

Towards a typology of pronominal cliticization

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ALT V Conference
Cagliari, Italy
15-18 September 2003

1 introduction

This is part of an investigation into pronominal clitics, which attempts to unravel the grammaticalisation of verbal person agreement from erstwhile free independent pronouns (cf. Givón 1976)

There is a massive literature on pronominal clitics, though it almost exclusively deals with a single languages (preferable European). A thorough typological investigation is still missing.

There are three big questions, I will here only talk about the third:

- Why do some languages have pronominal clitics and other not?
- In languages that have pronominal clitics: why do they occur in a particular sentence and not in another sentence?
- **If a clitic occurs in a sentence: where does it occur?**

Simplified drastically, there are two positions for pronominal clitics in a sentence:

- **Wackernagel's 2nd position** (after first word, after first syntactic constituent, or after first phonological unit)
- **Verb adjacent** (preverbal, postverbal, or enclitic to the preverbal constituent)

I will here present various languages that use more than one position for their pronominal clitics, depending on the kind of sentence. I will argue that the host depends, in these languages, on the information structure of the sentence.

Pronominal clitics themselves are highly topical (given, old, expected) information. In search for a host to attach onto, these clitics are in these languages drawn to the contrary element in the sentence. The hosts often represent highly focal (new, unexpected) information.

2 Some European languages

In Standard Romance languages (Spanish, French, Italian), but also in standard Greek, Albanian (Buchholz & Fiedler 1987: 450), and Macedonian (Franks & King 2000: 82-85) the unmarked position of pronominal object clitics is preverbal, except in non-finite verb forms like imperatives (though not always in negative imperatives), infinitives and gerunds.

(2.1) ITALIAN

- a. *Gianni lo ha letto*
 NAME 3SG.MASC.ACC has read
 ‘Gianni has read it.’
- b. *mangia-lo!*
 eat-3SG.MASC.ACC
 ‘eat it!’

Some languages, areally at the fringes, have a different distribution of pronominal object clitics:

(2.2) CYPRIOT GREEK (Terzi 1999)

Unmarked position of reduced pronoun is postverbal, as shown in (a) and (b), though preverbal/second position occurs:

- after factive complementizer *pu*
- after subjunctive marker *na*
- after sentential negation *en*, see (c)
- after WH-pronouns *pjos* “who”, *ti* “what”, see (d)
- after focused initial constituents, see (e)

- a. *poli anthropi panda kamnoun to sosta*
 many people always do.3PL it correctly
 ‘Many people always do it correctly.’
- b. *touto to vivlio dose tou!*
 DEM ART book give.IMP 3SG.DAT
 ‘Give this book to him!’
- c. *en ton iksero*
 NEG 3SG.ACC know.1SG
 ‘I don’t know him.’
- d. *pjos ton idhe?*
 who 3SG.ACC saw
 ‘Who saw him?’
- e. *tuto to vivlio su edhoken i Maria*
 DEM ART book 2SG.ACC gave.3SG ART NAME
 ‘THIS BOOK Mary gave to you.’

(2.3) EUROPEAN PORTUGUESE (Madeira 1992; Barbosa 1996; Rouveret 1999)

Unmarked position of clitics is postverbal, though preverbal position occurs:

- in embedded clauses: after complementizer *que* “that”
- after indefinite subjects: *ninguém* “no one”, *alguém* “someone, see (c)”
- after quantified subject: *todos [X]* “all X”, *poucos [X]* “few X”, see (b)
- after NPs with focus particle: *só [X]* “only X”, *até [X]*, “even X”, see (d)
- after preverbal adverbials: *já* “already”, *nunca* “never”
- with sentential negation *não*
- after initial WH-pronouns: *quem* “who”, *onde* “where”, *que* “which”, *o que* “what”
- after focussed constituents, see (d)

- a. *os rapazes ajudaram-me*
 ART boys helped.3PL-1SG.ACC
 ‘The boys helped me.’
- b. *todos os rapazes me ajudaram*
 all ART boys 1SG.ACC helped.3PL
 ‘All the boys helped me.’
- c. *alguém me ajudou*
 someone 1SG.ACC helped.3SG
 ‘Someone helped me.’
- d. *até o Pedro me deu uma prenda*
 even DEM NAME 1SG.DAT gave.3SG ART present
 ‘EVEN PEDRO gave me a present.’

