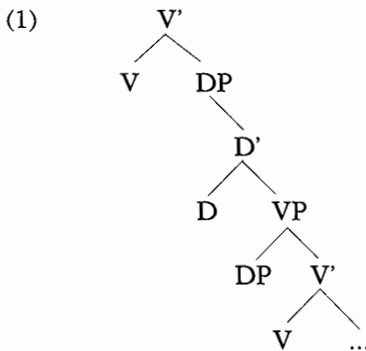# On the Nature of Clitic Doubling

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0. Introduction.

In this article, I present a view of clitic-doubling rooted in the selection of a functional head by light verb. Following Hale and Keyser (1991), I assume that the arguments of certain verbs (or perhaps all) are organized whitin a Larsonian type of VP-shell in a binary branching X-bar theory, along the lines of Kayne (1983).[1] The leading idea is that light verbs may select, not just for a V, as it is commonly assumed, but for a functional head, a kind of Infl, which I represent as a D below:

(1)

```
         V'
        / \
       V   DP
            \
            D'
           / \
          D   VP
             / \
           DP   V'
               / \
              V   ...
```

Intervening between the higher and the lower verb there is a DP whose head I assume is the accusative clitic of the Spanish example below:

(2)   Lo empujaron a Juan.
       him-pushed to John
       'They pushed John'

(1) Unlike in Larson's (1988) proposal, I assume that the verb that heads the higher VP-shell has morphological features, rather than being empty. An attempt to relate some aspects of Pesetsky's (1993) theory of layered structures to the claims of this article is made in work in progress.

The accusative clitic corresponds to the functional Head D. The lexical DP, which appears with the dative Preposition ('to'), is the argumental object. Morphologically, the accusative clitic and its double are in the same gender, person, and number. Semantically, they are interpreted as one single argument. For the time being, I assume that the object is in the Specifier of the lower VP. See footnote 9.

In the seventies and eighties, the clitic-doubling phenomenon received a great amount of attention. The following are examples involving clitic-doubling of a direct object in: (a) Lebanese Arabic, (b) Romanian, (c) Albanian, (d) Macedonian, and (e) Modern Greek:[2]

(3)　a.　sefit-o la karim.　　　　　　　　　(Lebanese Arabic)
　　　　　saw-she-him (to Karin)
　　　　　'She saw Karin'
　　　b.　l-am　　　vazut pe Popescu.　　　　(Romanian)
　　　　　him-have-I seen　to Popescu
　　　　　'I have seen Popescu'
　　　c.　Agini e pa Sokolin.　　　　　　　　(Albanian)
　　　　　Agin-def cl see Sokol-def
　　　　　'Agim saw Sokol'
　　　d.　Go vide tatka si.　　　　　　　　　(Macedonian)
　　　　　him he-saw father to-self
　　　　　'He saw his father'
　　　e.　o Yanis ton idhe ton Kosta.　　　　(Modern Greek)
　　　　　DET Yanis him-saw DET Kosta
　　　　　'Yanis saw Kosta'

The sketched approach to clitic-doubling has a number of straightforward implications which I list below:

First, the clitic of a clitic-doubling configuration must be a non-argument, and the double must be an argument. Therefore, in examples such as (3), the XP that is thematically related to the verb is the lexical DP, not the clitic.[3]

Second, in syntactic contexts such as in (4) below in which the functional category D (the clitic) is selected but it does not appear overtly, an argumental null pronominal must be postulated:

(4)　Lo empujaron pro.
　　　him-pushed pro
　　　'They pushed him'

Third, the functional Head selected by the light verb (the clitic) does not have to

---

(3) This result is in agreement with the behavior of clitic-doubling structures with respect to Binding Theory. It has been argued by Aoun (1985) and, far more extensively, by Varela (1988) that the element subject to Binding Theory is the double instead of the clitic.

appear overtly. For clitic-doubling contexts such as (5) below, a null clitic must be part of the structure:

>   (5)   Empujaron a Juan.
>   pushed to Juan
>   'They pushed Juan'

Factually, there is cross-linguistic variation concerning the overt expression of an accusative clitic in non-dislocated contexts with non-pronominal and non-anaphoric objects. To my knowledge, the main variables controlling the phenomenon in all clitic-doubling languages are the definiteness of the object and its pronominal vs its non-pronominal nature. Here I will ignore these variables, unless they become relevant in the course of the discussion.[4]

Next I turn to discuss what verbs and in what contexts select for the functional category that I argue surfaces as the clitic of clitic-doubling structures.

