

## AT LEAST TWO *SI*'S\*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Indefinite subject sentences in Italian usually employ the clitic *si*.<sup>1</sup> This clitic is phonetically identical to the third person reflexive clitic. Because of the phonetic identity of these two clitics, linguists have often questioned whether the two *si*'s are best analyzed as identical or distinct.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I present a list of syntactic and semantic facts which distinguish between the two clitics, concluding that the indefinite subject *si* and reflexive *si* are not identical syntactically or semantically, but rather that their only common point in a synchronic<sup>3</sup> grammar of Italian is their phonetic shape. Furthermore, I show that indefinite subject *si* is transformationally inserted when a Pro or first person plural subject is present.

Included among indefinite subject sentences are examples of the following type:

- (1) *Si mangia bene qua.*  
'One eats well here.'
- (2) *Si guarda le donne la domenica.*  
'One watches women on Sunday.'
- (3) *Si guardano le donne la domenica.*  
'One watches women on Sunday.'
- (4) *Le donne si guardano la domenica.*<sup>4</sup>  
'One watches women on Sunday.'
- (5) *Ci si sveglia troppo presto in campagna.*<sup>5</sup>  
'One wakes up too early in the country.'
- (6) *Si deve far sacrifici quando si è medici.*  
'One has to make sacrifices when one is a doctor.'

and the embedded sentences in:

- (7) Bisogna essere accorti.  
'It's necessary to be careful.'
- (8) Quel film fa piangere.  
'That film makes people cry.'

In specific, I assume that (2), (3), and (4) are syntactically related and that the *ci si* of (5) is in a reflexive indefinite subject sentence. These assumptions are justified in Napoli (1973) and will not be justified here.

## 2. FACTS

Listed below are distinguishing factors of indefinite subject sentences and reflexive sentences. Among the examples of reflexive sentence I include first person singular examples as well as third person examples to illustrate the fact that these factors are typical of the whole reflexive clitic paradigm and not just of the third person.

### 2.1 *With Direct Object*

When there is a direct (ie, accusative) object, many predicates can appear with reflexive clitics, thus expressing a particular sense of intimacy or intensity on the part of the subject.<sup>6</sup>

- (9)a Mi guardo Pia allo specchio.  
'I'm looking at Pia in the mirror.'

These same predicates can appear without the reflexive clitic with a reading very similar to that of the sentence with the clitic but without this special sense of intimacy or intensity:

- (9)b Guardo Pia allo specchio.  
For the third person consider:

- (10)a Carlo si guarda Pia allo specchio.  
'Carlo looks at Pia in the mirror.'

versus:

- (10)b Carlo guarda Pia allo specchio.

No such sense of intimacy or intensity is observed with these same predicates with indefinite *si*:

- (11)a Si guarda Pia allo specchio.  
'One looks at Pia in the mirror.'

And if *si* does not appear, the sentence has a completely different reading:

- (11)b Guarda Pia allo specchio.  
'He/she/it is looking at Pia in the mirror.'

### 2.2 *With Indirect Object*

When there is an indirect (ie, dative) object, many predicates cannot appear with reflexive clitics:

- (12)a \*Mi darò un bel regalo ai ragazzi.

versus:

- (12)b Darò un bel regalo ai ragazzi.

'I'll give a nice gift to the children.'

and

- (13)a \*Carlo si darà un bel regalo ai ragazzi.

versus

- (13)b Carlo darà un bel regalo ai ragazzi.

'Carlo will give a nice gift to the children.'

No such restriction is observed with these same predicates with indefinite *si*:

- (14) Si darà un bel regalo ai ragazzi.

'One will give a nice gift to the children.'

### 2.3 *With Intransitive Verbs*

Many intransitive verbs cannot appear with reflexive clitics:

- (15)a \*Mi cado facilmente.

versus

- (15)b Cado facilmente.

'I fall easily.'

- (16)a \*Carlo si cade facilmente.

versus

- (16)b Carlo cade facilmente.

'Carlo falls easily.'

No such restriction is observed with these same verbs with indefinite *si*:

- (17) *Si cade facilmente.*  
'One falls easily.'

#### 2.4 *With Parts of the Body*

Certain verbs cannot appear with reflexive clitics when the direct object is a part of the body of the subject<sup>7</sup>:

- (18)a \**Mi alzo la mano per giurare.*

versus

- (18)b *Alzo la mano per giurare.*  
'I raise my hand to swear.'

- (19)a \**Carlo si alza la mano per giurare.*

- b *Carlo alza la mano per giurare.*  
'Carlo raises his hand to swear.'

No such restriction is observed with these same verbs with indefinite *si*:

- (20) *Si alza la mano per giurare in tribunale.*  
'One raises his hand to swear in court.'

#### 2.5 *With Peculiarities of Particular Predicates*

Reflexive clitics cannot appear with certain predicates, among them *aver* 'have' in any of its uses as a main verb:

- (21)a \**Mi ho { un libro, paura di Giorgio. } { cinque anni. }*

versus

- (21)b *Ho { un libro, paura di Giorgio. } { cinque anni. }*  
'I have a book.'  
'I'm afraid of George.'  
'I'm five years old.'

- (22)a

\**Sara si ha { un libro, paura di Giorgio. } { cinque anni. }*

b

*Sara ha { un libro, paura di Giorgio. } { cinque anni. }*

'Sara has a book.'

'Sara is afraid of George.'

'Sara is five years old.'

No such restriction is observed with these same predicates with indefinite *si*:

- (23)

*Si ha { un libro, paura di Giorgio. } { cinque anni. }*

'One has a book.'

'One is afraid of George.'

'One is five years old.'

