On Psych Verbs and Optional Clitic Doubling in Catalan and Other Ibero-Romance Languages*

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Abstract

Although undesired under a theoretical viewpoint, natural languages often show cases of "true" optionality. According to a reformulation of the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace 2006), highly complex constructions are more susceptible to optionality and change. Psych verbs that select a subject dative experiencer fall under this definition. Ibero-Romance languages use different strategies to reduce this morphosyntactic inconsistency. Whereas Catalan and Spanish reinforce the deviant construction through additional morphological markers (dative clitic doubling and subsequent grammaticalization of the clitic as subject-verb agreement marker), Portuguese avoids inherent datives at all, using structural case instead. These innovations in argument structure have significant consequences: clitic doubling with full DPs and the grammaticalization of the clitic pronouns are blocked, in contrast to Catalan and Spanish. It becomes evident that a closer look at how argument structure is codified in the lexicon is needed in order to better understand processes of language change.

Keywords: optionality; interface hypothesis; psych verbs; experiencer; dative; clitic doubling

Resum. *Sobre els verbs psicològics en català i altres llengües iberoromàniques*

Tot i ser poc desitjat en la teoria, les llengües naturals presenten sovint casos de «veritable» opcionalitat. Seguint una reformulació de la Hipòtesi de la Interfície (Sorace 2006), les construccions amb major grau de complexitat són susceptibles d'ocasionar opcionalitat i canvi lingüístic. Els verbs psicològics que seleccionen subjectes experimentadors en datiu en són un exemple. Les llengües iberoromàniques fan servir diverses estratègies per reduir aquesta inconsistència morfosintàctica. El català i l'espanyol reforcen aquestes construccions a través d'un marcatge morfològic addicional (el doblatge i posterior gramaticalització de clítics datius com a marcadors de concordança de subjecte) —el portuguès rebutja d'entrada el cas inherent i el substitueix per cas estructural. Aquesta innovació en l'estructura argumental comporta altres canvis significatius: el doblatge de clítics amb SD plens i la gramaticalització dels pronoms clítics queden bloquejats, al contrari que en català i espanyol. És evident que cal considerar amb més deteniment com es materialitza al lèxic l'estructura argumental per comprendre millor el canvi lingüístic.

Paraules clau: opcionalitat; hipòtesi de la interfície; verbs psicològics; experimentador; datiu; doblatge de clítics

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1. Introduction

It is often assumed that the computational system for human language is optimally designed to satisfy legibility conditions between narrow syntax and the articulatory-perceptual and conceptual-intentional interfaces (the "strong minimalist thesis", SMT; cf. Chomsky 2001 and related work). If this is true, intralinguistic variation is not expected to exist – the availability of free choices among equivalent, redundant variants would count as an "imperfect" satisfaction of the interface conditions. Accordingly, a bulk of linguistic research aims at identifying the motivation for such seemingly equivalent structures. So, for instance, Catalan – as most other Romance languages – generally allows for a free choice between an overt and a null subject (the personal pronoun 'tu' in example (1)), but this kind of variation cannot be considered optional, since it gives rise to different pragmatic readings and/or is required under different conditions (see, e.g., Mayol 2010 and references therein). In (1), the subject pronoun 'tu' is obligatory and a null subject is infelicitous as an answer to the question "who saw you?", since the subject is under focus. In other words, the usage of certain syntactic constructions (i.e., overt vs. null subject) directly depends on pragmatics or information structure and, accordingly, apparent "true" optionality does not apply.

(1)   Qui   et   va veure?
      who   CL.2SG   saw.3SG
      'Who saw you?'

      #(TU)   em   vas veure.
      You.NOM   CL.1SG.ACC   saw.2SG
      'It was you that saw me.'   (Mayol 2010: 5)

In many cases, variability can be identified as diatopic, diastratic or diaphasic variation – e.g., the choice between *pretèrit perfet simple* and *pretèrit perfet perifràstic*, between the clitic cluster *l'hi* and *li'l*, etc. Unfortunately, finding a complementary distribution is not always possible, as is illustrated in the following examples. Although past participle agreement is directly related to the expression of perfectivity or specificity in Old Catalan and Decadença Catalan[1] (Vega Vilanova

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2020), as well as still in certain modern varieties (2) (Salvà i Puig 2017), it can generally be considered to be in free variation nowadays, at least in the appropriate syntactic configuration (e.g., object cliticization as in (3)). Similarly, restructuring verbs allow for the clitic to stay in the base-generated position (4a) or to "climb" to the finite verb (4b) without giving rise to any different readings (cf. Paradís 2018). In the same vein, stylistic fronting in Old Catalan (5) was supposed not to convey any characteristic information structural features (cf. Fischer 2010), i.e., it was an optional operation. Optionality thus excludes the complementary distribution of the variants involved – they are fully interchangeable.

