

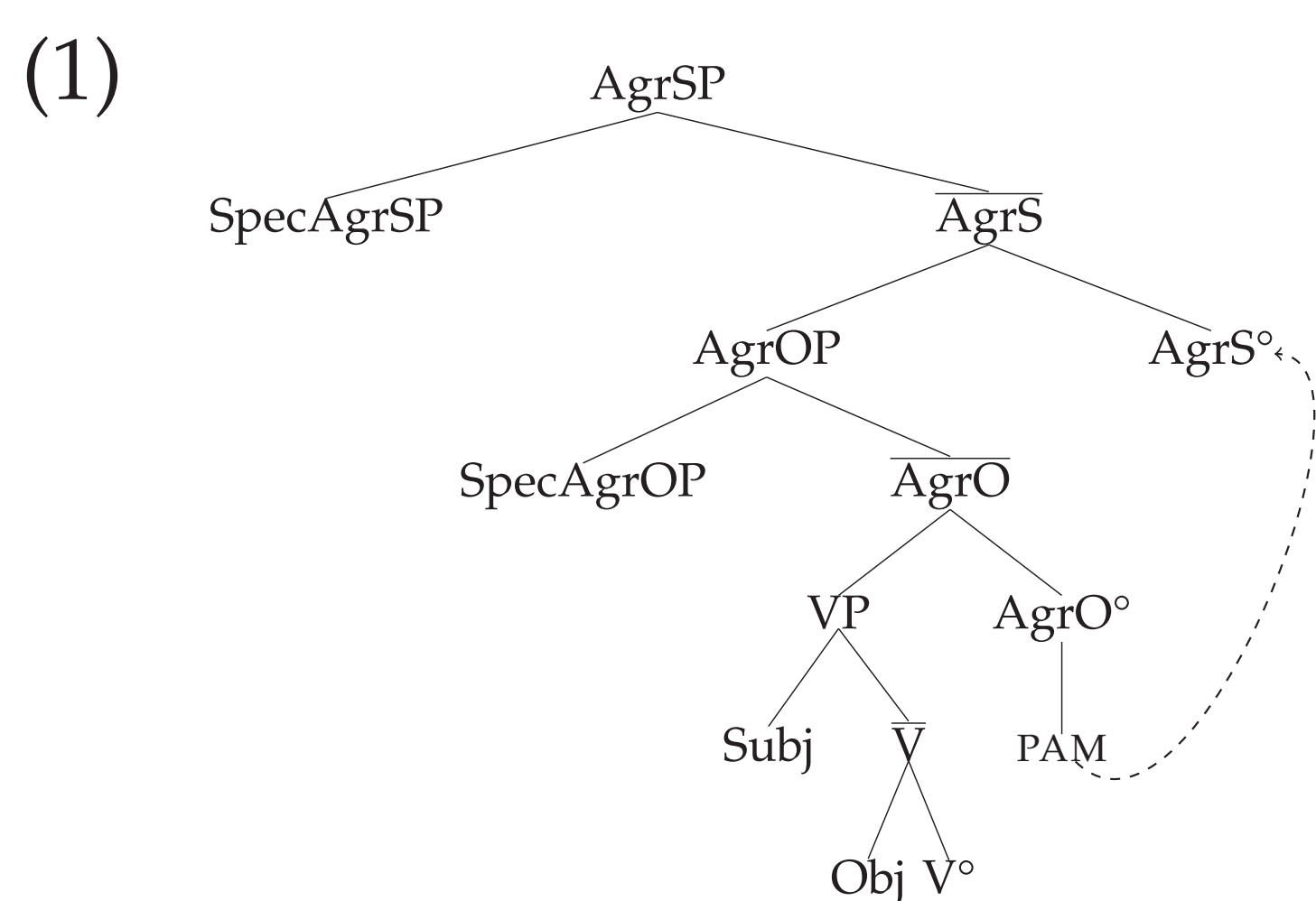
INTRODUCTION

Based on their agreement behavior, verbs in sign languages are traditionally divided into classes:

- **Plain verbs:** show no agreement at all.
- **Agreement verbs:** show agreement between the subject's and the object's location.
- **Spatial verbs:** show agreement between source and goal in locative verbs.
- **Backward verbs:** special class of agreement verbs that show agreement between the object's and the subject's location.
- **Single agreement verbs:** are only able to show 1st person subject agreement and non-1st person object agreement.

