Determiner phrase in a language without determiners

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1. Introduction

Recently, it has been argued with reasonable force that nouns are not heads of the phrases traditionally referred to as noun phrases (NPs), such as, "the picture." Instead, the article is taken to be the head of this projection, dubbed determiner phrase or DP (e.g. Szabolcsi (1987), Abney (1987)):

(1)

```
  DP
     \--- D'
         \-
          D   NP
            \-- the
                 \-
                   picture
```

The reasons include, but are not limited to, the following facts: a) articles are heads, and in an optimal model of grammar, every head should project a phrase; b)
there is systematic paralellism between sentences and NPs (cf. (2)), which can best be captured by introducing functional categories into NPs; c) some languages show possessor/possessed agreement in the NP (cf. (3) from Hungarian (Szabolcsi (1987))), clearly indicating a need for a functional head in the NP:

(2) a. [S John builds spaceships]
b. [NP John’s building a spaceship] upset me.

(3) a. az en kalap-om
   the I-NOM hat-1sg
   “my hat”
b. a te kalap-od
   the you-NOM hat-2sg
   “your hat”
c. a Peter kalap-ja
   the hat-3sg
   “Peter’s hat”

Articles seem to be the only category which occupies the head D position, uncontroversially and crosslinguistically. Giusti (1993, 1995) shows that demonstratives and possessives can co-occur with articles in many unrelated languages and concludes that they occupy specifier positions, not head of DP:

(4) ez a haz
   "this the house" (Hungarian)

(5) ika n anak
   "this the boy" (Javanese)

(6) la mia penna
   "the my pen" (Italian)

The following questions arise with respect to languages without articles: do they or do they not project a DP; if not, why is it possible to have arguments not headed by D in such languages, but not in say Italian or English (see Longobardi (1994)); if yes, what kind of evidence do children have in acquiring this category, in the absence of a salient head; or is the category D a universal property, and thus need not be learned from the input?

I look at one such language, a language without articles, Serbian/Croatian (SC). Inspite of the lack of articles, and inspite of the fact that demonstratives and possessives act like adjectives in SC, there is support for the existence of a DP. First of all, SC exhibits noun/pronoun asymmetries which are best captured by placing
pronouns in D positions (cf. Postal (1969) and Longobardi (1994)), and nouns in N position. Next, SC provides morphological evidence for the existence of another functional head above NP, which may be a head of some version of "split D". SC also seems to provide evidence that pronouns are generated in N, and then move to D, in the spirit of Cardinaletti's (1993) proposal, rather than being generated in D directly.

2. Noun/Pronoun contrasts

In SC there are some adjectives that can appear with pronouns, in which case pronouns necessarily precede them, in contrast to nouns, which uniformly follow adjectives: ²

**Accusative:**

(7)  
*I samu Mariju to nervira.
"and alone Mary that irritates"
That irritates even Mary.

(8)  
*?Mariju samu to nervira.

(9)  
*?samu nju/mene to nervira.
"her/me"
That irritates even her/me.

2. It is interesting to note in this respect that reflexives seem to pattern with nouns, rather than with pronouns:

(i)  
*On ne podnosi ni samog sebe.
"he not stands neither alone self-ACC"
He cannot stand even himself.

(ii)  
*?On ne podnosi ni sebe samog. (poetic)

In the literature on reflexives, one usually differentiates two broad types of reflexives, simple and complex, e.g. Chinese *zi*, vs. *ta-zi* ("self" vs. "he-self"). Simple reflexives, on the otherhand, seem to fall into (at least) two distinct types, those situated in D, such as *sich, sig*, etc. (cf. Reinhart and Reuland (1993)), and those situated in N, such as *sebja* in Russian and *sebe* in SC (cf. Gohre and Progovac (1994) for arguments).
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(10) *I nju/mene samu to nervira.

Dative:

(11) Ni samoj Mariji se to ne svidja.
    "neither alone-DAT Mary-Dat self this not appeals"
    This does not appeal even to Mary.

(12) *Ni Mariji samoj se to ne svidja.

(13) *Ni samoj njoj/mini se to ne svidja.
    "neither alone-DAT her/me-DAT self this not appeals"
    This does not appeal even to her/me.

(14) Ni njoj/mini samoj se to ne svidja.

Nominative:

(15) *Ni Marija sama u to ne veruje.
    "neither Mary alone in that not believes"
    Not even Mary believes that.