#### 2.6 *Passive Voice*

Reflexive clitics cannot appear with passive verbs:

- (24)a \**Mi sono giudicata dal prete.*

versus

- (24)b *Sono giudicata dal prete.*  
'I'm judged by the priest.'

- (25)a \**Carlo si è giudicato dal prete.*

b

*Carlo è giudicato dal prete.*  
'Carlo is judged by the priest.'

No such restriction is observed with indefinite *si*:

- (26) *Si è giudicati dal prete.*

'One is judged by the priest.'

#### 2.7 *Clitic Order*

Accusative clitics follow reflexive clitics:

- (27) Me la compro.  
ref. acc.  
'I'm buying it for myself.'
- (28) Se la compro.  
ref. acc.  
'He/she is buying it for himself/herself.'

Accusative clitics precede indefinite *si*:

- (29) Lo si dice.  
'People say that.'
- (30) Il sale, lo si compra dal tabaccaio.  
'Salt, one buys it at the tobacco shop.'

### 2.8 Number Agreement of Finite Verb

With reflexive clitics finite<sup>8</sup> verbs agree in number with their subject, not their direct object:

- (31)a (Io) mi compro le mele.  
sing. sing. plural  
'I buy myself apples.'

and not

- (31)b \*(Io) mi compriamo le mele.  
sing. plural plural  
'Dario si compra le mele.'

- (32)a Dario si compra le mele.  
sing. sing. plural  
'Dario buys himself apples.'
- b \*Dario si comprano le mele.  
sing. plural plural

With indefinite *si* finite verbs optionally agree in number with full NP direct objects<sup>9</sup>:

- (33)a Si compra le mele qui.  
sing. plural  
b Si comprano le mele qui.  
plural plural  
'One buys apples here.'

And in many varieties of Italian the verb in indefinite *si* sentences (almost) obligatorily agrees in number with partitive objects replaced by the clitic

*ne*. Thus in (34) *leggono* (plural) is strongly preferred to *legge* (sing.) for many speakers, while for others *legge* is preferred, and for still others both choices are equally acceptable.

- (34) Maria: Nessuno legge giornali giapponesi in Italia.  
Dario: Ma shagii; eccome che se ne leggono/legge.  
'No one reads Japanese newspapers in Italy.'  
'But you're wrong; certainly one reads them.'

### 2.9 Human Subjects

Reflexive clitics can appear with predicates that exclude human subjects<sup>10</sup>:

- (35)a Gli uccelli si nettano le piume.  
'The birds are preening themselves.'

Indefinite *si* never appears with such predicates<sup>11</sup>:

- (35)b \*Ci si netta/nettano le piume.  
sing. plural  
'One preens ones feathers.'

Note that this exclusion involves surface subjects only. Thus *pungere* 'to sting' in its literal meaning excludes human subjects in deep structure. However, the surface subject of such a verb may be human in a passive sentence:

- (36)a Sono stato punto dall'ape.  
'I've been stung by the bee.'

Likewise, indefinite *si* can appear with *pungere* in a passive sentence:

- (36)b Nell'apiario se non si fa attenzione, si è punti subito.  
'In the apiary if one doesn't pay attention, one is stung immediately.'

### 2.10 Subject Pronouns

Reflexive clitics can appear in the same clause as a nominative pronoun and that nominative pronoun must have the same person and number as the reflexive pronoun:

(37) Io mi pento di questo.

'I repent this.'

(38) Lui si pente di questo.

'He repents this.'

Indefinite *si* cannot appear with nominative pronouns other than *noi* 'we':

(39)a \*Io si va?

b \*Tu si va?

c \*Lui/Lei si va?

d \*Voi si va?

e \*Loro si va?

versus

(39)f Noi si va?

'Shall we go?'

The *noi si* combination is found only with indefinite *si*, never with reflexive *si*:

(40)a \*Noi si pente di questo.

versus

(40)b Noi ci si pente di questo.

'We repent this.'

### 2.11 Clitic Climbing

There is a rule of Clitic Climbing in Italian which moves<sup>12</sup> *lo* from the embedded verb in (a) to the matrix verb in (b) below<sup>13</sup>:

(41)a Imparo a leggerlo.

b L'imparo a leggere.

'I'm learning to read it.'

(42)a Pia imparo a leggerlo.

b Pia l'impara a leggere

'Pia is learning to read it.'

Clitic Climbing cannot move reflexive clitics for many speakers of Italian in sentences like the following<sup>14</sup>:

(43)a Imparo a dominarmi.

b \*Mi imparo a dominare.

'I'm learning to master (ie. express) myself.'

(44)a Pia imparo a dominarsi.

b \*Pia si imparo a dominare.

'Pia's learning to master herself.'

Thus reflexive *si* is never found cliticized to a finite form of *imparare* when followed by *a* plus an infinitive for these speakers.

Indefinite *si*, however, can so appear:

(45)a. Si imparo a dominare.

'One learns to dominate.'

and never:

(45)b \*Impara a dominarsi.

unless (45b) is read as having its surface subject deleted<sup>15</sup>, in which case it is not a variation on (45a).

### 3. EXPLANATIONS OF THE FACTS IN SECTION 2

The list of syntactic and semantic differences between reflexive clitics and indefinite *si* given in Section 2 above is not exhaustive in any sense, but it is representative of the kinds of facts one must look to in trying to determine the source of indefinite *si*. Let us now go through that list, examining the problems that arise if we say that indefinite *si* and reflexive *si* both arise by way of reflexivization.

