

# H Y L L I I D R I T Ë S

## E PËRKOHSHME KULTURORE - LETRARE

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LEONARDO M. SAVOIA AND BENEDETTA BALDI

**Object clitics in imperatives: variation in Gheg  
and Tosk Albanian.  
A morpho-syntactic account**

**Abstract**

In many languages, typically in Romance and Albanian varieties, modal contexts, specifically imperative and infinitive, and negation, give rise to phenomena of clitic reordering and an interesting micro-variation. In Albanian varieties, imperative differs from declarative sentences in generally selecting enclisis and, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> plural person of imperative, mesoclisisis, except for Shkodër Gheg where enclisis is restricted to 3<sup>rd</sup> person Object Clitics (OCl). Negative contexts in turn require the usual preverbal position of OCl. This article addresses the distribution of object clitics in imperatives excluding the DM treatment based on the manipulation of syntactic information. Inspiring to Chomsky (2020a,b), the combination of sub-word elements (roots and affixes) is the result of the rule of Merge and morphology is part of the syntactic computation.

**1. General points**

Linguistic variation is a crucial point in linguistic theorizing: ‘It may be that the computational system itself is (virtually) invariant, fixed by innate biological endowment, variation among languages and language types being limited to certain options in the lexicon; quite restricted options ... (Chomsky 2000: 79). In this perspective, linguistic variation depends on which pieces of the universal conceptual space and of an invariant repertory of interface primitives, the language-specific lexicon is able to externalize. The comparison between Albanian varieties presented in this work can contribute to understanding the mechanisms underlying and feeding morpho-syntactic variation.

Clitic order raises interesting questions concerning the relation between syntactic structure and its expression at the interpretive levels of language. In many languages, e.g. in Romance varieties, the interac-

tion of clitics with modal properties, specifically imperative and infinitive, and negation gives rise to reordering phenomena. Albanian varieties show interesting differences in the distribution of clitics in modal contexts. More precisely, imperative differentiates from declarative sentences in selecting enclisis except for negative contexts, where clitics occur between the negative element and the verb. Moreover, also mesocclisis appears in the 2<sup>nd</sup> plural person of imperative, whereby either one clitic or the entire clitic string is inserted between the verbal base (root) and the person inflection (Manzini and Savoia 2007, 2011a, 2018). The different types of organization between Shkodër Gheg and Gjirokastër varieties will be the subject of this study.

## 2. The data<sup>1</sup>

We will examine the data coming from the Gheg variety of Shkodër and the variety, of standard type, of Gjirokastër. The comparison provides a test bench for a theoretical treatment of the interaction between morphology and syntax. As the first step we consider the occurrence of OClS in declarative sentences, where they occur in pre-verbal position, exactly like in Romance languages. Precisely accusatives are in (1a), dative in (1b) and reflexive/unaccusative in (1c) (NA = Non-Active; cf. Manzini and Savoia 2007). It is of note that dative and 1<sup>st</sup>/ 2<sup>nd</sup> person OClS precede accusatives in sequences. Generally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> singular person OCl is realized by the alternant  $\epsilon$  in isolation and by the alternant *a* in clusters *oblique-accusative*, as shown by the comparison between (1/2a) and (1/2b).

- (1) a. m / t /  $\epsilon$  / i / na / ju fof-in  
 me / you / her/him / them / us / you see-3PL  
 ‘they see me/ you/ her/ him/ them/ us/ you’
- b. i a n $\epsilon$ p  
 to.her/him/them it give.3SG  
 ‘(s)he gives it to hwee/hem/them’
- c. u la-v-a  
 NA wasg-PAST-1SG  
 ‘I sashed myself’

Shkodër

<sup>1</sup> The data here discussed and analyzed have been collected by means of field research in Shkodër and in Gjirokastër in recent years. We are grateful to our informants, which for Shkodër are our colleagues and friends Eliana Laçeç and Alma Hafizi, and for Gjirokastër, among others, Eli Vito and Aida Lamaj.

