THE ROLE OF DATIVE CLITIC DOUBLING IN ROMANCE DITRANSITIVES. WHAT NON-AGREEING DATIVE CLITICS CAN TELL US ABOUT IT

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Abstract. This contribution aims at examining ditransitive constructions in Romance languages (especially Spanish and Catalan), and their interaction with dative clitic doubling. First, we show that the transposition of the so-called English dative alternation, composed by the double object construction and the *to*-dative construction, onto Romance languages fails in a dramatic way if one wants to establish a parallelism between clitic doubled and non clitic doubled Romance ditransitives, as proposed for example for Spanish by Demonte (1995) and Cuervo (2003). An alternative approach to Romance ditransitives is proposed, where the absence or presence of clitic doubling boils down to the optional spell out of an applicative head. Finally, the discourse-related role of dative clitic doubling is further examined by analyzing the use of a singular dative clitic to double a plural IO, a phenomenon present in Spanish and Catalan, where the non-agreeing clitic seems to become a mere verbal affix.

Keywords: double object constructions, dative clitic doubling, non-agreeing clitics, applicatives, Romance languages, Spanish, Catalan.

1. INTRODUCTION

In several Romance languages, such as Spanish and Catalan, ditransitive constructions may optionally be clitic doubled:

(1) a. Andrés (le) dio una rosa a Anna. (Spanish)
Andrew CL.DAT.SG give.PST.3SG a rose to Anna
b. L' Andreu (li) donà una rosa a l' Anna. (Catalan)
the Andrew CL.DAT.SG give.PST.3SG a rose to the Anna
'Andrew gave a rose to Anna.'

Furthermore, in Spanish and, recently, also in Catalan, a plural dative argument can be doubled by a singular dative clitic (2), instead of the "expected" plural clitic (3)[2]. This

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[2] We systematically transcribe the plural dative form in Catalan as *els[i]*. The plural dative clitic in Standard Catalan is *els*. In the spoken language, such a plural clitic remains *els* in Valencian Catalan, but in many other dialects the form is *elsi*, showing the same ending vowel found in the singular clitic, *li*.

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phenomenon has been labeled *le*-for-*les* in the Spanish grammatical tradition, and Pineda (2018) proposes the parallel label *li*-for-*els[i]* for Catalan.

(2)	a. Le	daremos	un	regalo	a los	niños.	(Spanish)
	b. Li	donarem	un	regal	als	nens.	(Catalan)
	CL.DAT.SG	give.FUT.1PL	a	present	to the	kids	
	'We will give the kids a present.						
(3)	a. Les	daremos	un	regalo	a los	niños.	(Spanish)
	b. Els[i]	donarem	un	regal	als	nens.	(Catalan)
	CL.DAT.PL	give.FUT.1PL	a	present	to the	kids	
	'We will give the kids a present.'						

In this paper, we aim at assessing the role of dative clitic doubling in Romance ditransitive constructions in general (1)–(3), with a special interest for the non-agreeing doubled constructions (2).

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 2 builds on Pineda (in press) and focuses on ditransitive constructions in Romance languages. It shows that the transposition of the so-called English dative alternation, composed by the double object construction and the *to*-dative construction, onto Romance doubled and noun-doubled ditransitives (as proposed by several authors) fails in a dramatic way. An alternative approach to Romance ditransitives is proposed, where the absence or presence of clitic doubling reduces to the optional spell out of an applicative head. Section 3 further examines the discourse-related role of dative clitic doubling: after closely examining the degree of optionality of clitic doubling in Romance (subsections 3.1-3.2), the focus is put on the so-called *le*-for-*les* phenomenon, attested in Spanish and Catalan (2), whereby plural IOs are doubled by singular dative clitics, which appear to have evolved towards a mere verbal affix (subsection 3.3), and the corresponding analysis for non-agreeing clitics is proposed (subsection 3.4). Finally, section 4 presents the main conclusions.

2. ROMANCE DOUBLE OBJECT CONSTRUCTIONS AND THE ROLE OF DATIVE CLITIC DOUBLING

As is well known, English ditransitives divide into Double Object Constructions (DOCs), in (4a), and Prepositional Constructions (PCs), also known as the *to*-dative, in (4b). These doublets constitute an instance of the so-called dative alternation, which is reflected at the surface level by a different word order and the presence of *to*:

(4) a. Andrew gave Anna a rose. (DOC)
b. Andrew gave a rose to Anna. (PC)

C-command asymmetries have been observed between English DOCs (4a) and PCs (4b). Building on observations made by Barss & Lasnik (1986), Larson (1988) noted that in the English DOC the IO c-commands the DO, whereas the reverse is true for the PC. Grammaticality judgments regarding anaphors, binding of possessives, availability of distributive readings, frozen scope and other phenomena show that a robust structural difference exists between DOCs and PCs in English, in the sense that objects display

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different hierarchical orderings: IO>>DO in DOCs (5), but DO>>IO in PCs (6). We illustrate these contrasts with anaphor binding:

(5) a. I showed John himself (in the mirror).
b. *I showed himself John (in the mirror). (Barss & Lasnik 1986:347)
(6) a. *I showed himself to John (in the mirror).
b. I showed John to himself (in the mirror).

There is important work claiming that the DOC pattern exists in several Romance languages. For Spanish, this line of inquiry is not new (Strozer 1976, Masullo 1992, Demonte 1995, Romero 1997). More recently, and on the basis of Pylkkänen's (2002) work on applicatives, the DOC has been said to exist in Spanish (Cuervo 2003a,b), Romanian (Diaconescu & Rivero 2007), Portuguese (Torres Morais & Salles 2010) and French (Fournier 2010). These recent works have in common the adoption of Pylkkänen's (2002, 2008) Applicative Hypothesis in the analysis of DOCs, according to which the transfer of possession relation that holds between the DO and the IO in a DOC is entailed by a Low applicative head, which takes the DO as its complement and the IO as its specifier and ensures such a semantic relation (see also Larson 2010).

Focusing now on Spanish, most studies assessing ditransitive constructions in this language (Masullo 1992, Demonte 1995, Romero 1997, Cuervo 2003a,b) claim that the syntactic and semantic differences allegedly found between DOCs and PCs in English (recall (5)-(6)) are also found in Spanish when doubled and non-doubled ditransitives are compared. They posit a correlation between Spanish non-clitic doubled ditransitive (7a) and the English PC, on the one hand, and clitic doubled ditransitives (7b) and the English DOC, on the other. According to these authors, *a* is a preposition in (7a) but a dative case marker in (7b); for now we will systematically gloss it as A:

(7) a. Juan dio el libro a María.
Juan gave the book A María
'Juan gave the book to María.'
b. Juan le dio el libro a María.
Juan CL_{DAT} gave the book A María
'Juan gave María the book.'

