Propredicative clitics in Romance: a micro-parametric variation approach.

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In Italian the object of a verb can be cliticized onto it (by means of a full inflected range of clitics (1b): la (fem. sing.), lo (masc. sing.), le (fem. plur.), etc.; see Burzio 1986). However, as noted and accounted for by Moro (1993, 1997, and subsequent works), in copular sentences involving either a predicative NP or an AP there is a special clitic, namely *lo*, which is invariant in gender and number (2a,b) although it refers to a feminine predicative NP (as in 2,b).

(1) a. La ragazza   riconosce la   gioia   dei genitori
        The girl   recognizes the$_{fem-sing}$ joy-$_{fem\ sing}$ of the parents
        'The girl recognizes the joy of her parents.'

  b. La ragazza   la /   *lo   riconosce (la gioia dei genitori).
        The girl   it$_{fem-sing}$/ it$_{masc-sing}$recognizes
        'The girl recognizes it.'

(2) a. La ragazza   è   la   gioia   dei genitori.
        The girl   is   the$_{fem-sing}$ joy-$_{fem\ sing}$ of the parents

  b. La ragazza   *la/lo è   (la gioia dei genitori)
        The girl it$_{fem-sing}$/ it$_{masc-sing}$ (the$_{fem-sing}$ joy-$_{fem\ sing}$ of the parents).
        'The girl is the joy of her parents.'

We provide a comparative overview of propredicative clitic sentences in Italo-Romance: we suggest an analysis of copular constructions in which the predicative XP (NP, AP) clitizises in an invariant/uninflected form, updating the original proposal of Moro (1997) for which *lo* is generated in a N^0 rather than D^0. In all the described varieties an invariant neuter form is found for propredicative clitics: the microparametric variation is linked eventually to differences between N vs Adjective or to the referential status of the nominal predicates.

On the interpretative interface, 3rd person clitics are commonly assumed to be D category for the Definiteness morphology (*l-* in Romance) embedding an N, i.e. nominal class category, for its inflections (Kratzer 2009, Manzini & Savoia 2007). However, in the case of propredicative clitic in (2), *lo* displays an invariant N inflection (*-o*) and does not imply a definite description ([-referential] in the terms of La Fauci & Loporcaro, 1997): *lo* can either refer to an indefinite predicative NP (3a) or to an NP where the determiner can be omitted (3c).

(3) a. Maria è una donna.   b.   Maria lo/   *la   /*ne è
        Maria is a woman   Maria it$_{masc-sing}$/ it$_{fem-sing}$ /it$_{part}$ is

  c. Maria è (la)   causa   del litigio
        Maria is (the$_{fem-sing}$)   cause$_{fem}$ of the fight

Moro (1997) analyzes *lo* as generated in a N^0 rather than D^0 and since there is only one AGR projection in copular sentences (which is activated for the chain of the raised subject NP *Maria* in 3) no inflected items are allowed. We report the parametric distribution of the propredicative clitic in Romance languages that on the one hand confirms that no inflected element is allowed as propredicative clitic and on the other hand shows that *-l* like clitic are substituted in many varieties by lexical elements which confirm a [-definite] description status of the proforms.

We find three different overt realization for the predicative clitic referring to the predicate of copular construction across Italo-Romance: 1) an oblique clitic of the *ci* type, 2) no propredicative clitic and 3) an invariant lo- clitic (as the Italian examples in 2). In the last group of varieties we can find alternation depending on the characteristics of the predicate (adjective or referential NP).

In the first group of varieties, the propredicative clitic proform is expressed through a *ci*-like (there-element) (4,5) which is also used in locative constructions (see the Calabrian example in 5b) and to express oblique dative relation (5e), while Italian restricts the use of *ci* to existential and locative constructions.

