# ROMANIAN POSSESSIVE DATIVE – THE LIMITS OF THE STRUCTURE

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**Abstract.** This paper explores the syntax and semantics of the Romanian structure with a dative clitic which has possessive value. Romanian has a very broad use of this configuration, among Romance languages. The choice for the possessive dative construction, over the possessive adjective, is determined by semantic and pragmatic factors. The possibility for a verb which is not subcategorized for a dative argument to receive it is explained as a syntactic phenomenon, following the Construction theory. A typology of the possessive dative structure according to the capacity of doubling is suggested.

## 0. INTRODUCTION

Romanian, like all other Romance languages, can encode possession through a sentence-level structure, in which the possessor is expressed as a dative pronominal clitic whose host is the verb, and the possessum, as a DP with different syntactic functions (subject, object, prepositional object, adverbial). Considering that the clitic and the determiner phrase which take part in the possessive structure are not syntactically dependent on one another, the existence of a relation between them is marked by different means: by a discourse strategy – anaphora, and, optionally, by a referential property – inherence of possession.

The phrase "possessive dative" covers two meanings in Romanian grammars: it is the label given to the dative clitic which encodes the possessor, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it names a specific syntactic function, which the above mentioned pronominal form receives in the sentence (Dindelegan, 1994, p. 129−131).

This paper takes as starting point the assertion that the possessive dative is the unmarked manner to express possession in Romanian (Şerbănescu, 1999, Van Peteghem, 2000). I shall try to attempt to determine the factors that lead to the occurrence of a possessive dative structure in Romanian, as well as which semantic and syntactic restrictions Romanian imposes on this configuration. I shall suggest a syntactic analysis of the dative clitic on basis of Construction Theory (Hole *et al.,* 2006) and a typology of the dative possessive structure, on basis of doubling capacity. Another objective of the paper will be to delimit the contexts in which the dative clitic has possessive function: I will suggest that the role of possessor can combine with other roles, such as experiencer, beneficiary, target.

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The following features characterize the possessive dative structure with verbal host:

− The construction admits exclusively a dative pronominal *clitic*;

− The clitic's morphosyntactic host can be only the verb;

− The adverbal possessive dative is, depending on the context, a special clitic[1], if the verb is only a morphosyntactic host (1), or a simple clitic, lacking prosodic accent, if the verb is also its phonological host (2);

(1) ***îi*** *văd mama/**le** confiscă jucăria*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-see$_{1.SG.}$ mother-the/**CL**$_{3.PL.D.}$ takes away toy-the
'I can see his mother/he takes away their toy'

(2) ***i**-am văzut mama/ **le**-a confiscat jucăriile*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-saw$_{1.SG.}$ mother-the/**CL**$_{3.PL.D.}$-took away toys-the
'I saw his mother/he took away his toys';

− The clitic has a fixed position in relation to the verb: it is preverbal (3), with the exception of imperatives and gerunds (4):

(3) ***Mi**-am pierdut cartea.*
'I lost my book.'

(4) *Dă-**mi** cartea!*
'Give me the book!'
*dându-**mi** cartea*
'giving me the book';

− The clitic's adjacency to the verb is obligatory, the only elements that can come in between being other clitics (*mai* 'more', *tot* 'keep on', etc.):

(5) *******îți **acum** rupi piciorul*
**CL**$_{2.SG.D.}$ now break$_{2.SG:}$ leg-the
'you are now breaking your leg'
*îți **tot** rupi piciorul*
**CL**$_{2.SG.D.}$ keep$_{2.SG.}$ on breaking leg-the
'you keep on breaking your leg';

− The dative clitic can have a [+/-Animate] referent:

(6.a) ***Ioana**$_i$ **și**$_i$-a spart capul.*
'Ioana$_i$ broke her$_i$ head.'[+ Animate]

(6.b) ***Radioului**$_i$ **i**$_i$ s-au terminat bateriile.*
'The batteries of the radio are empty.' [− Animate];

− The dative personal pronoun with possessive function can enter into a coreference chain with a genitive (7), or with a dative nominal (8) in a clitic doubling structure;

(7) *Ion **își**$_i$ vede propriile **lui**$_i$ limitări.*
Ion **CL**$_{3.SG.D.i}$ sees own-the **his**$_i$ limitations.
'Ion sees his own limitations.'

[1] The distinction between a simple (phonological) and a special (syntactic) was made by A. Zwicky, *On Clitics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Linguistic Club, 1977).

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(8) *Ion$_i$ **i**-a adus înapoi **lui Mihai$_i$** cartea.*
Ion **CL**$_{3.SG.D.i}$-brought back **to Mihai$_i$** book-the
'Ion brought **Mihai$_i$ his$_i$** book back.'

− If the possessive dative structure encodes a part-whole relationship, the clitic is also coindexed with the nominal that designates the part; the clitic functions as an antecedent for the part-nominal, which, therefore, identifies its referent through an associative anaphora:

(9) ***Mi$_i$**-am rupt **mâna$_i$**.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.\ i}$–broke$_{1.SG.}$ hand$_i$-the
'I broke my hand.'

− In the part-whole configuration, encoding the possessor as a dative pronominal clitic induces a distributive effect (Vergnaud, Zubizarretta, 1992) on the second nominal in the structure: this one is typically in the singular, but has a distributive interpretation if the clitic is in plural:

(10) *Ion **le**-a sărutat doamnelor **mâna**. (= 'mâna fiecărei doamne')*
Ion **CL**$_{3.PL.D.}$-kissed ladies-the$_D$ **hand-the**. (=*'each lady's hand'*)
'Ion kissed the ladies' hands.'

## 1. POSSESSIVE MEANINGS EXPRESSED BY THE DATIVE CLITIC STRUCTURE

The possessive dative clitic is mainly used to express a relation of possession in its broad sense[2]. Following the cognitive grammar line (Langacker, 1993, Taylor, 1996), I consider *possession* to be a binary relation between two entities (a possessor and a possessum): the possessor bears the function of reference point in the process of identifying the possessum – as it is more prominent in the referential domain.

Possessive relations encoded by the dative clitic structure:

A. Inalienable associations:
   a. Kinship:
      (11) ***Îmi** iubesc mama.*
      'I love **my** mother.'
      ***Îi** cunosc unchiul.*
      'I know his uncle.';
   b. Part-whole relation, with a [+ animate], [+ human] (12) or [− animate] possessor (13):
      (12) *Ioana **şi**-a rupt **mâna**.*
      'Ioana broke her arm.'

[2] However, in a structure that contains a complex event nominal, the pronominal form expresses a former argument of the base verb: ***I**-am urmărit zborul de aproape*. (**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-*watched$_{1.SG.}$ the flight closely= I watched its flight closely*.)

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(13) *Ioana **i**-a rupt (mesei) **piciorul**.*
'Ioana broke its leg (= the leg of the table).';

c. Spatial relation, where the possessum designates a part of the whole by indicating its position in space:
(14) *Femeii acesteia nu **i**-am văzut **spatele** (= partea din spate).*
'I haven't seen this woman's back. = her back side;

d. The relation between a possessor and its inalienable property:
(15) ***Îi** urăsc **lipsa de respect**.*
'I hate her lack of respect.'
***Îi** apreciază **frumusețea** (oraşului).*
**'**He appreciates its beauty (= the town's beauty)'

e. The relation possessor – object which has the property encoded by the Accusative DP:
(16) *Nu toată lumea **îi** poate înțelege **subtilitățile**$_{Acc.}$(= remarcile subtile).*
'Not every one can understand his subtleties. = his subtle remarks'

f. The relation possessor – result of his action:
(17) ***I**-am urmărit **săriturile** în lungime.*
'I watched his long jumps.'

g. The relation possessor – person which is affected by the possessor's actions or states:
(18) *Nu-**i** cunosc toate **iubirile**. (= persoanele iubite de x).*
'I am not aware of all his loves.'

h. The inalienable locative relation: the possessor is the place in which the possessum is situated (the equivalence *recipient = possessor* is made):
(19) *Am ajuns la Someş. După ce **i**-am traversat **apa**, am făcut un popas.*
'We arrived at the river Someş. After crossing its waters, we stopped for a while.'

i. The relation between the possessor which is a spatial source and the possessum entity which originates in that space:
(20) ***Acestei vii i**-a fost premiat vinul.*
'The wine of this vine was awarded a prize.'