(16) Ni sama Marija u to ne veruje.

(17) Ni ja sama /ona sama u to ne veruje(m).
    "I she"
    Not even I/she believe(s) that.

(18) Ni *sama ja / ?sama ona u to ne veruje(m).

(19) Mi siti ne verujemo gladnima.
    "we full not believe hungry"
    We full do not believe the hungry.

(20) *Siti mi ne verujemo gladnima.

(21) Siti ljudi ne veruju gladnima.
    People who are full do not believe the ones who are hungry.

(22) *Ljudi siti ne veruju gladnima.
From the data above it seems safe to conclude that pronouns and nouns in SC appear in different surface positions. What are those positions?

Longobardi (1994) discusses similar name/pronoun contrasts in Italian, and concludes that pronouns occupy the determiner position (D) underlyingly, following Postal (1969), whereas nouns are generated in N positions, and may, in some languages, under certain circumstances, raise to D. Significantly, this movement can only take place in the absence of articles, suggesting that D position is involved in the pronoun/noun contrasts in Italian:

(23) La sola Maria si è presentata.
    Only Mary showed up."

(24) *Sola Maria si è presentata.

(25) Maria sola si è presentata.

(26) *La sola lei si è presentata.

(27) Lei sola si è presentata.
    Only she showed up.

(28) *Sola lei si è presentata.

The pronoun/noun asymmetries in Italian take a slightly different form from the ones in SC: while adjectives cannot precede pronouns at all, they can precede nouns, but only if there is an article heading the phrase. If the article is missing, the proper name has to precede the adjective, suggesting that it occupies the same position as the pronoun, namely D. Longobardi suggests that this obligatory raising of a proper noun is driven by the strong referential (R) feature of D in Italian (cf. Chomsky's (1993) minimalist program), as opposed to the weak R feature in Germanic, in which languages the N raising takes place only in LF, in accordance with the Principle Procrastinate. It is reasonable to assume that in Serbian/Croatian the referential feature in D is weak, given that no overt category of articles exists in this language. If true, then N raising will not apply in SC, and the difference between, for example, Italian (25) and SC (8) will be accounted for: adjectives will necessarily precede nouns in SC, but can either precede or follow proper nouns in Italian, depending on the presence vs. absence of articles. On the other hand, if pronouns sit in D in both
languages, no difference in adjective placement with respect to pronouns is expected, as confirmed by the data.

Notice that this account of the SC contrasts, as well as the explanation of the differences between SC and Italian, relies on the existence of a DP even in SC. Since SC has no articles, and since proper names do not raise to D in syntax, the only category that occupies D position at an audible level are pronouns. As for learnability - it seems highly improbable that SC children learn that they have a DP on the basis of the contrasts given above. This is because constructions involving pronouns modified by adjectives are extremely rare. This may mean that the category D is a universal property of UG, and thus need not be salient in the input of any particular language.

3. Pronouns in D: base generation or movement?

Although many would agree that pronouns appear in D positions at S-structure (or pre-spell-out), there is still disagreement with respect to whether they are generated there (cf. Postal (1969), Longobardi (1994)), or move from N to D (e.g. Cardinaletti (1993)). SC seems to support the latter hypothesis for two reasons: pronouns in SC show morphology, not present in nouns, that would be acquired/checked by head movement through the extended projections of NP all the way to D; next, nominative pronouns in non-argument positions are preceded by adjectives, which would follow from an assumption that they stay in N.

Pronouns in SC show more functional morphology than nouns. This is hardly a quirk of SC. English, e.g., still has case marking on pronouns but not on nouns (cf. he/him). In addition, one of Greenberg’s universals claims that a pronoun is more likely to have gender morphology than a noun (cf. Greenberg (1966)):

(29) Greenberg’s universal 43: “If a language has gender categories in the noun, it has gender categories in the pronoun.”

These facts can be explained by the assumption that pronouns move longer way than
nouns, at least before spell-out (i.e. overtly), on their way to a functional projection, thus acquiring/checking their agreement/case/referential features in more projections.

In SC adjectives agree with nouns in gender, number and case (see (30)). Although case markers on adjectives and nouns usually coincide, they do not always, as evident from (33). In case they do not coincide, the agreement on adjectives is heavier, and comprises the nominal agreement. The interesting fact is that pronouns surface with this heavier, adjectival agreement, as shown in (32): *nje-g-a*. Suppose that adjectival agreement is generated in an extended projection of NP, say AgrP (see Cinque (1990, 1992)). If pronouns move to D at S-structure, they will move through the head of this phrase and acquire/check the features of Agr. Nouns, on the other hand, will procrastinate their movement to D until LF, if they move at all, and thus will not show the same agreement overtly.

