

Dative-locative syncretisms and the Y-model

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We examine dative-locative syncretisms in three grammars of French, as a probe into (i) the modular architecture of the grammar and (ii) the scope of the syntax and (post-)spell-out or morphophonology components. Three basic approaches to syncretisms exist: morphological ones outside syntax, after spell-out to PF (Bonet 1991, 1995), syntactic-transformational (Couquaux 1975, Postal 1990), and syntactic-lexical (Manzini and Savoia 2002, Kayne 2008). Our results indicate that all three approaches are right for different grammars. The modular architecture of the Y-model predicts certain clusterings of properties for each of the above approaches: the invisibility of post-spell-out phenomena to syntax and interpretation, and the invisibility to post-spell-out mechanisms of syntactico-semantic distinctions otherwise neutralized at the interface with PF. These expectations are strongly met by two of the grammars, one where dative-locative syncretisms are morphological and one where they are syntactic-transformational, and they are compatible with the third, where the syncretisms are lexical. Thus each of these components of the grammar must have the power to effectuate such syncretisms, and the modularity of the Y-model is supported by the limits found on possible clusterings of properties.

A key tool for investigating these syncretisms is the *Person Case* constraint or PCC. In French, it blocks 1/2.ACC + DAT clitics, (1)a. To express these combinations, French uses a dative strong pronoun, à *eux* (1)b, for the clitic. This is unique to PCC contexts: elsewhere unfocussed *dative* pronouns must surface as clitics, (1)c, and à + strong pronoun combinations can only express unfocussed *locatives*. The substitution of a strong pronoun by a clitic in PCC contexts affects syntax, since it impacts syntactic phenomena like the licensing of the floating quantifier *tous* in (1): only a clitic can and not the strong pronoun can license it. Therefore, the clitic-strong alternation in (1) occurs in the syntax (Rezac 2008).

- (1) a. On ***me leur** / √**la leur**_i; a (tous_i) présenté. "One introduced ***me/√her to them (all)**".
b. On **m'a** (*tous_i) présenté à **eux_i**. "One introduced **me to them (*all)**."
c. *On l'a présenté à **eux_i**. "*One introduced **her to them (all)**."

Consider now the different grammars with dative-locative syncretisms.

Grammar 1: Couquaux (1975), Postal (1990) (Bonet 1991 for Catalan) observe that some varieties have an alternative to (1)b: the dative clitic, with *any phi-features*, is replaced by locative *y*, in grammars that *do not otherwise permit* the locative *y* for datives: (2). This dative-locative syncretism is thus limited to PCC contexts, like the strong pronoun of (1), indicating that like it, the use of the locative for the dative occurs in syntax. Two other shared properties of the use of the locative and the strong pronoun to repair the PCC confirm this. First, only 'lexical' datives can be replaced, not 'extended' datives such as possessors, benefactives, or psych-experiencers, (3). These are distinctions visible to the syntax, but systematically neutralized by Romance morphology which spells out all datives using the same clitic series. Second, while the syntactic PCC problem is repaired in this manner, morpho(phono)logical problems like double dative clusters cannot be, as would follow from their status as post-syntactic problems invisible to syntax. This dative-locative syncretism is thus a *syntactic* use of locatives for datives, advocated for all syncretisms by Manzini and Savoia (2002). Modularity predicts it to have the properties it has: it affects syntax, it uses syntactic distinctions neutralized in morphology, and it does not see postsyntactic problems. Following Couquaux/Postal, the mechanism involved is the

use of a locative syntax for indirect objects, which is not available to extended datives that can only use an applicative syntax. This accounts both for the locative-like *à* + an unfocussed strong pronoun, and for the locative clitic for those speakers who can use it to refer to animates.

- (2) Elle **m'/*l'y**_i a présenté, à toi_i / à eux_i. "She introduced **me/*him to you / them**."
 (3) a. On **t'/*y** jette dans les bras < *à elles >. "One throws **you in their** arms."
 b. On **le <leur>** jette dans les bras < *aux filles >. "One throws **him in their/*the girls'** arms."

Grammar 2: Contrasting with the foregoing are French varieties that use *y* (not *'i < (l)üi*) for 3SG.DAT *lui* (Morin 1979, Auger 1994), though not other persons, in *all* contexts. In fact, the PCC is specifically *not affected* by the use of the locative in these varieties, so that *m'y* in (2) is ungrammatical. Further inquiry reveals that this use of *y* for datives retains all their syntactic properties and respects limitations on the scope of the post-syntactic component, in contrast to Grammar 1: (i) This *y* behaves like a dative, not like a locative, for the PCC, binding properties, etc. (ii) It affects all dative clitics regardless of whether lexical or extended, respecting the morphological neutralization of these syntactically distinct dative types. (iii) It is subject to morphological realization constraints that do not derive from those on locative or dative clitics, such as the order *y (l)a* for *la lui* (vs. locative *l'y*). For this syncretism therefore, a placement in post-syntactic morphology is indicated. Bonet (1991) analyses thusly a dative-locative syncretism in Catalan in the context of 3.ACC clitics, and the foregoing diagnostics bear it out—in contrast to the phenomenon in Grammar 1, also found in Catalan.

Grammar 3: At first sight, the third grammar with a dative-locative syncretism mixes properties. *Y* is used for datives of all phi-features everywhere, but its use repairs the PCC (Lambrecht 1981). Effect on the PCC indicates more than a post-syntactic spell-out of a dative as *y* is involved. However, for diagnostics other than the PCC, this *y* is syntactically dative, not locative: it licenses floating quantifiers and replaces extended datives, e.g. (4). We propose that the underlying syntax is indeed that of a dative clitic, but the dative is underspecified for phi-features. Therefore, all phi (person/number) combinations surface using the single clitic *y* (Lambrecht 1981), and the PCC which depends on phi-features does not arise; however, for all other diagnostics there is a genuinely dative syntax present. Thus this grammar arises from the availability of a version of the locative clitic *y* to spell-out some component of the dative syntax that shares properties with locative syntax, e.g. the phi-less *pro* itself (or a shared functional head, cf. Kayne 2008). Thus this syncretism is due to the existence of a lexical item that can appear in both dative and locative structures, along with the existence of phi-less dative structures.

- (4) Elle **nous y**_i a jeté dans les bras, aux filles_i. "She threw **us** into **their**_i arms, the girls_i."

Conclusion: The modular architecture of the Y-model predicts a tight association of insensitivity to morphologically neutralized distinctions, reference syntactically arbitrary clitic properties (including orderings), and invisibility to syntactic phenomena like floating quantifier licensing and the PCC. Dative-locative syncretisms or substitutions bear this out, supporting the Y-model. They also show the necessity of endowing both morphology and syntax with the power to execute such syncretisms, alongside the more banal need to allow the lexicon to simply contain items insertable in both structures. The tools provided here extend to other syncretisms with similar conclusions, such as 1PL-locative.