B. Alienable possession:

j. Possession proper:
(21) *Apa **i**-a distrus **casa**.*
'The water destroyed his house.'
*Am văzut maşina ta nouă. **I**-am admirat **husele** de scaun.*
'I have seen your new car. I admired its chair covers.'

k. The functional relation (the possessor has a function in relation to the possessum):

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(22) ***Ți**-am condus **șeful** la aeroport.*
'I have seen your boss off to the airport.'
*Satului nostru **i**-a fost incendiată **primăria**.*
'The mayor's hall of our village was set on fire.

l. The alienable locative relation: the possessor is a recipient which contains the possessum:
(23) *Ai dreptate că pomul meu este bolnav. ?**I**-am văzut și eu **omizile**.*
'You are right that my tree is sick. ?I have seen its caterpillars too.'

All relations that were considered as belonging to the domain of *possession* can be lexicalized through a possessive dative structure. The Romanian possessive dative has *a very broad use*, comparable to the Spanish parallel structure, and much broader the French one, which can encode only a part-whole relation (Lamiroy, Delbeque, 1998).

## 2. POSSESSION AND THE DATIVE CASE. THE VALUES OF THE ROMANIAN DATIVE

In relation to its main use (that of "target"), the semantic value of possession is a secondary meaning of the dative case, as are the *beneficiary* of *experiencer*. Using the cognitive grammar frame, an attempt was made to explain the variety of meanings of the dative as a result of mechanisms such as generalization, metaphorization or metonymy (Geeraerts, 1998). The dative case expresses two primary thematic relations, "target" and "interested party". They can unite in some configurations, giving way to the function of "recipient". To these, "human roles" can be added, i.e. relations that imply a human entity *(the possessor, the experiencer* and *the beneficiary)*. A "human role" can be added to the function of *target*. The result is a complex thematic relation, of the type "target + possessor" (Van Langendonck, 1996).

In the following section I shall discuss the thematic relations encoded by the dative case, focusing on those structures in which the possessive meaning is added to a certain semantic function.

The meanings of the dative in Romance languages have been studied starting from the values of the Latin dative. I shall take over this typology, since Romanian has preserved most of the functions of the Latin dative case.

### 2.1. The dative of target (*Dativus dandi*)

This is the prototypical meaning of the dative case, realized in the vicinity of a *transfer verb.* Material transfer from a source entity, expressed as a $DP_N$, to a target entity (the dative DP) is encoded by the verb *a da* ('to give') and by the

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series: *a oferi* (‘to offer’), *a dărui* (‘to offer’), *a împrumuta* (‘to lend’), *a trimite* (‘to send’), *a vinde* (‘to sell’), *a aduce* (‘to bring’), etc.:

(24) ***Îți*** *ofer florile acestea.*

‘I offer these flowers to you.’

The antonymic series: *a lua* (‘to take’), *a fura* (‘to steal’), *a prelua* (‘to take over’), *a scoate* (‘to take out’), etc. *(25)* can be added. Here the direction of the transaction is reversed, so that the source is encoded as a dative DP, and the target as a subject DP. In this second series, the dative nominal which functions as a source is also the *possessor* of the transferred object:

(25) ***Îți*** *vând bijuteriile (tale).*

**CL**$_{2.SG..D.}$ sell$_{1.SG.}$ jewells-the (your)

‘I am selling your jewells.’

***Îți*** *fur mâncarea (ta).*

‘I am stealing your food.’

The dative clitic that encodes the target in a configuration with verbs of material transfer can express the possessor in a context of the type:

(26) ***Îți*** *dau cartea (ta).*

**CL**$_{2.SG..D.}$ give$_{1.SG.}$ book-the (your)

‘I am giving you your book.’

The possessor of the transferred object and the target of the transfer must have the same referent. In the pragmatic organization of the sentence, this means that the transacted entity is part of the old discourse information. This nominal will either be definite (27), or indefinite with a partitive reading (28):

(27) *Îți dau carte****a*** *pe care mi-ai împrumutat-o acum o lună.*

‘I am giving you **the** book that you lent me last month.’

(28) *Îți dau* ***o*** *carte din cele patru pe care mi le-ai împrumutat*.

‘I am giving you **a** book of the four that you lent me.’

The transferred entity can never be an inherently possessed object, because in this situation it is the source entity, encoded as the Nominative DP, and not the dative clitic, that automatically functions as a possessor:

(29) *(Eu$_i$)* ***îți*** *dau o mână$_i$ de ajutor.*

‘I$_i$ am giving you a helping hand$_i$.’

If possession in not inherent, the source can be doubly lexicalized as the Nominative DP and as the dative clitic:

(30) *(Eu$_i$)* ***îmi$_i$*** *dau banii$_i$* ***nevoiașilor$_j$****.*

‘I$_i$ am giving my$_i$ money to the needy$_j$.’

The verbal and perceptual transfer (expressed by verbs as: *a spune* (‘to tell’), *a zice* (‘to say’), *a adresa* (‘to address’), *a striga* (‘to shout’), *a scrie* (‘to write’), *a transmite* (‘to transmit’), *a arăta* (‘to show’), *a comunica* (‘to communicate’) etc. − (Van Hoecke, 1996) also imply a target which is encoded as a dative clitic:

(31) ***Îți*** *spun o poveste.*

‘I am telling you a story.’

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The dative clitic receives possessive meaning if the transferred object is part of the old information of the discourse:

(32) ***Îmi*** *povestesc* ***romanul*** *(pe care l-am scris astă-vară) tuturor care vor să asculte*.

'I am telling the plot of my novel (that I wrote last summer) to anyone that wants to listen.'

Dative-possessor, old information

The clitic possessive pronoun is accepted by verbs of abstract transfer:

(33) ***Îți*** *strig numele/soțul/colegul/vecina.*

'I am calling your name/husband/neighbour.'

***Îți*** *scriu numele.*

'I am writing your name.'

The clitic's doubling through a dative DP is possible:

(34) ***Ție îți*** *strig numele.*

to you **CL**$_{2.SG..D.}$-call$_{1.SG.}$ name-the

*I am calling YOUR name.*

Like the personal pronoun, the reflexive clitic form can express both inherent and non-inherent possession:

(35) ***Își*** *arată* ***dinții*** *albi.*

'He is showing his white teeth.'

***Îmi*** *transmit/comunic/arăt* ***intențiile****.*

'I transmit/communicate/show my intentions.' − Inherent relation

***Își*** *povestește* ***cartea****.*

'He tells the plot of his book.' − Free association

The reflexive pronominal clitic has to meet a supplementary condition for the structure to be grammatical: the referents of the clitic and of the DP-target should not be coreferential.

(36) ***Își***$_i$ *arată dinții albi* ***oamenilor***$_j$ *de pe stradă.*

'He$_i$ shows his$_i$ white teeth to the people$_j$ in the street.'

The reflexive pronominal clitic is used if the target and the possessor have different referents. Comparing the reflexive clitic (***Îți*** *strig numele.* 'I call **your** name.') with the personal clitic – both with possessive value, we can see that the latter does not allow the lexicalization of another dative DP, non-possessive:

(37) ****Îți*** *strig numele* ***mamei****.*

***** **CL**$_{2.SG..D.}$ call name-the to mom-the

'*****I call **your** name **to mom**.'.

This could suggest the following:

a. If the target-DP and the possessor-DP have different referents, the transfer verb allows the cooccurrence of the two dative constituents, with different roles: a lexical dative with the meaning *target* and a non-lexical dative, with possessive meaning.

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b. If the target-DP is coreferential with the possessor-DP, the verb does not accept their cooccurrence. Only one dative clitic can appear, in the form of a personal pronoun. This clitic will encode both thematic relations (cf. (37)).

2.2. The dative of interest **(***Dativus (in)commodi***)**

The thematic relation expressed by a dative DP which has the meaning "person in whose favour or disfavour the activity takes place" is that of *beneficiary*.

A beneficiary can be expressed in configurations with transitive resultative verbs: *a picta* ***cuiva*** *un tablou* ('to paint a painting **for someone**$_D$'), *a face* ***cuiva*** *o favoare* ('to make **someone**$_D$ a favour'), *a face* ***cuiva*** *o mâncare* ('to prepare **someone**$_D$ a dish'), etc.

(38) ***Îți*** *fac un tort.*

'I am baking a cake for you.'

If the action is directed towards an object which belongs to the entity functioning as a beneficiary, the meanings of beneficiary and possessor manifest simultaneously, therefore, the clitic cumulates two semantic relations:

(39) ***Îți*** *repar radioul.*

**CL**$_{2.SG.D.}$ repair$_{1.SG.}$ radio-the

'I am repairing **your** radio **for you**.'

***Îți*** *curăț hainele.*

**CL**$_{2.SG.D.}$ clean$_{1.SG.}$ clothes-the

'I am cleaning **your** clothes **for you**.'