#### 3.1 With Direct Object

In (9) and (10) the role of direct object is filled with a nonreflexive NP. The reflexive clitic in these sentences functions as a 'colloquial' dative of interest (see footnote 6) giving the sentence its tone of emotional intensity. If this clitic does not appear, we still have a fully grammatical sentence but one that is 'uncolored' emotionally (as in (9b) and (10b)). In (11a), however, indefinite *si* appears. If this *si* arose by way of reflexivization, then at the time the rule Reflexive applies, there must be two 'identical' (for the purposes of the specific rule Reflexive) NP's present. One of these coreferential, or identical, NP's must be either a dative or an accusative, since the particular predicate in (11) lacks a prepositional phrase. But, surely, if one of the coreferential NP were a dative, the only possible candidate for the dative in (11a) would be *si*. Yet *si* in

(11a) cannot be a dative, since if it were, it would be a dative of interest, identical to the *si* of (10a). But (11a) lacks the special reading of intensity attached to sentences with such datives. Furthermore, if *si* is not present, the S has a very different reading (as in (11b)), while with the dative of interest, the sentences with and without it are still very close in meaning (compare (9a) to (9b) and (10a) to (10b)). Thus (11a) does not involve coreference with a dative NP.

The alternative is that the coreference in (11a) involves an accusative NP. But any explanation of (11a) involving two identical NPs (and thus involving the rule Reflexive) of which one is an accusative is inadequate because of sentences such as:

(46) In Italia *si* considererebbe te ricca.

'In Italy one would consider you rich.'

The direct object NP here, *te*, is second person. Thus if Reflexive had operated, we would have expected that the NP coreferential with *te* would also be second person, yielding some ungrammatical sentence such as:

(47) \*In Italia ti consideresti/considererebbe te ricca.

Since we would wish to generate the indefinite *si* of (11a) and that of (46) in the same manner, Reflexive cannot have applied to (11a).

Thus indefinite *si* in (11a) does not arise by way of reflexivization involving a dative object. Furthermore, indefinite *si* in any sentence can not arise by way of reflexivization involving a direct object (as (46) shows). Rather, I propose that *si* is a marker on the verb telling us that the subject of this sentence is a special indefinite subject whose features are distinct from those of other subjects.<sup>17, 18</sup> With this explanation we need not propose any special way to have Reflexive apply to (11a), where no two coreferential NPs are present, but to (9) and (10) only if two coreferential NPs are present. That is because Reflexive does not apply to (11a) at all.

### 3.2 With Indirect Object

Again a serious problem with saying that the *si* of (14) arises by way of Reflexive is found in sentences involving nonthird person dative objects, such as:

(48) Si darà un bel regalo a voi altri.

'One will give a nice gift to you.'

We have already seen in 3.1 above that indefinite *si* cannot arise by way of reflexivization involving direct objects. Now we see that the *si* of (48) cannot be the result of reflexivization involving the indirect object, since *voi altri* is second person plural and if there were another NP coreferential with it in the sentence we would expect it, also, to be second person plural. But the second person plural clitic is *vi*, not *si*. Thus indefinite *si* does not arise by way of reflexivization involving indirect objects in (14) or in any other sentence. Once more the explanation that *si* is a marker on the verb for the indefinite subject accounts for the facts without requiring any ad hoc way of making Reflexive apply to (14) but not to (12a) and (13a).

### 3.3 With Intransitive Verbs

Reflexive clitics do not appear in (15a) and (16a) because, except for a handful of exceptions,<sup>19</sup> reflexive clitics do not appear with intransitive verbs. This is precisely because reflexive clitics play an object role in the sentence and intransitive verbs usually do not have an object, except, perhaps, a prepositional one. In (15a) and (16a) there is no preposition for which the reflexive clitic could serve as an object. Thus these sentences preclude reflexive clitics. Indefinite *si*, however, is fine with intransitive verbs, even though any attempt to derive the *si* in a sentence such as (17) by way of reflexivization would run into not only the problem of which object role *si* plays, but also which NP it is identical with for the purposes of Reflexive. Again if *si* is a verbal marker of the indefinite subject, the facts in 2.3 are accounted for.

### 3.4 With Parts of the Body

#### 3.5 With Peculiarities of Particular Predicates

#### 3.6 Passive Voice

In Sections 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 we find restrictions on the appearance of reflexive clitics which are very difficult to explain. Why reflexives do not appear with *alzare la mano*, as in (18) and (19), but do appear with *rompere la gamba*,<sup>20</sup> as in

(49)a Mi sono rotto una gamba.

'I broke a leg.'

b Carlo si è rotto una gamba.

'Carlo broke a leg.'

is not at all obvious. Likewise, the fact that *avere*, in any of its uses as a main verb, does not allow reflexive clitics is a difficult fact to explain. And, finally, the fact that reflexives do not appear with the passive voice still awaits a satisfactory explanation, since proposals such as cross-over constraints (Postal 1971) have been called into question (Postal 1972, among others). And even if some such sort of cross-over constraint is involved, probably the constraint is limited to very specific environments.

In any case, whatever mechanisms are needed to account for the exclusion of reflexive clitics in Sections 2.4 through 2.6, we know that they are difficult to describe. If we add the restriction<sup>21</sup> that these constraints against the appearance of reflexive clitics do not apply if the reflexive clitic is indefinite *si*, not only are we complicating further these constraints which we do not understand, but we also are losing sight of the significant generalization that, although all three sets of facts are very different and call for very different constraints, indefinite *si* is an exception to all. If, instead, indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic, we need not list it as an exception. The constraints simply do not apply to indefinite *si*.

