Clitics and the EPP
The analysis of LOC as a clitic has two advantages: it makes it natural to assume that LOC bears a D-feature (clitics are Ds), and it provides an independent reason for LOC to occur in a position which is higher than the position of the subject. As we saw in section 3.4, the feature content and the relative distance from the target node are crucial for the determination of the optimal checker.

However, this analysis makes a strong prediction: every element that can raise that high (higher than the subject) and that carries the required D-feature can satisfy the EPP instead of the subject. Italian seems to have such elements: object clitics, indirect object clitics and expletive clitics. The analysis we proposed for LOC predicts that the presence of a clitic in the clause is sufficient to license subject inversion. Apparently, the data offer a confusing picture that may undermine our generalization. Yet, closer inspection of the structures underlying such clauses seems to confirm our predictions and shows that this analysis may be empirically adequate. In the next two subsections we will examine sentences with one clitic complement and with two clitic complements, respectively.

1.1 One Clitic Complement
The clitic complement can be the direct object or the indirect object, in both cases cliticized onto the verb in INFL. Since clitics must be related to an element previously introduced into the discourse, the question-answer tests we have been using are slightly adapted to the different context. (1) has a direct object clitic:

1 a Che fine ha fatto la macchina da scrivere?

\emph{where did the typewriter go to}
\emph{‘what about the typewriter’}
b L’ha presa Dante.
   \textit{it-Fem-Sing-has taken-Fem-Sing Dante}

c #Dante l’ha presa.
   \textit{Dante it-Fem-Sing-has taken-Fem-Sing}

In both answers the clitic is adjoined to the finite verb (in INFL), yet only (1b) with the subject in postverbal position, is felicitous. The same pattern is found in (2), with an indirect object clitic:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[2] a Hai notizie di Beatrice?
   \textit{have you got news about Beatrice}
   \textit{‘what about Beatrice’}

\item[2] b Le ha parlato Francesca.
   \textit{to-her-has spoken Francesca}

\item[2] c #Francesca le ha parlato.
   \textit{Francesca to-her-has spoken}
\end{enumerate}

The intuitions are subtle, but consistent. Cl V S is the most natural word order for answers to wide focus questions like (1a) and (2a).\footnote{Notice, in passing, that the S Cl V word order of (1c) and (2c) must be derived by a special rule, as it is the case for the narrow focus reading of the subject in non-inversion verbs context (see chapter 4 for more discussion).} From a minimalist perspective, we expect that this word order is thus the result of a more economical alternative for satisfaction of the EPP. Indeed, the analysis proposed above for the clitic LOC may provide an elegant explanation for these facts as well. Consider (3), representing the structure of (1b) after verb raising:
The verb ends up in INFL, moving through AGRo. The direct object clitic adjoins to the finite verb in INFL (perhaps it incorporates into the verb before leaving the VP). Since the clitic carries a D-feature, it satisfies the EPP and it allows the lexical subject to remain in its base position. I will assume the same analysis for the indirect object clitic Cl_{IO} in (0b). Consider now (0c) and (0c). These sentences are unacceptable in this context. Raising of the subject is blocked as a more costly alternative for satisfaction of the EPP. However, (0c) and (0c) become felicitous in a context that requires a narrow focus interpretation of the predicate, like (0) and (0):

4  a  Cosa ha fatto Dante con la macchina da scrivere?
    *what did Dante do with the typewriter*
  b  Dante l'ha presa.
    *Dante it-Fem-Sing-has taken-Fem-Sing*
    *Dante took it'*

5  a  Che provvedimenti ha preso Francesca nei confronti di Beatrice?
    *which measures did Francesca take towards Beatrice*
  b  Francesca le ha parlato.
    *Francesca to-her-has talked*
The wellformedness of (4b) and (5b) may appear problematic for our analysis. Observe that in both clauses the lexical subject and the clitic co-occur in preverbal position. If it is correct to assume that the clitic checks the strong D-feature of INFL (EPP), what then is the trigger for subject raising? This operation cannot be justified by the necessity of checking Case and phi-features, as we assumed that these features are weak and therefore checked until LF.

The peculiarity of (4b) and (5b) disappears if these sentences are placed in the same interpretive context as narrow focus constructions like (6):

6  a  Chi è impallidito?  
   *who turned pale*  
   E’ impallidito Berlusconi.  
   *turned pale Berlusconi*  
   b  Chi ha scritto questo libro?  
   *who wrote this book*  
   Ha scritto questo libro Dante.  
   *wrote this book Dante*  

In (6) the postverbal subject gets a narrow focus interpretation. Recall that these sentences contain non-inversion verbs, hence they do not allow inversion with the wide focus interpretation (cf. chapter 1). As suggested in section 2.2., this type of construction may require a marked focus rule. The constructions in (4b) and (5b) belong to the same interpretive domain. The subject can occur in preverbal position only if it is already given in the discourse, so that the predicate gets a narrow focus interpretation (see chapter 4 for more discussion of this issue).

1.2 Two Clitic Complements

We turn now to the relative distribution of clitics and DPs/PPs in inversion contexts. The following sentences contain two internal arguments, one of which is a clitic and the other a lexical DP or PP. Consider first (7), with a direct object clitic:

7  a  Che fine ha fatto la macchina da scrivere?
‘what about the typewriter’

b L’ha prestata Dante a Beatrice.

*it-Fem-Sing-has lent-Fem-Sing Dante to Beatrice*

c #Dante l’ha prestata a Beatrice.

*Dante it-Fem-Sing-has lent-Fem-Sing to Beatrice*

The contrast in felicity between (7b) and (7c) is not very sharp. Yet, (7b), with the Cl<sub>DO</sub> V Subj IndObj, sounds more natural. This subtle difference may be explained by the analysis suggested above. In the former clause the EPP is satisfied by the direct object clitic, as expected, so that the subject just remains in its base position. In (7c) the subject has raised as well, although there was no (syntactic or interpretive) trigger for this operation. (7b) may thus be preferred as a more economical derivation.

Consider now a clause with an indirect object clitic:

8 a E Beatrice, come mai è così contenta?

*and Beatrice, why is she so glad*

b #Le ha prestato Dante la macchina da scrivere.

*to-her-Fem-Sing-has lent Dante the typewriter*

c Dante le ha prestato la macchina da scrivere.

*Dante to-her-Fem-Sing-has lent the typewriter*

(8b), with inversion, is clearly worse than (8c) with the subject in preverbal position. The infelicity of (8b), with the Cl<sub>IO</sub> V Subj Obj word order, is unexpected and contrasts with the Cl<sub>DO</sub> V Subj IndObj word order of (7b).

Let us recapitulate. The distribution of clitics with respect to subject inversion is summarized in (9):

9 a Cl<sub>DO</sub> V Subj

b Cl<sub>IO</sub> V Subj

c Cl<sub>DO</sub> V Subj IndObj

d #Cl<sub>IO</sub> V Subj DObj<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> (9) is reminiscent of the old adjacency problem. See Chomsky (1995, Ch.4) for a solution in minimalist terms.
The distributional patterns in (9a-c) are correctly predicted by the account proposed here. (9d), however, remains unexplained until we have a better understanding of cliticization in general, and of the properties of direct and indirect object clitics more specifically.