In structures with the dative of interest, the beneficiary and possessor are obligatorily coreferential:

(40) ******Îmi***$_i$ *repar* ***lui Ion***$_j$ *radioul.*

****CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$ repair$_{1.SG.}$ **to Ion** the radio

For the clitic to receive possessive meaning, it is necessary for the direct object (the possessed entity) to be part of the text's old information.

**2.3. The dative of approach**

Certain locative and movement verbs are subcategorized for a *dative of approach* (Van Hoecke, 1996), which indicates the *destination* (if the verb is [+ dynamic]) or the *location* (if the verb is [− dynamic]) (***a se aşterne*** *drumului/câmpului* ('to set off on the way/on the field'), ***a se duce*** *naibii/dracului* ('to go to hell') – dynamic verbs, ***a rămâne*** *locului* ('to stay put'), ***a sta*** *locului* ('to stay put') – verbs of state). The construction with a dative of approach is limited to idiomatic expressions in Romanian. There is also an abstract meaning of *approach* which develops, that of comparing two objects in order to reveal their similarity or

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to put them in contrast. The dative DP designates the element with which the comparison is made (*a se asemăna **cuiva*** (‘to resemble **someone**’), *a prefera ceva **altcuiva*** (‘to prefer something **to something else**’), *a opune ceva **cuiva*** (‘to oppose something **to something else**’)).

The dative clitic can receive possessive meaning if it attaches to verbs that either show a movement oriented towards a target/destination, or a comparison between two entities:

(41) ***Îmi** ating limitele.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$ reach$_{1.SG.}$ limits-the
‘I am reaching my limits.’
***Îi** prefer mama tatălui.*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$ prefer$_{1.SG.}$ mother-the to father-the
‘I prefer his mother to his father.

(42) *Mâinile **ne** seamănă.*
hands-the **CL**$_{1.PL.D.}$ look alike
‘Our hands look alike.’

The transitive verbs (41) place the possessum in the direct object position, while the intransitive verbs place it in subject position (42).

### 2.4. The sympathetic dative (*Dativus sympatheticus*)

The verbs that refer to a process or a state which affects a participant to the event require a *sympathetic dative*, whose semantic value is that of *experiencer*:

(43) ***Îmi** place asta.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-likes this*
‘I like this.’
***Îmi** pasă de tine.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-cares of you*
‘I care about you.’

Generally, a structure containing a dative-experiencer can receive a supplementary possessive value if the object that suffers directly the action or the process represents the old information:

(44) ***Mi**-au venit **cinci turişti** azi la pensiune.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-came five tourists today to hostel*
Experiencer function, the subject is the rheme, [+dynamic] verb

(45) ***Mi**-a venit **ideea** în timp ce lucram.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-came idea-the while was$_{1.SG.}$ working*
Possessor function, the subject is the theme

In Romanian, this construction is used both to express a part-whole relation (45), and other types of associations included in the possessive domain (46), on condition that a pre-established relationship should exist between the two affected entities:

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(46) ***Mi**-a venit **copilul**.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-came child-the*
'My child came.' − Kinship
***Mi**-a venit **colegul**.*
'My colleague came.' − Functional relation
***Mi**-a venit **turistul**.*
'My tourist came.' − Accidental functional relation
***Mi**-a venit **factura de întreținere**.*
'My house expenses bill came.' − Possession proper

Not only dynamic, but also state verbs accept a DP that combines the function of experiencer with that of possessor:

(47) ***Mi**-e trist copilul.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$*-is sad child-the*
'My child is sad.'
***Mi**-e afectat creierul.*
'My brain is affected.' − Experiencer + Possessor

The possessive meaning manifests if the possessum is the thematic component of the sentence.

### 2.5. Possessive dative (*Dativus possessivus*)

This label covers Romanian constructions in which a personal pronominal clitic in the dative case indicates in any context the possessor of an entity.

**A. *The sum pro habeo structures***

Romanian preserves the Latin *sum pro habeo* structure *(*lat. *Domus est Marco = Marcus has the house.)*, expressing possession in a sentence which is equivalent to configurations whose centre is the verb *to have.* We can notice the equivalence:

(48) a. *Mihai îi **este** naş.*
'Mihai **is** godfather to him.'
b. *El îl **are** naş pe Mihai.*
'He **has** Mihai as godfather.'

The following configurations continue the *sum pro habeo* structure:

a. *Dative clitic + locative 'to be' + subject DP:*

(49) a. ***Mi**-e foame.*
'I am hungry.'

In subject position only DPs that refer to a physical or mental state are allowed. This leads to interpreting the clitic as experiencer of the state. Its function of possessor is suggested by the equivalence with sentences that contain the verb *to have*:

b. *Jucătorii **au** o foame mare de puncte.* (prosport.ro/index.php 15.09.2007)
'The players **have** a great hunger of points.'

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b. *Subject-possessum + clitic [D] + 'to be'+ locative:*

In this structure, the possessed object is encoded as subject, and the verb is supplementarily subcategorized for a locative, which can be realized as a DP or as an adverbial of place:

(50) *Copilul **îi** este aici.*
'His child is here.
*[...] apucă o fată de pestiman sau de salba care-**i** este împrejurul gâtului*
(www.unibuc.ro/eBooks/filologie/tanasescu/index.htm)
'He grabs the girl by the scarf or by the necklace that is around her neck.'

c. *Subject-possessum + clitic [+D]* + 'to be' (or *a veni* ('to come' − pop.)) + *predicative:*

(51) a. *Ion **îmi** este frate.*
'Ion is **my** brother.'
***i**-am fost oaspe în palatul său din Catania* Caragiale
(www.e-scoala.ro/biblioteca/mateiucaragiale1.html)
'I was **his** guest in his palace in Catania.'
*Ion **îmi** vine cumnat.*
'Ion is my brother-in-law.
b. *Capul **îi** este frumos.*
'**His** head is beautiful.'

In structures of type (51.a), the post-copular NP is the predicate of possession. The DPs *frate* ('brother'), *cumnat* ('brother-in-law'), *oaspe* ('guest') are bivalent predicates that take the possessor and the possessum as arguments. The construction accepts only relational DPs.

In nowadays Romanian, the configuration with copular *to be* is limited to animate relational nouns, but in old Romanian, the construction had a broader use, accepting inanimate relational DPs:

(52) *să **le** fie moşie* (DÎR p.130)
'to be their estate'

In the configurations under (A), the postnominal element has the role of logical predicate of the sentence: the predicative, in structures such as (51.a), the subject in (49.a), the adverbial of place in (50). Any type of relation of possession can be encoded through this structure.

**B. *The configuration with the verb 'to have' and a dative pronominal clitic***

*To have* is a transitive verb of possession which is not subcategorized for dative DPs. In standard constructions, the possessor is encoded as a nominative DP, and the possessum, as an accusative DP (*Am o casă* 'I have a house') or NP (*Am casă* 'I have a house', *Am vin* 'I have wine'). Apart from this construction, Romanian also presents the following configuration: the possessor is doubly expressed (through the subject and through a dative reflexive clitic) and the accusative DP is obligatorily definite, being modified by a coreferential possessive which is placed in focus *(a),* or by a small clause *(b)*:

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(53.) a. *(Eu)* ***îmi*** *am grijile mele.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$ have$_{1.SG.}$ worries-the my
'I have **my** own worries.'
b. *(Eu)* ***îmi*** *am copiii departe.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$ have$_{1.SG.}$ children-the far.
'I have **my** children far away.'

Any relation of possession *that can be asserted* accepts this configuration. The possessor is also regarded as an experiencer, and this favours the lexicalisation of the dative clitic. The pronominal clitic is facultative, considering that the relation of possession is already encoded through the predicative configuration with the verb *to have.* What the dative adds to the meaning of *to have* is the feature [+affected], the information that the state described by the sentence affects the possessor.

### 2.6. Conclusions regarding the semantic functions of the dative clitic

We can notice that in the first four configurations with a verbal dative clitic (2.1.–2.4.) this can also receive the function of possessor. Moreover, the verbs of material or abstract transfer accept the presence of a possessive clitic together with the dative DP with the function of target, if the two entities that they encode are non-coreferential. It is the only group of verbs that admits for the possessor and the second entity involved to have different referents.