### 3.7 Clitic Order

The literature on clitic order in the Romance languages which tries to give reasons for particular orderings is overwhelming (Szabo 1974, Wanner 1974, Dimssen 1972, among many others) and uniformly inconclusive. As far as I can see, there is no intrinsic reason why clitics should have to come in one order and not another. Rather, surface structure constraints like those developed in Perlmutter (1970) seem to best account for such facts.<sup>22</sup> Thus accusative clitics follow reflexive clitics in Italian, regardless of other syntactic and semantic aspects of any given sentence. If indefinite *si* is a reflexive clitic we need to say that accusative clitics follow reflexive clitics except for the reflexive clitic indefinite *si*, which they precede.<sup>23</sup> This exception on the ordering statement is a global device since it requires us to keep track of the fact that indefinite *si* arises from a deep structure distinct from any deep structure yielding reflexive *si* even after Reflexive has applied. But after the application of Reflexive all clitic *si*'s generated by it should be indistinguishable syntactically. Since such global devices are a powerful addition to grammars and since their existence is not well supported (except, perhaps, for agree-

ment phenomena, as discussed in Andrews 1971, Andrews 1973, and Napoli 1975, among others), this exception to the clitic ordering statement is very dubious. If, instead, indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic, then we can maintain the simple statement that accusative clitics follow reflexive clitics and add the statement that accusative clitics precede indefinite *si*, which is distinct from all other clitics.

### 3.8 Number Agreement of Finite Verb

Number agreement of verbs must be a late rule, after all cyclic rules have applied, because of the fact that we do not find it on verbs whose subjects have been removed by deletion or raising.<sup>24, 25</sup> In 2.8 we find that number agreement behaves differently in the presence of reflexive clitics than in the presence of indefinite *si*. Given that Reflexive is a cyclic rule in Italian,<sup>26</sup> if indefinite *si* were the result of Reflexive, we would expect the reflexive clitic indefinite *si* and the regular reflexive clitic reflexive *si* to be treated identically by the late rule of Number Agreement. Since the two *si*'s are treated differently by this rule, in order to maintain the proposal that indefinite *si* is generated by Reflexive, we must have a global condition on the number agreement rule which allows it to look back to some stage before Reflexive to see the distinction between the sources for the two *si*'s. As we argued in 3.7 above, global solutions of this sort are to be avoided if possible. If, instead, indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic, then no such problem arises. The number agreement rule can treat indefinite *si* sentences in a distinct way from other sentences since indefinite *si* is distinct from all other clitics.

### 3.9 Human Subjects

The fact that indefinite *si* appears only with predicates that allow a human surface subject can be handled by either analysis. If indefinite *si* arises by way of Reflexive, then we can explain the fact that with predicates excluding human surface subjects we never understand a clitic *si* as an indefinite subject because of a semantic interpretation rule which operates on the surface structure (to pick out *si* and the predicate which excludes human subjects) and looks at the deep structure (to note the origin of the *si*), as well. If indefinite *si* does not arise by way of Reflexive, we need no such interpretive rule. Indefinite *si* simply does not insert with such predicates, since their surface subject is not Pro or *noi*. Thus the analysis

which says that indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic can account for the semantic nature of the predicates it appears with in a more simple way, and thus, in a preferable way.

### 3.10 Subject Pronouns

If indefinite *si* is a reflexive clitic, the fact that it cannot appear with nominative pronouns other than *noi* is a mystery. Why is *noi*, the first person plural pronoun, the permissible nominative pronoun when the reflexive clitic *si* is third person, not first? If indefinite *si* is a verbal marker, however, the exclusion of nominative pronouns other than *noi* is due to the fact that the surface subject in an indefinite *si* sentence is either first person plural (which can appear with or without *si*) or a pro-form, call it Pro, which is [+human] and third person plural indefinite, generic, or specific<sup>27</sup> (which must appear with *si*). The rule of *Si* Insertion cliticizes *si* to the verb optionally if the subject is first person plural and obligatorily if the subject is Pro. The first person plural subject if it is pronominal, is then spelled out as *noi* (which, like other nominative pronouns, may undergo Subject Pronoun Drop). The third person subject, Pro, however, is not spelled out at all, since Italian has no nominative pronoun with exactly the features of Pro.<sup>28</sup> Thus (50) and (51) are transformationally related<sup>29</sup>:

(50) (Noi) non facciamo così.

(51) Noi non si fa così.

'We don't act like that.'

In (50) *Si* Insertion has not applied; in (51), it has.<sup>30</sup>

### 3.11 Clitic Climbing

If indefinite *si* is a reflexive clitic, then the fact that it appears with *imparare* followed by *a* plus an infinitive, as in (45a), means either that the reflexive clitic indefinite *si* is an exception to the restriction against reflexive clitics climbing here (regardless of what kind of restriction that may be) or that the reflexive clitic indefinite *si* has not climbed in (45a), but rather originated in the matrix sentence. The first possibility would require a global exception on clitic climbing, like the global devices described in 3.7 and 3.8 above. The second possibility leaves us at a loss

in trying to find which NP the NP underlying *si* could possibly have been identical to for the purposes of Reflexive. There is no such NP available in (45a) as far as I can see. If indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic, but rather a verbal marker, however, then it can appear in (45a) because it is inserted into the matrix sentence, whose subject is Pro or first person plural. It has not climbed up from the lower sentence.

## 4. ANALYSIS

We saw in Section 3 that all the facts listed in Section 2 are easily explained if indefinite *si* is a verbal marker inserted transformationally on verbs whose subject is Pro or *noi*, but very difficult to explain if indefinite *si* is the result of Reflexive. Let us now consider what type of rule *Si* Insertion must be.

I propose that *Si* Insertion is a postcyclic rule which precedes number and person agreement of the verb. To see that *Si* Insertion cannot be precyclic, consider (52):

(52) *Si* vuole andare.

