

Flexible search conditions on Agree-probes

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Overview

- Dynamic search conditions:** Recent work has argued that Agree-probes may update their search condition across the course of the derivation (Béjar 2003, Georgi 2010, Béjar and Kahnemuyipour 2017, Deal 2024, a.o.).

- My proposal:** If a probe Merges picky, and first-cycle Agree fails, it *relaxes* its search condition to φ upon reprojection, as defined in (1).

(1) *Probe relaxation:*

If an Agree probe on head H bears an interaction condition X (where $X \neq [\varphi]$ and X geometrically entails $[\varphi]$) and first-cycle Agree fails because there is no DP that bears X in the domain of H, the probe relaxes its interaction condition to $[\varphi]$ upon reprojection.

- Patterns:** This predicts a variety of patterns which are all attested:

- [SPKR] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$ Enxet Sur (Elliott 2021)
- [ADDR] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$ Quechua (Myler 2017)
- [PART] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$ Kamairuá (Seki 2000)

Enxet Sur: [SPKR] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$

- Enxet Sur (Enlhet-Enenlhet/Mascoyan; Paraguay, 3.800) exhibits a 1>2/3 agreement pattern with 1st person agreement preference. However, in the absence of 1st persons the subject controls agreement (2). Subject agreement is often for grammatical gender (see Elliott 2021).

(2) **Singular agreement paradigm in Enxet Sur declarative Mood:**

	1 Agent	FEM(2/3)	MASC(2/3)	\emptyset (unacc.)
1 Patient	X	e- 1.OBJ	e- 1.OBJ	e- 1.OBJ
FEM(2/3)	ek- 1.SUBJ	\emptyset - F	ap- M	a- F.STAT
MASC(2/3)	ek- 1.SUBJ	\emptyset - F	ap- M	ap M.STAT
\emptyset (unerg.)	ek- 1.SUBJ	\emptyset - F	ap- M	X

- The agreement forms vary across Moods and there are also plurals in the language but these data are omitted for space. The pattern is uniform across all Moods according to Elliott (2021) and 1st plural objects control agreement similarly to 1st singular objects.

- I propose that the probe in Enxet Sur Merges on v with the conditions in (3) but, if 1st-cycle Agree fails, then the interaction condition is relaxed (4).

