

Disjunction under single referent: voiding the ban on clitic coordination

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The inability of clitic pronouns to be coordinated is often taken to be one of their defining properties (Kayne 1975; Cardinaletti and Starke 1994; i.a.). This is observed with both conjunction and disjunction, and regardless of clitic host and placement requirements. Clitic pronouns cannot be coordinated in Italian, where they are verbal proclitics (cf. (1-a)), as well as in Slovenian, where they are second position clitics (cf. (2-a)),¹ but coordination of strong pronouns is allowed in both (cf. (1-b), (2-b)).

- | | | | | |
|-----|----|---|----|--|
| (1) | a. | * Lo e/o la chiamo.
him _{cl} and/or her _{cl} call.1SG | b. | Chiamo lui e/o lei .
call.1SG him _{st} and/or her _{st} |
| (2) | a. | *Kličem ga in/ali jo .
call.1SG him _{cl} and/or her _{cl}
'I call him and/or her.' | b. | Kličem njega in/ali njo .
call.1SG him _{st} and/or her _{st}
'I call him and/or her.' |

Based on new data from Italian and Slovenian, we will show that the ban on coordination of clitic pronouns is not absolute. Namely, the ban is lifted when the following three conditions are met: (i) the coordination is a *disjunction*, (ii) the clitic pronouns share a referent, and (iii) some ϕ -features on the clitic pronouns have contrasting values. We argue that the restriction in (1) and (2), and the aforementioned exception to it, are tied to the different internal structure of clitic and strong pronouns and how it interacts with the interpretation of conjunction vs. disjunction in relation to the creation of plural discourse referents from coordinated pronouns.

1. The glosses follow the *Leipzig glossing rules*. In addition, we use the notations 'st' and 'cl' in the glosses to indicate strong and clitic pronouns, respectively.

1 Voiding the coordination ban

Contrary to the consensus view, clitic pronouns can in fact be coordinated, but the conditions that make this possible are very specific. The relevant examples are (3) for Italian, and (4) for Slovenian.² What is crucial here is that: (i) the coordination is a disjunction and (ii) the entire disjunction (‘him or her’) refers to a single discourse referent (‘the winner’); this is possible with (3) and (4) in a context where the gender of the winner of the competition is unknown at the time when the sentence is uttered.³

- (3) Quando decideranno chi è il vincitore, **lo o la** chiameranno.
when decide.FUT.3PL who is the winner, him_{cl} or her_{cl} call.FUT.3PL
‘When they decide who the winner is, they will call him or her.’
- (4) Ko bo zmagovalec določen, naj **ga ali jo** pokličejo na oder.
when will winner determined SBJV him_{cl} or her_{cl} call.3PL on stage
‘When the winner is determined, they should call him or her on stage.’

To be more precise, the entire disjunction in (3) and (4), and both pronouns in it must have the same referent.⁴ For example, in the context of a competition, it may be that several competitors of different genders are still competing and we do not know which of them will be the winner, or it may be that a single competitor is left after the elimination of other candidates, but their gender is unknown. Clitic pronoun disjunction is possible under either of these “single referent” interpretations.

For reasons of space, we only present Italian examples below, as the two languages pattern in the same way regarding the phenomenon in question. However, note that the different placement requirements of Italian and Slovenian clitic pronouns tell us

2. The Italian data come from 10 speakers from the province of Lucca, Tuscany (including one of the authors). The Slovenian data come from 4 speakers from the Gorica/Karst region (including one of the authors).

3. Miller and Monachesi (2003, 19n24) have also noted that clitics can be coordinated in similar environments in French, Italian, Spanish and Catalan, attributing this possibility to a “metalinguistic” avoidance strategy employed to avoid stating the gender of the referent (cf. also Abeillé 2006, 9). However, we show below that the possibility of clitic pronoun coordination is more pervasive, highly systematic, and a bona fide grammatical phenomenon (see also Section 2 specifically on the shortcomings of the metalinguistic analysis).

