

A base-generation approach to Georgian split DPs

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Background

Split DP: construction in which material external to the DP intervenes between the head noun and its modifier.

- Continuous DP (CDP): ... [_{DP} Mod NP] ...

- Split DP (SDP): ... Mod ... NP ...¹

These are possible in Georgian (1a), as well as in several other languages, including Russian (1b):

1a) (In a context in which we are discussing a big girl, a big boy, a big dog, a big snake, and a big cat.)

did-ma_i Maia [bič-ma ____i] naxa.

big-ERG Maia boy-ERG saw
'As for big things, the boy saw Maia.'

1b) Rubašku_i ja kupil [krasnuju ____i]

shirt 1SG bought red
'I bought a red shirt.'

No argument/adjunct asymmetries

Movement shows argument/adjective asymmetries

Hypothesis 1 prediction: splitting of complement DP should be possible, splitting of adjunct DP should not because it would violate adjunct island.

Hypothesis 3 prediction: no argument/adjunct asymmetry.

5a) Nino-m dačril-i xel-i dartxa magida-s.
Nino-ERG wounded-NOM hand-NOM knocked table-DAT
'Nino knocked on the table with her wounded hand.'

5b) dačril-i Nino-m xel-i dartxa magida-s.

6a) Nino-m xel-i dartxa dzvel magidas.
Nino-ERG hand-NOM knocked old.DAT table-DAT
'Nino knocked on the old table'

6b) dzvel-s Nino-m magida-s dartxa xel-i.

Evidence points toward Hypothesis 3: base-generation.

Question:

Split DPs in Georgian have two properties that distinguish them from splits in other languages:

- Unexpected case concord properties
- Little evidence to suggest a movement analysis (which is the null hypothesis for SDPs in other languages)

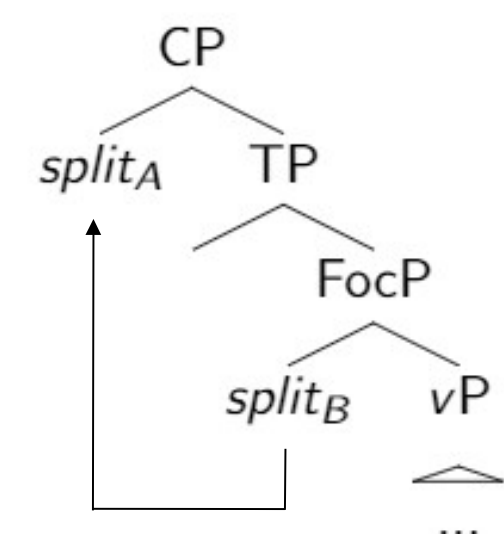
How can we account for the case concord facts on split DPs and for the lack of movement properties?

Hypotheses:

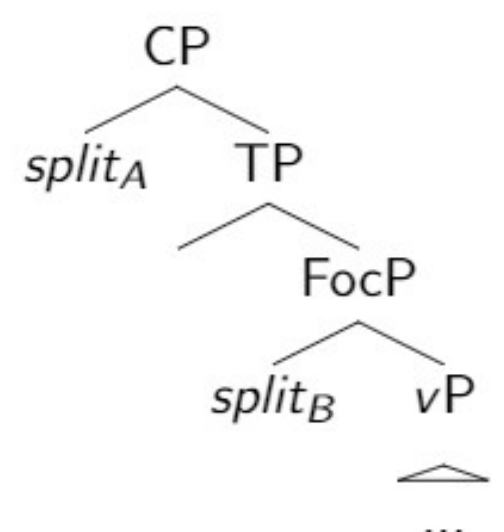
Hypothesis 1: SDP is single DP, the modifier has undergone movement from within the DP to the left periphery.

... Mod ... [_{DP} t NP] ...

Hypothesis 2: SDP is two full DPs that undergo ellipsis. One DP is copy of lower DP, appears in clause-initial position through movement.²



Hypothesis 3: SDP is two full DPs that undergo ellipsis; clause-initial DP is base-generated and is coreferential with lower DP.



SDPs across negative islands

Data from French has shown that negated verbs are islands for extraction.

7a) [Combien de livres]_i il n'a pas vendu t_i?
how.many of books he not.has not sold
'How many books did he not sell?' (how many are left)

7b) *Combien_i il n'a pas vendu [t_i de livres]?

Hypothesis 1 prediction: objects of negated verbs should not be allowed in SDPs as this would violate the negative island for extraction.

Hypothesis 3 prediction: objects of negated verbs will not obey negative islands.

8a) Ramden-i student-i ar čačra Giorgi-m?
how.many-NOM student-NOM NEG fail Giorgi-ERG
'How many students did Giorgi not fail?'

