

DATIVE-NOMINATIVE ALTERNATIONS IN GERMANIC LANGUAGES

A generative perspective*

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Abstract – This paper focuses on the conditions under which dative–nominative alternations take place, mainly within the Germanic family, with a view to illuminate the nature of dative case cross-linguistically. In particular, we investigate the properties of *bekommen/krijgen* passives in different varieties of Dutch and German and compare these passives to other instances of Dat-Nom alternations attested in Icelandic. We consider two parameters of variation: (i) the environments where Dat-Nom alternations take place (monotransitives and ditransitives or only ditransitives) and (ii) the extent to which these depend on the organization of the Voice systems in the languages under discussion (passives or non-passives). The proposal we defend, within the generative framework, is that mixed approaches towards dative are correct. There are three types of languages: languages where dative is always structural, languages where dative is never structural and finally languages where dative qualifies as structural in some environments and as inherent/lexical in others.

Keywords: Dative, case, passivization, German, Dutch, Icelandic.

1. Introduction

In the literature, three views on the status of dative case have been expressed, in different forms, in GB and Minimalist writings:

- (a) Dative is non-structural Case, usually called “inherent” (Chomsky 1986) or “lexical” (i.e. idiosyncratically determined). Inherent dative, like other inherent cases, is retained throughout the derivation. Being thematically licensed (e.g. D-structure Case in GB; Interpretable Case in Minimalism), it does not alternate with nominative in passives and unaccusatives. For approaches that crucially link NP-movement to Case licensing, this entails that dative arguments do not undergo A-movement, unlike structural accusatives.
- (b) According to another view, which has been motivated by research on Icelandic (Zaenen, Maling, Thráinsson 1985 and many others following them), dative is quirky Case, i.e. it is idiosyncratically determined by the selecting verb and, as such, it does not become nominative in NP-movement environments (Chomsky 1995 and others). In principle, however, dative arguments do qualify as subjects with respect to a number of subjecthood criteria. This has led to a dissociation of Case and (EPP-) Licensing (as in Marantz 1991; Harley 1995; cf. Yip et al. 1987).

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- (c) One can also find mixed positions in the literature. Dative is held to be ambiguous, qualifying as structural Case in certain languages and as inherent or quirky in others. Dative arguments carrying structural Case enter into case alternations (Broekhuis, Cornips 1994; Svenonius 2002, 2006). Dative has been argued to have a double status even within one language: in certain environments, it is structural, while it is inherent/lexical in others (Harley 1995; Webelhuth 1995).

In this paper, we examine the conditions under which dative-nominative alternations take place across languages. In particular, we investigate the properties of *bekommen/krijgen* passives in different varieties of Dutch and German and compare these passives to other instances of Dat-Nom alternations attested in Icelandic. We consider two parameters of variation: (i) the environments where Dat-Nom alternations take place (monotransitives and ditransitives or only ditransitives) and (ii) the extent to which these depend on the organization of the Voice systems in the languages under discussion (passives or non-passives). The proposal we defend is that mixed approaches towards dative are correct. There are three types of languages: languages where dative is always structural, languages where dative is never structural and finally languages where dative qualifies as structural in some environments and as inherent/lexical in others.

2. Datives in German and Dutch

German has morphologically distinct nominative, accusative, dative and genitive case. Certain mono-transitive verbs like *helfen* ‘help’ take a dative object. German ditransitives have four distinct realizations that differ in the morphological marking of the direct (DO) and indirect object (IO) as well as the “unmarked linearization” of the two objects (Lenerz 1977; Höhle 1982; Fanselow 1991, 2000; Beermann 2001). The four patterns are schematically represented in (1) and exemplified in (1’) (with data from Beermann 2001):

(1) *German argument linearization and morphological case in ditransitives*

- | | | | |
|----|-------------|----|-------------|
| a. | NOM>DAT>ACC | c. | NOM>ACC>ACC |
| b. | NOM>ACC>DAT | d. | NOM>ACC>GEN |

