

## CHAPTER 45

# Clitic pronominal systems Morphophonology

DIEGO PESCARINI

### 45.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on some morphophonological properties of clitics and clitic combinations. Before addressing the data, a brief remark on the notion of ‘clitic’ is in order. A clitic is a function word which is not inherently stressed, occupies a fixed position in the clause, cannot be coordinated or contrasted, and cannot occur in isolation or in predicative constructions.

In the recent literature, a further distinction has been proposed to distinguish ‘clitic’ from another type of non-strong element, which is usually referred to as a ‘weak element’ (Holmberg 1986; Cardinaletti 1998; Cardinaletti and Starke 1999; Egerland 2002). Like clitic pronouns, weak elements cannot occur in isolation or in predicative position, and cannot be focalized or coordinated, but, unlike clitics, weak pronouns do not necessarily cluster with other clitics and cannot be doubled. Sometimes, weak items are morphologically ‘heavier’ than clitics, insofar as they can be polysyllabic.

In Italian, for instance, the pronoun *loro* (< ILLORUM) with a dative interpretation can be introduced by *a* or occur as a bare element:

- (1) Parlo (a) loro (It.)  
 I.talk to them  
 ‘I talk to them’

Without *a* ‘to’, *loro* cannot behave as a strong element: it must immediately follow the inflected verb, cannot be used in isolation, cannot be coordinated, etc. Unlike fully fledged clitics, however, *loro* has a peculiar behaviour: while clitics, like the 3SG *gli* (or its allomorph *glie*) in (2a), stand proclitic to the inflected verb, *loro* always follows the inflected verb, as in (2b):

- (2) a. Glie= lo= do (It.)  
 to.him/her/them= it= I.give  
 ‘I give it to him/her’

- b. Lo= do loro (It.)  
 it= I.give to.them  
 ‘I give it to them’

Although the above syntactic evidence leads us to postulate a tripartite distinction between strong, weak, and clitic pronouns, it is worth noting that no Romance language exhibits traces of a tripartite morphological system in which a given set of morphosyntactic features (person, number, gender, case, etc.) can be expressed by three different exponents: a weak, a clitic, or a strong pronoun. This amounts to saying that morphological systems always show a dichotomy between strong and non-strong elements (‘deficient’, in Cardinaletti and Starke’s 1999 terms), while further syntactic distinctions are neutralized at the morphological level.

The chapter is organized as follows: §45.2 focuses on the morphology of clitic systems, §45.3 on some phonological issues, and §45.4 deals with the morphophonology of clitic combinations.

### 45.2 Morphology

This section introduces some data and empirical generalizations concerning the morphology of Romance clitics. In particular, I will focus on aspects such as paradigmatic gaps, patterns of syncretism, and allomorphic alternations. The following material is organized into four subsections: §§45.2.1–3 are about object, subject, and possessive clitics, respectively; §45.2.4 focuses on the so-called clitics ‘of auxiliary’, i.e. dummy clitic elements which, in certain vernaculars, precede HAVE/BE forms beginning with a vowel.

#### 45.2.1 Object clitics

Object clitics derive from Latin pronouns and adverbial particles such as INDE ‘thence’, \*‘inke ‘hence’, IBI, ‘there’.

The genitive/partitive clitic (Fr. *en*, It. *ne*) and the so-called locative clitic (It. *ci*, Fr. *y*, Cat. *hi*) are sometimes referred to as pro-PPs, instead of pro-nouns, as they stand for various types of prepositional phrases (see Kayne 1975).

The cross-linguistic distribution of object clitics has been captured by means of the following descriptive generalizations taken from Benincà and Poletto (2005:227):

- (3) a. If a Romance language (Rl) has clitics, it has direct object clitics.
- b. If a Rl has dative clitics, it has direct object clitics.
- c. If a Rl has partitive or locative clitics, it has dative clitics.
- d. If a Rl has subject clitics, it also has direct and indirect object clitics.
- e. There is no implication between locative/partitive and subject clitics.
- f. Adverbial clitic forms for elements that are never selected by a verb are much rarer and imply the presence of argument clitics.

The generalizations in (3a) and (3b) are based on data from the Ræto-Romance subgroup (Haiman and Benincà 1992:126), in which some dialects do not display clitic forms at all (as in Brigels and Camischollas), while others exhibit defective paradigms. The dialects of Ardez and Remüs, for instance, have direct object clitics, but no dative, locative or partitive clitic.

In some dialects of Comelico (an Alpine area in the Veneto region, northern Italy), object clitics show further gaps in their paradigms: Tagliavini 1926 noticed that these dialects have no reflex of 1<sub>PL</sub> NOS and 3<sub>DAT</sub> ILLI. Furthermore, several varieties do not display third person clitics at all (see Paoli 2009).

Several languages (modern Spanish, Romanian, Portuguese) do not display any locative or partitive forms (even if in Spanish a trace of a locative *y* ‘there’ is argued to still be found in existential *hay* (< *ha* ‘has’ + *y* ‘there’) ‘there is/are’, e.g. *haypan* ‘there is bread’). Dialects of the extreme south of Italy (e.g. province of Reggio Calabria), often lack the locative clitic, but not the partitive one. Lastly, Friulian exhibits traces of a partitive clitic, but no locative form is attested.

Object clitics exhibit gender-, number-, and, especially in the third persons, case-morphology. In general, they are formed by a person morpheme followed by a vowel (a thematic vowel, according to Harris 1994). It is worth distinguishing between two types of thematic vowels: (i) agreement markers carrying morphosyntactic information; (ii) oblique endings without morphosyntactic value, as in the case of first/second person pronouns, e.g. Sp. *me’me’*,

*te* ‘you’.<sup>1</sup> Romanian differs from the other Romance languages in displaying case morphology with first and second person singular clitics (cf. §8.4.4.2).

When number is expressed by a dedicated suffix (-s), plural pronouns still exhibit conservative thematic vowels like Sp. *nos* < NOS ‘us’, *os* < UOS ‘you.PL’, *los* < ILLAS ‘they.M’, *las* < ILLAS ‘they.F’. Conversely, where number and gender features have been fused into a single exponent, plural forms have undergone processes of analogical levelling and hybridization. First and second person plural clitics have taken the default vowel of singular pronouns (NOS > *no* > *ne*, in analogy with *me*, *te*, *se*, etc.) or, alternatively, they were replaced by adverbial clitics deriving from Latin particles like \**inke* > (n)*ce*, INDE > *nde*, *ne*, *de*, IBI > *vi*, HIC, etc. Although both etymological explanations are valid, in many cases the reconstruction remains opaque or controversial (Sornicola 1991; Loporcaro 1995a; 2002a). In the same varieties where gender and number features are expressed solely by the thematic vowel, third person accusative clitics have inherited the thematic vowel of nominative plural forms ILL-I ‘they.M’, ILL-AE ‘they.F’ > It. *li/le* ‘them.M/F’ instead of those of the accusative series (ILLOS, ILLAS).

A few languages have developed a non-etymological dative feminine pronoun. Italian exhibits an opposition between *gli* ‘to him’ and *le* ‘to her’, possibly by analogy with the opposition between reflexes of ILLI and ILLAE in the accusative series. In *laísta* Spanish, varieties such as Madrileño the dative form *le(s)* references masculine individuals, while feminine referents are pronominalized by the accusative clitic *la(s)*, as shown in the following example:

- (4) A ella, la= dolía la cabeza (Mad.)  
 To her her= hurt the head  
 ‘She had a headache’

Various languages exhibit compound forms, i.e. clitic pronouns which are formed by the combination of two clitic items. In Occitan (Ronjat 1937:§§505-6; Ahlborn 1946:59-61; Rohlfs 1970:182), the dative clitic is often constructed by combining the accusative clitic with *i*. The same holds for

<sup>1</sup> According to Kayne (2000), third person clitics are formed by a root followed by an agreement ending, while oblique clitics are *monomorphemic*. Kayne (2000) and Cardinaletti and Repetti (2008) argue for a more radical analysis by assuming that oblique endings are *epenthetic*, i.e. segments which are not part of the morpho-lexical representation of clitic elements. However, the epenthetic status of these final Vs remains rather obscure to me, in particular in the case of the Italo-Romance varieties which have never undergone a generalized and systematic loss of final unstressed vowels. In fact, in these varieties, the default vowel normally coincides with the expected evolution of Lat. -E in final, unstressed position and, as a consequence, monomorphemic clitics can be viewed as regular reflexes of the Latin forms ME, TE, SE, INCE, INDE without postulating the intervention of epenthesis processes.