(2) a. Aquest curs he   tengut unes   estudiants   brillants.
         this course   have.1SG had.DEF some.FPL students.FPL brilliant.FPL
         'I had some brilliant student in this course.'
                   (some students were brilliant but probably not all: [–Specific])

     b. Aquest curs he   tengudes unes   estudiants   brillants.
         this course   have.1SG had.FPL   some.FPL students.FPL brilliant.FPL
         'I had some brilliant student in this course.'
                                   (all students were brilliant: [+Specific])
                                                         (Salvà i Puig 2017: 67)

(3) Que l'   has   vist/vista,   a   la Maria?
     that CL.3SG.FEM.ACC have.2SG seen.DEF/FSG DOM the Mary
     'Have you seen Mary?'

(4) a. Començaré   a pensar-hi.
         begin.FUT.1SG to think-CL

     b. Hi començaré   a pensar.
         CL begin.FUT.1SG to think
         'I will begin to think about this.'
                       (Hernanz & Rigau 1984: 31, cited by Paradís 2018: 284)

(5) que feita$_i$ aviets   *ec*$_i$ la corona del   Emperi,
     that made had.2PL   the crown of-the Empire
     'that you had built the crown of the Empire'   (Fischer 2010: 116)

In this paper, I will discuss another case of optionality in Catalan, namely dative clitic doubling (datCLD). On the basis of several well-established principles of language change, I will provide a new explanation about how this structure emerged and is spreading, in order to account for the optionality currently found. More specifically, I will argue that dative experiencers may give rise to syntax-semantics mismatches so that different languages apply diverse strategies to reduce the complexity of the construction. In this respect, the comparison with other Ibero-Romance languages is especially interesting since only Catalan is under an intensive and prolonged language contact situation (cf. EULP 2018; Plataforma per la

Llengua 2018; GOIB 2017; see also Vila Pujol 2007) and it has been shown (cf. e.g. Perpiñán 2018 or Fischer & Vega Vilanova 2018, who build on Sorace 2006) that language-contact settings are particularly vulnerable to language change. In contact settings, increased levels of optionality and variation are expected, both within an individual language and across languages. Indeed, what we find there is the coexistence of several unsystematic structures, in other words, "true" optionality. The conditions that favor optionality and the possible outcomes thereof are, however, still clearly identifiable – optionality does not appear randomly, it is not arbitrary. In this sense, attested optionality can be still reconciled with the tenets of the SMT.

This paper is organized as follows: in section 2, I will briefly present a description of clitic doubling of accusative and dative objects among Romance languages. Section 3 offers several theoretical considerations about optionality, with relation to language change and acquisition. In section 4, I will discuss some characteristics of psych verbs following Belletti & Rizzi (1988) and show that different Ibero-Romance languages have developed particular solutions to the morpho-syntactic complexity of psych verbs. Chapter 5 sums up the main findings of this paper.

2. The Clitic Doubling Cycle

Clitic doubling (CLD) in Romance languages has attracted much attention in the last decades (see Anagnostopoulou 2017 for references). Not only is CLD an apparently redundant structure, where two elements (the clitic pronoun and the full DP) compete for the same theta-role and case within a clause, but it also shows a great deal of inter- and intralinguistic variability. Doubling of full pronouns (6a) is quite extended (in Spanish it is obligatory). Full DPs in Catalan are only optionally doubled in dative (6b), accusative CLD is ungrammatical (6c) (cf. Fischer & Rinke 2013; Fischer et al. 2019).

(6) a. (La$_i$)   vam veure només   a   ella$_i$.
         CL.3SG.FEM.ACC saw.1PL   only   DOM she
         'We only saw her.'

     b. (?Li$_i$)   van donar un ram   de flors   a   l'Ada Colau$_i$.
         CL.3SG.DAT gave.3PL a   bunch of flowers to the Ada Colau
         'They gave Ada Colau a flower bunch.'

     c. (*Els$_i$)   vam comprar els   llibres$_i$.
         CL.3PL.MASC.ACC bought.1PL   the   books.MPL
         'We bought the books.'

Fischer et al. (2019) identify a path along which CLD spreads from full pronouns to a generalized doubling of any kind of DP in different Romance languages and their varieties. The gradual spread of the construction seems to obey to the accessibility feature in the DP: inanimate non-specific indefinites are the last object DPs that admit CLD (see also Zdrojewski & Sánchez 2014). Therefore, Fischer et al. argue that CLD is a cyclical change, whereas the CLD cycle captures both

synchronic and diachronic variability (7). Crucially, the possibility for a language to attain the one or other stage in the cycle depends on two independently motivated factors: the grammaticalization of the clitic itself (as full DP, D° or merely agreement; see also Fischer & Rinke 2013), and the specification for the verb-movement parameter, intimately connected to the greater or lesser flexibility of object placement and the syntactic representation of information structure in the CP/TP-domain. Both conditions must be met, otherwise a language or variety cannot proceed to the next stage of the cycle.

