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Impersonal-passive *se* and person restrictions in Romance*

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1 General

Two *se*-constructions are relevant here, impersonal *se* and passive *se*; extensive overviews across Romance are Dobrovie-Sorin 2017, Pescarini 2017a, within Spanish, Fabrégas 2021.

One construction is traditionally called *passive se*, because when it applies to a transitive, the coding of the O of corresponding actives is close to the promoted O→S of the periphrastic passive: it is an agreeing nominative, though when it is postverbal, there is more leeway for nonagreement than for the corresponding in passives. When passive *se* can be isolated from impersonal *se*, as in Italian nominative-licensing nonfinite clauses, it can be seen to be restricted to transitives and unergatives, perhaps unifiable as having a syntactically projected internal argument. There is likely need to distinguish *middle se* from passive *se*, and there may be systems with only middle *se*, though traditional systems of this sort might rather have independent limitations on passive *se*, cf. Zribi-Hertz 2008.

The other construction is traditionally called *impersonal se*. Here O is coded as O of actives, accusative or DOM dative, though that will presently be nuanced. Only impersonal *se* is available with some or all unaccusatives, broadly understood here to include e.g. periphrastic passives, as well as generally unergatives. With transitives, there is variation: some systems allow accusative O generally even when the nominative O→S of passive *se* is an option, Italian; others only when nominative O→S is barred by person restrictions, Genovese; and other still have manifestly have it to go by unaccusatives but with transitives only allow passive *se* and its nominative O→S. There are agreed to be systems with passive *se* but no impersonal *se*, given away by restriction of *se*-constructions with a silent human impersonal to transitives-unergatives and obligatory O→S, and there have been proposed to be systems with impersonal *se* but no passive *se* save perhaps insofar as there is middle *se*, which in their pure form would be given away by the unavailability of agreeing nominative O→S, cf. Ormazbal and Romero 2021.

On the JR-inspired analysis of constructions arbitrary human impersonal *arb* A/S subjects, the person restrictions PRs on the agreeing nominative O→S of passive *se* are due to a ϕ -quirky *arb* A, specified for person but not number, giving rise to the type *se ven* : **te ves* (**se ves*). The complementary PRs on the accusative/DOM O of impersonal *se* reflect repairs of these PRs, *se te ve* : **se lo ve*. Unrestricted O→S should reflect entirely philess or absent *arb* A, as in the canonical passive, and so continuing to illustrate with the same morphology, as if a system allowed *arb* without person -- or no *arb* -- to give *te vees* or *se vees* alongside *se veen*. Unrestricted O should reflect phi-complete A, so as if *arb* could be enriched with say PL to give (*esto*) *se lo ve* alongside *se te ve*. The different contents would, under specific assumptions, affect potential to participate in dependencies, for instance antecedence of anaphora specific for number-gender only by

* This is a working document supplementing sec. 4.4 of ‘The rise and fall of a person-case constraint in Breton’, forth. *NLLT*, here PCB, and its other supplement PCB-F, see references.

phi-complete *arb*, alongside its need to be licensed in the manner of other phi-complete silent pronouns of a system.

On these points, studies of Romance systems offer some supportive evidence, and some difficult evidence that might end up supportive, turning on reconciliation of different conclusions reached about the *arb* of impersonal and passive *se* in different traditions of research, partly correlated with work on varieties of Italian vs. Spanish. Parallels to Romance systems in Basque, Finnic, and Slavic may clarify where Romance is relatively unrevealing through poverty of its case system, notably nominative case of O→S with passive *se*, and dative case as well as agreement of the impersonal-specific DOI or leísmo in transposition of the Spanish pattern *lo ven a él : se le ve a él* to Basque. They also add permutations of Romance systems that look like more or less incidentally unexplored diachronic pathways, notably partitive rather than dative DOM, as if at the diachronic transition from passive to impersonal *se*, the innovation of O coding at not recruited R coding but O coding in the antipassive *se* alternation.

These issues are taken up here: first, aspects of the coding of O; then, properties of *arb* with respect to syntactic dependencies and distribution across clause types.

2 Impersonal vs. passive SE: O and PRs

PRs on O coding with impersonal and passive *se*, and some of their puzzles, can be illustrated with Spanish.

Base case and its puzzles: Spanish impersonal and passive *se*: The illustration comes from traditional descriptions of peninsular varieties without leísmo or laísmo and conservative in not extending accusative in impersonal *se* to 3rd person inanimates generally: Mendikoetxea 1999: 26.3-4, cf. Fernández-Ordoñez 1999: 21.2.1.6. In this type of system, passive *se* with its O→S is restricted to low-animacy 3rd persons, essentially those where free O would not be *a*-marked in actives. The complementary set of O, roughly those that would be *a*-marked in actives, and only these, participate in impersonal *se*, and there are coded in the way actives code O. To some extent such systems exist directly, but typically there are two twists, bring us to the two puzzles.

With passive *se*, the low-animacy O can agree less robustly than in corresponding periphrastic passives, e.g. when postverbal and a dative intervenes: see Mendikoetxea 1999: 26.3.2 for descriptions, and for examples of different analyses, Mendikoetxea 2008: 4.2, Ormazabal and Romero 2022.

With impersonal *se*, the high-animacy O only has the same coding as in actives when free, but with clitics this is only in some varieties full or partly when dative-accusative distinction collapse through leísmo-laísmo-loísmo, while in varieties or categories without these phenomena, O of *se*-impersonals determines dative clitics, historically strictly and still strictly or preferentially depending on variety and gender, even in systems where O outside *se*-impersonals take strictly accusative clitics: see Mendikoetxea 1999: 26.4.2, Fernández-Ordoñez 1999: 21.2.1.6, Fábregas 2021: 7.5, Pedersen 2022 for the description and diachrony, for theoretical approaches e.g. Pescarini 2017a: sec. 4, Mendikoetxe and Battye 1992: 3.2.2 for peninsular Spanish, e.g. Ordóñez and Treviño 2016, MacDonald and Melgares 2021 for nonleísmo varieties outside peninsular Spanish.¹