4. The masculine gender of the antecedent plays no role. The effect of default masculine gender can be controlled for by using variants of the antecedent (e.g. in Italian *il vincitore o la vincitrice* ‘the male winner or the female winner’, *chi ha vinto* ‘who has won’), which do not affect the acceptability of the examples. Different orders of the clitics (*la o lo*, *lo o la*) also do not affect the judgments. In addition, the pattern in (3) is also found with number and person contrasts (see (8) and (9)), where gender is not relevant.

that the coordination ban has nothing to do with the prosodic/host requirements of clitics, as both show the same restriction and circumvent it under the same conditions.

To further illustrate the relevance of the single referent reading in (3) and (4), note that it disappears when the clitic pronouns are replaced with strong pronouns:

- (5) Quando decideranno chi e' il vincitore, chiameranno **lui o lei**.
 when decide.FUT.3PL who is the winner, call.FUT.3PL him_{st} or her_{st}
 'When they decide which one is the winner, they will call him or her.'

Sentence (5) is felicitous only if the context imposes two distinct referents (e.g. a male and a female competitor in a fencing match), where each pronoun refers to a distinct individual. This reading requires strong pronouns, so the use of clitics, as in (3) or (4), is highly degraded. The single/distinct referent contrast between clitic and strong pronouns is also observed if the referents are explicitly established, as in (6).⁵

- (6) Quando Albano e Romina dovranno ritirare il premio, ...
 when Albano and Romina have.FUT.3PL pick.up the prize
 'When Albano and Romina have to pick up the prize, ...'
 a. ... ??**lo o la** chiameranno sul palco.
 him_{cl} or her_{cl} call.FUT.3PL on.the stage
 b. ... chiameranno **lui o lei** sul palco.
 call.FUT.3PL him_{st} or her_{st} on.the stage
 '... they will call him or her on stage.'

An additional piece of evidence for the single referent interpretation is the impossibility of referring back to the disjunction of clitics with a plural pronoun, as shown in (7) (a plural pronoun can refer back to the disjunction of strong pronouns in (5)).

- (7) ... **lo o la** chiameranno. *Entrambi però riceveranno un premio.
 ... him_{cl} or her_{cl} call.FUT.3PL they.both though get.FUT.3PL a prize
 '... they call him or her. Both of them, though, will get a prize.'

So far, we considered examples where the unknown property of the discourse referent is their gender. But similar examples can be constructed where a different property is unknown or undetermined, and crucially the ban on coordination is lifted in these cases too. Thus, in (8), the number of individuals that will be 'the winner' is unknown

5. The marginal acceptability of disjoined clitic pronouns in this context is briefly addressed in footnote 14 in relation to the analysis introduced in Section 3.

(either an individual or a team can win) and disjunction of clitic pronouns is allowed.

- (8) Quando determineranno se i vincitori sono molti o uno
 when determine.FUT.3PL if the winners be.PRS.3PL many or one
 soltanto, **lo o li** chiameremo sul palco.
 only, him_{cl} or them_{cl} call.FUT.3PL on.the stage
 ‘When they determine if the winners are one or many, they will call him or them on stage.’

A referent’s person can also be undetermined, as in (9), where either *the speaker’s* or *the addressee’s* team can be ‘the winner’. Clitic pronouns can be disjoined here too.⁶

- (9) Quando la nostra o la vostra squadra vincerà, **ci o vi**
 when the our or the your team win.FUT.3SG, us_{cl} or you_{cl}
 chiameranno sul palco.
 call.FUT.3PL on.the stage
 ‘When our team or your team wins, they will call us or you on stage.’

To sum up, two factors are crucial for allowing the coordination of clitic pronouns: the **type of coordinator** (*and/or*), and the **distinct/single referent** interpretation. The (im)possible coordinations with respect to pronoun type, coordinator type, and referent(s) are summarized in Table 1 (CL = clitic, ST = strong).

	distinct referents		single referent	
	CONJUNCTION	DISJUNCTION	CONJUNCTION	DISJUNCTION
CL	✗	✗	✗	✓
ST	✓	✓	✗	✗

Table 1: Coordination of pronouns with distinct/single referents

6. Note though that not all combinations are possible. Specifically, 1st/2nd clitics can not be coordinated with 3rd clitics even with the appropriate context, as shown in (i).