8b) Ramden-i ar čačra Giorgi-m student-i?

Evidence points toward Hypothesis 3: base-generation.

NP ellipsis yields case connectivity

Differences in modifier case between CDPs (left) & SDPs (right):

	NOM	ERG	DAT	ACC
head noun (dog)	dzayl-i	dzayl-ma	dzayl-s	dzayl-s
adjective (big)	did-i	did-ma	did	did
adjective (small)	p'at'ara	p'at'ara	p'at'ara	p'at'ara
numeral (3)	sam-i	sam-ma	sam	sam
numeral (10)	at-i	at-ma	at	at
dem. (this)	is	im	im	im
dem. (that)	es	am	am	am
quantifier (some)	zog-i	zog-ma	zog	zog
quantifier (all)	q'vela	q'vela	q'vela	q'vela
quantifier (no)	arts ert-i	arts ert-ma	arts ert	arts ert
quantifier (each)	titoeul-i	titoeul-ma	titoeul	titoeul
possessor (my)	tjem-i	tjem-ma	tjem	tjem
possessor (Nino's)	Ninos	Ninos	Ninos	Ninos

	NOM	ERG	DAT	ACC
head noun (dog)	dzayl-i	dzayl-ma	dzayl-s	dzayl-s
adjective	did-i	did-ma	did-s	did-s
adjective (small)	p'at'ara	p'at'ara-m	p'at'ara-s	p'at'ara-s
numeral (3)	sam-i	sam-ma	sam-s	sam-s
numeral (10)	at-i	at-ma	at-s	at-s
dem. (this)	*	*	*	*
dem. (that)	*	*	*	*
quantifier (some)	zog-i	zog-ma	zog-s	zog-s
quantifier (all)	q'vela	q'vela-m	q'vela-s	q'vela-s
quantifier (no)	#	arts ert-ma	#	#
quantifier (each)	titoeul-i	titoeul-ma	titoeul-s	titoeul-s
possessor (my)	tjem-i	tjem-ma	tjem-s	tjem-s
possessor (Nino's)	Giorgi-s-i	Ninos-am/ma	??Giorgis	??Giorgis

Clause-initial part of split DP also starts as full DP, but undergoes NP ellipsis; case on head noun is outside scope of ellipsis, and is perceived as appearing on preceding modifier.

... [_{DP} Mod NP-case] ... → Mod-case

... [_{DP} p'at'ara eign -s] ... → p'at'ara-s

Evidence for case preserved in ellipsis in Georgian: Same case concord facts surface in NP ellipsis.

9) bič-i Maia-s did cign-s adzlevs, ...
boy-NOM Maia-DAT big.ACC book-ACC gives...
... magram Giorgi p'at'ara-*(s) (adzlevs).
... but Giorgi.NOM small-ACC gives
'The boy will bring Maya a big book, but Giorgi (will bring her) a small (one).'

No ambiguity in adjective reconstruction

Particular order of adjectives with respect to each other leads to subtle differences in interpretation:

2) Vano konperencia-ze maghal axalgazrda mecnier-s elaparaka.
Vano conference-at tall.DAT young/junior.DAT scientist.DAT spoke
'Vano spoke to a tall young/junior scientist at the conference.'

→ Ambiguous: ✓ young in age, but received PhD some time ago
✓ scientist is junior but not necessarily young.

3) Vano konperencia-ze axalgazrda maghal mecnier-s elaparaka.
Vano conference-at young/*?junior.DAT tall.DAT scientist-DAT spoke
'Vano spoke to a young tall scientist at the conference.'

→ Unambiguous: ✓ 'Young scientist'; ✗ 'junior scientist'

Hypothesis 1 & 2 prediction: structure pre-movement/ellipsis could be either (1) or (2), so interpretation of split DP should be ambiguous.

Hypothesis 3 prediction: the only interpretation available is the one for which the linear order of modifiers in the CDP matches that of the SDP.

4) Axalgazrda-s Vano maghal mecnier-s elaparaka.
young/*junior-DAT Vano tall.DAT scientist-DAT spoke
'Vano spoke to a young tall scientist at the conference.'

→ Unambiguous: ✓ 'Young scientist'; ✗ 'junior scientist'

Evidence points toward Hypothesis 3: base-generation.

Conclusions:

How can we account for the case concord facts on split DPs?

NP ellipsis of a full DP preserves case, which then appears on Mod. ...And for the lack of movement properties? SDPs are underlyingly two DPs; the clause-initial DP is base-generated in topic position.

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¹ There are also DPs of the form [... NP ... Mod ...]. For reasons of space, these will not be addressed in this poster.

² One part of a split DP must be in preverbal or postverbal focus position; thus, one part of the split appears in FocP. SDPs with postverbal material are beyond the scope of this poster.

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