¹ I will use the shorthand marked-person to characterise Os that appear with impersonal *se* as *a*-marked

Impersonal-specific DOI/DOM, diachrony: There appears to be at least a partial historical explanation of impersonal-only leísmo. The history of *se*-constructions goes from with reflexive *se*, cf. *people presented themselves to us*, to middle/anticausative *se*, cf. *problems presented themselves to us*, to passive *se*, to impersonal *se*: Kaufmann 1994, Salvi 2011, Giacalone-Ramat and Sansò 2011, Wolfsgruber 2021 *in fine*, also Maiden 1995: 8.9, cf. also Narò 1976 (see Siemund 2014 with lit. on parts of this development with the phrasal *self* reflexive in English, as with *present*). In this development, the coding of O had to be innovated: reflexive *se* originally took up accusative O, and so could only combine with non-O arguments in addition to itself; the next stage of passive *se* coded O but only as promoted to agreeing nominative S. The system included several fulcra for the reanalysis, including transitives that did not need to code O overtly and so when they did not, and nonagreement with postverbal free O given absence of overt nominative-accusative case distinctions (op.cit.).

In systems like Italian, O with the new impersonal *se* ended up by recruiting the coding of O in actives, distinctively accusative rather than dative apparently from the outset, and perhaps relatedly, there are no restrictions of the broadly “person” (animacy, etc.) category on O that may appear with impersonal *se*, though the category does restrict passive *se*. In Spanish, originally, O that appeared with impersonal *se* was only the marked-person O that independently took R-like by *a*-marking in actives under general DOM, while other O and it alone appeared with the earlier passive *se*. This general dative DOM did not lead at this point to general dative DOI by dative clitics as it ultimately did in leísmo varieties. Yet even at this stage, as in nonleísmo varieties later, it did give originally strict and systematic dative DOI by dative clitics in *se*-impersonas, i.e. the pattern *lo ve a él : se le ve a él*. Reasons for this active : passive *se* split in clitic-indexing of O may be simply that actives offered evidence at each diachronic stage for accusative clitics, so these were not replaced by dative ones, whereas the innovated impersonal *se* offered no evidence for O coding at all, so when DOM *a*-marked O was introduced, clitic innovated to coded where the dative ones that are were associated with most *a*-marked arguments in the system, R (cf. Fernández-Ordoñez 1999: 21.2.1.6, which would then contrast with motivation of general leísmo in the demonstrative system *lo = este*, 26.1.1) - - the more so if one of the fulcra for the innovation of impersonal *se* with its characteristic lack of passive *se*'s O→S promotion were verbs and constructions where O and R alternated (e.g. O/R-labile bivalent verbs, light verb paraphrases with *dar*, etc.; for such potential fulcra and other factors like ambiguity op.cit., e.g. Pedersen 2022 with lit.; for diachrony of *a*-marking DOM, lability, leísmo, see Laca 2006, von Heusinger 2008, Flores and Melis 2007).

Impersonal-specific DOI/DOM, boundaries on analysis: Finnic and Basque: The synchronic state of affairs presents the challenge of ensuring that DOM-able Os determine accusative *lo(s)* in active clauses with ordinary A, but DOI dative when A is the human

when free \approx Os that appear as *a*-marked in actives \approx Os that undergo typical leísmo as masculine or in general depending on variety, cf. Ormazabal and Romero 2007, but this is with the caveat that the phenomena extend to inanimates with certain verbs or in certain structures in ways that may be central to the proper analysis, e.g.. verbs like *riegar* in Mendikoetxea 1999: 26.4.2.2, verbs with object-complement predication complements like *llamar* in Fabrégas 2021: 10.1, both with O→S in passives.

impersonal pronoun *arb* of impersonal *se*. MacDonald and Melgares 2021 propose morphological adjustment, and support it with properties on which *se le(s)* coding O behaves like *lo(s)* coding O rather than *le(s)* coding R: selectivity of doubling and optional nonagreement for number. Ordóñez and Treviño 2016: 10.2.2 point out that these syntactic correlates are only unexpected if the dative clitic reflected syntactic R, not if it reflected DOI of syntactic O, cf. e.g. secondary predication with generalised leísmo, Odria 2019: sec. 4, and passage from R to O through their coincident codings in Pineda 2019 (including doublin, Pineda 2019: 35n26).²

Whether or not it is right for Spanish, other systems have impersonal-specific DOI/DOM beyond the traditional boundaries of morphology (but not beyond various extensions, cf. discussion of dependent case and alternatives that incorporate some traditional morphological operations into syntax in Bárány and Sheehan 2022, or the scope of viruses in Lasnik and Sobin 2001). A simple example is partitive DOM in Finnic, generalised in some varieties like South Karelian, impersonal-specific in others like Estonian (see below). Here Basque will be to illustrate, since it illustrates Spanish-like and arguably Spanish-induced DOI+DOM in a system with richer case distinctions, and where a local morphological adjustment of *se lo(s)* > *se le(s)* would have to be accompanied by absolutive > dative at a phrase-structurally unbounded distance from the agreement complex.³

In Basque, the older and still widespread case-marking and agreement/clitic-indexing of O in plain transitives is strictly absolutive, e.g. 2SG *zu triste ikusten zaitut*, pseudogloss ‘te_{ACC} veo triste ti’, 3SG *Amaia triste ikusten dut*, ‘la veo triste Amaia’.⁴ A number of varieties have the counterpart and possibly borrowing of Spanish leísmo DOI + *a*-marking DOM into the richer case-agreement system of Basque to give dative agreement DOI + dative case DOM for O, only for 1st/2nd person alone, *zuri triste ikusten dizut* ‘te_{DAT} veo triste a ti’, or also for high-animacy 3rd, *Amaiari triste ikusten diot* ‘le veo triste a Amaia’, modulable by finiteness and tense unlike in Spanish: Odria 2019, Rodríguez-Ordóñez 2020. The dative O shares with absolutive O syntacticosemantic properties like licensing of secondary predication that distinguish it from dative R even of monovalent R, O, or labile R/O verbs: Odria 2019, cf. for Spanish Pineda 2019.