- (i) *Quando determineranno se hai vinto tu o ha vinto lui,
 when determine.FUT.3PL if have.PRS.2SG win.PRTC you or have.PRS.3SG win.PRTC he
ti o lo chiameranno.
 you_{cl} or him_{cl} call.FUT.3PL
 ‘When they determine if you won or he won, they will call **you or him**.’

The existence of this additional restriction provides further evidence against the metalinguistic and ellipsis analyses discussed in Section 2, since neither metalinguistic coordination nor ellipsis can be constrained based on this specific person contrast. See footnote 13 for two possible explanations for this gap based on the analysis proposed in Section 3.

In short, clitic pronoun coordination is only allowed with disjunction, and only under the single referent reading, while strong pronouns refer to distinct referents regardless of the type of coordination.⁷ Additionally, single referent readings are impossible with conjunction regardless of pronoun type. In Section 3 we will argue that the pattern in Table 1 in fact follows the distinct ways in which disjunction and conjunction as well as clitic and strong pronouns can relate to discourse referents.

2 Against ellipsis and metalinguistic coordination

Before introducing our analysis, we will consider two alternative analyses of the exceptional clitic coordination cases: ellipsis and metalinguistic coordination.

Strings where clitic pronouns are separated by a coordinator could in principle be obtained via ellipsis by coordinating two verbs hosting object clitics, and then eliding the verb in the first conjunct: e.g. *lo chiamò o la chiamo*. However, there is no obvious reason why ellipsis of the verb should be limited to disjunction (**lo chiamò e la chiamo*), or why it should only be possible under the single referent reading of the clitic pronouns. Most importantly, verbal ellipsis with clitic stranding is usually impossible in Italian (as expected for verbal proclitics; Kayne 1975; van Riemsdijk 1999), so it is unclear why the cases in question should be an exception to this general prohibition.⁸

Another option is metalinguistic coordination, which allows for the coordination of sub-word units, as in *ortho- and periodontists* or *re- or deceive* (Selkirk 1984; Rochemont 1986; Artstein 2004; 2005; i.a.). This analysis runs into the same problems as the ellipsis analysis. Namely, metalinguistic coordination can not be limited to disjunction under the single referent reading, since metalinguistic coordination is

7. Although the single referent reading can be marginally available with disjunction of strong pronouns; see footnote 12 for some discussion on why this might be the case.

8. Slovenian provides further (indirect) evidence against an ellipsis analysis. In Slovenian, clitic pronouns can seemingly occur in conjunctions, although this configuration forces the use of prosodic pauses before the coordinator and after the second conjunct (cf. (ii)), and is more acceptable when a non-pronominal auxiliary clitic is included (cf. (iii)).

- | | | | |
|------|---|-------|--|
| (ii) | ?On ga in jo obiskuje. | (iii) | On ga je in jo je obiskal. |
| | he him _{cl} and her _{cl} visiting.M | | he him _{cl} is and her _{cl} is visit.M |
| | ‘He is visiting him and (visiting) her.’ | | ‘He visited him and (visited) her.’ |

Under a direct clitic conjunction analysis, (iii) requires coordination of non-constituents, suggesting an ellipsis or right node raising derivation is more appropriate here. In contrast, disjunction does not force similar pauses under the single referent reading, which tells us that this ellipsis/right node raising derivation is not required in that case.

unconstrained regarding coordinator type and the interpretation of the coordinated sub-word units, which can even lack an independent meaning (e.g. *de-* in *deceive*). Furthermore, the free conjunct (the one preceding the coordinator) in true cases of metalinguistic coordination has to form a prosodic word (Artstein 2004, 2005), but clitics can never project a prosodic word (Selkirk 1984; Anderson 2005; i.a.).

An analysis based on ellipsis or metalinguistic coordination would thus require positing ad hoc restrictions uncharacteristic of either phenomenon.