1. Transitive Verbs that Select D.

The tye of transitive verbs that select D can be found by looking at the Case-marking of the object. Descriptively speaking, D only appears with "specific" animate objects.

To facilitate the presentation, below I provide a summary of the data in my ms in progress that lead to this conclusion:[5]

>   (6)   *Transitive Accusatives*
>
>   With: Agentive Subject   Experiencer Subject
>   DIRECT OBJECTS   DIRECT OBJECTS
>
>   definite   indefinite   definite   indefinite
>
>   Dative P: obligatory   obligatory   optional

1.1. The Agent/Theme (or Patient) Class

Within the eventive class of transitive accusative verbs, two main sub-clasees can be distinguished: (a) the 'see'-class; (b) the 'push'-class. Here I will only discuss the empirical evidence that separates the two: non-specific indefinites. An indefinite object can appear with the dative Preposition: (a) optionally with the 'see'-class of verbs; (b) obligatorily with the 'push'-class of verbs. We should point out however that this distinction holds only for "animates", as we will see in section 2.1.1:

>   (7)   a. Empujaron (*a) una niña.   b. Vieron/besaron (a) una niña.
>   pushed to the girl   her-saw/kissed (to) the girl
>   'They pushed the girl'   'They saw/kissed a girl'

In (7a), the dative Preposition occurs obligatorily with the object, whereas in

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(4) I examine the least central issues of doubling in my manuscript in progress.

(5) I ommit the animacy variable from the graph, and proper names. There is one other case missing from (6). This case is too complex to explain here and irrelevant for the purposes of this article.

(7b) the Preposition is optional. Since the presence of the Preposition signals a hidden D, we can infer from these data that verbs such as 'push' (or 'hit') have an underlying light verb which in some languages selects D obligatorily. Verbs of the 'see'-class, however, have a choice.

Once this premise is established, let us look more closely at the apparent optionality of the dative Preposition with verbs of the 'see'-class. Upon closer inspection we realize that there is a difference in meaning whenever the object of these verbs come accompanied by the Preposition. More concretely, the subject receives a different interpretation depending on whether D is selected or not. If the dative P appears on the object, the subject of the clause has a more agentive meaning than otherwise.

Observe the following contrast involving the verb 'hide', which belongs to the same class as 'see' (cf. *La familia escondió (a) un prisionero* 'The family hided a prisioner':

(8)   a.   Esta montaña esconde prisioneros de guerra.
            this montain hides war prisioners
       b.   *Esta montaña esconde a prisioneros de guerra.
            this montain hides to war prisioners
            'This montain hides war prisioners'
       (cf. Alguna gente esconde a prisioneros de guerra
            Lit., some people hides to war prisioners)

As we see in these examples from Spanish, a non-agentive subject with *esconder* ('hide') is precluded when the object is preceded by the dative Preposition (8b). In other words, the presence of the dative P on the object makes the sentence an action. An action needs an agentive subject. Since the subject of (8b) cannot be agentive for lexical reasons, (8b) is excluded.

The existence of two types of readings with 'hide' and similar verbs is argued for by Jackendoff (1990) for English. According to Jackendoff, 'hide' alternates between a State and an Event readings. As illustrated in (8), this holds true in Spanish also. In Spanish, the presence of the dative Preposition on the object forces the Event reading of this verb. Since the Event reading of the verb correlates with an agentive subject, (8b) is impossible.

Jackendoff suggests that the difference in the two readings of 'hide' must be encoded in lexical entries. I take the position that each reading of 'hide' correlates with a different light verb. It is the light verb that gives rise to the Event reading the one that selects for a special Infl, the clitic, and not "the flexibility" of —in this case— 'hide'.