The fact that verbs of transfer accept two dative nominals if the target and the possessor are different entities, but only one dative nominal if they have the same referent, could be an indirect evidence of the hypothesis that I support: that the clitic form cumulates two semantic values. The possessive meaning is realised when the patient/theme nominal is part of the topic of the sentence, while the initial semantic relation: target, beneficiary or experiencer is not deleted. In sentences such as: ***Îți*** *dau cartea înapoi.* ('I give you the book back.'), the verb's meaning is the element that disambiguates the function of the target-entity as being also the possessor of the object under transaction. But, in a context such as: *Îți dau cartea.* ('I give you the book.'), the previous discourse or the extra-linguistic knowledge of the participants to the event is what establishes the status of possessor of the dative clitic. In this situation, *cartea* ('the book') is an element with a known referent because it is possessed by the recipient. In a sentence like: ***Îți*** *dau o carte.* ('I give **you** a book.') the object with the role of patient/theme is newly introduced in the discourse, and the fact that it is possessed by the individual with the role of target is the consequence of the transaction. In the moment that the transaction takes place, the individual for whom the object is meant is not also its possessor.

Romanian is a language which has the characteristic of not requiring the lexicalisation of the possessor-entity in the sentence (Şerbănescu, 2000), especially in the situation in which the possessum has the syntactic function of direct object:

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*Nu mai ţin minte unde am lăsat **maşina** (= maşina mea).* 'I can't remember where I left **the car**. = my car'.

The phenomenon was called by Şerbănescu (2000) "possessor deletion". This feature of Romanian led to an alternative analysis of contexts such as *Îţi dau cartea.* ('I give you the book.'), *Îţi dau cartea înapoi.* ('I give you the book back.'): the possessive meaning is exclusively marked by the definite form of the possessum-nominal, which has a high deicticity in Romanian (Şerbănescu, 2000). The pronominal clitic would have exclusively the function of experiencer. I consider that, although in a series of sentences the phenomenon of possessor deletion is present, there where it appears, the dative clitic has the secondary function of expressing the possessor.

## 3. SEMANTIC TYPES OF VERBS THAT ACCEPT THE POSSESSIVE DATIVE

I shall make a semantic classification of the verbs starting from the typology proposed by Vendler (1967): *activities*, *accomplishments*, *achievements* and *states*. The classification is realised on the following criteria: [+/− dynamic], [+/− telic], [+/− durative]. To these I shall add the criterion of agentivity and of the (non-)existence of a patient (or of a theme) that undergoes the action (= *activity* or *result*) or the process, which translates syntactically as (in)transitivity.

A. Agentive/causative verbs

In configurations with an agentive or causative verb, the subject of the sentence is an agent (***Ion** înoată* '**Ion** swims.') or a cause (***Vântul** ridică frunzele de pe jos.* '**The wind** lifts the leaves from the ground.').

a. Intransitive activity verbs

Intransitive ergative verbs have the features [+ dynamic], [− telic], [+/− durative].

i. [+ durative] verbs: *a merge* ('to walk'), *a se plimba* ('to stroll'), *a alerga* ('to run')

(54) *Copilul **îi** merge deja.*
'**Her** child already walks.'

ii. [− durative] verbs: *a sări* ('to jump'), *a ciocăni (la uşă)* ('to knock at the door')

(55) *Copilul **îmi** tot sare în spinare.*
'The child keeps jumping on my back.'

b. Causative verbs

In these structures, the action of an agent causes a change of state; the patient is also the result of the action. The verbs have the features [+ dynamic], [+/− telic], [+/− durative]:

(56) *Ion a construit o casă pentru nevasta lui.*
'Ion built a house for his wife.'

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i. [+ durative] [+ telic] verbs: *a picta un tablou* (‘to paint a painting’), *a învăţa o poezie* (‘to learn a poem’)

(57) *Eu **i**-am pictat portretul.*
‘I have painted his portrait.’

ii. [− durative] [+ telic] verbs: *a ridica o carte* (‘to lift a book’), *a coborî ochii* (‘to lower one’s eyes’), *a mişca mâna* (‘to move one’s hand’)

(58) ***Mi**-am ridicat cartea de pe jos.*
‘I lifted my book from the ground.’
***Mi**-am mişcat mâna.*
‘I moved my hand.’
*cu o zi înainte să **mi**-o omoare* (EZ 4867, 4)
‘a day before they killed her to me’

iii. [+ durative] [− telic] verbs: *a roti un cerc* (‘to spin a circle’), *a învârti o spadă deasupra capului* (‘to turn a spade around one’s head’)

(59) ***Mi**-am rotit ochii prin cameră.*
‘I turned my eyes around the room.’

B. Non-agentive verbs

The subject of the sentence is a DP with the semantic role of experiencer (***Ioana** suferă din dragoste* ‘**Ioana** suffers out of love’) or patient/theme (***Ion** intră în casă.* ‘**Ion** enters the house’); the verbs have the features [+/− dynamic], [− telic], [+/− durative]).

a. Unaccusative verbs, with the feature [+ dynamic]:

i. Intransitive process verbs [+ durative]: *a curge* (‘to flow’), *a îmbătrâni* (‘to get old’), *a slăbi* (‘to lose wight’), or [− durative]: *a muri* (‘to die’), *a se înroşi* (‘to become red’)

(60) a. ***Îi** curge nasul.*
‘**His** nose is running.’
b. ***I**-a murit pisica.*
‘**His** cat died.’

ii. Transitive process verbs [− durative]; the process is undergone by a patient/ theme: *a deschide* (‘to open’), *a ridica* (‘to lift’), *a rupe* (‘to break’)

(61) a. ***Şi**-a deschis ochii.*
‘He opened **his** eyes.’
b. *un bărbat **şi**-a pierdut viaţa* (EZ 4867, 6)
‘a man lost **his** life’
b. ***şi**-a găsit maşina zgâriată* (EZ 4867, 4)
‘He found **his** car scratched.’

iii. Intransitive verbs of movement [− durative]: *a ieşi* (‘to exit’), *a intra* (‘to enter’), *a sări* (‘to jump’)

(62) a. ***I**-a intrat ceva în cap.*
‘He got a new idea.’
b. ***Mi**-a intrat un hoţ în casă.*
‘A robber entered into **my** house.’

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b. Verbs of state, with the features [− dynamic], [+ durative]:

(63) ***Îi*** *este ruşine.*
'**He** is ashamed.'
***Îmi*** *este naş.*
'He is **my** godfather.'
*Casa* ***îi*** *este pe deal.*
'**His** house is on the hill.'
*Copilul* ***îi*** *stă în braţe.*
'**His** child stays in **his** arms.'
***Îşi*** *are mama în spital.*
'He has **his** mother in the hospital.'
***Îşi*** *vede prietenii.*
'He sees **his** friends.'
***Îmi*** *iubesc prietenii.*
'I love **my** friends.'

One can notice that in Romanian the semantic type of host does not set any restrictions on the occurrence of the possessive dative clitic. The restrictions seem to be of *lexical* nature, as some verbs do not accept the occurrence of this clitic, be it possessive or of a different type: *a constitui* ('to constitute, to be'), *a exista* ('to exist'), *a însemna* ('to mean'), *a reprezenta* ('to represent, to be'), *a spera* ('to hope'):

(64) ****Îmi*** *sper fericirea.*
'*I hope for **my** happiness.'

## 4. THE SEMANTIC-PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE POSSESSIVE DATIVE CONSTRUCTION

The existence in Romance and in some Germanic languages of the possessive dative structure, next to the construction with "internal possessor" (encoded as a genitive DP or as a possessive adjective) makes a comparative analysis of the two configurations necessary, in order to determine which semantic and pragmatic factors lead to the choice for one or the other mark of possession.

A series of studies discusses the semantic and pragmatic differences between the possessive dative and the genitive/possessive DP, differences that are based on two elements: the idea of *affectedness* and the way the sentence is built from an *informative* point of view.

### 4.1. Affectedness

The non-synonymy between the possessive dative and the possessive adjective (or the genitive DP) is induced by the semantic feature [affected]. As opposed to the possessive adjective structure, the possessive dative construction indicates that the possessor is affected by the process undergone by the possessum.

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In the terms of Velasquez-Castillo (1999), the constructions in which the possessor is encoded at sentence level are indication of a "subjective construal" of the event, considering that the possessor empathetically identifies with it. The verb's action is conceived as being directed towards the possessor, because it affects the possessum. This effect is absent in the structures that encode the possession at the level of the DP (Chappell, McGregor, 1996):

(65) a. ***Mi**-a omorât nevasta.*
'He killed my wife.' − [+ Affected]
b. *A omorât-o pe nevasta **mea**.*
'He killed **my** wife.' − [− Affected]

Considering that in Romanian the use of the possessive dative clitic has maximum extension, it was asserted that the feature [affected] has a more abstract meaning in this language, that of "positive effect on the referent"[3] (Van Peteghem, 2000).

