

Deictic fission in Romance demonstrative-reinforcer constructions

Romance varieties display demonstrative-reinforcer constructions, with a demonstrative form followed by a spatial adverb, as shown in (1) (see Brugè 1996, Bernstein 1997, Roehrs 2010):

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|-----|---------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-----------|
| (1) | <i>questo</i> | <i>qui/</i> | <i>quella</i> | <i>là</i> | (Italian) |
| | DEM-PROX | here-PROX/ | DEM-DIST | there-DIST | |

In (1), the demonstrative pronoun and the spatial adverb encode compatible deictic features, which are either proximal or distal.

In some Romance varieties, like Piedmontese and Messinese, demonstrative-reinforcer constructions show however only partially overlapping, and in some cases even seemingly contrastively specified, deictic features. These are encoded by binary demonstrative systems and ternary adverbial systems (as discussed below). Examples are in (2-3) (data from Ledgeway 2015):

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|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| (2) | <i>cust si/</i> | <i>cul li/</i> | <i>cul là</i> | (Piedmontese) |
| | DEM-PROX here-PROX/ | DEM-DIST there-MED/ | DEM-DIST there-DIST | |
| (3) | <i>chistu ccà/</i> | <i>chistu ddhocu/</i> | <i>chillu ddhà</i> | (Messinese) |
| | DEM-PROX+MED here-PROX/ | DEM-PROX+MED there-MED/ | DEM-DIST there-DIST | |

While I follow traditional Leipzig glossing rules, notice that the demonstrative-reinforcer systems in (2-3) are person-oriented: this amounts to say that proximal encodes reference to the speaker, medial encodes reference to the addressee and distal encodes reference to neither of them (Ledgeway 2015).

Neapolitan and Brazilian Portuguese show systems comparable to the one in (3). Crucially, the patterns of co-occurrence above are the only attested ones. The other logically conceivable combinations are the type **cust li* for systems as the one in (2) and the type **chillu ddhocu* for systems as the one in (3). Both options are ungrammatical.

Analysis. Building on Harbour (2016), person is taken to be the result of possible combinations of the bivalent features [\pm Participant] and [\pm Author]. I reapply Harbour’s system to reference to person (in person-oriented demonstratives and adverbs) as well, i.e. to deictic person. Differently from Harbour, I specify the deictic value of each form directly in its lexical entry, without the need for a space head.

Therefore, the demonstrative forms have a deictic person value, in addition to the traditionally assumed syntactic person value. The syntactic is 3rd person, [$-$ Participant_{syntax}, $-$ Author_{syntax}]. The deictic person value, defining reference to one of the speech act participants, or to neither of them, is: [+Participant_{deixis}, +Author_{deixis}] (Leipzig ‘proximal’), [+Participant_{deixis}, $-$ Author_{deixis}] (Leipzig ‘medial’), [$-$ Participant_{deixis}, $-$ Author_{deixis}] (Leipzig ‘distal’).

We can now go back to (2) and (3). In both varieties, as for deixis, the demonstrative system is binary, while the adverbial system is ternary (Ledgeway 2015). In binary systems, according to Harbour, only one feature is at work: data collected in Ledgeway (2015) clearly show that for Piedmontese-like varieties (as 2) it is [\pm Author_{deixis}], and that for Messinese-like varieties (as 3) it is [\pm Participant_{deixis}]. In ternary systems, instead, all features are at work.

The featural composition of the demonstrative and reinforcing forms in Piedmontese and Messinese is represented in the following Vocabulary Items list:

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|---|---|
| (2') <i>cust</i> ↔ [+Author _{deixis} ; φ _{syntax}] | (3') <i>chistu</i> ↔ [+Participant _{deixis} ; φ _{syntax}] |
| <i>cul</i> ↔ [-Author _{deixis} ; φ _{syntax}] | <i>chillu</i> ↔ [-Participant _{deixis} ; φ _{syntax}] |
| <i>si</i> ↔ [+Author _{deixis} , +Participant _{deixis}] | <i>ccà</i> ↔ [+Participant _{deixis} , +Author _{deixis}] |
| <i>li</i> ↔ [-Author _{deixis} , +Participant _{deixis}] | <i>ddhocu</i> ↔ [+Participant _{deixis} , -Author _{deixis}] |
| <i>là</i> ↔ [-Author _{deixis} , -Participant _{deixis}] | <i>ddhà</i> ↔ [-Participant _{deixis} , -Author _{deixis}] |

(φ_{syntax} is constant in these features sets: third person singular masculine: [-Participant_{syntax}, -Speaker_{syntax}, +sg, +masc]. The specific features involved in 'singular' and 'masculine', and the definiteness issue are left aside, as they are not directly relevant for this analysis.)

As shown in (2-3), the binary demonstrative system and the ternary adverbial system can be combined. This usually happens in marked contexts, to sort out reference to the addressee, and yields constructions where the deictic features only partially overlap (bold forms in (2-3)), along with restrictions on other co-occurrence patterns.

The hypothesis is that the demonstrative and the spatial adverb are two different exponents for the same terminal node. This naturally accounts for deictic compatibility issues and co-occurrence restrictions.

Here is how the derivation works in cases of partially overlapping features, the terminal node being: [+Participant_{deixis}, -Author_{deixis}; φ]. After the demonstrative is inserted, part of the deictic value of the terminal node is left unexpressed: [±Participant] in (2) and [±Author] in (3). In unmarked contexts, vocabulary insertion ends with underspecification. In marked contexts, the leftover deictic feature is expressed by a second round of vocabulary insertion, through fission. This suggests that the basic functional feature of the demonstrative system ([±Author] in (2) and [±Participant] in (3)) is secondary in adverbs and has to be preventively discharged by the demonstrative form. Adverbial features in (2') and (3') are accordingly revised by inserting parentheses, to mark secondary features:

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|---|--|
| (2'') <i>si</i> ↔ [(+Author _{deixis}), +Participant _{deixis}] | (3'') <i>ccà</i> ↔ [(+Participant _{deixis}), +Author _{deixis}] |
| <i>li</i> ↔ [(-Author _{deixis}), +Participant _{deixis}] | <i>ddhocu</i> ↔ [(+Participant _{deixis}), -Author _{deixis}] |
| <i>là</i> ↔ [(-Author _{deixis}), -Participant _{deixis}] | <i>ddhà</i> ↔ [(-Participant _{deixis}), -Author _{deixis}] |

Therefore we get:

- (2''') [+Participant_{deixis}, -Author_{deixis}; φ_{syntax}] → [/'kul/: -Author_{deixis}; φ_{syntax}] + [/'li/: +Participant_{deixis}]
Cust li is expectedly ruled out by featural incompatibility.

- (3''') [+Participant_{deixis}, -Author_{deixis}; φ_{syntax}] → [/'kistu/: +Participant_{deixis}; φ_{syntax}] + [/'dɔ̀kɔ̀/: -Author_{deixis}]
Chillu ddhocu is expectedly ruled out by featural incompatibility.

This account can be extended to other patterns of co-occurrence: via reduplication in case of coincident features (as in (1)) and once again via fission in case deictic features are expressed

by the spatial adverb alone, as in French: *celui-ci*, *celui-là*. Linearisation issues may be accounted for by prosodic constraints holding on one of the exponents.