From Latin to Romance: case loss and preservation in pronominal systems

M. Rita Manzini - Leonardo M. Savoia

Abstract. The evolution from Latin into Romance is marked by the loss of case in nominal declensions. In most Romance varieties, however, pronouns, specifically in the 1st/2nd person singular, keep case differentiations. In some varieties 1st/2nd singular pronouns present a three-way case split, essentially the same reconstructed for proto-Romance (De Dardel and Gaeng 1992, Zamboni 1998). We document and analyze the current situation of Romance in the first part of the article (section 1). In the second part of the article we argue that the Dative Shifted distribution of *loro* in modern Italian, accounted for by means of the category of weak pronoun in Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), is best construed as a survival of oblique case in the 3rd person system (section 2). This casts doubts on the weak pronoun category, as applied to Old Italian as well (Egerland and Cardinaletti 2010).

1. From Latin to Romance varieties: Three case systems

Within the minimalist framework, Chomsky (2001, 2008) proposes that the real underlying relation between case assigner and case assignee is agreement in phi-features. While phi-features are interpretable on DPs, case is not; its status is that of a mere reflex of agreement on DPs. The most obvious problem with a reduction of case to agreement is that mismatches between agreement and case are fairly common in natural languages. First, there are instances where the EPP arguments of finite sentences are in the accusative, for example causative constructions in infinitive-less Balkan languages (Greek, Albanian). According to Iatridou (1993), Chomsky (2001) the relevant sentences in Greek are untensed (i.e. they are in an invariable present form); but Manzini and Savoia (2007) show that in Arbëresh (Italo-Albanian) varieties they involve the embedding of past tenses, as in (1). In (1) therefore the accusative form *buʃtrinə* agrees with TP ï and in fact it alternates with the predicted nominative.

(1)	(ɛ)	bara	tə	fraçə	buʃtrinə/buʃtri
	(it)	made-1sg	Prt	slept-3sg	dog-acc.def/dog-nom.def

ðI made the dog sleepô

Vena di Maida

Baker and Vinokurova (2010), in turn, study instances where accusatives are assigned in the absence of a *v*P in Sakha (Turkik). Similar phenomena are described in the typological literature under the label of 'extended accusative' (Plank 1985), documented in familiar languages like Latin. Specifically, Late Latin has a number of accusatives corresponding to the sole argument of unaccusative verbs, including middle-passives (M/P), as in (2a). The same pattern appears more sporadically in Early Latin, as in (2b); other examples are discussed in Cennamo (2011), where the data in (2) come from. Since unaccusative verbs by hypothesis lack a vP projection, the prediction is that they exclude accusative arguments; yet *ipsos ficos* in (2a) and *vitam* in (2b) are accusatives.

(2) a. ipsos ficos imponatur
these-acc figs-acc gather-subj.M/P.3sg
ó*One should gather these figs*ô

(Rufus of Ephesus, *De Podagra* 35)

b. vitam vivitur
life-acc live-indic.M/P.3sg
ó*Life is lived*ô (i.e. ó*One lives one*ôs *life*ô)

Early Latin (Ennius, *Tragoediae* 241)

Given the difficulties involved in Chomskyôs conception, Manzini and Savoia (2011a) revert to the classical idea that the category of case has an interpreted content, namely as an elementary predicate/operator. As in standard lexicalism, entries specify a mapping between sound and meaning (cf. Jackendoff 2002), and they do so without any distinction between the so-called functional lexicon (including case inflections) and the substantive lexicon. Correspondingly, there is no morphological buffer between functional nodes and the exponents that instantiate them, in the manner of Distributed Morphology; morphology and syntax form a unified module of grammar, projected directly from lexical items ï which seems to be what the minimalist program (Chomsky 1995) intends.

In this section, we pursue Manzini and Savoiaôs approach, illustrating it first with Latin, and in particular with the ï *i* inflection; we associate this ending with a relational content, which accounts both for its oblique and its plural reading (section 1.1). We then analyze three-case systems (nominative, objective, oblique) found with $1^{st}/2^{nd}$ person pronouns in Romance (sections 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6). The view that case inflections are interpreted makes it possible for us to associate a theoretical content with the conclusion that, for instance, the ï *i* inflection of Romance (oblique)

continues the ***ï i*** inflection of Latin ï namely its interpretive content remains essentially constant (section 1.4).

1.1 The notion of case: Latin -i

Consider the Latin inflection *-i* seen in the genitive of the II class, as in (3b), and in the dative of the III class, as in (3a) ï i.e. generally in the oblique. For Manzini and Savoia (2010), ***ï i***, like the prepositions *to* and *of* in English, lexicalizes an elementary predicate introducing a possession relation between the noun (phrase) to which the case ending attaches and a local argument. This is the first internal argument of the ditransitive predicate in the ódativeô (3a), and the head of the DP in the ógenitiveô (3b). The second internal argument of ditransitives (the dative), as in (3a), has been connected to possession in the formal literature at least since Kayne (1984).

(3) a. mulier-i omnia dat dono
woman-dat all-pl give-3sg gift-abl
óHe gives everything to the woman as a giftô
(Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus*, 1137)

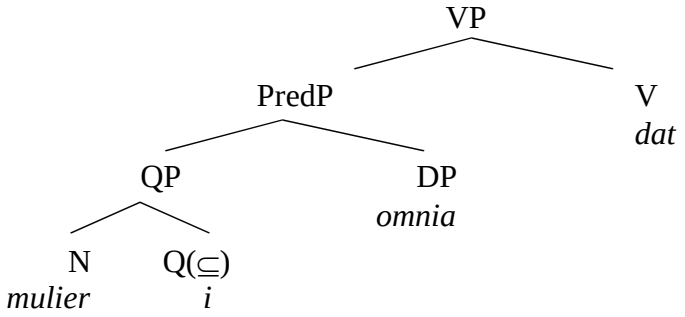
b. nomen domin-i
name master-gen
óThe name of the masterô
(Plautus, *Mostellaria*, 661)

An idea put forth in similar terms by various strands of literature is that possession is in fact a surface manifestation of the more elementary part-whole relation. Manzini and Savoia (2005, 2007) propose that the Romance clitic *ne* (syncretic in some varieties between genitive and dative) denotes a superset-of some other argument of the sentence (the theme). Belvin and den Dikken (1997:170) define the relation introduced by *have* as ñzonal inclusionò in the following terms: ñthe ómeaningô of have é denotes a special kind of inclusion relation é dubbed ózonal inclusionôé Entities have various zones associated with them, such that an object or eventuality may be included in a zone associated with an entity without being physically contained in that entityé The type of zones which may be associated with an entity will vary with the entity.ò Manzini and Savoia (2011a) notate the relevant relation with ó⊆ô, to be understood not mathematically but as looser zonal inclusion. This relation can be lexicalized by case endings (Latin) or it can be lexicalized by

prepositions (English). We correspondingly notate prepositions like *to* and *of* as P(⊆), as a reminder of their content. As for oblique endings like Latin *-i*, we label them as Q(⊆), since relational content within the nominal domain is associated with Q categories (cf. generalized quantifier theory).

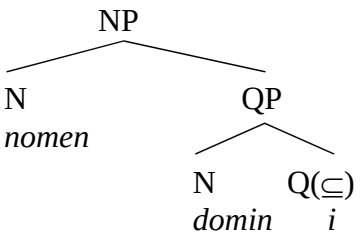
In (3a), following Kayne (1984), the complement of the ditransitive verb ógiveô is a predication PredP. In present terms, the dative *-i* inflection introduces a possession predicate, Q(⊆), which takes *mulier* as its internal argument (the possessor) and the theme of the verb *omnia* as its external argument (the possessum), as in (4).

(4)



The same relation Q(⊆), introduced by the same inflection ï *i* predicates possession/inclusion of *nomen* by *domini* in (3b). The *-i* inflection with Q(⊆) content takes the possessor *domin-* as its internal argument and the possessee *nomen* as its external argument, as in (5).

