Functional Heads and Object Clitics

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0. Introduction

In this paper I discuss direct object clitic placement in Bergomanserese (a Northern Italian dialect spoken in the Piedmont region of Italy). In particular, I show that object clitic placement in this dialect is best understood if we take cliticization to involve both verb-adjunction and adjunction of the clitic to a functional head. There are a few assumptions I make in this paper that are perhaps worth clarifying now: first, clitics (which I take to be X0's) move from their base (i.e., theta-) positions to a position higher in the clause. Second, I ultimately assume (following Kayne 1991) that apparent 'enclisis' to a lexical item can be understood in terms of syntactic left-adjunction of the clitic to a functional head, with the apparent 'host' appearing to the left of the clitic (in a distinct syntactic position). Nevertheless, for convenience I use the terms 'enclisis' and 'host' throughout the paper. Third, since the position of 'lower' (pre-VP) adverbs is relevant to understanding direct object clitic placement in this language, I adopt a theory of adverb placement that allows me to easily describe the word order facts. In particular, I adopt Cinque's (1999) analysis, which takes adverbs to occupy specifications of functional heads.

This paper is organized as follows: in section 1 I outline the facts of clitic placement in Bergomanserese, which I then attempt to account for in section 2. In section 2.4, I discuss a particular piece of data which appears to contradict generalizations.

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1 Thanks go to Mark Baker, Paola Benincà, Guglielmo Cinque, Diana Cresti, Sam Epstein, Jon Gejewski, Richard Kayne, Richard Larson, Alan Mann, Cecilia Polito, Cristina Schmitt, Dan Smeil, Ul Shiosaki, and Amerani Teobosch for very helpful discussion. As always, a heartfelt thanks, too, to all my Bergomanserese friends/consultants (especially Giuseppe and Mila Barchetta). All errors, lapses, and gaps, or any boredom on the part of the reader, is purely my responsibility.

2 The object pronouns I examine in this paper exhibit all the properties of clitic pronouns discussed in Kayne (1975) (they cannot be modified, coordinated, stressed, used in isolation, or placed in peripheral positions); they also have phonological effects on their 'hosts' which are typical of clitic pronouns (and not of weak DPs, in the sense of Cardinaletti & Steria 1998).

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arrived at earlier in the paper. In order to account for this data, I suggest that clitic placement must be understood in terms of the clitic's need to be adjoined both to the verb and to a functional head.

1. The Data: Generalized Enclisis in Borgomanerese

In this section I outline some facts of clitic placement in Borgomanerese (I characterize these facts as 'generalized enclisis').

Borgomanerese is like other Piedmontese dialects (e.g., Burzio's 1986 Torinese; also, many varieties found in the ASIS (see references)) in that in the compound tenses, it exhibits enclisis of object clitics on the past participle:

(1) a. i o purè la torta.
   SCL have(1sg) brought the cake
   'I have brought the cake.'

   b. i o purè-lia.
   SCL have(1sg) brought-4l(fem.sg)
   'I have brought it.'

This is in contrast with languages like Italian and French, whose object clitics are proclitic on the finite (auxiliary) verb:

ITALIAN:
(2) a. L'ho portata.
   it-have(1sg) brought(fem.sg)
   'I have brought it.'

   b. *Ho portata-la.
   have(1sg) brought-it

1.1. Enclisis on the Finite Verb

Borgomanerese differs from Torinese, however, in that it exhibits enclisis of object clitics in the simple tenses as well; this can be seen in (3b):

(3) a. i porti la torta.
   SCL bring(1sg) the cake
   'I'm bringing the cake.'

b. i porta-la.
   SCL bring(1sg)-lt(fem.sg)
   'I'm bringing it.'

1.2. Enclisis on Certain Adverbs

In addition to finite (non-auxiliary) verbs, enclisis is obligatory with the following adverbs: *mija 'NEG', già 'already', and pìo 'no more'.

1.2.1. Enclisis on NEG

I will first concentrate on *mija 'NEG'. *Mija is a 'post-verbal negative marker' (not unlike French pas; see Zanuttini 1997); this can be seen in (4a). As can be seen in (4b), when *mija is present, the object clitic enclisisizes to it:

(4) a. i porti *mija na torta.
   SCL bring(1sg) NEG a cake
   'I'm not bringing a cake.'

   b. i porti mi-lia.
   SCL bring(1sg) NEG-4l
   'I'm not bringing it.'

