

Clitics do not encode specificity¹

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1. Introduction

Since the first groundbreaking publications in the eighties (Borer 1984, Jaeggli 1982, 1986, Suñer 1988), extensive investigation of the properties of clitic doubling in different languages has led to the conclusion that, at least in direct object clitic doubling, certain specificity effects arise in a systematic way. By *specificity effects* I intend to refer to a family of semantic constraints operating on clitic doubling in languages such as some varieties of Spanish², Romanian³, Greek⁴, Albanian⁵ and Bulgarian⁶: with minor variations, clitic doubling requires the doubled nominal expression to be interpreted as specific. Far from being an accidental fact, the constraints seem to be one of the clearest points of interaction between syntactic structure and the semantic property of specificity.

My main concern in this paper is the way grammatical theory can deal with this well attested correlation between specificity and clitic doubling. The primary goal I pursue is to argue against the idea that specificity is encoded in the lexical entry of direct object clitics, much along the lines of the considerations in Leonetti (2004), and according to the hypothesis that specificity is not among the formal features that syntactic nodes can encode. In order to clarify this position, I devote section 2 to setting out a quick survey of the basic data in a Spanish variety (with some additional examples from Romanian), and section 3 to revising a particular group of accounts of doubling based on lexical specification of clitics, with Suñer (1988, 1989) and Sportiche (1996) as the main representatives. Some arguments against these accounts are put forward in section 4, in order to point out the shortcomings derived from the assumption that clitics encode specificity in some sense. Once this criticism is made explicit, an alternative proposal which abandons such an assumption and partially takes inspiration from Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2001) is presented in section 5, as an attempt to find an answer to the questions ‘How do speakers interpret a clitic doubling structure?’, and ultimately, ‘How and when do specificity effects result from the matching relation between a definite clitic and its associate?’. I will conclude with some general considerations in section 6.

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² See Bleam (1999), De Mello (2004), Estigarribia (2005, 2006), Fernández Soriano (1999), Franco (1993, 2000, 2001), Franco and Mejías-Bikandi (1999), Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2001, 2002), Korkostegui (1998), Parodi (1998, 2003), Suñer (1988, 1989, 1991, 2000), Torrego (2002).

³ See Dobrovie-Sorin (1990), Gierling (1997), Farkas and von Heusinger (2003).

⁴ See Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1997), Anagnostopoulou (1999).

⁵ See Kallulli (1999, 2000).

⁶ See Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Hellan (1999), Jaeger (2003).

2. Specificity and clitic-doubling

Leaving aside for the moment the case of indirect object (IO) doubling, and thus concentrating on direct objects (DO), the crucial facts from colloquial Argentinian Spanish (Porteño) are represented in the examples in (1) and (2), from Suñer (1988, 1989):

- (1) (a) **La** oían {**a Paca / a la niña / a la gata**}.
 ‘They listened to Paca / the girl / the cat’
 (b) Diariamente, **la** escuchaba **a una mujer que cantaba tangos**.
 ‘Daily, (s)he listened to a woman who sang tangos’
 (c) (***La**) buscaban **a alguien que los ayudara**.
 ‘They were looking for somebody who could help them’
 (d) (***Lo**) alabarán **al niño que termine primero**.
 ‘They will praise the boy who finishes first’
- (2) (a) ***La** compramos **a esa novela**.
 ‘We bought that novel’
 (b) **Lo** voy a comprar **el diario** justo antes de subir.
 ‘I am going to buy the newspaper just before coming up’

The data in (1) show that clitic doubling in Porteño requires the object to be specific: it is definite and specific in (1a), indefinite and specific in (1b), indefinite and non-specific in (1c), and finally definite and non-specific in (1d), with the last two examples being ungrammatical in Porteño. The specificity requirement seems to be the essential licensing condition for doubling. All of the sentences in (1) are instances of Differential Object Marking (DOM) by means of the preposition *a*, and all direct objects are [+human] or [+animate]. This is in accordance with so-called Kayne’s generalization (‘Clitic doubling requires the object to be case-marked’), but notice that the absence of *a* in (2b) does not support it; this kind of counterexamples led Suñer (1988: 400) to discard the generalization as a spurious one.

The data in (2) show that animacy may be relevant as a secondary condition: this is the reason why (2a) is not acceptable (*esa novela* ‘that novel’ does not denote an animate being), but it does not seem to be at work in (2b), a piece of spontaneous speech that seems to be acceptable in spite of the inanimate nature of the object referent (*el diario* ‘the newspaper’). Suñer (1988, fn. 11) suggests that speakers often extend the use of doubling by overriding the animacy condition, thus following the same path that the extension of DOM with *a* is following in American varieties of Spanish (see von Heusinger and Kaiser 2005).

The constraints operating in (1) and (2) thus involve both specificity and animacy, as the main conditions that doubled DPs have to obey to be acceptable for Porteño speakers, though animacy does not hold systematically. The first thing that should strike a grammarian is the fact that the constraints are the same ones that govern DOM with *a* in Spanish. Suñer (1988: 404) in fact recalls that specificity / definiteness and animacy are prevailing features in the Case marking of objects in different languages, as well as in agreement processes. A second fact which is worth emphasizing at this point is that doubling of non pronominal objects is optional in Porteño. This is significant because a major part of specificity effects in environments such as DOM, scrambling or clitic doubling appear when the grammatical mechanism involved (marking, movement, doubling) is optional. Once it becomes obligatory, the usual result is the loss of semantic import and thus the disappearance of referential constraints on doubled DPs. Finally, it must be stressed that Suñer’s analysis takes Spanish clitics as manifestations of object agreement and considers clitic doubling as the mirror image

of subject-verb agreement processes, in line with a widely accepted view in recent Spanish linguistics.⁷

Suñer suggests that the natural way to capture the facts in (1) and (2) is combining a Matching Principle, which states that there can be no clash in features between the clitic and the doubled DP, with the specification of certain features in the lexical entry of doubling clitics. It suffices to assume that such clitics may be inherently specified as [+specific] (and [+human]) to derive the semantic restrictions: only DPs with human and specific referents will qualify as elements entering an agreement relation with the clitic in the doubling configuration. The Matching Principle is merely a consequence of indexing in agreement. A confirmation of its positive consequences for grammaticality prediction is obtained from extraction phenomena like those in (3).

- (3) (a) ¿**A qué candidato** (*lo) entrevistaron?
 ‘Which candidate did they interview?’
 (b) ¿**A cuál de los dos candidatos lo** entrevistaron?
 ‘Which of the two candidates did they interview?’

Examples such as (3a) first led to the conclusion that *wh*-extractions of doubled direct objects in Porteño were ill-formed, but the contrast between (3a) and (3b) shows that in some cases they are fully acceptable. Suñer derives such a contrast in a simple way from the Matching Principle and the features of the doubled element: as the doubled DP in (3a) (*qué candidato*) is predominantly interpreted as non-specific and is thus unable to agree with the clitic *lo*, the sentence is odd, while the specific reading of the object in (3b) makes it an adequate nominal expression to match the feature [specific] on the clitic. In this case specificity is overtly signalled by the partitive construction *cuál de los dos candidatos*. In fact partitivity (or D-linking to a previously established discourse set) is the kind of specific interpretation that Suñer relies on in all the examples she discusses, mainly because partitive constructions make specific readings unambiguously deducible for most speakers. This raises the question whether doubling is exclusively linked with partitive readings or rather licensed by any kind of specific interpretation (i.e. epistemic specificity or scopal specificity) in Porteño. Suñer (1988: 423) mentions some examples where quantifier phrase doubling receives only wide scope readings, and this could support the (null) assumption that the feature [specific] in her hypothesis covers every type of specificity (see Farkas 2002 for a discussion of different notions of specificity). Nevertheless, it is true that partitivity or, more generally, D-linking, plays a prominent role in the interpretation of clitic doubling, and I intend to address this point later in sections 3 and 4.

To complete a sketch of the possibilities of clitic doubling in Porteño, something must be added on IO doubling. In (4) I repeat some of Suñer’s examples to demonstrate that IO clitic doubling gives grammatical results with any kind of DP, be it definite or indefinite, specific or non-specific, animate or inanimate (it is excluded with non-modified bare nouns only). This is true with respect to all Spanish varieties.

⁷ See Franco (1993, 2000), García Miguel (1991), Roca (1996), Fernández Soriano (1999). However, a full identification of clitic doubling and agreement is not without problems, and deserves accurate analyses of all of the factors involved; see Lyons (1999: 5.2.1), Franco (2000) and Corbett (2006) for discussion.

- (4) (a) **Le** ofrecí ayuda {**a la niña / a una estudiante**}.
 ‘I offered help to the girl / to a student’
 (b) **Les** ofrecieron queso y leche **a familias de pocos medios**.
 ‘They offered cheese and milk to low-income families’
 (c) **Les** dejaré todo mi dinero **a los pobres**.
 ‘I will leave all my money to the poor’
 (d) **Les** corté los ruedos **a esas polleras**.
 ‘I hemmed up those skirts’

The doubled DP is definite specific and indefinite specific in (4a), indefinite non-specific in (4b), definite non-specific in (4c) and inanimate, definite and specific in (4d). There are no semantic constraints on IO clitic doubling in Spanish, and as a consequence it has no interpretational import. It looks like a purely syntactic agreement process (see Roca 1996, Blears 1999, Gutiérrez-Rexach 2000). The asymmetry between DO clitic doubling and IO clitic doubling is easily captured in Suñer’s analysis by assuming that dative clitics are not endowed with the feature [specific]. This is confirmed by the wellformedness of extractions of doubled IO, independently of the semantics of the doubled phrase (cf. *¿A quiénes les dieron el premio?* ‘Whom did they give the prize to?’), and the scope ambiguity of doubled quantified IO (cf. *Todos los candidatos les dijeron la verdad a algunos electores* ‘Every candidate told the truth to some voters’).

