Review by Anonymous

Does the paper make a novel contribution to the understanding of the topic under investigation? [max 250 words]*

The paper is an interesting attempt to account for complementizer deletion as the output of verb movement to Fin or Force where the final position of the verb represents two different parametric choices. Movement to Fin yields Complementizer Deletion 1 (CD1) of Standard Italian, while movement to Force yields Complementizer Deletion 2 (CD2) of Florentine. The idea is to show how the Parametric Comparison Method (PCM) can account for these two patterns in terms of implicational statements. Regarding CD2 the author (A) modifies Cocchi & Poletto (2002) and argues the clitic moves along with the verb to the C-domain (generalizing V-movement from CD1 to CD2). On the one hand, reference to the PCM model is the novelty of the discussion. On the other hand, the actual account regarding V-movement to Force is mainly an adaptation of Cocchi & Poletto 2002) as an instance of alternative checking. Although the author (A) makes the additional point that it is the clitic/negation/aux+V cluster that moves to Force in CD2 there is little elaboration of how this is technically achieved or why it is restricted to embedded contexts.

Is the empirical content of the paper sound (i.e. the data are collected and presented properly, the experiments are well designed, the statistics is well done, the examples contain no spelling mistakes, etc)? [max 400 words]*

The distinction between bridge and non-bridge verbs is mainly established in terms of whether they CD1 or CD2 (or embedded V2 in Germanic) is attested with no further clarifications. There is no reference to semantic classes of verbs, while the verbs provided on p. 4-5 assume Vikner's distinction. Since in Standard Italian (SI) – unlike German – CD1 also depends on irrealis mood, the classification of the selecting predicates (bridge vs non-bridge) is established on this property, i.e., whether they can take an irrealis or realis complement clause. In other words, it's probably a subset of bridge verbs that permits CD1, which means that that the parameter of mood also must also be taken into consideration, e.g., "Does V (a bridge verb) allow for an irrealis complement?" This introduces another implicational relation which remains to be empirically verified, namely: if a (bridge) verb can take an irrealis complement, then CD is available.

CD2 is also sensitive to the properties of the selecting predicate, but this seems to be determined on a verb-to-verb basis. For example, affective verbs like 'hate' and 'love' do not allow CD(2) but 'be sorry' which is also affective does (cf. (12a-b)). In this respect CD2 is sensitive to lexical items, i.e., a nano-parameter. If this is correct, it needs to be empirically tested.

The author should clarify how or why non and hai are treated as clitics (like pronominal ones) (cf. p. 6 and elsewhere). If they are clitics, they should be subject to the same restrictions in both matrix and embedded clauses

Is the argument coherent and sound, with no major flaws and/or shortcomings, within the context of the theoretical assumptions made by the author? [max 500 words]*

The presentation in generally very clear and follows the theoretical assumptions introduced by the author. At the same time the point that the A is trying to make does not come out in a clear way. Is it an elaboration of the existing accounts (cf. the discussion in section 4) or is it an attempt to show the importance of parameter hierarchies (PCM) taking the two manifestations of CD as a case study?

Comments:

(i) Does Florentine allow for both CD1 and CD2? CD1 is a subset of CD2, which means that all cases where CD1 is attested in SI are included in the CD2 option. But this is different from arguing that Florentine has both parameter settings.

(ii) If movement to Fin is sensitive to mood (irrealis), then the role of the matrix predicate is only secondary. If movement to Fin/Force is not sensitive to mood, then the role of the matrix predicate may or may not be relevant. If it is, CD2 should be generalized to all contexts of embedded declaratives; if not, CD2 should be restricted to some cases of embedded declaratives. It's not clear to me that A raises this issue.

(iii) What does the PCM introduced in section 3 tell us about the syntactic distance between SI and Florentine and microparametric variation?

(iv) Pc7 (CDO) has two formulations, one without 'only' on p. 12 and one with 'only' on p. 18 – please be consistent. I wonder to what extent Pc6 is required as a separate parameter. If the answer to Pc7 with 'only' is negative, the implication is that CD is possible with non-bridge verbs as well, in which case it derives the essence of Pc6 (which becomes redundant). Moreover, there should be a mood parameter (realis/irrealis) which is activated only when Pc7 takes a positive value and predicts that CD can be further sensitive to mood. This gives us two options: the SI (irrealis) vs English (realis or possibly irrelevant).

(v) Pc1 and Pc3 on p. 18 should be restricted to embedded contexts but this property does not seem to be discussed here. What determines the root-embedded asymmetry? The same of course extends to Pc2 and Pc4. It seems to me that there has to be a superordinate parameter that asks whether there is a root vs embedded asymmetry out of which the other parameters will follow. However, I have to say that this is rather stipulative.

Terminological issues:

p. 13, after Table 1: "that a language lexicalizes CD1, …": the term 'lexicalizes' here is odd. I think A means 'manifests' here. On p. 17 ff. the term 'grammaticalized' is used, presumably to mean the (overt) realization of a grammatical feature. Since this terminology is attributed to Gianollo et al (2008) it should be clarified, given that the term 'grammaticalization' can also be interpreted in terms of creating new exponents of functional heads.

Are there any relevant scholarly works that have been overlooked by the author? If the answer is YES, please provide the full references.*

NO

The reference to Gianollo et al. (2008) on p. 17 is missing from the list of references.

Have you seen this paper, its content, the proposed analysis, or the conclusions published in other venues? [If your answer is YES, please add the relevant reference.]* No

If you accept the paper with minor revisions, please list the revisions you would advice (you are not required to proofread the paper) [max 500 words]

The paper can in principle be published as it potentially offers an interesting account of the implicational hierarchies of parameters, taking complementizer deletion as its case study. However, various flaws suggest that this can only be done if major revisions take place. Since this option is not provided by the journal (it's either accept, or accept with minor revisions), the recommendation is 'reject'. I suggest that the author reorganize the discussion and elaborate the arguments regarding V movement to Force (along with clitics, or negation, or aux). The latter is a technical but significant part. Once the empirical arguments that support V to Force movement are provided, the implications for the PCM should follow. In the present version, the discussion is mixed, and the reader cannot easily identify what the goal of the paper is (to support an alternative for CD2 or to discuss the role of PCM?).

More precisely:

(i) The discussion in section 4 where the empirical arguments for movement to Force are provided should precede the discussion in section 3 which presents the background for the theoretical analysis. The discussion of section 3 should be the pretext of the analysis that follows which aims at showing how PCM favors an implicational relation regarding the syntactic phenomenon of CD and its two manifestations as CD1 vs CD2.

(ii) The option elaborated in section 4.3 with respect to V-movement to Force cannot be seen independently of other properties of the grammar, namely, the position of clitics (proclisis), negation and auxiliaries in matrix declaratives as well as embedded declaratives introduced by a complementizer. In many languages, V-movement to the left periphery gives rise to enclisis as opposed to proclisis when V is in I. So, it's hard to see what would necessitate movement of the clitic along with V to a C position. Additionally, it's unclear why the realization of the verb in Force would block the projection of Topic and/or Focus (cf. (30) for example). Why would their projection be sensitive to the element that overtly realizes Force, i.e., che vs the verb? The data A discusses seem to me to suggest that in CD2 at least the complement clause lacks the CP-layer. If this is correct, there are no extra complications regarding the position where clitics/neg/aux are realized in CD contexts. It is sort of taken for granted the clitic moves along with the verb. If this is correct then apart from the clitic

there is negation and aux, they should all form a big cluster that moves to Force along with the verb. This needs to be discussed.