

OBJECT CLITICS IN SPANISH AND CATALAN

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This paper studies the properties of object pronominal clitics in Spanish and Catalan and shows that they behave very differently in several ways. Contrary to what is generally assumed, we propose that direct object clitics and indirect object clitics are two different kinds of functional categories: the direct object is considered a DP generated in an A-position, and the indirect object clitic is analyzed as a functional category with Person features that acts as a sort of dative marker rather than as an element in an A-position. This analysis covers the main properties of each clitic and it is free from the main problems that usually affect previous hypotheses.

1. Introduction

Within the Government and Binding framework, several proposals have been made to explain the nature and behaviour of pronominal clitics in Romance languages. From the syntactic point of view, this discussion can be reduced to the following three hypotheses, very briefly reviewed: the 'Movement Hypothesis', that assumes that the clitic is generated in an A position and that it moves towards the functional head occupied by the verb (see Kayne (1975, 1991)); the 'Affix Hypothesis', that suggests that the clitic is base-generated next to the verbal form (see Jaeggli (1982, 1986) and Borer (1983)); and the 'AGR Hypothesis', that puts forward that pronominal clitics and subject agreement morphemes are the same kind of element and that both head an AGRP (see Suñer (1988) and Fernández Soriano (1989)).

No matter what hypothesis on clitics we adopt, IO and DO clitics are usually analyzed as if they were entirely equivalent. Although there is no doubt that these elements have a lot of things in common, it is also true that in some languages they do not behave exactly alike. When noted, these differences have been usually attributed to a lexical feature or to a very idiosyncratic

property of one of the clitics (see Suñer (1988)) or to the properties of the argument that it represents (see Jaeggli (1986)), but never to the possibility of having a different status for each clitic. The only exception is Torrego (1990), who tries to account for some differences between Castilian and American Spanish in terms of a distinction between the two object clitics.¹

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 is devoted to the study of object clitics in Spanish and Catalan. We will see that IO clitics differ from DO clitics in several ways and that, although they share some properties, it is possible to attribute a different status to each clitic. In section 3 we suggest an analysis that can account for these differences.

Most of the data and constructions examined here belong to Catalan and Spanish and refer only to direct and indirect object clitics, but some of the observations can be extended to other related Romance languages too.

2. The Properties of Object Pronominal Clitics in Spanish and Catalan

We think that in Spanish and Catalan there are some differences between the two object clitics that clearly call for a distinction in their status. Now, let us consider these differences, that any theory on clitics should be able to account for. At the moment, we limit ourselves to presenting them; we will not argue for or against any hypothesis.

2.1. Overt ϕ -features

It is usually assumed that a pronominal, even if phonologically null, has some ϕ -features. These features include the person, gender and number specification, as we can see in the so-called personal or strong pronouns:

¹ This reference corresponds to a course in a summer school, but in fact I think that this idea is being developed in recent work in progress. Uriagereka (1992) also seems to accept some of the ideas of Torrego.

(1)	yo	[1p sg]	nosotros	[1p pl]
	tú	[2p sg]	vosotros	[2p pl]
	él	[3p sg m]	ellos	[3p pl m]
	ella	[3p sg f]	ellas	[3p pl f]

Pronominal clitics also reflect these features, but as (2) shows, while DO clitics have the same features as strong pronouns, 3rd person IO clitics do not show gender distinction:

(2)	DO clitics:		IO clitics:	
	me	[1p sg]	me	[1p sg]
	nos	[1p pl]	nos	[1p pl]
	te	[2p sg]	te	[2p sg]
	vos	[2p pl]	vos	[2p pl]
	lo	[3p sg m]	le	[3p sg]
	los	[3p pl m]	les	[3p pl]
	la	[3p sg f]	las	[3p pl f]

Given that as 1st and 2nd person object clitics are formally identical, from now on we will pay attention only to 3rd person clitics, the ones which show more differences.

There are also other elements with ϕ -features such as the different determiners and the possessive pronouns. Among these determiners, we call your attention on the definite article, that coincides with some object clitics in the specification of the ϕ -features and even in its morphophonological form:

(3)	el	[m sg]	los	[m sg]
	la	[f sg]	las	[f sg]

This parallelism can be seen as a first piece of evidence for analyzing the definite article and some object clitics as the same kind of element, that is as determiners that head a DP. In fact, this is what we will suggest and develop in the following sections.

2.2. Clitic-NP Doubling

As is well-known, the clitic-NP doubling constructions are sentences in which a pronominal clitic and an NP in the argument position that the clitic refers to co-appear. The two object clitics differ clearly in this respect: whereas clitic-NP doubling is always possible with indirect objects, it is not always allowed with direct objects. The following examples show that the IO clitic can double any kind of NP in dative position:

- (4) a. Luis le dio un libro a María.
L. 3pDat gave a book to M.
'Luis gave María a book.'
- b. Les expliqué lo sucedido a unos policías.
3pDat (I) told the happened to some policemen
'I told what happened to some policemen'.
- (5) a. Le duele la cabeza a Juan.
3pDat hurts the head to J.
'Juan has a headache.'
- b. Le hice un traje a Luis.
3pDat (I) made a suit to L.
'I made a suit for Luis.'
- c. Luis siempre le ha sido fiel a su esposa.
L. always 3pDat has been faithful to his wife
'Luis has always been faithful to his wife.'

In (4) there are NPs² with different inherent features and they all allow clitic-doubling. The direct object counterparts of these cases are clearly ungrammatical in peninsular Spanish:

² The categorial status of dative arguments is a controversial point. Here we assume that they are NPs, not PPs (see Branchadell (1992) and references cited there).

- (6) a. *Luis la vio a María.
 Luis her saw to María
- b. *Los expliqué unos cuentos.
 them (I) told some tales

(Obviously, these sentences are grammatical without the clitic.)

The examples of (5) involve datives that are not subcategorized by the verb (see Branchadell (1992) for an analysis of the similarities and differences between subcategorized and non-subcategorized datives). Here, there is no possible comparison with direct objects because these are always arguments of the verb.

