

## On Clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian

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### 1. Introduction

In this paper we offer a preliminary report on a phenomenon found in several western Slovenian dialects which, in view of several claims and correlations made in the literature, one would expect not to find in these dialects. Clitic doubling, a phenomenon where an argument of the verb is doubled by a corresponding clitic, is known from many languages, which all seem to share (at least) two things: they all have verb adjacent clitics and they all have determiners. Languages reported to have clitic doubling include Spanish, certain Italian dialects, Romanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Greek, Albanian, etc. A typical example of clitic doubling is shown in (1), and a comparable example from a western Slovenian dialect is given in (2).

- (1) *Mene me e jad.* Bulgarian  
me.ACC me.ACC be.3SG angry  
'I am angry.'  
(Franks and King 2000: 251)
- (2) *Mene me zebe.* Gorica Slovenian [GoS]  
me.ACC me.ACC cold.3SG  
'I am cold.'

The goal of this paper is not to argue for any particular analysis of clitic doubling but simply to introduce a new language into the discussion on clitic doubling and point out certain difficulties that it presents for various analyses that have been proposed for clitic doubling on the basis of other languages.

Our data are from the Slovenian dialects of the larger area of Nova Gorica and Gorica/Gorizia, which we will collectively refer to as Gorica Slovenian, but we add that the phenomenon can be found in other western Slovenian dialects as well (from Bovec in the north to Piran in the south and Postojna in the east); however, at this point, we do not know to what extent the phenomenon exhibits the same patterns in all of these varieties, and we suspect that the varieties show differences in its productivity, so we restrict our observations to Gorica Slovenian. Unless otherwise marked, the acceptable Gorica Slovenian data in this paper all come from naturally occurring spontaneous speech.<sup>1,2</sup>

In the following sections, we will present the phenomenon in more detail, show that it is indeed a case of clitic doubling rather than some other related phenomenon, and briefly discuss some theoretical implications.

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<sup>1</sup> The examples marked as 'Judged GoS' were not found in spontaneous speech, but rather report judgements passed by speakers of Gorica Slovenian.

<sup>2</sup> As we are interested in the syntactic patterns, we do not use a phonetic transcription (as is customary in Slovenian dialectology), and we may also ignore morphophonological peculiarities where they are not relevant for our topic. Also, there is no single standard way of writing the speech of our dialects, so our transcription is partly random and may vary from example to example.

## 2. Clitic doubling or something else?

As pointed out by Anagnostopoulou (2006) and Arnaudova and Krapova (2007), one should be careful when talking about clitic doubling since not every cooccurrence of a clitic and a DP argument within the same sentence is an instance of clitic doubling. Therefore, we will first show that the phenomenon under discussion is indeed clitic doubling.

First, observe that the clitic/DP argument cooccurrence observed in Gorica Slovenian does not appear to be an instance of Clitic Left Dislocation, since there is no need for the doubled DP argument to come first in the sentence, and it may very well follow the clitic, as in (3).

- (3) *Ma to me mene ne briga.* GoS  
but this me.GEN me.GEN not cares  
'But I don't care about this.'

Secondly, our clitic/DP argument cooccurrence is also not a case of Right Dislocation, since there is no need for the doubled DP argument to appear at the right edge of the clause/sentence, as can also be seen from (3) above. In fact, Right Dislocation does exist in Gorica Slovenian, but it also exists in Slovenian more generally, that is, also in standard Slovenian and in the dialects where (2) and (3) above are not possible; an example of right dislocation is given in (4).

- (4) *Poglej ga no kljukca.* Standard Slovenian  
look him.ACC well dummy  
'Well look at our dummy now.'