Thus, what lies behind much prior literature on Spanish ditransitive is the idea that the syntactic and semantic differences found between DOCs and PCs in English, such as the c-command contrasts illustrated in (5)-(6), are to be found also in Romance ditransitives, when doubled and non-doubled ditransitives are compared.

However, as extensively shown in Pineda (in press), the syntactic and semantic differences attributed to the presence versus absence of dative clitic doubling in Spanish ditransitives do not hold, at least for many speakers. Specifically, we review data regarding anaphors, binding of possessives (availability of distributive readings), weak crossover effects and frozen scope, and show that, at least for many speakers, clitic doubling does not make any structural difference, i.e. we find symmetrical c-command relations between the DO and the IO regardless of the presence or absence of dative clitic doubling. This brings (the relevant variants of) Spanish in line with other Romance languages, such as French (Harley 2002) and Italian (Giorgi & Longobardi 1991), where the symmetric c-

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commanding relation in ditransitives is recognized, (8)-(9). The symmetric c-command between the DO and the IO in Romance DOC has also been reported by Pineda (2016: §3.3.1), Tigau (in press: §6) and Tigau & von Heusinger (in press) for Romanian; and Brito (2014) and Pineda (2016: §3.3.2) for Portuguese.

(8) a. Marie a donné [$_{DO}$ son$_i$ crayon] [$_{IO}$ à chaque garçon]$_i$.
Marie gave his pencil A every boy
'Marie gave every boy his pencil.'
b. Jean a présenté [$_{DO}$ chaque institutrice]$_i$ [$_{IO}$ à ses$_i$ élèves].
Jean introduced every teacher A her students
'Jean introduced every teacher to her students.'

(Harley 2002:62)

(9) a. Una lunga terapia psicoanalitica ha restituito [$_{DO}$ Maria] [$_{IO}$ a se stessa]$_i$.
long therapy psychoanalytic restored Maria A herself
'A long psychoanalytic therapy restored Maria to herself.'
b. Una lunga terapia psicoanalitica ha restituito [$_{DO}$ se stessa]$_i$ [$_{IO}$ a Maria]$_i$.
a long therapy psychoanalytic restored herself A Maria
'A long psychoanalytic therapy restored herself to Maria.'

(Giorgi & Longobardi 1991:42)

As argued in Pineda (in press), the French and Italian sentences above, as well as any other Romance ditransitive construction conveying a transfer-of-possession meaning, might in principle be analyzed as DOCs. Then, in the case of a doubling language such as Spanish, this holds for both doubled and non-doubled ditransitives with a transfer-of-possession interpretation. Furthermore, it follows that in Romance DOCs c-command relations are symmetrical –the symmetry of binding relations in Romance ditransitives is accounted for by assuming that in these languages binding relations can be set in the basic word order (IO>DO) or in the derived word order (DO>IO); the key aspect has to do with the (case-driven) movement the DO undergoes and its ability to reconstruct in the base position – see Pineda (in press: § 2.5) for a detailed account.

We thus question the idea that a specific asymmetric configuration of objects is an inherent property of DOCs, following the thinking of Fournier (2010) on French ditransitives, and also Bleam's (2003: 234) claim that the Spanish DOC "does not display all the properties that the English DOC does". In other words, the alleged structural characteristics of DOCs, such as the asymmetric c-command relation between the IO and the DO exemplified in (5)–(6), are epiphenomenal, and do not necessarily have to occur in DOCs cross-linguistically.

As for the optional presence of a doubling dative clitic in Spanish DOCs, Pineda (in press) argues that this reduces to a mere surface difference of spell-out of the Low applicative head relating the IO and the DO, which is responsible for the transfer of possession interpretation, as shown in (10):[3]

[3] Following Cuervo (2003a) and Fournier (2010: 209), we assume that the Low applicative assigns inherent dative case to the DP in its Specifier (the IO) in Romance languages, whereas the DO will have to move in order to check structural accusative case. More specifically, as Torres Morais & Salles (2010: 204–205) point out when analising Romance lanaguages such as Spanish and European Portuguese, the applicative head does not have uninterpretable φ-features, therefore it is inert and cannot act as a Probe. In this scenario, the IO is merged in the Specifier of the applicative projection and has an abstract dative Case feature (interpretable Case feature) which corresponds to morphological dative case, so it needs not be valued under Agree; in turn, the applicative head, bearing an interpretable/inherent dative feature, is responsible for the dative case of the applied argument (the IO).

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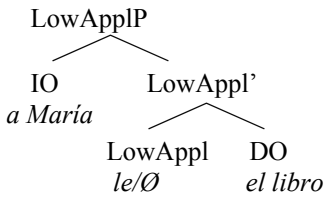
(10)



As shown in Pineda (in press), this analysis of DOCs extends to other languages in the Romance family where dative clitic doubling in ditransitives is optional, such as Catalan or colloquial Italian, as well as to languages where dative clitic doubling is not an option but which arguably feature DOCs, such as French and normative Italian. Taking into account the behavior of all these varieties, we claim that Romance has DOCs, but crucially the applicative head present in the structure may be either spelled out by a doubling clitic or silent, as we shall see in more detail in the following section.

3. THE ROLE OF DATIVE CLITIC DOUBLING

3.1. The optionality of dative clitic doubling

In Section 2 we have argued that a doubling dative clitic is not the hallmark of DOCs in Spanish nor in Catalan or any other Romance clitic doubling language or variety. We have proposed instead that such clitic is the spell-out of the Low applicative head, which may be phonologically null or overt without any further structural or semantic consequence (10).

The optionality of dative clitic doubling in Spanish ditransitives with a recipient IO is supported by evidence in corpus studies, such as Aranovich (2011) and Nishida (2010). Therefore, the Spanish and Catalan DOCs parallel Greek genitive DOCs, which according to Anagnostopoulou (2003: 15, 2005: 110) show optional (genitive) clitic doubling:[4]

(11)	*(Tu)*	*eðosa*	*tu*	*Jiani*	*to*	*vivlio*
	(CL.GEN)	give.PST.1SG	the	Jianis.GEN	the	book.ACC

'I gave Jianis the book'

Following Pineda (2013, 2016, in press), cross-linguistic and intra-linguistic variation regarding the clitic is not to be analyzed in terms of presence vs absence of structure, but rather in terms of silent variation (Sigurðsson 2004; Kayne 2005), since semantic effects (related to a transfer-of-possession interpretation) remain regardless of the pronunciation of the functional projection Appl. Crucially, these effects also remain in the DOC pattern of languages completely without clitic doubling, such as French or normative Italian, where the Low applicative head is simply silent. In short, we argue that clitic

[4] See also Kupula Roos (2016) for a recent formalization of the optionality of clitic doubling in Greek ditransitives.

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doubling of dative arguments, which creates superficial differences across Romance languages and varieties, amounts to a matter of optional spell out of a syntactic head.