(5)



Several issues are raised by this proposal. First, datives also occur as arguments of unergative verbs. We have seen that with ditransitive verbs Q(⊆) establishes a relation between the argument to which it attaches and another argument present within the VP. The question is what the Q(⊆) inflection ***ï i*** does in an unergative sentence like (6a). Intuitively, unergative predicates can be paraphrased by a causative predicate associated with an eventive nominal. Thus in English *answer* alternates with *give an answer to*. Hale and Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995) formalize this intuition about the complex nature of unergative predicates by assuming that they result from the incorporation of an elementary state/event noun into a transitivizing predicate (CAUSE, or *v*), cf. (6b). Within such a conceptual framework it is possible to argue that Q(⊆) takes as its arguments the noun to which it attaches (the possessor) and the elementary state/event (the possessum). Thus

(6a) can be informally rendered as ôHe caused the woman (to get) an answerõ as in (6b) ï which justifies the presence of Q(⊆), i.e. the descriptive dative.

(6) a. [é] mulier-i responderet
é woman-dat answer-subj.3sg
ôHe would answer the womanõ

(Gaius Ateius Capito, *Iurisprudentia*, *9.8*)

b. EA [CAUSE/*v* [answer [$_{Q(\subseteq)}$ (the) woman]

With genitives, a potential problem concerns eventive or deverbal nouns. In this instance, the genitive lexicalizes not the possessor, with a notoriously loose relation with the head noun, but what appears to be an internal or external argument of the noun, with a stricter relation to it, as illustrated in (7). Despite apparent interpretive differences, we provisionally maintain the same characterization for the genitive in (7) as we have provided for possessors. In other words, inclusion, Q(⊆), is the all-purpose attachment for complements of nouns, though its interpretation appears to be restricted when it satisfies an argument slot of eventive/deverbal nouns.

(7) imperi-i cupiditas
command-gen desire
ôThe desire for commandõ

(Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* [sp.] 2.34.1)

A different type of problem with our approach is met when we consider that ***ï i*** is not just an oblique singular in Latin, but also a plural, in particular the nominative plural of the same II declension illustrated in (3b), as in (8). One obvious move, face to the difficulty of reducing the plural nominative in (8) to the singular oblique in (3) is to postulate two different ï *I* inflections, as proposed by Halle and Vaux (1997), Calabrese (1998, 2008). The problem with this is that the singular oblique/ plural non-oblique syncretism looks anything but accidental; Manzini and Savoia (2011a) study it in detail in Albanian, while Johnston (1997) quotes several other examples, e.g. Russian.

(8) unum [é] domin-i fugiunt
one.thing-acc é master-pl shun-3pl
ôThe masters shun a single thingõ

(Cicero, *De Lege agraria*, 2.70.3)

Manzini and Savoia (2010) argue that ***ï i*** maintains its Q(⊆) content both as the oblique in (3) and as the plural in (8). Specifically, they propose that Q(⊆) is construed as plural morphology if its scope is restricted to the noun it attaches to. It contributes plurality to the noun as sketched in (9) ï by isolating a subset of the set (or set of sets) of all individuals that are ómasterô ï the latter taken to be the denotation of the predicate ómasterô.[1] Note that under the proposal in (9), ***ï i*** contributes only plurality to the noun it attaches to; in other words, the conventional nominative plural in ***ï i*** of the Latin II class is in reality a pure plural. We shall return to direct cases, i.e. the conventional nominative and accusative in general, in section 1.3.

(9) a. domin [$_{Q(\subseteq)}$i]

b. ∃ x Q(⊆) {master}

ón x such that x is a subset of the set of individuals with the property ómasterô

Summing up so far, the main aim of this section was to introduce a conception of case as an interpretable element, contributing to the construction of the LF of the sentence ï as opposed to the minimalist conception of case as an uninterpretable property, entering only the syntactic computation as a reflex of agreement. This is most easily comprehended in relation to oblique cases (essentially the inherent cases of Chomsky (1986)) ï which is why we started from the oblique. At the same time, the brief discussion of the descriptive syncretism between oblique (singular) *-i* and plural (non-oblique) ***ï i*** evokes a further important theoretical matter, involving the nature of the lexicon. Two main frameworks are currently available for thinking about inflections and other functional categories. Under the realizational view, associated in particular with Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz 1993), functional nodes in the syntactic tree are represented by clusters of abstract features; only after these are processed by the Morphological Structure component, are actual óexponentsô inserted (Late Insertion). The classical lexicalist framework on the other hand is projectionist, i.e. takes syntactic trees to be projected from lexical entries, conceived as pairings of LF and PF properties. As far as we can tell, this latter view is held by

[1] An anonymous reviewer notes that a singleton subset would satisfy the definition of plural in (9). S/he also notes that an appropriate stipulation can be added to restrict the cardinality of the subsets. We prefer to leave the matter as is, since it is evident that many plurals of natural languages can be satisfied by singletons. This is true for instance of generics e.g. *They are knocking at the door.* (*Itôs Peter.)* or *I am peeling onions/an onion right now.* It is also obviously true of questions (*How many came? Just one*).

Chomsky (1995) ï and implied by the minimalist principle of Inclusiveness. The projectionist view is simpler, in the sense that it cuts out the Morphological Structure component altogether. At the same time the argument of proponents of the realizational view is that Morphological Structure is empirically motivated, among others by syncretisms. The discussion of Latin ï *i* that precedes suggests on the contrary that descriptive syncretisms can be dealt with under a projectionist view in an advantageous way.

As before, our morphological treatment raises several issues. First, different nominal classes (or declensions, in the terminology of traditional Latin grammars) display different syncretisms. For instance, in (3) we have used a III class noun *mulier* and a II class one, *dominus*. In the III class, *-i* is a dedicated dative singular (the genitive singular and the plural are formed by ï *s*). In the II class, we observe a genitive singular/nominative plural syncretism, as in (3b) and (9). In the pronominal 3rd person declension, ï *i* is the dative singular and the plural (masculine), cf. *illi* (ó*to him, they*ô). It is only in the I class that the genitive/dative singular and the plural coincide on ï *i*, at least if we follow Halle and Vaux (1997) in assuming that forms like *rosae* ó*of/to the rose, roses*ô are underlying *rosa-i*. Suppose we associated Latin ï *i* simply with the entry in (10a), reflecting the fact that it can in principle be dative, genitive and plural, as in (10b). This is of course insufficient to capture its varying values in the different classes.

(10) a. *-i*: Q(⊆)

b. VP construal: ódativeô

NP construal: ógenitiveô

N construal: ópluralô

In fact, what we are looking for is simply a technical means by which the content of ï *i* in (10) can be contextually restricted to certain subclasses of N. With free lexical items/morphemes, contextual restriction is achieved by means of selection. Therefore we assume that the ópluralô attachment of ï *i* selects the subset of Ns conventionally known as II class as well the *ill-* base, as in (11). The same mechanism can be used to exclude II class Ns from those that take ï *i* in the dative singular ï and so on. Though the nominal inflection system of Albanian is somewhat simpler than that of Latin, Manzini and Savoia (2012) argue that nothing more than selection is required to account for the entire distribution of case endings in the various nominal classes.[2]

[2] Since the Romance languages we concentrate on have three cases (or at best a residual comitative/instrumental fourth, cf. section 1.2), the only oblique discussed here is genitive/dative. As is well-known, Latin also had an ablative (instrumental etc.). In some nominal classes, ï *i* can also take on this value. For some insights into the matter, we refer

(11) *-i*: Q(⊆) → VP construal (ódativeô): selects for all N, except II class
N construal (ópluralô): selects for II class Ns, *ill-*
NP construal (ógenitiveô): é é é é é .

1.2 Romance pronouns with a three case system

An approach like the one sketched in the previous section treats case inflections, e.g. Latin ï *i* in the same terms as any contentive lexical entry of the language. It also allows us to speak of the historical change they might have undergone, no differently than if we were speaking about any other lexical category. In this section, we will review some Romance languages that preserve a particularly rich case system, namely the three-way split (nominative, accusative, oblique) reconstructed for proto-Romance by De Dardel and Gaeng (1992), Zamboni (1998). In sections 13-1.5 we will turn to their analysis.