DIEGO PESCARINI

the Catalan dialect spoken in Barcelona, where the third person dative clitic /ə<sub>l</sub>zi/ ‘to them’ has been argued by Bonet (1991) to be a combination of the clitic ə<sub>l</sub>z—which corresponds to the accusative plural clitic—with an oblique marker -i, identical to the so-called locative clitic (written *hi* ‘there’).<sup>2</sup> The hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that in the same dialect the genitive/partitive clitic (ə)n occurs between the formatives ə<sub>l</sub>z and *i* giving rise to the sequence ə<sub>l</sub>z-ən-*i* ‘to them of it’ (Bonet 1991).

Diachronically, the explanation of the above compound forms may reside in a previous stage of *loísmo/laísmo*, namely, a stage in which the dative clitic was expressed by an accusative exponent (see (4) and below) Later, *loísta/laísta* varieties—which are attested in the same areas—developed a dative form combining the accusative-pro-dative clitic, e.g. Gsc. *lous* <*illos* ‘(to) them’ with *i*, giving rise to the modern compound elements, e.g. *lous y* ‘to them’.

One might wonder whether the same analysis holds for singular forms of the type *li*. Such forms, rather than being regular reflexes of *illi*, may result from a previous accusative-pro-dative clitic (e.g. *l(o)*) combined with the oblique clitic *y* (hence, *l’y* rather than *li*). It seems to me that this account can shed light on a series of irregularities displayed in the same varieties when third person dative clitics are combined with other clitic elements (see §45.4).

In several northern Italian dialects, locative and partitive clitics are compounds as well. In many Veneto dialects, for instance, the genitive/partitive clitic is formed by a combination of the locative clitic *ghe* /ge/ and the partitive element *ne* (5a). The composite structure of the partitive is synchronically evident, as in several Veneto varieties the former item (*ghe*) disappears in combination with a dative or locative clitic (Benincà 1994) (see (5b):

- (5) a. *ghene= magno do* (Pad.)  
of.it/them= I.eat two  
‘I eat two of them’  
b. *te= (\*\*ghe)ne= porto do* (Pad.)  
to.you= of.it/them= I.bring two  
‘I bring you two of them’

Penello (2004) reports cases of composite partitive forms (e.g. *nin* ‘of it/them’ in Romagnol dialects) which may be analysed as reduplicated forms of the usual partitive *ne/en*.

Clitic formatives are sometimes expressed by syncretic exponents. Generally, reflexes of *HINC* (or \**inke*), *INDE* and *SE*

have replaced reflexes of *NOS* and *ILLI*, respectively (on Italo-Romance, see Rohlfs 1969a; Calabrese 1994; Loporcaro 1995a; 2002a). The syncretism due to the substitution of the third person dative clitic with a locative form is particularly frequent in French, Italian, and Catalan varieties (i.e. in all the areas in which the locative clitic is attested).

- (6) *Díse =y* (Gsc.)  
he/she.say =to.him/her/them  
‘S/he talks to him/her’

One might wonder if the above syncretism is a consequence of palatalization, which, in a previous chronological stage, made the regular reflex of *illi* become opaque and, in various dialects, homophonous with the ‘locative’ pro-PP. The nature of the dative/locative syncretism, however, is much more controversial and cannot result only from regular morphophonological processes. Manzini and Savoia (2002) and Rezac (2010) argue that the cause of the syncretism is syntactic in nature rather than phonological as, syntactically speaking, the third person dative clitic can be considered a particular kind of locative clitic (for a principled explanation, I refer the interested reader to these works and references therein). In fact, it is worth noting that third person dative and locative clitics tend not to co-occur, and that the so-called ‘locative’ is in fact a pro-PP referencing a number of prepositional complements including non-human datives (see below).

A peculiar case of syncretism concerns reflexive forms. First and second person clitics are normally used with a reflexive interpretation, but in some varieties the third person reflexive is extended to other persons with an anaphoric function. Benincà and Poletto’s data show that the extension follows an implicational scale, whose starting point is the first person plural pronoun and the endpoint is the second person singular pronoun. In several Valencian varieties, for instance, the third person exponent *es* replaces first and second person plural clitics but not first and second person singular clitics (Bonet 1991:138): see (7). This also happens in Vegliote: see §48.3.

- (7) a. *Es= posarem darrere* (Vlc.)  
self= we.will.put behind  
‘We will move behind’  
b. *Es= poseu darrere* (Vlc.)  
self= you.put behind  
‘You(.PL) move behind’

In some dialects, first and second person reflexives (either plural or singular) are expressed by combining the first and second person clitic with the third person reflexive one:

<sup>2</sup> The plural dative clitic ə<sub>l</sub>zi is often written *els hi*.

- (8) Va= sa= lavì (Bel.)  
 you.PL= self= you.wash  
 ‘You wash yourselves’

Several clitic systems are sensitive to animacy or countability. In general, third person pronouns referencing countable, human entities are morphologically differentiated from pronouns referencing inanimate or abstract entities, mass nouns, events, and phrasal antecedents. In the descriptive literature, the latter pronouns are referred to as neuter pronouns because they derive from Latin neuter forms such as *ILLUD* ‘that’, *HOC* ‘this’ (on neuter in Romance, see Ch.57), attested in Catalan, Provençal, and southern Italian dialects (9).

- (9) Pròbo =m =oc! (Gsc.)  
 Prove.IMP =to.me =it  
 ‘Prove it to me!’

Elsewhere, ‘neuter’ elements are pronominalized by the third person masculine clitic or, rarely, by the feminine one, as in Romanian.

In many dialects of central and southern Italy (Vanelli and Renzi 1997:110f.), the masculine and the neuter clitic (*ILLUM* vs *ILLUD*) are expressed by the a single, syncretic exponent (e.g. Nap. *o*) but the contrast is still visible as the neuter clitic, unlike the masculine one, triggers *raddoppiamento fonosintattico*, ‘consonant doubling’ of the following word (cf. §§16.3.1.3.2, 40.3.1): Nap. [o s’satfə] ‘I know that fact’ vs [o ‘satfə] ‘I know him’.<sup>3</sup>

Animacy-related distinctions may give rise to patterns of *laismo* and *loismo*, i.e. the extension of accusative forms to dative complements when the latter reference human entities. Such patterns are attested in Ibero-Romance (see (4) above), Gallo-Romance (10), and southern Italo-Romance (11).

- (10) Et pay lou= ditz (Gsc.)  
 the dad to.him/her= says  
 ‘Dad says to him/her’

The following minimal pair shows that the accusative-pro-dative form ‘a is allowed if the dative is human as in (11a), otherwise, as in (11b), the only possible dative form is *ncə* (Ledgeway 2000):

- (11) a. Nce/’a= rispunnnetteno, a Maria (Nap.)  
 to.her= they.replied to Maria  
 ‘They replied to her (Maria)’  
 b. Nce/’\*\*’a= rispunnnetteno â lettera (Nap.)  
 to.it= they.replied to.the letter  
 ‘They replied to it (the letter)’

Besides cases of accusative for dative clitics, the Romance languages also display cases of *leísmo*, i.e. of dative for accusative forms when the referent is human. Table 45.1 provides a comparison between the distribution of third person clitic forms in standard and *leísta* Spanish.

Lastly, an animacy-based restriction underlies the distribution of dative clitics (< *ILLI*(s)), which are usually replaced by the locative pro-PP (Fr. *y*, It. *ci*, Cat.*hi*) when denoting a non-human entity, see (12) (Rigau 1982). The restriction is active in all the Romance languages in which a locative clitic is present and, to the best of my knowledge, the evolution of the Latin deictic *ILLI*(s) as a dative form restricted to a human interpretation is still unaccounted for.

- (12) a. A la meva filla, li= dedico  
 To the my daughter, to.her= I.devote  
 molt de temps (Cat.)  
 lot of time  
 ‘As for my daughter, I devote lots of time to her’  
 b. A això, hi= dedico molt de temps (Cat.)  
 To this, there= I.devote lot of time  
 ‘As for this, I devote lots of time to it’  
 (13) a. A mia figlia, le= dedico molto tempo (It.)  
 To my daughter, to.her= I.devote lot.of time  
 ‘As for my daughter, I devote lots of time to her’  
 b. A questo, ci= dedico molto tempo (It.)  
 To this, there= I.devote lot.of time  
 ‘As for this, I devote lots of time to it’

#### 45.2.2 Subject clitics

Paradigms of subject clitics exhibit systematic gaps. In their seminal work, Renzi and Vanelli (1983) put forth a series of descriptive generalizations in the form of implicational statements capturing the cross-linguistic distribution of subject clitics in Italo-Romance, Provençal, and Ræto-Romance varieties. For instance, they noted that, if a variety has at least one subject clitic, it is second person singular; if a variety has two subject clitics, they are second person singular and third person singular; if a dialect has three

<sup>3</sup> In enclisis, the neuter clitic, unlike the masculine, does not trigger metaphony on the preceding dative clitic (in Neapolitan, when two pronouns occur in enclisis, the leftmost one is stressed and subject to metaphony; see §45.3.1): [maŋna’tilla] ‘eat=it.COUNT’ vs [korda’tella] ‘forget=it.UNCOUNT’ (Vanelli and Renzi 1997:110f; Ledgeway 2009a:306). In the present-day dialect, however, the alternation is not systematic.

