What do we learn from clitics?

The Polish case study.

Albert Ventayol i Boada
Universitat de Barcelona

BA thesis – Supervisor: Valeria Salcioli
Outline

• State of the Art:
  o First analysis of clitic systems.
  o The clitics of Polish.

• The present study:
  o Methodology.
  o Results.
  o Conclusions and discussion.
State of the Art

First analysis of clitic systems
First analysis of clitic systems

• First approach: Wackernagel (1892).

He studied the «elements without stress» of Ancient Greek. After the inquiry he concluded that clitics are universally **enclitic** and tend to appear in **second position**, regardless of the previous word.
First analysis of clitic systems

  He defined clitics as «morphemes that present analytic difficulties because they are neither clearly independent words nor clearly affixes».

After analysing a sample of a wide variety of languages, he proposed the first classification of the phenomena in (i) simple clitics, (ii) special clitics and (iii) bound words.
First analysis of clitic systems

(i) Simple clitics:
   She met him.
   Full form: [mẽt hım]
   Clitic form: [mẽtım]

(i) Special clitics:
   María compró un libro. > María lo compró.
   [SBJ + VRB + OBJ] [SBJ + OBJ + VRB]

(i) Bound words:
   [The girl you met]’s name.
   [The man responsible]’s name.
   [The boy that seemed tired]’s name.
   [The girl you’re talking to]’s name.
First analysis of clitic systems


In order to establish a systematization of the phenomena, this author proposed some parameters that characterise clitics: (1) the adjunction of the clitic to the right (Initial) or to the left (Final) of its domain; (2) the position of the clitic with respect to the most peripheral word of the constituent (Before vs. After); (3) the phonological adjunction to its right (Enclitic) or to its left (Proclitic).
First analysis of clitic systems

1. Cats chase=the [small white mice] relentlessly.
2. Cats chase [the=small white mice] relentlessly.
3. Cats chase [small=the white mice] relentlessly.
5. Cats chase [small white=the mice] relentlessly.
6. Cats chase [small white the=mice] relentlessly.
7. Cats chase [small white mice=the] relentlessly.
8. Cats chase [small white mice] the=relentlessly.

Adapted from Spencer and Luís (2012)
First analysis of clitic systems

• To sump up:
  o Clitics are not only unstressed, but need a **host** to be attached to. They never bear stress.
  o Clitics have a low selection of traits. This has been labeled in the literature as “**promiscuous adjunction**”.
  o Clitics behave in a way that is **atypical** for full-fledged words.

• Other characteristics of clitics:
  o They express either **functional categories** or serve **discursive** purposes.
  o They usually appear in rigid sequences or **templates**.
  o They can **co-occur** with the constituents they replace.
First analysis of clitic systems

- Regarding the expression of **functional categories**, Spencer and Luís (2012) point out that clitics usually encode what affixes typically do. These functions are **case, possession, (in)definiteness** for the noun, **time, aspect** or **mode** when it comes to the verb.

(Edna) interesna kniga.

Kniga=ta (e interesna).
[book=the (is interesting)] "The book is interesting"

Interesna=ta kniga.
[interesting=the book] "The interesting book"

Interesna=ta anglijska kniga.
First analysis of clitic systems

• When it comes to **discursive purposes**, the authors show such function with the following examples from Russian:

Ja=to n’e rabotaju doma.
[1.SG:NOM=CL no work:PRS:1.SG home]
“I don’t work at home (but maybe someone else does...)”

Doma=to ja n’e rabotaju.
[home=CL 1.SG:NOM no work:PRS:1.SG]
“I don’t work at home (but somewhere else...)”

© Albert Ventayol Boada

Adapted from Spencer and Luís (2012)
First analysis of clitic systems

• Regarding the **co-occurrence** of both clitics and arguments, Macedonian is usually cited as paradigmatic example.

Marija *(go) poznava učenik-ot/Vlado/neo.
[Mary:NOM ACC.3.SG know:PRS:3.SG student-DF/Vlado/him]  
“Mary knows the student/Vlado/him”

Marija *(go) poznava Eden učenik.
[Mary:NOM ACC.3.SG know:PRS:3.SG one student]  
“Mary knows a student”

© Albert Ventayol Boada  
Adapted from Spencer (1999)
First analysis of clitic systems

• Finally, Spencer and Luís (2012) pointed out that clitic systems tend to occur in **rigid sequences**, which resemble those of Template Morphology.

Da li će ti ga sutra pokazati?
[COMP Q AUX DAT.2.SG ACC.3.SG tomorrow show.INF]
“What will he show to me tomorrow?”

Da li mi ih je dao Jovan?
[COMP Q DAT.1.SG ACC.3.PL AUX give:PTCP Jovan:NOM]
“Did Jovan give them to me?”
First analysis of clitic systems

• After all, it looks implausible to postulate a definition of clitics suitable for all the phenomena described, as soon as clitics are “special” in phonological, syntactic and morphological terms.

• Spencer and Luís (2012):
  «Clitics lie on the interface between the major modules according to which grammar is organised.»
State of the Art

The Polish clitic system

© Albert Ventayol Boada
# The Polish clitic system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Preterit (clitic form)</th>
<th>Copula (full form)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st p. sg.</td>
<td>-(e)m</td>
<td>jestem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd p. sg.</td>
<td>-(e)ś</td>
<td>jesteś</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd p. sg.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>jest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st p. pl.</td>
<td>-(e)śmy</td>
<td>jesteśmy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd p. pl.</td>
<td>-(e)ście</td>
<td>jesteśmy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd p. pl</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>są</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Franks and King (2000)
The Polish clitic system

• Verbal personal markers can be detached from the verbal stem and take any other host under two conditions, according to Franks and King (2000):
  o The host has to be a phonological full word.
  o The host has to be placed in a position on the left side of the verb, never on its right side.