- (1’)
- | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|--------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| a. | Sie | hat | dem | Mann | das Buch | geschenkt | |
| | She-nom | has | the | man-dat | the book-acc | given | |
| | ‘She has given the man the book’ | | | | | | |
| b. | Er | hat | den | Patienten | der | Operation | unterzogen |
| | He-nom | has | the | patient-acc | the | operation-dat | submitted |
| | ‘He has submitted the patient to the operation’ | | | | | | |
| c. | Sie | hat | die | Schüler | das Lied | gelehrt | |
| | She-nom | has | the | students-acc | the song-acc | taught | |
| | ‘She has taught the students the song’ | | | | | | |
| d. | Man | hat | den | Mann | des Verbrechens | beschuldigt | |
| | One-nom | has | the | man-acc | the crime-gen | accused | |
| | ‘One has accused him of the crime’ | | | | | | |

Morphological dative marks IOs in (1a) and what has been argued to be oblique arguments in (1b). Morphological accusative canonically marks DOs, but it may also exceptionally mark IOs, as in (1c), (1d).¹ Ditransitives are divided into two major categories, *regular* and

¹ In (1d) *den Mann* should be classified as an IO. The diacritic is the theta role of the argument, and as *den Mann* is an animate malefactive in that sentence, it is best analyzed as an IO. This is in accordance with

irregular ditransitives. In the former, the regular case for the theme is accusative and the regular case for the goal, possessor, benefactive/ malefactive and affected arguments is dative. The regular order among the two objects is DAT > ACC, i.e. IO > DO. With irregular ditransitives, we find the patterns ACC > DAT (with e.g. *aussetzen* ‘expose’), ACC > ACC (with the verb *lehren* ‘teach’) and ACC > GEN (with e.g. *anklagen* ‘accuse’).

Dutch is like English in that it does not have a distinction between dative and accusative case. According to Broekhuis and Cornips (1994, 2010), Dutch mostly has goal ditransitives, as in (2) and in general ditransitives are very restricted:²

- (2) Jan bezorgde Marie/ haar het pakje
 Jan delivered Marie/ her the package
 ‘Jan brought Mary the package’

Also, there is an extremely small set of verbs licensing benefactive ditransitives in Standard Dutch, prototypically the verb *inschenken*, as in (3):

- (3) Jan schenkt Els een kop koffie in
 Jan pours Els a cup coffee PRT
 ‘Jan pours Els a cup of coffee’

3. *Werden* Vs. *bekommen/krijgen* Passives in German and Dutch

Both German and Dutch cannot form passives of IOs with the auxiliary *werden/worden*. These only permit direct passives (passive of the DO). We illustrate this on the basis of German (4 – 5):

- (4) *Er wurde die Blumen geschenkt
 He-nom was the flowers-acc given
 ‘He was given the flowers’
- (5) Die Blumen wurden ihm geschenkt
 The flowers-nom were him-dat given
 ‘The flowers were given to him’

Passives of IOs can be formed, but only with the auxiliary *bekommen/krijgen* (Dutch data from Everaert 1990, p. 127; Broekhuis, Cornips 1994, p. 176):

- (6) a. Er bekam die Blumen geschenkt *German*
 He-nom got the flowers-acc given
 ‘He was given the flowers’
- b. Hij kreeg de boeken op zijn kantoor bezorgd *Dutch*
 He got the books at his office given
 ‘He got the books delivered at his office’

standard practice in the theoretical literature that calls benefactives/ malefactives, goals and sources in ditransitives “indirect objects” (IOs) and themes “direct objects” (DOs).

² See the list of verbs in Broekhuis and Cornips (1994, 2010), and references therein for a more complete list based on an extensive corpus research. The topic could be further discussed from a diachronic perspective, but that lies beyond the scope of the current paper. For some recent work on the diachrony of Dutch ditransitives, also in comparison with other Germanic languages see Coleman (2010) and Coleman et al. (2010).

In the literature, there are two main views regarding the status of (6). According to the first one, the examples in (6) are not true passives (see Haider 1984, 1985; Vogel, Steinbach 1998). The opposing view argues that (6) has all the properties conventionally associated with the passive (see Wegener 1985; Reis 1985; Fanselow 1987; Webelhuth, Ackerman 1994 for German; Broekhuis, Cornips 1994, 2010 for Dutch), and the surface subject is an externalized indirect object. Crucially for us, if the latter view is correct, then dative in German and Dutch must be structural Case, at least in the environments where *bekommen/krijgen*-passivization is possible.