Note that it is typically said that Right Dislocation can be distinguished from clitic doubling in that the former requires a pause before the doubled DP argument, whereas the clitic and its associate in clitic doubling belong to the same prosodic domain (e.g. Arnaudova and Krapova 2007). In Slovenian, Right Dislocation may require a specific intonation pattern, but the requirement on the pause actually does not appear to hold in cases such as (4) above and (5a)-(5b) below. However, the restriction on the doubled DP to appear on the right edge is clearly enough to distinguish these cases from our cases of clitic doubling, since, in contrast to the clitic-doubling sentence in (3) above, the doubled DP must be on the extreme right edge of the sentence.

- (5) a. *O, lej ga Toneta.* GoS  
ah look<sub>IMP</sub> he<sub>ACC</sub> Tone<sub>ACC</sub>  
'Ah, look who's here, Tone.'
- b. *O, lej ga tam Toneta.* GoS  
ah look<sub>IMP</sub> he<sub>ACC</sub>there Tone<sub>ACC</sub>  
'Ah, look who's there, Tone.'
- c. #*O, lej ga Toneta tam.* GoS  
ah look<sub>IMP</sub> he<sub>ACC</sub>Tone<sub>ACC</sub>there

Thirdly, our clitic/DP argument cooccurrence is also not a case of "appositive doubling," which requires heavy comma intonation and which is also not restricted to Gorica Slovenian but is possible in Slovenian quite generally:

- (6) *Torej so ga, lisjaka zvitega, le ujeli.* Standard Slovenian  
 so are him<sub>ACC</sub> dog-fox cunning at-last caught  
 ‘So they managed to catch that cunning fox after all.’

With this, we have exhausted the options for what else this clitic/DP argument cooccurrence in Gorica Slovenian could be; therefore, we conclude that it is indeed a case of clitic doubling in the standard sense of the expression.

Note also that in a discussion of clitic doubling in Bulgarian, Arnaudova and Krapova (2007), following previous literature on the topic, mention another property as a criterion for distinguishing clitic doubling from Right/Left Dislocation, namely, that “the [doubling] clitic is obligatory in the presence of a full DP, whether the latter is pre- or postverbal” (op.cit.: 15). On the one hand, this test is hard to use given that there clearly exist Bulgarian examples where a full-DP direct object is not doubled by a clitic (see for example Werkmann 2008: 578, ex. (15a)); and if one were to claim that such cases constitute separate constructions, we need independent tests to distinguish such constructions from clitic-doubling constructions. On the other hand, it is hard to establish whether clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian could be said to be obligatory, since all speakers of Gorica Slovenian we have been able to ask for judgements are under heavy influence of non-doubling and formal varieties either due to education or everyday usage (and most often both).

So even considering the “obligatoriness” test, it still seems perfectly fair to conclude that our construction is indeed a case of clitic doubling. In the next section, we will look at some characteristics of the occurrence of our clitic doubling.

### 3. Some properties of clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian

Perhaps the most prominent feature of clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian is that it is limited in that it can only happen when the DP argument is represented by a full pronoun. A clitic never doubles a non-pronominal argument (whether a common noun or a proper name). For example, in contrast to (7a), examples such as (7b) below are judged as ungrammatical by speakers of the Gorica dialects; based on a few random checks, we can add that they also appear to be judged ungrammatical by speakers of several of the other clitic-doubling western Slovenian dialects, although doubling of a non-pronominal argument is reported to be attested in the north-west dialect of the Režija/Resia Valley by Šekli (2008).

- (7) a. *Bi mu mogu njemu pustit.* GoS  
 would him.DAT must him.DAT leave  
 ‘I should have left that for him.’
- b. \**Bi mu mogu Petru pustit.* judged GoS  
 would him.DAT must Peter.DAT leave

Secondly, even though it seems to happen most commonly in contexts with first and second person singular, clitic doubling does not seem to be limited with respect to person, number or case.<sup>3</sup> Any pronoun that has a clitic version can be doubled, though we add that not all pronouns have a clitic counterpart. We offer Table 1 below as a simplified guide to Slovenian clitics. The table does not include dual pronouns since those are not used at all in