Czarnego psa=ś widział?
[black:ACC.SG dog:ACC.SG=2.SG see:PRF.M]
“Have you seen a black dog?”

Czarnego=ś psa widział?
[black:ACC.SG=2.SG dog:ACC.SG see:PRF.M]
The Polish clitic system

• However, this mobility of clitics have some bizarre consequences at the phonological level. Compare the following examples from Rappaport (1988):

Mógł > Mogła > Mogłem
Wziął > Wzięła but Wziąłem

• Therefore, the behaviour of clitics suggests that sometimes they are seen as purely inflectional (i.e. as affixes), but not always.
The Polish clitic system

• At the phonological level we also find unexpected phenomena regarding accent assignment. Compare the examples from Franks and King (2000):

Kiedy zobaCZYł-e=ś te dokumenty?
[When see:PRF-EP=2.SG the:ACC.PL document:ACC.PL]
“When did you see the/these documents?”

Kiedy=ś zoBAczył te dokumenty?
[When=2.SG see:PRF the:ACC.PL document:ACC.PL]

Kiedy zobaCZYły=śmy te dokumenty?
[When see:PRF.F=1.PL the:ACC.PL document:ACC.PL]
“When did we (f.) see the/these documents?”

© Albert Ventayol Boada
The Polish clitic system

• In addition to that, Polish personal markers also exhibit the property of omission. Consider the following example from Mikoś and Moravcsik (1986).

Czytaliśmy, pisali i studiowali.
“We read, wrote and studied”
The Polish clitic system

• To sump up:
  o Verbal personal markers are enclitic.
  o Singular personal markers are inflexional attached to the verb and clitic elsewhere.
  o Plural personal markers are inflexional or clitic wherever they appear.
  o Verbal personal markers can break constituents and be omitted.

• Such facts suggest that verbal personal markers are in a flux, i.e. one can identify properties from both inflectional affixes and syntactically independent elements.

• **Hypothesis**: are Polish verbal clitics in a process of grammaticalization?
The present study

Methodology
Methodology

• The experiment we designed consists of two different tasks: a set of value judgments and assigning accent to a given word within a string.

• Types of value judgments:
  o Vowel shift ĺě > ĺę in relation to the position of the clitics.
  o Verbal markers attachment to adverbs and personal pronouns.
  o Verbal markers breaking constituents and attaching to all sorts of hosts
  o Omission of personal markers.

• The sentences used were those cited in the literature.

© Albert Ventayol Boada
Methodology

• 74 participants took part in the experiment.

• Variables considered for being eligible:
  o Be a Polish native speaker.
  o Be a Polish citizenship and live currently in Poland.

• Relevant variable for the study:
  o age of the participants.

• Variables not taken into consideration:
  o Sex.
  o Level of education.
Methodology

© Albert Ventayol Boada
The present study

Results

© Albert Ventayol Boada
Results

• Block I: q≥q alternation
  
  o No alternation with the personal marker detached:
    Accepted in: 18.2% (16-20), 5.1% (21-25), 14.3% (26-30).
  o Alternation with the personal marker detached:
    Accepted 3/72
  o Alternation with the personal marker attached to the verb:
    Accepted in: 27.3% (16-20), 15.4% (21-25), 28.6% (26-30), 20% (31-50).

© Albert Ventayol Boada
Results

- Block II: adjunction of the clitic to adverbs and personal pronouns in initial position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adverb adjunction:</th>
<th>Personal prn. adjunction:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Częstoś go widywał w parku?</td>
<td>Częstoś widywał go w parku?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>54,5</td>
<td>45,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>35,9</td>
<td>64,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>42,9</td>
<td>57,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-65</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Albert Ventayol Boada
Results

- Block III: attachment to different hosts.

- Sentences:
  - Ciekawą książkę kupiłaś Janowi.
  - Do mojego biura nie przyszłaś.

- Attachment to a word on the right side of the verb: 100% unaccepted in both cases.
- Attachment to a preposition: accepted 1/72.
- Attachment to the verb: acceptance 80%-100%
Results

• Block IV: omission.

• Sentences:
  o Czy poszłaś i zobaczyłaś, co tam się stało?
  o - Co zrobiłeś wczoraj w bibliotece?
    - Czytaliśmy, pisali i studiowali.

• If question, 90%-100% of the participants rejected omission of personal markers in one of the verbs.

• If reply, omission unaccepted in all cases. When the clitics were attached to the personal pronoun in nominative, the overall acceptance was up to a 40%
Results

• Block V: stress assignment.

• When asked for the Wh-element: the 100% of the two higher age groups keeps the stress in the same syllable when the personal marker as if the clitic was there; whereas only 56.5% of the younger groups only does so.

• When asked for the verb: results follow the same fashion. Older groups keep the accent, younger groups tend to stress always the penultimate syllable.
The present study

Conclusions and discussion
Conclusions and discussion

• To some extent our hypothesis is confirmed: the adjunction of clitics to other hosts than the verb is less and less accepted within the younger groups.

• The cases that are still acceptable to some degree are with personal pronouns and adverbs as hosts.

• Hosts have to be on the left side of the verb and omission is not possible (contra Franks and King, 2000).
Thank you for your attention!
Bibliography

Bibliography

- Wackernagel, Jacob (1892). Über ein Gesetz der indogermanischen Wortstellung, Indogermanische Forschungen, 1, 333-436.