3.2. The path towards obligatorification of dative clitic doubling

Let us proceed to a closer examination of *optional* dative clitic doubling across Romance languages. Interestingly, both in Spanish and Catalan, there are some dialectal differences with respect to the pervasiveness of dative clitic doubling. For example, several authors have pointed out that the phenomenon is especially systematic in American Spanish (Flores & Melis 2004, Becerra Bascuñán 2006, Melis & Flores 2009, Aranovich 2011), and the same is true in the case of Catalan for Valencian Catalan and the Barcelona area (Todolí 2002, Pineda 2016, 2018, in press). It is also true that doubling is especially frequent in colloquial and oral registers (see Company (2003), NGLE (2009) and Aranovich (2011) for Spanish). Be as it may, all varieties where dative clitic doubling is possible seem to make a more and more systematic use of that. Huerta Flores' (2005: 166) words are very illustrative: "The indirect object in present-day Spanish seems to have incorporated as obligatory the co-occurrence of a dative clitic that doubles it its own verbal phrase [our translation]" (see also Huerta Flores 2005: 170).

There are reasons to believe that the *optionality* observed in languages such as Spanish and Catalan is actually instantiating a particular stage of an ongoing linguistic change towards the obligatorification of dative clitic doubling. We will now discuss some evidence that is crucial to untangling what the current optionality of dative clitic doubling in the languages under analysis may be leading to. In particular, we will refer to a phenomenon which emerged a while ago in Spanish, and much more recently in Catalan, and which seems to contradict the foundations of referential cohesion. It is the use of a singular dative clitic *le/li*, instead of the plural one *les/els[i]*, when doubling a plural indirect object, as in (12). In the Spanish linguistic tradition, this phenomenon has been dubbed *le*-for-*les*.

(12)	a. Le	daremos	un	regalo	a los	niños.	(Spanish)
	b. Li	donarem	un	regal	als	nens.	(Catalan)
	CL.DAT.SG	give.FUT.1PL	a	present	to the	kids	

This phenomenon can arguably be seen as the consequence of a process of obligatorification of dative clitic doubling among a number of speakers. As mentioned before, it has indeed been noted for Spanish (Company 2003, NGLE 2009) and Catalan (Todolí 2002, Vallduví 2002, Pineda 2018, in press) that speakers for whom dative clitic doubling is an option tend to make it gradually more systematic, to the point that "lots of speakers feel rare not to have the clitic [our translation]" (NGLE 2009).[5]

Actually, dative clitic doubling has already become obligatory in some Romance varieties: this is the case of the American Spanish varieties of Río de la Plata, Chile and Caracas (see Bentivoglio 1978, Suñer 1998, Silva-Corvalán 1981, Parodi 1998, Senn 2008,

[5] In the case of Catalan, this occurs especially –though not exclusively– in areas (Barcelona, Valencia) and segments of population which are also the most exposed to Spanish influence. Assessing the role of language contact in this particular matter is thus something to be investigated.

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Pujalte 2009), as well as Trentino (Cordin 1993), as shown in (13)-(14). These varieties thus would have reached the end of a path that probably all Romance doubling languages are following, each at its own pace.

(13)	María	*(le)	dio	un	libro	a	Juan.
	Mary	CL.DAT.SG	give.PST.3SG	a	book	to	John
	'Mary gave John a book.'						
(14)	*(Ghe)	dago	el	regal	al	Mario.	
	CL.DAT.SG	give.PRS.1SG	the	present	to.the	Mario	
	'I'll give the present to Mario.'						

This process of systematization of clitic doubling across Romance varieties is key to the phenomenon we are now interested in, the emergence of non-agreeing doubling clitics. As doubling becomes more and more widespread, a depronominalization of the dative clitic takes place. In other words, if dative clitic doubling is actually becoming systematic in many varieties, it would not be unexpected that it has lost its status as anaphoric pronoun and has become a sort of grammatical marker in the verb whose sole function is to indicate the presence of an indirect object –a prominent argument in the sentence. This is precisely what seems to be going on in Spanish (Company 2003, Huerta Flores 2005, Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera 2017) and recently too in Catalan (Pineda 2018), where speakers use more and more frequently a singular dative clitic when doubling a plural IO. In (12), since the dative clitic is just a grammatical marker, the plural marking becomes *unnecessary*, as it already appears in the doubled lexical IO. Ultimately, it is not typologically rare that pronominal arguments incorporated to the verb have less phonetic content that the corresponding independent pronouns (Bresnan & Mchombo 1987: 765).

Crucially, note that the systematization and subsequent depronominalization of the doubling clitic can be easily accommodated under an account like ours, where the presence of the clitic does not make any structural contribution, and therefore it may well become just a marker to signal the presence of a dative argument. In subsection 3.3, we present a variety of factors that may create the conditions where such a verbal affix (the non-agreeing dative clitic) becomes necessary. After that, in subsection 3.4, we focus on the formal analysis of these non-agreeing clitics, building on the idea that doubling dative clitics are the realization of an applicative head (Cuervo 2003a,b; Pineda 2013, 2016, in press; among others; see also Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera 2017).

3.3. Non-agreeing dative clitics

The use of singular dative clitics to double plural indirect objects (12) started to be productive in Spanish at the beginning of the 20th century, and nowadays some authors point out that it could end up becoming the norm (Huerta Flores 2005: 186)[6]. The *le*-for-*les* phenomenon has been described by Company (2003: 237) as an instance of depronominalization of the dative clitic, which is the result of the generalization of dative clitic doubling. In other words, as clitic doubling of IO in Spanish becomes more and more

[6] Although there were also some instances in Old Spanish (Casares 1918: 114, Cuervo 1955: 346-349, Flórez 1967: 64, Huerta Flores 2005: 166).

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systematic, dative clitics lose their status as anaphoric pronouns and become a mere grammatical marker that attaches to the head of the predication (the verb) and signals the presence of a prominent argument, the IO. Thus, in terms of reanalysis, the dative clitic would have evolved from an anaphoric pronoun to a marker of verb-object agreement (in particular, verb-indirect object), in such a way that number agreement becomes irrelevant.

The depronominalization we are referring to is illustrated in examples (15)-(16): in doubling constructions (15), some speakers do not treat the clitic as a pronoun anymore, unlike what occurs in a sentence like (16), where the clitic actually stands for a dative argument whose referent has been previously mentioned in the discourse. Thus, in the relevant varieties, the clitic in doubling constructions ceases to be considered a superfluous pronoun reproducing the lexical IO, that is, it ceases to be grammatically interpreted as a pronoun. It has been depronominalized and, by means of reanalysis, it is reinterpreted as an object (IO) agreement marker in the verb whose function is to signal the presence of a prominent object in the VP, the IO (Huerta Flores 2005: 170, 172 and references therein). The view of (accusative and dative) clitics as agreement markers is also put forward by Vilanova, Fischer & Navarro (2018), who define the emergence of non-agreeing dative clitics in Spanish as indicating "the beginning of semantic bleaching, i.e. the effacement of features" (Vilanova, Fischer & Navarro 2018: 127).