'One wants to go.'

Here Equi has applied to delete the subject of *andare* under identity with the subject of *volare*. If *Si* Insertion were precyclic, then Equi would have to be written so as to delete not only subjects but also the verbal marker *si* under identity with the matrix verbal marker *si*. This is a significant complication of the rule.

Likewise, if *Si* Insertion were precyclic, we would have difficulty explaining the nonappearance of *si* under the causative *fare*, as in

(53) *Ha fatto cantare.*

'He made people sing.'

An ad hoc rule which wipes out indefinite *si* under *fare* would be needed. (53) also provides us with an argument against the cyclic application of *Si* Insertion. If *si* were inserted cyclically, then its nonappearance in (53) would again require an ad hoc rule to wipe out this clitic.

If, instead, *Si* Insertion is postcyclic, we see that Equi<sup>31</sup> can apply as usual to subjects and only after Equi has applied will *si* be cliticized to *volare* in (52). Likewise (53) is no problem if *Si* Insertion is postcyclic. The rule which moves the verb of the sentence embedded under *fare*, call it *Fare* Attraction, applies cyclically.<sup>32</sup> This rule also takes the



embedded subject and puts it into an object role. Thus in (54) we see the embedded subject as accusative object, dative object, and prepositional object of the higher verb:

- (54) a Ho fatto cantare Gianni.  
 'I made Johnny sing.'  
 b Ho fatto cantare l'innno a Gianni.  
 'I made Johnny sing the hymn.'  
 c Ho fatto cantare l'innno a Maria da Gianni.  
 'I made Johnny sing the hymn to Maria.'

Once *Fare* Attraction has applied to (53), the embedded subject becomes an accusative object of the higher verb *fare*. Then in the postcycle *Si* Insertion will not apply since *si* is criticized only to verbs whose subject is *Pro* or *noi*. In (53) after *Fare* Attraction the verb *cantare* has no subject, so thus *Si* Insertion cannot apply here. Note that in (53) no trace of the underlying *Pro* subject of *cantare* appears, since *Pro* is never realized phonetically.

## 5. PROBLEMS

Undoubtedly many problems and questions remain with the analysis proposed here. An already well attacked problem is that of number agreement on the verb (Napoli 1973, Comrie 1975, among others). Two other very important ones come immediately to mind. One involves the choice of auxiliary; the other involves impersonal verbs such as *bisognare*.

The past tense auxiliaries in Italian are *avere* and *essere*. All transitive verbs take *avere*, as do many intransitives. Other intransitives take *essere*. However, if the verb has a reflexive clitic, the auxiliary is always *essere*. Thus *comprare* in (55) has *avere*, but in

- (56) with the reflexive clitic it has *essere*.  
 (55) Ho comprato un cappello.  
 'I bought a hat.'  
 (56) Mi sono comprata un cappello.  
 'I bought myself a hat.'

With indefinite *si* the auxiliary *essere* is accepted by all Italians while only some accept *avere*, and then with apologies. Thus (57) is the usual form and (58) is much less frequently found, if at all:

- (57) Si è pianto.

- (58) Si ha pianto.  
 'One cried.'

An immediate question, then, is why indefinite *si* calls for *essere*. If indefinite *si* is a reflexive clitic, then the preference for *essere* in (57) follows. However, for the reasons given in Section 3 and many others, I claim that indefinite *si* is not a reflexive clitic. Thus, I must complicate the auxiliary switch rule by stating that not only verbs with reflexive clitics but also verbs with indefinite *si* switch the auxiliary to *essere*. Since the auxiliary switch must be made very late,<sup>34</sup> there is no problem with having this rule follow the postcyclic rule of *Si* Insertion. Thus, while my analysis can handle the auxiliary choice easily, it claims that there is no relation between the fact that *essere* is used with reflexive *si* and the fact that *essere* is used with indefinite *si*, an unhappy claim at best.<sup>35</sup>

The second big problem is how to analyze a sentence such as:

- (59) Bisogna andare.  
 'It's necessary to go.'

or

- (60) Bisogna stare attenti.  
 'It's necessary to stay alert.'

When *bisognare* takes an infinitival subject,<sup>36</sup> as in (59) and (60), it is never found with clitics. Thus you never get sentences such as

- (61) \*Mi bisogna (di) farlo.  
 'I've got to do it.'  
 (62) \*Gli bisogna (di) farlo.  
 'He's got to do it.'

Rather, one finds

- (63) Bisogna che io lo faccia.  
 'It's necessary that I do it.'  
 (64) Bisogna che lui lo faccia.  
 'It's necessary that he do it.'

Sentential subjects of *bisognare*, in general, cannot be reduced by any means to infinitivals. The exception to this statement, of course, is sentential subjects with indefinite *si*. Thus (65) and (66) can be reduced to (59) and (60) above, respectively,

- (65) Bisogna che si vada.  
 'It's necessary to go.'

(66) Bisogna che si stia attenti.

'It's necessary to stay alert.'

The question, then, is how the subject of the embedded sentence in (65) and (66) gets deleted. Note well that in many varieties of Italian no subject other than that underlying indefinite *si* (ie, *Pro* or *moi*) can be deleted, as (67) shows<sup>27</sup>:

(67) \*Bisogna stare attenta, Maria.

feminine

'It's necessary to stay alert, Mary.'

I have no explanation at this time for the behavior of *bisognare* and other such verbs with indefinite *si*. It is important to note, however, that the facts presented here are as much a problem for the Reflexive analysis of indefinite *si* as for the *SI* Insertion analysis. Thus they do not weaken my claim that indefinite *si* is not the result of Reflexive.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

We have seen that indefinite *si* cannot be the result of the application of Reflexive. Rather it is transformationally inserted postcyclically by a rule whose precise nature remains to be examined. Thus Italian has at least two clitic *si*'s, the reflexive one and the indefinite subject one.