The most serious argument in favor of the first view is that *bekommen/krijgen*-passives seem to be subject to idiosyncratic restrictions and, as such, they cannot be considered a productive construction, like the passive usually is. However, *krijgen*-passives in Dutch are very canonical with verbs of transmission and communication³. *Bekommen* passives in German are regular with verbs expressing a concrete transfer of possession to the recipient and communication verbs. If a construction is regularly attested under well-defined conditions then it cannot be regarded as idiosyncratic.

Note that there is considerable dialectal variation within/among German and Dutch dialects when it comes to the availability of this passive with monotonatives, unlike ditransitives. For instance, (7) is not acceptable by all speakers across dialects of German (see Lenz 2009).

- (7) * Er bekam geholfen
He got helped

There are two ways to understand the monotonative vs. ditransitive asymmetry with *bekommen/krijgen*-passives: Either the meaning of the *bekommen/krijgen* auxiliary, that of a possession relation between the goal and the theme, makes it compatible only with the double object frame, or, alternatively, *bekommen/krijgen* passivization is only possible in environments where dative is structural Case, and dative is in many dialects inherent/lexical Case in monotonatives (because it is more idiosyncratic in monotonatives than in ditransitives, where it is canonically associated with goals). Evidence from dialectal variation militates against the former option. As already alluded to above, in certain dialects of German, e.g. Luxemburg German, monotonatives permit *kréien*-passives:

- (8) De Mann kritt gedroot *Luxemburg German*, Lenz (2009)
The man gets threatened
'The man gets threatened'

The contrast between (7) and (8) suggests that in Low and Upper German, dative is inherent in monotonatives and structural Case in ditransitives, explaining why *bekommen/krijgen* passives are possible only with ditransitives. In other words, the examples above seem to suggest that Low and Upper German display a monotonative vs. ditransitive asymmetry. On the other hand, the Luxemburg German pattern is attested in Ancient Greek as well, where datives alternate both in monotonative and in ditransitive passives (Anagnostopoulou, Sevdali 2009).

There is independent evidence that the *bekommen*-passive is sensitive to the distinction between structural vs. non-structural dative. Dative IOs in (9) can be passivized

³ Provided that they denote actual transmission of the theme to the goal/beneficiary/inalienable possessor, with the mode of transmission specified, as in Broekhuis and Cornips (1994) and (2010).

when the auxiliary is *bekommen*, while dative oblique objects in (10) cannot do so, see Beermann (2001):⁴

- (9) Der Mann bekam ein Buch geschenkt
 The man-nom got a book-acc given
 ‘The man was given a book’
- (10) *Die Operation bekam den Patienten unterzogen
 The operation-nom got the patient-acc submitted

In the double accusative frame, accusative indirect objects become subjects in *bekommen*-passives, as shown in (11) (Beermann 2001). This suggests that it is the higher argument with structural Case that becomes subject in *bekommen*-passives. This argument is dative in “regular ditransitives”, while accusative direct objects become the subjects of *werden*-passives, as in (11b):

- (11) a. Die Schüler bekommen das Lied gelehrt
 The students-nom get the song-acc taught
 ‘The students are taught the song’
- b. Ein Buch wurde dem Mann geschenkt
 A book-nom was the man-dat given
 ‘A book was given to the man’

In addition to the observation that oblique datives do not become nominative in German, unlike structural ones, as shown in (9–11), there is additional evidence suggesting that the dative can in principle be either structural or inherent case in German. Bayer, Bader and Meng (2001) note that while certain verbs with a single dative object can form a *bekommen*-passive others cannot, once again suggesting that dative objects of monotransitives do not always have structural Case, even in the dialects which, in principle, have monotransitive verbs assigning structural dative:

- (12) a. Alle gratulierten dem Opa
 All congratulated the grand-dad-dat
 ‘Everybody congratulated the grand-dad’
- b. ??Der Opa bekam von allen gratuliert
 the grad-dad-dat got by all congratulated

This correlates with the fact that dative is not productive in German. Structural Case is supposed to be productive and therefore ‘on the rise’. This has been argued to be the case with Icelandic dative (Barðal 2001, Maling 2002, Svenonius 2002)⁵, but crucially not with the German dative. See the discussion in the following section.