(4) a. Rosa è 'mbecille forte   b.   (mbecille) Rosa c'è/*lo è forte   *Romanesco*
        Rose is stupid   strong   (stupid) Rose there is /* it is strong
        'Rose is really stupid'   '(stupid)   Rose really is'

                                                        (La Fauci & Loporcaro,1997:19)

(5) a.   Maria ε ttʃɔta   *Northern Calabrian*
              Maria is silly

     b.   (tʃɔta) Maria   tʃ   ε / *(l)u ε
             silly   Maria   there is / * it is

     c.   Maria ε ddinʦa a kasa
             Maria is inside   the house

     d.   (dinʦa a kasa)   Maria tʃ ε / *(l)u ε
             (inside the house) Maria there is / *it is

                                         (La Fauci & Loporcaro,1997:27)

     e.   tʃɪ   detti   nu libbru   a Maria
             her$_{cl}$ I gave   a book   to Maria
             'I gave a book to Maria.'   (Gioiosa Ionica: Ledgeway, Schifano, Silvestri 2017)

In the second group of Romance varieties (mainly Apulian varieties) no propredicative clitic is possible: the proform used can be a postverbal adverb which is not obligatory (similar data are described by La Fauci & Loporcaro 1997:ff 29 for the variety of Altamura).

(6) a.   Maria iɜ u   priʃə   də   la nonnə   *South Eastern Barese*
             Maria is the   joy   of   the grandmother

     b.   (u priʂə də   la nonnə)   Maria (*u) iɜ / iɜ (akksε)
             (the joy) of the grandmother)   Maria (*it) is/ is (so)

The last group is the one that works like Italian and includes Spanish, French, Many Northern Italian varieties and Sardinian. We report in (7) the example from Logudorese Sardinian in which two different propredicative clitics are found: one for predicative NP(7a,b) and another for locative PP (7c,d).

(7) a.   Maria εl fεa   b. (fεa) Maria lu εste / *bb εste   *Logudorese Sardinian*
        Maris is ugly   (ugly) Maria it is /   there is

     c.   Maria εst in dɔmo   d. (in dɔmo) Maria *lu εste / bb εste
         Maria is   at home   (at home) Maria it is / there is   (La Fauci & Loporcaro,1997:27)

Occitan patterns with the group of Italian since it selects a *lo*-like propredicative clitic. However, there is a striking difference whether the propreticative clitic refers to an AP or to an NP: with AP, we find either the *o* clitic, as with NP,   or a partitive clitic *ne*.

(8) a.   La filha es l'enveja dels vesins /   La filha o es / *n'es.   *Occitan*
             The girls is the envy of the neighbors   The gilr it$_{cl}$ is / it$_{part-cl}$ is.

     b.   La filha es polida   La filha o es / n'es.
             The girl is beautiful   The girl it$_{cl}$ is / it$_{part-cl}$ is.   (Sichel-Bazin, pc)

Similarly in some varieties of Catalan, we have the general use of the invariant neuter clitic *ho* to refer to nominal and adjectival predicates, but it is possible to find a parallel construction in which an inflected proclitic is found for NPs where the DP can not be omitted (9,c,d) and are [+def] suggesting that we are dealing with an ellipsis.

(9) a. Les noies son (les) mestres   b.   Les noies ho/*les   son
      The girls are (the) teacher   the girls it$_{neut}$ / them $_{fem}$ are
      c. Les noies son les mestres del poble   d.   Les noies ho/ les   son
      The girls are the teacher of the town   The girls it$_{neut}$ / them $_{fem}$ are

All the varieties show that there is an invariant propredicative clitic (or adverb) for the nominal predicates of copular construction. As for the varieties that show a *lo* clitic strategy, the definite D reading, sometimes associated with clitic involving a -*l* [+def], cannot be confirmed due to case like Occitan where the propredicative clitic can also be rendered optionally through a partitive clitic. Furthermore, the different lexical elements (*ci* or adverbs) which are used as propredicative (across the non-*lo* varieties) also share a non-definite (and non-referential) status of the cliticised XP.

Selected References. La Fauci, M & M. Loporcaro, 1997, 'Outline of a theory of existentials on evidence from Romance'. *Studi italiani di linguistica teorica ed applicata* 26 (1), 5- 55./ Kratzer, A.2009. 'Making a pronoun: Fake indexicals as windows into the properties of pronouns'. *Linguistic Inquiry* 40: 187 237. Manzini, M.R. & L.M. Savoia, 2007. *A unification of morphology and symtax. Studies in Romance and Albanian varieties*. London: Routledge. / Moro, A . 1997. *The Raising of Predicates*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.