The sketched approach makes one prediction with respect to the selection properties of verbs like 'hide' and 'see'. Both of these verbs select for stage-level small clauses. Since the Event reading of these verbs describes a change that culminates in the State reading, the small clause will force the Event reading of the verb. In this case, in clitic-doubling languages, the light verb corresponding to the event reading will select for the clitic. As shown below, this prediction is borne out:

(9)   a. Alli vieron una mujer muerta.
          there (they) saw a dead woman
          'There they saw a dead woman'
      b. Alli vieron a una mujer muerta.
          there (they) saw to a woman dead
          'There they saw a woman dead'

The examples in (9) differ in interpretation. As suggested by the glosses, the object of *ver* ('see'), which has the dative Preposition, can be clausal only in (9b).

We see then, that depending on whether verbs like 'hide' or 'see' have one or the other light verb, the Event reading emerges or not. Light verbs which are eventive (presumably, verbs close to 'get', 'give', etc.) select for a special infl in some languages, the clitic. From this point of viex, direct objects associated to accusative clitics are event participants in a subordinate VP-shell with a special form of case.[6] This result recalls the morphological Case-marking of subjects and objects interpreted as "specific" in a variety of languages.[7]

In sum, the selection of light verbs is not the same across languages; it is parametrizable.

1.1. The Experiencer/Theme Class

There is another class of transitive accusative verbs which, like eventive verbs, take a special Infl but these verbs are stative. Verbs such as 'know' and 'love' are in this class:

(10) a. Juan conce *(a) una bailarina.   b. Juan la conoce a ella.
          John knows (to) a dancer   Juan her-knows to her

(11) a. Juan ama *(a) una bailarina.   b. Juan la ama a ella.
          John loves (to) a dancer   Juan her-loves to her

The clitic-doubling facts in (10) and (11) do not differ from those of eventive verbs.

A similar situation arises with both *considerar* 'consider' and *tener* ('have' with possessive meaning). These two verbs select for a special Infl (the clitic) with small clauses:

(12) Pedro considera un genio *(a) un violinista.
      Pedro considers a genious (to) a violinist

The subject of the predicate embedded under *considerar* receives the Case assoc-

---

(6) Massey (1991) notes that verbs of the class that I am arguing obligatorily select D, are expressed in Japanese by the light verb *suru*. She classifies them as the 'DO-TO' class. It is quite common for these verbs to have paraphrases with light verbs in Spanish: *empujar / dar un empujón*; *golpear / dar un golpe*; *asustar* (in its agentive meaning), *dar un susto*, and so on. The same happens with *echar: echar la culpa*. A detailed discussion of the syntactic and semantic issues involving classes of transitive verbs is provided in my ms in progress.

(7) It is a well-known fact that there are semantic distinctions such as Carlson's (1977) classification of stage-level predicates and individual-level predicates, which have syntactic effects in some languages. See Kuroda (1972, 1992); Higginbotham (1985); Diesing (1992); Kratzer (1989) and Raposo and Uriagereka (1993), among others. Other semantic distinctions (whatever the label is) can be marked syntactically by the grammar. We seen to be dealing here with one of them.

iated to a hidden D. This verb, like *judge*, might be considered eventive, but it is less clear than in the previous cases.

Stative *tener* ('have') can take a small clause, with its subject marked by the dative Preposition:[8]

(13)   a.   Tienen (*a) un hijo.   b.   Tienen (a) un hijo en el hospital.
              pro have (to) my son   pro have (to) a son in the hospital
              'They have a son'   'They have a son in the hospital'

What the verbs in this subsection have in common is that they all take an Experiencer as subject and a Theme (or a Patient) as object.[9]

It appears then that there are two classes of accusative verbs which, in terms of the proposals of this article, have an underlying light verb that selects for a special Infl in Spanish: (a) verbs that an Agent and a Theme (or a Patient); and (b) verbs that take an Experiencer and a Theme (or an Patient).[10] I will leave this generalization in this descriptive stage.

