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# A case of Multiple Agree

## Accusative, not dative, indirect object *se*

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This paper attempts to explain why indirect objects and aspectual *se* in Spanish are ungrammatical in the periphrastic passive. The claim is that *se* is accusative and since accusative is not available in passive, these *se* are ungrammatical in passive. An appeal to parallel patterns by indirect object *la* of *laista* dialects of Spain, which is overtly accusative, lends support to this approach. The technical account of accusative case on indirect object *se* relies on Multiple Agree with *v*. The Multiple Agree account generates concrete predictions regarding (non-)intervention effects with ethical, benefactive and alienable possessor datives. These predictions are tested and the results are positive, supplying support to the overall analysis.

### 1. Introduction

It is well known that in many Romance languages the accusative and dative reflexive and reciprocal clitic pronouns have the same form. This is illustrated in (1) and (2) by Spanish reflexive and reciprocal *se* respectively.

- (1) a. *Juan se mandó un regalo.*  
Juan  $se_{\text{DAT}}$  sent a gift  
'Juan sent himself a gift.'
- b. *Juan se vio en el espejo.*  
Juan  $se_{\text{ACC}}$  saw in the mirror  
'Juan saw himself in the mirror.'
- (2) a. *Juan y María se mandaron un regalo*  
Juan and María  $se_{\text{DAT}}$  sent a gift  
(*el uno al otro*)  
(the one to.the other)  
'Juan and María sent each other a gift.'

- b. *Juan y María se vieron en el espejo.*  
 Juan and María *se*<sub>ACC</sub> saw in the mirror  
 ‘Juan and María saw each other in the mirror.’

If both dative and accusative have the same form, one can raise the following question: Is *se* in (1a) and (2a) dative? There are three reasons that might lead one to conclude that *se* in (1a) and (2a) is dative: one morphological, one interpretational and one theoretical. First, when the non-reflexive/reciprocal clitic corresponding to *se* surfaces, it is overtly dative, i.e. *le*, illustrated in (3).

- (3) *Juan le mandó un regalo.*  
 Juan *le*<sub>DAT</sub> sent a gift  
 ‘Juan sent him/her a gift.’

Second, *se* in (1a) and (2a) is interpreted in the same way as *le* in (3); *se* is a goal, just like *le*.

Third, since Chomsky (1981), it has been assumed that only one abstract Nominative or Accusative case can be assigned, and once assigned to a phrase, no others can receive it. In (1a), we know that the direct object *un regalo* ‘a gift’ receives accusative, thus, *se* must receive some other case: dative.<sup>1</sup>

Given these considerations, it is not unreasonable to treat *se* in (1a) and (2a) (henceforth *I(ndirect) O(bject) se*) as an argument receiving dative case. If we draw this conclusion, however, we are immediately faced with a challenge, as noted by Kayne (1975): while *IOse* is ungrammatical in passive, illustrated in (4), overtly dative *le* is not, as illustrated in (5).<sup>2</sup>

- (4) a. *El profesor (\*se) ha sido presentado*  
 the professor *IOse* has been presented  
 (*a sí mismo*).<sup>3</sup>  
 (to self same)  
 ‘The professor has been introduced to himself.’  
 b. *Juan y María (\*se) han sido presentados*  
 Juan and María *IOse* have been presented  
 (*el uno al otro*).  
 (the one to.the other)  
 ‘Juan and María have been introduced to each other.’

1. Evidence that *un regalo* in (1a) bears accusative is that when pronominalized the corresponding clitic is *lo*, and it becomes the subject of a passive.

2. Not all datives are grammatical. As Demonte (1995:12) observes, when the dative corresponds to benefactive or interest datives, passivation is not good.

3. A felicitous context here might be one where the professor has a clone that he meets for the first time.

- (5) a. *El profesor le ha sido presentado (a María).*  
 the professor *le*<sub>DAT</sub> has been presented (to María)  
 ‘The professor has been introduced to María.’
- b. *Juan y María le han sido presentados (a Julia).*  
 Juan and María *le*<sub>DAT</sub> have been presented (to Julia)  
 ‘Juan and María have been introduced to Julia.’

