CLITIC-DOUBLING AND THE CHECKING OF FOCUS

Running Title: CLITIC DOUBLING AND THE CHECKING OF FOCUS

Article type: Syntax

Author: Liliana Sanchez

Affiliation: Rutgers University

Address: Department of Spanish and Portuguese

105 George St

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Phone: 732-932-9412 ext. 18

Fax: 732-932-9837

E-mail: lsanchez@spanport.rutgers.edu
Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of optional clitic-doubling constructions in Limeño Spanish that supports the view that doubled determiner phrases (DPs) are adjuncts to verbal phrases on the basis of evidence from coordination, quantifier interpretation and locality constraints. The paper also argues that clitics are agreement morphemes that emerge as a result of AGREE operating between v as a probe and the doubled DP. Doubled DPs are marked with an exhaustive focus feature (+Fe). Checking of this feature takes place under identity of interpretable features such as person and number features with v. From this analysis follows Suñer’s (1988) Matching Principle requiring that the clitic and the doubled DP agree in phi-features. The Fe specification accounts for the different distribution in discourse of clitic-doubling and clitic structures since the former are associated with a positive value of a focus feature and the latter with a negative value. The interaction of such features with sentence-internal operators that link agreement features throughout discourse yields the distribution of clitic, clitic-doubling, clitic left dislocation and overt DP structures in discourse.

1. Introduction

Direct object clitic-doubling constructions in Spanish such as the one in sentence (1):

(1)  La vi a Lucía
    Cl vi to Lucía
    “(I) saw Lucía”

have generated a debate on the nature of clitics as agreement markers (Suñer 1988, Franco 1993, Everett 1996) or clitics as functional heads with a doubled DP in its Specifier position (Uriagereka 1995, Sportiche 1998, Zubizarreta 1998). The position of the doubled NP has also raised questions about the availability of Case for NPs in non-argumental positions. One of the main difficulties that the analyses of clitic-doubling constructions have faced has arisen from the fact that in certain dialects of Spanish such as Argentinian Spanish, clitic-doubling appears to be optional with direct object DPs and is conditioned by the feature specification of the overt DP (Suñer 1988). In this paper, I
CLITIC-DOUBLING AND THE CHECKING OF FOCUS

will present evidence from Limeño Spanish (LS), a dialect with optional direct object clitic-doubling in favor of an analysis of optional clitic doubling as a case of agreement with DPs in non-argumental positions, as in Baker’s (1996) and (2002) proposals for non-configurational languages. I will propose that the overt DP in clitic-doubling structures in LS is marked with an exhaustive focus feature and that this feature is checked by means of the AGREE operation as defined in Chomsky (1998). I will also propose that an Overt Topic Constraint operates on the spell-out of argument-related topics in discourse and interacts with the checking of focus features associated with dislocated DPs in clitic-doubling, clitic and clitic left dislocation constructions (CLLD).

2. The nature of the clitic and the position of the doubled DPs

Analyses of direct object clitic doubling structures in some varieties of Spanish such as the one in sentence (1) have focused on the nature of the clitic and on the position occupied by the doubled NP. Two main positions can be identified with respect to the nature of the clitic: the clitic is analyzed as an independent functional head (Uriagereka 1995, Sportiche 1998, Torrego 1998, Zubizarreta 1998) or as an agreement marker (Suñer 1988, Franco 1993, Everett 1996). With respect to the position occupied by the doubled NP, Jaeggli’s (1986) approach was to posit that doubled NPs in Spanish are in non-argumental positions. Suñer (1988) adopted a different line of analysis. She proposed that the doubled NPs are in argumental positions and receive case and the th-role assigned by the verb. In the next subsections, I will present evidence in favor of analyzing the clitic in Limeño Spanish as an agreement marker and of adopting the view that the doubled NP in LS is in a non-argumental position.
2.1. Object agreement, $D^0$ and the nature of the clitic

Limeño Spanish has a mixed agreement system formed by a set of subject agreement morphemes marked with person and number features and a set of object clitics that have been proposed in the literature to be object agreement morphemes (Suñer 1988, Franco 1993). Third person clitics are marked, in addition to person and number features, with gender, specificity and definiteness features (Uriagereka 1995). This is shown in table 1:

Table 1 Direct Object Agreement Morphemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person</td>
<td>Me (+def, +spec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person</td>
<td>Te (+def, +spec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person</td>
<td>Lo, la, le, los, las, los, les (±def, ± spec)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that object agreement morphemes in Spanish are marked with definiteness and specificity makes them closer to determiners than to actual agreement morphemes. Uriagereka (1995) based on Postal’s (1969) has proposed that clitics and determiners both project DPs. Regular determiners have as their complements an overt DP while clitics have an NP-pro as their complements. Uriagereka also proposes that the specifier of DP in the case of clitics can be occupied by the doubled element in clitic doubling structures. A similar proposal is Sportiche’s (1992, 1998) analysis of clitics as heads of the functional projection Acc that selects an accusative DP as its complement. At LF the DP moves to the specifier of AccP position as an instance of Spec/Head agreement and checks a functional feature related to specificity. Sportiche’s proposal tries to unify the
analysis for clitics in clitic doubling and non-clitic doubling languages by deriving parametric variation from the fact that the overt DP could move overtly or covertly, the clitic head may be overt or covert and the XP itself could be overt or covert. A different treatment of clitics is to consider them as a bundle of phi-features as in Suñer (1988), Franco (1993), Everett (1996) or more recently in Dechaine and Wiltschko (2002). Evidence in favor of considering clitics as agreement markers in LS clitic-doubling constructions rather than as independent heads comes from the fact that clitic doubling is restricted to argument-related DPs but is banned in the case of predicative clitics as shown by the contrast between:

(2) Vi [ VP[DP a María]
    Saw to Maria
    “(I) saw María”

(3) Lai vi [ VP[DP a María)]
    CL saw to Maria
    “(I) saw María”

