Toward an Understanding of Apparent Suppletion in Romance Pronominal Possessives

Richard S. Kayne
New York University

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1.
     Third person pronouns in Romance usually have an *l*, e.g. Italian non-clitic *lui* ('him'), *lei* ('her'), *loro* ('them'), accusative clitic *lo* ('him/it'), *la* ('her/it'), *li* ('them(masc.))', *le* ('them(fem.)') and dative clitic *le* ('her') and (with a palatal variant of *l*) *gli* ('him/them').[1]
     Italian also shows an *l* in possessive 3pl. *loro*, as in:
   (1) il loro libro ('the their book')
But the possessive 3sg. does not have an *l*:
   (2) *il luo libro
Instead we have, with an *s-*:
   (3) il suo libro ('the his/her book')
In agreement with Cardinaletti (1998, sect. 2.2) and Manzini (2014), we can take possessive *loro* in (1) to be an oblique pronoun and the lack of agreement with *loro*:
   (4) la loro/*lora macchina ('the their car')
to correlate with its status as an oblique pronoun.[2]
     Obviously, *suo* in (3), like 1sg. possessive *mio* and 2sg. possessive *tuo* has a different status from *loro*, as shown by the (feminine) gender agreement (with the noun) in:
   (5) la mia/tua/sua macchina ('the my/your/his/her car')
This agreement resembles adjectival agreement (cf. Giusti (1993)) and determiner agreement. The following proposal then comes to mind, as a first step toward accounting for the impossibility of (2), which appears to hold across all of Romance:
   (6) If a pronominal possessive is amenable to adjectival/determiner-type agreement, then it cannot contain *l-*.
     This way of understanding the impossibility of (2) (to be refined below) does not take (2) vs. (3) to simply be an instance of suppletion.[3] Rather, it takes the impossibility of (2) to be a property of Romance languages that is in need of explanation, independently of the existence of (3). Conversely, the existence of (3), and in particular the fact that (3) shows an *s-* that looks like Romance reflexive *s-*, itself calls for explanation.
     To think of (2) and (3) as just being suppletive variants would fail to provide a handle on the question why it is in possessive contexts with agreement that *l-* is excluded and
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[1]Italian clitic *ci* and Paduan clitic *ghe* are close to English *there* and not third person in the relevant sense; for discussion, see Kayne (2008).
[2]Cf. the lack of agreement with the DP-internal oblique (clitic) possessors in Bulgarian discussed by Pancheva (2004). Non-possessive dialectal counterparts of *loro* can, in a way not directly relevant to the text discussion, show a gender distinction - v. Vanelli (1997, 108).
[3]Suppletion was mentioned by Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002, note 25), though just in passing.

gives way to *s-*,[4] insofar as a suppletion relation could in principle be stated for any arbitrary instance of *l-*. From a suppletion perspective, there would also be the unanswered question why it is third person *l-* that is excluded in the agreeing contexts at issue, rather than, say, first person *m-* or second person *t-*. Nor would a suppletion approach tell us anything about why we find *s-* in (3), rather than some random consonant:

   (7) *il buo/duo/guo libro

Thinking solely in terms of suppletion would put us in danger of thinking that none of these questions need to be asked.

2.

    In pursuing a non-suppletion approach to (2) vs. (3), I will be in agreement with Dobrovie-Sorin and Giurgea (2011),[5] who develop a non-suppletive account of (2) based (cf. their (12) and (43)) on a certain notion of inflectional phi-feature uniqueness that in part rests on the agreement seen in (5). When I return below to the question of (2), I will, however, try to set out a different non-suppletive way of looking at (2) that does not directly involve agreement.

    Let me begin, though, with (3), repeated here:

   (8) il suo libro ('the his/her book')

The *s-* seen in (8) recalls the *s-* found systematically in Romance third person reflexive clitics, as in the Italian example:

   (9) Gianni si fotografa. ('J refl. photographs')

However, the *s-* of *suo* in (3)/(8) seems to be pronominal, rather than reflexive, to judge by:

   (10) Ho letto il suo libro. ('I-have read the his/her book')

in which there is no local antecedent for *s-*.

    Dobrovie-Sorin and Giurgea (2011, note 12) take the *s-* of (the Romanian counterpart of) (10) to be synchronically unrelated to the *s-* of (the Romanian counterpart of) (9). In line with the position I took in Kayne (2016a; 2016b) to the effect that the language faculty strongly disfavors homophones, and also for the more specific reasons given just below, I will argue, in contrast, that the *s-* of (9) and the *s-* of (10) can and should be unified.

    We can note immediately that the *s-* of (9) and the *s-* of (10) have certain significant properties in common. First, they are both gender-insensitive in Romance, in the sense that neither possessive *s-*, as in (10), nor reflexive *s-*, as in (9), ever require an antecedent of a specific gender.

    Second, with respect to number, they have in common that neither ever favors a plural antecedent, and that both can be number neutral. Reflexive *s-* is usually, though not always, number neutral, in the sense that it usually allows its antecedent to be either singular or plural. Possessive *s-* is number neutral in that same sense in Catalan and

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[4]The dialects mentioned in Kayne (2003a, sects. 2.6, 2.7) need to be looked into further.

