

Manuscript title:  
**Intervention effects in Czech clitic climbing**

*This is an anonymised submission.*

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## 1 Introduction

Czech has a number of short, clitic-like elements that tend to appear together in a cluster after the first element of a sentence—thus known as “second position clitics”. Under certain circumstances, clitics associated with the argument structure of an embedded clause can instead appear in the matrix clause, a phenomenon known as *clitic climbing*.

Previous work on Czech clitic climbing has shown limitations on clitic climbing out of infinitival complements of object control verbs (Rosen, 2001; Lenertová, 2004; Rezac, 2005; Hana, 2007). After a brief overview of Czech clitics in Section 2, I discuss empirical evidence clarifying these restrictions. I provide new evidence for a contrast between monoclausal and biclausal structures: within a single TP, clitics may cross one another in moving from their merged position to the clitic cluster (Section 3), but in object control constructions, clitics usually cannot climb if they would have to cross over the controller to do so (Section 4).

In Section 5, I account for these generalizations with a clitic probe containing a novel mechanism: a nested case hierarchy (Caha, 2009) that interacts with a DP by successively shedding layers until matching its case. If the probe reaches a DP in the wrong order, it will have already discarded the layer required to match it. This analysis explains both the standard clitic order and case-based intervention effects in object control sentences. I derive the contrast between monoclausal sentences and object control sentences from the fact that clitics may scramble (and thus reorder themselves to match the required hierarchy), but only within a TP. I then provide an overview of my account’s predictions and discuss outstanding issues. Section 6 concludes with additional paths for future research.

## 2 Background

Before discussing the details of clitic climbing, I present my basic assumptions about the position and behavior of clitics.

### 2.1 Clitics come “second”

In (1) we see that the clitics (emphasized here) can appear after the main verb, as in (1-a), or a phrase, like the adverb in (1-b):

- 1 (1) a. Omluvil **jsem se mu**.  
 apologized PST.1SG REFL.ACC him.DAT  
 2 'I apologized to him.'
- 3 b. Včera **jsem se mu** omluvil.  
 yesterday PST.1SG REFL.ACC him.DAT apologized  
 4 'Yesterday I apologized to him.' (cf. [Fried, 1994](#), 170)

5 The examples in (1) show members of the clitic cluster in their canonical order: first  
 6 come auxiliaries like *jsem*, followed by the accusative *se* and dative *si* reflexive cli-  
 7 tics, then pronominal clitics, with dative clitics like *mu* preceding accusative and, more  
 8 rarely, genitive clitics.

9 Clitics can sometimes follow two elements, like a complementizer and a contrastive  
 10 or non-contrastive topic ([Lenertová, 2004](#); [Sturgeon, 2008](#); [Kaspar, 2016](#)). I assume that  
 11 clitics are always in the same place, and other things can vary around them.

## 12 2.2 Clitics are in the specifier of CliticP

13 Following earlier accounts (e.g. [Toman, 1999](#); [Lenertová, 2004](#)), I assume that clitics  
 14 occupy a set position in the lower left periphery. In main clauses, clitics usually end  
 15 up in second position because of an EPP feature that attracts an element to a pre-clitic  
 16 projection—which I, in line with these previous accounts, identify as Fin, also the site  
 17 of auxiliary clitics. The EPP feature is satisfied by movement of a phrase (like *včera* in  
 18 (1-b)) or, if no phrase is available, by head movement of the inflected verb to Fin, as in  
 19 (1-a) ([Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou, 1998](#); [Lenertová, 2004](#); [Sturgeon, 2008](#)).

20 I assume Theory A of [Toman \(1999\)](#): clitics are base-generated and move to specifiers  
 21 of a clitic projection. Unlike [Dotlačil \(2007\)](#), I assume that clitics are DPs that have some  
 22 syntactic deficiency. This deficiency is not the ability to receive case: as [Dotlačil \(2004\)](#)  
 23 shows, clitic movement is not case assignment (contra [Rezac, 2005](#)). While [Toman \(1999\)](#)  
 24 assumes a series of projections—RefIP for reflexive clitics,  $K_{dat}P$  for dative clitics, etc.  
 25 (see also [Ciucivara, 2009](#))—I place all clitics in successive specifiers of a single CliticP.

## 26 2.3 Clitics can climb out of TP, but not CP

27 Certain embedded clauses allow arguments originating within them to “climb” out of  
 28 them, cliticizing in second position of the matrix clause. Clitics cannot climb out of finite  
 29 embedded clauses or *wh*-infinitives ([Lenertová, 2004](#); [Rezac, 2005](#); [Dotlačil, 2007](#)).<sup>1</sup> For  
 30 example, when the verb *chtít* ‘want’ (first singular *chci*) acts as a subject control verb  
 31 embedding an infinitive (cf. [Rezac, 2005](#)), the reflexive clitic associated with the verb

<sup>1</sup>[Lenertová \(2004, fn. 22\)](#) discusses an apparent counterexample of clitics climbing out of a certain type of *wh*-infinitive with modal meaning. [Šimík \(2011\)](#) argues that this construction is smaller than a CP in Czech.

1 *soustředit se* ‘focus’ can climb ((2-a)). However, when it embeds a conditional that is  
 2 headed by a conditional complementizer and includes an inflected verb ((2-b)), the  
 3 clitic cannot climb.

- 4 (2) a. Ted’ *se* chci [soustředit hlavně na hokej].  
 now REFL.ACC want.1SG focus.INF mainly on hockey  
 5 ‘Now I want to focus mainly on hockey.’ (SYNV11)<sup>2</sup>
- 6 b. Ted’ {\**se*} chci, [aby {*se*} soustředil hlavně na  
 now REFL.ACC want.1SG that.COND.3SG REFL.ACC focus mainly on  
 7 hokej].  
 hockey  
 8 ‘Now I want him to focus mainly on hockey.’

9 Dotlačil (2004) shows, contra Lenertová (2004) and Rezac (2005), that clitics can climb  
 10 out of infinitives with syntactic subjects (that is, PRO). One of his diagnostics for PRO  
 11 is partial control (Landau, 1999), where the subject of the embedded verb includes, but  
 12 is larger than, the matrix subject. In (3), the matrix subject *Pavel* cannot be the subject  
 13 of the infinitive *líbat se* ‘kiss’, where the reflexive clitic *se* has a reciprocal meaning. This  
 14 reading requires a subject coindexed with *Pavel* and some other individual(s), hence  
 15 the index *i+* (otherwise the reading is reflexive: ‘Pavel kissed himself’). This PRO does  
 16 not block climbing of the reflexive clitic *se* to the matrix clause.