(15) Li he donat el regal al nen
CL.DAT.3SG have.1SG given the present to.the kid
'I've seen the kid and I have given him the present.'

(16) He vist el nen i li he
have.1SG seen the kid and CL.DAT.3SG have.1SG
donat el regal
given the present
'I've seen the kid and I have given him the present.'

The emergence of non-agreeing doubling clitics is much more recent –actually incipient– phenomenon in Catalan –to our knowledge, the first mention of the phenomenon is made by Pineda (2018). In colloquial registers, especially in Valencian varieties as well as in the Catalan spoken in the area of Barcelona, one starts to find uses such as the one in (12), where *li* is used instead of the plural dative clitic (*els* in Valencian or *elsi* in Central Catalan). Again, this seems to be connected to the fact that dative clitic doubling is becoming systematic in many Catalan varieties (Todolí 2002, Pineda 2016, in press). As a result of such systematization, the clitic ends up deprived of its anaphoric status, and thus agreement with the originally doubled IO becomes dispensable. As argued for Spanish, it seems that the clitic has become a simple verbal affix signaling or anticipating the presence of such argument, and indicating its special status: the IO is a topical, prominent, core argument, high in hierarchy.

Regarding the semantic prominence of IOs, recall that these arguments are normally more relevant in the sentence than DOs because they prototypically refer to human beings, and they normally outrank DOs as for topicality (Langacker 1991: 236–239, Company 1998: 539–440). In short, in both Spanish and Catalan the emergence of non-agreeing dative clitics in some varieties means going one step beyond the generalization of doubling. The final consequence of the depronominalization of dative clitics is the loss ofagreement.

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In the following subsections, we describe the scope, contexts of appearance, and incompatibilities of the phenomenon in Spanish and Catalan –it is worth mentioning that the phenomenon is notably incipient in Catalan, and therefore not stable. The observations made for Catalan are based on the examples we have been collecting over the past few years using the following sources, representative of several dialects, mainly Central Catalan and Valencian Catalan: spontaneous speech, oral media (TV and radio), written (on-line) press, and books. This preliminary approach will undoubtedly have to be completed in the future by interviewing informants and/or using extensive corpora which allow to obtain relevant data related to the frequency of the phenomenon, and to control for variables such as age or dialect.

3.3.1. *Type of predicates*

Non-agreeing clitics appear with psych-predicates, such as *agradar* 'please' (17a) or *molestar* 'bother' (17b), pseudoimpersonal verbs, such as *passar* 'occur' (17c), and transfer-of-possession and transfer-of-communication verbs, i.e. ditransitive verbs featuring a DO and IO, such as *donar* 'give' (18a,b) or *dir* 'tell' (18c). Catalan examples are given below (from Pineda 2018):

(17) a. Quin tipus de dona *li*$_{[sg]}$ agrada més
what kind of woman CL.DAT.SG please.PRS.3SG more
als *homes?*
to.the men
'What kind of woman pleases men?'
(*Catalunya Diari*, 5/11/2016)

b. El que en el fons *li*$_{[sg]}$ molesta *als*
what deep down CL.DAT.SG bother.PRS.3SG to.the
socialistes$_{[pl]}$ és que hàgem posat en marxa un
socialists is that have.SBJV.1PL started up a
Bioparc magnífic
Bioparc superb
'What bothers the socialists deep down is that we have started up a superb Bioparc'
(*Valencia.es*, news portal of the València city council, 29/01/2010)

c. Què *li*$_{[sg]}$ deu passar *als* *micos*$_{[pl]}$
what CL.DAT.SG must.3SG occur.INF to.the monkeys
de Gibraltar?
from Gibraltar
'What must happen to the monkeys from Gibraltar?'
(Central Catalan, RAC1 radio station, middle-aged woman, 2017)

(18) a. quins consells *li*$_{[sg]}$ donava *als* *seus* *alumnes*$_{[pl]}$
what advice CL.DAT.3SG give.IPFV.3SG to.the his pupils
per a ser millor professional?
to be better professional
'what advice did you give to your pupils to be a better professional?'
(*Catalunya Press*, 01/04/2016)

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b. Ui, pipes de carabassa. Això és lo que
wow, seeds of pumpkin this is what
li[sg] donen *als* *pardals*[pl]!
CL.DAT.3SG give.PRS.3PL to.the birds
'Wow, pumpkin seeds. This is what one gives to birds'
(spontaneous speech, Valencian Catalan, Alt Vinalopó, young man, 2017)

c. el govern *li*[sg]] diu *als*
the government CL.DAT.3SG say.PRS.3SG to.the
espanyols[pl] que vetllarà per…
Spaniards that look.after.FUT.3SG for
'the government tells the Spaniards that it will look after…'
(*Vilaweb*, 18/06/2015)

These are all verbs with which clitic doubling is becoming more and more systematic in the relevant Catalan varieties (Todolí 2002). The dative argument in these verbs is different in nature: it is an experiencer/benefactive/malefactive in the case of psychological and pseudoimpersonal predicates in (17), and it is a recipient or goal in the case of transfer predicates in (18). Importantly, in both cases they are licensed by means of an applicative head –a High Appl in the former case, a Low Appl in the latter case. We will go back to this when presenting the formal analysis in subsection 3.4 below.

3.3.2. *Position of the IO*

The position of the IO is a factor conditioning the loss of agreement of the doubling clitic. Several authors have pointed out that a necessary condition of the *le*-for-*les* phenomenon in Spanish is the postverbal position of the IO (Alcina & Blecua 1975: 608, Fernández Ramírez 1987: 51, Soler 1992: 66-67, Company 2003: 238, Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera 2017: 104-105).[7,8] The V-IO order requirement also holds in Catalan, as can be seen in the examples above. We have not found a single example of lack of agreement with preverbal IOs, i.e., left-dislocated IOs, as in (19). Actually, a survey with some informants allowed us to confirm that, if the order of any of the previous examples is altered, we obtain ungrammatical results:

(19) **als* *espanyols*[pl] , el govern *li*[sg]]
to.the Spaniards the government CL.DAT.3SG

[7] But see also Huerta Flores (2005: 184-185) who notes the incipient presence of the phenomenon also when the IO is preverbal, in Mexican Spanish; and Soler (1992: 62) for a similar observation regarding other dialects, such as the Spanish varieties spoken in Argentina, Chile and Caracas. Company (2003: 238) also mentions this slight progress of the phenomenon with IO in marked (i.e. preverbal) positions. This can be seen as proof of how advanced the phenomenon is in Spanish.

