

OBSERVATIONS UPON THE CLITICS OF THE DATIVE CASE IN ROMANIAN

Maria-Magdalena JIANU¹

1. Prof., PhD, "Hyperion" University București, General Director in the Ministry of Education, Research, Youths and Sports,
Agency of Credits and Scholarship Grants
Corresponding author: jianumagda@yahoo.com

In the list of morphological litigations, a special position is occupied by the semantico-syntactic and pragmatic status of certain clitics of the dative, more precisely of the pronominal forms accepted in the literature of the field as representations of the ethical dative. According to DSL¹, ethical dative is defined as a *special utilization of the clitical forms of dative of the personal pronoun, characterized by the loss of any anaphorical function and charged with a special stylistic and pragmatic function. These segments are attached to the verb, for evidencing the emotional participation of the locutor to the action or for rousing the interest of the interlocutor in it.* For exemplifying the occurrence of the clitical forms of ethical dative in Romanian statements, the same structure provides two different contexts: *Pe unde-mi stai?* and ... *răpede mi-ți le-a înfulecat* (I. Creangă).

The problem of clitics in dative, possibly configured as emotional elements capable of enhancing the discourse of either locutor or interlocutor, even if their occurrence is not generated by morphological dependencies on other lexical elements present in the statement, is also resumed in more recent grammar volumes, considering such realities as asyntactic and nonanaphoric². In parallels with this, the literature of the field considers that some clitics of the prototypical personal pronouns may represent dative possession, but only in the situations in which the center-nominal structure is lexicalized, as in the following examples: *În drumu-ți, vei întâlni fel și fel de oameni. Fața-i părea tristă. Mama ne crește copiii.*

In our attempt to demonstrate the semantico-syntactic and pragmatic qualities of the emotional dative clitics, statement: *V-au murit lăudătorii* will be considered, where clitics *v-*, conjuncted with

a proximal verb, might be viewed as an indirect object. However, the meaning imposed by the whole statement to *v-* is of indexicalizer³ of the possessor, a reality obtained by reconfiguration of the context, namely by introduction in the sequence of the lexical unit expressing the logically established possession (*V-au murit lăudătorii voștri*) and which, assuming all tautological risks, imparts to the clitics the part of attributive adjunct element. Elimination of the nominal structure *lăudătorii* favours the statement *V-au murit*, whose flexionary motivation to clitics *v-* is possible only in relation with the nominal anterior form *lăudătorii*. If the support-statement, *V-au murit lăudătorii*, permits reading of clitics *v-* as a possessive attribute, the same syntactico-semantic situation should be also accepted for pronoun *v-* in the transformed statement: *V-au murit*.

Mention should be nevertheless made of the fact that, in structures of the *V-au murit* type (considered a-grammatical, an aspect still to be elucidated), namely fractured, the position of attribute is identified exclusively by resorting to the profound structures, where the presence of a nominal mark is – in our opinion – a *must*.

As a conclusion to such anticipative general elements, one may consider that, in a similar manner, in all cases in which dative clitics have no semantico-referential and morphological motivation, being however related to a larger linguistic sau extralinguistic context, within which they depend on the nominal structures, and for which they act as indexicalizers, involved here are surface structures, within which the units are defined syntactically only *vs* the profound ones⁴.

In the semantico-referential structure of the statement and also in the transformation and relation network through which these clitics are developed, the author considers that, apart from the role of doubling the locutor or / and interlocutor (or, more rarely, the extralocutor), which depends exclusively on the former's persuasive intention, the mentioned forms of dative also indexicalize, in the pre-mental structure of the locutor, the possessor. A good conjunctural example is the context: *ți-l bat de nu se vede*, where **ți-**, even it may be omitted, refers to a nominal non-lexicalized, yet unseparable nominal form, as a result of the semantico-grammatical references preserved by the grammatical clitics **-l**: *ți-l bat pe copil*. By this transformation of the text, the statement renders **ți-** as an obvious indexicalizer of the possessor, playing the syntactic role of possessive attribute, to be possibly replaced by a dative clitics in conjunction with the center-nominal form or with an established possessive structure: *Îl bat pe copilul-ți/ copilul tău*. A comparison between the two – real and virtual – types of structures demonstrates that **ți-** has the quality of possessive attribute in the profound structure (once it is included in the spectrum of the group with a lexicalized nominal form of the type: *copilu-ți*), being only apparently asyntactic in the surface structure, thus not representing an ethical dative. Such an assertion is based on the reality that, by means of the possessive attribute, a new piece of information – the possessive one,[□] which responds positively to the insertion of a nominal reference – is introduced into the statement. By means of the clitics in the dative, as a surplus of information[□] is provided, the reality it refers to and which represents the basis of the previous example cannot be inserted in the content of the notion of ethical dative, as due to an obvious possessive information contained by clitics **ți-**.