- 17 (3) Pavel<sub>*i*</sub> *se* ne-chtěl [líbat PRO<sub>*i+*</sub> v knihovně].  
 Pavel REFL.ACC NEG-wanted kiss.INF PRO<sub>*i+*</sub> in library  
 18 ‘Pavel did not want to kiss [someone else] in the library.’ (Dotlačil, 2004, 92)

19 I thus assume that clitic climbing is blocked by a CP boundary, and that embedded  
 20 infinitives with PRO can be TPs out of which clitics may climb.

## 21 2.4 Summary

22 I assume that Czech pronominal clitics are merged like other DPs and cluster together  
 23 in multiple specifiers of a single dedicated CliticP projection. Their “second position”  
 24 derives from being in CliticP just below Fin, an EPP head that attracts an element to its  
 25 specifier (or, sometimes, its head). Clitics originating in embedded clauses can climb  
 26 into matrix clauses, but climbing is blocked by a CP boundary.

## 27 3 Clitic movement is free in monoclausal constructions

28 The next two sections discuss mismatches between the relative order of clitics in their  
 29 merged position and their surface position. In this section, I show that, within a

<sup>2</sup>This note marks examples taken from the Czech National Corpus’s SYNv11 corpus (Křen et al., 2022).

1 TP, the only restriction on pronominal clitics is their surface order (reflexive–dative–  
 2 genitive/accusative). Otherwise, cliticization is quite unrestricted: two pronouns may  
 3 reverse their merged order (that is, one may cross over another) when needed to sat-  
 4 isfy this order. This is true even if the pronouns have non-structural case or are not  
 5 arguments at all, but rather extract from within an argument DP. In Section 4, I show  
 6 that this relative freedom contrasts with a restriction on clitic climbing in object control  
 7 sentences: pronouns merged in a lower TP usually cannot climb into the matrix clause  
 8 across a matrix DP.

9 [Rezac \(2005\)](#) attributes the limitations discussed in Section 4 to the fact that clitic  
 10 movement is intimately tied to case assignment. He predicts that clitic movement  
 11 should always respect the merged order of clitics, and that arguments with non-struc-  
 12 tural case should not cliticize; both predictions are incorrect. These findings thus re-  
 13 inforce the argument of [Dotlačil \(2004, 87–92\)](#) that clitic movement cannot be for the  
 14 purpose of case. Accordingly, the restrictions discussed in Section 4 require a different  
 15 explanation; I present an account of them in Section 5.

### 16 3.1 ACC-DAT ditransitives: non-structural dative can cliticize across 17 structural accusative

18 [Dvořák \(2010\)](#) shows that Czech has two types of ditransitive: first, standard dative–  
 19 accusative verbs including benefactives, which she analyzes with an accusative merged  
 20 in VP and a dative merged in a higher applicative projection; and second, accusative–  
 21 dative verbs, where the dative is the object of a null preposition below the accusative.

22 The dative argument of accusative–dative verbs like *svěřit* ‘entrust’, which is thus  
 23 non-structural, can cliticize. When both arguments cliticize, as in (4), the dative must  
 24 cross over the accusative, since the latter is merged at a higher position.

- 25 (4) Soud **mu** **ho** svěřil loni 25. května.  
 court him.DAT him.ACC entrusted last year 25th May  
 26 ‘The court entrusted him [the child] to him last year on May 25.’ (SYNV11)

27 The dative argument in accusative–dative verbs like *podřídít* ‘subordinate’ can be reflex-  
 28 ived, as shown in (5). Reflexive clitics precede accusatives, so reflexive datives in these  
 29 verbs must cross over accusatives to cliticize, under the assumption (which I adopt) that  
 30 reflexive clitics originate in the same position as non-reflexive internal arguments.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>See [Medová \(2009, c. 3–5\)](#) for an overview of theories of reflexive clitics, focusing on Romance and Slavic. In her account, adapted from [Kayne \(1986\)](#) and [Alboiu et al. \(2004\)](#), reflexive clitics in true reflexive constructions are associated with the merged position of internal arguments, so the examples presented in this section still constitute reversal of merged order. By contrast, in the account of [Kayne \(1986\)](#), the merged order of reflexive clitics always precedes that of verbal arguments and the examples presented here do not constitute reversals of merged order.

- 1 (5) 'And what's more, I'm taking the route of befriending my dog rather ...'  
 2 než **si** **ho** za každou cenu podřídít.  
 than REFL.DAT him.ACC for any price subordinate.INF  
 3 'than subordinating him to myself at any cost.' (SYNV11)

### 4 3.2 DAT-ACC ditransitives: reflexive accusative can cliticize across 5 dative

6 If reflexive clitics originate in the same position as internal arguments, as assumed  
 7 in Section 3.1, the dative–accusative ditransitives discussed in Dvořák (2010) provide  
 8 another example of clitic order reversing merged order. In these verbs, the accusative  
 9 argument is merged below the dative argument, so a reflexive accusative would have to  
 10 cross over the dative to occupy its position in the cluster preceding the dative. This is  
 11 shown in (6) for the reflexive form of the dative–accusative verb *připomenout* 'remind'.

- 12 (6) '[Hockey opponent] David Výborný didn't even recognize me, ...'  
 13 musel jsem **se** **mu** připomenout tvrdším zákrokem.  
 needed PST.1SG REFL.ACC him.DAT remind.INF harder.INS tackle.INS  
 14 'I had to remind him who I was with a rather rough tackle.'

15 This class of ditransitives thus provides further evidence that clitics can be reordered  
 16 from their merged position.

### 17 3.3 Numerals: datives and reflexives cliticize across non-argument 18 genitives

19 Genitive clitics, which are somewhat marginal, are positioned after datives. These can  
 20 arise from a few verbs that take genitive arguments or, more commonly, as complements  
 21 to certain quantifiers, mostly numerals five or greater (Rezác, 2005):

- 22 (7) Včera jsem **jich** šel [koupit pět].  
 yesterday PST.1SG them.GEN went buy.INF five  
 23 'Yesterday I went to buy five of them.' (Rezác, 2005, 130)

24 The genitive clitic in (7) is not a verbal argument. This is unexpected if cliticization is  
 25 limited to arguments with structural case, as acknowledged by Rezác (2005).

26 Pronominal objects of numeral constructions may cliticize when they are associated  
 27 with the *subject* (which triggers neuter singular agreement), as in (8). Here genitive *jich*  
 28 slots below dative *mi*, even though the latter originates below it.

