the common underlying structure. As for the reflexive, *se* merges with Voice and deletes its category feature, although it cannot receive a θ-role from Voice. Note now that the internal argument *Ana* does not get accusative Case so it remains active and can get the external θ-role from Voice. Following Saab (2014), I further assume that Voice is a θ-role assigner only if specified with a D-feature, which is the case for all the constructions to be explored here.[2] I contend now that *se* has another crucial syntactic property, namely, it acts as a probe for A-movement. Thus, *Ana* moves to Spec,VoiceP and ends associated to two θ-roles. This is an important difference between the present framework and Pujalte and Saab's, for whom the agreement dependency between the subject of, say, a reflexive

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[2] This means that if Voice has an agent θ-role but not a subcategorization feature, it is not a thematic head. As argued in Saab (2014), this is the case of analytical passives. See also section subsection 5.4.

sentence and the clitic is entirely implemented at PF. On the present theory, *se* has a set of unvalued ϕ-features and also an EPP feature, the trigger of movement. Schematically, we represent the final result as follows:

(13)   [$_{\text{VoiceP}}$ Ana$_{[Theme-Agent]}$ *se* Voice$_{<D>}$] [$_{\text{VP}}$ criticar *t*]]

This result in an A-dependency between *Ana*, *se* and the *trace*. Each of these elements has a particular realization at the interfaces. At PF, the Agree relation between *Ana* and the clitic results in morphological agreement, giving rise to what is known in the literature as paradigmatic *se* (e.g., *se*, *me*, *te*, *nos* depending on the features of the subject). At LF, I claim that *se* is realized as a λ-abstractor, which abstracts over the trace of the moved element. As it is standard, the moved element saturates the argument the abstractor introduces. Here is a rough LF representation:

(14)   LF: [$_{\text{VoiceP}}$ Ana$_{[Theme-Agent]}$ λ Voice [$_{\text{VP}}$ criticar *variable*]]

Note that the three elements identified in this A-dependency corresponds unequivocally to the three LF objects Heim & Kratzer (1998) assume for any A-movement chain (and other type of chains), namely, the moved argument XP, the index or the abstractor that XP movement creates and the variable left by XP movement.

(15)   [XP [$_{\alpha}$ *i* [$_{\gamma}$ ...t_i...]]

According to Heim & Kratzer (1998), this syntactic scenario feeds predicate abstraction at LF:

(16)   **Predicate Abstraction Rule**
        Let α a branching node with daughters β and γ, where β dominates only a numeric index *i*. Then, for any variable assignment g, $[\![\alpha]\!]^g = \lambda x. [\![\gamma]\!]^{g^{[i \to x]}}$.
        (Heim & Kratzer 1998: 186)

The difference between Heim and Kratzer's scenario in (15) and the scenario in (14) is that in the latter the abstractor (i.e., *se*) is dissociated from the movement operation and is base-generated in the external argument position. I will claim that this scenario generalizes to other types of A-dependencies in Spanish, which also involves the syntactic activity of a clitic (e.g., accusative and dative clitic doubling). The empirical observation is that the presence of these clitics are the morphological counterpart of λ-abstractors which are all dissociated from A-movement *per se*. On this view, A-movement, as other types of movement, is triggered by LF considerations; basically, such a movement satisfies the argument that Voice' (i.e., the sister of the abstractor/clitic) requires.

Importantly, according to this theory about *se*-reflexives in Spanish, the trigger for A-movement is not a θ-role in the Voice head. Such a θ-role ends associated to the internal argument as a result of A-movement of the internal argument, but the motivation for movement is directly linked to formal properties of *se*. This is a crucial difference with approaches that also allow for an argument to be associated to more than one θ-role, in particular, with the advocates of the movement theory of control and the movement theory of reflexivization (Hornstein 1999; 2001; Boeckx, Nunes & Hornstein 2008: among others). With this family of theories, I assume that θ-roles can be assigned both under both internal and external Merge (see Sheehan 2012) although I will leave open the possibility for a more liberal version Θ-theory, according to which θ-roles can also be assigned under a certain distance between the thematic head and the thematic receptor (as proposed in Saab 2015). I also will keep θ-assignment restricted to the local domain of a VoiceP, and not, say, a larger domain like IP as in Reinhart & Siloni (2005). This implies that a given argument can receive more than a θ-role but in the restricted domain of the VoiceP in which is merged.[3] A conceptual motivation for this is connected to the eventive calculus. Suppose, for instance, that we allow a given K node receives more than a θ-role of the same type, say, an agent θ-role. Given the way in which the present system is designed, this would end up in a situation in which a given K head would have the following denotation, after conjunction reduction:

(17) $[\![\, K \,]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e[\text{Agent}(x, e)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(x, e)] = \lambda e[\text{Agent}(x, e)]$

By restricting θ-assignment to the same VoiceP domain, this situation is avoided. Another way of avoiding the elimination of a θ-role by conjunction reduction would be to restrict interpretation by phases or cycles. I will leave this particular issue of Θ-theory for future research. For the empirical realm I am concerned with here we can stay with the more restricted view of θ-assignment. In this respect, the only departing of the orthodox view is my explicit rejection of the ban of movement from θ-position to θ-position. As is well-known, this prohibition always remained axiomatic, i.e., it does not follow from any principled semantic or syntactic property of the system.[4]

Coming back to reflexivization, it is worth-mentioning that I am not claiming that A-movement is the way in which reflexivization proceeds universally.[5] Even in

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[3] If some applied arguments are allowed to merge above VoiceP, then by hypothesis they should be part of the same eventive core.

[4] In contrast, the strict locality view on θ-assignment would be at least partially motivated by semantic considerations related to the way in which axioms for binary branching are defined. Although it is not clear at all how deep this motivation is, it is at least theoretically consistent.

[5] Indeed, as we will see in section section 6, even among Romance *se* we can find cases in which this is not the case, either.

Spanish, we have reflexives constructed via true anaphora subject to the principle-A of the binding theory, like in the following examples:

(18)   a.   Ana depende de sí misma.
              Ana depends of herself
              'Ana depends on herself.'
    b.   Ana soñó   consigo misma.
              Ana dreamed with   herself
              'Ana dreamed with herself.'

That reflexivization is an epiphenomenon within and across languages is a largely well-known fact (see Reuland 2011 for detailed discussion). My hypothesis here is that indeed reflexives in Spanish comes essentially in two ways: through *se* reflexives and through reflexive pronouns (like *sí misma*). True reflexive pronouns occur in argument position and are bound variables of a certain type. In *se* reflexives, the clitic is just an abstractor at LF and a probe in the syntax, which as such attracts the internal KP to Spec,VoiceP.

Let us turn our attention to the impersonal derivation for (11). The activity of the internal argument is at the core of the difference with reflexives. The scenario now is this: the internal argument has its Case already valued when the θ-role of Voice has to be assigned. Since that neither the clitic nor the inactive internal argument are θ-receptors for the agent role, this role stays in Voice:

(19)   [$_\text{VoiceP}$ *se* Voice$_{[Agent]}$ [$_\text{VP}$ criticar Ana$_{[Theme,Acc]}$]]

A crucial consequence of this situation is that *se*, still a probe, cannot be associated to the internal argument. As a consequence of this Agree failure (Preminger 2014), the clitic receives a third person singular interpretation by default at PF. At LF, however, no interpretation problem arises because, being a pure index of the *e* type, it can saturate the agent argument that remained unassigned in Voice. The two schematic representations that follow resume what I have said with respect to the syntax and the semantics of impersonal *se*:

(20)   a.   Syntax of VoiceP: [$_\text{VoiceP}$ *se* Voice$_{[Agent]}$ [$_\text{VP}$ criticar Ana$_{[Theme,Acc]}$]]
    b.   LF of VoiceP: λe. [Agent(*se*, *e*) & Theme(Ana, *e*) & Criticar(*e*)]

This is the gist of the proposal I will offer here. Broadly speaking, there are two main theses, one regarding the syntax of *se* constructions and another one regarding the way in which LF interprets the outputs that syntax produces:

(21)   *Thesis 1 (syntax)*: *se* is a probe for A-movement.

(22)   *Thesis 2 (semantics)*: The LF realization of *se* depends on the syntactic output. Either A-movement applies in the syntax and LF receives the instruction for predicate abstraction or there is no A-movement and, as a consequence, no abstraction. If the latter is the case, *se* satisfies the individual argument Voice requires.

The rest of this paper makes explicit these two theses through concrete syntactic and semantic implementations. But before entering in such implementations, let us comment on how the present proposal handles with the rest of the paradigm, in particular, with inherent *se* sentences.
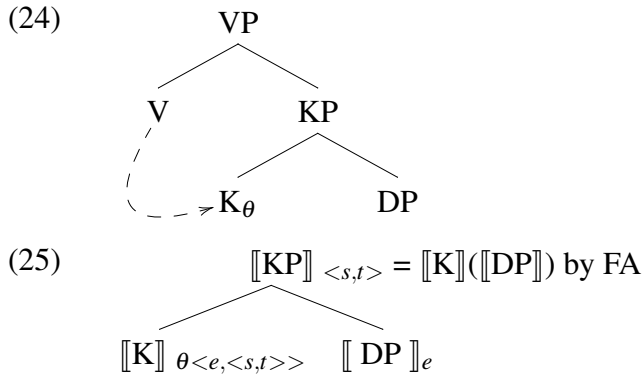
    As I have already advanced, one of the main contributions of this study is that the same common property underlies in the rest of the paradigm discussed so far. Crucially, the analysis covers in a simple way sentences involving inherent *se*, so, for a sentence like (7a) the agent DP is also generated as the sister of V:

(23)   a.   Juan **se** quejó.
             Juan SE complained
        b.   [$_\text{VoiceP}$ *se* Voice$_{[<D>]}$ [$_\text{VP}$ quejar Juan]]

Here V subcategorizes for the object DP, although it does not θ-mark it. This implies abandoning some standard assumptions regarding the connection between subcategorization and θ-assignment, in particular, Chomsky's stipulation that "subcategorization entails θ-marking" (Chomsky 1981: 37; see also Williams 1994: 78 for another type of criticism).[6] More generally, if I am on the right track with respect to the underlying factor triggering *se* syncretism, we are led to a more radical reconsideration of θ-theory such as it is conceived in different syntactic approaches (from Chomsky 1981 to Hornstein 1999; see also E. Williams 1994 for a different syntactic approach) and in semantic approaches (Kratzer 1996; Heim & Kratzer 1998; Pylkkänen 2008, among many others), according to which θ-roles are not syntactic primitives but just the result of functional application (or other axioms of semantic composition). Both mainstream syntactic and semantic approaches share a strong locality view of predicate-argument relations that reduces thematic relations to sisterhood. Another crucial property shared by mainstream approaches is the disconnection between Case and thematic relations. The Case Filter is mostly considered a purely formal phenomenon related to legibility at the interfaces (deletion of uninterpretable features, for instance). With respect to these two ingredients, and as I have already said, I will not take any particular stance with respect to the strong locality view of θ-Theory, since in principle my system is compatible both

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[6] The need for abandoning such a stipulation was originally proposed by Postal & Pullum (1988), who provided several arguments in favor of dissociating θ-assignment and subcategorization. I am thankful to a reviewer for calling my attention to Postal & Pullum's work.

with the strong locality view or with more flexible locality theories of θ-assignment (e.g., the theory in Saab 2014; 2015). For the expository sake, I assume a strong locality view. Yet, as far as the formal version of the Case Filter is concerned, I will try to show that K heads must be interpretable at LF. Evidently, This move has large implications regarding the proper nature of θ-roles and syntactic Case. My claim is that (i) θ-roles are syntactic primitives that are assigned to active K heads (aka syntactic visibility, cf. (12)) plus some locality conditions, and that (ii) at LF, θ-roles are semantically realized as functions from entities to event predicates (i.e., as $< e, < s, t >>$ types) on K(ase) heads. Concretely, I propose that, in the general case, nominals project a KP, whose head starts its syntactic life as a semantically empty head. Syntactic θ-assignment to the K head provides the proper input for semantic realization at LF. Thus, given a syntactic configuration like (24), LF will interpret the K head as function from entities to event predicates, as shown in (25):

(24)

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              VP
           /      \
          V        KP
         ⁄        /    \
        ⌞ --→ K_θ       DP
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(25) $[\![KP]\!]_{<s,t>} = [\![K]\!]([\![DP]\!])$ by FA

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           /          \
  [\![K]\!]_{θ<e,<s,t>>}   [\![ DP ]\!]_e
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On this theory, structural K is conceived of as an argument introducer mediating between predicates (pure event properties) and arguments, whose particular semantics is syntactically determined.

In the two next sections, the theory just sketched is explored in detail.

3   Syntactic implementations

In this section, I will deploy a syntactic implementation for the thesis regarding the syntax of *se* constructions, repeated below:

(26)   *Thesis 1 (syntax)*: *se* is a probe for A-movement.

The first important assumption relates to the formal makeup of the clitic *se* and its agreeing variants. First, I assume that *se* is a minimal/maximal nominal category projecting a D(P). Its feature matrix contains unvalued ϕ-features and an EPP feature, i.e., it is formally a probe:

(27)   D$^{min/max}$
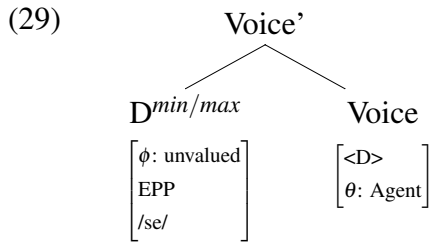$$\begin{bmatrix} \phi\text{: unvalued} \\ \text{EPP} \end{bmatrix}$$

Clitics like *se* contrast with full nominals, which, by hypothesis, project a KP not, a DP and have valued ϕ-features, at least in the normal case. I will make now the crucial assumption that whenever K has unvalued Case features, K itself can be a receptor of θ-roles:

(28)   KP
$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{Case: unvalued} \\ \phi\text{: valued} \\ \theta \end{bmatrix}$$

Importantly, I conceive of θ-roles as syntactic objects that are assigned by designated heads to active K projections. In other words, I do not think that θ-roles are features valued by Agree, but as far as I can tell, this could be just a purely implementation issue. Alternatively, we can think of θ-roles as being realized at some point of the syntax-LF interface by a subset of allosemy rules. In any case, what is crucial is (i) that θ-roles are syntactic elements that, depending on some structural conditions, must be assigned to K, and (ii) that, as we will see in detail in section 4, they are realized as functions from entities to event predicates at LF.

The corollary of the structural deficiency of *se* is that *se* cannot be a θ-role receptor, even when it merges with a θ-assigner like Voice.[7] Therefore, as far as this aspect of the syntax of *se* constructions is concerned, *se* merges in order to delete a subcategorization D-feature in Voice, although it does not receive a θ-role from Voice:

[7] It is important to have in mind that this structural deficiency does not imply assuming that these D-clitics do not receive case. In principle, I assume that they do, but in the post-syntactic component through the insertion of a dissociated K node like in McFadden (2004). In a Case theory containing K heads as crucial ingredients, there are also other options to consider not only for clitics but full arguments. For instance, some DPs which do not project a KP could receive some default case as proposed by Bittner & Hale (1996) for nominative arguments. Interestingly, if this were the case at least for some nominative full arguments in a subset of languages, this would impact also in the semantic derivation since such DPs would not receive the Agent θ-role from Voice, which, as a consequence, would stay in Voice itself. The semantic realization this syntactic scenario feeds would be very similar to what happens with passive/ impersonal *se* with the difference that this DPs do have referential import. At any rate, it is not part of the research agenda of this study to make any specific claim about the morphological case / abstract Case connection; therefore, I cannot do justice to the vast literature on this issue. My concern here is the connection between abstract Case / θ-roles, for which I do have a theory to offer.

(29)

$$
\text{Voice'}
$$

D$^{min/max}$ Voice

$$
\begin{bmatrix} \phi\text{: unvalued} \\ \text{EPP} \\ \text{/se/} \end{bmatrix}
\quad
\begin{bmatrix} \text{<D>} \\ \theta\text{: Agent} \end{bmatrix}
$$

Since this D is a probe for A-movement it looks for a suitable goal in its complement domain. Two basic scenarios may obtain: either the probe finds such a goal or it does not. In the first situation, we obtain a reflexive sentence, but an impersonal/passsive one in the second one. Let us consider each scenario in turn.
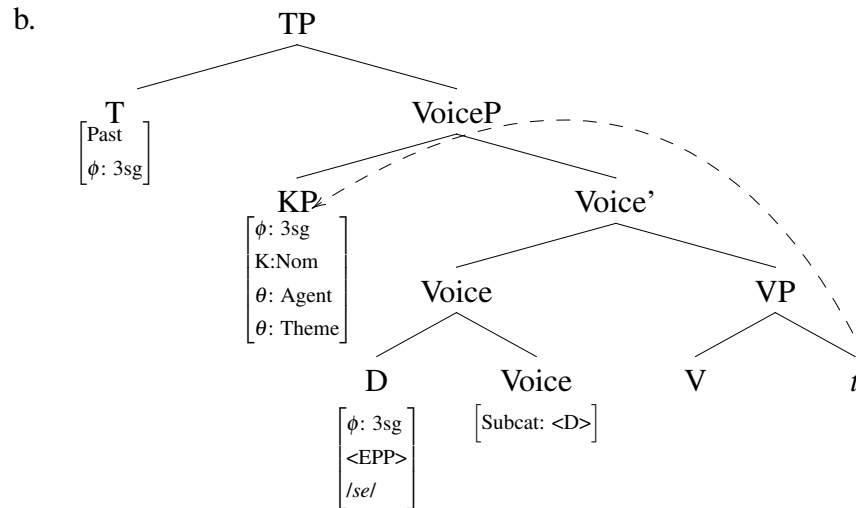
3.1 The Role of Activity behind u-Syncretism

3.1.1 Scenario #1: A-movement and Agree

The syntax of a reflexive sentence with *se* is exactly like a transitive sentence with a crucial difference: Voice, which like in any transitive simply subcategorizes an external argument through the specification of a [D]-feature, does not assign accusative case in reflexive environments. According to Pujalte & Saab (2012), this follows if Voice can enter the syntax with or without unvalued ϕ-features. If it has ϕ-features, then it values them through *Agree* against the internal object like in simple transitives. If Voice is fully ϕ-defective, then there is no accusative valuation by Voice. Nothing hinge on this particular implementation. Other theories of case assignment would do the same job, namely, deactivate the internal argument when there is such an argument present in the syntactic derivation. In fact, in passing, I will suggest other ways to approach this particular aspect of the theory in order to stress that I have no particular commitment with any theory of Case assignment (see footnote 7).

Now, because of the formal defectiveness of Voice, the internal argument of a *se*-reflexive transitive sentence, which has already received the theme θ-role from V, is active with respect to the probe that *se* instantiates. Therefore, the internal argument raises to Spec,Voice, deletes the EPP feature in *se* and receives an additional agent θ-role from Voice. In the following tree, I illustrate these aspects of the derivation:

(30)   a.   Ana se criticó.

b.

```
                              TP
                      ┌────────┴────────┐
                      T              VoiceP ─ ─ ─ ─ ─
                 ⎡ Past   ⎤      ┌──────┴──────┐        ╲
                 ⎣ φ: 3sg ⎦     KP          Voice'        ╲
                            ⎡ φ: 3sg   ⎤  ┌──────┴──────┐   ╲
                            ⎢ K:Nom    ⎥ Voice          VP    ╲
                            ⎢ θ: Agent ⎥ ┌──┴──┐      ┌──┴──┐   ╲
                            ⎣ θ: Theme ⎦ D    Voice   V     t
                                      ⎡ φ: 3sg ⎤ [Subcat: <D>]
                                      ⎢ <EPP>  ⎥
                                      ⎣ /se/   ⎦
```

A clarification is in order. In this tree, I represent the clitic as adjoined to Voice, but recall that clitics are hybrid as far their phrasal status is concerned. This means that they have a mixed phrasal status, behaving as phrases and heads. In a sense, they are licensed to adjoined as maximal phrases although they can also have head properties (acting like probes in the relevant domain, for instance). I will come back to the hybrid nature of clitics in section 3.2.1 and in section 4.3. For the time being, just keep in mind that this representation does not necessarily capture such hybrid nature of clitics.