   The sentence in (4c) shows that enclisis on *mija is obligatory:

(5) a. *i porta-la *mija.
   SCL bring(1sg)-lt NEG

If we compare (4c) with (3b), we must conclude the following: the finite verb can act as a host to the (en)clitic, as long as there is not another potential host to the right of it; if there is another potential host to its right, then that must host the clitic. For the purpose of exposition, let us call this the right-most host requirement.

1.2.2. Enclisis on already and no more

The data in (5b), (6b), and (7a) show that enclisis also obtains with già 'already', and pìo 'no more':

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3 Enclisis induces a change in the final vowel of the host from [i] to [æ]. I take this to be a phonological effect, irrelevant to the present discussion. Such effects are also seen, for example, with enclisis on prepositions (e.g. dosp [inside], but i porti dosp-la 'I bring it inside' — see (5b) below) and negation (mija, but i porti già-lia 'I'm not bringing it' — see (4b)). The reader may also have noticed that while the [i] of the clitic is [i fem] in geminates in (1b), it is not geminates in (3b). Again, this is a phonological effect (the initial consonant of a clitic becomes a geminate when the preceding syllable is stressed).
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(5) a. i venghi Maria già da dì ogni
   SCL see(1sg) Maria already of two years
   'I've already been seeing Maria for two years.'

   b. i vangumma gi-naal da dì ogni
   SCL see(1pl) already-us of two years
   'We've already been seeing each other for two years.'

(6) a. i venghi piò la mata.
   SCL see(1sg) no-more the girl
   'I don't see the girl anymore.'

   b. i vanghi piò-l Attribute
   SCL see(1sg) no more-her
   'I don't see her anymore.'

(7) a. i mangi piò-nmu.
   SCL eat(1sg) no more-of them
   'I'm not eating anymore of them.'

   Note that the right-most host requirement also applies to già and piò; compare, for example, (7a) with (7b):

(7b) b. *i mangiu-nu piò.
   SCL eat(1sg)-of.them no more

1.3. Enclusis on 'Resultative' Prepositions

Another class of elements that can host the direct object clitic is 'resultative' prepositions (including: denti 'inside', fora 'outside', ndre 'behind', vija 'away' si 'up', gjib 'down' cë 'home'). We can see the effects of the right-most host requirement once again if we include this type of potential host in a construction that contains two other potential hosts, as in (8b):

8. (8) a. i porta mija denti la torta
   SCL bring(1sg) NEG inside the cake
   'I'm not bringing the cake inside.'

   b. i porta mija dents-
   SCL bring(1sg) NEG inside-it
   'I'm not bringing it inside.'

   c. *i porta mi-lx denti.
   SCL bring(1sg) NEG-it inside

   d. *i porta-lx mija denti.
   SCL bring(1sg)-it NEG inside

In particular, (8b-d) show that given the presence of a finite verb, the negative marker saja, and a resultative preposition such as denti 'inside' (i.e., three potential hosts), the object clitic must be enclusis on the right-most of these.

1.4. Enclusis on Past Participles

As we saw in (1b) above, the compound tenses the object clitic enclusisizes to the past participle. Given the fact that the past participle is a potential host, a question arises as to whether the right-most host requirement is respected when it occurs with other potential hosts. The following data show that the answer to this question is affirmative:

9. (9) a. i o piò viusta-lx.
   SCL have(1sg) no more seen-her
   'I haven't seen her anymore.'

   b. *i o piò-lx viusta.
   SCL have(1sg) no more seen

10. (10) a. i eva piò saludd mmi.
    SCL had(3sg) no more greeted-me
    'She didn't say hi to me anymore.'

   b. *i eva piò-mmi saludd.
    SCL had(3sg) no more-me greeted

So, as can be seen in (10), for example, although piò is a potential host (see (6b) and (7a)), if the past participle occurs to its right, it cannot host the clitic. It is also worth noting that the past participle optionally occurs to the left of the adverb piò (past participle movement will be discussed in more detail below in sections 2.2 and 2.3); the past participle then seems to be the only 'mobile' potential host. Note that in this case, the object clitic must enclusisize to the adverb (so compare, for example, (9) with (11)): 
1.5. Non-Potential Adverbial Hosts

While enclisis is obligatory with the adverbs mi̱ja, gi̱ò, and pi̱ò (barring the presence of another potential host to their right), note that it is not possible with other adverbs, like manner adverbs (e.g., bej ‘well’, mal ‘badly’, & nse ‘like so’) and sempri ‘always’.

This can be seen in (12) through (14):

(12) a. i faga-la nse.
   SCL do(1sg)-It like.so
   ‘I’m doing it like this’

b. *i fagbi nés-La.
   SCL do(1sg) like-so-It

(13) a. i trata-Lu mal.
   SCL treat(1sg)-him badly
   ‘I treat him badly.’

