**Floating agreement in American Spanish Leísta dialects**

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Romance Linguistics in the Pacific: Variation in Time and Space

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This special issue includes selected peer reviewed proceedings of the workshop Romance Linguistics in the Pacific: variation in time and space, part of the Australian Linguistic Society Conference held in December 2011 at the Australian National University in Canberra. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the participants and the audience for their comments and suggestions. We are also grateful to the editor of AJL, Keith Allan, for giving us this opportunity.

The workshop brought together specialists from both sides of the Pacific working on a variety of topics within Romance Linguistics, ranging from phonological analysis to syntax and discourse. The rationale behind this workshop was to celebrate the establishment of a research group in the field at the School of Language Studies at the ANU, in particular Hispanic Linguistics. This special edition marks the launch of the Romance Linguistics in the Antipodes (RomLA) virtual research centre, which aims to provide a platform for researchers in Australia and New Zealand, and to facilitate collaborations and networking with colleagues outside of Oceania.

The papers are organised in alphabetical order, which coincidentally allows us to organise the papers according to theoretical frameworks and/or topics.

In the first paper, Delicado Cantero addresses clausal substantivization in Spanish. After introducing a formal syntactic account of finite clauses and clausal nominalization in Spanish, a language where a DP may optionally top a CP in certain contexts, the author concentrates on two main issues. The first is the unexpected constraint barring the combination of prepositions and clauses introduced by determiners. While DPs make typical prepositional complements, <D + CP> in Spanish results in ungrammaticality if selected by a preposition. Building on the weak nature of the Spanish complementizer que and on interpolation tests, the author argues for the application of strict adjacency between P and C, thus blocking a potential DP projection. The author goes on to argue against the need of the determiner layer – a DP – in creating a nominal (finite) clause, and supports a differentiation between the nominality of the (finite) clause and the projection of an additional DP, labelled clausal substantivization.
This first paper adopts a Chomskyan perspective, which is also the basis for the second paper, by Di Sciullo and Somesfalean. They adopt a biolinguistic perspective in examining the linearization of definite determiners in the history of Romanian based on the ‘Directional Asymmetry Principle’. They envision change as an evolutionary process in line with recent findings in biology, in particular the principle of symmetry breaking. Like bipartite organisms moving from an initial stage of symmetry towards an asymmetrical stage through a fluctuating stage, after a period of variable order, Romanian definite determiners have moved from a variable stage (due to differences in feature valuation) to a stable but asymmetrical stage: syntactically constrained to one position. Directional asymmetry is seen as a process of simplification.

Romanian is also the topic of the third paper, by Virginia Hill, which examines the historical evolution of differential object marking (DOM) by pe with a discourse based approach. Based on data from Early Modern Romanian and from other Balkan Romance languages, Hill argues for pe as a discourse marker and against the generally assumed analysis as a Case assigning preposition. This distinction is important as it allows to dissociate clitic doubling from DOM and establish both as independent operations. The fine-grained analysis of pe-DOM as a contrastive topic, switching to a familiar topic in conjunction with clitic doubling, is not only useful for a deeper understanding of Romanian grammar and dialectal variation, but also to identify the types of derivational triggers involved.

The fourth paper, by Elisabeth Mayer, focuses on ‘floating features’ in clitic clusters with two third-person participants in American Spanish Leísta dialects (ASLD). The author links the floating features to a split object marking system, indicative of a language change in progress and proposes an analysis within the framework of Lexical-Functional Grammar. Clitic cluster agreement is triggered by a loss of case restrictions on the third-person clitic paradigm, which in turn is a continuation of the historical erosion of case in Spanish. While Standard Spanish varieties draw a clear distinction between direct and indirect objects, ASLDs follow a generally typologically observed tendency to mark the primary object instead.

We close the special issue with an invited paper by Catherine Travis and Rena Torres Cacoullos. While not presented at the ALS 2011, this paper offers a sociolinguistic and corpus-based study of language variation and retention in minority groups. The study revolves around the compilation of the New Mexican Spanish-English Bilingual corpus
New Mexican Spanish is particularly interesting in being a rather isolated dialect of Spanish which represents the oldest European language spoken in what is today the USA. Due to the pressure of English, the influence from standard Mexican Spanish and Spanish in the schools, traditional New Mexican Spanish is an endangered dialect. The authors provide a sociolinguistic profile of the community and explain in detail their methodology for data compilation and transcription. Travis and Torres Cacoullos advocate for oral corpora built upon spontaneous interactions collected in community-based fieldwork. The speech community lies at the centre of their approach. With the addition of this paper to our volume we welcome Catherine Travis as the new chair of Modern European Languages at the ANU and as a new researcher in Romance Linguistics in Australia, in particular Hispanic Linguistics.

Last but not least, we finish this foreword with sincere thanks our peer reviewers, working in Australia, the USA and Europe, whose expertise and assistance have made this volume possible.
Floating agreement in American Spanish *Leísta* dialects

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In this paper I link ‘floating features’ in clitic clusters with two third-person participants to a split object marking system, indicative of a language change in progress. Both clitics are undergoing concurrent reanalysis processes affecting them differentially, i.e., they are located at different stages in the process. Whereas standard varieties draw a clear distinction between direct and indirect object, American Spanish *Leísta* dialects move to a distinction between primary and secondary object. Clitic cluster agreement in those dialects is triggered by a loss of case restrictions on the third-person clitics resulting in a tendency to mark the primary object.