(30) \[ tv-o-g(a) \; lep-o-g(a) \; brat-a \]

“your-ACC/GEN/Masc/Sg handsome-ACC/GEN/Masc/Sg brother-ACC/GEN/Masc/Sg”

(31)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
DP \\
/ \ \\
\text{tvog}(a) \\
/ \ \\
\text{D'} \\
/ \ \\
\text{AgrP} \\
/ \ \\
\text{lepog}(a) \; \text{Agr'} \\
/ \ \\
\text{Agr} \; \text{g(a)} \\
/ \ \\
\text{t}_{i} \; \text{N'} \\
/ \ \\
\text{brat-a}
\end{array}
\]
(32) nje-ga (him)

(33) below is a complete paradigm comparing the form of adjectival agreement to the form of the pronoun. Clitic pronouns, if any, are given immediately following the full pronoun. It is particularly striking that clitic pronouns actually consist solely of the adjectival agreement in question (thanks to Anna Cardinaletti, p.c., for pointing this out to me), lending further support to the idea that Agr is an extended projection of the NP. Furthermore, this fact is consistent with Cardinaletti’s (1993) claim that weak/clitic pronouns lack some of the structure of DP. It is also interesting to observe that full pronouns cannot refer to inanimate NPs, only clitics can, as indicated with a "*" in the accusative case, which is distinct for animate and inanimate NPs. This is also true of other pronouns, which do not have distinct forms for animante/inanimate distinctions, (cf. Cardinaletti and Starke (1994), who pointed out to this fact in other languages).

(33) Third Person:
Nominative:
lep-∅ čovek-∅ (handsome man)  on-∅ (he)
lep-a žena (pretty woman)  on-a (she)
lep-e žene (pretty women)  on-e (they-F)
lep-i ljudi (handsome men)  on-i (they-M)
### Accusative:

- *lep-og(a) čoveka* -animate: *njega/*ga (cf. Genitive)
- *lep šešir* (Nominative)-inanimate: *njega/*ga (cf. Genitive)
- *lep-u ženu*:
  - *nju lju*-ACC or *je*-GEN
- *lep-e ljud-ežen-e* (Nominative):
  - *njih/ih* (Genitive!)

### Dative:

- *lep-om(u/e) čoveku*:
  - *njemu/mu*
- *lep-aj ženi*:
  - *njoi/jaj*
- *lep-im(a) ljudima/ženama*:
  - *njima/im*

### Genitive:

- *(od) lepe žene*:
  - *nje* (*je*, used only in ACC)
- *(od) lepog(a) čoveka*:
  - *njega*
- *(od) lep-ih ljudižena*:
  - *njih*

### Instrumental:

- *(sa) lepom ženom*:
  - *njom*
- *(sa) lepim čovekom*:
  - *njim*
- *(sa) lepim ljudima/ženama*:
  - *njima*

### Possessive:

- *čovekov kofer/čovekovom koferu-DAT*:
  - *njegov/njegovom*
- *ženin kofer/ženinom koferu-DAT*:
  - *njen/njenom*
  - *(archaic: njezin/njezinom)*

No plural possessive!

- *njihov/njihovom-DAT*
**First person:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ja</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>(Nominative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mene/me</td>
<td>nas/nas</td>
<td>(Accusative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>menl/mi</td>
<td>nama/nam</td>
<td>(Dative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mene</td>
<td>nas</td>
<td>(Genitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mnom</td>
<td>nama</td>
<td>(Instrumental)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moj</td>
<td>nas</td>
<td>(Possessive)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Second person:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ti</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>(Nominative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tebe/te</td>
<td>vas/vas</td>
<td>(Accusative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tebi/ti</td>
<td>vama/vam</td>
<td>(Dative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tebe</td>
<td>vas</td>
<td>(Genitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>todom</td>
<td>vama</td>
<td>(Instrumental)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tvoj</td>
<td>vas</td>
<td>(Possessive)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In other words, the facts that pronouns have more morphology than nouns, and that this morphology coincides with agreement in the extended projection of NP, are best accommodated under the assumption that pronouns move from N to D. In addition, Cardinaletti (1993) points out that pronouns can follow adjectives in Italian if in non-argument positions. This prompted her to conclude that pronouns are actually generated in N, and moved to D only in argument positions. The same argument can be reproduced for SC:

(34) **Jadan**
    “poor-Masc he-NOM”
    Poor him!