[5]Zanuttini (1997, chap. 4) on imperatives in Romance informally uses the term 'suppletive' in the context of an account that is appreciably more interesting than the term would suggest.

Spanish.[6] In French, Italian and Romanian, on the other hand, possessive *s-* requires a singular antecedent. In no language that I am aware of does possessive *s-* require a plural antecedent.

Although reflexive *s-* is usually number-neutral, with respect to the number of its antecedent, it occasionally favors a singular antecedent,[7] as with Italian long-distance non-clitic reflexives (as brought to my attention many years ago by Luigi Rizzi), with *sé* the reflexive in question:

(11) ?Il ragazzo mi ha convinto a parlare di sé. ('the boy me has convinced to speak of refl.=him')

(12) *I ragazzi mi hanno convinto a parlare di sé. ('the boys...')

What is never found with reflexive *s-*, any more than with possessive *s-*, is a case where it favors a plural antecedent.

Considerations of person yield a third point in common between possessive *s-* and reflexive *s-*, namely that both invariably favor a third-person antecedent. This appears to be true without exception for possessive *s-*, which as far as I know never allows a first or second person antecedent in Romance.[8] In all the most widely-spoken Romance languages, this is equally true of reflexive *s-*, though there are Romance dialects in which reflexive *s-* can in addition have a non-third person antecedent.[9] Yet Romance languages/dialects never have a reflexive *s-*, any more than they do a possessive *s-*, that would only allow a non-third person antecedent.

The preceding points of similarity between possessive *s-* and reflexive *s-* have to do with properties of the antecedent of *s-*. Two additional significant points of similarity appear if we look at the form of *s-*. One is that neither possessive nor reflexive *s-* ever varies in form for gender. As noted, the antecedent of *s-* can be either masculine or feminine, but the form of *s-* never shows sensitivity to the grammatical gender of the antecedent; no Romance language or dialect has, say, a *se/sa* distinction whereby *se* would appear if the antecedent were masculine and *sa* if it were feminine. Secondly, neither possessive *s-* nor reflexive *s-* ever varies according to the number of its antecedent; no Romance language or dialect has, say, a *se/ses* distinction whereby *se* would appear if the antecedent were singular and *ses* if the antecedent were plural.

3.

The commonalities that we have just seen to hold in Romance between reflexive *s-* and possessive *s-* encourage us to try to find a way to bridge between them, despite Romance possessive *s-* not being reflexive. One key (non-Romance) language here is Norwegian, as discussed by Fiva (1984). Norwegian, like other Scandinavian languages and like Slavic languages, has a distinction between reflexive possessors

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[6]Cf. Wheeler et al. (1999, 114-116) and Butt and Benjamin (1988, 75).

[7]Cf. the singularity of Faroese reflexive *seg*, to judge by Barnes's (1994, 212) example:

(i) Tey nokta seg sekan ('they deny refl. guilty')

with the adjective *sekan* in the accusative masculine singular, agreeing with singular *seg*, despite the plural subject.

[8]As opposed to various Slavic languages - cf. for example Browne (1993, 368) on (interpretive effects in) Serbo-Croat.

[9]For some examples, see Kayne (1993, sect. 3.6).

(e.g. *sin*) and non-reflexive possessors (e.g. *hans* ('his')), as in the following examples from Strandskogen and Strandskogen (1989, 109):

(13) Henry tar sykkelen sin. ('H takes bicycle-the his(refl.)')

(14) Henry tar sykkelen hans. ('H takes bicycle-the his(non-refl.) = someone else's')

Of importance now is the fact that *sin* can occur, as Fiva (1984; 1987) discusses, within DPs such as *Per sin bil* ('Peter his(refl.) car'), which have the interpretation 'Peter's car',[10] as in the Norwegian sentence:

(15) Vi liker Per sin bil. ('we like Peter his car' = 'we like Peter's car')

In such cases, as Fiva (1987, 10) notes, *sin* does not look like a familiar possessive reflexive, insofar as it does not, in this kind of sentence, relate two separate arguments. (Whereas it does appear to relate two separate arguments in (13), namely the subject of 'take' and the possessor of 'the bicycle'.)

On the almost certainly valid assumption that *sin* in (15) is the same as *sin* in (13),[11] we have a case in Norwegian in which something that seems to be a clear reflexive, as in (13), can also not be a reflexive (in the usual sense of the term), as in (15). The question, then, is how best to unify these seemingly disparate instances of *sin*.

In (15), the phrase containing *sin* also contains a DP possessor, *Per*. As an initial step toward unification, let me take there to be a DP possessor within the phrase containing *sin* in (13), too, as shown in:[12]

(16) Henry tar [sykkelen DP(POSS) sin]

This silent possessor DP will have 'Henry' as antecedent (perhaps via movement of the phrase 'Henry' from within the object DP).

Returning to Romance, the proposal is now, following a suggestion by Thomas Leu (p.c.) that Romance possessive *s-*, in a way that now largely mimics (16), is invariably accompanied by a DP possessor. Thus (10), repeated here:

(17) Ho letto il suo libro. ('I-have read the his/her book')

is to be understood as in:

(18) ho letto il DP(POSS) suo libro

with the silent possessor DP in this case being, more specifically, a silent third person singular pronoun (capitals indicate silence):

(19) ho letto il LUI/LEI suo libro ('I-have read the HIM/HER suo book')

that can take an antecedent freely.[13]

4.