(7) The CLD Cycle (Fischer et al. 2019: 60):
   Stage I   → no CLD
                              Latin/Proto-Romance

   Stage II   → optional CLD with full pronouns
                              Old Spanish / Old Catalan / (Portuguese?)

   Stage III → obligatory CLD with full pronouns,
                   → optional CLD with indirect nominal objects [+anim/+def/+spec]
                              Early Modern Spanish / Decadença Catalan
                              Spanish / Catalan

   Stage IV   → obligatory CLD with full pronouns,
                   → obligatory CLD with indirect nominal objects.
                   → Spread of CLD to direct nominal objects [+anim/+def/+spec]
                              Buenos Aires Spanish / Judeo-Spanish

   Stage V   → generalized CLD (with all objects, even inanimates)
                              Lima Spanish / Andean Spanish

The Spanish varieties seem to fit quite well in the cycle, at least concerning accusative objects. As for dative arguments, the picture is less clear. DatCLD is an intermediate stage between doubling of full pronouns and CLD of accusative arguments, in other words, datCLD is a pre-condition for moving forward in the cycle. However, as Fischer et al. (forthcoming) point out, sentences lacking dative doubling are still acceptable in varieties that already allow CLD with a wide range of accusative DPs (e.g., in Argentinean Spanish) and sentences with datCLD are produced in varieties that only allow optional doubling of full pronouns (e.g., in Old Spanish). As Pineda (2016) already showed, the optionality of datCLD can neither be explained in the terms of the "dative alternation" in English, as Demonte (1995) and Cuervo (2003) proposed. If sentences with a doubling dative clitic would correspond to double objects constructions (such as "I gave John the book") and sentences without clitic to the prepositional construction (such as "I gave the book to John"), we would expect, like in English, several semantic and syntactic effects (e.g., binding asymmetries, different word order preferences, etc.). The empirical evidence does not support these claims in Spanish and Catalan.

According to this, Catalan may be placed at stage III of the cycle. Personal pronouns are (almost) obligatorily doubled, as shown in (6a) above, doubling of datives

is only optional (6b). However, doubling of indirect objects in dative (as in (6b) above) is strongly dispreferred by many speakers, whereas experiencer datives (8) show a very strong tendency to co-occur with the dative clitic in any Catalan variety.

(8) A la Maria$_i$ *(li$_i$)   agrada el pastís de poma.
     to the Maria CL.3SG.DAT like.3SG the cake of apple
     'Maria likes apple cake.'

Interestingly, the distinction according to the thematic role of the argument (experiencer vs. goal, source or recipient) is quite common cross-linguistically (see, for instance, Kramer 2014 or Machado-Rocha & Martins Ramos 2016). If dative arguments are to be doubled in a language, it seems that experiencers are the first candidates among them. Hence, it can be assumed that experiencer datives have some particular features that may give rise to doubling structures which, in turn, may be extended to datives with other theta-roles and even to accusatives lacking the relevant feature(s) carried by experiencer datives. The expansion of optional CLD to all kind of dative arguments, independently of their theta-role, seems to be replicating the mechanisms that provoke doubling of the experiencer (in contrast to accusative clitic doubling, which follows a well-defined expansion path along several feature values, or doubling of full pronouns, which is mostly categorical). Even more, only languages with a generalized use of dative experiencers can later on qualify as CLD languages. Before addressing these topics, I will discuss some theoretical approaches to optionality that will be useful to the analysis of datCLD that will be presented in Chapter 4.

3. Accounting for optionality – the Interface Hypothesis, complexity and economy

Following the Strong Minimalist Thesis, it has been assumed that narrow syntax must remain invariable. Consequently, the observed variability must be a matter of externalization, i.e. variation is only found at PF. Thus, the presence or absence of the clitic in optional datCLD could be seen as a case of "silent variation", since the clitic heading its own functional projection is facultatively spelled out without carrying any semantic distinction (cf. Pineda 2016; but see Biberauer & Richards 2006 for an alternative approach in which syntax allows for "true optionality" as far as all variants can satisfy the same requirement without additional derivational costs). The expression of case and φ-features is often linked to post-syntactic morphology (i.e., PF) (cf. Bobaljik 2008; Vega Vilanova 2020). However, it is still necessary to identify when and where this post-syntactic variability is possible at all, whether all features and constructions can be equally affected and how stable or unstable optionality is in each scenario. Considerations from research on language change and language acquisition (two domains that are closely related) can give us new insights into the very nature of optionality.

First, it seems that optionality is not randomly distributed. Some areas of the grammar are more vulnerable than others. The most influential formulation of this

idea is known as the Interface Hypothesis, IH (cf. Sorace 2006; Sorace & Serratrice 2009, among many others; see Fischer & Gabriel 2016 for an overview). The IH was originally proposed to explain near-native L2-attainment. Highly proficient L2-speakers still show residual optionality in certain domains, but not others. More specifically, it is claimed that phenomena within a single language module (e.g., syntactic, morphological, phonological, or semantic) present fewer difficulties for L2-acquisition than interface phenomena. This is derived from a greater cognitive complexity by phenomena at the interfaces – the speaker has to combine heterogeneous information pertaining to different modules, which is not always successful – the available cognitive resources in the L2 are not always enough. Due to their complexity, interface phenomena are acquired later in the L1 and are probably the first constructions to be affected by L1-attrition (cf. Chamorro & Sorace 2019).

