

Deconstructing dative clitics*

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1 Introduction

In this paper I investigate the properties in Romance languages of dative clitics, with a focus on the internal structure of third person dative clitics in Catalan. These clitics show a number of structural and distributive irregularities that seem to reveal something fundamental missing from the picture. By looking at their morphological structure, I will show that we can do a decomposition of (at least Catalan) dative clitics into simpler components, which I will show that include features like definiteness and deixis. This inquiry will allow us to extract some generalizations on the structure of Romance dative clitics and, perhaps on the nature of dative case itself.

1.1 Basic descriptive facts

Let me first offer a complete list of the normative Catalan clitics, for ease of reference throughout the paper.

(1)

PERSONAL CLITICS	Accusative	Person	1 st	2 nd	3 rd s	3 rd l
		Singular	<i>em</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>el, la</i>
	Plural	<i>ens</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>els, les</i>		
	Dative	Singular	<i>em</i>	<i>et</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>li</i>
Plural	<i>ens</i>	<i>us</i>	<i>els</i>			
IMPERSONAL CLITICS	Neuter	<i>ho</i>				
	Locative	<i>hi</i>				
	Partitive	<i>en</i>				
	Impersonal	<i>es</i>				

The table in (1) shows the normative forms in the *Diccionari de la Llengua Catalana* edited by the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans*, the official academy of this language. However, in the paper I show that there is important variation in the use of the third person plural dative clitic. A basic

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fact of many varieties of spoken Catalan is that they do not use the normative *els* (pronounced [əls]) as the 3rd person plural dative clitic. Rather, speakers add a vowel [i] to the normative form, probably in parallel to the dative singular *l*-clitic [li]. Thus, the dative plural *l*-clitic ends up pronounced as [əlzi] (cf. Bonet 1991, 1995, Viaplana 1980):

- (2) [əls] / [əlzi] donaré el llibre ¹
 DAT.3P DAT.3P I-give.FU the book
I'll give them the book

Catalan speakers write the colloquial form of this sentence, using the complex '*els hi*', formed by what seem to be two separate clitics: the normative dative clitic *els* plus what is considered to be the locative clitic *hi*. This spelling is so common that it has even spread to more *formal* settings like public television, as shown by the following image:

(3)



The subtitle says:

o sigui que als meus fills els hi ensenyaré mandarí
 which translates quite literally for

"That is to say, to my children, I will teach them Mandarin".

This non-standard spelling of the dative plural *l*-clitic in the public television raised indeed a number of critiques from Catalan normativist grammarians like Gabriel Bibiloni.

(<http://bibiloni.cat/blog/>).

The questions I want to answer in this paper are (i) why are Catalan dative *l*-clitics irregular?, and (ii) why does a locative clitic appear with dative *l*-clitics? Before attempting an answer, I need to say some things in the next two subsections about dative and locative clitics in Catalan.

1.2 Catalan dative clitics

As we saw in (1) above, Catalan dative clitics, as in most other Romance languages, show syncretism with accusative clitics in most of the paradigm.² This is clear for 1st and 2nd person clitics, and also for what I call 3rd person *s*-clitics (e.g. reflexive clitics like Spanish or Catalan *se*). The paradigm of clitics for those cases is repeated in (4), where I provide the phonetic form, without the epenthetic vowel [ə], and I give examples in (5), where I give the orthographic form:

¹ In line with Bonet (1991, 1995), I am going to use for the moment the phonetic transcription of the dative clitics [lzi] in order to avoid the orthographic question.

² Romanian behaves like Standard Italian in that syncretism between accusative and dative 1st and 2nd person does not hold. See note 8 below.

- (9) Catalan
 A Maria, I' he vist avui i la re-veuré demà
 to Mary, ACC.3SF I-have seen today and ACC.3SF re-I-see.FU tomorrow
- (10) Italian
 Maria, I' ho vista oggi, e la ri-vedrò domani
 Mary ACC.3SF I-have seen today and ACC.3SF re-I-see.FU tomorrow
 LITERALLY (BOTH): *Mary, I've seen her today, and I'll see her again tomorrow*

As we saw in (6) above, dative *l*-clitics, unlike accusative, do not show gender distinctions in Catalan (or most Romance languages). Now, since masculine is not represented by overt morphemes, it is not surprising that the normative dative plural *l*-clitic, which lacks gender features, is syncretic with respect to the accusative plural masculine, i.e. with the accusative form without an overt gender morpheme. This way, the dative singular *li* remains as the only form of the normative paradigm which has no syncretism with an accusative form, and also as the only one including the morpheme [*i*] (Bonet 2002, Viaplana 1980). Indeed, if we take into account the non-standard form of the plural dative [*lzi*], then both forms of dative *l*-clitics share this morpheme [*i*], and both forms are different from the accusative.

Now, is this morpheme [*i*] really a dative morpheme as stated in the decomposition in (8) above? The question is far from settled in the Catalan literature (Viaplana 1980). According to some authors, it would be an epenthetic vowel characteristic of 3rd person *l*-clitics (López del Castillo 1976). This is a really implausible option, as this would be the only case where that vowel would be an epenthesis in the whole Catalan system. The epenthetic vowel in Catalan is always the schwa [ə]. More plausible is the proposal, adopted by Bonet 1991, 1995, Harris 1997, or Solà-Pujols 1998, that the vowel [*i*] is a dative morpheme, just as the one that appears in the dative singular *l*-clitic [*li*]. The problem for this proposal is that if it is so, why would it only appear with *l*-clitics, but neither with 1st or 2nd person?:

- (11) a. *[mi] compraràs el llibre a mi³
 DAT.1S you-buy.FU the book to me
You'll buy me the book
- b. *[ti] compraré el llibre a tu
 DAT.2S I-buy.FU the book to you
I'll buy you the book

Another characteristic of Catalan dative *l*-clitics is the irregularity in the formation of the plural. The morphological realization of number features of Romance clitics constitutes a problem. In most cases, it does not seem that singular and plural clitics are related by the usual rules of nominal pluralization. Catalan forms regular nominal plurals by adding an [*s*] (or allophonic variant) to the corresponding singular form. Thus, the plural of *home* (man) is *homes* and the plural of *cap* (head) is *caps*.