Keywords: dialect syntax, clitic clusters, case erosion, primary object marking

1. Introduction

This paper proposes an analysis of object marking by clitic clusters with ‘floating features’ focussing on feature variation- and surface constraints in third person clitic clusters in

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1 I would like to thank the audience of the ALS 2011, as well as two anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions. I owe gratitude to Avery Andrews for many helpful suggestions. The usual disclaimers apply.
American Spanish *Leísta* dialects (henceforth ASLD) within the framework of Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG). In these dialects, either number (1b) or gender, or both, if both are present as in (2b), optionally float from the first clitic se onto the second clitic resulting in double-marking of the features of the indirect (dative) object, and no marking of those of the direct (accusative) object. The difference between ASLD (1b) and (2b) and the Standard Spanish version in (1a) and (2a) is that in the latter co-occurring clitics show feature agreement with their referential noun phrases.

(1) a. **Standard Spanish** [+AGR, +REF]
   
   El libro, a ellos, ¿quién se lo prestó?²
   
   DET.MSG book IOM PRO.3MPL who SE ACC.3MSG lent.3SG
   
   ‘The book, who lent it to them?’

   b. **American Leísta Spanish** [-AGR, -REF]
   
   El libro, a ellos, ¿quién se los prestó?
   
   DET.MSG book IOM PRO.3MPL who SE ACC.3MSG lent.3SG
   

(2) a. **Standard Spanish** [+AGR, +REF]

   Si ellas me quieren comprar el caballo yo se lo venderé
   
   if PRO.3FPL DAT.3SG want.3PL buy DET.MSG horse PRO.1SG SE ACC.3MSG sell.1SG

² The following conventions and abbreviations are used in all examples: third person clitics in bold, the syncretic case marker a in italic. 1,2,3: first, second, third person; SG: singular; PL: plural; IOM: indirect object case marking=dative case (DAT); DOM: differential object marking = accusative case (ACC); DAT: dative clitic=indirect object marker; ACC: accusative clitic=direct object marker; DET: determiner; M: masculine gender; F: feminine gender; IMP: imperative; INF: infinitive; PRED: predicate feature/lexical form; PRO: pronoun; GEND: gender; PAST: past tense; AGR: agreement; REF: referential; IMPERS: impersonal; REFL: reflexive; PREP: preposition; ETHDAT: ethical dative; OM: object marker. All data if not acknowledged are mine.
'If they want to buy the horse from me, I will sell it to them'

b. American Leista Spanish [-AGR, -REF]

Si ellas, me quieren comprar el caballo, yo se las venderé.

‘If they want to buy the horse from me, I will sell it to them’

Company (2003, based on Lope Blanch 1953)

Cluster variation in terms of floating features is motivated by a complex mix of morphological, syntactic and pragmatic, synchronic as well as diachronic factors. The aim of this paper is to analyse and explain floating features in American Spanish Leista dialects based on a hybrid/split object agreement system as shown in (2b). The main claim is that the ‘floating features’ phenomenon can be analysed as a result of loss of case restrictions on the third-person clitics, which is a continuation of the historical erosion of case in Spanish, combined with a generally typologically observed tendency to mark the ‘primary’ rather than the ‘secondary’ object in the sense of Dryer (1986).

Previous accounts treated the phenomenon as non-standardised dialectal variation (Heap 1998; Ordoñez 2002; Company 2001, 2003), proposed morphological analyses such as feature delinking from *spurious se* and relinking onto the direct object clitic (Bonet 1991, 1995; Harris 1994, 1995; Pescarini 2005), violable language-specific markedness constraints based on the interaction of phonology and morphology (Grimshaw 1982, 2001, 2004) and topic-worthiness of the macro-roles THEME and RECIPIENT in a frequency-based analysis (Haspelmath 2004).

Even though these formal morphological, syntactic and functional-pragmatic studies address animacy, case syncretism, pragmatic motivation and agreement issues, they do not integrate the analysis of ‘floating features’ with the properties and cross-dialectal variation in American Leista Spanish dialects. Part of the problem are highly variant co-occurrence restrictions of floating features that are not very extensively documented for these varieties.

The paper is organised as follows. Section two presents my proposal to incorporate the ASLD clusters under discussion in form of a modified version of the Verb Phrase rules
originally developed by Grimshaw (1982) for French. The rest of section two is dedicated to introduce the background of the phenomenon in terms of case syncretism of the pronominal paradigm, case erosion of clitics and how this can be linked to primary object marking in ASLD demonstrating the difference between direct vs. indirect object (DO/IO) marking in Standard Spanish varieties and primary vs. secondary object (PO/SO) marking in ASLD. Section three treats alignment constraints and surface orders mainly for Standard Peninsular Spanish facts and proposes two alternate restrictions for spurious SE. ASLD strategies and innovations in terms of primary and secondary object marking is given in section four, followed by a short conclusion in section five.