In addition to this, the IO clitic can double any instance of Wh-phrase, while this is absolutely out in the case of direct objects in Catalan or peninsular Spanish and even in American dialects that allow some instances of clitic-NP doubled direct objects:

- (7) a. ¿A quién le diste el libro?
 to whom 3pDat (you) gave the book
 'To whom did you give the book?'
- b. Ésta es la chica a la que le regalé rosas.
 this is the girl to the that 3pDat (I) gave roses
 'This one is the girl to whom I gave roses.'
- c. A MARÍA le di un beso.
 to M. 3pDat (I) gave a kiss
 'It is Maria that I kissed.'
- (8) a. *¿A quién lo viste ayer?
 to whom him (you) saw yesterday
- b. *Éstas son las rosas que se las regalé a María.
 these are the roses that 3pDat them (I) gave to M.

- (8) c. *A MARIA la besé.
to M. her kissed

This contrast clearly shows that DO doubling is more constrained than IO doubling.

2.2.1. *Clitic-NP Doubling of Strong Pronouns.* In the preceding paragraphs we have seen that the DO clitic NP-doubling is impossible in a large number of cases. This does not mean, however, that we cannot find any occurrence of this kind of doubling. As a matter of fact, in Catalan and peninsular Spanish a DO clitic can double a direct object when it is a strong pronoun. In this case the clitic is not only allowed but also required since its absence causes the ungrammaticality of the sentence. Here, the indirect object behaves exactly alike:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(9) a. Lo vi a él.
him(acc) (I) saw to he
'I saw him.'
b. *Vi a él.</p> | <p>(10) a. Le devolví el libro a ella.
3pD (I) returned the book to she
'I returned her the book.'
b. *Devolví el libro a ella.</p> |
|--|---|

This behaviour can be explained by attending to the nature of strong pronouns rather than to the properties of the two object clitics. Rigau (1988) observes that, among pronominal elements, clitics and empty *pro* act in a parallel way and are very different from strong pronouns. She points out the ability to act as a resumptive pronoun (11), and the impossibility of strong pronouns to refer to a left dislocated constituent (12) or to count as variables bound by a quantified phrase (13):

- (11) a. Aquest és el nen que diuen que li van regalar un cavall.
this is the boy that say that 3pD (they) PAST give a horse
'This is the boy that they say that they gave a horse to him.'
b. *Aquest és el nen que diuen que li van regalar un cavall a ell.

- (12) a. A en Pere, li van regalar un cavall.
 to the Pere, 3pD (they) PAST give a horse
 'Pere, they gave him a horse.'
- b. *A en Pere, li van regalar un cavall a ell.
- (13) a. Tothom_i sap que *pro*_i es divertirà.
 everybody knows that *pro* have-fun-FUT
 'Everyone knows that he will have fun.'
- b. *Tothom_i sap que *ell*_i es divertirà.

In (11a) the clitic can be involved in the resumptive pronoun strategy and can act at LF as a variable bound by the operator of the relative clause, but in (11b), when it is related to a strong pronoun, it cannot. This would show that these strong pronouns cannot serve as logical variables at LF. Similarly, in (13b) the presence of the strong pronoun blocks the bound reading that *pro*, and also a clitic, allows.

Moreover, she also notes that strong pronouns do not occupy the same syntactic position as other NP arguments. This can be seen in the following contrast:

- (14) a. Vam acostumar el nen a això.
 (we) PAST get-used the boy to this
 'We got the boy used to this.'
- b. *El vam acostumar a ell a això.
 3pAcc (we) PAST get-used to he to this
- c. El vam acostumar a això a ell.
- (15) a. Consideren en Pere molt intel·ligent.
 (they) consider the P. very intelligent
 'They consider Pere very intelligent.'

- (15) b. Us consideren molt intel·ligents *a vosaltres*.
 2pDat (they) consider very intelligent-pl to you-pl
 'They consider you very intelligent.'
- c. *Us consideren *a vosaltres* molt intel·ligents.

In (14) the verb *acostumar* 'get used' selects an NP and a PP, but if the direct object is a strong pronoun the order DO-PP is ruled out and the only possibility for the pronoun is to appear at the right of the PP. The same happens in (15): in (15a) the NP *en Pere* is placed in the A-position, the subject position of the small clause, but the strong pronoun cannot stay there as (15c) shows.

Consequently, Rigau claims that strong pronouns do not occupy an A-position and that they are in a peripheral position, an A'-position external to the VP, that can free them from becoming bound elements at LF and can explain their S-structure position. The presence of these pronouns would be licensed through coindexing with a *pro* or a clitic chain. So, under this view, the A-position of these constructions would be occupied by this *pro* and the strong pronoun would remain in a peripheral A'-position.

Picalfo (1991) also observes the same differences between possessive pronouns and strong pronouns inside nominal phrases. She assimilates the possessive pronoun in nominals to the empty *pro* in sentences and distinguishes these two elements from strong pronouns. She gives the following contrasts concerning proximate interpretation (16), quantifier binding (17) and denotative properties (18):

- (16) a. La Maria_i diu que en Pere_j truca sovint a la seva_{i/j} mare.
 the M. says that the P. phones often to the her/his mother
 'Maria says that Pere often phones to her/his mother.'
- b. *La Maria_i diu que en Pere_j truca sovint a la mare d'ell_{i/j}.

- (17) a. El temor de tot acusat; al seu; fiscal.
 the fear of every accused to-the his Public Prosecutor
 'The fear of every accused to his Public Prosecutor.'
- b. *El temor de tot acusat; al fiscal d'ell;_i.
- (18) a. La desaparició de les llibretes;_i
 the disappearance of the notebooks
- b. La seva; desaparició.
 the its disappearance
- c. *La desaparició d'elles;_i
 the disappearance of them

The facts in (16)-(17) are identical to those of (11)-(13), and what (18) shows is that strong pronouns are more restrictive than *pro* or possessives: while *pro* or possessives can denote any kind of object or set, strong pronouns can denote only denumerable or [+human/animate] entities. This is the reason for the ungrammaticality of (18c), where the pronoun *elles* 'them' should refer to the [-anim] NP *les llibretes* 'the notebooks'. In (18b) a possessive is used and there is no problem.

If we accept this analysis, and we really accept it, then we have a plain explanation for the need of the clitic in (9) and (10). In these constructions the obligatoriness of the clitic would follow straightforwardly from the Projection Principle: given that the strong pronoun occupies an A'-position, the A-position must be filled by some element in order to keep the θ -grid of the verb up; this element will be the clitic, or the *pro* licensed by it, that in its turn can serve as licenser of the peripheral strong pronoun.