In the Romansh variety of *Vella* (Lumnezia Valley, Grisons), the 1st person singular pronoun has a three case system, namely nominative, objective and oblique, as schematized in Table 1. By *a Obj* we mean the form selected by the *a* ótoô preposition, i.e. the dative/oblique exemplified in (12a). The form that is selected by other prepositions, notated *P Obj* in Table 1, is the same that occurs as the object of a verb (*Obj*), as exemplified in (12b)-(12c); we identify it with the accusative/objective. The 3rd person and the 1st/2nd person plural have a single form; the 2nd person singular has two forms for nominative and oblique vs. accusative.

	1sg	*2sg*	*3sg*	*1pl*	*2pl*	*3pl*
Nom	jɛu	ti	el/ɛ:la	nu:s	vu:s	els/ɛ:las
Obj/P Obj	mai	tai				
***á a ô** Obj*	mi	ti				

Table 1. Full pronouns in *Vella*

(12) a. els datən a mi/ti/els
they give-3pl to me/you.sg/them
óThey give it to me/you/themô

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the reader to the discussion of the residual ablative of Albanian (also syncretic with the oblique) in Manzini and Savoia (2011a, 2012).

b. els klɔman mai/tai/els
they call-3pl me/you.sg/them
óThey call me/you/themô

c. els fan pɛr mai/tai /els
they do-3pl for me/you.sg/them
óThey do it form me/you/themô

Vella

Similar data emerge in the pronominal systems of Southern Italian varieties, for instance *Sasso di Castalda* (Lucania)[3]. This variety has a single pronominal form for 3rd person and for 1st and 2nd plural. By contrast, 1st and 2nd person are associated with a three case system, again nominative, objective (for the object of prepositions other than *a*) and oblique (for the object of the *a* preposition), as schematized in Table 2. The processing of the relevant examples in (13) is slightly complicated by the fact that *Sasso* is a Differential Object Marking (DOM) language (Aissen 2003 and references quoted there), where the definite, animate direct object is introduced by the preposition *a* in (13a), exactly like the dative in (13b). Correspondingly the descriptive literature speaks of a óprepositional accusativeô in (13a).

	1sg	*2sg*	*3ps*	*1pl*	*2pl*	*3pp*
Nom	ji	tu	iddə/edda	nujə	vujə	lɔrə
P Obj	me	te				
***óaô** Obj*	mi	ti				

Table 2. Full pronouns in *Sasso*

(13) a. camənə a mmi/tti/jiddə
call-3pl to me/you/him
óThey call me/you/himô

b. u rainə a mmi/tti/jiddə
it give-3pl to me/you/him
óThey give it to me/you/himô

[3] Limitations of space prevent us from providing more than one example. The *Sasso* system is found not only in Southern Italy (Loporcaro 2008), but also in Sardinian varieties (Manzini and Savoia 2010). In Romanian, 3rd person and 1st/2nd plural pronouns have a two case declension, like non-pronominal Ns. 1st/2nd person singular pronouns however distinguish dative *mie/Şe* from accusative *mine*/*tine* and nominative *eu/tu* (a three case system again).

c. l a ffattə pə mme/tte/jiddə
it has done for me/you/him
ǿS/he has done it for me/you/himô

Sasso di Castalda

Actually, *Sasso* displays a fourth case form ï originating from the combination of the pronoun and preposition *cum* ówithô - in contexts introduced by the preposition ówithô, as in (14a), and other selected prepositional contexts, as in (14b), configuring an even more complex case system (cf. fn. 2).

(14) a. ku mmikə/ttikə
with me/you.sg
ówith me/youô

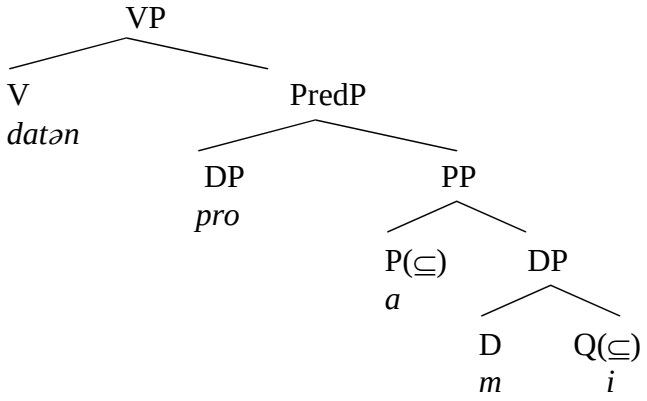
b. viənə addo mmikə/ttikə
comes to me/to you.sg
ǿS/he comes to me/youô

Sasso di Castalda

1.3 The three case system of Vella*: nominative, objective, oblique*

Let us review first the system of *Vella* in Table 1, which presents three cases in the 1st person singular, though it doesnôt have the added complication of the prepositional accusative. In *Vella*, a morphological oblique, i.e. *m-i* in the 1st singular, is embedded under the preposition *a* ǿtoô, as in (12a). Given the account of oblique case sketched in section 1.1, we conclude that the ***ï i*** inflection in *Vella* lexicalizes the Q(⊆) elementary predicate. The *a* ǿtoô preposition can itself be construed as introducing a (⊆) property, i.e. as P(⊆), which doubles the dative inflection Q(⊆). The predicate (⊆) is the head of a predication PredP, denoting possession/inclusion, which takes *m-* as its internal argument (the possessor) and the theme of the verb (*pro*) is its external argument (the possessum), as schematized in (15) (cf. (4) in section 1.1).

(15)



We can furthermore ask whether the framework sketched in section 1.1 and applied in (15) allows us to provide an account of the direct cases of *Vella*. **ó**Accusativeô corresponds to the merger of the lexical bases *m-, t-* (denoting speaker, hearer) with of the inflection ***ï****ai*, endowed at least with N (nominal class) properties. Suppose ï*ai* has no further properties. In other words, while ï*i* in Latin or in *Vella* is endowed with predicative/operator content (Q(⊆)), the ï*ai* inflection of *Vella* is a pure nominal inflection N. If so, the pronominal inflection does not contribute any means by which to attach the pronoun to the sentence spine. Rather the pronoun is attached to the sentence via ordinary lambda conversion ï which the nominal inflection N is necessary and sufficient to satisfy. Prepositions other than *a* behave like verbs in that their internal argument position is simply satisfied by the N inflection.

In the 1st person ónominativeô is represented by a specialized lexical base (*jæu*). It is reasonable to attribute to it again minimally, and perhaps maximally, nominal N properties, besides speaker denotation. Nevertheless all-purpose satisfaction of argumental slots (óaccusativeô) is differentiated from satisfaction of the EPP environment (ónominativeô) ï which may perhaps be conceived as a sort of specialized lambda abstract, as suggested by Butler (2004)[4].

In the present account, the asymmetry between structural and inherent case of Chomsky (1986), is reconstructed as an asymmetry between two types of argumental attachment, either via mere lambda conversion (direct case) or via the introduction of some specialized elementary predicate (oblique). In a very simple case system like *Vella*ôs, this asymmetry coincides with a lexical opposition between inflections like ***ï****i* which convey relational content (here Q(⊆)) and inflections which have mere phi-features content (here for instance nominal class, *-ai*). In a more complex case system like Latin, the ï*i* inflection has both a relational construal, whereby Q(⊆) is

[4] The 2nd singular differs from the 1st singular in presenting a *t-i* form syncretic between nominative and oblique. See section 2.1 for a comparable syncretism in the 3rd person of Old Florentine (*ell-i* nominative and *lu-i* oblique singular).

read as a syntactic-level relation between two arguments (a predicate), hence as the oblique in (4)-(5) ï or as a word-level property, i.e. plurality, in (9).[5]

It is worth noting that the present set of assumptions is in principle compatible with a minimalist rendition in terms of feature checking/ evaluation ï at least for oblique case. For instance, a functional head Appl (Pylkkänen 2008) can be added to (15), as in (16) ï and the dative *mi* can be construed as checking it (deleting an uninterpretable feature associated with it ï or valuing such a feature). However, under the view that case inflections have interpretive content, abstract functional heads like Appl in (16) are redundant.[6]

(16) els $[_{vP}$ $[_{ApplP}$ (⊆) $[_{VP}$ datən $[_{P(\subseteq)P}$ a mi]

Vice versa, one may wonder whether present conceptions make any contributions towards solving the empirical difficulties represented by case/agreement mismatches, briefly reviewed at the outset. Recall that the crucial difficulty for Chomsky (2001, 2008) is that accusative case cannot be construed as agreement with vP. In response to this difficulty, Baker and Vinokurova (2010) adopt Marantzôs (1991) dependent case algorithm. This amounts to treating nominative as the Elsewhere case, while accusative is the case assigned (checked) when there is at least another DP not assigned inherent case locally. We suggested the opposite, namely that accusative is the Elsewhere case, since it corresponds simply to the attachment of arguments via ordinary lambda conversion (see also Adger and Ramchand (2005) for a feature theoretic translation of lambda notation). Nominative by contrast corresponds to the satisfaction of the specialized EPP environment (perhaps a specialized lambda abstract). Whether our approach can do away with the dependent case algorithm remains to be verified.