2. Proposal for ‘floating’ agreement and theoretical background

I argue that the extended and annotated VP rule in (3), adapted from Grimshaw (1982) for French in Mayer (2010), adequately allows for ‘floating’ features when read in conjunction with the ordering restrictions in Perlmutter’s (1971) template \( (V_{\text{fin}} \text{ SE I II III (AUX) V}_{+\text{fin}}) \). The adapted VP-rule in (3) allows for the difference between optional and relatively unrestricted object-marking with dative objects, as well as much more restricted object marking with accusatives. It also covers very limited clitic doubling (CLD) of accusative objects in Peninsular Standard Spanish, liberal CLD limited to specifics in some American Spanish dialects, and CLD in ASLD. The annotation \( (\uparrow \text{OBJ})=\downarrow \) is based on the assumption that reflexive constructions are actually transitive (as in Alencar & Kelling 2005), covering both ‘primary and ‘secondary’ object.\(^3\)

\(^3\) Reflexives are treated by the syntax as objects based on evidence that reflexive and non-reflexive clitics show identical linearization and grammatical functions. Thus the extended VP-rule can handle the difference in transitivity due to a distinction between syntactic reflexivity with an agentive subject and semantic reflexivity (ethical datives) with a non-agentive subject and with similarities to unaccusative syntax.
This allows us to specify *se* as PERS 3 and the series of *lo/la* as PERS 3 and REFL-.

Morphological Blocking (Andrews 1990) assures the selection of the *lo/la* series over *se* for the presence of a single nonreflexive third-person clitic.

However, there is a problem with overgeneration since the revised template allows most of the clitics to be assigned any core grammatical function, with controlling order solely by person and the ‘reflexive’ feature. The problem will be addressed in the following sections by introducing restrictions on ‘case’/grammatical function of the clitics and the most relevant universal or near universal constraints from the literature.

### 2.1. Clitics and case erosion

Spanish has a mixed clitic system of enclitics and proclitics. Enclitics (including the subject clitic) can be treated as stem-level inflectional affixes, morphologically attached to the verb with internal structure and their own grammatical functions (Andrews 1990). Proclitics are special clitics (Zwicky 1977), prosodically weak single words syntactically adjoined to the verbal host. Spanish clitics cannot be modified, conjoined, topicalized, nor appear in isolation. They play a double role in the functional morphology of phrases. They can function
as PRED-less agreement markers in grammatical agreement, or as full theta-role or PRED-bearing objects in anaphoric agreement\(^5\); optionality of the alternate functions is regulated by Bresnan’s rule of anaphoric control (Bresnan 2001a).

While grammatical relations in standard Spanish varieties are marked according to the properties of each feature-specific paradigm of the third-person clitics, in some American Spanish leísta dialects, the entire sequence of lo/a/e(s) attempts to manifest the properties of a single grammatical relation. This phenomenon, known as leísmo, laísmo and loísmo is a result of case erosion, it is highly variant and more tightly keyed to grammatical function than to morphological form.\(^6\)

Tables 1a,b below show the important difference in clitichood and object agreement of the dative and accusative paradigms in Standard Spanish and ASLD. Whereas European Spanish uses a referential system based on [±animacy], American Spanish leísmo object marking strategies eliminate gender in favour of case distinction, hence the name ALSD. In the reanalysis process affecting the clitic systems differentially, the fully grammaticalised dative le emerges as almost sole featureless object marker showing a more advanced grammaticalization stage than the accusative lo, which retains some referential features as topic-anaphoric pronoun in the sense of Bresnan (2001b).

\(^5\) I follow Bresnan & Mchombo (1987) in adopting the distinction into anaphoric agreement and grammatical agreement, with the latter being part of structural syntax, e.g. predicate-argument.

\(^6\) Standard leísmo (restricted to European Spanish) extends the use of dative le to human and mainly male (accusative) direct object arguments; laísmo refers to the use of feminine accusative la to dative and accusative arguments, and loísmo refers to an extension of accusative lo to dative arguments (cf. Fernández-Ordoñez 1999 for the full range of variation in European Spanish). ASLD extends the dative le to feminine humans and in some dialects under extensive leísmo to inanimates, triggering loss of laísmo. There is further the issue that leísmo does not facilitate clitic doubling as discussed by Ormázabal & Romero (2007) in terms of agreement, as doubling does not seem to have a significant effect on the form or behaviour of an object-marking clitic.
Tables 1a, b. Evolution and differences in clitic systems

1a. Standard Spanish clitic system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ACCUSATIVE</th>
<th>DATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANIM</td>
<td>le/lo</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ANIM</td>
<td>lo</td>
<td>la</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1b. American *Leísta* Spanish clitic system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANIM</th>
<th>ACCUSATIVE</th>
<th>DATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>le/lo</td>
<td>le/lo/la</td>
<td>le</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, under extensive *leismo*, as for example in Ecuador and Paraguay, this leads to a single object marking system based on *le* for [±animates] with *lo* restricted to propositional anaphors.