The non-reflexive possessive *s-* of (17)-(19) seems to be present in all of Romance, as well as in German and Dutch. But it appears not to be found in Scandinavian, nor in

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[10]Cf. the DP-internal possessive doubling found in colloquial German (cf. Durrell (2002, 44) and Sick (2006)); also French *son ami à lui* ('his friend to him') and *son ami, à Jean* (Kayne (1975, sect. 2.20).

[11]Cf. Pica's (1990, 367) argument for this assimilation based on common restrictions concerning the agentiveness of the antecedent.

[12]Cf. Leu (2015, 132) on Swiss German.

[13]This is similar to Kornfilt's (2001, 207) proposal for Turkish inflected reflexives; cf. Schürcks (2006, 394) on Bulgarian *negovata si* and the discussion of both of these in Franks (2013).

Slavic, nor in (classical) Latin. Conversely, the reflexive possessive *s-* of (13) and (16) is apparently found in all of Scandinavian and all of Slavic, as well as in Latin, but is not found in Romance or German or Dutch.

A familiar type of comparative syntax question arises.[14] Can this distribution of reflexive vs. non-reflexive possessive *s-* within Romance, Germanic and Slavic be related to another property (or properties) of the languages in question? The answer may be yes, as follows:

(20) Reflexive possessive *s-* is possible only in languages lacking DPs of the form 'D N', where D is the definite article.

(21) Non-reflexive possessive *s-* is possible only in languages allowing DPs of the form 'D N', where D is the definite article.

Romance languages (and German and Dutch) have non-reflexive possessive *s-* and all clearly allow 'definite article + N', with the possible exception of Romanian, which normally has 'N+enclitic definite article'. But Romanian does have immediately pre-N *al*, which has been taken by some to contain a (pre-N) definite article (cf. the references cited by Giurgea (2014, notes 6 and 7) and by Giurgea himself (cf. his (37)) to sometimes licence a silent pre-N D. (It may also be relevant that Romanian, alone among Romance languages, as far as I know, has the property that, as stated by Dobrovie-Sorin and Giurgea (2013, 348) "The forms *său/sa/săi/sale* are mostly confined to the written register".) It thus may be possible to take (21) to hold without exception.

Scandinavian and Slavic and (classical) Latin[15] all have reflexive possessive *s-*. Some of these languages have no obvious definite article at all; if so, they are immediately compatible with (20). Others have DPs in which a definite article is enclitic to N;[16] such DPs are straightforwardly compatible with (20). (The fact that some have DPs of the form 'A+D N' is also compatible with (20).) Some Scandinavian languages have 'D A N', with a definite article preceding a prenominal adjective, which is allowed by (20), as long as 'D N' with a definite D is not allowed, which seems to generally be the case.

As noted by Julien (2005, 65), West Jutlandic, spoken in Denmark, is exceptional relative to Scandinavian in having only pre-N definite articles; however, Perridon (1997, 360) notes that "In West Jutlandic the reflexive possessive pronoun *sin* has been replaced by the genitive *s* of the personal pronouns...when referring to human beings" and on p.362 that "In West Jutlandic no distinction is made between a reflexive and non-reflexive use of *sin*" so that West Jutlandic may also be compatible with (20) (and (21)).[17]

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[14]Cf. Kayne (2013).

[15]Cf. Gildersleeve and Lodge (1989, 56).

[16]Note that, in the transition from Latin to Romance, *s-* in possessives did not, strictly speaking, change its status, if the present analysis is on the right track. Rather, the behavior of possessive *s-* changed because Romance languages developed prenominal definite articles.

[17]Perridon (p.351) says that South Jutlandic is like West Jutlandic with respect to the positioning of its definite article, but nothing is said in the paper about the status of *sin* in South Jutlandic.

If (20) and (21) are correct as stated, the next question is, why would they hold? Why would there be a correlation between reflexive vs. non-reflexive possessive *s-*, on the one hand, and the impossibility vs. possibility of 'D N', with D the definite article, on the other?

With (17)-(19) in mind, in which non-reflexive possessive *s-* is associated with a silent pronoun (probably originating in the Spec of *s-*) that itself takes the antecedent that *s-* only seems to directly take, we could interpret (21) as indicating that the silent pronoun in question needs to be licensed by a pre-N definite article,[18] arguably via the Spec of D, as in:

(22) ...PRON D s-...

Such a licensing position for silent PRON would then not be available in a language with no definite article at all; nor would it be available in a language whose definite articles are always enclitic, if the phrase/head to which they (phonologically) encliticize occupies their Spec and thereby prevents it from hosting the silent possessor pronoun.

As for reflexive possessive *s-* and (20), it might be that *s-* can impose reflexivity on PRON only if, conversely, PRON does not move up to Spec,D. (The parameter(s) underlying raising vs. non-raising of this silent possessor pronoun remain to be determined.) Thus, just as (22) corresponds to non-reflexive *s-*, so does (23), from this perspective, correspond to reflexive *s-*:

(23) ...D PRON s-...