This contrast raises a problem for the conclusion that IOse is dative, since, as we see in (5), overtly dative arguments are perfectly grammatical. The main goal of this paper is to offer an explanation of the ungrammaticality of IOse in passive in Spanish. Specifically, I claim that IOse is accusative, not dative. Thus, the reason it cannot appear in passive is because accusative is not available in passive.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section 2, I briefly review previous accounts of the ungrammaticality of IOse in the passive. As pointed out by Dobrovie-Sorin (2006), we will see how each of these previous accounts all face at least one important empirical challenge: Romanian IOse can occur in the passive. I tie this to the significant fact that Romanian shows an overt morphological distinction between dative and accusative reflexive and reciprocals. In Section 3, we will see that in one *laísta* dialect of Spanish, I(direct) O(bject) *la* shows overt accusative morphology and patterns in several ways like IOse, for at least some speakers. For these speakers, I claim that IO*la* is accusative. In Section 4, I offer a technical analysis of indirect object accusatives based on a Multiple Agree relation (see Hiraiwa 2005 among others) with little *v*. We will see that a Multiple Agree account makes interesting (non-)intervention predictions between IOse and other (dative) clitics; concretely we discuss why neither ethical datives nor alienable possessor datives intervene, while benefactive datives do. Section 5 recaps and offers a possible explanation for the well-attested fact in Spanish that a reflexive pronoun can be an *inalienable* possessor, but cannot be an alienable possessor. This, we will see, follows from the claim that *se* in Spanish is not dative, in contrast to alienable possessors.

## 2. Previous accounts

Kayne (1975), Burzio (1986), and Pesetsky (1995) claim that the presence of IOse is licensed by an external argument, and since there is no external argument in passives, IOse is ungrammatical in passive. Rizzi (1986) claims that IOse intervenes between the raised subject and its empty category, thus giving rise to a chain formation problem, illustrated in (6).<sup>4</sup>

4. Burzio (1986) observed that IOse is not only ungrammatical in the passive, but also in raising verbs/copulas and unaccusatives, data not provided here due to space limitations.

(6) \*NP<sub>i</sub>...[<sub>α</sub> IOse<sub>i</sub>...e<sub>i</sub>...]

As Dobrovie-Sorin (2006: 132) points out, each of these accounts faces one serious empirical challenge: Romanian IOse can appear in passive.<sup>5</sup>

(7) *Ion și Maria și- au fost prezentați anul trecut.*  
 Ion and Maria IOse-have been presented year-the last  
 ‘Ion and Maria were presented to each other last year.’

An important difference between Romanian and Spanish is that Romanian (morphologically) differentiates dative reflexive/reciprocal clitics from accusative reflexive/reciprocal clitics. Accusative (D(irect) O(bject)) *se* is illustrated in (8a) (from Dumitrescu 1990: 424) and dative *își* is illustrated in (8b) (from Dobrovie-Sorin 2006: 130).

(8) a. *S-a întristat la față.*<sup>6</sup>  
 DOse-has sadden the face  
 ‘His/Her face became sad.’  
 b. *Ion și-a trimis cărți poștale*  
 Ion IOse-has sent postcards  
 ‘Ion sent himself postcards.’<sup>7</sup>

Romanian reflexives and reciprocals are dative and they are fine in passives. In Spanish, overt dative *le* is also possible in passives. There appears to be a generalization here: if a clitic is in dative, it can appear in the passive.<sup>8</sup> Since IOse cannot appear in the passive, I will assume that it is not dative. Moreover, since passive lacks accusative, I will assume that Spanish IOse is in fact accusative. This would explain its inability to appear in passive.

### 3. Laísta dialects illustrate overt IO accusative

In laísta dialects of Spain, indirect object clitics that are animate and feminine surface with a form that is homophonous with feminine direct object clitics (Gutierrez Ordóñez 1999; Romero 2013; Fernandez Ordóñez 1994, 1999) as illustrated in (9), which I refer to as *IOLA*.

5. Romanian IOse can also appear with copula verbs, as expected. Glosses from Dobrovie-Sorin with the change to “IOse” by J. E. MacDonald.

6. Dumitrescu (1990) only supplies a translation in Spanish: *Se ha entristecido en la cara*, literally ‘Self has saddened in the face.’ Glosses and translation by J. E. MacDonald.

7. Translation by J. E. MacDonald.

8. Note also that many Slavic languages have a dative reflexive that can also appear in the passive.

- (9) *La escribió un poema a Inés.* [Gutierrez Ordóñez 1999: 1870]  
 IOla wrote a poem to Inés  
 ‘S/he wrote Inés a poem.’

As observed by Gutierrez Ordóñez (1999: 1870), IOla cannot appear in passive, illustrated in (10) below.

- (10) *El regalo le/\*la fue enviado.*  
 the gift IOle/\*IOla was sent  
 ‘The gift was sent to her.’