<sup>3</sup> The predominance of the phenomenon's occurrence in first/second person contexts could, of course, be due to the simple fact that with personal pronouns (which are used for animate referents), these contexts are more frequent than third person contexts. However, at this point, our data sample is not large enough to allow testing any statistically reliable correlations.

the dialects of Gorica (and the dual more generally is hardly present); we are also not including the feminine forms of the plural pronouns, since they exist only in the nominative (as *me*, *ve* and *one*, but even then *mi* and *vi* can also be used for female-only referents), and we are also leaving out the neuter form of the third person singular since this also exists only in the nominative case (in all other cases, the neuter pronoun declines like the masculine pronoun).<sup>4</sup> As can be seen from the table, only the pronouns in genitive, dative and accusative case have a corresponding clitic form, so it is only in these cases that there can be doubling.<sup>5</sup>

No./ person	Case					
	Nom	Gen	Dat	Acc	Loc	Instr
Sg. 1	<i>jaz</i>	<i>mene - me</i>	<i>meni - mi</i>	<i>mene - me</i>	<i>meni</i>	<i>mano</i>
2	<i>ti</i>	<i>tebe - te</i>	<i>tebi - ti</i>	<i>tebe - te</i>	<i>tebi</i>	<i>tabo</i>
3	<i>on</i>	<i>njega - ga</i>	<i>njemu - mu</i>	<i>njega - ga</i>	<i>njemu</i>	<i>njim</i>
	<i>ona</i>	<i>nje - je</i>	<i>njej - ji</i>	<i>njo - jo</i>	<i>njej</i>	<i>njo</i>
Pl. 1	<i>mi</i>	<i>nas - nas</i>	<i>nam - nam</i>	<i>nas - nas</i>	<i>nas</i>	<i>nami</i>
2	<i>vi</i>	<i>vas - vas</i>	<i>vam - vam</i>	<i>vas - vas</i>	<i>vas</i>	<i>vami</i>
3	<i>oni</i>	<i>njih - jih</i>	<i>njim - jim</i>	<i>njih - jih</i>	<i>njih</i>	<i>njimi</i>
Reflexive		<i>sebe - se</i>	<i>sebi - si</i>	<i>sebe - se</i>	<i>sebi</i>	<i>sabo</i>

Table 1: The Slovenian pronominal paradigm (without the dual pronouns)<sup>6</sup>

As already mentioned, any pronoun that has a corresponding clitic pronoun can be doubled with a clitic in Gorica Slovenian. Below we give some examples for each case in both numbers; all three examples in (8) as well as (9c) come from natural spontaneous speech, whereas (9a)-(9b) give examples which we tested with our informants (cf. footnote 1).

- (8) a. *Mi lahko daste kar meni?* GoS  
 I.DAT possible give.2PL PTCL I.DAT  
 ‘Can you give it to me?’
- b. *Ma kaj tebe te ne zanima, kako bo šlo končat?* GoS  
 but Q you.GEN you.GEN not interest how will go end  
 ‘Don't you want to know how will it end?’
- c. *Jaz se ga njega spomnim še iz srednje šole.* GoS  
 I.NOM REFL he.ACC he.ACC remember still from high school  
 ‘I remember him already from High School.’
- (9) a. *Peter nam nám ni tou prnest neč za pit.* judged GoS  
 Peter we.DAT we.DAT not want bring notnig for drink  
 ‘Peter didn't want to bring us anything to drink.’
- b. *... in nás nas ni blo.* GoS  
 ... and we.GEN we.GEN not-aux be  
 ‘... but we weren't here.’

<sup>4</sup> Since neuter nouns are predominantly inanimate, a further difficulty is the restriction on animates found in full pronouns (cf. Cardinaletti and Starke 1999, but cf. also Miličev 2008).

<sup>5</sup> In this regard, the dialect of the Rezija/Resia Valley may be different again, as it is reported to have clitic pronouns in the nominative as well, and in fact to also show clitic doubling with a full nominative pronoun (Šekli 2008).