In a language that would have no visible definite article at all, D would not be present (or at least not be visible); in a language with only enclitic definite articles, there would be an X preceding D that would match whatever that definite article is enclitic on. In neither case would the silent possessor pronoun raise to Spec,D, in languages with reflexive possessive *s-*.

By the phrase 'impose reflexivity' in the preceding paragraph, I have in mind, among other languages, English, in the following way. Instead of thinking of, say, *himself* as taking a local antecedent, we should rather, following Helke (1973, 11), take the *him* contained within *himself* to take a local antecedent, with that locality (and c-command requirement) being imposed by *self*, in a way that needs to be better understood.[19]

5.

If (23) is correct, then reflexive possessive *s-* in the languages that have it is associated with a silent pronoun in a way that is arguably parallel to the way in which *self* is associated with an overt pronoun (e.g. *him*) in English. The question then arises as to whether reflexive elements are in general associated with a pronoun. Ordinary reflexive clitic sentences in Romance at first suggest not:

(24) Jean se photographie souvent. (French 'J refl. photographs often')

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[18]Indefinite articles play no role in the correlations at issue, suggesting that they are not Ds in the sense in which definite articles are Ds; cf. Perlmutter (1970).
[19]In addition, the presence of *self* allows the avoidance of a Condition B violation - cf. Kayne (2002). For relevant discussion of complex vs. simplex anaphors, v. Pica (1987) and Jakubowicz (1992, 136).

In such sentences there is a reflexive *se*, but no visible pronoun. Put another way, it would appear that sentences like (24) have one less element than the corresponding English sentence:

  (25) John photographs himself often.

   Consider now the following (dative) reflexive sentence in French (which looks like (24), except for the extra direct object):

  (26) Jean se lave les mains. ('J refl.(dat.) washes the hands' = 'J washes his hands')
Corresponding to (26), we would have, in the first person singular:

  (27) Je me lave les mains. ('I me wash the hands')
Here, instead of reflexive *se*, we have what looks like pronominal *me*, with the challenge of understanding why this pronominal *me* doesn't trigger a Condition B violation.

   The picture changes, though, if we jump from French to Bellinzonese (a Romance language/dialect spoken in the Ticino part of Switzerland), which has, for (27), the following, as discussed by Cattaneo (2009, 163):

  (28) Mi a ma sa lavi i man. ('me I me refl. wash the hands')
The *mi* here is a non-clitic pronoun that is not relevant to the issue at hand; nor is the *a*, which is a subject clitic of a sort discussed by Poletto (2000, chap. 2). What is important is that where (26) has just *se* and (27) just *me*, (28) has two object clitics, *ma* and *sa*. (This is also possible in Bellinzonese in the second person plural, with *va sa*.)

   The natural proposal is that Bellinzonese here is reflecting UG more transparently than French is. Consequently all Romance languages/dialects should be taken to have, in sentences comparable to (24) and to (26)-(28), not one object clitic, but two. Both (24) and (26) are now to be understood to be as in:

  (29) ...PRON se...
with PRON a silent non-reflexive pronominal object clitic, while (27) is to be understood as in:

  (30) ...me SE...
with SE a silent reflexive object clitic. Parameters of one sort or another will regulate what is silent when, and in what language.

   A generalization of this proposal would be:

  (31) All reflexive elements of the *s*-type or the *self*-type must be accompanied by a (silent or pronounced) pronoun that mediates the taking of an antecedent, in all languages.

   This may be paired with:[20]

  (32) Apparent Condition B violations of the sort seen in (27) always indicate the presence of a silent reflexive element (of the *s*-type or the *self*-type), in all languages, with the silent reflexive in such cases 'protecting' the pronoun from a possible Condition B violation.

6.
   The examples in (24), (26) and (27) come from Standard French. But there is a variety of French brought to my attention by Sophie Moracchini (p.c.) that allows certain sentences that recall the Bellinzonese example (28). One such sentence is:

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[20]Cf. Kayne (2009, sect. 8).

(33) Jean, cette voiture, il se la lui est offerte lui-même. ('J, this car, he refl. it him(dat.) is offered him-same' = 'J, this car, he bought it for himself himself')

Like the Bellinzonese example, (33) seems to have an extra object clitic. (The intensifying reflexive *lui-même* facilitates acceptability, but is not otherwise relevant.) Standard French would have just reflexive *se* here, along with the accusative clitic *la*, whose antecedent is 'this car'. But standard French would not have the 'extra' (dative) clitic *lui*, which from the present perspective is 'doubling' reflexive *se* (unsurprisingly, given (31)); put another way, *lui* in this example is to *se* as *him* in English is to *self*.

It should be emphasized that the present proposal takes all instances of *s-*, whether reflexive or non-reflexive, to be the same element *s-*, accompanied in all cases by an 'extra' pronoun. It is this pronoun that is the locus of the difference in behavior between reflexive *s-* and non-reflexive *s-*. *S-* imposes locality constraints on that pronoun only when, as in (23), that pronoun has not raised to Spec,D.[21]

The non-reflexive instances of *s-* that have so far been discussed have all been instances of possessive *s-* in Romance (with allusions to German and Dutch). The relevant structure was given in (19) and is repeated in essence here (with PRON a silent pronoun), taking into account the proposal illustrated earlier in (22):

(34) ho letto PRON il suo libro ('I-have read PRON the his/her book')

This represents an Italian sentence corresponding to English *I have read his/her book*.