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#### NOTES

\* This work is in part a revision of sections of Chapters 4 and 5 of my doctoral dissertation (Napoli 1973). The dissertation is an extensive examination of the clitic *si*'s of Italian, and, of necessity, I will refer to it repeatedly below for syntactic justification of various claims. I would like to thank all the people who aided me in the writing of my dissertation, as well as Minne de Boer for comments on the dissertation, Vincenzo Lo Cascio for comments on an earlier version of this article, Marina Nespor for many suggestions and criticisms, and Giulio Lepschy for his perspicacious observations and continual encouragement.

1 I use the term 'indefinite' rather than 'impersonal' (following Napoli 1973) since the subject of the sentences discussed in this paper is [+human] (see Napoli 1973) and, therefore, has a 'person'. This person is indefinite, like the subjects of the sentences below in certain contexts (see Napoli 1973):

(i) In Italia  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{vano} \\ \text{uno va} \\ \text{andiamo} \\ \text{vai} \end{array} \right\}$  in chiesa ogni domenica.

'In Italy  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{they go} \\ \text{one goes} \\ \text{we go} \\ \text{you go} \end{array} \right\}$  to church every Sunday.'

The term 'impersonal' is better used to describe sentences which do not have a personal (neither first, nor second, nor third) subject in any logical sense at any level in their derivation. Thus the verb in (ii) is third person syntactically, but this is logically truly an impersonal sentence:

(ii) Piove.  
'It's raining.'

2 The amount of literature on the analysis of reflexives contrasted with indefinite subject sentences in the Romance languages is enormous. I give here a representative, but in no way exhaustive, list. See Napoli 1973 for a detailed discussion of the proposals offered in these works. On Spanish we find Babcock 1970, Benckamp 1972, Bollinger 1969, Contreras 1966, Contreras 1972, Green 1972, Langacker 1970, Lorzano 1970, Otero 1972, Roldán 1971 and 1972a, and Schrotten 1972. On Italian we find many references in traditional grammar books as well as Casagrande 1967, Lepschy 1973 and 1974, Lo Cascio 1974, Puglielli 1970, and Warner 1972. On Portuguese we find Naro 1968. On French we find Obenauer 1970, Runet 1970, and Stefanini 1971. A comparison of English, French, Italian, and German is found in Weiszäcker (1968).

Many works not examined in Napoli 1973 discussing the subject include Lo Cascio 1970 (where reflexive *si* and indefinite *si* are treated as distinct pronouns which have undergone a "divergenza nella funzione semantica e sintattica" (p. 201)), Lo Cascio 1976 (where the use of *si* in sentences involving a "universal, indistinct, indefinite, generic world" (p. 34) are examined and compared to passive sentences and contrasted with more clearly 'active' sentences), and Parisi and Castelfranchi 1976 (where they conclude that the morpheme "*si* always maps a nominal which is not fully characterized" and, thus, hope to have captured a (semantic?) generalization about the clitic *si*'s - but never mention the fact that other "not fully characterized" nominals do not appear with *si*, as, for example,

(i) Fa bello.  
'It's good weather.'

or the subjects of the sentences in (i) of footnote 1 above; thus their conclusion offers little insight into why reflexive *si* and indefinite *si* are phonetically identical).

Further reference to some of these works is given below in the text.

3 It is quite possible that a diachronic analysis, on the other hand, would relate the two *si*'s, thus explaining their phonetic identity. See Napoli 1973, Chapter 1 for a history from Latin to Italian of indefinite subject sentences. See Naro 1968 for some discussion of this question in Portuguese.

4 (4) is a typical example of what people might call a 'passive' *si* sentence (see Lepschy 1974 for a discussion of sentences which are indefinite, passive, or ambiguous between the two, according to him). Clearly Italians intuit a difference between (2) and (4) (with (3) being ambiguous, perhaps) (see Lo Cascio 1976 for a discussion of the semantics of such sentences). However, this distinction is of a semantic nature characteristic of sentences which are syntactically related but exhibit differing surface order (such as is found in active/passive pairs) and differing 'details' (such as the morphophonemic spelling out of agreement). Napoli 1973 argues that, while the semantic distinctions are real between these sentences, and while these sentences probably would appear in different linguistic contexts, there is no syntactic evidence against deriving (2)-(4) from the same underlying sentence, and such a derivation, furthermore,

allows us to account for many facts which remain a mystery if these sentences are not syntactically related. The semantic differences between these sentences are of the type typical of S's that are transformationally related (such as active/passive pairs).

<sup>5</sup> The relation of *ci si* to *\*si* and to *noi* is discussed in detail in Napoli 1973, who follows up on a proposal made by Roth's 1949.

<sup>6</sup> See Napoli 1973, ch. 2, for a discussion of this colloquial dative of interest. See Roldán 1972b for a discussion of such datives in Spanish.

Also, Marina Nespor has pointed out to me that for some speakers *nello specchio* is preferred whenever the object is not coreferential with the subject, while *allo specchio* is used when the object is coreferential with the subject in S's such as (9)-(11). These speakers would use *nello specchio*.

<sup>7</sup> Giulio Lepschy has pointed out to me that both (18a) and (19a) are grammatical with the reading in which one lifts ones hand with the other hand because it is paralyzied, for example. With the reading given below in the text, however, (18a) and (19a) are bad. But (20) is good with precisely that bad reading. Vincenzo Lo Cascio has pointed out to me that in some varieties of Italian (18a) and (19a) are acceptable. For such varieties, a better set of examples (suggested to me by Marina Nespor) might be:

- (i) \*Mi adopero il naso per cercare i tartufi.
- (ii) \*Carlo si adopera il naso per cercare i tartufi.
- (iii) Si adopera il naso per cercare i tartufi.