2.2.2. *Bare NPs in IO Position.* Turning to IO clitic doubling, it has been noted that the only NPs that do not allow it are bare NPs, which have a non-specific reading. In this respect, Fernández Soriano (1989) gives the following examples:³

³ This has also been observed by Jaeggli (1982: 59, fn. 39), who gives these examples:

- (19) a. Creo que (*les) daré todo mi dinero a personas necesitadas.
 (I) think that 3pDat give-FUT all my money to people poor
 'I think that I will give all my money to poor people.'
- b. No se (*les) debe pegar a mujeres indefensas.
 not se 3pDat should hit to women defenceless
 'You should not hit defenceless women.'

According to her, the presence of the clitic in these constructions leads to ungrammaticality because, in general, non-specific NPs cannot be related at all with a pronominal clitic.

We are not going to enter into an exhaustive discussion of these examples, but we would like to point out that we doubt that such a contrast actually exists. In fact, we believe that IO clitics are not incompatible with bare NPs, specially when the clitic appears in a defective form, and that sentences like the following are acceptable or nearly acceptable.⁴

- (20) a. Le hablaré de este asunto a gente de la universidad.
 3pDat (I) talk-FUT of these affaire to people-sf of the university
 'I will talk to people from the university about these affaire.'

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- (i) a. *Les regalaré todos mis libros a mujeres.
 b. *Les entregaran las frazadas contaminadas a indios makas.

⁴ In fact, these constructions, with or without the clitic, sound a bit strange to me and to other speakers, but the relevant point here is that we do not find such a contrast. Moreover, some speakers who tend to use the 'defective' singular form *le* to refer to both singular and plural indirect objects (see section 2.6.) have pointed out to me that between the two examples of (i) they clearly prefer the version with the 'defective' *le*.

- (i) a. Luis nunca da dinero a niños.
 L. never gives money to children
 b. Luis nunca *le* da dinero a niños.

- (20) b. *No se les puede decir estas cosas a mujeres sensibles.
 not *se* 3pplDat can say these things to women sensitives
 'You cannot say these thing to sensitive women.'
- c. Los caramelos, se los daré a niños que no tengan ninguno.
 the sweets, 3pDat 3pplAcc (I) give-FUT to children that not have-subj no one
 'The sweets, I will give them to children that do not have.'

The form *se* in (20c) has no overt specification of the number or gender features, and it is the form that the IO clitic usually adopts when it forms a clitic cluster with the DO clitic. In any case, what we want to suggest here is that there is no such a contrast between the presence/absence of the clitic in these constructions, and that, at least in some cases, it is possible to find IO clitic forms doubling a non-specific bare NP. Then, we can maintain the differences with respect to DO clitics, that, obviously, do not allow clitic-NP doubling with these arguments either.

In conclusion, we have shown that while IO clitics allow any instance of clitic-NP doubling, DO clitics are more restricted in this sense. This is a clear difference that argues for an analysis that will distinguish the two clitics. The need for this distinction is precisely what we are pursuing here and will explore in the next sections, where we will also try to go deeply into the syntactic character of these pronominal clitics.

2.3. *Object Clitics and Definiteness*

In the preceding section we have seen that an IO clitic can be linked to non definite NPs in clitic-NP doubling constructions. What we would like to propose now is that, usually, the DO clitic cannot denote indefinite arguments.

Given that the doubling structures are not possible with direct objects because of the general constraint on DO clitic-NP doubling, we cannot use them as direct evidence for this idea. However, there are some configurations that show that this object clitic does not put up with a

[-def] referent. This is the case of left-dislocated or topicalized constructions, where a non-emphasized NP in topic position, that is a CP external position, must be reduplicated by a clitic:

- (21) a. Las zanahorias_i, María las_j detesta.
the carrots M. them hates
'The carrots, María hates them.'
b. *Las zanahorias, María detesta.

Nevertheless, if the topicalized element is an NP headed by the indefinite determiner or a bare NP, whether singular or plural, the presence of the clitic is ruled out:

- (22) a. *Un reloj, lo compré ayer.
a watch, it (I) bought yesterday
'A watch, I bought it yesterday.'
b. *Unas cervezas, las he dejado en la nevera.
some beers, them (I) have left in the fridge
'Some bottles of beer, I have left them in the fridge.'
- (23) a. *Dinero, no lo tengo.
money, not it (I) have
'Money, I do not have.'
b. *Cervezas, no las he comprado.
beers, not them (I) have bought
'Bottles of beer, I have not buy any.'

Thus, we can easily conclude that, provided that the syntactic configuration is the same in all the examples (21)-(23), it is the different semantic value of the dislocated NP that leads to ungrammaticality in (22)-(23). We know that there are some constraints on left-dislocating indefinite NPs, but the idea that we would like to point out here is that, in general, DO clitics cannot refer to indefinite NPs. In other words, since we suggest that DO clitics are similar to

the definite determiner, we expect them to be inherently marked as [+def] and to be related only to NPs with a definite interpretation. Then, independently from the constraints on left-dislocation, (22) and (23) would be ungrammatical because the [+def] feature of the DO clitic clashes with the [-def] or [-spec] values of indefinite and bare NPs.

It is also interesting to note that the configurations of (22) and (23) actually differ from each other, and that indefinite NPs and bare NPs do not behave exactly alike in topicalized constructions. This can be easily seen when the DO clitic is absent, as in the following contrast:

- (24) a. *Un reloj, compré ayer.
a watch, (I) bought yesterday
b. *Unas cervezas, he dejado en la nevera.
some beers, (I) have left in the fridge
- (25) a. Dinero, no tengo.
'Money, I have not.'
b. Cervezas, no he comprado.
'Bottles of beer, I have not bought any.'

While the deletion of the DO clitic is allowed with bare NPs and it results in one of the null object constructions in Spanish, it is not in (24), where the instances of indefinite NPs are involved. Catalan also offers stronger evidence for this clear distinction. In this language the paradigm of pronominal clitics includes the clitic *en*, that can be used to express indefinite objects with a partitive interpretation. The examples (26)-(27) show that this clitic can appear when the dislocated element is a bare NP, but not when it is an indefinite NP:

- (26) a. De diners, no en tinc.
of money-pl. not *en* (I) have

- (26) b. De cava, en vaig comprar ahir.
of cava, *en* (I) PAST buy yesterday
'Cava, I bought it yesterday.'
- (27) a. *Un rellotge, no n'he comprat ahir.
a watch, not *en* (I) have bought yesterday
b. *Unes cerveses, n'he deixat a la nevera.
some beers, *en* (I) have left in the fridge

In (26) the partitive clitic is required exactly in the same way as the definite DO clitic is when the dislocated NP is [+def].

