

## Are there silent clitics?

1. In the Spurious *se* phenomenon of Romance, a 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative clitic is available in isolation, but combination with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative clitic leads to its apparent substitution by *se*, as exemplified in (1) with a Sardinian dialect. In fact, apparent suppletion phenomena like (1) are possible to the extent that (in other languages) *se* can express the dative tout court, as in (2) – in traditional terms a syncretism of dative and *se*.

- (1) *Làconi* (Sardinia)
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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>a.     dđi    a       kkustu</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">to.him he.gives this</p> | <p>b.     si                   dđu    ađa</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">SE(=to.him) it       he.gives</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
- (2) *S.Agata del Bianco* (Calabria)
- |                                                                                  |  |
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| <p>si                   đunanu    kistu</p> <p>SE(=to.him) they.give    this</p> |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

In Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993), lexical insertion is governed by Elsewhere – in other words the best lexical match to a feature bundle takes precedence over other less optimal matches; therefore insertion of *se* instead of the specialized dative in (1b) requires an Impoverishment rule, deleting the dative feature in the context of an accusative. More generally, Impoverishment is crucial to the explanation of syncretism. The Optimality Theory analysis (Grimshaw 1997) is similar in essential respects. In the normal course of events a faithfulness constraint requires the matching of the dative property by the specialized clitic; however a constraint may intervene that is more highly ranked, e.g. a double-*l* constraint excluding two *l*-clitics in the same string. In that case the dative slot will be filled by the least offending clitic, namely the severely underspecified *se* in (1b). Both solutions make crucial recourse to the underspecified nature of *se*. Both of them at some point depend on an optimization procedure; for Optimality this resides in constraint ranking, while for Distributed Morphology it is implicit in the Elsewhere constraint on vocabulary insertion. The two theories are equally (very) powerful, since Impoverishment allows for the same range of effects as are introduced in Optimality by the reranking of constraints.

2. Two recent proposals, namely Manzini-Savoia (2005) and Kayne (2006), subvert the monopoly of underspecification/ ranking theories on suppletion/ syncretism phenomena such as (1)-(2) – or their counterpart in (3)-(4) with the locative clitic instead of *se*.

- (3) *Galtelli* (Sardinia)
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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>a.     li/lir               dana   kustu</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">to.him/them he.gives this</p> | <p>b.     bi                   lu     dana</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">there(=to.him) it     he.gives</p> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
- (4) *Modena* (Emilia)
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|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p>a     g     dag    kwas-kε</p> <p>I    to.him give    this</p> |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

Kayne (2006) in dealing with cases of the type in (4) proposes that the dative property is represented as a non-pronounced clitic DATCL which combines with the locative (or ‘deictic’) clitic; the latter corresponds to an expletive originating in an embedded small clause whose associate is the direct object, *un libro* in (5). The silent DATCL is licenced by *ghe* through a head-Spec/ phase mechanism.

- (5) *Paduan* (Kayne 2006:24)
- DATCL ghe dago un libro

Manzini-Savoia (2005) argue that dative is a pseudo-category of current grammars. The closest category to dative is something like ‘second object of ditransitives’. Natural languages allow its lexicalization by practically any of the categories that can independently turn up as clitics, namely an *l*-form, a locative, the free variable (*si*) and in fact a partitive (*ne*). Indeed, locative and even *se* do not exhaust the possible suppletion/ syncretism patterns involving the lexicalization of dative, rather instead of *se* or *g* we also find the type *ne*, as in (6)-(7). Thus the logical space of ‘second argument of ditransitives’ is covered in different ways by different languages, sometimes depending on syntactic context. In particular, the hypothesis with respect to suppletion is that