2.2. Primary and secondary object marking

Clitic case erosion marks the move from co-reference to grammatical agreement in object marking. Case marking in Standard Spanish varieties allows identification of different grammatical relations intrinsically linked to differentiate between the grammatical functions DO/IO. In ASLD grammatical functions are defined in terms of PO/SO in accordance with their prominence ranking on the thematic role hierarchy (Alsina 1996: 36) in (4a), and on the partial ordering of argument functions (Bresnan 2001a: 309) in (4b).

(4) a. AGENT>BENEFICIARY>GOAL/EXPERIENCER>INSTRUMENT>PATIENT/ THEME>LOCATIVE
    b. SUBJ>OBJ, OBL$_0$ > OBJ$_0$

The floating phenomenon in (1) and (2) can be accounted for by assuming the classification of objects in Table 2 with the AGENT as the most topical mapping onto the external function SUBJ. For the internal object functions, Spanish complies with the PO/SO principle (Dryer 1986: 836) where the corresponding object relation in monotransitives are PO↔DO, and in ditransitives PO↔IO, SO↔DO, exactly as laid out in Table 2 with the corresponding thematic roles.
Table 2: Primary and secondary object classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>PATIENT/THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+Direct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ditransitive</th>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>RECIPIENT</th>
<th>THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+Primary</td>
<td>-Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Direct</td>
<td>+Direct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semi-transitive</th>
<th>AGENT</th>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+Primary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Direct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In object–verb agreement, Spanish shows dependent and head-marking for both core grammatical functions, the dative object and the accusative object (Nichols 1986; Bresnan 2001a). Dependent-marking uses a syncretic form *a* to mark dative objects obligatorily (IOM) and accusative objects differentially (DOM). Head-marking in Standard Spanish obtains through a set of feature-specific clitic pronouns (number, case/gender [fem/masc]) which optionally cross-reference the object on the verb. Co-occurrence of head and dependent marking, so called clitic doubling (CLD), shows two elements specifying information about one argument. The following examples demonstrate Spanish object marking for ditransitives and monotransitives in terms of DO/IO and PO/SO marking, as well as PREDless clitics in grammatical agreement and PREDcarrying clitics in anaphoric agreement.

In ditransitive constructions such as in (5), the dative is the primary object [+primary, -direct], and the accusative the secondary object [-primary, +direct]. Dative objects (IO) show no crossreferencing (CLD) restrictions presumably because they are usually core arguments with intrinsically greater animacy and topicality. In grammatical agreement in (5a), the dative *le* is a PRED-less agreement marker, and in anaphoric agreement in (5b) a PRED-bearing object. Clitic clusters (5c-d) show the move from co-reference to grammatical agreement.

7 Also called the prepositional accusative, the form *a* functions as a locative preposition, dative case for indirect objects (IOM) and differential object marker (DOM) for direct objects.
Standard varieties (5c) draw a clear distinction between DO and IO with feature-specific clitics. ‘Floating’ features in ASLD (5d) represent the move to PO/SO in marking the object argument highest on the thematic hierarchy, as such most topical, as the primary object in the secondary object slot.

(5) a. Lei doy el libro a mi hermana
    DAT.3SG give.1SG DET.MSG book IOM POSS sister.FSG
    ‘I give the book to my sister’

b. Lei doy el libro
    DAT.3SG give.1SG DET.MSG book
    ‘I give her the book’

c. Se lo doy lo [pers 3][pers 3,gend,num]
    SE ACC.3MSG give.1SG
    ‘I give it to her’

d. Se la doy la [+primary, -direct]
    SE PRIM.3FSG give.1SG
    ‘I give it to her’

Monotransitives mark the accusative as DO/primary object [+primary, +direct] in grammatical agreement in (6a-c). Clitic doubling of accusatives is restricted to pronominal objects (6a) in Peninsular Standard Spanish, and more liberal in American Spanish dialects. DOM obligatorily marks specific human direct objects as in (6b) and extends optional marking to highly topical animate (6c) and inanimate objects. Anaphoric agreement with feature-specifying clitics, referential with their antecedent objects for (6a-c), is shown in (6d).

(6) a. La /lo vi a ella /él
    ACC.3FSG / ACC.3MSG see.1SG DOM PRO.3FSG/ PRO.3MSG
    ‘I saw her/him’

b. Vi a Ana/Pablo
    see.1SG DOM Ana/Pablo
    ‘I see Ana/Pablo’

c. Vi (a) la gata/el gato de mi hermano
    see.1SG DOM DET.FSG cat / DET.MSG cat PREP POSS.1SG brother
    ‘I see the she cat/he cat.’
Peninsular or European Spanish and American Spanish leísta strategies are different from each other. Whereas American Spanish leísmo is case-based and indicative of a language change in progress, Peninsular Spanish leísmo is animacy-based as shown in (7a) referring to a highly topical human masculine object argument.8 Since there appear to be no agreement phenomena associated with the traditional cases, clitics express inside out functional uncertainty which constrain the grammatical functions they can express rather than the DAT vs. ACC case values. In the Peninsular Spanish leísmo strategy in (7a) the ([+primary]↓) specification blocks leísmo examples such as (16b) and (16c) while MAN=+ represents a semantic restriction. The loss of the constraint [+direct] that lo realizes in (7b), generalizes to realizing [+object].