[8] As an anonymous reviewer points out, supporting evidence for this claim is found in other phenomena across Romance. For example, in some Northwestern varieties of Catalan, unaccusative verbs don't agree with their postverbal subject (third person plural), as shown in (i) (see Solà 1973, 1987; Rigau 1991). Similarly, as the reviewer points out, in Romanian the failure to undergo subject-predicate agreement in number in the third person typically occurs with postverbal subjects, not with preverbal ones.

(i) Arriba turistes.
arrive.PRS.3SG tourists
'Tourists arrive.'

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diu	que	vetllarà	per…
say.PRS.3SG	that	look.after.FUT.3SG	for

'to the Spaniards, the government tells them that it will look after…'

Huerta Flores (2005: 185) points out that in the IO-V order the precedence of the IO helps speakers having a clear idea of the number of the IO, which makes the loss of agreement more difficult. In addition, dislocated objects occupy a clearly topical position and are discursively prominent and core arguments, therefore there is no need to resort to any verbal mark to signal their centrality or prominence. Actually, being dislocated objects, these examples do no longer contain a doubling clitic, but a reasumptive one, which stands for an argument that is not present in the matrix clause, as in (16) above.[9]

3.3.3. *Factors causing degradation of the IO*

There are lexical-semantic, syntactic and pragmatic factors that may contribute to maintain or erode the prototypical features of the IO, and therefore they can complicate the quick and clear codification of the weakened or degraded IO, thus creating a context for the need of a verbal marker indicating the presence of such an argument, i.e. creating a context for the non-agreeing dative clitics we see in the *le*-for-*les* pattern.[10] As Huerta Flores (2005: 172) points out, a degraded IO has to look for a mechanism to recover its centrality and prominence, and this rescue mechanism is the transformation of a doubling clitic into an affix or marker located in the verb and responsible for anticipating or signaling the presence of the IO in the structure. In short, it seems that one can associate the loss ofagreement with a series of factors which, for one reason or the other, undermine a quick and clear codification of the IO and therefore degrade it.

First, the degradation of the IO can be lexical-semantic. A prototypical IO is [+human/animate], [+definite], [+volitive], etc. Thus, IOs referring to entities located at the periphery of the *IO category* (that is, entities lacking features such as animacy, individuation, concreteness, volition, definiteness, activity and energy) will be more prone to trigger the lack of agreement. Huerta Flores' (2005: 173) corpus study on Mexican Spanish concludes that the lack of agreement is proportionally more frequent with inanimate IOs: 82% of inanimate IOs present a non-agreeing dative clitic, while the percentage with animate IO is lower, 52%[11]. Also Soler (1993: 66–67) confirms that the [-human] feature of the IO is a triggering factor for Spanish *le*-for-*les*.

[9] Actually, any kind of dislocated object, even if it is right-dislocated and thus postverbal, does not allow for the lack of agreement

(i)

el	govern	*li*$_{[sg]}$	diu	que	
the	government	CL.DAT.3SG	say.PRS.3SG	that	
vetllarà		per…	,	**als*	*espanyols*$_{[pl]}$,
look.after.FUT.3SG	for	to.the	Spaniards		

'the government tells them that it will look after…, to the Spaniards'

[10] In addition to the factors that will be described, Huerta Flores (2005: 177) also mentions that the phrase expansion of the IO (with adjectives, appositions, relative clauses, prepositional phrases…) may contribute to degrade the IO. Even if a priori such modifiers emphasize and specify the information of the head of the IO, they can also trigger difficulties for the clear and quick identification of the IO. In the corpus study on Mexican Spanish by Huerta Flores (2005), 76% of expanded IOs co-occur with a non-agreeing clitic, whereas "only" 50% of non-expanded IOs do. Our Catalan data do not seem to conclude anything about the relevance of this factor.

[11] The author goes further and establishes a distinction between abstract inanimates (featuring lack of agreement in 100% of the occurrences) and concrete inanimates (79%). Thus, if an IO, in addition to being inanimate, is also abstract, it is even more distant from the prototype of the category, which is usually concrete and specific.

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Although there is not a similar corpus study for Catalan allowing to compare the impact of non-agreement in human vs. non-human IOs, Pineda (2018) points out that probably the compatibility of [-human] IOs with the lack of agreement also holds for Catalan, since these IOs are not prototypical. Actually, examples of non-agreeing doubling clitics with inanimate IOs are found:[12]

(20) a. *Li* llevem valor *a* *les* *coses*
CL.DAT.SG take.PRS.1PL value to the things
'We take value from things.'
(spontaneous speech, Valencian Catalan, Marina Alta, young man, 2017)

b. la importància que el diari *li*$_{[sg]}$
the importance that the newspaper CL.DAT.SG
donava *als* *fets*$_{[pl]}$
give.IPFV.3SG to.the facts
'the importance that the newspaper was giving to the facts'
(*Mèdia.cat, Observatori crític dels mitjans*, 16/12/2016)

c."Experiència és el nom que tothom *li*$_{[sg]}$
experience is the name that everybody CL.DAT.SG
dóna als seus errors$_{[pl]}$" Oscar Wilde
give.PRS.3SG to.the his/her mistakes
' "Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes" Oscar Wilde'
(*Butlletí del Col·legi de Censors Jurats de Comptes de Catalunya*, May 2017)

d. qui especula i no *li*$_{[sg]}$
who speculate.PRS.3SG and not CL.DAT.SG
dóna *als* *habitatges*$_{[pl]}$ la seva finalitat
give.PRS.3SG to.the homes their purpose
'who speculates and does not give the homes their purpose'
(Web news *3/24*, 22/02/2016)

This does not mean, of course, that the phenomenon is restricted to inanimate IOs, but there are many other lexical-semantic factors that may trigger the phenomenon we are interested in, also with human IOs. A relevant factor is the distinction between plural objects with a more defined number category and plural objects with a more united sense (Huerta Flores 2005: 176). Thus, in many of the examples given in sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.3 one can see the united sense of plurality, which refers to a rather generic or undetermined group of entities: men, children, birds... The fact that these plurals refer to collectives can be seen as a factor that blurs the specificity of the referent and causes the need to rescue the prominence of the IO by means of a non-agreeing clitic that appears as a verbal affix.

[12] In the case of Spanish, the difference in frequency of the *le*-for-*les* phenomenon between human/animate and inanimate IOs leads Huerta Flores (2005) to consider that the change must have started (or at least be much more preferable) with inanimate IOs, and subsequently extended to human IOs. However, we do not think that this was the case for parallel phenomenon in Catalan: since most Catalan varieties have a locative clitic available, the use of dative case with certain types of inanimate entities is less frequent. In other words, for many speakers doubling the inanimate IOs in (20) with a dative clitic is not an option, since they would rather treat them as locative complements, thus replaced by the locative clitic *hi.* Therefore, it is more likely to consider that non-agreeing dative clitics in Catalan started with human IOs and, afterwards, extended to inanimate IOs as the ones in (20) in those dialects (such as Valencian or Barcelona Catalan) where dative doubling is not restricted to human IO humans (see Pineda 2016: § 2.2.1.1).