- 1 (8) ‘When I shook hands with them ...’  
 2 tak mi jich několik řeklo ...  
 then me.DAT them.GEN several said.N.SG  
 3 ‘a few of them said to me ...’ (SYNV11)

4 Reflexive clitics likewise cliticize above genitive clitics from subject numerals, as shown  
 5 in (9) for the reflexive verb *přihlásit se* ‘enroll’ and the numeral *několik* ‘several’.

- 6 (9) Již nyní se jich několik přihlásilo.  
 already now REFL.ACC them.GEN several enroll.N.SG  
 7 ‘Several of them have already enrolled.’ (SYNV11)

8 The genitives above do not c-command internal arguments when merged inside a nom-  
 9 inal phrase; however, if they must extract to the clausal spine to cliticize, their landing  
 10 site would c-command those arguments, making (8) and (9) a reversal of hierarchy.

### 11 3.4 Summary

12 In this section, I showed that pronouns are able to cliticize within a single TP, no  
 13 matter their initial position—so long as they end up in the order reflexive–dative–  
 14 genitive/accusative.

## 15 4 Clitics cannot reorder in biclausal structures

16 The freedom of clitic order in clauses with a single verb contrasts with clitic climbing  
 17 of embedded objects into matrix object control clauses, which obeys several restrictions  
 18 (Rosen, 2001; Lenertová, 2004; Rezac, 2005; Hana, 2007). In this section, I show that  
 19 embedded objects usually cannot climb into the matrix clause if they would need to  
 20 cross over the object controller to do so, regardless of whether the controller is a clitic  
 21 or a full DP. There is one exception: accusative and genitive embedded clitics can climb  
 22 into dative object control sentences, even if this involves crossing over a full DP dative  
 23 controller.

### 24 4.1 Reflexive clitics cannot climb over object controllers

25 Hana (2007) notes that reflexive clitics cannot climb in object control sentences. We see  
 26 this in (10): the reflexive clitic from the embedded infinitive *pojistit se* ‘insure oneself’  
 27 cannot climb, but must stay in the lower clause. This is true regardless of whether the  
 28 controller is a clitic or a full DP.

- 1 (10) Vláda {\*se} { jim / občanům } doporučila [{se}  
 2 government REFL.ACC them.DAT / citizens.DAT recommended REFL.ACC  
 3 pojistit].  
 4 insure.INF  
 'The government recommended the citizens to get insurance.'  
 (cf. Hana, 2007, 130)

5 The only available site for clitics in the matrix clause is the second position, after *vláda*  
 6 'government'. Thus, in order for the reflexive clitic to climb to this position, it would  
 7 have to cross over the dative controller (*jim* or *občanům* in (10)), which is not permit-  
 8 ted. This contrasts with the pattern shown in Section 3.2: within a TP, when reflexive  
 9 accusative clitics are merged below datives, the reflexive can cross over the dative to  
 10 cliticize in reflexive–dative order.

## 11 4.2 Dative clitics cannot climb over accusative controllers

12 Embedded dative clitics cannot climb into sentences with accusative object controllers,  
 13 as shown in (11). Here, the dative clitic *jí*, which is the oblique object of the embedded  
 14 infinitive *pomocť* 'help', cannot climb over the accusative controller merged in the matrix  
 15 clause. As in (10), the object clitic must remain in the embedded clause. This is true  
 16 whether the controller is a clitic or a full DP.

- 17 (11) Matka {\*mu} { ho / Petra } přinutila [{mu} pomocť].  
 18 mother him.DAT him.ACC / Petr.ACC forced him.DAT help.INF  
 'Mother forced him/Petr to help him.' (cf. Lenertová, 2004, 162)

19 This restriction, too, contrasts with its monoclausal analogue in Section 3.1: within a  
 20 TP, dative clitics precede accusative clitics even when the dative is merged below the  
 21 accusative and must cross over it.

## 22 4.3 Clitics of the same case respect order of embedding

23 Rosen (2001) notes that an embedded dative clitic can climb into a clause with a dative  
 24 controller, so long as the controller comes first. Hana (2007) tentatively expands this  
 25 to accusatives as well. For example, (12) is better when the dative controller of *zakázat*  
 26 'forbid' precedes the indirect object of the embedded infinitive *kupovat* than vice versa;  
 27 similarly, (13) is better when the accusative controller of *učit* 'teach' precedes the direct  
 28 object of the embedded infinitive *napsat* 'write', but the reverse order is questionable.

- 29 (12) Martin mu jí včera zakázal [kupovat takové dárky].  
 30 Martin him.DAT her.DAT yesterday forbade buy.INF such presents  
 'Martin forbade him from buying her such presents yesterday.'  
 31 ?'Martin forbade her from buying him such presents yesterday.'



- 1 (13) Martin **ji** **ho** učil [napsat].  
 Martin her.ACC him.ACC taught write.INF  
 2 'Martin taught her to write it [a masculine noun like *článek* 'article'].'  
 3 '?Martin taught him to write it [a feminine noun like *povídka* 'story'].'  
 4 (Hana, 2007, 147–8)<sup>4</sup>

5 These examples are problematic: the judgements are weak, and other authors (e.g.  
 6 Veselovská, 1995) consider climbing ungrammatical in both interpretations. In addi-  
 7 tion, *jí* can function as either a clitic or a full pronoun, so (12) allows an alternative  
 8 analysis where the second dative is not a clitic.<sup>5</sup> For greater insight, I searched for at-  
 9 tested examples of clitics climbing into sentences with a controller of the same case.<sup>6</sup> I  
 10 included cases where the climbing object is unambiguously a clitic (the second-person  
 11 singular and third-person masculine singular clitics) and it has unambiguously climbed,  
 12 meaning that there is matrix clause material located between the clitic cluster and the  
 13 embedded infinitive. I found 4 examples satisfying these criteria of dative clitics climb-  
 14 ing into matrix clauses with dative object controllers and 56 such examples with two  
 15 accusatives. One example with two accusatives, similar to (13), is shown below. In  
 16 most of the examples, the object controller is first- or second-person; (14) is one of two  
 17 tokens with two third-person clitics. Crucially, in all 60 examples across both dative  
 18 and accusative, the embedded clitic appears after the controller clitic of the same case.

- 19 (14) A **prý** **ji** **ho** baví i [uklízet]!  
 and supposedly her.ACC it.ACC amuses even clean.INF  
 20 'And she says she even enjoys cleaning it [her house]!' (SYNV11)

21 The corpus results bolster the judgements in (12) and (13): at least some speakers allow  
 22 clitics to climb into matrix clauses with clitic controllers of the same case. However, em-  
 23 bedded clitics consistently slot in after the controller clitics. This fits the generalization  
 24 that embedded clitics can climb, so long as they do not climb over an object controller.