Given that IOla is ungrammatical in the passive, and IOla has overt accusative case morphology, I conclude that IOla is accusative (see Romero 2013 for more arguments that IOla is accusative).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, I would like to suggest that so-called (transitive) *aspectual se*, an example of which is illustrated in (11), is also accusative.

- (11) *Juan se bebió la cerveza.*  
 Juan IOse<sub>asp</sub> drank the beer  
 ‘Juan drank up the beer.’

As illustrated in (12), as expected, aspectual *se* is ungrammatical in the passive.

- (12) *La cerveza (\*se) fue bebida.*  
 the beer IOse<sub>asp</sub> was drunk  
 ‘The beer was drunk up.’

Although there could be a semantic issue in the passive, which might explain the ungrammaticality in (12), I still claim that aspectual *se* is accusative.<sup>10</sup>

If, as I argue, IOse is accusative, the final question to address here is how it gets accusative, especially if there is already a direct object that receives accusative. Case checking, as in Chomsky (1981), would rule out an account of these facts. The solution I pursue is Multiple Agree with *v*.

9. Romero (2013: 285) notes that IOla cannot appear with unaccusatives or replace datives in copular constructions. Note that there are laista speakers that find IOla in unaccusatives and copular constructions to be grammatical. Importantly, the same speakers find IOla grammatical in the passive as well. In this case, IOla would appear to behave just like overt non-laista dative *le*.

10. While a potential semantic issue might rule out the passive in (12), it does not inform us about the intervention effects discussed below in Section 4.3.

#### 4. A Multiple Agree account of IOse

##### 4.1 Multiple Agree: One probe, multiple goals

Hiraiwa (2001, 2005) (see also Anagnostopoulou 2005; Boeckx 2008; Chomsky 2004; Nevins 2007 among others) proposes a theory of Multiple Agree couched within a probe-goal theory of Chomsky (2000, 2001), whereby a single head can probe two distinct goals. With respect to the number of goals with which the probe can Agree, Agree is not inherently constrained. It is constrained, however, by the *Phase Impenetrability Condition* (PIC) which limits Agree to Phases. A probe can also only see Matching features (types, not values) and value *active* goals. Additionally, Hiraiwa (2001:71) proposes the following (derivational) constraint on intervention:

- (13) *The Defective Intervention Constraint* (DIC) (*derivationally revised*):  
A syntactic operation AGREE must obey a strict locality condition. AGREE ( $\alpha, \gamma$ ) is prohibited if there is a closer matching goal that is already inactive *at the point of the derivation* where the probe is merged; thus the DIC is restricted to a case where a probe for  $\gamma$  and a probe for intervening  $\beta$  are *derivationally distinct*.

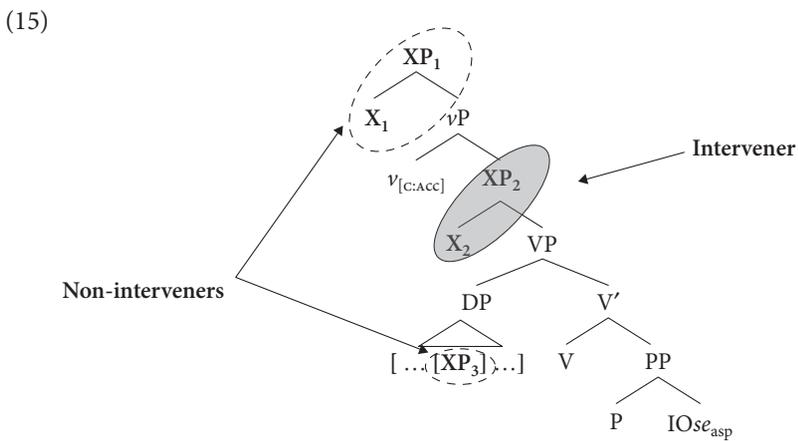
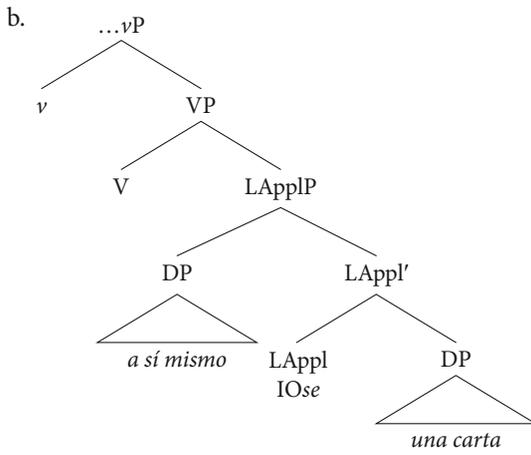
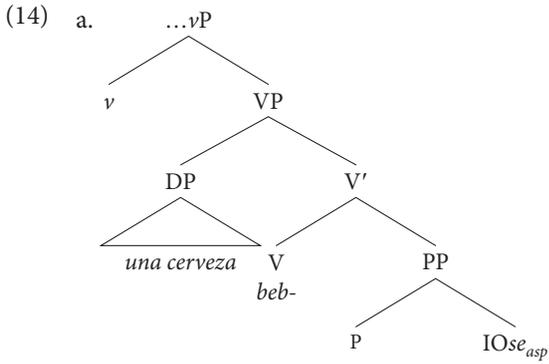
In essence, since Agree takes place simultaneously, a goal has to *already be inactive* (i.e. have no unvalued features) at the point in the derivation where the probe is merged in order for it to intervene.<sup>11</sup>