<sup>8</sup> I use my/Carlo uses his/One uses ones nose to look for truffles.

Note that the varieties of Italian that accept (18a) and (19a) in no way offer evidence against my claim that indefinite subject *si* and reflexive *si* are two different clitics.

<sup>9</sup> I say 'finite' here since nonfinite forms such as past participles must be excluded.

<sup>10</sup> This is true for many Italians only if the direct object is third person:

- (i) Si guarda noi donne.  
se. pl. 1st person.
  - (ii) \*Si guardano noi donne.  
pl. pl. 1st person.
- 'One looks at us women.'

Facts like these are discussed and an explanation is offered in Napoli (1973). Other speakers have obligatory agreement in S's like (33b).

<sup>11</sup> Since the first person is used for those who can speak (i.e., humans), I give no first person example here. However,

- (i) Mi netto le piume.  
'I'm preening my feathers'

is grammatical if we have a bird speaking, as in a fairy tale, for example.

<sup>12</sup> (33b) is grammatical only if we are in the context of a group of talking birds where the indefinite subject is taken to be any old bird (see footnote 10 above and Lo Cascio 1974 for further comments on this point).

<sup>13</sup> Whether Clitic Climbing as I have described it here is responsible for the variation in the position of the clitics in (41) and (42) or whether some other rule (such as a clitic placement rule which has several slots available to it for depositing the clitic, so that (a) and (b) would not be transformationally related, but rather be two different results of the operation of Clitic Placement on the same underlying structure) is involved here is immaterial to my argument. The syntactic distinction between reflexive clitics and indefinite subject *si* remains regardless of what kind of rule postulates the clitics.

<sup>14</sup> Examples (41) through (45a) are taken, with a few minor variations, from Lo Cascio 1970, p. 201, where a semantic/functional explanation is given.

<sup>14</sup> Why reflexive clitics can climb in some constructions but not in others is a problem discussed extensively in Lo Cascio 1970 and touched on in Napoli 1973. Many questions remain to be examined.

<sup>15</sup> Indefinite *si* can, of course, be found cliticized to infinitives in other sentences, such as:

- (i) La frase deve capirsi così.  
'The sentence must be understood in this way.'

See Napoli 1973, Lepschy 1974, Cristea 1972, and Lo Cascio 1976 for discussion.

<sup>16</sup> Whether the two identical NP's were present in deep structure or one arose by way of a copy rule (as most advocates of the Reflexive analysis of indefinite *si* would hold, since the presence of two coreferential NP in the deep structure of every indefinite *si* sentence is very unlikely) is immaterial to the application of Reflexive. Thus derivations like that in Langacker 1970 for Spanish are subject to the criticisms below.

<sup>17</sup> See Napoli 1973 for a discussion of and syntactic evidence for these features, which include [+human], [+plural], and usually [+inclusive] on the part of the group of people the speaker considers himself to be a member of. See Babcock 1970 and Schrotten 1972 for interesting data on the problem in Spanish.

<sup>18</sup> See Section 3.10 below for a discussion of *si* in a sentence with a first person plural subject.

<sup>19</sup> Some of these exceptions form the much discussed (semantic?) class consisting of verbs of staying (such as *stare/essere*) and verbs of motion (such as *andarsene*).

<sup>20</sup> An explanation is offered in Lepschy and Lepschy (in press).

<sup>21</sup> Whether this restriction is global or not depends on whether the ill understood constraints in question apply early in the derivation (before Reflexive, when a syntactic distinction between the source of reflexive *si* and indefinite *si* is, presumably, apparent) or later.

<sup>22</sup> See also Lo Cascio 1970, especially Chapter 5, where a comparison between the principles which govern the order of the verb's complements and those which govern the order of the clitics is given.

<sup>23</sup> In accusative clitics, I'm including *mi*, *ti*, *lo*, *lo*, *ci*, *vi*, *le*, and *li*. The partitive *ne* is not included. *Ne* is a special clitic in that it is similar to accusative clitics in some ways (for example, in many varieties of Italian it can optionally trigger past participle agreement):

- (i) Maria: Hai bisogno di comprare dei fannulloni?  
Dario: No, ne ho già comprato/comprati.  
sing. plural

'Do you need to buy some matches?'

'No, I already bought some.'

where the ending on *comprar-* may be determined by *ne*) but differs in other ways (for example, it can come off a subject as well as off an object):

- (ii) Ne vengono molti.  
'Many of them are coming.'

see Napoli forthcoming). *Ne* as an object partitive follows both reflexive clitics and indefinite *si*. This fact in no way presents evidence against my major thesis that reflexive *si* and indefinite *si* are two distinct clitics. In fact, the fact that *ne* follows indefinite *si* while accusative clitics precede indefinite *si* is just one more way in which it differs from accusative clitics.

<sup>24</sup> This is not true for Portuguese. See Quicoli 1972 for a discussion of number agreement and raising in Portuguese. Note, however, that the facts in Quicoli are not simply accounted for by calling number agreement cyclic, since there are verb forms

in Portuguese which have no number agreement, such as verbs whose subject has been deleted by Equi.