#### 25 4.4 Accusative and genitive clitics can climb over dative controllers

26 In this section, I show that embedded accusative and genitive clitics can climb into  
 27 sentences with dative object controllers (Lenertová, 2004; Rezac, 2005). When both  
 28 objects cliticize, the order is dative–genitive/accusative: the merged order matches the  
 29 usual clitic order. When the dative object controller is a full DP, embedded accusative  
 30 and genitive clitics can still climb into the matrix clause, even though it has to cross

<sup>4</sup>Hana (2007) writes the feminine accusative clitic as *jí*, with a long vowel, although the standard orthographic form has a short vowel. He notes that the accusative clitic can be pronounced either way, so I bring the example in line with the orthography.

<sup>5</sup>I thank a reviewer for raising this point.

<sup>6</sup>Object control verbs were selected from Lopatková et al. (2022), a database of Czech argument structure.

1 over the object controller to do so. In the examples in (15), the accusative object *ji* of  
 2 the infinitive *navštívit* climbs when the dative controller is the clitic *mu* or the full DP  
 3 *Petrovi*.<sup>7</sup>

- 4 (15) a. Matka **mu** **ji** ne-dovolila [navštívit].  
 mother him.DAT her.ACC NEG-allowed visit.INF  
 5 'Mother didn't allow him to visit her.'
- 6 b. Matka **ji** Petrovi ne-dovolila [navštívit].  
 mother her.ACC Petr.DAT NEG-allowed visit.INF  
 7 'Mother didn't allow Petr to visit her.' (Lenertová, 2004, 162)

8 Attested equivalents to (15) for genitive clitics are shown in (16). In these sentences,  
 9 genitive pronouns originating inside a numeral in the embedded clause climb to the  
 10 matrix clause, slotting in after a dative clitic controller as in (16-a), or before a full DP  
 11 dative controller, as in (16-b). In both cases, the clitics slot in after the reflexive clitic  
 12 from the impersonal matrix verb *podařit se* 'succeed'.

- 13 (16) a. Za pár desítek minut **se** **mu** **jich** podařilo  
 during few tens.ACC minutes.ACC REFL.ACC him.DAT them.GEN succeeded  
 14 [koupit pět]  
 buy.INF five  
 15 'Over the course of half an hour or so, he managed to buy five of them.'  
 16 (SYNV11)
- 17 b. Pokud **se** **jich** účastníkům hry podaří [nashírat  
 if REFL.ACC them.GEN participants.DAT game.GEN succeed collect.INF  
 18 pět], mají na šestou památku vstup zdarma.  
 five have.3PL to sixth sight entry free  
 19 'If participants of the game manage to collect five of them, they get entry to  
 20 a sixth attraction for free.' (SYNV11)

21 These examples show that full DP dative controllers do not block genitive or accusative  
 22 clitics from climbing, even though accusative controllers block dative clitics from climb-  
 23 ing (see Section 4.2). This is the one configuration in which embedded clitics are able  
 24 to cross over object controllers.

## 25 4.5 Summary

26 In the preceding sections, I have surveyed the empirical landscape of clitic movement,  
 27 making the following generalizations:

- 28 1. Within a TP, elements may cross over one another to cliticize.

<sup>7</sup>Dotlačil (2004, 81) notes that only third-person accusative clitics can climb across a dative controller (see also Nováková, 2012). This is plausibly due to the Person Case Constraint, which restricts the order of clitics by person (e.g. Béjar & Rezac, 2003, 2009; Nevins, 2007; Deal, 2024).

1 2. Clitics originating in an embedded TP usually cannot cross over object controllers  
 2 to cliticize in a matrix clause. One exception is that embedded accusative and  
 3 genitive clitics can climb across full DP dative controllers.

## 4 5 A case containment analysis of clitic movement

5 I will now present an analysis that captures the two generalizations described in Sec-  
 6 tion 4.5. The main mechanism is a probe on the Clitic head that allows clitics to move  
 7 into specifiers of CliticP, so long as they are reached in an appropriate order. Examples  
 8 of successful and unsuccessful clitic movement with the probe are found in Section 5.4.

### 9 5.1 The probe on the Clitic head

10 An extensive literature on clitics (e.g. Béjar & Rezac, 2003; Coon & Keine, 2021, and  
 11 many others) casts clitic movement as the product of a need for the clitic to be licensed  
 12 in some way—the exact way in which clitics are defective relative to other DPs is unclear,  
 13 though in Czech, it is not for the purposes of case assignment (Dotlačil, 2004). As case  
 14 is relevant for my proposed probe, I tentatively suggest that clitics can receive case but  
 15 lack a K layer to license this case (e.g. Nevins, 2011).

16 I place a probe on the Clitic head that searches the tree below it for potential DPs  
 17 to agree with. This probe has no satisfaction requirements; its purpose is to interact  
 18 with DPs to allow clitics to move and be licensed. If the probe matches with a clitic, the  
 19 clitic can choose to move, although it does not have to.<sup>8</sup> If a clitic has not cliticized to  
 20 a possible landing site at the end of the derivation, the derivation crashes. The probe  
 21 interacts with all DPs in its c-command domain, clitic or not, similar in spirit to Multiple  
 22 Agree (Hiraiwa, 2001, 2005; Nevins, 2007, 2011) or other probes that allow for multiple  
 23 interactions (Deal, 2015, 2024). If a given probe attracts multiple clitics, they occupy  
 24 multiple specifiers in the order in which they move, each “tucking in” beneath the last,  
 25 as Richards III (1997, 100–101) also suggests for clitic movement in Serbo-Croatian.<sup>9</sup>

26 The probe, like other Agree relations, is blocked by a CP boundary due to the Phase

<sup>8</sup>That is, the presence of CliticP in a lower clause does not block clitic climbing. This optionality in clitic landing sites predicts that clitics should be able to climb partway to intermediate projections, which Hana (2007, 127) allows. It similarly predicts that in a cluster with multiple clitics, some may climb while others stay low. Rezac (2005, 111) says that this is not possible. The grammaticality judgements of these two authors are likely mutually exclusive in this case, as they are elsewhere.

<sup>9</sup>Alternatively, Krapova & Cinque (2005) propose that multiple specifier movement must preserve the hierarchy of the moving phrases because reversing their order would violate a form of Relativized Minimality (Rizzi, 2001). That is, the chain comprising a phrase and its copies cannot be contained entirely within the chain of another phrase “of the same structural type”: \*XP<sub>1</sub> ... XP<sub>2</sub> ... <XP<sub>2</sub>> ... <XP<sub>1</sub>>. Relativized Minimality cannot account for all the Czech climbing data: it predicts that full DP object controllers should either *always* block clitic climbing (if full DPs are “of the same structural type” as clitics) or *never* do so (if they are not). However, in Czech this intervention effect is sensitive to case, as shown in Section 4.4.