3 Towards an explanation: Coordination and plural referents

We argue that the possible and impossible clitic pronoun coordinations can be derived in a principled way, using regular coordination. A key observation our analysis builds on is that conjunction must create new plural discourse referents, whereas disjunction does not have to.⁹ Thus, in (10) ‘they’ refers to the plural discourse referent created by the conjunction of DPs, whereas ‘she’ can only refer to either DP conjunct, resulting in a pragmatically odd use of the singular pronoun. In contrast, singular pronouns can refer back to a disjunction of DPs (Stone 1992; Simons 2000), as in (11-a), but only if the DPs are not identified as distinct individuals, as in (11-b).

(10) The soprano_{*i*} and the alto_{*j*} will sing. They_{*i+j*}/#She_{*i/j*} will perform Mozart.

- (11) a. The soprano_{*i*} or the alto_{*i*} will sing. She_{*i*} will perform Mozart.
 b. Jane_{*i*} or Maud_{*j*} will sing. #She_{*i/j*} will perform Mozart. (Simons 2000)

Note that (11-a) is essentially a flipped version of examples like (3), where a singular DP (‘the winner’) is the antecedent of a disjunction of clitic pronouns. Furthermore, (11-b) is reminiscent of examples like (6), where conjoined proper nouns (‘Albano and Romina’) require the disjoined pronouns referring to them to be strong pronouns.

It is well established that clitic and strong pronouns, in languages that have both, differ in terms of possible referents. Strong pronouns are semantically more rigid than clitic pronouns: they require human referents, they cannot be bound variables, and they require salient antecedents (see e.g. Cardinaletti and Starke 1994).

9. This is true of pronouns, but not necessarily lexical nouns, where we can get so called *joint reading* conjunctions like “*That sailor and soldier is my friend*” (see e.g. Heycock and Zamparelli 2005). However, those involve conjunction of NPs inside a single DP (cf. “**That sailor and that soldier is my friend*”), whereas pronouns behave like full DPs.

Another way in which strong pronouns are semantically more rigid concerns the availability of strict and sloppy identity readings. As shown in (12), overt pronouns in English do not allow sloppy identity readings. However, in a number of languages—including Italian and Slovenian—*clitic* pronouns allow both strict and sloppy readings, while *strong* pronouns still resist sloppy readings; shown for Italian in (13).¹⁰

- (12) John_i scratched his_i arm and Mary scratched **it** too. (Ross 1967: 348)
- a. ✓ ... and Mary scratched [John’s arm] too STRICT IDENTITY
- b. ✗ ... and Mary_i scratched [her_i arm] too SLOPPY IDENTITY
- (13) Paolo ha guardato [suo fratello]_i e anche Eva_j ...
 Paolo have.PRS.3SG look.PRTC his brother and also Eva
 ‘Paolo has looked at [his brother]_i and Eva_j also ...’
- a. ... I=ha guardato.
 him_{cl}=have.PRS.3SG look.PRTC
 ‘... has looked at **him_i/her_j brother** too.’ STRICT & SLOPPY
- b. ... ha guardato **lui**.
 have.PRS.3SG look.PRTC him_{st}
 ‘... has looked at **him_i** too.’ STRICT ONLY

We assume that the semantic asymmetries between clitic and strong pronouns follow from a structural difference between them, building on the insights of Cardinaletti and Starke (1994). Specifically, we suggest that the structural source of the sloppy reading asymmetry is the key to deriving the ban on the coordination of clitic pronouns and its exceptions in a principled way. The gist of the analysis we present below is that the ban arises due to the interaction of the following conditions: (i) for conjunction to create a new plural discourse referent, all conjuncts must have distinct discourse referents, (ii) the creation of plural discourse referents occurs in the syntax, and (iii) strong but not clitic pronouns have the structure necessary for the syntactic encoding of discourse referents. The exceptional behavior of pronoun disjunction then follows solely from disjunction not having to create new plural discourse referents.

10. See Ippolito (2017), Alexopoulou and Folli (2019), and Oda (2022) on Italian; Stegovac (2019a, b) on Slovenian; Runić (2014) and Bošković (2018) on Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian.