In all varieties, the counterpart of Spanish impersonal-passive *se* is formed by detransitivisation of the verbal complex of periphrastic constructions, shared with constructions like anticausatives much in the way of Spanish *se*-constructions. This is always available with inanimate O, resulting in O→S, where both O and O→S are absolutive in case and agreement, but distinguished as O vs. S by the rest of the agreement complex: *sariak banatuko dira* ‘se repartirán premios’ (for full ex., Ortiz de

² To illustrate the complexity and confounds here: Alcaraz 2018, argues against a morphological analysis of Spanish spurious *se* for expected dative *le(s)* when in a cluster with accusative *lo(s)* in Nevins 2007, a.o. because spurious *se* lacks the restriction of *le(s)* against doubling bare plurals, a syntactic effect; Pescarini 2017b: sec. 6 reviews and analyses the augmented capacity of Italian *gli/le* to double when it appears as *glie* in certain clitic clusters but not as *gli* alone or in other clitic clusters, and the clusters involved seem to be those with cliticisation of or from within the other argument of ditransitives, but ditransitivity alone does not help doubling unless both arguments contribute clitics to the cluster.

³ The same argument can probably be made with parallel impersonals in systems that have an entirely unrelated DOI and/or DOM: e.g. Finnic systems that use partitive DOM only in the context of Jahnsson’s Rule, see lit. in PCB-F on Estonian, and the patterns there in Finnish-Karelian, e.g. SG O in F1538.

⁴ For agreement-indexing, clitic-indexing is an alternative analysis throughout.

Urbina 2003: 4.7.2). Typically, 1st/2nd and high-animacy 3rd persons are cannot appear as absolutive in this detransitivisation impersonal, though this is not so for all speakers or varieties, who allow still to be fully studied strings like *ikusten zara kantari* as if ‘te vees [como] cantante’: Ortiz de Urbina 2003: 4.7.4 (q.v. for full ex.), 2006, Berro, Odría and Fernández 2022: 159n12. In western varieties, these high-animacy Os appear instead with dative case and agreement in the impersonal, but still license secondary predication that distinguishes O from R, making for DOI+DOM: *zuri triste ikustait zaizu* ‘se te ve triste a ti’, *Amaiari triste ikusten zaio* ‘se le ve triste a Amaia’: Ortiz de Urbina 2003, Fernández and Berro 2021, Berro, Odría and Fernández 2022. This is so not only if a given variety allows or requires dative DOI+DOM for a given O of plain actives, but also when it does not, that is, there are systems with impersonal-specific dative DOI+DOM, and so with and only with case-agreement codings pairs like *Amaia triste ikusten dut : Amaiari triste ikusten zaio*. There are also eastern varieties where neither absolutive nor dative codings of high-animacy O is available in the impersonal, and O is then the more ineffable the higher up in 3rd < 1st/2nd, requiring paraphrase.⁵

Impersonal-specific DOI/DOM, analytical options: The alternative to postsyntactic adjustment is for the impersonal detransitivisation to have whatever syntactic DOI/DOM, but limited to impersonals. Some options are:

-Impersonal R : active O alternation, in the manner of labile verbs but conditioned by impersonal A or its associated flavour of v. This analytical option is rejected in the literature because in both Basque and Spanish, impersonal-specific DOI/DOM O has shares syntactic properties like secondary predication with absolute/accusative O and general DOI/DOM O against dative R even of monotransitives like labile verbs (op.cit.).

-Impersonal DOI/DOM O = general DOI/DOM O and both are unrelated to absolutive-accusative of O in general or at least of nonperson/low-animacy O. Modulation of DOI/DOM to impersonals has been by appealing to the A of impersonals directly, e.g. its phi-quirkiness whereby the person feature of A interferes with person-licensing of O by the nominative-absolutive system available to S and DOI/DOM is the repair, or indirectly, e.g. through consequences of selecting for impersonal A such as on availability or flavour of v, or both: see for impersonal-specific leísmo of Spanish Ordóñez and Treviño 2016 and discussion in Fabregas 2021: 7.5; Pescarini 2017a: sec. 4; cf. Ormazabal and Romero 2019: sec. 5 note 38; for Basque Berro, Odría and Fernández 2022: esp. sec. 6.3, p. 180; and relatable to the general leísmo mechanisms insofar as these seem susceptible to modulation by A/v, a.o. Kalin 2018: sec. 5, pattern D.

-Ditto, but with construal of DOI/DOM as reflecting the same O-coding and licensing system as accusative-absolutive, modulated by category of O, e.g. absolutive : dative for no : marked person feature, and by direct or indirect consequences of the presence of impersonal A, e.g. dative realising the case assigned by the flavour of v that selects

⁵ My inquiries indicate the separability of all these systems, save the one that allows absolutive high-animacy O→S, but have been extremely limited, and should be confirmed; I am grateful to M. Duguine, R. Etxepare, A. Irurtzun, U. Etxeberria for judgments, and to B. Fernández for much correspondence.

impersonal A, PCB: sec. 4, or the multiple case from v and T across phi-quirky A, PCB: sec. 5.

Boundary conditions on adequate theories are proper delimitation of attested and absent patterns for DOI/DOM. In Romance and Basque, general DOI/DOM and impersonal-specific DOI/DOM involve the same coding of O, dative, and it seems the same categories of O, e.g. 3rd masculine human in a given variety, but obligatoriness and context can differ, e.g. Basque DOI/DOM can be optional in actives but obligatory in impersonals (op.cit.). Finnish-Karelian-Estonian seem similar: at least arguably, DOM of O is always the same, partitive, but this can be optional for SG in actives and obligatory in impersonals (e.g. perhaps Agricola, clearly South Karelian and Estonian, PCB-F). Finnish-Karelian-Estonian adds that all nominative O with PRs in a system have the same pattern of DOM, e.g. O of impersonal, O of imperative, and oblique-subject unaccusatives (PCB, PCB-F).⁶

The foregoing analyses recruit internalist mechanisms that relate the coding of O with properties of A ultimately proposed in order to capture variants of Burzio's Generalisation, e.g. assignment of case to O by the selector for A; and/or mechanisms that relate plain and marked coding of O in DOI/DOM. There is nothing in the diachrony or synchrony that restricts generalised or impersonal-specific DOI/DOM to coincidence with R coding, and indeed this coincidence in soe Romance and its likely contact spread to adjacent Basque is simply absent in the otherwise parallel gamut of DOM in Finnic. Indeed, a slightly different diachrony can be imagined whereby upon the passage from passive to impersonal *se*, innovation of O coding had not relied on *a*-marked through O-R alternations, but on say the O-PP alternations of so-called antipassive *se* to give a hypothetical *se ven : se ve de/con te*, and something like this appears to lie behind the use of the partitive for both general and impersonal-specific DOM in Finnic (cf. Larjavaara 1990 with 1991). Other pathways can be imagined, and the distribution of expected vs. attested outcomes remains to be explored.