(3) **Enxet probe:**

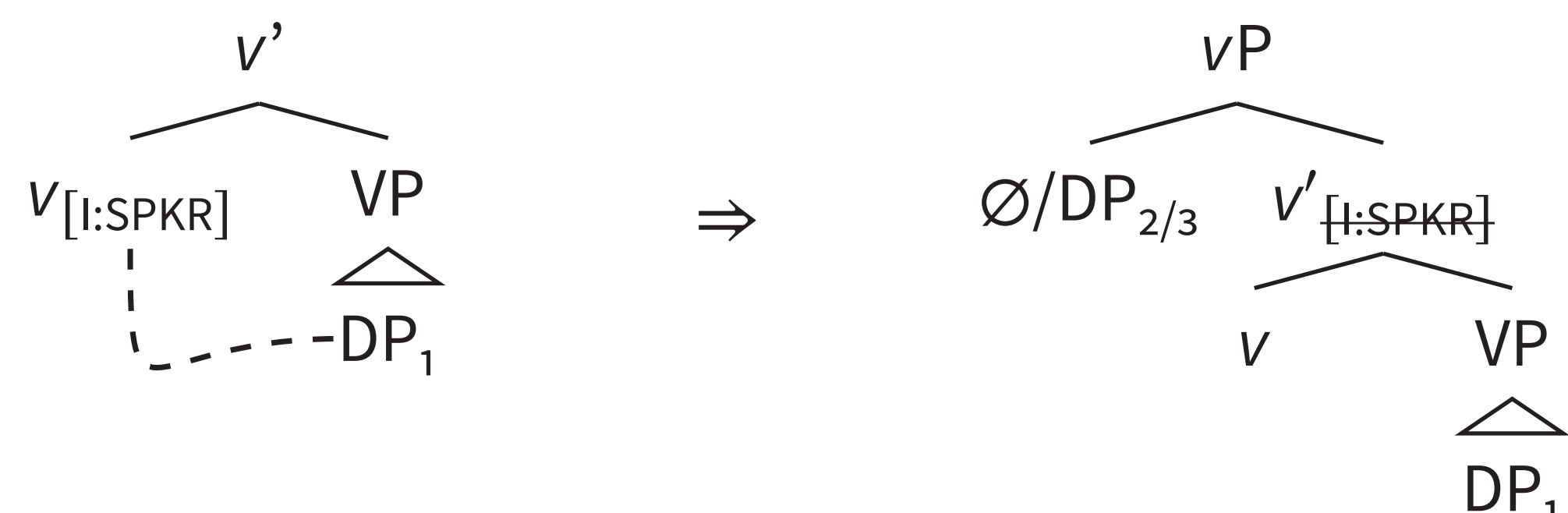
$V_{[INT:SPKR, SAT: \varphi]}$

(4) **Relaxed Enxet probe:**

$V_{[INT: \varphi, SAT: \varphi]}$

- 1st person object agreement is derived straightforwardly (5).

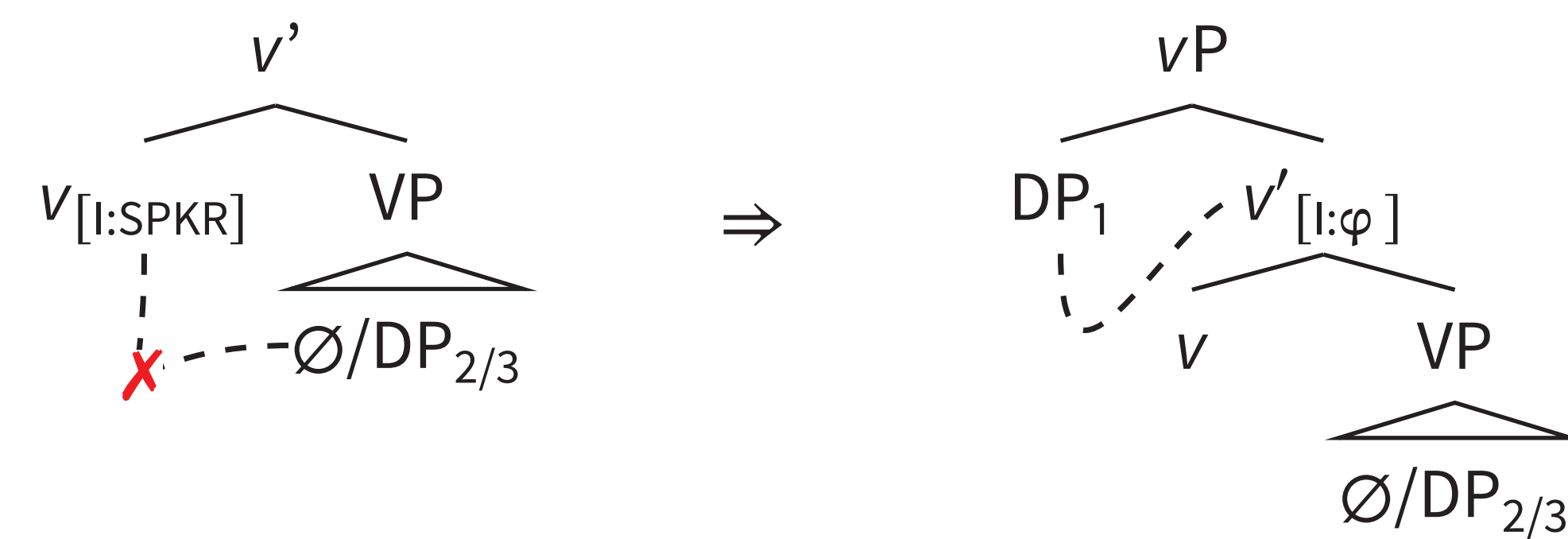
(5) **Derivation of 1st person object agreement:**