Moreover, the analysis seems at first sight suitable for doubling phenomena in other languages. The most obvious similarity, inside the Romance domain, is with Romanian, a language that allows an indefinite DP to be doubled if it is amenable to a specific reading; non-specific indefinites are ruled out if doubled, as shown in (5) (from Dobrovie-Sorin 1990).

- (5) (a) **O** caut **pe o secreteră**.
 her look-for-1SG to a secretary
 ‘I look for a certain secretary’
 (b) ***Îl** caut **pe un elev care să știe englezește**.
 him look-for-1SG to a student which speaks-SUBJ English
 ‘I look for a student who can speak English’

As in Portefño, there is a specificity constraint, and doubling is accompanied by DOM (with the preposition *pe*). However, a possible source of doubt about the suitability of Suñer’s account for Romanian lies in the way we understand the term *specific*. Is it the same for Romanian and Spanish? Anagnostopoulou (1999: 783) points out that “the notion ‘Specificity’ must be understood in a much broader sense for Romanian doubling than for Portefño Spanish: in the second case, accusative clitic doubling is legitimate only when the DP is partitive”. If this is correct, maybe a slightly different feature should be used to describe Romanian and Spanish accusative clitics. But some of the data and judgements presented in Dobrovie-Sorin (1990) seem to point towards partitivity and D-linking as important factors in Romanian too. I will leave the discussion of this problem for section 4.

Finally, one caveat related to specificity effects has to be mentioned, before going on with the discussion. One of the issues that repeatedly appear in the literature on doubling is the need to ensure that the constructions under study are instances of genuine Clitic Doubling (CLD), instead of cases of Clitic Right Dislocation (CLRD). Suñer (1988) and Jaeggli (1986) gave some arguments for keeping Portefño examples of CLD clearly distinct from CLRD. There are in fact good arguments for the distinction at least in certain contexts (see Anagnostopoulou 1999 for Greek too). However, there is a potential problem that is seldom addressed in the literature: as far as I have been able to check with Argentinian speakers, most typical cases of CLD in Portefño are pronounced with the destressing and the intonational

contour typical of CLRD, so that it may be suspected that we are in fact facing an extended use of CLRD, possibly following intonational patterns borrowed from Italian immigrants in the Río de la Plata area. Does this force us to conclude that CLD is not a distinctive property of Porteño among Spanish dialects, after all? Should we consider Porteño facts as unrelated to Romanian or Greek facts? If most examples that have been treated like CLD are actually cases of CLRD, then new questions arise (Why should there be specificity effects in CLRD? Are they attested in other languages?) and a whole new panorama emerges. Though this issue is worth a careful examination, I cannot discuss all its implications here⁸. So I will proceed on the same basis as before, taking for granted that Suñer (1988) and Jaeggli (1986) were right in their analyses and that at least a significant number of cases of apparent CLD in Porteño are actually genuine CLD. Independently of how many real contexts for CLD can be defined in Porteño, some considerations on specificity effects and the way they have been dealt with until now is still in order, and this may be a justification for the following sections.

3. Specificity as a formal feature in grammar

An obvious advantage of Suñer's approach to direct object doubling in Porteño is the possibility of reducing parametric variation to language-particular differences in the lexical specification of clitics. More recently, Sportiche (1996) represents another interesting attempt to offer a uniform analysis of clitic constructions which is able to deal with crosslinguistic variation and again deserves a prominent role to the feature [specific].

In Sportiche's theory, clitics are functional categories heading their own projections and agreeing in features with the "doubled" XP. This "doubled" phrase may be overt or covert, and moves to the Spec position of the clitic projection (CL_{acc}P, in the cases I am discussing). It is the Spec/Head relationship in the Clitic Phrase that captures the necessity of agreement between the clitic (i.e. the head) and the "doubled" (i.e. the phrase in Spec). In this way the grammar of clitics is assimilated to the general pattern of movement constructions, while retaining, at the same time, the basic intuitions of the base generation approaches for clitics (Jaeggli 1982, Suñer 1988). The "doubled" XP, be it overt or covert, has to match the feature which the clitic head licenses on it, and in the case of object clitics such a feature is *specificity*. Dative clitics project their own phrase and are not associated with the feature. The system opens up a set of different possibilities, given that both the head and the associated XP may be overt or covert, and movement to Spec may be overt or covert too. In this way the same configuration underlies non-doubling clitic constructions (when the associate is covert), doubling constructions (when it is overt but moves covertly), and scrambling constructions as well (when the associate is overt and moves overtly, but the head is covert). A filter blocks overt movement of an overt XP when the head is overt. The unification of scrambling and clitic doubling is a welcome result, because specificity effects arise in scrambling and doubling in a similar (and non accidental) way, and the two constructions share a number of interesting properties (see Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1997, Delfitto and Corver 1998 and Suñer 2000 for a formal approach to the issue, and Leonetti 2007b for some criticism).

Leaving aside the merits of Sportiche's hypothesis, it is the use of the feature [specific] which it shares with Suñer's what I want to discuss. In both analyses, the semantic constraints on DO clitic doubling obtain from a formal feature which is associated to the lexical entry of the clitic or else to the syntactic configuration which the accusative clitic projects. This provides a simple and neat account of the constraints, at least with the restricted set of data which originated the theories.

The association of OD clitics with specificity is actually not limited to the study of clitic doubling. It appeared independently in some linguists' work, mainly on the basis of some

⁸ Some considerations on the development of clitic doubling in Spanish dialects can be found in Leonetti (2007a).

reflections on clitic positioning in clause structure and on the usual readings that clitics are assigned. Uriagereka (1995) is a good example of this stance. It relates clitic movement to the pronoun's lexical properties of being "specific" or "familiar"; according to the Mapping Hypothesis (Diesing 1992), this could be the motivation for pronoun movement, because specific or familiar DPs must be projected outside of the VP, as a condition for the correct mapping of syntactic representations into semantic ones. Although I am not going to discuss clitic movement, it is worth recalling that alternative proposals are available that rely on features different from specificity or familiarity, for instance checking of Case features or some other morphological requirement of the clitic, and they seem to be well motivated accounts which fare better than those based on lexical features like [+specific] or [+familiar] (see Delfitto and Corver 1998, Corver and Delfitto 1999 for discussion).

Several linguists assume, with Uriagereka (1995), that clitics are specific because of their inherent pronominal nature and the fact that they refer mostly to particular entities already mentioned in the discourse. A clear formulation of this stance is in the following quote from Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Hellan (1999: 484):

Being personal pronouns in nature, we assume that the pronominal clitics individually should be characterized by a feature *specific*, which signifies that the expression in question is used about an entity or matter which is being identified by the speaker (or some individual mentioned in the discourse) as a particular entity (often described as a case of "having the entity in mind").

Notice that Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Hellan are aware of some problems which may arise with their assumption, but they discard them to stick to what seems to be a powerful generalization:

Although it is in principle possible to use personal pronouns non-specifically, like the *he* in the statement *The new director has not been selected yet, but he will clearly have to do an extensive house-cleaning*, we assume that the specific type of use is so typical of this word-class that the pronominal clitics have acquired "specific" as a grammaticalized semantic feature. (1999: 484)

To sum up, the idea that clitic pronouns (or at least DO clitics) are specific in some sense has developed and extended in recent research. It has reached a level of diffusion that makes linguists take it for granted and build new analyses and hypothesis on its basis. As for clitic doubling (of personal pronouns), a good example of the usual reasoning about specificity can be found in this quote from Sportiche (1996: 56-57):

Since pronouns are quintessentially specific DPs, we expect that if anything is doubled, i.e. singled out as specific by a clitic marking specificity, it will at least include the archetype of specific DPs, i.e. pronouns.

Thus, it may be interesting to spend some time in a critical discussion of the shortcomings and consequences of such received truth.

4. Against specificity as a semantic feature of clitic pronouns

Up to now I have been surveying some reasons to think of object clitics as specific nominal expressions, at least in some dialects of Spanish and some other European languages. In this section I intend to present a number of problems and difficulties with this assumption, both on conceptual and empirical grounds. I will start with the most general and theoretical considerations to continue later with the most particular / empirical ones.

4.1 The elusive nature of specificity

It is well known that specificity has recently been the subject of extensive discussion in the areas of syntax and semantics. One of the outstanding problems is how to give a unitary definition of what means for a DP to be 'specific', given that there are at least three different notions covered by the term (see Farkas 2002 and von Stechow 2002 for discussion of this

issue), and quite often it is not easy to be precise on the particular sense of *specific* one is dealing with. It may well be that different notions of specificity are needed to account for different kinds of grammatical phenomena. In Farkas' terms, "...specificity turns out to be an epiphenomenon connected to a family of distinctions that are marked differently in different languages" (2002: 214). If this is taken seriously, the difficulty of specifying what the precise contribution of clitic doubling to the proposition expressed is grows bigger, because an accurate definition of 'specific' is needed. Of course, this is not a difficulty which is exclusively found with specificity; it is rather a common situation with several basic grammatical notions, such as 'patient' or 'topic', and possibly one that is positively evolving towards a more efficient comprehension of the facts. However, the logical and philosophical roots of the concept 'specificity' make it a notion which is not always easy to grasp and does not represent a plausible and systematic content for a syntactic node.

My point is that specificity is not an optimal candidate to count among the features by which syntactic configurations drive and constrain the interpretive process (unless it is encoded in a determiner or a quantifier). Semantic / pragmatic notions like specificity or rigid designation do not seem to play any role in the computational system, and it even seems preferable to get rid of them if we aim to constrain the possible range of abstract meanings that the computational system can express. This is the general hypothesis I put forward in Leonetti (2004) as a framework for the study of Differential Object Marking in Spanish. I am using it as the background of my considerations on clitic doubling, without engaging in a full discussion of all its consequences, in an attempt to explore its possibilities. The semantics of clitics may be adequately captured in terms of definiteness, with no recourse to specificity, as I will argue later. Is specificity, then, an indispensable component of a theory of clitic doubling? All in all, it seems preferable to avoid a [specific] feature if possible, due to its elusive nature and its dubious role in syntactic computations. Again, I am aware that this point of view does not make a solid argument against the proposals I reproduced in section 2, but it contributes some motivation to look for alternative explanations.