Romance variation in O coding: Against this background may now be briefly set out other codings of O in Romance impersonal-passive *se* constructions, reviewed in Pescarini 2017a, with some comparanda in Basque (refs. op.cit.), Finnic (lit. and survey in PCB-F), and occasionally Slavic (Rivero and Shephard 2003, Medová 2008, Fehrmann, Junghanns and Lenertová 2010, Meyer 2010 with diachrony, plus Rezac and Joutteau 2008: 8.7, Půda 2018 on *arb* and anaphora in Czech). In each of these groups, there are systems that look like point-by-point analogues to Romance once, e.g. passive *se* with PRs on nominative O→S, impersonal *se* available but not to repair these PRs, e.g. Czech ≈ Piedmontese, or with complementary PRs on O, Finnish ≈ Spanish, or O with PRs, Tver Karelian ≈ Trentino; and when in a subset of these systems *arb* has been tested, it antecedes at least phi-less anaphora, as discussed later.

⁶ The other systems here are consistent with this: they have other Os with PRs, but when these are nominative or absolutive, applying to them the DOI/DOM that helps in impersonals would not help, e.g. Basque **eman naiote* → **diodate*. When it comes to nominative and absolutive object S with PRs, Finnic lacks these in dialects with DOM partitive, dialects with accusative or DOM *t*-forms do treat it like O, while in Basque I have no idea how varieties with transitivity repair of PR on object S in *gustatuko zaizkio* : **natzai* → *dio* would treat PR on O in the *se*-counterpart of *emango zaizkio* : ?

(i-a) passive *se* O→S with no PRs, sc. *se ven : te vees* or *se vees*. I am not aware of examples in Romance, apart from coercions of middles discussed below. In Basque, the expected *ikusten dira : ikusten zara* are documented, but cf. (ii-a), and I do not know if key properties of arbitrary human impersonals that do characterise 3rd inanimate O→S (Ortiz de Urbina 2003) also characterise 1st/2nd O→S here, a.o. whether eventive readings are available (if not, we might have generic impersonal or whatever middles are), and whether its silent A antecedes reciprocals (if not, we might have the implicit A of a passive, even though the constructions do not have the canonical form of resultative participle + *be* passive or predicative formations, see Ortiz de Urbina 2006). In Finnish, some dialects have no PRs on impersonal-passive verbal form + nominative O, the combinations can be eventive, and there is in them no O→S, since O keeps properties that define O against S in plain actives (partitive of aspect and negation, Lehtinen 1985, see PCB-F), but the nature of silent A is unknown (e.g. inert for antecedenence of reciprocals, or active like the A of systems where impersonal-passive + nominative O has PRs).

(i-b) passive *se* O→S with PRs, i.e. *se ven : *te vees* and **se vees*: the usual Romance, Basque, Finnic pattern, with gaps usually filled by unpromoted O coding in (ii). However, some such systems, although they have impersonal *se* to judge by availability of the construction from unaccusative to transitives, have no alternative for those Os barred by PRs from O→S, and might be described as lacking repairs (in the terms of PCB). Here seems to belong in Romance Piedmontese, where paraphrase is required, Parry 1998: 3.3.⁷ In Basque here go eastern varieties above with *ikusten dira : *zara, *zaizu* and paraphrase. In Finnic I know of no examples. Of Slavic *se*-constructions, Czech belongs here (op.cit., or perhaps (i-a), but see on coercion of person restriction below).

(ii-a) impersonal *se* O with no PRs, sc. *se los_{inan} ve : se te ve*: e.g. Italian, where the clitics involved are accusative regardless of animacy of 3rd, distinct from dative in 3rd, and standing beside O→S with PR, D'Alessandro 2007; Trentino, Zubizarreta 1982: 2.4, also discussed in Cinque 1988: 5.4; C- or clitic strategy varieties of Spanish, again at least some also allowing O→S with PRs, in Ormazbal and Romero 2007. In Basque, absolutive alignment makes this difficult to indistinguishable from unconstrained O→S type *ikusten zara*. In Finnic, this is the imp.-pass. form when it is an accusative-object context, as in Tver Karelian and Far-Northern Finnish of Kemi (PCB-F). In both these latter systems, the replacement in the impersonal-passive of older O→S nominative with PR by unrestricted O coding has been related to the additional grammaticalisation of the impersonal passive as 3PL including 3PL nominative. That is the best -- yet almost none -- hint I have that impersonal-passives with unrestricted O involve phi-complete rather than phi-quirky A, i.e. A that number visible to syntactic dependencies, alongside what is suggested for Italian PL *arb* later. For Slavic *se*-constructions, cf. the study of Polish in Rivero and Shephard 2003, and microvariation in Serbian and Croatiaon, Rivero and Shephard 2003: 105n1.

⁷ My *seems* is due to unfamiliarity: I might have reported the same for Portuguese based from Narò 1976: sec. 2 -- nuanced by study of more options for clitic placement Martins and Nunes 2016: 3.1.

