

Variation in accusative clitic doubling across three Spanish dialects



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Abstract

In this paper, an account of the differences between three varieties of Spanish with accusative clitic doubling is proposed. The dialects studied are: Andean, Buenos Aires and Lima Spanish. Buenos Aires and Lima Spanish are varieties that express full agreement (i.e. agreement in gender and number) between the clitic and a doubled direct object, whereas Andean Spanish is a dialect that neutralizes gender and number distinctions in 3rd person clitics. It is commonly assumed that clitic doubling is derived through object movement to Spec,vP. This is the case of Lima and Buenos Aires dialects. We claim that, in Andean Spanish, the doubled constituents remain in a vP internal position. We propose that the apparent doubling phenomenon registered in some varieties of Andean Spanish is not a case of clitic doubling, but a different phenomenon. A second source of variation explored is Kayne's Generalization – the condition on object DPs to bear a visible morphological case marker in order to be clitic doubled. Buenos Aires Spanish differs from Lima and Andean Spanish with respect to this condition. Finally, two issues are discussed: (a) to what extent it is possible to trace a correlation between clitic doubling via object movement and the full agreement pattern and (b) to what extent these conditions on clitic doubling can be linked to Baker's (2008) Parameters of Agreement.

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1. Introduction

The main goal of this paper is to explore microvariation in accusative clitic doubling in three varieties of Spanish: Andean Spanish, Buenos Aires Spanish and Lima Spanish.¹ The most salient contrasts among these dialects arise in the morphology of the third person doubling clitic and in the extension of the phenomenon in each dialect. Lima and Buenos

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¹ The clitic doubling phenomenon in the Buenos Aires dialect has received exhaustive and extensive attention in the literature (Barrenechea and Orecchia, 1979; Jaeggli, 1982, 1986; Hurtado, 1984; Suñer, 1988, 2000; Estigarribia, 2006; Di Tullio and Zdrojewski, 2006; Belloro, 2007; Zdrojewski, 2008; Saab and Zdrojewski, 2012; Di Tullio et al., 2013). As noticed by Belloro (2007) and Di Tullio et al. (2013), the way this dialect has been labeled has generated some confusion in the literature. It has been referred to as River Plate Spanish, Porteño Spanish, Rioplatense Spanish. We will refer to it as Buenos Aires Spanish. The variety of Lima Spanish described here as having a direct object clitic with gender and number features corresponds to that of speakers with very little contact with Quechua or other indigenous languages in Peru. We will refer to this variety as Lima Spanish. We must note however that due to extensive migration from the Andes to the city of Lima there is now a complex demographic composition in the city that results in Andean Spanish varieties with non-agreeing clitics being also spoken in Lima. In this paper, we

Aires Spanish exhibit gender and number marking on the agreeing clitic, *lo* [masc.sg], *los* [masc.pl], *la* [fem.sg], *las* [fem.pl] (hereafter, full agreement), whereas these distinctions are lost in Andean Spanish in favor of an invariable form *lo*, consistent with the singular masculine form in other varieties.² As for the extension of the phenomenon, these three dialects differ from other varieties of Spanish in that clitic doubling is not restricted to strong pronouns, and it extends to other kinds of DPs. However, each dialect makes a different cut in a continuum of doubling that goes from personal pronouns to bare plurals.

These variation facts, although well documented in the literature, have not been, to the best of our knowledge, extensively analyzed from a comparative perspective, with the exceptions of Leonetti (2008), Sánchez and Zdrojewski (2013), Ormazabal and Romero (2013), and Di Tullio et al. (2013). Our main goal in this paper is to explore a less studied source of variation: the (strict) observation of *Kayne's Generalization*, namely, the requirement that doubled DPs must bear a visible morphological case marker.

We claim that *Kayne's Generalization* is an instantiation of a more general condition: a case dependency requirement on agreement (Baker, 2008). Buenos Aires Spanish obeys *Kayne's Generalization*. In this variety, clitic doubling, which we assume to be an instance of agreement marking, is dependent on case marking (Jaeggli, 1986; Zdrojewski, 2008; Saab and Zdrojewski, 2012; Di Tullio et al., 2013).³ Instead, the analysis of this requirement in Lima Spanish reveals that in this variety, *v*^o can agree with unmarked DPs (in a clear violation of *Kayne's Generalization*), and *T*^o can agree with accusative marked DPs. In other words, in Lima Spanish, clitic doubling, and agreement in general, does not seem to be exclusively dependent on case marking.

In addition to this, we take into consideration another syntactic factor related with the phenomenon under study. It has been proposed in the recent literature that clitic doubling configurations have to meet a structural condition, i.e., the doubled DP must move to Spec, *v*P. We assume the movement analysis for Lima and Buenos Aires Spanish and we propose that in Andean Spanish dialects the object remains *v*P internal. Furthermore, we claim that clitic doubling in this dialect has to be understood as anti-EPP effect.

The paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we present the distribution of clitic doubling phenomena in the three varieties: Buenos Aires, Lima and Andean Spanish, with a focus on Peruvian varieties in contact with Quechua languages. We present the distribution of gender and number marking in Section 2.1 and the limits of definiteness and specificity accounts of clitic doubling in Section 2.2. In Section 3, we show that the doubling phenomenon in Andean Spanish dialects should not be derived by movement of the doubled DP, in contrast to what is assumed for Lima and Buenos Aires varieties. In Section 4, we analyze the behavior of these three dialects with respect to *Kayne's Generalization*. Finally, in Section 5, we present some concluding remarks including a possible connection of our data with Baker's (2008) Agreement Parameters.

² This non-agreeing clitic *lo* has been attested in varieties of Andean Spanish in areas of high contact with Quechua by Escobar (1978, 2000), and Caravedo and Klee (2005) among others. In those varieties it has been labeled an archimorpheme by Caravedo and Klee (2005) because it can double direct objects (animate, inanimate, definite, indefinite and some quantifiers as well as other VP-internal constituents). Mayer (2010) labels it *strange lo*. In some varieties of Andean Spanish the form that emerges is not *lo* but *le*. These two forms may coexist in the speech of some speakers (Camacho and Sánchez, 2002; Sánchez, 2003).

³ We make this assumption on the basis of previous work (Jaeggli, 1982, 1986; Zdrojewski, 2008; Saab and Zdrojewski, 2012; Ormazabal and Romero, 2013). We will not focus in this paper on providing a systematic review of the distinction between clitics as pronouns and clitics as agreement markers. An anonymous reviewer suggests that we use a coordination test to show that doubling clitics are agreement markers. While pronouns can be dropped in coordination structures, agreement markers cannot as shown in (i) where the pronoun *he* is dropped in the second conjunct but the subject agreement on the verb is not:

- (i) He eats and drinks.

This is also the case for clitic doubling in the varieties under study. The following example from Buenos Aires Spanish illustrates this point:

- (ii) #Lo_i abraz-ó y bes-ó a Pedro_i
 DEF.ACC.MASC.S hug-PST.3.S and kiss- PST.3.S DOM Pedro
 "(S/he) hugged and kissed Pedro."

This sentence can only be interpreted as having a different referent for *lo* and Pedro. If the referent is the same then clitic doubling is required:

- (iii) Lo_i abraz-ó y lo_i
 DEF.ACC.MASC.S hug-PST.3.S and DEF.ACC.MASC.S
 bes-ó a Pedro.
 kiss- PST.3.S DOM Pedro
 "(S/he) hugged and kissed Pedro."

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