Object reduplication in Maltese

Slavomír /bulbul/ Čéplö
Comenius University, Bratislava
www.bulbul.sk
Object reduplication (OR):
“A syntactic phenomenon where the lexical object co-occurs with a co-referential pronominal clitic.”

≈ Clitic doubling

Clitics:
{-ni, -k, -h/-u, -ha, -na, -kom, -hom}
{-li, -lek, -lu, -lha, -lna, -lkom, -llhom}
Introduction

Object reduplication
Balkan Sprachbund: Miklosich 1869
Romance languages outside of Balkans: Jaeggli 1982
Berber: Guerrsel 1995
Arabic: Aoun 1999

Maltese:
-Sutcliffe 1939 ("The direct suffixes are often used redundantly, but effectively.")
-Fabri 1993
-Fabri & Borg 2002, Borg & Alexander-Azzopardi 2009
Object reduplication

**Traditional view:** One unitary phenomenon

**Recent reanalysis** (Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2008; Krapova and Cinque 2008; Tsakali and Anagnostopoulou 2008):

- Clitic doubling proper (CD)
- Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)
- Hanging Topic Construction (HTC)
- Clitic Right Dislocation (CLRD)
- Focus Fronting (FF)
Clitic Doubling proper (CD) and the rest

Common features of all OR phenomena:

- Co-occurrence of lexical object with clitic
- Scope (specificity/definiteness)
- Pragmatics (in languages where some types of OR are not obligatory)

Differences:

- Position within sentence
Clitic Doubling proper (CD) vs. the rest

“True” clitic doubling (CD) applies to the cases when the full NP occurs in its argument position inside the clause.” (Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Vulchanov 2008:107)

In Maltese:
- Argument position: SVO
- Inside the clause vs. clause periphery
Clitic Doubling proper (CD) vs. the rest
Inside the clause [1] vs. clause periphery [2]

[1] fejn iridu jafu juzawha l bibja
where 3.IMPF=want=3PL 3.IMPF=know=3PL 3.IMPF=use=3PL=CL.ACC.3SG.F DEF Bible
“They know how to use the Bible
biex jiggustifikaw id dhul tal klandestini
.to .IMPF=justify=3PL DEF entry GEN=DEF illegal=PL
to justify the entry of illegals wherever they want.”

[2] Il-vettura raha ukoll il-kunsillier Francis Callus...
DEF=car see.3PF=CL.ACC.3SG.F too DEF=councilor NAME
“Councilor Francis Callus also saw the vehicle...”
Object reduplication

- Clitic doubling proper (CD)
- Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)
- Hanging Topic Construction (HTC)
- Clitic Right Dislocation (CLRD)
- Focus Fronting (FF)
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Direct object:

[1] Il-vettura raha ukoll il-kunsillier Francis Callus...
DEF=car see.3PF=CL.ACC.3SG.F too DEF=councilor NAME

“Councilor Francis Callus also saw the vehicle...”

Indirect object:

[2] Lit-tfal trid tixtrilhom rigal
DAT=DEF-children 2SG.IMPF=want 2SG.IMPF=buy=CL.DAT.3PL gift

“You might want to buy a gift for the kids.”

Borg & Azzopardi-Alexander (2009:75): left dislocation / topicalization of indirect objects and is incompatible with the IO marker, but see [2].
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Traditionally defined scope of CLLD in Maltese:

1. **Definite NPs** (incl. inherently definite NPs like names and pronouns)

   “… in fact, pronominal clitics can only be co-referential with definite NPs.”
   (Fabri & Borg 2002:360)

Actual scope:

1. **Definite NPs** (incl. inherently definite NPs like names and pronouns)
2. **Some quantified NPs** (kull, xi)
3. **Bare nouns**
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Quantified NPs - direct objects

[3] **Kull** sold **investejnieh**
every coin invest=1SG.PL.PERF=ACC.CL.3SG.M

“"We invested in them every penny…"”