(4) Yesica, es [ SC t_i [AP inteligente]]
    “Yesica is intelligent”

(5) Yesica, loj es [ SC t_i [AP t_j]]
    Yesica CL is
    “Yesica is (intelligent)”

(6) *Yesica, loj es [SC t_i [AP inteligentej]]
    Yesica CL is intelligent
    “Yesica is (intelligent)”
While clitic doubling is possible although not required in LS with argument-related DPs, it is not possible with predicative complements to the verb *es* ‘to be’ as shown in (5) in contrast with cliticization in (5). If one assumes that clitics in clitic doubling structures are morphological markers for verb arguments, then it follows that such markers would be unavailable in the case of a predicate that is not an argument of the verb.¹

In this paper, I will assume the view that third person direct object clitics in clitic doubling constructions in LS are bundles of phi-features under *v* in a manner similar to agreement features, but I will share Uriagereka’s and Suñer’s (1988) view that their definiteness and specificity features allows them to enter agreement relations with

¹ Sportiche (1995) has proposed that French predicate clitics are heads of the functional projection ClP. In his analysis the clitic has as its complement a CP that is raised to Spec of ClP at LF. CPs can be cliticized but not doubled in LS as shown in:

(i) quiere que vengas  
want3ps that come 2ps  
“S/he wants for you to come”

(ii) lo quiere  
Cl want3s  
S/he wants it”

(iii) *lo quiere que vengas  
Cl want-3s that come-2s  
“(S)he wants for you to come”

This restriction suggests that CPs in argumental position must be null if the clitic is a head and has a pattern similar to that of predicate clitics. In an analysis of the clitic in doubling structures as an agreement marker such restriction follows from the impossibility of CPs to match the person and number features in *v*.
expressions headed by $D^0$. Furthermore, I will argue along the lines of Suñer’s (1988) proposal that clitic-doubling constructions in LS involve long distance agreement and are the spell-out of a language specific operation AGREE that according to Chomsky (1998): “establishes a relation (agreement, Case-checking) between an LI and a Feature F in some restricted search space (its domain)” p.14. This analysis is restricted to clitic-doubling structures and does not argue against the view that non-doubled clitics and predicate clitics in LS undergo movement or that they are functional heads.

2.2. The apparent optionality of clitic doubling: DPs in argumental versus non-argumental positions

As noted by Suñer (1988), unlike its subject counterparts, direct object clitics are optional in some clitic-doubling varieties of Spanish such as Argentinian and Limeño Spanish:

*Subject Agreement*

(7) $V$-i a Maria

See-past1 to Maria

“I saw Maria”

*Direct Object Agreement*

(8) La $v$-i a Maria

DO Cl see-past1 to Maria

“I saw Maria”
This optionality in direct object agreement was linked in Suñer’s (1988) analysis to a requirement in the matching of features between the clitic and the doubled NP (see section 3 for a discussion of the Matching Principle). I would like to propose that the coexistence in Limeño Spanish of constructions in which an unstressed direct object DP is not doubled and structures in which it is doubled is related not exclusively to the matching of features but to the fact that Limeño Spanish allows for VP-internal DPs to be in non-argumental positions and to the type of focus interpretation that overt direct object DPs receive in such position. In that respect, direct object clitic-doubling in LS falls under Baker’s (2002) biconditional: “A verb X agrees with an NP Y if and only if Y is in a dislocated adjunct position” p. 109.

Thus, clitic-doubling in LS differs crucially from the coexistence of subject agreement with an overt subject in LS and Standard Spanish given that subject agreement is always required but it does not force the dislocation of post-verbal subjects as noted by Alexiadou and Agnostopoulu (1998). In this paper, I will argue that direct object clitic doubling in LS falls under Baker’s biconditional because it is the counterpart to pre-verbal subjects in dislocated positions but with the opposite focus value.

I will now address the availability of non-argumental positions for unstressed object DPs. In LS it is possible to have wh-extraction with a clitic and without a clitic:

(9) ¿A quién viste?

To who see-past 2 sg

“Whom did you see?”

---

Franco (1993) treats doubled clitics as the head of AgrDO with strong features, but does not explicitly provide an analysis for the optionality.
(10) ¿A quién la viste?
    To who Cl-fem see-past 2 sg
    “Whom did you see?”

As proposed by Suñer for Argentinian Spanish, the two questions receive different interpretations in LS, while in (9) the wh-word tends to be interpreted as –spec, the wh-word in (10) can only be interpreted as +spec. In her proposal, doubling imposes a requirement on + specific features for the clitic and the doubled element.

Notice, however, that such optionality restricted by specificity constraints is unavailable in leftward dislocations. In Spanish, unstressed [– definite, -specific] DPs are banned from a pre-verbal position

(11) *A un estudiante cualquiera veremos.
    To a student any see-1 pl fut
    “We will see a student”

(12) A Lucía la veremos
    To Lucia see-1 pl fut
    “We will see Lucia”

According to Cinque’s (1990) analysis of CLLD structures in Italian, the fronted DP in CLLD constructions is base generated in a non-argumental position and is linked to an operator that licenses the clitic. One possible account for the asymmetry between clitic doubling in wh-constructions and CLLD structures in LS is that in the case of wh-

---

3 Sentence (11) is ungrammatical if no pause exists between the fronted DP and the verb. Therefore, it is not a hanging topic of the type proposed by Zubizarreta (1998).
extraction, the extracted element may be in an argumental position as in (9) and does not require a clitic, or it may be in a non-argumental position as in (10) and in this case extraction triggers the spell-out of an agreement morpheme. In CLLD constructions, the position occupied by the DP is always a non-argumental one and requires a clitic. As the clitic is by definition either +specific or +definite, a DP with –specific,-definite values is banned.