1 Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky, 2000, 2001; Keine, 2018). However, it can search  
2 into control infinitives, which are at most weak, penetrable phases (Landau, 2008).

### 3 5.2 The probe's feature geometry

4 While interactions with DPs leave no visible trace except for potential clitic movement,  
5 they can prevent DPs lower down from matching the probe. I propose that the probe  
6 has the feature geometry in (17), with a reflexive feature dominating a dative feature,  
7 followed by genitive and accusative features.

8 (17) *Full clitic probe in its initial state – can match REFL, DAT, GEN, or ACC*  
9 [REFL [DAT [GEN [ACC]]]]

10 The REFL feature may be a shorthand for some structure or feature that matches reflexive  
11 clitics; the rest of the hierarchy has been independently proposed as the containment  
12 hierarchy for Czech cases to explain phenomena like case syncretism (Caha, 2009).

13 When the probe encounters a DP, it attempts to match its case (or reflexive feature).  
14 If the top layer of the probe does not match that of the DP (i.e., if the DP is not a reflexive  
15 clitic), it discards layers one by one until it finds a match. For example, if a probe with  
16 the features in (17) encounters a genitive DP, it discards the REFL and DAT features so  
17 that the required GEN feature is exposed. The probe then continues its search, now with  
18 a diminished feature set:

19 (18) *Full clitic probe after matching a genitive – can match GEN or ACC but not REFL or DAT*  
20 [GEN [ACC]] (discarded: REFL, DAT)

21 From here, the probe can match any additional number of genitive DPs, or it can shed  
22 its GEN layer and match accusative clitics. This process accounts for the order of the  
23 cluster: a given probe must first attract reflexives, then datives, then genitives, then  
24 accusatives, because once a layer has been discarded, it is gone for the remainder of the  
25 probe's search. However, multiple clitics of the same case can be attracted in succession,  
26 for as long as the probe has a given case exposed.

27 In certain case configurations, DPs can act as interveners preventing lower clitics  
28 from matching and moving. This occurs, for example, if the probe encounters a dative  
29 clitic after an accusative. In this case, the probe discards its DAT feature in the process  
30 of matching the accusative, so when it subsequently reaches the dative, it has no DAT  
31 feature to match it and the dative cannot cliticize. This is what happens in object  
32 control sentences: in most cases, clitics from an embedded clause cannot climb across  
33 matrix object controllers (the second generalization in Section 4.5). This is because

1 arguments in a matrix clause (object controllers) interact with the probe before those in  
 2 an embedded clause. Thus, if both the controller and the embedded object cliticize, the  
 3 controller must come first. If the controller is a full DP, the intervention effect depends  
 4 on case: if the controller is accusative, a dative embedded object clitic is unable to  
 5 match the probe and cannot climb. However, if the controller is dative, an accusative  
 6 embedded object *can* climb, since the clitic probe can match the dative (which does not  
 7 move), followed by the accusative (which does). This is the pattern we see in Section 4.4.

### 8 5.3 Scrambling to accommodate the case hierarchy

9 The probe described in Section 5.2 requires clitics to be matched in a particular order  
 10 and cannot rearrange them. However, in Section 3, I showed that clitics can cross over  
 11 one another, with no intervention effects, within a single TP. This can only be true  
 12 if clitics are able to obviate intervention effects by rearranging themselves *prior* to clitic  
 13 movement—but only within the bounds of a TP. I propose that they do so through what  
 14 Kučerová (2007) calls g-movement and Šimík et al. (2014), Šimík & Wierzba (2015), and  
 15 many others call scrambling: movement of given elements to the middlefield. Clitics are  
 16 necessarily given elements, and Biskup (2006) and Sturgeon (2008) show that phrases  
 17 can scramble (to specifiers of *v*P, in their analysis) in any order (contra Veselovská, 1995).  
 18 Thus, clitics should be able to rearrange themselves as needed to match the probe’s case  
 19 hierarchy by scrambling before clitic movement.<sup>10</sup>

20 Kučerová (2007, 34–35) shows that Czech scrambling, unlike *wh*-movement and con-  
 21 trastive focus movement, cannot escape infinitival TPs.<sup>11</sup> Thus, embedded clitics cannot  
 22 scramble outside of their TP to the matrix *v*P to place themselves above the object con-  
 23 troller prior to clitic movement. In this case, as described in Section 5.2, embedded cli-  
 24 tics can only climb into matrix clauses if the matrix clitic probe can successfully match  
 25 the object controller before the embedded object—that is, if the merged hierarchy (ma-  
 26 trix object controller > embedded object) matches the probe’s containment hierarchy  
 27 (reflexive > dative > genitive > accusative). By proposing that clitics, like other given el-  
 28 ements, can scramble, I thus derive the attested contrast between clitic climbing, which  
 29 shows intervention effects, and clitic movement within a TP, which does not.

<sup>10</sup>Diesing (2003) likewise argues that certain intervention effects in Yiddish *wh*-movement can be cancelled by scrambling (cf. Richards III, 1997, 90–95) prior to *wh*-movement, given that scrambling itself in Yiddish is not subject to superiority effects (Diesing, 1997).