At any rate, A-movement of the active KP to Spec,VoiceP creates a syntactic Agree dependency between this argument and the probe instantiated by the clitic. As a result of such a dependency, the clitic values its ϕ-features as third person singular. Once T is introduced into the derivation (or C, depending on assumptions about the locus of ϕ-features), it probes into its complement domain, finds KP, which is still active, and establish an A-dependency with it. As a result of this new instance of Agree, T values its ϕ-features and KP receives nominative as its case value. The "visible" effects of these abstract Agree relations are morphological agreement between the subject, T, the clitic and the case form of the subject (zero in this case). Importantly, this system derives all instances of the so-called "paradigmatic" *se* as the result of syntactic Agree. All the agreeing variants of the clitic, then (*me*, *te*, *nos*, etc.) obtain their features in the syntax and their surface form at PF. If Agree fails in the syntax, this, in turn, will result in the so-called "non-paradigmatic" *se*, i.e., impersonal/passive *se*. On this approach, there is no need for the basic division that most analyses of Spanish *se* make between the paradigmatic and non-paradigmatic types. In effect, according to the present theory, there is only one *se* in the syntax that merges with Voice, deletes the D-feature in Voice but, given its formal makeup (absence of K), cannot receive a θ-role from it. The main

difference between paradigmatic and non-paradigmatic *se* relies on whether or not the probe instantiated by the clitic succeeds attracting a full argument. As I have argued here, it does in the case of reflexive, and most cases of paradigmatic *se* (as we will see below), but it does not in non-paradigmatic *se* scenarios, to which I turn my attention now.

3.1.2 Scenario #2: Agree failure

Let us assume that, unlike paradigmatic instances of *se*, Voice is a probe for accusative case in impersonal/passive structures with *se*. Empirically, the contrast between the derivation of an impersonal/passive or a reflexive *se* sentence stemming from the same verbal root is clear and not subject to particular controversies, with the exception of passive *se*, which I will discuss below. In other words, there is no doubt that the contrast between (30) and (31) is at least a contrast in the Case of the internal argument. This is evident but not always sufficiently stressed, as far as I can tell. Anyway, let me illustrate the assumption that Voice values the internal argument as accusative through the following tree (double arrow = Agree between Voice and the internal KP):

(31)   a.   Se criticó a Ana.
       b.
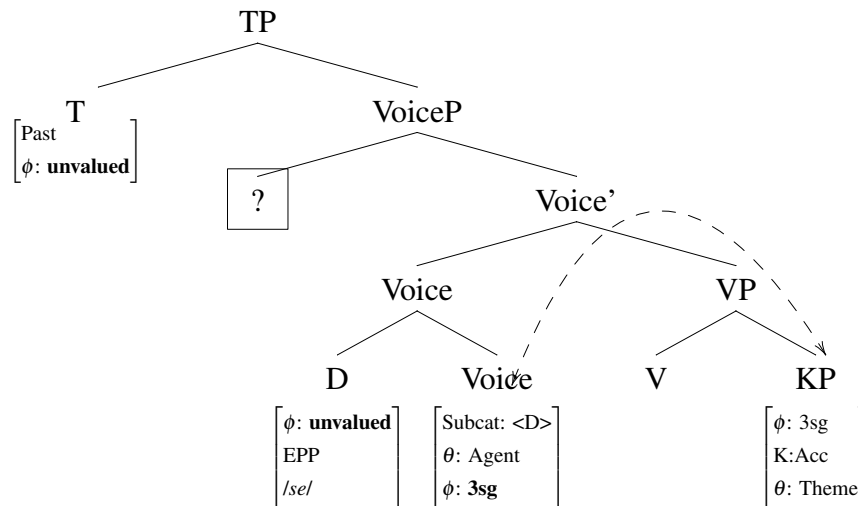
Note that Voice Case valuation necessarily precedes Voice θ-assignment. Otherwise, the agent θ-role would be assigned to the internal argument even in impersonal *se* environments. Alternatively, one could conjecture that Case valuation applies before than θ-assignment because it depends on a functional head below Voice (e.g., αP, see López 2012).[8] At any rate, the sole crucial difference between this

---

[8] Some of these alternatives are discussed in Saab (2015).

tree and the tree in (30b) is, then, the formal content of Voice, which in the impersonal scenario contains a set of unvalued ϕ-features. Voice itself then establishes an A-dependency with the internal argument and, as a result, this argument is deactivated. The direct consequence of this is an Agree failure between *se* and the internal argument (see Preminger 2014 for extensive discussion and a theory on Agree failures). By the same reasoning, T cannot value its uninterpretable features either. For impersonal *se*, this generalized failure is resolved at PF by default agreement and PF deletion of the noninterpretable feature in D (i.e., EPP). For passive *se*, a particular rule of postsyntactic agreement relates T and the object (see below). Therefore, the non-paradigmatic nature of impersonal and passive *se* is then the surface manifestation of this Agree failure and not the result of any intrinsic property of the clitic.

Now, because of this failure and the functional defectiveness of *se*, Voice does not discharge its θ-role to any KP. In LF terms, this means that the agent θ-role is realized in the Voice head. As we will see in section subsection 4.3, this syntactic scenario feeds combination between *se* and the Voice head under regular Functional Application. I will postpone the discussion of this aspect of the theory to section 4.

At first glance, the theory I am developing seems to make an incorrect prediction with respect to passive *se* constructions, where the internal argument agrees with the verb (cf. (2) above):

(32)   **Se** cerraron   las puertas para bloquear la salida.
       SE closed.3PL the doors   for   block.INF the exit
       'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

However, as shown by Pujalte (2013), Pujalte & Saab (2014), Saab (2014) and Ormazabal & Romero (2020), this is a kind of illusion. Concretely, passives and impersonals involving the clitic *se* do not differ regarding their abstract Case structure. Put differently, both constructions instantiate the same abstract syntactic structure deployed in (31a). Therefore, in passive *se* configurations there is no nominative Case valuation. This can be corroborated in contrasts as the following ones, in which passive *se* does not admit nominative pronouns or proper names in subject position:

(33)   a.   Se encontraron cadáveres.
            SE found.3PL   bodies
            'Bodies were found.'
       b. *Se encontró   Juan/él.
            SE found.3SG Juan/he
            Intended: 'He was found.'

    c. *Me   encontré yo.
        CL.1SG.ACC found.1SG I
        Intended: 'I was found.' (b-c OK as reflexives; see Pujalte & Saab
        2012)

Crucially, accusative pronominalization or differential object marking must be used here. This always results in an impersonal *se* sentence:

(34)   a. Se los   encontró.
          SE CL.MASC.3PL.ACC found.3SG
          'They were found.'
    b. Se me   encontró.
          SE CL.1SG.ACC found.3SG
          'I was found.'
    c. Se encontró a   Juan.
          SE found.3SG DOM Juan
          'Juan was found.'

For some dialects, the right generalization seems to be that only those objects that are not explicitly marked as accusative show subject-verb agreement effects. In Pujalte (2013) and Pujalte & Saab (2014) this agreement difference between passives and impersonals is considered as purely morphophonological. If this is correct, we have to dissociate morphological case from morphological agreement. We refer the reader to those works and, in particular, to the recent paper by Ormazabal & Romero (2020) for extensive discussion and a specific proposal.

In summary, I have illustrated the role that the Activity Condition plays in the derivation of reflexives and impersonals/passives. In the next subsection, I turn my attention to the question whether other standard restrictions on A-movement play also a role in the derivation of *se*-reflexives in Spanish. I will show that this is indeed the case and that by assuming that *se*-reflexivization is an instance of A-movement, we can provide a straightforward account for certain intriguing reflexivization patterns in Spanish ditransitives. I also show why the present analysis is superior to other alternatives in competition.

3.2 Evidence for A-movement
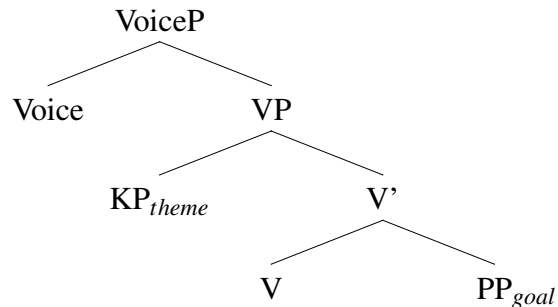
3.2.1 Reflexivization in ditransitives

A crucial ingredient of the present theory is the view of *se* as a probe for A-movement. Regular diagnostics for A-movement (absence of WCO effects, for instance) are impossible to test in reflexives. Yet, there is empirical evidence com-

ing from a contrast observed in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016, 2017) involving *se* reflexivization in ditransitive sentences. It is well-known that Spanish has a dative alternation in which the goal DP can surface as a PP headed by *a* 'to' or as *a*-marked DP doubled by a dative clitic (see Masullo 2003, Demonte 1995, Cuervo 2003, and Pujalte 2013 for another approach):
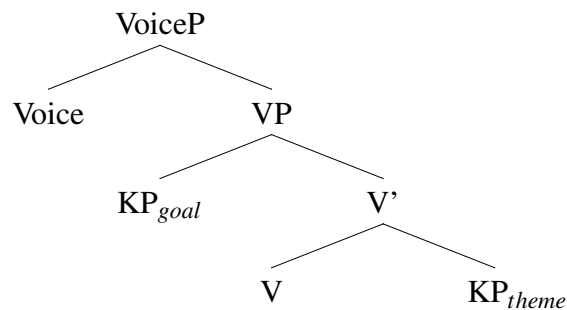
(35)   a.   Juan entregó el libro a María.
            Juan gave the book to María
            'Juan gave the book to María.'
    b.   Juan le entregó el libro a María.
            Juan CL.3SG.DAT gave the book to María
            'Juan gave María the book.'

The example (35a) illustrates the prepositional variant of the alternation whereas (35b) illustrates what I will call without any theoretical commitment *the double object construction*. Following main insights in the literature, I assume that the dative alternation reverses the c-commanding relations between the two internal arguments:[9]

(36)   *Prepositional construction*

```
                    VoiceP
                   /      \
               Voice       VP
                          /   \
                   KP_theme    V'
                              /  \
                             V    PP_goal
```

(37)   *Double object construction*

```
                    VoiceP
                   /      \
               Voice       VP
                          /   \
                   KP_goal     V'
                              /  \
                             V    KP_theme
```
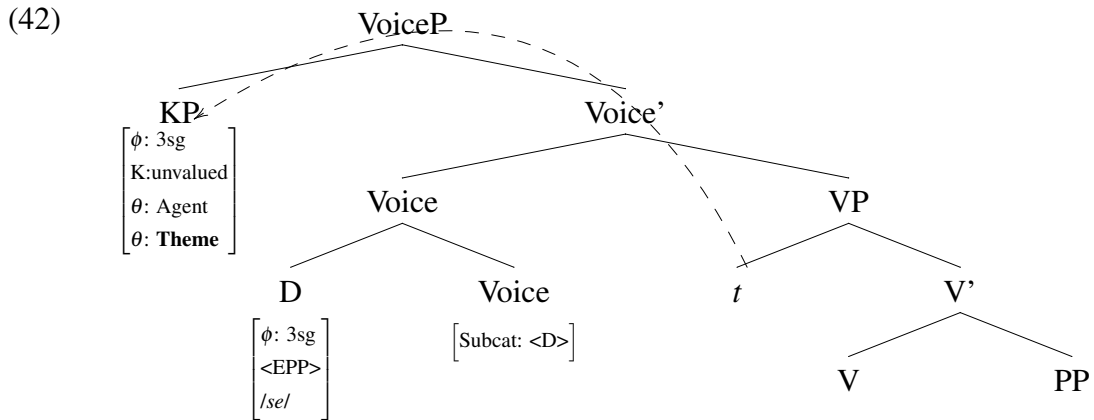
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[9] I also follow Pujalte (2013), according to whom true ditransitives like *recomendar* does not project a low applicative phrase (against Cuervo 2003). Yet, I think that the point I make in the body of the text is orthogonal to this issue.
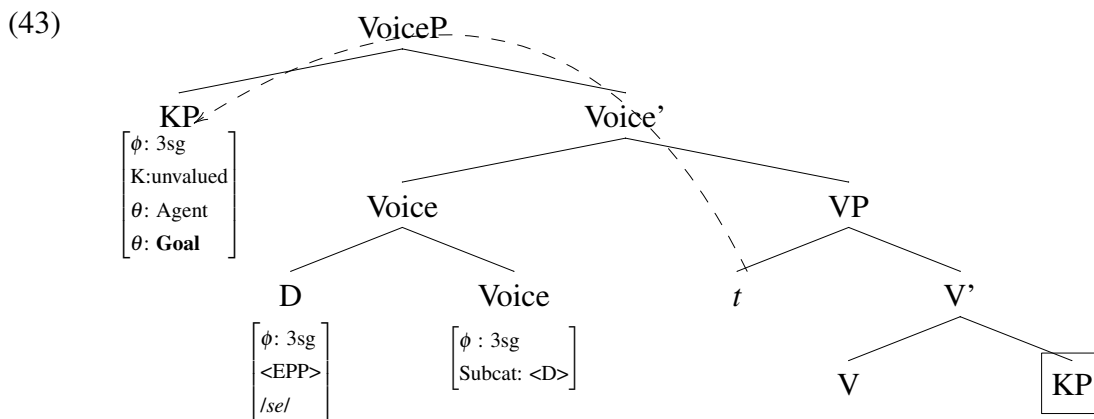
Assuming this analysis of the dative alternation, the following prediction arises with respect to *se* reflexivization: only the theme KP in the prepositional variant can move attracted by *se*. This prediction is correct. In the following examples, reflexivization of the theme KP is only allowed in the prepositional construction. In the double object construction, the result of reflexivizing the theme KP either is ungrammatical or gives rise to an idiomatic reading, which I indicate with parentheses below. In the latter case, *se* is not reflexive, but inherent/diacritic (more on this below):

(38) a. Juan se entregó a la policía.
          Juan SE delivered to the police
          'Juan turned himself in/over the police.'
      b. *Juan se le   entregó a la policía.
          Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to the police
          (NB: Ok in some dialects if read idiomatically as Juan made things easy for the police to have sex with him.)

(39) a. Juan se recomendó   a su jefe para ese trabajo.
          Juan SE recommended to his boss for   that job
          'Juan recommended himself to his/her boss for that job.'
      b. *Juan se le   recomendó   a su jefe para ese trabajo.
          Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT recommended to his boss for   that job

(40) a. Juan se presentó   a María.
          Juan SE introduced to María
          'Juan introduced himself to María.'
      b. *Juan se le   presentó   a María.
          Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT introduced to María
          (NB: OK if read as Juan suddenly appeared in front of María.)

(41) a. Juan se regaló   a María envuelto en un paquete.
          Juan SE give-a-present to María wrapped in a   package
          'Juan gave himself as a present to María wrapped in a package.'
      b. *Juan se le   regaló   a María.
          Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT give-a-present to María
          (NB: Ok in some dialects if interpreted approximately as Juan did not oppose any resistance to María.)

Standard restrictions on A-movement accounts for why this contrast exists. Concretely, only in the prepositional construction the theme KP is local in the favored sense (see (42)). In the double object construction, the goal KP is closer to the Voice head than the theme KP and, consequently, it cannot be attracted by the relevant probe that the clitic instantiates:

(42)

VoiceP
- KP
  [φ: 3sg
  K:unvalued
  θ: Agent
  θ: **Theme**]
- Voice'
  - Voice
    - D
      [φ: 3sg
      <EPP>
      /se/]
    - Voice
      [Subcat: <D>]
  - VP
    - t
    - V'
      - V
      - PP

In the double object construction, the goal KP is closer to the Voice head than the theme KP and, consequently, cannot be attracted by the relevant probe that the clitic instantiates. Therefore, we correctly rule out any attempt to A-move the theme KP to Spec,Voice in the double object construction. Put differently, only the goal KP can be reflexivized in the double object construction.

(43)

VoiceP
- KP
  [φ: 3sg
  K:unvalued
  θ: Agent
  θ: **Goal**]
- Voice'
  - Voice
    - D
      [φ: 3sg
      <EPP>
      /se/]
    - Voice
      [φ : 3sg
      Subcat: <D>]
  - VP
    - t
    - V'
      - V
      - KP

The following example, in which the goal A-moves to Spec,VoiceP, shows that the goal argument can indeed be reflexivized:

(44)   Juan se entregó el libro.
        Juan SE gave   the book
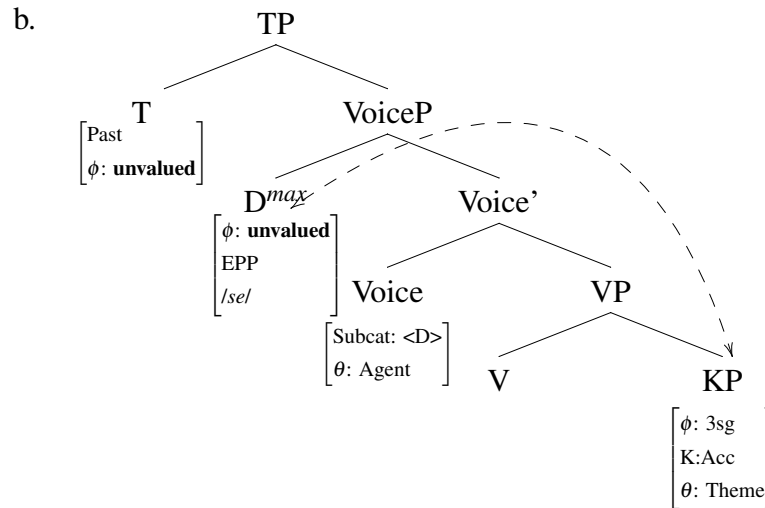   'Juan gave himself the book.'

Before entering into comparison with alternative analyses, two comments are in order. First, we can assume here that dative Case is structural (at least in ditransitives), but, unlike nominative and accusative, it is not assigned by Agree with a given functional head, but through a PF mechanism that inserts the preposition *a* to an argument that has not valued its Case feature in the syntax. Pujalte (2013) mo-

tivates this operation by properties of the inheritance mechanism and the particular distribution of dative arguments in the syntax. I refer the reader to that work for details. Alternatively, we can assume that dative Case is valued *via* Agree with a probe *above* VoiceP. Under both alternatives, the goal KP is active to get a second θ-role from Voice. At any rate, it is important to stress that these are auxiliary assumptions. In principle, the present theory is perfect compatible with other Case theories offered in the literature. A prominent family of theories are the competition-based ones (Marantz 1991, Preminger 2014, Baker 2015, among many others). According to such theories, nominals obtain their structural case value from competition among them in a certain structural domain. We can, then, adapt the present theory to such views by, for instance, exploiting a particular feature of my analysis. In effect, recall that, following more or less standard approaches to clitics, I have assumed that clitics are hybrid regarding their phrasal status. Following ideas by Chomsky (1995) and others, I have implemented this assumption by stipulating that clitics are minimal and maximal:

(45) $D^{min/max}$
         $\begin{bmatrix} \phi\text{: unvalued} \\ \text{EPP} \end{bmatrix}$

So far, I have assumed that clitics are adjoined to the Voice head without providing more details. Embick's (2004) original suggestion is that clitics could merge in Spec,VoiceP and then cliticize onto Voice. Let us assume that this could be the case for reflexives, but that for impersonals the computational system exploits the hybrid nature of clitics by specifying the feature [maximal]. If this is correct, the tree in (31b) should be replaced by the following alternative analysis (double arrow = argument competition):

(46)   a.   Se criticó a Ana.

b.

```
                    TP
            ┌────────┴────────┐
            T              VoiceP
      ⎡ Past      ⎤    ┌──────┴────────── �
      ⎣ φ: unvalued ⎦  D^max          Voice'
                  ⎡ φ: unvalued ⎤  ┌─────┴─────┐
                  ⎢ EPP         ⎥  Voice        VP
                  ⎣ /se/        ⎦ ⎡ Subcat: <D> ⎤ ┌──┴──┐
                                 ⎣ θ: Agent    ⎦  V    KP
                                                    ⎡ φ: 3sg  ⎤
                                                    ⎢ K:Acc   ⎥
                                                    ⎣ θ: Theme ⎦
```

This is an interesting move, with clear consequences for the issues I am exploring here. If this option is plausible, then the story would go as follows. In reflexives, D adjunction to Voice makes D invisible for Case competition. For this reason, in reflexives the internal argument is active and can be attracted by *se*. In impersonals, the clitic, being maximal, counts for Case competition. Roughly speaking, once the clitic merges with Voice it competes for Case with the internal arguments. Following roughly Baker and others, since D c-commands the internal argument, this argument receives accusative with the consequence of becoming inactive for A-movement and further θ-assignment. Note now that on this approach the impossibility of reflexivizing the theme argument in double object configurations follows from Activity and not from Locality. Merging the goal argument above the theme one results in accusative assignment to the theme argument and in its inactivation for establishing further A-dependencies. Either way, the theory correctly rules out all the ungrammatical sentences we are discussing in this section and correctly rules in the grammatical ones.