(35) **Jadna**
    “poor-Fem I”
    Poor me!

Tentatively, then, I will conclude that pronouns are normally generated in N, but moved to D in argument positions. Things may be more complicated than this (or
perhaps I should say more minimalist than this). Perhaps ambiguous categories such as pronouns can be generated either in D or in N, whichever is less costly. Below I sketch a possibility for SC and leave it for further research to choose between the two alternatives. I can only say at this point that the latter option takes me a step further in analyzing the SC data.

Given the conclusion that pronouns are uniformly generated in N, one may wonder what it is that drives the movement of pronouns. If pronouns do not move in order to satisfy their own special features, say referential features, then they do not satisfy Greed. If they do, then we would not expect to have pronouns in non-argument positions such as (34 and 35) above, but we do. We would also not expect to have languages in which pronouns co-occur with articles, but we do (cf. Giusti (1995)). Furthermore, if argument positions just require the D position to be filled, it is not clear why nouns would not do the job just the same, thus obliterating the differences between nouns and pronouns. The intuition seems to be, somehow, that pronouns are associated with D, much more tightly than by movement alone. Suppose that pronouns are either generated in D, or in N, whichever is less costly.

The data dealing with SC pronouns seem to bear on the issue. Nominative case differs systematically from oblique cases in that it does not contain the j/i piece (see (33)). In section 4. below I argue that the definite i, which surfaces on adjectives, is a head of the functional projection above NP. Since pronouns are definite, it is reasonable to assume that j is actually just a phonological variant of i. If true, then it may be possible to argue that nominative is generated in D directly, whereas oblique case undergoes movement from N to D. I will return to this question in the following section, after introducing the definite i marker.

4. The definite "i" phrase

In SC the so-called "definite aspect" is marked on adjectives, and often corresponds
to the use of definite articles in English. This marking is segmentally realized with masculine nouns in the nominative case, taking the form of suffix. In other cases, it can be marked by a shift in accent (cf. Leko (1986) for a more detailed discussion and an analysis in terms of different X' placement of the two types of adjectives):

(36) *Nedostaje mi plavi kaput.*
    *misses to-me blue-DEF coat’*
    I am missing the blue coat.

(37) *Nedostaje mi plav kaput.*
    I am missing/I need a blue coat.

(38) *Mudri čovek to ne bi uradio.*
    *wise man that not would done’*
    The/that wise man would not have done that.

(39) *Mudar čovek to ne be uradio.*
    A wise man would not have done this.

Predicate positions only license the short form:

(40) *Ovaj kaput je plavi/*plavi.*
    This coat is blue.

Vocatives, on the other hand, only take the long form, being an exception to the

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3. Definite marking on adjectives was also possible in Old English (thanks to Martha Ratliff for pointing this out to me). The examples below, illustrating weak and strong declension respectively, are from Pyles and Algeo (1993):

(i) *se dola cyning*
    that foolish king

(ii) *dol cyning*
    a foolish king (without demonstratives)

It is the weak declension, then, that corresponds to the definite aspect in SC, since the strong declension cannot appear with demonstratives, while the SC definite aspect appears with demonstratives most naturally.
general rule that the definite aspect in SC is translated using *the* in English: 4

(41) *Tučni / *tučan čoveče, pridji bliže.
    “sad man come closer”

(42) (*The) Sad man, come closer.

Definite adjectival forms appear most naturally following possessives or demonstratives, and with some adjectives the short form results in ungrammaticality, as (43-44) illustrate (see also footnote 2). This is reminiscent of Comp/Infl selection at the sentential level, namely the selection of *to* by *for* or a finite Infl by *that*. If so, then embedding the definite phrase under DP seems a natural step (cf. (45)).

(43) *Tvoj dragi prijatelj je upravo uhapšen.
    Your dear friend has just been arrested. 5

(44) *Tvoj drag prijatelj je upravo uhapšen.