DIEGO PESCARINI

**Table 45.1** Distribution of third person clitics: standard vs *leísta* Spanish

|                        |                 | Standard Spanish | <i>leísta</i> Spanish |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| [Non-human] accusative | 'it.M/F'        | <i>lo/la</i>     | <i>lo/la</i>          |
| [Human] accusative     | 'him/her'       | <i>lo/la</i>     | <i>le</i>             |
| Dative                 | 'to it/him/her' | <i>le</i>        | <i>le</i>             |

clitics, they are second person singular, third person singular and plural; etc. The resulting scale of implications is as follows:

- (14) 2<sub>SG</sub> < 3<sub>SG</sub> < 3<sub>PL</sub> < others

The above implications are robust trends rather than exceptionless constraints. For instance, in a few Trentino dialects third person clitics are attested despite the absence of a second singular form (Manzini and Savoia 2005).

In general, gaps in the distribution of subject clitics are more frequent in proclisis. Moreover, etymological forms are better preserved in enclisis than in proclisis, as shown by the following minimal pair, in which the first person plural clitic alternates between the forms *i* (in proclisis) and (*n*)*os* (in enclisis):

- (15) a. *i=* durmin (Forni di Sotto, Frl.)  
 we= sleep  
 'We are sleeping'
- b. durmin =os? (Forni di Sotto, Frl.)  
 Sleep =we  
 'Are we sleeping?'

Cardinaletti and Repetti (2008) argue that one form can be derived from the other by means of morphophonological processes, but some cases, such as (15), seem true cases of suppletion.

The asymmetry in (15), in particular, is due to *syncretism* (i.e. same form, different grammatical meanings). Calabrese (2011) points out that first singular, first plural, and second plural subject clitics—namely, the rightmost in the hierarchy (14)—are frequently expressed by a single syncretic exponent, which usually coincides with a reflex of *EGO* 'I' (e.g. *i* in (15a)). The reason for such an opacity might be diachronic in nature (Calabrese and Pescarini 2014): in the early stages of the development of the subject clitic system, there was resistance to cliticizing first and second personal pronouns. In fact, in several vernaculars first and second personal pronouns were not attested as clitics in Renaissance varieties (cf. Poletto 1995 on Veneto dialects, Cormany 2011 on Friulian), when the other pronouns had already become clitic. We can then assume that, in certain dialects, there was analogical pressure to extend clitics to

all persons, so that also first and second person pronouns became clitic by means of a syncretic exponent which, at that time, appeared synchronically and diachronically opaque. The best candidate was the first person singular pronoun, which for independent historical reasons had been reduced to a 'vocalic' clitic, namely an onset-less and coda-less syllable.

Another case of correlation between gaps and syncretism is exhibited by some Occitan dialects (Regis 2006; Benincà 2014 and references therein). The first person singular subject clitic occurs only in enclisis, viz. in contexts of verb–subject inversion such as main interrogative or exclamative clauses. If present, the first person singular clitic (and, in some dialects, the first plural clitic) is expressed by an expletive element,<sup>4</sup> as in (16a) and (16b), or has the form of the subordinate complementizer *ke* as in (16c).

- (16) a. kuz ai =la da catà? (Prà del Torno, Occ.)  
 what have =I to buy.INF?  
 'What have I to buy?'
- b. soc minju =lo? (Rodoretto di Prali, Occ.)  
 what eat =I  
 'What will I eat?'
- c. ki devu =ke salytà? (Rorà, Occ.)  
 who must =I greet.INF?  
 'Who do I have to greet?'

In some dialects, a syncretic element—usually the onset-less and codaless one derived from *EGO*—has been extended to other persons, giving rise to composite forms in which the 'vocalic' formative (e.g. *i*) precedes the etymological one. For instance, in the dialect of S. Michele al Tagliamento (Friulian, Benincà 1994:122) the second person singular clitic is expressed by the composite compound form *i ti* 'you'. Similarly, several Lombard dialects exhibit a dummy clitic *a* preceding all other clitic forms (see Ascoli 1876:404; Salvioni 1884:123).

Compound forms may be split by negation, which in some vernaculars occurs between the vocalic and the other

<sup>4</sup> In (16a) and (16b) the clitic *la/lo* coincides with the expletive clitic used in impersonal constructions (see below).

formative, e.g. *i no ti* ‘you not’. Moreover, the vocalic clitic does not undergo inversion:

- (17) I= compri =tu? (S. Michele al Tagliamento, Frl.)  
 you= buy =you  
 ‘Will you buy (anything)?’

In several dialects, the invariable ‘vocalic’ clitic is used as an expletive in impersonal constructions. Elsewhere, the expletive clitic coincides with the third person masculine singular clitic, as in French, or, in some Occitan varieties, with the feminine form, as in (16a).

The distribution of expletives is constrained by a series of syntactic factors, giving rise to a kaleidoscopic degree of variation. Expletives occur in combination with impersonal verbs or in sentences with non-canonical subjects (i.e. with postverbal or clausal subjects). The example in (18a) illustrates the co-occurrence of a non-agreeing subject clitic (the 3MSG *u*) with a postverbal plural subject, to be contrasted with (18b), where the preverbal subject co-occurs with an agreeing plural pronoun (*i*).

- (18) a U= caz er foie (Pontinvrea, Lig.)  
 SCL= drop the leaves  
 b Er foie i= caz (Pontinvrea, Lig.)  
 The leaves they= drop  
 ‘The leaves drop’

However, the expletive nature of the clitic in (18a) is far from straightforward. In fact, we know that third person postverbal subjects fail to control verb agreement in a number of Romance varieties, with or without subject clitics. The pattern in (18a) may therefore follow from a generalized constraint on agreement, rather than being a fully fledged expletive construction.

True expletive constructions are found, by contrast, with impersonal verbs. To account for the cross-linguistic distribution of expletives, it is worth distinguishing different types of impersonal construction:<sup>5</sup> expletive clitics are more likely to occur with weather verbs, as in (19a), while they are less common in other impersonal contexts like raising constructions, existential constructions, impersonal *si* constructions, and in combination with the impersonal modal of necessity (19b-d). As shown below, in the Ligurian dialect of Carcare, all these contexts select for an expletive clitic:

- (19) a. U= ciov (Carcare, Lig.)  
 SCL= rains  
 ‘It rains’  
 b. U= smija che chercun u jaggia  
 SCL= seems that someone SCL have.SBJV.3SG  
 scric na lettera (Carcare, Lig.)  
 written a letter  
 ‘It seems that someone has written a letter’  
 c. U= j= è n matutin (Carcare, Lig.)  
 SCL= there= is a boy  
 ‘There is a boy’  
 d. U= s= diz pareg (Carcare, Lig.)  
 SCL= si= says so  
 ‘We say it that way’  
 e. U= bsogna parti (Carcare, Lig.)  
 SCL= is.necessary leave.INF  
 ‘It is necessary to leave’

In other dialects, however, the distribution of expletives is more constrained and, again, it can be captured with a system of implications. In general, if a dialect has the expletive in one impersonal context, it will be with a weather verb; by contrast, if a dialect has an expletive with the modal of necessity, it will have the expletive in all the other contexts. The resulting scale of implications is as follows (Renzi and Vanelli 1983; Pescarini 2014b):

- (20) weather verb < psych verbs < existential < impersonal  
*si* < modal of necessity

The syntax of vocalic clitics and the existence of composite forms led Poletto (2000) to hypothesize different classes of subject clitics, each occupying a dedicated syntactic position. In particular, she notes that ‘vocalic’ clitics are characterized by a series of properties cross-linguistically: they never express gender and number distinctions, they never follow negation, they must cluster with the complementizer, and they may be omitted in coordination. According to these criteria, however, the term ‘vocalic clitic’ has assumed a narrow, possibly misleading meaning. In fact, there are subject clitic forms which are morphologically vocalic, but they do not behave as ‘vocalic’ clitics à la Poletto. For instance, reflexes of *ILLE* such as *u* ‘he/it’ or *i* ‘they’ are often onsetless and codaless due to independent phonological processes of aphaeresis, vocalization and palatalization (see §45.3). Nonetheless, they do not always display the prototypical behaviour of ‘vocalic’ clitics in the narrow, syntactic sense illustrated above: they convey gender and number information, may follow negation, cannot be omitted in coordination, etc.