- (2) a. mə / tə / ε / i / na / ju θəras-in  
 me / you / her/him / them / us / you call-3PL  
 they call me/ you/ her/ him/ them/ us/ you’
- b. i a ðatʃ  
 to.hem/her/them it give.PAST.1SG  
 ‘I gave it to her/him/them’
- b. u vɛʃ  
 NA dress.PAST.3SG  
 ‘(s)he dressed himself’

In imperative contexts, the proclitic position of OCl is replaced by the post-verbal position or mesoclis. Nevertheless, there are differences between the two varieties we investigate, primarily involving the position of object clitics in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural person of imperative, separating the Geg of Shkodër in (3) from the Tosk of Gjirokastër in (4), involving a different distribution of clitics. Considering now the data of Shodër, (3a)-(3a’) illustrate the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular with 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCl and 1<sup>st</sup> person OCl respectively; (3b) illustrates the enclisis of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCl in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural forms, (2b’) mesoclis of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCls, and (3b’’) the pre-verbal occurrence of 1<sup>st</sup> person OCls. 3<sup>rd</sup> person *dative* + 3<sup>rd</sup> person *accusative* clusters occur in enclisis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular imperative in (3c), while in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural imperatives these clusters are optionally followed by a copy of the inflection *-ni*, as in (3d). 1<sup>st</sup> person + 3<sup>rd</sup> person *accusative* clusters are inserted in proclisis, both in the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular imperative, in (3c’) and in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural imperative in (3d’). The preverbal distribution of 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics differentiates the variety of Shkodër from that of Gjirokastër in (4), where both 1<sup>st</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics, including clusters, are inserted either in enclisis or in mesoclis

- (3) a. ʃif-ε  
 Look.2SG at- him/her  
 ‘look ather/him’
- a’. m ʃif  
 me look.2SG at  
 ‘look at me’
- b. θir- ni- ε /tʃɔ- n(i)- ε / mɛr- n(i)- ε  
 call 2PL him/her / bring 2PL it/ take 2PL it  
 ‘call her/ him/ bring it / take it’
- b’. ʃif- / θir- / tʃɔj- ε- ni  
 look at/ call / bring her/him/it 2PL  
 ‘look at/ call / bring her/ him/it’
- b’’. m ʃif-ni / m θir-ni / m tʃɔ-ni  
 me look-2PL / me call-2PL / me bring-2PL

Shkodër

- c.           ‘look at/ call / bring me’  
 nɛp-           j-           a  
 give.2SG      3dat   it  
 ‘give him/ her it’
- c’.       m-       a /       na       ɛ       nɛp.2SG  
 me   it /   us       it       give  
 ‘give me / us it’
- d.       nɛp-   ni-       j-           a-   (ni) / tʃɔ-   ni-       j-           a-   (ni)  
 give   2PL   him/her   it   2PL/ bring-   2PL   her/him   it   2PL  
 ‘give (PL)/ bring it to her/him’
- d’.       m       a       nɛp- / jɛp-       ni  
 me   it       give-           2PL  
 ‘give (PL) me it’

In the variety of Gjirokastër in (4), (4a) and (4a’) exemplify the enclitic occurrence of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics with the 2<sup>ns</sup> singular imperatives. (4b) and (4b’) illustrate mesocclisis of both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics with 2<sup>nd</sup> plural imperatives. (3c)-(3c’) illustrate the enclisis of clusters on the 2<sup>nd</sup> singular imperative. Clusters occur in mesocclisis in the 2<sup>nd</sup> plural person of imperative, as in (4d)-(4d’). Mesocclisis of the 1<sup>st</sup> plural person OCl *na* and of the dative *i* is shown in (4e) and (4f) respectively.

- (4) a.       ʃix- / vijf-                   ɛ / i  
 see.2SG / dress.2SG him/her/them  
 ‘see/ dress her/ him/ them’
- a’.       ʃix-                   mə       mua  
 see. 2SG           me       me.obl  
 ‘see (SG) me’
- b.       ʃix-       / vijf-                   ɛ-                   ni  
 see   / dress                   him/her           2<sup>nd</sup>PL  
 ‘see/ dress him/her’
- b’.       ʃix- / vijf-   mə- ni   /   nə- m-       ni       atə  
 see-/ dress me 2PL / give me 2PL   that  
 ‘see/ dress me / give me that’
- c.       jɛp-                   i-           a  
 give. 2SG           him/her   it  
 ‘give him/her it’
- c’.       nə-                   m-       a / jɛp-       m       -a  
 give.2SG           me       it / give.2SG me   it  
 ‘give me it’
- d.       jɛp-   i-           a-       ni  
 give- him/her it   2PL  
 ‘give him/her/them it’