(ii-b) impersonal *se* O with PRs that restrict it to complement or repair of PRs on O→S with passive *se*, sc. **se los_{inan} ve : se te ve*: This is the typical description for Spanish varieties, with general or impersonal-specific DOI, sc. *leísmo*. Here may also belong the system of Genovese, where only 1st/2nd clitics are available with impersonal *se*, Mendikoetxe and Battye 1992 -- possibly if the system requires impersonal-specific DOI, but lacks the means to realise this with either accusative or dative 3rd person clitics, only with dative-accusative-syncretic 1st/2nd person ones. In Basque, this is the western dative DOI+DOM *ikusten zaizu* type in dialects without and with general dative DOI+DOM. In Finnic, this is represented in systems where DOM partitive is reserved to nominative-object contexts of JR, including Estonian and e.g. perhaps F1538 in PCB-F. Of Slavic *se* constructions, cf. discussion of Serbian and Croatian in Rivero and Shephard 2003.⁸

Among Romance systems, impersonal *se* typically entails passive *se*, i.e. *se te ve* entails *se ven*, but this is not always so, and exceptions might be such that there are no PRs on impersonal *se* then, *se te/lo ven*: see Trentino in (ii-a). Conversely, there are systems given out with passive *se* but not impersonal *se*, in the sense that there are systems with only O→S and not O coding, **se te/lo ve*, though they admit their *se* with varying ranges of unaccusatives: see Piedmontese in (i-a) and further Dobrovie-Sorin 2017 on Romanian.

The Romance impersonal-passive distinction is subject to the qualification that only bound and weak pronouns distinguish case, so nominative is only obvious on *pro* (if we take agreement-licensed *pro* as nominative: but see Ormazabal and Romero 2021), clitic pronouns (French, granting it has passive *se*, Zribi-Hertz 2008), and weak pronouns (D'Alessandro 2007: 45), and that agreement is more variable for putative O→S of passive *se* than with O→S of say anticausative *se* or periphrastic passive (the first puzzle above, q.v. for theoretical approaches).⁹

The Basque systems are absolutive-aligned and do not show any case-change between O of actives and O→S of impersonals, so if we take their detransitivisation morphology as the counterpart of *se*-marking, we cannot see the difference between passive *se* of *se ven* and impersonal *se* of *se los ve* from coding alone, though one might go further within the context of a particular analysis of the agreement complex such as Albizu 2001. What we observe descriptively across Basque then is variation in whether absolutive S has PRs, and whether these can be repaired or must be paraphrased.

The Slavic and Finnic systems do systematically show nominative case with the counterpart of passive *se*.

⁸ Cf. Mendikoetxea and Battye 1992: 3.2.2 p. 185 “Spanish is like Genovese ...” in the sense of lacking accusative clitics for 3rd save that it has DOI/DOM; in both systems 1st/2nd person pronouns are syncretic for dative-accusative indexing and marking.

⁹ In Romance, one confound for conclusions about case from bound pronouns are phenomena whereby agreement tracks adjacent nonnominative clitics. This can be unrelated to impersonal-passive *se*, as accusative clitics (only) in hypercomplex inversion, French *cela les gêneront-elles*, Kayne and Pollock 2021; perhaps specific to impersonal-passive *se*, as with accusative clitics in Italian *le se vendono*, *le si sono comprate*, Maiden and Robustelli 2007: 122n7, Lepschy and Lepschy 1988: 227. The confound becomes more general in systems where agreement can track free unmarked O, DOM O, (pro)nominals in PPs, and nominal adverbs, studied esp. for Spanish, apparently in configurations especially involving but not limited to impersonal-passive *se*, *se hablaron con las autoridades*, *se castigaron a los culpables*, Gallego 2019, Ormazabal and Romero 2021, Ordóñez and Treviño 2016. Rather different conclusions have been drawn about these phenomena across this literature.

Slavic clearly includes systems of the Piedmontese type above where the sole coding of O available is O→S with PRs and paraphrase, i.e. passive *se* only with the proviso that it is available with unaccusatives. Czech is one such systems as offers evidence that this type has *arb* at least as active and likely somewhat more than Spanish for anaphora and control (op.cit.). I do not know if there are Slavic systems without passive *se* diagnosed by nominative O→S.

Finnic clearly has systems without O→S, including near-minimal pairs of varieties, most South Karelian -person nominative O ~ +person partitive DOM O, cf. Spanish : Tver subgroup of South Karelian, unrestricted accusative O, cf. Tretino. In both members of this pair, the imp.-pass. form has been recruited for 3PL, in the way impersonal *se* has been recruited for 1PL in Italian, and the shift to all-accusative O in Tver Karelian has been understood as a further step in the evolution passive-like > impersonal > active. I do not know of Finnic systems where the usual PRs on O→S in counterparts of passive *se* have no repairs by counterparts by plain or DOM O coding with counterparts of impersonal *se* and need paraphrase (PCB-F with lit.).

3 Impersonal vs. passive: A/S *arb*

Base case, some puzzles, and a guess: Research on Spanish has suggested that impersonal and passive *se* have the same arbitrary human impersonal *arb* as their A/S, insofar as sameness is diagnosable by potential to license dependencies like local anaphora, and distribution across nonfinite clause types.

However, research on Italian has suggested that the *arb* of impersonal and passive *se* need to be distinguished on the very same grounds, e.g. syntactically represented vs. implicit.

Independently, comparison of the two systems has indicated that the reduced anaphoric potential of Spanish *arb* relative to Italian impersonal *se arb* is due to lack of number on the former and PL on the latter, and this seems extensible to their different distribution in nonfinite clauses.

In turn, *arb* of Italian passive *se* may reduce to Spanish *arb* and lack PL.

If Italian does have numberless and PL *se*, then given Spanish, we should expect both to occur with both transitives-unergatives and unaccusatives, up to independent constraints. This seems tenable: PL *se (si)* is restricted to clauses that license pro-drop, and so to finite clauses; numberless *se (si)* is barred if PL *se (si)* is due to preference for maximal phi-specification familiar from pronouns; numberless *se (si)* beats PL when O needs to control agreement, i.e. with transitives-unergatives; and even numberless *se* is limited with unaccusatives in nonfinite clauses to independent restrictions on their aspect with arbitrary human impersonals.

