Clitic Doubling with Full NPs in Non-Standard Serbian and Slovenian

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The Problem – The aim of this talk is to account for previously unnoticed clitic doubling with full NPs in Prizren-Timok Serbian (PTS) and Gorica Slovenian (GS), two non-standard dialects spoken in southeast Serbia and western Slovenia. Contrary to what has been reported in the literature, at least for GS (Marušič and Žaucer 2009, 2010), doubling with full NPs has been confirmed with some speakers, both in PTS and GS (note that pronominal doubling is always allowed in these dialects). More precisely, nine (out of seventeen) speakers of PTS and four (out of four) speakers of GS allow doubling with full NPs. In PTS, these speakers allow doubling with both proper nouns (1a) and common nouns (1b). GS is more restricted, allowing only proper nouns to be doubled (2a), doubling with common nouns being banned (2b):

(1) a. % Ja ga Milovana poštujem.
   I him.cl.ACC Milovan.ACC respect.1sg
   ‘I respect Milovan.’
b. % Ja gu kafu volim da popijem s komšiju.
   I it.cl.ACC coffee like.1sg to drink.1sg with neighbor
   ‘I like having coffee with my neighbor.’

(2) a. Jst ga Janeza spoštujem.
   I him.cl.ACC Janez.ACC respect.1sg
   ‘I respect Janez.’
b. Jst (*jo) kavo rad spijem s svojim sosedom.
   I it.cl.ACC coffee gladly drink.1sg with my neighbor
   ‘I like having coffee with my neighbor.’

The above data contrast with Bošković’s (2008, 2012) claim that only languages with articles allow clitic doubling. PTS and GS do not have articles yet allow clitic doubling. Bošković’s (2008, 2012) claim is made in light of the NP/DP Parameter, according to which only languages with articles project DP (DP languages), while languages without articles (NP languages) lack DP entirely. The aim of this talk is to explore properties of NP doubling in the dialects at stake, and propose an analysis that can account for this murky phenomenon.

Definiteness/specificity requirements – Clitic doubling is typically related to some definiteness/specificity effects. Thus, while Bulgarian and Macedonian, languages with articles, differ with respect to exact licensing of clitic doubling (e.g., the presence vs. absence of topical nouns), they share one crucial feature – common nouns cannot be doubled if they are non-specific indefinite. This is illustrated in (3):

(3) a. Târsjat (*go) nov učitel.        [Bulgarian, Franks and King 2000:253]
   seek.3pl him.ACC new teacher
   ‘They are seeking a new teacher.’
b. Profesorot (*ja) prašuvaše edna studentka.
   professor-the her.cl.ACC questioned one student
   ‘The professor was questioning a student’       [Macedonian, Berent 1980:161]

In (3a-b), both nov učitel and edna studentka are non-specific indefinite and thus cannot be doubled. In brief, languages with articles require doubled nouns to be related to definiteness/specificity in order to license clitic doubling.

PTS and Specificity Effects - The first issue that I examine is whether there are any definiteness/specificity effects involved in doubling with common nouns/full NPs in PTS (proper nouns are inherently definite and thus will be ignored). I use Bickerton’s (1981)
proposal concerning the interpretation of articles in a language, used by a number of second language researchers. Bickerton (1981) suggests that all the differences in the interpretation of articles can be deduced from two binary features: whether the article and associated NP refer to a specific entity [± specific referent], and whether the article and associated NP are already known from the previous discourse or from context, to the person who is listening or reading the sentence [± hearer knowledge]. I test all the possible feature combinations, along with a context. Due to the space limitations, here I only present the most relevant feature combination for the current purposes [specific referent -hearer knowledge], a situation which involve non-specific indefinite nouns, crucially impossible to trigger doubling in languages with articles (cf. 3a-b). Surprisingly, speakers in PTS allow non-specific indefinite nouns to be doubled:

(4) a. The context:
Imagine that you are at a wedding party eating roast meet. However, the waiter forgot to bring napkins. You will ask the waiter:

b. Izvin’te. Imate (gu) salvetu? [PTS]
sorry have.2sg it.cl.acc napkin
‘Excuse me. Do you have a napkin?’

In short, by allowing non-specific indefinite nouns in (4b), doubling with full NPs in PTS does not follow the general properties of clitic doubling, as illustrated in (3a-b) through clitic doubling in Bulgarian and Macedonian.

The Analysis – Based on (4), I argue that clitic doubling with full NPs in PTS is not an instance of standard clitic doubling but some other phenomenon, similar to the one found in Iroquoian languages. Noun doubling in Iroquoian languages, reported by Baker (1988), among others, involves an incorporated noun that can be doubled by an external NP (note that the incorporated noun and the external noun phrase do not have to be identical lexical items). This is illustrated in (5) from Tuscarora (the example is taken from Baker 1988:145):


‘He regularly picks up dogs [he is a dog catcher].’

Doubling constructions in Iroquoian and PTS involve doubling of non-specific indefinite nouns (cf. (5) and (4)), impossible in DP languages (3a-b). Moreover, (5) is a property of NP languages, given that Iroquoian languages lack articles. Given the parallelism above, I argue for a unified analysis between clitic doubling with full NPs in PTS and noun doubling in Iroquoian. I adopt a syntactic account of noun doubling, as put forth by Barrie (2006, 2011), who develops a phrasal movement account of noun incorporation in Northern Iroquoian. Specifically, Barrie argues that the incorporated nominal element and the double are merged within VP as a constituent, which he refers to as CIP, the nominal element that surfaces as incorporated being generated as SpecClP, and the doubling nominal as the complement of ClP, after which the nominal element undergoes noun incorporation, while the double remains in situ. I extend Barrie’s claim to clitic doubling in PTS and argue that the clitic, albeit not incorporated, performs the same role as the incorporated noun. Overall, I claim that clitic doubling in PTS and noun doubling in Iroquoian can be analyzed under the same umbrella using Barrie’s (2006, 2011) phrasal movement account.