<sup>5</sup> I am considering here both impersonal verbs, i.e. verbs that do not project an external argument, and constructions in which the thematic subject does not occupy its canonical preverbal position (e.g. existentials).

DIEGO PESCARINI

Conversely, many Romance languages display cases of vocalic clitics (in Poletto's sense), which cannot be considered 'subject' clitics. Despite their pronominal origin, such clitic particles do not express pronominal features anymore, but have ended up conveying pragmatic meanings. For instance, in the dialect of Padua (Benincà 1983a), the clitic particle *a* (< EGO? 'I') signals that the content of the sentence is all new and unexpected information.

### 45.2.3 Possessives

Cardinaletti (1998) shows that, in Italian, although pronominal and postnominal possessives are identical, they have different properties: the former cannot be contrasted, coordinated, or modified. This led Cardinaletti to argue that Italian pronominal possessives are weak (cf. 45.1).

In other languages, like Spanish and French, the same asymmetry is expressed morphologically by means of a dual series of possessives, e.g. Sp. *mi libro* 'my= book' vs *el libro mío* 'the book my' (see Lyons 1986 on the diachronic emergence of the dual series). Cardinaletti (1998), however, shows that French and Spanish pronominal possessives are not weak elements (as in Italian), but clitics, which can be doubled and cannot co-occur with the definite article:

- (21) a. mon livre à moi (Fr.)  
 my book to me  
 'my own book'
- b. (\*\*1e) son livre (Fr.)  
 the his book  
 'his book'

Some languages, such as Italian dialects and old Gascon (Rohlfs 1970:187), display a triple system of possessives, exhibiting strong postnominal possessives, as in (22a), weak pronominal possessives, as in (22b), and, with singular kinship nouns, clitic possessives, which do not co-occur with the definite article, see (22c):

- (22) a. el libro mio (Pad.)  
 the book my
- b. el me libro (Pad.)  
 the my book  
 'my book'
- c. me= mama (Pad.)  
 my= mum  
 'mum'

In several Romance varieties, the possessive clitic occurring with kinship nouns is enclitic. Enclitic possessives are

attested in Romanian (see §8.5.1.2), old Italian (Giusti 2010a), and modern southern Italian dialects (Egerland 2013; cf. also §16.3.1.4).

- (23) a. 'fijə =mə (Lanciano, Abr.)  
 son =my  
 'my son'
- b. 'mammə =mə (Lanciano, Abr.)  
 mum =my  
 'my mum'
- c. 'fretə =tə (Lanciano, Abr.)  
 brother =your  
 'your brother'
- d. 'tsiə =tə (Lanciano, Abr.)  
 uncle =your  
 'your uncle'

Lastly, in literary Romanian, dative clitics (in particular, first and second person clitics) may function as postnominal possessives (Nicolae 2013b:341-3):

- (24) Am pierdut stilou ==mi (Ro.)  
 have lost pen =my  
 'I have lost my pen'

### 45.2.4 Auxiliary clitics

In various dialects, a dummy clitic formative appears in front of vowel-initial forms of BE/HAVE. In actual fact, the term 'auxiliary clitic'—originally due to Brandi and Cordin (1981)—is misleading, since such clitics are also found in combinations with lexical BE and HAVE.<sup>6</sup>

In Occitan and western Italo-Romance dialects, the auxiliary clitic is a reflex of ILLE and can be easily mistaken for a third person subject clitic (according to Parry 1994, it in fact derives from a subject clitic form). In many dialects, however, *l* occurs with any auxiliary form beginning with a vowel, regardless of grammatical person (see Garzonio and Poletto 2011). In the following Piedmontese dialect, for instance, the auxiliary clitic follows the 2SG clitic *ti*:

- (25) Ti l= eri ndò (Viola, Pie.)  
 You= l= are gone  
 'You had gone'

<sup>6</sup> In some dialects, the auxiliary clitic is found when the verb BE/HAVE functions as an auxiliary, while it is absent when the same verb has a lexical function.

In many dialects the auxiliary clitic is synchronically analysable as part of the verbal root, as it never undergo inversion in main interrogatives.

Elsewhere, the auxiliary clitic derives from a locative particle, which gave rise to forms such as /j, g, z/ after processes of palatalization and fortition (Rohlf 1968:267; Benincà 2007a; Bertocci and Damonte 2007):

- (26) G= o magnà ben. (vic.)  
 G= I.have eaten well  
 'I ate well'

### 45.3 Phonology

This section illustrates some phonological phenomena which can affect the morphological shape of clitics, while I will not address here sandhi phenomena that, cross-linguistically, do not give rise to systematic morphological alternations.

The structure of the section is as follows: after some brief considerations on the interaction of stress and cliticization (§45.3.1), in §45.3.2 I will focus on processes of vowel loss (elision, apocope, syncope), while in §45.3.3 I will deal with phenomena of vowel insertion (prosthesis, epenthesis); the last subsection is about processes affecting the formative *l*, in particular aphaeresis, vocalization, and palatalization.

#### 45.3.1 Stress

Clitic elements are not inherently (i.e. lexically) stressed, although they might receive stress or dislodge primary stress in certain varieties and under certain circumstances. Furthermore, Peperkamp (1995; 1996) has convincingly shown (*contra* Nespor and Vogel 1986) that, when clitics combine, they form an autonomous prosodic constituent—a metrical foot—which is given secondary stress.

In languages like Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, clitics cannot receive stress. In French, by contrast, enclitics can be stressed.<sup>7</sup> One might wonder whether the allomorphy exemplified below is caused by stress assignment, as argued in Foulet (1924):

- (27) a. Il= me= le= donne (Fr.)  
 He = to.me= it= gives  
 'He gives it to me'

<sup>7</sup> The same happens in the Italo-Romance dialect of Viozene (Rohlf 1966:442; Kenstowicz 1991:182f.): *fnir=lù* 'end.INF=it', *saver=lù* 'know.INF=it', *portama=rù* 'we.take=it'.

- b. Donne =le =moi (Fr.)  
 Give.IMP =it =to.me  
 'Give it to me!'

Although this might be a possible diachronic explanation, this account does not hold synchronically, as the same alternation is observed in non-standard varieties displaying the opposite order of clitics, e.g. coll. Fr. *donne=moi=le*. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the same account cannot explain why third person accusative clitics are not affected by any enclisis/proclisis asymmetry.

Southern Italian dialects like Calvello (Gioscio 1985; Kenstowicz 1991:181f.) behave like French, with the relevant difference that in Calvello the sequence formed by a lexical word and one or more clitics is not oxytonic as in French, but paroxytonic, i.e. the resulting sequence is stressed on the penultimate syllable, regardless of whether it corresponds to a clitic or a verbal suffix (for principled analyses, see Kenstowicz 1991; Bafile 1992; 1994; Peperkamp 1995; Loporcaro 2000):

- (28) a. 'vinnə + lə → vən'ni=llə 'sell.IMP.2SG it'  
 (Clv., Bas.)  
 b. vən'nitə + lə → vənnə='ti=llə 'sell.IMP.2PL it'  
 (Clv., Bas.)  
 c. 'ra + mmə + lə → ra=m'mi=llə 'give.IMP.2SG it to me'  
 (Clv., Bas.)  
 d. man'nata + mə + lə → mannətə='mi=llə  
 'send.IMP.2PL it to me'  
 (Clv., Bas.)

In present-day Neapolitan, stress shift is mandatory when two enclitics co-occur, as shown in (29), while stress shift with a single enclitic is mandatory when the host is proparoxytone (as in Calvello), optional otherwise, see (30a) vs (30b) (Ledgeway 2009a:34f.):

- (29) a. pərta = 'ti = llə (Nap.)  
 bring.IMP =to.yourself =him/them.F/it.M  
 'Fetch it/him/them for yourself!'  
 b. pərta = 'te = llə (Nap.)  
 bring.IMP =to.yourself =him/them.F/it.M  
 'Fetch her/them.f for yourself!'
- (30) a. 'fraveka + la → fravə'kallə (Nap.)  
 make.IMP it.F  
 'Make it!'  
 b. 'assə + mə → 'assəmə / assəmmə (Nap.)  
 let.IMP me  
 'Let me!'