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[5] Furthermore, though this is beyond the scope of this article, Latin ï *m* in the conventional accusative singular is obviously not a phi-feature; vice versa, dative singular ï *o* of the Latin II class is the pure nominal class ending (as argued by Halle and Vaux 1997). See Manzini and Savoia (2010) for some discussion.

An anonymous reviewer also raises the question of the selectional properties of prepositions. In present terms prepositions are predicates, like verbs. Verbs differ as to whether they allow their arguments to attach via simple lambda conversion (direct case) or rather they require the extra layer of structure corresponding to oblique. The same can be assumed for prepositions (see Manzini and Savoia 2011a, 2012 on Albanian). Exactly like different structures of embedding can result in a shifting of the interpretive value of the predicate, so the different type of embedding under a preposition may configure interpretive shifts (motion vs. state etc.).

[6] This is the low Appl of Pylkkänen, positioned inside the VP (technically between the vP and VP projections). The high Appl (corresponding to experiencer and benefactive datives) occupies a predicate-external position; presumably, in present terms, it can be mimicked by a VP-external (IP) attachment of NPs/PPs endowed with the Q(⊆) property.

1.4 The nature of change

On the basis of the discussion of Latin and Romance case in sections 1.1 and 1.3, we can brieflyconsider the issue of change. Within the framework of Distributed Morphology, Calabrese (1998, 2008) proposes an account for the development from Latin to Romance case systems which treats case loss in terms of the activation of constraints disallowing certain case feature combinations. In a language which has all possible case oppositions, none of the case constraints applies. Languages that do not have certain cases, or have no case, activate one or more restrictions ï or all restrictions. Therefore what happens on the way from Latin to Romance is the activation of several case constraints. The corresponding feature clusters undergo repairs that are standard under DM (Impoverishment etc.), resulting in the insertion of syncretic exponents.

In the present model, morphosyntactic structures are projected from fully specified lexical items; there are no abstract feature clusters and no constraints of the kind postulated by Calabrese and therefore the change from Latin to Romance cannot be a change in these constraints. The question is whether there is an alternative. Under the assumption that the locus of variation (and hence of change) is the lexicon, all that can change are case inflections. We can surmise that a certain part of the Latin case inflectional system is dropped on the way to Romance (for instance consonantal specialized endings such as *-bus* for oblique plural, *-m* for accusative and neuter nominative, etc.). What survives, for instance *-i*, survives with the same basic properties it had in Latin. In the discussion surrounding (10)-(11) we discussed the basic mechanism, i.e. selection, whereby ï *i* maintains the same core content, though its distribution varies according to nominal class. In this perspective, the ï *i* continued by *Vella* is specifically the dative of singular pronouns (*mihi* ‘to me’). To take another example, in standard Italian, the ï *i* inflection is dative on the *gl-i* ‘to him’ clitic, or plural on the *l-i* ‘them’ clitic. Again it continues the ï *i* of 3rd person pronouns, i.e. *ill-i* as dative singular and nominative plural.

In this respect, historical change raises an important question for the Distributed Morphology model, where underlying syntactic structure involving only abstract feature clusters are lexicalized by exponents at the PF interface. We have seen that for Calabrese (2008) change in case systems is change in underlying feature clusters. Nothing is said about the vocabulary of exponents that runs parallel to the underlying abstract structure, providing an externalization for itï in line with the conceptualization in Halle and Marantz (1993), Halle and Vaux (1997). In reality, the assumption seems to be implicit in Calabrese’s account that the vocabulary remains constant. But

why would that be? Why canôt the abstract lexicon and the vocabulary of exponents vary each on its own?

For instance, why wouldnôt ***ï i*** be found in some Romance language as an accusative singular (this would be a Romance language with an accusative singular clitic *li*)? Similarly, consider ï *s*, which for Halle and Vaux (1997) is just a default, i.e. an empty exponent. Why couldnôt there be a language like French, except that ï *s* marks some the accusative singular? The whole of historical comparative grammar is predicated on the assumption that such órbitraryô changes are impossible ï essentially rematching a possible LF with a possible PF, breaking with previously attested possible LF values for the PF form. Our point is that the existence of a conventional lexicon predicts this basic fact about change. However if there are in fact two separate lexicons, one for abstract contents and one for PF exponents, radical rematchings of the type described must be blocked through additional assumptions.

1.5 Differential Object Marking: the Sasso *system*

The language of *Sasso* in (13) presents a distribution very similar to that reviewed for *Vella* ï except that 1st and 2nd person pronouns are preceded by the preposition *a* not only as datives (i.e. goals, possessors etc.), but also as themes. In this latter instance, the traditional literature speaks of óprepositional accusativesô The prepositional accusative treatment extends to animate and definite noun phrases, as in (17a), though not to inanimates and indefinites, as in (17b). Either animacy or definiteness may suffice in some varieties to define an appropriate context for prepositional accusatives, but at least one of these properties is needed (Suñer 1988 on Spanish, Manzini and Savoia 2005 on Italian varieties).

(17) a. camənə a ffrat-tə
call-3pl to brother-yours
óThey call your brotherô

b. annə piʎʎatə nu/ kwiru libbrə
have-3pl taken a/ that book
óThey have taken a/that bookô

Sasso di Castalda

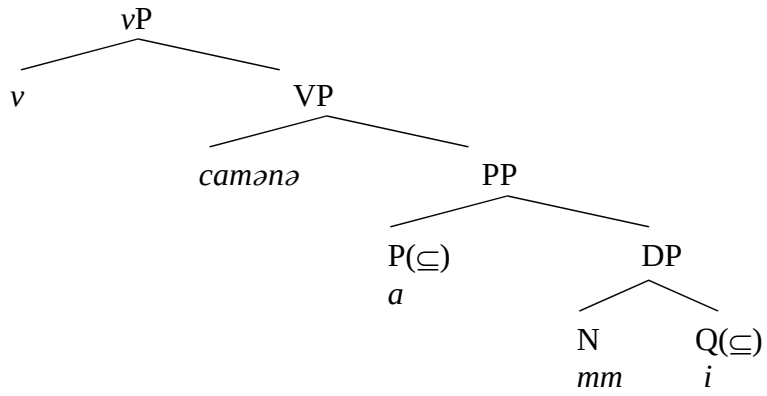
Prepositional accusatives fall under a large family of linguistic behaviours, whereby case is determined not only by the argument position that a DP fills but also by its intrinsic referential content. These behaviours are often described in terms of alignment between case and ónimacyô. As Dixon (1979: 85-86) comments, ñthough the phenomenon is often referred to under the heading of split ergativity, it is evident that in the typological continuum it touches what we may call split accusativityò. Similarly, using a different terminology, Aissen (2003:473) states that ñthe factors that favour differential subject marking will be the mirror image of those that favour DOMò (Differential Object Marking).

Consider then the *Sasso* pronominal system in Table 2. The nominative forms consist of a specialized lexical base for the 1st person and presumably also for the 2nd person. This specialized lexical base corresponds to the satisfaction of the EPP (perhaps just a special lambda operator, as suggested in section 1.3). The non-nominative forms, *me/te* and *mi/ti*, consist of the lexical bases *m-* and *t-*, inflected by *-e* and *-i* respectively. The *-e* ending is just a nominal class N inflection, which we take to be sufficient to satisfy the ordinary argument-of relation (lambda conversion). This inflection, i.e. the descriptive accusative/objective, is seen in *Sasso* in (13c) with embedding under prepositions other than *a*.