1.1.2 *On the Animacy Variable*

One of the possible variables restricting clitic-doubling cross-linguistically is animacy. Spanish and Macedonian contrast along this dimension. In Spanish, only Nouns which can be "actors" in virtue of their inherent lexical content can cooccur with the clitic:

(14)   a.   *(La) empujaron la mesa.   b.   (La) empujaron a la niña.
              (it)-pushed the table   (it) pushed to the girl
              'They pushed the table'   ¨'They pushed the girl'

Although the verb is the same in (14a) and (14b), only the animate clitic of (14b) can be appear doubled. This does not hold in Macedonian, where non-animates also appear with a clitic (cf. *skrsi ja casa-ta* (break it the glass 'Break the glass').[11]

Animacy also restricts the overt-case marking of objects in Hindi. It appears, then, that the special form of Case that singles out objects in Spanish correlates with

(8) Independently of any other consideration, D could not surface as a pronominal clitic with the object of *tener* if this verb were to be the lexicalization of 'be' and a selected D, as proposed by Kayne (1993) for possessive *have* in English. Kayne assigns the following structure to possessive *have*: *be* [[D/P] [possessive]]', where the possessive DP raises to the matrix Infl for case reasons. Incorporation of the D/P 'to be will preclude the surface realization of D. The behavior of *tener* with small clauses is compatible with this alternative, since *tener* selects one more predicate.

(9) With this class of verbs, it ceases to be an advantage of the system to have the overtly Case-marked object in the Specifier of the lower VP-shell. In the case of eventive verbs, this makes more sense, particularly in the case of the objects of the 'push'-class of verbs, which is affected (see Tenny 1987). Marantz (1990) generates affected objects exactly in this position. This issue needs further investigation, specially in light of Pesetsky-s (1993) Cascade theory.

(10) This comes close to the description that traditional grammarians of Spanish use to make of the marker *a*. They took a functional approach and observed that the marker is used when either of the two arguments of the verb could be taken as holding the grammatical relation of subject and object. The ambiguity is possible when both arguments appear postverbally, as in:

(i)   persigue el gato el raton.
      chases the cat the mouse 'The cat chases the mouse' or 'The mouse chases the cat'

Agents and Experiencers share with Patients the fact that they are potential actors.

(11) For the purposes of this presentation, I refer to animates and inanimates. But 'animacy' is not the correct notion to characterize the nominals that can be clitic-doubled in Spanish. Either 'participant', or Jackendoff's (1983) notion of [actor] seems to be more adequate. I discuss this issue in more in depth in my ms in progress.

the Inf. selected by light verbs and may surface as a clitic. In Hindi, on the other hand, the special Case of animates seem to correlate with object-AGR (see Mahajan 1990a, 1990b).

It may seem that animacy and specificity are entirely unrelated. However, why, then, only direct objects which are semantically "specific" get this special Inflection? I would like to propose that animacy is to be encoded as a morphological feature in the definite determiner. The basic idea is to make "animacy" dependent on D:

(15)   D
                 |
          P(articipant)
                 |
          Oblique
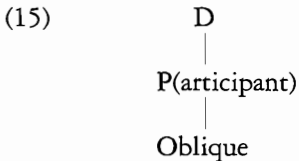
The parametric variation with respect to animacy can be seen as reflecting different choices in the features of D.

The animacy restriction that holds of clitic-doubling in Spanish and similar languages creates a split in the status of clitics with respect to theta and movement theory.

Everything else being equal, the argument status of clitics in Spanish will differ according to whether they are the expression of the functional category selected by the light verb, or they are the actual complement of V. Thus, in the minimal pair in (14) below, the clitic is an argument in (16a), and a non-argument in (16b):

(16)   a. La empujaron (= la mesa).   b. La empujaron (= a la niña).
           it-pushed   (the table)   her-pushed   (to the girl)
           'They pushed the table'   'They pushed her'

Similary, we expect that non-argumental clitics will move as Heads from the beginning, whereas clitics which are arguments, could, in principle, move as XPs, in whatever manner clitics move in non-clitic-doubling languages.

1.2. On Ditransitive Verbs

So far only single transitive verbs have been discussed. This section will look at the state of affairs presented by ditransitive verbs.

Despite the cross-linguistic similarities that can be observed in the examples of (3), languages differ with respect to the complements that enter into clitic-doubling. Both direct and indirect objects can appear doubled by a clitic in present-day Spanish. This is shown in (17) below:

(17)   Se la presentaron (a ella) (al profesor).
       him-her-introduced (to her) (to the professor)
       'They introduced her to the professor'

The view of clitic-doubling put forward here requires to posit two light verbs underlying the representation of verbs such as *presentar* ('introduce').