[4] **Lil** xi **whud** minnhom **Pablo** kien
DO some ones from=3PL name AUX.PERF.3SG.M

“"Some of them, Pablo

**jafhom** tajjeb...
3SG.IMPF=know=ACC.CL.3PL well

knew them well …
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Quantified NPs - indirect objects

[4] Lil kull sindku fl-Amerika baghtitilhom tazza żghira …

DAT every mayor in=DEF-America send=1SG.PERF=DAT.CL.3SG glass small=F

“To every mayor in America, I sent them a small glass…”

[5] Lil xi niċċeċ ohra insterqulhom

DAT some statue.PL other.PL 3.IMPF=PASS=steal=3PL=DAT.CL.3PL

“For some statues, they stole

il-fanali li kellhom quddiemhom …

DEF=lantern=PL REL have.PERF=3PL in front of=3PL

the lanterns they had in front of them …”

ittorca-9967.html-cleaned.txt
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Bare nouns – direct objects

[5] Haxix bhal bell peppers, zucchini u karrotti tista vegetables such as bell peppers zucchini and carrots 2SG.IMPF=can “Vegetables such as bell peppers, zucchini and carrots, you can

tghallih jekk thobb l-ikel msajjar sew. 2SG.IMPF=boil=ACC.CL.3SG.M if 2SG.IMPF=like DEF-food cooked thus boil them if you like food prepared that way.”

Bare nouns – indirect objects

Fil-Kenja hija haga normali li bniedem jiekol gurnata iva u gurnata le.

[6] Bniedem toffrilu l-ikel u jghidlek, person 2SG.IMPF=offer=DAT.CL.3SG.M DEF=food and 3.IMPF=say=DAT.CL.2SG.M “A person, you offer him food and he tells you

Imma jien il-bierah kilt!

but I yesterday eat=PERF.1SG

‘But I ate yesterday!’”

lorizzont-20720.html-cleaned.txt
Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)

Bare nouns
Indefiniteness vs. topichood?

De Cat 2010:
1. Existential indefinite (“a specific item from the set of all X”)
2. Generic indefinite (“a typical X embodying all properties of X / representing all X”)

“If a specific reading is forced (by using a past tense), this sentence is no longer acceptable ...”
(De Cat 2010:21)

=> quantified NPs with *kull*
Hanging Topic Construction

Primary contrast to CLLD:
Level of connectivity with the rest of the clause

“…topicalised expressions are in a looser relationship with the rest of the sentence…”

(Borg and Azzopardi 2009:75-76)

Sutcliffe 1935: nominativus pendens
## Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Hanging Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Category neutral</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>NP only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Iterative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-root contexts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Free ordering of dislocates</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Obligatory resumptive</td>
<td>clitic only</td>
<td>any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ordering with respect to wh-</td>
<td>C-CLLD-wh</td>
<td>C-HTC-wh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Connectedness</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intonational break</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Villalba 2000:81
## Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Hanging Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Category neutral</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>NP only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Iterative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-root contexts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Free ordering of dislocates</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Obligatory resumptive</td>
<td>clitic only</td>
<td>any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ordering with respect to wh-</td>
<td>C-CLLD-wh</td>
<td>C-HC-wh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Connectedness</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intonational break</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Hanging Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iterative</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HTC: one per sentence  
CLLD: several possible

[1] **Jien il-golf ma nafx x’jarawlu…**

I DEF-golf NEG 1SG.IMPF=know=NEG what=3.IMPF=see=PL=DAT.CL.3SG.M

“I don’t know what they see in golf…”

lorizzont-21669.html-cleaned.txt
Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Hanging Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-root contexts</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“HTLD (=HTC) can be found only in root contexts … CLLD appears in both root and non-root contexts”
(Krapova and Cinque 2005:259)