What is directly relevant here is the ï *i* inflection, specialized for embedding under the *a* preposition. Suppose this inflection is analysed as a lexicalization of Q(⊆), corresponding to the descriptive dative/oblique. This is unproblematic for the ditransitive structure in (13b) ï but if extended to (13a) it implies that prepositional accusatives are really datives/obliques in turn. In section 1.1, we have seen that unergative verbs such as *respondo* ónswerô in Latin (6a) can be paraphrased by a causative elementary predicate taking an eventive nominal as its complement (cf. *give an answer to*). Following Hale and Keyser (1993), Chomsky (1995) the unergative predicate result from the incorporation of the elementary state/event into the transitivizing predicate (CAUSE, or *v*). It is then possible to argue that a Q(⊆) complement takes as its internal arguments the noun to which it attaches (the possessor) and as its external argument the elementary state/event (the possessum) ï as schematized in (6b) for unergatives. We assume more or less the same for the transitive *camənə* óthey callô in (13a), with the structure in (18). In other words, ócallô can be thought of as a complex predicate consisting of a causative elementary predicate (*v*) and an eventive nominal (cf. *give a call to somebody*). If so, the two arguments of Q(⊆) in (18) are the 1st person clitic to which it attaches and the event nominal (literally ó[They caused me (to have) a callô).[7]

[7] The main problem for the approach we are proposing is represented by the fact that prepositional accusatives, like other accusatives, can passivize ï while datives cannot. This problem is discussed in Manzini (2012), where it is proposed that the real difference is between Q(⊆) operators selected by the verb (which block passivization) and Q(⊆)

(18)



In the light of (18), the gist of the prepositional accusative/DOM phenomenon is that certain types of referents (discourse participants, animates, definites) require to be embedded via the elementary predicate Q(⊆), and are incompatible with the embedding provided by the descriptive accusative (corresponding to simple lambda conversion). In other words, they are associated only with certain roles in the event: agent, possessor, but not theme. Inanimate/ indefinite complements yield a canonical transitive event structure, comprising an agent and a theme, as in (17b). In (18) the discourse participant must on the contrary be treated as a possessor, ózonally includingô the event of calling.

1.6 The Person split

The treatment of DOM in the previous section allows us to ask a crucial question, left implicit so far, namely why 1st/2nd person referents (speaker, hearer) are associated with a richer array of cases than other (3rd person) referents in many Romance languages (e.g. *Vella*, *Sasso*). This appears now to be yet another facet of the alignment of case with the participant/animacy/definiteness hierarchy.

We know that splits in case alignment can occur at different points in the descriptive animacy hierarchy. In *Sasso* in (17) the prepositional accusative/DOM split is between definite or animate DPs and others ï as is most often the case in Romance languages (cf. Suñer 1988 on Spanish, Manzini and Savoia 2005 on Italian varieties). On the other hand, Manzini and Savoia (2005: §4.9) list Central Italian dialects where prepositional accusative/DOM only affects pronouns (including 3rd person ones) to the exclusion of other referents (*Avigliano Umbro*, *Canosa Sannita*,

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operators introduced only in order to embed a participant/animate/definite DP within the VP ï which can be left out under passive, where the DP is raised out of the VP.

Torricella Peligna) ï and other dialects where the split is between 1st/2nd person referents and the rest, as illustrated in (19) with *Cagnano Amiterno* (cf. *Colledimacine, Borbona*).

(19) a. camanu a mmi/a tti
they.call to me/to you
óThey call me/youô
b. camanu issu/issi/frate-tu
they.call him/them/brother-yours
óThey call him/them/your brotherô

Cagnano Amiterno

Similarly, in *Vella* in (12) or in *Sasso* in (13), 1st/ 2nd person are cut off from other referents by the fact that they are associated with case differentiations at all.[8] In other languages, case inflections single out pronominal DPs (including 3rd persons) from non-pronominal ones, for instance Old Florentine, to be considered immediately below in section 2.1. Other languages have different case systems for definite and indefinite DPs (e.g. Romanian), and the indefinite set is typically less differentiated; for instance in Albanian nominative and accusative may be differentiated in the definite paradigm, but not in the indefinite one (Manzini and Savoia 2011a).

Descriptively, therefore, it is clear how the participant/animacy/definitness hierarchy works. Its theoretical status is much less well defined. What is obvious is that 1st and 2nd person referents (speaker and hearer) are directly anchored at the universe of discourse, while 3rd referents (and also possibly 1st/2nd plural, which involve reference to óothersô besides the óspeakerô and óhearerô) are not. Seen from this perspective, human referents are also a potential set of speakers and hearers ï i.e. of potential discourse-anchored participants. In such terms, the prominence of animates does not involve their potential agentivity (pace Dixon 1979), but rather their referential saliency (cf. DeLancey 1981). Definiteness and indefiniteness establish a different scale of referential saliency. What DOM suggests is that the two scales are only partially independent in the underlying ontology of natural languages.

At the same time, the problem posed by the data in section 1.2 is not only why 1st/2nd singular referents split away from others, but also why they have the richest case alignment. The answer is presumably similar to the one we have suggested for the prepositional accusative/DOM pattern ï namely that DPs higher in the referential scale may require more complex embedding

[8] In fact since it is generally assumed that 1st person referents are more prominent on the óanimacyô hierarchy we are not surprised to find that in *Vella*, the richest case system pertains to the 1st person.

structures, making them into possessor rather than simple themes. Similarly, we suggest that less salient referents are able to satisfy any sentential attachment in virtue of their simple nominal class inflection N (via lambda conversion). However DPs higher in the referential scale require a more articulated structure of embedding, which reserves pure N inflections for themes (*Vella*) or even just for prepositional objects (*Sasso*), while specialized lexicalization are required for EPP (nominative) and possessor (dative) embedding.

When these considerations are projected long the temporal axis, what they amount to is that the participant/definiteness/animacy system is more resistant to the loss of specialized case alignments ï and that discourse participants are the most resistant. From this perspective, the change from Latin into Romance is not so much characterized by the loss of case as by the alignment of case with some (highly restrictive) cuts on the animacy/definiteness hierarchy ï so that case is preserved only by participant pronouns.

2. From Old Florentine to modern Italian: Two case systems

In section 1 we have considered the survival of a three case system (nominative, objective, oblique) in the 1st/2nd person pronouns of Romansh and Southern Italian varieties. In this section we survey Old Italian (Florentine) pronouns, characterized by a two case system (nominative vs. objective/oblique) in all persons. The two case organization still characterizes the 1st/2nd person singular of modern Italian (e.g. *io* óIô vs. *me* ómeô). Some of it survives also in the 3rd person plural, since we argue that the special distribution for *loro* depends on the fact that *loro* oblique properties, rather than on its weak status, as argued by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999).

2.1 Old Florentine

In late XIII and early XIV century Florentine, 1st/ 2nd singular and the 3rd person full pronouns differentiate nominative from objective/oblique (Castellani 2009, Egerland and Cardinaletti 2010), though 1st/2nd person plural have a single form, *noi*, *voi*. This two case system, illustrated in Table 3, recalls that of Medieval Gallo-Romance nouns (Brunot and Bruneau 1969).

	1sg	*2sg*	*3sg.m*	*3sg.f*	*3pl.m*	*3pl.f*
Nom	io	tu	elli/egli	ella	elli/eglino	elle
Obj/Obl	me	te	lui	lei	loro	loro

Table 3. Full pronouns in Old Florentine

To exemplify, nominative *elli* in (20a) alternates with *lui* both as direct object in (20b) and as the object of the a preposition in (20c). Comparable examples are provided for *ella* vs. *lei* in (21).