In principle, it is hard to see which theory is better, since this depends to a great extent on theories concerning the morphological case / abstract Case connection and, as I said, this is something that cannot be resolved here (see footnote 7). It seems that this competition-based approach handles in a better way the fact that we can have pairs like the following ones, where the goal KP seems to be active and inactive depending on whether the sentence is impersonal or reflexive:

(47) a. Juan se entregó el libro.
         Juan SE gave   the book
         'Juan gave himself the book.'

     b.   Se le   entregó el libro a Juan.
         SE CL.3SG.DAT gave   the book to Juan
         'Someone/one gave Juan the book.'

The sentence in (47a) was already discussed above when I explained why only the goal argument can be reflexivized in the double object construction. The sentence in (47b) is the impersonal version which is derived from the same underlying double object configuration. It is easy to see how a competition-based theory of Case would derive each sentence: either *se* is minimal and we obtain the reflexive sentence or it is maximal and we obtain, instead, the impersonal sentence. Under the Agree theory of Case, it is not evident how the impersonal sentence is ruled in. In principle, if the goal is active when *se* is introduced, then it should be attracted to Spec,Voice obligatorily ruling out sentences like (47b). In order to account for pairs like these, then the Agree based theory would perhaps require additional assumptions regarding the timing of Case valuation, in general, and the nature of the dative, in particular. But since there is no broad consensus regarding the nature of Spanish datives, we cannot resolve the issue here. Importantly, it seems that the theory should acknowledge the non-uniform status of datives (see for instance Cuervo 2003 and Pujalte 2013). This is clear if we take into account that some datives do not intervene in A-movement. As I have already observed, sentences like (38b) are grammatical if interpreted not as reflexive sentences but as containing a type of inherent *se* clitic. As we will see in section 5.1, inherent *se* sentences also involves A-movement. If this is the case, then we are led to conclude that either the dative has inherent case or it is higher in the structure, both plausible solutions from what we can deduce from the vast literature on the issue.

    Second, assuming that in double object constructions V enters the syntax with two θ-roles to assign, we should wonder why both θ-roles are not directly assigned to the object KP once V and this KP are merged,i.e., before the introduction of the indirect object:

(48) $[_{V'} \text{ V KP}_{[theme,goal]}]$

If this happens, the indirect object would not receive a θ-role and, consequently, the resulting sentence would violate the Θ-Criterion. It seems then that the VP projection must be completed by External Merge of the indirect object before θ-assignment of the goal θ-role:

(49) $[_{VP} \text{ KP}_{goal} [_{V'} \text{ V KP}_{theme}]]$

Yet, this is not necessarily so. In principle, one could let (48) to take place in the syntax and to filter the result at LF. Alternatively, the step in (48) is blocked in the

syntax by principles that regulate the timing of External Merge and θ-assignment. This second strategy is discussed in detail in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016). Any decision in this respect would crucially depend on the assumption that a given thematic head can have more than one θ-role and, obviously, on assumptions about the proper analysis of double object constructions. Space limitations prevent further inquiry into these technical issues.

3.2.2 Evaluating other theories in competition

The facts discussed so far are crucial because they allow to distinguish among different analytic options on empirical grounds. Consider first Reinhart & Siloni's (2005) approach. According to them, long-distance θ-role assignment is allowed by the system whenever certain conditions apply. First, a given DP can receive more than one θ-role through the operation of reflexivization bundling:

(50) **Reflexivization bundling:**
      $[\theta_i][\theta_j] \rightarrow [\theta_i] - [\theta_j]$, where θ_i is an external θ-role.

      <div align="right">[Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 400]</div>

Bundling is an operation that applies in syntax or in the lexicon depending on parametric options. French and Spanish are languages in which reflexivization is syntactic and subject to the following conditions:

(51) **Reflexivization in syntax**
      a. Case: Case is reduced by the appropriate morphology (such as the clitic *se*).
      b. Bundling: Operation (50) applies to unassigned θ-roles, upon merger of the external θ-role.

      <div align="right">[Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 404]</div>

Then, for a simple reflexive sentence like (52a), the unsaturated theme θ-role is bundled with the external θ-role once the external argument is merged:

(52) a. Jean se lave.
          Jean SE washes
          'Jean washes.'
      b. VP: [se lave$_{\theta i-Agent, \theta k-Theme}$]
      c. IP: [Jean$_{<\theta i, \theta k>}$ [se lave$_j$ [$_{VP}$ t$_j$]]]

      <div align="right">[Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 404]</div>

According to Reinhart & Siloni, languages in which reflexivization takes place in the syntax, like French and Romance in general, allow dative or accusative reflex-

ivization depending on the specific Case the clitic *se* reduces. If the clitic reduces dative Case we get (47a), but (38a) when accusative Case is reduced (see Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 412). The question, then, is how to rule out examples like (38b) where the theme argument cannot be reflexivized in presence of a c-commanding DP goal. Given that a theme θ-role is never realized as a dative argument (Reinhart & Siloni 2005: 412), we must assume that the clitic here reduces accusative and that the goal argument receives dative. This results in a configuration in which the theme θ-role remains unassigned. If this is correct, then reflexivization bundling would apply upon merger of the external argument. However, this is impossible.

Ditransitives present a more serious challenge to Labelle (2008). On her view, *se* is the realization of a Voice head, whose semantic definition requires combination with an open predicate. This is possible if, for instance, the verbal predicate, defined as function from entities to event predicates, does not have an internal argument. The denotation of Voice$_{se}$ is then as follows:
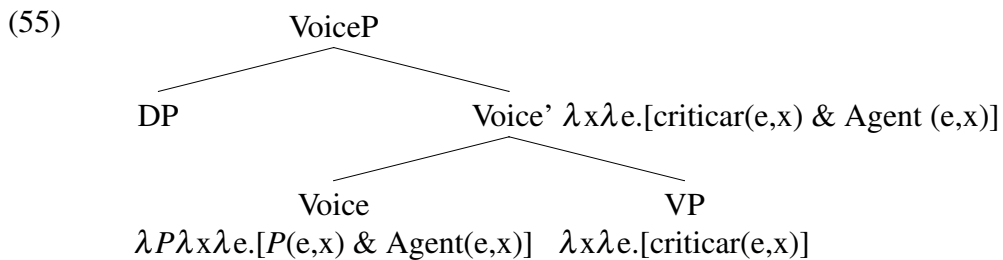
(53) $\llbracket \text{Voice} \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x) \ \& \ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$

[Labelle 2008: 838]

So, for a reflexive sentence like the following one:

(54)   Ana se critica.
         Ana SE criticizes
         'Ana criticizes himself.'

Labelle proposes the analysis in the tree below (adapted from Labelle 2008: 838):

(55)

VoiceP

DP   Voice' $\lambda x \lambda e.[\text{criticar}(e,x) \ \& \ \text{Agent}\,(e,x)]$

Voice   VP
$\lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x) \ \& \ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$ $\lambda x \lambda e.[\text{criticar}(e,x)]$
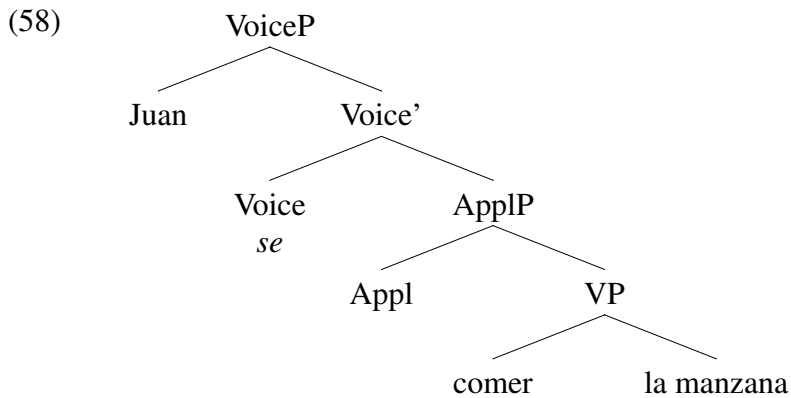
Crucial to this analysis is the relation between the Voice head and its complement. It is required that an open predicate obtains before combination through functional application with the Voice head. Added arguments are of particular importance here. Such as Labelle suggests, aspectual *se* (see example (5) repeated below) could be derived under a high applicative analysis in which the benefactive argument that the high applicative head requires remains unsaturated leaving this applicative head open (see subsection 5.3 for more details):

(56) Juan se comió la manzana.
      Juan SE ate   the apple
      'Juan ate the apple.'

Let us see how the argument proceeds in more detail. Following Pylkkänen (2008), Labelle adopts the following denotation for high applicatives:

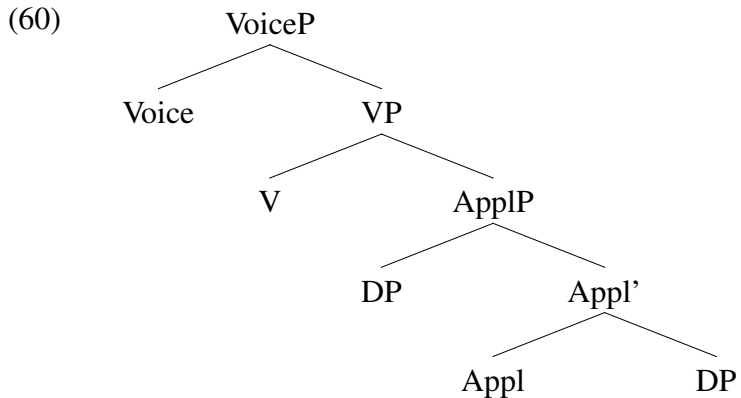(57) $[\![\text{Appl}_{high}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{Benefactive}(e, x)]$

Syntactically, this type of high applicatives merge above VP and below Voice and, semantically, they relate an individual and an event predicate. If the entity argument is not saturated before Voice introduction, an open predicate obtains, one that can legitimately combine with Voice$_{se}$, as defined in (53):

(58)

```
              VoiceP
             /      \
          Juan      Voice'
                   /      \
               Voice      ApplP
                se       /      \
                      Appl       VP
                               /    \
                          comer   la manzana
```

The denotations of the relevant nodes is provided below. Note that the Appl head combines with the VP through Event Identification (Kratzer 1996; Pylkkänen 2008, and the next section):

(59) a. $[\![\text{VP}]\!] = \lambda e.\ [\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana})]$
      b. $[\![\text{Appl}_{benef}]\!] = \lambda z \lambda e.[\text{Benefactive}(e, z)]$
      c. $[\![\text{ApplP}]\!] = \lambda z \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana})\ \&\ \text{Benefactive}(e, z)]$ By Event Identification
      d. $[\![\text{Voice}_{se}]\!] = \lambda P \lambda x \lambda e.[P(e,x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
      e. $[\![\text{Voice'}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana})\ \&\ \text{Benefactive}(e, x)\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,x)]$
      f. $[\![\text{VoiceP}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{comer}(e, \text{la manzana})\ \&\ \text{Benefactive}(e, \text{Juan})\ \&\ \text{Agent}(e,\text{Juan})]$

Labelle also suggests tentatively that her analysis could be extended to low applicatives. According to Pylkkänen, low applicatives relate two individuals and are generated below V as shown below:

(60)

```
                    VoiceP
                   /      \
              Voice        VP
                          /  \
                         V    ApplP
                             /     \
                           DP       Appl'
                                   /     \
                                 Appl     DP
```

Pylkkänen recognizes two semantic flavors for low applicatives, one expressing a recipient relation and another one denoting a source relation:

(61)   a. $[\![\mathrm{Appl}_{recipient}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.[\,f(e, x)\; \&\; \mathrm{theme}(e, x)\; \&\; \text{to-the-possession}(x, y)]$

         b. $[\![\mathrm{Appl}_{source}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.[f(e, x)\; \&\; \mathrm{theme}\,(e, x)\; \&\; \text{from-the-possession}(x, y)]$
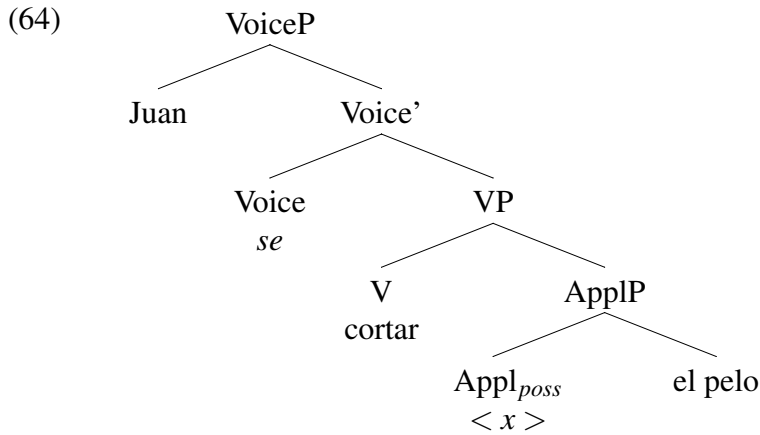
Following Cuervo (2003), Labelle extends the low applicative analysis to account for inalienable possession sentences involving *se*:

(62)   Juan se corta el   pelo.
        Juan SE cuts   the hair
        'Juan cuts his hair.'

Inalienable possession is expressed by a lexical variant of a low applicative head denoting an *in-the-possession-of* relation:

(63) $[\![\mathrm{Appl}_{poss}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda y \lambda f_{<e,<s,t>>}.[f(e, x)\; \&\; \mathrm{theme}\,(e, x)\; \&\; \text{in-the-possession}(x, y)]$

With these assumption in mind, the analysis for a sentence like (62) can be represented as follows (adapted from Labelle 2008: 853):

(64)

VoiceP
├── Juan
└── Voice'
    ├── Voice
    │   *se*
    └── VP
        ├── V
        │   cortar
        └── ApplP
            ├── Appl$_{poss}$
            │ $< x >$
            └── el pelo

Labelle does not provide more details. As far as I can tell, as it stands, this analysis fails, since combination of V and Appl would result in a mismatch of semantic types.[10] In effect, absence of a dative argument would produce a type mismatch, in which the semantic type of V$_{<e,<s,t>>}$ cannot saturate the individual argument of Appl$_{<e,<e,<s,t>>>}$. Put differently, the syntax proposed in (64) does not give the required open predicate at the VP level; the derivation is indeed cancelled when V is introduced. Concerning the paradigm from (38) to (41), this is not entirely bad news if we assume a low applicative analysis for ditransitives. Reflexivization of the theme role in the double object sentences is correctly ruled out. The problem is that the theory also rules out sentences where the applied argument is reflexivized. As the grammaticality of the sentence in (44) shows this prediction is not borne out. And of course, the sentence in (62) is not properly ruled in.

As we have seen, the ungrammaticality of sentences like (38b) could be thought as the result of a minimality effect, where the KP in complement position illicitly crosses the goal KP. In this sense, the movement theories of reflexivization, according to which the *se* is a residue of A-movement (Hornstein 2001 and Boeckx, Nunes & Hornstein 2008) could then derive the relevant patterns along the lines of the theory defended here. A simplified representation of how this analysis should proceed is illustrated below:

(65)   a. *Juan se le   entregó a la policía.
           Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to the police
           Intended: 'Juan delivered himself to the police.'
       b. *[$_{VoiceP}$ DP$_{Theme}$ Voice [$_{VP}$ DP$_{Goal}$ V t$_{Theme}$]]

---

[10] As pointed out by a reviewer, V and Appl could combine by Function Composition, as proposed in Wood (2015), Wood & Marantz (2017) and also Myler (2014). If this is the case, then the problem would be that she would correctly rule in the example in (47a), but she would incorrectly rule the example in (38b) as well.

Kaminszczik & Saab (2016; 2017) argues against the A-movement approach on the basis of the fact that object to subject movement crossing a dative goal is attested in passive sentences:

(66)   El   libro   le   fue   entregado   a   Juan.
            the book CL.3SG.DAT was given   to Juan
            'The book was given to Juan.'

For reasons like this, they argue then in favor of an alternative approach, according to which the ban of theme reflexivization in double object constructions is the result of the ban of long-distance agent θ-role assignment to the theme argument by Voice in the presence of an intervening goal argument. Yet, I think that the argument is not enough to reject an A-movement approach to the paradigm at hand, first because there is no conclusive evidence for subject movement in Spanish triggered by EPP properties of tense, and second, because even if subjects move to Spec,TP, the analysis of such a putative derivation would be crucially different from the relevant ditransitive sentences. In reflexives the probe for A-movement is in Voice, but encoded in T in passives like (66). This is a "dramatic" difference regarding the timing of movement. Suppose for instance that dative Case is checked by a probe above Voice, which was one of the alternatives discussed in the previous section. If this is correct, then once T enters the derivation the goal argument would be inactive for further EPP-induced movement.

(67) $[_{TP}$ KP$_{Theme}$ T$_{EPP}$ $[_{DatP}$ KP$_{Goal}$ Dat$_{EPP}$ $[_{VoiceP}$ Voice $[_{VP}$ t_{Goal} V $t_{Theme}]]]]$

There is indeed robust evidence that goal KP arguments cross the subject via A-movement. For instance, WCO is avoided whenever there is dative doubling, a clear indication that the first step of movement of the goal argument to Spec,CP is of the A-type:

(68)   ¿A quién$_i$??(le$_i$)   dio   un libro su$_i$ madre?
            to   whom CL.3SG.DAT gave a   book his/her mother
            'Whom does his/her mother give a book?'

If this is on the right track, then the A-movement approach to reflexivization in ditransitive contexts cannot be ruled out on the basis of sentences like (66). And in principle, the A-movement approach seems to be superior to the proposal in Kaminszczik & Saab (2016) at least for conceptual reasons since it accounts for the paradigm without further ado, in particular, without introducing special conditions on θ-role assignment.

3.3   Interim summary

In this section, I have explored Thesis 1 in detail, repeated below, and proposed a concrete syntactic implementation of it:

(69)   *Thesis 1 (syntax)*: *se* is a probe for A-movement.

I have shown that standard conditions on A-movement, essentially, Activity and Minimality, are attested in the derivation of impersonals and passives. In the next section, I focus on the semantic aspect of my theory in order to show that the syntactic derivations proposed so far give two different inputs to LF: one under which the clitic is realized as a λ-abstractor and another one under which it is realized as a variable, i.e., an indefinite in Heim's (1982) classical approach.