But ditransitive verbs do not behave uniformly with respect to clitic-doubling. Strozer (1976) shows that the particular verb involved and the realization of each of its objects crucially matters.

1.2.1 *How Many Ds per Verb?*

With a slight marginality, some ditransitives allow two *a*-objects with no overt clitic; however, others do not:

(18)   a.   Presentamos a Juan al profesor.
            introduced to Juan to the teacher
            'We introduced Juan to the teacher'
       b.   Describimos a Juan (*al profesor).
            described to Juan (to the teacher)
            'We described Juan (to the teacher)'

As shown, the verb *presentar* 'introduce' can take two *a*-objects whereas *describir* 'describe' cannot.[12]

Similarly, with a slight marginality, the verb *presentar* 'introduce' allows direct object to be realized as a clitic and the indirect object with no overt clitic; however, this combination yields ill-formedness with *describir* 'describe':

(19)   a.   Lo presenté al editor.   b.   *Lo describí al editor.
            him-introduced to the editor   him-described to the editor
            'I introduced him to the editor'   'I described him to the editor'

The contrast shown in (19) suggests a difference in the underlying representation of each of these verbs.

Let us suppose that the underlying representation of *presentar* ('introduce') contrary to that of *describir* ('describe') allows for two (rather than one) light verbs each of which may select D:

(20)

```
                    V'
                   /  \
                 V1    DP
                         \
                          D'
                         /  \
                       D1    VP
                            /   \
                         P-DP    V'
                        a Juan  /  \
                              V2    DP
                                      \
                                       D'
                                      /  \
                                    D2    VP
                                         /   \
                                      P-DP    V'
                                 a su profesor  /  \
                                              V3    ...Presentó a Juan a su profesor
```

---

(12) I thank I. Bosque and C. Piera (p.c.) for pointing out this contrast to me.

This assumption makes the prediction that *presentar* ('introduce') should permit doubling of both objects in the same sentence and *describir* 'describe' only one. This prediction is boned out. As pointed out to me by I. Laka (p.c.), the following contrast holds:

    (21)   a. Se los presenté (a ellos) (al editor).
               to him-them-introduced (to them) (to the editor)
               'I introduced them to the editor'
         b. Se los describí (*a ellos) (al editor).
               too him-them (to them) (to the editor)
               'I described them to the editor'

As shown here, with *presentar* both of its objects can be doubled by a clitic, whereas with *describir* only the indirect object can.

I have not yet provided syntactic evidence in favor of the postulated functional Head associated to dative objects. I will do so in the next section.

2. On the Syntactic Effects of D

In Chomsky's (1992, 1993) theory, both the subject and the object move from within the VP to a Spec of an AGRP projection for Case and agreement feature checking. Feature checking must occur in the checking domain of the relevant Head. Strong features are visible at PF. Visible unchecked features are not interpretable at the interface levels of PF and LF. Therefore, strong features must be checked by Spell-Out, whereas weak features need not be checked until LF.

In the spirit of current work by Chomsky and others on AGR, I will assume that once D checks its features, its trace deletes and its D-projection is no longer visible. As a result, the D selected by light verbs will play no direct role at LF.

Let me first make explicit my basic assumptions about overtly case-marked objects.
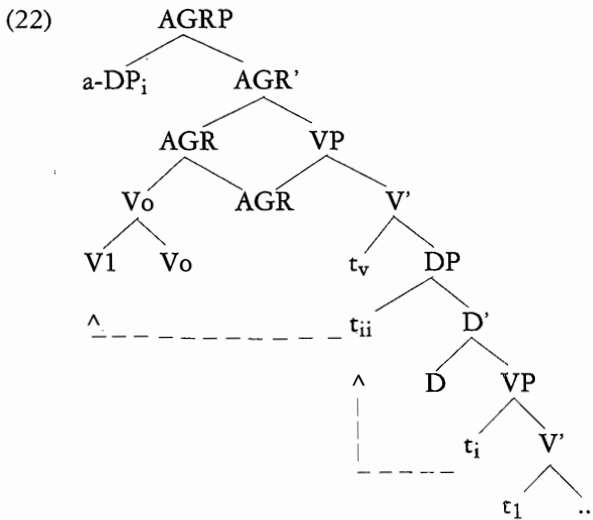
2.1. Case checking of Dative Objects