Although it was not initially thought of as a theory apt to account for language change, Fischer & Vega Vilanova (2018) show that the IH makes right predictions in diachrony as well. In this paper, they analyze some constructions in Judeo-Spanish spoken in Bulgaria in order to determine to what extent language change can be explained by contact. More concretely, they discuss clitic placement and the expression of verbal aspect. Clitics in Bulgarian are not allowed in first position, but Judeo-Spanish clitics are verb-adjacent, as they are in Peninsular Spanish. Clitic placement is considered to be a core syntactic phenomenon and is not affected in this language contact situation: Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish allows clitics in absolute first position as long as they are placed adjacent to the verb. The Bulgarian rule for clitic placement, i.e. avoiding the first position of the clause, does not apply to Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish. On the contrary, verbal aspect combines morphological and semantic features so that it is a phenomenon at an internal interface. Spanish periphrastic imperfect (*estabas cantando* 'you were singing') is specialized in progressive readings. The imperfect simple form (*cantabas* 'you sang/were singing') is a default form compatible with both habitual and progressive readings. Interestingly enough, the distinction between habitual and progressive past tenses does not take place in Bulgarian. Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish speakers seem to have more difficulties with aspect: they often use the periphrasis in contexts where the progressive reading is excluded (for instance with stative and modal verbs like *poder* 'be able': *esto puedyendo*). Fischer & Vega Vilanova (2018) conclude that theories based mainly on transfer (cf. Thomason & Kaufman 1988; Heine & Kuteva 2003) cannot account for the Judeo-Spanish data, since they should also be able to predict which constructions are eligible for transfer (e.g., the expression of aspect) and which ones are not (e.g., clitic placement). But the IH does the right predictions: clitic placement, a purely syntactic phenomenon, seems to be very robust and stable over time; in contrast, the expression of aspectual features in the verb is more vulnerable and presents variation and, eventually, transfer from the contact language.

Recently, the IH has been the object of criticism – the empirical basis was not as clear as originally expected (see, e.g., Slabakova 2015). Furthermore, a strict modularity, where each language module may work autonomously of the others, is not the only possible conception of grammar. In a way, narrow syntax cannot be considered independent of its effects at PF and LF – every syntactic output

with any degree of complexity must be sent to the interfaces by spell-out, so that every construction should be a phenomenon at the interfaces and trigger interface effects. It is thus necessary to re-formulate the IH accordingly. The intuition that cognitive load for language processing and complexity determine the probability of success of acquisition still seems to be well-founded. Complexity thus correlates with variability and change. However, a principled definition of "complexity" is still due.

From a diachronic perspective, it is not sufficient to determine which constructions are more vulnerable to instability but one should also try to understand the mechanisms that led to this vulnerability. In this respect, language economy seems to be the main driving force (cf. Roberts & Roussou 2003; van Gelderen 2004 and others). Vega Vilanova (2020) argues that pragmatic needs may give rise to doubling structures, i.e. to a structure in which the same features are expressed in more than one constituent for emphasis, expressivity, focalization, etc. Constructions with such "pragmatic overload" (cf. Eckardt 2009) are felt as too costly and speakers will try to avoid them. An effective way of doing this is grammaticalization: doubled semantic features (σ) are replicated in the syntax so that one instance of σ can be now deleted without carrying any apparent consequences. This in turn causes a temporary increase in the syntactic complexity, since at least one new Agree-relation is needed. This, however, is still preferable as a repair last-resort mechanism to the pragmatic overload. Crucially, this approach allows to (re-)introduce complexity in a system driven by economy and simplification and thus justifies optionality and variation. As for clitic doubling constructions, this view is in consonance with a wide-spread analysis since Suñer (1988) – through grammaticalization, the overt personal pronoun loses morpho-syntactic and phonological weight until it is reinterpreted as a mere agreement marker, i.e. a φ-features bundle, which is finally eliminated (Ø) (cf. Fontana 1993; Fischer & Rinke 2013) (9).

(9) DP > D° > φ > Ø

In the same vein, Gabriel & Rinke (2010) claim that clitic left dislocation is the origin for CLD. This amounts to saying that a doubling structure that conveys pragmatic meanings (in this case, topicality) is the source for syntactic doubling. Similarly, Vega Vilanova (2020) proposes the same grammaticalization process to account for the loss of participle agreement in Catalan: doubled semantic features are transferred to the syntax and reinterpreted as syntactic agreement giving rise to optionality (see examples (2) and (3) above) but reducing the overall complexity of the clause (I refer to Vega Vilanova 2020 for the technicalities and further discussion). In sum, dative CLD too can be understood as a means of simplifying constructions with a higher degree of complexity, even if it first gives rise to a temporary increase in the overall complexity. But contrary to what has been proposed (that the source of CLD are dislocated constituents), I claim that the assignment of different argument structure to experiencers of psych verbs plays a crucial role. This is shown in the next section.