4   Semantic implementations

In the previous sections, I have shown how my system accounts for the syntax of *se* constructions. I now turn my attention to Thesis 2, repeated below, regarding the LF realization of sentences containing the clitic *se* or its agreeing variants:

(70)   *Thesis 2 (semantics)*: The LF realization of *se* depends on the syntactic output. Either A-movement applies in the syntax and LF receives the instruction for predicate abstraction or there is no A-movement and, as a consequence, no abstraction. If the latter is the case, *se* satisfies the individual argument Voice requires.

I will proceed first making explicit some basic assumptions (4.1). The theory is illustrated with a simple transitive sentence (4.2). Then I provide some detailed analyses for *se* reflexives (4.3) and for impersonal *se* constructions (4.4). In passing, I will also provide comparisons with some extant approaches to reflexives and impersonal *se*.

4.1   Basic assumptions

I propose that, at LF, θ-roles are semantically realized as functions from entities to event predicates (i.e., objects denoting in $< e, < s, t >>$), like V and Voice in Kratzer (1996). At least for the basic cases, these are the only semantic objects of this type, given that I assume a radical nonprojectionist view on thematic relations, according to which verbal predicates only denote event predicates (see Pietroski 2005 and A. Williams 2005, among others). A KP then cannot be combined directly

with the verbal predicate for semantic reasons. For simple e-denoting DPs, direct combination with $V_{<s,t>}$ would produce a noninterpretable object at LF:

(71) ? Type Mismatch

$V_{<s,t>}$ DP_e
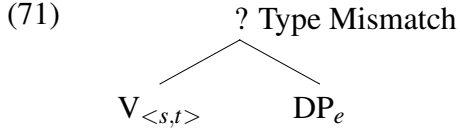
In order to resolve this issue, let us first assume the following three axioms for semantic composition of binary nodes:

(72) **Functional Application (FA):** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ is a function whose domain contains $[\![\gamma]\!]$, then $[\![\alpha]\!] = [\![\beta]\!]([\![\gamma]\!])$.

[Heim & Kratzer 1998: 44]

(73) **Predicate Modification for event properties (PM):** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ and $[\![\gamma]\!]$ are both in $D_{<s,t>}$, then $[\![\alpha]\!] = \lambda e \in D_{event}.[\![\beta]\!](e) = [\![\gamma]\!](e) = 1$.

[adapted from Heim & Kratzer 1998: 65]

(74) **Event Identification (EI):** If α is a branching node, $\{\beta, \gamma\}$ is the set of α's daughters, and $[\![\beta]\!]$ is in $< e, < s,t >>$ and $[\![\gamma]\!]$ is in $< s,t >$, then, $[\![\alpha]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e_s.[[\![\beta]\!](e,x) \& [\![\gamma]\!](e)]$

[adapted from Kratzer 1996: 122]

Second, I assume that θ-roles have a specified denotation at LF; concretely, they denote functions from entities to event predicates:

(75) a. $[\![\theta_{Theme}]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x \lambda e.Theme(e,x)$
      b. $[\![\theta_{Agent}]\!]_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x \lambda e.Agent(e,x)$

This removes the predicative import from Voice. Generalizing proposals in Myler (2014), Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Schäfer (2015), Wood (2015), Wood & Marantz (2017) and Schäfer (2017), I adopt the idea that Voice denotes the following identity function (maybe partial, if we want to introduce aspectual conditions, for instance):
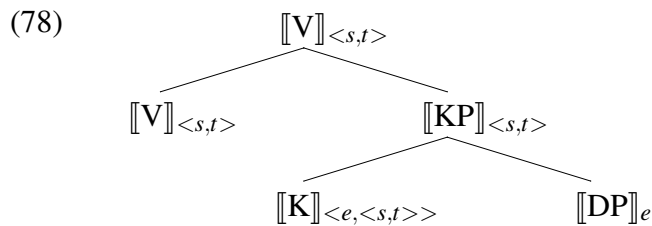
(76) $[\![Voice]\!]_{<<s,t>,<s,t>>} = \lambda f.f$

The logic of the argument leads us to conceive of θ-features as elements that are assigned/discharged on arguments in order to produce a predicative structure to the

interior of those arguments. As a concrete implementation, I have already assumed that DPs project a K head which is the receptor of a given θ-role. Verbal predicates are, in the general case, pure event predicates and not internal argument introducers, an idea in accordance with Pietroski (2005) and A. Williams (2005), among others. Put differently, on this view, K heads are derived argument introducers. In this way, we motivate the need for an argument to have Case through a condition at play at the LF interface. In the abstract, K must receive a θ-role for interpretability considerations at LF and for producing a semantically well-formed combination:[11]

(77)

$$\llbracket \text{KP} \rrbracket_{<s,t>}$$

$$\llbracket \text{K} \rrbracket_{<e,<s,t>>} \qquad \llbracket \text{DP} \rrbracket_e$$
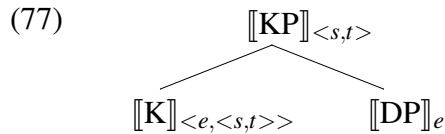
VP and KP cannot be interpreted by FA but by PM:

(78)

$$\llbracket \text{V} \rrbracket_{<s,t>}$$

$$\llbracket \text{V} \rrbracket_{<s,t>} \qquad \llbracket \text{KP} \rrbracket_{<s,t>}$$

$$\llbracket \text{K} \rrbracket_{<e,<s,t>>} \qquad \llbracket \text{DP} \rrbracket_e$$

Again, the idea is not a novelty; it is at the heart of Pietroski's (2005) event semantics, according to which Merge is semantically equivalent to conjunction and not to FA. Here, I will not go as far as Pietroski, because I assume that Merge can indeed have as semantic correlates both FA and PM. At any rate, I do agree that this approach brings much more advantages than problems. In particular, it avoids stipulating conjunction as part of the predicate denotations and to deduce it directly from PM. In what follows, I show how the theory in section 3 and the assumptions about the semantic architecture just discussed offer an alternative to standard event semantics that it is extensionally equivalent to it in a number of cases, but superior in others. But before entering into detailed analyses, a clarification is in order.

As conceived here, structural K starts its syntactic life just as an empty semantic node. There are two initial points to make with respect to this. First, if K does not receive a θ-role, then either K is treated as an empty node at LF or it denotes the

---

[11] I assume with A. Williams (2005: 13, footnote 10) that "Quantifier Raising applies to all DPs of quantificational type, $<<e,t>,t>$, leaving a trace in type $<e>$". This move is well known in models where QR is motivated by LF considerations (Heim & Kratzer 1998). Note that perhaps I have to make the further assumption that quantificational DPs uses Spec,KP as a escape hatch. As noted by a reviewer, this predicts K stranding, but note that if this is indeed the case the stranding arises only at LF.

identity function. The move is well-known in contemporary formal semantics. The crucial consequence is that this avoids some of the criticisms that the Visibility Condition has received in the past (see Lasnik 2008 for an important overview). Expletives are a case at point.[12] If expletives are K projections –perhaps with an empty semantic D head encoding, say, person features or other relevant category or inflectional properties– merged in Spec,TP, then K would not receive any θ-role, as desired, and would have no LF import at all:

(79) a. It seems that John is here.
      b. There are many guests in the party.

Second, other circumstances are also worth mentioning. It could be the case, for instance, that KP occurs in syntactic-semantic configurations in which it does not receive any θ-role because it is the argument of an $< e,t >$ predicate. If its DP complement denotes, for instance, in e then, K either is empty at LF or denotes the identity function:

(80) a. John is crazy.
      b. LF: $[\![_{AP} \text{ crazy}]\!]_{<e,t>}([\![_{KP}[_{DP} \text{ John}]]\!]_e)$

Of course, a proper analysis of copular or expletive sentences largely exceeds the limits of this study. These briefs comments only aim to show what I believe is the correct way of thinking the different semantic realizations of K, namely, that K is an allosemic category in the sense of Marantz (2013) and Wood & Marantz (2017). Put differently, its semantic realization is contextually determined by the syntactic environment in which it is allowed to occur. Of course, allosemy should be properly restricted and I will do it in subsection 5.1, where I exploit this aspect of the theory in order to fill a gap in the syntax and semantics of *se*, namely, inherent *se* constructions.
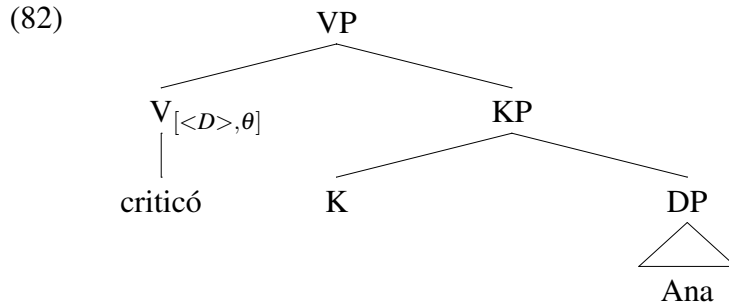
4.2 Deriving simple transitives

Let us start with a transitive sentence:

(81) Juan criticó   a   Ana.
      Juan criticized DOM Ana.
      'Juan criticized Ana.'

---

[12] In the GB days, the Visibility Condition was also criticized for considerations involving PRO, a category with θ but without Case. Chomsky & Lasnik's (1993) theory of Null Case avoids this problem for the Visibility Condition although introduces new ones. The movement theory of control proposed by Hornstein (1999) and others also avoids the issue.
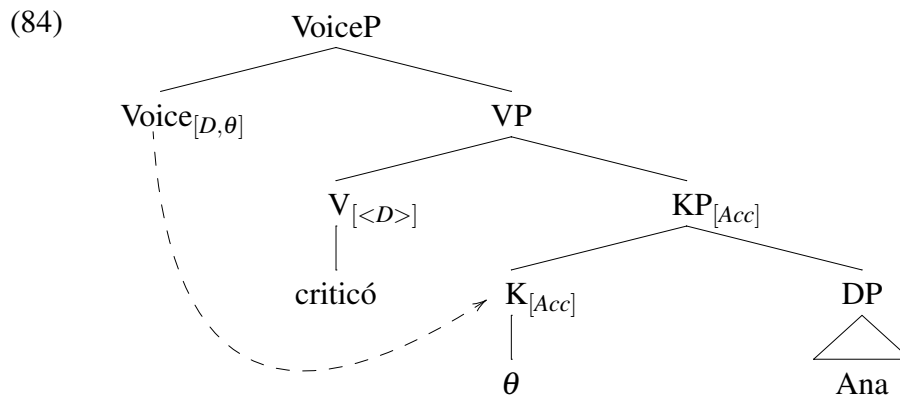
The relevant steps of the syntactic derivation are the following ones. First, V merges with its internal argument, a KP that has a unvalued K feature:

(82)

```
                    VP
              ┌──────┴──────┐
         V[<D>,θ]           KP
          │            ┌────┴────┐
       criticó         K         DP
                                 △
                                Ana
```

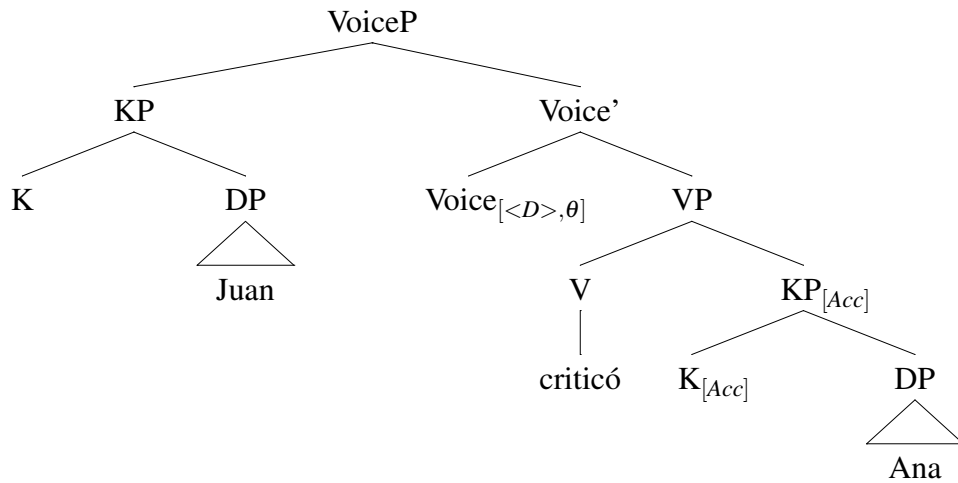Now, given that this K head is active with respect to V, V can assign its theme θ-role to the internal argument:[13]

(83)

```
                    VP
              ┌──────┴──────┐
         V[<D>]             KP
          │            ┌────┴────┐
       criticó         K         DP
                       │         △
                       θ        Ana
```
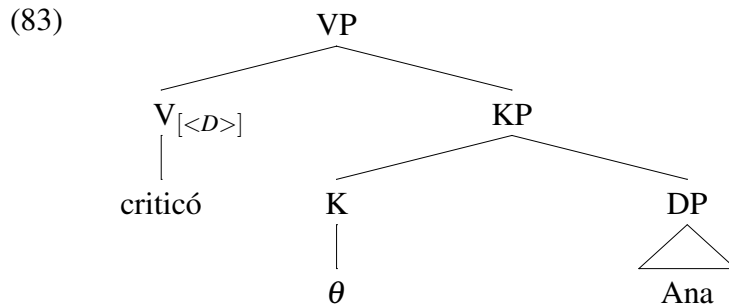
In the next step, Voice is introduced and values the KP with accusative Case:

(84)

```
                      VoiceP
              ┌─────────┴─────────┐
        Voice[D,θ]                VP
                            ┌──────┴──────┐
                       V[<D>]            KP[Acc]
                        │           ┌─────┴─────┐
                     criticó      K[Acc]        DP
                                   │            △
                                   θ           Ana
```

Now, the external argument is merged in Spec,VoiceP:

[13] In occasions, I annotate the result of θ-role assignment via a subscript, i.e., K_θ.

(85)

VoiceP
- KP
  - K
  - DP
    - Juan
- Voice'
  - Voice$_{[<D>,\theta]}$
  - VP
    - V
      - criticó
    - KP$_{[Acc]}$
      - K$_{[Acc]}$
      - DP
        - Ana

Again, given that the KP in Spec,VoiceP is active with respect to the Voice head it receives the agent θ-role from it:

(86)

VoiceP
- KP
  - K
    - θ
  - DP
    - Juan
- Voice'
  - Voice$_{[<D>]}$
  - VP
    - V
      - criticó
    - KP$_{[Acc]}$
      - K$_{[Acc]}$
      - DP
        - Ana
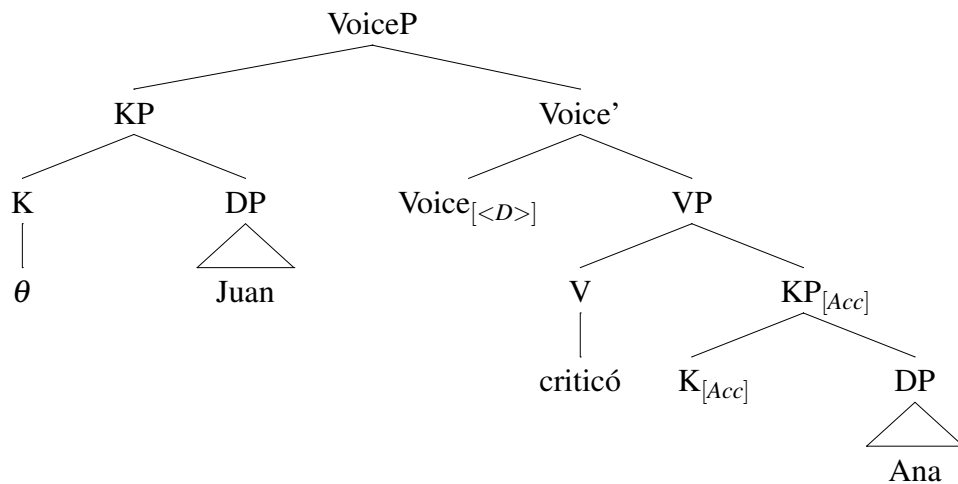
Once T enters the derivation, it deactivates the external KP through nominative Case valuation. For our purposes here, it is irrelevant whether C is the head that assigns nominative, as in inheritance models (Chomsky 2008, for instance):

(87)
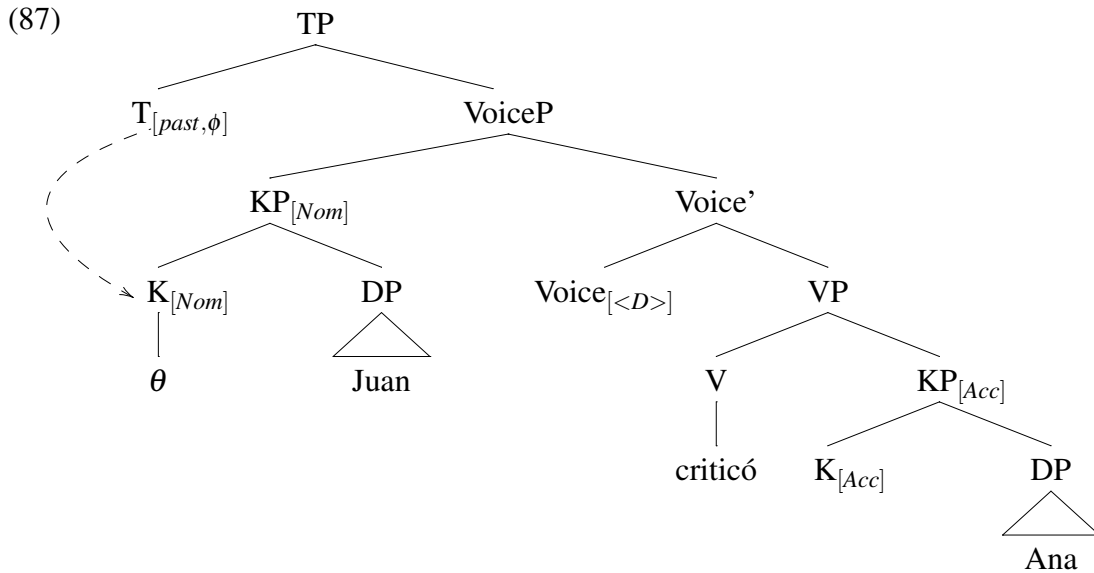
In (88), I provide the denotations node-by-node in a top-down fashion (omitting the nodes contained in the VP). Following the simplification in Kratzer (1996), I assume that [past], in addition to existentially close the event variable, is also a predicate of such a variable:

(88)　**LF denotations:**

　　a.　$[\![\text{TP}]\!] = \exists e[\text{Agent}(e, \text{Juan}) \,\&\, \text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana}) \,\&\, \text{Past}(e)]$

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　by FA

　　b.　$[\![\text{T}_{[past]}]\!] = \lambda P.\exists e[P(e) \,\&\, \text{Past}(e)]$

　　c.　$[\![\text{VoiceP}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Agent}(e, \text{Juan}) \,\&\, \text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana})]$

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　by PM

　　d.　$[\![\text{KP}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Agent}(e, \text{Juan})]$ by FA

　　e.　$[\![\text{Voice'}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana})]$ by FA

　　f.　$[\![\text{K}]\!] = \lambda x \lambda e.\text{Agent}(e, x)$

　　g.　$[\![\text{DP}]\!] = \text{Juan}$

　　h.　$[\![\text{Voice}]\!] = \lambda f.f$

　　i.　$[\![\text{VP}]\!] = \lambda e.[\text{Criticar}(e) \,\&\, \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana})]$
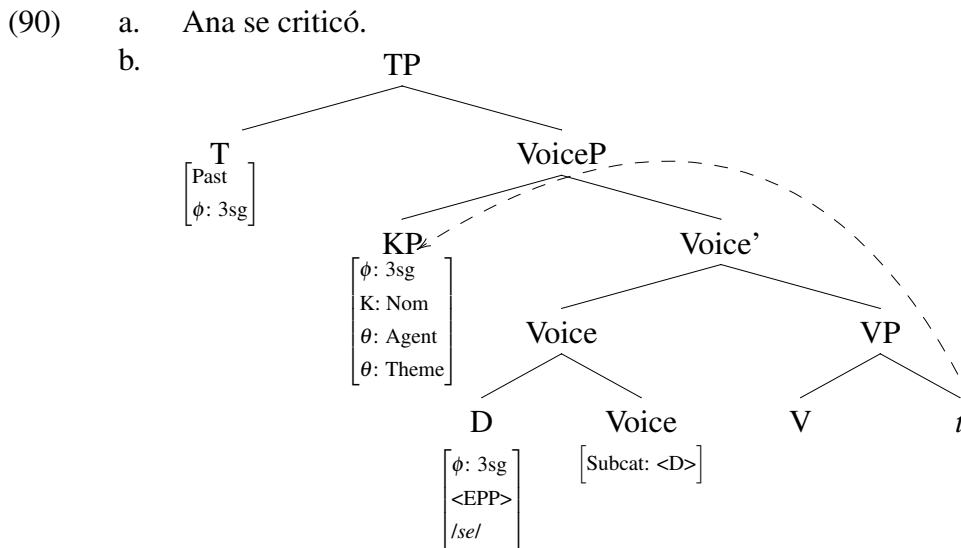
4.3　SE reflexives

Let us see now how the derivation of a reflexive sentence proceeds (cf. (4)) at LF.