I claim that IOse is accusative due to a multiple Agree relation with *v*. *v* values both the direct object and IOse accusative. Moreover, I assume the following structures for aspectual *se* in (14a) (from MacDonald 2004, 2006) and for double object constructions (DOC) in (14b) (following Cuervo 2003).<sup>12</sup>

Assuming these structures and the DIC, we can generate predictions about potential interveners. I illustrate this with the structure for aspectual *se*, in (15), although the predictions are the same for the DOC. First, observe that  $XP_1$  is

11. *Principle of simultaneity*: Apply operations simultaneously in parallel at probe level (Hiraiwa 2005:38).

12. An alternative account is a high applicative à la Cuervo (i.e. what she calls an *affected experiencer*, used differently in Bosse et al. to appear) where these two clitics compete for the same applicative head. For a concrete instantiation see Armstrong (2011:232–233 and references therein). There are three immediate complications for such an approach, which I cannot elaborate on for the sake of space.



structurally higher than  $\nu$  and therefore should not intervene, because it is not  $c$ -commanded by  $\nu$ . Additionally,  $XP_3$ , which is embedded within a DP, should also not intervene – whether the DP it is contained in is structurally higher than  $IO_{se}$  as in (14a) or lower as in (14b) – since it would not  $c$ -command  $IO_{se}$ .  $XP_2$  is the only XP that meets the structural conditions of the DIC, and should count as a potential intervener.

In the next section, I test these predictions, taking ethical datives, or Bosse et al.'s (2012) affected experiencers, as an instance of  $XP_1$ , high applicatives à la Pylkkänen (2008) as an instance of  $XP_2$ , and DP internal *alienable* possessors as an instance of  $XP_3$ .

#### 4.2 Non-intervention: Ethical datives

As illustrated in (16), the presence of an ethical dative does not give rise to an ungrammatical sentence, whether with aspectual *se* (16a) or in a DOC (16b).

- (16) a. *Mi hijo se me bebió una botella de tequila.*  
 my son  $IO_{se_{asp}}$   $me_{Ethical}$  drank a bottle of tequila  
 'My son drank a bottle of tequila on me.'
- b. *El editor se me leyó el poema en público.*  
 the editor  $IO_{se}$   $me_{Ethical}$  read the poem in public  
 'The editor read the poem on me in public.'

Bosse et al. (2012) call these elements *affected experiencers*, and note that they can appear either below  $\nu$  or above  $\nu$ . One indication that they are above  $\nu$  is that the source of experience can be the subject. In Spanish, observe that the subject can be the source of the experience, as indicated by an example of an ethical dative in a statement typical of a parent, in (17).

- (17) *Mi hijo no me come.*  
 my son no  $me_{Ethical}$  eats  
 'My son doesn't eat on me.'

Ethical datives appear to be above  $\nu$ . This would explain why they do not intervene: they are simply too high.

#### 4.3 Intervention: High applicative à la Pylkkänen

In Pylkkänen (2008: 13), the position below  $\nu$  but above the verb phrase corresponds to a high applicative (HAppl). A high applied argument bears a relation with the event itself, and can be interpreted as *benefiting from the event by not doing it him/herself*. Observe in (18) that this interpretation is available in Spanish.

- (18) a. *Yo te bebo la cerveza.*<sup>13</sup>  
 I you<sub>HAppl</sub> drink the beer  
 ‘I will drink the beer for you (i.e. instead of you).’
- b. *Yo te envío el regalo a María.*<sup>14</sup>  
 I you<sub>HAppl</sub> send the gift to María  
 ‘I will send the gift to María for you  
 (i.e. instead of you).’