4.2 The stipulative nature of the account

Quite often formal approaches to grammar offer, together with deep insights, clearly formulated analyses which do their job correctly in a descriptive sense, but without contributing a real explanation of the facts. In these cases the reader has the feeling that the formal device works, and nevertheless does not address the basic questions, or even raises new questions. In my opinion, this is the case with the analyses I have summarized in the previous sections.

The stipulative nature of the account raises a need for a better motivated solution. Obviously, this cannot count as a demonstration that featural accounts are on the wrong track, but it is enough to cast a shadow of doubt on their correctness and inspire further research.

As a result of their stipulative nature, analyses based on specificity encoding in clitics fail to offer a principled account of the facts. First of all, it is not clear why there should be a connection between clitic doubling and specificity: the correlation is simply stipulated and viewed as a more or less accidental fact. Notice that a similar problem appears in semantic accounts like Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2001, 2002), which cannot be accused of leaving interpretation issues aside: Gutiérrez-Rexach claims that DO clitic doubling in Spanish is subject to four constraints (the Principal Filter Constraint, the Presuppositional Constraint, the Context Dependence Constraint, and the Animacy Constraint), and indeed he shows how to capture all the relevant facts by means of such constraints, but one may still wonder why those constraints should affect clitic doubling. There must be some principled explanation for the relevance of just that particular set of constraints, but Gutiérrez-Rexach does not address the problem. I will suggest some ideas in section 5.

The second aspect that strikes me in featural accounts is their inability to explain specificity effects as something related to Differential Object Marking (DOM). There are good reasons to believe that DO clitic doubling and DOM are deeply related: they operate on the same kind of object DPs, they give rise to the same interpretive results, and they can be described on the basis of the same scales or hierarchies (Animacy and Definiteness / Referentiality). This does not mean that the two constructions have to be obligatorily present in a language, nor am I assuming that DOM is a prerequisite for doubling. The similarities simply give some ground to believe that DOM and doubling are manifestations of the same abstract grammatical principles. But it is unlikely that a full comprehension of all these devices is to be obtained locating specificity in accusative clitics.

Among the facts that remain obscure under featural approaches is the basic asymmetry between direct and indirect objects (DOs are affected by DOM, IOs are not; DOs allow bare nominals and incorporated nominals, IOs do not seem to do it; doubling in DOs is usually limited by constraints that do not affect doubling in IOs). Many authors deal with the asymmetry by treating accusative clitics as definite determiners and dative clitics as agreement morphemes⁹. Let's assume that in fact grammaticalization processes from pronoun / determiners to agreement develop in a faster way in datives than in accusatives. If this is right, the relevant question should be why there is a difference and what underlies it. A partial answer was offered in Givón (1976) in terms of higher degree of topicality in datives, and the idea is surely worth considering and refining. In any case, positing features in the lexical entry of clitics does not help to progress on this issue.

To sum up, far from being inserted in a global and well motivated account of specificity effects in natural languages, the constraints on DO clitic doubling are quite often treated as idiosyncratic and unmotivated phenomena, and no attempt is made to answer questions about the relevance of specificity for certain constructions.

4.3 Specificity is not in the clitics

An examination of the facts gathered in (1) to (5) leads the observer to consider two possibilities for an account of specificity effects. On one hand, specificity may be encoded in one of the elements entering the construction, be it the clitic (as in Suñer's version) or the doubling configuration (as in Sportiche's version); this is the initial assumption that one expects to hold in any formal account. On the other hand, specificity may be considered as an inferential effect, i.e. the result of processing the linguistic information encoded in the doubling construction together with contextual information. To put it more precisely, in Relevance-theoretic terms (Sperber and Wilson 1986), specificity could appear in the interpretive process of developing the logical form encoded by the sentence into the explicature of the utterance, a complex task that combines decoding and inferring. The crucial shift in this point of view, with respect to the previous one, is that there is no element in the doubling construction encoding the feature [specific]. In a few words, one doesn't need to assume that specificity is grammatically encoded to account for the occurrence of some specific reading in a grammatical environment, simply because specificity could be a matter of inferential development of the proposition expressed, without being included as a feature in the output of the grammatical system.

The relevant question is, then, whether specificity is a part of grammatical content or not. I think that there are reasons to believe, contrary to most current studies, that specificity is not a part of encoded grammatical content: neither the clitic itself nor the doubling construction are inherently specific.¹⁰ In fact, there is no evidence in favour of specificity features in third-person clitics outside doubling constructions (pace Uriagereka 1995: 84-90). It is true that the

⁹ See Roca (1996), Bleam (1999), Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000).

¹⁰ The same conclusion is reached, on different grounds, in Gerlach (2002).

interpretations assigned to object clitics, as well as to personal pronouns in general, are predominantly specific, but some facts have to be kept in mind:

a) Clitics are compatible with non-specific readings too, in particular when they appear inside modal contexts, as in the following examples:¹¹

- (6) (a) Cuando te encuentras en una situación así, es difícil manejar**la**.
 ‘When you find yourself in such a situation, it is difficult to handle it’
 (b) Aquí podemos coger un taxi sin tener que llamar**lo**.
 ‘Here we can take a taxi without having to call it’
 (c) Antes debes cocer un poco las patatas que vayas a usar, en lugar de freír**las**.
 ‘First you have to cook a bit the potatoes you are going to use, instead of frying them’

In addition, as pointed out by Cristina Sánchez (p.c.), several idiomatic constructions include object clitics, usually third person feminine forms, that do not refer to any specific entity: expressions like *ingeniárselas* (‘manage’), *pasarlas canutas* (‘be in trouble’), *pirárselas* (‘leave’), *pagárselas a alguien* (‘to pay for something’), *hacerla buena* (‘make something wrong’) or *armarla* (‘make trouble’) are common in Spanish and other Romance languages. The clitics appearing inside them denote some kind of abstract semantic object, according to Espinal (2007), and have to be semantically incorporated into the verb. I believe that their non-referential nature is hardly compatible with a [+specific] inherent feature, thus making a strong argument against the assumed correlation between pronominal clitics and specificity. They cannot be doubled.

b) The predominance of specific readings is not due to any [specific] feature, but to definiteness, on one hand, and to the absence of descriptive content in pronouns, on the other hand. These two properties of pronouns make them high accessibility markers, i.e. expressions that specialize in the recovery of highly accessible -in focus- referents / antecedents (Prince 1981, Ariel 1990, Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski 1993). I am assuming that definite determiners and pronouns serve as processing signals to the addressee, and that definiteness is in fact a case of procedural content. Given that the uniqueness condition encoded in definiteness must be fulfilled in the interpretive process, and that pronouns offer no descriptive content that can lead to the identification of the referent, the only referents pronouns can be associated with are entities which are represented in current short-term memory and at the current centre of attention, i.e. highly accessible referents whose contextual saliency guarantees their identifiability. Such entities in focus generally represent the topic of the preceding utterance and are likely to be the topics of subsequent utterances.

It is the interaction between the procedural semantics of definiteness and the hearer’s inferential ability that is responsible for the topical and (predominantly) specific nature of the referents corresponding to pronominal clitics. Topicality and specificity are thus simple contextual effects of definiteness. The fact that clitics and pronouns are high accessibility markers, due to their meaning, becomes the key factor to account for the mostly specific readings of such elements. Later on I will capitalize on this property to deal with specificity in clitic doubling too (section 5).

¹¹ Another relevant problem that I cannot fully address here is the possibility of having third-person clitics as objects of certain measure verbs in Spanish:

(i) Mide dos metros (Los mide)

‘(He/it) is two meters long’

(ii) Pesa cien kilos (Los pesa)

‘(He/it) weighs one hundred kilos’

Measure phrases are commonly assumed to be non-referential or non-specific nominals, but this does not prevent them from being represented by means of object clitics. Thus, apparently we have an instance of clitics with non-specific reading in this case.

c) Once it is accepted that in non-doubling contexts the semantics of dative and accusative clitics must be the same, and that assuming two different lexical entries for clitics in doubling and non-doubling constructions is not desirable, the simplest thing to do seems to be to keep definiteness as the only referential feature for clitics. Thus, the differences between dative doubling and accusative doubling are not to be expressed by positing a [specific] feature for accusative, but in some alternative way (see section 5).

These arguments, together with a reasonable preference for a unified semantics for clitics (instead of proposing that they are endowed with different features in doubling and non-doubling contexts), lead us to reject the idea that clitics are specific. It seems that it is the doubling configuration, and not the clitic itself, that triggers specificity restrictions.

4.4 Specificity is not the right notion

The critical objection that specificity is not the key notion in clitic doubling is not new. It has been advanced for languages like Spanish, Albanian, Greek and Romanian by Franco (1993, 2000, 2001), Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2001, 2002), Kallulli (1999, 2000), Anagnostopoulou (1999) and Gierling (1997). These authors argue that specificity cannot be the crucial property responsible for clitic doubling. Anagnostopoulou (1999: 783) points out that doubled DPs in Greek have to be necessarily definite and ‘prominent’ (familiar), instead of simply specific, and that the notion that could cover the crosslinguistic distribution of doubling is not specificity, but *referentiality*, understood as a scalar notion and represented in the scale in (7):

- (7) anaphoric pronouns > demonstratives > proper names / definite descriptions > novel
 definites > weak definites > partitives > referential indefinites

Referentiality is the easiness of location of referents, and it is clearly related to Ariel’s (1990) accessibility scale. The advantage of resorting to a more comprehensive notion like this is the possibility of systematically ordering all doubling phenomena along the referentiality scale, with Greek located close to the maximal endpoint and Spanish and Romanian located close to the minimal endpoint. Anagnostopoulou’s proposal is able to capture basic generalizations (for instance, if a language has doubling with definite descriptions it must permit it with pronouns, but not vice versa). However, we might still wonder why referentiality has to be the crucial factor in doubling. I will suggest that referentiality is a consequence of the role of the clitic in the interpretation of the doubling construction.