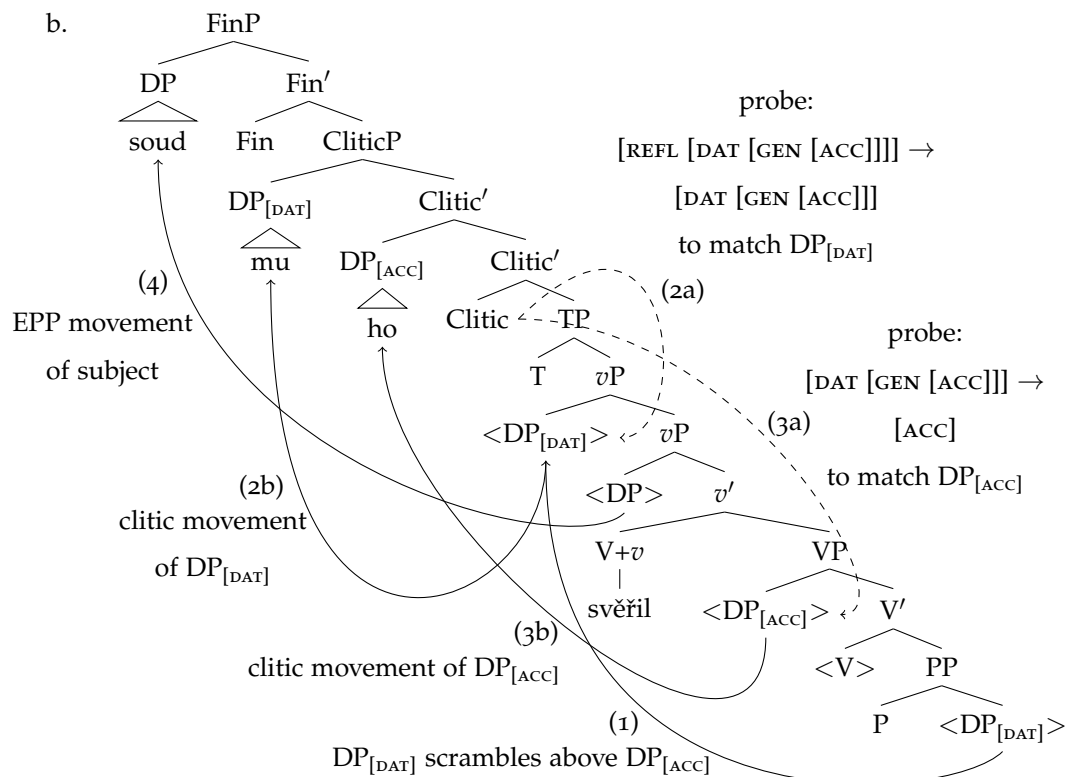
<sup>11</sup>I follow Kučerová (2007) and Kosta (2006) in assuming that the scrambling operation in question is A movement and has different properties than the long-distance scrambling out of embedded clauses in languages like Hindi and Japanese (see e.g. Mahajan, 1990; Miyagawa, 1997). Kosta (2006) assumes that in Czech, as in German (cf. Wurmbrand, 2001), phrases can only scramble out of infinitives smaller than TP, which themselves can only be embedded under lexically specified “restructuring” predicates. Since object control verbs are not restructuring predicates, they can only embed infinitives out of which objects cannot scramble.

## 5.4 Examples

I now present two examples showing attempted movement of accusative and dative clitics where the merged position of the accusative c-commands that of the dative.

First, (19) features the accusative–dative ditransitive *svěřit* ‘entrust’ (see Section 3.1). The accusative clitic *ho* originates in the VP, while the dative *jí* is merged in a PP below it (Dvořák, 2010). For the probe to attract both clitics, the dative must be above the accusative, so (1) the former scrambles to the *v*P edge above the latter. Now the probe can work: (2a) the probe first encounters the scrambled dative clitic, so it sheds its REFL layer to expose DAT and match the dative clitic, which (2b) moves to the specifier of CliticP. The probe then continues (ignoring the subject) until (3a) it reaches the accusative clitic—which I show *in situ*, although it may also scramble below the dative. The probe casts off its DAT and GEN layers to match the accusative and attract it to CliticP, where (3b) the clitic tucks into a specifier beneath the previously moved dative. Finally, (4) the subject moves to the specifier of FinP to satisfy the EPP feature on Fin.

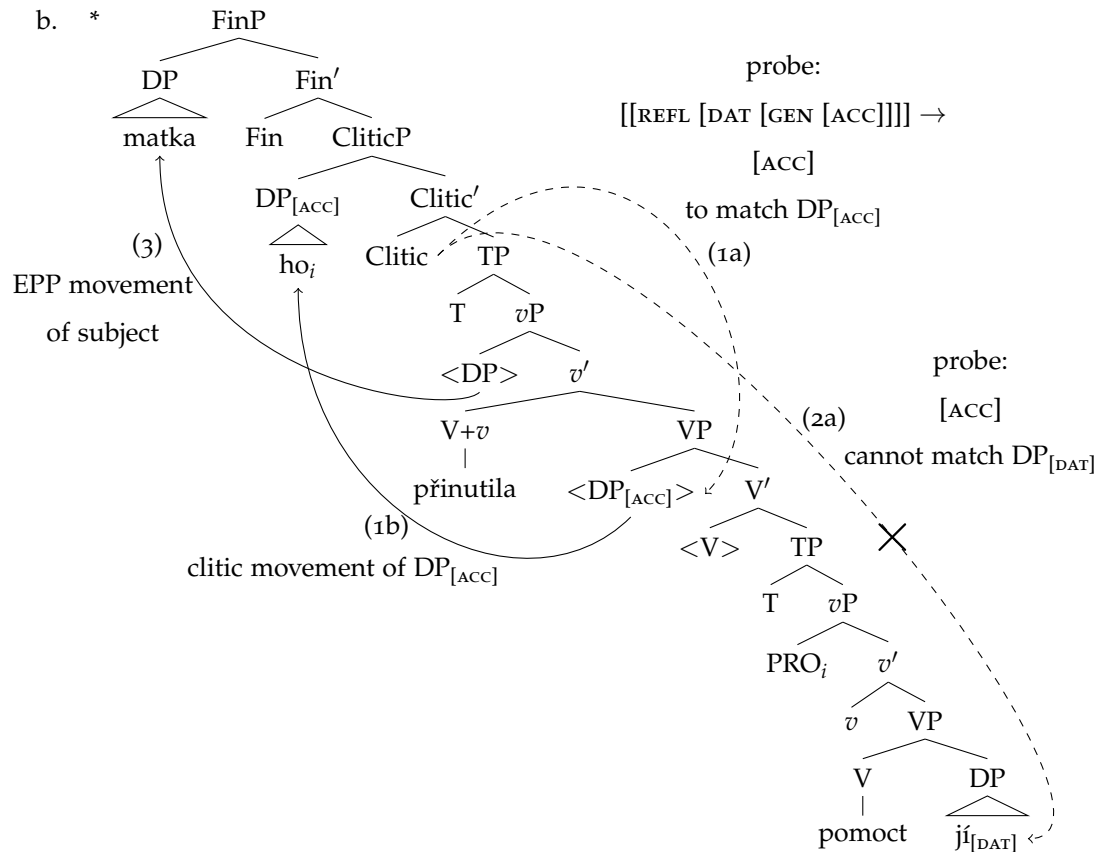
(19) a. Soud **jí** **ho** svěřil.  
 court her.DAT him.ACC entrusted  
 ‘The court entrusted him to her.’ (see (4))



We can contrast this with the failed derivation in (20), with an accusative controller

1 *ho* in the matrix clause and a dative object *jí* merging in the embedded clause, as the  
 2 object of *pomoct* (whether this argument is a simple VP complement, as I have it, or  
 3 introduced in a different structure does not matter for these purposes). This dative  
 4 cannot scramble outside of its TP, so it is stuck below the accusative. Thus, (1a) the  
 5 clitic probe first encounters the accusative DP and sheds its first three layers, leaving  
 6 only [ACC]. After being matched, (1b) the accusative moves to the specifier of CliticP.  
 7 Next, (2) the probe finds the embedded dative. By this point, the probe has no DAT  
 8 feature, and cannot match the dative object. Thus, the dative clitic is stranded in a non-  
 9 clitic position, so after (3) regular EPP movement of the subject to FinP, the derivation  
 10 crashes. The grammatical alternative (not depicted here) is for the dative to be attracted  
 11 to a lower CliticP projected in the embedded clause, where the accusative controller  
 12 cannot intervene—that is, the clitic does not climb.

