**Summary**

**Goal:** *subregular* analysis of case licensing

**Subregular hypothesis:** linguistic patterns are properly contained in the class of regular (string/tree) languages

- Syntactic representations: derivation trees of Minimalist Grammars (Stabler 1997, 2011)
- MGs combine lexical items via Merge (●) and Move (○)
- **Known fact:** Merge and Move are *Tier-based Strictly Local* (TSL) over derivation trees. (Graf 2018)
- Our analysis of case assignment in English illustrates how the TSL view extends to other syntactic dependencies.

**Core Insight**

- Case assignment follows a uniform pattern that generalizes Dependent Case Theory (Marantz 1991; Baker and Vinokurova 2010).
- Both structural and lexical case are mediated by sister-daughter relations.

### TSL over trees

**Intuition**

- Ignore irrelevant material by projecting specific nodes onto *tree tier*
- *Locally* defined constraints determine permisssible tier shapes

**Application to case-licensing**

- Tier projection rules

  - **Project:** if...
    - C + mother + selecting ● always
    - Tfin + mother always
    - Tfin + selecting selected by ECM-verb or for
    - PRO + selecting ● always
    - NOM + selecting ● always
    - ACC + selecting ● not subject under projecting Tfin
    - DAT + selecting ● treated as dependent case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Tier-projection function</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C, Tfin, PRO, NOM, Tfin, ACC</td>
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- **Local constraints**

  - If daughter of ● is... licensing sibling of ● must be...
    - NOM, Tfin, PRO, NOM
    - ACC, Tfin, PRO, ACC

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<tr>
<th>Table 2: Case licensing as daughter-sibling constraints</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM, Tfin, PRO, NOM, ACC, Tfin, PRO, ACC</td>
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**Datives**

- Merge node ● with DAT daughter must have ACC sister:
  - a. He showed her him.
  - b. I showed him to her.

**Nominatives**

- Merge node ● with NOM daughter must have Tfin sister:
  - a. He thinks that she has arrived.

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