

Travaux du 19ème CIL | 19th ICL papers

Congrès International des Linguistes, Genève 20-27 Juillet 2013
International Congress of Linguists, Geneva 20-27 July 2013

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19th International
Congress of Linguists
July 21-27 2013
Geneva - Switzerland

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The Internal and External Syntax of Nominal Expressions from Latin to Romance

poster presentation in session: 5 Theoretical and comparative syntax (Luigi Rizzi)

Published and distributed by: Département de Linguistique de l'Université de Genève, Rue de Candolle 2, CH-1205 Genève, Switzerland
Editor: Département de Linguistique de l'Université de Genève, Switzerland
ISBN:978-2-8399-1580-9

The Internal and External Syntax of Nominal Expressions from Latin to Romance

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STARTING POINT: The present proposal is part of a wider research (still in progress), which aims at an in-depth study of the syntactic development of Nominal Expressions from a diachronic perspective: from early Latin to Romance (cf. Ledgeway 2012)

TOPIC AND AIMS: 1. To investigate the diachronic evolution of the nominal left-periphery.
2. To consider the new values assumed by *ille*, which evolves into article and clitic in the passage from Latin to Romance.

THE SYNTAX OF LATIN DEMs

DEM is inserted into the specifier of a functional projection (Giusti 1992, 1997; Brugè 1996). It is not involved in syntactic movement, but it is always found in SpecDP. DEM occurs in SpecDP also in complex nominal expressions independently of the linear orders (Iovino 2012):

- a. [SpecDP DEM [NP N]]
b. [Left-Per. Adj/Poss/Num SpecDP DEM [NP N]]

DEM marks the Left-Periphery of the nominal expression.

The noun can occasionally raise to the left of DEM, landing in a structural position higher than SpecDP, displaced in the left-periphery of the nominal expression (cf. Giusti (1996); Giusti and Oniga (2007), (2011); Salvi (2011)):

- a. [SpecDP hic [NP homo]]
b. [Left-per. actor SpecDP hic [NP actor]]

THE POSITION OF LATIN ADJECTIVES

Spevak (2010) notes that three different orders for adjectives with respect to the noun they modify are possible: A > A > N; N > A > A; A > N > A. But a *corpus* consisting of 100 CNEs containing a noun and at least two ADJs shows that it is possible to individuate six structural configurations (Iovino 2012):

a. [parvulis _{ind.} [equestribus _{dir.} proeliis]] (Caes. Gall. 5,50,1)	16%
b. [Plautina _{dir.} [longa _{ind.} [NP fabula]]] (Plaut. Pseud. 2)	3%
c. [magnus _{ind.} [miles Rhodius _{dir.}]] (Plaut. Epid. 299)	24%
d. [[populares _{dir.} homines] improbos _{indir.}] (Cic. rep. frg. 4,11)	4%
e. [res [veteres _{indir.} [religiosas _{dir.}]]] (Gell. 2,10,4)	7%
f. [[equite Romano _{dir.}] resistente _{indir.}] (Cic. Verr. II 3,36)	37%

DISCONTINUOUS STRUCTURES

Latin allows different kinds of discontinuous structures (Ledgeway in press; Iovino in progress):

- 1) Discontinuous structures produced by edge-fronting:
omnium genera omnium avium, inquit Trimalchio. (Petr. 69)
 - 2) By the insertion of a weak element in Wacernagel position (both in the sentence and in the colon):
 - a. *Reliquos autem collibertos eius cave contemnas* (Petr. 38)
 - b. *Flebat et Fortunata, flebat et Habinnas, tota denique familia, tamquam in funus rogata, lamentatione triclinium implevit* (Petr. 72)
 - 3) By the "insertion" of a verb:
Interim ego, qui privatum habebam secessum, in multas cogitationes diductus sum, quare aper pilleatus intrasset. (Petr. 41)
- **A subconstituent can be raised to the Left-Periphery of DP**
→ **From this position it can escape and raise to the Left-P of the clause**
→ **Discontinuity is impossible in Romance**

THE SYNTAX OF ROMANCE DEMs

Differently from Latin, in a cross-Romance parametric perspective, postN position for DEM and ART is not possible:

- a. [questo/il [libro]] vs *[libro [questo/il]] (It.)
b. [ce/le [livre]] vs *[livre [ce/le]] (Fr.)