Crucially, this high applicative interpretation is not available with either aspectual *se* (19a) or with IO<sub>se</sub> in the DOC (19b).

- (19) a. *Pedro se (\*te) bebió la/mi cerveza.*<sup>15</sup>  
 Pedro IO<sub>se<sub>asp</sub></sub> you<sub>HAppl</sub> drank the/my beer  
 ‘Pedro drank up the/my beer for you  
 (i.e. instead of you).’
- b. *Pablo se (\*te) envió un regalo de cumpleaños*  
 Pablo IO<sub>se</sub> you<sub>HAppl</sub> sent a gift of birthday  
 (*a sí mismo*).  
 (to self same)  
 ‘Pablo sent himself a birthday gift for you  
 (i.e. instead of you).’

13. Note that it is not exactly clear why, assuming that the HAppl merges higher than VP, the complement of which is the direct object, HAppl does not block  $\nu$  from valuing accusative on the direct object in simple transitives (as well as ditransitives). This question arises under Agree, multiple or not. One possibility is that HAppl is not so high and is actually lower than the direct object, yet still takes the VP as a complement.

14. Low applicative benefactives (i.e. intended recipients) are out with the DOC because it is impossible to apply an applicative to a subject (Cuervo 2003) or, alternatively, as discussed by Pylkkänen (2008), there is a semantic problem.

15. An alternative explanation for the ungrammaticality of (19) is that they violate the P(erson) C(ase) C(onstraint), whereby the combination of 2nd person IO and 3rd person IO here is no good, due to their both entering into verbal agreement (Ormazabal & Romero 2007), possibly checking a (person or animacy) feature on  $\nu$  (Anagnostopoulou 2005). Bonet (1991:197) has shown that benefactives are subject to the PCC, just like indirect objects. Thus, if Agree with  $\nu$  by two elements underlies the PCC constraint, then we would have to conclude that both Agree with  $\nu$ , and thus there could be a PCC violation here, since we know that reflexives are not exempt from PCC constraints (Anagnostopoulou 2005; Kayne 1975; Bonet 1991). The crucial test case is the following, which for some speakers is grammatical: (i) *Te me presentas* ‘You present yourself to me,’ indicative of the *weak version* of the PCC (see Bonet 1991), where a 2nd person DO reflexive and 1st person IO avoids a PCC violation. So, if the examples in (19) are out due to the PCC, we would expect that a sentence like (ii) *\*Te me bebiste su cerveza*. ‘You drank up his beer for me.’ and (iii) *\*Te me enviaste el regalo*. ‘You sent yourself the gift for me.’ should be grammatical for those speakers that allow (i). The speakers who allow (i) find (ii) and (iii) ungrammatical, suggesting the PCC alone cannot account for (19).

On the present account, the unavailability of the high applicative with these IO*se*, follows under the DIC: the high applicative intervenes between *v* and IO*se*.

#### 4.4 Non-intervention: DP internal alienable possessors

Observe that while an alienable possessor interpretation is available with aspectual *se*, illustrated in (20a), it is not available with IO*se* in the DOC, illustrated in (20b).

- (20) a. *Juan se te bebió la/\*mi cerveza.*  
 Juan IO*se*<sub>asp</sub> you<sub>APOS</sub> drank the/my beer  
 ‘Juan drank up your beer.’
- b. *Juan (\*se) te envió el regalo de cumpleaños.<sup>16</sup>*  
 Juan IO*se* you<sub>APOS</sub> sent the gift of birthday  
 ‘Juan sent (himself) your birthday present.’

I take the contrast between the construction with aspectual *se* and the DOC to arise from their different underlying structures. With respect to aspectual *se*, I assume that the null P that introduces *se* forms a complex predicate with the verb and that together they assign a compositional theta-role to the direct object. This contrasts starkly with the applicative account of the DOC. On that account, the direct object is not semantically related to the verb (Cuervo 2003; Pyllkkänen 2008: 14). The lack of theta-relation with the verb is the source of the contrasts with respect to the alienable possessors. Essentially, a constituent must be theta-marked for the possessor to move out.<sup>17</sup>

An underlying assumption on this account is that dative clitic alienable possessors in Spanish are generated DP internally and move to a clitic position outside the DP. They are available with aspectual *se* because the direct object is theta-marked by the verb (and the null P). Since the alienable possessor moves from a position within the DP to a clitic position, which is higher than *v*, it never c-commands aspectual *se*, so it does not intervene. In contrast, dative clitic alienable possessors in the DOC construction are ungrammatical because they move from within a DP that is not theta-marked by the verb.