4. Compounds are another exception to the rule. They necessarily take the long adjectival form, the short form resulting in the literal meaning of the adjective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Slovenian</th>
<th>Slovenian Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blind mouse</td>
<td>*slep miš / slep miš</td>
<td>(“bat”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white onion</td>
<td>*beli luk / beo luk</td>
<td>(“garlic”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is also surprising for another reason - compounds in English do not readily take inflectional morphology, cf: billiard-table vs. ??billiards-table.

5. The (ironic) interpretation (43) receives is the following: ((to you dear) friend), and is not interpreted as “*your friend, who is dear*.”
Curiously, although possessives take other adjectival suffixes (e.g. tvojih / plavih (GEN), tvojima/plavima-DAT, etc.), they appear not to take the definite i (*tvoji/plavi kaput). On the assumption that possessives raise from the specifier of NP, being arguments of N (see (45)), they would also presumably move head-to-head through the Def position.

It may be that the definite suffix is already an integral part of possessives and demonstratives, given that they are inherently definite, which is phonologically realized as j in both. The possessive forms for masculine gender, nominative, are illustrated in (46), and the demonstrative paradigm for masculine gender, nominative, is given in (47) below:

(46) 1 moj (my) 2 tvoj (your) 3 njeg-ov (his) / Milan-ov (Milan’s)
      naš (our) vaš (your) njih-ov (their)

(47) ovaj (this-M) taj (this/that-M) onaj-M (that)
Possessive pronouns in the third person are formed by adding the typical nominal possessive suffix to the genitive form of the pronoun. As I am going to argue later, the pronominal forms may also contain the inherent marking for definiteness, in which case j in the third person paradigm can be seen as a phonological variant of the definite morpheme. This move would make even more sense in the case of demonstratives (47) and first and second person singular of possessives (46), which all end in j. Naš and vaš in (46) can also be analysed as genitive followed by j, which palatalizes the preceding sound. This kind of phonological rule, callediotation, is common in Slavic (see e.g. Carlton (1990)), and has the effect of j palatalizing the preceding consonant and then deleting, predicting exactly the forms in (48):

(48) nas-GEN + j = naš; \hspace{1cm} vas-GEN + j = vaš

It would make sense to think of pronouns, demonstratives and possessives as being inherently definite (none of them can, for example, appear with articles in English). And if this is the correct assumption, it would be too much of a coincidence that exactly these forms have the morpheme which otherwise appears on definite adjectives.

5. Back to pronouns

From there, it remains to examine the paradigm of pronouns in more detail. I concentrate on the third person since it has both feminine and masculine forms, and involves no suppletive forms. I repeat the part of the relevant paradigm in (49) below:

(49) \hspace{1cm} \textit{Third Person}:

\textbf{Nominative}:
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{on-}Φ \hspace{1em} (he)
\item \textit{on-}a \hspace{1em} (she)
\item \textit{on-}e \hspace{1em} (they-F)
\item \textit{on-}i \hspace{1em} (they-M)
\end{itemize}
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Accusative:
njega/ga (cf. Genitive)
*njega/ga (cf. Genitive)
nju/ju
njih/ih (Genitive!)

Dative:
njemu/mu
njoj/joj
njima/im

Genitive:
nje
njega
njih

Instrumental:
njom
njim
njima

It is interesting to note that all the forms expect Nominative have the definite piece j in them. What nominative shares with other forms is just the "n" part, the piece that also surfaces on the demonstrative onaj, another fact that cannot be just disregarded as coincidence. Suppose that "n" is the epitome of third person features in SC. Suppose, next, that Nominative is a default case in SC, given that it has no case endings, and given that it is the case of NPs used in isolation, as well as the case that surfaces on NP's in non-argument positions, such as (35) repeated below as (50):

(50) Jadan on!
    "poor-Masc he-NOM"
    Poor him!

Suppose then that nominative pronouns, having no case features to check, can be
generated in D, unlike other pronouns. Nominative form will be assigned by default, as well as the definite feature, possibly by association to D. The idea is that base generation in D will be less costly than generation in N, and then subsequent movement to D, thus ruling out the latter option by Economy. In the case of (50), on the other hand, if D in non-argument positions is not necessarily realized (cf. Longobardi (1994)), there will be no movement to D, and thus generating the pronoun in N would be the least costly option, since it involves the least elaborate structure. The vowel can be analyzed as a morpheme of support, à la Cardinaletti (1993).