- d'. sil- m- a/i ni  
bring me - him/her/them 2PL  
'bring me it'
- e. prit- na- ni  
wait for us- 2PL  
'wait for us'
- f. jɛp- i- ni kətə  
give- him/her 2PL this  
'give him/her/them this'

The order between deictic clitic pronouns, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> person elements, and 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics whereby the 1<sup>st</sup> person OCl precedes the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitic, regularly showing up in proclisis, is substantially preserved also with imperatives, in the sense that deictic clitics however are placed in a domain more to the left than the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics. In the case of Shkodër in (3), this distribution is realized by placing the cluster in preverbal position.

Negative imperatives involve a specialized negation *mos/ mas* occurring also in other modal contexts, which entails the pre-verbal occurrence of OCls, between negation and verb, as illustrated in (5a,b) and (6a,b) for simple OCls and clusters.

Shkodër

- (5) a. mas ε / m jif / jif-ni  
NEG him/her / me look.2SG / look-2PL  
'do not look at her/ him/ me'
- b. mas m / i a nɛp / nɛp-ni  
NEG me / him/her it give-2SG / give-2PL  
'do not give it to me/ to her/him'

Gjirokastër

- (6) a. məs j- a jɛp  
NEG him/her it give.2SG  
'do'nt give him it'
- b. məs m- a sil- ni  
NEG me- it bring- 2PL  
'don't bring me it'

The non-active forms of imperative require the non-active (NA) clitic *u* (*self*; Manzini and Savoia 2007). The latter characterizes passive, middle and reflexive forms of the verb also in the perfect and, according to the varieties, in other forms. In the imperative the distribution



of *u* coincides with that of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics. In particular, *u* is positioned in enclisis in the 2<sup>nd</sup> plural of imperative in Shkodër in (7a) and in mesocclisis in (8a) for Gjirokastër. Negative forms reproduce the proclisis, as in (7b)-(8b).

Shkodër

- (7) a.    la-    ni-    u  
           wash- 2PL- NA  
           ‘wash yourself’  
       b.    mas    u        la-ni  
           Neg   NA     wash-2PL  
           ‘don’t wash yourself’

Gjirokastër

- (8) a.    la-    h-    u-    ni  
           wash NA *infl* NA 2PL  
           ‘wash yourself’  
       b.    məs    u        la-    ni  
           Neg   NA     wash 2PL  
           ‘don’t wash yourself’

The main differences we observe are synthesized as follows:

- ✓ Mesocclisis is attested in both varieties in 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural form of imperative
- ✓ In Shkodër variety 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics precede the imperative and mesocclisis involves only 3<sup>rd</sup> person and NA clitics, but only in the case of simple OCl.
- ✓ In Gjirokastër variety mesocclisis involves both 1<sup>st</sup> singular and 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics

We obtain the schema in (9), where, mes = mesocclisis, prv/psv = pre-verbal/postverbal:

(9) *Clitics in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural person of imperative*

Clitics	1 <sup>st</sup> sg	3 <sup>rd</sup> acc/dat/NA	1 <sup>st</sup> sg+3 <sup>rd</sup> acc	3 <sup>rd</sup> dat+3 <sup>rd</sup> acc
Gj.	mes	mes	mes	mes
Sh.	prv	psv/ mes	prv	psv/ mes

A generalization can be derived on the distribution of OCl, whereby 1<sup>st</sup> singular person clitic (deictic) precedes the other ones, and 3<sup>rd</sup> person dative precedes 3<sup>rd</sup> person objects, as in (10):

(10) *Deictic clitics* > *3<sup>rd</sup> Person dative* > *3<sup>rd</sup> Person and NA*

These asymmetries put into play some of the crucial interpretive properties underlying the organization of the sentence:

- ✓ DOM emerges whereby the deictic clitic (1<sup>st</sup> person) has a distribution different from 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics in Shkodër;
- ✓ In all contexts 1<sup>st</sup> person precedes 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics (mesoclysis/ post-verbal/ pre-verbal).
- ✓ Negation requires clitics to occur in pre-verbal position (Manzini and Savoia 2007, 2011a, 2017; Baldi and Savoia 2020, Savoia and Baldi 2020)

### 3. Some proposals for the analysis

In the following analysis, we adopt an approach to morpho-syntax, based on the idea that morphology is part of the syntactic computation and there is no specialized component for the morphological structure of words (Manzini and Savoia 2011a, 2017, 2018, Manzini et al. 2020, Savoia et al. 2018; see also Collins and Kayne 2020). Lexical elements, including functional morphemes, are endowed with fully interpretable content, and contribute to externalizing the syntactic structure.

