

**On complementizer deletion in Tuscan varieties:
a parametric analysis of a new empirical pattern in Pisano**

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Background: Italo-Romance varieties license two distinct types of complementizer deletion (CD): CD1, only licensed if the selecting verb is a bridge verb and if the embedded verb bears a [-realis] feature (1) and CD2, which is insensitive to verb type and to mood but requires a specific clitic-like element (preverbal object clitic, preverbal negator or auxiliary) between the matrix and embedded verbs (2). Standard Italian only allows CD1, whereas Italo-romance varieties such as Florentine or Barese allow both (Cocchi & Poletto, 2002).

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| (1) Credo (che) sarà interessante ascoltarlo.
believe. PRS.IND.1sg (that) be. FUT.IND.3sg
interesting listen-him.
'I believe (that) it will be interesting to
listen to him' | (2) Mi dispiace (che) non è venuta.
to-me am-sorry (that) not is come
'I'm sorry (that) she did not come' |
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According to Cocchi & Poletto (2002), CD1 and CD2 can be unified under the assumption that they represent instances of “alternative checking” (Zanuttini, 1997; Obenauer, 2001). From this account, two questions arise: (1) can the distribution of CD1 and CD2 be implicationally linked? (2) Are the same patterns of selecting and embedded verb selected in all varieties with CD2? This talk offers an alternative view of CD relying on the Parametric Comparison Method (PCM), an approach aimed at defining the parameters which regulate phenomena that operate in a specific syntactic domain (CP) and their functional implications (Longobardi, 2001a, Longobardi & Guardiano, 2009, 2017, Ceolin et al. 2020).

Parametric implications: Following the PCM, a parametric implication between CD1 and CD2 can be stated on the basis of both logical and empirical assumptions. From a logical viewpoint, languages like Florentine with CD2 can have CD when the selecting verb is bridge or non-bridge and when the embedded verb encodes [+realis] or [-realis] features. Therefore, the occurrence of CD2 naturally entails the occurrence of CD1. Under the PCM approach, three parameters can be postulated:

- (3) *Pc1*: Is complementizer deletion attested?
Pc2: Is complementizer deletion attested with bridge and non-bridge selecting verbs?
Pc3: Is complementizer deletion only attested with bridge selecting verbs?

Consequently, if a language has a negative value for *Pc1*, there is no point in checking the values of *Pc2* or *Pc3*; on the other hand, if *Pc1* is positive, the other two become relevant. From (3), if *Pc2* is positive, then *Pc3* is also positive, namely if a language admits CD2, it also presents CD1. These assumptions are further supported by empirical data collected from several Italo-Romance varieties: some of them rule out CD in both CD1 and CD2 contexts (Sicilian, Alto Polesano, Neapolitan, Campidanese), whereas other varieties present both (Florentine). Finally, there are some varieties that behave like Italian, which license CD1, but not CD2. However, there is no variety to my knowledge that displays CD2, but not CD1, therefore supporting the view that there is a parametric implication between CD1 and CD2.

The problem of Mood: According to Cocchi & Poletto (2002), CD2 occurs when the mood of the embedded verb is either realis or irrealis. However, there seem to be some slight variations according to the variety under analysis. In this paper, I intend to report data collected from speakers living in the Pisa area, showing that the acceptability of both irrealis and realis embedded verbs is not systematic:

- (4) Ha detto un ci sar  al tu' compleanno
has said not there be. FUT.IND.3sg at the your birthday
'He said he won't be at your birthday.'
- (5) Ha detto un ha portato nulla
has said not has brought anything
'He said he hadn't brought anything'
- (6) Mi dispiace un ci sia al tu' compleanno
to-me am-sorry not there be.PRS.SBJ.3sg at the your birthday
'I am sorry that he won't be at your birthday'
- (7) ?? Mi dispiace un sei venuta
to-me am-sorry not are.PRS.IND.2sg come
'I am sorry that you didn't come'

Speakers living in the Pisa area unsurprisingly accept complementizer deletion in (4), which is an instance of CD1, but they also accept (5) and (6), which are both instances of CD2. However, the structure in (7) given by the combination of a non-bridge selecting verb and a realis embedded verb is not completely accepted. Therefore, CD2 with both non-bridge and bridge selecting verbs and both irrealis and realis embedded verbs is not systematic in all Tuscan varieties, but there is actually a certain degree of variation. From the viewpoint of the PCM, this implies that Pc2 is not enough to cover CD2 phenomenon; indeed for speakers from Pisa, it is not the case that all structures with non-bridge verbs admit CD, but only those that have an irrealis embedded verb. Therefore, an additional requirement involving the mood of the embedded verb is needed in order to capture the variations found in this variety. Hence, a new parameter directly following Pc2 can be established:

- (8) *Pc2b*: Is complementizer deletion attested with both irrealis and realis embedded verbs?

Assuming Pc2b, it is possible to distinguish between Florentine that accepts complementizer deletion irrespective of the mood of the embedded verb, thus assigning a positive value to Pc2b and Pisano, where complementizer deletion is contingent on the mood of the embedded verb, hence it receives a negative value for Pc2b. Significantly, from an implicational viewpoint Pc2b is relevant only if Pc2 is positive, meaning that it is necessary to investigate the mood of the embedded verb if and only if it has already been established that the selecting verb can be both a bridge and non-bridge.

Conclusions: This paper offers both an original approach to analysing CD introducing the revealing notion of parametric implications and a new empirical pattern of CD observed in Pisano. The PCM can successfully capture the implications between CD1 and CD2 and between the different realizations of CD in at least two distinct areas of Tuscany.

References

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