Now, this does not hold for the dative *l*-clitics. The accusative *l*-clitics do form the plural in a regular way, as we saw in (6). The plural of masculine singular [*l*] is [*ls*] and the plural of

³ It might be potentially interesting that the strong pronouns *mi*, *si* (just like Spanish *mi*, *ti*, *si*) both incorporate a segment [*i*] and have to be obligatorily preceded by the preposition *a*. I only point to this fact here, and leave it as a subject of possible further research.

feminine singular [lə] is [ləs]. However, the plural of dative singular [li] is either [əls] in the normative form, or [lzi] in the colloquial version, instead of the expected [*lis].⁴

This irregularity on dative *l*-clitics is not only characteristic of Catalan, though. Other Romance languages also display it. In French, for instance, the plural of the dative singular *l*-clitic *lui* is not **luis*, but *leur*. In Italian, the plural dative in high registers of the language is *loro*, for both masculine and feminine. Italian has gender marking in dative singular *l*-clitics, at least in those high registers. The dative singular masculine is *gli*, and the feminine is *le*. In colloquial Italian, the dative singular is *gli* for both masculine and feminine.

Notice that the appearance of the [i] in the spoken Catalan plural dative *l*-clitic does not solve, in principle, the problem. If the dative singular *l*-clitic is [li] and the plural dative *l*-clitic is [lzi], then what seems to happen is that in the dative plural the plural morpheme [z] is interpolated between the [l] and the [i], in a case of *distributed exponence*, a term taken from Solà-Pujols 1998. This solution was proposed by Bonet 1991, 1995, but Catalan does not productively use this kind of infixation, except for cases where the dative is involved. Another example, discussed in Bonet 1991, is the infixation of a partitive clitic [n] within the dative plural *l*-clitic:

- (12) De llibres, a ells, [əlz-ən-i] donaré tres
of books, to they, DAT.3P-PART-LOC I-give.FU three
I will give them three books

This kind of infixation with dative plurals makes us think that there is something special at stake with dative *l*-clitics. This is the main topic of this paper, but before address it I need to give some details on the other component of the complex *els hi*, namely the so-called locative clitic *hi*.

Summing up this subsection: there are three irregularities with the Catalan dative *l*-clitics: they have a special morpheme [i], they are not syncretic with the correspondent accusative clitics, unlike the rest of the other dative clitics, and the plural form is irregular with respect to the singular.

1.3 The Catalan clitic *hi*

Hi is usually considered a locative clitic in Catalan, equivalent to French *y*, Italian *ci*, or Medieval Spanish *y*. This clitic pronominalizes all kinds of locative complements, regardless of whether they are stative or directional. That is to say, as its equivalent in other Romance languages, *hi* is an impersonal clitic that represents a circumstance concerning place or direction:

- (13) a. Si vas a casa ara, encara *hi* trobaràs en Joan.⁵
If you-go to home now still LOC you-find.FU the John
If you go home now, you'll still find John there
b. Quan jo tornava de la plaça, ella *hi* anava.
When I I-came-back from the market, she LOC went
When I was coming back from the market, she was going there

⁴ The form *lis* is attested in Valencian Catalan, and some other varieties strongly influenced by Spanish. It is also attested in other Romance languages such as Sardinian (Jones 1993: 220), quoted in Kayne *to appear*. Similarly, in Spanish, the dative plural *l*-clitic *les* is the regular plural of the singular *le*.

⁵ For now, I gloss the clitic *hi* as LOCATIVE (LOC), but I revise this notation later.

In these examples, we see how *hi* can stand for argument locative PPs. Sometimes those PPs may be present in the antecedent discourse, and sometimes may not. For example, in (13a), the verb *trobar* 'find' selects a theme DO, and a location introduced by the preposition *a* 'at'. As a result, *hi* acts as complement of the verb *trobar*, and its denotation is *a casa* 'at home', recovered from the precedent clause. In (13b), the PP in the precedent clause *de la plaça* 'from the market' cannot be the form *hi* stands for, because in Catalan PPs introduced by the preposition *de* 'of', like in French, require a clitic *en*. As a result, since the verb *anar* selects a PP headed by the preposition *a* (*anar a Barcelona*, 'to go to Barcelona') the clitic *hi* has to be the one playing the role of this complement.

However, as in the other Romance languages where a counterpart of *hi* is present, this clitic goes beyond the mere locative function (Kayne, to appear). It also pronominalizes non-locative PPs (14), as well as non-locative adjectives and non-locative adverbs (15), or sentences with perception verbs (see, hear) when used intransitively (16):

- (14) a. Ningú no defensava aquella opinió, però ell s' **hi** entossudí
 Nobody NEG advocated that opinion, but he SE LOC got-stubborn
Nobody else advocated that opinion, but he stubbornly kept doing it
- b. En Pere pensa en son xicot? No **hi** pensa gaire
 the Peter thinks in his boyfriend? NEG LOC he.thinks little
Does Peter think of his boyfriend? No, he doesn't think much
- (15) a. No era ric, però **hi** he esdevingut com a lingüista
 NEG I.was rich but LOC I.have become as a linguist
I didn't use to be rich, but I have become so as a linguist
- b. Havia de parlar lentament, però no **hi** he parlat gaire
 I-had of to.speak slowly but NEG LOC I.have spoken much
I was supposed to speak slowly, but I haven't (speak that slowly)
- (16) En Joan no **hi** veu gaire
 the John NEG LOC he-sees molt
John doesn't see very well

The obvious question is why, if *hi* is a locative clitic, it can be used in these other non-locative contexts. Maybe we should avoid the terminology *locative clitic* because it is misleading, as claimed in Kayne, to appear. These other behaviors of the locative clitic seem to suggest that to be a *locative clitic* is only part of a bigger story, i.e. maybe locative *hi* is just a sub-case of a more general phenomenon. Following Kayne, to appear, I am to propose a deictic status for this kind of element in Romance and their counterpart in English (*there*). Observe the following uses of these elements, both used as locative, i.e. referring to a location (17) or as non-locative (18):

- (17) a. I want to go there
- b. Je veux y aller (French)
 I want LOC to.go
- c. Ci voglio andare (Italian)
 LOC I-want to.go
- d. Hi vull anar (Catalan)
 LOC I-want to.go