The feature *'affected'* is inherent to the dative case: no matter what semantic function it has in context, the dative expresses the entity indirectly involved in an action or in a process, since it is its recipient, beneficiary or experiencer. These three thematic relations share the semantic components *effect* of the action and *final point of the event.* The semantic component [affected], which appears as a consequence of encoding the possessor as a dative clitic, can be described as *effect of a certain nature on an entity*. In some cases, the role of possessor is associated with one of the three semantic functions mentioned above, which are specific to the dative. The meaning of these thematic relations is convergent, as they also indicate the entity on which the event has a certain effect. Specific for Romanian is the fact that any type of configuration in which the predication is directed towards a patient/theme can be interpreted as affecting an entity with possessor function. The predication can be an action, a process, a physical or mental state and even a verb of perception:

(66) *Îmi **văd** mâinile.*
'I can see **my** hands.'
*Îi **aud** vocea.*
'I can hear **his** voice.'

The effect of the predication can be directed towards any type of possessor, be it animate (65) or inanimate (6.b).

### 4.2. Topicality

Topicality is the capacity of a constituent of the sentence to have the pragmatic function of *topic,* element that encodes the old, known information and which is the logical subject of the discourse (DSL, 1997).

[3] Own translation from French.

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It was noticed that different morphological classes have a specific predisposition to play the role of topic in the sentence. This led to creating a hierarchy of topicality, which shows the accessibility of a class to become the topic and the probability to persist as topic for a number of sentences. The highest position in the hierarchy is occupied by the null anaphora (***Pro*** *Am venit.* ***Pro*** *came*$_{1.SG.}$). It is followed by pronominal clitics, grammatical agreement, the long form of the pronoun etc. (Givon, 1983). This means that the pronominal clitics have a very high probability to become the discourse topic. This is due to their intrinsic nature – thy have an immediately accessible referent (known to the participants to the act of speech), identifiable from the context (Taylor, 1996).

Not only morphological classes manifest a variable capacity of becoming the topic of the sentence, but also the syntactic and/or semantic cases. A case hierarchy according to their capacity to become the 'topic' of the sentence was established by Givon (1983):

Agent > Dative/Beneficiary > Accusative > other cases.

The position occupied by the dative case/semantic role of beneficiary is very high, next to agent. Moreover, we can notice that this hierarchy places the entities with the feature [+human] (agent and beneficiary ("dative")) on the highest level of topicality.

These data converge with Hawkins' possessive hierarchy (1981): the access to possessor status is conditioned by the entity's ontological status. In this hierarchy, the top position is occupied by animate, human individuals, followed by non-human and inanimate concrete entities. The lowest position is occupied by abstract inanimates.

If we corroborate the topic's characteristics with those of clitics and of the entities with possessor value, we can notice the very high accessibility of the possessor, on the one hand, and of the clitic pronoun, on the other hand, to function as the topic of the sentence. The consequence is that a possessor with topic function will prefer to be encoded as a dative clitic pronoun.

In cognitive terms, the possessor's topicality is explained by the fact that it is more prominent than the possessum. The discourse tends to have as 'subject' the entity which is easier to identify in the referential universe, which leads to "the promotion of the whole over the part'/of the possessor over the possessed element (Berthonneau, 1999).

Being the topic of the sentence, we can consider that the dative clitic form plays the role of logical subject, a semantic function associated with predication. If the roles of grammatical and logical subject belong to different nominals, they will also have distinct semantic roles: the grammatical subject has nominative case and imposes the agreement to the verb (Aissen, 1999), but the logical subject is the agent or, in non-agentive configurations, the element with the highest thematic role. In possessive structures such as: *Mi s-a rupt haina.* ('My jacket got torn.'), *Mi-a albit părul.* ('My hair has become white.'), we can notice that the subject is

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postverbal and has the role of patient/theme, while the dative clitic is in preverbal position and has experiencer role. The pronominal clitic is the logical subject of the sentence.

In order to distinguish the two subject positions in the derivation, Cardinaletti suggests that the nominal bearing the role of logical subject (but is not also the grammatical subject) is placed in a separate functional position, called *Subject Phrase*. On the other hand, the nominative DP, which is the grammatical subject, will be placed in the *Agreement Subject Phrase*) (Cardinaletti, 2004):

$[_{SubjectP}$ Mi $[_{Subject}$ s-a rupt$_i$ $[_{AgrSP}$ $[_{AgrS}$ t$_i$ $[_{TP}$ $[_{T}$ t$_i$ $[_{VP}$ piciorul $[_{V}$ t$_i$]]]]]]]]

The grammatical subject does not rise to SpecAgrP in syntax, but at the level of the Logical Form, to make the agreement of the verb with the nominative DP.

## 5. THE SYNTAX OF THE POSSESSIVE DATIVE STRUCTURE

In traditional grammar, the possessive dative is placed, with some of its uses, in the category of pronominal attributes (GA, II, p. 133) (***îşi*** *aruncă privirile* (idiom. 'he watches'), *guriţa nu-**ţi** tace* (idiom. 'you won't shut up'), *vezi-**ţi** de treabă* ('mind your own business')) and, with other uses, in the class of indirect objects (*Solului nu **i** se taie capul* (Negruzzi, S. I 39) 'One does not behead the messenger.'*, **îi** băgase mamei o mulţime de bazaconii în cap* (Creangă, A. 12) 'he had put a lot of strange ideas in my mother's head') (GA, II, p. 163). In modern grammar, which takes over the results of generative analyses, this construction is treated as a separate function, called *possessive dative* (Dindelegan, 1994) or *possessive object* (GALR).

I shall take over this last proposal, but only partially, considering that *it is not the possessive clitic, but the full dative DP coindexed with it (in doubling structures) that has the syntactic function of possessive dative.* The following syntactic features of the construction were brought as arguments to differentiate it from an indirect object or attribute structure:

a. The possessive dative can be coindexed with a genitive DP/possessive adjective or with a dative DP, allowing doubling constructions:
   (68) ***Îi**$_i$ văd mâna **lui**$_i$/**sa**$_i$*
   **CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$ see$_{1.SG.}$ hand-the **his**$_{i\ G.}$ /**his**$_{i\ poss.\ adj.}$
   'I see HIS hand.'
   ***Lui**$_i$ **i**$_i$-am rupt picioarele.*
   **to him**$_i$ **CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-broke$_{1.SG.}$ legs-the
   'I broke his legs.'
b. It can be adjoined to verbs that are not subcategorized for dative (see the verb *a vedea (to see)*).

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c. The verb has the capacity to confer the dative to another DP, non-coreferential with the possessive dative clitic (see (30))[4].
d. The class of clitic morphosyntactic hosts consists out of verbs while an IO can also be subordinate to an adjective or to an adverb.
   (69) *I-au tăiat mâna.*
   'They have cut his hand.
e. The verb can not assign the same syntactic function to two DPs, as would be the case in structures like the one under (30), if we admitted that it contains two indirect objects[5].

### 5.1. The possessive dative – a pronominal clitic

In modern linguistics, clitics are a recurrent object of study, from the perspective of different theories, because of their ambiguous phonological and morphosyntactic status (at the border between word and affix). They were analysed as a morphologic (Borer, 1981, Monachesi, 2005) or syntactic phenomenon (Kayne, 1969, Dobrovie, 1999).

I shall take over Anderson's definition (2005, p. 33) regarding clitics, as elements whose phonology is "prosodically deficient", which are "morphosyntactically anomalous" or both.

The author distinguishes two clitic classes in the line of Zwicky's analysis (1977): *phonological clitics* (also called "simple clitics" (Zwicky, 1977)), which do not have a prosodic structure at the level of the "PWord" (= Prosodic Word (Anderson, 2005, p. 33)), and *morphosyntactic clitics* (also called "special clitics" (Zwicky, 1977)), whose position in the sentence is ruled by different principles than the autonomous elements (in Romanian an accusative DP is positioned after the verb in syntactic word order, but the accusative clitic is placed in preverbal position[6]).

### 5.2. Possessive dative: a basic structure

Contrary to analyses such as that of Kayne (1969), Baker (1988), Belletti (1999), and GALR (2005, II, 442) for Romanian, which hypothesise that the dative clitic's preverbal position is the result of syntactic movement, I shall consider all dative clitics, including the dative with possessive value, to be a basic structure.

[4] The a-c points are taken over from G. Pană Dindelegan, *Teorie şi analiză gramaticală* (Bucureşti: Coresi, 1994), p. 129-131.

[5] Points d, e are taken over from *Gramatica limbii române,* ed. Academia Română. Institutul de Lingvistică „Iorgu Iordan − Al. Rosetti", vol. 1: Cuvântul; 2: Enunțul, 2 vol. (Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Române, 2005), vol. 2, p. 441−443.