(89)　**Reflexive *se***

a. Juan criticó   a   Ana.
   Juan criticized DOM Ana
   'Juan criticized Ana.'

b. Ana **se** criticó.
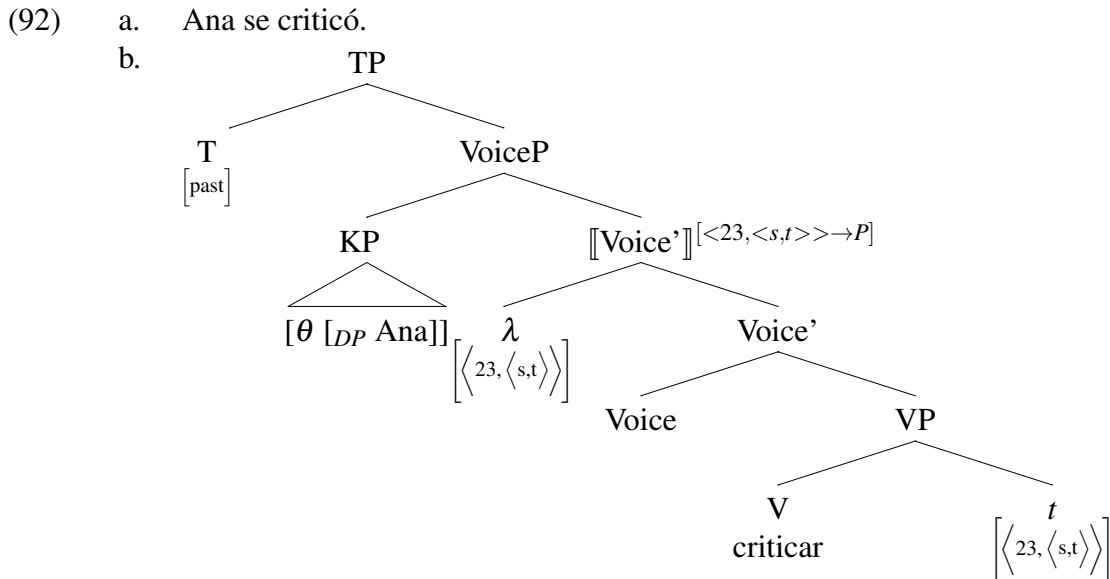   Ana SE criticized
   'Ana criticized herself.'

Recall from section 3 the syntax proposed for a reflexive sentence:

(90) a. Ana se criticó.
      b.

Note that there are only two important differences when compared with a regular transitive sentence: (i) the Agree dependency between the clitic and the internal argument and (ii) the fact that the external θ-role is assigned to the active theme argument in the reflexive scenario. As for the LF implementation of these two aspects, I assume here that two θ-roles on the same head amounts to some sort of function composition or θ-bundling (see Reinhart & Siloni 2005 and section 3.2.2). Essentially, this gives us the following semantic realization of any K with two θ-roles:

(91) $\llbracket \begin{bmatrix} \theta\text{: Agent} \\ \theta\text{: Theme} \end{bmatrix} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda e.\text{Agent}(e, x) \ \& \ \text{Theme}(e,x)$

Regarding the point raised in (i), I assume that an Agree dependency like this is translated at LF as coreference, which amounts to saying that the clitic receives the same referential index as the trace of the displaced constituent. Focusing only in the relevant portions of the LF tree for (90b), consider the following LF representation:

(92)   a.   Ana se criticó.

b.

$$
\begin{array}{c}
\text{TP} \\
\diagup \qquad \diagdown \\
\text{T} \qquad\qquad \text{VoiceP} \\
\left[\text{past}\right] \qquad \diagup \qquad\qquad \diagdown \\
\qquad \text{KP} \qquad\qquad [\![\text{Voice'}]\!]^{[<23,<s,t>>\to P]} \\
\qquad \diagup \quad \diagdown \qquad\qquad \diagup \qquad\qquad \diagdown \\
[\theta\ [_{DP}\ \text{Ana}]] \quad \lambda \qquad\qquad \text{Voice'} \\
\qquad\qquad \left[\langle 23, \langle \text{s,t}\rangle\rangle\right] \qquad \diagup \qquad \diagdown \\
\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad \text{Voice} \qquad \text{VP} \\
\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad \diagup \qquad \diagdown \\
\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad \text{V} \qquad\qquad t \\
\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad \text{criticar} \qquad \left[\langle 23, \langle \text{s,t}\rangle\rangle\right]
\end{array}
$$

Recall that clitics are hybrid as far their phrasal status is concerned. I propose that at LF clitics are read as phrasal categories, although this is only a technical detail made explicit here for the expository sake.[14] What is crucial is that as a result of syntactic Agree, the clitic is read at LF as instantiating the same index as the the trace of the moved KP. And since now the index is a sister of Voice', it triggers predicate abstraction for this node:

(93)   **Predicate Abstraction Rule**
Let α a branching node with daughters β and γ, where β dominates only a numeric index i. Then, for any variable assignment g, $[\![\alpha]\!]^g = \lambda x.[\![\gamma]\!]^{g^{[i\to x]}}$. (Heim & Kratzer 1998: 186)

As advanced in section 2, unlike the implementation in Heim & Kratzer, I propose that A-movement does not leave an index as a sister of Voice'. The clitic itself is the LF realization of such an index as a result of syntactic Agree. More concretely, I am assuming here that (at least some) probes are pure λ-abstractors at LF (or indexes in the original terms in Heim & Kratzer 1998). I think that this move opens the possibility of a rationale for A-movement. Put differently, if probes are abstractors, movement is then motivated by LF reasons. This restates predication as the motivation for the EPP, an idea that I think it is also present in Chierchia (2004) (for an original formulation of EPP in terms of predication, see Rothstein 1983). This view of Spanish *se* as an abstractor contrasts with the more familiar idea of

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[14] Since this is the axiomatic part of the theory, many other alternatives are possible (index percolation, alternatives to the Predicate Abstraction Rule and so on). At any rate, the implementation followed in the main text is perfectly consistent with our assumption regarding the mixed nature of clitics.

reflexive *se* as a bound variable (Embick 2004; Doron & Hovav 2007; Schäfer 2008; 2017; Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Schäfer 2015, among others). Truth-conditionally both approaches are, of course, indistinguishable, but I think that they can still be empirically distinguished on syntactic grounds, as I will suggest in section 6, where I conjecture that the bound variable analysis is correct at least for Italian. Conceptually, the abstractor view makes *se* more inactive semantically, a fact that seems to be in consonance with the view of a subset of clitics as purely formal material (say, agreement markers). This puts reflexive *se* in Spanish (not in Italian, as we will see) on a par with inherent *se*, which is obviously semantically inert. The thesis is attractive because allows for a conjecture regarding variation in the clitic systems of Romance, namely, the idea that pronominal clitics, which are born as variables, can become probes in the syntax and abstractors at LF because of well-known grammaticalization processes. I postpone the discussion on this issue to section 6.

Coming back to the derivation of our *se* reflexive sentence, with Heim & Kratzer (1998) I am assuming that variables can be of any semantic type, so that we can stipulate assignment functions for any semantic type, as well. This is explicitly stated by Heim & Kratzer as follows:

(94)   A partial function *g* from indices to denotations (of any type) is a (variable) assignment iff it fulfills the following condition: For any number *n* and type τ such that $< n, \tau > \in dom(g)$, $g(n, \tau). \in D_\tau$. (Heim & Kratzer 1998: 292)

According to our analysis, the variable left by A-movement corresponds to an event predicate variable, i.e., it denotes in $< s, t >$. The KP *Ana*, which has the denotation in (91) for the K node, serves as the argument for the predicate opened by index assignment (i.e., the LF realization of *se* after Agree). This gives us the following denotation for VoiceP:

(95) $[\![\text{VoiceP}]\!]^g = \lambda P.\lambda e_1[\text{Criticar}(e)\&P(e)](\lambda e_1[\text{Agent}(\text{Ana}, e_1)\&\text{Theme}(\text{Ana}, e_1)])$

After the relevant λ-conversions, we end with a standard event semantics for the entire sentences:

(96) $[\![\text{TP}]\!]^g = \exists e[\text{Criticar}(e) \& \text{Agent}(e, \text{Ana}) \& \text{Theme}(e, \text{Ana}) \& \text{Past}(e)]$

Before closing this subsection, I would like to consider briefly some arguments that have been provided in the literature against one of the aspects of my analysis, namely, its "unaccusative part". In effect, my analysis shares with an important part of the recent literature on the topic the idea that in *se*-reflexivization the KP that gets two θ-roles does not originates as an external argument. The idea comes originally from Marantz (1984) and has been dubbed as the "unaccusative hypoth-

esis" for reflexives, a misleading term, in my view. As already discussed in Embick (2004), to claim that the subject of a reflexive is not the external argument (i.e., a DP in Spec,Voice) does not imply claiming that reflexives are unaccusatives. They are not in many respects. The basic functional structure of a reflexive is identical to the functional structure of, say, a transitive sentence (or ditransitive, of course) and not identical to that of an unaccusative sentence, which arguably has as a minimum a different flavor of Voice (see Folli & Harley 2005). Besides this, since its original formulation, arguments have been provided in favor or against the alleged unaccusative nature of reflexives. Reinhart & Siloni (2005) offer two well-known arguments against the unaccusative nature of reflexives in French connected to the (im)possibility of impersonal constructions with inverted subject, and to the (im)possibility of *en*-placement from this inverted subject. Whereas unaccusative sentences allow for both constructions, reflexive sentences reject them. This kind of argument has been shown as inconclusive by Rooryck & Wyngaerd (2011) and by Sportiche (2014). I refer the reader to those works for detailed discussion. Sportiche, however, claims that, while Reinhart & Siloni's arguments does not show what has to be shown, there is still another argument that makes the unaccusative hypothesis untenable. This involves association with focus in reflexives and middles. The basic fact is related to the ambiguity of the sentence below:

(97)   Solo Juan se considera inteligente.
        only Juan SE considers intelligent
        'Only Juan considers himself intelligent.'

[adapted from Sportiche 2014: 311]

This sentence has a sloppy reading, according to which Juan is the only one that has the reflexive property, and a strict reading, according to which Juan is the only one that considers Juan intelligent:

(98)   a. λx (x considers x smart)
        b. λx (x considers Juan smart)

[Sportiche 2014: 312]

The following denials allow disambiguating the sentence in one way or another:

(99)   a.   No, yo también me   considero inteligente.
              no, I   too   CL.1SG consider intelligent
              'No, I consider him intelligent too.'
        b.   No, yo también lo   considero inteligente.
              no, I   too   CL.3SG.ACC consider intelligent
              'No, I consider him inteligent too.'

[adapted from Sportiche 2014: 311]

Crucially, denial of the theme argument is impossible:

(100)   #No, Juan también me   considera a   mí inteligente.
        No, Juan also   CL.1SG considers DOM me intelligent
        'No, Juan considers me intelligent, too.'

<div align="right">[adapted from Sportiche 2014: 314]</div>

This contrasts with middles, which, according to Sportiche, have a clear unaccusative syntax:

(101)   a.   En la India, solo el arroz se come con los dedos.
             in the India, only the rice   SE eats   with the fingers
             'In India, only rice is eaten with the fingers.'
        b.   No, en la India, el pan   también se come con los dedos.
             no, in the India, the bread also   SE eats   with the fingers
             'No, in India, bread too is eaten with the fingers.'
        c.   No, los indios comen también el pan   con los dedos.
             no, the Indians eat   also   the bread with the fingers
             'No, Indian people too eat bread with the fingers.'

<div align="right">[adapted from Sportiche 2014: 313]</div>

Sportiche's reasoning goes as follows. If reflexives were unaccusative, we would expect association with focus exclusively with the theme argument, i.e., the reading Juan considers only Juan intelligent should be available as it is in (101). But as the infelicity of (100) indicates this is not borne out. I think that this reasoning is misleading since the focus structure in both cases is different. Note that from the focus marking in (97) we can derive two questions under discussion (QuD, see Roberts 2012), namely, *Who considers himself intelligent?* for the sloppy reading or *Who considers Juan intelligent?* for the strict one. Both (97) and the denials in (99) are congruent with one or another QuD, but (100) is not, as the alternatives in this case are computed over the theme object and not the agentive subject as required by the focus marking of the original assertion in (97). The sentence (100) is congruent with a radically different QuD, namely, *Who does Juan consider intelligent?* In the example involving a middle construction, both denials are congruent with the QuD that the original assertion tries to answer, i.e., *What is eaten with the finger in India?* Certainly, the sentence in (101c) seems to presuppose another QuD, namely, *What does Indian people eat with the fingers?* However, this QuD and the original one entail each other, so the discourse is perfectly congruent. Of course, a full exploration of the interesting connections between focus and reflexivization would take me too far from the original goals of this study, but I think that these considerations suffice to show that there is no expectation that middles and reflexives behave in

the same way when it comes to evaluating their behavior under focus. In section 6, I will also reject another argument that has been adduced against the unaccusative hypothesis. But for the time being, I complete my analysis turning my attention to the semantics of impersonals.
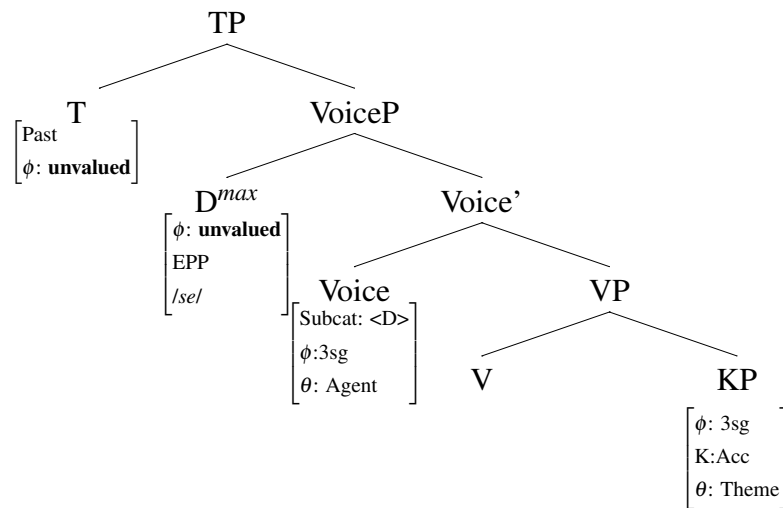
4.4 Impersonal SE

We are ready to provide an explicit syntax and semantics for impersonal *se* constructions (cf. (3)):

(102) **Impersonal** *se*

    a. Juan criticó   a   Ana.
        Juan criticized DOM Ana
        'Juan criticized Ana.'

    b. **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
        SE criticized DOM Ana
        'One/someone criticized Ana.'

Recall our syntax for passives and impersonals involving *se* from subsection 3.1.2:

(103)   a.   Se criticó a Ana.
       b.

The more obvious LF implementation for a passive/impersonal *se* derivation in the present framework is as follows. Since the Agent θ-role was not assigned to any KP in the syntax, it is directly realized on Voice in the same way as in Kratzer's (1996) proposal, i.e., as a function from entities to event predicates:

(104) $\llbracket \text{Voice}_{Agent} \rrbracket_{<e,<s,t>>} = \lambda x \lambda e.\text{Agent}(e, x)$

Now, the clitic *se* did not form any A-dependency in the syntax, so it is semantically realized as a free variable without any referential index; put differently, as a pure indefinite in the terms originally proposed by Heim (1982). This idea of assimilating *se* to indefinites in Heim's sense was already proposed by Chierchia (2004) (see also Mendikoetxea 2008 for Spanish). On my account, this is derived from a particular syntactic derivation, one in which Agree has failed to apply. If we follow Heim, the variable we obtain at LF ends up existentially closed unless some operator in the environment unselectively binds *se*. As it is well-known, at least since Cinque (1988), impersonal *se* has a quasi-universal and a quasi-generic version. As also noticed by Chierchia, the quasi-generic reading also supports E-type readings, a fact that provides direct evidence for the variable nature of impersonal/passive *se*:[15]

(105) a. Se criticó   a   Ana.
           SE criticized DOM Ana
           'Someone criticized Ana.'
       b. Si se llega   temprano, se trabaja mejor.
           if SE arrives early   SE works better
           'If one arrives early, one works better.'

With Chierchia, I will then propose that impersonal/passive *se* is an indefinite that can be unselectively bound in certain contexts. For the basic episodic, existential cases, the derivation is straightforward: *se*, as an entity variable, combines with Voice through functional application:

(106) $\llbracket \text{VoiceP}_{Agent} \rrbracket = \lambda x \lambda e.\ [\text{Agent}(e, x)\ \&\ \text{Criticar}(e)\ \&\ \text{Theme}(e,\text{Ana})](se)$

[Pyllkänen 2008: 26]

But recall that this semantic result is a consequence of a defective probe in the syntax, one that cannot value any of its ϕ-features. This makes impersonal/passive *se* in Spanish syntactically different from other indefinites. For instance, as noticed by Saab (2014), episodic impersonal *se* constructions do not tolerate secondary modification, reflexivization and pronominal binding:

(107) a. *Ayer   se besó a   María borracho.
           yesterday SE kissed DOM María drunk.SG.MASC
           Intended: 'One$_i$/someone$_i$ kissed Mary drunk$_i$.'

---

[15] The semantic and syntactic derivation for a passive *se* construction would proceed exactly in the same way, with the agreement differences between both types of sentences being determined at PF.

b. *Aquí se lava   (a   sí-mismo).
    here SE washes DOM himself
    Intended: 'One washes oneself.'

c. *Aquí se puede dejar   su saco.
    here SE can   leave.INF his coat
    Intended: 'One$_i$ can leave his$_i$ coat here.'

Replacing *se* by *uno* 'one' renders all these sentences grammatical. This shows that *se* has no interpretable or valued ϕ-features. MacDonald (2017a), however, argues that inalienable possession constructions in impersonal *se* sentences empirically justify the presence of an arbitrary *pro* in the syntax. The following example is adapted from MacDonald (2017a):

(108)   Se levantó la   mano para hacer una pregunta en clase.
    SE raised   the hand for   make a   question in class
    'Someone/one raised her/his hand to ask a question in class.'