With some verbs, German Sign Language (DGS), a basic SOV language, requires or allows the insertion of a sign called 'person agreement marker' (PAM) into the sentence if the object is animate:

- Traditionally, PAM is considered to be an auxiliary which is used with verbs which cannot show agreement on their own (i. e., plain and single agreement verbs) (e. g., Rathmann 2003; Pfau & Steinbach 2003; Steinbach 2011).
- In these cases PAM takes over the agreement in that it shows subject-object agreement (Pfau & Steinbach 2008):



- The reason for PAM insertion is, on these accounts, purely phonological as the verb class a verb belongs to is arbitrary.

As these accounts fail to explain why PAM is only used with animate objects I argue that PAM is an differential object marker. Additionally, I claim that PAM only agrees with the grammatical object and not with the subject and object.

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PAM AS A DOM-MARKER

The examples in (2a) and (2b) show that PAM is inserted when the object is animate.

- (2) a. PAUL_{3a} PAM_{3b} MARIA_{3b} KNOW b. PAUL_{3a} MUNICH KNOW

- That PAM is only used with non-agreeing verbs is probably an illusion: the vast majority of verbs in DGS are non-agreeing.
- However, there are some agreeing verbs which require PAM insertion (3a).
- Even with backward verbs PAM insertion is possible; in these cases, PAM agrees with the grammatical object (3b).

- (3) a. PAUL_{3a} PAM_{3b}MARIA_{3b} _{3a}ADVISE_{3b}
'Paul advises Maria.' agreement verb
- b. PAUL_{3a} PAM_{3b} MARIA_{3b} _{3b}INVITE_{3a}
'Paul invites Maria.' backward verb