A natural assumption is that the strengh of the agreement features of the selected D vary depending on whether or not D appears overtly in the accusative. If D is realized as *lo* (ACCUS.), I assume that D has strong agreement features. If D is non-overt, I assume that it has weak agreement features. In either case, D has agreement features (Ferguson 1993). It is important to note that definite objects come with an overt accusative clitic in some dialects, and that indefinites do not (cf. *(los) escondieron a los prisioneros* 'They hided the prisoners' vs *(*los) escondieron a unos prisioneros* 'They hided some prisioners'). The strengh of the morphological features of the DP argument determines the kind of agreement in each instance: strong agreement features require an overt D (*lo(s)/la(s)*), and weak agreement features involve a null D.

The selection of D entails one specific form of Case realization: the dative. If D is selected, the direct object appears in the dative. If D is not selected, the object appears in the regular accusative.

Here it becomes important to view the dative Preposition as a Case-feature on the object. I assume that the dative Preposition in Romance is not a true Preposition, but the spelling out of a Case-feature.[13] Note that if direct objects in the dative are DPs, in the appropriate configuration, we expect to find a Past Participle agreeing overtly with an a-DP; this case is attested in small clauses such as: *tienen a los soldados castigad(*os)* (Lit. 'they have to the soldiers punished'). I assume that this instance of agreement is mediated by an AGRP, along the lines of Kayne (1985).[15]

I make the assumption that the dative Case-feature manifested by the Preposition of direct objects in checked against V, since V, and not D, ultimately supplies the accusative Case. This amounts to claiming that accusative in Spanish can be strong or weak. Strong accusative is manifested by the dative Preposition.[15]

There are different ways of achieving feature checking of objects with the dative Preposition. In principle, the dative object could raise to AGR-o via the Specifier of the DP-projection. Here it will check the nominal features of the Head D in a Spec-Head agreement relation.[16] Then it will proceed to the Specifier of AGR-o to check its Case:

(22)

AGRP
├── a-DP$_i$
└── AGR'
    ├── AGR
    │   ├── Vo
    │   │   ├── V1
    │   │   └── Vo
    │   │   └── ^
    │   └── AGR
    └── VP
        ├── t$_v$
        │   └── t$_{ii}$
        │   └── ^
        └── V'
            └── DP
                ├── t$_{ii}$
                └── D'
                    ├── D
                    │   └── t$_i$
                    └── VP
                        ├── t$_i$
                        └── V'
                            └── t$_1$ ...

The second option is that null D moves and adjoins to V (Baker 1988); (adjunction is a standard form of formal licensing for null elements); then, the dative object will raise to the Spec of AGR-o directly:

(13) Thanks to R. Kayne (p.c.) for helping me clarify this point. Despite the fact that animate indefinites can appear as objects in the configuration in (1), their interpretation is constrained by specificity in Spanish (Enc 1991 and Diesing 1993).

(14) This statement does not imply that there is no difference in the syntactic behavior of dative complements in Romance, direct and indirect objects. Although indirect objects in Romance behave like DPs rather than like PPs for Binding (see Rizzi 1988 and Branchadell 1992), they act differently in many other respects. See Kayne (1984) and Emonds (1985).

(15) For relevant discussion about the nature of the dative P in Romance see Emonds (1985).

(16) The idea that D mediates in the Case relation between V and its direct object finds support in the fact that the clitic and the argument have to match in animacy, gender, number and person: Hurtado's (1980, 1981) and Suñer's (1988) Matching Hypothesis.