(7)  a. le(s): ([+primary]↓), MAN = +
    Le /lo vimos (a él)
    DAT.3SG / ACC.3MSG saw.1PL (DOM PRO.3MSG
    ‘We saw him’

    b. le(s): ([+primary, -direct]↓)
    Le /lo vimos
    DAT.3SG / ACC.3MSG saw.1PL
    ‘We saw him/him/it (as in the event)’

In sum, the differences in CLD seem to be more tightly keyed to grammatical functions/cases rather than morphological form. As such the distinction between primary object [-R] and secondary object [+R] is syntactic and represented at two different levels. The concept of object is represented on f(functional)-structure, the level that represents grammatical functions. The concept of restrictedness is represented at the level of argument)-structure. Therefore an object represented as a restricted object on f-structure maps onto a restricted

8 The personal leísmo strategy is part of a highly complex multisystem and subject to geographical variation.
argument on a-structure; and an object represented as an unrestricted object on f-structure
does not map onto a restricted argument on a-structure. The features (un)restricted [±R] and
(non)objective [±O] regulate the mapping of thematic roles to argument functions. The
distribution of primary and secondary object in Spanish is shown in table 3.

Table 3. Primary and secondary object in Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>-R</th>
<th>+R</th>
<th>DT</th>
<th>-R</th>
<th>+R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-O</td>
<td>SUBJ</td>
<td>OBL_θ</td>
<td>-O</td>
<td>SUBJ</td>
<td>OBL_θ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+O</td>
<td>OBJ/DO</td>
<td></td>
<td>+O</td>
<td>OBJ/IO</td>
<td>OBJ_θ/DO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Spanish then, the primary object is the thematically unrestricted object [-R], OBJ/DO in
monotransitives and OBJ/IO in ditransitives. The secondary object is OBJ_θ, it is thematically
restricted to arguments with particular thematic roles. From a crosslinguistic perspective SO
is mostly patients and themes, they are more marked and more restricted in their distribution
than primary objects⁹ (Dryer 1986; Bresnan & Kanerva 1989; Alsina 1996, 2001; Butt &
King 1996).

2.3 Case syncretism in the clitic paradigm

The immediate consequence of case erosion as described above is case syncretism as shown
in Table 4 for the Spanish pronominal object paradigm. Case syncretic forms mark the two
core object arguments, the dative and the accusative, correlating with person surface
constraints in clitic clusters.

⁹ For example, Butt & King (1996) correlate weak (nonspecific) objects in Hindi/Urdu with the primary object
and strong (specific) objects with the secondary object.
Table 4. Syncretism in the clitic paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERS</th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>SG+ACC</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>PL</th>
<th>PL+ACC</th>
<th>ACC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nos</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>te</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>le</td>
<td>lo/la</td>
<td>les</td>
<td></td>
<td>los/las</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LAS</td>
<td>le</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>le</td>
<td>lo/la</td>
<td>les</td>
<td></td>
<td>los/las</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Person 1&2 syncretic forms are phonologically weak, underspecified for case and gender but marked for person; they do not overtly distinguish dative and accusative arguments.\(^{10}\) The second person plural paradigm shows two lines with a difference in the plural paradigm only. As shown in example (18) in section 4.2 below, European Spanish (ES) retains the syncretic form "os", and Latin American Spanish (LAS) replaces it with the plural third person forms displaying a singular concentration of person/number/gender features and a split into dative and accusative case.

The fully syncretic form "se" is only specified for person, “without explicit reference (gender and number)” (Pescarini 2005: 253), covering as a portmanteau morpheme third person singular and plural, second person plural reflexive pronouns, spurious "se" and impersonal "se", which is the only true subject clitic and can be replaced by “one” (Zagona 2002: 17). The problem that syncretism causes here is the loss of consistency of expression (Spencer & Luis 2010: 5), as syncretism breaks the one to one correspondence between form and function/meaning. However the form per se remains consistent in all environments.

The strong relationship between case syncretism and surface constraints is shown in the next section.

\(^{10}\) Spanish third-person clitics originated from the Latin demonstratives, and as such are the only clitics to preserve the gender, case and reflexivity features.
3. Alignment constraints and surface order

Due to the lack of GF specification in the template and the high degree of syncretism in the clitic paradigms, the possible clitic sequences are highly underdetermined without additional constraints being imposed. This section treats these mostly universal or near universal constraints focusing on the relatively well-known Peninsular Standard Spanish facts.

Previous mainly Minimalist proposals, such as the Object Agreement Constraints (OAC) or the Restricted Argument Parameter (RAP) triggered by the dative (Albizu 1997; Ormáñabal & Romero 2007; Nevins 2007; Adger & Harbour 2007) argue that clitics fail to check features against a functional head, and that object agreement on the verbal complex needs to be restricted to one argument only. The present proposal of PO/SO marking is based on the classic me lui/I-II or Person-Case Constraint (PCC) (Bonet 1991, 1995) which in turn builds on clitic order surface constraints (Perlmutter 1971) and the spurious SE rule.