(20) a. Elli fece uno concilio di cxiij vescovié
He made a council of 113 bishops
(*Cronica fiorentina del XIII secolo*, Schiaffini 1954: 86, 24)

b. é lo Imperadore.., sì cacciò lui e elesse un altro papaé
the emperor indeed chased him away and elected another Pope
(*Cronica fiorentina del XIII secolo*, Schiaffini 1954: 94, 24)

c. Onde picciolo guiderdone diedi a lui di così ricco insegnamento.
whence little recompense I gave to him for such a rich teaching
(*Il Novellino*, VIII, Lo Nigro 1968: 81)

(21) a. é chêella non fusse la diricta lancia con che Cristo fu feditoé
that it(f) wasnôt the true spear with which Christ was wounded
(*Cronica fiorentina del XIII secolo*, Schiaffini 1954: 91, 6-7)

b. é lo quale amava anche leié
who loved also her
(*Il Novellino*, XCIX, Lo Nigro 1968: 209)

In the plural, the distribution of objective/oblique *loro* is slightly different from that of *lui/lei*, since it can occur without preposition with dative interpretation, as in (22b); its use after preposition remains of course possible, as in (22c). In (22a) we provide the comparison with the nominative (masculine) *elli*. The possibility for *lui/ lei* to occur as datives without preposition, quoted in the literature and taken up by Egerland and Cardinaletti (2010) seems to characterize only a restricted number of texts, largely poetic or erudite ones, in particular by Dante (e.g. *ondêio risposi lei* ówhence I answered herô (*Purg.* 33, 91)), and by Brunetto Latini (e.g. *la persona che lui semblava reaé* óthe person that seemed (to) him guiltyô (*Rettorica*, 197, 13)). The prose, practical texts that we exemplify systematically present oblique *lui/lei* introduced by preposition.

(22) a. Et quasi elli fecero di nuovo unêaltra Tavola Ritonda
and almost they made again another Round Table

(*Cronica fiorentina del XIII secolo*, Schiaffini 1954: 93, 32-33)

b. é e fece loro simigliante proposta.
and he made them a similar proposal

(*Il Novellino*, LXXXI, Lo Nigro 1968: 78)

c. é onde mandiamo a loro é
whereby we send to them

(*Il Novellino*, LXXXI,, Lo Nigro 1968: 187)

Old Florentine 1st and 2nd person forms alternate according to the modern Italian usage, and are not exemplified here. The nominative *io* ‘I’ and *tu* ‘you’ use specialized lexical bases, while the objective results from the bases *m-*, *t-* followed by the nominal class morphology ***ï e*** (*me, te*). As for the 3rd person, The *ell-* base and the *l-* base denote definiteness ï or in any event the complex set of primitives clustering around the D category (Ramchand and Svenonius 2008). In the feminine nominative the lexical base *ell-* is inflected simply by the nominal class N morphology ***ï a*** for the singular and ***ï e*** for the plural. The objective forms *l-oro*, *lu-i* and *le-i* result from the merger of the lexical base *l-* (eventually inflected for nominal class (*lu-*, *le-*) with the oblique ***ï oro*** (plural) and ***ï i*** inflections.[9] The same ï *i* inflection, also turns up in the nominative *ell-i* both in the singular and in the plural.

The syncretism between oblique ***ï i*** (*lui, lei*) and plural ***ï i*** (*elli* ‘they’) has already been discussed in connection with Latin (1)-(7); in fact it characterizes the Latin pronoun *ill-i* ‘to him/her’, ‘they’. At the same time Old Florentine extends ï *i* to nominative singular. Manzini and Savoia (2010, 2011b) discuss this syncretism between oblique and nominative (including the singular) for Latin ***ï s***, which in the III class lexicalizes genitive singular (e.g. *urbi-s* ‘of the city’) and nominative singular and plural (e.g. *urb-s* ‘the city’; *urbe-s* ‘the cities’). If we follow Manzini and Savoia, Latin *-s* is a generalized Q inflection, compatible with oblique and with plural, i.e. Q(⊆), but also with the EPP construed as a specialized lambda abstraction closing off the argumental structure of the sentence (see section 1.3). The same would apply to ï *i* in Old Florentine.

A problem raised by the analysis of *lui/lei* as obliques is how these forms come to be found in the descriptively accusative position, as in (20b). It is tempting to propose that this oblique

[9] In the historical literature it is standardly accepted that *lui/ lei* have an ‘analogical’ origin based on dative forms of the type *e-i* ‘to him/her’, *cu-i* ‘to which’, etc. (Rohlfs 1068 [1949]: 137). In Vulgar Latin (documented in inscriptions) we indeed find datives *illui, illaei* (Väänänen 1971:219). In the literature it is also generally accepted that dative *illi* is directly continued by the Italian dative clitic *gli*, and by the corresponding clitic forms of Old French *li*, etc.

marking is a reflex of the person/animacy/definiteness split conditions reviewed in section 1.6. In other words, 3rd person pronouns, (involving the *l-* definiteness base also found on determiners), can only be attached as EPP arguments (nominative) or as possessors (oblique). Thus it is possible that a particular lexical base (here *l-* for definiteness/D) presents an alignment not found with other denotations. This is what we expect to find if hierarchies are at best descriptive devices ï while the underlying reality of person, definiteness and animacy alignments are discrete categories such as definiteness.

This aspect of the Old Florentine pronominal system also poses an interesting problem for Calabreseôs (1998, 2008) analysis. Calabrese discusses the two case system of Old French (nominative vs. objective), where the objective continues the Latin accusative. He derives Old French from the assumption that the oblique case filter is activated; the repair of the underlying feature cluster leads to realization of the oblique by the accusative morphology. However this process depends on oblique being more marked than accusative, so that it is blocked first. The markedness hierarchy cannot be reversed to yield a system like Old Florentine similar to Old French in opposing nominative and objective, but where it is the morphological oblique that survives, rather than the accusative.

2.2 Italian loro *as a weak pronoun*

Modern Italian, like Old Florentine, has *io/me*, *tu/te* contrasts in the 1st/ 2nd person (see Table 3). However the 3rd person forms *lui, lei, loro* cover the entire spectrum of argumental positions, including the nominative. In other words, 1st and 2nd singular display once again a more robust association with case than 3rd person, as studied in section 1. We argue that an exception to this state of affairs is represented by the 3rd person plural modern Italian *loro*, which maintains the distribution seen in Old Florentine (22b), imputed here to oblique case. On the contrary, Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), Cardinaletti (1998) argue that the special distribution of *loro* in modern Italian is to be captured through the category weak pronoun. The same category is argued to account for the distribution of *lui/lei/ loro* in Old Italian/ Florentine by Egerland and Cardinaletti (2010). In particular weak *loro* would account for (22b), while its strong counterpart would be responsible for the objective distribution in (22c), exactly as for their modern Italian counterparts.

Let us briefly review Cardinaletti and Starkeôs (1999) evidence. They observe that *loro* óthey/them/to themô in modern Italian has two different distributions. In one distribution, it fills the same positions as any ordinary noun phrase, patterning together with *lui* óhe/himô and *lei* óshe/herô

as in (23b). In the other distribution, *loro* is associated with a Dative Shift position which is unavailable to *lui/lei*, as in (23a) ï and similarly for the genitive position in (23c) (Cardinaletti 1998). Modern Italian (23) closely parallels the examples from XIII-XIV century Florentine prose texts in (20)-(22).

(23) a. Ho offerto loro/*lui/*lei il mio aiuto
I.have offered them/him/her my help

b. Ho offerto il mio aiuto a lui/ lei/ loro
I.have offered my help to him/her/them

c. Il loro/*lui/*lei libro
The their/his/her book

From the distributional facts in (23), Cardinaletti and Starke conclude that there are two *loro* ï namely a strong *loro* and a weak *loro*. They support this categorization by correlating the distributions observed with independent criteria, also adopted by Egerland and Cardinaletti (2010: 416). First, they argue that strong *loro* is interpreted as human, while weak *loro* (the Dative Shift/ genitive one) can have any reference. However the intuitions of the speakers we consulted are that *loro* generally admits of inanimate reference also in the strong distribution. This is supported by corpus data like (24) from the national newspaper *La Repubblica* (Baroni et als. 2004).[10]

(24) a. Consideriamo, per un attimo, l'automobile [é] Eccola lì. Anzi, eccole lì [é] proprio
Consider, for a moment, the car é There it is. Or better, there they are é just
nel momento in cui l' uomo non può più servirsi di loro [é] per qualche giorno,
at the time when a man can no longer use (of) them é for a few days
pensa che, ecco, in città si può, forse, vivere **senza di loro**
he thinks that, yes, in the city one can, perhaps, live without (of) them

b. Quando poi [é] arriva a dipingere il fondo, tutto si fa indistinto, sciolto
When nexté he gets to painting the background, all becomes indistinct, melting
nella luce [é] Sarà la fila lunga delle colline che si fanno tutte rosa sotto il pallido
into the light é It may be the long line of hills that become all pink under the pale
azzurro del cielo **sopra di loro**
blue of the sky above (of) them

[10] This is not a corpus study, and we interrogated the database in a completely unsophisticated way, simply asking for expressions which ought to be acceptable in the relevant readings, here ñsenza di loroò, ñsopra di loroò.

