

Grammatical categories: Strong and weak pronouns in Romance[☆]

M. Rita Manzini

Dipartimento di Lingue, letterature e Studi Interculturali, Università di Firenze, Via C. Battisti 4, Firenze, Italy

Received 19 November 2012; received in revised form 6 July 2014; accepted 8 July 2014

Available online



Abstract

This article addresses the categorization of Romance non-clitic pronouns as strong and weak. It is argued that independently motivated categories are sufficient to yield distributions for which the notions of weak and strong pronoun have been invoked. The theoretical point of the exercise is twofold. First, the standard account of strong and weak pronouns (Cardinaletti and Starke, 1999) requires a realizational model of grammar, whereas the alternatives proposed here are compatible with a projectionist view. Second, the categories of strong and weak pronouns depend on a criterion for categorization whereby a unique crossing of a morphological form (M) with a distribution D is sufficient to individuate a category C ($C = M + D$). We argue that in instances where three series of pronouns can be individuated on the basis of this criterion, it is not obvious that the intermediate series ('weak') displays consistent characteristics, undermining the bases for the categorization itself.

© 2014 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Weak pronouns; wh-pronouns; Oblique case; Projection from the lexicon; Categorization

1. Theoretical introduction

Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) motivate the categories strong and weak pronoun 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, as in (1). For instance the morphology *loro* (M) with specialized distribution D (Dative Shift-like) individuates the category weak pronoun ($M + D$). This differs both from the morphology *P loro* 'P them' with ordinary PP distribution (strong pronoun) and from the morphology *gli* 'to him' with clitic distribution (see section 2). The existence of three different series of personal pronouns in Italian (or of three series of wh- pronouns in Northern Italian dialects and French, see sections 3 and 4) depends on this criterion.

- (1) category C = $M + D$, where M is a morphology specialized for distribution D

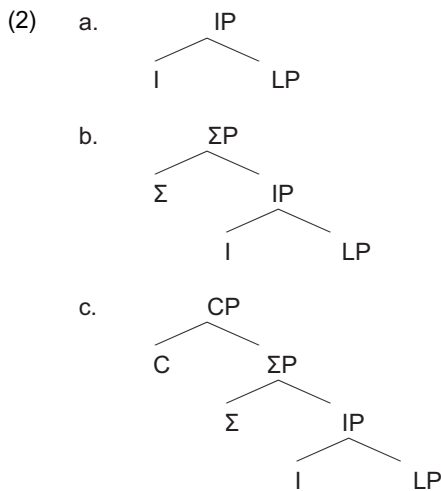
The aim of this article is to address the account that is provided for the weak and strong pronoun categories (Cardinaletti and Starke, 1999) – but also the descriptive categories themselves, and hence ultimately criterion (1).

Let us consider the theoretical account of weak and strong pronouns. Unlike nominal class or number, weak and strong are not properties of lexical items. Rather Cardinaletti and Starke provide a structural characterization of these categories.

[☆] The research reported in this article has been supported in part by a PRIN 2012 grant from the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR), Research title: Theory, Experimentation, Applications: Long distance dependencies in forms of linguistic diversity, Coordinator: Prof. Adriana Belletti. I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for the contribution they made to the shaping of this work.

E-mail address: mmanzini@unifi.it.

Clitics are IP-like constituents, as shown in (2a), where LP notates ‘Lexical Phrase’. Weak pronouns correspond to a projection ΣP (in the sense of Laka (1990)), which contributes to them prosodic properties, as in (2b). Strong pronouns have a CP-like structure, contributing case, as in (2c).



Now, supposedly weak and strong pronouns as well as clitics seem to have the same morphological constituency. If anything, clitics may have more structure than full pronouns, for instance case inflections. Let us consider for instance the 3rd person clitic and full pronouns system of the Sardinian variety of *Paulilatino* (Manzini and Savoia, 2005, 2007, 2011a, cf. Harris, 1994 for a comparable analysis of Spanish). The full pronoun system is structured along the lines of (3), where the pronominal base *iss-* is inflected for nominal class N (*-u/ɔ* in the masculine and *-a* in the feminine) and for number Q (via the sigmatic plural inflection *-s*). The clitic paradigm in (4) is more highly articulated. The pronominal base is *ɔ-*. In the objective forms in (4a–d), *ɔ-* is followed by exactly the same inflections as in (3), i.e. nominal class (*-u/ɔ* and *-a*) and plural (*-s*). On the other hand, clitics, unlike full pronouns are also case inflected. Specifically, dative (4f–g) is associated with the specialized case ending *-i*, otherwise unattested as a nominal class morphology; the number inflection *-s* remains unvaried.

- (3) a. $[[D \text{ iss} [N \text{ u}]]$ ‘him’
 b. $[[D \text{ iss} [N \text{ a}]]$ ‘her’
 c. $[[D \text{ iss} [N \text{ ɔ}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ ‘them(m.)’
 d. $[[D \text{ iss} [N \text{ a}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ ‘them(f.)’
- (4) a. $[[D \text{ ɔ} [N \text{ u}]]$ ‘him’
 b. $[[D \text{ ɔ} [N \text{ a}]]$ ‘her’
 c. $[[D \text{ ɔ} [N \text{ ɔ}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ ‘them(m.)’
 d. $[[D \text{ ɔ} [N \text{ a}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ ‘them(f.)’
 f. $[D \text{ ɔ} [[DAT \text{ i}]]$ ‘to her/him’
 g. $[D \text{ ɔ} [[DAT \text{ i}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ ‘to them’

The mismatch between the structural encoding of strong, weak and clitic categories in (2) and of actual morphological constituency in (3) and (4) reflects a realizational conception of the lexicon – which the authors explicitly endorse (cf. also Starke (2009) on nanosyntax). However projection from the lexicon is at the core of the original minimalist programme (Chomsky, 1995) and intrinsically simpler than the realizational view, since it allows us to cut out the component or components dedicated solely to the readjustment of syntactic structures for the purposes of PF externalization, in particular the Morphological Structure of Distributed Morphology (Halle and Marantz, 1993).

One could of course try to reformulate the strong/weak/clitic tripartition within a projectionist framework, for instance by endorsing a sufficiently large amount of ‘silent’ structure in natural languages (much in the sense of Kayne, 2010). Given sufficient access to empty structure, any mismatch between underlying categorization, e.g. (2), and surface constituency, e.g. (3) and (4) can be generated in the syntax. However what appears to be important in both systems is the underlying regularity of abstract categories; the amount of opacity present at the PF interface (in the form of homophony or

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7298497>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7298497>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)