13 (20) a. \*Matka **jí** **ho** přinutila [pomocť].  
 14 mother her.DAT him.ACC forced help.INF  
 15 'Mother forced him to help her.' (see (11))



## 5.5 Predictions and outstanding issues

This section discusses my account's predictions. Table 1 shows combinations of clitics merged in the same TP. The predicted orders are listed in with the section in which evidence, sometimes incidental, is provided. Canonical cases in which the template and the merged order align and for which I have no example are labelled [C].

		<i>merged lower</i>			
		REFL	DAT	GEN	ACC
<i>merged higher</i>	REFL	REFL REFL	REFL DAT [C]	REFL GEN [C]	REFL ACC [C]
	DAT	REFL DAT 3.2	DAT DAT	DAT GEN [C]	DAT ACC [C]
	GEN	REFL GEN 3.3	DAT GEN 3.3	GEN GEN	GEN ACC
	ACC	REFL ACC 3.1	DAT ACC 3.1	GEN ACC	ACC ACC

Table 1: Predicted clitic orders for single clauses, with sources of evidence

Table 2 shows predicted combinations of matrix and embedded clitics—certain combinations should be impossible (that is, certain embedded clitics should not climb), while the others should be possible in a fixed order, with the matrix clitic (*m*) preceding the climbing embedded clitic (*e*). When a section is listed in brackets, the relevant cases are not discussed directly but follow the pattern shown in that section.

		<i>embedded clitic</i>			
		REFL	DAT	GEN	ACC
<i>matrix clitic</i>	REFL	REFL <sub>m</sub> REFL <sub>e</sub>	REFL <sub>m</sub> DAT <sub>e</sub> [4.4]	REFL <sub>m</sub> GEN <sub>e</sub> 4.4	REFL <sub>m</sub> ACC <sub>e</sub> [4.4]
	DAT	* 4.1	DAT <sub>m</sub> DAT <sub>e</sub> 4.3	DAT <sub>m</sub> GEN <sub>e</sub> 4.4	DAT <sub>m</sub> ACC <sub>e</sub> 4.4
	GEN	* [4.1]	* [4.2]	GEN <sub>m</sub> GEN <sub>e</sub> [4.3]	GEN <sub>m</sub> ACC <sub>e</sub>
	ACC	* [4.1]	* 4.2	*	ACC <sub>m</sub> ACC <sub>e</sub> 4.3

Table 2: Predicted clitic combinations and orders for embedded infinitives, with sources of evidence

Some issues remain involving two arguments of the same case or type. Table 1 predicts that clitics of the same case from the same TP should appear in any order. However, for the verb 'teach' (imperfective *učít*, perfective *naučit*), which takes two accusatives, only the order in (21) is attested, in which the clitic for the student precedes the clitic for the material being taught.

(21) 'And where on earth did he come to learn that Czech sentence?'

Naučila **ho** **ji** jeho dívka, Češka, která zde studovala arabštinu.  
 taught him.ACC it.ACC his girl Czech.F who here studied Arabic

'His girlfriend, a Czech who studied Arabic here, taught it to him.' (SYNV11)

The reverse order may be ruled out by economy (dispreferring movements unnecessary to obtain a grammatical result) or a preference for animate clitics to precede inanimate



1 clitics.

2 Reflexive clitics are predicted to be able to climb into clauses with other reflexive  
3 clitics, but as Rosen (2014) discusses, they cannot. However, one solution is the deletion  
4 of one of the reflexives (haplology). This restriction and solution are unique to reflexive  
5 clitics, so I assume that these clitics are subject to some additional restriction.

6 Another issue involves clitics climbing into clauses with full DP controllers of the  
7 same case. Matrix controllers serve as interveners whether they are clitics or full DPs  
8 (see Section 4.2 and Section 4.4) and clitics can climb into clauses with clitics of the  
9 same case (see Section 4.3), so they should be able to climb over full DP controllers of  
10 the same case as well. However, I have not been able to find any examples of them  
11 doing so: sentences like (22), adapted from (14)—and equivalents with a dative clitic  
12 climbing over a full DP dative controller—should be grammatical but are unattested.

13 (22) %A prý ho její náctileté děti baví i [uklízet]!  
14 and supposedly it.ACC her teenage children.ACC amuses even clean.INF  
15 ‘And she says her teenage children even enjoy cleaning it [their house]!’

15 These examples may be unattested because they are confusing, featuring inversion of  
16 merged order for arguments of the same case. Sentences somewhat similar to (22), with  
17 a full DP dative controller in sentence-initial position preceding a dative clitic that has  
18 climbed out of an embedded infinitive, are marked \* by Dotlačil (2004, 80) but ?? by  
19 Dotlačil (2017)—so it is unclear whether such sentences are wholly ungrammatical or  
20 merely degraded.<sup>12</sup> I leave rigorous testing of this prediction to future research.

21 My account predicts that genitive clitics should precede accusative clitics. Geni-  
22 tive and accusative clitics rarely appear in the same cluster and exhibit widespread  
23 syncretism—they are only consistently distinguished in the third personal plural, which  
24 has genitive *jich* and accusative *je*. The literature is divided about their ordering.  
25 Veselovská (1995) and Toman (1999) place genitive clitics before accusative clitics. How-  
26 ever, Franks & King (2000, 108) report mixed judgements for (23), which has a genitive  
27 clitic extracted from a subject numeral (see Section 3.3) and an accusative object clitic:  
28 of three speakers asked, one preferred each clitic order and the third rejected both.

<sup>12</sup>A reviewer notes that a similar logic should apply to (15-b), in which the third-person feminine singular accusative clitic *ji* climbs across a full DP dative controller, because *ji* is syncretic with the dative. However, (15-b) is judged as acceptable. In fact, there is reason to suspect that *ji* climbing across a dative controller would be less confusing than (22): the accusative–dative syncretism is incomplete. Hana (2007, 78) notes that many speakers have neutralized the vowel length distinction among third-person feminine singular clitics between accusative *ji* and dative *jí*, but the distinction is still maintained in the written standard and usually holds up in published texts as well. Moreover, for speakers who have merged the two pronouns, the usual pronunciation is *jí*, with a long vowel. Thus, a given written pronoun *ji* is much more likely to be accusative than dative, and thus less likely to be confused with another dative argument than *ho* with another accusative argument.