Turning to Dutch, Broekhuis and Cornips (2010) argue that the formation of *krijgen*-passives with ditransitives is subject to two generalizations: (i) the verb indicates what mode of transmission is involved and (ii) the referent of the indirect object is the goal

⁴ As also discussed in Fanselow (2000), and Cook (2006), the *bekommen*-passive is possible and acceptable for all speakers only for ditransitive verbs with the basic/unmarked word order *dat* >> *acc* ‘schenken’ and not with verbs with the basic/unmarked word order *acc* >> *dat* ‘unterziehen’.- See also Czepluch (1988), Molnárff (1998), McFadden (2004).

⁵ Svenonius (2002) argues that the fact that Icelandic dative is spreading in novel contexts and neologisms provides evidence that speakers do not learn where dative is used on a verb-by-verb basis (as a lexical approach to dative would predict).

(and not the source) of transmission. As already mentioned, the regularity of the process argues against a lexical analysis and in favor of a transformational one. In turn, this suggests that Dutch dative is structural Case.

But are *krijgen/bekommen*-passives true passives, in the sense of containing an implicit external argument? It is generally agreed upon that the external argument is implicitly present in passivization, as it is semantically and syntactically active. This is suggested by e.g. the licensing of (i) agentive *by*-phrases, (ii) purpose clauses, and (iii) agentive adverbs. In the remainder of this section we apply these tests to the Dutch and German *krijgen/bekommen*-passives.⁶

In Dutch, *door*-phrases are used with the regular passive, while *van*-phrases are ruled out (with the exception of Limburg- and Belgian/Flemish- Dutch where *van* is used alongside with *door*):

- (13) Het boek werd hem ?door/*van Peter toegestuurd
The book was him through/by Peter sent
'The book was sent to him by Peter'

Both in Standard and Heerlen Dutch *door*-phrases are somewhat marked with the *krijgen*-passive but the majority of our informants prefer *door* over *van*, as in all regular passives:

- (14) Jan kreeg het boek gisteren ?door/#van Peter doorgestuurd
Jan got the book yesterday through/by Peter sent
'Jan got the book sent by Peter yesterday'

In German passives, *von*-phrases introduce agents, and *durch*-phrases introduce causers/forces, and causing events:

- (15) Die Vase wurde von Peter/ durch den Erdstoß zerbrochen
The vase was by Peter / through-the earth tremor broken
'The vase was broken by Peter/by the earth-tremor'

All our informants accept *von*-phrases in the *bekommen*-passive, see also Leirbukt (1997) for a detailed survey.

- (16) Peter kriegte das Paket von der Mutter geschickt
Peter got the parcel by the mother sent
'Peter got sent he parcel by the mother'

While in both Standard and Heerlen Dutch, control into purpose clauses is possible (as seen in example 17 below), the German situation is rather unclear. For several speakers (18) is acceptable, while for others not. A similar state of affairs is observed concerning agentive adverbs. While all our Dutch informants accept them (19), (20) is acceptable for some speakers, but not for others:

- (17) Zij kreeg de prijs overhandigd om haar vriendje te irriteren
She got the prize awarded to her friend to annoy
'She was awarded the prize to annoy her boyfriend'

⁶ Many thanks to Hans Broekhuis, Leonie Cornips, Timothy Coleman, Liliane Haegeman, Jeroen van Craenenbroeck, Marc van Oostendorp, and Jan-Wouter Zwart for Dutch judgements and to Matthias Jilka, Alexandra Lenz, Winfried Lechner, Susanne Lohrmann, Sabine Mohr, Marcel Pitteroff and Florian Schäfer for German judgements.