[6] With the exception of the feminine *-o: am adus-**o*** ('I brought **it**'), and of certain non-finite forms: *aducându-**l*** ('bringing **it**'), *Ad-**o**!* ('Bring **it**!')

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The clitic is generated in the verbal phrase, not in the nominal phrase, analysis which follows the line of Borer (1981), Anderson (2005), among others.

This line of thought in GG is based on Chomsky's lexicalist analysis (1970), more precisely, on the "Lexical Integrity Hypothesis", which postulates that 'the rules of syntax may not affect the internal structure of words'[7]. Starting with Kayne, the clitic is considered to attach to the verb, forming an $X^0$ element, which means that the pronominal form is part of the internal structure of the verbal head. Therefore, clitic adjunction is a lexical (morphologic) phenomenon and does not take place in syntax.

Besides the lexicalist postulate, the main argument that led to the rejection of the derivational analysis of the pronominal clitic structure (possessive or of a different type) is the phenomenon of clitic doubling. The movement of the clitic would leave behind a trace *t,* which would make the lexicalization of a DP in the same position of the derivation impossible. However, Romanian, as well as Italian in its non-literary variant, accepts clitic doubling.

(70) a. *Îmi$_i$ văd de treburile mele$_i$.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$-*mind$_{1.SG}$ business-the. my$_i$*
'I mind my own business.'
b. *Îl$_i$ văd pe Ion$_i$.*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-*see$_{1.SG.}$ Acc.mark Ion$_i$*
'I see Ion.'
c. it. ***a te ti*** *manca il sale* books.google.ro/books 18.05.2008
*to you* **CL**$_{2.SG.D.}$ *lacks the salt*
'You don't have any salt.'

If the pronominal clitic is not generated in a postverbal position as a full nominal, then its categorial status has to be reconsidered. The clitic, which is placed in front of the host in its base position, is not interpreted as an independent lexical element $X^0$, *argument* of the verbal head (as it was analysed by Kayne, 1969, Zwicky, 1977, Baker, 1988). Instead, it is analysed as a set of *functional* features that receive phonetic realization (cf. Chomsky, 1981, Borer, 1981, Sportiche, 1998, Monachesi, 2005).

Aside its internal features, the verb has a second set of *external* features, the features of the clitic attached to the verb (Borer, 1981).

The clitic does not absorb the verb's case feature (contrary to Chomsky, 1981), as the empirical data of Romanian show. The dative clitic can be doubled by a full pronominal form or by a dative DP:

(71) ***I$_i$****-am dat* ***ei$_i$****/****mamei$_i$*** *cheile.*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$-gave$_{1.SG.}$ **to her$_i$/to mother$_i$**-the keys-the

[7] Chomsky, N., *Remarks on Nominalization,* ed. Jacobs, R. and P. Rosenbaum. *Readings in English Transformational Grammar,* (Waltham, MA: Blaisdell, 1970), apud H. van Riemsdijk, "Clitics: A State-of-the-Art Report," in *Clitics in the Languages of Europe*, ed. H. van Riemsdijk (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1999), p. 17.

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Moreover, the possessive dative clitic can co-occur with a non-coindexed dative DP in the sentence (cf. (30)).

On the other hand, one can notice that the coocurence of two full dative nominals is not grammatical:

(72) **Mi$_i$-am donat **mie$_i$** averea **săracilor$_j$**.*

***CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$**-**donated$_{1.SG.}$ **to me**$_i$ fortune-the **to poor$_j$-the**

'I donated MY fortune to the poor.'

This shows that only a constituent that bears prosodic accent absorbs the verb's dative case feature.

Other analyses consider the clitic forms to be a manifestation of *agreement*: Suñer (1988) draws a parallel between the subject-verb agreement and the clitic doubling (a type of agreement between object and verb). The same line of analysis is followed by D. Sportiche (1998): in order to give an explanation to clitic doubling, the author introduces a functional phrase called Clitic Phrase, which has the clitic form as head and the full DP in the specifier position (lexicalised or having the form of *pro)* with the purpose of verifying its features: [$_{CliticP}$ pro/DP [$_{Clitic}{}^{o}$]].

I shall consider (based on Sportiche, 1998, Dindelegan, 2003, 223-4, Monachesi, 2005) that the Romanian verb is capable to express next to its intrinsic morphological features (mood, tense, voice) certain syntactic features of the nominal elements in its subcategorization frame. Through agreement morphemes, the verbal head offers information about the person, number and, in some cases, the gender of the subject DP. Through the clitics, if lexicalises information over case, person, number and, in some instances, gender, of the other DPs in the sentence. As the verb can bear the functional features of arguments through clitics, the appearance of the full DPs becomes optional, as is the lexicalization of the subject. Clitic doubling through the long pronominal form has the role of placing the DO or IO constituent in focus. The *pro-drop* parameter extends, therefore, from the subject to the complements.

The existence of the possessive dative structure proves that the verb is capable to express not only an *argument's* functional features, but also those of a *facultative* constituent, the possessor.

The dative clitic with a verbal host and the postnominal[8] possessive structures are treated here as separate, basic configurations. The base of this analysis is:

a. From a theoretical perspective, deriving the possessive clitic from a possessive adjective construction does not explain the clitic doubling phenomenon (Borer, 1981):

(73) ***Îmi$_i$** vreau dreptul **meu$_i$**.*

**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$-want$_{1.SG.}$ right-the-**my$_i$**

[8] Postnominal structures are: the adnominal dative clitic (*ochii-ți* ('eyes-the-to you = your eyes'), the genitive personal pronoun (*ochii ei$_{Genitive}$*) and the possessive adjective (*ochii mei* 'eyes-the-my = my eyes).

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'I want what is rightfully **mine**.'
***Îmi**$_i$ este **mie**$_i$ vecin.*
**CL**$_{1.SG.D.\ i}$ is to me$_i$ neighbour
'He is **my** neighbour.'

b. A derivational link between the structures does not explain the fact that some contexts do not accept a possessive adjective (cf. **Am rupt piciorul **meu**.* *broke$_{1.SG.}$ leg-the-**my** 'I broke **my** leg').

c. Semantically and pragmatically, the two structures are not equivalent. Depending on the context, it is either the possessive dative, or the possessive adjective structure which is *marked* at discourse level.

### 5.3. The syntactic status of the possessive dative: adjunct vs. argument

One of the defining properties of the syntactic position "possessive dative" is its non-lexical character, the adjunct status (Dindelegan, 1994).

(74) ***Mi**-am pierdut caietul.* 'I lost **my** notebook.' *vs.*
*Am pierdut caietul.* 'I lost **the** notebook.'

However, in the following configurations, the pronominal clitic is an *argument* (GALR, II, p. 442):

a. The structure is an idiomatic expression:

(75) *a nu-şi crede ochilor* ('to not believe one's own eyes'), *a-şi da viaţa* ('to die'), *a îi merge numele* ('to become famous'), *a-şi pierde urma* ('to get lost'), *a-şi pierde minţile/capul/viaţa/vremea* ('to lose one's mind/~ mind/to die/to lose one's time'), *a-şi pune capăt zilelor* ('to end one's life'), *a-şi pune în gând* ('to set one's mind to something'), *a-i trece prin cap* ('to cross one's mind'), *a-i ţine cuiva calea* ('to follow someone'), *a-şi ţine firea* ('to keep calm'), *a-şi ţine gura* ('to keep silent'), *a-şi vedea de treabă* ('to mind one's business'), *a nu-şi vedea lungul nasului* ('to be vane'), *a-**i** veni pe limbă* ('to find the words'), *a-i veni inima la loc* ('to calm down'), *a-i veni ceasul* ('to die'), *a-i veni dracii* ('to get furious') vs. **a nu crede ochilor săi/Ioanei* ('*to not believe to eyes-the **his**/**of Ioana** = *to not believe his/Ioana's eyes').

We can notice that fixed expressions contain all semantic types of verbs; there are action verbs: *a-şi pune capăt zilelor, a-şi pune în gând,* state verbs: *a nu-şi crede ochilor* and verbs of process, which are the most: *a-şi pierde minţile, a-i veni ceasul.* Some verbs accept a lexical dative (*a da* 'to give'), some can not take a dative argument (*a veni* 'to come').

b. The sentence encodes an abstract inalienable relation; the clitic attaches to the locative *to be,* and the postposed subject refers to a physical or mental state:

(76) ***Mi**-e foame/sete. (**CL**$_{1.SG.D.}$-is hunger/thirst)* vs.
'*E foame. (*is hunger), *E foamea **mea**. (*It is my hunger.)'