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Another relevant lexical-semantic factor pointed out by Huerta Flores (2007: 178) has to do with the distinction between predicates with goal/recipient IOs and predicates with experiencer IOs, which we already mentioned in 3.3.1. Interestingly, transfer-of-possession predicates, which we argued are to be analyzed as Double Object Constructions (section 2), are especially prone to trigger the lack of agreement between the IO and the doubling clitic. This is so because the IO designates an entity experiencing a severe change of state, that is, a change that degrades its status as an active, volitive entity. If the IO is degraded, there will be more chances for the need to resort to a marker or affix (the non-agreeing clitic) in the verb to signal its presence and prominence. This affectedness/change of state of the IO can occur as a consequence of the transfer of an object into the physical space of the entity designated by the IO (in the case of ditransitive constructions such as 'give something to someone') or it can also be related to a sensory stimulus that enters the internal space of the entity designate by the IO (in the case of ditransitive predicates describing a perceptual/mental transfer, as in 'tell something to someone').

The prediction is borne out: IOs which are affected by the transfer event described by the verb co-occur with non-agreeing dative clitics very frequently, both in Spanish and in Catalan.[13] On the other hand, IOs with the experiencer role are considered to be less prone to trigger the lack of agreement: in the events they are involved in, the entity designated by the IO does not undergo any change of state but they are simply in a stative situation related to a psychological/emotional experience (in the case of constructions with psych-predicates, such as 'please to somebody') or an existential experience (in the case of unaccusative and existential verbs, such as 'occur to somebody', 'lack to somebody'). These IOs are thus less affected, their status as prominent objects is more easily preserved, and thus there is a smaller need to resort to a verbal affix. In Huertas Flores' (2005: 179) corpus study of Mexican Spanish, the percentage of recipient IOs with *le*-for-*les* is 59%, in front of 45% with experiencer IOs. The preliminary data available for Catalan data (Pineda 2018) seem to confirm this tendency towards a major frequency of the phenomenon with recipient IOs predicates (18) than with experiencer ones (17).

[13] In addition to these recipient goals, we also think that another type of affected IOs corresponds to those designating the beneficiary of a transitive event or the possessor of the DO. Several non-agreeing examples have been found in Catalan:

(i) a. *Li*$_{[sg]}$ fan un regal *als* *cuiners*$_{[pl]}$
CL.DAT.SG make.PRS.3PL a present to.the cooks
'They make a present to the cooks'
(spontaneous speech, Central Catalan, Barcelona, young man, 2017)

b. *Li* compro una rosa *a* *totes* *les* *treballadores*$_{[pl]}$
CL.DAT.SG buy.PRS.1SG a rose to all the working.women
'I buy a rose to all working women'
(spontaneous speech, Central Catalan, Cardedeu, young man, 2018)

c. El que no t' agrada que et
what not you please.PRS.3SG that you
facin a tu, tu no l'hi$_{[sg]}$
do.SBJV.3PL to you you not CL.ACC.SG=CL.DAT.SG
facis *als* *altres*$_{[pl]}$
do.IMP.2SG to.the others
'What you don't like the others to do to you, don't do it to the others'
(Ernest Folch, RAC1 radio station, middle-aged man, 2017)

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Transfer-of-possession predicates with recipient IOs (18) are also subject to syntactic degradation of the IO. An IO is syntactically degraded when it appears with other core constituents in the sentence, such as a DO –actually, the idea that the competition between a DO and IO may trigger changes in the dative is also pointed out by Company (1998, 2002). In ditransitive constructions (18) there is an argument competition between the DO and the IO to be the "object argument" of the sentence (Huerta Flores 2005: 181). This competition causes a categorial weakening of the IO, whose discourse prominence decreases. In this context, the non-agreeing dative clitic functions as a verbal affix reinforcing and highlighting the presence of the IO in the sentence (Huerta Flores 2005: 172).[14] Data from Huerta Flores' corpus study on Mexican Spanish confirm that in ditransitive structures we find the *le*-for-*les* in 62% of the cases, while in structures without DO the phenomenon occurs in 48% of the cases.[15] Our preliminary study of Catalan (Pineda 2018) confirms that the syntactic degradation of the IO could also play a role in the *li*-for-*els[i]* phenomenon in this language, as most of the examples we collected correspond to ditransitive structures, with a DO and an IO. At the same time, our informants confirmed that sentences whose DO is left unexpressed do significantly much worse with non-agreeing dative clitics:

(21) Aquest entrenador {*els[i]* / *??li*} exigia massa
this trainer CL.DAT.PL / SG demand.IPFV.3SG too.much
als jugadors
to.the players
'This trainer used to demand to much of the players.'

Finally, an IO may also be degraded on the pragmatic side. This occurs if it loses its topicality: if the IO is seen as less central and less connected to the event, its codification becomes less clear. Specifically, an IO will be pragmatically degraded if it does not take part in the event and it is mentioned as an add-on. In this context, the loss of agreement is a mechanism to integrate the IO in the sentence by means of a verbal affix. The non-agreeing clitic is thus a mechanism to emphasize the IO as a main argument in the sentence and reinforce the tie between the IO and the event (Huerta Flores 2005: 183). Huerta Flores' (2005: 183) corpus study on Mexican Spanish confirms that 62% of pragmatically non-core IOs lose their agreement, whereas the percentage is slightly lower with pragmatically core arguments, 52%. However, the classification provided by Huerta Flores (2005: 184, examples (7)) regarding pragmatically core and non-core arguments is not very clear to us, so we will not consider this variable with respect to the Catalan examples.

In sum, a variety of factors that may cause a degradation of the IO have been described. Crucially, many of them happen to concur in the DOC pattern assessed in section 2[16]. When such degradation of the IO takes place, the dative argument needs to be

[14] The co-occurrence of the subject does not have any influence (Huerta Flores 2005: 173, fn. 11). This may be due to the fact that in transitive constructions the subject is an external argument, located outside the VP, whereas the DO, located inside the VP, is much closer to the IO, which is also VP-internal.

[15] All the examples without DO given by Huerta Flores (2005) correspond to ditransitive verbs whose DO is left unexpressed because it is understood or generic, as in *Me niego a rentarles a mexicanos* 'I refuse to rent to Mexicans'. However, the author does not say if all the examples used in the corpus are like this one or alternatively include unaccusative constructions, such as 'occur to someone', which by definition lack a DO.

[16] It is worth noting that the above-mentioned factors may have different degrees of influence and of course there is no need for all of them to concur at the same time for the loss of agreement to take place.