Not yet mentioned in our discussion of non-reflexive *s-* is the well-known case of Spanish 'spurious' *se*,[22] seen in:

(35) Juan se lo da a Pedro. ('J *se* it gives to P' = 'J gives it to P')

Let us consider this type of sentence from the perspective of (31), now generalized in such a way as to cover all instances of *s-*, not just reflexive ones:

(36) All reflexive or non-reflexive elements of the *s*-type (or the *self*-type) must be accompanied by a (silent or pronounced) pronoun that mediates the taking of an antecedent, in all languages.

If (36) is correct, the *se* of (35) (like reflexive *s-* and also like non-reflexive possessive *s-*) must be accompanied by an associated (silent) pronoun (distinct from the pronounced accusative clitic *lo* of (35)). That this is in fact so is suggested by a property of (at least) Mexican Spanish noted by Harris and Halle (2005, 214) and references cited there, namely that Mexican Spanish allows sentences like:

(37) El libro, Juan se los da a los chicos. ('the book, J *se* it+s gives to the kids')

Given that the direct object in (37) is singular (*el libro*), the expected accusative clitic is singular *lo*. Yet what appears is *los*, as a function, at first glance surprising, of the plurality of the indirect object.

An analysis of (37) that now readily comes to mind is, but only as a first approximation:

(38) ...se lo PRON da...

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[21]By extension, we would expect the pronominal subpart of English reflexives not to have raised to Spec,D.

[22]The term goes back to Perlmutter (1971, chap. 2). The existence of 'spurious' *se* is related to Spanish not allowing any combination of two object clitics each beginning with *l-*; for discussion, see Manzini and Savoia (2008, chap. 2).

with a silent plural dative clitic pronoun that doubles the indirect object (*a los chicos*), in the general manner of Spanish dative clitic doubling. However, to fully account for the form of (37), we need to refine (38) as follows. The key property of Mexican Spanish illustrated in (37) is that the plural *s* of this dative clitic pronoun is pronounced, even though the rest of the pronoun is not. So a more adequate rendering of (38) as a representation of (37) must be (against the background of the fact that the plural dative clitic in Spanish is *les*):[23]

  (39) ...se lo LE s da...

In (39), the *le-* part of *les* is silent, at the same time as the plural *-s* part is pronounced. The spelling *los* in (37) is now seen, via (39), to be syntactically misleading (although it may be phonologically revealing), insofar as 'los' in (37) does not correspond to a syntactic constituent.

    Were there no accusative clitic, the dative clitic, in a standard sentence otherwise maximally like (37), would be *les*, as in:

  (40) Juan les da un libro a los chicos.

But without the accusative clitic, *se* is not possible:

  (41) *Juan se da un libro a los chicos.

    As for the question why exactly (41) is not possible, let me suggest a speculative answer based on the fact that silent elements never give away their position directly. Let me therefore revise (38) and (39) to the following:

  (42) ...se LES lo <LES> da...
  (43) ...se LE lo <LE> s da...

In both of these, the (silent) dative clitic moves up from a position below the accusative *lo* to a position above it. In (43), which corresponds to Mexican Spanish, this raising strands the plural *-s*; in (42), it does not. The raising of LE(S) now allows us to say that its licensing depends on it ending up in the Spec of *lo*, in a way parallel to the discussion of (22) above. (This paralellism is to be thought of against the background of Postal's (1966) proposal that pronouns are assimilable to definite articles.[24]) Since in (41) there is no accusative clitic, there can be no derivation of (41) that would track the derivation of (35) or (37); i.e. (41) is excluded as desired.

    It turns out that the unusual French example (33) is also unacceptable in the absence of an accusative clitic. If we take (33) (pared down a bit for the purposes of exposition):

  (44) Il se la lui est offerte. ('he refl. it him(dat.) is offered' = 'he bought it for himself')

and replace the accusative clitic *la* by a lexical DP, yielding:

  (45) *Il se lui est offert une voiture. ('he refl. him(dat.) is offered a car' = 'he bought a car for himself')

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[23]In a way that recalls English cases like *the others* or *two four-year-olds*, with a pronounced plural *s* in the presence of a silent N; cf. Kayne (2003b; 2017a).
[24]It suffices for the text point that Postal's proposal be on the right track for third person pronouns. On the arguably distinct status of first and second person pronouns, see below; that distinct, non-D, status leads to the expectation (correct, as far as I know) that 'spurious' *se* will never appear with first or second person clitics (unless, perhaps, there is in addition a third person clitic present).

the resulting sentence is not acceptable. A possible proposal, in the spirit of (42)/(43), would be that when French *se* has an overt double (here *lui*), *se* must be licensed in the Spec of the accusative *la*.

This potential parallelism between (42)/(43) and (44) is, it should be noted in passing, compatible with the fact that the *se* of (44) is a subcase of reflexive *s-*, while the *se* of (42)/(43), like many of the instances of possessive *s-* discussed earlier, is a subcase of non-reflexive *s-*. Moreover, Spanish 'spurious' *se* is not spurious in anything like Perlmutter's (1971) sense; rather, it is one more instance of (non-reflexive) *s-* occurring in combination with a ((partially) silent) pronoun.