In general, the facts concerning these dislocated NPs are the same in Spanish and Catalan. The only difference between these two languages lies in the partitive clitic: Catalan has it and uses it to refer to NPs that allow a partitive reading such as bare NPs, but not indefinite NPs; Spanish does not have it, but can maintain the difference between bare NPs and indefinite NPs by allowing/not allowing the null object construction of (25). In the other points the two languages behave exactly alike: both require the DO clitic when the dislocated phrase is [+def]; neither Catalan nor Spanish allow this clitic when the dislocated element cannot be interpreted as definite; dislocation of an indefinite direct object yields ungrammaticality in both cases; and a bare NP can be dislocated under some conditions: *en* cliticization in Catalan and null object construction in Spanish.

We would like to insist on the fact that the ungrammaticality of (22) is due to the presence of the DO clitic rather than to a constraint on dislocating non-definite NPs. Although left-dislocated indefinite NPs are strange, we think that it is possible to construct a minimal pair that shows the contrast between DO and IO clitics:

- (28) a. *Unos libros, no debes tratarlos así.
 some books, not (you) should to-treat-3pA so
 'You should not treat some books in this way.'
- b. A unos policías, esto, no debes decírselo nunca.
 to some policemen, this, not (you) should to-say-3pD-3pA never
 'You should not say this to some policemen.'⁵

Given that the sentence (28b), with a left-dislocated indefinite NP, is right, we expect the same kind of NP of (28a) not to be the cause of the ungrammaticality. Then we can consider that the differences between the two examples follow from the different grammatical function of each NP, and, more precisely, from the properties of dative and accusative clitics in Spanish.

Therefore, we will prefer to account for this restriction on indefinite NPs by means of an interpretation based on independent grounds: the general properties of left-dislocated structures and the inherent features of pronominal clitics. As (21) and (26) show, a dislocated phrase must be reduplicated by a clitic. This follows straightforwardly from the fact that this phrase occupies an A'-position and that, in order to avoid a violation of the Projection Principle, the A-position it refers to must be filled by some element: the clitic or a *pro* licensed by the clitic. We also assume that at least some pronominal clitics are inherently marked with some features, and

⁵ We must admit that the facts concerning these structures are a bit confusing. For instance, if we take a singular [+hum] indefinite NP instead of the plural NP of (28a) the grammatical judgements are slightly modified:

- (i) a. ^{???}A un policía, no debes golpearlo de esa manera
 to a policeman, not (you) should hit-3pA of that manner
 'You should not hit a policeman in this way.'
- b. A un policía, no debes decirle nunca la verdad.
 to a policeman, not (you) should say-3pD never the truth
 'You never should tell the truth to a policeman.'

Note, however, that the contrast between DOs and IOs is still maintained.

that, as a consequence, they can be linked only to NPs that are compatible with these features. We suggest that, according to its similarity with the definite determiner, the DO clitic in Spanish and Catalan has the same features as this determiner, and it is interpreted as [+def]. The same criterion will be applied to the Catalan clitic *en*, but with the slight difference that this element seems to receive a partitive interpretation.

Thus, the ungrammaticality of (22) and (27) in Spanish and Catalan follows from the fact that there is no DO clitic form compatible with an indefinite NP: both the [+def] pronominal clitic, the only one that Spanish has, and the partitive clitic of Catalan have different features and by no means can be related to this kind of NP. Then, given the absence of the clitic, the above requirement for topicalized constructions is not fulfilled —there is an empty A-position and the Projection Principle is not preserved— and the sentence is ruled out.

Under this view the most puzzling case is the difference between indefinite and bare NPs in Spanish. We have stated that, in Spanish, dislocated bare NPs produce a null object construction. So we could ask ourselves why the same strategy is not allowed with indefinite NPs. We are not going to pursue this matter further; we will simply note that this null object strategy seems to be the Spanish counterpart of the Catalan constructions with the clitic *en*.⁶ Under these assumptions, we can easily capture the strong parallelism between Spanish and

⁶ In fact this seems to be the case, at least as far as dislocated structures are involved, as shown by the following examples with PP complements of a verb (i a) and genitive arguments (i b), the other uses of *en* in Catalan:

- | | | | |
|-----|----|--|---------|
| (i) | a. | De política, ya hablaremos mañana.
of politics, already (we) talk-FUT tomorrow
'We will talk about politics tomorrow.' | Spanish |
| | a' | De política, ja <i>en</i> parlarem demà. | Catalan |
| | b. | De este libro, me he leído la primera parte.
of this book, 1pDat (I) have read the first part
'I have read the first part of this book.' | Spanish |
| | b' | D'aquest llibre, me n'he llegit la primera part. | Catalan |

Catalan concerning these structures and the character of DO clitics as opposed to IO clitics, that can be related to any kind of NP and, in this sense, seem to behave like the subject agreement morphemes, which are not restrictive on the nature of NPs either.

Turning to the features of the DO clitic, there are sentences like the ones of (29) that offer further evidence for the claim that the DO clitic is inherently marked as [+def]:

- (29) a. Los vimos a todos.
3pA (we) saw to all
'We saw all of them.'
- b. *Los vimos a algunos.
3pA (we) saw to some
'We saw some (of them).'

The quantified phrase *todos* 'all' in (29a) is interpreted as definite and the clitic-NP doubling structure is allowed. However, in (29b) the indefinite quantifier *algunos* 'some' does not admit the presence of the DO clitic. We think that this is a clear proof for the [+def] feature of this clitic and against the possibility of linking it to indefinite phrases.

Before leaving this, let me point up two more structures that show that DO clitic forms are sensitive to the nature of the argument they are referring to.