<sup>6</sup> The pronominal paradigm of Gorica Slovenian is slightly different from the paradigm of Standard Slovenian, but since all of the differences are phonological in nature, we ignore them here.

- c. *Vás si vas ne upam nič prašat.* judged GoS  
 you.GEN REFL you.GEN not dare nothing ask  
 'I dare not ask you anything.'
- d. *Lahko jih pa njih vpraša.* GoS  
 possible they.ACC PTCL they.ACC ask  
 'He can ask them.'

Kallulli (2000) argues that clitic-doubled direct object DPs in Albanian and Greek are unambiguously interpreted as topics. Even though in many of our examples the clitic doubled element (not only when a direct object) appears to function as topic, this cannot be a defining characteristic of clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian, as shown by example (3) above, repeated here as (10a), and by (10b).

- (10) a. *Ma to me mene ne briga.* GoS  
 well this I<sub>ACC</sub> I<sub>ACC</sub> not care  
 'Well I don't care about this.'
- b. ... *zato me mene to moti.* GoS  
 therefore I<sub>ACC</sub> I<sub>ACC</sub> this bother  
 '... that's why this bothers me.'

The doubled arguments in (10) are not the topic of the clause but are also not new information given that these are first person pronouns, whose referent is trivially part of the context. In this light, the clitic doubled argument in (10)—and in Gorica Slovenian doubling in general—is presumably always part of (some sort of) contextual/discourse background, given that it always involves pronouns, which inherently denote entities that are present in the context.

A recurrent claim in the literature on clitic doubling in various languages is also that the doubled argument is obligatorily specific, that is, that specificity of the doubled argument is a necessary condition for clitic doubling to occur (e.g. Kallulli 2000, Franks and King 2000: 250, Werkmann 2008). Since Gorica Slovenian only doubles pronouns, it is impossible to test if specificity plays any role at all; at the same time, however, one could also say that specificity *is* indeed a condition on clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian, but since it is only pronouns that can be doubled, this condition is trivially satisfied.

Furthermore, Arnaudova and Krapova (2007) claim that the clitic-doubled full DP in Bulgarian can be contrastively focused, can be wh-moved, and can serve as new information. As for the first of these characteristics, (11) below shows that the clitic can certainly double a pronoun (in the case of (11) reflexive) that is contrastively focused, so Gorica Slovenian seems to match Bulgarian in this respect. With respect to clitic doubled wh-phrases, Gorica Slovenian appears to exhibit a somewhat unclear pattern; on the one hand, it allows a clitic-doubled wh-phrase in the dative, (12a), but on the other hand, it does not seem to allow a clitic-doubled wh-phrase in the accusative, (12b), or genitive, (12ci). In addition, judgements seem to vary, with some speakers not allowing the doubling of dative-marked wh-phrases as in (12a) either. And in Tolmin Slovenian (35 km north of Gorica), the doubling of wh-phrases is available more generally; for example, (12b) with the doubled accusative clitic was judged acceptable, just like (12cii) with the genitive marked wh-phrase. So at this point, we can only conclude that the whole thing needs further investigation. Thirdly, the clitic-doubled DP can certainly serve as new information; (13), for example, can answer the question in (12a).

- (11) *Sebe se slišim, drugih ne.* GoS  
 self.ACC self.ACC hear others not  
 'I hear myself but not others.'

- (12) a. *Komu mu paše skočit u vodo?* judged GoS  
 Who.DAT he.DAT feels-like jump in water  
 'Who feels like jumping in the water?'
- b. *Koga (\*ga) je Peter videl?* judged GoS  
 who.ACC he.ACC is Peter seen  
 'Who did Peter see?'
- c. i) *Koga si se (\*ga) bal?* judged GoS  
 ii) *Koga si se ga bal?* judged Tolmin Slo.  
 who.GEN aux self he.GEN afraid  
 'Who were you afraid of?'
- (13) *Meni mi paše.* judged GoS  
 I.DAT I.DAT feels-like  
 'I feel like it (≈I do).'

