

Complementizer deletion: parametric implications and verb movement

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Background: Italo-Romance varieties legitimize two distinct types of complementizer deletion: CD1, which can only be licensed if the selecting verb is a bridge verb and if the embedded verb bears [-realis] feature (1) and CD2, which is insensitive to verb type and to mood feature but requires a specific intervening clitic-nature element (a preverbal clitic, a preverbal negator or an auxiliary) between the matrix and embedded verbs (2). Standard Italian only accepts CD1, whereas Italo-romance varieties like Florentine or Barese select both (Cocchi & Poletto, 2002).

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| (1) Credo (che) sarà interessante ascoltarlo.
believe (that) will be interesting listen-
him.
'I believe (that) it will be interesting to
listen to him' | (2) Ha detto (che) non ha portato nulla.
Has said (that) not has brought anything
'He said (that) he did not bring anything' |
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According to Cocchi & Poletto (2002), CD1 and CD2 can be unified under the assumption that they both represent instances of “alternative checking” (Zanuttini, 1997; Obenauer, 2001). Focusing on CD2, the complementizer, base-generated in Force and encoding the [declarative] feature is the alternative checker of the clitic element moved to Force. From this featural account, two questions naturally arise: whether an implication between occurrence of CD1 and CD2 can be established and whether it is correct to assume that the clitic element moves solo in CD2 structures. This paper is aimed to offer an alternative view of CD relying on the Parametric Comparison Method (PCM), which is a parametric approach aimed to define the parameters which regulate the phenomena that operate in a specific syntactic domain (CP in this case) and their functional implications (Longobardi, 2001a).

Parametric implications: Following the PCM, I argue that there is a parametric implication between CD1 and CD2 resting on both logical and empirical assumptions. From a logical viewpoint, languages like Florentine with CD2 can have complementizer deletion when the selecting verb is both bridge and non-bridge and when the embedded verb encodes both [+realis] and [-realis] features, therefore any time that a language manifests CD2, it must also present CD1. Under the PCM approach, three parameters can be generated:

- (3) *Pc1*: Is complementizer deletion attested?
Pc2: Is complementizer deletion attested with both bridge and non-bridge selecting verbs and with both [+realis] and [-realis] feature specifications on the embedded verb?
Pc3: Is complementizer deletion only attested with bridge selecting verbs and with [-realis] specification on the embedded verb?

Consequently, if a language has a negative value for *Pc1*, there is no point in checking *Pc2* or *Pc3*'s values; these parameters turn 0-, meaning that they are irrelevant due to the value previously assigned to another parameter. On the other hand, if *Pc1* is positive, the other two are relevant. From (1), I can likewise conclude that if *Pc2* is positive, then *Pc3* is 0+, namely if a language admits CD2, it also presents CD1. These assumptions are further supported by empirical data collected from several Italo-Romance varieties: some of them categorically rule out complementizer deletion in both CD1 and CD2 contexts (Sicilian, Alto Polesano, Neapolitan, Campidanese), whereas other varieties present both (Florentine, Barese). Finally, there are some varieties that behave like Italian, which grammaticalizes CD1, but not CD2. However, there is no variety in my knowledge that displays CD2, but not CD1, upholding hence the view that there is a parametric implication between CD1 and CD2.

Verb Movement in CD2: Contrary to Cocchi & Poletto's (2002) proposal on clitic movement to Force in CD2 contexts, in this paper I propose that the clitic forms a unique unit with the verb at the syntactic level. This means that embracing the idea that CD2 involves clitic movement to Force (Cocchi & Poletto, 2002), verb movement along with the clitic need to be hypothesized as well. Under the PCM, this implies that a language like Florentine could assign a positive value to the following parameter (more specifically, if Pc2 is positive then Pc4 is 0+ as languages with CD2 directly entail V-to-Force movement):

- a. *Pc4*: Does the verb move to Force?

This proposal is borne out by some empirical data retrieved from Florentine which, in a manner akin to languages with V-to-Force movement, has a poor preverbal field resulting in a low occurrence of V3 and V4 (Wolfe, 2016). In Florentine, speakers accept a focalized element (or a topic or an adverb etc.) in CD2 structures only if it follows the verb (4):

- (4) M'ha detto *(QUATTRO BOTTIGLIE) te tu hai bevuto QUATTRO BOTTIGLIE ieri
 Me has told *(FOUR BOTTLES) you you-cl have drunk FOUR BOTTLES yesterday
 'He told me that FOUR BOTTLES you drank yesterday'

However, V-to-Force languages admit elements like hanging topics to the left of the verb (Wolfe, 2019b). The same occurs in a language like Florentine:

- (5) Scommetto Gianni l'avete preso in giro tutta l'estate per quello che ha fatto
 Bet John him have mocked the whole summer for what he did
 'I bet (as for) John, you mocked him the whole summer for what he did'

From these data, it is, therefore, possible to conclude that in CD2 structure, not only does the clitic element move to Force, but the whole verbal unit undergoes verb movement towards Force.

Conclusions: This paper aims to provide a new approach to analysing complementizer deletion introducing the notion of parametric implications. As observed, a parametric tool like PCM can successfully capture the implications between CD1 and CD2 assuming a parameter hierarchy capable of identifying which languages admit different patterns of CD1 and CD2. Moreover, further analysis of this phenomenon has led to the conclusion that languages with CD2 behave similarly to language with V-to-Force movement and this phenomenon can also be regulated by a parameter under the PCM, generating its respective relations.

References

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