Differential Object Marking (DOM) and cliticization

Basic data. Romance DOM consists in embedding a referentially high-ranked DP under a dative/locative preposition, generally *a*, as in (1).

(1) a. Maria llamò un taxi/a Juan *Spanish*
Maria called a taxi/DOM Juan
b. cammani u kane/a to sureḍḍa *Corsican*
they.call the dog/DOM your sister

According to Bossong (1991) "identity of marked accusative and dative… is a frequent and widespread morphological pattern all over the world". The traditional approach to this identity is to postulate a low-level morphological syncretism (recently Barany 2018). However Torrego (2010), Manzini and Franco (2016) propose the stronger conclusion that DOM arguments are syntactically embedded as datives.

Framework. The structure of a ditransitive verb containing a goal dative is fairly uncontroversially as in (2). Note that *contra* Manzini and Franco (2016), Manzini and Savoia (2017) implicitly concede that dative clitics are exponents of Appl (Cuervo 2003).

(2) a. a iddu di nni ðɔgu ðui *Corsican*
to him 3DAT of.them I.give two
'I give two to him'
b. [TP T [vP *pro v* [ApplP *di* [VP *ðɔgu ðui*] *a iddu*]]

Next, in the tradition of studies initiated by Hale and Keyser (1993), a transitive verb decomposes into a causative elementary predicate represented by *v* and a nominal component. Thus *to call your sister* as in (1b) is essentially *to make/give a call to your sister.* In this perspective, finding the high ranked object *your sister* in the dative is the normally expected state of affairs, along the lines of (3a). In turn, the transitive predicate *call* is obtained via the incorporation of the resultative nominal into the causative or other transitivizing *v* predicate. The accusative (*v*) case of low ranked objects, e.g *a dog*, reflects the incorporated representation of the predicate, as in (3b).

(3) a. [TP T [vP *pro v* [Appl [√P *camm-*] *a zɔ fratelli*]]]
b. [TP T [vP *pro v* [VP *cammani un kane*]]]

In order for the account of DOM to be complete, we also need to explain why it is high ranked referents that are matched to the Appl structure in (3). A stream of literature concerned with the PCC (Person Case Constraint) associates the dative/applicative position with person/participant features (Anagnostopoulou 2005), or more recently, with point of view/perspective properties (Pancheva and Zubizarreta 2017), as schematized in (4). The reason why high ranked referents are lodged in Appl is then as simple as the fact that they are viewpoints/perspectival centers.

(4) [ApplP DP [Appl Dat viewpoint/perspective

Ledgeway et al (2019) propose that DOM objects have a [person] feature checked with *v*, while bare objects do not. The basic intuition seems compatible with that developed here in terms of Appl and viewpoint/perspective properties, though Ledgeway et al do not discuss the present model.

Research question. Scholars working in different frameworks (Bossong 1991, Barany 2018) deem structures like (3) untenable for empirical reasons. The overall argument is that the model predicts DOM to have the same syntactic behavior as datives – which happens not to be true, specifically with respect to passive (i.e. transitivity). The answer by Manzini and Franco (2016) is that these empirical contrasts follow from a single crucial difference, namely that a goal dative (benefactive, etc.) is an inherent oblique in the sense of Chomsky (1986), but a DOM dative is not. In this presentation we consider another objection, concerning the pronominalization patterns of DOM and dative.

Pronominalization data. In standard Spanish, DOM objects are pronominalized and eventually doubled by an accusative clitic, as in (5). This seems to imply that the *a* phrase is an underlying accusative, and to exclude that it is an underlying oblique/applicative.

(5) Lo vio (a el) *Spanish*
him he.saw DOM him

Nevertheless, in Spanish *leista* dialects, DOM objects are pronominalized/doubled by the

dative clitic, as in (6). This pattern provides *prima facie* evidence in favour of the present view, that DOM and inherent datives have the same structure of embedding.

(6) Le vi (al niño) *Spanish, Basque Dialect*
to.him I.saw DOM the boy

Before turning to pronominalization in Italian varieties with DOM, we sketch the parameter responsible for Spanish (5)-(6).