The synchronic upshot of this picture is that the impersonal-passive unification that has been achieved for Spanish extends to Italian, where the Spanish system with its numberless *arb* operates, but is partly masked by the availability of the same *arb* save with PL. In diachronic terms, the diachronic pathway from passive *se* to impersonal *se* with its numberless *arb* of Spanish was continued in Italian by enriching *arb* with PL and so creating an essentially active structure close to arbitrary human impersonal uses of 3PL, correlated with fully active coding of O independent of PRs on nominative objects of passive *se* unlike in Spanish. There are clear analogues in Finnic and Slavic.

Anaphora and control: The syntactic properties of the *arb* A/S of impersonal *se* and *arb* A of passive *se* have been studied as a group and in contrast to each other in Romance.

For Italian, work reviewed and extended in Dobrovie-Sorin 2017 shows that *arb* of impersonal *se* (*si*) can antecede anaphora and control, but when impersonal *se* is excluded by using nonfinite structures and in systems without impersonal *se* like Romanian, *arb* of the remaining passive *se* fails to license anaphora, see esp. Dobrovie-Sorin 2017: 4.2.3. Dobrovie-Sorin argues that the *arb* A/S of impersonal *se* is syntactically active, in the manner of *pro*, but the *arb* A of passive *si* is syntactically inert to a degree comparable to the silent A of canonical passives, an implicit argument.¹⁰ This is supported licensing of OC PRO, e.g. with *promise*, by the *arb* impersonal but not passive *se*. However, the result seems unexpected even in the light of the implicit A of canonical passives, in the light of the licensing of OC PRO even by the implicit A of canonical passives widely or generally doing so, Piteroff and Schafer 2019, and that is so with in Italian, Bianchi 2015 with lit.¹¹ Alternative solutions have been proposed for the resistance of passive *se* to doing so, at least for Romanian, Giurgea and Cofas 2021, though cf. the strikingly different pattern in Spanish in Saab 2021, MacDonald and Vázquez-Lozares 2020.

For Spanish, the literature has found that both impersonal and passive *se arb* is relatively unavailable as antecedent of anaphora licensed by impersonal *se* (*si*) of Italian. MacDonald 2017 argues that this inertness reduces to lack of number-gender, through failure to provide number for anaphora that need these features from their antecedent, and that when that is controlled for, *both* impersonal and passive *se* have *arb* that antecedes local anaphora, while the implicit A of canonical passives does not.¹² The result has been adopted and extended by subsequent work on Spanish, e.g. Ormazabal and Romero 2019, Saab 2020. MacDonald 2017 and MacDonald and Maddox 2018 extend the argument to Italian as well as Romanian, though see Dobrovie-Sorin 2017: 2.1.3. The findings coverage with evidence outside Romance e.g. in Basque, Berro, Odria and Fernández 2021: 5.1, and Finnish, see lit. in PCB. This comes with the limitation that counterpart of passive *se* are difficult to distinguish from impersonal *se* (absolutely-aligned Basque) or *arb* activity with it needs more verification (Finnish, PCB-F), and there are no canonical

¹⁰ I will assume here that the silent A of canonical passives does not license anaphora, that is, that there is something about generic contexts that explains such licensing, whether or not that something can be reduced to logophoricity, see Collins 2022 arguing against this position and lit. there, and cf. Bianchi 2015: Appendix. However, ultimately what matters is that the *arb* of impersonal-passive *se* constructions licenses local, nonlogophoric anaphora in episodic contexts where the silent A of the canonical passive does not, as argued in MacDonald 2017. That seems to hold quite sharply in systems I have access to, e.g. French (in)alienable *on a levé la main* : (*in)alienable *la main a été levée* ; *on a fait de son mieux pour moi* : **il a été fait de son mieux*; I am grateful to M. Joutiteau p.c. for judgments.

¹¹ The contrasts seem entailed by the generalisations advanced in each work, and the pairs almost minimal, cf. Dobrovie-Sorin 2017: exx. 100, 102 with Bianchi 2015: 39 and Piteroff and Schafer 2019: ex. 20c.

¹² The logic of the argument is strongest for anaphora that make overt number-gender phi-distinctions, and one might expect some lability in a speaker's analysis of e.g. *si*, cf. the somewhat less sharp judgments in Carrasco 1978, and variability with other number-deficient impersonals in Rivero and Shephard 2003: 108n2, Rezac and Joutiteau 2016: 4.6, 5.2, 8.7, Půda 2018. There should also be leeway to the extent dependencies can favour have interpretively motivated phi-features even if they favour those supplied grammatically, e.g. predicates Spanish *si se esta embarazada* - Italian *se si è incinta* 'whether one is pregnant.FSG', cf Mendikoetxea 2008 for Spanish, and further discussion of secondary predication with *arb* in Spanish in Ormazabal and Romero 2019, Saab 2020, cf. Rezac and Joutiteau 2016: 4.6.8, and the different classes of in Corbett 2004: 6.4.

passives to contrast (both systems). All these works take the position that the *arb* of impersonal and passive *se* and their counterparts is the same element within each systems, unlike the distinction made on the basis of anaphora for Italian in Dobrovie-Sorin 2017.

The greater anaphoric potential of impersonal *se* in Italian than Spanish should ideally come down to the PL specification of Italian *si*, overtly visible in the concord of nonfinite predicates: thus MacDonald 2017, Ormazabal and Romero 2019, Saab 2020, Ordóñez 2021, cf. for a related agreement effect Piteroff and Schafer 2019, and for failure of this PL to appear on finite verbs, D'Alessandro 2007, adopted a.o. in Mendikoetxea 2008, MacDonald 2017, Pescarini 2017a. However, the evidence of overt concord seems limited to impersonal *se*, where it surfaces in unaccusative verbal constructions, as on the participles *arrivati*, *stati invitati*, while with transitives and unergatives, where both impersonal and passive *se* are available in Italian, *scoperto*, *lavorato*, we get DFLT here with the impersonal and concord with O with the passive *se*, arguably including concord with DFLT O of unergatives, cf. Dobrovie-Sorin 1998.