Derivations for Enxet Sur

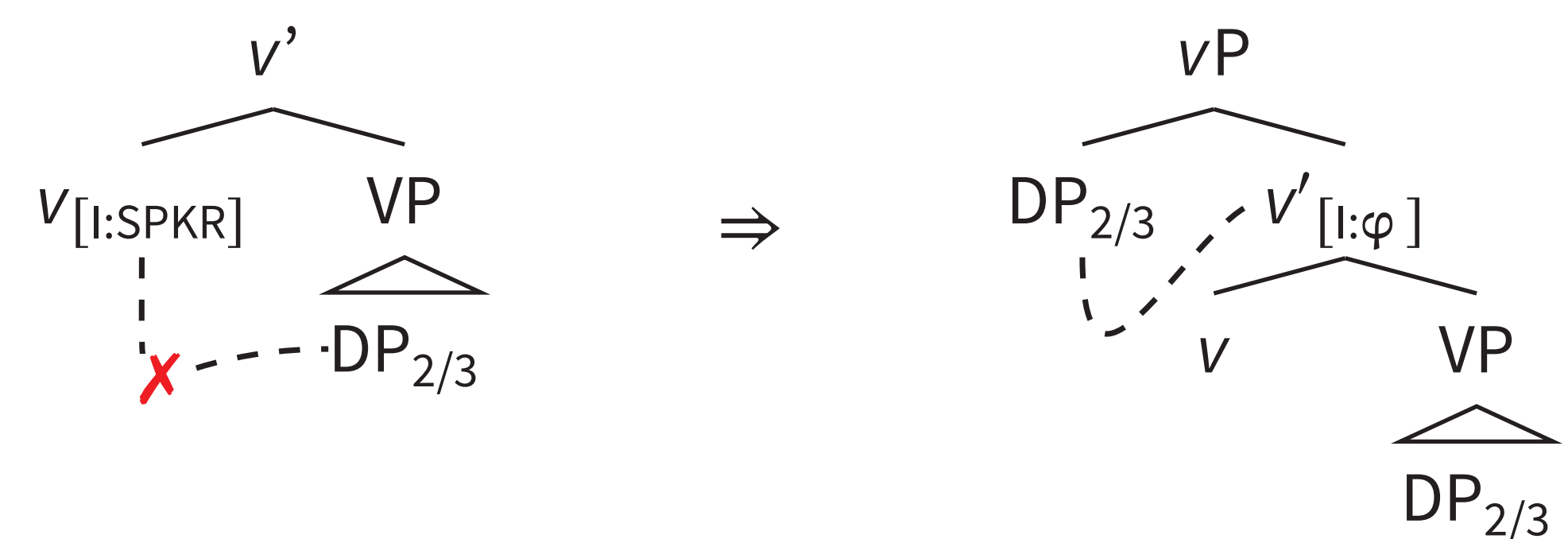
- Derivations of 1st person subject agreement, on the other hand, involve relaxation because Agree fails in the first cycle.

(6) **Derivation of 1st person subject agreement:**



- Relaxation also occurs in clauses without 1st persons where subject agreement surfaces (2).

(7) **Non-1st-person subject agreement:**



► **Derivational parallels:** This analysis provides derivational parallels between unergative/subject agreement on the one hand and unaccusative/object agreement on the other. It accomplishes this because unrelaxed probes in Enxet treat 2nd/3rd persons the same as the absence of a DP.

Quechua agreement: [ADDR] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$

- Huaylas Quechua (Julca-Guerrero 2008) exhibits the [ADDR]-counterpart of Enxet (setting aside some complications), with a twist: there's no subject/object morphological distinction (8). 2nd person agreement surfaces as *-nki* for both objects and subjects.

