

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 23 August 2014



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

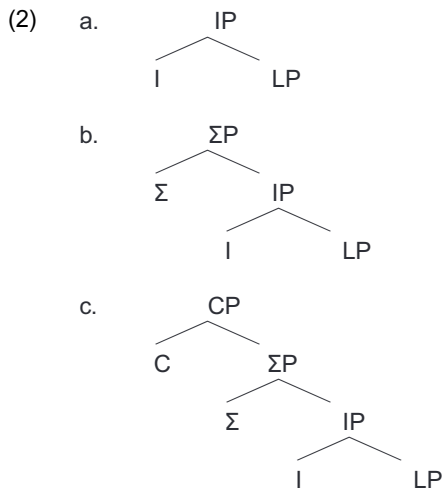
The aim of this article is to address the account that is provided for the weak and strong pronoun categories (Cardinaletti and Starke, 1999) – but also the descriptive categories themselves, and hence ultimately criterion (1).

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: manzini@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

syncretism/neutralization) is irrelevant. In other words a (near) invariant syntactic-semantic structure combines with (near) arbitrary variation at the PF interface – which is also the hallmark of realizational models.

In short, there are theoretical reasons that suggest a reassessment of the proposal in (2). In this article we also provide evidence that the strong/weak distinction is not used consistently in the literature. In other words, when different morphologies or distributions are observed among non-clitic pronouns, the strong and weak categories are invoked – but there is no uniform characterization of the properties and behaviours that strong and weak status correspond to. In section 2 we argue that the Object Shift-like position of Italian *loro* can be accounted if we assume that it has oblique case, making it unlike other full pronouns, which are not case marked; the correlation with non-distributional facts (no animacy restriction, no contrastive focus, no modification, no coordination) only partially holds. In section 3, the distribution of the three series of wh- pronouns of Lombard varieties is shown to be freer than envisaged by Poletto and Pollock (2009) – and the independently needed category Focus is sufficient to account for it. Finally, the complex distribution of French wh- pronouns in section 4 requires only independently motivated categories of animacy and case (as well as finiteness).¹

If the crossing of a particular morphology with a particular distribution, as in (1), is a valid criterion for establishing a categorization, one obtains essentially the same paradigms as in a descriptive or normative grammar, with a proliferation of syncretisms and homophonies. For instance, categorizations like that of weak and strong pronouns are associated with partial lexicons of the type illustrated in Tables 5 and 6 of section 4 for French wh- pronouns. I already indicated why such grammars are very powerful (namely PF opacity). Since they use highly structured categories, they are also relatively rigid. This is not to say that there are no categorial oppositions in grammar; however such oppositions reflect much simpler categorizations and their complex interplay.²

The implications of the adoption of a weak pronoun category go also beyond the three case studies considered here. In particular, as briefly discussed in section 2.4, it is not only the weak-strong divide that causes concern, but also the clitic-weak divide, that cannot be discussed here in any detail for reasons of space. A grammar that adopts the category weak pronoun, understood as the intersection of a distribution and a morphology that are not quite the same as clitics or as full DPs, cf. (1), can attach this label for instance to stressed pronouns with enclitic distribution, as in (27) below. In present terms, however, the real primitives are stress, and possibly a notion of pronominal inflection ('clitic') and the real issue therefore is why they intersect in certain contexts, as opposed to being in complementary distribution. In other words the explanation we are looking for does not (and cannot) involve the complex category of weak pronoun defined by (1), but rather atomic categories corresponding to bona fide properties of lexical items interacting with elementary rules of the computational component.

In what follows my basic aim is quite modest – namely to show how in the three instances considered here, independently motivated categories such as case, focus, etc. may be sufficient to capture the data, making the complex category weak pronoun unnecessary.

2. Italian *loro*

This section argues that Italian *loro* with Dative Shift-like or possessive (genitive) distribution is not a weak pronoun, homophonous to the strong pronoun *loro*, but rather an oblique pronoun – the only surviving non clitic oblique of the language (together with relative *cui*). Two general caveats on the data are in order. First, it is part of the present argument that the judgements on strong *loro* provided by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) are too restrictive. Because potentially controversial grammaticality judgements are involved, I proceeded in a particularly cautious way, checking expressions which I found acceptable in the relevant readings against the corpus from the national newspaper *La Repubblica* (Baroni et al., 2004). The naturalistic examples so obtained were then submitted to native speakers. So, what are used here are grammaticality judgements on naturalistic examples. Second, oblique *loro*, while part of the standard language as reflected by written sources such as *La Repubblica* newspaper, may be disappearing (or have disappeared) from colloquial varieties, especially as a dative; similar considerations apply to *cui*. This matter has not been especially attended to here, since by definition we must rely on idiolects where the relevant forms and distributions are present. Since we work in a mentalist frame of reference, we take the view that whatever people say or accept defines a bona fide grammar. Issues of language change, preservation and loss are of course of the greatest interest – but to reiterate the point, a native speaker competence defines a grammar, however unstable in externalist terms.

¹ This does not say anything about Germanic languages (Holmberg, 1986). The expectation is that if Germanic languages have three series of pronouns, they cannot be accounted for in terms of diminishing structural size, as in (2), without use of a rich PF interface (Late Lexicalization) – and that the three series do not have constant properties across languages and pronoun type.

² This aspect of the proposal in (2) is deeply consonant to the cartographic enterprise (Cinque and Rizzi, 2008 and references quoted there).

2.1. Introducing the data

Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) observe that what appears to be a single lexical element, namely Italian *loro* ‘they/them’, has in fact two different distributions. In the strong distribution, it patterns together with *lui* ‘he/him’ and *lei* ‘she/her’ and fills the same positions as any ordinary noun phrase, as shown in (5b–c); in particular as a dative, strong *loro* is embedded under the *a* preposition, as in (5b), and follows the accusative. In the weak distribution, *loro* associates with a position unavailable to *lui/lei*, as in (5a).

- (5) a. Ho offerto loro/*lui/*lei il mio aiuto
I have offered them/him/her my help
‘I offered them/him/her my help’
b. Ho offerto il mio aiuto a lui/a lei/a loro
I have offered my help to him/to her/to them
‘I offered my help to him/her/them’
c. Ho visto lui/lei/loro
I have seen him/her/them
‘I saw him/her/them’

The parallel between dative (5a–b) and genitive *loro* in (6) is noted by Cardinaletti (1998). In (6b), *loro* has the same distribution as *lui*, *lei*, namely as the object of a preposition. In (6a), the prenominal genitive position is available for *loro* but not for *lui*, *lei* – recreating the same contrast as in (5a) vs. (5b).

- (6) a. La loro/*lui/*lei casa
the their/his/her home
‘Their/his/her home’
b. La casa di lui/di lei/di loro
the home of him/of her/of them
‘Their/his/her home’

Another element in Italian that behaves like *loro* is relative *cui* ‘whom’. *Cui* can occur in the same positions as the other relative pronoun *il quale*, in particular as the object of a preposition in (7). However it can also appear in the genitive position, as in (8b), unlike *il quale*. Furthermore, it can lexicalize the dative without the help of any preposition, as in (8a). Again, in the terms of Cardinaletti (1998), there are two *cui* in Italian, a strong one in (7) and a weak one in (8).

- (7) L'uomo a cui/al quale/ di cui/del quale ho parlato
The man to whom/ of whom I have spoken
(8) a. L'uomo cui/*il quale diedi il libro
The man whom I gave the book
b. L'uomo il cui/*il quale libro ho recensito
The man the whose book I have reviewed
‘The man the book of whom/whose book I reviewed’

Cardinaletti and Starke relate the distributional facts in (5)–(8) to other properties, including animacy, contrastive focus, coordination, modification by adverbs. As schematized in Table 1, they argue that strong forms (i.e. *a loro* as in (5b) or direct object *loro*, as in (5c)) and weak forms (i.e. dative *loro* in (5a)) are in complementary distribution with respect to these properties or configurations. In what follows we will briefly examine each correlation in turn.

2.1.1. Evaluating Table 1

Beginning from the top of Table 1, strong pronouns are associated with animacy restrictions while weak pronouns are not. These restrictions hold only for personal pronouns. For instance, *cui* can have any reference even when it is supposedly strong, i.e. embedded under prepositions; thus it refers to an animate in (7) and to an inanimate in (9). One may then wonder why animacy facts can vary, while the strong/weak categorization remains constant.

- (9) La cosa a cui mi sono dedicato
The thing to which myself I am devoted
‘The thing which I took care of’

Table 1
Cardinaletti and Starke's (1999) predictions.

	Weak <i>loro</i>	Strong <i>Loro</i>
Animacy restriction	No	Yes
Contrastive focus	No	Yes
Coordination	No	Yes
Modification by adverbs	No	Yes

Embedding under a preposition counts as a strong context, for instance in (5b) or (6b). However *loro* generally admits of inanimate reference when embedded under prepositions, as in the examples in (10), from *la Repubblica* corpus. The shape of the complex PP appears to be irrelevant, including *attorno a* (literally ‘around to’) in (10a), with an obligatory *a* ‘to’ – and *sopra di* (literally ‘above of’) in (10b), with a *di* ‘of’ found only in front of pronouns (cf. Garzonio and Rossi, 2013 for a classification).

- (10) a. ...il deterioramento del livello di vita finisca per aprire maggiore spazio alle correnti di pensiero “non conformiste” e coagulare **attorno a loro** il crescente malcontento
the deterioration of the level of living ends up opening more space for currents of thought “non conformist” and to coagulate around (to) them growing dissatisfaction
- b. Quando poi... arriva a dipingere il fondo, tutto si fa indistinto, sciolto nella luce... Sarà la fila lunga delle colline che si fanno tutte rosa sotto il pallido azzurro del cielo **sopra di loro**
when next... he gets to painting the background, all becomes indistinct, melting into the light... It may be the long line of hills that become all pink under the pale blue of the sky above (of) them

Another set of contexts that counts as strong are those characterized by contrastive focus (second line of Table 1), also including exhaustive focus, as in answers to questions. The facts of the matter are that inanimate *loro* is easily found under exhaustive/contrastive focus in clefts, as in the corpus data from *la Repubblica* in (11), accepted by the native speakers consulted. In other words, as before, the correlation between animacy and supposedly strong status (under contrastive/exhaustive focus) does not hold.

- (11) a. E' più importante ai fini della prestazione sportiva l'analisi degli ormoni maschili [...] **sono loro che** favoriscono l'aumento della massa muscolare
it is more important for the purposes of performance in sport the analysis of male hormones... it's them that favour the increase of muscular mass
- b. l'andamento dei conti dipende largamente dalla prossima legislatura [...] **Sono loro che**, eventualmente, possono condurre l'Italia al soddisfacimento delle condizioni necessarie per la partecipazione.
the profile of the accounts [i.e. the budget] depend largely on the next legislature... It's them [i.e. the accounts] that, eventually, may lead Italy to the satisfaction of the conditions necessary for participation

Note that the data in (10) and (11), from written texts, have anaphoric *loro*, referring back to a full DP. On the contrary, the examples in Cardinaletti and Starke are generally out of the blue, and as such invite the reader to interpret them deictically. Suppose their judgements are correct, so that in deictic contexts, inanimates must be referred by other pronominal series, notably demonstratives. Whatever accounts for this, it is not be the strong/weak categorization per se. Deictic reference must be available to weak pronouns and to clitics (see the discussion in section 2.2) so that a direct deixis-strong status correlation is too powerful.

A further test of weak status for pronouns is that they cannot be coordinated (line 3 of Table 1). Examples of coordination for weak *loro* involve coordinating prepositionless *loro* with itself, as in (12), in a position which is antifocussed (in Romance, Focus is aligned with the right edge, cf. Zubizarreta, 1998). I suggest that coordination of two identical items in the absence of contrastive focus/ostension may make (12a) odd. Even in genitive contexts if *loro* is coordinated with itself, as in (12b), the result is odd, on a par with (12a).

- (12) a. #Ho dato loro e loro i miei consigli
I have given them and them my advice
- b. #La loro e loro missione...
their and their mission...

However coordination can be tested without pragmatic interference on the genitive position, where *loro* can in principle be coordinated with any possessive pronoun. In the judgements I collected and in the corpus data from *Repubblica* in (13) coordinations with *loro* yield wellformed results. Cardinaletti (1998:68) comments that “in apparent conjunctions of prenominal possessives . . . we very probably have a case of backward deletion in the first conjunct”. An anonymous reviewer suggests that backward deletion predicts that “the sequence cannot be read with the typical intonation of coordinations, i.e. with phrase-final stress only on the second conjunct”. However in the intuitions of the speakers consulted the intonation of the coordinations in (13) is flat.

- (13) a. nulla aggiungono e spesso molto tolgono alla **loro e nostra** sacra missione, documentare la Verità
nothing they add and often much they subtract to their and our sacred mission documenting Truth
b. Santagata e Morganti, che negli anni hanno . . . ricondotto alla **loro e nostra** quotidianità, . . . anche
i mondi degli autori volta a volta visitati: Dostoevskij . . .
S. and M., who throughout the years have . . . brought back to their and our daily life, . . . also the worlds of
the authors in turn visited: D. . .

Next, weak *loro* cannot be modified by adverbs according to Table 1 (line 4), specifically by *only* and *also*. Data like (14), sourced from the *Repubblica* corpus, are instead acceptable for the speakers consulted. Prenominal *anche loro* cannot be tested because branching constituents are impossible in prenominal position in Romance, as in English.³

- (14) a. La diagnosi ha **dato anche loro** la certezza che erano sane pure le loro figlie
the diagnosis has given also them the certainty that were healthy their daughters too
b. nel pomeriggio è stato a Coverciano da quelli grandi. A chiedere **anche loro** quel patto di lealtà sinora
negato.
in the afternoon he has visited at C. the big ones [i.e. national team footballers]. To ask also them that vow
of fealty till now denied

In general, Table 1 predicts that strong and weak pronouns are in perfect complementary distribution. This is because of another important principle that Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) defend, namely Economy of representations, which they formulate simply as “Minimize structure (up to crash)”. Because of Economy of representations, a strong pronoun is allowed exactly in those cases in which a weak pronoun “does not result in an acceptable derivation”. Some of the data already introduced, namely (7) and (8a), show that there is no complementary distribution between *cui* and *a cui*.⁴ As for *loro*, since weak *loro* is allowed in anti-focussed, non-left-peripheral position, e.g. (5a), by Economy of representations we should predict that strong *a loro* will be confined to focus-aligned or left-peripheral environments. Nevertheless, examples like (15), from *La Repubblica* corpus, are accepted by the native speakers consulted with a non-focus interpretation for *a loro*; different interpretations are in fact difficult to access.