7.
The non-reflexive possessive *s-* of (34) has now been seen to fit into a broad and rich syntax of *s-* (in Romance, Germanic and Slavic) that covers both reflexive and non-reflexive *s-* (with the latter being exemplified also in Spanish 'spurious' *se*) and that extends well beyond possessives.

In a similar vein, we should expect the prohibition against possessive *l-* that was discussed earlier to be related to aspects of syntax that again go well beyond possessives. But before getting into possessive *l-*, let us briefly consider Romance impersonal *si/se*, as discussed in detail in particular by Cinque (1988), and ask how it might fit in with the general syntax of *s-*.

Let me take a key question to be:
(46) Why is impersonal *si/se* an object clitic and not a subject clitic?
In Italian, impersonal *si* is clearly an object clitic, despite its thematic and/or agreement link to the subject (position). This is shown in part by Italian impersonal *si* being able to be preceded by other object clitics. In addition, Italian has no subject clitics in any case. So one could think that the answer to (46) for Italian is simply that Italian doesn't ever allow subject clitics.

The question in (46) looks more interesting in French, which does have subject clitics. Why, parallel to the Italian:
(47) Non si parla di noi. ('neg impers.*si* speaks of us' = 'they're not talking about us')
does French not have the following:
(48) *Se ne parle pas de nous. ('impers.*se* neg speaks not of us')
with *se* as a subject clitic?

The impossibility of (48) is all the more striking as French does have a subject clitic *on*, as in:
(49) On ne parle pas de nous.
such that the interpretation of (49) seems identical to that of (47).[25] So the question is, more precisely put, why does French lack a subject clitic with an 'impersonal' interpretation that would be built on *s-* in the way that Italian *si* is?

The same question arises in North Italian dialects, in particular in those that have many overt subject clitics. For some of these dialects it might at first look like their impersonal *se/si* is actually a subject clitic, e.g. in those varieties of Friulian in which one has sentences of the form '*Si* V OCL,' with impersonal *si* preceding the finite verb and

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[25]For further details, see Cinque (1988, sect. 3.5).

other object clitics following it.[26] But such Friulian sentences can instead be taken to be instances of split object clitics, which we know to be possible in some Romance.[27]

One clear argument in favor of impersonal *se/si* (which is widely, if not universally found, in North Italian dialects) never being a subject clitic is the following. If it could be, we should find at least some North Italian dialects in which *se/si* inverts with the finite verb in interrogatives in the manner of French *on* (and other subject clitics):

  (50) Parle-t-on de nous? ('speaks one of us')

As far as I know, no such dialect exists. If that is true, then (46) calls for an answer.

Before suggesting one, let me note a second reason to think that impersonal *si/se* in North Italian dialects is always an object clitic and never a subject clitic. Take those North Italian dialects in which preverbal negation invariably precedes object clitics.[28] In many of those dialects, preverbal negation is itself preceded by subject clitics. Therefore, if impersonal *si/se* could be a subject clitic, we would expect there to exist some North Italian dialects in which impersonal *si/se* could precede preverbal negation (without any object clitics preceding preverbal negation). But as far as I know, there are no such dialects, suggesting that impersonal *si/se* can never be a subject clitic.

As for why impersonal *si/se* cannot be a subject clitic (or a subject non-clitic), what comes to mind is that impersonal *se/si,* as an instance of *s-,* requires in one way or another an antecedent. But if it were a subject clitic, no sufficiently local antecedent would be available at all.

How then does Italian impersonal *si,* if it is an instance of *s-,* come to have an antecedent? Its object clitic status avoids the problems of the preceding paragraph up to a point, but where is the antecedent? A speculative answer would be, in subject position, with a French example given by Gross (1975, 102):

  (51) Il se réfléchit à de drôles de choses ici. ('it *se* reflects on of funny of things here' = 'people think about funny things here')

being relevant. This kind of example may require the presence of a PP, which may be why Gross took this *se* to be an instance of middle *se,*[29] but there's a slight chance that it contains instead impersonal *se,* whose antecedent would then perhaps be the expletive-like subject clitic *il.* In which case Italian impersonal *si* might then take as antecedent a silent counterpart of this subject *il.*

Alternatively, and more plausibly, if (51) is not an instance of impersonal *se,* it might be that Italian impersonal *si* in (47) is another instance of non-reflexive *s-,* and is linked, in the manner of Norwegian (15) *Per sin bil* (and perhaps of English *oneself*), to a silent counterpart of French (49) *on* that would be in subject position. If so, then one needs to understand why French does not allow its *on* to cooccur with a true impersonal object clitic *se:*[30]

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[26]Cf. Benincà (1989) and Kayne (1991, sect. 1.4).

[27]Cf. Kayne (1991, sect. 1.3).

[28]Which is most of them. For the exceptions, see Zanuttini (1997, 19) and references cited there.

[29]On middle *si/se*, v. Cinque (1988) and references cited there. How to integrate into the present framework his distinction between +/-arg *si* is left open, as is the question of the relation between *s-* and his 'arb'.