- (18) a. There is a book
 b. Il y a un livre (French)
 EXPL LOC? has a book
 c. C'è un libro (Italian)
 LOC? is a book
 d. Hi ha un llibre (Catalan)
 LOC? has a book

For the sentences in (17) to be felicitous it has to be contextually clear what the locative clitic (*y*, *ci*, *hi*) or English *there* refers to. For example if I see a picture of Aruba in the subway, I will say to my boyfriend: *I'd like to go there next summer*, or if we speak in Catalan to each other I would say: *Hi vull anar l'estiu vinent*. Since by definition (Levinson 1983, for example), deictics are grammatical elements used to point more or less directly to contextual information, the examples in (17) seem to fit neatly to this: the meaning of these elements is deictic in the sense that it does not refer or name any particular entity on all occasions of use; rather it is a variable or placeholder for some particular entity given by the context.⁶ Now, as pointed out by a reviewer, the fact alone that these elements retrieve their referent from the environment is not enough to consider them deictic. Anaphoric pronouns also behave in this way, and we would not call them deictic, at least if we stick to the common use of deixis, which necessarily incorporates the speaker as the center of the indexical field (Bühler 1934), i.e. as the element with respect to which deictics gain reference. Thus, whereas demonstratives like *this* and *that* (and morphemes like *here* and *there*) do indeed make reference to the speaker (near the speaker vs. away from the speaker), the Romance elements (*hi*, *ci*, *y*) are completely neutral with respect to the speaker (i.e. when used as locatives, they are neutral with respect to the speaker, near or away). Although I agree in part with this idea, I think the problem is much more complex, and the reference to the speaker is not always so crucial in some uses of clearer deictics. Let's examine a couple of examples: (i) French *ici* et *là* (roughly equivalent to English *here* and *there*), and the indefinite use of the English demonstrative *this*.

With respect to French demonstratives *ici* et *là*, they generally express the same opposition that *here* and *there* express in English: *ici* express proximity to the speaker, and *là* express distality from the speaker:

- (19) a. Arrêtons -nous ici
 stop.IMP.1PL us here
 Let's stop here
 b. Ne restez pas ici, allez là
 NEG stay.IMP.2PL NEG here go.IMP.2PL there
 Don't stay here, go there

⁶ According to Levinson (1983: 54), typical examples of deictic expressions are demonstratives, first and second person pronouns, tense, certain place and time adverbials like *here* and *now*, and some verbs such as *come* and *go*. According to the theory developed by the psychologist Karl Bühler in 1934, deictic expressions refer into what he calls the indexical field, whose zero (or *origo*) is fix by the person who speaks (the 1st person), the place of utterance (the *here*), and the time of utterance (the *now*) (Weissenborn & Klein 1982). This entails that there are three types of deixis: *personal*, *spatial*, and *temporal* deixis.

However, facts are not so clear. *Là* can sometimes mean *here* too:

- (20) a. Je reste là
 I stay here
 b. Marie est là
 Mary is here

In these cases, we see how a clear demonstrative (and therefore deictic element) as *là* can also be rather neutral with respect to the speaker, in terms of proximity and distality. The meaning of these uses can only be distinguished by clues provided by the context of utterance, exactly as what happens with *hi*.

It is also of interest in this respect, the indefinite use of the English demonstrative *this*, used colloquially to refer to a person or thing previously unspecified. In that same context, *that* is not allowed, because it presupposes that the person or thing is contextually clear:

- (21) My brother went to a party yesterday, and he met this / *that very interesting guy.

If we understand contextual knowledge of the person mentioned as proximity to the speaker, as intuitively one may think, then the behavior of *this* and *that* in (20) is exactly the opposite from what we would expect. If that were the case, *this* should be used when the reference was clear from the context, and *that* when it was not. The fact that is exactly the opposite case seems to suggest that *this* and *that* might not be inherently specified as proximal or distal, but may gain this kind of meaning from contextual tips.

Finally, it is usual to consider that verbs like ‘to come’ or ‘to go’ are deictic, in the sense that they incorporate the speaker as the point of reference with respect to which the action of coming is interpreted. For example, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, ‘come’ is defined as “*move or travel toward or into a place thought of as near or familiar to the speaker*”, whereas ‘go’ is conceptualized either neutrally with respect to the speaker, or as moving away from the speaker. However, in many languages, a telephonic interchange like the following would be absolutely standard:

- (22) A: Could you please come to my office for a moment?
 B: I’m coming right away (cf. #I’m going right away)

Catalan makes a really pervasive use of the verb ‘come’ as ‘going to where you are’:

- (23) A: Podries venir un moment?
 Could.you come.INF a moment
 Could you come for a moment?
 B: Ara vinc (cf. #Ara vaig)
 Now I.come
 I’ll go in a minute

In any case, these facts seem to suggest that even clear deictics like *là* or *this* are not always clearly defined with respect to the speaker, and therefore, the fact that *hi* is not so specified either should not count as a proof against its deictic character. What makes it a deictic is the fact that it

is used to point more or less directly to contextual information, that it does not refer or name any particular entity on all occasions of use; rather it is a variable or place-holder for some particular entity given by the context. From this point of view, maybe what we consider as two separate phenomena, namely deixis and anaphora, might turn out to be just two subcases of the same thing (von Heusinger 2002).

Let's now turn to (18)? Can we consider deictic these presentational uses of the so-called locative clitics in Romance and English *there*? In this respect, as I said above, I am going to assume here the proposal in Kayne, to appear, that considers these elements as deictic expressions. According to Kayne, the Romance elements in (18) (and in my examples in (14) and (15)), as well as their English counterpart *there* are the same deictic element as the locative version in (17). These deictic elements behave like demonstratives in that they modify a noun, in structures like the following.

