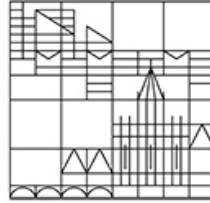




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Telling clitics from affixes: the morphological realization principle as a criterion

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Introduction

The Issue

There is no agreement among linguists regarding the locus of Romance pronominal clitics in the architecture of grammar.

Pronominal clitics are minor syntactic constituents:

Perlmutter (1971), Kayne (1975), Rizzi (1986), Brandi & Cordin (1989), Kaiser (2008), among others.

Pronominal clitics are inflectional affixes:

Zwicky (1977, 1985), Zwicky & Pullum (1983), Kaiser (1992 for French), Monachesi (1999 for Italian), Luís (2004 for European Portuguese), among others.

Basic assumptions

We **assume** that

- Today's clitics have gone through a grammaticalization process (following Lehmann 1985 and others).
- In the process the items concerned moved from one locus to another in the architecture of grammar.
- Within a language family, "clitics" that have a common origin may feed syntax in one language and morphology in another.

Organization of the talk

0. Introduction
1. Properties shared by affixes and clitics
2. Differences between affixes and clitics
3. The Morphological Realization Principle (MRP)
4. Applying the MRP as a criterion
 - 4.1 Subject pronouns in Gallo-Romance
 - 4.2 Object pronouns in focus constructions
5. Outlook

1

**Properties shared
by affixes and
clitics**

Phonology

Both, affixes and clitics, are no phonological words.
They cannot bear contrastive stress:

It. **Gianni LA preferisce.*
 Gianni preferisce LEI.
 'Gianni prefers HER.'

Fr. **Jean LA préfère.*
 'Jean prefers her.'
 C'est ELLE que Jean préfère.
 'It's HER that John prefers.'

Morpho-syntax

The following is more or less well-known; cf. Kayne (1975), Auger (1993), Cabredo-Hofherr (2004), Cordin & Calabrese (1998), Monachesi (1999).

Affixes as well as clitics are bound forms. As such they

- do not occur in isolation
- cannot be coordinated
- must be repeated when attached to coordinated hosts
- form clusters with fixed order
- show gaps in their paradigms

Arbitrary gaps

For this issue cf. Auger (1993), Monachesi (1999).

Romance pronominal clitics may be arranged as clusters.

Some of the clusters are not grammatical,

- It. **Martina **gli mi** presenta.*
 Martina **mi gli presenta.*
 *Martina **mi** presenta **a lui**.*
 'Martina introduces me to him.'

If clitics and their clusters are conceived of as having a paradigmatic structure, these lacking combinations are arbitrary gaps.

2

Differences between affixes and clitics

Linear order

Clitics are not uniform with respect to linear order.
Some always either precede or follow their host:

Always preceding host

It. determiners

Fr. negative clitic *ne*

Always following host

Lat. *-que* 'and'

Swed. definite article *flickor-na* 'the girls'

Still others show variation, depending on the verb's form.

Italian pronominal clitics must follow the verb if it is an infinitive, a gerund, an imperative, and, with restrictions, a participle:

guardarlo
'to look at him'

guardandolo
'looking at him'

guardalo!
'look at him!'

spettantemi
'which I am entitled to'

Elsewhere, they must precede the verb.

Friulian: Right-hand vs. left-hand attachment depends on sentence type

Sentence type	Example	Gloss
declarative	Jo o feveli.	PRO SCL speak-1SG
	O feveli jo.	SCL speak-1SG PRO
interrogative	Jo fevèli o?	PRO speak-1SG SCL
	Fevèli o jo?	speak-1SG SCL PRO

Puzzling French pronominal clitics

Fr. *me, te* (DAT/ACC.1SG/2SG):

They may precede or follow their host, but may not occur at the right edge of V'. They have homonyms, *moi* and *toi*, which only occur at the right edge:

Elle [me fait] confiance

**Elle [moi fait] confiance*

'She trusts me'

**Faites-me confiance !*

[Faites-moi] confiance !

'trust me!'

vs.

[Donnez-m'en] quelques-uns !

**[Donnez-moi-en] quelques-uns !*

'give me some'

N.B. *Moi* and *toi* are not identical with their non-clitic counterparts. The latter would have to express Dative by case-marker *à*.

Choosing the host

If two or three verbs are present in the simple sentence, the choice of the host depends on the first verb's class membership.

French

X Auxiliar, Y main verb: X is host
je l'ai vu 'I saw it'

X Modal, Y main verb: Y is host
je veux le voir 'I want to see it'

X Causative, Y main verb: X is host
je le lui ferai voir 'I will show it to him'

The choice may be free:

Italian:

X Motion or Modal, Y main verb: both, X and Y, are eligible

Verrò a prenderti 'I will come to pick you up'

Ti verrò a prendere

Ti voglio vedere 'I want to see you'

Voglio vederti

To our knowledge, no inflectional affix shows this kind of behavior!