2.3.1. *Cliticization of Nominal Predicates in Catalan.* According to normative Catalan, in nominal predicates (that is, constructions where two noun phrases and the copulative verb *ser* 'to be' are involved) two different pronominal clitics can be used: the neutral form *ho* 'it', used also for the direct object when it is neuter or a subordinate clause, and the usual DO clitic forms. The distribution of these two clitics is clearly defined: while the neutral form can pronominalize any instance of nominal predicate —an adjective, a prepositional phrase or a

noun phrase—, the DO clitic form must be used when this nominal predicate is a definite NP. Let us consider the following examples, from Fabra (1956):

- (30) a. En Pere és mestre.
the P. is teacher
'Pere is a teacher.'
- a' En Pere *ho* és.
- b. En Pere és el mestre d'Espot.
the P. is the teacher of Espot
'Pere is the teacher of Espot.'
- b' En Pere *l'*és.

In (30a) the nominal predicate *mestre* 'teacher' is an NP, but given that it is not interpreted with a [+def] value, it cannot be pronominalized by the [+def] clitic and the neutral clitic is used. On the other hand, in (30b) the nominal predicate is a clearly definite NP and the DO clitic is required. This would show again that the DO clitic really has a [+def] feature and that it can only refer to definite NPs.

2.3.2. *DO Clitic-NP Doubling constructions in Porteño Spanish.* As is well known in the literature (see Jaeggli (1982, 1986) and Suñer (1988, 1989)), there are some American varieties of Spanish, like Porteño, that allow some instances of DO clitic-NP doubling. The possibility of having this kind of doubled structures seems to be related to the definite nature of the NP in the direct object position, as the following examples show:

- (31) a. La vi a Mafalda.
her (I) saw to M.
'I saw Mafalda.'
- b. *Lo vi un camión.
it (I) saw a truck

Moreover, Suñer claims that these constructions are regulated by a Matching Principle (MP), that ensures that the features of the clitic and the doubled NP agree, and puts forward that the DO can only be doubled if it is interpreted as [+spec]. She gives the following examples, that involve DOs that are not preceded by the preposition *a* 'to' and Wh-phrases:

- (32) a. Yo la tenía prevista esta muerte.
I it had foreseen this death
'I foresaw this death.'
- b. ¿A cuántas de ellas las interrogaron?
to how-many of them them (they) questioned
'How many of them did they question?'

Usually, Wh-phrases in DO position are not doubled by a clitic, but she points out that they can be doubled if they are interpreted as [+spec], as in (32b). Briefly, her idea is that any instance of [+spec] direct object can be doubled by a clitic because the DO clitic is lexically marked as [+spec]. On the contrary, a [-spec] NP cannot be doubled because this feature will clash with the [+spec] of the DO clitic and the MP would be violated. The doubling of an IO is always possible because the IO clitic is not inherently marked as [+spec] and, consequently, the MP is satisfied.

To sum up, in this section we have seen that, concerning the kind of NPs they can be related to, the DO clitic is more restricted than the IO clitic. More precisely, we have put forward that the DO clitic, but not the IO clitic, is inherently marked as [+def] — or, maybe, [+spec] in Suñer's view — and that this is the reason why they behave differently in this respect. Evidence for this comes from left-dislocation and clitic-NP doubling structures in peninsular and Porteño Spanish.

2.4. *Pronominalization of Other Arguments*

While the IO clitic can refer to dative complements that are not arguments of the verb — i.e., the non-subcategorized datives —, the DO clitic is clearly restricted to express this verbal argument. We think that this clear difference is actually interesting and that it can be enforced, at least in Spanish, by the ability of the IO clitic to pronominalize an internal argument of the verb that by no means can be considered a dative. Look at the following sentences, borrowed from Hernanz-Brucart (1987):

- (33) a. Los alumnos se ríen de María.
the students *se* laugh of M.
'The students laugh at María.'
- b. El ladrón se escapó de la policía.
the thief *se* escaped of the police
'The thief escaped from the police.'
- c. Se apiadaron de él.
se (they) took-pity of him
'They took pity on him.'

In these cases the internal argument of the verb is a PP headed by the preposition *de* 'of'. None of these complements can be believed to be a dative argument; they are rather instances of what traditional grammars call prepositional complements selected, or governed, by the verb. However, when these arguments pronominalize, the dative clitic is always used, there is no alternative:

- (34) a. Los alumnos se *le* ríen.
b. El ladrón se *le* escapó.
c. Se *le* apiadaron.

The main difference between these examples and the non-subcategorized datives lies in the fact that now the IO clitic seems to refer to a PP with the form 'de + NP', whereas in the other cases it reproduces a phrase with the form 'a + NP', the usual form of dative arguments.

The pronominalization of these arguments is very different in Catalan. In this language, the partitive clitic *en* is used to express bare NPs in object position and internal arguments headed by the preposition *de*. This is precisely the case of the constructions we are dealing with, and, as expected, the partitive clitic is required and the dative form is completely out:

- (35) a. Els alumnes se n'enriuen (de la Maria).
the students *se* of-her laugh (of the M.)
'The students laugh at her.'
- b. El lladre se n'ha pogut escapar (de la policia).
the thief *se* of-it has could to-escape (of the police)
'The thief could escape from it.'
- c. Se n'han penedit (d'en Pere).
se of-him (they) have taken pity (of the P.)
'They have taken pity on him.'
- (36) a. *Els alumnes se *li* enriuen.
b. *Se *li* han penedit.⁷

⁷ The case of the verb *escapar-se* 'to escape' is especial since it allows both kinds of pronominalization: partitive *en* (see (54b)) and IO clitic (see (i)).

- (i) El lladre se *[li]* ha escapat (als policies).
the thief *se* -3pplDat has escaped (to-the policemen)
'The thief escaped from them.'

As the bracketed phrase indicates, the 'a + NP' form is allowed. Note also that this behaviour of the dative clitic is only possible with pronominal verbs both in Spanish and Catalan. As shown in (ii), the non pronominal verb *escapar* does not allow the IO clitic:

This seems to suggest that the Spanish dative clitic is doing the work of the partitive clitic in Catalan, at least with these PP internal arguments. However, this is not true because, leaving aside the fact that this dative cliticization strategy is also possible in certain cases in Catalan, there are similar PP arguments that do not allow the dative clitic in Spanish. Thus, we will prefer to state simply that the presence of the IO clitic in these structures shows its ability to express several kinds of arguments.