[30]An additional question is why *se* could not double a lexical subject DP in the manner

(52) On (*se) donne beaucoup d'argent aux pauvres. ('one *se gives much of money to-the poor')

A possible link would be to Koopman's generalized doubly-filled Comp filter - cf. Koopman and Szabolcsi (2000, 4), Collins (2007) and Baltin (2010).

8.

The restriction against possessive *l-* that I will now finally return to was illustrated in Italian (2), repeated here:

(53) *il luo libro ('the his/her book')

A third person possessive in Romance cannot have an *l-* if it is part of an agreeing form such as **luo*.[31]

Strictly speaking, though, the restriction does not depend on (overt) agreement. That it does not depend on gender agreement can already be seen from Spanish prenominal possessives:

(54) su(*a) casa ('his/her/their house')
(55) *lu casa

Although *su casa* lacks gender agreement,[32] *l-* is still impossible. More extreme are various North Italian dialects, in which pre-N possessives agree with N neither in gender nor in number.[33] Yet they, too, show, in the third person, *s-* and not *l-*. For this reason, I will take the prohibition against *l-* in these possessives to depend instead on the vocalic morpheme that in a visible way immediately follows the person consonant in most Romance, as in Spanish, in the following:

(56) mi casa; tu casa; su casa ('my house; your(sg. fam.) house; his/her/their house')

The suffix in question here is *-i* with a first person singular possessor and *-u* with a second person singular (familiar) possessor or third person possessor. I will take this suffix not to be a Case suffix (contrary to the *-or(o)* of *loro* in (1)), but rather to be an adjective-like suffix (that facilitates agreement in those cases in which agreement is found).[34] Let me informally call it Poss.[35]

of French complex inversion - relevant is the discussion in Kayne (2017b) of the incompatibility of *se* with French hyper-complex inversion.

[31]Why exactly Bulgarian *nego-(o)ova-(ta kniga)* (from Pancheva 2004) is possible, in apparent minimal contrast with **luo*, will need to be understood. It may of course be that Bulgarian *n-* is not the same sort of morpheme as Romance *l-.*

[32]A perhaps better way to put it is that Spanish prenominal possessives cannot show a W(ord)M(arker), in Harris's (1991) sense. Portuguese may indicate that the restrictions on *l-* at issue carry over to silent counterparts of *l-.*

[33]Cf. Renzi (1997, 165), Pelliciardi (1977, 70), and Cardinaletti (1998, 21) (and references cited there). These dialect facts indicate that Dobrovie-Sorin and Giurgea's (2011) 'feature complexity' approach, though in the right non-suppletion spirit, was too narrowly focussed.

[34]Cf. Zribi-Hertz (2003, 152) on French.

[35]The degree to which Romance Poss matches the Hungarian Poss of Szabolcsi (1983) needs investigation.

In agreement with Dobrovie-Sorin & Giurgea (2011), let me take the impossibility of (53) and (55) not to be a 'morphological gap' or 'instance of suppletion' that would admit of no explanation. I will, instead, try to look outside the syntax of (Romance) possessives to find related phenomena.[36]

In part, we are looking at a restriction concerning 'person'. In the context of the suffix Poss, third person *l-* is disallowed (as opposed to first person *m-*, second person *t-,* and *s-*). To my eye, this prohibition against third person *l-* recalls the following:

(57) He agrees that the ?you-ness/?me-ness/*him-ness of that photograph is remarkable.

(58) She agrees that that's the ?you-est/?me-est/*her-est photograph that's ever been taken.

It seems that certain kinds of affixation, e.g. the *-est* of (58) and the *-ness* of (57) are incompatible with third person pronouns (while first and second person pronouns are passably acceptable). Let me propose, then, that the incompatibility between Poss and *l-* seen in (53) and (55) is essentially like the incompatibility of *him* or *her* with *-est* and with *-ness* seen in (57) and (58).[37]

Thinking of Postal (1966), this generalized incompatibility between third person pronouns and certain kinds of affixation is almost certainly to be related to restrictions bearing on definite articles, as long as we take Postal's assimilation of pronouns to definite articles to be correct only for third person pronouns.

I have in mind facts like the following. There are boroughs of New York City that differ with respect to the definite article:

(59) They live in Brooklyn.

(60) They live in *(the) Bronx.

These two boroughs differ in that one requires the definite article in ordinary sentences like (60). Yet in OV compounds the definite article is prohibited:[38]

(61) They're real Brooklyn lovers.

(62) They're real (*the) Bronx lovers.

(63) How many Brooklyn loving linguists do you know?

(64) How many (*the) Bronx loving linguists do you know?

Such OV compounds show what I think is a parallel prohibition against third person pronouns:[39]

(65) *Nixon would have liked to be able to disregard all those him-haters.

(66) *Nixon would have liked to be able to disregard all those him-hating linguists.

As in (57) and (58), the prohibition is (here, only somewhat) weaker with first and second person pronouns:

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[36]This section pursues an idea undeveloped in Kayne (2003a, sect. 2.6).

