

The (Non-)Deficiency and (Non-)Redundancy of Clitic Pronouns

Dalina Kallulli – University of Vienna

Focusing on Clitic Doubling (CD), in this talk I will address the foundational question of the ontology of the range between agreement, clitics and weak and strong pronouns and the deep nature of the categories included. The strong hypothesis is that these all instantiate the same grammatical class of items, which however differ from each other in the size of the underlying structure, as well as what features trigger the realisation of various degrees of strength. Hypothesising that the answer to the latter question is to be sought in Kiparsky's (2008) D-hierarchy, and postulating universal realisation of all the items included in the range, I set to model the strength of realisation in terms of various types of **Deficiency** (defined here as features invisible to the PF interface) and **Redundancy** (features invisible to the LF interface), including operations such as impoverishment, or rules of exponence. In particular, it is hypothesised that the responsible feature for all repeated realisations is [topic], but that in the process of grammaticalisation it gets weakened. Ultimately doubling is generalised and driven by mere syntactic locality, which following Kallulli and Roberts (2025), I will implement in terms of Form Copy (Chomsky et al. 2024). What begins as topic-doubling in a certain position ends as agreement with the highest argument or universal clitic doubling. Depending on various factors, crucially including the degree of grammaticalisation and the syntactic position, languages display doubling of various degrees of strength, from different zero elements, to agreement, to clitics. The main empirical puzzles targeted concern binding, reconstruction effects, resumption, the Person-Case Constraint and (anti-)locality effects associated with clitic pronouns.

References:

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