One of the arguments often adduced against specificity is that specificity cannot explain certain facts related to focus projection and information structure: according to Kallulli, Anagnostopoulou and Gierling, doubling of direct object DPs yields ungrammatical results when the DPs are focus or part of the focus domain (in Albanian, Greek and Romanian). The Romanian examples in (8) are from Gierling (1997: 67):

- (8) (a) Ce faci?
 What do-2SG
 ‘What are you doing?’
 (b) Il caut pe Ion
 him look-for-1SG to John
 ‘I am looking for John’

According to Gierling, (8b) is not adequate as an answer to (8a); it could be appropriate only as an answer to a question with DP focus (something like ‘Who are you looking for?’). The generalization is that Focus cannot project from a doubled DP, which Gierling (1997: 67) takes as a consequence of the doubled DP having left the VP. The relevant conclusion here is that specificity cannot be the feature blocking Focus projection, nor cannot it be seen as the

driving force for movement out of the VP. Kallulli (2000: 217-225) reaches similar conclusions for clitic doubling of direct object DPs in Greek and Albanian¹²: she argues that the relevant feature is [-Focus], which reinforces the parallelism between doubling and Germanic scrambling that many authors have defended. Incidentally, this kind of descriptive observations support the suspicion that quite often grammarians take examples of CLRD as cases of genuine CLD, as I pointed out before (and in spite of the warnings in Gutiérrez-Rexach 2000: 333). CLRD, like Germanic scrambling, is a way of overtly marking topic constituents in order to keep them out of the scope of the Focus domain. In any case, the argument against specificity as the basic feature involved still holds, because it seems that features like [topic] or [presuppositional] are better candidates for a characterization of accusative clitic doubling, if the available data are correct. Unfortunately, such features are not adequate for an account of clitic doubling in Spanish.

4.5 The difficult integration of animacy

An additional [+animate] or [+human] feature is needed to deal with animacy restrictions in Porteño Spanish, but, as noted in Anagnostopoulou (1999:788), such a feature would lead us to predict that object clitics exclusively refer to human or animate referents in non doubling constructions too, which is obviously contrary to fact. Again, the features should not be part of the clitic's semantic content, which reduces to definiteness, case, person and number. Furthermore, there is evidence that clitics, contrary to strong pronouns, are underspecified for a feature like [human]. Then, the problem with animacy is equivalent to the problem with specificity: there are restrictions on doubling, but they cannot be traced back to any inherent feature of clitics.

In what follows, I do not intend to make a proposal about animacy facts. I will limit my observations to specificity, simply assuming that animacy constraints need an account along the lines briefly suggested in Anagnostopoulou (1999: 789).

4.6 Clitic doubling of complement clauses

Clitic doubling with object complement clauses is seldom analyzed in the light of more general proposals about doubling with DPs. I believe that this kind of doubling constructions is particularly interesting, just because it allows us to observe the interpretive effects of doubling on non-nominal expressions and thus provides us with crucial data to test the alleged encoding of specificity in the syntax. I have been able to find some mention of clitic doubling of subordinate clauses in Capone (2000), Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2002), Kallulli (2006) and Tsakali (2003), and I reproduce here some examples in Spanish, Italian and Greek.

- (9) (a) **Lo sé que te sientes mal** (Spanish; Gutiérrez-Rexach 2002)
 It know-1SG that you feel bad
 'I know that you feel bad'
- (b) ***Se lo preguntó si te sentías mal**
 CL it wondered-3SG if you felt bad
 'He wondered whether you felt bad'

¹² See Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000: 330, 2002: 340) for comments on certain incompatibilities between clitic doubling and focus in Spanish.

- (10) (a) **Lo** sai [che Maria è a Parigi]. (Italian; Capone 2000)
 It know-2SG that Maria is in Paris
 ‘You know that Maria is in Paris’
- (b) Lei **lo** aveva creduto che lui sarebbe andato a Parigi.
 She it had believed that he would have gone to Paris
 ‘She believed that he was going to Paris’
- (11) **To** theoró [to na petihis stis eksetasis] simantiko. (Greek; Tsakali 2003)
 It consider-1SG the to-SUBJ pass-2SG the exams important
 ‘I consider passing the exams important’

As for Spanish data, I would say that Gutiérrez-Rexach’s examples may be considered as real cases of doubling only for Porteño speakers and possibly for speakers of other American dialects. In the standard European variety of Spanish they must be taken as instances of Clitic Right Dislocation. Let us assume, anyway, that they are acceptable as core cases of clitic doubling for some speakers. Gutiérrez-Rexach accounts for the contrast in (9) by means of his Principal Filter / Referentiality Constraint, which requires the doubled DP to be referential: when the complement clause denotes a proposition, as with *know* in (9a), the constraint is satisfied, but the opposite happens when the complement clause denotes a set of propositions (a question), as with *wonder*, because only with *know* is the subordinate interpreted as referential, according to Gutiérrez-Rexach. It is open to discussion whether such a contrast is in some sense reducible to specificity, but this notion does not look like a relevant feature in the analysis of propositions. At first sight, the key notion that seems to capture the role of doubling clitics both with DPs and with complement clauses is not specificity, but presuppositionality or some kind of Discourse-linking. In fact, a superficial look at the felicity conditions of two utterances like (12a) and (12b), differing only in the presence of the accusative clitic *lo* (as well as the intonational contour and the adverbial *ya*, whose role I can’t comment upon here), shows that the first one is context-neutral, while the second one requires accessing some contextual assumptions: more precisely, that the subordinate proposition conveys given information and has to be a part of the contextual background (i.e. has to be pragmatically presupposed).

- (12) (a) Creo que esto tiene importancia.
 ‘I think that this has importance’
- (b) Ya **lo** creo que esto tiene importancia.
 ADV it think-1SG that this has importance
 ‘I think that this has some importance’

As a confirmation of this property, the anomaly of (9b) and (13) could be seen as a result of the clash between the semantic requirements of the verb and the presuppositional reading triggered by the clitic on the clause:

- (13) ?**Lo** quería que vinieras.
 It wanted-1SG that come-2SG
 ‘I wanted you to come’

As for the Italian examples, I think they can only be analysed as instances of Clitic Right-Dislocation. Capone (2000) – surprisingly – does not address this issue of syntactic representation in his discussion of examples like (10a) and (10b). He states that the clitic *lo* introduces a presupposition, thus conveying the assumption that the speaker takes the embedded proposition for granted and expects the hearer to do so too. In accordance with this,

Capone presents (14) as an example of ill-formed discourse, as it is impossible to use the information in the embedded clause as new by doubling the clause with a clitic.

- (14) A: Dov'è andata Maria?
 'Where has Mary gone?'
 B: Angela **lo** sa **che Maria è andata a Parigi.**
 Angela it knows that Mary is gone to Paris
 'Angela knows that Mary has gone to Paris'

A significant aspect of the behaviour of these 'presuppositional clitics' is that they can combine with factive verbs such as *sapere* ('know'), which presuppose the truth of the embedded proposition by themselves, and also with non-factive verbs such as *credere* ('believe') or *dire* ('say'), triggering a presupposition in this case too. This fact has been observed by Capone (2000) and recently by Kallulli (2006), who discusses factive uses of non-factive verbs like *believe* in different languages, and points out that factivity –the presupposition of the truth of the complement– may be triggered by a so-called pleonastic or correlative pronoun that “doubles” the subordinate clause, as in the German and Albanian examples in (15) and (16), or else simply by deaccenting the embedded clause.

- (15) Er glaubte **es, dass Peter verstarb** (*aber tatsächlich lebt er noch)
 He believed it that Peter died (but actually lives he still)
 'As for Peter dying, he believed it (*but actually he is still alive)'
 (16) **E** besova **se Beni shkoi** (*por në fakt ai nuk shkoi)
 it believed-1SG that Ben left (*but in fact he not left)
 'I believed the fact that John left (*but he didn't leave)'

According to Kallulli, doubling and deaccenting are two ways of expressing the presupposed status of the embedded proposition, as some sort of defocussing operations. This is in line with all the previous observations on the effects of doubling. The immediate conclusion concerning clitic doubling of complement clauses is that it consistently works as a presuppositional / defocussing device and cannot be described in terms of specificity, thus falling out of the scope of the above mentioned featural accounts and weakening their foundations.

It could still be argued that two different solutions are needed for clitic doubling of DPs (possibly by means of a feature [specific]) and for clitic doubling of clauses (maybe by means of a feature [presuppositional]). But it should be uncontroversial that, unless some new crucial data are put into the picture, a unified analysis that is able to deal both with 'specificity effects' and with 'presuppositional effects' is preferable. In what follows I will assume that a unified account is clearly desirable and, moreover, it has to be an account where specificity does not play any basic role.

Just to close this section, mainly devoted to a critical discussion of accounts based on the encoding of specificity in accusative clitics, two considerations emerge: first, an alternative account of specificity effects is needed, with two main goals, explaining why non-specific interpretations are usually excluded from clitic doubling constructions, and finding a way to cover those semantic aspects of clitic doubling that are not reducible to specificity; second, such an alternative account has to be somehow motivated and well integrated among the general principles that govern the interaction of syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

5. How to interpret clitic doubling structures

5.1 Preliminaries

If these arguments hold, some alternative account of the interpretive effects of clitic doubling must be devised. I believe that such an account should be based on widely accepted assumptions like the following ones:

a) clitic doubling can be considered an instance of (the development of) object agreement (with some qualifications), and agreement relations are known to be often constrained by prominence hierarchies (it is usually said that this is why animacy and specificity can play a role in clitic doubling);

b) clitic pronouns are definite determiners, and there is evidence showing that agreement morphemes are historically derived from pronouns / determiners in several languages;

c) in genuine doubling constructions, the doubled DP is not a right-dislocated adjunct, but an argument;

d) there must be some sort of matching condition (Suñer 1988) holding between the clitic and the doubled DP, given that the two elements form a chain;

e) apart from case, person, gender and number, clitics encode only definiteness (see Gutiérrez-Rexach 2001 for a representation of their lexical entries).