Bafile (1992; 1994) points out that, both the root and the penultimate clitic bear primary stress as the root vowel in

DIEGO PESCARINI

'pɔrtə is open (and open mid vowels in Neapolitan are allowed only in syllables with primary stress) and the inner enclitic is subject to metaphony,<sup>8</sup> which is typical of tonic vowels.

Similar phenomena are attested in other Romance languages, where enclitics may dislodge stress. In Romanian imperatives, for instance, the presence of an enclitic pronoun may cause stress shift: in many people's speech, the imperative form *spúneți!* 'say.2PL' becomes *spunéți=!* 'say.2PL=it!'.

The preceding patterns follow from prosodic models in which clitics are integrated into the prosodic structure of a recursive Prosodic Word (Selkirk 1995). If more than one clitic occur, they are grouped under a metrical foot (Peperkamp 1995; 1996; 1997), as shown in (31b):

- (31) a. [[host]<sub>PrW</sub> clitic]<sub>PrW</sub>  
 b. [[host]<sub>PrW</sub> (clitic clitic)<sub>Fr</sub> ]<sub>PrW</sub>

Cross-linguistic differences emerge depending on whether stress is assigned only to the inner PrW (as in Italian, Spanish, etc.), to the outer PrW (as in French and in the dialect of Calvello and, with a single enclitic, in Neapolitan), or, cyclically, to both the inner and the outer PrW, as arguably happens in Neapolitan when two enclitics co-occur.

### 45.3.2 Vowel drop (elision, apocope, syncope)

The occurrence of clitic elements may give rise to sequences of vowels triggering language-specific hiatus-resolution strategies such as the insertion of a prosthetic consonant or the desyllabification of one vowel (synalephe). More frequently, however, the vocalic ending of clitics is elided. In varieties in which elision is optional, it is constrained by a number of factors, both morphological and phonological: singular endings are more readily elided than plural ones, and elision is favoured before unstressed syllables and before auxiliaries (see Garrapa 2011).

Besides prevocalic elision, many Romance languages exhibit apocope, namely loss of final vowels regardless of the presence of a following vowel. Cross-linguistic variation depends on both phonological and morphological factors: [-low] vowels are more likely to be dropped than *a*; apocope is favoured after a single sonorant; vowels carrying morphosyntactic meaning (e.g. number and gender) are dropped less frequently than default thematic vowels, etc.

<sup>8</sup> This metaphonic distinction between the masculine and feminine is no longer very robust amongst most speakers, and the originally non-metaphonic form is generalized in most instances. See Ledgeway (2009a).

Furthermore, on the basis of data from medieval Italo-Romance, Vanelli (1992; 1998b:179-85) has pointed out that the distribution of apocope is sensitive to the morpho-phonological nature of the preceding elements. Diachronically, apocope is originally allowed when the clitic follows another clitic element; later, it is allowed after monosyllabic function words and, lastly, it is allowed everywhere.

The preceding factors have a strong impact on the morpho-phonological shape of clitics as they give rise to a number of inter- and intralinguistic variants. In dialects of Piedmont, Lombardy, and Emilia-Romagna, for instance, apocope is generalized: all clitic elements end up being expressed by a single consonant, e.g. 2SG *t < TU/TE*, which may be syllabified by means of a prosthetic/epenthetic vowel (see below). Elsewhere, apocope is much more constrained as it targets only reflexes of ILLUM.

In languages with optional apocope, the process is further constrained by syllabic and alignment constraints. For instance, apocope of the clitic is blocked if it would result in an illicit syllabic configuration such as a complex coda. Let us consider sequences formed by an infinitive followed by an enclitic pronoun, both of which, in early Italian vernaculars, may undergo apocope. However, if apocope targeted both the verb and the clitic, the resulting output would be syllabically illicit because of a complex coda, e.g. *\*\*far(e)l(o)*. To prevent this, only the infinitive undergoes apocope, e.g. *far(e)=lo* 'do.INF=it', while the clitic is apocopated only if preceded by another enclitic:

- (32) *voler(e) =ve =l(o) dir tuto (OVer.)*  
*want.INF =to.you=it say.INF all*  
 'To want to say it all to you'

The pattern above means that the process is cyclical, i.e. apocope applies to the lexical word first and then to the outer prosodic constituents (Pescarini 2011; 2013).

Horne (1990) shows that,<sup>9</sup> besides apocope, word-internal processes of syncope can apply post-lexically to proclitic sequences. Old French, for instance, exhibits two processes targeting unstressed vowels: apocope, deleting final vowels with the exception of *a* (which becomes *ə*), and *syncope*, deleting unstressed vowels when they follow a syllable bearing secondary stress. The following example shows how apocope and syncope apply to the reflex of Latin *BONITATE(M)* > /bon'te/ (the asterisks signal secondary and primary stress):

- (33) BO N(i) TA T(E)  
           ↑          ↑  
       syncope  apocope

According to Horne (1990), the final vowel of the cluster is subject to syncope as clitic clusters—according to analysis proposed in §45.3.1—correspond to a left-headed foot:

- \*
- \*
- (34) ne= m(e)= vidrent (OFr.)  
NEG me= they.saw  
 ‘they did not see me’

The same process targeted in particular the 3<sub>M</sub> clitic *le(s)*, which underwent syncope after subject clitics—as in (35a)—and other monosyllabic function words, including complementizers and negation (Foulet 1930:§217). In the same contexts, the PL *les* is subject to a further process deleting the formative *l*, as shown in (35b).

- (35) a. se je= l= puis fare (OFr.)  
 if I= it= can do.INF  
 ‘if I can do it’
- b. nuls hons ne s= doit escouter (OFr.)  
 no men not them=have.to listen.to  
 ‘nobody has to listen to them’

As a consequence of vowel deletion processes, the clitic, which is syntactically proclitic to the following word, ends up being phonologically enclitic to the preceding element. In the following section I will argue that, to prevent such a syntax/prosodic misalignment, several languages make use of prosthetic vowels preventing a proclitic from syllabifying with a preceding prosodic constituent.

### 45.3.3 Vowel insertion (prosthesis/epenthesis)

Prosthesis can be regarded as a strategy repairing marked syllabic configurations, which arise as a consequence of vowel deletion processes like apocope. In languages in which apocope determined a systematic loss of final vowels, clitics were reduced to single consonants which syllabify with either the preceding or the following element. Otherwise, the clitic is syllabified by means of a prosthetic vowel, as in the following examples from the Catalan dialect spoken in Barcelona (Bonet and Lloret 2005) illustrating prosthesis and epenthesis of ə with the first person plural object clitic /ns/ in accordance with the phonological context:

- (36) a. tiri [ns] ‘throw (to) us’ (Bcl.)  
 b. tirèu [nzə] ‘throw.PL (to) us’  
 c. tirèm [zə] ‘let’s throw (to) ourselves’  
 d. [əns] tira ‘he/she throws to us’  
 e. [ənzə] salva ‘he/she saves us’

For similar phenomena regarding the morphology of subject clitics, see Cardinaletti and Repetti (2008) on Piacentine (northern Italian) dialects.

In other dialects, however, prosthetic forms are found adjacent to a nucleus. In particular, Vanelli (1998b) shows that prosthetic forms in early northern Italo-Romance are found in the same phonological context where apocope is allowed, namely V\_C. Here, prosthesis cannot follow from syllabification principles. Pescarini (2011; 2013) argues that in these cases prosthesis is a repair strategy preventing a misalignment when apocope began to target clitic elements on the left edge of the syntactic/prosodic phrase: apocope gives rise to the misalignment because a proclitic ends up being phonologically enclitic to the preceding word (37a). Prosthesis, in (37b), prevents the misalignment by blocking the syllabification of the accusative pronoun with the preceding word.

- (37) a. [la scriptura =l(o)]PPH [diso]PPH (OVer.)  
 the scripture =it says
- b. [la scriptura]PPH [el= diso]PPH (OVer.)  
 the scripture it= says

This hypothesis explains why prosthesis does not apply in enclisis, where no misalignment can result from apocope.