In this, we distance ourselves from the descriptive frame of Distribute Morphology, the more adopted approach to morphology, which identifies morphology with an autonomous component, where subword elements (affixes and clitics) are understood as ‘dissociated morphemes’ conveying an information ‘separated from the original locus of that information in the phrase marker’ (Embick and Noyer 2001: 557) and involving post-syntactic rules of linear adjacency (Local dislocation) (Embick and Noyer 2001). Hence, agreement and case morphemes are not represented in syntax but they are added postsyntactically ‘during Morphology’.

We think that having recourse to the simple syntactic rule of Merge is sufficient to account for the formation of complex words whose inflection realizes syntactic relevant contents. Inflected words are analyzed as the result of a Merge operation that combines inflectional heads with a category-less lexical root R, corresponding to a predicate. In the case of nominal elements, inflectional contents are Class (gender feminine/masculine) and other classificatory properties such as number and case (Manzini and Savoia 2011b). In inflected verbal forms agreement features and mood/ tense/ voice inflections are merged with R. Specifically, syncretism and other kinds of ambiguity imply a

treatment based on the interpretive properties of the items/inflectional exponents and not on different syntactic structures. So, the Merge operation (Chomsky 2020a,b) in (11) gives rise to the combination of morphemes in complex words:

$$(11) \text{ MERGE}(X,Y) \rightarrow [X,Y]$$

Specifically, morphology involves the combination of heads, roots and other morphemes. Chomsky (2020a: 55) sees in pair-merge the way of treating head raising: ‘It’s always described incorrectly. If a verb raises to inflection, say to T, it’s always described as if the T-V complex becomes a T; but it’s not, it’s a V-the outcome of the adjunction is really verbal, not inflectional’. As for the traditional categorizer *n* for nouns and *v* for verbs (cf. Chomsky 2020a), we can conceptualize them as the bundles of  $\phi$ -features that characterize the functional content of words entering into the agreement operations. Finally, agreement can be accounted for as the morphological manifestation of the identity between referential feature sets corresponding to the arguments of the sentence.

### 3.1. Imperative

From a semantic point of view, imperatives introduce a clause that escapes the truth conditions generally applicable to declaratives; in keeping with Portner (2004: 239) imperatives introduce a property ‘which can only be true of the addressee’, rather than an event, and as such it is not submitted to veridicality requirements. Negation and modal contexts (imperatives, interrogatives) are core instances of what Giannakidou (2011) calls non-veridical contexts<sup>2</sup>. Thus, imperative assigns a property to a prominent argument, identified with the addressee (Platzak and Rosengren 1998, Mauk and Zanuttini 2008). The idea of Mauk and Zanuttini (2008) is that the imperative form is a predicate with an unsaturated variable *x* bound by the  $\lambda$  operator introduced by modality as in (12)

$$(12) \text{ } \lambda x, \text{ look at } (x, y)$$

As for the different distribution of 1<sup>st</sup> person and 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCLs, it implies a DOM effect. The idea is that certain types of referents, of

<sup>2</sup> “veridicality is a property of sentence embedding functions: such a function *F* is veridical if *Fp* entails or presupposes the truth of *p*. If inference to the truth of *p* under *F* is not possible, *F* is nonveridical” (Giannakidou 2011: 1674)

which participants in the discourse are the typical subset, are lexicalized independently of their role in the event, by virtue of their intrinsic denotational force. Indeed the interpretation of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person is anchored to the discourse universe. while 3<sup>rd</sup> person elements (on a par with nouns) are anchored to the event introduced by the verb.