- | | | | | |
|---------|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------|
| (24) a. | We spoke thereof | → | We spoke there THING of | |
| b. | Jean pense à quelque chose | → | Jean y THING pense | (French) |
| | John thinks to some thing | | John LOC? thinks | |
| c. | Anirem a Barcelona | → | Hi PLACE anirem | (Catalan) |
| | we.go.FU to B | | LOC? we.go.FU | |

As we see, the silent noun is PLACE in the case of locatives, but other nouns in the other cases. As in Kayne, to appear, I will use the term *locative clitic*, as abbreviation for '*deictic clitic modifying the silent noun PLACE*'. This means, then, that all the other uses of the clitics *hi*, *y*, etc are [DEICTIC + N]. Support for this idea comes from the overt character of this structure in some other languages, where we find an overt demonstrative as complement of a noun, in addition to the demonstrative or (in)definite article:

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| (25) a. | That there car | |
| | Cette voiture -là | (French) |
| | this car here | |
| b. | El coche este | (Spanish) |
| | the car this | |
| c. | un tipo aquí | (Spanish) |
| | a guy here | |
| d. | det herre huset | (Colloquial Norwegian; Leu 2008) |
| | the here.INF house | |

An also interesting support for the idea that *hi* can be a deictic accompanying a (silent) noun comes from sign languages (Emmorey 2002). In many SLs, there is a marked distinction between first and second person, which are signed by pointing to the participants in the discourse, and third person, which can be produced by pointing (deictic gesture per se) to specific locations within the signing space, without necessity of pointing to any person. Interestingly, the association between a person and a spatial location is typically made by producing a nominal sign at a location in space, or by pointing to a location while producing a nominal sign. That pointing (indexing) sign has been analyzed as a determiner when it is produced prior to the noun and a locative adverbial when produced in isolation after the noun (like a clitic?). The important idea is that the pointing gesture (the deictic) occurs with a noun first, and as a pure deictic (pointing gesture)

later. We could consider that in both cases, the pointing gesture is a deictic clitic with a status similar to the one of *hi* and its Romance and Germanic counterparts.

Notice that this underlying phrasal structure of *hi* may explain why in Catalan, verbs of perception like *see* or *hear*, when used intransitively need the deictic clitic *hi*, as we saw in examples (10e), repeated as (26a), with the underlying structure in (26b):

- (26) a. En Joan no hi veu gaire
 the.SM John NEG LOC he-sees molt
 John doesn't see very well
 b. En Joan no [hi THING] veu gaire

This indeed entails that all the other non-locative uses of *hi* behave in a similar way, with the structure [DEICTIC+N]. This is an interesting result, because it means that *hi* can never go isolated, but has to always be related to some element that it modifies somehow. This result is going to be important in the proposal I going to develop in the next section to explain the behavior of the dative *l*-clitics in Catalan and other languages.

2 The [DEF + DEIX] proposal.

The questions I want to answer in this paper are two: (i) Why are Catalan dative *l*-clitics irregular in so many respects?, and (ii) Why does a deictic clitic (updating the original question with the result of the last section) appear with dative *l*-clitics? The answers to these two questions are related. My proposal is that whereas 1st and 2nd person dative clitics can appear on their own, because they internally incorporate deixis features (person deixis), dative *l*-clitics require the presence of the extra deictic clitic *hi*, in order to incorporate deixis features (locative deixis in this case; more on this below).⁷ This entails that I am going to take the form '*els hi*' in Colloquial Catalan to be transparent with respect to the structure of the dative *l*-clitics. I refer to that complex structure as [DAT+DEIX]. This proposal, as I show in the next subsections, not only solves the apparent irregularities of the Catalan dative *l*-clitics, but also allows us to explain other phenomena related to this grammatical case in Catalan and Romance: in section 2.1, I justify the proposal for Catalan, and in section 2.2, for other Romance languages. Whether or not we can extend this proposal to all languages, by the *uniformity principle* in Chomsky 2000, following the logic in Hale & Keyser 2002, is left as a topic for future work.

2.1 The proposal for Catalan

Several ideas support the proposal of the underlying structure [DAT+DEIX] for Catalan. The first and more immediate advantage of this proposal is that it offers a unified solution to the apparent irregularities of the dative *l*-clitics that we reviewed in section 1.2. In the first place, it entails that

⁷ This proposal needs refinement to include the *s*-clitics, which also are 3rd person clitics. As such, my theory would predict that when used as datives, they should also incorporate a deictic clitic *hi*, which they do not. A tentative idea is that these kind of clitics are mainly anaphoric, and as such are linked to the person features of their antecedents, and this is why do not need deixis of their own. Further research would be necessary.

the morpheme [i] is not part of the dative, i.e. it is not a dative morpheme, as suggested by Bonet 1991, 1995, Harris 1997, or Solà-Pujols 1998. This solves the question on why it does not show up in the other person forms of the paradigm of the dative clitics. Indeed, we still have to explain why this extra element appears with the dative *l*-clitics. I come back to this issue, with a proposal, in section 3.

The second irregularity of dative *l*-clitics is also solved by my proposal, because it provides a simple explanation for the plural form. According to my proposal, dative *l*-clitics are part of a structure [DAT+DEIX]. This means, that the singular dative *l*-clitic, written according to the normative as *li*, could also be written as *l'hi*, making thus transparent its internal structure: the morpheme *l* would be, properly, the singular dative *l*-clitic, and *hi* would be the deictic clitic. Then, if the actual dative singular *l*-clitic is *l*, its now regular plural is *ls*, i.e. *l+s*. The deictic clitic, since it lacks φ -features remains invariable in both cases, and therefore it makes absolute sense that the Catalan dative *l*-clitics are *l'hi* and *els hi*.

A direct consequence of the previous discussion of the plural, and therefore the third advantage of my proposal, is that it also solves the problem of the syncretism of the dative *l*-clitics with respect to the accusatives. If the actual dative *l*-clitics are in fact the bare *l* and *ls* (both pronounced in most cases with the epenthetic vowel [ə]), then we see how they are syncretic to their accusative counterparts, exactly as the rest of their paradigms. That is to say, accusative and dative have the same form across the board.

However, this is not strictly true for two reasons. Firstly, there is an important difference between dative and accusative *l*-clitics, namely the gender morphemes of the accusative are not present in their dative counterparts. Notice that if dative *l*-clitics lack gender features, then it is expected that the syncretism of the dative *l*-clitics be with the masculine forms of the accusative *l*-clitics. These are the accusative forms that also lack overt gender marking. Indeed, it remains to be clarified why dative clitics in Catalan, and most other Romance languages, do not have gender features.⁸ Secondly, the dative clitics require deictic information, either internal (1st / 2nd person) or external (3rd person). The presence of the deictic features is what ends up establishing the difference between accusative and dative clitics across the board.