3

The Morphological Realization Principle

Our proposal

The morphological realization principle (MRP):

Inflectional features must be realized if a morphological realization is available.

Explaining the MRP

MRP requires that a feature be realized in a given paradigmatic cell, if:

- The feature is specified for that cell
- The feature does not systematically lack an exponence

Explaining the MRP, continued

The MRP is not violated in the following cases:

- The feature is absent from the entire paradigm; e.g. Gender in the tensed verb forms of It., as opposed to Classical Arabic; cf. *katab-a* 'he writes' *katab-at* 'she writes'.
- The feature is fully specified, but is never realized, e.g. [tense = present].
- The feature is underspecified, e.g. [number =] in Trentino *canta*, It. *camion*.
- The feature shares its exponence with other features, e.g. Person and Number of the It. verb; all features in suppletive forms like It. *è* 'is'.

4

**Applying the MRP as a
criterion**

Using MRP to distinguish clitics from affixes

If a given bound form does not satisfy MRP, it is not an inflectional affix.

We will show, e.g., that the Friulian and standard French 'subject clitics' actually are clitics, because they ignore MRP.

**Clitics violate the MRP,
inflectional affixes do not!**

4.1 Subject clitics in Gallo-Romance

Friulian

In Friulian, subject clitics are obligatory in some contexts, but ungrammatical in others. The default ordering of preverbal clitics is

subject clitic >> object/reflexive clitic

Fri. (*Tu*) *tu ti viodis.* (**Ti viodis*).
'You see yourself.'

But the occurrence of a subject clitic with any other clitic is only allowed for 2SG. Elsewhere, the subject clitic does not appear.

Fri. **O mi viodi.* (*Jo mi viodi/Mi viodi.*)
 'I see myself.'

The **MRP is clearly violated** by the fact that subject clitics, with exception of the 2SG, are omitted if preceding a reflexive pronoun or an object clitic.

Following Kaiser (2008: 315), we assume that contextual gaps of the kind described exclude that the clitics involved are affixes.

These gaps actually are not systematic with respect to the paradigm. Instead, they are triggered by the syntactic or lexical context.

This also holds true for subject clitics that are correferent with unspecific subjects: In Standard French, subject clitics do not occur with indefinite subjects such as *personne* 'nobody' (Rizzi 1986: 401, Salvi 2003: 207).

Fr. *Personne, (*il) ne veut venir.* (Kaiser 2008: 316)

Again, it is the syntactic context, not paradigmatic structure, that constraints the distribution of the clitic. Hence the Standard French subject clitic is not an affix, if the MRP is used as a criterion.

However, for a variety of Colloquial French, Palasis (2010) observes that subject clitics even occur with an indefinite subject in L1-data produced by children:

Fr. *Personne i m'l a dit.*
 'Nobody has told me that.'

Tout le monde i s'assoit dessus.
 'Everybody sits on it (the bed).'

In this case, "subject clitics" actually are affixes, since MRP is not violated.

This confirms the idea that languages or varieties may differ with respect to the stage they have reached in the process of grammaticalization (Lehmann 1985, Vanelli 1987, Haiman 1991, Cabredo-Hofherr 2004, Kaiser 2008, among others).

4.2 It. object-clitics in focus constructions

It. resumptive object clitics in contrastive focus constructions are ungrammatical (Benincà 2011:6); cf.

- (1) a. *Il TUO libro ho comprato.* 'I bought YOUR book'
 b. **Il TUO libro lo ho comprato.*
- (2) *Il tuo libro, lo ho COMPRATO.* 'your book, I BOUGHT it'.

Ex. (1) is a contrastive focus construction; ex. (2) is a topic construction with clitic doubling.

If *lo* in (1) was an affix, MRP would be violated.

Does paradigm structure matter?

A possible objection, inferred from some of the literature:

"Paradigms are typical of inflectional morphology. Hence, if the clitic pronouns are organized in paradigms, they are located in morphology."

However, this argument is not tenable.

The pronominal systems of the languages considered here all are organized in paradigms, regardless of whether the pronouns are free or clitic (Schwarze, to app.).

4 Outlook

We have argued that, besides being an efficient criterion for the distinction between clitics and affixes, the MRP is a general characteristic of (inflectional) morphology. Therefore, MRP is an argument for the autonomous status of morphology (Aronoff 1994, Maiden 2003, 2004, 2005).

This assumption also has a consequence for diachronical reconstruction in terms of grammaticalization.

It implies that all forms that migrate from syntax to morphology acquire conformity with the morphological realization principle.

To investigate this is a task for further research.

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