4. Dative clitic doubling

As already mentioned above, there is a clear distinction between ditransitive verbs and psych verbs with respect to the acceptability of datCLD. It is thus worth looking first at the peculiarities of psych verbs in order to better understand the spread of CLD to accusative objects. Additionally, I will adopt a cross-linguistic perspective and compare the behavior of the three Ibero-Romance languages Catalan, Spanish and Portuguese concerning the properties of psych verbs. As I will show, the way how each language solves the tension/complexity found in type III psych verbs (see Table 1) has a direct influence on the availability of optional datCLD with ditransitive verbs and on the extension of CLD to accusative objects.

Belletti & Rizzi (1988) distinguish three types of psych verbs in Italian. Roughly the same verb classes can be found in the Ibero-Romance languages (see Table 1). Verbs of the first class, such as *temere* 'be afraid of' (10a), select an experiencer subject in nominative and a theme or stimulus as accusative DP in object position. The second verb class, for example *preoccupare* 'worry' (10b), has an inverted pattern, i.e., the experiencer is the accusative object and the theme/stimulus occupies the subject slot. The third type, with verbs such as *piacere* 'like, please' (10c-d), marks the experiencer with dative case, whereas the theme/stimulus is assigned nominative case. The first two types do not seem to be especially problematic: the argument in subject position gets the corresponding structural case, nominative. However, type III shows conflicting rules: since the experiencer has inherent dative case, both arguments are potentially adequate for the subject position. The dative is placed higher in the animacy and topicality hierarchy (see Ariel 1991 and Fischer et al. 2019 for more details on DP accessibility hierarchies); hence it is readily interpreted as the logical subject of the clause and occupies, as a topic, the position to the left of the verb, which is usually the subject position in canonical SVO sentences. In turn, the theme/stimulus carries nominative case and triggers verbal agreement; morphologically, it is the formal subject of the clause.

(10) a. Gianni teme   questo.
       Gianni fear.3SG this
       'Gianni fears this.' (*Italian*)

   b. Questo preoccupa Gianni.
      this   worry.3SG Gianni
      'This worries Gianni.' (*Italian*)

   c. A Gianni piace   questo.
      to Gianni please.3SG this
      'Gianni likes this.' (*Italian*)

   d. Questo piace   a Gianni.
      This   please.3SG to Gianni
      'Gianni likes this.' (*Italian*)

Table 1. Types of psych verbs after Belletti & Rizzi (1988)

		Experiencer		Stimulus	
		Case	Grammatical relation	Case	Grammatical relation
	Cat.: *témer*				
Type I	Sp.: *temer*	Nom.	Subject	Acc.	Object
	Port.: *temer*				
Type II	Cat., Sp., Port.: *preocupar*	Acc.	Object	Nom.	Subject
	Cat.: *agradar*				
Type III	Sp.: *gustar*	Dat.	???	Nom.	???
	Port.: *agradar*				

    According to the proposal in Chapter 3, the first two verb types should stay quite stable over time, but type III presents a greater complexity because of the conflicting principles for the ascription of the arguments to grammatical relations. It is thus expected that these psych verbs show more variability and are more unstable diachronically. In section 4.1, I will look at the argument structure and other properties of psych verbs in Catalan, Portuguese and Spanish and I will correlate the observations with the grammaticalization path of the dative clitics in each of these languages. In 4.2, I will discuss how the observed properties interact with another important condition for CLD introduced in section 2 above, namely the verb-movement parameter.

4.1. Dative clitic doubling, psych verbs and the grammaticalization of clitics

The grammatical status of dative experiencers in Romance languages is still a controversial matter. Masullo (1993) suggests that dative experiencers in Spanish share several properties with canonical nominative subjects so that they are able to qualify as syntactic subjects. In contrast, it is commonly assumed that these subject properties in Modern Romance are not decisive and that the idiosyncratic properties of the experiencer datives can be derived independently without postulating non-nominative subjects (cf. Rigau 1990, Gutiérrez Bravo 2006, etc.). Following Fischer (2012), however, it seems that dative experiencers in Old Romance, like in Old Germanic, still had a subject-like behavior that got lost over time (I refer to this paper for the specific arguments and evidence).

    Among the first instances of CLD with full DPs in Old Catalan and Old Spanish, we find many cases of dislocated constituents (11) (cf. Gabriel & Rinke 2010) and some experiencer datives (12), even though doubling is not systematic (*pace* Rivero 2010).