- (18) ^{Unclear} Der Junge kriegt das Paket zugeschickt um die Eltern zu ärgern
 The boy gets the parcel sent in order the parents to annoy
 ‘The boy gets the parcel sent in order to annoy the parents’
- (19) Zij kreeg opzettelijk het verkeerde boek toegestuurd
 She got deliberately the wrong book sent
 ‘She got deliberately sent the wrong book’
- (20) ^{Unclear} Der Junge kriegte absichtlich das falsche Paket zugeschickt
 the boy got deliberately the wrong parcel sent
 ‘The boy got deliberately sent the wrong parcel’

We conclude that the Dutch *krijgen*-passive does contain an implicit external argument, as does the German *bekommen* passive of certain of our German informants. This does not hold for all speakers, though, i.e. some speakers do not view these constructions as true passives containing an implicit external argument, at least as far as the control and agentive adverbs tests are concerned. The fact that *von*-phrases are accepted by all speakers might suggest that this is not the most reliable diagnostic for the presence of an implicit external argument.⁷ The reasons for this split among speakers/ dialects of German seem to be quite complex, relating presumably to the status of the grammaticalization of the verb *bekommen*. Here, we will treat German as being similar to Dutch.

4. A Different System: Icelandic Dat-Nom Alternations⁸

Icelandic presents a different system to what we have seen so far. First, dative – nominative alternations never happen in passives. They happen in *-st* middles (and also certain anticausatives and adjectival passives, see (19) and Zaenen, Maling 1990). An important difference between the middle and the periphrastic passive in Icelandic is that the former does not license *by*-phrases (21b) while periphrastic passives do (22a) (Sigurðsson 1989, p. 268; Svenonius 2006):

- (21) a. Ég týndi úrinu
 I-nom lost the watch-dat
 ‘I lost the watch’
 b. Úrið týndist
 The watch-nom lost-middle
 ‘The watch got lost’
- (22) a. Hundurinn var drepinn (af lögreglunni)
 The dog-nom was killed by the police
 ‘The dog was killed by the police’
 b. Hundurinn drapst (*af lögreglunni).
 The dog-nom killed-middle by the police
 ‘The dog got killed’

In Icelandic, causative change of state monotransitive verbs may assign dative case. As Maling (2002) notes, the object is a theme which undergoes a change of location. In (23) the dative Case seems to require a locative adverbial:

⁷ Agentive *by*-phrases are licit in English nominalizations, which also lack an implicit external argument, see Fox, Grodzinsky (1998), Alexiadou (2001) for discussion.

⁸ We thank Florian Schäfer and Jim Wood for many (e-mail) discussions over this point.

- (23) a. þeir mokuðu skafinum burt
 they shoveled snow-drift-the-dat away
 ‘They shoveled the snow drift away’
 b. þeir mokuðu skafinn
 they shoveled/dug through snow-drift-acc
 ‘They shoveled through the snow drift’

Finally, Sigurðsson (1989) points out that only DO theme datives alternate in ditransitives (Jónsson 2000 provides a list of some verbs that can do this). The dative case of benefactive IOs does not alternate. This also holds for the *-st* verbs, where dative IOs stay dative, even under *-st*:

- (24) a. Jón gaf mér þetta tækifæri
 John-N gave me-dat this opportunity-acc
 ‘John gave me this opportunity’ (Sigurðsson 1989:270)
 b. Mér gaf-st þetta tækifæri (*viljandi)
 me-D gave-st this opportunity-nom (*willingly)
 ‘I happened to get this opportunity’ (Sigurðsson 1989:270)

A comparison between the German/Dutch and the Icelandic system leads to a generalization along the following lines:

(25) **Dat-Nom Generalization:**

- Dat-Nom alternations happen ‘high’ (i.e. in passives and passive-like constructions) when the case affected is assigned on non- prototypical DO arguments of monotransitives (non-themes) and IOs in ditransitives.
- Dat-Nom alternations happen ‘low’ (i.e. in anticausatives and anticausative-like constructions) when the case affected is assigned on prototypical DOs (themes) both in monotransitives and in ditransitives.