- (15) occorre fare di più, nel nostro Paese, per i bambini, per la loro tutela giuridica, per la loro salute fisica e
affettiva, per **dare a loro** un futuro sereno
it is necessary to do more in our Country for the children, for their protection under the law, for their
physical and emotional health, to give to them a serene future

Consider then the other side of the correlation, namely that weak *loro* is not compatible with contrastive/exhaustive focus positions, where strong *a loro* is forced. In fact, a stronger generalization on dative *loro* is actually proposed by Cardinaletti and Starke, essentially that *loro* is never associated with any discourse-related position, including left peripheral ones. Suppose that in this direction the correlation holds. Cardinaletti and Starke impute the restricted range of positions available to weak *loro* to the structure in (2b) with its lack of a C layer. However we will see in sections 3 and 4 that the literature assumes that there are weak wh- pronouns and that they are to be seen in the left periphery of sentences.

³ An anonymous reviewer points out the possibility that in (14a), *anche* modifies the verb. In (14b) this is excluded by the context; *anche loro* is ‘the big ones too’ (as opposed to ‘the small ones’, i.e. junior league players).

⁴ Both are possible within the same literary register, *cui* by common consent – and *a cui* because of occurrences in literature texts like (i).

(i) la storia attesta come riuscisse ad armare contro quel re il duca di Savoia, **a cui** fece perder più di una città
history attests how he was able to arm against that king the duke of Savoy, to whom he caused the loss of more than one city
(A. Manzoni, *I Promessi Sposi*, ch. 1)

Table 2
Present empirical findings.

	Oblique <i>loro</i>	Other <i>Loro</i>
Animacy restriction	No	No
Contrastive focus/left-peripheral	No	Possible
Coordination	Yes	Yes
Modification by adverbs	Yes	Yes

Thus either *wh-* is not a C property – or else the complementary distribution under focus/in the left periphery cannot in fact be explained in terms of the theory in (2).

Going back to Table 1 we are now in a position to modify the empirical picture it presents. Our overall conclusion is that the special distribution of oblique *loro* does not necessarily correlate with size, either in terms of fewer restrictions (animacy) or in terms of inability of being embedded into more complex structures (modification, coordination). Rather animate and inanimate reference is possible for all *loro*, as is coordination and modification by adverbs (Table 2). We shall return to the antifocussing of oblique *loro* in proposing our account of it in section 2.3.

2.2. The analysis of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999)

As outlined in (2), Cardinaletti and Starke propose an analysis under which weak *loro* is structurally smaller than strong *loro*, while it is bigger than a clitic. The analysis in itself has considerable intuitive appeal. What the data say is that oblique, preposition-less *loro* and *loro* with the ordinary full pronoun distribution share the same PF form. At the same time oblique, preposition-less *loro* is much more similar to clitics than to full pronouns in displaying an idiosyncratic distribution: it appears where other DPs cannot and vice versa. Now, most models embed the idea that clitics are smaller than full pronouns in some way (prosodically, in X vs. XP constituency etc.). Hence trying to refine the model so as to allow an intermediate size between clitics and full pronouns, is both natural and ingenuous.

The correlations depicted in Table 1 and discussed in the previous sections are brought into play in an attempt to show that the relative size model can explain independent properties of the various series of items involved. However we tried to show that the correlations do not hold. Another issue concerns the interpretive predictions of the model. Déchaine and Wiltchko (2002) observe a number of properties with respect to which pronouns of various kinds may differ in interpretation. For example, not all pronouns can be bound variables; English *one* and English *I* or *we* cannot. Therefore they propose that the internal size of pronouns varies. 1st/2nd person pronouns are full DP's; *one* is an NP since it can be preceded by a D as in *this one*. Finally 3rd person pronouns, which can be bound variables, are ϕ Ps. As they remark “the only other proposal that distinguishes pronouns from each other in terms of their categorical identity is that of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999)” (Déchaine and Wiltchko, 2002:438). Interestingly, they identify Cardinaletti and Starke's weak *loro*, strong *a loro* and clitic *gli* with a ϕ P projection, since they all have the same LF properties.

A conceptual issue for the structural size analysis in (2) is implicit in this discussion. Introducing a C layer or a Σ layer in a sentence implies introducing LF-relevant properties. Therefore introducing such a layer in the structure of a pronoun, as in (2), ought to yield LF-relevant distinctions between weak pronouns, strong pronouns and clitics. The semantic correlates of the strong/weak/clitic distinction are in fact discussed by Cardinaletti and Starke. Here we must separate two different issues, namely possibilities that are available for clitics (weak pronouns) and not for strong pronouns and the reverse.

If there are interpretations that strong pronouns have and clitics (weak pronouns) do not, we may impute them to the added layers of strong pronouns, especially the C layer. In this respect, Cardinaletti and Starke state that a deficient pronoun may accompany “ostension” but only “in a limited range of contexts”. In particular, “the deficient elements are permissible ... only if they refer to an entity which is already prominent in the discourse” or in the non-verbal context. In reality, discourse and non-verbal context define the standard conditions which make deictic reference possible for any pronoun at all. No pronoun can be interpreted deictically in the absence of restrictions from discourse or non-verbal context. Therefore it is not clear that the C layer actually makes an interpretive contribution. This also weakens the claim pertaining to the interpretive construals available only for clitics (weak pronouns), for instance expletive or idiomatic ones. One cannot claim that ‘non-referential’ readings of clitics (weak pronouns) are due to the lack of the C layer in any automatic way – simply because the lack of C still licences all of the referential interpretations.

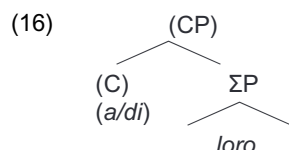
As anticipated in section 1, morphology concurs with semantics in supporting an equally complex structuring of the whole 3rd person pronoun set in Romance, including clitics, as illustrated in (4), cf. (4') below. In the words of [Manzini and Savoia \(2007\)](#), “clitic pronouns... are not elementary lexical entries, but correspond to the merger of two separate morphemes, namely an */d/* allomorph, introducing definite reference, and inflectional endings introducing the properties traditionally described in terms of number, gender and case”.⁵ [Kratzer \(2009:221\)](#) draws similar conclusions from the semantic analysis of full pronouns: “the alleged “3rd person” features are in fact gender features, a variety of descriptive feature... If [a descriptive feature] is to grow into a pronoun, it has to combine with a feature [def] that turns it into a definite description. If [def] is the familiar feature that can also be pronounced as a definite determiner in certain configurations, it should head its own functional projection, hence be a D. It would then not originate in the same feature set as descriptive features, which are nominal, hence Ns”.

- (4') a. $[[D \text{ d } [N \text{ u}]]$ 'him'
 b. $[[D \text{ d } [N \text{ a}]]$ 'her'
 c. $[[D \text{ d } [N \text{ ɔ}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ 'them(m)'
 d. $[[D \text{ d } [N \text{ a}]] [Q \text{ s}]]$ 'them(f)'

Paulilatino (Sardinia)

In short, objections from overt morphological constituency can be circumvented in a realizational model of the syntax/lexicon interface (see section 1); however the interpretive issues just raised are independent of the projection vs. realization debate. Furthermore, the fact that structures like (3)–(4) admit of a (roughly) compositional interpretation makes it less easy to confine them to the realm of morphemic analysis, with no necessary match to underlying syntactic structuring.

It remains for us to consider how Cardinaletti and Starke account for the crucial distribution in (5a) and (5b). Recall that for them, prepositionsless *loro* is a weak pronoun characterized by an internal structure lacking the equivalent of the CP sentential layer. In strong *a loro*, this CP layer is present and headed by the preposition *a*, as illustrated in (16). They propose that the CP-like layer of strong pronouns is associated with case, of which the *a* preposition is an instance (as is, presumably, *di*). Since weak *loro* lacks the CP-like case layer, it must occur in a position where it can get case via agreement, namely a (dedicated) [Spec, Agr] position.



Therefore what matters for the distribution in (5a) and (5b) is whether *loro* and *(a) loro* are or are not associated with case. For Cardinaletti and Starke the presence or absence of the CP layer also accounts for the correlations in [Table 1](#). However if these correlations do not hold, the distribution in (5a) vs. (5b) may as well be accounted for directly in terms of case.

⁵ An anonymous reviewer quotes “weak and clitic pronouns in idioms, with generic or existential reading” as arguments again the conclusion that the */* morpheme as an element which “introduces definite reference”. For instance (i) admits of both a definite interpretation for *la* ‘it’ (e.g. ‘the lemonade’, etc.) and of an idiom interpretation for *la bevo* ‘drink it’, i.e. ‘believe it’. However, in the same way, we could point to the generic or existential reading of */*-determiners in Romance (ii) ([Vergnaud and Zubizarreta, 1992](#)) and conclude that ‘definiteness’ or D is not an appropriate label for them. This line of argument is represented in the literature (e.g. [Giusti, 1995](#), who takes Romance */*-determiners to instantiate the K category for Case). I believe that the right way to proceed is sharpening the notion of D/definiteness, clarifying its internal articulation and the crosslinguistic variation it gives raise to (cf. [Ramchand and Svenonius, 2008](#)).

- (i) non me la bevo
 not me it I drink
 ‘I won’t drink it’/‘I won’t believe it’
 (ii) la balena bianca
 the white whale
 ‘the white whale’/‘white whales’

2.3. An alternative analysis

Since we adopt a projectionist view of the lexicon/syntax interface, let us begin with a morphemic analysis of *loro*. Obviously, *loro* results from the inflectional ending *-oro* attaching to the definiteness base *l-*. In Latin, the related morphology *-ru(m)* is an oblique plural ending (specifically the genitive plural, cf. Halle and Vaux, 1997; Calabrese, 2008). In the only Romance language with case inflections on nouns, namely Romanian, *-or* also shows up as the oblique plural, subsuming genitive and dative, and attaching to the *l-* definiteness morphology, as in as in *băieți-l-or* ‘to/of the boys’, *fete-l-or* ‘to/of the girls’, *l-or* ‘to/of them’.

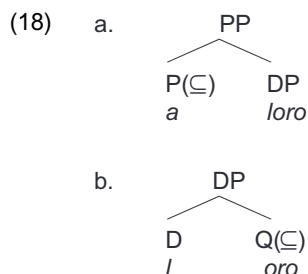
In Italian *loro* cannot be oblique in contexts where it alternates with *lui/lei*, and specifically in direct case contexts like (5c). At the same time, the possibility may be explored that in the contexts where *loro* does not alternate with *lui/lei*, for instance (5a), it has an oblique content that *lui, lei* do not have (or no longer have, cf. the discussion of Old Italian by Egerland and Cardinaletti (2010)). In other words the hypothesis is that *loro* is optionally oblique, as in (17). The *loro* that alternates with *lui/lei* is only plural; while the *loro* that does not alternate with *lui/lei* is both plural and oblique.

(17) *loro*: D, plural, (oblique)

We assume that oblique case denotes a relation.⁶ In this respect, oblique case and prepositions like *a* ‘to’, *di* ‘of’ etc. have the same content (even categorically), essentially as proposed by Fillmore (1968). Hence, *loro* and *a loro* do not differ by the absence and presence of case respectively, but rather by the mode of lexicalization of the oblique relation, namely by the inflectional ending *-oro* or by the preposition *a*. As for the actual content of this oblique relation, the obvious answer is possession, namely the content traditionally associated with the genitive. The dative, in turn, has been argued to be connected to possession at least since Kayne (1984); Kayne takes the internal argument of a ditransitive verb like ‘offer’ in (5) to be a small clause, where the dative plays the role of possessor to the accusative.

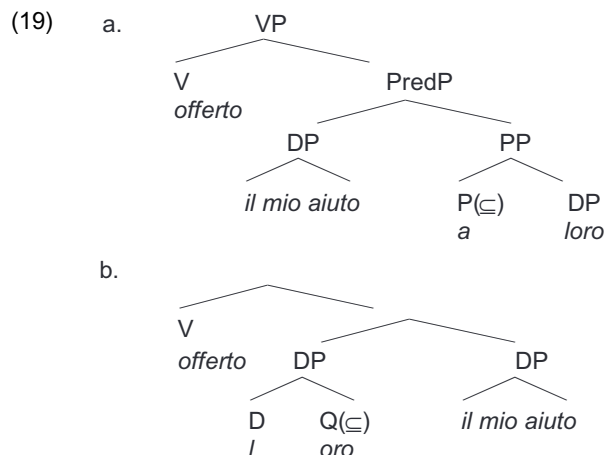
Various strands of literature put forth the idea that possession is a surface manifestation of a more elementary part-whole relation. Manzini and Savoia (2005, 2007) propose that the Romance clitic *ne* (syncretic in some varieties between genitive and dative) denotes a superset-of some other argument of the sentence (the theme). Belvin and den Dikken (1997:170) define the relation introduced by *have* as “zonal inclusion” in the following terms: “the ‘meaning’ of *have* ... denotes a special kind of inclusion relation ... dubbed ‘zonal inclusion’ ... Entities have various zones associated with them, such that an object or eventuality may be included in a zone associated with an entity without being physically contained in that entity. ... The type of zones which may be associated with an entity will vary with the entity.”