This has several interesting consequences concerning the way how this arguments can be represented. As Hernanz-Brucart (1987) point out, the presence of this clitic interacts with the possibility of having an 'a + NP' complement, as in (37):

- (37) a. *A María se le ríen en clase.*
b. *Se le escapó el ladrón a la policía.*
c. *?A Juan se le apiadaron.*

This possibility can be seen as a 'dative-like' feature that precisely correlates with a property of non-subcategorized datives that we have seen above: the presence of the clitic is obligatory in these cases. As (38) shows, if the 'a + NP' phrase is maintained, the absence of the clitic leads to ungrammaticality.

- (38) a. **A María se ríen en clase.*
b. **Se escapó el ladrón a la policía.*
c. **A Juan se apiadaron.*

-
- (ii) a. *El ladrón escapó de la policía.*
the thief escaped of the police
'The thief escaped from the police.'
b. **El ladrón le escapó.*

Probably, this presence of the dative clitic is related to the properties of this pronominal *se*.

2.5. Invariant *le*

This phenomenon consists of the use of the singular form *le* to refer to a plural dative, that is, when the plural *les* is expected. This can be seen in the following constructions:

- (39) a. No *le*_i tenfa miedo a las balas_i.
not 3psgDat (he) had fear to the bullets
'He was not afraid of bullets.'
- b. No darle_i importancia a los detalles_i ...
not to-give-3psgDat relevance to the details
'Not to give relevance to details ...'

This property of IO clitics has been already noted by various traditional grammarians (see Marcos Marín (1978) and references cited there), and they all agree that this use of the singular form is a widespread phenomenon.

All the occurrences of *le* in (39) are instances of clitic-NP doubling structures. This means that the defective clitic is simply advancing the presence of a dative argument immediately represented as a full NP, and that, probably, this is the reason why this defectiveness is allowed. In other words, as long as the dative argument is immediately identified, the specification of all its features does not appear so necessary. However, there is a certain controversy because, while there are sentences whose indirect object is expressed only by the invariant form (see (40a-b)), it seems that when the indirect object goes at the beginning of the sentence the defective form is not allowed (40c):

- (40) a. Ellos_i ... poseen frente al desprecio que éste *le*_i inspira ...
they ... have before to-the scorn that this-one 3pD incites
'They ... have before the scorn that this one causes in them...'

- (40) b. (ellos) ... Por temor a que nuestro contacto con los indios le_i acarrese
 (they) ... by fear to that our contact with the Indians 3pD cause
 algún tipo de enfermedad ...
 some kind of illness
 '... because they were afraid that our contact with the Indians could cause them
 some illness...'
- c. A los niños les /*le dije que ...
 to the boys 3pplD/3psgD told that
 'I told them that ...'

Although there is no clear explanation for this, we think that this property can be seen as a step towards a stage where this pronominal clitic will have lost all its argumental properties and will appear as an element that simply announces the presence of certain arguments, as a sort of dative marker:

However, no matter what analysis is the right one, we would like to point out that this behaviour is possible only with the IO clitic. There is no occurrence of invariant DO clitics in Spanish, not even in some *laísta* dialects, which use the DO clitic form to express both accusative and dative arguments. If both object pronominal clitics were basically the same kind of element, we would expect them to behave exactly alike in this respect. Since this expectation is not borne out, we have another piece of evidence to distinguish the status and properties of the two clitics.

In conclusion, in this section we have explored some clear differences between IO and DO pronominal clitics in Spanish and Catalan. These differences concern the overt and inherent features of the clitics, that determine the class of NPs they can denote, the clitic-NP doubling structures, and the relation with certain internal arguments and non-argumental complements.

In the preceding sections, we have observed that the DO clitic has more features and undergoes more restrictions than the IO clitic. These restrictions can be related to the properties of the definite determiner, which heads a DP. Consequently, we can assume that the DO clitic is a DP very close to the definite determiner.

In its turn, the IO clitic seems to be freer concerning these aspects: it is not specified for so many features as the DO clitic —sometimes, it even appears as a defective form—, and its relations with several kinds of NPs and arguments are not so restricted. This could lead us to assume that it is an AGR head. However, we must be very careful with such a statement, because this would mean that the IO clitic is closer to a subject morpheme than to a pronominal clitic; but we should not forget that there are several syntactic properties shared by the two object clitics such as its position at S-structure, the behaviour in coordinate and clitic climbing structures, etc.

Maybe these properties of the IO clitic follow from the fact that it is a DP or an AGRP with very special properties that can provide an answer for the relations between a true pronominal element and an inflectional morpheme with pronominal features. This is what we will explore in the next section.

3. An Analysis

In this section we would like to suggest a possible analysis of object clitics that accounts for its main properties and for the differences between the two object clitics seen in the preceding section.

What we can conclude so far is that, at least in Catalan and peninsular Spanish, the DO clitic is much closer to the definite determiner *el*, *la* 'the', while the IO clitic seems to exhibit a different behaviour that keeps it away from the typical properties of definite determiners. Bearing this in

mind, we will try to assign a different status to each clitic in order to explain these differences while still capturing their similarities.

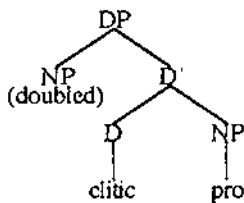
3.1. The DO Clitic and the Structure of DP

We would like to propose that DO clitics are actually Ds, that is, elements of the class of determiners, that head a DP generated in an A-position. In fact, this is not an original idea since something similar has been proposed by Laenzlinger (1990) and Torrego (1990, 1991).

Laenzlinger studied French and Italian pronominal clitics and suggested that they are DPs that take an empty category *pro* as their complement. According to him, this *pro* is formally licensed by the verb in its D-structure position and semantically identified by the ϕ -features of the head D once it has incorporated into the verb. We will differ from his approach in several ways: first of all, we do not believe that all clitics have this structure; secondly, we will prefer to establish the identification of *pro* in other terms, that is, via specifier-head agreement; and, finally, we do not think that the derivation of clitics involves D-incorporation into V as a first step.