(23)

```
                    AGRP
             _____
         a-DPᵢ                AGR'
                        _____
                      AGR              VP
                   _____       _____
                 Vo     AGR      V'
               _____          _____
             Vo     D         to      DP
           _____                   _____
          V1    Vo                  D'
                               _____
                             t_d       VP
                                    _____
                                   t       V'
                                        _____
                                      t1    ...
```
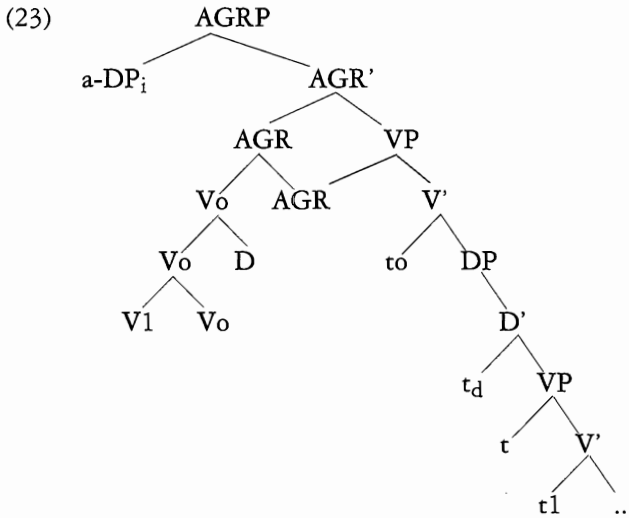
I believe each of these derivations is instantiated in the grammar in different contexts. The former when D surfaces in the accusative; the latter when D is null. There is a great amount of dialectal variation in this area. Such variation will reflect different choices of the grammar concerning the strengh of morphological features, and subsequent differences in their checking.

What is important for my purposes here is that: (a) accusative clitics bear strong agreement features, and that (b) the dative Case of accusatives is checked by the verb.

The syntactic system gives us the Case-properties of one dative object with no problem. However, we have seen that when a verb takes more than one dative object, the data can get fairly complex.

I want to outline the main tenets of my approach vis a vis one particular case which does not require much data. It deals with combinations of a non-animate accusative clitic and a lexically realized indirect object. Such combination yields ill-formedness with all verbs in Spanish, and was noted by Strozer (1976). Morphology cannot be responsible for the exclusion of such combination because their analogue in Italian is well-formed.

2.1. The Case Split with Mixed Arguments

Examine (24):

(24)   *Lo entregué a los alumnos.
       it-gave to the students
       'I gave it to the students'

Although sentence (24) is ungrammatical with *lo* interpreted as a non-person clitic (*lo* = *el articulo*), (25) below is well-formed:

(25)   Lo entregué (lo = el articulo).
       it-gave (it = the article)
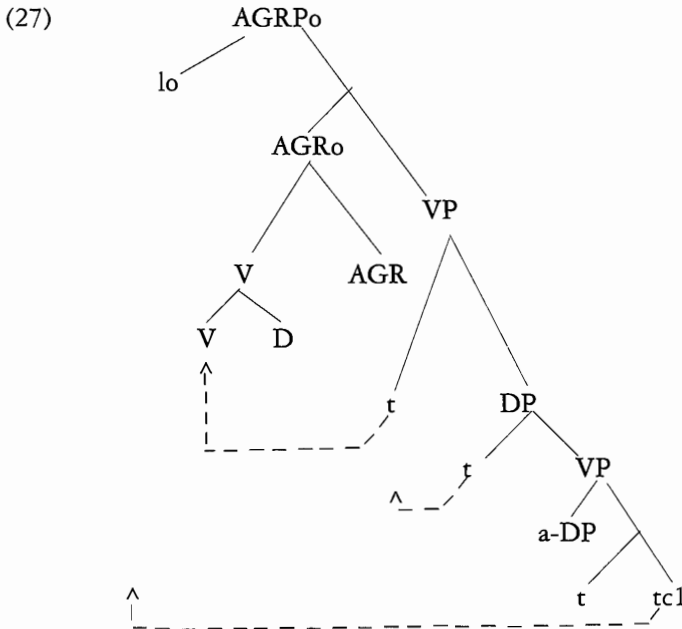   'I gave it to the students'

Note, also, that (26) is unproblematic:

(26)   Entregué el artículo a los alumnos.
       it-gave the article to the students
       'I gave the article to the students'

These data establish that it is the combination of a lexically realized indirect object (with no clitic) and the accusative third person clitic, that is potentially in conflict.

There is a key fact that must be bore in mind. Clitic-doubling in Spanish is attested with *all* objects in the dative. In the syntax, this translates as there being a D, null or overt, for each dative object. Everything hinges in the postulated D.