So if anything, my proposal has the advantage that it offers a unified explanation to the irregularities we have talked about in the first section. However, my proposal have other benefits that need to be taken into consideration.

A first one that comes to mind is that this proposal solves an apparent incompatibility between dative and locative clitics that we find in Catalan and some other Romance languages. This problem arises when a locative and a dative *l*-clitic should co-occur, for example in cases of multiple clitic left-dislocation (CLLD, in the sense of Cinque 1990). In (27) we see how none of the dative *l*-clitics allows the presence of a locative clitic, even if the dislocation of the dative PP *a casa seva* 'to his place' would also require a locative clitic:

⁸ Actually, dative clitics do have gender in (varieties of) some Romance languages like Italian, Romanian or Spanish. For example, some varieties of Spanish do show gender in datives through the phenomenon called *laísmo*. This phenomenon involves the use of feminine morphemes in dative *l*-clitics:

(i) A Maria la dije la verdad
 to Mary DAT.SF I-said the truth
I said the truth to Mary

- (27) a. Als nois, no *els hi* portis res
to-the boys, NEG DAT DEIX you-bring.SJV nothing
Don't bring anything to the boys
- b. Als nois, a casa seva, no *els hi* (*hi) portis res
to-the boys, to house POSS.3SF, NEG DAT DEIX you-bring.SJV nothing
Don't bring anything to the boys to their place
- c. Al Miquel, a casa seva, no *li* (*hi) portis res
to-the Michael, to house POSS.3SF, NEG DAT DEIX you-bring.SJV nothing
Don't bring anything to Miquel to his place

In (27a) the complex clitic *els hi* resumes the left-dislocated dative phrase 'als nois' (to the boys). In (27b), since we have the dative and a locative phrase dislocated, we should add another resumptive *hi* to the sentence, and we would expect two consecutive instances of that clitic, the first one as part of the complex [DAT+DEIX], the second one as the resumption of the left-dislocated locative phrase. But as we see in (20b), this is ungrammatical, maybe because of a kind of *Repeated Morph Constraint* (MENN & MCWHINNEY 1984) understood as the avoidance of adjacent identical morphs. Interestingly, the same happens with the dative singular *l*-clitic in (27c). This is easily explainable if we assume that the dative singular *l*-clitic also has the structure [DAT+DEIX].

This phenomenon is indeed not only phonological. It is perfectly possible to have an [*i*] after a dative:

- (28) Als altres professors també *els hi* igualaré els salaris
to-the other professors too DAT DEIX equalize the salaries
I'll equalize the salaries to the other professors too

A quite similar phenomenon happens in French, where the co-occurrence of a dative and the locative clitic is normally reduced to the occurrence of the dative. The co-occurrence of the singular dative *lui* with the expletive *y* is clearly ungrammatical in the singular. In the plural is not so strongly rejected, but some speakers report redundancy:

- (29) A la fête, je lui (*y) / leur (y) ai parlé
to the party NOM.1S DAT.3S DEIX DAT.3S DEIX I-have talked
I talked to him / them at the party

Another fact in support of my proposal would be the following. As we saw above, according to the Catalan normative, the dative singular *l*-clitic has to be written *li*. However, when this clitic appears in combination with other clitics, it is reduced to the deictic clitic *hi*. In those cases, *hi* can apparently assume the function otherwise reserved for the dative. This is shown in the interaction of dative with accusative (30a), with partitive (30b), or it is used to avoid the Person Case Constraint (30c):

- (30) a. Li donaràs el llibre o no **l'** **hi** donaràs?⁹
 DAT.3S you-give.FU the book or NEG ACC.SM DEIX you-give.FU
Will you give him the book, or will you not?
- b. Si me' n demana deu, **n'** **hi** donaré dotze.
 If DAT.1S PART he-asks ten PART DEIX I-give.FU twelve
If he asks me for ten, I will give him twelve
- c. Demà t' **hi** presentaran al(s) president(s)
 Tomorrow ACC.2S DEIX they.introduce to-the president(s)
Tomorrow you will be introduced to the president(s)

Some scholars (e.g. Wanner 1977, quoted in Bonet 1995) have considered this to be a case of phonological constraint on identical sequences like *el li*. However, in Valencian or Occitan such combinations are possible, as we see in (31) and therefore it does not seem to be a case of pure phonology:¹⁰

- (31) El llibre al xiquet li ' l compraré (Valencian)
 The book to-the boy DAT.3S ACC.3SM I-buy.FU
I'll buy the book to the boy

2.2 Extension of the proposal

Remember that the question I am trying to answer is about the structure of dative clitics in Romance. I have concluded that the [DAT+DEIX] hypothesis can be posited for Catalan, and it has advantages, because it offers an answer to some of the problems of the dative in that language, and explains some other facts. However, I said in the introduction that this proposal can be applied to (at least some) other Romance languages. This is what I explore in this section.

In order to empirically support the relationship between dative and the deictic clitic, we need to find languages where either they co-occur as in Catalan, or where the presence of the deictic clitic can be used to express the function of the dative. Although it is rather common to acknowledge that there is an intuitive relationship between locative (or deictic clitic, in our terms) and dative, the common fact is that most Romance languages either do distinguish them (French, Catalan, or Italian) or do not have a locative (deictic) clitics (Spanish, Portuguese).

However, there do exist languages where the property we are looking for holds. In some of these languages, datives and locatives cannot be distinguished. For example, Lassiter 2004 analyzes the case of Hittite, an extinct language of the Indo-European family. According to Lassiter, this language had a case used for both locative and dative markings, called dative-locative, with endings *-i/-ya* in the singular. Since dative case is more common cross-linguistically, Lassiter concludes that the dative-locative case of Hittite can be reduced to dative.

A related fact occurs in colloquial French, where dative singular *lui* is often reduced to the locative *y* (Dominique Sportiche, pc):

⁹ This is written in standard orthography, as we see in the difference between *li* and *l'hi* I am denying here.

¹⁰ Although I do not go into this topic further here, let me suggest that this might be a case of polydefiniteness of the definiteness marker *l-* similar to the one we find in Greek definite determiners. Further research may clarify this.