Torrego also proposes that clitics are heads of a DP and that they can take a *pro* as complement exactly in the same way as other determiners take an NP or a CP. Besides, she introduces the possibility of having a doubled NP that would occupy the specifier of this DP. The structure she seems to accept is the following one:⁸

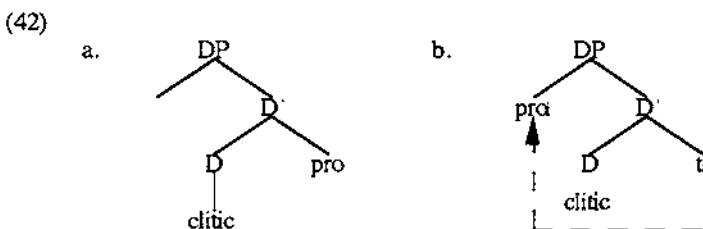
(41)



⁸ This structure is taken from Uriagereka (1992), who cites and generally assumes Torrego's work. Torrego (1991) also seems to suggest a similar structure for the dative clitic.

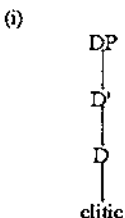
Here, the doubled NP in the specifier position would get case through specifier-head agreement with the Dative or Accusative clitic whenever clitic-NP doubling is allowed.

We will not discuss these analyses because the differences between them and their relation with the structure we are going to propose are not really very significant, and we think that they all can be taken together as good evidence for the common idea that (at least some) pronominal clitics are determiners. The structure we propose for DO clitics consists simply of assuming that they are Ds that take a *pro* as their complement and head a DP generated in A-position:⁹



(42b) shows the movement of the complement *pro* from its original position to the specifier of DP in order to be licensed via specifier-head agreement with the clitic in head position. This

⁹ In fact, we could also propose an even simpler structure as the one of (i), where there is no *pro* and the clitic would be a kind of 'intransitive' determiner, that is, a head D that does not take any complement:



We are not exploring here the advantages or disadvantages of such structure. Abney (1987) proposes a similar structure for pronouns. In any case, it is important to note that the analysis of pronominals as DPs must be formulated very precisely in order to cover all the similarities, but also the differences, between articles, pronominal clitics, and (strong) pronouns.

analysis is compatible with the criteria of *pro* identification of Picallo (1991), who proposes that a pronoun lacking referential content is formally identified if it agrees with a local head, and coincides with the identification of subject *pro*, that involves also a specifier-head agreement relation.

Contrary to Torrego's approach, this analysis does not include the possibility of having a doubled NP. Since there is a base-generated *pro* in the complement position and the specifier of DP appears as a landing site for the identification of this *pro*, there is no room for an NP in this structure. Note, however, that this is precisely the case of direct objects in peninsular Spanish or Catalan, where, leaving aside the cases with strong pronouns (see section 2.2), clitic-NP doubling is not allowed. So, if we propose a structure for direct object clitics that does not allow clitic-NP doubling we are actually proposing an empirically adequate structure.

This analysis also covers the properties of DO clitics seen in the preceding section. Firstly, if we consider that these clitics are determiners we capture their similarity concerning the ϕ -features expressed with other categories such as definite articles, demonstratives or any kind of pronominals that are usually supposed to belong to the class of determiners.

This similarity also allows us to go into the so-called inherent features of the clitic. More precisely, we can assume that DO clitics have an inherent [+definite] or [+specific] feature exactly in the same way as other determiners have.

Finally, we can go further and suggest that direct object clitics have exactly the same features as the definite article. If this is true, then we have a plain explanation for the facts of section 2.3, where we showed that the DO clitic cannot refer to indefinite or bare NPs: the DO clitic can only take a definite NP as referent simply because it is itself definite in nature. Catalan also offers evidence in favour of this point. In Catalan we have a partitive clitic *en* that is used to pronominalize bare NPs in DO position, precisely the cases where the usual DO clitic is not possible, as in Spanish.

As a final remark we can also point out that, within this analysis, the final character of this D would depend simply on the complement it takes. Thus, if D takes an overt NP as complement we have a definite determiner, but if it takes a *pro* it behaves as a clitic. In fact, as shown in (43), this determiner can take an NP, an AP, a PP or a CP as complement:¹⁰

- (43) a. La casa. -
the(f-sg) house
- b. Los verdes.
the(m-pl) green(pl)
'The green ones.'
- c. La de rojo.
the(f-sg) of red
'The one in red.'
- d. La que tiene una ventana rota.
the(f-sg) that has a window broken
'The one with a broken window.'

Bearing these examples in mind, it does not seem extremely strange to think that the direct object clitic is actually the case in which this determiner has an empty complement. Obviously, this possibility is restricted to the DO clitic form because the IO clitic form counterparts of (43) are completely out:

- (44) a. *Le de rojo.
dat-cl of red
- b. *Les que son de Madrid.
dat-cl that are from Madrid

¹⁰ We do not go into the analysis of these constructions neither in the question if (4b-d) should be analyzed with a *pro* between the D and its complement.

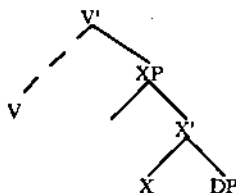
3.2. *The Indirect Object Clitic*

According to the preceding paragraphs, it is easy to infer that we do not believe that indirect object clitics are determiners of the same type as direct object clitics. In fact, we prefer to consider that they are not at all true determiners, and we will try to show that they act more like a sort of dative marker that 'warns us' of the presence of a dative argument in the sentence rather than as a true argument, or as an element in argument position.

Under this view, the first problem we must face is to define precisely the status of this 'dative marker'. This is a very controversial point, because it concerns different kinds of obligatory and optional arguments, but we could tentatively assume that it is a functional head placed among the functional categories of the sentence. The main duty of this category would be to identify, when necessary, one of the arguments of the sentence, just as AGR_{subj} does with the subject. The only difference would be that the subject is obligatory (it follows from the Extended Projection Principle) whereas a dative complement is not, and that for some reason the AGR_{subj} is a suffix and the dative marker surfaces as a pronominal clitic. The categorial status of this functional projection is not clear either. The structure we are suggesting would be something like (45):¹¹

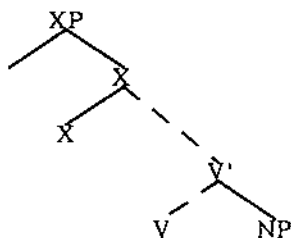
¹¹ An alternative analysis that we are not developing here but that would be worthwhile to explore is the following:

(i)



where the projection of the clitic is generated in the A-position and the clitic takes the whole dative DP as its complement. This possibility could be seen as the first loss of the pure pronominal clitic properties.