(11) ni la sacha   de la lana, madona d'en Morey no
     nor the sack.FSG of the wool madona d'en Morey not
     l'   à   pres
     CL.3SG.FEM.ACC has.3SG taken
     'madona d'en Morey has not taken the wool sack either'[2]   (14th century)

(12) creuré   que li   pesa   a vostra senyoria
     believe.FUT.1SG that CL.3SG.DAT sorrow.3SG to your   lady
     'I will believe that your lady sorrows'   (16th century)

At this stage, the clitic pronouns find perfect conditions for their further grammaticalization (in the sense of Fontana 1993 or Fischer & Rinke 2013). As a consequence of the tendency to a reduction of their syntactic weight, dative clitics at this stage may assume a new function – namely, that of singling out dative arguments that are in a subject position from the other dative DPs. In this sense, dative clitics are understood as cues pointing to the subject argument or, in other words, they can be reanalyzed as subject agreement, which is otherwise expressed by the verbal endings (cf. Batllori et al 2019). This would perfectly explain the subsequent obligatorification of datCLD with psych verbs in Modern Catalan and Modern Spanish – subject agreement is a very regular syntactic operation. But at the same time, this also explains why (impersonal) dative constructions, i.e., constructions in which there is no nominative argument in subject position and the logical subject is expressed in an oblique case, are relatively frequent in Spanish and Catalan compared to other languages that used to have non-nominative subjects, such as French or English. The latter languages opted for a very different strategy to minimize the conflicting structures presented by type III psych verbs: changing the argument structure of the verbs under consideration. Instead of doing this, Spanish and Catalan developed an additional agreement marker to unambiguously identify the non-nominative argument as the "true" subject of the clause. Elvira (2011) and Batllori et al. (2019), among others, already observed these two opposed tendencies within the Romance languages – one tendency to transitivity (e.g. in French or Portuguese) and another tendency to unaccusativity (e.g. in Spanish and Catalan). Languages with a tendency to transitivity remove constructions that are not compatible with the canonical transitive scheme so that psych verbs are accommodated to the nominative-accusative alignment. Verbs with a tendency to unaccusativity have no problems accepting structures that do not match this model.

The fact that the dative and the accusative clitics do not necessarily share the same grammaticalization progress (cf. Bleam 1999; Marchis & Alexiadou 2013) further supports this analysis. This is especially evident in Spanish. Some features of the dative clitic seem to be bleaching – in (13) the same clitic can be used to express singular or plural, but only in a CLD construction, otherwise the full pro-

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2. The Old Catalan data were taken from the corpus CDAR_HH, gathered within the research project "Clitic Doubling across Romance" funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG (German Research Foundation) and conducted by Susann Fischer.

noun distinguishes number (14). The well-studied phenomenon of *leísmo* (i.e., the use of a dative clitic instead of an accusative one (15)) is evidence that the case feature of the dative clitic is weakening (see also Cabré & Fábregas 2020).

(13) a. Le$_i$ di   un libro a mi vecino$_i$.
        CL.3SG.DAT gave.1SG a   book to my neighbor

   b. Le$_i$ / Les$_i$ di   un libro a mis vecinos$_i$.
       CL.3SG/PL.DAT gave.1SG a   book to my neighbors
       'I gave my neighbor/s a book.' (*Spanish*)

(14) a. A   mi vecino$_i$, le$_i$ di   un libro.
        to   my neighbor CL.3SG.DAT gave.1SG a   book

   b. * A mis vecinos$_i$, le$_i$ di   un libro.
       to my neighbors CL.3SG.DAT gave.1SG a   book
       'My neighbor/s, I gave a book.' (*Spanish*)

(15) A Juan$_i$, le$_i$ / lo$_i$ vi   el otro día por
       DOM Juan CL.3SG.DAT / CL.3SG.MASC.ACC saw.1SG the other day in
       la   calle.
       the street
       'Juan, I saw him the other day in the street.' (*Spanish*)

Catalan and, even more clearly, Portuguese behave differently. Apart from certain particularities of clitic clusters in Catalan, neither semantic bleaching (feature reduction) nor phenomena such as *leísmo* are found in Catalan and Portuguese (*lheísmo* is only attested sporadically in certain Lusophone varieties). More importantly, the possibility of interpolation suggests that the clitics in Modern European Portuguese (16), similarly to Old Spanish (17), still have a greater syntactic weight than Modern Spanish clitics. Catalan clitics, however, are closer to Modern Spanish clitics, since they have lost the possibility of interpolation as well as the possibility of having flexible sequences of clitics within clitic clusters, which was still possible in Old Catalan (18).