Following Manzini and Savoia (2011a), let us notate the part-whole/superset/zonal inclusion relation with ‘ $\subseteq$ ’. This relation can be lexicalized by case endings or it can be lexicalized by prepositions. We correspondingly notate the prepositions *a* ‘to’ and *di* ‘of’ as $P(\subseteq)$, as a reminder of their content. As for oblique endings like *-oro*, since relational content within the nominal domain is associated with Q categories (cf. generalized quantifier theory), we label them as $Q(\subseteq)$, though nothing hinges on the choice of Q. In terms of this notation, the structure of the PP *a loro* will be as in (18a), the structure of intrinsically oblique *loro* as in (18b). This implies that verbs selecting for ‘dative’ select neither D nor P – but ($\subseteq$) itself.

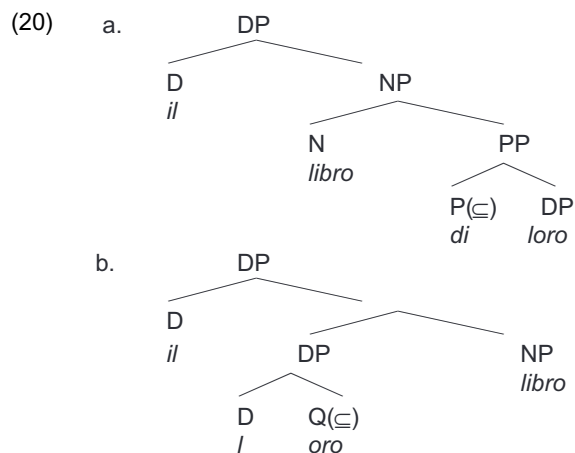


⁶ As is well known, for Chomsky (2001, 2008), Case is a mere byproduct of agreement. However there is an obvious family of problems with this approach, namely that agreement and case fairly commonly split in natural languages. Unexpected splits include EPP arguments of finite sentences in the accusative (Manzini and Savoia, 2007 on Albanian vs. Chomsky, 2001 on Greek). They further include accusatives assigned in the absence of a vP (Baker and Vinokurova, 2010 on Sakha, but their phenomena correspond to the ‘extended accusative’ of the typological literature, documented in familiar languages like Latin, cf. Plank, 1985; Cennamo, 2011).

We can now consider the data in (5), beginning with (5b). Following Kayne (1984), as mentioned above, the complement of a ditransitive verb like ‘offer’ in (5) is a predication denoting possession. In present terms, *a* is the predicate denoting possession, $P(\subseteq)$, taking *loro* as its internal argument (the possessor) and the theme of the verb is its external argument (the possessee), as in (19a). Consider next *loro* in (5a). The present hypothesis is that *loro* yields a dative (i.e. possession) interpretation in that it is associated with an inflectional oblique. In other words, the *-oro* ending is a lexicalization of the $Q(\subseteq)$ relation taking as its internal argument the *I*-pronominal base to which it attaches and as its external argument the theme of the verb. The resulting surface constituency is as in (19b).



The alternation between genitive *loro* structures, as in (6a), and structures where the possessor is introduced by the *di* ‘of’ preposition, as in (6b), reproduces the alternation in (19) – as schematized in (20). The *di* preposition with $P(\subseteq)$ content in (20a) takes the possessor as its object to the right and the possessee as its subject to the left. Genitive *loro* yields the inverse order of possessor and possessee, as in (20b).



In general, the possessor to the right implies a preposition; the possessor to the left is taken here to imply some intrinsic (oblique) case properties. Left-right reorderings of arguments obviously invite a treatment in terms of movement. A good example of such treatments is Kayne (1994). In discussing Heavy NP Shift, Kayne (1994:72–73) takes the ACC-DAT order in (19a) to be base generated – which means that leftward reordering of the dative in (19b) is due to movement. For the French counterpart of (20a), Kayne (1994:102–103) has a base structure very similar to (20b). In (20a) the possessee moves leftward and the lexicalization of *de* ‘of’ (to licence the possessor) is a byproduct of this movement. This contrasts with Hungarian (Szabolcsi, 1984), where it is the possessor that raises to licence dative case.

Mimicking closely Kayne (1994) and Szabolcsi (1984), we can say that the case properties of *loro* in (19b) and (20b) require it to be positioned in some functional head higher than (hence to the left of) the base generated position of the V/N

head. We may call this the $Q(\subseteq)$ head; (19b) and (20b) are then to be slightly refined as in (21).⁷ Technically, let us adopt the representational construal of movement as chain formation at the LF interface (Brody, 2003), which among other things, cuts away the role that uninterpretable features have in the derivational model. In representational terms, because of its case properties, *loro* is associated with the functional Spec, $Q(\subseteq)$ position as well as with a theta-position; spell-out occurs in the higher position.

- (21) a. ... offertò [_{Q $\subseteq$ P} loro] [_{VP} offertò [il mio aiuto loro]]
 b. [_{DP} il] [_{Q $\subseteq$ P} loro] [_{NP} libro loro]

Interestingly, (21a) closely matches Cardinaletti and Starke's schema of derivation for weak *loro* (moved leftward to an AGR functional head). But recall that we did not set out to change their derivation, only the bases for it. For Cardinaletti and Starke, *loro* moves to a functional position because it is smaller than a *loro* (has an impoverished set of properties); this is the essence of the strong/weak distinction. In the present approach, *loro* and *a loro* have the same properties, though differently lexicalized, by $Q(\subseteq)$ (case) and $P(\subseteq)$ respectively.⁸

It is important to note that the characterization of oblique provided here is meant to apply beyond ditransitives, for instance to unergatives like (22). Manzini (2012b), Manzini and Franco (2013) adopt the view that unergatives result from the incorporation of a nominal object into a light verb (Hale and Keyser, 1993) – reducing the dative of unergatives to that of ditransitives, along the lines in (22b). This is close to another attempt at dealing in a principled way with dative objects, by Svenonius (2002), who proposes that dative objects reflect a split treatment of the v-V complex (albeit on aspectual grounds, rather than on the grounds suggested here). For all I can tell, *a loro* and *loro* in (22a) alternate in the base generated and $Q(\subseteq)$ positions along the same lines as in ditransitives.

- (22) a. Ho telefonato loro/a loro
 I phoned them/to them
 b. [CAUSE [phone call [(to) them]

Recall now that we should not only explain the special distribution in (5a), but also exclude *loro* from other positions, including positions associated with discourse properties (focus, topic). Intuitively, Cardinaletti and Starke propose that this is because *loro* is closer to a clitic than to a full pronoun in size. However coordination and modification are possible, according to our examples, while they are excluded with clitics. The other formal possibility is that *loro* is similar to clitics in a different respect, namely in that it is a dedicated lexicalization of $Q(\subseteq)$, hence not so much a DP, as a $Q(\subseteq)P$, when associated with oblique properties. Its freezing in the functional Spec, $Q(\subseteq)$ position is then criterial in the sense of Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007). Intuitively, this is the idiosyncratic solution adopted by a language (Italian) which has no other phrasal obliques, but only oblique clitics (dative, partitive). Datives in other structures and other languages may move freely to the extent that they are not $Q(\subseteq)P$ and need not pass through the functional $Q(\subseteq)P$ projection.

2.3.1. Appendix on *cui*

Let us go back briefly to (7) and (8), where we introduced data regarding the *wh*-pronoun *cui*, which seems to share the same basic distribution as *loro*. Morphologically, *cui* is formed by the lexical base *ku-* for the *wh*-operator and by the *-i*

⁷ The $Q(\subseteq)$ functional head could perhaps be identified with the Appl head of Pykkänen (2002), Cuervo (2003) in the dative/sentential domain, though to my knowledge it has never been extended to genitive/DP-internal contexts.

⁸ Other data concerning the distribution of dative *loro* are not discussed by Cardinaletti and Starke, and correspondingly ignored here. First, *loro* can be found between the auxiliary and the participle, as in (i) in a position usually reserved for adverbs and *Q*-float. An anonymous reviewer suggests that the data in (i) depend on participle movement – or rather lack thereof, so that the functional position where *loro* is found happens to be higher than the participle's.

- (i) Ho loro offertò il mio aiuto
 I have them offered my help
 'I offered my help to them'

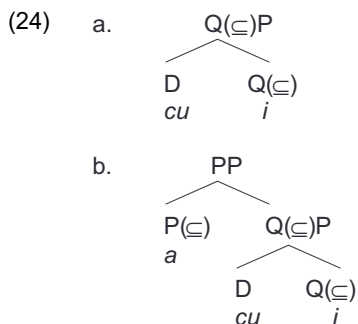
Second, *loro* easily occurs to the left of unaccusative verbs where it has an experiencer(-like) interpretations, as in (ii) (from *la Repubblica* corpus). The relevant position appears to be that of an oblique subject-of-predication. In the terms of Cardinaletti and Starke it must be a functional position allowing *loro* to be case licensed. Essentially the same will have to hold in the present framework, where the crucial properties involved are $Q(\subseteq)$. Since the entire matter involves the independent issue of oblique ('quirky') subject, I drop it here.

- (ii) Comprano all'estero il 20 per cento di ciò che loro occorre
 They buy abroad 20 per cent of what them is necessary

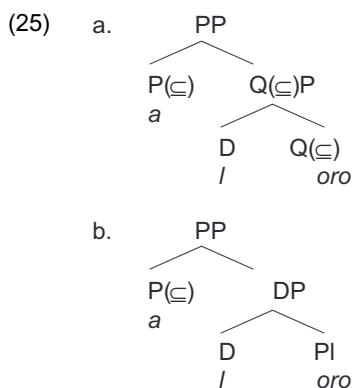
ending for singular oblique independently found in Italian the 3rd person dative clitic *gli-i*.⁹ The same *-i* morphology (ultimately connected to Latin *-i*) can also be seen in the Romanian nominal inflection system, cf. *băiat-ulu-i* ‘to the boy’, *fet-e-i* ‘to the girl’, *lu-i* ‘to him’, *le-i* ‘to her’. Correspondingly I assume that *cui* has oblique case and therefore is compatible with the $Q(\subseteq)$ functional head. On the other hand, *cui* never occurs in direct case positions (nominative, accusative), leading us to the conclusion that its oblique case is obligatory, as in (23).

(23) *cui*: wh-, oblique

On the basis of the discussion that precedes, the oblique property in (23) projects, yielding (24a) for prepositionless *cui*. At the same time, if oblique always projects, that implies that prepositions also licence $Q(\subseteq)P$, as in (24b).¹⁰



Given (24b), and given that in (17) the oblique property can be associated with *loro*, the internal structure of *a loro* can be refined as in (25a). The discussion concerning *(a) loro* follows as before because $P(\subseteq)$ is the head of the phrase, even if its oblique property is doubled by *loro*. At the same time, P must also be able to embed non-case inflected DPs, for instance the non-pronominal DPs of the languages. This means that the structure in (25b) must also be possible, where the oblique property of *-oro* is not selected and *-oro* simply projects its plural property.



2.4. Conclusions and further prospects

Let me summarize the argument concerning *loro* (and *cui*). I argued that the truly important contribution of [Cardinaletti and Starke \(1999\)](#) to the understanding of Italian *loro/a loro* concern distributional facts. On the contrary, it is not obvious

⁹ An anonymous reviewer points out that the same *-i* inflection is found on *mi* ‘(to) me’, *ti* ‘(to) you’. In traditional terms *mi* and *ti* are syncretic between accusative and dative; in present terms the syncretism is on the dative form. See [Manzini and Franco \(2013\)](#) for a possible line of explanation.

¹⁰ An anonymous reviewer notes that we may expect that since both the *-oro* and the *-i* morphology are compatible with *l-* allomorphs, *cu-* may equally be expected to combine with *-oro* – which it doesn’t (there is no wh-pronoun *cu+oro*). This is where lexical idiosyncrasy come into play, specifying that oblique *-oro* (stressed) selects for a single lexical base, namely *l-*. This should in fact be stated as part of its lexical entry in (17).

that there should be a correlation of the distributional facts with the possibility of modifying or coordinating the relevant forms, their animacy restrictions, their morphological make-up and their interpretation. If there is no correlation, or not in the expected terms, there is no reason to analyze the distributional facts in terms of the relative size of the pronouns involved (weak vs. strong) – as opposed to directly in terms of case. I have argued in favour of *loro* and a *loro* presenting different lexicalizations of case.

What is at stake is two different analyses of *loro*, but also more interestingly two different conceptions of the relation between the lexicon and the computational component (realizational or projectionist) – and two different approaches to categorization. In the approach outlined in (1), a unique intersection of morphological and distributional properties defines a supercategory, which we expect to find replicated in different languages and contexts. Under the present approach there is just an idiosyncratic overlapping of case with full DP properties for Italian *loro* – which we hardly expect to see systematically replicated. My aim in this section was to argue that the weak pronoun model of *loro* is not necessary. However in sections 3 and 4, when the discussion is extended to other potential weak pronouns, we will inevitably hit on the question whether the weak pronoun model is sufficient to capture the data. An important part of the argument to be developed is that across languages and contexts, multiple series of pronouns may be observed – however the defining morphosyntactic properties of the three series are not predictable on the basis of a single set of supercategories. For reasons of space we constraint ourselves to a discussion of the distinction weak vs. strong pronoun. Addressing the weak-clitic distinction requires a separate article. Nevertheless we will briefly sketch the issue as defined by current literature.

As is well-known, clitics are singled out by a distinctive distribution. In Romance, they cannot occur in predicate-internal positions, but are uniquely associated with the inflectional domain of the sentence (or the left-peripheral domain, cf. in particular section 3.4). The classical approach to this distribution (Kayne, 1975) is to assume that they move from theta-position to V-adjoined position (I-adjoined position in Kayne (1994)). An alternative approach, pursued in particular by Sportiche (1996) holds that clitics are base generated in specialized inflectional positions. According to the discussion in section 1, in morphological and interpretive terms the structure even of a clitic is potentially as rich as that of a full pronoun, cf. (3)–(4). Nevertheless, independently of whether one adopts a base-generated or a movement approach, a non-clitic pronominal form is embedded in argument position, hence as a phrasal constituent XP, as illustrated in (26b), while a clitic is a head X, as in (26a) (cf. Chomsky's (1995) bare phrase structure).