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c. The sentence encodes a part-whole relation. The clitic adjoins to a reflexive transitive verb.

c'. Process verbs:

(77) ***Mi**-am rupt mâna.* ('I broke my hand.'), ***Mi**-am spart capul.* ('I broke my head.'), *Maşina **şi**-a mărit viteza.* ('The car increased its speed.'), ***Mi**-am sucit glezna.* ('I twisted my ankle.')
**Am rupt mân**a** (**mea**)*. ('I broke my hand.')

c''. Action verbs:

(78) ***Mi**-a scos un dinte.* 'He pulled my tooth.'
**Am scos un dinte (al meu)*. '*I pulled a tooth (of mine).'

If we set aside the idiomatic (a) and the quasi-idiomatic expressions (b), we can consider that the features of the configuration under (c) are the ones that determine the appearance of the dative pronominal clitic with possessive function. These properties are: dynamic meaning of the verb, part-whole as type of possessive relation, reflexivity and transitivity[9] (encoding the possessum as a direct object).

We can make the following prediction: a structure which has at least one of these properties will favour the expression of the possessor through a possessive dative, instead of the possessive adjective or the genitive DP.

### 5.4. The position of the dative pronominal clitic in the derivation

The hypothesis according to which the clitic structures are obtained through derivation of the original configuration in syntax is challenged by the fact that two datives can co-occur in Romanian (cf. (30)). A postulate of the GG says that a verbal head is capable to assign one and the same case to only one nominal subordinate to it.

A solution for the analysis is offered by the "Construction Theory" (Hole *et al.,* 2006). The starting point is the multi-stratified structure that Larson (1988) suggests for the VP: the VP contains two verbal heads if the verb has two internal arguments. One of the arguments is generated in the position of complement of V and the second, in the position of specifier of VP. The phrase that will be labelled $VP_2$ is dominated by a second verbal phrase ($VP_1$), whose centre is void, but whose specifier contains the subject of the sentence.

(79) *Ion a pus cartea pe masă.*
'Ion put the book on the table.'
$[_{VP1}$ Ion $[_{V1}$ a $pus_i$ $[_{VP2}$ cartea $[_{V2}$ $t_i$ $[_{PP}$ pe masă]

The Larsonian structure of the VP is taken over by Chomsky (1993). Chomsky (1993) proposes the position Spec *v*P for the subject DP. The internal arguments of the verb are generated inside the VP. The subject is exterior to VP, it is generated in the *v*P, which takes VP as its complement. The *v* head is a *light verb*

[9] At least one of these properties of the possessive dative construction has to be present.

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and will not be empty (contrary to Larson). Light verbs were defined as verbs lacking phonological form, which have their own syntactic and semantic frame, so that they alter the verb's initial configuration. Therefore, the lexical verb is made up/'constructed' out of a base configuration and a number of predications that do not receive phonetic form, but manifest at logical/interpretative level.

The constructionist view postulates that, similar to agentive or causative verbs, the structures that lexicalize a possessive dative clitic contain a supplementary projection, a *v*P, whose centre is a light verb. This is an element called "Affected" or "Applicative", whose maximal projection is Affected Phrase or Applicative Phrase. The specifier of the ApplicativeP will be occupied by the full DP with possessor function.

In the sentence *I-am rupt păpuşii piciorul* ('I broke the doll's leg.'), the head verb can be decomposed in a base verb *a rupe* ('to break'), which has the following syntactic and semantic grid: [$DP_N$/Agent _ $DP_{Acc}$//Patient/Theme] and a light verb, the centre of the *Applicative Phrase.*

[$_{IP}$ pro [$_I$ $i_i$-am rupt [$_{Appl(icative)P/Aff(ected)P}$ păpuşii$_i$ [$_{Appl/Aff}$ $t_i$ [$_{vP}$ [$_v$ [$_{VP}$ [$_{V0}$ [$_{DP}$ piciorul ]]]]]]]]

The Applicative/Affected head is the one that licenses the DP which is added to the base configuration and assigns dative case to it. In the final configuration, the verb which results from the fusion of two heads ($V^0$ + $Appl^0$), contains a supplementary feature ([affected]) which can manifest at the level of the verbal head, as a dative pronominal clitic, with the function of possessor.

Considering that a verb that does not project functional categories can not take a pronominal clitic, I consider that the feature [+ affected] can manifest as a clitic form only through incorporation of the centre $Appl^0$ into $I^0$. Like an affix, a clitic can be attached in two positions, pre- or postverbal: [$_I$ V-Infl,CL] or [$_I$ CL, V-Infl][10]:

IP
/\
Spec I'
/\
$I^0$ *v*P
($I^0$ + $Appl^0$)
[$_I$ V-Infl, CL]/[$_I$ CL, V-Inf]

This analysis explains why two dative DPs can appear in a sentence: the case is assigned by two different verbs. It also explains why one and the same dative clitic expresses two thematic relations (distinct verbs participate to the two semantic relations − Herslund, 1988, Fried, 1999, McIntyre, 2006).

[10] Adaptation of Borer's analysis in *Parametric Variation in Clitic Construction* (MIT, 1981). The author considers that the clitic form is inserted at the level of $V^0$.

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### 5.5. The anaphoric relation between the possessum and the possessor DPs

The possessive relation in dative clitic configurations is marked through the pronominal clitic attached to the verb and through the definite/indefinite form of the possessum DP. The possessed entity is presented as *known* because it enters into an anaphoric relation with the clitic. The two nominals are not coreferential in the strict meaning of the word, but are coindexed, as their association is pre-established, either because of the inherent nature of their relation, or because of previous mention of their possessive relation, or because it is part of the extra-linguistic knowledge of the speakers. This type of discourse binding is called *associative anaphora* (Kleiber, 2001).

The existence of an anaphoric relation between the two nominals in the possessive structure offers an explanation for the linear order in the sentence: possessor DP – possessum DP: the antecedent has to precede the anaphoric element, which means placing it in the highest position in the derivation, where it can c-command the DP that provides its reference indirectly.

### 5.6. Syntactic types of verbs that can enter a possessive dative structure

The clitic's host can be a verb which is subcategorized for a dative (***Şi-a dat*** *ochii peste cap* ('He rolled his eyes over.'), ***Mi-a trimis*** *romanul pe care i-l împrumutasem.* ('He sent me the novel I had lent to him.')) or a verb that accepts only a nominative and/or accusative argument, with the exception of this structure (***Îți văd*** *mama acolo.* ('I see your mother there.')/***Îți merge*** *mintea.* (Your mind is working well. = You are smart.'), ***Ți-a venit*** *trenul.* ('Your train has arrived.'), ***Îi curge*** *nasul.* ('His nose is running.'))

**A.** ***Verbs that are subcategorized for a dative DP***

Romanian displays the following syntactic patterns in which a dative nominal is lexicalized:

a. Transitive verbs, which are subcategorized for two internal arguments, the first in accusative, the second one in dative case:

(80) ***I****-am dat* ***Mariei*** *[+D]* ***o carte*** *[+Ac].* -> ***I****-am dat* ***Mariei cartea*** *înapoi.*

'I gave Maria a book.' 'I gave Maria the book back.'

(**N**(on)-**P**(ossessive) clitic) (**P**(ossessive) clitic)

b. Intransitive verbs, which next to the subject DP, have an internal argument, to whom they assign dative case:

(81) ***Ion îmi*** *ajută.* (**N-P**) -> ***Ochii îmi*** *ajută.* (**P**)

'Ion helps me.' 'My eyes help me.'

c. Intransitive verbs that ask for a dative DP and a prepositional phrase:

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(82) i. ***Îmi*** *arde* ***de dansat***. (**N-P**) -> *Ø* (**P**)
'I feel like dancing.'
***Îmi*** *place* ***de el***.(non-literary) (**N-P**) -> *Ø* (**P**)
'I like him.'
ii. ***Îmi*** *vine bine* ***cu haina*** *pe care am probat-o.* (**N-P**) -> ***Îmi*** *vine bine* ***cu haina*** *(mea).*
'The coat I've tried on suits me well.' 'My coat suits me well.'

The first two patterns (a) and (b) accept a dative pronominal clitic with possessive function. The third pattern (c) is a special structure, with reduced frequency in the language. Only the (82.ii) sub-pattern accepts the possessive dative structure.