5. Sketching an Analysis

We propose to link the two different types of Dat-Nom alternations in (23) to properties of two different heads in the vP domain. More specifically, Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou and Schäfer (2006) argue that (change-of-state) verbs are syntactically decomposed into a Voice, a *v* and a Resultant state component:

- (26) [VoiceP [vP [RootP/Resultant state]]]

Under the Voice Hypothesis (Kratzer 1996), the functional projection of Voice is responsible for the introduction of external arguments. The same head introduces a DP in the active and licenses a PP in the passive. *v* introduces event implications and is crucially involved in causatives (see Pykkänen 2002; cf. Ramchand’s 2008 *process* head). This decomposition makes available two heads that could in principle be involved in Case licensing-absorption, Voice and *v*. Based on this, we argue for the following:

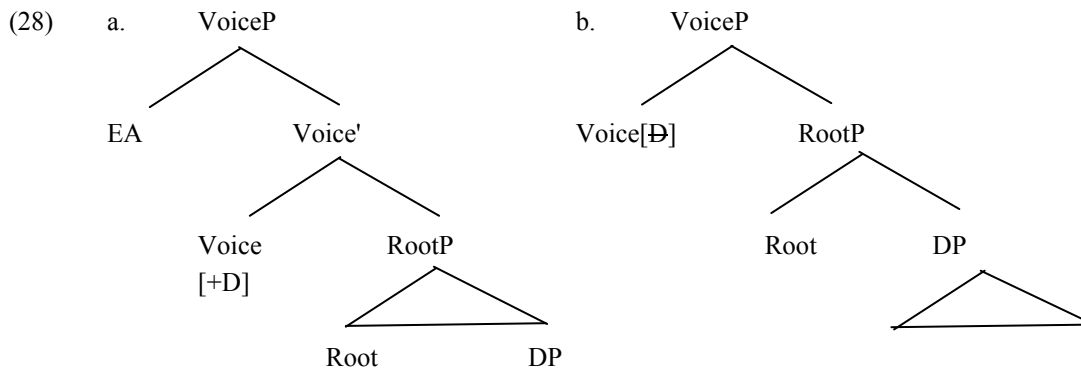
(27) **Case assignment/ absorption hypothesis**

Dative ‘assignment’ and ‘absorption’ are mediated through the same head. The head that licenses dative when it is active cannot license it when it is non-active. (Anagnostopoulou, Sevdali 2009)

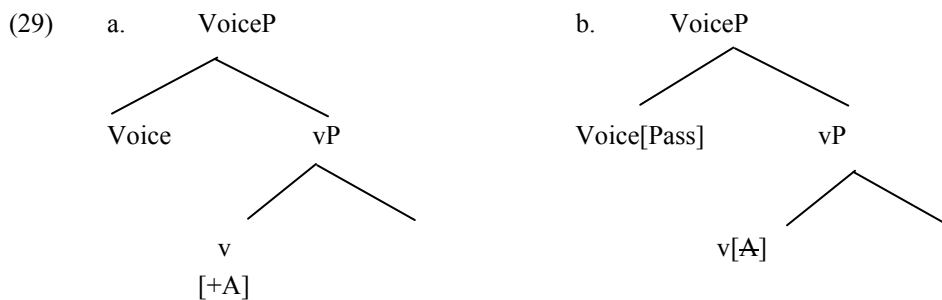
Following Svenonius (2002, 2006) and Sigurðsson (2009a), we assume that structural dative Case is a property of the Root (since it is sensitive to the semantics of the root, it is

partially idiosyncratic etc.), but it is licensed by a higher head (Voice or v). We propose that the two language-types in (23) differ with respect to the head licensing dative: (a) In German, Dutch (and Ancient Greek) the higher head Voice licenses dative when it is active. Passive Voice is defective, 'absorbing' (i.e. not licensing) structural dative. (b) In Icelandic, dative is licensed by the lower head v. Dative 'absorption' is failure of licensing by a defective v in middles, stative passives and anticausatives. Structural dative continues to be licensed in passives because the higher Voice[+ passive] does not interfere with the properties of the lower v. In what follows, we illustrate first how this works for monotonatives, proceeding from there to ditransitives.

We propose that structural dative in Ancient Greek and German dialects permitting the formation of *bekommen*-passives with monotonatives is licensed by Voice. In passives, Case on Voice is inactive (a deficiency perhaps reducible to the presence of a deficient set of *phi*-features in Voice), and the DP object cannot be licensed by Voice. It is licensed by T. The result is that the single DP argument carries Nom.