In order to discuss all aspects related to the semantico-syntactic status of dative clitics, as well as those referring to the nature of the group to which they belong, denominated as ethical datives, we shall analyze a context set, including various clitics, as they are mainly utilized in the family, as well as in the belletristic style of the Romanian language:

1. *Pe unde mi-o fi stat aseară?*
2. *Vi-l bat de nu se vede.*
3. *Vi ți-l bat de nu se vede*
4. *Mi ți-l bate de nu se vede.*

From the viewpoint of the host⁵ on which cliticization is realized, and also as to the position of the clitics *vs* them, one may observe that the basis may be verbal, configuring the pre-verbal clitics (1), or pronominal, configuring the prepronominal clitics (2), in both cases the segments being without the prosthesis of *i*. In cases in which 2 dative clitics occur (examples 3, 4), the pronoun appears in other two hypostases: free (the first clitics, *mi*, *vi*) and cliticizing on another clitics, of accusative nature (the second clitics, *ți*): in such contexts, the position of the clitics is differentiated, more precisely clitics **mi** and **vi** are pre-pronominal, while **ți** is inter-pronominal. Considering the multitude of statements from the family variant of the Romanian language, in which dative clitics of the configured ones type occur, the author puts forwards the idea that the clitical forms of dative may be also developed on an adverbial basis (*unde-mi tot pleci?*), selected by the locutor being both the forms without a prothetic *i*, and the dative allomorphes with syllabic character and prothetic *i*: *Unde îmi tot pleci?*

Observation. In few cases, when the topics is modified, one may observe that the statements with 2 dative clitics maintain the succession of persons from the initial example: *Vi ți-l bat/ batu-vi-ți-l, Mi ți-l bate/ batu-mi-ți-l*.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- a) According to the common perspectives of the 4 statements selected for the present demonstrations, it may be observed that the clitical forms do not occur as a result of the semantico-morphological conditions imposed by the center-verbs, as they do not possess the qualities of getting combined with a dative case.
- b) With the exception of (1), all the other examples evidence a weak indexicalization of a nominal argument, made virtual through a clitical sequence of accusative (**-l**), which favourizes reading of the declarations with the insertion

of the conveniently suitable name: *Vi -l bat pe copil/ Vi ți-l bat pe copil/ Mi ți-l bate pe copil.*

c) In oral Romanian, dative cliticization may be represented by both an unique (1,2), and an extended form (3,4). If also adding here the other persons involved in the communication situations here under analysis, a total score of 2:4 is attained. More precisely, in (1), two aspects of communication may be identified, namely: the *locutor*, represented by **mi**, and the actant-subject of the verb (**el**); in (2), 3 persons are involved: the *locutor*, desinentially involved, the *interlocutor* (**vi**) and the *extralocutor* (**-l**); in (3), an agglomeration of clitics may be observed, among which the *locutor*, represented by the information deduced from the verbal inflexion, the *extralocutor* (**-l**), as a rest of the absent nominal structure, and the *interlocutor*, with a double representation: both as a singular interlocutor (**ți**), and as a plural interlocutor (**vi**). The double indexicalization of the interlocutor generates a semantico-referential ambiguity, two readings being accepted in this case, as follows: the expression is either ceremonious or official, a case in which **vi** is a possessive attribute (*copilul vostru, -vi*), or it is familiar-friendly – when **ți** is a possessive attribute. In both reading variants, one of the clitics is non-indexicalizing and asyntactic, respectively pronoun in ethical dative, accepting the omission, according to the pattern of the incident words, while the other represents the witness of the possessive information included in the content of a GN which, in a previous communication, the assigned possessive forms would have had. Rewriting of the statement, assuming a successive configuration of the clitics as possessive structures, imposes, on leaving aside the tautology, utilization of specialized and lexically-upgraded possessive indexicalizers:

1. *Vi ți-l bat pe copilul vostru*, which may be also read without **ți**: *Vi-l bat pe copilul vostru.*
2. *Vi vi-l bat pe copilul tău*, which may be also read without **vi**: *vi-l bat pe copilul tău.*

As a consequence of such transformations, some oscillation may be observed as to the semantic information of the clitics, on successive

reading with the assigned possessive form (*vostru, tău*), which once again raises two interpretative problems:

- a) Either both clitics (**vi, ți**) are ethical, therefore incidental;
- b) Or one of them is ethical and the other one possessive, a precise selection upon which of them is ethical and which one is possessive being debatable.

If accepting a), it may be observed that elimination of the possibly incidental terms produces a semantic fracture in the architecture of the text, which becomes, by leaving aside the sentence from their part, poorer (remaining statement: $\Theta\Theta\hat{l}$ bat).

When accepting variant b), the incompatibility between the singular and plural representation of the interlocutor-possessor, coincidentally marked, too, by both **vi** and **ți**, occurs. Therefore, no correct conclusion can be established upon which of the two indexicalizations of the interlocutor-possessor (**vi** or **ți**) is the one aimed at by the locutor. In the proposed context, *Vi ți-l bat de nu se vede*, analysis of the semantic and/or syntactic role of dative clitics is quite complicated, as due to the presence of the plural form **vi**. Considering that the role assigned by the locutor to clitics **vi**, in the communication here proposed, is a sign of the prevalence of the ceremonious function of the language, the author appreciates that the position it occupies is of a special type of attribute, which, if considering the manner of its identification – by deduction of the structures having generated it, will be named *attribute of recurrence*. The singular form **ți**, bearing no semantic-functional motivation, is only a linguistic ornament, configurating non-indexicalization, which gives a positive reply to the test of omission, being therefore fixed in the category of incidences: *Vi Θ -l bat*.

Statement: *Vi ți-l bat de nu se vede* is distinguished from the *Mi ți-l bate* one (4) by the fact that, while **mi** represents the formal hypostasis of the locutor in communication, being therefore an ethical dative, and plural **vi** is the witness of the premental presence of the interlocutor, as well as **ți**.

In (4), there exists an actant of the verbal action, involved in the grammatical information it transmits (**el**), a locutor, suggested by the free

clitics **mi**, an interlocutor, represented by the conjunct clitics **ți-**, and an extralocator, configurated by the accusative clitics (**l**). The two conjunct forms, **ți-l**, establish, on one side, for the former, the quality of possessor of the entity configurated by clitics **-l**, while, on the other, the asyntacticity of **mi**, respectively its value of ethical form and incident, therefore of nonindexalization agent.

In cases of co-occurrence of two clitics, both of them *ethical* (in the general opinion of linguists), the author considers that, actually, only one of them realizes the objectivation of the *captatio benevolentiae* strategy as such, the other one assuring the positive, explainable meaning, again only by means of the premental speech project. Consequently, in the example: *Mi ți-l bate*, **ți** is much closer as meaning to the possessor of a nominal, absent in this case, while clitics **mi** remains outside the possible possessive interpretation, performing only an incidental phenomenalization in the discourse of the locutor: *Mi-l bate pe copilul-ți*. Our opinion, supported by the insertion, in the statement of the predictable nominal structure (*copil*), favourizes omission of clitics **mi**, with no effects upon the meaning of the general declaration: *⊙ț i-l bate de îndată pe copil*. As such a demonstration identifies two syntactic-semantic realities, both of them defined, in traditional grammar, *ethical dative*, we state that, in this case too, certain terminological and of syntactic analysis-type revisions, deduced from the semantico-functional behaviour of the clitics, are necessary, as shown by the omission or insertion operations. The consistent application of the principles of the indexalization process here proposed opens new interpretative perspectives.