The above alignment constraint, however, is not mandatory: several Romance languages do allow proclitics to become phonologically enclitic to a preceding element, in particular if the preceding element is a monosyllabic function word. In Romanian, for instance, the 3<sub>M.SG</sub> (*îl*) occurs without prosthesis after a dative clitic (see §45.4.5), the negation marker, the complementizer, etc. (Monachesi 1998a):

- (38) a. Mihai nu =(\*\*î)l aşteaptă (Ro.)  
 Mihai not =him wait.for  
 ‘Mihai does not wait for him’
- b. Cred că =(\*\*î)l vede (Ro.)  
 I.believe that =him see  
 ‘I believe that he sees him’

### 45.3.4 On *l-*: Aphaeresis, vocalization, and palatalization

In several dialects the formative *l-* of third person non-reflexive clitics undergoes aphaeresis. Before addressing the data, it is worth noting that in many vernaculars the aphaeresis of *l-* is not a generalized phonological rule, but

DIEGO PESCARINI

rather a clitic-specific phenomenon targeting third person formatives. Second, in some dialects *l*-dropping seems to depend on morphosyntactic factors, rather than being a consequence of a morphophonological rule (see Manzini and Savoia 2010).

In some dialects of Italy, aphaeresis is synchronically productive and it may cause the lengthening of the following vowel (Loporcaro 1991), although Marotta (2002-3) argues that the following nucleus is doubled rather than lengthened (see also Bafile 2008). The doubled/lengthened vowel can be either the ending of the clitic, as in (39a) or, if the clitic has undergone elision, the beginning of the following word, as in (39b).

- (39) a. lo= 'bbɾu:ʃo → o: 'bbɾu:ʃo (Rmc.)  
 it= I.burn  
 'I burn it'
- b. l= aʃʃugo → a:ʃʃugo (Rmc.)  
 it= I.dry  
 'I dry it (up)'

By contrast, in other dialects, aphaeresis (and elision) gave rise to a double series of allomorphs: a prevocalic one (*l*) and a set of preconsonantal elements (e.g. *a, u, i*), cf. (40a) and (40b). Enclitics, on the other hand, undergo neither aphaeresis nor elision, but their thematic vowel undergoes centralization, like other unstressed vowels, see (40c).

- (40) a. o= əppijə (Nap.)  
 it= I.catch  
 'I take it'
- b. l= akkattə  
 it= I.buy  
 'I buy it'
- c. əpijja =lə  
 catch =it  
 'Catch it!'

In northern Italian dialects, the absence of the formative *l* with reflexes of *ILLUM* is due to a different process, which determined the vocalization of *l* in coda positions, i.e. before a consonant. This gave rise to phonologically conditioned alternations like *l / \_V* vs *u / \_C*, found, for instance, in several Alpine dialects. It is worth noting, however, that in some dialects such alternation has been reanalysed as a syntactically conditioned alternation, triggered by the presence of another clitic. In many vernaculars of Romagna, for instance, the third person masculine singular subject clitic *l* becomes *u* in front of any object clitic, including vocalic clitics like the third person dative *i*:

- (41) Gnent u= i= pudra fe  
 Nothing SCL to.him can.FUT make.INF  
 cambié idea (Rmg.)  
 change.INF idea  
 'Nothing will change his mind'

In almost all the Romance languages, processes of palatalization have affected the morphology of the reflexes of *ILLI*, beginning with prevocalic contexts where *liV* > *ljV*. I have already mentioned that such changes may have led, in various languages, to the 'substitution' of the etymological (but synchronically opaque) reflex of *ILLI* with a syncretic exponent, *si, ci*, etc. It is worth noting, however, that suppletion and allomorphy tend to target dative *li* more frequently than the homophonous accusative pronoun.

## 45.4 Cluster-internal phenomena

In what follows I address the morphophonological properties of clitic combinations. Arguably, part of the following morphophonological phenomena are surface effects due to the syntactic makeup of clitic clusters, which, for space issues, will not be addressed here.

The section is organized as follows: §45.4.1 contains some preliminary considerations on the order of object and subject clitics; §45.4.2 focuses on the ordering of combinations of object clitics; §45.4.3 addresses phenomena of contextual suppletion in cluster-internal position; §45.4.4 outlines mutual exclusion patterns; §45.4.5 deals with further puzzling alternation regarding the linking vowel of object clitic clusters.

### 45.4.1 Order: generalities

In declarative clauses, subject clitics precede object ones.<sup>10</sup> In interrogative clauses, object pronouns remain proclitic, while subject clitics may invert. Sometimes in old French object clitics are also enclitic in inversion contexts, due to a strict application of the Tobler–Mussafia law, i.e. the principle triggering enclisis in finite clauses which prevents object clitics from occurring in sentence-initial position (for a formal analysis of the law, see Benincà 2006). In

<sup>10</sup> In the Carnic dialect spoken in Forni di Sotto (Frl.), a formative of 3rd person subject clitics can be doubled after the object clitic (*al mi* → *al mi-l* 'he me') and the leftmost copy of *l* may be deleted (*al mil* → *a mi-l* 'he me') giving the impression that the resulting order is object > subject clitic (Manzini and Savoia 2005, 2009; Calabrese and Pescarini 2014). To the best of my knowledge, this is the sole Romance variety exhibiting this pattern.

such cases, the resulting order is verb > object clitic > subject clitic (Foulet 1930:§162):

- (42) e    saveréiez =le =me    =vus    mustrer? (OFr.)  
 and    would    it    =to.me =you.PL show  
 ‘and would you show it to me?’

Negation may either precede or follow subject clitics (Parry 2013b). In origin, all Romance varieties displayed the order subject clitic > negation, but around the fifteenth century several northern Italian vernaculars began to display the opposite ordering; negation > subject clitic. In Friulian, for instance, the second person singular subject *tu/te* occurred before negation until the sixteenth century, as shown in (43a), while in modern varieties the only possible order is negation > *tu/te* (43b):

- (43) a. Tu=   no=   havarè   la   bielle   fie (OFrl.)  
       you= not= have.FUT the nice girl  
       ‘You will not have the nice girl’  
    b. No=   tu=   compre mai   meil (Barcis, ModFrl.)  
       Not= you= buy   never apples  
       ‘You never buy apples’

In inversion contexts, preverbal negation behaves like an object clitic element: it remains proclitic to the verb, which has crossed the position occupied by subject clitics:

- (44) N’=   as    =tu   pas mangé? (Fr.)  
       not= have =you not eaten  
       ‘Didn’t you eat?’

Negation usually precedes object clitics. However, Parry (1997b) reports some cases from Ligurian dialects in which the preverbal negative marker *n* is reduplicated after certain object clitics (see also Manzini and Savoia 2005, III:295). It is worth noting that in these varieties, the negation marker is the postverbal one (*nent*), while preverbal *n* must be considered a clitic expressing negative spreading/concord (Zanuttini 1997).

- (45) I=    n=    te=   (n=) dan nent u libr (Lig.)  
       They= NEG= you= (NEG=) give NEG the book  
       ‘They do not give you the book’

#### 45.4.2 Order of object clitics

It is normally assumed that object clitics are rigidly ordered on a language-specific basis. Since Perlmutter (1971), such

orderings have been captured by means of language-specific templates, setting the order of clitic elements regardless of the position of the corresponding phrasal complements (see e.g. Wanner 1977 on Italian; Bonet 1991 on Catalan). Templates account for the existence of opposite orders such as those exemplified below:

- (46) a. Glie=                    lo=            danno (It.)  
       to.him/her/them= it/him= they.give  
       ‘They give it/him to him/her/them’  
    b. Ils=    le=    lui=            donnent (Fr.)  
       they= it/him= to.him/her= give  
       ‘They give it/him to him/her’  
    (47) a. Le=    si=    parla (It.)  
       to.her= one= speaks  
       ‘One speaks to her’  
    b. Se=    le=            habla (Sp.)  
       one= to.him/her= speaks  
       ‘One speaks to him/her’

The above scenario, however, changes if we assume the hypothesis that clitic ordering is not so rigid, as languages may move from one ordering pattern to another.

First of all, it is worth noting that the above differences between the modern languages mainly result from a limited number of diachronic changes which, in certain languages, reversed the order of certain clitic combinations. In Italian and French, for instance, first and second person datives followed third person accusative clitics until the end of the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, respectively. Both orders were allowed for some time in apparent free variation.<sup>11</sup>

- (48) a. che [...] voi la= mi=  
       that [...] you it.F= to.me=  
       concediate (OTsc., Boccaccio, *Filocolo* 212)  
       grant.SUBJ  
       ‘that you grant it to me’  
    b. se Egli me= la=  
       if He to.me= it.F =  
       concede (OTsc., Boccaccio, *Filocolo* 72)  
       grants  
       ‘if He grants it to me’

- (49) a. Je= le= te= comande. (OFr.)  
       I= it= to.you= order  
       ‘I order you to do so’

<sup>11</sup> Besides their ordering, (48a) differs from (48b) with respect to the vowel of the dative clitic (*me* vs *mi*); see §45.4.5.