In order to account both for (107) and (108), Ormazabal & Romero (2019) propose then that the subject of an impersonal *se* sentence is a minimally specified syntactic category (see also Rivero 2001). Assuming that this subject lacks inflectional features like gender or person directly accounts for all the cases in (107), given that syntactic binding requires inflectional matching. At the same time, they also account for (108), because the implicit possessor in the DP *la mano* does not have person features. I am assuming here that the description provided by Ormazabal & Romero (2019) of impersonal/passive *se* is equivalent to my defective probe. Yet, a crucial difference between their analysis and mine is that they seem to accept the basic division between paradigmatic and non-paradigmatic *se* (i.e., between impersonal/passive *se* and the rest). In my view, this type of lexical division loses the generalization that the kind of syncretism we are exploring here is systematic, not accidental. On my analysis, instead, there is only one *se* that participates of, at least, two different syntactic derivations, one in which there is an Agree relation between the clitic and an active argument, and another one in which there is not. Once this minimal difference is accepted the rest of the differences between, say, impersonals and reflexives fall in place. An Agree relation in the syntax feeds LF for interpreting the clitic as an abstractor, whereas when Agree fails no A-chain can be formed in the syntax and the clitic remains as a LF variable without any index (i.e., as an indefinite in Heim's terms).

Note now that generic impersonals behave differently with respect to some of the tests that detect syntactic activity. For instance, secondary predication is licensed in generic *se* sentences:

(109) Cuando se vive borracha,   se muere feliz.
      when   SE lives drunk.FEM.SG SE dies   happy
      'When one lives drunk, one dies happy.'

This indicates that generic *se* sentences require a different syntactic analysis, one that perhaps includes a generic operator in the syntax. This is exactly what we expect if impersonal *se* is view as a variable that can be unselectively bound.

    In sum, in these two sections I have provided a detailed syntactic, morphological and semantic derivation of a set of argument alternation involving the clitic *se*. Taking this set as a case study has been proved useful as a way of illustrating the research agenda of this study, namely, providing an explicit theory of Case/θ interactions in syntax and semantics with the aim of making sense of a particular pattern of systematic u-syncretism in Spanish. Importantly, I have brought new theoretical considerations for a positive reconsideration of the Visibility Condition, according to which the role of Case in natural languages is producing interpretable objects at LF.

5   Extensions

5.1   Inherent SE

An important consequence of the model developed here is its structural flexibility. In other words, in principle there is no ban for an agent θ-role to be derived within the domain of VoiceP. Among other important consequences, this implies abandoning principles such as UTAH (Baker 1988) that impose strict correlations between θ-roles and syntactic positions. This view has also important empirical consequences in the domain of Spanish *se* constructions. As is well known, there is subset of quasi-reflexive sentences that seems to resist any principled account. I am referring to inherent *se* constructions. Here is a list of such verbs taken from Di Tullio (2005):

(110) **Inherent *se***: quejarse 'to complain', arrepentirse 'to regret', dignarse 'to deign', adueñarse 'to take possesssion', vanagloriarse 'to plum', jactarse 'to brag', regodearse 'to deligth', atreverse 'to dare', enterarse ´to find out´, desperezarse 'to stretch', atenerse 'to keep', percatarse 'to notice', estremecerse 'to shudder', desentenderse 'to disengage', etc.

As noted in the introduction, the two main properties of these predicates are that they cannot occur without the pronominal element, and that they reject transitive uses:[16]

(111) a. Juan se quejó.
           Juan SE complained.
           'Juan complained.'
       b. *Juan quejó.
           Juan complained
       c. *Juan lo   quejó.
           Juan him/it complained

In the previous section, I made explicit the hypothesis that K is subject to allosemy, i.e., to syntactically conditioned polysemy. There are, of course, contexts in which a derivation crashes just because syntax does not provide a suitable output for LF interpretation. Consider the following situation. The category V selects a KP, but it does not have any θ-role to assign. Recall that being specified for a [D]-feature is a precondition for being a θ-role assigner. The reverse does not hold: having a [D]-feature does not force the bearer of such a feature to be a thematic assigner. This is obvious for functional heads like, say, T. In other words, nothing in the formal system prevents this configuration, where V is not a thematic head:

(112)

$$VP$$

$$V_{[<D>]} \qquad KP$$

$$K \qquad DP$$
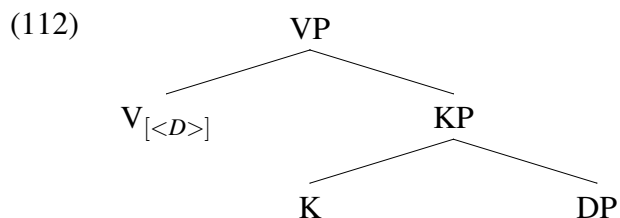
In the next step, if Voice is introduced with ϕ-features, the internal KP would be automatically deactivated (double arrow = Case valuation):

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[16] As noted by an anonymous reviewer, a subset of this predicates can take prepositional complements. Indeed, this is the case with *quejar* in examples like *Se quejó del problema* ('She complained about the problem.'). I avoid representing such arguments in what follows in order to keep the illustration simple. Nothing changes if there is more than argument in the VP domain or in a larger structure. The crucial point is the derived nature of the subject of inherent *se* sentences.

(113)

VoiceP
- Voice$_{[D,\theta,\phi]}$
- VP
  - V$_{[<D>]}$
  - KP
    - K$_{[Acc]}$
    - DP
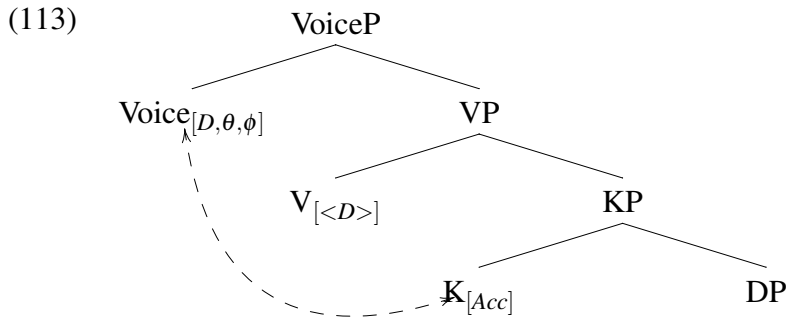
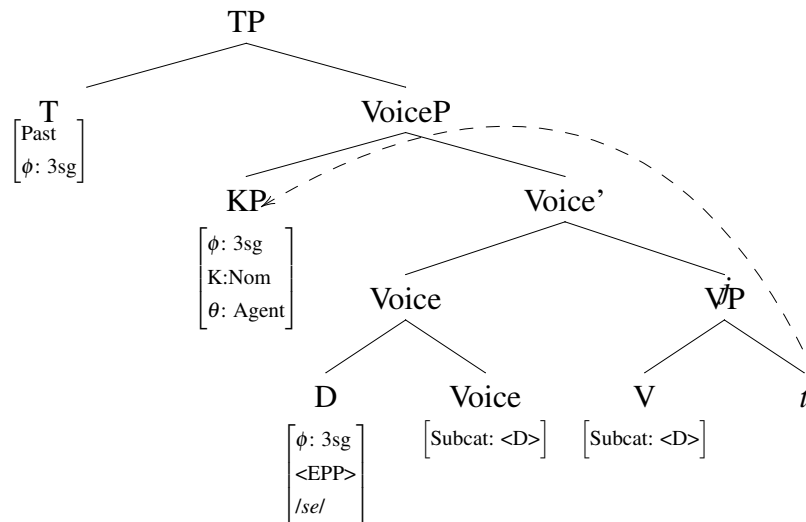Here, K is invisible for receiving the θ-role from Voice, which would then assign it to a potential external KP, if any. Either way, the VP cannot receive a proper denotation at LF. If the DP denotes in e and K is empty or the identity function, we obtain a type mismatch at LF (cf. (71)):

(114)

? Type Mismatch
- V$_{<s,t>}$
- DP$_e$
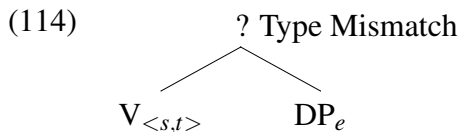
This is how we can reinterpret a violation of the θ-Criterion. A KP without θ-role in the relevant domain cannot provide the relevant denotation for semantic computation at LF. Now, suppose that Voice is ϕ-defective. Under this circumstance, Voice assigns its θ-role to the internal KP:

(115) a. Juan se quejó.
       b.

TP
- T $\begin{bmatrix} \text{Past} \\ \phi: \text{3sg} \end{bmatrix}$
- VoiceP
  - KP $\begin{bmatrix} \phi: \text{3sg} \\ \text{K:Nom} \\ \theta: \text{Agent} \end{bmatrix}$
  - Voice'
    - Voice
      - D $\begin{bmatrix} \phi: \text{3sg} \\ \text{<EPP>} \\ /se/ \end{bmatrix}$
      - Voice $\begin{bmatrix} \text{Subcat: <D>} \end{bmatrix}$
    - V̇P
      - V $\begin{bmatrix} \text{Subcat: <D>} \end{bmatrix}$
      - t

At LF, this produces a legitimate output. Thus, the relevant interpretation of the VP area for a sentence like (111a), repeated below, would be as in (116b):

(116) a. Juan se quejó.
           Juan SE complained
           'Juan complained.'
       b. ⟦VoiceP⟧ = λe. Quejar(e) & Agent(e, Juan)

The remaining routine for the LF computation until TP is trivial.

Before concluding, we should wonder whether this approach predicts that all instances of inherent *se* results in a unaccusative syntax.[17] I think that there is no expectation that this should be the case, since that unaccusatives do not have an agentive syntax in the first place. Yet, I do think that this approach would predict a mixed behavior of the subject of reflexives or inherent *se* constructions. This seems to be correct. Consider, for instance, the fact that inherent *se* verbs, like unaccusatives, are incompatible with *-dor* nominalizations (e.g., *trabajador* 'worker' vs. **quejador* 'complainer'), but, unlike unaccusatives, they cannot participate in absolute constructions (e.g., *Llegado Juan...* 'Once Juan arrived...' vs. **Quejado Juan...* 'Once Juan complained...').[18]

In summary, the proposed system provides thus a principled reason as to why inherent *se* sentences show the transitivity restriction commented above: if Voice valued Case with the internal argument, this argument would remain without a proper denotation and a type mismatch would obtain at LF. At the same time, the theory also explains why clitic insertion is unavoidable here; i.e., why they are inherently pronominal verbs. The reason is that the internal KP receives the θ-role associated with the Voice head preventing thus the introduction of another KP in Spec,Voice. In true reflexive sentences, none of these restrictions show up because V is a thematic head; therefore, Voice can occur with or without ϕ-features giving rise to the reflexive alternation.

I think that this approach to inherent *se* generalizes to diacritc *se*. Recall the example in (8) from the introduction:

(117) a. Juan acordó las condiciones.
           Juan agreed the conditions
           'Juan agreed to the conditions.'
       b. Juan **se** acordó   de Ana.
           Juan SE rememebered of Ana
           'Juan remembered Ana.'

---

[17] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for raising this question.

[18] My analysis also predicts the impossibility of passivizing the derived subject of an inherent *se* sentence (e.g., *Juan fue quejado*, Lit: 'Juan was complained'). Yet, as pointed out to me by a reviewer, this does not seem to be the case in German (see Schäfer 2012).

The crucial difference with inherent *se* is that in cases like these there is an alternation between the variant with the clitic and the one without it, i.e., there is some sort of competition between both variants that results in a meaning change. One way of making sense of this competition consistent with the present framework is encoding the difference in the formal makeup of the verbs that participate in this alternation. The non-pronominal variant enters the syntax with a θ-role which is absent in the pronominal variant:

(118) a. $[_{VP} \text{V}_{[D,\theta]} \text{KP}]$
  b. $[_{VP} \text{V}_{[D]} \text{KP}]$

For a transitive verb, the analysis in (118a) has nothing special, i.e., the relation between V and the internal KP is mediated through θ-assignment and its meaning is compositionally determined at LF. In contrast, the relation between V and the internal KP in (118b) is not derived through principles of thematic assignment and semantic composition, but it is stored in memory and interpreted by accessing the Encyclopedia. In other words, determination of the meaning in cases like (118b) requires access to arbitrary lists and lot of lexical and world knowledge. One of the most interesting consequences of this way of approaching the issue is that it provides a solution to the problem of metonyminc readings in fake reflexives:

(119) Juan se explica bien.
  Juan SE explains well
  'Juan explains his words / his actions well.'

According to Labelle (2008), this type of constructions introduces a serious challenge for the "unaccusative" hypothesis of reflexives at the time that supports her own approach. Recall that she treats *se* as a realization of a particular realization of a Voice head, which requires an open predicate as argument. On this view, in a sentence like (119), the verb introduces a variable making reference to Juan's words or actions, which is not syntactically satisfied. As a result, the predicate remains open and can combine with Voice:

(120) ⟦explicar⟧ $= \lambda x \lambda e[\text{explicar } (e, x_{words})]$ [adapted from Labelle 2008: 864]

There are two main problems with this analysis. First, the individual variable in (120) comes from a dubious paraphrase of the original sentence, based exclusively on certain meaning intuition connected to the verb meaning. The most obvious meaning of sentence (119) is just that Juan is clear. This concrete meaning is exclusively based on some encyclopedic knowledge about the verb at hand and the syntactic environment in which it appears. Second, Labelle's strategy does not generalize. As she acknowledges, there are other predicates whose meaning cannot

be resolved introducing the type of denotation proposed in (120). Consider the following Spanish examples translated from the French example in Labelle (2008: footnote 24):

(121) Juan se trata.
       Juan SE treats
       'Juan looks after his health.'

Here, the meaning of *tratarse* is related to medical care. This is fully unpredictable and, consequently, must be listed in the Encyclopedia. Myriads of verbs participate in the type of alternation we are discussing and, for each case, accessing to lexical and world knowledge is unavoidable.

Now, according to Embick & Marantz (2008), special meanings pertain to the lowest domain of the clause (in their terms, the lowest category-defining head and the Root). If Labelle's examples are particular instances of inherent/diacritc *se*, as I am proposing, then we can make sense of the particular meanings that these predicate have when they occur as pronominal verbs. Both sentences in (119) and (121) would receive the same analysis:

(122) a. [$_{VoiceP}$ se Voice [$_{VP}$ explicar$_{[D]}$ Juan]]
       b. [$_{VoiceP}$ *se* Voice [$_{VP}$ tratar$_{[D]}$ Juan]]

The data discussed so far show not only that Labelle's argument against the "unaccusative" hypothesis does not hold, but that her theory fails to account for many instances of inherent/diacritic *se*, including standard cases like *quejarse*, for which an open predicate analysis does not seem plausible.

5.2 Ergative SE

The sentences in (1), repeated below, have received much attention in the literature (see Schäfer 2008 for extensive discussion and references, and Pujalte 2013 for Spanish in particular):

(123) **Ergative** *se*
       a. La tormenta hundió al   barco.
           the storm   sank DOM.the ship
           'The storm sank the ship.'
       b. **Se** hundió el barco con la tormenta.
           SE sank   the ship with the storm
           'The ship sank by the storm.'

Unlike impersonals or reflexives, ergatives have no agentive meaning. For this sentence, the sinking event can be related to an internal or an external cause. The *con*-phrase in (124) introduces an external cause. Internal cause readings in Spanish can be triggered by adjectives like *solo* 'solo'.

(124) El barco **se** hundió solo.
       the ship   SE sank   only
       'The ship sank by itself.'

Interestingly, ergatives are also compatible with a non-agentive participant of the event. This participant is realized as a *dativo de interés*, a variety of the ethical dative:

(125) A Juan se le   quemó el asado.
       to Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT burned the barbecue
       'The barbecue burned on Juan.'

Space reasons prevent me from providing a detailed analysis of *se*-ergative constructions and comparing it with the huge literature on the topic, but some considerations are worth-mentioning. First, the analysis proposed for inherent *se* in the previous section has obvious consequences for the proper analysis of ergatives. A core ingredient of my approach to inherent *se* is abandoning Chomsky's assumption that subcategorization entails θ-marking as proposed in Postal & Pullum (1988). An inherent *se* configuration is one in which the verb subcategorizes for a KP that is θ-marked by Voice and not by V. The logic of this system allows for a situation in which V has subcategorization and θ-features but Voice only has a [D] feature, i.e., it is not a θ-assigner. I suggest that this logical option is indeed instantiated by *se*-ergative constructions:
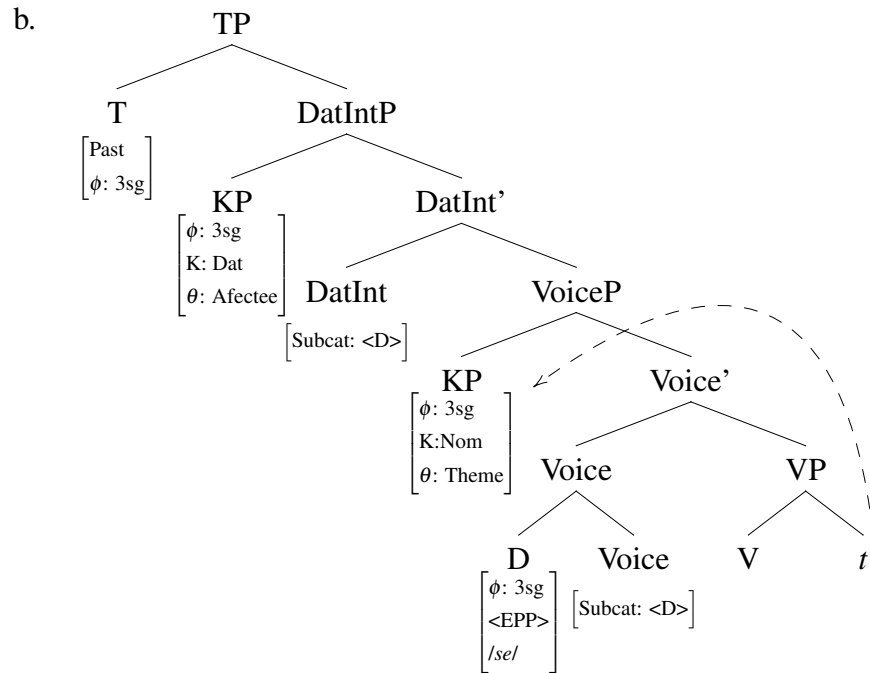
(126)   a.   El barco se hundió.

b.
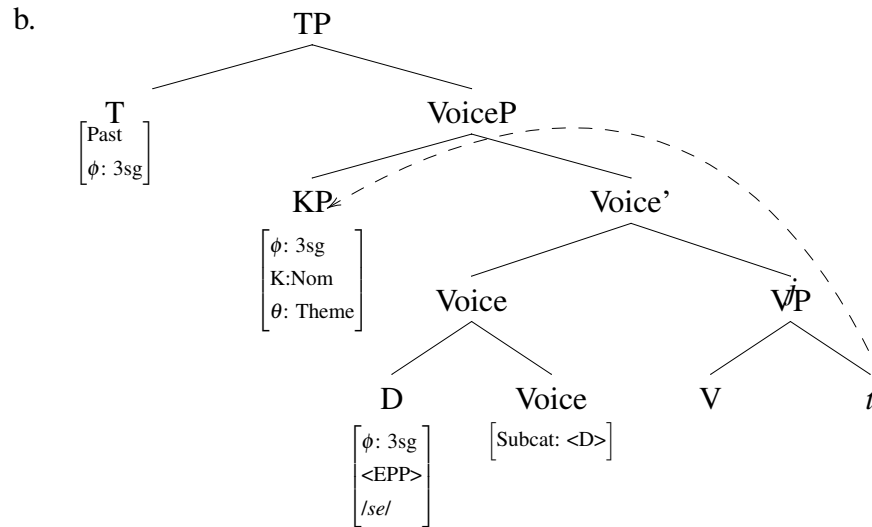
Here, the internal KP receives a θ-role from the V and Case from T, since Voice does not have ϕ-features. The semantic computation at LF is trivial, given that in this particular scenario the semantic contribution of Voice is null. It does not introduce any θ-role, so it is unique contribution reduces to the identity function it denotes (cf. (76)):

(127) $[\![\text{Voice}]\!]_{<<s,t>,<s,t>>} = \lambda f.f$

This analysis captures in a direct way the non-agentive property of ergatives. Moreover, it also explains in a simple way the compatibility of *se*-ergatives with the *dativo de interés* illustrated in example (125). The reasonable strategy here would be adopting a applicative analysis for this special dative[19]:

(128)   a.   A Juan se le quemó el asado.