3.1 Me lui/I-II or Person-Case constraint

The me lui /or person I-II constraint applied in (8a) “disallows the presence of a third person clitic which does not correspond to the direct object, with ditransitive verbs” (Bonet 1991: 42). This constraint is claimed to be universal, but there are language-specific strategies to avoid it.

(8a) *Me le recomendaron
   ACC.1SG DAT.3SG recommend.3PL.PAST
   ‘They recommended me to him/her’

b. Me recomendaron a él
   ACC.1SG recommend.3PL.PAST PREP PRO.3MSG
   ‘They recommended me to him/her’

This then rules out ASLD combinations such as me le, te le where le is the indirect object.

The order restriction DAT>ACC presents a solution to most ordering underdetermination.

11 The English translation in (8b) is a faithful reproduction from the article, however it should only be ‘They recommended me to him’, as the PRO él is only masculine.
For clusters with two third-person arguments this order restriction is imposed by the verb and not by the forms of the clitics. This would rule out third-person clusters of *se le* with *se* as the direct object.

### 3.1.1 Two third-person clusters and spurious SE

In two third-person clusters, the spurious SE rule in (9a) gives rise to the only opaque clitic in Spanish. Spurious SE is based on two basic interacting rules for the relative clitic order in Spanish and French, on the surface structure constraints (Perlmutter, 1971: 76) in (9b) and on the case constraints based on the thematic case hierarchy in (9c) (Dinnsen 1972: 181).

\[
\begin{align*}
(9) & \quad \text{a. } *\text{le(s)}_{\text{DAT}} \text{ lo}_{\text{ACC}} \rightarrow \text{SE lo} \\
    & \quad \text{b. } \text{se II I III} \\
    & \quad \text{c. } \text{REFLEXIVE > BENEF active > DATIVE > ACCUSATIVE}
\end{align*}
\]

The template in (3) shows two positions for third person, one occupied by SE with its multifunctions. Co-occurrence of two third person clitics then places the accusative into the third person slot and transforms the dative into spurious SE (10b). In standard third person clusters, the PCC bars the dative (and *leismo*) from appearing in the second slot (10c).

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12 These constraints have also been addressed in Haspelmath (2004) in a diachronic functionalist explanation of the reworded ‘Ditransitive Person-Role Constraint’ (DPRC) in terms of THEME (T) and RECIPIENT (R) as macro-roles aiming at cross-linguistic generalization. In this frequency-based account, the role scale R > T interacts with the person scale 1, 2 over 3, that is the THEME is most likely a third person whereas the RECIPIENT tends to be first and second person. These semantic roles in turn are related to different grades of topic-worthiness which integrates the DPRC into a greater crosslinguistic generalization, namely the Ditransitive Topicality Roles Constraint. This approach shows a strong emphasis on speaker preferences but acknowledges the existence of language specific constraints nevertheless.

13 Important for this analysis is the potential assumption that the unsupported reflexive fails to parse dative and parses third person instead (Grimshaw 1982).
(10) a. *Le lo /la doy  
    DAT.3SG ACC.3MSG / ACC.3FSG give.1SG  
    ‘I give it to him / her’  

b. Se lo(s) /las(s) doy  
    SE ACC.3MSG(PL)/ ACC.3FSG(PL) give.1SG  
    ‘I give it (them) to him / her’  

c. *Se le doy  
    SE DAT.3SG give.1SG  
    ‘I give it to her’  

Parallel to le under Peninsular Spanish leísmo in (7a) and (7b), spurious SE has two alternate feature contents. SE restricted to a reflexive in (11a), and SE as the primary object when there is a third-person secondary object in (11b) as an inside out functional uncertainty condition.14

(11) a. REFL=c+  

b. ((POBJ↑) SOBJ PERS) = III  

Violations of first position SE with person I and II do exist as shown in (12) but are considered as extremely vulgar and to be avoided15 in traditional grammar. Unusual clitic cluster variations of first and second person have been reported for varieties of Aragonese, Occitan, certain varieties of Catalan, non-standard Murcian Spanish as in (12), Judeo Spanish, a specific region in the Dominican Republic, and for colloquial French (Heap 1998; Fernández Soriano 1999; Ordóñez 2002).

(12) a. Si no riego, me se sec a todo  
    if not irrigate.1SG ETHDAT.3SG SE dry.3SG QUANT

14 POBJ and SOBJ here are described as ad-hoc notations for the two kinds of objects.

15 This comment implies that these two combinations, which clearly violate Bello’s (1984) rule, are in fact not categorically ruled out by surface constraints, but not generally accepted because of a normative/standardizing view.
‘If I don’t irrigate, everything dries up on me’

b. La he atado para que no te se caiga

ACC.3FSG AUX.1SG tie.PARTIC PREP that not ETHDAT.2SG SE fall.SUBJUNC

‘I tied it so that it wouldn’t fall’

Heap (1998: 321)

Both instances of se in (12a) and (12b) can be easily analysed as primary object marking in second position of clitic clusters based on a grammaticalization process affecting the third-person clitic paradigm differentially and triggering a move from person to grammatical function marking.

3.2 Nonfinite positioning and clitic climbing

As a last point, clitic placement in preverbal or postverbal position depends on finiteness of the verb as illustrated in the extended version (13) of the reformulated spurious se rule (Mayer 2010: 32). The clitic position is not available to putative NPs, only another clitic in form of a clitic cluster or an auxiliary can come between the verb and a clitic.