Unlike the adverb sempri ‘always’, the adverb maj ‘never’ optionally hosts the clitic, this can be seen in (i) and (ii):

(i) dopu sceni, i mangi maj la frui.
   after dinner, SCL eat(1sg) never the fruit
   ‘After dinner, I never eat fruit.’

(ii) i mangi-la maj.
   SCL eat-It never
   ‘I never eat it.’

(iii) i mangi maj-la.
   SCL eat(1sg) never-It
   ‘I never eat it.’

One possible explanation for this possibility is the following: maj is ambiguous between an ‘always-type’ adverb and a negative morpheme (like mi̱ja). That is, it can either occupy the syntactic position that sempri ‘always’ occupies (yielding (ii)), or it can occupy the syntactic position that mi̱ja ‘NEG’ occupies (yielding (iii)); see (20) below.

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(14) a. i mengia-la sempri.
   SCL eat(1sg)-It always
   ‘I always eat it.’

b. *i mengi sempri-la.
   SCL eat(1sg) always-It

To summarize, then, while some adverbs are potential object clitic hosts, others are not. Furthermore, the past participle is a (mobile) potential host. However, given the right-most host requirement, any one of the potential hosts may not host the clitic.

In what follows, I provide an analysis of clausal structure and head movement which allows us to understand both the right-most host requirement, as well as what I will call the potential host question (i.e., the question of why some adverbs are potential hosts, while others are not).

2. Addressing the Right-Most Host Requirement and the Potential Host Question

In this section I would like to consider an analysis which allows us to understand both the right-most host requirement and the potential host question. To do this, I will follow Kayne (1991) and assume that clitics adjoin to functional heads. In order to understand this assumption, let’s first look at Kayne’s concerns.


Kaye (1991) sets out to explain the following contrast between Italian (15) and French (16):

(15) Parlar-gli sarebbe un errore.
   to.speak-him would-be a mistake
   ‘To speak to him would be a mistake.’

(16) Lui parler seri un errore.
   to.him to.speak would-be a mistake
   ‘To speak to him would be a mistake.’

That is, Kayne notes that while the (in this case indirect) object clitic follows the (non-finite) verb in Italian (15), the same type of clitic precedes the (non-finite) verb in French. To explain this, Kayne proposes the following: in Italian, the clitic moves from its base position to adjoin to a functional head (represented as T in (17)); the verb, on the other hand, moves to a position to the left of this head (represented as l in (17)):

The structure in (17) is a personal re-interpretation of Kayne’s structure (which actually involves adjunction of the verb to a bar-level).
This movement is what yields the order verb-clitic in (15) above.

In contrast with Italian, the French verb does not move as high as I; rather, it moves only as high as a functional head below I (represented as Infl° in (18)). The French clitic subsequently left-joins to the verb, yielding the order clitic-verb in (16) above; an approximation of the structure for (16) is represented in (18):

(18) \[ \text{parler} \]

As can be seen in (20), he proposes that the clitic en and the verb parler occupy two distinct functional heads, which is what enables an adverb like bien to intervene (in this structure, the adverb is taken to adjoin to Infl°).

I would like to suggest here that the Borgomanerese data can be accounted for in a similar manner. To understand how, consider again the sentences in (3b) and (4b). In (3b), the verb ‘hosts’ the clitic. In (4b), the negative marker ‘hosts’ the clitic. If we take the verb to be adjoined to one head and the clitic to be adjoined to another (distinct) head (even in the case of (3b)), we can understand how the negative marker can ‘intervene’, as in (4b) (where it is the negative marker which appears to ‘host’ the clitic). In other words, (4b) can be given an analysis not unlike that seen in (20) for Occitan.

In section 2.3, I work out the details of this idea. In doing so, I show that such an analysis allows us to account both for the right-most host requirement and the potential host question. But in order to understand the details, it is first necessary to look at the relative syntactic position of the adverbs in question. In what immediately follows, then, I will lay out the adverb ordering facts of Borgomanerese.

2.2. Order of Adverbs and Clausal Structure

In this section, I address the question of the order of the adverbs discussed so far in this paper.

Adverbs in Borgomanerese (like those in Italian and French – see Cinque 1999), seem to occur in a fixed order. For example, we see in (21) that miuja must precede già:

(21) a. T è miuja già mangià-llu.
    SCL have(2sg) NEG already eaten-it
    ‘You haven’t already eaten it.’

b. *T è già miija mangià-llu.