---

[19] I assume that this particular Appl head, which I call *DatInt*, merges above Voice, but semantically we would get the same result if it is merged below Voice. If the latter is correct, then we are forced to assume that the *dativo de interés* obtains inherent Case from the Appl head, which would be a plausible analysis in any case. The difference is that if the Appl head is lower than Voice, this would be a forced assumption since the added dative does not intervene between Voice and the internal argument. Importantly, the *dativo de interés* should not be confused with other well-known cases of high applicatives in the literature, like benefactives to be discussed in the next subsection in connection with benefactive *se*.

b.

```
                          TP
                   ┌───────┴───────┐
                   T            DatIntP
               ⎡Past  ⎤     ┌──────┴──────┐
               ⎣φ: 3sg⎦    KP          DatInt'
                        ⎡φ: 3sg  ⎤  ┌──────┴──────┐
                        ⎢K: Dat  ⎥ DatInt       VoiceP
                        ⎣θ: Afectee⎦ ⎡Subcat: <D>⎤  ┌────┴────┐
                                                  KP       Voice'
                                          ⎡φ: 3sg  ⎤   ┌────┴────┐
                                          ⎢K:Nom   ⎥ Voice      VP
                                          ⎣θ: Theme⎦ ┌──┴──┐   ┌──┴──┐
                                                     D  Voice  V    t
                                               ⎡φ: 3sg ⎤ ⎡Subcat: <D>⎤
                                               ⎢<EPP>  ⎥
                                               ⎣/se/   ⎦
```

In principle, it seems that the theory captures in a very similar way the poorly understood alternation among unacusatives predicates with and without *se*:

(129)   a.   Juan murió.
             Juan died
        b.   Juan se murió.
             Juan SE died
             'Juan died.'

(130)   a.   Cayó una persona al   río.
             fell   a   person to.the river
        b.   Se cayó una persona al   río.
             SE fell   a   person to.the river
             'A person fell into the river.'

In both cases, Voice only expresses the identity function, but in the *se* variant, Voice also comes with an inherent [D]-feature. Again, this is the perfect counterpart of inherent *se*. It seems that dissociating subcategorization and θ-marking provides an explanation for the existence of this some kind "deviant" cases.

Truth-conditionally, this alternation does not produce any variation, but there is, however, a subtle difference in meaning for each pair participating in the alternation. For instance, as noted by Pujalte (2013) and others, the sentence in (129b) is incompatible with the dead being provoked by a volitional agent.

(131) a.   Juan murió fusilado.
            Juan died   shot
       b.   ?Juan se murió fusilado.
            Juan SE died   shot
            'Juan died shot.'

The casuistic is extremely complicated (making reference to the cause of the event, to the truth of the propositional complement, to the source of the event, and so on), but it seems that there is a very abstract property in common for each pair, namely, the variant with *se* introduce a presupposition regarding the semantic nature of the internal argument of the predicate involved in the sentence. This idea can be implemented in the present system by stipulating that the variant with *se* introduces a presupposition in Voice. Putting the idea in a more technical way, I conjecture that *se*-Voice denotes a partial identity function, whereas Voice is just an identity function:

(132) a. $[\![\text{Voice}]\!] = \lambda f.f$
       b. $[\![\text{Voice}_{[D]}]\!] = \lambda f : presupposition.f$

Thus, both sentences lack an agent θ-role, but the version with *se* introduces both a syntactic and a semantic difference: because of the probe nature of *se*, it triggers A-movement in the syntax but it also induces a presupposition in the semantics.

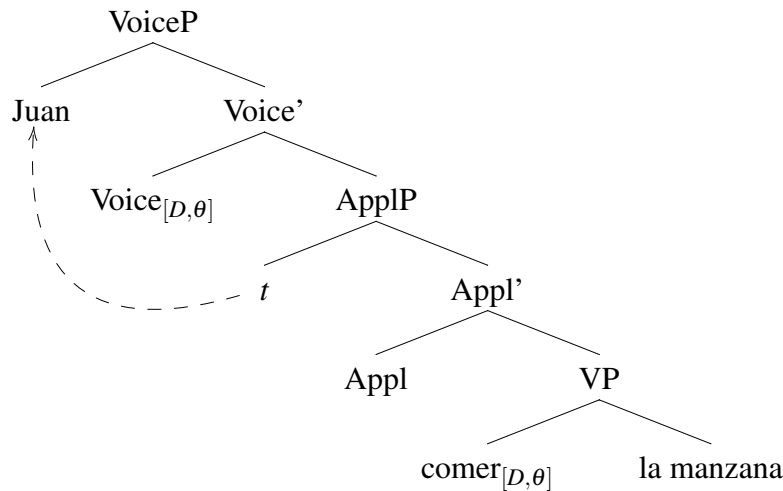## 5.3 Aspectual/Benefactive SE

Recall the basic alternation that gives rise to the so-called aspectual *se*:

(133) a.   Juan comió la   manzana.
            Juan ate   the apple
            'Juan ate the apple.'
       b.   Juan **se** comió la   manzana.
            Juan SE ate   the apple.
            'Juan ate the apple.'

A high applicative analysis, along the lines of Labelle's approach with the corresponding modifications, seems to be a good analytical option, which fits the expectations of my analysis. Here is a tentative analysis:[20]

---

[20] For Spanish, MacDonald (2017b) has proposed a similar analysis, but like Labelle, he also generates the subject DP in Spec,Voice. Given the arguments I have given regarding the need of accounting for the syncretism pattern, I do not see any reason to proceed in this way.

(134)

```
                        VoiceP
                  ┌───────┴───────┐
                Juan            Voice'
                 ↑        ┌───────┴───────┐
                 ┊     Voice_[D,θ]       ApplP
                 ┊              ┌───────────┴───────────┐
                 └┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄  t                    Appl'
                                               ┌────────┴────────┐
                                             Appl               VP
                                                         ┌────────┴────────┐
                                                    comer_[D,θ]      la manzana
```

The applied argument receives two θ-roles, one from Appl and another one from Voice, when it reaches that position. Minimality on A-movement is obviously satisfied, but it remains to be seen why activity is satisfied as well. This is connected to the general question about Case assignment for some applied arguments. In Spanish, they are syncretic with dative Case in ditransitves and other related environments. I assume here that the benefactive values its Case with a probe above Voice. Alternatively, if a competition-based approach is assumed, we can see that at the phase level (the VoiceP) *Juan* is in the position of getting nominative not dative, which means that it was active in a previous step of the derivation.

Of course, the tree in (134) is an oversimplification; in particular, it says nothing related to well-known facts about the behavior of direct objects in aspectual *se* environments (for instance, the incompatibility with bare objects). But I think that these issues are orthogonal to my point here and, for this reason, I leave them open for future investigation. I also leave open discussion with other alternatives that are compatible with my general theory, as well. In principle, my analysis seems to be consistent with Campanini & Schäfer (2011), according to whom aspectual *se* is not an instance of a high applicative syntax but of a low one.

The considerations made in this section had the main goal of making explicit how to proceed methodologically given any occurrence of the clitic *se* in Spanish. The crucial methodological step is this: unless empirical evidence dictates otherwise, assume that *se* is a probe for A-movement. Given the θ-system proposed here, there is *a priori* no reason to suppose that an agent KP is also a Voice specifier. Yet, that this is or is not the case is a purely empirically matter. For the *se* constructions analyzed in this paper, this methodological move has brought the important empirical result of making sense of the apparent chaos in the realm of *se* constructions. Showing that this strategy can be generalized requires a case-by-

case study. As mentioned in the introduction, the paradigm explored here does not exhaust all the attested uses of *se*. As far as I know, the paradigm from (1) to (8) is indeed attested in all Spanish varieties. There are, however, uses of *se* restricted to particular dialects. For instance, Di Tullio (2005) recognizes a "stylistic" use of *se* in the youngest generations of Rioplatense Spanish. Here are some examples:

(135) a. Juan **se** trabajó todo / la vida.
           Juan SE worked all   / the life
           'Juan worked a lot.'
       b. Juan **se** cantó todo / la vida.
           Juan SE sang all   / the life
           'Juan sang terrific.'

This kind of *se* only combines with unergatives or, more generally, intransitive and agentive predicates and requires the obligatory co-occurrence of *todo* o *la vida*. Its meaning depends to some extent on the verbal predicate as the translations above show. Crucially, unlike aspectual *se*, which only combines with transitive verbs, stylistic *se* can only combine with intransitive forms, a fact that does not follow from any semantic restriction:

(136) a. Juan se tocó   la vida.
           Juan SE played the life
           'Juan played (an instrument) terrific.'
       b. *Juan se tocó   la guitarra la vida.
           Juan SE played the guitar   the life
           intended: 'Juan played the guitar terrific.'

This type of intransitive restriction could be taken as an indication that there is material present in the V complement position. In turn, given the above-mentioned methodological advice, the occurrence *se* should be taken as evidence that the agent KP of these sentences is not in Spec,Voice. A tentative analysis consistent with these facts would be as follows:

(137) [$_{VoiceP}$ Juan *se* Voice$_{[D,\theta]}$ [$_{VP}$ tocar [$_{XP}$ la vida t_{Juan}]]]

The verb and its XP complement are listed through some process of grammaticalization. Clearly, neither XP nor its sub-constituent *la vida* are true direct objects of the verb. This is particularly evident in the latter case, in which replacement for an accusative pronoun results in strong ungrammaticality:

(138) *Juan se la   tocó.
        Juan SE CL.3.SG.FEM.ACC played
        *'Juan played (the guitar) terrific.'

Sentences involving uses of stylistic *se* are related in meaning to light verb constructions that also make use of *todo* or *la vida*:

(139)   Juan puso / dio   la vida / todo.
          Juan put   / gave the life / all
          'Juan did his best.'

In both type of sentences, a metaphorical process seems to be at play. This process involves a basic whole-part relation connected to the agent of the event in a way such that from *la vida de Juan* 'Juan's life' or *todo de Juan* 'all of Juan', we get a meaning closely related to the interpretation that Juan did his best. This seems to be plausible from a semantic point of view, but is there any evidence in favor of the analysis in (137), according to which *la vida* and *Juan* indeed form a syntactic constituent? In order to answer this question, consider first the following alternatives to (139), in which a possessive article or an emphatic anaphor can occupy the possessor position:

(140)   a.   Juan puso su vida.
                Juan put   his life
                'Juan did his best.'
          b.   Juan dio   todo de sí.
                Juan gave all   of himself
                'Juan did his best.'

The fact that these sentences are acceptable indicates that the subject does not generate in the possessor position. This is obvious for the example in (140b), in which the anaphor occupies the relevant position, but it can also be corroborated for (140a) comparing it with the well-known unacceptability of KPs in which the possessor is doubled with a possessive article (e.g., *su_i vida de Juan$_i$* 'his life of Juan' vs. *la_i vida de Juan$_i$* 'Juan's life'). Taken for granted that these tests can detect constituency within the nominal domain, consider now how they apply to sentences involving stylistic *se*:

(141)   a.   *Juan se trabajó su vida.
                 Juan SE worked his life
          b.   *Juan se trabajó todo de sí.
                 Juan SE worked all   of himself
                 'Juan worked a lot.'

The strong ungrammaticality of both examples suggests that the analysis in (137) could be on the right track. These brief considerations about the syntax of stylistic *se* are made with the sole purpose of illustrating how to proceed under the method-

ological statement that tells us that whenever an occurrence of the clitic *se* is detected in a given sentence, the possibility that that sentence involves A-movement from a KP within the complement domain of VoiceP must be taken seriously.

5.4 Summary: Voice deconstructed

The following table resumes the formal aspects regarding both the formal content of Voice and the formal content of the KP that establishes an Agree relation with the clitic and a thematic relation with Voice, in cases in which there is indeed such a KP in the derivation:

	Reflexive	Impersonal/ Passive	Inherent	Ergative	Benefactive
Subcategorization, θ and ϕ specification in Voice	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{D} \\ \theta: & \text{Agent} \\ (\phi: & \text{unvalued}) \end{bmatrix}$	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{D} \\ \theta: & \text{Agent} \\ (\phi: & \text{unvalued}) \end{bmatrix}$	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{D} \\ \theta: & \text{Agent} \end{bmatrix}$	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{D} \\ \theta: & \varnothing \end{bmatrix}$	$\begin{bmatrix} \text{D} \\ \theta: & \text{Agent} \\ \phi: & \text{unvalued} \end{bmatrix}$
Is there an A-dependency between *se* and a KP in the domain of Voice?	Yes $\begin{bmatrix} \text{K}: & \text{unvalued} \\ \theta: & \begin{Bmatrix} \text{Theme} \\ \text{Goal} \\ \text{etc.} \end{Bmatrix} \end{bmatrix}$	No	Yes $\begin{bmatrix} \text{K}: & \text{unvalued} \\ \theta: & \varnothing \end{bmatrix}$	Yes $\begin{bmatrix} \text{K}: & \text{unvalued} \\ \theta: & \text{Theme} \end{bmatrix}$	Yes $\begin{bmatrix} \text{K}: & \text{unvalued} \\ \theta: & \text{Benefactive} \end{bmatrix}$

Table 1: Voice deconstructed.

What is *se*, then, under the present proposal? It is a D-clitic that satisfies the subcategorization requirement of Voice. Since it is defective in the sense that it does not project K, the clitic cannot be a receptor of θ-roles. The table above shows that a subcategorization [D] feature in Voice is what *all* instances of *se* have in common. Thus, we derive the presence of *se* as syntactic expletive. Now, *se* is also probe, and as such it can attract a KP which is able to receive the agent θ-role, if there is such a role in Voice. According to the present theory, all the syntactic environments in which there is an active KP results in an A-chain with the moved KP, the clitic and the trace of KP as the members of such chain. Again, this is what all instances of the so-called *paradigmatic se* have in common, namely: a derived subject, which is born as an active KP within the complement domain of Voice. This is the *unaccusative* part of this kind of *u*-syncretism.

Thus, simple reflexive sentences like (4) instantiate an environment in which Voice has a [D] feature, an agent θ-role but no ϕ-features. In this scenario, the internal KP moves to a position from which it values the ϕ-features of the clitic, deletes the clitic EPP feature and receives a θ-role from Voice:

(142)   a.   Juan criticó   a   Ana.
            Juan criticized DOM Ana
            'Juan criticized Ana.'
        b.   Ana **se** criticó.
            Ana SE criticized
            'Ana criticized herself.'

It could be the case that Voice has also unvalued ϕ-features and enters into an Agree relation with some direct object, but there is still another active KP in the VP domain. This is the case of reflexivization of goal KPs in ditransitive constructions (cf. ex. (47a)):

(143)   a.   Juan le   entregó el libro a María.
            Juan CL.3SG.DAT gave   the book to María
            'Juan gave María the book.'
        b.   Juan se entregó el   libro.
            Juan SE gave   the book
            'Juan gave himself the book.'

Because of minimality, an object KP cannot be reflexivized in the same double object contexts (cf. (38b)):

(144)   *Juan se le   entregó   a la policía.
        Juan SE CL.3SG.DAT delivered to the police

There are cases in which V subcategorizes a KP although it does not θ-mark it. In those cases, such an argument can be properly interpreted if (i) Voice has an unassigned agent θ-role (because of the defective nature of *se*), but (ii) it does not have ϕ-features. This scenario results in the so-called *inherent se* (cf. (7)):

(145)   a.   Juan **se** quejó.
            Juan SE complained
            'Juan complained.'
        b.   *Juan quejó.
            Juan complained
        c.   *Juan lo   quejó.
            Juan him/it complained

As proposed in many works on anti-causatives (see Schäfer 2008 for an original proposal), Voice could be also semantically empty, but still subcategorize for a nominal. If *se* is inserted, then the clitic itself satisfies this subcategorization re-

quirement and, as a consequence of being a probe, it triggers A-movement of the theme KP. Note that it is necessary that V selects such a KP and also θ-marks it, otherwise, the argument cannot be properly interpreted at LF. This is the so-called *ergative or anti-causative se* (cf. (1)):

(146) a. La tormenta hundió al   barco.
the storm   sank   DOM.the ship
'The storm sank the ship.'
b. **Se** hundió el   barco con la   tormenta.
SE sank   the ship   with the storm
'The ship sank by the storm.'

The set of paradigmatic clitics discussed to some extent in the present study is completed by the so-called *aspectual/benefactive se*, which is a case in which Voice combines with *se* (keeping then its θ-role) but also has ϕ-features. If there is an added benefactive in its domain, then *se* attracts the benefactive, which agrees with *se* and receives the agent θ-role from Voice (cf. (5)):

(147) a. Juan comió la   manzana.
Juan ate   the apple
'Juan ate the apple.'
b. Juan **se** comió la   manzana.
Juan SE ate   the apple.
'Juan ate the apple.'

Whenever the clitic fails to attract a KP, either because such a KP is simply not there (e.g., impersonal *se* coming from unergatives verbs, cf. (148) below) or because there is such a KP but with a Case feature already valued (e.g., passive and impersonal *se* coming from transitive predicates; cf. (2) and (3)), we obtain the so-called *non-paradigmatic se*:

(148) a. Ana trabajó bien.
Ana worked well
'Ana worked well.'
b. **Se** trabajó bien.
SE worked well
'One/someone worked well.'

(149) a. La policía cerró las puertas para bloquear la   salida.
the police closed the doors   for   block.INF the exit
'The police closed the doors in order to block the exit.'

b. **Se** cerraron   las puertas para bloquear la   salida.
    SE closed.3PL the doors   for   block.INF the exit
    'The doors were closed in order to block the exit.'

(150) a. Juan criticó   a   Ana.
           Juan criticized DOM Ana
           'Juan criticized Ana.'
       b. **Se** criticó   a   Ana.
           SE criticized DOM Ana
           'One criticized Ana.'

In these situations, the agent θ-role in Voice remains unassigned in the syntax. At LF, this θ-role is then realized on Voice itself, which takes *se* as an indefinite argument. As discussed in section 3.1.2, the difference in agreement between impersonal and passive *se* boils down to a different mechanism of agreement resolution at PF, as proposed in Pujalte (2013), Pujalte & Saab (2014) and Ormazabal & Romero (2020).

Thus, the present theory conceives of most, if not all, instances of the clitic *se* and its agreeing variants as triggers for A-movement, i.e., formal probes. There is no need for specific *se* constructions. There is only one expletive *se* acting as a syntactic probe. Whenever A-movement succeeds the computational component generates what we superficially call *paradigmatic se* sentences. Whenever Agree fails because there is no A-movement, the system generates what we superficially call *non-paradigmatic se* sentences.

The theory also dispenses with Voice features of any type (e.g., Active vs Non-Active). The syntax only manipulates three types of formal objects: subcategorization features, θ-roles and ϕ-features. Such material is manipulated under well-known restrictions, namely, Activity and Minimality.

There are of course many remaining issues opened by the present research agenda. As noted by a reviewer, we should explore what type of combinations of the formal features discussed so far are really present across languages.[21] Moreover, we should integrate analytical passives into the picture, if we want eliminate Voice features entirely. As suggested in Pujalte & Saab (2012) and Saab (2014), the analytical passive would be a case in which there is an agentive Voice head present in the derivation, but no nominal subcategorization feature in the same head and, thus, no clitic.[22] Given that, by hypothesis, a thematic head must have a category feature in order to be a θ-role assigner, there is no agent θ-role assignment in ana-

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[21] In addition, as pointed out by another reviewer, the present system should provide a plausible account of how agentive modifiers work.

[22] See also the discussion around example (168) in section 6.

lytical passive contexts and Voice is realized as having an existentially closed agent. This would explain why, for instance, there is no pronominal binding of a possessor in cases like the following one, which, as shown by MacDonald (2017a), minimally contrasts with the example (108), repeated below:

(151) *La mano fue levantada.
       the hand was raised
       'Someone/one raised her hand.'