(13) V se II I III (AUX) V
    -fin       +fin

In finite clauses proclitics occupy the immediate preverbal position (14a), in non-finite clauses enclitics adjoin verb finally, as in the imperative (14b), the gerund (14c) and also with infinitives.

(14) a. Se lo da
    SE ACC.3MSG give.3SG
    ‘(S)he gives it to her/him/them’

b. ¡Déselo!
    give.IMP.SE.ACC.3MSG
    ‘Give it to her/him/them.’

c. Dándoselo
    giving.GERUND.SE.ACC.3MSG
    ‘Giving it to her/him/them’
Finally, clitic climbing constructions with light verbs as in (15a) and (15b) optionally allow both locations; cluster splitting (15c) does not normally obtain in any dialect or variety, but counterexamples do exist.\textsuperscript{16}

(15) a. Quiere dárselo
    want.3SG give.INF.SE.ACC.3MSG
    ‘(S)he wants to give it to her/him/them’

b. Se lo quiere dar
    SE ACC.3MSG want.3SG give.INF
    ‘(S)he wants to give it to her/him/them’

c. *Se/Le quiere darlo.

These examples provide ample evidence to view clitic clusters not only as morphological but also as phonological units (Harris 1995). In morphological accounts floating features are accounted for by feature relinking or feature transfer as a consequence of the application of spurious SE (Bonet 1995; Harris 1994, 1995; Pescarini 2005). However the motives for the linking processes remain unclear in these accounts.

4. American Spanish \textit{Leísta} dialect clusters

ASLD clusters as shown in this section, defy any explanation in terms of morphological features including syntactic proposals focusing on the dative and unique verbal agreement (Albizu 1997; Nevins 2007; Ormázabal & Romero 2007; Adger & Harbour 2007) as they are based on person. However, dialectal variation and non-standard clusters can be explained by the typological change from DO/IO to PO/SO marking, focusing on primary object marking in the second slot, which implies a move from person to GF marking. When reworded in those terms, the PCC constraint as well as the extended PCC (Ormázabal & Romero 2007: 319 ff) loosely apply.

\textsuperscript{16} See Andrews & Manning (1999, chapter 3, section 3.3) for an extensive discussion of clitic climbing with restructuring verbs and a proposal of a non-constructive splitting constraint rule. Also, thanks to an external reviewer for bringing counterexamples such as ‘se quiere darlo’ to my attention; further investigation is needed.
4.1. Primary and secondary object and PCC effects in ASLD

The combination of person 1&3 in (16) follows the PCC rule by placing the accusative in the second slot. ASLD speakers accept *leísmo* in the second slot in the person 1&3 cluster in (16b) as well as in the person 2&3 cluster in (16c) although the grammatical relation in slot 2 is an accusative (*leísmo*) and not a dative. In ASLD *leista* dialects the restrictions on the second entry weaken to the point that (16b) and (16c) are considered a dialect-variable (%).

\[(16)\]
\[\begin{align*}
a. & \text{ Me } \text{ lo } / \text{ la } \text{ acercaron} & \text{1&3} \\
& \text{DAT.1SG ACC.3MSG / ACC.3FSQ take.closer.3 PL} \\
& \text{‘They brought him/her closer to me.’} \\
& \text{b. } \%\text{Me } \text{ le } \text{ acercaron} & \%1&3 \\
& \text{DAT.1SG DAT.3SG take.closer.3PL} \\
& \text{‘They recommended him to me’} \\
& \text{c. } \%\text{Te } \text{ le } \text{ presentaron} & \%2&3 \\
& \text{DAT.2SG DAT.3SG introduce.3PL.IMPERS} \\
& \text{‘They introduced him to you’}
\end{align*}\]

Fernández-Soriano (1999:1267)

PCC constraints don’t appear in person 3&3 clusters with impersonal *se* appearing in the first slot and the dative in the second (17a) and in (17c) involving a case syncretic person 2 and a reflexive person 1. The person 2&1 cluster with two syncretic (case underspecified) clitics in (17b) is different as it may give rise to referential ambiguity. The PCC constraints may apply weakly here in order to render both readings a bit forced, but not fully ungrammatical.

\[(17)\]
\[\begin{align*}
a. & \text{ Se } \text{ les } \text{ presentaron unos problemas} & \text{3&3} \\
& \text{IMPERS DAT.3SG run.3PL.IMPERS some problems} \\
& \text{‘They ran into some (unexpected) problems’} \\
& \text{b. } ?\text{Te } \text{ me } \text{ presentaron} & \text{2&1} \\
& \text{ACC/DAT.2SG DAT/ACC.1SG introduce.3PL.IMPERS} \\
& \text{‘They introduced you to me/me to you’}
\end{align*}\]
c. Te me imaginaba diferente 2&1

ACC.2SG REFL.1SG imagine.1SG different

‘I thought you looked different’

In ASLD and other dialects [+primary] and [+direct] are replaced by [+object] and the lexical entries for le, lo/la (18) generalize to [+object].