Further evidence in favor of considering that there are two types of VP-internal elements in Limeño Spanish comes from the impossibility of coordinating argumental and non-argumental DPs as shown by right-node raising facts. While in (13) coordination of the two VPs is possible with an interpretation in which Maria is the argument of both verbs, (14) is ungrammatical with such interpretation:

(13) Vi y saludé a María

See-past and greet-past 1 to María

“I saw and (I) greeted María”

(14) *Vi y lai saludé a Maríai

See-past and CL greet-past 1 to María

“I saw and (I) greeted María”

Additionally, as noted by Aoun (1999) for clitic-doubling in Lebanese Arabic (LA), in LS quantifiers in doubled DPs have narrow scope while those in non-doubled DP are ambiguous:

(15) Vi la foto de los dos niños

Cl saw the picture of the two boys

“(I) saw the picture of the two boys”
(16) La vi la foto de los dos niños

Cl saw the picture of the two boys

“(I) saw the picture of the two boys”

The interpretation of (15) is ambiguous between a reading in which for each boy I have seen a picture and one in which I have seen a picture depicting the two boys. Sentence (16) has only the second reading. These facts are compatible with an analysis in which the doubled and the non-doubled DP occupy different positions.

Based on these different interpretations, Aoun (1999) proposes that the doubled element in LA is not in an argumental position and that it receives its interpretation not by virtue of receiving a th-role from the verb but by virtue of being the subject of a predicate formed by the clitic and a null pro generated in an argumental position. Part of the evidence presented by Aoun in favor of a predication relation between the doubled NP and clitic and the null pro cannot be duplicated in LS as it involves sentences with clitics adjoined to prepositional phrases. Such clitics cannot be found in any variety of Spanish.

Nevertheless, the interpretation facts for LA also show up in LS and strongly suggest that non-doubled DPs and doubled DPs are in different positions. Non-doubled DPs are in an argumental position and can be interpreted in situ or they can move at LF and be interpreted in Spec of CP. Doubled DPs are in a position or a configuration that precludes movement at LF and therefore the wide-scope interpretation is not possible. I would like to propose that in LS the non-doubled DP is in argumental position and may move at LF to Spec of CP and receive a wide scope interpretation. The doubled DP, on the other hand, is an adjunct to VP and must remain in this position to receive its interpretation. As
in Aoun’s analysis, I will propose that in the case of doubled DPs in LS, a pro sits in argumental position and forms a chain with the DP in non-argumental position. The corresponding structures are in:

(17) a. VP
    \[ V' \]
    \[ V \]
    \[ DP \]
    \[ QP_j \]

    b. VP
    \[ VP \]
    \[ DP_i \]
    \[ pro_i \]
    \[ QP_j \]

Support for positing a VP-adjunct position for the doubled DP comes from the fact that a wide scope interpretation is not possible in Spanish with a QP inside a non-argumental PP. Sentence (18) can only be interpreted as having narrow scope, the interpretation in (19) is not possible.

(18) Traje un libro con la foto de las dos niñas
    Brought a book with the picture of the two girls
    “I brought a book with the picture of the two girls”

(19) \[ [CP QP_i dos_i niñas [ C^0 Traje [VP un libro [VP [PP con la foto [PP de las [QP x_i] \]

Having established the position of the doubled DP, in the next section I will discuss the nature of the relationship between the clitic and the doubled DP. I will propose that in LS
such a relation is tied to the informational structure of the sentence, and more precisely to the focus interpretation of the doubled NP in LS.

3. **AGREE, the feature-matching hypothesis and the checking of identificational focus**

Several approaches have been proposed to account for the relationship between the clitic and the doubled element with respect to Spanish and the Romance languages. In this section, I will present evidence that the doubled DP bears an identificational focus feature (as defined by Kiss 1998). On the basis of such evidence, I will propose that the checking of this feature through the relationship AGREE (Chomsky 1998) between $v$ as a Probe and the chain formed by the pro and the doubled DP triggers the surfacing of the clitic as an overt morphological marker. From this analysis follows the feature-matching hypothesis proposed by Suñer (1988).

3.1. **The feature-matching hypothesis (Suñer 1988)**

Suñer (1988) proposes that clitic-doubling constructions in Argentinian Spanish require matching of agreement features between the clitic and the doubled NP. Doubled clitics are always + animate and + specific and doubled NPs must also be +animate and +specific, irrespective of whether the NP is definite or not as shown by the following examples. (21) is modeled after one of Suñer’s examples:

(20) *La conozco a esa estudiante*

     Her know to that student

     “I know that student”
(21) Diariamente lo veía a un hombre que tocaba música en la calle

Daily Cl saw to a man that played music on the street

“Everyday, (he/ I) saw a man who played music on the street”

In example (21) the doubled DP is –definite and +specific. DPs that are – animate or [–
definite and –specific] are ruled out for clitic doubling in Argentinian Spanish and also in
Limeño Spanish. Sentence (22) is a case of -animate and (23) a case of –definite,
-specific:

(22) *Lo compr-aron al libro

Cl bought-3-past-pl to-the book

“(They) bought the book”

(23) *La buscaban a una persona que supiera nadar

Cl looked to a person that knew-subj-past swim

“(They) looked for a person that knew how to swim”

However, unlike in Argentinian Spanish, clitic doubling with a + definite, – specific DP
is possible in Limeño Spanish:

(24) Loi alabarán [al niño que termine su tarea primero],

Cl praise to-the boy that finishes his homework first

“The will praise the boy that finishes his homework first” (Suñer 1988)

In a context in which there has been previous reference to children, the sentence is
acceptable. Thus, it seems that the restriction in LS is on [– animate] and [–definite,
–specific] features. Nevertheless, features are not the only characteristics that make this
sentence felicitous. Sentence (24) cannot be uttered, unless there has been previous
mention of potential antecedents of the doubled DP. Such a requirement is hard to
capture in an analysis that does not incorporate the Topic/ Focus structure of the sentence
and its relationship with definiteness and specificity. Thus, what is relevant in (24) is the
fact that the DP al niño ‘to the boy’ is understood as an element from a set of elements
that is shared as background information and to which the predicate alabarán ‘will
praise’ applies.