To summarize, clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian is restricted to pronouns, but, at the same time, it is quite general in the sense that all strong pronouns with a clitic counterpart, regardless of person/number/case, can be doubled, including reflexives. Further, the clitic doubled pronouns can be topic, can be new information, can be (contrastive) focus—but at the same time need not be any of these—and to some degree can be wh-moved.

In the following sections, we look at Gorica Slovenian clitic doubling in the context of two theoretical proposals that have been advanced in the literature for clitic doubling in Bulgarian, showing why these cannot be applied to Gorica Slovenian, and a wider generalization with respect to the clustering of clitic doubling and several other phenomena, showing why Gorica Slovenian could be seen as a problem for this generalization.

#### 4. Franks and King (2000)

Franks and King (2000) suggest that clitic doubling in Bulgarian and Macedonian should be analyzed as verb agreement; this view is modeled on the specific clitic systems of these languages, that is, systems where clitics are verb-adjacent. However, Slovenian clitics are not verb-adjacent but Wackernagel clitics, so that rather than being next to the verb, they occur in the second position in the clause. Of course, if the verb happens to occur clause-initially or in the 'third' position, this would still result in the second-position clitic being verb-adjacent; but in several doubling examples above the clitic was not next to the verb (i.e. the verb was not next to the second position). Therefore, a Franks and King (2000)-style analysis is not applicable to clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian. This is also confirmed by example (14) below, where the doubling clitic even climbed out of its original clause; if doubling clitics were a realization of verbal agreement with the object, they should presumably stay on the verb of the embedded clause (given that a non-finite clause has the same functional projections and syntax up to the TP, and that cases are assigned to direct and indirect objects in the same way as in finite clauses).

- (14) *Zdej ti bo treba tebi znižat provizijo.* GoS  
 now you<sub>DAT</sub> will.be necessary you<sub>DAT</sub> lower commission  
 'Now we'll have to cut your commission.'

## 5. Slavkov (2008)

Another recent discussion of clitic doubling in Bulgarian, specifically, of dative clitic doubling, is that of Slavkov (2008). Slavkov shows that what had been viewed in Bulgarian as optional dative clitic doubling is in fact not optional in that the version with the doubling clitic and the version without it are interpretationally and therefore structurally distinct. With the help of the standard tests of binding, weak crossover, and frozen scope, Slavkov shows that the version with the doubling clitic corresponds to the English Direct Object Construction and the version without the doubling clitic corresponds to the English Prepositional Ditransitive Construction.

Although this seems like an interesting hypothesis to test out on Gorica Slovenian, this is not really possible; given that clitics can only double pronouns, the standard tests of binding, weak crossover, and frozen scope are unavailable.

## 6. Bošković's (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) generalization

On the basis of a number of languages—specifically, Albanian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Greek, Somali, Spanish, French (some dialects), Catalan, Romanian, Hebrew, Arabic, and Dutch (some dialects)—Bošković (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) proposes the generalization that only languages with definite articles/determiners may allow clitic doubling; in other words, according to this generalization, we should not find a language that has clitic doubling but does not have a definite article/determiner.

Therefore, since we have seen that western Slovenian dialects have clitic doubling, the proposed generalization suggests that they should also have articles/determiners. However, we have not been able to find that these dialects would differ in any way from central Slovenian dialects with respect to the inner structure of the DP. Just like central Slovenian dialects, such as the one of Ljubljana, these dialects have the so-called “adjectival definite article *ta*.” which, as established in Marušič and Žaucer (2006, 2007) and its name notwithstanding, is not a definite determiner.<sup>7</sup> They also match central Slovenian dialects in having the indefiniteness element *en* (literally ‘one’), but the presence of such indefiniteness elements (which could also turn out to be adjectives) is not relevant for the generalization anyway; the generalization only pertains to definite determiners, as indefiniteness is presumably encoded lower than definiteness (Bošković 2008b, but cf. also an alternative speculation in Bošković 2008b: fn. 23). In short, then, the Gorica Slovenian dialects, which have clitic doubling but do not have a definite determiner, are problematic for Bošković's otherwise robust generalization.