This restriction of evidence for PL suggests one way of accounting for the greater anaphoric inertness of the *arb* of passive than impersonal *se* in Italian and contrast on this point with Spanish. Let us suppose that Italian has two *arb*'s: the numberless *se* of Spanish with its relative anaphoric inertness save when it comes to philess anaphora, and PL *arb*, antecedent anaphora that need number-gender from their licenser, returning in this respect to Cinque 1988. The numberless *se* should be available with unaccusative structures as much as with transitive-unergative structures, but is immediately barred by the familiar preference to maximise phi-features on pronouns, barring say number-default pronouns when interpretation entails a specific number, on any of the usual accounts of this principle. The PL *arb* should be available with transitives and unergatives, and is in their impersonal pattern, detectable for instance by the same O coding as in finite clauses, e.g. by clitics; and given PCB, PL *arb* is phi-complete rather than phi-quirky, so there should be no PRs on the O clitics of Italian unlike Spanish, correctly. However, only the numberless *si* can lead to O controlling concord and being nominative, i.e. passive *si*, since PL *arb* would preempt this.

Italian then has followed the diachronic pathway that led from passive to impersonal *si* one step further and turned *arb* from numberless to phi-complete and its impersonal *si* structure to one that is more fully active than in Spanish.¹³

This difference between the systems may be independently useful with their differences in nonfinite clauses.

Nonfinite clauses: Dobrovie-Sorin 1998, 2017, developing Cinque 1988, argues that Italian impersonal *si* is not available in nonfinite clauses, even if they independently license nominatives: thus with transitives, the O coding that distinguishes impersonal *si*

¹³ In Italian, this is coupled to a personification of PL *arb* where it seems to allow addition of 1st person to give 1PL, Cinque 1988, D'Alessandro 2007, though rise of 1PL might be later rise of PL alone, Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011; cf. the personification in varieties of Portuguese with their similar unrestricted coding of O in impersonal *se*, Martins 2009, Martins and Nunes 2016. A very similar personification of number-neutral *arb* in Finnic can allow it to be used in addition to remaining *arb* also 1PL, e.g. Savonian Finnish and Common Spoken Finnish, 3PL, Karelian, both, Southeastern and Far-Northern Finnish varieties, or neither, some Southwestern and Ostrobothnian Finnish, and for both 1PL and 3PL, the doubling can be of both *arb* taking unrestricted O, Tver Karelian and some Far-Northern Finnish, and *arb* of nominative O with PR and O with complementary PR, all other systems: PCB-F.

from passive *si* is unavailable, namely nonagreement, *essendosi vendut-i/*²o pochi automobili*, and accusative clitics, *essendo(*le)si vendute*, and only transitives and unergatives are allowed, *non essendosi provveduto alle sue necessità*, **non essendosi morti in giovane ...*, that is, those passive *si* in the sense that these structures either clearly have O which undergoes O→S visible e.g. in agreement or can be attributed silent 3SGM O.

Dobrovie-Sorin reduces this constraint on the distribution of the *arb* A/S impersonal *si* to its being syntactic *pro* unlike the implicit A of passive *si*, and so confined to finite clauses where agreement licenses *pro*, like the other *pro*'s of Italian.

Ormazabal and Romero 2019: 2.6, cf. Fabrégas 2021: 7.5, argue that Spanish impersonal *se*, identified by *a*-marking of O, does occur in nonfinite clauses provided they license nominative, *al describirse a los culpables, por acusarse a esa persona* -- i.e. like passive but not impersonal *se (si)* of Italian. Saab 2021: sec. 4 also observes this Italian-Spanish contrast, and cites earlier work already showing Spanish can allow impersonal *se* as diagnosed by *a*-marking under ECM, *Nunca escuché criticarse tanto a alguien* -- again more like passive *se (si)* of Italian, modulo certain complexity discussed in Cinque 1988: 526n8, 561n48.¹⁴

Saab 2021: sec. 4 argues that even in Spanish, impersonal *se* in nominative-licensing nonfinite clauses is in fact limited to transitives-unergatives, **Al desaparecerse de esa manera*. This is the pattern of Italian impersonal *se* with unaccusatives, but not transitives-unergatives. One way to get this limitation for Spanish, and if so in Italian as well, is if these infinitives do not license the temporal-aspectual content for the generic uses to which unaccusatives with arbitrary human pronouns are largely limited, in contrast to transitives-unergatives (Cinque 1988 on Italian; the restriction leaks, but not in ways easily exploited at present, see Fenger 2018 on *man*, Rezac and Joutteau 2016: 5.4.3 on *on*, Fabregas 2021: sec. 1 re ex. 14, sec. 7.2 re ex. 326b on Spanish *se*, and with most lit. on Spanish cited here asserting some form of the restriction).¹⁵

The remaining Italian-Spanish contrast is that nominative-licensing infinitives allow impersonal and passive *se* in Spanish, but only passive *se (si)* in Italian, as readily diagnosed by a.o. by the coding of O. That now seems to follow from combining the distinctive PL *arb* of Italian with Dobrovie-Sorin's proposal that *arb* must be licensed by agreeing clauses if restricted only to *arb* with number-gender. The only way to get the impersonal rather than passive *se (si)* in Italian would be as in Spanish to have numberless *arb*, and then as in Spanish, we would expect this to be available only with high-person O by PBC, and for many proposals of this pattern below and with PCB, though not entailed by PCB, only if a system has DOI/DOM, unlike Italian. Even without this auxiliary

¹⁴ The proposals in these works entail that in in Spanish, impersonal *se* is available in nominative-licensing infinitives in general, or rather it is with transitives-unergatives as below, and I will assume the unexemplified consequences, notably clitic coding of O in putative *al describir-se-les/te*: Google suggests examples across a wide range of printed sources, e.g. for *invitarseme* in *La idea me surgió al invitarseme a integrar a comisión organizadora de la celebración...*; *Ese libro ... releído por mi algún día después de invitarseme para intervenir en este acto...* The proposals for Spanish do not seem to discuss the different findings for Italian, and I will hopefully assume that this is not so because the generalisations for Italian based on **essendosi vendute* &c above have changed since.