(8) **2nd persons consistently control agreement:**

a. kuya-**nki**
love-2
'You love him/her.' (Julca-Guerrero 2008: 9b, 25)

b. kuya-shu-**nki**
love-2INV-2
'S/he loves you.' (Julca-Guerrero 2008: 11, p. 26)

- When no 2nd person is present, the subject simply controls agreement (9).

(9) **Subject controls agreement in absence of 2nd person:**

a. kuya-**a**
love-1
'I love him/her.' (Julca-Guerrero 2008: 9b, p. 25)

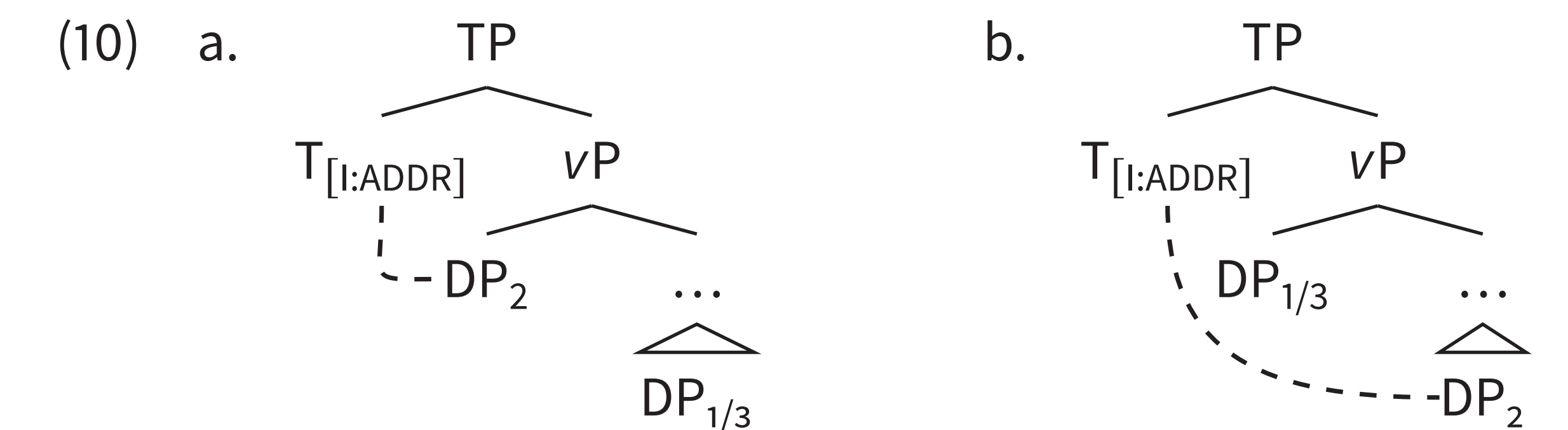
b. maqa-ma-**n**
hit-1INV-3
'S/he hits me.' (Julca-Guerrero 2008: 8b, p. 24)

- I propose that the probe in Quechua on T (Myler 2017) Merges with the conditions: $[I:ADDR, S:\varphi]$. Upon failed Agree, the probe relaxes to $[I:\varphi, S:\varphi]$.