At the same time, we acknowledge that, as mentioned above, the clitic doubling of Gorica Slovenian is not as generalized as it is in better-known clitic-doubling languages in that it is restricted to pronouns, and so his Macedonian/Bulgarian example in (15a), as was mentioned above, does not have a clitic-doubled counterpart in Gorica Slovenian.

- (15) a. *Ivo go napisa pismo.* Bulgarian, (Bošković 2008b)  
Ivo it.ACC write letter.DEF  
'Ivo wrote the letter.'

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<sup>7</sup> That *ta* is not a definite article in the DP/DefP of the entire noun phrase is clearly shown by (i) where *ta* occurs in an indefinite noun phrase with an overt indefinite determiner (cf. Marušič and Žaucer for more discussion).

(i) *eni ta hitri avti* Standard Slovenian/GoS, (Marušič and Žaucer 2006, 197)  
one.PL TA fast cars  
'some fast cars' (cf. \**some the fast cars*)

b. *Ivo (\*ga) je napisal pismo.*  
Ivo it.ACC write letter.ACC  
'Ivo wrote the letter.'

GoS

One obvious direction to explore with respect to maintaining Bošković's generalization could be to show that the presence of a definite article is only a prerequisite for clitic doubling in systems with verb-adjacent clitics. This would suggest, however, that the absence of clitic doubling in, say, Serbo-Croatian cannot be used as support of its not having the DP, since this language also has a Wackernagel clitic system. Another possibility to explore is that Gorica Slovenian clitic doubling is completely different from clitic doubling in languages such as Bulgarian; but apart from the doubling being restricted only to pronouns, we see no reason to assume so. As yet another option, we note that despite his claim of Slovenian overall patterning as an NP language, Bošković (2008b, fn. 23) suggests in a footnote that it might also be that Slovenian (including, for our purposes, Gorica Slovenian) is in a transitional stage of language development, starting to show signs of an emerging DP system; his reasons for suggesting this are the existence of an indefinite article and the degradation of left-branch extraction. The suggestion that Slovenian might have adopted a DP is also made in Franks (2008, 110). We add that another sign pointing in this direction could be the clitic system, which is a Wackernagel system but somewhat relaxed in comparison to, say, Serbo-Croatian in that clause-initial clitics are sometimes allowed as well—or as Wayles Browne (p.c.) facetiously put it, clitics are always in second position, except when they are not.

## 8. Conclusion

In this preliminary report, we showed that Gorica Slovenian has clitic doubling of strong pronouns in Accusative, Genitive and Dative case in all numbers and persons, including reflexives. We also showed that the phenomenon is indeed clitic doubling in the standard sense of the term, since it is distinct from Clitic Left Dislocation, Right Dislocation and appositive doubling.

Our goal here was not to argue for any particular analysis of clitic doubling but simply to introduce a new language into the discussion on clitic doubling. We have nonetheless showed that certain proposals that have been put forth for clitic doubling in other languages cannot be used for Gorica Slovenian; the main characteristic that prevents the application of existent proposals is the position of clitics in Gorica Slovenian, since (Gorica) Slovenian clitics are not verb-adjacent as in Bulgarian and Romance but are rather second-position/Wackernagel clitics. We showed that clitic doubling in Gorica Slovenian appears to be different from other known clitic-doubling languages, which all seem to have definite determiners; this presumably makes Gorica Slovenian a problem for Bošković's (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) generalization.

The obvious direction for future research is a more detailed investigation of the other clitic-doubling western Slovenian dialects, including the thus far best documented dialect of Rezija/Resia, and the neighboring Romance languages, specifically Friulian (cf. Erat 2006) and northern Italian dialects such as Triestino (Pinguentini 1984), which also exhibit clitic doubling.

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