#### 4. The distribution of OCIs

Let us consider the treatment of verbal inflection and clitic insertion in terms of merger operations. Our aim is to show that the same operation forming syntactic structure is at work in combining morphological structures. A result that we can expect insofar as morphology is nothing but a way of realizing the interpretive properties organizing the sentence. Starting from Halle and Marantz (1994) the interplay between clitics and inflections has induced a unified treatment of them as realizations of  $\phi$ -features associated with syntactic categories. This solution is confirmed by mesoclysis (Manzini and Savoia 2011a, Baldi and Savoia 2020), presented in (3)-(4), where clitic elements are interpolated within the inflectional string and obey the same combinatory rules.

We assume that the inflectional content of the verb satisfies the properties of the sentence. For instance, consider the simple clause in (13) (cf. (1a), Shkodër):

- (13)                [<sub>OCI</sub>  $\varepsilon$  ] [<sub>T/v</sub>  $\text{fof-in}$ ]  
                       her                see- 3PL  
                       ‘They see her/him/it’

In the light of Chomsky (2015, 2020b), the inflection, identifying the  $\phi$ -features of  $v$  corresponding to the External Argument of the verb, is merged with  $R$ , yielding (14).

- (14)                 $\langle \text{in}_\phi, \text{fof}_R \rangle \rightarrow [\text{v}/_{3\text{ps}} \text{fof} - \text{in}_\phi]$

If words, here the verb, are phases (Marantz 2007), we need to think that inflectional head is accessible to operations at  $vP$ , where it agrees with the features of  $v$ , as suggested in (15). In accord with Roberts (2010: 57), the OCI can be conceived as the head of agreement for  $v$  phase, its phase edge.

- (15) a.             $vP$  phase<sup>3</sup>:    T            v            word-phase  
      $\varepsilon_\phi, \phi$     -in+fof-

Merger operation yields, then, (16) where the verb is combined with the OCl subsuming  $\phi$ -features of  $v$ .

$$(16) \quad \langle \text{OCl}_\phi, \text{fofin}_v \rangle \rightarrow [{}_v \varepsilon [\text{fofin}]]$$

We can think that inflectional properties of the verb realize T; in other words,  $vP$  and  $TP$  absolve the Agreement criterion invoked in Chomsky (2015, 2020b), giving rise to (17), where the amalgam  $\text{OCl}+R$  is merged to T.

$$(17) \quad \langle T_\phi, [\varepsilon [\text{fofin}_\phi]] \rangle \rightarrow [{}_T [\varepsilon \text{fofin}_{\text{Inf}}]]$$

What does the special order between verb and OClS in imperative come from? In generative tradition the postverbal position of OClS is referred to the movement of verb to C or to a higher position. This is the current analysis in cartographic approaches, where the illocutionary nature of imperatives is associated with the C field or the Speech Act Phrase (Speas and Tenny 2003). The split between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> clitics reflects their different status in relation to the syntactic representation of the imperative pragmatic content, where lexical verb and 1<sup>st</sup> person do not belong to the phase including inflection+3<sup>rd</sup> person.

In our approach, based on the preceding discussion, we treat the order *verb-clitic* of imperative as the morpho-syntactic expression of the specific interpretive properties of mood, as in *n p-ni-i-a* ‘give(2pl)-to. her/him-it!’ from (3b) for Shkodër. We may think that  $n\varepsilon p_R - ni_{2PL}$  realizes the properties inherited by T from C, where the inflection *-ni* is specialized for the 2<sup>nd</sup> plural. The enclisis of the clitic string can be seen as a structural possibility implemented by the externalization procedure.

More precisely, the OCl cluster realizes the two arguments selected by the ditransitive verb ‘give’, introducing a predicative relation of possession between the possessum, the accusative, and the possessor, the dative. In accord with the proposal in Manzini and Savoia (2011b), Baldi and Savoia (2021), we can represent this relation in terms of the inclusion relation P in (26), involving the object and the oblique clitic, where the possessor (the dative) includes the possessum (the object).

$$(26) \quad a \text{ ‘it’} \subseteq i \text{ ‘to.her/him/them’}$$

Thus it is natural to assume that the cluster *i-a* is formed by merging the beneficiary and the internal argument in the same cycle, as in (27a), as suggested by the fact that the OCl in combination with the dative selects a specialized form, i.e. *a* in the place of the usual  $\varepsilon$  (cf. the

examples in (1)-(2)). The amalgam *i-a* is merged to  $v$ , [<sub>v</sub> *nɛp-ni*], whose it realizes the agreement  $\phi$ -features, as in (27b). The order of clitics, inverted with respect to the order in declaratives, satisfies the requirements of T, as the expression of the mood inherited by C, as in (27c). We may relate the position of the verb to the criterion whereby forms like imperatives, with deictic import, are interpreted independently of the described event and the basic structural order. The initial position is, thus, externalized.