**B.** ***Verbs that are not subcategorised for a dative DP:***

a. Transitive bivalent verbs:
(83) *Văd marea.* (N-P) -> ***Îmi*** *văd soacra.* (P)
'I see the sea.' 'I see **my** mother-in-law.'

b. Transitive trivalent verbs:
(84) *Iau ziarul de la chioşc.* (N-P) -> ***Îmi*** *iau copilul de la grădiniță.* (P)
'I take the newspaper from the stand.' 'I take **my** child from the kindergarten.'

c. Intransitive monovalent verbs:
(85) *Vine trenul.* (N-P) -> ***Îmi*** *vine copilul.* (P)
'The train comes.' '**My** child comes.'

d. Intransitive bivalent verbs, with a prepositional object:
(86) a. *Văd de copii.* (N-P) -> ***Îmi*** *văd de treabă.* (P)
'I see after the children.' 'I mind (see after) **my** business.'
b. *Fata s-a căsătorit cu un parlamentar.* (N-P) -> ***I*** *s-a căsătorit fata cu un deputat.* (P)
'The girl married an MP.' '**His** girl (=daughter) married an MP.'

e. Intransitive bivalent verbs, with an adverbial internal argument:
(87) *Ana intră* ***în casă***. (N-P) -> *Anei nu-****i*** *intră poezia în cap.* (P)
'Ana goes into the house.' 'Ana can't memorize the poem." (lit. The poem does not enter her head)

### 5.8. The syntactic function of the possessum-DP

The possessum DP which is part of a possessive dative structure can have different syntactic functions, such as direct object (88), prepositional object (89), indirect object (90), subject (91), adverbial (92), attribute (93):

(88) *Îi admir* ***casa***.
'I admire his **house.**'
(89) *Nu-i mai ştie nici* ***de nume.***
'He doesn't even know his **name** any more.'

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not-**CL**$_{3.SG.D.}$ any more knows even of name

(90) *I-am dat viață **copilului**.*
'I gave life **to the child**.'

(91) *I-a albit **părul**.*
'His **hair** became white.'

(92) *Îi merge **la inimă**.*
'It goes **to** his **heart**.'

(93) *Îți$_i$ văd albul$_i$ **ochilor$_i$**.*
'I can see the white of your **eyes**.'

(Note: in (93) the head of the attribute, which is a direct object, refers to an entity that has the same possessor.)

### 5.9. Doubling of the possessive dative clitic

The possibility of *clitic doubling* allows us to distinguish between the following types of constructions:

1) Constructions in which doubling is impossible:

a. Idiomatic expressions:

(94) ***Îşi** dă **sieşi** ochii peste cap.*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D}$** rolls to himself eyes-the over head
**Ochii **săi şi**-i dă peste cap.*
*His eyes **CL**$_{3.SG.D}$ - **CL**$_{3.PL.Acc.}$ rolls$_{3.SG.}$ over head

b. Part-whole structures:

(95) ***Şi**-a rupt **sieşi** piciorul.*
**CL**$_{3.SG.D}$**-broke$_{3.SG.}$ to himself the leg
**Piciorul **său şi** l-a rupt.*
*leg-the **CL**$_{3.SG.D}$ **CL**$_{3.SG.Acc.}$-broke

There is a notable exception to point (b), i.e. doubling is possible if the DO nominal receives a modifier (96).

(96) ***Şi**-a rupt piciorul **său** fragil.*
'He broke his fragile leg.'
***Îşi** vede picioarele **sale** butucănoase.*
'He can see his stumpy legs.'

2) Constructions which allow *only* doubling by a dative DP:

a. Idiomatic expressions:

(97) *Frica **îi** pătrunde **Ioanei** în suflet.*
'Fear gets into Ioana's heart.'
**Frica **îi** pătrunde în sufletul îngrijorat al **Ioanei**.*
'Fear gets into Ioana's worried heart.'

b. Intransitive verbs taking a prepositional object-possessum:

(98) *Cine ştie ce-i mai trece **lui** prin cap?*
'Who knows what goes on now through his head?'

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Exception: if the possessum DP has a modifier, doubling through a genitive DP is possible (99).

(99) *Cine ştie ce-**i** mai trece prin capul **lui cel prost**?*
'Who knows what goes on now through his **stupid** head?'

c. Structures in which the possessum is an attribute:

(100) ***Ioanei îi** văd albul ochilor.*
'I can see the white of Ioana's eyes.'
***Îi** văd albul ochilor **Ioanei**.*

d. Intransitive structures in which the possessum is encoded as a subject DP:

(101) ***Ioanei i**-a albit părul.*
'Ioana's hair became white.'
**Părul **Ioanei i**-a albit.*

e. Intransitive non-reflexive structures in which the possessum is a prepositional object:

(102) ***Lui** nu-**i** mai ştie de urmă.*
'He doesn't know anything about him any more.'
**Nu-**i** mai ştie de urma **lui**.*

f. Transitive non-reflexive structures that contain verbs which do not accept an indirect object:

(103) a. ***Ție îți** admir casa.*
'I admire your house.'

We can notice an exception to point (f), i.e. a *possessum*-DP which has a modifier accepts a possessive adjective:

(103) b. ***Îți** admir casa **ta superbă**.*
'I admire your wonderful house.'

3) Constructions in which only doubling by a genitive DP or by possessive adjective is allowed:

a. Intransitive reflexive structures in which the possessum is a prepositional object N:
***Îşi** vede de treburile **sale**./*Îşi vede **sieşi** de treburi.*
'He minds (see after) his own business.'

b. Transitive reflexive structures in which the possessum is an indirect object:
***Şi**-a pus capăt zilelor **sale**./*Şi-a pus capăt **sieşi** zilelor.*
'He ended his own life.'

c. Transitive reflexive structures which contain verbs that do not accept an indirect object:
*Fiecare mamă **îşi** iubeşte copilul **ei./*Îşi** iubeşte **sieşi** copilul.*
'Each mother loves her child.'

d. Transitive structures that contain verbs which accept an indirect object:
***Îmi** donez cărţile **mele** unei biblioteci./*Îmi donez **mie** cărţile unei biblioteci.*
'I donate my books to a library.'

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d'. The reflexive structures are the exception, accepting both doubling by a genitive and by a dative DP, as well as their cooccurrence:
***Îmi*** *citesc scrisoarea* ***mea****./* ***Îmi*** *citesc* ***mie*** *scrisoarea./****Îmi*** *citesc* ***mie*** *scrisoarea* ***mea****.*
'I am reading my letter to myself.'

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

We can notice that Romanian imposes no semantic restrictions as to the type of possessive relation which can be expressed through a dative pronominal clitic. Compared to the other Romance languages, Romanian is *maximally permissive* as far as the use of the possessive dative is concerned. Any semantic and syntactic type of verb can enter a possessive dative configuration, action verbs as well as process or state verbs, verbs that require one or more arguments, to which they assign different morphological cases.

The possessive meaning of the dative clitic, non-central among its semantic functions, still conserves a relation with the prototypic meaning of target (the idea of final point of the action).

I considered that it is possible for the possessive value to be associated with the function of beneficiary, experiencer or human target, on basis of their common semantic components: *entity on which the action has an indirect effect.* In these configurations, the dative clitic participates at two thematic relations simultaneously, although the verb assigns only one θ-role to the dative, i.e. <Beneficiary>, <Experiencer>, <Target>.

The semantic and pragmatic analysis of the possessive dative showed the semantic and discourse components that favour the encoding of the possessor as a dative pronominal clitic form. The factor *affected,* which indicates the fact that what happens to the possessum has a positive/negative effect on the possessor, determines the use of the possessive dative. The topic function of the possessor, combined with the centrality of the possessum, leads to the choice for the possessive dative construction. The possessor has a very high tendency to become the discourse topic because prototypically it has the features [+ animate], [+ human], which are also defining properties of the logical subject. The possessor will receive the dative case, as it occupies a high position in the topicality hierarchy, contrary to the genitive.

Syntactically, the possessive dative construction places the two elements, i.e. the verb and the possessum DP (that together with the clitic are part of the threefold structure), in the scope of the possessor. I analysed the possessive dative clitic as being the lexicalization of a functional feature of the verbal complex, *affected.* In the contexts in which it manifests, this feature does not belong to the base verb, but to a centre called *Applicative (Appl)*, which licenses the clitic. *ApplP*

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dominates the VP and reorganizes the subcategorization frame of the verb, adding a supplementary constituent, the possessor. This analysis explains why a verb can assign the dative case to two DPs: the base verb assigns dative to $N_1$, inside the VP, and the Applicative head assigns case to $N_2$ (possessor). The dative full NP with possessor function will enter the derivation in the Specifier position of the Applicative Phrase. The dative clitic will be lexicalised at the [[$_V$Verb + Appl] + Infl] level, as it is not possible to attach it to a non-inflected verbal form.

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