<sup>25</sup> Another possibility is that number agreement is made cyclically but then 'wiped out' at a later point. The environments for this wiping out rule would include verbs whose subject had been removed by deletion or raising. There are several problems with this analysis that I cannot go into here. However, note that this analysis requires two rules, Number Agreement and Wipe Out, while the analysis which assumes a postcyclic number agreement rule calls for only one rule, with no need for Wipe Out. Thus, even if both analyses were empirically adequate and problem free to an equal extent, we would still prefer the one rule analysis to the two rule analysis, since the most simple grammar is the preferred one.

<sup>26</sup> See Napoli 1975b for justification.

<sup>27</sup> Extensive justification for these claims is found in Napoli 1973.

<sup>28</sup> See Napoli 1973 for a comparison of indefinite subject and generic subject sentences. There it is shown that the third person plural nonspecific subject seen in (i) has distinct semantic properties from the subject of an indefinite *si* sentence:

(i) In Italia vanno in chiesa la domenica.  
'In Italy they go to church on Sunday.'

<sup>29</sup> (50) has at least two readings: a definite specific one in which the speaker is specifically including himself and a generic one in which the speaker, specifically, may or may not be included (although he is associated somehow with the subject). The difference is clearer between (i) and (ii), where the most immediate reading of (i) is definite and specific and the most immediate reading of (ii) is generic:

(i) Non abbiamo una macchina.  
'We don't have a car.'

(ii) In Italia non abbiamo piscine come in America.  
'In Italy we don't have swimming pools like in America.'

When *noi* is used with *si* only the specific reading is allowed for the speakers I have questioned. However, if there are speakers who allow *noi si* in the generic subject sentences, they are merely optionally inserting *si* in the presence of any first person plural subject.

<sup>30</sup> For many Italians (51) is not a sentence in their grammar. Their *si* insertion rule applies only to Pro subjects, not to first person plural subjects.

Also, the verb in (51) is third person because the person agreement rule says that with indefinite *si* the unmarked person, third person, is used (see Napoli 1973).

<sup>31</sup> Whether Equi is cyclic, as argued for Italian in Napoli 1976, or postcyclic, as argued for French in Kayne 1975, is immaterial to this argument. Note also that the proposal that *si* inserts postcyclically requires that a rule such as Raising into Subject Position also be postcyclic in order to rule art:

(i)\* *Si sembra voler tutto.*

'One seems to want everything.'

<sup>32</sup> See Kayne 1975 for an analysis of this rule in French, and de Boer and van Thiel-Di Maio 1973 for some discussion of this rule in Italian. See Napoli 1976 and Cinque 1975 for justification of the cyclicity of Fare Attraction for Italian.

<sup>33</sup> If one uses as a definition for subject the NP to the left of the VP under S, then *cantare* has no subject in (53) after Fare Attraction. If, instead, you use Kayne's 1975 definition for subject as the NP that is immediately dominated by S (regardless of its relative position to the VP), then *cantare* still has a Pro subject in (53) after Fare Attraction. In order to keep *si* from inserting, then, we would need to say that *si* inserts only when Pro is to the left of the VP.

<sup>34</sup> Certainly this rule applies after the late rule of past participle agreement, given

that past participle agreement with indefinite *si* maintains the distinction between verbs that always call for *essere* and those that call for *avere* except when auxiliary switch gives *essere*. This distinction is seen in (i) and (ii):

(i) *Si è piano.*  
unmarked

(ii) *Si è andato.*  
plural

'One went.'

<sup>35</sup> The only nice way out of this mess for my analysis would be if the auxiliary switch rule were triggered not by reflexive clitics *per se*, but rather by some factor or property common to both reflexive clitic sentences and indefinite subject *si* sentences, which factor or property did not require any shared transformational source of the two *si*'s. Until further work is done on the auxiliary switch rule, it is impossible to know whether or not decisive evidence exists. A parallel problem to the auxiliary problem is presented by the fact that both indefinite *si* and reflexive clitics never appear on the infinitive following *fare* in the *fare* construction. My analysis says this nonappearance of the two clitics is two separate, unrelated facts unless it can be shown that the nonappearance of the two *si*'s is due to some factor or property common to both indefinite *si* and reflexive clitics.

<sup>36</sup> Note that *bisognare* need not take a sentential subject, in which case clitics may appear on it, as in:

(i) *Mi bisognano due libri.*  
'I need two books.'

(ii) *Gli bisogna il coraggio.*  
'He lacks the courage.'

However, (i) is not accepted by many Italians. They prefer to use *occorrere* here. And the use of *bisognare* in (ii) is semantically distinct from that in the text. Thus, it may be possible to argue that *bisognare* in the sense of 'the necessary' never takes a clitic in the speech of many Italians.

<sup>37</sup> For some speakers (67) is good. They seem to have a rule which allows deletion of a lower subject under *bisognare* under certain discourse conditions. In their speech indefinite *si* sentences present no special problem. For the speakers who reject (67), however, indefinite *si* presents a serious problem, as (59) and (60) show.

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## RIASSUNTO

La tesi principale di questo articolo è che il clittico *si* delle frasi con soggetti indefiniti (come *Si è tutti agitati qui*) si distingue sintatticamente e semanticamente dall'omofono clittico riflessivo in un'analisi sincronica della grammatica italiana. Si mostrano sei strutture che escludono il clittico riflessivo ma ammettono il *si* indefinito. L'ordine dei pronomi clittici, la concordanza fra soggetto e verbo, e il collocamento dei pronomi clittici (nelle loro possibilità di movimento) aiutano a distinguere fra i due clittici *si*. Le restrizioni sui predicati e sui pronomi personali soggetto sono anche utili nel paragonare i due clittici. Si propone che il *si* indefinito si inserisca con una regola trasformazionale che differisce dalla regola di riflessivizzazione sia per l'ambiente in cui si applica sia per il suo ordine rispetto ad altre regole.