3.1 The syntactic source of semantic asymmetries between pronouns

We propose that the syntactic locus of most of the semantic asymmetries between clitic and strong pronouns is an *index head*, or *idx* (Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2017; Hanink 2018), which is present in strong pronouns but absent in clitic pronouns. Semantically, *idx* is an identity function that limits the referents of the pronoun to established human discourse referents with the appropriate index (k). In other words, *idx* is what makes strong pronouns only pick out salient human linguistic antecedents. The denotation of the *idx* head, adopted from Stegovec (2019a), is given in (14).

$$(14) \quad \llbracket \text{idx}_k \rrbracket^g = \lambda x . [\text{human}(x) \ \& \ x = g(k)]$$

Recall also that clitic pronouns in Italian and Slovenian allow sloppy identity readings (cf. (13)), which we take to mean that they can denote properties/relations, not just individuals, following Tomioka’s (2003) analysis of sloppy readings (a version of the E-type analysis of donkey anaphora; Cooper 1979; Heim and Kratzer 1998). We assume this follows from clitic pronouns consisting of only interpretable ϕ -features (cf. Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002) and thus no *idx* head. Following Stegovec (2019a), this means that such a clitic pronoun—comprised only of interpretable ϕ -features—may be mapped in LF to either an individual variable or a property variable. This is the reason why it may pick out either a salient discourse referent (x) or a salient property/relation (e.g. x ’s brother in (13-a)). In contrast, strong pronouns only pick out individuals due to the *idx* head, which blocks mapping to a property variable by limiting reference to individuals that are salient discourse antecedents.

Returning to coordinated pronouns, we argue that *idx* is also a prerequisite for creating plural discourse referents from pronouns inside an $\&P$: the distinct indices of the *idxs* combine into a composite plural index (cf. $k + j$ in (15-a)). In Italian and Slovenian, this occurs only with strong pronouns, as the lack of *idxP* in clitic pronouns prevents creation of plural discourse referents via coordination (cf. (15-b)).

$$(15) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{a.} \quad \llbracket \&P_{k+j} \llbracket \text{idxP}_k \text{ idx}_k [\phi_P \phi \dots] \llbracket \&' \ \& \llbracket \text{idxP}_j \text{ idx}_j [\phi_P \phi \dots] \rrbracket \rrbracket \\ \text{b.} \quad \llbracket \&P_i [\phi_M] \llbracket \&' \ \& \llbracket \phi_F \rrbracket \rrbracket \end{array}$$

Crucially, we assume that the plural index must be created in the syntax.¹¹ Equally as

11. This is independently necessary to explain why number agreement with coordinated DPs is affected by the conjunction/disjunction distinction, including the interpretation of disjunction (Smith

important is that the lack of *idxP* in clitic pronouns does not mean that they cannot refer to individuals, but merely that they can also receive other interpretations.

All the pieces are now in place to derive the ban on the coordination of clitic pronouns, as well as its exceptions observed in the case of disjunction.

3.2 *Deriving the coordination ban and its exceptions*

Only strong pronouns can be conjoined because: (i) conjunction of pronouns *must* create a plural discourse referent with a composite index, and (ii) in order to create a composite index, *idxP*—limited to strong pronouns—*must* be present in all conjuncts. Since clitic pronouns lack *idxP*, which is necessary to feed the obligatory creation of a composite index, the result is that clitic pronouns cannot be conjoined.

Unlike conjunction, disjunction does not force the creation of plural discourse referents, as evidenced by the single referent reading. This is, crucially, what allows clitic pronouns to occur in a disjunction despite lacking *idxP*. We tentatively propose that the single referent reading arises when the whole &P with both sets of interpretable ϕ -features maps to a property variable at LF (see Section 3.1). Disjunction thus allows alternatives of a salient property centered on a single individual (x) to be contrasted (e.g. x is a winner and masculine vs. x is a winner and feminine).