- (26) a. Li vedo
 them I see
 'I see him'
- b. Vedo loro
 I see them
 'I see them'

Many properties correlate with the distributional, X/XP difference in (26), including morphophonological ones. The full pronoun is stressed and polysyllabic, while the clitic is not stressed and at most monosyllabic. What we are interested in is that many Romance language have pronouns, associated in particular with the postverbal enclitic distribution, that are also polysyllabic and/or stressed, including French *lui* in (27a), or Southern Italian (Miglionico) *jullə* in (27b) (from Manzini and Savoia, 2005). Following the guidelines laid out by Cardinaletti and Starke in (2), the existence of prosodic properties on the enclitics in (27) forces them to be at least weak pronouns, as in (2b). This line of analysis is pursued by Ordoñez and Repetti (2006), Cardinaletti and Repetti (2008), and Pescarini (forthcoming).

- (27) a. Donne-le-lui
 Give it him
 'Give it to him!'
- b. cama-^ljullə
 call him
 'Call him!'

Manzini and Savoia (2005) provide an account of several Italian varieties, e.g. (27b), based on a different construal of the data. They maintain that *lui* or *jullə* are clitics as defined here, i.e. functional heads X. They further note that many Romance languages, have different clitic series for proclisis and enclisis, and that enclitic series are systematically richer than proclitic ones; for instance many Italian dialects have vocalic clitics in proclisis (*u/o* 'him', *a* 'her', etc.) and *l-* forms in enclisis. In the languages in (27), the enclitic series also has word stress, without changing the terms of the problem, namely why enclitics have richer specifications than proclitics. For Manzini and Savoia (2005), therefore, the notion of weak pronouns does not get into the equation at all. As anticipated, the analysis of (27) must remain open here; however the questions it raises are a good illustration of the further ramifications of the present discussion.

3. Wh- phrases in Lombard varieties

3.1. Introducing the data

Lombard varieties with wh- in situ and wh- doubling, where at least some wh- pronouns have three different forms, lead Poletto and Pollock (2009) to embrace the strong-weak-clitic partition of pronouns in Cardinaletti and Starke's (1999) model.

It is worth recalling briefly what the general issues involved in Romance wh- in situ are. Poletto and Pollock (2004, 2009) following the research programme of Kayne (1998), analyze wh- in situ as an instance of remnant movement of sentential material around the left dislocated wh- phrase. They argue for a movement analysis of wh- doubling, under which a wh- head and a wh- phrase are base generated as part of the same 'big DP'; remnant movement generates the apparent wh- in situ. Remnant movement is a powerful device, which does not obey restrictions imposed on Chomskyan movement/chain formation. Manzini and Savoia (2005, 2011b) argue that Lombard (in general Northern Italian) varieties do not provide any argument in favour of a remnant movement treatment of wh- in situ; in other words, there is no empirical disadvantage in taking wh- in situ to be exactly what it appears to be – namely the positioning of a wh- phrase in argumental position, rather than in scope position. They also take a representationalist rather than a derivational stance on wh- doubling, which they construe as a chain relation between a wh- element in situ and a wh- element in scope position at LF.

Because of these larger issues, the question whether the three morphological series of wh- pronoun in Lombard varieties support the strong-weak-clitic distinction is largely peripheral in the literature. Vice versa here we focus on it, abstracting from the remnant movement debate. The interest of Lombard varieties lies in the fact that it is difficult to find three morphologically distinct series of pronouns in Romance. For instance, Italian supposedly weak *loro* is lexically identical to supposedly strong *loro* (section 2) – and what Sportiche (2011) characterizes as strong, weak and clitic *qui* are again lexically identical (section 4).

Consider instead the *Olgiate* variety in (28).¹¹ Three forms of the wh- word for 'what' can be distinguished. First, *se* in (28a) is prosodically and distributionally a clitic, consisting of a monosyllabic base and occurring only at the left periphery. Second *ku'zε* is prosodically and distributionally non clitic, occurring in argumental position in (28b) and (28c), as well as in left peripheral position in (28b–b'). Finally a distinct form '*kuza* occurs in the left periphery in (29c), prosodically non-clitic, yet with some distributional properties that also set it apart from *ku'zε*. Specifically, in doubling, *ku'zε* must occur in situ, while the left peripheral element must be either the clitic *se*, as in (28a), or '*kuza*, as in (28c).

- (28) a. *se* fa la *ku'zε* Olgiate Molgora (Lecco)
 what does she what
 'What does she do?'
 b. *ku'zε* fa la
 what does she
 'What does she do?'
 b'. so minga *ku'zε* maŋ'dʒo
 I.know not what to eat
 'I don't know what to eat'
 c. '*kuza* fa la *ku'zε*
 what does she what
 'What does she do?'

The general pattern illustrated in (28) is reproduced in example (29c') of *La Strozza*. There are three different forms for 'what', namely clitic *se* and non-clitic '*kuza* and *ko'zε*; *ko'zε* fills an argumental position, while '*kuza* appears in the left periphery doubling it. The data in (29) also show that no lexical tri-partition is found with the wh- word 'who'. Therefore *ki*

¹¹ The relevant Lombard varieties are spoken in the provinces of Bergamo, Brescia, Como, Lecco (roughly the lake region, North-West of Milan) as well as in Italian-speaking Switzerland (Canton Ticino, dialectologically a Lombard area). Both Manzini and Savoia (2005) and Poletto and Pollock (2009) have original data from such areas. Poletto and Pollock discuss *Mendrisio* (Canton Ticino, Switzerland, cf. Lurà (1987)). Manzini and Savoia have data from the following varieties: *Grumello del Monte*, *Cologno al Serio*, *La Strozza Valle Imagna*, *Adrara San Rocco*, *Borgo di Terzo* (Bergamo), *Passirano* (Brescia), *S. Fedele Intelvi* (Como), *Civate*, *Olgiate Molgora* (Lecco). All data in the text are from Manzini and Savoia; they are transcribed in a broad IPA from Leonardo Savoia's fieldwork sessions with native speakers. Stress marks should be paid particular attention to, since they are often distinctive.

‘who’ equally occurs in situ as in (29b), in the left periphery, as in (29a) – and can double itself, occurring both in situ and in left peripheral position in the same sentence, as in (29c).

- (29) a. **ki** tʃamet La Strozza Valle Imagna (Bergamo)
 who you call
 ‘Who are you calling?’
 b. tʃamet **ki**
 you call who
 ‘Who are you calling?’
 c. **ki** tʃamet **ki**
 who you call who
 ‘Who are you calling?’
 c’. so mia **ʔkoza/ se** porʔta t **koʔzɛ**
 I.know not what to bring you what
 ‘I do not know what to bring you’

3.2. Discussion of Poletto and Pollock (2009)

According to Poletto and Pollock (2009), the variety of *Mendrisio* (Ticino) displays a “tripartite distinction among wh-items: not only does it have clitic and strong (‘tonic’) wh-items ... but also weak wh- words”. In examples like (28)–(29), monosyllabic *se* would be a clitic, while forms such as *ʔkuza*, *ʔkoza* would be weak – contrasting with the strong *kuʔzɛ*, *koʔzɛ*, characterized by stress on the last syllable. Poletto and Pollock justify this tripartition on the basis of several empirical criteria: (i) weak wh- pronouns cannot occur “sentence internally”; (ii) they must be “adjacent to (the pronominal clitics adjacent to) a finite verb”; (iii) “they cannot bear focus”, yielding the predictions summarized in Table 3.

The “sentence internal” criterion relates to the idea of Cardinaletti and Starke that the deficient status of weak pronouns pushes them to move to a functional projection – hence to an edge position. Consider however *Grumello* in (30); this is a variety of the type under examination, with wh- in situ in (30a) and two non-clitic wh- words for ‘what’, namely *koʔhɛ* in (30a) and *ʔkoha* in (30b). Yet in (30b) the supposedly weak pronoun *ʔkoha* is embedded in a prepositional phrase, hence definitely not in an edge position. In other words, it is “sentence internal”, flouting this criterion. Note that we do not know what the status of examples like (30b) is in *Mendrisio*, in the absence of relevant data from Poletto and Pollock. Nevertheless as far as we can tell, *Grumello* is like *Mendrisio* in all respects relevant for the present discussion. Therefore even if *Mendrisio* (quite interestingly) respects the predictions of Table 3, the existence of languages like *Grumello* means that Table 3 lays out properties compatible with the two wh- series—not properties necessarily correlated with them.

- (30) a. al fe:t **konʃ koʔhɛ** Grumello (Bergamo)
 it you do with what
 ‘What do you do it with?’
 b. **konʃ ʔkoha** al fe:t
 with what it you do
 ‘What do you do it with?’

The same can be repeated for the variety of *Civate* in (31). Specifically, in (31b) the supposedly weak element *ʔkuzɛ* is embedded in a prepositional phrase. (31a–a’) show that this variety has wh- in situ and wh- doubling – as well as the relevant tripartition in the lexicalization of ‘what’, namely *kuʔzɛ*, *ʔkuzɛ* and *se*.

- (31) a. **se** fet **kuʔzɛ** Civate (Lecco)
 what you do what
 ‘What do you do?’
 a’. di m **se** te fet **kuʔzɛ**
 tell me what you do what
 ‘Tell me what you do’
 b. **konʃ ʔkuzɛ** te l et fa:
 with what you it have done
 ‘With what have you done it?’

Table 4
Present empirical findings.

	⁻¹ ε form	Other non-clitic forms
Sentence internal	Yes	Yes
Adjacent to verb	Yes	Yes
(Contrastive?) Focus	Yes	Yes

At this point of the argument, the issue we are concerned with crosses a larger debate. Recall that as briefly indicated at the beginning of this section [Poletto and Pollock \(2009\)](#) account for all wh- in situ by applying the programme of [Kayne \(1998\)](#) which reduces covert movement to remnant movement. Remnant movement, not being subject to Economy ([Chomsky, 1995](#)) allows for an unrestricted amount of abstract structure as triggers/landing sites for movement. Therefore the similar linear order of the wh- phrases in (32) as well as in (33a) and (33b) could correspond to wildly different underlying structures. As stated at the outset, [Manzini and Savoia \(2005, 2011b\)](#) show how the facts about Lombard wh- in situ do not require remnant movement but can be captured under the covert movement/LF construal view – thus upholding Chomsky's restrictions on movement, among other things. In turn, if the LF construal of wh- in situ implies that the latter is in argumental position, then (32)–(33) imply not only the same linear order, but also the same position for the wh- phrases.¹⁴ Under these theoretical assumptions, the Lombard data present no complementary distribution between supposedly strong and weak forms, which means either that [Cardinaletti and Starke's \(1999\)](#) Economy of representations does not apply to them (they are not weak/strong) – or else that it is inadequate with respect to them. In particular, no complementary distribution is observed in (28)–(33), where supposedly weak and strong forms alternate in the same positions, and sometimes even in the same examples (cf. (32)). The state of affairs after the present review of the data is summarized in [Table 4](#).¹⁵

3.3. An alternative proposal

The existence of a class of clitic wh- words in Lombard varieties, including forms like *se* 'what' in (28a) or *ndo* 'where' in (33b), is not questioned here (cf. also section 4 on French). These wh- clitics are associated with a left peripheral distribution which is consistent with the general characterization of clitics as functional heads outlined in section 2.4.

What we are interested in are non-clitic forms, which are equally found in the left periphery and in situ. For instance, *ku'zε* appears in situ in (28a) and in the left periphery in (28b); *in'do/n'doe* appears in the left periphery in (33a) and in situ in (33b). As already noted, there are distributional constraints on non-clitic wh- forms as well. In particular, in wh- doubling examples, forms with final stressed ⁻¹ε are required to appear in situ and to be doubled by a non ⁻¹ε form. Note that ⁻¹ε forms cannot be constrained to appear in situ in general, since they can appear in the left periphery in the absence of doubling, for instance in (28b). Vice versa, the in situ position cannot be restricted to the ⁻¹ε series, since *in'doe* can felicitously occupy it in (33). To reiterate, the generalization that needs to be explained is that if the language has an ⁻¹ε form and if this is inserted in a doubling context, then it must necessarily occur in situ. More sweeping generalizations do not seem to hold, see [Table 4](#).

Given the general lexicalist bias of the present discussion, let us begin by a morphological analysis of the wh- pronouns involved. Non-clitic forms divide into two subclasses depending on whether an ⁻¹ε ending is present or not. This morphologically coincides with the 3rd person singular of the verb *be*. Now, in Romance languages, as in English, the copula has a focussing role in cleft constructions, including questions – cf. Italian *cos'è* (*che . . .*) 'lit: what is (it that . . .)'. We also know that the copula is grammaticalized as a focus particle in other languages, for instance in Somali ([Frascarelli and Puglielli, 2005](#)). Observations of this type lead one fairly naturally to the conclusion that the ⁻¹ε morphology of Lombard varieties lexicalizes focus properties.

More formally, I propose that the internal structures of wh- word like *indo*¹ε and *in'doe* (*ku'zε* and *ku'za* etc.) is as in (34). In (34a) the wh- base *indo* is associated with a nominal class inflection;¹⁶ the word stress is on the lexical base. In (34b) on the other hand the lexical base is associated with the Focus particle ⁻¹ε which attracts the main word stress. Thus Lombard

¹⁴ Another possibility is that the right-peripheral position is the low FocusP of [Belletti \(2008\)](#) – a possibility exploited in section 3.3. As indicated there, the different wh-phrases can still have the same position (the burden of proof is on proponents of Economy of representations to show that they cannot).

¹⁵ Given the historical, regional, sociological stratification of a national language like Italian one may try to claim that environments where *loro/cui* and *(a) loro/(a) cui* alternate depend on different registers (though see fn. 4). For obvious reasons, this line of explanation is excluded for the languages at hand whose sole alternant is (some form of) the national language.

¹⁶ The categorization N for nominal class inflections follows what we did for personal pronouns in (3) and (4). A brief discussion of the D/Q-N internal structuring of pronouns and of the semantics this implies is provided in section 2.2.

varieties like *Adrara* in (34) have a bound morpheme $^{-1}\varepsilon$ specialized for the lexicalization of Focus, that selects for a subset of wh- bases (excluding in particular *ki* ‘who’).