Since change of state/causative verbs always assign accusative in these languages, we propose that Acc is located in v (29a), and hence is absorbed at that level (29b):

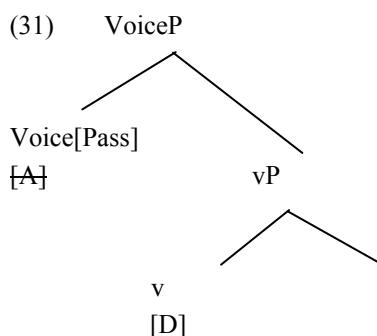
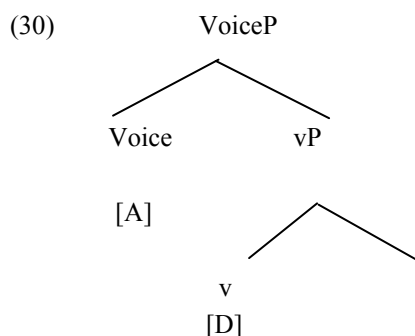


Note that (28) is inapplicable to Dutch and German dialects with monotonatives not forming *bekommen*-passives, because there, dative is not structural. (28) is applicable to Ancient Greek, Luxemburg German and the dialects permitting *bekommen*-passives with monotonatives.⁹

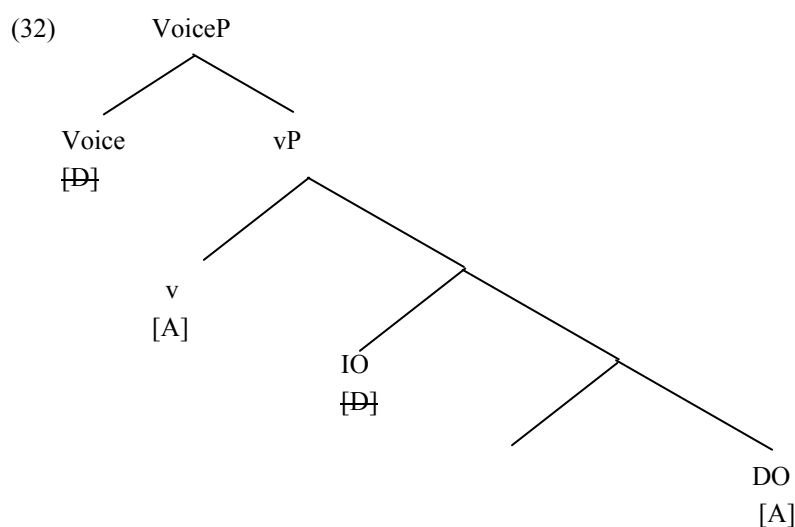
In Icelandic, Dat is licensed by v explaining why it can surface on objects of causative verbs. Hence, Voice[Pass] does not interfere with assignment of Dat by the lower v. Since

⁹ If German *bekommen*-passives lack Voice, then the structure is like Icelandic (31), except that there is no suppressed Dat feature.

Voice[Pass] only 'absorbs' Acc in Icelandic, we propose that Voice[Act] licenses Acc Dative is 'absorbed' in middles (stative passives and anticausatives) which contain Case deficient variants of v head and lack Voice:^{10,11}



Turning to ditransitives of all languages, we assume that they have a structure where the IO and the DO are introduced in the lower part of the tree¹² and v and Voice are merged above them. In AG and German dative assignment and absorption happens at the level of Voice and accusative assignment and absorption happens in v:



In Icelandic, Dat-Nom alternations affect only DOs. This is so because Voice and v are both involved in the assignment of **structural** accusative or dative Case on the DO, as in

¹⁰ See Schäfer (2008) and Sigurðsson (2009) for alternative analyses. These authors argue that in Icelandic anticausatives and stative passives Voice is absent. Since Voice is absent, the higher argument will get structural nominative instead, following Marantz (1991) and Yip et al. (1987). The *-st* facts could be captured in this analysis assuming that an expletive Voice is involved (Schäfer 2008).