Suppose that the argumental clitic crosses to AGR-o over DP. This is possible when D moves and ajoins to V. In this derivation, the Specifier of the intervening functional projection DP and the Specifier of AGR-o are equidistant, once V raises to AGR-o:

(27)

```
                AGRPo
              /
          lo
                \
              AGRo
             /    \
            /      \
           /        VP
          V    AGR  /
         / \       /
        V   D     /
        ^        /    DP
        |       t    /  \
        |          t    VP
        └──────┘  ^_/  /  \
                   a-DP    \
        ^                t   tcl
        └────────────────────┘
```

Since V carries along the agreement features of the incorporated D, it is reasonable to suppose that they are checked by AGR. If so, the clitic will be able to check accusative Case, but not its agreement features. If left unchecked, the agreement features of the accusative clitic will be visible at the interface levels of PF and LF, causing the derivation to crash.

It is crucial that the accusative clitic has strong agreement features. This, I assume, is responsible for the grammaticality contrast between (24) and (26):

(24)   *Lo entregué a los alumnos.   (26)   Entregué el artículo a los alumnos.
       it-gave to the students   it-gave the article to the students
       'I gave it to the students'   'I gave the article to the students'

Unlike the accusative clitic D, there is no reason to assume that the direct object in (26) has strong agreement features.[17]

It is quite telling that the accusative non-animate clitic and the lexical dative in (24) are wrongly understood as if they were one and the same argument. This interpretation corresponds to the derivation of an instance of clitic doubling of accusatives. In essence, the clitic *lo* is the functional Head D, and the lexical dative is the argument that checks its Case against the accusative clitic:

(28)   INFL...[...V [*a*-DP   [lo]   [t [V ...]]]]
            VP   DP   D'   VP
                              ^_ _ _ _ _ /

Two kinds of evidence support the sketched analysis. One is that the ungrammaticality of (24) vanishes if the choice of the clitic is not a D (*lo*) but *me/nos*, a first person clitic singular or plural, or *te/os*, a second person clitic singular or plural:

(29)   me/te entregué a los alumnos.
       me/you-gave to the students
       'I gave myself/you to the students'

One difference between first/second person clitics and third is that only the former class exhibits person-feature. In the syntax, this can have an important effect: first and second person clitics "license" 'pro' (Borer 1984). However, *lo* (Ds) will not license 'pro'. We can now hypothesize that 'pro' has weak agreement features. Under these assumptions, the only pronominal element that is compatible with the functional Head D in derivation (28) will be 'pro'. In this account, (30) and (24) share the fact that their objects have weak agreement features; hence, they do not have to be checked before LF.

Further evidence in support of this approach comes from dative clitics. To put the matter in simple terms: A dative clitic turns any combination of accusative clitic and lexical dative well-formed:[19]

(30)   (*Se) lo presenté (a los alumnos).
       (to them)-it-introduced (to the students)

The dative clitic, which in (30) is realized as *se*, appears doubling the indirect object *a los alumnos*. Note that, here, the accusative clitic *lo*, a D with strong features, causes no problem. The saving role of the dative clitic is valid for all verbs, regardless of their lexical class.

There is a crucial morphological diference between the dative clitic *le(s)* and the accusative clitic *lo(s)/la(s)* (masculine and feminine in the singular and plural, respectively: the dative clitic has weak agreement features.[20] If instead of a null D, D is

(17) I have placed the accusative clitic lower than the lexical dative, but this is not crucial for the analysis. What is important is that the accusative clitic be lower than the functional projection DP.

(18) In dialects which allow clitics to double accusatives (as in R(iver) P(late) S(panish)) these examples are good under this reading.

(19) The Spanish clitic *se* is the form that corresponds to the dative clitic *le* in combination with a third person accusative clitic. See Bonet (1992).

(20) Whereas accusative clitics manifest gender overtly, the dative clitic does not. In addition, there are dialects in which a singular form of the dative clitic can cooccur with a lexical object in the plural.

realized overtly in the dative, the cause of ungrammaticality of derivation (28) ceases to exist. There is no functional Head D that interferes with the checking of the agreement features of the accusative clitic *lo*.

I neglect to discuss a number of other effects having to do with dative clitics. The arguments that led me to conclude the assumptions presented here form a body of independent research. Let me just anticipate that there is a Default D which supplies dative case to a dative object, namely the clitic *le*; and that this clitic plays a crucial role throught the grammar.

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