- (32) J y parlerai (cf. Je lui parlerai) (French)
 NOM.1S DEIX I-speak.fu
I'll speak to him/her

Another instance of the phenomenon is provided by Rigau 1982. Rigau documents Catalan dialects where the locative clitic sometimes substitutes the standard dative clitic:

- (33) a. En Joan hi donà cops (Catalan)
 the John DEIX gave knocks
John knocked the door
 b. En Joan li donà cops
 the John DAT gave knocks
John knocked the door

Another case along the same lines is provided by Northern Italian dialects, especially those of the Veneto area (Kayne, to appear). In these languages, the clitic *ghe* (pronounced [ge]) can cover both dative and locative cases. Paduan provides an example. In this language, there are not separate clitics for dative and locative. And as we have seen, Kayne defends in that paper the status of *ghe* as a deictic clitic. This explains why *ghe* can cover a pure locative and a dative function:

- (34) a. *Ghe* dago el libro
 DEIX I-give the book
I'm giving him/her/them the book
 b. *Ghe* meto el libro
 DEIX I-put the book
I put the book there

According to Kayne, the use of *ghe* is systematic for Paduan. For him, the underlying form of the dative sentence in (32a) involves the presence of a silent third person dative clitic. This means, that sentence (34a) should be thought as (35):

- (35) DAT.3 *ghe* dago el libro

Also colloquial Italian, at least for some speakers, accepts the locative clitic *ci* in the place of the dative clitic in the equivalent to (32) (Nicola Lampitelli, pc):

- (36) a. *Ci* daró il libro
 DEIX I-give.FU the book
I'll give him/her/them the book

Finally, this co-occurrence of dative and locative clitics is overt in other languages apart from Catalan. Kayne to appear mentions the following case from Sardinian (Jones 1993: 220):

- (37) Narra – bí – lis
 Tell – DEIX – DAT.3P
Tell them (about it)

These examples provide empirical support to the co-occurrence of datives and deictic clitics. Such co-occurrence must always happen, regardless of whether one of the two elements remains silent. The silent one is normally the locative, although as we have seen in this section, it can sometimes be the dative. If this is true, and some of the two elements of the complex [DAT+DEIX] can be silent, as this happens in Paduan, according to Kayne, we could apply the same logic to other languages. Thus, we have: (i) languages where both participants of the [DAT+DEIX] are overt, like Catalan or Sardinian, or even the French *lui*, (ii) languages where only the deictic element is overt, like Paduan, the cases of Catalan where the dative combines with other clitics, and the cases of French in (32). Following the same logic, we could consider that languages like Spanish or Portuguese do present the same structure [DAT+DEIX], but since they lack an overt deictic clitic, they only show the dative clitic overt. I do not consider here the question of whether both elements of the complex [DAT+DEIX] can be silent at the same time.

3 The special character of *l*-clitics

Now we come to the last part of the paper. The proposal is that dative *l*-clitics, unlike all the other dative clitics have to co-occur with an overt deictic clitic. That proposal makes good predictions for Catalan and other Romance languages. Now, indeed, the question is why would only dative *l*-clitics enforce the structure [DAT+DEIX]? Why would no other clitic require the presence of a deictic clitic? The thesis I am going to pursue in this last section is that this is so because dative *l*-clitics are different from 1st/2nd person dative clitics. The latter are provided with internal deictic features (person deixis), and hence do not need to get deixis externally. However, I am going to argue that *l*-clitics lack person features, and hence need the complementation of an external deictic in order to get those features. This is the reason why they appear within the structure [DAT+DEIX].

In order to argue in favor of this hypothesis, in this section I need to examine two questions: (i) Are we justified in considering that *l*-clitics lack person features?, and (ii) why do dative clitics need this deictic feature, but the accusative clitics do not? Let me start by the first question.

3.1 The special character of *l*-clitics

Clitics can be defined as bundles of φ -features without substantive or encyclopedic content whatsoever (i.e. as functional words). If we consider this idea, then we should expect that clitics can be decomposed in morphemes expressing those features, ideally with each feature being expressed by a single morpheme (Bonet 1991, 1995; Kayne 2000: chapter 8, or Viaplana 1980, among many others). An example of this approach is offered in Kayne (2000:131-ff), where the author elaborates on the decomposition of French and Italian possessives and other pronouns. According to Kayne, clitic pronouns such as *mes*, *tes*, *ses*, and *les* (the latter homophonous to the definite article plural) would be composed of the morphemes *m*, *t*, *s*, and *l*, plus morphemes expressing agreement in number *es*. Kayne notices that it is quite uncontroversial that *m* and *t* are person morphemes, 1st and 2nd person respectively. However, the status of *s* and *l* is not so clear. According to some authors, like Bernstein, in press, the *l*-morpheme, like the *th-/d-* morpheme in Germanic languages, is 3rd person. Other scholars, though, consider *th-/d-* and *l-* morphemes to be definiteness morphemes (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002, Leonetti 1999, or Leu 2005).

Kayne 2000 notices the asymmetry between *mes*, *tes*, *ses*, which can be possessive determiners and reflexive pronouns, and *les*, which can be neither possessive nor reflexive. It is also interesting that the reflexive 3rd person pronoun in most Romance languages (French, Spanish, Catalan, etc.) uses the *s* rather than the *l*:

- (38) Se ha comprado su propio coche (Spanish)
 RFL.3S he-has bought his own car
He's bought himself his own car (= He has bought a car for himself)

In addition to the reflexive, the *s*-morpheme is present in the paradigm of possessive determiners in most Romance languages, going back to Latin which also used that morpheme in the possessive.¹¹ Example from French:

- (39) a. Mon / Ton / Son / *Lon pere
 my your his / her father

Finally, that the *l*- morpheme is not a person morpheme is also suggested by the following fact from Catalan (it would also work in Spanish). If the *l*- in the definite determiner is essentially the same as the one in the accusative *l*-clitics, and if that morpheme is a person morpheme, then (40) would be rather surprising:

- (40) a. Les professores volem el nostre propi horari
 the.PF professors.PF we-want the our.SM own schedule
We (female) professors want our own schedule
 b. Les professores voleu el vostre propi horari
 the.PF professors.PF you.PL-want the your.SM own schedule
You (female) professors want your own schedule
 c. Les professores volen el seu propi horari
 the professors.PF they.want the their.SM own schedule
The (female) professors want their own schedule

(40) shows two things: First, the definite DP *les professores*, which includes the *l* morpheme, can interact with different person inflections of the verb *voler* (to want), either 1st, 2nd or 3rd person plural, unlike what happens for example with pronouns:

- (41) a. Nosaltres volem / *voleu / *volen una millora
 We we-want you.P-want they-want an improvement
 b. Elles *volem / *voleu / volen una millora
 They.F we-want you.P-want they-want an improvement

¹¹ Strictly speaking, this generalization applies to 3rd person singular in all Romance languages. However, the *l*- is present in the possessive paradigm of some Romance languages, but only for the 3rd person plural. French: *leur*, Italian: *loro*. It is interesting that these forms can be both dative and possessive, a topic not unknown in the literature: Szabolcsi 1981, 1983, Freeze 1992, Kayne 1975, 2000.