Following an observation by Zwickly (1972) that clitics are morphemes that may never
be stressed, I would like to propose that in isolation, clitics are marked with – Focus
features. This property makes them ideal candidates to act as anaphoric elements in
discourse. However, when clitics are associated with other DP structures as is the case of
clitic-doubling sentences, they enter feature matching relationships with other Ds not
only with respect to phi-features as proposed by Suñer (1988) but also with respect to
focus features. Thus, when clitics are part of a chain involving an unstressed overt DP in
a Clitic Left Dislocation structure, they agree with the overt DP (Cinque 1990) in –Focus
features. Evidence in favor of this proposal comes from the impossibility of a CLLD
structure with an unstressed DP as an answer to a contrastive question as in:

(25) ¿A quién viste ayer, a María o a Pedro/ a la gerente o al cajero?

              Whom did you see yesterday, Maria or Pedro/ the manager or the teller?

(26) ?A María/ A la gerente/ a ella la vi

              To Maria/ A la gerente/ a ella Cl saw

              “(I) saw Maria/ the manager/her”

The opposite effect can be found when the clitic forms a chain with an overt DP or
pronoun in a clitic-doubling sentence.
CLITIC-DOUBLING AND THE CHECKING OF FOCUS

(27) ¿A quién viste ayer, a María o a Pedro/ a la gerente o al cajero?
Whom did you see yesterday, Maria or Pedro/ the manager or the teller?

(28) La vi a María/ a la gerente/a ella
To Maria, Cl saw
“(I) saw Maria/ the manager/ her”

I propose that in this case, the chain bears focus features (+F). Evidence in favor of considering this as a + F structure comes from the possibility of wh-extraction with clitics but not with clitic doubling as shown by the following contrast:

(29) ¿A quién, la, viste tº?
To whom cl see-2ppast?
“Whom did you see?”

(30) *¿A quién, la, viste a ella,?
To whom cl see-2ppast to her?
“Whom did you see?”

In Limeño Spanish (29) is possible but (30) is out. If one assumes that wh-questions involve a +F feature in the wh-word, the incompatibility of the wh-word and the chain formed by the clitic and the pronoun must come from the +F feature borne by the pronoun.

As Spanish obeys the Nuclear Stress Rule (Cinque 1995, Zubizarreta 1998), the doubled DP is by default marked with +F. The same is true of the non-doubled DP. Nevertheless, their distribution in discourse differs. While the non-doubled DP can be uttered in an out of the blue sentence, the clitic doubling construction requires a presupposed set of
elements in discourse. Thus, I would like to propose that the two constructions
 correspond to two different types of focus. While the non-doubled DP in sentence-final
 position is informational focus, the doubled DP is identificational focus as defined by
 Kiss (1998):
 “An identificational focus represents a subset of the set of contextually or situationally
given elements for which the predicate phrase can potentially hold; it is identified as the
exhaustive subset of this set for which the predicate phrase actually holds” (Kiss

Clitic doubling constructions pass the exhaustive identification test proposed by Farkas
cited as p.c. by Kiss (1998) according to which it is possible to negate exhaustive
identificational focus but it is not possible to negate informational focus. The following
dialogue replicates Farkas’ test:

(31) Maria la vio a Teresa
    Maria Cl saw Teresa
    Maria saw Teresa

(32) No, la vio a Tatiana también
    No, cl saw Tatiana too
    No, she saw Tatiana too

Overt unstressed DPs that are not doubled do not pass the test:

(33) Maria vio a Teresa
    Maria saw Teresa
This indicates that the chain in a clitic-doubling structure bears an exhaustive focus feature (+Fe) different from the informational focus that characterizes DPs in sentence final position in Spanish.

3.2. AGREE and the checking of Fe

I will assume that in LS, v is a Probe that has the uninterpretable features Case with accusative value, number, person, specificity, definiteness, animacy and Fe. The pro in argumental position has the same interpretable features. This pro forms a chain with the DP in non-argumental position and shares with it the features mentioned before.

In principle, the checking of Fe would be impossible because the DP in adjunct position is not a sister to v and therefore is not in the relevant checking domain (Chomsky 1998). However, in a representational approach, the overt DP in non-argumental position forms a chain with the pro in argumental position. I would like to propose that under identity of features with the chain formed by the pro and the DP, the probe v checks the accusative features and Fe. The AGREE relationship is represented in:
In this analysis, the clitic in the clitic-doubling structure is the overt morphological expression of the AGREE relationship triggered by Fe. This analysis accounts for the need of feature-matching present in Suñer’s Feature Matching Hypothesis given that identity is a requirement for this relationship. It also provides semantic content to Aoun’s (1999) proposal of a predicate relationship between the clitic and the doubled DP. Such a relationship is one in which the probe \( v \) and the doubled DP share a +Fe feature. In the case of argumental DPs, the Fe feature is not present in the probe and the derivation is possible only if the DP does not bear the feature Fe. Support for the idea that the probe \( v \) bears the Fe feature comes from the locality of clitic doubling as illustrated by sentence (36):

\[(36) \quad *La quiere que vean a María\]

Cl want that see to María
“(S/he wants for (them) to see María”

Evidence for the non-argumental position of the DP comes from the impossibility of coordinating doubling and non-doubling clitics:

(37) * Ayer [lo vi] y [la vi a Yesica]

Yesterday [Cl saw] and [cl saw to Yesica]

“Yes yesterday I saw him and I saw Yesica”

Coordination should not be precluded in (37) if the only difference between the first and the second conjunct is that in the first one the doubled element is null but in the second conjunct it is overt. However if the second conjunct involves a structure in which there is a DP in non-argumental position but the first conjunct does not have such a position then a structural difference arises.