(152) Se levantó la mano para hacer una pregunta en clase.
       SE raised the hand for make a question in class
       'Someone/one raised her/his hand to ask a question in class.'

This is, in a nutshell, how the present research agenda should be expanded in the future. I think that the agenda is interesting since it opens our analytic space in some intriguing ways. If the theory is at least partially correct, we should push the deconstruction project even further. I cannot explore such additional research routes here, but before closing this article I would like to provide some final conjectures regarding the question of how some clitics, which are born as regular variables, become formal probes.

6   Some remarks on variation

The theory deployed so far is a theory about a fragment of Spanish grammar. I have tried to be the more exhaustive and explicit possible within the reasonable limits of an article. Yet, it is important to stress that, as usual in grammatical theory, the theory cannot be exhaustive. On the one hand, it does not cover every syntactic environment in which the clitic *se* can occur in Spanish in general and in different dialects and, of course, it does not cover other Romance languages. Moreover, the theory has remained silent about the way in which the clitic *se* and its agreeing variants fit into the system of Spanish clitics. Having said this, I would not like to finish this study without at least providing some suggestions or conjectures regarding the routes that theory can take in order to address some of these variation issues.

In principle, the system presented in the previous sections is able to make sense of certain variation aspects within a given language and across Romance (and perhaps beyond) making use of a minimal assumption, namely:

(153) **Conjecture**: Within and across languages clitics can come in at least two guises: $D^{min/max}$ or $K^{min/max}$.

This is, of course, not a novelty. Manipulating the formal makeup of pronominal systems within and across languages has been proven as a fruitful strategy when it

comes to explaining variation facts (see Cardinaletti & Starke 1999, among many others). I have argued here that *se* and its agreeing variants are defective in the sense of non-projecting a K head above D:

(154) $D^{min/max}$
$$\begin{bmatrix} \phi: \text{unvalued} \\ \text{EPP} \end{bmatrix}$$

This makes a subset of Spanish clitics deficient both formally and semantically. Syntactically, they do not receive structural Case and, consequently, no θ-role. This results in a semantic type of deficiency, as well: absence of a θ-role forces the semantic realization of clitics either as λ-abstractors or as indefinite variables.

But assume now that on occasions clitics can project K, like I show below (I remain neutral as far as the status of their ϕ-features is concerned):

(155) $K^{min/max}$
$$\begin{bmatrix} \phi: \text{(un)valued} \\ K: \text{unvalued} \\ \theta: \end{bmatrix}$$

This simple difference has large consequences for the syntax of clitic constructions. Indeed, I think that Romance languages can be divided in at least two types as far as reflexivization is concerned depending on whether they have "D-reflexives" or "K-reflexives". I have already defended the thesis that in Spanish *se* is a D-clitic. Consider now Italian.

As is well-known, Italian does not allow for reflexive doubling, which means that *se stesso* and *si* are in complementary distribution:[23]

(156) a. Gianni difende se stesso.
           Gianni defends himself
       b. Gianni si difende.
           Gianni SI defends.
           'Gianni defends himself.'
       c. *Gianni si difende se stesso.
           Juan   SI defends himself

Interestingly, Spanish is the type of language which allows for reflexive doubling productively:

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[23] See Verdecchia (2020), who claims that there is a strong correlation between clitic doubling and reflexive doubling in Romance. Spanish is a language with both clitic doubling and reflexive doubling and Italian is a language that lacks both options. In the terms of the present theory, this would suggest that in Italian a big part of the elements of its clitic system is still strongly correlated to pure variables.

(157) Ana **se** criticó   a   sí misma.
       Ana SE criticized DOM herself
       'Ana criticized herself.'

On the theory presented so far, reflexive doubling could be derived as follows. Recall first that *se* is a robust indication of A-movement in Spanish; a plausible analysis of reflexive doubling would then involve a big KP in object position (see Uriagereka 1995 and Kayne 2002), in which the antecedent-reflexive pronoun dependency is syntactically resolved. If the anaphor is the head of such a big KP, with the subject of the reflexive in its specifier, then it would receive the theme θ-role from V. Once Voice is introduced, it values the anaphor as accusative and *se* attracts the subject KP to Spec,Voice, position in which it values the inflectional features of *se* and in which it receives its agent θ-role from Voice:

(158) $[_{\text{VoiceP}}$ Ana$_{[Agent]}$ *se* Voice$_{<D>}]$ $[_{\text{VP}}$ criticar $[_{KP}$ t_{Ana} a sí misma$_{[theme]}$ $]$ $]$ $]$

Licensing reflexive doubling in the syntax is a way of splitting the two relevant θ-roles in two different KPs and, as it is well-known, this crucially impacts in processes of KP focalization.[24] As we have seen in subsection 4.3, Spanish non-doubled *se* reflexives does not allow for focalization of the theme θ-role with independence of the agent θ-role. Focalization of the theme θ-role in doubled reflexives is well-attested:
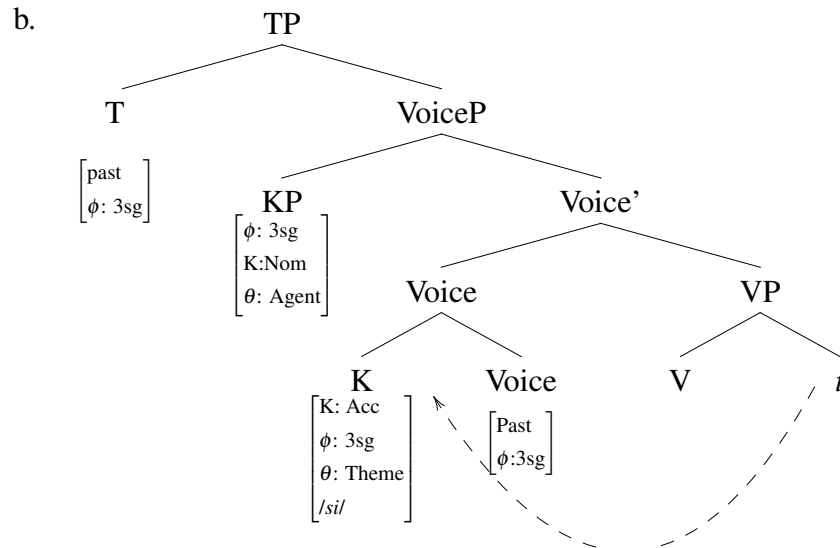
(159)   Ana se criticó   a sí misma, no a   Paula.
        Ana SE criticized herself,   not DOM Paula
        'Ana criticized herself, not Paula.'

This follows from the analysis in (158) without further ado.

Now, let us consider absence of reflexive doubling in Italian. If reflexive *si* is a K-clitic, then the clitic itself values accusative Case with Voice and receives the theme θ-role from V. My analysis for a *si* reflexive sentence in Italian is then as follows:

(160)   a.   Gianni si difende.

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[24] See Labelle (2008) and Doron & Hovav (2007), who use this as a test against the "unaccusative" analysis of reflexives. As I show in the main text, their criticism does not apply to my system.

b.

```
                          TP
                 ┌────────┴────────┐
                 T                 VoiceP
            ⎡ past ⎤        ┌────────┴────────┐
            ⎣ φ: 3sg ⎦      KP              Voice'
                        ⎡ φ: 3sg ⎤      ┌─────┴─────┐
                        ⎢ K:Nom ⎥    Voice          VP
                        ⎣ θ: Agent ⎦ ┌──┴──┐      ┌──┴──┐
                                     K    Voice   V     t
                               ⎡ K: Acc ⎤  ⎡ Past ⎤
                               ⎢ φ: 3sg ⎥  ⎣ φ:3sg ⎦
                               ⎢ θ: Theme ⎥
                               ⎣ /si/ ⎦
```

This is essentially the analysis proposed by Schäfer (2008; 2017) for reflexives in Romance. On this analysis, K-clitics are true bound variables, and not λ-abstractors. This is not a subtle difference, but, without a doubt, is opaqued by the superficial similarities between, for instance, Spanish and Italian. At any rate, the proposal suggested in (160) for *si* reflexives in that language explains straightforwardly why Italian does not allow reflexive doubling. An analysis along the lines of (158) is correctly ruled out for Italian for Case reasons. In effect, since the clitic receives both accusative Case and the theme θ-role, the anaphor *se stesso* cannot co-occur with it.

On the other hand, note that if the clitic adjoins to Voice, we end up with a partial structural similarity between K-clitics and D-clitics. This similarity could be at the heart of the syncretism pattern across Romance. Plausibly, all these clitics are born as arguments and, in some cases, mutate into formal probes, which is the case in Spanish, but not in Italian, it seems.

This division into two types of clitics can be also instantiated within a same language. There is indeed robust evidence that in Rioplatense Spanish, accusative and dative clitics come in both guises, i.e., as D-clitics and K-clitics. As shown in detail by Di Tullio, Saab & Zdrojewski (2019), accusative clitic doubling in Rioplatense Spanish involves A-movement of the object to a position above the subject. In the following example, I provide a simple case of optional accusative doubling in the dialect:

(161)   Ana (lo)   criticó   a   Juan.
        Ana CL.3SG.ACC critiziced DOM Juan
        'Ana criticized Juan.'

Note now that focus movement of the object can repair WCO only under clitic doubling, a strong indication of A-movement:

(162)   A   JUAN$_i$??(lo$_i$)   criticó   su$_i$ madre.
        DOM JUAN CL.ACC.3SG criticized his mother
        'His mother criticized JUAN.'

As we saw in section 3.2.2, the same observation applies to doubled datives (cf. (68)):

(163)   ¿A quién$_i$??(le$_i$)   dio   un libro su$_i$ madre?
        to   whom CL.3SG.DAT gave a   book his/her mother
        'Whom does his/her mother give a book?'

These facts suggest that doubling clitics are probes for A-movement above Voice, as schematized below, a view consistent with Sportiche's (1996) classical proposal on clitics as Voice heads.

(164)   [$_\text{DATP}$ Probe$_\text{DAT}$ [$_\text{ACCP}$ Probe$_\text{ACC}$ [$_\text{VOICEP}$ Probe$_\text{SE}$]]

But of course, Rioplatense Spanish also uses clitics as free variable arguments:

(165)   a.   Ana lo   criticó.
           Ana CL.3SG.ACC critiziced
           'Ana criticized him.
     b.   Ana (le$_i$)   dio   un libro.
           Ana CL.3SG.DAT gave a   book
           'Ana gave her/him a book.'

And as in almost all Spanish dialects, Rioplatense also uses clitics as bound variable arguments in clitic left dislocation and clitic right dislocation:[25]

(166)   a.   A   Juan, Ana lo   criticó.
           DOM Juan, Ana CL.3SG.ACC critiziced
           'Juan, Ana criticized him.'
     b.   A Juan, Ana (le$_i$)   dio   un libro.
           to Juan   Ana CL.3SG.DAT gave a   book
           'Juan, Ana gave him a book.'

(167)   a.   Ana lo   criticó,   a   Juan.
           Ana CL.3SG.ACC critiziced, DOM Juan
           'Ana criticized him, Juan.'

---

[25] I refer the reader to Di Tullio, Saab & Zdrojewski (2019) for arguments in favor of distinguishing this kind of clitic duplications from clitic doubling.

b.   Ana (le$_i$)   dio   un libro, a Juan.
     Ana CL.3SG.DAT gave a   book, to Juan
     'Ana gave a book to him, Juan.'

So, it seems that we have good reasons to think that Spanish has both D-clitics and K-clitics. In simple terms, the clitics in (161)–(163) are D-clitics, whereas those in (165)–(167) are K-clitics.

This is not the unique source of variation within and across languages. As argued by Pujalte & Saab (2012), it seems that in some particular configurations *se* is a probe of Tense not of Voice. This seems to be the case with the so-called [−argument] *se*, famously proposed by Cinque (1988).

(168)   Cuando se es castigado sin   razón...
        when   SE is punished without reason...
        'When one is punished without a reason...'

We also owe to Cinque the important observation that this type *se* does not have the same distribution of other instances of impersonal *se*. On the one hand, they are only compatible in generic environments and not in episodic ones:

(169)   *Ayer   se fue castigado sin   razón...
        yesterday SE was punished without reason...
        Intended: 'Yesterday one was punished without a reason...'

On the other hand, it is incompatible in (absolute) nonfinite clauses:

(170)   *Al   serse   castigado sin   razón...
        to.the be$_{INF}$-SE punished without reason...
        Intended: 'One being punished without a reason...'

Note that the so-called [+argument] *se* is grammatical in the same environment:

(171)   Al   castigarse   a   Ana sin   razón...
        to.the punish$_{INF}$-SE DOM Ana without reason...
        Intended: 'Ana being punished without a reason...'

As mentioned in subsection 5.4, Pujalte & Saab (2012) argue that we can eliminate features like [−argument] if we allow that some generic Tense nodes can come with a subcategorization D-feature. In their system, this feature is resolved at PF. But we can maintain the same idea under the syntactic approach to *se* insertion. So let us assume that some generic Tense nodes can come with a formal probe. As for analytic passives, I also assume with Pujalte et al. that they have an agent θ-role in Voice but no D-feature in it and, consequently, Voice does not require a specifier

(for related proposals, see also Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Schäfer 2015 and Schäfer 2017).[26] Now, generic T requires a generic operator, which is attracted by the probe that *se* instantiate. This is illustrated in the following tree:

(172)
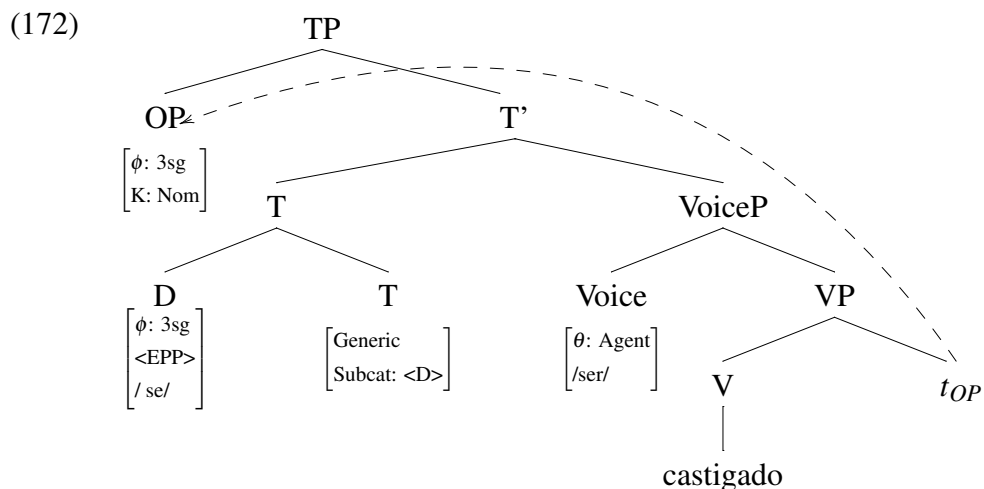
This analysis captures the restricted occurrence of [−argument] *se* to generic environments and also its distribution in (non)finite clauses. As argued in Pujalte & Saab (2012), absolute clauses require predicate fronting, which is in complementary distribution with expletive *se* (see their article for details and a brief comparison with Icelandic, a language in which the same complementary distribution is attested). Alternatively, this distribution could also follow from the generic property of Tense, which is absent in nonfinite clauses. I have to postpone a full exploration of this type of alternatives for future research. The hope is that the distribution of the probe *se* across the functional structure of the clause gives us different "flavors" of impersonal/passive *se* in Spanish and beyond without the need of stipulating [α argument] features.[27]

7   Concluding remarks

In this study, I have discussed the main properties of *se* constructions in Spanish with the aim of sustaining two main theses on the syntax-interface connection of such constructions:

(173)   *Thesis 1 (syntax)*: *se* is a probe for A-movement.

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[26] The agent θ-role is then existentially closed at LF, as it is standard.

[27] Note that the distribution of impersonal/passive *se* is not captured in recent proposals like, for instance, Ormazabal & Romero (2020), according to which impersonal/passive *se* is just a regular nominative pronoun.

(174)   *Thesis 2 (semantics)*: The LF realization of *se* depends on the syntactic output. Either A-movement applies in the syntax and LF receives the instruction for predicate abstraction or there is no A-movement and, as a consequence, no abstraction. If the latter is the case, *se* satisfies the individual argument Voice requires.

On the empirical side, the theory I have defended allows for unification of many instances of *se* syncretism in Spanish. In particular, I have detected what I think is the common property in those scenarios in which the clitic *se* occurs, namely, impersonal/passive *se*, reflexive *se*, ergative *se*, inherent *se* and aspectual *se*, among others. This common property is a probe or D-clitic merged in Voice. Being a probe of the relevant type, *se* triggers A-movement of an argument in its complement domain, if there is one. In that scenario, the clitic agrees with the moved goal, which in turn receives an additional θ-role from Voice. At LF, the clitic is realized as a λ-abstractor. If there is not such a goal, then the clitic fails to agree in the syntax agreement is entirely resolved at PF. At LF, it is realized as an indefinite in Heim's sense. I have provided several argument to the effect of showing A-movement properties in the relevant environments; essentially, I have shown that typical activity and minimality effects constraining other type of A-dependencies are clearly attested in the relevant patterns explored here. The conclusion is self-evident: *se*-constructions are the superficial manifestation of an abstract syntactic scenario connected to well-known properties of the A-system.

On the theoretical side, this study makes what I think are two relevant contributions. First, it really dissolves the need for postulating a variety of *se* constructions in favor of one abstract underlying property, i.e., the presence of a syntactic probe under Voice. Connected to this, the theory also provides an explicit account of the LF realizations of the scenarios that syntax produces, making sense (or providing a rational beyond EPP features) of the LF impact of A-movement. But more importantly, the theory dispenses with unmotivated Voice features (like [Active] vs [Non-Active]) and suspicious features for particular instances of *se* (like, [$\pm$ argument]). The theory only needs make reference to well-established constraints on A-dependencies regulating abstract Agree and A-movement, essentially, Activity and Minimality. If the theory is on the right track, then the computational system only manipulates θ-roles, ϕ-features and subcategorization features. Nothing else. Deconstructing Voice in this favored sense seems then a good theoretical move, one that brings us further progress in our understanding of *u*-syncretism in Spanish and, hopefully, beyond.

Second, I think that this study also makes a contribution to the debate about the proper nature of abstract Case. A great deal of generative theorizing in the last 40 years has been devoted to elucidate the proper nature of Case, a category

resistant to extra linguistic (or more properly, extra syntactic) considerations or motivations (although see Hinzen 2014 for a recent reconsideration). Case Theory, as conceived in the GB era, was considered under two views in competition: (a) The Case Filter and (b) The Visibility Condition. At that time, there were reasons to call the Visibility Condition into question (PRO theory, expletives, etc) and, perhaps this was the reason that led us to favor a more formal approach within the Minimalist Program (Checking Theory, Valuation Theory, among other important alternatives). A flavor of redundancy, however, persisted in the formal approach, as lucidly argued in McFadden (2004). The redundancy boils down to the basic fact that formal Case can in principle being derived from licensing considerations. McFadden's strategy was relegating case determination to morphology, a move that implied abandoning abstract Case Theory. I agree with McFadden's criticism but not with the way in which Case Theory is resolved. In my view, any version of the (syntactic or morphological) formal approach only deals with Case/case interactions; i.e., with the syntax-morphology interaction. And that is, without a doubt, an essential part of Case Theory. There is, however, another aspect at the core of the theory, which is -as it should be evident at this point- Case/θ interactions, and this is, again without a doubt, another essential aspect of the theory, but one that connects the syntactic properties of Case with its semantic effects. Here is where the Visibility Condition enters into the picture again. On the reconsideration of such a condition made in this study, Case is syntactic, θ-roles are also syntactic, but the associations between Case and θ that are syntactically determined (via allosemy) have a crucial impact in the semantic derivation.

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