The last open question is why disjunction requires contrasting the gender, number, or person of the pronouns, but not the referents of the pronouns themselves. We relate this to the focus-related semantics of disjunction (Simons 2000; Alonso-Ovalle 2006; i.a.), and the requirement that the domain of focus is established *based on syntactic constituents* (Rooth 1985; 1992; i.a.). With strong pronouns, the whole pronoun including *idxP* is in the domain of contrastive focus induced by the disjunction. The *idx* heads can be contrasted with respect to the only property in which they can differ: the value of their index. Thus, the referents of strong pronouns are distinct even with disjunction.¹² Clitic pronouns, on the other hand, are composed entirely

et al. 2018), and the number of referents inside the coordination (Harbour 2020). Whether agreement is the result of a narrow syntactic operation (Chomsky 2000, 2001), a PF operation (Bobaljik 2008), or both (Bhatt and Walkow 2013), the interpretation of coordination can feed agreement only if these contrasts originate in narrow syntax.

12. In principle, the focus domain could be smaller than *idxP*, so the availability of clitic pronouns with a single referent reading must block the smaller focus domain with strong pronouns, making the absence of this reading with strong pronouns a competition effect like the *Montalbetti Effect* (Montalbetti 1984; Despić 2011). This predicts that single referent readings should be possible when there are no clitic counterparts, which is borne out with subject pronouns (coordinating *pro*

from ϕ -features, so only their ϕ -feature values can be contrasted.¹³ The contrasting of referents is impossible due to the lack of a syntactic element associated with referential indices that could put referents in the domain of focus. With clitics, the mapping to either a property or individual variable happens in LF, after the domain of focus is established in narrow syntax over the sets of ϕ -features present there.¹⁴

The possible coordinations of pronouns with respect to pronoun type, coordination type, and the distinct or single referent reading in our proposed analysis are summarized in Table 2 (cf. Table 1). Importantly, the complete pattern emerges from independent syntactic and semantic factors concerning the difference between clitic and strong pronouns and conjunction and disjunction.

		distinct referents	
		CONJUNCTION	DISJUNCTION
CL	X [$\&P_{i+k}$ [ϕ_M] [$\&'$ <i>and</i> [ϕ_F]]]	X [$\&P_{i+k}$ [ϕ_M] [$\&'$ <i>or</i> [ϕ_F]]]	
ST	✓ [$\&P_{i+k}$ [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$] [$\&'$ <i>and</i> [$\text{idx}P_k \dots$]]]	✓ [$\&P_{i+k}$ [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$] [$\&'$ <i>or</i> [$\text{idx}P_k \dots$]]]	
		single referent	
		CONJUNCTION	DISJUNCTION
CL	X [$\&P_i$ [ϕ_M] [$\&'$ <i>and</i> [ϕ_F]]]	✓ [$\&P_i$ [ϕ_M] [$\&'$ <i>or</i> [ϕ_F]]]	
ST	X [$\&P_i$ [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$] [$\&'$ <i>and</i> [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$]]]	X [$\&P_i$ [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$] [$\&'$ <i>or</i> [$\text{idx}P_i \dots$]]]	

Table 2: Coordination of pronouns with a distinct vs. single referents

is not an option due to it being null). This could also be why the single referent reading with strong object pronouns is marginally acceptable.

13. Recall from footnote 6 that it is impossible to disjoin a 1st/2nd person clitic with a 3rd person one. One possible explanation for this is that the two have distinct enough semantics to not be viable semantic alternatives under focus, which is required with disjunction: i.e. the semantic value of 1st and 2nd person (indexical) features is not a presupposition (Sudo 2012), whereas the semantic value of other ϕ -features is (Cooper 1983). The other option is that 1st/2nd person clitics simply have more structure than 3rd person ones (Kayne 2000). In this case, any coordination of 1st/2nd and 3rd person clitics is excluded for the same reason as the coordination of a clitic and a strong pronoun: they are not the same category.

14. The marginal acceptability of disjoined clitic pronouns with distinct referents noted in (6) could be due to distinct ways of mapping the clitics to variables: either each clitic is mapped to a property variable, or $\&P$ as a whole is mapped, with a preference for the latter. We leave working out the details and implications of this possibility for future research.