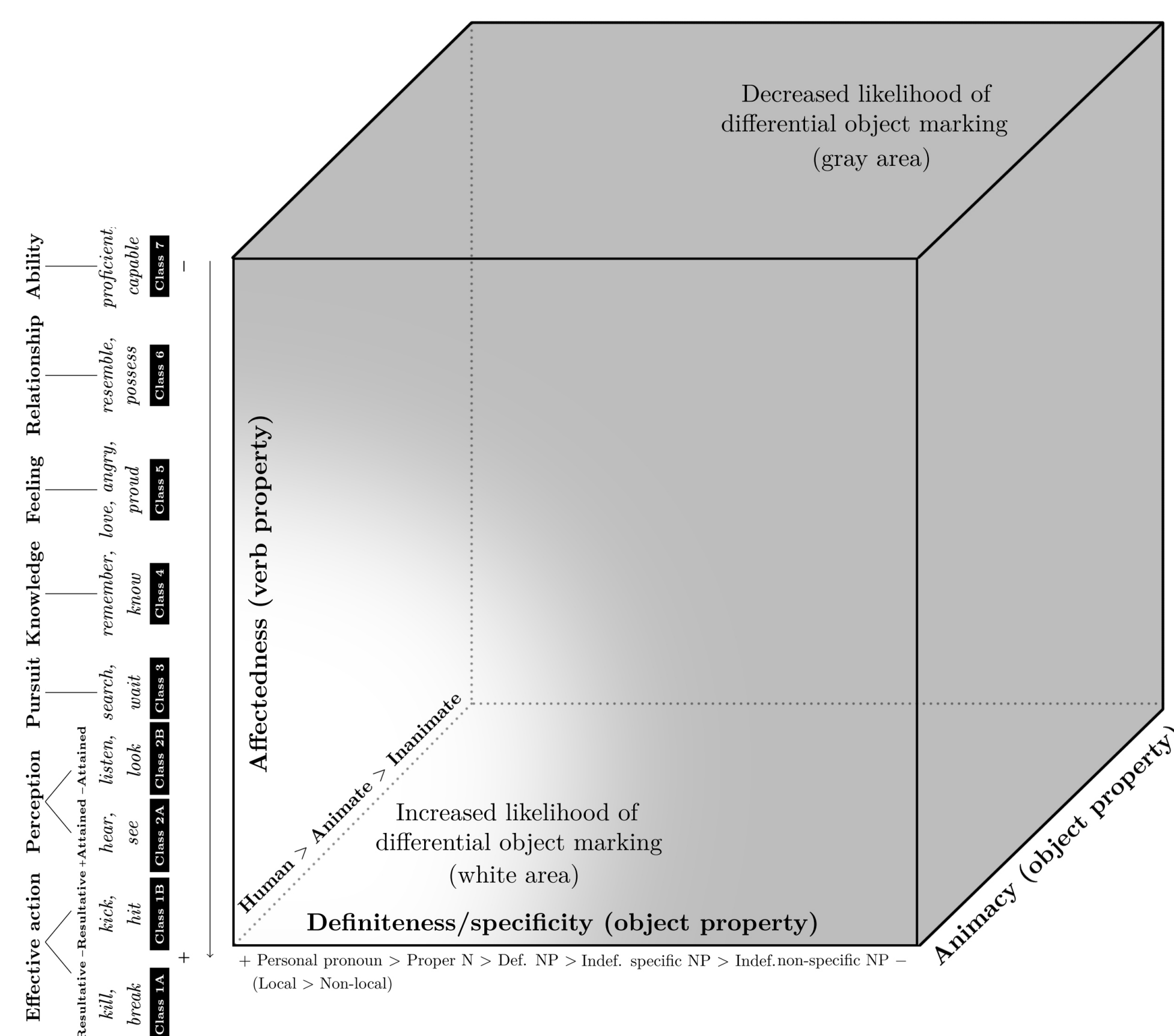
- On an auxiliary verb analysis, the examples in (3) would involve double agreement with both the main verb and the auxiliary agreeing with the object.
- Instead of being an auxiliary, I argue that PAM is a preposition-like element; evidence comes from nominalizations:

- (4) a. INDEX₁ POSS₁ LOVE PAM_{3a} PAUL_{3a} NEVER FORGET.
'I will never forget about my love for Paul.'
- b. *INDEX₁ POSS₁ LOVE PAUL_{3a} NEVER FORGET.
'I will never forget about my love for Paul.'

- PAM has another property: It is able to locate a referent in signing space which leads to a definite interpretation.

- (5) a. PAUL_{3a} POLICE#PERSON_{3b} SEE_{3b} b. PAUL_{3a} PAM_{3b} POLICE#PERSON_{3b} SEE_{3b}
'Paul saw a/the policeman.' 'Paul saw the policeman.'

- Besides animacy and definiteness another property leading to PAM insertion is affectiveness (just as in other DOM languages, cf. Heusinger & Kaiser 2007); the following picture emerges:



- The definiteness of the direct object has another, more general effect in DGS: they have to leave their VP-internal base position and move to a higher syntactic slot (Diesing 1992):

- (6) a. Context: Paul is walking through the village and knocks on every door. First, he knocks on one door, then on a another.
NOW PAUL AGAIN DOOR KNOCK
'Now, Paul is again knocking on a door.'
- b. Context: Two days ago, Paul knocked on the door. Yesterday Paul knocked on the door.
NOW PAUL DOOR AGAIN KNOCK
'Now, Paul is again knocking on the door.'

CONCLUSION

Instead of being an auxiliary verb, I claim that PAM is a differential object marker which is used with highly affected animate objects. Additionally, I argued that definite objects have to leave the VP in DGS.