Here I will not address the well known syntactic puzzles posed by doubling constructions, such as how can two different elements correspond to what seems to be one single argument, and how are case and thematic role assigned. I intend to remain agnostic with respect to the issue whether the doubled argument is the specifier or the complement of the clitic projection, with both elements forming a “big DP”, or whether they are or are not generated inside the same constituent. For my purpose it is enough to assume that the clitic and the doubled DP stand in a local relation and are coreferential (why this coreferentiality relation escapes from the well known constraints expressed by the Binding Theory is an issue I cannot deal with).

In what follows I intend to propose a very simple account of specificity effects and related phenomena and then, in the light of such a proposal, discuss the role of clitic doubling in discourse and its distribution in different Spanish dialects.

5.2 The role of definiteness

Now the crucial question is this: how does a clitic doubling configuration gets its interpretation? Suppose that the clitic and the DP form a syntactic chain and give rise to a complex referring expression. As long as the clitic has not completed its evolution from pronoun to agreement yet, it behaves like a definite determiner and, more precisely, like the head of the complex definite expression¹³. In Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001) the clitic is analyzed as a head selecting the doubled DP as its complement. Without committing myself to a formal selection relationship of this kind, I accept that it plays a dominant role inside the doubling configuration: it is the clitic that imposes its referential properties on the doubled DP. Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001: 121) states that in clitic doubling constructions the context set for the interpretation of clitics is retrieved from the denotation of the doubled expression, instead of being only determined by discourse principles. But the crucial condition is the following one (op. cit., 124): as a result of the feature selection by the clitic with respect to the doubled DP, definiteness –and not specificity– is the relevant feature in doubling constructions, as the clitic requires that the expression it merges with have the feature [+ definite]. This equals the Principal Filter Constraint (Gutiérrez-Rexach 2000), which is the basic condition that determines the well-formedness of doubling:

¹³ This is in line with the basic assumptions of the ‘Big DP’ analysis, i.e. the clitic as the D head of a complex DP with the associated DP as its specifier or its complement.

In sum, from a semantic point of view the presence of a doubling accusative clitic forces the associated existential quantifier to be a principal filter, in other words, to behave like a definite in that context. (2001: 127)

The obvious connection between definiteness and specificity here is the link they establish between the intended referent and another discourse referent already introduced in the discourse; in a few words, it is the discourse-dependent nature of the resulting interpretation. I agree with the intuitive content of this proposal, in particular with giving definiteness the main role in the interpretive process. Quite informally, I would like to put things this way: the condition imposed by the clitic forces the doubled DP to get a referential value which corresponds to the clitic's one.

If this is right, we expect the doubling configuration to include some sort of matching relation between the two elements involved, but not necessarily a strict feature matching condition. Here I depart from the feature identity condition invoked in Suñer (1988) and Sportiche (1996). Let's review different possibilities allowed by grammars.

The most severe case of identity requirement in doubling is manifested when doubling is limited to pronouns, as in Standard European Spanish. In this case the features of the doubled DP (except the morphophonological ones) are identical to those of the clitic. It is a pronoun, it is definite, it agrees in gender and number, and it receives the same interpretation.

A strict coincidence in feature value between clitic and DP is just one of the admissible ways out that the system defines. As [definiteness] is the only referential feature encoded in clitics, the strictest form of matching involves definiteness and requires that the doubled DP be not only a definite, but a familiar or discourse-dependent definite, so that the DP shows the same kind of definite reading that a clitic typically exhibits. This is the kind of D-linked reading which Delfitto (1995) and Corver and Delfitto (1998) associate to pronouns as incomplete definite descriptions¹⁴.

Such a type of interpretive coincidence between the clitic and its associate clearly manifests itself in Greek. As exhaustively argued in Anagnostopoulou (1999), clitic doubling of direct objects in Greek is restricted to definite DPs¹⁵. Moreover, it excludes novel definites, and requires familiar and prominent referents. The two examples in (17), from Anagnostopoulou (1999: 771-772), nicely illustrate the constraint. They differ in their felicity conditions: only (b) (with doubling) indicates shared knowledge by speaker and hearer that the referent is perceptually salient, while (a) (without doubling) is appropriate when the presence of the pedestrian in the street has not been perceived by the hearer.

- (17) (a) *Proseche! Tha chtipisis ton pezo!*
 Watch-out FUT hit-2SG the pedestrian
 'Watch out! You will hit the pedestrian!'
- (b) *Proseche! Tha **ton** chtipisis **ton pezo!***
 Watch-out FUT him hit-2SG the pedestrian
 'Watch-out! You will hit-him the pedestrian!'

The same condition on familiar / prominent entities favours the doubling of epithets like *ton malaka* 'the jerk', due to their quasi-pronominal properties, while disfavouring the doubling of 'brand-new' and focused definites. Greek data fit into the general picture I am presenting

¹⁴ Delfitto and Corver (1998) argue that scrambling and clitic doubling are ways of encoding an interpretable feature of 'familiarity' in syntax. Familiarity triggers the salience and context-dependence of the domain of quantification. I agree with this characterization of the semantic import of clitic doubling, but I don't think that here familiarity is an autonomous feature driving syntactic computations. In my view familiarity is pragmatically inferred, and only definiteness is encoded in the clitic.

¹⁵ Kallulli (2000: 214-216) mentions some examples of doubling with indefinites in Greek. There seems to be individual variation in the acceptability of doubled indefinites.

as a case of strong matching not only in definiteness, but in the kind of definite interpretations that pronouns receive (i.e. restricted to familiar / 'old', salient / prominent, activated or in focus referents). The facts can be attributed, thus, to the leading role of the clitic inside the doubling chain, as the doubled DP is constrained to reproduce the range of readings that clitics allow.

A less radical matching between the clitic and its associate is obtained when the doubled DP is a definite DP with the full range of possible readings, from the familiar and discourse-linked ones to the novel and non-anaphoric ones. This is probably the condition for obligatory doubling in Macedonian (Parodi 2003), and maybe in some Spanish dialects in South America that allow for some extensions of accusative doubling with proper nouns and definites.

The next step in this expansion of doubled DPs is a situation that permits the combination of clitics and indefinite nominals. This is the case where specificity effects can be detected (i.e. the case of Porteño and Romanian). Here the matching cannot obviously involve inherent features of the two elements, because the clitic is definite and its associate is indefinite. Then the doubling configuration should be ruled out. But the crucial fact is that, far from giving rise to anomalous sequences, the kind of indefinite associates appearing in examples like those in (18), from Gutiérrez-Rexach (2001), produces acceptable clitic doubling constructions:

- (18) (a) **Los** enojó **a unos profesores.**
 them annoyed-3SG to a-PL professors
 'He annoyed some professors'
 (b) **Lo** busco **a un unicornio.**
 him look-for-1SG to a unicorn
 'I am looking for a unicorn'

This fact suggests that some sort of matching relation is still operating in (18). The only way of maintaining such a relation is by means of a contextual dependency as part of the indefinite's reading, in the sense of a link to previously established discourse referents: such a dependency insures that the referential properties of the clitic and those of the indefinite DP are equivalent, i.e. both refer to a uniquely identifiable entity, as imposed by definiteness, and both refer to an entity that has to be determined by accessing some kind of contextual information. Now it is clear that in most cases this means that the indefinite DP has to be given a specific interpretation. In other words, specificity effects arise because a specific interpretation of the doubled indefinite DP is the obvious way to obey the matching condition inherent to doubling, thus saving the acceptability of the construction. The [definite] feature in the clitic finds its corresponding feature in the indefinite DP because the indefinite determiner is assumed to operate on a contextually given set that is inferentially retrieved: it is this given domain of quantification that satisfies the definiteness requirement in most cases. It plays the role of a covert 'coda' in a partitive construction. The inferential task needed to introduce such an implicit contextual domain into the explication of the utterance (in Sperber and Wilson's terms; see Sperber and Wilson 1986) is triggered by the need to match the definiteness of the clitic. By means of such a mechanism, a sentence like the one in (18a) is thus assigned a reading equivalent to 'He annoyed some of the professors' or 'He annoyed certain professors'.

My point is that specificity effects are simply the consequence of the dominant role of the clitic in the doubling configuration. If this is on the right track, specificity, mostly manifested in partitivity, anaphoricity or D-linking, is triggered by the definite feature in the clitic, simply because the natural reading of a clitic pronoun has to be discourse-dependent and oriented

towards highly accessible referents¹⁶. According to this view of specificity effects, the kind of specific readings usually classified under partitivity or D-linking (Enç 1991) are the most commonly found in doubling constructions. They are not necessarily the only way to comply with the condition posed by the clitic: epistemic specific readings may be available too, if contextual assumptions concerning given sets of entities are not retrievable. In this way Anagnostopoulou's referentiality condition, together with the well attested tendency towards wide scope of doubled DPs, could be captured.

An immediate consequence of this view is this: if all the doubling systems I have mentioned occupy a specific position along the referentiality scale in (7), thus obeying the grammatical pattern of definiteness underlying the scale, as indicated in Anagnostopoulou (1999), it is due to the role of definiteness in the clitic. This factor governs the distribution of doubling constructions in the languages that display clitic doubling: conventional (language-specific) rules determine the extent to which the features in the associated DP have to match the features in the clitic, but the internal organization of referentiality / definiteness scales guarantees that the expansion of doubling will always follow the same path (from pronouns to definite descriptions and then to indefinites) and predicts what kind of doubling systems are conceivable, and which ones are not. This point will be discussed in more detail in section 5.3.