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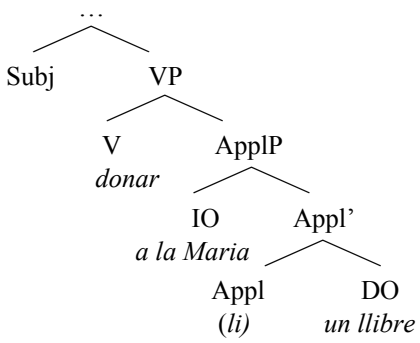
restored as a prominent object in the sentence. This restoration is provided by the dative clitic: it is depronominalized and attaches to the verb as a simple marker of anticipation and highlighting of the IO, with the subsequent lack of number agreement. The following subsection is devoted to show how an analysis for non-agreeing doubling clitics can be formally implemented if we make use of applicative heads.

3.4. Formal analysis of non-agreeing dative clitics

In section 2 we provided an analysis of Romance ditransitive constructions expressing a transfer-of-possession. More specifically, we proposed that the IO is introduced and licensed in the structure by an applicative head (Pylkkänen 2002, 2008). The applicative analysis allows accounting for the co-occurrence of the doubling clitic and the lexical IO and, as will be seen now, it also accounts for the loss of agreement between the doubling clitic and the IO described above. Recall that the presence of applicative heads in Romance languages has been put forward by Cuervo (2003) for Spanish, Diaconescu & Rivero (2007) for Romanian, Fournier (2010) for French, Torres Morais & Salles (2010) for Portuguese and Pineda (2016, in press) for Catalan, among others. In addition, for Romance languages that allow for doubling the IOs with a clitic, as is the case of Spanish, Romanian and Catalan, it has been argued that the doubling clitic is the spell out of the applicative head, as shown in (10) above or (22) below.

Pylkkänen's (2002: 15) pioneering work on applicatives distinguished the existence of two types of applicatives in the languages of the world. Low applicatives, as shown in (10) above and also (22) below, merge as a complement of the verb and ensure a transfer-of-possession relation between the argument in complement position (DO) and the applied argument, in the specifier position (IO). The applied argument is thus interpreted as the recipient of the DO. Ditransitive predicates such as 'give something to someone' or 'tell something to someone' correspond to this structure, presented in (22) –we disregard any theoretical details which are not relevant now:

(22) Low applicative: *(Li) donarem un llibre a la Maria* 'We will give Mary a book'



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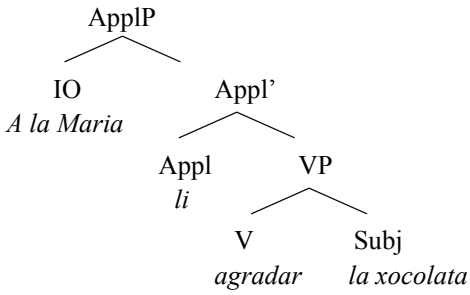
In turn, High applicatives are structurally licensed above the verb, and take the VP as a complement, as shown in (23) below –again, the structure is deprived of any theoretical detail not relevant now. Thus High applicatives establish a semantic relationship between the applied argument (the IO, in the specifier position of the applicative) and the event expressed by the VP. The applied argument is interpreted as the beneficiary, possessor or experiencer of the whole event expressed by the VP. This structure corresponds to psychological predicates such as *agradar* 'please'*, molestar* 'bother', etc. as well as pseudoimpersonal verbs such as *passar* 'occur'*, ocórrer* 'occur'.

(23) High applicative: *A la Maria li agrada la xocolata* 'Mary likes chocolate'



Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera (2017: 103, 105) adopt the applicative analysis to account for the presence of non-agreeing dative doubling clitics in Spanish. They specifically argue that in a sentence such as (23a), with an IO doubled by an agreeing clitic, the doubling clitic is the spell out of the applicative morpheme and the agreement morpheme. On the other side, in a sentence such as (23b), with an IO doubled by a non-agreeing clitic, the clitic is the spell-out of just the applicative head, without the agreement morpheme[17]. Using Company (2003) and Huerta Flores' (2005) terms, the *depronominalization* of the doubling clitic, which means going step forward in the path towards the obligatorification of clitic doubling, implies the suppression of the agreement morpheme: agreement is no longer seen as necessary, because the clitic has become a mere verbal affix signaling the presence and prominence of the IO.

(23) a. *Les* daremos un regalo *a los niños*.
CL.DAT.PL give.FUT.1PL a present to the kids
'We will give the children a present.'

[17] Recall from fn. 3 the assumption that the applicative head is deprived of uninterpretable φ-features, and therefore cannot as a Probe; and that the IO has an abstract dative Case feature (interpretable) which does not need to be valued under Agree. Also, recall from section 2 that, when presenting the analysis of Romance DOCs, we obviated the movement that doubling clitics undergo to end up being pronounced where they are, just next to the verb. This movement is explicitly shown now, in the structrures that are based on Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera's (2017) analysis. This analysis further specifies that doubling clitics may stand for just an applicative morpheme, or an applicative morpheme plus an agreement morpheme.

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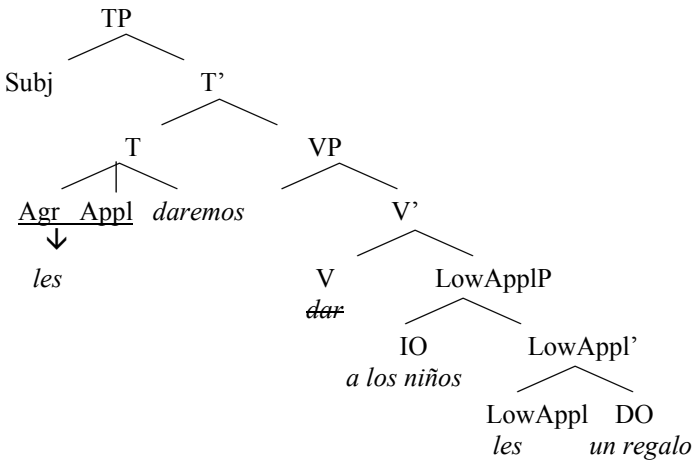
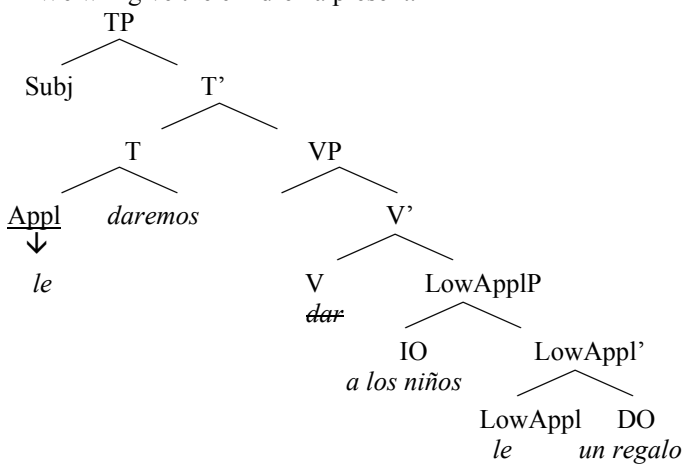


b. *Le* daremos un regalo *a los niños*.
CL.DAT.SG give.FUT.1PL a present to the kids
'We will give the children a present.'



Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera (2017) focus on examples with transfer-of-possession predicates such as 'give', whose structure contains a Low applicative head (23). Crucially, in subsections 3.3.1-3.3.3 we saw that transfer-of-possession predicates are especially prone to trigger the emergence of non-agreeing clitics, and these predicates have also been the focus of attention in section 2, when defending the presence of applicative heads in Romance languages. However, we think that the analysis in (23b) also holds for non-agreeing dative clitics with psychological and pseudoimpersonal verbs, whose structure contains a High applicative instead of a low one. Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera's analysis for non-agreeing dative clitics rests on the theoretical assumption that dative and accusative clitics can be treated the same. Crucially, accusative clitics (24) have been analyzed as morphological agreement markers (Suñer 1988), similar to subject agreement markers in verbal desinences (as in Spanish *cant-amos* 'we sing').

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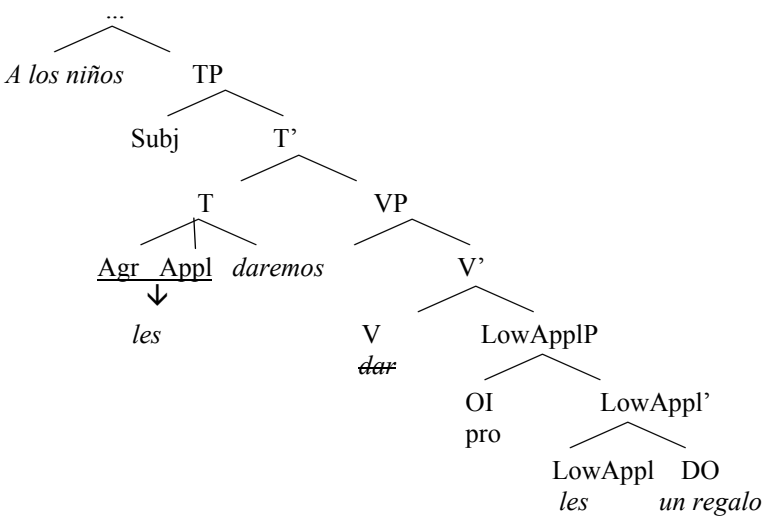
(24) a. *Te* *vi* *a* *ti*
you(CL.ACC) see.PST.1SG DOM you
'I saw you.'
b. *L'* *estimo* *a* *ell*
him(CL.ACC) love.PRS.1SG DOM him
'I love him.'

After providing extensive evidence on the parallelism between accusative and dative clitics (which we can not reproduce here for reasons of space), Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera (2017: 109) transpose the view of accusative clitics onto dative clitics: doubling accusative clitics (24) are agreement morphemes, and doubling dative clitics decompose into a compulsory applicative morpheme and an optional agreement morpheme (23). This agreement layer is located in the Tense head, which corresponds to verbal inflection. Again, the idea of the clitic instantiating just an applicative morpheme in the Tense head connects with Company (2003) and Huerta Flores' (2005) view of the non-agreeing dative clitic as a verbal affix. Finally, recall that in subsection 3.3.2 we saw that non-agreeing clitics do not emerge with preverbal (dislocated) IOs. This restriction is accounted for once we assume that such IOs are external to the VP (Alexiadou 2006), while what we have inside the VP in the IO position is a truly *pronominal* element (25). This configuration, akin to the one in (24) with strong pronouns functioning as DOs, triggers the obligatory presence of an agreement morpheme, therefore non-agreeing clitics are not possible in Spanish (Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera 2017: 114) –nor in Catalan (Pineda 2018):

(25) *A* *los* *niños* *les* daremos un regalo.
to the kids CL.DAT.SG give.FUT.1PL a present
'To the kids, we will give them a present.'



In short, we believe that Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera's (2017) proposal of decomposition of doubling dative clitics into an agreement morpheme and an applicative

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morpheme provides a satisfactory account for the emergence of non-agreeing dative clitics, in particular in the context DOC conveying a transfer-of-possession meaning and thus having a structure with a Low applicative head. In our view, the formal analysis presented here fits in with the description of the lexical-semantic, syntactic and pragmatic conditions under which lack of agreement between the IO and the doubling clitic is possible.[18] More generally, what this phenomenon seems to be telling us is that the role and import of doubling clitics in Romance ditransitives is subject to variation, and in particular it is evolving toward an obligatory element in some varieties, subsequently losing its anaphoric status, to end up being a simple flag that signals the presence of a prominent argument (the IO) in the sentence.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper we have focused on the role of dative clitic doubling in Romance ditransitive constructions, with a special focus on Spanish and Catalan. Following Pineda (2016, in press), in Section 2 we have argued that the transposition of the so-called English dative alternation, composed by the double object construction and the *to*-dative construction, onto Romance languages fails in a dramatic way if one wants to establish a structural and semantic distinction between clitic-doubled and non clitic-doubled Romance ditransitives. An alternative approach to Romance ditransitives has been proposed, where the absence or presence of clitic doubling boils down to the optional spell out of an Appl head. In section 3 we have delved into the *optionality* of dative clitic doubling in several Romance varieties, showing that in many of them speakers tend to clitic-double IOs systematically (see subsections 3.1–3.2). This has led us to reconsider the role that one should attribute to the doubling clitic: following Huerta Flores (2005) and others, we have argued that, once the clitic becomes obligatory, it looses its anaphoric status and becomes a grammatical marker attached to the verb whose sole function is to indicate that there is a prominent argument in the sentence, the IO, whose prominence has been diminished by a variety of factors (see subsection 3.3). We have finally adopted Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera's (2017) formal analysis of non-agreeing dative clitics, showing that the process of systematization of dative clitic doubling among many Spanish and Catalan speakers is changing the nature of the dative clitic: as its presence becomes obligatory, it is deprived of its anaphoric value and therefore the agreement morpheme is no longer there, allowing for non-agreeing clitics to emerge (see subsection 3.4). Once that occurs, the dative clitic becomes a mere verbal affix, instantiating just an applicative morpheme, and emphasizing or reinforcing the presence and prominence of the IO.

[18] However, we must acknowledge that Ausín & Fernández-Rubiera's (2017) proposal also faces some problems, which we are willing to investigate in future research. As an anoynomous reviewer points out, alternative analyses where agreeing and non-agreeing clitics end up in (or start out from) different positions should also be taken into consideration. It is true that diachronic changes like the one under study are usually associated with different merging sites (see Roberts and Roussou 2003, among others). If that were the case for non-agreeing clitics too, one could entertain the possibility that the structure reflecting a more advanced grammaticalization (the one with the non-agreeing clitic) corresponds to a higher merging position of the clitic (i.e. involving upward reanalysis) or movement up to a higher position.

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