(18) le(s): ([+object])
lo/a(s): ([+object])

The Peninsular non-floating feature version keeps [+direct].

(19) lo/a(s): ([+direct])

The example from (16b) will be disambiguated both by the PCC and the constraint PO >SO in the linear ordering replacing the DAT > ACC.

4.2 Case syncretism and the PCC

Proposals such as Adger & Harbour (2007) focussing on a strong relationship between the PCC and case syncretism support the analysis presented here as they exemplify the move from coreferential agreement marking IO and DO in (20a) to primary object marking in (20b).

(20) a. European Spanish 2&3 → [IO + DO]
Os lo agradezco
DAT.2pl ACC.3MSG thank.1SG
‘I thank you (pl) for it’

b. Latin American Spanish 3&3 → [PO + SO]
Se lo agradezco
SE ACC.3MSG thank.1SG
‘I thank you (sg/pl) for it’

Losing the person feature from the second person plural, not only triggers an increase in syncretism but also in argument marking, both examples combine an [+ANIM] and an [-ANIM] object and referential identification obtains unambiguously in (20a) different from (20b) where the case syncretic weak clitic SE gives rise to potential referential and syntactic ambiguity. SE can either refer to you plural or You singular as anaphor for the honorific third
person personal pronoun usted. SE as the type of addressee in (20b) can be specified in the f-
structure representation in (21).

(21) PRED ‘PRO’
     PERS {}
     NUM PL

In ASLD in (22), the [+MASC, +PL] features float from spurious SE to the accusative clitic
assuring referential identification of the primary object.

(22) American Spanish Leista dialects\textsuperscript{17} 3&3 → [+primary, -direct]
    Se los voy a agradecer
    SE ACC.3MPL will.1SG PREP thank.INF
    ‘I will thank you (pl) for it’

The primary feature reflects the discourse status and topic-worthiness of the object, and
the direct feature reflects the thematic role status of the object (cf Dryer 1986: 841).

4.3 Increased syncretism as an effect of case erosion

In Castilla, historic uses of the dative clitic le referring to inanimate direct objects (23a) and
in a cluster consisting of dative and leismo (23b) date back as far as to XIII. Specifically the
leismo cluster in (23b) presents more evidence for the syntactic nature of the phenomenon
and against a morphological treatment (Bonet, 1991 me-lui constraint).

(23) a. el paraguas le perdí
    DET.MSG umbrella DAT.3SG lost.1SG
    ‘I lost the umbrella’

b. los libros me les dejé en casa
    DET.MPL book DAT.1SG DAT.3PL left.1SG PREP home
    ‘The book I forgot them at home’

\textsuperscript{17} Chilean Spanish, pc from C Holtheuer.
Further, the combination of two completely underspecified clitics, a first person ethical dative and a third person leísmo in (24a), and an impersonal and third person leísmo in (24b), demonstrates fully fledged primary object marking in ASLD.

(24) a. ¿Conoces a Michelle y Alex?
    ‘Do you know Michelle and Alex?’
    b. Sí,  yo          me          les          encuentro todos los días
    ‘Yes, I meet them every day’
    c. Se          les          encuentran todos los días
    ‘Yes, one meets them every day’

Finally, as expected in a language change situation, ASLD dialects show the full range of competing grammars, the classic indirect object in (25a) and loísmo co-varying with leísmo in (25b). Co-variation of floating features in terms of agreement markers (las) referential with the PO and LAS leísmo in (25c) are a further consequence of case erosion and indicative of primary object marking.

(25) a. lei          entregamos el regaloj a     lasi     niñasi
    DAT.3SG give.1PL DET.MSG gift IOM DET.FPL girls
    ‘We give the gifts to the girls’
    b. Se lo          /le          entregamos
    SE ACC.3MSG/ DAT.3SG give.1PL
    ‘We give it to them’
    c. Se las          / les          entregamos
    SE ACC.3FPL / DAT.3PL give.1PL
    ‘We give it to them’

The theory presented here predicts that in ASLD examples such as (25c) SE and the third person can jointly realize the primary object as las/les realize [+object]. Of crucial importance is that the DAT>ACC ordering restriction for 2 third-person arguments is triggered by the inherent feature content of the arguments, as imposed by the verb, and not by the forms of the clitics.
5. Conclusion

At first sight the phenomenon looks like a simple parsing problem, where, due to coexistence of various paradigms, *leísmo, laísmo, loísmo*, dialect speakers potentially fail to distinguish between dative and accusative clitics (as argued for by Harris & Halle (2005: 212)). This is true to a certain extent, however it is also symptomatic of several ongoing grammaticalization processes affecting the general case object marking system. These reanalysis processes are gradual, resulting in case erosion indicative of a typological change from ACC-DAT in monotransitives to PO/SO (primary object/secondary object) in ditransitives. I have shown that both *le* in Peninsular / European Spanish *leísmo* as in (7) and *se* in (11) have each two alternate feature contents, this also applies to spurious *se*. If *lo/la/le* lose their case specifications, and null secondary object anaphora become allowed, there is nothing to block floating features since both the *se* and the third-person positions can realize the primary object GF with *se* as primary and third-person as secondary.

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