The device underlying specificity effects has to be also responsible for all of the interpretive properties of clitic doubling that have already been pointed out. Let me review them:

a) Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2002) mentions four constraints operating on clitic doubling in Spanish. Aside from the Principal Filter Constraint, already mentioned, and the Animacy Constraint (which I don't discuss here), the Presuppositionality Constraint and the Context Dependence Constraint are independently needed. The first one states that the existence of the individuals referred to by doubled objects is presupposed; this should account for the predominance of partitivity and D-linking in the interpretation of indefinite DPs. The second constraint establishes that only contextually restricted quantifiers can be doubled. It provides an explanation for the following contrasts, where *todos los* 'all the' and *algunos* 'some' are contextually dependent quantifiers / determiners, and *todo* and *unos* are not (they are not linked to a context set).

- (19) (a) **Los** vi **a todos los hombres**
 them saw-1SG to all the men
 'I saw all the men'
 (b) ***Lo** vi **a todo hombre**
 him saw-1SG to every man
 'I saw every man'
- (20) (a) **Los** vi **a algunos (de los) estudiantes.**
 them saw-1SG to some (of the) students
 'I saw some students'
 (b) ***Los** vi **a unos estudiantes.**
 them saw-1SG to a-PL students
 'I saw some students'

The Context Dependence Constraint should account also for the contrasts between different interrogatives in Spanish and Romanian (*qué* vs *cuál*, *cine* / *ce* vs *care*), and the absence of weak crossover effects with doubled quantifiers, already pointed out in Suñer (1988, 1991)

¹⁶ The idea that specificity is only a side effect of the combination of other factors is stated explicitly in Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000, 2002).

and Dobrovie-Sorin (1990), as the facts follow from the referential nature of the doubled DPs, which is ultimately due to D-linking. Finally, the possibility of clitic doubling with complement clauses, exemplified above in (9)-(16), is clearly related to the Context Dependence Constraint, because the main effect triggered by the insertion of the clitic is forcing the embedded proposition to be a part of the contextual background (i.e. the presuppositional reading of the complement clause is once again the result of the need to satisfy the matching condition, as far as definiteness is concerned).

Once the relevance of the two mentioned constraints has been proved, it is licit to formulate questions like ‘What is there behind the constraints?’ or ‘Why are those constraints relevant for accusative clitic doubling?’. I believe that the formulation of explicit constraints could be avoided, with considerable simplification of the semantic machinery involved, if the data can be explained as consequences of the obligatory matching requirement imposed by the clitic. On the one hand, semantic properties like presuppositionality and context-dependence seem to be clearly derived from the role of the clitic, as I tried to show above. Thus, behind the constraints there is only the clitic’s definiteness. On the other hand, the constraints on clitic doubling in fact operate at the Semantics / Pragmatics interface, as suggested by Gutiérrez-Rexach; this seems to be due not to the presence of a number of semantic constraints, but to the following division of labour between semantic content and pragmatic inference:

- (21) **Semantics:** [definite] feature and absence of descriptive content in the clitic, plus whatever semantic content the doubled DP carries.
Pragmatics: the inferential calculus required to adjust the interpretation of the DP to match the referential value of the clitic, as long as it is possible, as a part of the inferential specification of the explicature of the utterance (the process by which the optimization of utterance interpretation obtains).

The combination of both levels produces the particular readings that have been signalled in the literature. Definiteness is the trigger of pragmatic inference, as in many other grammatical phenomena (discourse anaphora, or bridging, for instance).

b) Indefinite DPs headed by purely quantitative elements like *demasiado* ‘too much’, *pocos* ‘few’ or comparative quantifiers are not acceptable in doubling contexts, according to Gutiérrez-Rexach (2000: 328):

- (22) (a) ***Las** quiero **a demasiadas mujeres**
 them love-1SG to too-many women
 ‘I love too many women’
 (b) ***Los** conocía **a pocos invitados**
 them knew-1SG to few guests
 ‘I knew few guests’
 (c) ***Los** saludé **a más congresistas que senadores**
 them greeted-1SG to more congressmen than senators
 ‘I greeted more congressmen than senators’

Bare nouns are excluded from doubling not only in Spanish, as shown in (23), but in all of the languages quoted in the previous sections. This seems to be a robust generalization¹⁷, at least in languages with some sort of matching relation between the clitic and its associate (but see below for a different system of doubling).

¹⁷ A plausible way of describing the constraint against bare noun phrases is assuming that the clitic blocks semantic incorporation in contexts that otherwise (i.e. without the clitic) would allow it.

- (23) (a) ***Los** conoce **amigos que tienen yate**.
 them knows-3SG friends that have yacht
 ‘He knows friends that own a yacht’
 (b) ***Ya los** compramos **bombones**
 Already them bought-1PL chocolates
 ‘We already bought chocolates’

Both restrictions, against certain kinds of indefinites and against bare nouns, follow from the Principal Filter Constraint, and could also follow from a simple specificity requirement, given that the expressions banned from doubling constructions can hardly have specific readings. Actually, every kind of non-referential object, including idioms and cognate objects, is excluded from doubling in Spanish. My point is that the facts result from the impossibility of reaching an interpretation that matches the referential properties of the clitic, so that no constraints are needed to account for them.

c) Clitic doubling constructions are often analyzed as a kind of ‘topic marking’ devices¹⁸. This usually means that doubling triggers the interpretation of the doubled DP as topic or given / presupposed information. Several authors use ‘topic’ in the sense of Givón (1976), to refer to entities that are cognitively salient in the discourse (predominantly animate and identifiable) and that constitute good candidates for subsequent anaphoric mentions. Givón (1976: 168) takes object agreement to signal variation in the relative topicality of the various object DPs. Others use ‘topic’ in the ‘aboutness’ sense, to indicate a referent that is being talked about. It is the first sense that seems relevant for clitic doubling. However, some connection with the second sense is easy to find: most discourse prominent entities reach their status just because they represent the topics that speakers talk about. The ‘aboutness’ sense of ‘topic’ must be relevant as well to deal with the incompatibility of doubling with focus that some authors have pointed out¹⁹ (cf. (8)). This issue merits a careful analysis that I cannot develop here. However, I would say, first, that the incompatibilities with focus projection –at least in the Balkan languages- should be taken as consequences of the dominant role of the clitic, once again, and the same goes for the topical nature of the entities referred to by doubling structures. Secondly, if this proposal is correct, we don’t need to assume that doubling encodes information structure features like [-focus] or [topic], because such notions, like specificity, become by-products of the role of the clitic. Furthermore, as doubling is not directly an instrument of information structure, the structural parallelism drawn by Suñer (2000) and others between doubling and object scrambling must be reconsidered. It is certainly true that the two operations have similar interpretive import, but they possibly produce the same effects through different paths: scrambling (object shift) is driven by a feature like [-Focus], while doubling simply combines a clitic and a DP and forces a ‘clitic-like’ reading in the DP (cf. Leonetti 2007b).

To sum up, it seems that most properties of doubling structures can be accounted for without resorting to the coding of particular features neither in the clitic nor in the associated expression.

5.3 Clitic doubling and Definiteness scales

Now, this view of the interpretive mechanisms of doubling makes sense if it helps to give some motivation for the existence of clitic doubling in a grammatical system, at least in its intermediate stages of development, prior to grammaticalization and automatization of the doubling device. In fact some motivation, both for the role of doubling and for its

¹⁸ See Kallulli (2000) for Albanian, Jaeger (2003) for Bulgarian, Silva-Corvalán (1981, 1984), Suñer (2000), Belloro (2004), Estigarríbia (2005, 2006) for Spanish.

¹⁹ See Sánchez (2004) for a different perspective.

crosslinguistic distribution, can be found if doubling is contemplated from the perspective of anaphoric devices, accessibility and givenness.

5.3.1 Doubling and accessibility

Doubling creates a new kind of complex marker that has to be assigned some position along the Accessibility Scale in (24):

- (24) Accessibility Scale Ariel (1990)
 Zero > Clitic > Strong Pronoun > Definite DP > Indefinite DP

Accessibility scales are based on the fact that the most salient, activated and accessible referents need less codification and can be indicated by phonetically reduced elements lacking descriptive content, i.e. pronouns, while less accessible referents require more complex expressions enriched with a certain amount of descriptive content, i.e. so called ‘descriptions’. Indefinite DPs necessarily occupy the final pole in the scale: this means that they are unable to give instructions about the relative accessibility of entities, and in fact indefinites do not guarantee accessibility at all.

The existence of doubling structures is apparently paradoxical: on the one hand, they should not be used to refer to salient and activated entities, because clitics and null pronouns are the optimal forms to do that job, and at the same time they should not be used to refer to uniquely identifiable entities, like definite DPs do, because they are structurally more complex and should be associated to a more specific referential use. What is the discourse function of doubling, then?

Latin-American linguists have pointed out that in Porteño and other American varieties of Spanish doubling of lexical DPs is optionally used to refer to referents that must be accessible from discourse or situational context. Belloro (2004: 11) relies on the classical activation levels elaborated in Givenness hierarchies to propose that accusative clitics encode the status of referents in discourse representation and in particular mark arguments as highly accessible. According to Belloro, doubling in Porteño appears with *accessible* (and even *inactive*) referents of definite DPs, and with *brand-new but anchored* referents of indefinite DPs (i.e. specific DPs). This implies that doubling is excluded both with *active* referents (those under current consideration in discourse), at one pole of the Givenness hierarchy, and with *brand-new unanchored* referents, at the opposite pole. Very similar remarks can be found in different authors. In Estigarribia (2005) the problem is formulated in Optimality-theoretic terms: clitic doubling appears to be the optimal response to conflicting pressures on the expression of a nominal argument. Estigarribia’s proposal is that, in cases where clitic doubling is available as a grammatical option, it is the optimal expression for salient but not recoverable referents (i.e. salient but not maximally salient / prominent referents). This Optimality Theory approach leads to a harmonic integration of other factors like animacy (which I do not discuss) into the general picture, as well as to certain typological predictions. The crucial implication for my perspective is that both Belloro and Estigarribia would place clitic doubling in the middle of the Accessibility / Definiteness Scale, between clitics and definite descriptions, thus characterizing it as a special anaphoric mechanism.