(16) Todos os dias se   **para lá**   ia   achar túbara.
       all   the days CL.3.REFL to   there went.3SG find   truffle
       'Everyday (s)he went there and looked for truffles.' (*European Portuguese)*
                                                                 (Magro 2010: 105)

(17) assi como les   **dios** auie   prometido
       so   how CL.3PL.DAT God   had.3SG promised
       'as God had promised them' (*Old Spanish*)   (Fischer 2002: 40)

(18) a. car   lo pare **lo**   **li**   havie   tolt
     because the father CL.3SG.MASC.ACC CL.3SG.DAT had.3SG removed
     'since his father has removed it to him'

   b. e   el pages **li**   **lo**   atorga
     and the peasant CL.3SG.DAT CL.3SG.MASC.ACC forgive.3SG
     'and the peasant forgives it to him'   (Fischer 2011: 113)

Crucially, psych verbs in Portuguese are more similar to French than to the other Ibero-Romance languages – verbs of type III with dative experiencers are quite rare (cf. Mendes 2002; Cançado 2012). The most common psych verb, *gostar* 'to like', has changed its argumental structure so that the experiencer argument[3] is now a nominative subject and the theme/stimulus a prepositional object (19). Other psych verbs fall into type I (experiencer is nominative) or II (experiencer is accusative), some of them showing alternances between both types as *entristecer* 'feel sad, sadden' (20). This process must have begun quite early on with the consequence that the further grammaticalization of the dative clitic did not even take place: if the non-canonically marked subjects (i.e., the dative experiencers) are missing or only marginal, there is no need for the clitic to be reanalyzed as an agreement marker and hence to proceed in the grammaticalization path. The lack of type III psych verbs at certain parametric stages inhibits the grammaticalization of the clitics and, as a side effect, blocks the spread of CLD (remember that, according to the account by Fischer et al. 2019, the grammaticalization of the clitics is a necessary condition for CLD).

(19) Eu   gosto   muito da música.
    I.NOM like.1SG much of-the music
    'I like music very much.' (*Brazilian Portuguese*)

(20) a. Isto   entristece   as crianças.
     this.NOM sadden.3SG the children.ACC
     'This makes the children feel sad.' (*Brazilian Portuguese*)

   b. Eu   me   entristeço   com isso.
     I.NOM CL.1SG.REFL fell-sad.1SG with that
     'I feel sad about that.' (*Brazilian Portuguese*)

In sum, we have seen that language change takes place when the constructions present some kind of complexity – in this case psych verbs of type III, which have conflicting properties, are modified in order to show a more consistent behavior,

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3. Originally, the corresponding subject argument of *gustare* carried the theta-role of agens, but the verb semantics was not that of a psych verb (it meant rather 'to taste', 'to savor'). Once grammaticalization shifted the verb to the category of psych verbs, the subject theta-role changed to experiencer. I am dealing with the Portuguese verb *gostar* once this change had already taken place, i.e. the theta grid contains just an experiencer and a theme (see Batllori et al. 2019).

either by structural case replacing inherent one and by simplifying the correspond-ence between arguments and grammatical relations, or by reinforcing the deviant subcategorization frame with additional cues (i.e., by identifying non-nominative subjects through clitics as agreement markers).

4.2. The verb-movement parameter and the CLD cycle

Apart from the facts already discussed, there is still another factor that has an impact on the potential development of CLD: the verb-movement parameter. Fischer et al. (2019) argue that it is not the grammaticalization of the clitic pronouns alone that triggers the clitic doubling parameter but rather the conjoint action of verb placement and grammaticalization (Fig. 1).
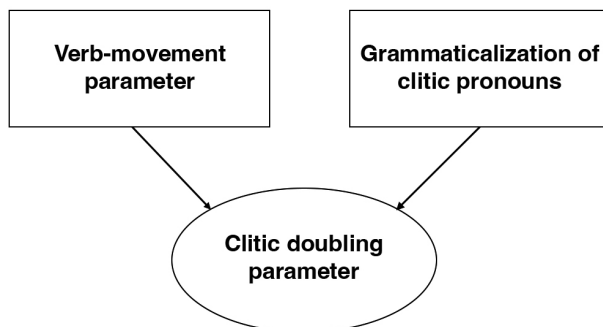
Figure 1. Factors triggering the CLD parameter (Fischer et al. 2019: 68).

   All Old Ibero-Romance languages had a quite high position for the verb (C° or Σ°) and a very flexible constituent order (cf. Martins 1994; Fischer 2010). With increasing restrictions on verb movement (only to T°) and limitations on possible fronting operations (e.g., stylistic fronting disappears, canonical SVO is generalized), more and more cases of CLD are attested in Spanish and Catalan. Portuguese, however, still maintains a high position for the verb. Evidence for this is found in clitic placement (enclisis rather than proclisis) and in a variety of fronting strategies – no stylistic fronting any more, but focalization, QP-fronting, etc. (cf. Barbosa 2009). According to this, it is not expected that Portuguese pro-ceeds to stage III of the CLD cycle (7). It is though expected that some datives are optionally doubled, as in the Old Catalan examples above (11–12). Essentially, Portuguese only allows optional CLD with full pronouns (21):[4]

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4. Third person clitics are not common in Brazilian Portuguese, that is why CLD is only found with 1st and 2nd person full pronouns. But even in European Portuguese (21b), with a productive use of 3rd person clitics, both accusative and dative, doubling of full DPs is ungrammatical.