DIEGO PESCARINI

- b. Je= te= le= comande (ModFr.)  
 I= to.you= it= order  
 ‘I order you to do so’

In Italian, a similar change has affected combinations containing the clitic *ne*,<sup>12</sup> which in the earliest documents preceded the third person dative clitic, while in modern Italian it must follow any other clitic. Other Romance dialects, conversely, have not undergone the changes above and still maintain the alleged archaic order accusative > dative, as in some dialects of western Ligurian, Aragonese, Catalan, and Occitan. We cannot exclude that other changes had happened in previous, undocumented historical stages leading to the present day variation.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the above changes did not take place suddenly, but Italian and French have evolved through a stage in which the order of certain clitic combinations was free. This contradicts the usual claim that combinations of object clitics are rigidly ordered. In fact, traces of optional orders are found in the modern languages as well: for instance, in modern French—as in old French (Foulet 1929:§436)—the order of the clitics *y* ‘there’ and partitive *en* is not fixed (*pace* prescriptive grammars):

- (50) a. Je= te= jure, j’= en= y=  
 I= to.you= swear, I= of.them= there=  
 ai vus trois (Fr.)  
 have seen three  
 ‘I swear, I saw three of them there’

- b. Je= te= jure, j’=y en= ai  
 I= to.you= swear, I=there= of.them= have  
 vus trois (Fr.)  
 seen three  
 ‘I swear, I saw three of them there’

Similarly, in various Ibero-Romance varieties (Heap 1998; Ordóñez 2002), the order of the reflexive/impersonal clitic *se* and first and second person datives is free in proclisis, while it is rigid in enclisis:

- (51) a. Se= me= escapa. (Mur.)  
 itself= to.me= it.escapes  
 ‘I’m losing it’

- b. Me= se= escapa (Mur.)  
 to.me= itself= it.escapes  
 ‘I’m losing it’

- (52) a. Puede escapar =se =me (Mur.)  
 it.can escape =self =to.me  
 ‘I could lose it’

- b. \*\*Puede escapar =me =se (Mur.)  
 it.can escape =to.me =self  
 ‘I could lose it’

Conversely, several Occitan varieties display free ordering in enclisis but not in proclisis (note that they are the dialects displaying the accusative > dative order typical of medieval French and Italian):

- (53) a. Lo= me= dussèt pas veire (Occ.)  
 it= to.me= let not see  
 ‘You did not let me see it’

- b. \*\*me= lo= dussèt pas veire (Occ.)  
 to.me= it= let not see  
 ‘You did not let me see it’

- (54) a. Daussa =m =lo! (Occ.)  
 let =to.me =it  
 ‘Leave me it!’

- b. Daussa =lo =me! (Occ.)  
 let =it =to.me  
 ‘Leave me it!’

The data above have shown that, although the order of object clitics seems synchronically rigid, clitic systems evolve continuously through diachronic stages in which different orders alternate in free variation. However, in principle such a chaotic cross-linguistic scenario can be reduced to a finite number of possible changes affecting a limited set of clusters on a language-specific basis. For reasons of space, I cannot pursue this objective here.

#### 45.4.3 Mutual exclusion patterns

Not all clitic combinations are permitted. In Friulian dialects, vocalic subject clitics (cf. §45.2.2) are dropped in combination with an object clitic or negation. For instance, the syncretic clitic *o*, which in the dialect of Moimacco occurs with first person singular, first person plural, and second person plural subjects, as in (55a), is dropped when combined with the negation marker in (55b) or an object clitic as in (55c).

<sup>12</sup> In principle, different types of *ne* (genitive, partitive, ablative, etc.) could occupy different syntactic positions, and consequently might give rise to different orders once combined with other clitic material. To the best of my knowledge, however, the position of the clitic *ne* with respect to other clitics does not depend on the type of *ne* involved, but rather on the nature of the co-occurring clitic form.

- (55) a. O= mangi el milus (Moimacco, Frl.)  
 I= eat the apple  
 'I'll eat an apple'
- b. (\*\*O=) no sai cui che l=  
 I= not know who that he=  
 laverà i plas (Moimacco, Frl.)  
 wash.FUT the dishes  
 'I do not know who will wash the dishes'
- c. (\*\*O=) l= hai vioduda ier (Moimacco, Frl.)  
 I= her= have seen yesterday  
 'I saw her yesterday'

Third person subject clitics are frequently dropped in combination with third person object clitics (Roberts 1993d on Francoprovençal; Manzini and Savoia 2007:120–48 on a number of northern Italian dialects). The phenomenon (illustrated below) normally concerns third person clitics expressed by the *l* formative:

- (56) a. El= te= cema (Tavullia, Mar.)  
 he= you= calls  
 'He calls you'
- b. (\*\*El=) la= cema (Tavullia, Mar.)  
 he= her calls  
 'He calls her'

One might wonder whether the incompatibility of the type in (56) follows from a constraint against sequences of identical formatives. In fact, many Romance languages do not admit sequences of identical exponents (Grimshaw 1997; 2001; Maiden 1997d; 2000a; Pescarini 2010). This restriction holds in the case of combinations of subject and object clitics, but also with sequences of object pronouns. In Italian, for instance, the locative clitic *ci* 'there' is free to combine with any other clitic, save for the identical first person plural clitic, see (57c):

- (57) a. Mi= ci potete portare? (It.)  
 b. Ti= ci potete portare? (It.)  
 c. (\*\*Ci)= ci potete portare? (It.)  
 d. Vi= ci potete portare? (It.)  
 OCL= there= can.2PL bring  
 'Can you bring me/you/us/you.PL there?'

Observe that in languages in which the two clitics are not identical such as French (58), the same combination is possible. It means that the restriction does not follow from a constraint on the grammatical content expressed by the clitics, but is due to a language-specific morphological condition on their exponence.

- (58) pouvez =vous =nous =y conduire? (Fr.)  
 Can =you.PL =us =there take  
 'Can you drive us there?'

Before concluding this subsection, a final remark on the notorious Person Case Constraint (PCC) is in order. The PCC is the ban against combinations of object clitics when the direct object is first and second person. The constraint holds for almost all the Romance languages when the dative is third person (see Ch. 48),<sup>13</sup> while combinations of first and second person clitics (e.g. Sp. *te me*) are more readily tolerated:

- (59) \*\*Je= te= lui= ai présenté (Fr.)  
 I= you= to.him/her= have introduced  
 'I introduced you to her/him'

Although Nevins and Săvescu (2010) have argued for a correlation between case syncretism and the PCC, the restriction in (49) seems morphologically inert, inasmuch as it holds cross-linguistically—within and outside the Romance domain—independently of the morphophonological properties of clitics and clitic combinations. The treatment of PCC effects therefore lies beyond the remit of the present chapter.

#### 45.4.4 Synthetic clusters

Sequences of object clitics are often opaque, insofar as the morphological shape of the cluster does not correspond to the juxtaposition of the expected items since clusters are subject to a number of morphological irregularities.

Such irregularities seem caused by the same constraint against the co-occurrence of identical clitics, which gives rise to the above mutual exclusion patterns. In Italian, for instance, combinations of identical clitics are avoided by replacing the leftmost element of the cluster with a dummy exponent *ci* (Pescarini 2010). Noticeably, these substitutions never affect the intended meaning of the combination.

- (60) a. Ci/\*\*si= si= lava ogni giorno (It.)  
 ci/\*\*self= one= washes every day  
 'You wash every day'
- b. Ce/\*\*ne= ne= escono  
 ce/\*\*from.there= of.them= they.come-out  
 molti (It.)  
 many  
 'Many of them come out from there'

<sup>13</sup> Romanian is more liberal than the other Romance languages, see Săvescu Ciucivara (2007), Nevins and Săvescu (2010).

DIEGO PESCARINI

The same explanation may hold for sequences of third person clitics, in which the dative element is frequently replaced by another, unexpected exponent. In Ibero-Romance and Campidanese Sardinian, the replacing element is the third person reflexive clitic;<sup>14</sup> in many Italo-Romance dialects, Logudorese Sardinian, and Catalan, the dummy exponent coincides with the locative clitic (e.g. *ci*, *hi*, *bi*); some southern Italian dialects insert the partitive/genitive clitic; in Italian, in the same context, the feminine clitic *le* is replaced by its masculine counterpart *gli*.<sup>15</sup>

- (61) a. Juan *se/\*\*le=* lo= compró (Sp.)  
 Juan *se/\*\*to.him/her/them=* it= bought  
 ‘Juan bought it for him/her/them’
- b. *bi/\*\*li=* l’= appo datu (Log.)  
*bi/\*\*to.him/her/them=* it= I.have given  
 ‘I gave it to him/her/them’
- c. *n/\*\*i=* u=da (Rocca Imperiale, Cal.)  
*n/\*\*to.him/her/them=* it=gives  
 ‘He/she gives it to him/her/them’
- d. Gianni *glie/\*\*le=* lo= comprò (It.)  
 Gianni *glie/\*\*to.her=* it= bought  
 ‘Gianni bought it for her’

In other varieties, the cluster is reduced to a single clitic form. The following data are from the Catalan dialect spoken in Barcelona (Bonet 1991). For every possible interpretation I report between parentheses the expected combinations with the order dative > accusative.