Along the same lines, Suñer (2000: 268-271), in her description of doubling in Porteño, states that

Only those (direct objects) whose referents have previously been introduced in the (extra-) linguistic discourse are doubled; i.e., doubling occurs when the referent is presupposed or identifiable in Suñer’s (1988) terminology. Hence, a novel referent is not doubled even if definite; but if it is mentioned again, it is [...].

Suñer (2000: 269) mentions example (25) to show that even proper names are not necessarily considered as presupposed: if (25) is used to introduce Luis to someone as a novel referent, clitic doubling is inappropriate, but if Luis has already been mentioned in the conversation it is acceptable.

- (25) Te (lo) presento a Luis, un amigo de mi infancia.
 To-you him introduce-1SG to Luis a friend of my childhood
 ‘Let me introduce Luis, a childhood friend, to you.’

Sánchez (2003: 49) analyzes clitic doubling in the speech of some Quechua – Spanish bilingual communities in Peru. Her findings confirm that doubling is used when the direct object referent is presupposed as a topic or is reintroduced as a potential topic in discourse. In a few words, both in Porteño and in those Peruvian varieties of Spanish, doubling marks certain kinds of given referents, thus working mainly as an anaphoric device (notice that Greek doubling with definite DPs, as described before, does not look very different from doubling of definite DPs in American Spanish). I assume that this is just the kind of situation one can expect in a language when clitic doubling is optional with definite lexical DPs. There must be some subtle communicative difference between non-doubled objects and doubled ones. This difference is quite naturally related to the role that definite descriptions play in referent tracking and discourse anaphora: doubled DPs are formally marked, compared with simple clitics and simple definite descriptions, and thus restricted to some specialized role in retrieving discourse antecedents.

Once the place of doubling structures among anaphoric markers is made explicit, the relevant question is how to derive this characterization of doubling from the hypothesis presented in section 5.2. Why should doubling typically mark salient / accessible referents instead of active / maximally salient ones, or non-salient ones? A minimal answer needs to rely on two factors. One is an economy principle, already informally introduced in the discussion, which bans complex doubling constructions for tasks that can successfully be executed by means of simple clitics or simple DPs²⁰. The other one is, again, the role of the two components of the doubling configuration. The lexical DP provides the addressee with the descriptive content needed for referent identification; the clitic introduces definiteness together with a requirement to match its referential value (the Matching Principle). Obeying the clitic’s requirement means selecting a subset of the possible readings for the lexical DP: more precisely, those readings based on contextual dependence, with the consequent specialization of doubling structures in familiar, activated, salient referents –or partitivity in the case of indefinites-. In a few words, the discourse function of doubling is the result of interpretive constraints imposed by the clitic, together with general economy principles that govern pragmatic inference. This is in accordance with my hypothesis on the nature of specificity effects.

5.3.2 Doubling in a comparative perspective

Adopting the hypothesis I am presenting for the interpretation of clitic doubling structures allows us to shed some light on how languages and dialects differ in the extension of the doubling mechanism. Crosslinguistic variation in the extension of accusative doubling does not preclude the possibility of a uniform analysis. Different semantic conditions on the DPs that can be doubled have been invoked for Spanish and Romanian (specificity or partitivity), Greek (‘prominence’ / ‘referentiality’ in Anagnostopoulou 1999), Albanian and Bulgarian (topicality). However, in my view all of them follow from the same principle: the obligation

²⁰ Gerlach (2002: 230) and Estigarribia (2005) resort to a similar role of economy principles in order to constrain the distribution of doubling.

for the doubled DP to reproduce the referential properties of the clitic. Different degrees of strictness in this matching relation give rise to different grammars, as already mentioned in section 5.2: the matching condition becomes less and less strict as one proceeds from the left end towards the right one, with the resulting extension of doubling. If the well known Definiteness Scale which is relevant for DOM (Aissen 2003), reproduced in (26), is taken as a reference point for the extension of doubling, a simple picture of crosslinguistic variation emerges (although something else should be added to account for the role of animacy, which I am not considering).

(26) *Definiteness Scale* (Aissen 2003)
 Personal Pronoun > Proper Name > Definite NP > Specific NP > Non-specific NP

The scale in (26) is able to capture the main generalizations concerning the extension of doubling, both synchronically and diachronically, as shown in table (27), where I include the grammatical systems mentioned so far (Standard Spanish, Porteño and Greek), together with some variety not yet mentioned (Lima and Córdoba Spanish, which apparently allow doubling with definites, but not with indefinites), and finally the special case of Bilingual Spanish -I have chosen such a general term to refer to the Spanish varieties spoken by bilingual individuals who are speakers of Amerindian languages like Quechua, Aymara or Guaraní-.

(27) Extension of accusative clitic doubling

	Pronouns	Names	Definites	Indefinites	
				+Spec	-Spec
Standard Sp.	Yes	No	No	No	No
Greek	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Lima, Córdoba	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Porteño Spanish	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Bilingual Sp.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Standard Spanish is obviously the most restrictive doubling system: clitic doubling is only allowed with personal pronouns, so that the two expressions involved match in definiteness and in pronominal status too. However, there is evidence showing that spoken Spanish is slowly evolving towards the next stages in the hierarchy. In fact, a significant number of speakers of European Spanish find the examples in (28) quite acceptable²¹:

²¹ The first one is taken from M. Vázquez Montalbán, *La rosa de Alejandría* (Planeta – Booklet, p. 210), the second one is from P. Baroja, *El aprendiz de conspirador* (Madrid, 1931; quoted in De Mello 2004: 341), and the third one is from R. Sánchez Ferlosio, *El Jarama* (Madrid, 1955; quoted in García Miguel 1991: 375). The case of spoken Peninsular Spanish is discussed in Leonetti (2007a).

- (28) (a) No se acerque, señor, que muerde. **Las** ha mordido **a las monjas que**
 Not get closer, sir, that bites-3SG. Them has bitten to the nuns that
pedían...
 asked ...
 ‘Do not get closer, sir. It bit the nuns that asked for ...’
- (b) Mira, llámale **al jefe**, que me conoce.
 Look, call-him to-the boss, that me knows-3SG
 ‘Look, call the boss, for he knows me.’
- (c) **La** ayudo **a mi madre**.
 Her help-1SG to my mother
 ‘I help my mother.’

Greek, as already discussed in section 5.2, admits doubling with familiar and context-dependent definite descriptions. In this case feature matching involves definiteness as well as context-dependence, as definite descriptions have to reproduce that characteristic property of clitic pronouns. I have tentatively assumed that the Spanish dialects spoken in Lima²² (Peru) and Córdoba²³ (Argentina) are quite similar to Greek as far as the use of doubling is concerned: on the one hand, they allow for doubling with definite DPs, but not with indefinites, and, on the other hand, discourse constraints on doubled definite DPs in Spanish dialects seem to correlate with the constraints that Anagnostopoulou (1999) discusses for Greek. However, further research is needed on this issue.

Porteño (and Romanian) represent the extension of doubling to specific indefinites. In such cases the matching condition involves just definiteness, in spite of the fact that the doubled DP is indefinite: as previously discussed, forcing the indefinite determiner to quantify over a contextually given domain, in order to get a uniquely identifiable and discourse dependent referent to match the clitic’s definiteness, produces a specific (partitive) reading in the indefinite DP (in case it is compatible with it). This is how specificity effects emerge in clitic doubling constructions.

Now the striking fact is that certain doubling systems, such as the one we find in Bilingual Spanish (BS) in Latin America, reach the final stage in the extension of the phenomenon, thus allowing for doubling with non-specific indefinites. The varieties spoken by bilingual individuals in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay, among other areas, deserve a special consideration. They show interesting transfer phenomena that involve Spanish and Quechua, Aymara or Guaraní, along with serious divergences with respect to Standard Spanish that I cannot discuss here²⁴. As for clitic doubling, there is a tendency to use the dative clitic *le* (in some cases the accusative *lo*, never the feminine accusative *la*) in every doubling construction, thus eliminating any trace of gender agreement with the doubled DP. In several varieties even number agreement is frequently lost in clitic doubling. Interestingly, the absence of grammatical agreement suggests that there is no matching in features between the clitic and the associate and that doubling is evolving towards a purely syntactic device with no semantic effects. It is not surprising, then, that specificity effects have disappeared in BS, so that doubling extends to non-specific expressions and reaches the final stage in the definiteness scale. In addition, doubling is often used with inanimate objects. Some sentences quoted in Lipski (1996) are gathered in (29) as samples of this kind of doubling systems:

²² See Mayer (2003) for details.

²³ See Schmitt (1998) for data and analysis.

²⁴ Lipski (1996) offers a remarkable collection of data on contact varieties of Spanish in America. More details on the pronominal systems in contact varieties can be found in Camacho and Sánchez (2002), Luján and Parodi (2001), Mayer (2003), Sánchez (1999, 2003), Suñer (1989).

- (29) Ya **lo** he dejado **la llama** (Bolivia)
 Already it have-1SG left the llama
 ‘I have already left the llama.’
- (30) **Le** veo **el carro** (Ecuador)
 It see-1SG the car
 ‘I see the car.’
- (31) **Lo** ponen abajo **los plátanos** (Mexico)
 It put-3PL down the bananas
 ‘They put down the bananas.’
- (32) **Sacalo las botellas** (Mexico, Chiapas)
 Take-out-it the bottles
 ‘Take out the bottles.’
- (33) **Lo** hay **una mata de lirios** (Nicaragua)
 It has a bush of iris
 ‘There is a bush of iris.’
- (34) No **lo** traigo **nada que dar** (El Salvador)
 Not it bring-1SG nothing to give
 ‘I do not bring anything to give.’
- (35) **Les** visité **a mis tías** (Paraguay)
 Them visited-1SG to my aunts
 ‘I visited my aunts.’
- (36) Se **lo** llevó **una caja** (Peru)
 CL it took one box
 ‘He took one box.’