If the DP *les professors* were 3rd person, we should expect a behavior similar to that observed in (41), but we do not see it. Second, in (40) we also see the complex form of the possessive in Catalan, consisting in the definite determiner, plus a possessive element. Notice that the number of the possessive depends on the number of the possessive element, and not on the definite determiner, even though the definite determiner is the head of the whole DP [*el nostre propi horari*] "our own schedule". This seems to indicate that no person morpheme is associated with the definite determiner, or the *l-* morpheme in general.

Now, if the *l-* morpheme does not have person features, why is the belief so common that it is 3rd person? In my view, this is related to what the 3rd person actually is. As stated in Benveniste (1966: 197), the notion of person only makes sense when applied to the 1st and the 2nd person. Person, which is a kind of deictic mark, as we see below, can be defined (informally) as the grammatical category that indicates discourse roles, i.e. the speaker (1st person) and the addressee (2nd person). That is to say, these have to be obligatorily people (or entities metaphorically humanized). However, the form that is called the 3rd person does not contain a specification about any particular participant in the discourse. According to Benveniste 1966, the 3rd person is a merely negative concept: it is used to indicate the 'non-person', i.e. any other thing different from the speaker and the addressee. In that complement set we find not only humans, but all kind of things for which the notion of person does not apply or it is only *metaphorical*.¹² That this split between person and non-person is true is suggested by two things: (i) by the fact that the *l-*clitics need the association with the deictic clitic, that the 1st/2nd person clitics do not, and (ii) by the different behavior shown by 1st/2nd person clitics, with respect to the *l-*clitics.

With respect to (i), it is interesting that the syncretism between dative and accusative in the 1st and 2nd person breaks with the *l-*clitics. The latter, in effect, have more overt morphological material: the accusative *l-*clitics have gender marking, and the dative *l-*clitics need the deictic clitic. It seems, then, that for the *l-*clitics to do the same work of 1st and 2nd person clitics, they require some more overt material.

With respect to (ii), it is interesting how some *l-*clitics can be sometimes omitted, keeping their meaning, whereas 1st and 2nd cannot.¹³ For example, when dative and accusative *l-*clitics co-occur, the accusative can sometimes be omitted:

- (42) [əɫzi] donaràs el llibre o no [əɫzi] (*el) donaràs?
 DAT.3P you-give.FU the book or NEG DAT.3P ACC.3SM you-give.FU
Will you give them the book, or will you not?

It seems that the presence of the dative clitic is enough to cover both the accusative and the dative arguments, and as a result the accusative clitic has to be omitted in the second disjunct in (42). This omission is not a unique property of Catalan. A similar phenomenon occurs in French:

- (43) Le livre, à l'enfant, je (le) lui ai donné (French)
 the book, to the boy, NOM.1S ACC.3SM DAT.3S I-have given
I've given the book to the boy

In (43), the presence of the accusative clitic *le* is optional to the extent that for some speakers its

¹² Although I assume Benveniste's idea about this in this paper, I keep using the term '3rd person' for simplicity.

¹³ On these differences, see the insightful discussion in SAVESCU CIUCIVARA 2004.

absence is in fact the preferred option. This phenomenon, though, seems to be limited to *l*-clitics. The optionality disappears when one of the clitics is 1st or 2nd person:

- (44) Le livre, Jean me *(l') a donné
 the book, John DAT.1S ACC.3SM he-has given
John has given me the book

Catalan though takes the optionality to a more extreme point than French. In Catalan, the opacity occurs without taking into account the number features of the clitics involved. If both clitics are singular, the clitic is the dative singular [*li*] (45a); in any other case the dative is [*elzi*]:

- (45) a. El llibre, a el nen, [*li*] donaré demà.
 The book to the boy DAT.3S I-give.FU tomorrow
I'll give the book to the boy tomorrow
 b. El llibre(s), a el(s) nen(s), [*elzi*] donaré demà.
 The book(s) to the boy(s) DAT.3P I-give.FU tomorrow
I'll give the book(s) to the boy(s) tomorrow

In any case, the reason why the *l*-clitics and *l*-DPs are considered to be person features seem related to the fact that verbs take a special form (the 3rd person form, probably a default form of agreement) when they agree with *l*-constituents. But this is like a negative marking: it is assigned, when required by the verb, to whatever is not 1st or 2nd person. The *l*-, then, is not a person morpheme, but rather the same definiteness morpheme we find in definite determiners. This is not surprising if we consider that accusative clitics and definite determiners are strongly related cross-linguistically (a fact that in Romance is particularly clear), in line with proposals in Postal 1969, Abney 1987, Kayne 2000: chapter 8, and Elbourne 2001. I do not go into this topic any further here.

In any case, since the *l*- does not seem to be a person morpheme, but rather a definiteness morpheme, the class of *l*-clitics is different from the, strictly personal clitics. This difference might be responsible for the fact that only dative *l*-clitics have to make explicit deixis when expressing datives. This might be due to the fact that 1st or 2nd person contain internal deixis, precisely because they contain person morphemes. That internal deixis allows to directly relate them to the immediate context of utterance, and then they do not need further specification to be identified as participants in the discourse (Benveniste 1966). With the 3rd person, we need to add something else to identify the referent, and this extra information is provided by the deictic.