This analysis also accounts for the fact that clitic doubling in other varieties of Spanish is possible only with strong pronouns but is banned with overt DPs. In principle, any DP could appear in a position adjoined to VP, however languages may differ with respect to the assignment of the Fe feature in the lexicon. Such assignment could be subject to parametric variation. In the lexicon of those varieties of Spanish that disallow direct object clitic doubling except for strong pronouns, only the D0 in strong pronouns may bear the Fe feature.

To summarize, the analysis proposed in this paper treats clitic-doubling structures in LS as the spell-out of the AGREE relationship triggered by the uninterpretable Fe feature borne by the probe v. It supports Suñer’s view that doubling clitics in languages such as Argentinian Spanish and LS are base-generated and are subject to a Matching Feature
Principle and it explains this requirement as well as the optionality of clitic doubling in these two languages on the basis of the focus interpretation of the DP coindexed with them. This analysis differs from Sportiche’s (1998) treatment of clitics in that it does not involve a Spec-Head agreement relationship but an AGREE relationship for clitic-doubling. It also differs from Aoun’s (1999) analysis in that it proposes a focus feature that is the trigger of the AGREE relationship and not a subject-predicate relationship.

4. The distribution of clitic-doubling and clitic structures in discourse

In order to understand how the checking of Fe is related to the informational structure of the sentence, I would like to discuss an extension of the analysis of clitic doubling presented here to the distribution of clitic doubling structures in discourse. The analysis presented so far indicates that clitic-doubling structures and clitic structures differ in that doubling is a reflex of the checking of a specific value of focus Fe while clitic structures are not marked with that specific focus value. This difference should be testable by analyzing the distribution of sentences containing clitic structures and clitic-doubling structures in discourse according to the informational structure of each sentence. In order to do that, I will analyze a fragment of discourse in LS controlling for the introduction of topics in discourse.

The following fragment of discourse represents a sequence of sentences in which two main discourse topics are introduced that can be recovered through clitic-related structures. I will use it as a testing environment for the distribution of clitic and clitic doubling structures in discourse positions B, D and F in Limeño Spanish. Additionally I will discuss the distribution of CLLD structures with unstressed DPs and sentences with
overt DPs in argumental position. All sentences in this fragment have a first person subject that is dropped and therefore does not count as a possible antecedent for Maria or Teresa.
**Table 2: Discourse Fragment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence A</th>
<th>(38) Ayer me encontré con María.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Yesterday (I) ran into Maria’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence B</th>
<th>(39) La saludé efusivamente, pero no me reconoció.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I greeted her effusively, but she did not recognize me’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence C</th>
<th>(40) Luego vi a Teresa.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Then (I) saw Teresa’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence D</th>
<th>(41) La saludó, pero tampoco me reconoció.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I also greeted her but she did not recognize me’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence E</th>
<th>(42) No había visto a María en años así que no me extrañó su reacción.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘I had not seen Maria in ages, so her reaction did not seem strange to me’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence F</th>
<th>(43) pero me la llevé a Teresa a un lado y le pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘But I took Teresa aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Table 2, I have included clitic-related structures that are acceptable in discourse for sentences B, D and F. I will now proceed to discuss why other structures are less acceptable in those slots. Sentence (38), repeated as (44) below, is the first sentence uttered in discourse:

**Discourse Sentence A**

(44) Ayer vi a María.

Yesterday see-1ppast to María

‘Yesterday I saw Maria’

In principle, in addition to the clitic structure, other structures could occupy position B in discourse. However, this is not the case as illustrated by the unacceptability of clitic doubling and CLLD structures as well as structures with overt DPs:

**Discourse Sentence B**

*Clitic*

(45) La saludé efusivamente, pero no me reconoció.

Cl3s fem acc greeted effusively, but not Cl lps acc recognized

‘I greeted her effusively, but she did not recognize me’

*Clitic doubling +DP*

(46) ?La saludé a María, efusivamente, pero no me reconoció

Cl3s fem acc greeted to María, effusively, but not Cl lps acc recognized

‘I greeted her effusively, but she did not recognize me’
CLITIC-DOUBLING AND THE CHECKING OF FOCUS

DP-Clitic Left Dislocation

(47) ?A Maríai la1 saludé efusivamente, pero no me reconoció.
To Maríai Cl3s fem acci greeted effusively, but not Cl lps acc recognized
‘I greeted her effusively, but she did not recognize me’

Overt Unstressed DP

(48) ?Saludé a Maríai efusivamente, pero no me reconoció
Greeted to Maríai effusively, but not Cl lps recognized
‘I greeted Maria effusively, but she did not recognize me’

While sentence (45) is judged felicitous by speakers of Limeño Spanish (46)-(48) are not with some difference in their degree of acceptance of the sentence. Knowledge of the infelicitous nature of these sentences cannot be attributed to a constraint on precedence that links the simple clitic to the closest potential antecedent in discourse. In fact, linear closeness does not result in an association of the clitic with the immediate potential antecedent. This is illustrated in the following sentences where the clitic is associated with the head of the DP projection and not to Maria which is the immediate antecedent:

(49) Ayer vi a la madre, de Mariaj
Yesterday saw to the motheri of Mariaj
“Yesterday, I saw Maria’s mother”

(50) La/*j saludé efusivamente
Cl/*j greeted effusively
“I greeted her effusively”
I would like to propose that while the sentences in (46)- (48) are grammatical as isolated sentences, knowledge of their lack of appropriateness in discourse is the result of the interaction of agreement and focus features with sentential topic operators. In the next subsection, I will try to derive from such interaction the fact that the only syntactic structure compatible with a felicitous focus/topic structure for a sentence A is the clitic structure.