- 1 (23) %Pět **mu** { **jich** **ho** / **ho** **jich** } nikdy nedalo.  
 five him.DAT them.GEN it.ACC / it.ACC them.GEN never NEG-gave  
 2 'Five of them never gave it to him.' (Franks & King, 2000, 108)

3 There is also one common ditransitive verb, *zbavit* 'rid', which takes a genitive and an  
 4 accusative argument: 'to rid X [accusative] of Y [genitive]'. Franks & King (2000) found  
 5 that when both arguments cliticize in this verb, as in (24-b), speakers preferred the  
 6 order accusative–genitive, although judgements were quite uncertain. Lenertová (2004,  
 7 154) also claims that arguments of *zbavit* usually cliticize in accusative–genitive order.

- 8 (24) a. Zbavili Alenu občanství.  
 rid Alena.ACC citizenship.GEN  
 9 'They stripped Alena of her citizenship.'  
 10 b. Zbavili { %**ji** **ho** / \***ho** **ji** }.  
 rid her.ACC it.GEN / it.GEN her.ACC  
 11 'They stripped her of it'. (Franks & King, 2000, 108)

12 A corpus search suggests that sentences like (23), with a genitive clitic extracted from  
 13 the subject and an accusative object clitic, overwhelmingly show genitive–accusative  
 14 order (as predicted in Table 1), while sentences with *zbavit*, like (24), show a rather  
 15 more ambiguous preference for accusative–genitive order. For reasons of space, I leave  
 16 further empirical study of the order of genitive and accusative clitics for future work.

17 For object control sentences, my account similarly predicts that accusative clitics  
 18 originating in embedded infinitives should be able to climb into matrix clauses with  
 19 clitic or full DP genitive controllers; if both are clitics, the order should be genitive–  
 20 accusative. There are no verbs that assign genitive case to controllers, so these genitives  
 21 must be extracted from numeral accusative object controllers (as shown in (25)) or nu-  
 22 meral subject controllers.<sup>13</sup> Examples (25) and (26) below are shown with their *predicted*  
 23 judgements.

- 24 (25) 'The teacher would be devastated if none of his students tried his goulash, ...'  
 25 tak bychom { **jich** **ho** / \***ho** **jich** / **ho** **kluků** }  
 SO COND.1PL them.GEN him.ACC / him.ACC them.GEN / him.ACC boys.GEN  
 26 měli přinutit ochutnat alespoň pár.  
 should force.INF taste.INF at least few  
 27 'so we should force at least a few of them / the boys to taste it.'

28 In contrast, embedded genitive clitics should not be able to climb into matrix clauses  
 29 with accusative controllers—thus, sentences like (26) should always be ungrammatical.

<sup>13</sup>I thank a reviewer for suggesting this point and the basic format of these examples.

1 (26) ‘You can’t expect that Pepa will learn to cook every classic Czech dish, but ...’

2 \*příští týden bych { **jich** **ho** / **ho** **jich** / **jich**  
 next week COND.1SG them.GEN him.ACC / him.ACC them.GEN / him.ACC  
 3 kluka } mohl naučit vařit šest.  
 boy.GEN could teach cook six

4 ‘next week I could teach him / the boy to cook at least six of them.’

5 My proposal’s predictions are clear but hard to test. I have not found attested examples  
 6 like (25) and (26), and speakers have unclear judgements or reject all such examples—in  
 7 part because they are confusing, requiring multiple extractions and stacked verbs. Here,  
 8 too, I leave thorough testing of my account’s predictions to future work.

## 9 5.6 Summary

10 I have proposed that clitic movement is driven by a probe with a hierarchy of reflexive  
 11 and case features that it uncovers one at a time to match DPs in its c-command domain.  
 12 When DPs are ordered in accordance with the probe’s hierarchy, we get the canonical  
 13 clitic order of reflexive–dative–genitive–accusative. When they are not, clitics fail to  
 14 cliticize. Scrambling allows clitics to reorder themselves as needed, so long as they are  
 15 in the same TP. This probe thus accounts for the generalizations about clitic climbing  
 16 discussed in the previous sections. Some predictions of my account, particularly those  
 17 involving genitive and accusative clitics, require further testing.

## 18 6 Conclusion

19 In this work, I have refined previous empirical generalizations about Czech clitic climb-  
 20 ing (e.g. Dotlačil, 2004; Lenertová, 2004; Rezac, 2005; Hana, 2007) and proposed a novel  
 21 probe that handles intervention effects through a hierarchical feature geometry that  
 22 removes layers to match successive DPs depending on their case. While this general ap-  
 23 proach neatly unifies the various possibilities and limitations of Czech clitic movement  
 24 presented here and makes generally correct predictions, some further issues remain.

25 One issue is technical: what is the feature I call REFL? We cannot say that reflexives  
 26 somehow bear nominative case alongside dative or accusative: nominative is at the  
 27 *bottom* of the case hierarchy (Caha, 2009), predicting that reflexives should come *last*.

28 Another open question is the interaction of case and person. Some Czech speakers  
 29 allow inversion of the usual clitic order to satisfy the Person Case Constraint, which  
 30 requires first- and second-person clitics to precede third-person clitics (Medová, 2009;  
 31 Sturgeon et al., 2011)—that is, first-person accusative clitics may precede third-person

1 dative clitics. Future work should aim to reconcile the Person Case Constraint and the  
2 case-based template. One potential route is to require two steps of clitic movement, first  
3 for case and then for person, as proposed by Ciucivara (2009) for Romanian.

4 Another avenue for further exploration is scrambling. Kosta (2006) and Kučerová  
5 (2007) assume that elements cannot scramble out of TPs, but Lenertová (2004, 162n24)  
6 shows an example with a full DP scrambling out of an embedded infinitive into a matrix  
7 clause beneath (but not across) an object controller. Future work should explore when,  
8 exactly, elements can scramble out of embedded infinitives.

9 Overall, the empirical theoretical work presented in this study should provide ample  
10 ground for further exploration of Czech clitic movement and embedded infinitives.

## 11 **Contact information**

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## 1 Abbreviations

1	first person	
3	third person	
ACC	accusative	
COND	conditional	
DAT	dative	
GEN	genitive	
INF	infinitive	
2	INS	instrumental
N	neuter	
NEG	negation	
PL	plural	
PST	past	
REFL	reflexive	
SG	singular	

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