¹¹ See Svenonius (2006) who argues that dative case in Icelandic is assigned structurally by a combination of v(our Voice) and a VD (our v). Cf. also Schäfer (2008, p. 290f.) who argues that dative case is licensed by Voice_{DAT}.

¹² It is irrelevant, for the moment, whether they are Spec and complement of a low applicative or a small clause head, Spec and complement of the Root, or the DO is argument of the Root and the IO specifier of a high applicative head. But see right below for evidence that the presence of an applicative head matters to the analysis of Icelandic and Dutch.

monotransitives.¹³ The IO dative is licensed by a lower **applicative** head, the head that thematically introduces it, and is preserved under passivization (i.e. the IO has **inherent dative**; Anagnostopoulou 2003, Wood 2012 among others).

Finally, recall that in Dutch there are two-modes of dative passivization: *worden*-passive, where dative is preserved; *krijgen*-passive where it is absorbed. It seems that two different structures feed the two modes: an applicative structure the *worden*-passive and a non-applicative one the *krijgen*-passive. As Broekhuis, Cornips (2010) note, Dutch ditransitive verbs must denote actual transmission of the theme argument in order to be able to undergo *krijgen*-passivization. (33a), their (34), implies actual transmission of the package to Marie, and *krijgen*-passivization is possible; (33b), on the other hand, is an idiomatic example, which does not imply transmission of *de rillingen*, and *krijgen*-passivization is excluded.

- (33) a. Jan bezorgde Marie/haar het pakje
Jan delivered Marie/her the package
'Jan brought Marie the package'
a'. Marie/Zij kreeg het pakje bezorgd
Marie/she got the package delivered
'Marie was brought the package'
b. De heks bezorgde Marie/haar de koude rillingen
the witch delivered Marie/her the cold shivers
'The witch gave Marie the creeps'
b'. *Marie/Zij kreeg de koude rillingen bezorgd
Marie/she got the cold shivers delivered

This contrast is reminiscent of a well-known difference in English ditransitives which, in turn, is suggestive of the type of dative that enters *krijgen*-passivization in Dutch. While the double-object example (34b) can have a “causative reading, this is not possible in the PP-example (34a) (see Pesetsky 1995 for discussion). Assuming that the IO in the English double-object construction is licensed by an applicative head (Baker 1988; Marantz 1991; Pylkkänen 2002; Anagnostopoulou 2003 and others), (33) suggests that in Dutch, it is the non-applicative version of a ditransitive that undergoes *krijgen*-passivization.¹⁴ In Dutch *krijgen*-passives, Voice licenses dative when active, and absorbs it when passive. On the other hand, an applicative structure is involved in *worden*-passivization; in this structure the applicative head licenses the Case of the IO and the DO must alternate:

- (34) a. Nixon gave a book to Mailer *agentive/*causative*
b. Nixon gave Mailer a book *causative/agentive*

6. Conclusions

In this paper, we looked at Dat-Nom alternations in dialects of German and Dutch and compared the patterns attested in these languages mainly to Icelandic (also with some passing remarks on Ancient Greek). We argued that there are three main factors regulating variation within and across languages: (a) whether the alternations are limited to

¹³ In Icelandic passives the higher dative becomes the subject and the lower nominative theme is an object, see Holmberg, Platzack 1995; Collins, Thráinsson 1996.

¹⁴ See Anagnostopoulou (2005) for arguments that there is no necessary correlation between the category of Indirect Objects (PP vs. DP) and the absence vs. presence of an applicative head.

ditransitives (Low and Upper German, Dutch) or they are also found with monotransitives (Luxemburg German, Ancient Greek, Icelandic); (b) whether the alternations affect IOs in ditransitives and non-theme DOs of monotransitives (Luxemburg German, Ancient Greek) or only DOs in ditransitives and monotransitives (Icelandic); (c) whether the alternations happen in passives, i.e. constructions containing an implicit external argument (Ancient Greek, Dutch, German for a group of speakers) or in non-passives, i.e. constructions lacking an implicit external argument (Icelandic, German for another group of speakers). Factor (a) has been attributed to the mixed status of dative: structural vs. inherent/lexical. Factors (b) and (c) have been argued to reduce to properties of the heads Voice and v.

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