4.1. The position of topic operators and the checking of focus features

Under traditional assumptions, if overt subjects occupy Spec of TP in Romance languages such as Spanish, then the position available for fronted Topics and Focus Phrases is Spec of CP. On the basis of Italian data, Rizzi (1997) has proposed a split CP hypothesis that allows for features such as Force, Topic and Focus to be checked in different layers of CP. Crucial to Rizzi’s view is that Topic Phrase is recursive whereas Focus Phrase is not. Apparently, this is the case also in Spanish as illustrated by the following contrast between the distribution of unstressed or topic pre-verbal DPs and stressed or focused ones:

(51) El libro, a María, mañana, se lo daré.

The book, to Maria, tomorrow, CL IO CL DO give-fut3

“I will give the book to Maria tomorrow”

(52) * A LA BENEFICENCIA, LA ROPA donaré (no al ejercito de salvación, los zapatos).

TO THE WELL-FARE INSTITUTION, THE CLOTHES give-fut 1 (not to the Salvation Army, the shoes)

4 Notice that the most internal topic in example (51) is not an argument of the verb.
“I will give the clothes to the well-fare institution) (not to the Salvation Army, the shoes)

In sentence (51) multiple unstressed DPs appear in pre-verbal position, but in (52) multiple stressed DPs in pre-verbal position are not possible.

In Rizzi’s analysis, the CP has an intermediate focus projection (FocP) that is located between a higher and a lower topic projection (TopP), as shown in (53)\(^5\):

\(\text{(53)}\)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{TopP} \\
\quad \text{Top'} \\
\quad \quad \text{Top} \quad \text{FocP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{Foc'} \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \text{Foc} \quad \text{TopP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{Top'} \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \text{Top}
\end{array}
\]

\(^5\) For the sake of exposition other projections proposed by Rizzi (1997) such as Finiteness and Force are excluded from this representation.
Zubizarreta (1998, 1999) has proposed a more restricted view of clause internal Topic positions. In Cinque’s (1990) original analysis of CLLD structures in Italian, he posited that the fronted DP or pronoun in a CLLD structure is in an A’ position presumably in Spec of a functional TopP projection and that it is a base generated position and not the result of movement. Zubizarreta (1998) proposes a different account for argument-related pre-verbal elements, based on the observation that in Spanish pre-verbal subjects and pre-verbal objects compete for the pre-verbal position, as shown by the contrast between (54) and (55):

(54) La carta la escribió Juan
    The letter obj agr/cl-wrote Juan
    “Juan wrote the letter”

(55) *La carta Juan la escribió
    The letter obj agr/cl-wrote Juan
    “The letter, Juan wrote it”

The pre-verbal position in (55) must be distinguished from an initial topic position that requires a pause or an intonational break between the direct object *la carta* and the pre-verbal subject *Juan*. Zubizarreta proposes that DP fronting in CLLD constructions must be local as shown by the ungrammaticality of the following sentence without a pause or an intonational break after ‘carta’ in:

---

7 This accounts for the structure’s mixture of properties: sensitivity to strong islands but not to weak islands, among others (Cinque 1990, see Zagona 2002 for Spanish examples).
(56) * La carta sé que la escribió Juan

The letter know that cl wrote Juan

“The letter I know Juan wrote it”

The locality constraint indicates that the fronting of the DP in CLLD is clause-internal. This leads Zubizarreta to propose that, in Spanish, Spec of TP is the position in which topic and focused phrases get their focus features checked and that tense is a synchretic category in Spanish that may check focus or topic features.\(^8\) In this view, Topic Phrase is not recursive, there is only one clause-internal topic in Spec of TP and it could be any argument of the verb. Presumably, higher topics are adjuncts to CP and are not generated inside the VP. If Zubizarreta’s restrictive proposal for topic positions is correct, then the synchretic nature of T accounts for the fact that, in Limeño Spanish, CLLD structures are possible with unstressed DPs as shown by sentence (54) but they are also possible with stressed DPs as shown by sentence (57):

(57) A MARIA la vi

To MARIA Cl saw

“(I) saw MARIAN”

In such an analysis, Spec of CP remains available for higher topics. A fronted focused DP in Spec of TP may only co-occur with recursive topics that are adjoined to CP. This

---

\(^8\) It is important to clarify that in Zubizarreta’s (1998) view, subjects check nominative case via feature movement as in Chomsky’s (1995) feature theory. It is only the D-feature and not the DP that moves to Spec of T. In the case of structures with post-verbal subjects the checking takes place in the covert syntax. This assumption is crucial to the proposal that Spec of TP is free for Topic or Focus Phrases.
analysis predicts that a focused phrase may not precede a topic in Spanish, but a hanging topic may precede a focused phrase and that prediction is borne in LS:

(58)  
*A LOS NIÑOS, un libro doné ⁹ (no a los adultos)  
TO THE CHILDREN, a book donated  
“I donated a book TO THE CHILDREN”

(59)  
Un libro, A LOS NIÑOS doné (no a los adultos)  
A book, TO THE CHILDREN donate 1p (not the adults)  
“I donated a book TO THE CHILDREN” (not to the adults)

In sentence (59), the unstressed overt DP checks its –F feature in Spec of TP and, as T is synthcretic in Spanish, it leaves no focus value available for the checking of the focused phrase and therefore a focused phrase in a higher position is not possible. I will extend Zubizarreta’s analysis of overt DPs in pre-verbal positions to null operators in LS discourse. I will argue that null operators are located in Spec of TP and that they must agree in a negative focus specification with clitics in order for a sentence to be acceptable in discourse. This agreement requirement licenses the semantic interpretation of clitics in discourse and accounts for the different distribution of clitic-doubling and clitic structures.