[2] ... jien nahseb li finalment din ir-responsabblità trid
I 1SG.IMPF=think that in the end this.F DEF-responsibility 3SG.F.IMPF=want

“… I think that in the end, the leadership of the Nationalist Party will want to shoulder this responsibility as well.”
# Clitic Left Dislocation vs. Hanging Topic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connectedness</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case connectivity:
DO / animacy marker “lil” and IO marker “lil” are optional in topicalized / left-dislocated NPs

1 ACC=I never NEG 2SG.IMPF=see=ACC.CL.1SG on DEF-stage
“I, me, you never will see me on the stage.”

Jien qatt ma tarani nohrog —
1 never NEG 2SG.IMPF=see=ACC.CL.1SG 1.IMPF=exit
“I, you never will see me exit — ”

illum-2009-06-14_interview.html.txt
# CLLD vs. HTC in Maltese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>CLLD</th>
<th>HTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Category neutral</td>
<td>any</td>
<td>NP only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Iterative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-root contexts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Free ordering of dislocates</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Obligatory resumptive</td>
<td>clitic only</td>
<td>any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ordering with respect to wh-</td>
<td>C-CLLD-wh</td>
<td>C-HC-wh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Connectedness</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intonational break</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus fronting or topicalization?

Object reduplication is obligatory with left-dislocated topicalized object (Borg and Azzopardi 1997:124, 126)


ACC=2SG. only 3SG.IMPF=defend
“He’s only defending you.”
illum-2008-02-24_r14.html.txt

Rajtu kemm hi tajba Marlene tagħna.

[2] Lilha ha mieghu l-President.
ACC=3SG.F take.PERF.3SG.M with=3SG.M DEF=president
“The president took her with him.”
illum-2009-08-30_r14.html.txt
Focus fronting or topicalization?

Fabri & Borg 2002:360

OVS/OSV without cliticization = focus on object (focus fronting)


FOCUS = new information introduced

[2] Lilha ha mieghu l-President.

TOPIC = tying the utterance to the rest of the discourse
Focus fronting or topicalization?

Qed issir hafna hidma tajba minn nies.i li jibqghu fid-dell, u jahdmu minghajr ma jidhru. Lilhom.i irridu naghtuhom.i kull gieh.

VS

Niftakar li kien kellimni l-president Michael Buttigieg u offrieli li nibda nitharreg b’xejn fuq l-isnuker tal-każin.i (Il-Każin Laburista tal-Mellieha). Lilhom.i irrid nghid# grazzi kbira.

Lilkom il-mexxejja u ghalliema tal-Kullegġ irrid nghidilkom grazzi. ...huma l-hin kollu qeghdin jahdmu fil-komunitajiet jirrappreżentaw lill-partit. Irrid nghidilhom grazzi tax-xoghol importanti...
Clitic Right Doubling / HTC / Afterthought?

1. Right dislocation of NPs with/without Case Connectivity

[1] One lesi invite pas, les malotrusi.  
‘We don’t invite louts.’  
De Cat 2010:99

“I will eat you.”  
maltarightnow-39-99819261.html-cleaned.txt

“This is what happened to me.”  
lorizzont-17259.html-cleaned.txt

‘Tinstema’ semplici u hekk hi, jidhirli, jien.  
Il-qarrejja tat-TORĊA saru jaghrfuha mill-ewwel u jwaqqfuha biex jifirhulha, hi, u ghaddejja fit-triq.
2. Information structure

And I went to the Commissioner and I will tell you what I told him, the Commissioner, and he confirms it himself.


Dislocated element provides additional information => afterthought

3. Intonational break

“Who gives them to them, after all, these numbers, to the EU?”

Conclusion

- More study of both OR and the syntax of the sentence periphery is required.
- For Balkan linguistics: both CLLD and CD proper possible with bare nouns.
- For Arabic dialectology: both CLLD and CD possible in Maltese as opposed to most varieties of Arabic with CLLD only.
Bibliography