Personality Disorders: Insights from the Slovenian Person-Case Constraint pattern

The Person-Case Constraint (PCC) is a ban on co-occurrence of specific case and person feature combinations on phonologically weak elements such as clitics, agreement affixes and weak pronouns. The PCC has received numerous treatments in terms of person feature checking/licensing failures (Béjar & Řezáč 2003, Anagnostopoulou 2005, a.o.). In this paper, I present a new PCC pattern from Slovenian, which is not predicted by the existing approaches, and propose a new account of PCC and the Strong/Weak PCC variation (see Bonet 1991 on the latter).

Central issue: Although sometimes listed as a language with no PCC, most Slovenian speakers exhibit restrictions on clitics consistent with the PCC (1a). In addition, Slovenian object clitics appear with both Dat>Acc (1b) and Acc>Dat (1b,2) orders (unlike in e.g. Greek or Serbo-Croatian). What is especially interesting is that *3DAT&1/2ACC violations are suspended with the Acc>Dat order (1b), but also that Acc>Dat order does not suspend PCC violations entirely, as illustrated by (2a).

(1) a. *Sestra mu me/te bo predstavila.  | b. Sestra me/te mu bo predstavila.
   sister 3.DAT 1/2.ACC will introduce  |  sister 1/2.ACC 3.DAT will introduce
   ‘The sister will introduce me/you to him.’ | ‘The sister will introduce me/you to him.’
(2) a. *Sestra ga mi/ti bo predstavila.  | b. Sestra ga mu bo predstavila.
   sister 3.ACC 1/2.DAT will introduce  |  sister 3.ACC 3.DAT will introduce
   ‘The sister will introduce him to you/me.’ | ‘The sister will introduce him to him.’

The full pattern is given in (3,4) below, with the traditional PCC in (3), and the Acc>Dat order with the previously unattested “inverse PCC” in (4). This pattern goes against the view of the PCC as a ban on 1st/2nd person DO/Acc clitics in the presence of IO/Dat/Gen clitics. This indicates that the PCC must be independent from the specific case morphology or -roles of IO and DO.

(3) a. 3.DAT=3.ACC  b. 1/2.DAT>3.ACC  c. *1/2.DAT>1/2.ACC  d. *3.DAT>1/2.ACC
(4) a. 3.ACC>3.DAT  b. 1/2.ACC>3.DAT  c. *1/2.ACC>1/2.DAT  d. *3.ACC>1/2.DAT

Imperatives complicate matters even further, since PCC effects are absent in imperatives with both clitic orders (5). In addition to that, Slovenian is a rare language that allows embedded imperatives. Significantly, in embedded imperatives clitics appear pre-verbally and PCC effects are observed (6).

(5) a. Predstavi me mu1!  | b. Predstavi mu me!
   introduce.IMP me.ACC him.DAT  |  introduce.IMP him.DAT me.ACC
   ‘Introduce me to him!’
(6) a. Rekel ti je, da me mu predstavi.  | b. *... da mu me predstavi.
   said you.DAT is that me.ACC him.DAT introduce.IMP  |  ... that him.DAT me.ACC introduc.IMP
   ‘He told you that you should introduce me to him!’

Existing approaches can only derive (3): For Béjar and Řezáč (2003) and Anagnostopoulou (2005) Dat checks off specific person (π) features on v^0 in a v^0>Dat>Acc base structure, leaving none of the relevant π-features on v^0 for a 1/2nd person Acc to check. The former achieve this with: (a) cyclic Agree (π probes before #), (b) moving Dat to avoid defective intervention, and (c) stipulating 3π does not require π-checking; and the latter with: (a) Dat is specified for π but defective for #, (b) v^0 can only check # on Acc, (c) Acc is unspecified for π, and (d) 3π is a lack of π-features. With both approaches it is crucial that Dat/IO and Acc/DO are made inherently distinct; as a result capturing the pattern in (4) becomes impossible. Similarly, for Nevins (2007) v^0 probes for specific π values on Dat>Acc and a non-matching Dat causes PCC. Also, in this approach clitics are reflexes of Agree itself. This makes 3>3 clitics (3a,4a) an issue; 3π never fits the π-values that v^0 probes for, so Agree cannot even occur.

Proposal: I capture (5) by appealing to Bošković (2004), where post-verbal clitics in imperatives result from pronunciation of lower copies. Imperatives involve F^0, a PF affix that must merge with V under PF adjacency. Since in their surface position clitics intervene between F^0 and V, the Stranded Affix Filter forces pronunciation of lower copies of clitics so that F^0 can merge with V. The absence of a PCC violation results from the pronounced order of clitics differing from the one in their final landing site. I argue that in (5b), the unpronounced higher copies are 1.ACC>3.DAT, a configuration where PCC is not active (1b,4b), but the pronounced lower copies are *3.DAT>1.ACC (1a,3d) (an account will be provided in the talk why higher copies must be pronounced in embedded imperatives).

To account for the full pattern in (3,4) I propose that weak pronominal elements enter derivation with unvalued π-features; these need to be valued before spell-out either under Agree or by receiving a default π value as a last resort. I further propose that: (i) the default π value is 3π, (ii) probe X^0 (X^0 can be v^0, T^0, Asp^0, or P^0; subject to language-internal/crosslinguistic variation) values π through Agree,
(iii) Agree cannot hold between probe and goal if there is a matching intervener (Chomsky 2000), and (iv) there is additional clitic movement in Slovenian (see below) which will be related to the fact that Slovenian clitics can be both proclitics and enclitics, even splittable (5).

(5) ? So mu včeraj ga dali? *Did they give it to him yesterday?"

Derivation: The derivation of (3, 4) assumes a Dat-Acc base order, with Acc clitic movement (before X0 is merged), but is also compatible with free base-generation of Dat/Acc clitics. Dat acts as an intervener for Agree between X0 and Acc in (6a). To avoid a crash, Acc must receive default (d) 3π. In a derivation where Acc moves above Dat (7a), Dat must then get default 3π for the same reason. X0 can then assign any π value under Agree to the top clitic (6b, 7b). Crucially, the banned configurations (*1/2>1/2, *3>1/2) are impossible, as Agree across a matching intervener violates locality.

The analysis so far works for the Strong PCC. Crosslinguistically there is another pattern, Weak PCC, which differs by allowing 1/2.Dat>1/2.ACC combinations. This pattern is also found with some speakers of Slovenian; as with Strong PCC, there is also an “inverse” pattern with the Acc>Dat order. I propose the locus of variation is the following difference: (i) Strong PCC: clitic movement is independent of π-feature valuation, (ii) Weak PCC: π-feature valuation is what drives clitic movement, i.e. π must be valued in SpecXP. As a result, when X0 merges in (9a, 10a), if high Dat/Acc enters into Agree with X0, it must move to X0 to be valued (9b, 10b). As traces do not count as interveners (Chomsky 1995), the low Acc/Dat clitic can now Agree with X0 and move ‘tucking-in’ under high Dat/Acc to get valued (9d, 10d). Alternatively, low Acc/Dat can receive default π-value (9c, 10c), thus deriving all acceptable patterns. Crucially, if Dat receives default π-value, it can no longer move to X0 (with Weak PCC π-feature valuation requires movement to SpecXP), becoming an intervener for X0 and Acc, blocking π-valueuation via movement for Acc, correctly capturing the unacceptability of *3>1/2. The option of deriving 3>1/2 by assigning the high Dat/Acc 3π, and low Acc/Dat 1/2π in a multiple-spec configuration is eliminated with the condition in (11), deriving the distribution in (12).