(21) a. Eu (te)$_i$ ajudo   você$_i$.
        I   CL.2SG help.1SG you
        'I help you.' (*Brazilian Portuguese*)

    b. * Dou   -lhe$_i$ o   livro ao Pedro$_i$.
        give.1SG CL.3SG.DAT the book to-the Pedro
        'I give Pedro the book.' (*European Portuguese*)

From this I conclude that the role of psych verbs for the spread of CLD might be much more important than initially assumed. Although Portuguese, as Old Catalan and Old Spanish, qualifies for datCLD, the construction is very rare, compared to the other Ibero-Romance languages. The crucial difference is the lexical gap in psych verbs of type III. CLD cannot directly apply to indirect objects without also affecting dative experiencers. If so, the lack of the appropriate lexical items (they are available in Old Catalan and Old Spanish) would impede datCLD to spread and, consequently, confine CLD to the domain of personal pronouns. Whereas doubled object pronouns usually convey a focal reading, i.e., they are pragmatically marked, the function of the dative clitic with psych verbs is very different: it is rather a grammatical function by which the non-canonically marked subject, the dative experiencer, receives morphological subject-verb agreement. From this viewpoint, the further grammaticalization of dative clitics is a logical outcome – CLD as syntactic agreement rather than pragmatic doubling.

There are several possible reasons for the extension of the doubling pattern from psych verbs to ditransitives and, later on, to direct objects. It is assumed that dative experiencer subjects, for the same reasons adduced so far, are unstable and vulnerable to giving rise to optionality and language change. Gradually, they will give up their syntactic subject properties and become a different kind of constituent (a "pole" in the terms of Gutiérrez Bravo 2006, or perhaps a canonical object, in a kind of "backward" development in the cyclical change proposed in van Gelderen 2018). Dative CLD is thus reinterpreted as object-verb agreement and, as such, extendible to other object DPs with similar values for the accessibility feature as the typical dative, namely, [+animate], [+definite] and [+specific]. This approach accounts for the fact that some dative arguments can be doubled in Catalan and Spanish but not in Portuguese. However, it does not account for the differences between Spanish and Catalan. In order to better understand these, more research would be needed on the current use of CLD in Catalan and the possible factors that have an influence on it. Fischer et al. (forthcoming) suggest that datCLD in the Spanish spoken in Catalan-speaking countries shows a higher degree of variability than in monolingual regions. They ascribe this result to the multilingual setting, not directly as transfer but rather as contact-induced language change. In this sense, there is an additional variable that has to be taken into account: contact languages. The interplay between internal forces for language change (economy, grammaticalization…) and external factors (multilingualism) yields optionality and seems to stimulate "interface effects" (cf. Fischer & Vega Vilanova 2018).

5. Some conclusions

In this paper, I have dealt with the question of "true" optionality understood as a free-choice among equivalent variants without any complementary distribution. Although free variation should be a priori excluded, optionality is, both synchronically and diachronically, ubiquitous. It is thus necessary to understand what the motivation for optionality is and try to predict when and where it may emerge. More specifically, I have analyzed the distribution of dative clitic doubling among Ibero-Romance languages. Instead of relying directly on the Interface Hypothesis as originally formulated by Sorace (2006), I have proposed a more general approach in which the complexity of the derivation plays the central role. Accordingly, psych verbs are expected to be an important source for variation, optionality and, finally, language change.

The comparison between Spanish and Catalan, on the one side, and Portuguese, on the other, has offered new insights on the cross-linguistic account for the emergence and spread of CLD by Fischer et al. (2019). First, it became clear that other factors than the grammaticalization of the clitic pronouns and verb-movement must be taken into account to fully understand some stages of the CLD cycle and the transitions from a stage to the next one. A survey of the properties of psych verbs and dative clitics has shown that CLD with personal pronouns and CLD with full DPs must be teased apart as two differently motivated phenomena – the former, an expression of information structure; the latter, subject-verb agreement. Surprisingly, it is not only syntactic features that have effects on CLD but it is also necessary to look at the lexical items that carry the relevant features, and how these features are transported to different argument structure patterns. A lexical gap in Portuguese (type III psych verbs are rather marginal), for instance, has blocked the extension of clitic doubling from personal pronouns to full DPs, all other parameters being comparable in the other Ibero-Romance languages. At the end, lexical items are the only components of language that necessarily must be learned. This could be one of the reasons why language contact settings seem to be more demanding and give rise to higher degrees of variability (cf. Fischer et al. forthcoming). How do multilingual speakers deal with inconsistencies in their spoken languages? Are grammars of multilingual individuals more permissive? What kind of cognitive burden does it represent and what kind of outputs can be expected? Where are the limits of contact-induced optionality and contact-induced language change? In a word, there are still many open questions with regard to the impact of multilingualism on language change.

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