

Ne-cliticization and the DP/PP distinction: A case for Q
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• **Ne-cliticization:** Italian’s inventory of clitics includes the partitive clitic *ne*. *Ne* cannot cliticize external arguments but only internal arguments: it is grammatical with unaccusatives (1a), but disallowed with unergatives (1b):

- (1) a. *Ne sono arrivate molte.*
 Ne.CL be.3.PL arrived many
 ‘Many of them (the girls) arrived.’
- b. **Ne hanno riso molte.*
 Ne.CL have.3.PL laughed many
 ‘Many of them (the girls) laughed.’

Doubling of the cliticized element is ungrammatical (2a), unless there is a strong prosodic break (signalled by the comma in (2b)):

- (2) a. **Maria ne ha mangiate molte (di) torte.*
 ‘Maria *ne* ate many cakes.’
- b. *Maria ne ha mangiate molte, di torte.*
 ‘Maria *ne* ate many, of cakes.’

We present new data showing that *ne* behaves differently from other clitics in its interactions with syntactic category and \bar{A} -movement, taking insights from Italian and Dutch. We propose that these interactions can be accounted for if *ne* obligatorily occurs within the scope of a Q head (Belletti&Rizzi 1981, Cardinaletti&Giusti 1992, a.o.). We argue that the distribution of QP within the verbal domain mirrors that of other non-DP arguments, like PPs, and does not mirror the distribution of DPs (Newman 2021). Together, these proposals account for i) the familiar fact that *ne* does not cliticize external arguments (*v* has a feature for licensing DP external arguments but not QPs), and ii) fronting asymmetries between *ne*-cliticized DP and PP arguments. •**Ne-cliticized DPs and PPs:** When *ne* cliticizes an internal DP argument, it replaces the NP within the DP and then moves to the pre-verbal clitic position (3), also controlling past participle agreement:

- (3) *Maria ha lett-o molti libri.* (4) *M. ne ha lett-i/*o molti.*
 Maria has read-M.SG many books M. ne.CL has read-M.PL/*M.SG many
 ‘Maria read many books.’ ‘M. read many of them.’

Ne-cl of a prepositional object (5) behaves differently: it doubles the PP rather than replacing its contents, and it causes the doubled PP to front (5b-c), with no prosodic break (cf. (2)):

- (5) a. *La mia carriera è dipes-a da tre incontri.*
 the my career is depended-F.SG from three meetings
 ‘My career depended on three meetings.’
- b. **La mia carriera ne è dipes-a da tre incontri.*
 the my career is ne.CL depended-F.SG from three meetings
- c. *Da tre incontri ne è dipes-a la mia carriera.*
 From three meetings ne.CL is depended-F.SG the my career
 ‘Three meetings, my career depended on.’

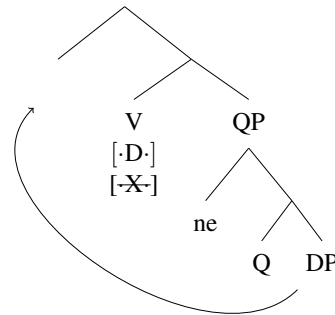
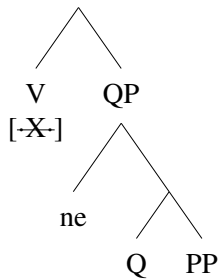
The doubling and fronting behavior is surprising, as when an Italian clitic besides *ne* cliticizes PP arguments, both clitic doubling and PP fronting are ungrammatical (6):

- (6) a. **M. ci ha dato un libro a noi.* b. **A noi M. ci ha dato un libro.*
 M. us.CL has given a book to us To us M. us.CL has given a book
 ‘Maria gave a book to us.’ Intended: ‘To us, Maria gave a book.’

Ne is unique among Italian clitics, as it induces obligatory fronting of the PP it cliticizes. •**Analysis:** We account for these patterns with the following proposals about i) the structure of *ne*-cliticized phrases, and ii) V’s feature endowment when it selects for arguments of different categories. We

propose that *ne* is licensed by a quantificational head, which we label Q. Q can take different complements, such as DPs and PPs (Cable 2010), which may contain *ne*. Q licenses *ne* via agreement/movement to its specifier. QPs also undergo wh-movement, pied-piping their complements. Crucially, the presence of a QP in an argument position impacts the relationship between verb and argument differently for arguments of different categories. This accounts for the difference between *ne*-cl of DPs vs. PPs. For verbs that select for a DP complement, inserting a QP fails to check the feature that usually introduces a DP (represented as [\cdot D \cdot] in (8)). Following Newman (2021), we propose that QP must be licensed by a feature that is underspecified for category, [\cdot X \cdot], which can also license PPs. Thus, in (8), the verb's normal argument-introducing feature is left unchecked when its complement is QP. Internal Merge is therefore required to check [\cdot D \cdot] (Müller 2010, Newman 2021, a.o.). When a V that selects a PP merges with a QP, however, QP checks the same argument-introducing feature that PP would have checked (7), requiring no movement.

(7) V selects a PP: merging QP checks [\cdot X \cdot] (8) V selects a DP: DP moves to check [\cdot D \cdot]



Thus, *ne*-cliticized DPs strand their QPs by having to move to check their argument-introducing feature. By contrast, *ne*-cliticized PPs do not move and strand QPs. So, when QP wh-moves, it pied-pipes PPs but not DPs. This analysis also provides a novel account of *ne*'s inability to cliticize external arguments. When *ne* cliticizes an argument, it changes the category of that argument to Q. Assuming that external arguments are introduced by a [\cdot D \cdot] on *v*, QPs are not licensed there. Importantly, QPs could not be licensed by a [\cdot X \cdot] on *v*, because everything checks [\cdot X \cdot]: even if *v* had [\cdot X \cdot], it would be checked when *v* selects its complement VP, preventing its use in the licensing of a QP. • **Extensions:** An advantage of our proposal is that it allows us to capture differences in the behavior of *ne*-cliticization in different languages. In Dutch, the partitive clitic *er* does not obligatorily induce fronting of the PP it cliticizes, contra Italian, for example.

- (9) a. *Maria houdt er van drie.*
 Maria holds er.CL of three
 ‘Maria loves three (of them)
- b. *Daar-van houdt Maria.*
 er.CL-of holds Maria
- c. *Daar houdt Maria van.*

This shows us that QP in Dutch may target different positions than in Italian: QP is sister to D when *er* targets NP (9a), and sister to P or PP when *daar* targets DP (9b-c). The distribution of QP in Dutch can be independently deduced from the fact that Dutch allows preposition stranding, while Italian does not. As a result, independent restrictions on the distribution of Q in each language correctly predict the behavior of *ne/er* respectively. • **Conclusion.** We provided an account of PP-fronting of Italian *ne*-cliticized PPs. The asymmetric behaviour of *ne*-cliticized PPs vs. DPs stems from the c-selectional properties of their corresponding verbs and the licensing requirement on *ne*. Our proposal extends to *ne*-cl of PPs and DPs in Dutch as well, when we take into account language-specific restrictions on the distribution of QP.