4.2. Deriving the distribution of clitic-doubling structures in discourse

In sentence (38) in slot A, Maria is new information and is marked with +focus in accordance to the Nuclear Stress Rule as defined for Romance by Zubizarreta (1998), given that the constituent in which Maria appears is the lower one in the asymmetric c-

---

⁹ The verb donar “to donate” is one of the few verbs in Limeño Spanish that does not require the use of a clitic when an argument is fronted.
command ordering. Presumably, the adverb occupies Spec of CP in a structure such as the one in (60):

**Sentence A**

(60) \[ CP \text{ Adv}_{TP} [T \text{ V-subj agr}_i [VP DP_j]] \]

\[ +F \]

Once the subject topic and the object topic have been established in (38), the question to be addressed is what argument is recovered in the next sentence as a discourse topic and through which mechanism is it recovered. I would like to propose that discourse topics are recovered at the sentential level through a topic operator in Spec of TP and that the closest argument marked with +F features in discourse is the one recovered as a topic in the next sentence. In this case, it is the direct object. Support in favor of an analysis in which only one topic operator is at work in this sentence comes from the fact that no intervention effects arise. In sentences with an overt object topic and an overt pre-verbal subject intervention effects arise between the chains formed by the overt DPs and the subject and object agreement markers, as noted by (reference not included for the purposes of review) with respect to example (62):

(61) Un día una viejita estaba en el campo y se encontró un pajarito

One day an old lady was in the field and CL found a little bird

"One day an old lady was in the countryside and found a little bird"

(62) Al pajarito, la viejita lo llevó a su casa

To the little bird CL took to her house

"The little bird, she took it to her house"
In principle, the structure assumed in this paper does not preclude two topics in a sentence as one could be a topic in Spec of CP and the other a topic in Spec of TP. However, when two overt DPs that may function as overt topic operators are present in a sentence, then minimality effects arise that render the sentence unacceptable. If the unstressed fronted object “Al pajarito” is located in Spec of CP and “la viejita” is in Spec of TP, minimality effects arise due to the intervention of the chain formed by the pre-verbal subject and the subject agreement morpheme and the chain formed by the fronted DP in Spec of CP, the accusative clitic and the pro sitting in the internal argumental position in an Sportichean analysis of CLLD, as formalized in (63):

\[(63) \ast [\text{CP Top DP}_i [\text{CP} \text{ DP}_j \text{ Cl}_j+V_k+ \text{subj agr}_i ] [\text{VP} \ldots t_k \text{ pro}_j]]\]

The structure for sentence (39) differs crucially from the previous case in that no minimality effects arise. Following Zwicky’s (1976) original proposal that clitics may not bear stress, I would like to propose that clitics in non-doubling structures are marked with a default –F value.10 Thus, sentence (39) is acceptable because there is no clash in features between the clitic marked with –F and the topic operator, irrespective of whether the single clitic structure is analyzed as a bundle of agreement features as in (64)a. or as a functional head as in (64)b.:

\[(64) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [\text{TP OP}_j [\text{T obj agr}_j-V_k- \text{subj agr}_i ] [\text{VP} t_k] \\ & \text{-F} \\
\text{b. } & [\text{TP OP}_j [\text{CP CL}_j-V_k- \text{subj agr}_i ] [\text{VP} t_k \text{ pro}_j] \\ & \text{-F}
\end{align*}\]

10 Discourse analysis of third person clitic pronouns in French have shown that their use in discourse presupposes a salient representation of the referent in the interlocutor’s mind. If a speaker assumes that such a representation is not accessible to the interlocutor then he or she uses an accented disjunctive pronoun (Cornish 1999).
In the case of clitic-doubling structures the chain formed by the agreement features and the overt DP is marked with a positive value for Fe. In sentence (46), under the assumption that no change of topic has taken place, the +F specification of the chain formed by the clitic and the DP clashes with the –F feature required by the topic operator as shown in (65):

Sentence B

(65) * [ [TP Top Opj [T obj agrj-Vk-subj agri [ VP [VP tk ] DPj … ] ]

\[-F \quad +F\]

This clash in features makes the sentence unacceptable in discourse. Assuming that CLLD structures have an overt topic operator, i.e., the unstressed fronted DP, and are marked with –F features, there should be no reason for the unacceptability of sentence (47). Apparently no minimality effects should arise since the only apparent overt topic is the DP in Spec of TP. In order to account for the unacceptability of this sentence, I would like to propose a constraint on overt topics that operates at the discourse level.

Overt Topic Constraint

(66) A –F element in Spec of TP must be phonologically null if it is coindexed with a +F DP in the immediately preceding sentence.

From this constraint it follows that CLLD structures with unstressed fronted DPs are used in discourse only when their index differs from that of the preceding +F. This results in their being used only when it is necessary to (re)-introduce a topic in discourse.\(^{11}\)

Finally, sentence (48) must be ruled out because the DP in final position carries informational focus assigned by the Nuclear Stress Rule. By virtue of being marked with +F it is incompatible with a topic operator in Spec of TP.

\(^{11}\) This fact has also been noted by functionalist analyses of discourse such as Prince’s (1997).
Sentence C introduces a new topic and now two antecedents are possible: Maria and Teresa.

**Discourse Sentence C**

(67) Luego vi a Teresa$_i$.

Then see past1p to Teresa$_i$

“Then (I saw) Teresa”

Again, the only construction that is clearly felicitous as a continuation of (67) in discourse is the clitic construction:

**Discourse Sentence D**

(68) La$_j$ saludé, pero tampoco me reconoció.

Also Cl3s fem acc$_j$ greeted, but neither Cl1s recognized

“I also greeted her but she did not recognize me”

(69) ?La$_j$ saludé a Teresa$_j$, pero tampoco me reconoció.

Also Cl3s fem acc$_j$ greeted Teresa$_j$, but neither Cl1s recognized

“I also greeted her but she did not recognize me”

(70) ?A Teresa$_j$ la$_j$ saludé, pero tampoco me reconoció

To Teresa$_j$ also Cl3s fem acc$_j$ greeted, but neither Cl1s recognized

“I also greeted her but she did not recognize me”

(71) ?Saludé a Teresa$_j$, pero tampoco me reconoció.