Furthermore, for Cardinaletti and Starke, weak pronouns cannot be coordinated. It is difficult to have an intuition about examples of coordination for weak *loro*, since they involve coordination of *loro* with itself in the Object Shift position, as in (25). We therefore suggest that judgement should be suspended on these examples and that coordination should be tested instead on the genitive, where *loro* can in principle be coordinated with any possessive pronoun. In the judgements we collected and in the corpus data from *La Repubblica* in (26) this coordination yields wellformed results.[11]

(25) ≠Ho dato loro e loro tutti i miei soldi
I.have given them and them all the my money
ôI gave all my money to them and themô

(26) a. (com' era) malsano quel vento dell'Est che, loro, respirarono gioiosamente a pieni
How unhealthy that wind from the East was that they breathed joyously with full
polmoni. E che oggi, per fortuna **loro e nostra**, non soffia più.
lungs. And that today, for (ggod) fortune their and ours, no longer blows.

b. Santagata e Morganti, che negli anni hanno [é] ricondotto alla **loro e nostra**
S. and M., who throughout the years have brought back to their and our
quotidianità, [é] anche i mondi degli autori volta a volta visitati: Dostoevskji [é]
daily life, also the worlds of the authors in turn visited: Dé

Next, in Cardinaletti and Starkeôs judgement weak *loro* cannot be modified by adverbs, specifically by *only* and *also*. Data like (27) are instead acceptable for our speakers, and they are indeed sourced from the *La Repubblica* corpus. Note that even if the postnominal position is involved for the possessive in (27b), the weak form *loro* seems to be used, not the strong form preceded by the ôofô preposition. If vice versa postnominal *loro* is claimed to be strong, this means that the absence of the prepositional layer is no longer a predictor of weak status ï undermining a different generalization.

(27) a. La diagnosi ha **dato anche loro** la certezza che erano sane pure le loro figlie
the diagnosis has given also them the certainty that were healthy their daughters too

[11] An anonymous reviewer questions the relevance of expressions like *per fortuna loro* in (26a), given that they seem to have special properties such as the lack of a definite determiner. However (26b) presents none of these special properties.

b. al Marsiglia mancavano cinque giocatori per squalifica (**colpa anche loro**).
Marseille lacked five players because of disqualification (fault also theirs)

Cardinaletti and Starkeôs idea is that weak pronouns are structurally smaller than strong pronouns, though they are bigger than clitics. Specifically, clitics are IP-like constituents. Weak pronouns correspond to a projection ÆP (in the sense of Laka (1990)), which contributes prosodic properties to them. Strong pronouns have a CP-like structure, where the preposition that introduces them (e.g. *a* ótoô in *a loro* óto themô) is assimilated to a C head. However, introducing a C layer or a Æ layer in a sentence implies introducing LF-relevant properties. Therefore introducing such a layer in the structure of a pronoun ought to yield LF-relevant distinctions between weak pronouns, strong pronouns and clitics. In reality, they all refer in the same way (i.e. deictically, anaphorically and as bound variables). Morphology concurs with semantics in supporting a similar structuring for all 3rd person pronouns in Romance. For instance, supposedly weak and strong *loro* are morphologically identical. More to the point, even clitics are at least as complex as full pronouns, corresponding to the merger of two separate morphemes, namely an *l-* base, introducing definite reference, and inflectional endings introducing nominal class and case. The only way to avoid the obvious conclusion that full pronouns and clitics are equal in size (internal constituency) is to embrace a realizational model of the lexicon (see section 1.4), as Cardinaletti and Starke do.

In the next section we will propose that *loro* is a just full pronoun (like *lui* or *lei*) except that its special oblique case properties allow it to occur in the Dative Shift and possessor positions not available to *lui/lei* in (23). In other words, *loro* provides no evidence for the strong vs. weak categorization. The category clitic is not questioned here. For it, we adopt the standardly accepted definition suggested by Sporticheôs (1996) analysis ï namely that clitic pronouns correspond to specialized functional heads on the sentential spine.

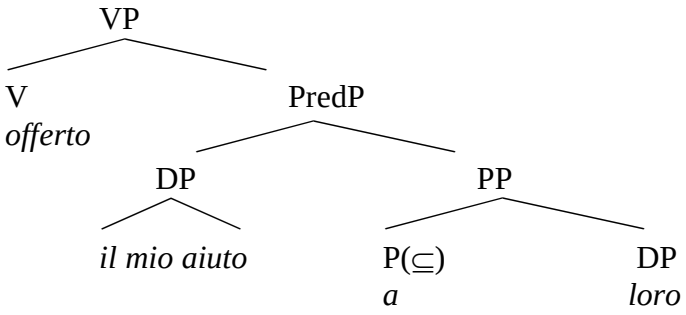
2.3 Italian loro *as an oblique*

Briefly, Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) account for the distribution of *loro* in (23) on the basis of the assumption that *a loro* is a strong pronoun and *a*-less *loro* a weak pronoun. Being strong, *a loro* has a CP-like layer introduced by the preposition *a*, which is characterized by case properties. Weak *loro* lacks this layer and therefore must occur in a position where it can get case via agreement, namely a [Spec, Agr] position, identified with the Dative Shift position. Here we argue on the

contrary that Dative Shift *loro* has case, namely oblique case. Conversely, other occurrences of *loro* depend on lack of oblique case.

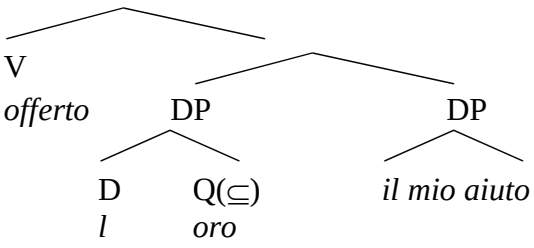
Consider first *loro* with the ordinary DP distribution (no Dative Shift), as in (23b). Following Kayne (1984), and as discussed above in connection with Latin (4) and *Vellaôs* (15), the complement of a ditransitive verb like óofferôis a predication denoting possession. In present terms, *a* is the predicate denoting possession, P(⊆), taking *loro* as its internal argument (the possessor) and the theme of the verb is its external argument (the possessum), as in (28). Since the ⊆ relation is introduced by P, no oblique Q(⊆) property is required on *loro*.[12]

(28)



Consider then Dative Shift *loro*, as in (23a). The present hypothesis is that this position depends on *loro* being associated with an inflectional oblique. In other words, the ***ï****oro* ending is a lexicalization of the Q(⊆) relation taking as its internal argument the *l-* pronominal base to which it attaches and as its external argument the theme of the verb. The resulting surface constituency is as in (29). We will return to whether (29) is a base structure (hence a VP) or a derived structure below.

(29)

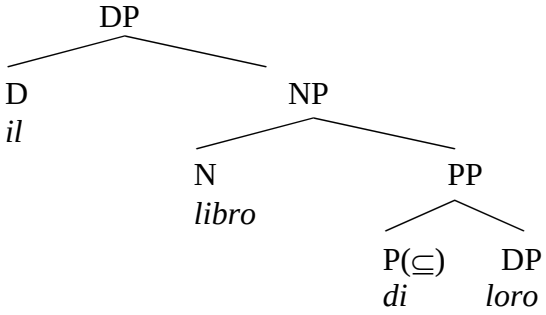


The alternation between genitive *loro* structures, and structures where the possessor is introduced by the *di* ófô preposition, reproduces the alternation in (28)-(29) ï as schematized in (30). The *di* preposition with P(⊆) content in (30a) takes the possessor as its object to the right and

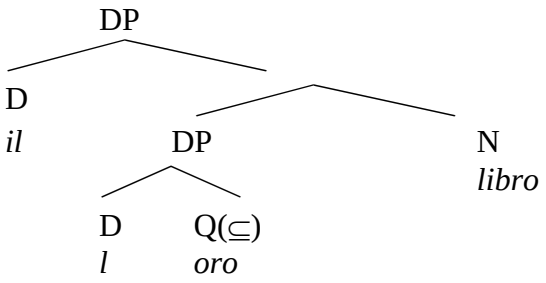
[12] The representation in (28) is of course simplified. Non-oblique *loro* has the same internal structure as oblique *loro* in (29) below. Following the discussion of Latin and Old Florentine ï *i*, furthermore, the plural reading of *loro* depends simply on a different construal of the Q(⊆) property associated with the ï *oro* inflection.

the possessee as its subject to the left. Genitive *loro* yields the inverse order of possessor and possessee, as in (30b).