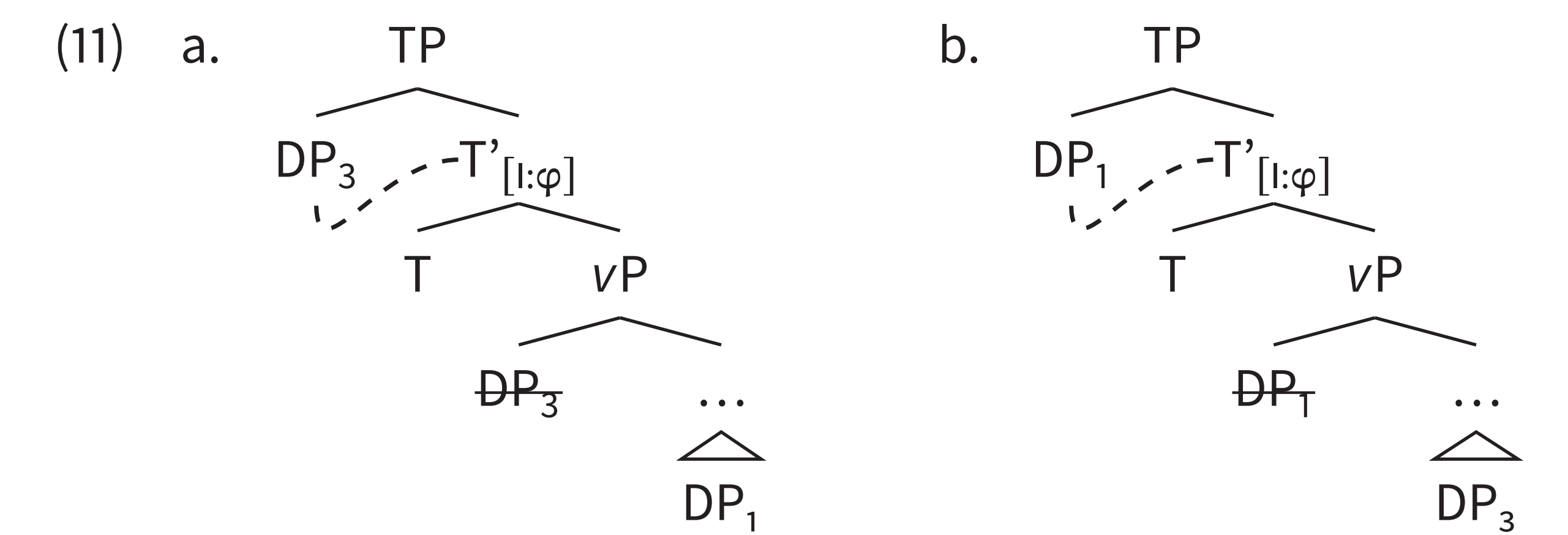
Selected references: Béjar. 2003. Phi-syntax: A theory of agreement. • Elliott. 2021. A grammar of Enxet Sur. University of Hawai'i. • Georgi. 2010. Third-cycle effects in Mordvin. • Julca-Guerrero. 2008. The person marking system in Huaylas Quechua. Thesis: UT, Austin. • Myler. 2017. Cliticization feeds agreement: a view from Quechua. *NLLT*. • Seki. 2000. Gramática do kamairuá. Campinas.

Derivations for Quechua

- [ADDR] probe Agrees with 2nd persons in the first cycle no matter what (10).



- If there's no 2nd person, the probe relaxes, moves the subject to spec,TP (Myler 2017), and Agrees with it (11).



- This account, in general, predicts a lack of cycle effects on higher probes. We saw cycle effects in Enxet with the intransitive split, but no such split is reported in Quechua intransitives (Julca-Guerrero 2008, Myler 2017).

Kamairuá: [PART] \rightsquigarrow $[\varphi]$

- Kamairuá (Tupi-Guarani; Brazil, 600) exhibits three separate agreement patterns that display complex interplay with one another (12) (Seki 2000). This system requires that a probe on v not Agree with 3rd person objects and only Agree with 3rd person subjects in 3>3 and 3rd person unergatives.

(12) **Kamairuá verbal agreement paradigm:**

	1 Agent	2	3	\emptyset (unacc.)
1 Patient	X	je- 1.OBJ	je- 1.OBJ	je- 1.OBJ
2	oro- 1>2	X	e- 2.OBJ	e- 2.OBJ
3	a- 1.SUBJ	ere- 2.SUBJ	o- 3.SUBJ	i- DFLT
\emptyset (unerg.)	a- 1.SUBJ	ere- 2.SUBJ	o- 3.SUBJ	X

- Assuming a probe with the initial conditions $v_{[I:PART, S:SPKR]}$ and relaxation $[PART] \rightsquigarrow [\varphi]$, this derives double Agree in 1>2 and 1>2 only. This is the only cell in the Kamairuá paradigm where a portmanteau form surfaces (13).

(13) **Derivation of 1>2 portmanteau**