Only Romanian, Spanish, Catalan and Occitan allow for (exceptional) postnominal position of DEMs with marked readings (Ledgeway 2012):

- c. **acest/acei** program vs program-ul **acesta/acea** (Rom.)
d. **este/ese/aquel** país vs el país **este/ese /aquello** (Sp.)
e. **aquestes/aquelles** opinions vs les opinions **aquestes/aquelles** (Cat.)
f. **aqueste/aquel** brave ôme vs lo brave ôme **aqueste/aquel** (Occ.)

THE POSITION OF ROMANCE ADJECTIVES

Contrary to what is found in Latin, the position of the elements in the nominal hierarchy appears to be quite fixed in most Romance varieties. Out of the six structural orders available in Latin, only two are possible in Italian, namely N > A_{dir.} > A_{indir.} and A_{indir.} > N > A_{dir.}

- a. *[piccole_{ind.} [equestri_{dir.} battaglie]] (Caes. Gall. 5,50,1)
b. *[Plautina_{dir.} [lunga_{ind.} [NP commedia]]] (Plaut. Pseud. 2)
c. **[grande ind. [soldato Rodio dir.]** (Plaut. Epid. 299)
d. *[popolari_{dir.} uomini] disonesti_{indir.}] (Cic. rep. frg. 4,11)
e. *[questioni [antiche_{indir.} [religiose_{dir.}]]] (Gell. 2,10,4)
f. **[[cavaliere Romano dir.] resistente_{indir.}]** (Cic. Verr. II 3,36)

THE EVOLUTION OF ILLE

In late Latin (cf. Harris 1978, Giusti 2001, Ledgeway 2012) *ILLE* undergoes semantic weakening (loss of the deictic value of "distality") and becomes:

- 1) a discourse-anaphoric operator (a precursor of the article "articloid" Aebischer 1948):
Quos oportet sub divo in agro dimittere, ut solem et auram patientur et ambulando per tempore morbum digerant, dum varietatem herbarum per suam voluntatem illi morbo repugnantes pascunt (Chiron.181)
 - 2) A weak pronoun:
Equam supinam sic ut caput eius supinum sit, [...] et punges il-lam acu tenue (Chiron. 147)
- As regards the development of the distal demonstrative, *ille* is replaced by a newly formed distal demonstrative ECCU-ille (Salvi&Renzi 2010). As for the proximal demonstrative, given that *hic* is monosyllabic, it is replaced by a new proximal demonstrative ECCU-iste, parallel to ECCU-ille.

ANALYSIS (AND A SKETCH PROPOSAL)

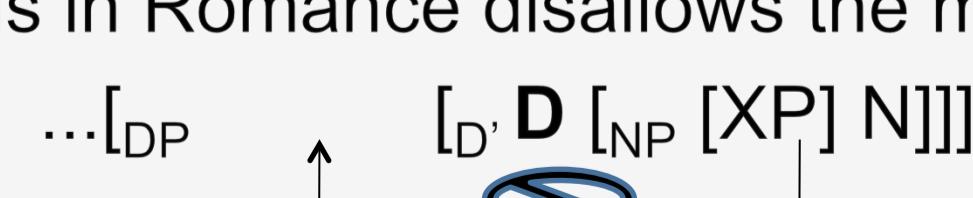
Latin
✓ has a fully fledged nominal structure including a DP and one more peripheral position. Latin syntactic structure is more flexible than that of Romance, maybe due to its rich morphology.
✓ admits extraction of ADJs out of the NP to the DP Left-Periphery
✓ allows extraction of nominal subconstituents and fronts them to the CP Left-Periphery under topic/focus interpretations

Romance languages

- ✓ do not allow either of these options
✓ in order for an element to receive a pragmatically marked interpretation, the whole DP must be dislocated:
*io che un cantuccio privato avevo... vs *io che un privato avevo cantuccio...* (translation of Petr. 72)

The diachronic analysis shows that there is a connection between the loss of the fronting and the progressive emergence of the article.

It is reasonable to suppose that the development of functional heads in Romance disallows the movement of a left-branch because it would violate anti-locality:



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