[37]As pointed out by Déchaine & Wiltschko (2002, 426), English allows *he-goat* et al.; these, however, differ from the text examples in that *he* in *he-goat* does not have an antecedent, and *he-goat* only has the interpretation 'male goat'.

[38]Cf. *another Brooklynite* vs. *another the Bronx-ite*; also *another Brooklyn-based linguist* vs. *another the Bronx-based linguist*.

[39]Cf. Postal (1969); for me, the deviance of these two text examples is appreciably greater than than of:

i) (?)Most Nixon-haters have never forgiven him for his behavior.

(67) ??I would have liked to be able to disregard all those me-haters/me-hating linguists.

(68) ??You would have liked to be able to disregard all those you haters/you-hating linguists.

Although I will not pursue the question of what underlies the restriction that I am suggesting is a single one and that holds for both definite articles and third-person pronouns in all of (53), (55), (57), (58), (65) and (66), in such as a way as to bridge between Romance possessives and English non-possessives, I would like to speculate about why first and second person pronouns act differently, beginning with (60) vs. (62)/(64).

The fact that the definite article that is normally obligatory with *the Bronx* can be absent without ill effects in *Bronx-lovers* and *Bronx-loving* recalls Baker's (1988, 93) discussion of determiner stranding via incorporation, and suggests to me that a silent definite article has, in (62) and (64), been stranded outside the 'compound'. The same may also hold with *Brooklyn-lovers* and *Brooklyn-loving linguists*, the difference being that *Brooklyn* is accompanied by a definite article that is silent even in (59). Put another way, it may be that *the Bronx* is reflecting UG more directly than *Brooklyn* is, and that all proper names, in all languages, are accompanied by a definite article.

The definite article in question would then arguably be the one seen overtly in:

(69) the person (who is) named John

(70), the borough (that is) named Brooklyn

in which case *Brooklyn* should be thought of as having the structure:

(71) THE BOROUGH NAMED Brooklyn

and *John Smith* as having the structure:

(72) THE PERSON NAMED John Smith

with a link then to sentences like:

(73) Please don't invite that John Smith person again.

In Kayne (2010), I argued that English *this* and *that* differ in that *this* is always associated with a (first) person element, while *that* is not. With Leu (2007) also in mind, we can reasonably conclude that *this* contains, or is associated with, both a definite article and a person morpheme. Let us now consider the possibility that the same holds for *me* (and *you*). First and second person pronouns are associated with a definite article that is in the general case silent.

If so, then we can now say that in (68), (67), (58) and (57), as well as in the Romance possessives in (56), the first and second person pronoun has had its associated definite article stranded by 'incorporation', in a way similar to what transpires with proper names. Alternatively, or in addition, there may be a link between first/second-person pronouns and *self* (thinking of *self-criticism* and *self-criticizing linguists*).

But the definite article itself cannot be 'incorporated', as seen in (62)/(64), nor can third person pronouns, as seen in (53), (55), (57), (58), (65) and (66), by virtue of their being in essence the same as definite articles, following Postal (1966).[40] First and second person pronouns act differently from what are called third person pronouns

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[40]This restriction might be related to the impossiblity of extraction from within compounds.

because first and second person pronouns have both a(n incorporable) person component and a definite article component;[41] the person component is lacking both in third person pronouns (which then don't deserve their name[42]) and in definite articles.

9.

A number of open questions remain. The Romance Poss seen in the vowel in *mi-, tu-, su-* (and in French *-on* in *mon, ton, son*) is possible only if the possessor is *m-, t-, s-*. For example, alongside Spanish:

(74) su libro ('his/her/their book')

there is no:

(75) *Juan-u libro

in which *s-* would be replaced by the proper name *Juan*.[43] This might not be a property specific to possessives, insofar as there exist other morphemes that are compatible only with *m-,t-,s-*, e.g. in French:

(76) On parle trop de moi/toi/soi/*Jean-oi. ('one speaks too-much of me/you/self/J')

Also open is the question of how close the restriction against definite articles within compounds is to the restriction against indefinite articles within compounds seen in:

(77) They're selling one-drawer desks in the back of the store.
(78) *They're selling a-drawer desks in the back of the store.
(79) Single-drawer file cabinets are on sale today.
(80) *A single drawer file cabinets are on sale today.

and in the arguably similar:

(81) He's clueless.
(82) He's without *(a) clue.
(83) *He's a clueless.

or to the restriction concerning non-numeral *one* illustrated by:

(84) A four-drawer file cabinet is more useful than a five/multi-/titanium-drawer desk.
(85) *A four-drawer file cabinet is more useful than a five/multi-/titanium-one desk.

10.

In conclusion, the (Italian) pair that we started with:

(86) *il luo libro
(87) il suo libro ('the his/her book')

and that is typical of Romance lends itself to an account of (86) in terms of constraints also seen in the syntax of compounding, and to an account of (87) that links its *s-*, despite initial appearances, to what we think of as Romance reflexive *s-*. We might informally call this pair an instance of suppletion, as long as we recognize that calling it suppletion falls short of an account.

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[41]Beyond the scope of this paper are (many) other differences between third and first/second; cf. Bartos (2001) for one.
[42]Cf. Benveniste (1966).
[43]Proper names can be followed by an adjectival suffix in Slavic - cf. Corbett (1987).

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