- (27) a.  $\langle \text{OCl}_\phi, \text{dative}_\phi \rangle \rightarrow [{}_{\text{CP}} \text{i-[a]}]$   
 b.  $\langle \text{OCl } cluster_\phi, \text{nɛp-ni}_v \rangle \rightarrow [{}_v \text{ia [nɛpni]}]$   
 c.  $\langle \text{T}_\phi, [{}_v \text{ia [nɛpni]}] \rangle \rightarrow [{}_{\text{T}} [[\text{nɛpni}] \text{ia}]]$

As the data show, Shkodër variety admits enclisis only for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCl in (3a,b). As to NA clitic *u*, in (8a), it occurs in enclisis, in the same way as the 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics. In Gjirokastër *u* is regularly inserted in mesoclis, as in (9a), in 2<sup>nd</sup> plural of imperative, in enclisis in the singular.

Let us now turn to mesoclis. In Gjirokastër variety, in (4d,d'), mesoclis affects both simple OCl and clusters, as in *jɛp-i-a-ni* 'give(2pl) it to her/him' and *sil-m-a-ni* 'bring(2pl) it to me'. We can assume that the inflection  $-ni_{2\text{pl}}$  is treated as a clitic, more precisely it is merged to the verb in the cycle of the OCls, as in (28a). We can expect this possibility, as far as we assumed that OCls are a type of agreement exactly as the person inflection. Again, we can think that the deictical properties of the imperative make the root free to occur independently of the other structural material. The inversion, as suggested, realizes the features of C inherited by T, in (28b).

- (28) a.  $\langle \text{OCl } cluster_\phi, \text{ni}_\phi \rangle \rightarrow [{}_\phi [ \text{i-a} ] \text{ni} ]$   
 b.  $\langle \text{T}_\phi, [{}_v [{}_\phi [ \text{i-a} ] \text{ni} ] \text{sil} ] \rangle \rightarrow [{}_{\text{T}} [[\text{sil}] \text{i-a-ni}]]$

We are saying that, in imperatives,  $v$  can realize the  $\phi$ -features of the EA within the string of the IA. This behavior can be related to the nature of imperative as a predicate whose argument is the addressee (Portner 2004), typically the 2<sup>nd</sup> person. Languages with mesoclis manifest morphologically this property by unifying the agreement string including subject inflection together with the one of the internal arguments of  $v$ , as in (28b).

Interestingly, the conclusion that the inflection  $-ni$  is treated like a clitic, is confirmed by the fact that also in other varieties with mesoclis/ enclisis, for instance Romance ones (cf. Baldi and Savoia 2020), we find an enclitic alternant in which the cluster includes the inflectional

ending of 2<sup>nd</sup> plural. In Shkodër varieties *-ni* is added to the cluster enclitic on the inflected form of the imperative, as in (3d), as in *nɛp-ni-i-a-ni* ‘give(2pl) it to her/him’, *tʃɔ-ni-i-a-ni* ‘bring(2pl) it to her/him’. SWe can think that in these cases the cluster *i-a-ni* is merged with the inflected verb form, as in (29).

$$(29) \quad \langle T_{\varphi}, [v [i-a] ni [tʃɔ-ni]] \rangle \rightarrow [T [[tʃɔ-ni] i-a-ni]]$$

Finally, Shkodër variety shows an evident DOM effect, whereby only 3<sup>rd</sup> person OClS and Dative clitics can occur in enclisis or mesoclis. On the contrary, 1<sup>st</sup> person OClS are positioned before the verb, as in (3a’,b’’,c’,d’). Hence, while 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns are associated with the event representation by *v*, deictic pronouns such as 1<sup>st</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup>) person clitics have an independent realization, associated with the modal form of the verb. So in (30) deictic clitics, as *m* ‘me’, may occur freely in the immediate context of the verb, exploiting its capability to be interpreted independently of the event introduced by the verb.