- (62) a. *li=* vaig donar (Bcl.)  
*li=* I.go give  
 ‘I gave it to him/her’ (\*\*/lə li/)
- b. *lzi=* vaig donar (Bcl.)  
*lzi=* I.go give  
 ‘I gave it to them’ (\*\*/lə lzi/)  
 ‘I gave them to him/her’ (\*\*/ləz li/)  
 ‘I gave them to them’ (\*\*/ləz lzi/)

Descriptively, in (62) the accusative clitic is always dropped, while the plural suffix is always placed between the formatives *l* and *i*. A possible analysis of the pattern in (62) might follow from the morphological analysis of the dative pronoun as a compound form. It is worth recalling (cf. §45.2.1) that in this dialect the dative clitic is formed by

<sup>14</sup> In Castilian, the cluster corresponding to (61a) was written <ge lo> until the 15th c.

<sup>15</sup> In colloquial Italian, *gli* is normally used for feminine datives too.

an accusative clitic followed by a locative-like exponent. Under this analysis, the accusative clitic *l(ə)* is dropped under identity avoidance because another formative *l(ə)* is part of the composite dative form *li*. Lastly, the placement of the plural formative can be regarded as an instance of parasitic plural (see below).

Not all cases of opacity, however, result straightforwardly from a ban against sequences of identical exponents. In fact this view ends up appearing rather naïve and too vague for a principled synchronic account. First, it is worth considering that the same patterns of substitution as in (61) are found before the partitive clitic *ne*. In such cases, no identity-avoiding principle can be responsible for the substitution. Among similar cases, Bonet (1991) reports a striking case from the dialect of Barcelona, in which a sequence formed by the clitic *ən* and the neuter clitic *ho* is pronounced *li*, with a form corresponding to a third person dative clitic.

Further irregularities result from the behaviour of the suffix *-s*, which in several Sardinian and Ibero-Romance dialects gives rise to patterns of ‘parasitic plural’ (Halle and Harris 2005; Manzini and Savoia 2009; Kayne 2010). When a plural clitic occurs in a cluster, the suffix *-s* ends up attaching to the right of the whole cluster, regardless of the position of the plural clitic. In some dialects of Logudorese, for instance, the third person plural dative clitic (*lis*) is replaced by the dummy clitic *bi*, but its plural feature is realized by the suffix *-s* in cluster-final position (63).

- (63) Nara =bi =lo-s! (Log.)  
 tell.IMP =bi =it-PL  
 ‘Tell it to them!’

Jones (1993) reports also cases of parasitic gender, i.e. cases in which the rightmost thematic vowel expresses the gender of the dative clitic, rather than that of the accusative one:

- (64) Nara =bi =l-a-s! (Log.)  
 tell.IMP =bi =it-F-PL  
 ‘Tell it to them.F!’

#### 45.4.5 Vowel alternations

This section focuses on two languages in which the leftmost clitic of a sequence formed by two pronouns is subject to a context-driven alternation.

In Italian, any clitic pronoun preceding a third person accusative clitic (e.g. *lo* ‘him’, *la* ‘her’) or the partitive *ne* (‘of it/them’) has its thematic vowel turned into *-e* (see also Melander 1929). Interestingly, those alternations target the

**Table 45.2** Italian clitic combinations

|             |                 | WITH THE VOWEL -E- |                 | WITH THE VOWEL -I- |                     |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
|             |                 | +3ACC <i>lo</i>    | +PART <i>ne</i> | +IMP <i>si</i>     | +LOC <i>ci /fi/</i> |
| 1SG.DAT     | <i>mi</i>       | <i>me lo</i>       | <i>me ne</i>    | <i>mi si</i>       | <i>mi ci</i>        |
| 2SG.DAT     | <i>ti</i>       | <i>te lo</i>       | <i>te ne</i>    | <i>ti si</i>       | <i>ti ci</i>        |
| 3SG.DAT     | <i>gli /ki/</i> | <i>le lo</i>       | <i>le ne</i>    | <i>li si</i>       | <i>li fi</i>        |
| 1PL.DAT/LOC | <i>ci /fi/</i>  | <i>fje lo</i>      | <i>fje ne</i>   | <i>fi si</i>       | -                   |

**Table 45.3** Romanian clitic combinations

|         |           | +3MSG <i>L</i> | +3FSG <i>O</i>         | +3MPL <i>I</i> | +3FPL <i>LE</i> |
|---------|-----------|----------------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1PL.DAT | <i>ne</i> | <i>ni-l</i>    | <i>ne-o</i>            | <i>ni-i</i>    | <i>ni le</i>    |
| 2PL.DAT | <i>vă</i> | <i>vi-l</i>    | <i>v-o<sup>1</sup></i> | <i>vi-i</i>    | <i>vi le</i>    |
| 3PL.DAT | <i>le</i> | <i>li-l</i>    | <i>le-o</i>            | <i>li-i</i>    | <i>li le</i>    |

<sup>1</sup> Clitics ending with *-ă* are regularly elided in front of words beginning with *o*.

same clusters which are subject to suppletion, cf. (61). The situation is summarized in Table 45.2: the first column contains oblique forms in isolation (*mi, ti, gli*, etc.), in the second and third columns the same oblique form are clustered with the third person accusative *lo* ('him, it') and the partitive *ne* ('of.it/them'); in the fourth and fifth columns, the same oblique clitic appears before the third person reflexive and impersonal clitic *si* ('himself/herself/themselves/one') and before the locative clitic *ci* ('there'). For the sake of simplicity, I report only singular clitics, but the same holds for plural forms.

This pattern has received a good deal of attention since D'Ovidio (1886:71), who argued that *-e-* derives from the etymological initial vowel of the second clitic (*e*)*lo* < ILLUM, (*e*)*ne* < INDE. Although D'Ovidio's analysis provides a straightforward explanation, the analysis has several drawbacks. Above all, if *-e-* came from *ĩ* (< ILLE, INDE), the resulting cluster would be expected to show a geminate sonorant: ME ĨLLUM > M'ĨLLU > \**mello*. Furthermore, it is worth recalling that, in origin, the order of these clitic combinations was accusative > dative (see §45.4.2).

Alternatively, Pescarini (2014a) argues that such alternation are symptomatic of the syntactic make-up of clitic combinations (see also Cardinaletti 2008): clusters with *-i-* are in fact separable in restructuring contexts (see 65), while the separation of clusters with the linking vowel *-e-* leads to severe ungrammaticality (see 66).

- (65) a. %*Si=* può portar =**lo** domani (It.)  
 one= can take =it tomorrow  
 'One/we can take it tomorrow'

- b. %*Mi=* ha dovuto portar =*ci*  
 me= has had.to take =there  
 un' amica (It., Google 30.10.12)  
 a friend.F  
 'A friend of mine had to take me there'
- (66) a. \*\**Carlo* *si=* può portar =*lo*  
 Carlo to.himself can take =it  
 domani (It., cf. <sup>v</sup>*Carlo se lo può portare* ...)  
 tomorrow  
 'Carlo can take it for himself tomorrow'
- b. \*\**Lo=* ha dovuto portar =*ci* un'  
 him/it= has had take =there a  
 amica (It., cf. <sup>v</sup>*ce l'ha dovuto portare*)  
 friend.F  
 'A friend of mine had to take it/him there'

Romanian displays a similar alternation, as the vowel of dative clitics is turned into /i/ when combined with an accusative clitic, save for the 3F.SG *o* 'her/it'. The data are summarized in Table 45.3: the dative forms are in the first column; from the second column onwards, I report the combinations with third person accusative clitics.

Again, there is evidence that such alternations are sensitive to the morphosyntactic makeup of the cluster. In fact, the only clitic that does not trigger the change is the 3FSG *o*, which has a rather peculiar syntactic behaviour: it is the only clitic that in analytic tenses does not climb to the auxiliary, but remains enclitic to the lexical verb. Again, morphophonological and morphosyntactic phenomena seem to go hand in hand.