Also greeted to Teresa$_j$, but neither Cl1s recognized

“I also greeted Teresa but she did not recognize me”
In (68), agreement features are –F and are compatible with a covert topic operator coindexed with Teresa. Sentences (69) and (71) are banned by the mismatch in features between the topic Operators and the chain formed by the clitic and the overt DP marked with +Fe in (69) and informational focus in (71). The Overt Topic Constraint bans sentence (70).

Sentence F is the mirror image of B and D. In this case, the only unacceptable structure is the clitic structure:

**Discourse Sentence F**

(72) ?Pero me la\_j lleve a un lado y le pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

But Cl1s Cl3s fem acc\_j took aside and Cl3s dat\_j asked: Happens something?

“But I took her aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”

(73) pero me la\_j lleve a Teresa\_j a un lado y le pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

But Cl1s Cl3s fem acc\_j took to Teresa aside and Cl3s dat\_j asked: Happens something?

“But I took Teresa aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”

(74) pero a Teresa\_j me la\_j lleve a un lado y le\_j pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

But Teresa\_j Cl1s Cl3s fem acc\_j took aside and Cl3s dat\_j asked: Happens something?

“But Teresa, I took aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”

(75) pero me lleve a Teresa\_j a un lado y le pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

But Cl1s took to Teresa\_j aside and Cl3s dat\_j asked: Happens something?

“But I took Teresa aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”
I would like to propose that the context for sentence F is one in which, if a null topic operator is in Spec of TP, then it can only recover María as a topic with an index \( i \) since it is the last +F DP in the previous sentence in slot E. It cannot recover the clitic in sentence (68) in slot D coindexed with Teresa\(_j\) in sentence (67). Sentence (72) is not felicitous because the clitic with index \( j \) must check its –F features with the null topic operator with index \( i \). One possible way in which the mismatch in indexes can be incorporated as a feature in the matrix of features is as a referentiality feature that needs to be matched. Thus the checking of –F is not possible because there is no matching in referentiality between the operator and the clitic:

\[
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{Op} & \text{Clitic} \\
\begin{bmatrix} r_i \\ -F \end{bmatrix} & \begin{bmatrix} r_j \\ -F \end{bmatrix}
\end{array}
\]

Evidence in favor of treating the null operator as crucial in blocking the coindexation of the clitic in (72) with the clitic in (68) is the fact that agreement features are not sufficient to recover the topic as illustrated by the following sentences in which the antecedent in sentence D is changed to a masculine:

(77) No había visto a Pedro\(_i\) en años así que no me extrañó su reacción.

“I had not seen Pedro in ages, so his reaction did not seem strange to me”

(78) ¿pero me la\(_j\) lleve a un lado y le\(_j\) pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

“But I took her aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”
If agreement features were sufficient to recover the topic, one would expect that the intervening masculine antecedent should not interfere in the identification of the clitic coindexed with Maria. Notice also that, if no topic operator is projected the clitic fails to check its –F feature and the derivation crashes too.

Sentence (74) is acceptable as a continuation of sentence D in discourse because it involves an overt topic operator that is coindexed with the clitic and their focus feature specifications coincide. The sentence does not violate the Overt Topic Constraint as the index is different from that of the +F DP in the previous sentence. In this case, the overt topic operator re-introduces a topic. With respect to sentence (73), if a topic operator is projected, the sentence should be unacceptable because the chain formed by the clitic and the DP would bear different referentiality indexes and the topic operator requires -F focus features, as shown in:

(79)  *[TP OPi  [T obj agrj-Vk-subj agr [VP tk [VP DPj]  
       -F    +F

Despite this fact, the sentence is appropriate and even preferred by speakers of LS over the CLLD structure. Therefore, the only possible account for the grammaticality of this sentence lies in the fact that no topic operator is projected. Evidence in favor of no topic operator involvement is generated by the fact that agreement features are sufficient to reintroduce the topic in discourse:

(80)  No había visto a Pedro en años así que no me extrañó su reacción.

Not had seen Pedro in years so that not CL1p shocked her reaction

“I had not seen Pedro in ages, so her reaction did not seem strange to me”
(81) pero me la lleve a Teresa y le pregunté: “¿Pasa algo?”

But Cl-1p Cl-3pj took to Teresa aside and Clj asked: Happens something?

“But I took her aside and I asked her: “Is something wrong?”

Finally, in the case of sentence (75) again one can also argue that no topic operator is
included in the numeration and therefore there is no clash in focus features between the
topic operator and the overt DP. To summarize, in this section I have accounted for the
different distribution of clitic-doubling structures and clitic structures in discourse by
explaining how their different feature values for focus interact with covert topic and overt
topic operators in discourse. In doing so, I have also proposed an account that CLLD
constructions are restricted in their distribution by the Overt Topic Constraint. Although
overt non-doubled DPs occupy a different syntactic position and are marked with
different types of focus features their distribution in discourse may coincide depending on
how they interact with null and overt topic operators in discourse.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, I have proposed an analysis of optional clitic-doubling constructions in
Limeño Spanish that supports the view that doubled DPs are not in argumental position
and that clitics are agreement morphemes that result from the AGREE operation between
\( \nu \) as a probe and the doubled DP. Checking of the uninterpretable exhaustive focus
feature of \( \nu (+Fe) \) takes place under identity of features between \( \nu \) and the doubled DP.
From this analysis Suñér’s Matching Principle requiring that the clitic and the doubled
DP agree in phi-features follows. Evidence from coordination, QP interpretation and
locality was provided to support the proposal that doubled DPs are adjoined to VP.
Furthermore, the feature specification proposed for clitic-doubling structures in this analysis accounts for the different distribution in discourse of clitic-doubling and clitic structures since the former are associated with a positive value of a focus feature and the latter with a negative value. The interaction of such features with sentence-internal operators that link agreement features throughout discourse yields the distribution of clitic, clitic-doubling, CLLD and overt DP structures in discourse.
References


Suñer, M. 1997 "Clitic-doubling of strong pronouns in Spanish" ms.