Concerning the adverbs miija and pùì, note that they cannot co-occur, so in contrast with the case of miuja and già in (21), it is impossible to use a sentence which
contains both of them to determine their relative ordering. Their complementarity potentially leads to the conclusion that they occupy the same syntactic position, but indirect evidence exists for the claim that mīja is structurally higher than piō. In particular, note that an infinitive verb in Bourgomanerese appears to the left of piō (22), but not to the left of mīja (23):

(22) a. durmī piō sarissì brittu.
    to.sleep no more.would be horrible
    'To not sleep anymore would be bad.'

b. *piō durmī sarissì brittu.
    no more to.sleep would be horrible

(23) a. mīja mangē fa mal.
    NEG to.eat makes ill
    'To not eat makes you sick.'

b. *mangē mīja fa mal.
    to.eat NEG makes ill

Under the assumption that the infinitive moves from its base position to the left of piō in (22a), we can explain the ungrammaticality of (23b) (and the grammaticality of (23a)) by claiming that mīja occurs in a structural position that is higher than piō.

In a similar manner, the relative order of the adverbs piō and gīà can also be determined. Consider the data in (24):

(24) a. i o piō parlā.
    SCL have(1sg) no more spoken
    'I didn't talk anymore.'

b. i o parlā piō.
    SCL have(1sg) spoken no more

As can be seen in (24), the past participle parlā 'spoken' can occur either to the right (24a) or to the left (24b) of the adverb piō. Again, let us take the position of the past participle (PasPar) in (24b) to indicate its movement to the left of piō. Now consider the following:

(25) a. i o gīà parlā.
    SCL have(1sg) already spoken
    'I already spoke.'

b. *i o parlā gīà.
    SCL have(1sg) spoken already

As can be seen, the PasPar cannot occur to the left of gīà. Once again, we can explain the ungrammaticality of (25b) (and the grammaticality of (25a)) by claiming that gīà occurs in a structural position that is higher than piō (that is, gīà occupies a position that is higher than the highest position to which the PasPar can move).

To summarize, the above data indicate that the three adverbs mīja, gīà, and piō occur in a fixed order, with mīja preceding gīà, gīà preceding piō (and mīja preceding piō, both by transitivity, and by the data seen in (22) and (23)). Adopting Cinque's (1999) analysis of adverbs, let us propose the following clausal structure, in which said adverbs occur in the specifier positions of functional heads.  

(26) Order of adverbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{XP} \\
&\text{spec} \quad X \\
&\text{spec} \quad Y \\
&\text{spec} \quad Y' \\
&\text{spec} \quad Z \\
&\text{spec} \quad W \\
&\text{spec} \quad U \\
&\text{spec} \quad \text{bej} \\
&\text{WC} \quad \text{UP} \\
&\text{WC} \quad \text{VP}
\end{align*}
\]

Now that we have a clearer picture as to the syntactic positions occupied by the adverbs discussed in this paper, I would like to turn to my analysis of the data discussed in this paper.

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1 The inspiration for investigating this question in Bourgomanerese came from Cinque's (1999) discussion of Poadock's (19989413) discussion of parl and piō in French. I thank F. Benincà for directing me to investigate this question.

2 For the present purposes I will have to stipulate (for space reasons) that sempri occurs to the right of piō, and manner adverbs (such as bej) occur to the right of sempri (although it is worth noting that data exist to confirm this claim).
2.3. Explaining the Right-Most Host Requirement and the Potential Host Question

To understand the data reviewed in section 1, let us adopt Kayne's (1991) idea (discussed in section 2.1) that object clitics move from their base positions and adjoin to functional heads.

I would like to claim that the object clitic in Borgomanerese moves to a functional head that is lower than that seen for Italian and French in (17) and (18). In particular, recall that the clitic occurs to the right of *mija, già, and piò, but to the left of *sempri. Given the structure in (26), this suggests that the clitic moves to the head labeled Z:

(27)

```
  Z
 /   \
Z    WP
   \
  clitic
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If Z is the position that the clitic occupies (by spell-out), we can see why *mija, già, and piò are potential clitic hosts: said adverbs always occur to the left of Z (see (26)). We can also understand why *sempri and the manner adverbs (e.g., bej 'well') are not potential clitic hosts: said adverbs always occur to the right of Z. This addresses the potential host question.

Furthermore, assuming the order of the adverbs is fixed as is illustrated in (26), the claim represented in (27) (i.e., that the clitic moves to Z by spell-out) gives us a way of understanding the right-most host requirement. In particular, if we assume that the finite verb occupies a position higher than *mija by spell-out (see (4)), then gives the presence of any one of the potential hosts (finite verb, *mija, già, or piò), the clitic in Z will necessarily occur to the right of it; so when more than one of these is present, the clitic will occur to the right of the last one (this implies that even if the adverbs are not present in the structure, as in (3b), the clitic is still in Z).

I now raise the question of the PasPar, which complicates matters somewhat, since it is a 'mobile' host. Furthermore, like the clitic, the PasPar too is a head, so a question arises as to how to account for the data given a structure like that in (26) (with the presence of multiple head positions). What I will ultimately suggest is that at some point in the movement of the PasPar and the clitic, the two cross paths.

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* For the case of *denti in (8b), it would seem that this type of preposition moves from its base position to the zone between X and Y in (26) (see footnote 4 above). The following facts ironize this claim: while *denti occurs to the right of *mija (cf. *denti *mija), it must occur to the left of *piò:

(i) *piò *denti *piò-miu
SCL bring(1sg) inside anymore
(ii) *piò *denti-be
(iii) *piò *denti-lu *denti

Given this comment, the question arises as to the relative position of *denti and *già (since *già occupies the zone between X and Y in (26)). This data has yet to be collected.

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**Note**, however, that the PasPar must occur to the left of manner adverbs:

(i) i o mangia bej.
SCL have(1sg) eat well
(ii) *i o bej mangia.

This suggests that the PasPar moves obligatorily from its base position (within VP) to W in (26). Subsequent movements to Z and Y are optional.

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To understand the interaction of the PasPar and the clitic, let us first revisit the data in (9), (11), (24), and (25), and consider more carefully the exact positions which the PasPar can/must occupy. In particular, note that the PasPar can occur to the right or left of *piò (9a) and (11a), respectively, but it can only occur to the right of *già. This suggests that the PasPar optionally occupies Z or Y in (26), but never X. In fact, if the PasPar can occupy Z, we predict it to appear to the left of *sempri. This is a correct prediction:

(28) i o *parl *sempri.
SCL have(1sg) spoken always
'I have always spoken.'

Note, however, that the PasPar can also appear to the right of *sempri:

(29) i o sempri *parl.
SCL have(1sg) always spoken
'I have always spoken.'

This suggests that the PasPar can also occupy W. So, to summarize, the PasPar moves to W, Z, or Y.16

2.4. The Question of *sempri

A question arises at this point. In particular, if the clitic adjoins to Z (as per the claim depicted in (27)), and the PasPar can adjoin to Z, do they ever share this position?

I would like to suggest that the answer to this question (which is yes) resides in the analysis of a piece of data which appears to contradict the generalization arrived at in view of (14). That is, given (14), we concluded that the object clitic cannot occur to the right of *sempri. However, the following data indicate that the clitic can occur to right of this adverb (only) when there is a past participle to *sempri's right:

(30) *Gianni *sempri mangia-llu.
Gianni SCL has(3sg) always eaten-it
'Gianni has always eaten it.'

Why can the clitic occur to the right of *sempri under these circumstances? Let us assume that when the clitic moves (head-to-head) from its base position to W, the past participle must also move (obligatorily) to W too; this creates the following structure:

16 Note, however, that the PasPar must occur to the left of manner adverbs:

(i) i o mangia bej.
SCL have(1sg) eat well
(ii) *i o bej mangia.

This suggests that the PasPar moves obligatorily from its base position (within VP) to W in (26). Subsequent movements to Z and Y are optional.
3. Conclusions

In this paper I hope to have shown that apparent enclisis to adverbs, the right-most host requirement, and the potential host question in Borgomanerese are understandable if we assume (a) that adverbs occur (in a rigidly fixed order) as the specifiers of functional heads, and (b) that the clitic must adjoin to a functional head which is situated relatively low in the clausal structure (but which is relatively high with respect to lower adverbs like sempri). Furthermore, the sempri paradox (namely, the clitic cannot occur to the right of sempri / the clitic occurs to the right of sempri) is explainable if we assume that the verb must adjoin to the clitic at a certain point in the derivation. In other words, the final piece of data regarding sempri suggests that clitics in Romance have a dual requirement: (i) they must adjoin to a functional head, and (ii) they must (at some point in the derivation) form a constituent with the verb. Of course, this analysis raises many questions for which I have no answer, such as, (a) what is the nature of Z such that the clitic must move there? (b) why is the target head for the clitic different in different Romance languages? (c) why must the verb exocorporate at a certain point in the derivation? (d) why must the clitic and the verb form a constituent at some point in the derivation? (e) given the (faict) assumption that only left-adjunction is allowed, why does the clitic move before the verb moves? (f) why is the "Z-requirement" on the clitic overridden in the case of (31-32)? While we are unable to answer these questions, perhaps they will serve as fodder for future research.

References

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