These examples, all reproducing the speech of rural bilingual communities, show that the constraints operating on clitic doubling in other Spanish dialects, or in languages like Greek, Albanian and Romanian, disappear in BS: animacy, definiteness and specificity are no longer relevant for the acceptability of doubling, gender / number agreement does not survive in most cases – as an indication that this kind of doubling does not obey any Matching Principle –, and the discourse function of doubling is certainly different from the role of doubling in Porteño. Such a situation looks similar to what we observe in dative clitic doubling in Standard Spanish (absence of semantic constraints, generalization of doubling, even loss of number agreement in some contexts –what Spanish grammars term ‘*le por les*’). Apparently we are confronted with the final stage of the evolution of doubling and its conversion into object agreement, i.e. into a formal device devoid of any semantic import. There is nevertheless a difference between accusative doubling in BS and dative doubling in Standard Spanish that is worth keeping in mind: while the present grammar of datives is the result of the development of inner principles of the grammatical system, in a long diachronic process, the grammar of doubling in BS is due to the interaction of the same inner principles and some transfer processes triggered by the contact with Amerindian languages (cf. Sánchez 2003). Language contact in Latin America has given rise to phenomena that are absent from Standard Peninsular Spanish (for instance, the well known case of definite null objects attested in different Andean dialects), and may have been responsible for a modification /

acceleration of certain latent tendencies in the grammar of Spanish, such as the extension of accusative doubling. A comparison of accusative doubling in BS with dative doubling in all dialects has to bear in mind that the two mechanisms are the result of different historical pressures and factors.

The data in (29)-(36) are at first sight hardly compatible with the hypothesis I put forward in section 5.2 on the role of definiteness in the interpretation of clitic doubling, given that definiteness does not play any relevant role in BS doubling. However, it suffices to consider the effects of grammaticalization processes to place BS data into the general picture again. Definiteness is an active feature in clitic doubling while the gradual transition process from pronouns / determiners to agreement morphemes (or maybe simply object markers, in BS) is still at work. This process includes all the stages represented in the scales in (26)-(27) but the final one, when non-specific indefinites are allowed to enter doubling configurations. Once this possibility has been reached, definiteness is no longer a feature in the clitic, and specificity effects disappear, along with any kind of semantic constraint on the doubled DP. My point is that grammaticalization processes (from pronoun to agreement) imply a progressive deactivation of certain features, in particular [definite]. Thus, if grammaticalization is taken into account, the appearance of doubling systems like the one observed in BS is in some sense to be expected, and in no way contradicts my analysis of specificity effects.

One could still wonder why we have a definite / specific reading of the indirect object in (37), if dative clitics have almost completed their conversion into agreement affixes, and thus can no longer be considered to be definite:

- (37) *Le dije que no viniera*
 To-him told-1SG that not came-3SG
 'I told him that he should not come'

Notice that in (37) there is no clitic doubling in the usual sense: in this case the dative clitic *le* is associated to an empty category in argument position. It is obvious that *le* refers to a given referent, thus apparently behaving like a definite pronoun. Three different accounts of this fact are available to us:

- a) *le* is still definite when not involved in doubling; this means that its [definite] feature is present or absent according to the overt or covert nature of the DP it associates with.
- b) *le*, as a dative, is not definite anymore, because of the grammaticalization stage it has reached; it is the empty category that supplies definiteness. It is not unusual to find statements about the definite feature in *pro* in the literature.
- c) neither *le* nor *pro* are inherently definite. The clitic is a simple object marker, and the definiteness of the empty category is pragmatically inferred. There is no grammatical encoding of definiteness in this case.

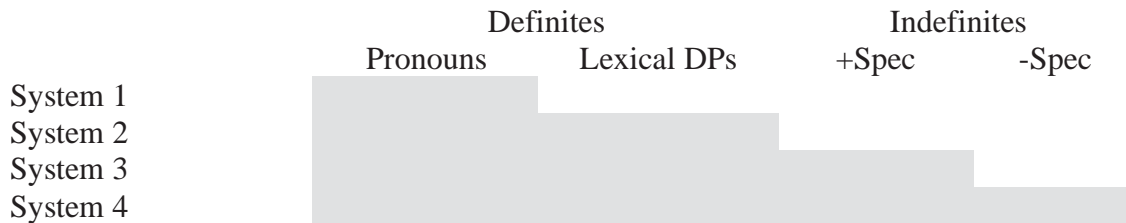
In accordance with all the previous reasoning in this paper, I have a preference for option c), characterized by the prominent role granted to pragmatic inference in the determination of utterance interpretation. After all, something along the lines of b) or c) is needed to account for the definite readings of null subjects in null subjects languages, given that there is no evidence that verbal inflection encodes definiteness in those languages. Moreover, a pragmatic approach like the one in c) is fully compatible with the basic tenets of Accessibility Theory and the use of Definiteness Scales. Assuming that an explanation along these lines can be worked out, there is nothing in the grammar of dative clitics (or in BS accusative clitics) that contradicts my proposal concerning specificity effects.

One additional merit of looking at clitic doubling from the perspective of accessibility and givenness scales is that the relevant predictions about possible and impossible doubling

systems are easily derived from the scales themselves. Spanish dialects show that the following grammatical possibilities are attested as four different doubling systems (cf. (38)):

1. doubling with strong pronouns → matching in definiteness and pronominal status
2. doubling with definite DPs → matching in definiteness only
3. doubling with definite and indefinite DPs → matching in definiteness, but allowing, in the case of indefinites, a “coercion-like” operation that forces a specific / partitive reading in order to obey the matching requirement
4. generalized doubling

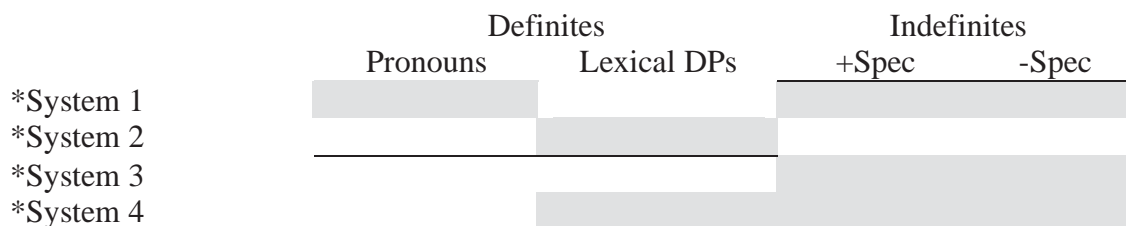
(38) Possible systems (obtained from the Definiteness scale)



Such options represent different cut-off points in the definiteness scale, and at the same time different degrees of strictness in the matching relation. Each language or dialect conventionally chooses a cut-off point, depending on how advanced the grammaticalization process of clitics may be. If this is correct, we do not expect to find doubling systems that contradict the internal organization of definiteness scales, like the following ones:

1. doubling with pronouns and indefinites, but not definite descriptions
2. doubling with definite descriptions, but not with pronouns
3. doubling with indefinites and bare nouns, but not with definite DPs
4. doubling with definites and indefinites, but not with pronouns

(39) Impossible systems (obtained from violations of the Definiteness scale)



In fact the prediction is borne out, as far as I know. Such systems would represent strong counterexamples for my hypothesis on the role of definiteness in clitic doubling (both from a diachronic and a synchronic point of view), but they do not seem to exist.

6. Conclusions

Clitic doubling is usually mentioned as one of the grammatical devices by which natural languages mark DPs as specific. Porteño is a well known example of this phenomenon. Some attempts to explain why specificity effects arise in clitic doubling rely on a [specific] feature in the lexical entry of accusative clitics, or alternatively on a formal feature specified in the doubling configuration. Other proposals invoke a number of abstract semantic constraints. I have tried to put forth some arguments against the common assumption that accusative clitics are inherently specific, in order to undermine the usual accounts of specificity effects. I have presented an alternative proposal that involves the following features:

- Specificity effects are triggered by definiteness, and no other semantic feature is needed to capture the role of the clitic in doubling constructions. When the doubled DP is indefinite, specificity is the result of pragmatic inference forced by a matching requirement.

- This account of specificity effects is not dependent on any specific syntactic analysis of doubling (although it shares some ideas with those analyses that make the clitic the head of the doubling configuration, i.e. the so-called ‘Big DP’ hypothesis).

- The account is based on the interaction of semantic and pragmatic factors (the procedural semantics of definite determiners / pronouns and the pragmatic inferences needed to obtain the basic explicature of an utterance).

- The account captures some additional properties of clitic doubling: on one hand, the discourse function of doubling as an anaphoric device, and, on the other hand, its diachronic development and its crosslinguistic distribution. The basic tool I exploit is the Definiteness Scale that underlies similar phenomena of object marking, like DOM.

A number of interesting issues are left out of the scope of this paper. The first one is the nature of the connection between clitic doubling and Differential Object Marking. In generative grammar it has been traditionally accounted for by *Kayne’s generalization* (‘Clitic doubling requires the object to be Case-marked’), basically relying on Case Theory. Clear counterexamples for Kayne’s generalization have been already pointed out, and an alternative perspective for the similarities between the two modalities of object marking is needed. In my opinion, the essential similarity lies in specificity effects, but these are only by-products of other basic properties, and such properties are not the same in doubling and DOM.

A second issue I have not addressed is the reason why there is an asymmetry between datives and accusatives. Future research on this topic could give us the clues for a better understanding of clitic doubling, DOM, scrambling, and any other kind of object marking.

Finally, a third problem that deserves much deeper attention is the relationship between Clitic Doubling and Clitic Right Dislocation. Some recent proposals (Cecchetto 1999) advocate a unitary analysis of the two constructions, but it is still to be ascertained whether the semantic constraints operating on them can be adequately explained in such a way.

7. References

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