(30) a.



b.



In general, the possessor to the right implies a preposition; the possessor to the left implies some oblique case properties. Right-left reordering of arguments obviously invites a treatment in terms of movement. The question is whether movement is actually involved (leaving an interpreted variable in the extraction site) or what are observed are simply two different linearizations for the same basic merger in PredP. Here we leave the question open, noting however that the present model is entirely neutral with respect to it. In other words, adoption of the present proposal does not interfere with further theoretical choices. Specifically, in section 1.3, we indicated that nothing prevents us from assuming that there is a dedicated functional head corresponding to the (⊆) content of oblique case inflections, presumably to be identified with the low Appl head of Pylkkänen (2008). In terms of a (⊆) functional head, we can model the right-left reorderings in (28)-(39) by movement, along the lines (31). The idea is that the case properties of *loro* in (29) and (30b) require it to be positioned in the Q(⊆) position, so that the relevant structures are to be refined as in (31a) and (31b) respectively.

(31) a. é offerto $[_{(\subseteq)}$ loro $[_{VP}$ ~~offerto~~ [il mio aiuto ~~loro~~]

b. $[_{DP}$ il $[_{(\subseteq)}$ loro $[_{NP}$ libro ~~loro~~]

Interestingly, (31a) closely matches Cardinaletti and Starkeôs schema of derivation for Dative Shift *loro* (moved leftward to an AGR functional head). However, for Cardinaletti and

Starke, *loro* moves to a functional position because it is smaller than *a loro*; this is the essence of the strong/weak distinction. In the present approach, *loro* and *a loro* have the same properties, though differently lexicalized, by Q(⊆) and P(⊆) respectively. The Dative Shift/possessive *loro* is accounted for on the basis of the category Q(⊆) (oblique case). However *loro* can also have the same non-oblique distribution as *lui/ lei*. Therefore we assume that the ï*oro* inflection can carry both plural and oblique properties, or just plural properties, as in (32). This correctly yields the alternation between oblique *loro* in (29) and (30b) and non-oblique *loro* in (28) and (30a).[13]

(32) *l-*: definite
-oro: plural, (oblique)

In short, Q(⊆) oblique case is sufficient to predict the distribution of Dative Shift/possessive *loro*.[14] Vice versa, at least for modern Italian pronouns, the notions of weak and strong pronoun are at best redundant. Note that our stance here does not consist in denying that there may be several pronominal series in the languages we are considering. Descriptively, *loro* cannot be entirely reduced either to other full pronouns (which do not share the Dative Shift/possessive distribution) ï nor to clitics. What we are calling into question is that this has anything to do with the weak pronoun category of the theoretical literature, as opposed to independently needed categories (here oblique case).

Going back to Old Florentine, we can now analyze examples like (22b) with the Dative Shift distribution of *loro* in the same way as their modern Italian counterpart (29). Evidence for a Dative Shift distribution of *lui/lei* is however restricted to a few authors and there is no evidence for it in the prose practical texts exemplified in (20)-(22). Therefore we would have to assume that the ï*i* inflection of *lui/lei* no longer has an oblique value, even at this stage of the development of the language. We of course assume the same to hold of modern Italian.

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[13] Technically, oblique and plural in (32) are just two different construals of the Q(⊆) predicate.

[14] One further distributional piece of data concerning dative *loro* has not been discussed here, namely the fact that it can be found between the auxiliary and the participle, as in (i).

(i) Ho loro promesso il mio aiuto
I have them promised my help
ôI promised my help to themô

This positioning of *loro* is an independent issue. For instance it could be dealt with by assuming that the Dative Shift position can be higher than the participle position, given a movement analysis of the type in (31).

2.4 Concluding remarks: the form of the lexicon.

Theoretically, the raison dêêtre of a category like that of weak pronoun is upholding a certain conception of the organization of the lexicon, hence of grammar. Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) motivate it on the basis of a classical criterion, crossing morphology and distribution. In general, given a morphology M specialized for distribution D, one says that M + D individuate category C. For instance the morphology *loro* (M) with Dative Shift distribution (D), as in (23a) individuates the category weak pronoun (M+D). This differs both from the form *(a) loro* with ordinary (P) DP distribution (strong pronoun) and from the form *gli* with clitic distribution.

If such a categorization is generalized, it yields essentially the same paradigms as in a descriptive or normative grammar, with a proliferation of syncretisms and homophonies. What appears to be important in such lexicons is the underlying regularity of abstract categories; the amount of opacity present at the PF interface (in the form of homophony or syncretism/neutralization) is irrelevant. In other words, a (near) invariant syntactic-semantic structure combines with (near) arbitrary variation at the PF interface, leading to the adoption of realizational models of the lexicon, as opposed to projection from the lexicon to the syntax.

For instance, consider Romansh varieties, where non-clitic pronouns have both a distribution available to Italian *lui/lei*, for instance in left dislocated position, as in (33b) ï and a distribution unavailable to *lui/lei* (and non-oblique *loro*) in Italian, for instance in V-adjacent position, as in (33a). In such a language the strong-weak categorization would lead to the postulation of two completely homophonous series of pronouns, one with the óstrongô distribution in (33b) and the other with the óweakô distribution in (33a). This obscures the fact that forms like *el/ɛla* óhe/sheô have exactly the same overall distribution as any lexical DP in the language (e.g. a name like *John*). Similarly, Egerland and Cardinaletti (2010) classify the occurrences of non-clitic pronouns in Old Florentine according to the categories weak and strong (or ñfreeò) pronouns. For instance an occurrence like (21b) would be óstrongô, while an occurrence like (22a) would be weak (incompatible with *lui/lei/loro* in modern Italian). It is immaterial to them that the strong and weak series are lexically identical.

(33) a. els klɔman mai/tai/el/ɛla
they call me/you/him/her
óThey call me/you/him/herô

b. mai jɛu diɛrməl
me, I sleep

ó(As for) me, I sleepô

Vella

In this section, we have argued that Italian *loro* can be accounted for (without loss of empirical adequacy or theoretical generality) by ignoring such abstract schemas of organization as the strong vs. weak opposition. Under the lexicalist conception of the architecture of grammar that we adopt, the mapping between LF content and PF content, with its potential for variation, is carried out by the lexicon ï and the computational component operates on lexical items and not on abstract properties. Under such a view, nothing leads us to expect that categories are represented uniformly throughout a given language ï or across languages. Thus *loro* is best accounted for as an optional survivial of oblique case.[15]

More generally, in this article we have found considerable evidence as to the survival of a case system into Romance, specifically in the full pronouns system. As a side result of our main line of investigation, we have been led to doubt that Romance languages have a weak pronouns series, besides full and clitic ones.[16]

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[15] The restricted distribution of *lui/lei/loro* in Italian in direct case positions (nominative, accusative) is explained by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) in terms of an Economy of representations principle, which they formulate simply as ñMinimize structure (up to crash)ò. By it, cliticization/null pronouns are obligatory if possible. The issue whether there are bona fide optimization processes in grammar is again too complex to be addressed here. In any event, the complementary distribution (if real) is between clitics/null pronouns and full pronouns and does not require the category weak pronoun.

[16] An anonymous reviewer reminds us that the discussion of Romance and other languages by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) is based on the notion of weak pronoun originally formulated by Holmberg (1986) for Germanic languages. Whether such a category can be given theoretical and empirical coherence in Germanic languages (and what its relation is with the category clitic of Romance) is outside the scope of the present work.

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