- (34) a. *Adrara*
- ```

 QP
 / \
 Q N
 in1do e

```
- b.
- ```

      QP
     /  \
    Q    Focus
  indo  1ε
  
```

Let us then return to the distributional restriction observed above, namely that in wh- doubling configuration a wh- element of the type in (34b) can be found only in situ. Wh- doubling is predicated on the assumption that wh- morphology is lexicalized more than once. As observed in section 3.1, Poletto and Pollock propose a derivational model of this in terms of the so-called ‘big DP’ analysis of clitic doubling. Manzini and Savoia (2011b) take a representational stand (Brody, 2003) under which both wh- items are generated in their surface position and connected by a chain at the LF interface. Independently of whether a derivational or representational model of doubling is chosen, at the LF interface there is a single position in which the wh- operator is interpreted, namely its scope position (the left peripheral position in syntactic terms). For instance in (35) (cf. (33a)), wh- properties are interpreted in the (Spec, CP) position. In fact, they may also be represented as Specs of a dedicated wh- functional head at the left periphery of the sentence, i.e. WH in (35).

- (35) [CP/WHP in¹do [IP et [VP ~~et~~ indo¹ε]

Additionally, questions are associated with a Topic-Focus partition of the sentence – and in Lombard varieties, wh- and Focus properties are separately lexicalized by wh- and $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology respectively. My proposal as to the distributional restriction observed with the $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology in wh- doubling is that, first of all, Focus properties are not only interpreted once (like wh- properties), but also lexicalized at most once. This does not quite explain why in wh- doubling $^{-1}\varepsilon$ is found in the in situ position – since in the absence of doubling it can equally well be associated with the left periphery of sentences.

I assume that in wh- doubling, wh- and Focus properties split between the doubled elements. As standardly assumed, wh- properties are associated with (Spec, CP), cf. (35). Focus properties are associated with the right peripheral position aligned with Nuclear stress (Zubizarreta, 1998). In order to make the representation more perspicuous, following Belletti (2008), we can say that the right peripheral position aligned with focal stress is a dedicated low Focus position sandwiched between IP and CP – yielding the syntactic representation in (36). The question that we need to answer is why the wh- phrases cannot be switched around in (36).

- (36) [WHP in¹do [CP et [FOCUSP indo¹ε [VP ~~et~~...

In essence, the relevant restriction is simply that if the Focus position and the Focus morphology $^{-1}\varepsilon$ are both lexicalized they must be aligned with one another. This condition is obviously satisfied by (36), but not if the two wh- phrases in (36) are switched around. It is also satisfied in (37a), cf. (33b), where the Focus position is lexicalized but no $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology is. Vice versa (37b), cf. (28c), satisfy the condition because $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology is lexicalized but no Focus position.

- (37) a. ... [WHP ndo [IP nda [FOCUSP n¹doe
 b. [WHP ku¹zε [CP fa [CLP la [VP ~~fa~~ ...

Note that factoring away the matrix vs. embedded status (which implies a different positioning of the verb), (36) and (37a) have exactly the same structure. Therefore we may expect them to have the same interpretation.

3.4. Conclusions

The existence of three series of wh- pronouns in Lombard varieties, clearly distinct morphologically, and in part also distributionally, seems to provide a good *prima facie* argument in favour of the clitic/weak/strong tripartition of pronouns. There is no doubt that these varieties have wh- clitics; in terms of the theory of clitics adopted in section 2.4, this means that these are dedicated lexicalizations of a left-peripheral WH head (see also section 4 on French). On the other hand, the weak-strong distinction does not help in predicting the distribution of the two other, non-clitic series of wh- pronouns, with

stress on the lexical base and with final $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology, if we are correct in assuming that the same positions, often even in the same example, can host one or the other form. In other words, the burden of proof is on proponents of the strong/weak categorization to show that different positions are involved, and that therefore the complementary distribution predicted by Economy of representations is observed in each given position.

Even more importantly, the review of the data provided here indicates that the properties of purportedly weak pronoun *loro* in section 2 and of purportedly weak wh- pronouns in this section do not overlap significantly. In other words, extending weak pronoun status to both *loro* in section 2 and to the non-clitic, non- $^{-1}\varepsilon$ series of wh- pronouns in this section, does not predict their different properties and distribution – which ultimately calls into question the categorization criterion in (1). In the previous section I proposed that the special properties of *loro* depend on its oblique case. Similarly, in this section I propose that wh- pronouns of Lombard varieties are sensitive to wh- and Focus properties. Specifically in doubling examples, wh- and Focus properties split between the doubled elements, so that if wh- is associated with the left peripheral scope position, Focus (hence $^{-1}\varepsilon$ morphology) must be associated with the position aligned with Nuclear Stress.

4. French wh- phrases

4.1. Introducing the data

As the last case study to be reviewed here, let us consider interrogative and relative wh- phrases in French. As in previous sections, we begin with a review of the evidence. Most examples are taken from Sportiche (2011), whose careful descriptive and analytical work forms the basis for much of the present discussion. Specifically we concentrate on three wh- words of French, whose distribution in questions and relatives is particularly complex, namely *quoi* ‘what’, *que* ‘what, that’ and *qui* ‘who, that’. Readers familiar with standard French can proceed to other sections.

Quoi is easily described. First, it is restricted to inanimate reference. Furthermore, as expected of a full DP, it is found under prepositions and in situ, as in (38). It surfaces bare in the left periphery of interrogatives, only if the latter are infinitival; otherwise it is impossible, as in (39). It never occurs as a bare relative pronoun, as in (40).

- (38) a. Avec quoi tu as mangé?
with what you ate?
b. rien contre quoi on se bat
nothing against which we fight
c. Tu as vu quoi?
you saw what?

- (39) a. *Quoi plait à Pierre?
what appeals to Pierre?
b. *Je sais quoi Jean a acheté.
I know what Jean bought
c. Quoi faire?
what to do?
d. Je ne sais pas quoi faire
I don't know what to do

- (40) a. *rien quoi tu connais
nothing what you know
b. *rien quoi te plait
nothing what pleases you
c. *quelque chose quoi faire
something what to do

Let us consider *que*. It is not embeddable under prepositions and does not appear in situ, as in (41). As a relative pronoun, it is restricted to accusatives, cf. (43c), and to finite sentences, cf. (43d). As an interrogative, in (42), it seems to be restricted to inanimates, it is found only as an object (which could follow from the fact that it is accusative) and furthermore only in matrix finite questions with subject-verb inversion or else in infinitivals.¹⁷

¹⁷ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for suggesting the minimal pair in (39d) vs. (42g) – on which more in section 4.3.

- (41) a. *Avec que as-tu mangé?
with what you ate
'With what did you eat?'
b. *rien contre que on se bat
nothing against which we fight
c. *Tu dis que?
you are saying what?
- (42) a. Que fait-il?
what does he?
b. Que fait Jean?
what does Jean?
c. *Que tu dis?
what you are saying?
d. *On se demande que tu fais.
we wonder what you are doing
e. *Que tombe du ciel?
what is falling from the sky?
f. Que faire avec ma vie?
what to do with my life
g. Je ne sais pas que faire
I don't know what to do
- (43) a. la fille que tu connais
the girl that you know
b. la ville que tu connais
the city that you know
c. *la table que sera vendue
the table that will be sold
c. *quelque chose que faire
something that to do

Finally, *qui* occurs as the object of prepositions and in situ, as in (44), and in such occurrences it is always interpreted as animate. It is also interpreted as animate in questions, where it is case neutral, as in (45). In relatives, it cooccurs with both animate and inanimate heads, but it is restricted to the nominative, as in (46).

- (44) a. la fille avec qui tu dances
the girl with whom you dance
b. Avec qui tu dances?
with who you dance?
c. Tu connais qui?
you know who?
- (45) a. Qui tu connais?
who you know?
b. Qui est venu?
who has come?
- (46) a. *la fille qui tu connais
the girl who you know
b. la fille qui est venue
the girl that came
c. la table qui sera vendue
the table that will be sold

Table 5
French restrictive relative pronouns (Sportiche, 2011).

	Nom	Acc
Strong [+ human]	qui	qui
Strong [– human]	quoi	quoi
+T _{weak} [0 human]	qui	que
–T _{weak} [0 human]	e	e

Table 6
Bare interrogative pronouns (Sportiche, 2011).

	[+ human]	[– human]
Strong	qui	quoi
Weak	qui	que
Clitic	qui	que

4.2. Discussion of Sportiche (2011)

The most recent complete presentation of the French *wh*-system that I am aware of is Sportiche's (2011), summarized in Tables 5 and 6 (these partially reproduce Tables 5 and 9 respectively of Sportiche). Nom, Acc and the [human] features are self-explanatory categories, while + T and –T refer to tensed and untensed contexts respectively. Strong, weak and clitic are the pronominal categories addressed here. The focus of Sportiche's discussion is the *que-qui* rule of French, for which he proposes an analysis treating so-called complementizer *qui* as the relative pronoun *qui*.¹⁸ Therefore Tables 5 and 6 should not be mistaken for a summary of his results; rather they summarize some of his starting assumptions. This doesn't make it any less relevant to ask whether an analysis of the French *wh*-system can be achieved by renouncing some of the descriptive richness of Tables 5 and 6 and in particular the categories of weak and strong pronoun.

Given the lexicalist bias of this work, we organize the presentation not around the categories of Tables 5 and 6, but around the three forms *quoi*, *que*, *qui*. Consider *quoi*. According to Tables 5 and 6 there are two *quoi*, namely a relative and an interrogative one. However in these tables they are both characterized as strong and [–human] and they both have a distribution independent of case – though known facts, as summarized in (38)–(40) are also compatible with a restriction of *quoi* to accusative. Because of their shared properties, let us proceed in the discussion as if there was a single *quoi*. For Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) the presence of an animacy restriction is a defining property of strong pronouns. Therefore one may think that the category strong pronoun, associated with *quoi* in Tables 5 and 6, does in fact predict its animacy restriction. However recall that for Cardinaletti and Starke strength predicts animacy restrictions only for personal pronouns, excluding the Italian strong *wh*- (*a*) *cui* (section 2.1). Therefore, for *wh*-pronouns animacy cannot in fact be predicted from strength.¹⁹

Strong pronoun status does explain the distribution of *quoi* in PPs and in situ, as in (38), cf. (47a–b) below; but note that non-clitic (full DP) status also does. In other words the strong pronoun category is not necessary, since the independently needed notion of phrasal constituent (XP) is sufficient to do the job. More interestingly, bare interrogative *quoi* cannot attach to the left periphery of a finite sentence, as in (39a–b). For Poletto and Pollock (2009), as reviewed in section 3.2, a criterion for weak *wh*-pronouns is being left-adjacent to a verbal complex (in practice attaching to IP/CP). One may therefore surmise that *quoi* is incompatible with left-peripheral attachment because it is strong. However there is no principled incompatibility between *quoi* and left peripheral position in infinitival questions, as in (39c–d). Therefore the category strong is of little use in predicting this distribution.²⁰ If I read him correctly, Sportiche simply proposes that *quoi* cannot locally cooccur with +T, which is stated in (47c) in terms of selection. Finally, as stated in (47d), for Sportiche the fact that *quoi* is always excluded as a bare relative pronoun depends on Cardinaletti and Starke's (1999) Economy of

¹⁸ Sportiche is non committal as to whether the so-called complementizer *que* is also to be identified with the *wh*-pronoun, as argued in different ways by Manzini and Savoia (2011a), Arsenijevic (2009), and Kayne (2010). We factor out this issue, not to complicate discussion further.

¹⁹ Vice versa, strength cannot be predicted from animacy, since in Table 6 Sportiche assumes that interrogative *qui* is animate though weak/clitic.

²⁰ An anonymous reviewer suggests that perhaps *quoi* is actually attached in the Mittelfeld of French. I cannot exclude this; I am just working on standard assumptions.

representations, given the existence of weak relative *que* (and *qui*). Since the minimal possible lexicalization must be instantiated, *quoi* is excluded.

- (47) *Quoi*: a. OK complement of P: strong Sportiche (2011)
 b. OK in situ: strong
 c. OK bare left-peripheral interrogative pronoun, only in –T contexts:
 if it selects C, then C_{–T}
 d. *bare relative pronoun: Economy of representations

Generalization (47d), which crucially refers to Cardinaletti and Starke's Economy, will be the main focus of section 4.3. Here I limit myself to the observation that, if *que* covers the distribution of *quoi* in relatives, we would expect the same to be true in questions. But it is not. Not only *que*, but also *quoi* is allowed in infinitival main and embedded questions as is *quoi* – as illustrated in (39). Therefore if there really is a blocking effect of *que* on *quoi*, it is restricted to relatives. It is difficult however to see why the Economy principle of Cardinaletti and Starke would select the more elementary wh- operator only in certain contexts (relatives rather than interrogatives).

Next, consider *que*. In Tables 5 and 6 there are again two *que*, which overlap in that both are clitics. One *que* is a relative pronoun with accusative/objective case and no animacy restrictions (Table 5), the other is an interrogative pronoun restricted to [-human] reference and with no case. In reality this partition is not as obvious as it seems. First, the restriction to accusative/objective case is observed not only in relatives, as in (43), but also in questions, as in (42). Second, it is possible to argue that interrogative *que*, like relative *que*, lacks any restriction, ranging over animates, inanimates and in fact events and propositions. Consider its English counterpart *what*. A question like *what do you see?* admits of the answer *a man* (animate), as well as *a field* (inanimate), *fighting* (event), or *that he is moved* (proposition). The same holds in Romance, suggesting that interrogative *que* does not have any animacy restriction, removing an important obstacle to the unification of relative and interrogative *que*.²¹ Therefore from now on we will proceed as if there was a single *que*.

