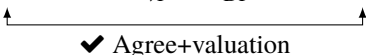


2.1 Assigning [*u*Prox] Which argument receives [*u*Prox] from *v* is determined by pronominal status and syntactic position. If present, a 3rd person pronoun is assigned [*u*Prox], arguably based on its inherent animacy even if there are higher 3rd person lexical DPs (3rd person pronouns in TN always have animate referents). If there are several 3rd person pronouns, the highest is [*u*Prox]; for lexical DPs, either a subject or an agreeing (ACC) object is assigned [*u*Prox], in that order. This matches observations by *i.a.* Dryer (1992), Aissen (1997) that animacy and grammatical function determine proximate status.

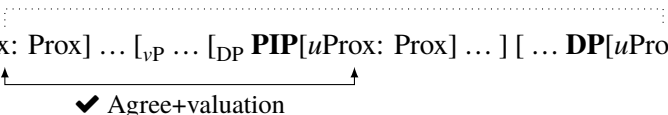
However, TN differs from other obviation languages in that not all possessors are more proximate than the possessed noun. We propose that only PIPs are proximate and inherently have [*u*Prox] (assigned in the DP without competition), while regular possessors are obviative. When a PIP is present, the possessed noun must be obviative, like in other obviation systems (Dahlstrom 1986, Dryer 1992, Aissen 1997).

2.2 Deriving the data A functional head H below the CP domain carries a [*i*Prox] feature (Bruening 2001). DPs with an unvalued [*u*Prox] feature must enter a (Reverse) Agree relation with this head in order to value [*u*Prox], resulting in [*u*Prox: Prox] (Zeijlstra 2012, Wurmbrand 2014). We assume that the [*i*Prox] head can discharge its value exactly once. Following Kalin (to appear), uninterpretable unvalued features crash the derivation, while uninterpretable valued features and interpretable features do not. Proximate Uniqueness then follows. If there are two [*u*Prox] DPs, the single [*i*Prox] head will only be able to value one of the DPs' [*u*Prox] feature. The other one remains uninterpretable and unvalued, leading to ungrammaticality. (6) and (7) illustrate the derivation of a grammatical and an ungrammatical structure, respectively. In (6), H enters an Agree relation with the PIP and values its [*u*Prox] feature.

(6) [H[*i*Prox: Prox] ... [_{vP} ... [_{DP} PIP[*u*Prox: Prox] ...] ...]] (cf. (3b), (4c), (5b))


The same Agree relation is established in (7), but the second [*u*Prox: ____] on DP cannot be valued assuming that H can only agree once. The uninterpretable and unvalued feature crashes the derivation. Note that an Agree relation across *vP* does not violate the PIC if H is below C (Chomsky 2001: 14).

✗ No Agree relation or valuation

(7) *[H[*i*Prox: Prox] ... [_{vP} ... [_{DP} PIP[*u*Prox: Prox] ...] [... DP[*u*Prox: ____]]]] (cf. (3a), (4a), (5a))


3 PIPs in the DP The position of PIPs in the DP is crucial for obviation, as lower possessors are not subject to the same restrictions. PIPs show other syntactic properties that distinguish them from lower possessors. There is evidence that PIPs but not regular possessors c-command out of SpecDP as PIPs can bind pronominal possessors in other DPs, while lower possessors cannot. In addition, PIPs can control the subjects of adverbial converbial clauses which otherwise require strict coreference between their PRO subject and the subject of the main clause. In (8), a PIP can control PRO. With a low possessor, (8) only has an odd reading with *kniga* controlling PRO. Thus (8) cannot involve logophoric or non-obligatory control (NOC), since *kniga* cannot be a logophor and NOC requires human antecedents (Landau 2013).

(8) [PRO *tol*^o-*h* *t'ax*^o-*na* *namt*^o-*o*^o] *ηəcəki*^o-*h* *kniga*#(-*da*) *mən*^o-*tey*^o-*q*
 table-GEN at sit-SS.CVB child-GEN book-3SG fall-REFL.3SG
 ‘When the child_i was sitting at the table, its_i book fell.’ (Nikolaeva 2014: 380)

In sum, we argue that TN shows effects of **syntactic obviation** with little morphological obviation (only PIPs are morphologically coded as proximate via possessive agreement). SpecDP is associated with a [*u*Prox] feature assigned to PIPs inside DP. Cooccurrence of PIPs with other proximate 3rd person DPs in the clause is ruled out by the failure of the functional head H to value more than one [*u*Prox] feature.

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