$$(30) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a.} \quad [\varphi m a], [v nɛp(-ni)] \rightarrow [v/\varphi m a [nɛp-ni]] \\ \text{b.} \quad \langle T_{\varphi}, [v m a [nɛp-ni]] \rangle \rightarrow [T [ma nɛpni]] \end{array}$$

The hypothesis that clusters are formed and then combined with the verb accounts for the fact that the clusters *1<sup>st</sup> person+accusative* occur together; in other words, the clitics forming clusters can not be decomposed in different positions. As a consequence, the left position of the clitic *m* ‘me’ forces the preverbal position of the OCl *-a*. What is evident is that the requirement for *m* to occur with the verb in deictic contexts automatically applies to the cluster.

#### 4.1 Negative contexts

Negative contexts entail proclisis. Following the literature, the negation is an operator that takes in its scope the arguments or the event introduced by the verb. Manzini and Savoia (2007, 2011b) conclude that the reordering of clitics in negative imperative is due to the fact that the verb is in a lower position, whereas the negation lexicalizes the higher modal categories. This explanation was used also for the proclisis of 1<sup>st</sup> person in Shkodër variety, so that the verb would remain in an inflectional position rather than to move to a modal high position.

Our idea is that the traditionally alleged contrast between verb in C or in T is not at issue. Rather, negation introduces an operator quantifying over the internal argument of the elementary event VP, and its

scope is immediately satisfied by the proclitic position of pronouns. However, as is now clear, we do not assign to the structure the cartographic-type representation of this relation. The verb realizes T, i.e. inflectional properties associated with the mood properties inherited by C, and the order of elements can be explained resorting to the simple merge operation.

We can argue that, because negation excludes veridicality of the proposition, it is able to satisfy the non-veridical interpretation triggered by imperatives. Hence, the verb no longer has to realize this property and the usual proclitic order is preserved, as in *məs i-a jɛp* ‘do’nt give (2sg) him it’ (cf. (6b)) for Gjirokastër and *mas m a nɛpni* ‘do’nt give (2pl) him it’ (cf. (5b)) for Shkodër. This is tentatively illustrated in (31).

- (31) a.  $[\varphi \text{ i a}], [v \text{ jɛp}] \rightarrow [_{v/\varphi} \text{ i a } [jɛp]]$   
 b.  $[_T < məs, [v \text{ i a } [jɛp]]] > \rightarrow [_T məs [ \text{ i a } \text{ jɛp}]]$

In (31a) the cluster *m a* is merged to the verb realizing its object agreement. This structure is merged with the head *mas* which expresses the non-veridical properties of mood.

## 5. Concluding remarks

In this article we have explored the variation in the morpho-syntactic properties of imperatives in Shkodër Gheg and in Gjirokastër Tosk variety. The latter presents enclisis and mesocclisis of all OCl and clusters, while Gheg admits mesocclisis and enclisis only for the 3<sup>rd</sup> person OCl, while 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics occur in pre-verbal position. In all varieties, negation requires clitics to be inserted in pre-verbal position (Manzini, Savoia 2007, 2011, 2017; Baldi and Savoia 2020, Savoia and Baldi 2020). Other phenomena emerge, in particular DOM effects whereby deictic clitics (1<sup>st</sup> person) precede 3<sup>rd</sup> person clitics, in all types of contexts (mesocclisis/post-verbal/pre-verbal), and, more crucially, in Gheg 1<sup>st</sup> person clitics however occur in pre-verbal position, excluding enclisis.

The main purpose of this article has been to account for the distribution of object clitics in imperatives referring to a theoretical framework excluding costly and ad hoc structures of cartographic approaches, and, as for the morphological operations, DM treatment based on the manipulation and obscuration of syntactic information. We have applied the model discussed in Chomsky (2020a,b), in which Merge operation account for the combination of functional and lexical heads and



of other syntactic object on the basis of internal and external merger. In this framework, we can treat the variation in terms of different possible ways whereby the combination of lexical heads and inflectional morphemes in syntax is connected to the interpretive content.

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