¹⁵ An alternative seems to work as well -- but also unmotivated -- where nominative-licensing infinitives need a number-bearing goal through some version of the Inverse Case Filter.

hypothesis, the numberless *arb* of Italian would be allowed to give impersonal *se* (*si*) only maximise matching is overridden by the failure of PL *arb* to be licensed by agreement.¹⁶

Dobrovie-Sorin's original proposal might readily account for an independent difference between impersonal and passive *se* in nonfinite clauses, the greater propensity of the former than the latter to climb in Spanish, which would then reflect its need as *pro* to be local to its licensing agreement: *no (se) pueden hacer(se) estas cosas : no (se) puede invitar(??se) a estas personas*, Fabregas 2021: 8.2. However, given that both impersonal and passive *se* are in fact licensed in nominative-licensing nonfinite clauses in Spanish, that account seems unavailable on the very grounds on which it is advanced for Italian. Yet the underlying *arb*-agreement relationship can perhaps be pressed into service somewhat differently. With passive *se*, there is O→S to control matrix agreement requirements, overtly or default with unergatives; with impersonal *se* there is only O, and *arb* may be the best goal for the agreement target, leading to its displacement to the matrix, given that most foregoing works assume that *arb* has a person feature either due to its restriction to human or to PRs on nominative O or both, see below.¹⁷

Impersonal and passive *se* alike across these systems are barred from nonfinite structures that do not license nominative – provided middle *se* with its distinctive interpretive properties is factored out, whether it involves a special syntax, or is passive *se* constraints to middle readings in such nonfinite clause: see e.g. Cinque 1988, Dobrovie-Sorin 2017; Mendikoetxea 1990, Ormazabal and Romero 2019, Fabrégas 2021.¹⁸ Of the other systems here, in Basque it would be difficult to distinguish its detransivisation impersonal in typical nonfinite structures, and it may be barred independently as it is with synthetic verbal forms (Ortiz de Urbina 2003); in Finnic the right nonfinite forms exist and there is fascinating evidence about their impersonal-passive vs. canonical passive properties but all to be explored (PCB-F); Slavic shares the limitations of impersonal-passive *se* to nominative licensing clauses but they can be further studied there (on Czech passive-only *se*, see Dotlačil 2004, Půda 2018).

4 A-O under JR

The approach to PRs in PCB correlates all-accusative O with ϕ -complete A, split-nominative O with ϕ -quirky A bearing π but not $\#$, and all-nominative O with ϕ -inert A.

This converges fully or partly with most accounts of PRs in the foregoing lit. on impersonal-passive *se*. Closest are direct extensions of Anagnostopoulou 2003, for passive *se* D'Alessandro 2007: ch. 3, Mendikoetxea 2008: 4.2, Rezac 2011: 5.6.4, 6.5, MacDonald 2017: 4.1, Giurgea 2019, for repair by impersonal *se*, Pescarini 2017a: 4.1; but they are quite close to alternatives that make somewhat different assumptions about

¹⁶ Granting \checkmark *al invitarseme*, see above, I only infer **essendomisi invitato* through the conclusion drawn from **essendolesi vendute* in Cinque 1988: 4.1, Dobrovie-Sorin 1998: 2.4.

¹⁷ Here something should be said also about raising patterns in Spanish, *(*se) parece Juan estar(se) enfermo*, Fabregas 2021: 7.4, with counterexamples, transitive-unergative vs unaccusative?, and contrasts with Italian, which may reduce to its PL *arb* needing to climb to be local to agreement as per Dobrovie-Sorin, *sembra non essersi lavorato/*arrivati, si è risultati non aver dormito*, a.o., Cinque 1988; cf. Mendikoetxea 1990 for discussion of Italian vs. Spanish here.

¹⁸ In barring impersonal-passive *se* from control infinitives, these works on Spanish do not discuss Cinque's 1988: 4.2 examples of canonical middle *se* here, which would look like Google Books *teniendo este la ventaja de lavarse y secarse con facilidad ; pero tiene la ventaja de transportarse y esconderse mejor*.

case and agreement, a.o. for PRs in both directions Ordóñez and Treviño 2016: 10.3.1, Ormazabal and Romero 2019, 2021; and to alternatives that work out somewhat differently what how the human restriction of *arb* and other elements works, Dobrovie-Sorin 2017, 2021, Cinque 1988.¹⁹

Challenges to linking person restrictions of *si/se*-impersonals to those of *me lui* in the same systems are discussed in Rezac 2011: ch. 6, Dobrovie-Sorin 2017, Schäfer 2016. There are striking if not categorical difference in the ease with person restrictions can be overturned in typical middle *se* structures, Zribi-Hertz 2008, Postal 1989, and perhaps but not clearly here Czech in Medová 2008: 7.5 and its contrast with Grepl and Karlík 1986: §168.6; and the impossibility or high variability of doing so with *me lui* by forcing ½ to be inanimate, Rezac 2011: 6.5, but they are not necessarily surprising, given the different size-content of the pronoun classes involved, and the ease with which typical subject-verb configurations can be coerced into middle-type predication.²⁰

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¹⁹ D'Alessandro 2007 for Italian and Mendikoetxea 2008 for Spanish argue for person restrictions with *se* on the basis of passivising *se* + agreeing 1st/2nd person nominatives. Dobrovie-Sorin 2017 takes the *se* form itself here to be the problem and gives out the corresponding agreeing 1st/2nd person nominatives with matching 1st/2nd accusative clitics as good on a passive as well as reflexive reading for certain but not other verbs, classing it with a constraint that in *se* middles affects even sufficiently individuated 3rd person, and probably does so in *se*-passives too. MacDonald 2017 likewise gives the ungrammatical component of this data set for *se*-passives in Spanish. The actual data-points seem consistent across systems and compatible with the approach to person restrictions here if the role of individuation in Dobrovie-Sorin 2017, 2021 can be understood through $\pi=3^{\text{rd}}$ here or in some other ways discussed in the literature cited there. Giurgea 2019 studies the constraint in this perspective for Romanian.

²⁰ More comparable then to *me lui* would examples that reduce the likelihood of middle readings like French *Tu t'inviteras demain pour neuf heures* or Czech *Pozveš se zítra na devátou*, I suspect both *.

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