Core account. [P DP] structures involving elementary case prepositions such as *of, to* have long being held to be ambiguous between PP and DP status (e.g. Selkirk's (1977) account of pseudopartitives). Therefore, we suggest that DOM objects of the form [*a* DP] can be labelled as either DPs or PPs. When labelled PP, DOM objects are doubled by a dative, i.e. Appl, clitic, as in (7b). When labelled DP, DOM objects are doubled by a D accusative clitic, as in (7a). Note that since the accusative clitic depends on the presence of the *v* transitivizing head, we assume that it is merged under *v* (see Roberts 2010 for a movement account).

(7) a. [$_{vP}$ [$_{D}$ *lo*] [$_{ApplP}$ [$_{VP}$ *vio*] [$_{DP}$ *a el*]]] cf. (5)
b. [$_{ApplP}$ [$_{Appl}$ *le*] [$_{VP}$ *vi*] [$_{PP}$ *al niño*]] cf (6)

Crucially, goal datives must project as PP in Spanish. This is because the PP is part of the lexically selected thematic frame of the verb and cannot be tampered with.

Italian varieties. Finally, we turn to a pattern of pronominalization robustly attested in Italian varieties (South Italian, Corsican, Sardinian, Manzini and Savoia 2005). Under it, both DOM objects (passivizable) and goal datives (non passivizable) correspond to accusative clitics, as in (8). Both clitics trigger perfect participle agreement.

(8) a. (að iɖu/iɖa/iɖi) l aɟu parlatu/parlata/parlati *Corsican*
to him/her/them 3ACC I.have spoken-MSG/FSG/PL
b. (að iɖu/iɖa/iɖi) l aɟu wistu/wista/wisti
DOM him/her/them 3ACC I.have seen-MSG/FSG/PL

The pronominalization of the DOM object by the accusative clitic in (8b) can be accounted for as in Spanish. The same structure seems to be involved in the pronominalization of the inherent dative, as in (9). This means that unlike in Spanish, PP is not part of the lexically selected thematic frame of the verb.

(9) [$_{vP}$ [$_{D}$ *l*] [$_{ApplP}$ [$_{VP}$ *parlatu/wistu*] [$_{DP}$ *að iɖu*]]] cf. (8)

The analysis is confirmed by a set of progressive South Italian dialects with the pronominalization pattern in (8), which display transitive-like behaviors for instance under passive (Pineda 2014).

Theoretical extensions. From a theoretical point of view, the question is what kind of labelling algorithm allows either DP or PP to project. We discuss this as time allows. We adopt the approach of Cecchetto and Donati (2015), namely that "the label of a syntactic object {α, β} is the feature(s) that act(s) as a probe for the merging operation creating {α, β}". Importantly, for them First Merge also depends on probing (selection etc.). Consider then (7). The preposition *a* is an elementary predicate, endowed with a general relator content, which as such requires the satisfaction of two argument places. P probes DP, in the sense that P holds the open argument place and DP the properties that satisfy it. Thus labelling of the P-DP constituent as PP is a possible outcome, as in (7b). On the other hand, the DP requires visibility/case. This may be construed as a case feature of DP that is valued as dative when DP saturates the argument place of *a*. In this instance, it is the case feature of DP that probes for P, leading to the projection of DP, as in (7a).

Selected references. Bárány A. 2018. DOM and dative case. *Glossa* 3(1): 97. 1-40 – Cecchetto C. & Donati C. 2015. *(Re)labeling*. The MIT Press – Ledgeway A. et al. 2019. Differential Object Marking and the properties of D in the dialects of the extreme south of Italy. *Glossa* 4(1): 51. 1-25 – Manzini M. R. & Franco L. 2016. Goal and DOM datives. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 34, 197-240 – Manzini M. R. & Savoia, L. M. 2017. Enclisis/Proclisis Alternations in Romance: Allomorphies and (Re)Ordering. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 115, 98-136 – Pancheva R. & Zubizarreta M.-L. 2017. The Person Case Constraint. The syntactic encoding of perspective. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* – Pineda A. 2014. *(In)transitivity borders. A study of applicatives in Romance languages and Basque*. PhD Dissertation, Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona – Torrego E. 2010. Variability in the case patterns of causative formation in Romance and its implications. *Linguistic Inquiry* 41, 445–470.