(45)



where: X = dative clitic
NP = dative argument

We are not going to discuss whether it is an AGRP like AGR_{subj} and AGR_{obj} or like the AGR proposed by Roberts (1992) to account for clitic placement in Old Romance, or a sort of clitic phrase as the one of Sportiche (1992). Here, we will simply claim that it is a functional head that has person features and dative case. We know, of course, that this is a very vague definition, but let us put it aside at this moment and let us see whether this distinction in terms of '(unknown) functional category' vs. DP really works.

We can begin by examining the doubling constructions. As is well-known, clitic-NP doubling of indirect objects is always allowed in Spanish, and in some cases (the non-subcategorized datives) it is required. Since we are assuming that the clitic does not occupy the A-position of the indirect object, we leave the possibility open of having an overt NP doubled by the clitic: the clitic would remain in its functional projection and the overt NP would be in the A-position. So, there is no problem and we can explain the contrast with direct objects.

Under this analysis, it would be interesting to try to capture the differences related to the need of the clitic. In section 2 we noticed that while non-subcategorized datives require the presence of the clitic, the subcategorized ones simply allow it or tend to prefer it. This slight difference can be seen in the following contrast:

(46) a. (Le) devolví unos libros a Luis.

3pDat (I) returned some books to L.

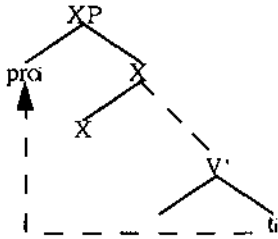
'I gave back some books to L.'

- (46) b. *(Le) rompí el brazo a María.
3pDat (I) broke the arm to María
'I broke María's arm.'

In (46b) we have a non-subcategorized dative and the sentence without the clitic is out. On the other hand, the subcategorized dative of the verb *devolver* 'to give back' in (46a) can be doubled by the clitic or not with no consequences in grammaticality. Probably, we could account for this contrast if we assume, as Torrego (1991) suggests, that only verbs that subcategorize for an indirect object can assign case to this argument. If this is true, we can explain the preceding contrast in the following way: in (46a) the verb *devolver* 'to give back' subcategorizes a dative and, consequently, it assigns case to the indirect object *a Luis* 'to Luis' and the presence/absence of the clitic is not relevant from the point of view of case assignment; however, in (46b) the verb *romper* 'to break' does not subcategorize a dative argument and cannot give case to the dative phrase *a María* 'to María', that in order to avoid a Case Filter violation should get case from some other element, namely the dative clitic. An interesting issue is to state the way the dative clitic can transmit the case to these non-subcategorized datives. In this point, we follow again Torrego and suggest that the NP moves to the specifier of the projection headed by the clitic, and that it gets case through specifier-head agreement; exactly in the same way as Nominative case is assigned to the subject.

In the last paragraph, we have seen what happens in the instances of clitic-NP doubling and when the dative clitic is not present. Now, let us explore another of the properties of the clitic: the identification of *pro* when there is no overt NP in the A-position. We will assume that the dative clitic also identifies a *pro* via specifier-head agreement. In this case the *pro* would be base-generated in the A-position where it receives its θ -role and would move to the specifier of the head occupied by the clitic in order to be identified:

(47)



This derivation is very close to the derivation of a subject *pro*, with the further parallelism that the ϕ -features are person and number in both cases. Then, we could explore the similarities between the dative clitic and the AGR_{subj} head in the sense that both assign case to an argument. If this is true, the Dative case would be similar to Nominative and, since they are assigned under the same structural configuration, both could be considered structural cases. In this respect, it would be interesting to study the properties of the Person and Number features of this functional head, as Rigau (1991) does within the AGR projection. Rigau concludes that the Person feature is the Nominative Case assigner. We are not going to develop this question, but we simply put forward that we can expect the Person feature to be the structural Case assigner also in this case—remember that the presence of the Number feature is not always necessary in this 'dative marker' (see section 2.5).

Another interesting property that distinguishes DO and IO clitics is the ability to express indefinite arguments. In the case of direct object clitics this has been accounted for by assuming that they are true definite determiners. In the same way, since indirect object clitics can be related to any kind of indefinite, we should expect them not to be specified for any definiteness feature. This is precisely what happens in agreement systems such as subject agreement, for instance. Moreover, as Uriagereka (1992) points out, clitic systems never start with indefinites, but they can evolve and get grammaticalized into agreement systems where indefinites are perfectly possible. If this is true, then we could consider the DO clitics a typical clitic system and the IO clitics a step towards a paradigm of agreement.

This idea can be enforced by the similarities between subject agreement and IO clitics, but we should not forget that an indirect object clitic is not an agreement morpheme, and that it has several properties, from its morphological form to its syntactic behaviour, that make it closer to a pronominal clitic than to an affix. So, we must make sure that, whatever these dative markers are, they behave first of all as pronominal clitics, and that all the properties related to agreement systems are compatible with this behaviour.

4. Summary

In this paper we have suggested an analysis that distinguishes the two pronominal object clitics in languages such as Spanish and Catalan. The need for this distinction follows from the fact that they have different properties and that, consequently, they behave differently in certain cases.

In section 2 we have explored these differences and we have concluded that the DO clitic has more overt and inherent features than the IO clitic and that this is the reason why the DO clitic can only denote a restricted set of NPs: those with a [+def] or [+spec] interpretation. We have also pointed up that the IO clitic appears in some syntactic configurations, such as clitic-NP doubling structures, in which the DO clitic is usually impossible.

In section 3 we have tried to attribute these restrictions of the DO clitic to the different status of each element. In agreement with this, we have proposed that direct object clitics are actually determiners that head a DP. We have also put forward that this D is the same definite determiner that we find preceding NPs, APs, PPs or CPs with the only difference that it takes a *pro* as its complement.

In its turn, the IO clitic is analyzed as the head of a functional category different from the DP of direct objects. The properties of this functional head will be the responsible for the clitic-NP

doubling structures, the inherent features, and the relation with indefinites and several kinds arguments, three possibilities of the IO clitic that the DO clitic does not have.

For the time being, we do not go deeper into the definition of the syntactic derivation that such a distinction between the two object clitics involves. We leave this question open, but we would like to point out that, although at first glance this analysis seems a bit strange, a derivation according to some of the conditions on clitic movement of Kayne (1991) would probably give the right results. Obviously, we will need to modify some of his criteria and to make some new assumptions.

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