According to Sportiche, the impossibility of finding *que* in PPs or in situ observed in (41), cf. (48a–b) below, follows from the fact that *que* is not strong, i.e. either weak or a clitic. It equally follows if we cut out the category weak in favour of the category clitic.²² There are two further restrictions on *que*. First, relative *que* is restricted to tensed contexts, i.e. it cannot appear in infinitival relatives, as in (43d). For Sportiche this is an instance of Economy of representations, cf. (48d), since infinitivals have a less structured relative pronoun available, namely a zero form. Second, as an interrogative, *que* is excluded from embedded tensed contexts; Sportiche also reduces this to the weak/clitic status of *que*, as indicated in (48c), via a requirement that interrogative force should be independently supported by V-in-C. We return to how this works immediately below.

- (48) *Que*: a. * complement of P: weak/clitic Sportiche (2011)
 b. * in situ: weak/clitic
 c. OK bare left-peripheral interrogative pronoun, if matrix tensed or untensed:
 weak/clitic, interrogative force supplied by V
 d. OK bare relative pronoun, only if tensed: Economy of representations

Sportiche informally suggests the following explanation of the generalization in (48c): “In relative clauses, the role of the C system is to provide a lambda-operator, a property that can be carried by strong or weak (or even silent) relative

²¹ Judgments on this point should not be confused with those on a quite separate issue, namely whether one could ask *what does Mary love?* if intending an animate answer. In that case *who does Mary love?* is of course obligatory. Furthermore *who* will occur in argumental slots restricted to [+human] participants, excluding *what*, e.g. *who*what loves my book?* (pointed out by an anonymous reviewer). The lexical properties of *what* are not involved here, but rather Gricean maxims (or the Relevance Principle, Sperber and Wilson, 1986). *Who*, denoting a subset of the answers denoted by *what* (i.e. [+human] individuals) is obligatorily lexicalized if a [+human] answer is implied. Another way to express the same generalization is by Elsewhere: the unrestricted *what* form cannot satisfy [+human] subcategorization in a language which has the specialized *who* form.

If so-called complementizer *que* identifies with the wh- pronoun *que* (cf. fn. 18), this provides further support to the conclusion that *que* is compatible with propositional denotation as well.

²² An anonymous reviewer notes a further distributional constraint on *que*, namely that it cannot appear in isolation, as in (i). For Cardinaletti and Starke this is a property of weak pronouns and clitics; it equally follows from a characterization of *que* as a clitic.

(i) *Quoi?/Qui?/*Que?* (Je n'ai pas compris)
 What?/who?/what? (I didn't understand)

pronouns. In questions, however ... further quantificational force is needed. We can speculate that weak interrogative pronouns, by the very fact that they are deficient, are incapable of carrying such force... weak forms are normally excluded for this reason. The only cases in which weak forms will be allowed to appear are those where the requisite quantificational force is encoded in some other way". In particular, among the finite examples in (42a–e), the only wellformed ones have subject-verb inversion, i.e. movement of V to C. Since we know that in yes-no questions, interrogative force is carried by V-in-C, we can assume the same for *que* interrogatives.

All that matters for the present discussion is that, as far as I can tell, the same explanation can be run if *que* is simply a clitic, rather than a clitic/weak pronoun. It should also be noted however that this line of explanation must somehow be extended to infinitival questions (which Sportiche does not discuss, cf. Goldsmith, 1981). It seems unlikely that the French infinitive moves to C, given the long tradition of studies that concludes in favour of a low position for it (Pollock, 1989; Kayne, 1991). I suggest a different solution, based on the observation that V-in-C in finite environments associates V with (interrogative) modality in C. Therefore I surmise that *que* is licenced in infinitival questions simply because the infinitival V is associated with (irrealis) modality in the ordinary I position. In other words, the "further quantificational force" of Sportiche is modality, supplied either by V-in-C or by infinitival I.

The application of Economy of representations in (48d) is more directly relevant here because it lends support to the theoretical core of the strong/weak distinction. There are however a couple of problems. First, Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) explicitly discuss at least one empty pronominal form, namely the subject *pro* of Italian. They conclude that it is a weak pronoun, not a clitic. In other words, it does not automatically follow from their lack of phonological realization that the empty relative pronouns of French are smaller in size than *que*.

More importantly, the complementary distribution of *quoi* and *que*, reviewed in connection with (47d) is very different from that of *que* and zero in (48d). The zero relative pronouns of French must be restricted to untensed environments as part of their lexical entry; otherwise the Economy logic would mean that the zero form covers the entire distribution of *que*. Therefore, the complementary distribution of zero forms and of *que* is a matter of Elsewhere, i.e. since the zero forms are restricted to untensed contexts, their non-zero alternants surface in the complement set of tensed sentences. Their relative size and Economy of representations are irrelevant.²³

Let us then turn to *qui*. In Table 5 there is a relative *qui*₁ which is strong, [+human] and case independent and a relative *qui*₂ which is weak/clitic, not restricted by animacy and nominative. In Table 6 there is an interrogative *qui* which is strong/weak/clitic, [+human] and case independent, i.e. essentially like relative *qui*₁. When animate, *qui* is very similar to *quoi* (inanimate), and when nominative, it is very similar to *que* (objective). Since the main theoretical and descriptive points have been addressed in connection with *quoi* and *que*, I will survey *qui* very briefly, dividing the discussion between animate *qui* and nominative *qui*.

Animate *qui* appears in situ and as object of prepositions (44), very much as we observed for *quoi*. For Sportiche this depends on its strong nature, cf. (49a–b), but see the discussion of *quoi* surrounding (47a–b) above. The distribution of animate *qui* is simpler than that of *quoi* because it freely occurs as a bare interrogative, as in (49c). As a relative, on the other hand, animate *qui* cannot appear bare in left peripheral position. This distribution has again been observed with *quoi* in (47d). The impossibility of finding animate *qui/quoi* as a left peripheral relative pronoun is attributed by Sportiche (2011) to the existence of the weak/clitic *que/qui* (objective/nominative) system, taking precedence over strong *quoi/qui* (animate/inanimate), cf. (49d). Recall however that this approach, based on Economy of representations, does not explain why the complementary distribution of *quoi* and *que* does not hold in infinitival questions. We return to the matter in section 4.3.

- (49) *Qui*: animate
- a. OK complement of P: strong
 - b. OK in situ: strong
 - c. OK bare left-peripheral interrogative pronoun
 - d. *bare relative pronoun: by Economy of representations

Sportiche (2011)

²³ Empirically, both the Economy and the Elsewhere view are insufficient for other Romance languages. For instance, in Old Italian (Brambilla Ageno, 1964) and in several Italian dialects (Manzini and Savoia, 2005), despite the existence of zero wh- pronouns, *che* 'what/that' can also introduce infinitival relatives, in particular in negative polarity contexts, as in (i).

(i) Non ho carlino che in borsa portare
not I have penny that in purse carry
'I don't have a penny to carry in my purse'

(Cronica aquilana rimata di Buccio di Ranallo 136, 6)

Manzini (2012a) proposes that *che* in Old Italian selects for finiteness, or else it must be read in the scope of polarity operators which include the negation in (i), and the question operator in interrogatives. This suggests that the disjunction between finiteness and modality is primitive.

As for nominative *qui*, its weak/clitic status is invoked by Sportiche in order to explain its distribution in (50a–b) – though clitic status is sufficient, paralleling *que* in (48a–b). As a relative pronoun, nominative *qui* only occurs in tensed contexts. Differently from *que* in (48d) Economy of representations in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke need not be involved, since nominative is not supported by infinitives anyway, cf. (50d). The other question posed by nominative *qui* concerns (50c), i.e. the fact that it cannot appear in interrogatives. This is stipulated by Sportiche, who simply provides two different tables for relatives and interrogatives.

- (50) *Qui*: nominative Sportiche (2011)
- a. *complement of P: weak/clitic,
 - b. *in situ: weak/clitic
 - c. *bare interrogative pronoun: stipulated
 - d. bare relative pronoun, only +T: by Economy of representations/nominative

In general, it seems fair to conclude that there aren't three lexical series or three distributions in French, i.e. strong-weak-clitic, but at most two. In fact, in Table 5, the opposition is between strong and weak relative pronouns – where the latter are construed as clitic or weak. The same holds for the interrogative system in Table 6, since interrogative weak and clitic forms are systematically homophonous and the single lexical opposition that the Table contains, between *quoi* and *que*, can be described in terms of clitic (*que*) vs. full pronoun (*quoi*). In other words, as far as I can tell, Sportiche's wh-system could be reproduced on the basis of an opposition between clitic and non-clitic categories.

Second, whether a tripartition or a bipartition is involved, Sportiche adopts the key idea of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) that Economy of representations predicts certain complementary distributions (or near such). We raised doubts about this in the discussion that precedes, since some complementary distributions (*que/qui* vs. zero in relatives) can be formalized simply by Elsewhere. More importantly, another complementary distribution (*quoi* vs. *que*) does not hold in infinitival questions, providing a counterargument to Economy of representations.

It is fair to note that, *quoi* is allowed in a much wider range of contexts and of stylistics level (varieties of French) than *que*. Specifically, if we read the literature on French correctly (including Goldsmith, 1981, Sportiche, 2011), only literary French allows for *que* at all; in other words, only at the appropriate stylistic level do minimal pairs like (39c) and (42g) arise. What is more, even in this register *que* appears to be restricted to a subset of environments in which *quoi* appears, including specifically the negative polarity one (cf. fn. 23 on the relevance of negation for *che* as an infinitival relative in Italian). Even so, in the varieties and the contexts that allow *que*, it does not block *quoi*. We turn to this matter in the next section.

4.3. An alternative proposal

Sportiche invokes Cardinaletti and Starke's Economy of lexicalizations to explain why weak/clitic *que/qui* (accusative/nominative) systematically cover *quoi/qui* (inanimate/animate) in (finite) relative clauses, as illustrated in (51). One issue raised in section 4.2 concerns the unexpected fact that this is not true in questions, where *quoi* and *que* alternate at least in infinitival contexts, as in (52a) vs. (51a). Furthermore, recall that it was suggested that there is no evidence for two different *que*'s, one accusative (relative) and the other inanimate (interrogative); rather, there is a single *que*, with objective case and lacking a restriction. If so, we may further ask why supposedly weak *que* does not cover supposedly strong, i.e. animate, *qui* in (52b) – as it does in (51b).

- (51) a. rien que/*quoi tu connais
nothing that you know
b. la fille que/*qui tu connais
the girl who you know
- (52) a. Je ne sais pas que/quoi faire
I not know not what to.do
'I don't know what to do'
b. Que/qui voit-il?
what/who sees he
'What/who does he see?'

Relatives and questions differ in that in relatives, a lexical restriction for the wh- operator is available in the form of the head of the relative clause. On the other hand, in questions, the only possible restriction on the wh- operator is provided by the content of the wh- word. This observation potentially takes us into a family of constraints, concerned with doubling/identity and its avoidance (Yip, 1998; Neeleman and van de Koot, 2006; van Riemsdijk, 2008; Richards, 2010).

The best known anti-identity constraint, namely the Obligatory Contour Principle (OCP) of Leben (1973) has been extended from the domain of phonology, where it was originally proposed, to the domain of morphosyntax. For instance, the morphosyntactic OCP is invoked to explain the mutual exclusion between two *I*-clitics in many Romance languages, including dative and accusative in Spanish (Harris (1994), Nevins (2007) for Distributed Morphology treatments, Grimshaw (1997) for an OT approach). Avoidance of doubling does not generally result in ungrammaticality, but rather in alternative lexicalizations. For instance instead of the dative-accusative **I*-*I* cluster we find *se* + *I*- in Spanish, *tj* (locative) + *I*- in Central Italian dialects (Manzini and Savoia, 2005, 2007), *ne* (partitive) + *I*- in Southern Italian dialects (Manzini and Savoia op. cit.). Evidently, the so-called suppletive clitics lack the offending *I*- property. However, as stressed by both Manzini and Savoia (2005, 2007) and Kayne (2010), there is no sense in which the suppletive form is a subset of the excluded form. For instance, though locative *tj* may lack the definiteness property of *I*-, it has a locative property that *I*-clitics lack. In other words, relative size is not involved.²⁴

If identity avoidance is at stake, we gain a new insight into why nominative/accusative *qui/que* blocks animate/inanimate *qui/quoi* in the relatives in (51) but not in the questions in (52). Animate/inanimate *qui/quoi* introduce a restriction which is potentially doubled by the head of the relative clause in (51), while it is not independently present in the questions in (52). By identity avoidance, restrictor-less *qui/que* are the sole possible lexicalization in relatives, where a restrictor is independently introduced by the head of the relative, as in (51), but not in questions where it is not, as in (52). Note that *XX constraints are strictly local, so that for instance two *I*-clitics in two different clitic strings are not blocked. I propose that this is the reason why embedding of animate/inanimate *qui/quoi* under a preposition is sufficient to undo the relevant context for identity avoidance in relatives. PP is the local domain for animate/inanimate *qui/quoi*, insulating them from the head of the relative, so that a PP containing animate/inanimate *qui/quoi* is wellformed in relatives as well, as in (38) and in (44).

This approach makes the further prediction that headless relatives allow for animate/inanimate *qui/quoi*. Unfortunately *quoi* has an anti-finiteness restriction excluding it from all finite clauses, for instance the questions in (39), while in infinitival relatives it is excluded by zero operators. However the prediction can be checked with *qui*. The prediction then is that free relatives will have the non-case sensitive animate *qui* which is excluded in relatives like (51b); the prediction is correct, as in (53).

- (53) J' aime qui je veux
I love who I want
'I love who I want to'

A final caveat is in order. Though *XX looks like a universal principle (and in fact a 'third factor' one), its application is parametrized – in the sense that the doubling excluded by some languages is required in others; for instance, French has the double-*I* cluster *le lui* 'it to him', that is excluded in Spanish.²⁵ We expect the same properties to hold of the mutual exclusion between relative heads and restricted relative pronouns. What holds in a language (e.g. French) need not hold in another. Hence English allows for *the man who* ... etc.²⁶

Let us draw a summary for *que* and *quoi*, before returning to *qui*. *Quoi* is a full DP, accounting for the distribution in (54a–b). As for the surfacing of *que*, rather than *quoi*, in relatives, as in (54d), I suggest that identity avoidance is at play

²⁴ This is an important point distinguishing Kayne or Manzini and Savoia from Distributed Morphology, where suppletion is determined by Impoverishment, so that suppletive forms are predicted to be a subset of the forms they are suppletive for. In this respect as well, note the depth of the consonance between superficially different realizational models, such as DM and Cardinaletti and Starke's.

