

Clitic doubling in Molise Slavic. A corpus-based classification.

Molise Slavic is a Slavic micro-language in Italy, closely related to istrian-ikavian dialects. Although belong to the Western South Slavic branch, Molise Slavic exhibits the syntactic construction *clitic doubling* (CD). CD (sometimes called *object doubling*) is a construction in which a direct or indirect object is doubled with a clitic form of a pronoun. This construction type is well-known in languages of the Balkan *sprachbund* (Albanian, Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian and Romanian) and in some Romance varieties (Spanish, Southern Italian etc.). In some languages, CD might be an obligatory process, dependent on definiteness (Macedonian), topicality (Bulgarian) or else, while in other languages it can be a facultative construction for emphasis (cf. Tomić 2008). Since a common genetic source can be excluded and it cannot be explained by Balkan linguistic convergence either, it is more likely a contact phenomenon. The first systematic account of Molise Slavic already mentions frequent (but optional) instances of clitic doubling (cf. Rešetar 1911: 233). In his extensive work on Molise Slavic, Breu highlights that the construction perfectly replicates the Italian or Southern Italian dialectal model, especially in the case of *fronted objects/clitic topicalization* (1). However, instances can be found in which the object does not occur fronted in the sentence (2). Also, it seems that some examples traditionally interpreted as clitic doubling are indeed instances of *clitic left dislocation* (3):

- (1) [...] ka **tvoju nevistu ju** ne moram či nišča [...]. [Clitic topicalization]
[...] REL **your-ACC.SG.F daughter-in-law-ACC.SG.F she.ACC** NEG can-PRS.1SG make-INF nothing
'[...] that I cannot do anything to your **daughter-in-law** [...]' (Breu, Piccoli 2011: [2.5.1]-17)
- (2) Bihu bolina [...] oni ti **ga** ne artiraša **bolin** [...]. [Clitic doubling proper]
be-IPRF.1SG ticket-NOM.PL DEM.DIST-NOM.SG.M you-DAT.SG **he.ACC.SG** NEG take-away-
IPRF.3SG **ticket-ACC.SG.M**
'There were these (meal) tickets [...] he did not take the **ticket** away from you.' (Breu 2011: [1.2.1]-301)
- (3) **Mèdz kvindal**, ti **ga** mečahu one zgora pleči. [Clitic left dislocation]
Half quintal, you-DAT.SG **it.ACC** put-IPRF-1SG they-NOM.PL on shoulder-GEN.SG.M
'Half a quintal, they put it on your shoulder.' (Breu, Piccoli 2011: [1.2.1]-275)

This raises the question which underlying mechanism enforces the doubling of an object. So far, no systematic account of CD in Molise Slavic exists. Based on a sub-corpus extracted from Breu, Piccoli 2011 (recordings of spoken language; n(tokens)=60.219; n(types) = 7.023), I investigate instances of the phenomenon in order to identify its function and role in the language system. In this study, I present a first classification of the phenomenon in Molise Slavic along three dimensions: I investigate if there are functional differences (a) between clitic topicalization (1), clitic doubling proper (2) and clitic left dislocation (3), (b) between doubling of direct objects and indirect objects and (c) between the doubling of a noun or a full-form pronoun. Based on the material, I examine if every sub-type of clitic doubling is motivated by the same mechanism (topicalization, prominence features or core syntax). The classification is especially relevant in regard of the question of optionality vs. obligatoriness and if constraints on the use of CD exist. This study draws on typological insights from clitic doubling research in other languages. The discussion of emergence of the phenomenon (internal vs. external) is not addressed in the talk.