As extra support for that idea, I would like to bring up the following fact. In Catalan or French, the verb *venir* 'to come', does not always allow the presence of the locative clitic *hi*. Crucially, the verb *venir* incorporates the information of 1st person in its meaning, and therefore disfavors the presence of another element indicating location. The opposite happens with the verb *anar* 'to go', and as a result *anar* has a stronger requirement for the deictic (locative) clitic:

- (46) a. Vine a Barcelona. Vine (*-hi) demà.
 you.S-come.IMPER to Barcelona. you.S-come.IMPER DEIX tomorrow
 Intended: *Come to Barcelona. Come here tomorrow*

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--------|----------|
| b. Ves | a Barcelona. Ves | *(-hi) | demà. |
| you.S-go.IMPER | to Barcelona. you.S-come.IMPER | DEIX | tomorrow |
| <i>Go to Barcelona. Go there tomorrow</i> | | | |

Strictly speaking, the locative is not always ungrammatical with the verb 'to come', although here it clearly is. It is not so clearly ungrammatical in a sentence like (47):

- (47) Demà, fem una festa. Si (hi) véns, truca'm.
 Tomorrow we-do a party. If LOC you-come call me
We do a party tomorrow. Call me if you want to come

Now, although the locative clitic is not strictly ungrammatical, it is optional. A possible explanation might be that the speaker is not in the party at the moment of utterance. I leave the topic as subject for further research.

All this seems to point in the direction we need, that is to say, that *l*-clitics require an overt association with deictic features that 1st/2nd do not need because they internally incorporate personal features, and these are indeed already deictic. This additional material is provided by the deictic clitic, or the (locative) preposition in overt DPs.¹⁴

Summing up this section, I have said that the special character of the *l*-clitics is due to their lack of internal deixis, which they have to add by means of association with an explicit deictic clitic. I have argued that the *l*- is actually not a person morpheme, and that therefore, the *l*-clitics lack person features, and then deixis. This indeed entails that the deictic clitics are somehow linked to the dative case. The 1st and 2nd person gets them internally, as part of the person morphemes they have got. The internal lack of this feature for the *l*-datives is what motivates the [DAT+DEIX] structure, in order for them to get that feature externally.

3.3 Why do datives require deictic features?

One of the main claims in this paper is that accusative and dative clitics are actually syncretic across the whole paradigm, and that the only difference between accusative and dative *l*-clitics in general (at least in Romance) is the requirement of deictic features by dative clitics. Now, although this seems to apply to *l*-clitics neatly, one question arises about 1st and 2nd person clitics. In these cases, since both accusative and dative carry person features, my proposal would require that accusatives also incorporate deictic features, and that lead us to eliminate the difference between the personal clitics. Now, look at the following sentences:

- (48) a. *(A) mi, em va-veure ahir
 to me ACC.1S he.saw yesterday
He saw me yesterday

¹⁴ Actually, if we think about accusative and dative DPs in most Romance languages, we see that they are identical too, except for the fact that all dative DPs in most (or all) Romance languages require to be the complement of a preposition or preposition-like element, normally *a*, whereas only some accusative DPs, (FOOTNOTE CONTINUES →) in some languages require that element, and most of them are direct complements of the verb. Whether the *a* with dative DPs is the same as the *a* with accusative DPs still remains a mystery, as it does the question on which accusative DPs, and why, require the *a*. I do not wish to say anything about these interesting topics here. I only ask why dative clitics and DPs require the extra (overt) element.

- b. *(A) mi, em va-dir la veritat
 to me, DAT.1S he.told the truth
 He told me the truth

In cases of CLLD, first and second person can only be doubled by strong pronouns, and in those cases, the double of the accusative has to be marked by the dative preposition (a phenomenon called Distinctive Object Marking, DOM). This, however, is not necessary with the 3rd person, which can be doubled for pronouns or DPs, and the latter do not necessarily have to be marked by the dative preposition:

- (49) a. *(A) la taula, la va-veure ahir
 to the table ACC.3SF he.saw yesterday
 He saw the table yesterday
 b. *(A) la noia, li va-dir la veritat
 to the girl DAT.1S he.told the truth
 He told the truth to the girl

So the fact that accusative and dative refer to people (participants in the speech event) may be responsible for the fact that they are syncretic in both cases. However, in the 3rd person clitics, the absence of person features makes it necessary to add the extra overt material. However, this does not explain what makes it obligatory for datives to have deictic features, while accusative have gender features. Two possible lines of investigation into this topic might be that (1) gender somehow plays the same kind of identifying role that deictics play in the case of the dative, i.e. gender would have some deictic function itself, in the sense that it helps to narrow down the reference of a DP; or (2) accusative clitics are actually intransitive definite articles with an elided NP (Baltin & van Craenenbroek 2008, going back to Postal 1968, or Abney 1987), and as such they have to agree in gender and number with the head of the noun phrase they select. In the latter case, the gender features in the accusative case may actually block deictic features. As for the dative, if one assumes a localist theory of case (as in Anderson 1971, for example), then it makes sense that the dative is related to locations, and as such to locative deixis. This is specially suggestive in the prototypical use of the dative as goal, source, or possessor (Freeze 1992, Kayne 2000, Szabolcsi 1983). Of course, this leaves unexplained other uses of the dative like ethical, benefactive, etc., for which I do not want to say anything about here, as these other uses may not even be a unified phenomenon, but rather a myriad of different things (Susana Huidobro, pc). As I say, this is pure speculation, and the topic would require extensive further research to even consider these as real possibilities.

4 Conclusions

Catalan, and probably Romance, dative and accusative *l*-clitics are syncretic across the board. They are distinguished because dative clitics add deictic features to the accusative form unmarked for gender. Those features are provided internally by their person morphemes, for the 1st and 2nd person clitics, and externally for the *l*-clitics, by means of their association with deictic clitics, which motivates the structure [DAT+DEIX]. The reason for this association was that the *l*-clitics actually lack person features, the *l*- being probably a definiteness morpheme, not a person

morpheme. In Catalan, this lead us to consider that dative clitics are actually *l'hi* and *els hi*, against the standard proposals of the Catalan academy, and this solved the complete set of problems that have traditionally plagued the dative *l*-clitics in this language.

I think that the theory may very well provide the basis for a new theory of datives, based on the fact that they require deixis, at least in the case of the prototypical datives (goal, source, possessor). Such a theory, may also help to understand that the great heterogeneity of the dative case may be due to the fact that they are just a cover term for a multiplicity of different grammatical phenomena.

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