In sum, if indeed oblique pronominal forms (at least in third person) all contain the definite morpheme \textit{i/j}, then \textit{njega} (him) can be represented as in (51) below. Movement from N to D would check the relevant features of the pronoun:

\begin{center}
(51)
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\node (DP) at (0,0) {DP};
\node (D) at (-2,-2) {D};
\node (DefP) at (-4,-4) {DefP};
\node (i/j) at (-6,-6) {i/j};
\node (AgrP) at (-8,-8) {Agr\textsuperscript{P}};
\node (Agr\textsuperscript{r}) at (-10,-10) {Agr\textsuperscript{r}};
\node (g(a)) at (-12,-12) {g(a)};
\node (NP) at (-14,-14) {NP};
\node (njega) at (-16,-16) {njega};
\draw (DP) -- (D);
\draw (D) -- (DefP);
\draw (DefP) -- (i/j);
\draw (i/j) -- (AgrP);
\draw (Agr\textsuperscript{P}) -- (Agr\textsuperscript{r}));
\draw (Agr\textsuperscript{r}) -- (g(a));
\draw (g(a)) -- (NP);
\draw (NP) -- (njega);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

On the other hand, a nominative pronoun will undergo no movement, and will be directly generated in D in argument positions:
6. **Pro as a zero clitic?**

If the conclusion above is on the right track, then it explains two things: first, that nominative pronouns lack a definite marker, and, second, that they do not have clitic counterparts. Recall that clitics take the shape of adjectival agreement, situated in Agr above. Since nominative pronouns never move through Agr, they will not have an overt clitic form. Alternatively, on the other hand, one may say that subject *pro-drop* in SC is nothing else but a realization of the null adjectival Agr in the nominative phrase. Note that *pro-drop* and clitics are basically used under similar circumstances. While full/strong pronouns are used for emphasis/contrast, or when coordinated, clitic/weak pronouns, as well as *pro-drop*, are used elsewhere (cf. Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) for a detailed discussion of the distinction between full and weak pronouns).

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6. SC places clitics in the clausal second position.
Emphasis/Contrast:

(53)  
Ja ga poštujem.  
“I him-clitic respect-1sg”  
I respect him.

(54)  
Ja poštujem njega.  
“I respect-1sg him”  
I respect HIM. (not some other person around, or another person mentioned before, etc.)

(55)  
Milan želi da pro dodje.  
“Milan wants that 'pro' comes”

(56)  
Milan želi da ON dodje.  
Milan wants that HE comes, not somebody else.

Coordination:

(57)  
*Ja jelju i ga poštujem. / *Ja poštujem ga i jelju.  
“I her-Cl and him-Cl respect”

(58)  
Ja poštujem nju i njega.

(59)  
*Milan želi da pro i ona budu prijatelji.  
Milan wants himself and her to be friends.

(60)  
Milan želi da on i ona budu prijatelji.

The above illustrate that neither pro nor clitics can be used for contrast/emphasis or in coordinated structures. The assumption that pro is just an empty clitic would complete the clitic paradigm in SC (33), and would trivially capture the similarities between clitics and pro.

On the other hand, it would raise a host of cross-linguistic questions, such as, should subject drop necessarily co-exist with overt oblique clitics in any particular language; why is pro-drop more likely to happen in nominative positions; why do
some languages have object drop; should languages with subject clitics not be allowed the option of *pro-drop* as well, etc.

I can only speculate here that subject drop need not coincide with the existence of overt clitics for oblique cases. For example, one can envision a language with null adjectival/case agreement in both nominative and oblique cases, in which situation the "clitic" forms would be null both for objects and subjects. Chinese may be a language of that kind (cf. Huang (1989) for data and an analysis).

French has subject clitics, but not *pro-drop* (see Kayne (1975)), which would be consistent with the expectation that clitics and *pro-drop* do not co-occur for the same case. On the other hand, if Cardinaletti and Starke (1994) are correct in claiming that there is a tripartite division of pronouns, clitic, weak, and strong, it may still be possible to find languages with strong/weak/pro options in the subject position, where the weak pronoun would be (mis)analysed as a clitic, in the absence of a "weaker" overt form.

Nominative *pro-drop* would be more likely than object drop, since nominative is more likely to be realized as a zero morpheme, which is necessary for *pro-drop* (cf. *he/him* in English, *on/hjega* in SC). This, of course, immediately raises the question of why English is not a subject drop language. Perhaps zero morphological marking is a necessary, but not yet sufficient condition for *pro* licensing. I will have to leave it for future research to see if this idea is plausible at all, and if yes, what other conditions are involved.
References