²⁵ Though some form of parametrized *XX is standardly taken to enter into the analysis of Romance clitics, Pescarini (forthcoming) argues that the mutual exclusion between *I*-clitics follows from Kayne's (1994) LCA (interestingly, Kayne (2010) entertains a different, 'silent categories' model). For Pescarini, lack of mutual exclusion in French is due to the fact that *lui* is a weak pronoun (cf. section 2.4), and/or differently ordered than in mutual exclusion languages. On the other hand, languages like Italian allow for clusters like *glielo* 'to him it' because *gli* is monomorphemic. This latter treatment requires a realizational model, since *gl-i* is clearly bi-morphemic at PF. Furthermore, independently of the projectionist/realizational debate, Manzini and Savoia (2005, 2007) unify the treatment of DAT-ACC and of NOM-ACC mutual exclusions – where a radically monomorphemic NOM clitic (*I* for masculine singular) is able to trigger exclusion. This unification seems out of reach for the LCA-based model.

²⁶ As an anonymous reviewer points out, German relative pronouns (demonstratives, rather than wh-pronouns) double phi-features of the head noun, etc.; I take this to be an instance of *XX parametrization (cf. also the preceding fn.). A second anonymous reviewer points out dialectal French paradigms of the type in (i)–(iii). I take the two apparently identical *qui*'s in (i) to be animate *qui* (the interrogative) and nominative *qui* (the so-called complementizer). Animate *qui* is excluded in (ii) by *XX. Double nominative *qui* is also excluded in (ii), may be precisely by *XX. The same reasoning may be applied to double (objective) *que* (but cf. also the V-in-C requirement discussed in section 4.2)

- (i) Qui qui est venu?
who that has come
(ii) *La personne qui qui est venue
the person who that came
(iii) *Que que tu veux?
what that you want

preventing the doubling of the lexical restrictions introduced by *quoi* and by the head of the relative. I adopt Sportiche's (2011) proposal that *quoi*, when embedding sentential material, requires it to be finite (54c).²⁷ The comparison here is with (47). As just indicated, (47c) = (54c). The deepest difference is between (54d) and (47d), since they refer to different principles. As for (54a–b), they are implied by (47a–b) since strong status implies XP status. However a grammar including (47a–b) contains both the concepts of XP and strength, the grammar used here contains only the former.

- (54) *Quoi*:
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. OK complement of P: | full DP |
| b. OK in situ: | full DP |
| c. OK bare interrogative pronoun, only in infinitives: | if selecting C, then C _{-finite} |
| d. *bare relative pronoun: | *XX |

Que is a clitic – understood in terms of attachment to specialized positions on the main sentential spine (cf. Sportiche, 1996 and section 2.4 here) – which accounts for its distribution in (55a–b). Like Sportiche (2011) we may assume that relative *que* is restricted to finite relatives, because zero operators are available in infinitivals, as in (55d) (on this, cf. fn. 23). We also follow Sportiche in connecting the further restrictions on interrogative *que* to its need to be supported by a verb with modal properties, as in (55c), hence either an infinitive or a V-in-C in finite interrogatives.

- (55) *Que*:
- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| a. * complement of P: | clitic |
| b. * in situ: | clitic |
| c. OK bare interrogative pronoun, only matrix finite or infinitives | V-in-C/I _{modal} |
| d. OK bare relative pronoun, only finite | Elsewhere |

Properties of *que* and *quoi* that need to be stated in their lexical entries include the fact that *quoi* is inanimate and that *que* is objective, as well as their selectional requirements with respect to tenseness. Clitic status may be predictable from other properties. French has no elements marked for case except in the pronominal clitic series and in the left-peripheral wh- pronouns series. In particular, there is no case differentiation among full pronouns, though many others Romance languages have a case system at least for P(articipant) pronouns (Loporcaro, 2008, Manzini and Savoia, 2011a). Among French wh- pronouns, the only case marked ones are obligatorily left-peripheral, including nominative *qui*, objective *que* and genitive *dont* 'of whom'. The relevant generalization is stated in (56); in other words, Case is only lexicalized as a functional category on the sentential spine, namely on a clitic in the sense of Sportiche (1996), and of sections 2.4 and 3.4. Therefore if *que* is objective, it must be a clitic – while in the absence of other specifications, *quoi* is a non-clitic (by Elsewhere).²⁸

- (56) Case → functional category on the sentential spine = clitic (French)

In the end, the lexicon for *quoi* and *que* is quite simplified with respect to Tables 5 and 6, as shown in (57)–(58). Much the same remarks are in order here, as in introducing (54) above. Obviously our entries overlap with Sportiche's. We have much the same primitives, differing only because of the weak/strong categorization. At some points the proposals are identical, in particular *quoi* is inanimate and wh- in both Tables 5 and 6 and in (57); it is also associated with the anti-tenseness constraint proposed by Sportiche. For *que*, however, the absence of an interrogative/relative distinction means that objective case is associated with all *que*, not just with the relative one. Strong and weak categorizations are nowhere to be seen.

- (57) *quoi*: wh-, inanimate
selects C only if C_{non-finite}

- (58) *que*: wh-, objective

Let us consider *qui*. In section 4.2 we ended up with a disjunction between nominative *qui* (no restrictor, the counterpart to objective *que*) and animate *qui* (no case, the counterpart to inanimate *quoi*). Consider first nominative *qui*. That it is a

²⁷ Descriptive finiteness has two components, namely tense and the presence of an inflection agreeing with the subject (the EPP argument). There are indications that it is the second component that is relevant for the distribution of complementizers/wh-operators (Kayne, 1991, Manzini, 2012a). Therefore we shall refer to finiteness rather than to Sportiche's T.

²⁸ An anonymous reviewer enquires about the contrast between grammatical (45b) and ungrammatical (42e) if both *qui* and *que* end up as clitics. Both are indeed good clitic configurations (verb adjacent). But the correct comparison is with grammatical (42b), where *que* bears the correct accusative case.

clitic is now crucially predicted by (56). Furthermore, nominative *qui* never occurs in questions²⁹; however we have also seen that its objective counterpart *que* is severely restricted in interrogatives. Specifically, in (55c) we adopted the idea that *que* requires support by a modal verb (infinitive or V-in-C) in order to be interpreted as an interrogative. Suppose we impose the same condition on nominative *qui*. On the basis of it, we expect to find nominative *qui* in questions with verb-clitic inversion (i.e. V-in-C), as in (59a) – but this type of question must be independently excluded in any account even with animate interpretation.³⁰ We also expect nominative *qui* to be wellformed in infinitivals– except that infinitivals do not support nominative, excluding (59b).

- (59) a. *Qui a-t-il/elle mangé la pomme?
Who has-s/he eaten the apple
b. *Qui aller?
Who to go

In short, nominative *qui* is blocked as an interrogative by a conspiracy of (56), forcing it to have a clitic distribution, and of the restrictions independently placed on clitic *que* – as summarized in (60c). The generalization in (56) equally predicts that *qui* in situ or object of preposition will be animate (and not nominative, which would be a clitic), as in (60a–b). In turn, animate *qui* is excluded from relative clauses, in the same way as inanimate *quoi*, namely by the *XX constraint, as in (60d). Finally, following in part Sportiche, relative *qui* (like relative *que*) is restricted to finite clauses because of Elsewhere, given the availability of empty operators for infinitival relatives, as in (60d) again (but see fn. 23).

- (60) *Qui*: a. OK complement of P: only animate
(nominative → clitic → *)
b. OK in situ: only animate
(nominative → clitic → *)
c. OK bare interrogative pronoun: only animate
(nominative → V-in-C/I_{modal} → *)
d. OK bare relative pronoun: only nominative
(animate → *XX)
only finite, by Elsewhere

The summary in (60) suggests that though the form *qui* is characterized by a real disjunction between animacy and case properties, this can be encoded in a single lexical entry as in (61). This reproduces the disjunction between animate and nominative *qui* in Tables 5 and 6. However the distinction between relative and interrogative *wh*-, or between weak and strong status are seen to be irrelevant.

- (61) *qui*: *wh*-, animate or nominative

Following the model of sections 2 and 3, the lexical entries in (56)–(57) and (61) can further be broken down in more elementary constituents. In essence *quoi* /kwa/, *que* /kə/ and *qui* /ki/ are formed from a /k/ base with *wh*- operator properties and various inflections /wa/, /ə/, /i/ specialized for this base, as in (62). Consider for instance *quoi*. Bouchard and Hirschbühler (1985) note that the *que/quoi* alternation is the same as in *me/moi* ‘me’, *se/soi* ‘himself’, *te/toi* ‘you’ – where these personal pronouns are animate. Evidently the inanimate properties are associated with *quoi* require *-oi* as an inanimate to select the *qu*- base.³¹ In (62) we have further associated animacy and case properties with the inflectional endings. On the other hand no selection for finiteness is associated with either the *qu*- base or its inflections. We keep assume that these properties are listed for the items that result from the composition of the elementary morphologies in (62). Recall that idiosyncratic properties occur at all levels of syntactic compositions, even at the phrasal level (idioms, cf. Borer, 2009) and will have to be listed.

- (62) a. *qu*:- *wh*-
b. *-oi*: inanimate, selects for *qu*-
c. *-e*: objective, selects for *qu*-
d. *-i*: nominative or animate, selects for *qu*-

²⁹ Needless to say we keep referring to questions, because the notion of an interrogative sentence is perfectly well defined even if that of an interrogative *wh*- is not; for instance questions may be characterized as such by a clause-typing operator.

³⁰ In the context of the present discussion it is tempting to assume that anti-doubling *XX constraint is again involved.

³¹ Similarly the *-ε* morphology in section 3 selects a *wh*- base (as opposed to any other base that can in principle bear Focus) and the *-oro* morphology in section 2 selects the *I*- base (as opposed to any nominal base in Romanian), cf. fn. 10.

4.4. Conclusions

The lexicon proposed for the *wh*- pronouns of French in (56)–(57) and (61)–(62) is quite distinct from the lexicon depicted by Tables 5 and 6. No role is played in the present lexicon by the strong/weak categorization – nor more importantly by the idea that different series of pronouns (including the clitic vs. full DP series recognized here) vary because of their different structural size. (Near) complementary distributions may be governed by Economy considerations – but not relating to abstract constituency. Other properties of the lexicon proposed here are also compatible with the lexicalist view. Thus lexical entries are associated only with bona fide intrinsic properties or with selectional properties – and nothing else. Specifically, relative and interrogative also disappear from the categorial inventory.

As emphasized for *loro* in section 2, it is important to realize that the purpose of this discussion was not to change the lexicon for *que*, *qui*, *quoi* per se, not even in order to have a leaner lexicon, or a poorer categorial inventory. The interesting difference between the lexicon in Tables 5 and 6 and the lexicon in (56)–(57), (61)–(62) is that the latter defines no paradigmatic distribution. Some properties are relevant for the syntax and interpretation of certain *wh*- pronouns, but not of others. Therefore the resulting pattern is somewhat irregular, presenting both overlappings of different lexical items and potential distributions not covered by any of the items involved. For instance, French matrix questions bearing on a non-restricted subject require the cleft structure in (63a) – while any embedded unrestricted finite question requires the complex form *ce que/qui* (lit: ‘that which’) in (63b).

- (63) a. Qu’est-ce qui se passe?
what is it that is happening
b. Je me demande ce qui se passe
I wonder what is happening

A paradigmatic organization of the lexicon of the type in Tables 5 and 6 depends on the powerful categorization tool in (1) whereby any unique crossing of a morphology and a distribution defines a potential category – and on a realizational morphology to deal with the abstractness of the system. In other words *qui*, *que*, *quoi* are mere exponents, while the substance of language is represented by abstract underlying schemas of organization. In the projectionist conception supported here, the mediation of such abstract schemas, including (1), is cut out altogether.

5. General conclusions

In this article we have tackled three different empirical domains where the literature has invoked the strong vs. weak categorization of pronouns and the attending notion that the complementary distribution between different series of pronouns results from an Economy principle based on their relative size. Specifically, we have considered Italian *loro*, which is discussed in the seminal paper by Cardinaletti and Starke (1994, 1999). We further studied Lombard varieties where three series of *wh*- pronouns are lexically distinguished. Finally we tackled the *wh*- system of French. That languages have multiple lexical series for the same pronominal reference is an obvious fact. However I argued that the interesting (and widely followed) attempt by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) to reduce these alternations to a single series of categorial splits ultimately fails. Part of my argument is that the various authors who adopt the strong/weak categorization do not adhere to a consistent characterization of it – the only constant is precisely the bigger or small constituency of the forms involved. But often the latter has no correlation with actual morphological constituency. Furthermore, the perfect complementary distribution between bigger and smaller items predicted by Economy of representations is hardly observed.

In all three case studies, I sought to show that the strong/weak categorization can be eliminated without loss of empirical coverage or generality. The distribution of *loro* is determined by its intrinsic oblique case, which makes the $\subseteq$ position(s) available to it. The distribution of *wh*- elements in Lombard varieties is governed by Focus, in the sense that $^{-1}\varepsilon$ inflected *wh*- pronouns provide the lexicalization of focus in the in situ position in *wh*- doubling. Independently needed categories of case, animacy and finiteness combine to yield the distribution of relative/interrogative *que*, *qui*, *quoi* in French.

As stressed in section 1, and throughout this article, this is not meant simply as an exercise towards a more parsimonious categorial inventory. Rather, I have tried to show at various points how the strong/weak categorization for pronouns requires a realizational conception of the syntax/PF interface – and therefore potentially undermines models of pronominal systems built on projectionist premises. In this respect, the aim of the present work was to show that complex distributions of the type studied here need not stand in the way of a strictly lexicalist view, under which syntax is projected from the lexicon. In other word the issue here is not the strong and weak categorization per se – but rather the different

views of the pronominal system embedded by the structures in (2) vs. (3)–(4), and ultimately the view of the lexicon that underlies them.