4 Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction, the ban on the coordination of clitic pronouns has in the past been taken to be absolute and a defining property of clitic pronouns (Kayne 1975; 1994; Cardinaletti and Starke 1994; van Riemsdijk 1999; i.a.). In fact, Kayne (1994, §6.2) even uses the ban to substantiate the claim that coordination of heads is universally disallowed. In light of this, it is quite striking that no previous analysis of the ban has been completely successful or widely adopted.

Crucially, no previous analysis can explain our new data, but even if we set that aside, all the analyses have independent issues. For example, it has been shown, based on a number of phenomena, that heads can in fact be coordinated (Borsley 2005; de Vries 2005; Zhang 2010; Petzell 2017; i.a.), so the coordination of clitic pronouns cannot be excluded due to a universal ban on the coordination of heads. Similarly, the coordination ban cannot be attributed to the host requirements of clitic pronouns: the ban occurs in both Italian and Slovenian, and clitic pronouns have distinct host requirements in the two languages; see also Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) on this point based on further examples from other languages.

The two tentative analyses offered by Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) are also somewhat problematic. One suggestion is that only complete extended projections (e.g. only CPs and DPs) can be coordinated—and clitic pronouns are not complete DPs, while the other suggestion is that &P makes clitic pronouns inaccessible for Case-licensing. Note that this necessitates either adopting a rather radical approach to coordination, or adopting two distinct mechanisms for Case-licensing/assignment: one for clitic pronouns, which &P blocks, and one for strong pronouns and lexical DPs, which &P does not block. Our proposal, based on core assumptions similar to Cardinaletti and Starke’s, instead derives the ban—and the exceptions to it—from independently motivated syntax-semantics interface assumptions about clitic vs. strong pronouns on one hand and conjunction vs. disjunction on the other.

Our findings have further implications for the analysis of clitic pronouns. Consider the widely held view that clitic pronouns are incompatible with contrastive focus (Kayne 1975, among many others). While this holds in the general case, recall that Italian and Slovenian clitic pronouns in disjunctions *must be* contrasted with respect to the values of their interpretable ϕ -features. Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) have previously noted that clitic pronouns can be contrastively focused in certain environ-

ments. We can now add disjunction of clitic pronouns with a shared single referent to the list of those environments, which should be taken into consideration in future research on the relationship between focus and clitic pronouns.

Another issue to consider is how cliticization takes place in the case of coordinated clitic pronouns. Our tentative proposal is that clitic coordination forms a complex head [$\& \phi$ [$\& \& \phi$]] that can move and cliticize together, where the *or* head itself is a clitic. In other words, a coordination structure containing clitic pronouns behaves as a cluster of three clitics individually capable of cliticization.

More importantly, our data are problematic for analyses that reduce cliticization to agreement (Borer 1984; Suñer 1988; Nevins 2007; i.a.). Within this type of analysis, the cliticization options should parallel those of agreement with coordinated DPs: agreement with one conjunct/disjunct, or agreement with the entire coordination (see Nevins and Weisser 2019 for an overview). With coordinated singular pronouns, the clitic host could agree with one of the pronouns, yielding one singular clitic, or it could agree with the entire coordination, yielding one plural clitic. To produce coordinated singular clitics within a probe-goal approach to agreement (Chomsky 2000, 2001), one would have to posit coordinated probes, each agreeing with one of the coordinated pronouns. Note that this option would have to be limited to disjunction, and furthermore limited to pronouns sharing a referent. It is unclear how an agreement-based approach could be implemented without creating a significant look-ahead problem, where interpretation forces the use of coordinated probes in narrow syntax.

As a final note, we think it is unlikely that Italian and Slovenian are unique in constraining the coordination of clitic pronouns in the specific way established above. So our hope, now that its universality has been challenged, is that the ban on the coordination of clitic pronouns can be reevaluated across a wider range of languages, leading to an even better understanding of the phenomenon and clitic pronouns in general.

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