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

The quantitative clitical differences, as well as the predictibilities upon the recovery of certain nominals with effects on the syntacticity/asyntacticity of dative clitics, as configurated in the 4 sentences proposed for analysis, generate, as already anticipated, different interpretations. Thus, the occurrence of the clitical pronoun in dative can be but the expression of the

configuration of a *post-syntactic morphology*⁶, in which the GN center is either lacking a phonological matrix (as in: *Pe unde mi-o fi stat copilul?*), or it may be recognized from the analysis of the content of indexcalizators (*Vi -l bat... Vi ți-l bat... Mi ți-l+ bate...*). One may observe that, prior to the leap to surface structures, the center nominal assigns to the clitical determinant a possessive role and a flexionary form, which it preserves even in the absence of the possessed object. However, the grammatical piece of information is dictated not only by the null nominal or by the witness nominal, it depends on the manner in which this is supported by the realities obtained as the effect of the lexical insertion operations.

a) Thus, in cases of absence of the nominal (1), we accept limitation of the reference of clitics **mi**, from *Pe unde mi-o fi stat?*, as a consequence of the supression of the GN center (the primary structure being: *Pe unde mi-o fi stat copilul?*). The modifier of the nominal, **mi**, is co-indexed with its antecedent (*copilul*), also granting, through conglomeration, the semantic reference of the substitute. Clitics **mi** is developed post-syntactically, after its fixation as a modifier of a lexically-resulted center-name. It may be identified only in the intuitive terms of the linguistic or extralinguistic context, its referential force being, in the given example (*Pe unde mi-o fi stat?*) diminished, yet not null. Synthetically, term (**mi**), left to lexicalize two semantic pieces of information, is the memory of the whole GN (**copilul** and **mi**), configuring, by the lexical occurrence of the basis-name (**copilul**), changing of the host (**mi-o fi stat**), as well. The semantic recovery of the omitted center involves consideration of a previous situation (an anaphoric extralinguistic case), possible in all cases here invoked). Mention should be made of the fact that the phenomenon of semantic fusion also occurs in the case of possessive structures as such: **Cartea mea e roșie. A mea e roșie**, examples in which the quality of cumulative indexcalizator of two semantic information of sequence **a mea** cannot be denied. The nominal structure *copilul*, absent from the analyzed sentence, might be assimilated to the void categories, as reading of the possessive

- attribute is only anaphorical, by identification of the approximate reference from the context. The resulting interpretation, involving the deep structures, makes clear the apparent semantico-syntactic void generated by name's leaving the GN, while favourizing reading of clitics **mi** as an attribute of recurrence.
- b) For the dative clitics of persons I and II singular and plural, with only one occurrence (**ți-l bat...**), which are, in the deep structures, possessive attributes integrated in GN together with a nominal (**ți-l bat pe copil**), and, in the surface structures, where the center of the nominal group is suggested exclusively by the accusative clitics **-l** and whose role is of doubling the locutor or the interlocutor, the nomenclature of *attribute of recurrence* and not of pronoun in ethical dative is maintained. Clitics **ți-** occurs post-syntactically, yet without the lexical leaving of the sentence by the determined center-name, through conservation, by means of a reduced phonological form (**-l**), of the grammatical information it bears in the initial discourse project; the referential capacity of **-vi** is thus maintained through **-l**.
- c) In cases of co-occurrence of the clitics of persons I and II (*Vi ți-l bat...Mi ți-l bate*), where the differentiation may be made between the possessive and the absolute affective role of each of them, it is recognized that the person I singular forms (**mi**, from the second example) are surplus, asyntactic and non-indexicalizer elements, whose motivation is given by the content of the grammatical notion of *ethical dative*, configurating incidencies of special type, while the person II ones (**vi**, from the first sentence, and **ți**, from the second one) are *attributes of recurrence*, being therefore syntactically involved.
- d) Consequently, the clitics here considered (**mi-**, from 1, **ți-**, from 2, **vi-**, from 3 and **ți-**, from 4) have associated specific semantic properties, deduced from the dependence on a nominal form, either absent or perceptible through reduced phonological forms, being, according to such interpretative dimensions, attributive determinants of recurrence⁷. In the deep structures, the determined nominal structure (*copilul*, the term proposed by the author) generates functional projections, selecting a unit which satisfies its syntactic valency. In such a case, clitical pronouns, as witnesses of possession, and containing functional features similar to those of the attributive possessive adjuncts, can be configurated only where a name (here, **copilul**) may possibly appear. As to its effect, the possessive form, having the same lexicalization in the deep and surface structures (*Pe unde mi-o fi stat copilul? Pe unde mi-o fi stat?*), should be considered in the GN context. In the surface structures, the verb does not impose a certain grammatical category, nor the clitics gets objectivized as a compulsory valency, imposed by the semantic information of the verb, yet, formally and in the absence of a decisive nominal form, the pronoun enters GV. The verb assumes this pronominal form only accidentally, taking it over, through conjunctural transfer, from GN¹⁰. The other dative clitics, appearing in the pronominally-agglomerated sentences (*Vi ți-l bat... Mi ți-l bate...*), and having no semantico-syntactic motivation depending on a nominal or on a verb, do not permit analysis inside GV, being developed functionally free of any categorial restrictions. Such independence is generated by the affective or persuasive intentionality of the locutor, who fixes the clitics outside any possible syntactic combinations, in the form of incident words.
- e) Extending the contexts in which the *recurrence attribute* in dative is objectivated, it is our opinion that it may be phenomenalized, *mutatis mutandis*, also by the clitics of person III singular. In the example *I-l binecuvânteț*, **i-** is a non-independent clitics, similar to the indirect one, from which it is differentiated by the fact that it does not represent the syntactic development of verb's semantic valency; its quality is of possessive attribute, generated as a function of a nominal argument, which may be recovered by means of the deep structure (*I-l binecuvânteț pe copil*) and symbolized by the clitical memory **-l**. A possible reading occurs either by a prototypical personal form (*I-l binecuvânteț pe copilul lui*) or, which is closer to the semantic information thus transmitted, by the consecrated possessive (*I-l*