The real *raison d'être* of a category like that of weak pronoun is exquisitely theoretical – namely upholding a certain conception of the organization of the lexicon, hence of grammar. As pointed out in section 1, Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) motivate the categories strong and weak pronoun on the basis of a classical criterion crossing morphology *M* with distribution *D*, to yield category *C* = *M* + *D*, cf. (1). For instance the morphology *loro* (*M*) with specialized distribution *D*, as in (5a) individuates the category weak pronoun (*M* + *D*). If the crossing of a particular morphology with a particular distribution is a valid criterion for establishing a categorization, one obtains essentially the same paradigms as in a descriptive or normative grammar, of the type illustrated by Tables 5 and 6 of section 4. What is important in such lexicons is the underlying regularity of abstract categories; the amount of opacity present at the PF interface (in the form of homophony or syncretism/neutralization) is irrelevant.

I have argued that Romance pronouns can be accounted for (without loss of empirical adequacy or theoretical generality) by ignoring such schemas of organization. Under a lexicalist conception of the architecture of grammar, lexical items carve directly the universal conceptual space. In other words, the mapping between LF content and PF content, with its potential for variation, is carried out by the lexicon – and the computational component operates on lexical items and not on abstract properties. Under such a view, nothing leads us to expect that categories are represented uniformly in all languages/or by all lexical series in the same language.

Importantly, the alternative proposed here to the weak-strong categorization is far from a surrender to the linguistic continuum. I obviously adhere to the discrete conception of natural languages embedded in the generative grammar framework. Rather it is part of the present argument that discrete points on the continuum are not typically individuated by macro-categories like weak and strong pronouns and in general by macrostructures of the type associated with realizational conceptions of the lexicon. In the present view, surface linguistic continua are broken along fine fault-lines better corresponding to a lexicalist, micro-parametric view of grammar.

References

- Arsenijevic, B., 2009. Clausal complementation as relativization. *Lingua* 119, 39–50.
- Baker, M., Vinokurova, N., 2010. Two modalities of case assignment in Sakha. *Nat. Lang. Linguist. Theory* 28, 593–642.
- Baroni, M., Bernardini, S., Comastri, F., Piccioni, L., Volpi, A., Aston, G., Mazzoleni, M., 2004. Introducing the “la Repubblica” corpus: a large, annotated, TEI(XML)-compliant corpus of newspaper Italian. In: *Proceedings of LREC 2004, ELDA, Lisbon*, pp. 1771–1774.
- Belletti, A., 2008. *Structures and Strategies*. Routledge, London.
- Belvin, R., Den Dikken, M., 1997. There, happens, to, be, have. *Lingua* 101, 151–183.
- Borer, H., 2009. *Roots and categories*. In: *Handout, 19th Colloquium on Generative Grammar. University of the Basque Country, Vitoria Gasteiz*.
- Bouchard, D., Hirschbühler, P., 1985. French “Quoi” and its clitic allomorph “que”. In: Neidle, C., Nuñez, R. (Eds.), *Studies in the Romance Languages*. Foris, Dordrecht, pp. 39–60.
- Brambilla Ageno, F., 1964. *Il verbo nell'italiano antico*. Ricciardi, Milano-Napoli.
- Brody, M., 2003. *Towards an Elegant Syntax*. Routledge, London.
- Calabrese, A., 2008. On absolute and contextual syncretism: remarks on the structure of paradigms and on how to derive it. In: Nevins, A., Bachrach, A. (Eds.), *The Bases of Inflectional Identity*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 156–205.
- Cardinaletti, A., 1998. On the deficient/strong opposition in possessive systems. *Univ. Venice Work. Pap. Linguist.* 8, 65–111.
- Cardinaletti, A., Repetti, L., 2008. The phonology and syntax of preverbal and postverbal subject clitics in northern Italian dialects. *Linguist. Inq.* 39, 523–563.
- Cardinaletti, A., Starke, M., 1994. The typology of structural deficiency. On the three grammatical classes. *Univ. Venice Work. Pap. Linguist.* 4, 41–109.
- Cardinaletti, A., Starke, M., 1999. The typology of structural deficiency. A case study of the three classes of pronouns. In: van Riemsdijk, H. (Ed.), *Clitics in the Languages of Europe*. Mouton-De Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 145–233.
- Cennamo, M., 2011. Impersonal constructions and accusative subjects in Late Latin. In: Malchukov, A., Siewierska, A. (Eds.), *Impersonal Constructions*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 169–188.
- Chomsky, N., 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Chomsky, N., 2001. Derivation by phase. In: Kenstowicz, M. (Ed.), *Ken Hale: A Life in Language*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 1–52.
- Chomsky, N., 2008. On phases. In: Freidin, R., Otero, C., Zubizarreta, M.-L. (Eds.), *Foundational Issues in Linguistic Theory. Essays in Honor of Jean-Roger Vergnaud*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 133–166.
- Cinque, G., Rizzi, L., 2008. The cartography of syntactic structures. *Stud. Linguist.* 2, 42–58, (Università di Siena).
- Cuervo, M.C., 2003. *Datives at Large*. (Ph.D. dissertation). MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Déchaine, R.-M., Wiltschko, M., 2002. Decomposing pronouns. *Linguist. Inq.* 33, 409–442.
- Egerland, V., Cardinaletti, A., 2010. I pronomi personali e riflessivi. In: Salvi, G., Renzi, L. (Eds.), *Grammatica dell'italiano antico*, vol. 1. Il Mulino, Bologna, pp. 401–467.
- Fillmore, C., 1968. The case for case. In: Bach, E., Harms, R. (Eds.), *Universals in Linguistic Theory*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, London, pp. 1–88.
- Frascarelli, M., Puglielli, A., 2005. The focus system in cushitic languages. A comparative-typological analysis. In: Fronzaroli, P., Marrassini, P. (Eds.), *Proceedings of 10th Meeting of Hamito-Semitic Linguistics. Quaderni di Semitistica*, vol. 25. Dipartimento di Linguistica, Università di Firenze.

- Garzonio, J., Rossi, S., 2013. *A/di/Ø Alternations in Italian Complex Ps.* Paper presented at the 43rd Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages, CUNY, New York, April 17–19.
- Giusti, G., 1995. A unified structural representation of (abstract) case and article. In: Haider, H., Olsen, S., Vikner, S. (Eds.), *Studies in Comparative Germanic Syntax*. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp. 77–93.
- Goldsmith, J., 1981. Complementizers and root sentences. *Linguist. Inq.* 12, 541–574.
- Grimshaw, J., 1997. The best clitic: constraint conflict in morphosyntax. In: Haegeman, L. (Ed.), *Elements of Grammar*. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp. 169–196.
- Hale, K., Keyser, S.J., 1993. On argument structure and the lexical expression of syntactic relations. In: Hale, K., Keyser, S.J. (Eds.), *The view from Building*, vol. 20. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 53–109.
- Halle, M., Marantz, A., 1993. Distributed morphology and the pieces of inflection. In: Hale, K., Keyser, S.J. (Eds.), *The View from Building*, vol. 20. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 111–176.
- Halle, M., Vaux, B., 1997. Theoretical aspects of Indo-European nominal morphology: the nominal declension of Latin and Armenian. In: Jasanoff, J., Melchert, C., Olivier, L. (Eds.), *Mir Curad. A Festschrift in Honor of Calvert Watkins*. Universität Innsbruck.
- Harris, J., 1994. The syntax-phonology mapping in Catalan and Spanish clitics. In: Carnie, A., Harley, H., Bures, T. (Eds.), *Papers on Phonology and Morphology*. MIT Working Papers in Linguistics, vol. 21. MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Holmberg, A., 1986. *Word Order and Syntactic Features in the Scandinavian Languages and English*. (Ph.D. dissertation). University of Stockholm.
- Kayne, R., 1975. *French Syntax: The Transformational Cycle*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Kayne, R., 1984. Connectedness and Binary Branching. Foris, Dordrecht.
- Kayne, R., 1991. Romance clitics, verb movement and PRO. *Linguist. Inq.* 22, 647–686.
- Kayne, R., 1994. *The Antisymmetry of Syntax*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Kayne, R., 1998. Overt vs. covert movement. *Syntax* 1, 128–191.
- Kayne, R., 2010. *Comparisons and Contrasts*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Kratzer, A., 2009. Making a pronoun: fake indexicals as windows into the properties of pronouns. *Linguist. Inq.* 40, 187–237.
- Laka, I., 1990. *Negation in Syntax: On the Nature of Functional Categories and Projections*. (Ph.D. dissertation). MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Leben, W., 1973. *Suprasegmental Phonology*. (Ph.D. dissertation). MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Loporcaro, M., 2008. Opposizioni di caso nel pronome personale: i dialetti del mezzogiorno in prospettiva romanza. In: De Angelis, A. (Ed.), *I dialetti meridionali tra arcaismo e interferenza*. Centro di Studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, Palermo, pp. 207–235.
- Lurà, F., 1987. *Il dialetto del mendrisiotto*. Edizioni Unione di Banche Svizzere, Mendrisio-Chiasso.
- Manzini, M.R., 2012a. The status of complementizers in the left periphery. In: Aelbrecht, L., Haegeman, L., Nye, R. (Eds.), *Main Clause Phenomena*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 297–318.
- Manzini, M.R., 2012b. From Romance clitics to case: split accusativity and the Person Case Constraint. In: Franco, I., Lusini, S., Saab, A. (Eds.), *Romance Languages and Linguistics 2010*. Selected Papers from 'Going Romance' Leiden, 2010. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 1–20.
- Manzini, M.R., Franco, L., 2013. It Not Only Looks Like a Dative, It Also Is Available from: <http://ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/001759>.
- Manzini, M.R., Savoia, L.M., 2005. *I dialetti italiani e romanci. Morfosintassi generativa*, 3 vols.. Edizioni dell'Orso, Alessandria.
- Manzini, M.R., Savoia, L.M., 2007. *A Unification of Morphology and Syntax*. Studies in Romance and Albanian Varieties. Routledge, London.
- Manzini, M.R., Savoia, L.M., 2011a. *Grammatical Categories*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Manzini, M.R., Savoia, L.M., 2011b. Wh- in situ and wh- doubling in Northern Italian varieties: against remnant movement. *Linguist. Anal.* 37, 79–113.
- Neeleman, A., van de Koot, H., 2006. Syntactic haplogy. In: Everaert, M., Riemsdijk, H. (Eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Syntax*, vol. IV. Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 685–710.
- Nevins, A., 2007. The representation of third-person and its consequences for person-case effects. *Nat. Lang. Linguist. Theory* 25, 273–313.
- Ordóñez, F., Repetti, L., 2006. Stressed enclitics? In: Montreuil, J.-P. (Ed.), *New Analyses on Romance Linguistics, Volume II: Phonetics, Phonology and Dialectology (Selected Papers from the 35th LSRL)*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, pp. 167–181.
- Pescarini, D., forthcoming. Clitic Clusters. *The Companion to Syntax*, 2nd ed. Blackwell, Oxford (forthcoming).
- Plank, F., 1985. The extended accusative/restricted nominative in perspective. In: Plank, F. (Ed.), *Relational Typology*. Mouton De Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 269–310.
- Poletto, C., Pollock, J.-Y., 2004. On wh- clitics, wh- doubling in French, and some North Eastern Italian dialects. *Probus* 16, 241–272.
- Poletto, C., Pollock, J.-Y., 2009. Another look at wh- questions in Romance: a look at Mendrisiotto. In: Torck, D., Wetzels, L. (Eds.), *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2006*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 199–258.
- Pollock, J.-Y., 1989. Verb movement. Universal grammar and the structure of IP. *Linguist. Inq.* 20, 365–424.
- Pylkkänen, L., 2002. *Introducing Arguments*. (Ph.D. dissertation). MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Ramchand, G., Svenonius, P., 2008. Mapping a parochial lexicon onto a universal semantics. In: Biberauer, M.T. (Ed.), *The Limits of Syntactic Variation*. John Benjamins, Amsterdam, pp. 219–245.
- Richards, N., 2010. *Uttering Trees*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.
- Rizzi, L., Shlonsky, U., 2007. Strategies of subject extraction. In: Gartner, H., et al. (Eds.), *Interfaces + Recursion = Language? Chomsky's Minimalism and the View from Syntax-Semantics*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 115–160.
- Shlonsky, U., 2012. Notes on wh in situ in French. In: Brugè, L., et al. (Eds.), *Functional Heads*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Sperber, D., Wilson, D., 1986. *Relevance*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Sportiche, D., 1996. Clitic constructions. In: Rooryck, J., Zaring, L. (Eds.), *Phrase Structure and the Lexicon*. Dordrecht, Kluwer, pp. 213–276.
- Sportiche, D., 2011. French relative qui. *Linguist. Inq.* 42, 83–124.
- Starke, M., 2009. Nanosyntax: a short primer to a new approach to language. *Nordlyd (Tromsø Univ. Work. Pap. Lang. Linguist.)* 36, 1–6.
- Svenonius, P., 2002. Icelandic case and the structure of events. *J. Comp. Ger. Linguist.* 5, 197–225.
- Szabolcsi, A., 1984. The Possessor that ran away from home. *Linguist. Rev.* 3, 89–102.
- van Riemsdijk, H., 2008. Identity avoidance. In: Freidin, R., Otero, C., Zubizarreta, M.-L. (Eds.), *Foundational Issues in Linguistic Theory. Essays in Honor of Jean-Roger Vergnaud*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 227–250.

- Vergnaud, J.-R., Zubizarreta, M.-L., 1992. The definite determiner and the inalienable construction in French and in English. *Linguist. Inq.* 23, 595–652.
- Yip, M., 1998. Identity avoidance in phonology and morphology. In: Lapointe, S., Brentari, D., Farrell, P. (Eds.), *Morphology and Its Relation to Phonology and Syntax*. CSLI, Stanford, CA, pp. 216–246.
- Zubizarreta, M.-L., 1998. *Prosody, Focus and Word Order*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.