16. This is not a semantic issue since a DP internal alienable possessor is perfectly felicitous in this context in DOC:

- (i) *Juan se envió tu regalo de cumpleaños (a sí mismo).*  
 Juan IO*se* sent your gift of birthday (to self same)  
 ‘Juan sent himself your birthday gift.’

17. This appeals to Government and Binding formulation of islands (see Chomsky’s L-marking), which is no longer a viable technical solution since it relies on government. Nevertheless, being theta-marked by the verb appears to be the source of the contrast.

## 5. Conclusion and an extension

I have argued that IO*se*, laísta IO*la* and aspectual *se* are accusative due to Multiple Agree with *v*. This straightforwardly explains why IO*se*, laísta IO*la* and aspectual *se* cannot appear in passive: there is no accusative in passive. Moreover, we saw three cases of (non-)intervention. Specifically, ethical datives do not intervene because they are structurally higher than *v*. High applicative benefactives showed intervention effects, while DP internal alienable possessors showed mixed results stemming from the different underlying structures for aspectual *se* and the DOC. As a final note, consider one assumption of the present approach to DP internal alienable possessors: they receive dative case DP internally (Szabolcsi 1983; cf. Landau 1999). This must be the case, since they do not stop off at any projection to receive case outside of the DP, before moving to the clitic position.<sup>18</sup> If they did, we would expect that they would also show intervention effects, but they do not. If it is the case that alienable possessors are dative, and as claimed here, IO*se* is accusative, then we might be able to explain the following contrasts in Spanish in which only *inalienable* possessors can be reflexive, while alienable possessors cannot (see Gutierrez Ordóñez 1999: 1900). This contrast is illustrated in (21a) and (21b) respectively.

- (21) a. *María se cortó el brazo.*  
 María *se* cut the arm  
 ‘María cut her arm.’  
 b. *María (\*se) destrozó el coche*  
 María *se* destroyed the car  
 ‘María destroyed her car.’

Now contrast (21b) with (22). The overtly dative *le* can represent the alienable possessor in (22), while the IO*se* in (21b) cannot.

- (22) *María le destrozó el coche.*  
 María *le* destroyed the car  
 ‘María destroyed his/her car.’

Observe moreover, in laísta dialects of Spanish, IO*la* can only be interpreted as an *inalienable* possessor, as illustrated in (23a), but not an alienable possessor, as illustrated in (23b).

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18. Data also consistent with this approach are dative possessors of a subject: *El ordenador no me funciona* ‘My computer doesn’t work.’ (Based on data from Vann 1994: 495). If a dative needed to move to a position below *v* for dative case, these examples should be ungrammatical in Spanish, since the external argument is merged above *v*.

- (23) a. *La cortaron el brazo.*<sup>19</sup>  
 her cut the arm  
 ‘They cut her arm.’
- b. \**María tenía varios coches a la venta y yo  
 María had several cars to the sale and I  
 la compré el coche gris.  
 la bought the car grey  
 ‘María had several cars for sale and I bought her grey car.’*

If alienable possessors are dative, we can explain these facts, under the assumption that Spanish IO<sub>se</sub> and laísta IO<sub>la</sub> are accusative. If Spanish IO<sub>se</sub> and laísta IO<sub>la</sub> are accusative, they cannot be dative, and if they cannot be dative, they cannot be alienable possessors. Observe, as expected under this account, that Romanian IO<sub>se</sub> can be interpreted as an alienable possessor, since Romanian IO<sub>se</sub> is dative.

- (24) a. *Și-a trădat patria.*<sup>20</sup>  
*se*-has betray homeland  
 ‘S/he has betrayed his/her homeland.’
- b. *Ion ș-a sărutat nevasta*  
 Ion *se*-has kissed wife  
 ‘Ion has kissed his wife.’

Crucially, these facts fall out if IO<sub>se</sub> and IO<sub>la</sub> are accusative, not dative, as argued in this paper.

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19. Data from Juan Romero (p.c.). Recall that this is for the set of speakers that share the judgments as discussed in Section 3. See also footnote 9.

20. Examples from Dumitrescu (1990:415) who only supplies a translation in Spanish: \**Se traicionó la patria* and \**Juan se besó la mujer*. which are ungrammatical in Spanish. Glosses and English translation by J.E. MacDonald.

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