binecuvântează pe copilul său), in both variants tautology being inherent.

- f) As to the substitution class, without putting forth an explicit solution to such a problem, the author suggests that only the attributes of recurrence represented by clitics of person III singular rarely commute with nouns, with other pronouns or with attributive sentences, and only after reconfiguration of the statement and insertion of a nominal argument: *I-l bat/Îl bat pe copilu-i/Îl bat pe copilul vecinului/unora. Îl bat pe copilul căruia îmi este vecin.* Even if, in an absolute situation of family communication, the structures in which attributes of recurrence might be developed as sentence representations of the clitics of persons I and II are possible, they nevertheless occur at the limits of (a) grammaticality: *Îl bat pe copilul căruia îmi esti vecin/ căruia îți sunt vecin.*

References

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Endnotes

1. *DSL*, p. 203.
2. *GLR*, I, 2005, p. 207.
3. Maria-Magdalena Jianu, *Pronominal Indexicalization in Romanian*, EDP, 2008, Bucuresti, p. 3 *et al.*, where indexicalization (an equivalent for the English term indexical(s), occurring itself in a relation of synonymy with the *deictic* and *deixis index*, according to *DSL*, p. 263) is considered an abstract process of viewing a deixis or an anaphora *vs* a communication situation or a linguistic context, which decodes it semantically, grammatically, pragmatically, the deixis/anaphora representing its material, lexical witness, semantically opaque by itself, and phenomenalized through different units.
4. N. Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press, p. 141.
5. Alexandra Cornilescu, *Despre trăsăturile periferice și cum le-am putea folosi*, in *Studii lingvistice, Omagiu...*, p. 47-
6. According to *DSL*, p. 203 and *GLR*, I, p. 207.
7. Gabriela Pană Dindelegan, in *Elemente de gramatică*, p. 99, considers that the rules of pronominal clitics' positioning *vs* the verbal support are much more rigid in the Romanian of today than in the old one, being identified, mainly in chronicles, especially in cases of intraposition (*făcutu-le-s-au oboroace*, Neculce), but also in ante- and post-position of the clitics (*l-au slobozitu-l*, Neculce)
8. Halle, Marantz, p. 111-
9. Milsark, p.15 and Giurgea, in *Studii*, p. 144.
10. Dindelegan, *Theory...*, p. 78.