(2.4) MEGLENO ROMANCE (Barbosa 1996: 12-15, citing Campos)

In most situations full object pronouns are used. Reduced object pronouns occur:

- after subordinators/complementizers: complementizer *ca* “that”, relative pronoun *tsi* “who”, conditional *ácu* “if”, temporal/causal adverb *con* “when”, causal adverb *ca* “because”
- after subjunctive *si*, future marker *si*
- after negation *nu*
- after emphatic subjects (focus?)

(2.5) SUMMARY

	preverbal clitics	postverbal clitics
Italian, Spanish, French	unmarked	imperative
Cypriot Greek	negation, WH-pronouns, focus, clause linkers	unmarked
European Portuguese	negation, WH-pronouns, focus, clause linkers, adverbs of time indefinites, quantifiers	unmarked

3 Pama-Nyungan languages

(for various surveys, see Capell 1967; Wurm 1969; Capell 1972; Dixon 1980: Ch. 11.3; 2002: Ch. 8)

Strictly syntactically organised cliticization in various forms:

- A: Often strictly second position clitics, e.g. **YINGKARTA** (Dench 1998: 33-36), **WAJARRI** (Dench 1998: 36-37), **NGIYAMBAA** (Donaldson 1980: 237-238), **WARLPURI** (Hale 1973)
- B: Sometimes subject clitic on second position, object clitic on verb, e.g. **NHANDA** (Blevins 2001: 79-88)
- C: Sometimes strictly verbal enclitics, e.g. **BIRI** (Terrill 1998: 25-27), **BARADHA** (Terrill 1998: 75-76)
- D: Slight variation on verbal enclitics: enclitics to constituent preceding the verb, except in sentences with only a verb, as there is nothing preceding the verb. **KUGU-NGANHCARA** (Smith & Johnson 2000: 398-402)

Some other languages show interesting complications:

3.1 Ngumpin languages (North-central Australia)

- A: Original pattern was second position cliticization
- B: Innovation 1: pronominal clitics are added to a base ('auxiliary') forming an independent word. This word occurs in various positions, though it appears to favour first or second position.
- C: Innovation 2: pronominal clitics are added to verb, independent of the position of the verb in the sentence

ad B:	clitics on auxiliary	other hosts
Ngarinyman, Bilinara	never	always on first constituent
Djaru, Gurindji	often	initial negation, WH-pronouns, focus, ...
Mudbara	(almost) always	(very rarely first constituent)

(3.1.1) DJARU (Tsunoda 1981: 125, 256)

conservative cliticization on first constituent (not on auxiliary):

- after conjunction *nanga*
- after modal adverb *ɲara* ‘possible’
- after negation *wagura*, see example below
- after WH-pronouns
- after focused NP (only rarely found)

<i>wagura-lija</i>	<i>ɲara-man-inura</i>	<i>ɲura</i>	<i>gaarara</i>	<i>ganimbara</i>
NEG-1DU.EXCL	know-PAST-NARR	camp	east	down creek
‘We did not know the camp east down the creek.’				

(3.1.2) GURINDJI (McConvell 1996: 308-309, 318-319)

conservative cliticization on first constituent (not on auxiliary):

- after subordinator/complementizer *nyamu*
- after sentential negation *kula*
- after initial WH pronouns
- after contrastive focus on first constituent, see (b)
- in swearing (not-literal conservative utterances), see (c)

- a. *yirrap-ma ngu=rna-yina parik wanyja VRD-la*
 one mob-TOP AUX=1SG.S-3PL.O leave leave.PAST VRD-LOC
 ‘One lot I left at VRD.’
- b. *yirrap-ma=rna-yina wart ka-nya murla-ngkurra*
 one mob-TOP=1SG.S-3PL.O back take-PAST here-ALL
 ‘THE OTHER LOT I brought back here.’
- c. *mirnti kartak-marraj=pa-n*
 anus receptacle-LIKE=LINK-2S
 ‘You have an anus like a billy can! (swearing at someone)’
 (when an auxiliary would be used, it would be intended literally)

ad C:

verb attracts clitics:

Ngarinyman	never
Mudbara	optional in imperative/hortative
Bilinara, Djaru, Gurindji	always in imperative/hortative
Malngin (Western Gurindji)	in imperative/hortative, future and past irrealis

(3.1.3) NGARINYMAN (McConvell 1996: 305)

- karnti-yi pina-ngka*
 wood-1SO give-IMP
 ‘give me a piece of wood’

(3.1.4) MUDBARRA (McConvell 1980: 90)

- a. *yali-ma pupa-ma wara jay-ka-li*
 that-TOP fire-TOP care see-IMP-2P
 ‘you lot watch out for that fire’
- b. *yali-ma-li wara jay-ka-li pupa-ma*
 that-TOP-2P care see-IMP-2P fire-ma
 ‘you lot watch out for that fire’ (=a)

(3.1.5) MALNGIN (McConvell 1980: 92)

- kayira yan-ku-lu-(lja)*
 north go-GUT-3P-(DOUBT)
 ‘they will (possibly) go north’

3.2 Kulin languages (West Victoria, Southern Australia)

- A: Original pattern was second position cliticization
 B: Innovation: verb became regularly placed in first position, with the clitic attached.
 Only a few kind of other elements could be placed in first position instead of the verb, viz. negative words, interrogative pronouns, and place/time adverbs

(3.2.1) WEMBAWEMBA, WERGAIA, MADIMADI (Hercus 1986: 50, 56-59, 92, 135-137)

‘It is a basic principle of Wembawemba that whenever words of the second class are used, that is interrogatives, negatives and demonstrative adverbs of time and place, they must take the position of the head word, which is otherwise generally occupied by the verb. The head word is the most strongly accented and important part of a sentence and the subject marker [enclitic] is normally transferred from the verb to it.

- a. *dagina-nda ginmer bembeygug biəlu djeligdjelig*
 hit-1S DEM children stick.INSTR yesterday
 ‘I hit these children with a stick yesterday’
- b. *gumba-nda*
 sleep-1S
 ‘I sleep’
- c. *wemba-nda gumba*
 NEG-1S sleep
 ‘I’m no sleeping’

(3.2.2) WATHWURRUNG (Blake *et al.* 1998: 77-80)

‘[enclitics] occur on the first word ... in the clause. Wathwurrung is a verb-first language, but the negative word and various interrogative words usually occur in the first position and attract enclitic pronouns.’

(3.2.3) WOIWURRUNG (Blake 1991: 73-77)

‘However, it is likely that the bound pronouns could attach to the first word or phrase in the clause ... Consider, for instance, the apparently inflected negative form [only one instance given] and interrogative forms [also only one instance given].’

(3.2.4) SUMMARY clitics not on the verb with:

Woiwurrung	initial negation, WH-pronoun (only few cases)
Wathwurrung	initial negation, WH-pronoun
Wembawemba	initial negation, WH-pronoun, time/place adverbs

3.3 Various Pama-Nyungan languages (in South-Central Australia)

A: Clitic is attached to the verb, independent of its position in the sentence.

B: A few initial elements attract the clitic: mainly negative word and interrogative pronouns, incidental place/time adverb.

(3.3.1) ARABANA-WANGKANGURRU (Hercus 1994: 264-266)

‘... the pronoun is enclitic to the verb, and the whole expression forms a unit ... The verb need not necessarily be in a sentence initial position to attract an enclitic pronouns. ... Apart from being enclitic to the verb, personal pronouns can be enclitic to the negative particles *malyka/malya* and *panta* “failed to”, but only when these are in sentence-initial position. ... The only other word which, when sentence initial, could attract an enclitic was *minha* “what”.’

- a. *waru* *nhanhi-k'-athu*
 long ago see-PAST-1S.ERG
 ‘long ago I saw it’
- b. *minha'-npa* *wangka?*
 what-2S language
 ‘What language (i.e. “nationality”) are you?’

(3.3.2) YURA LANGUAGES (Hercus 1994: 265-266)

‘The languages ... belonging to the Yura group, notably Kuyani, ... have bound pronouns, particularly pronoun subject forms enclitic to verbs. They also make an optional use of bound forms following the initial word in a sentence, particularly if that is a negative or an interrogative.’

(3.3.3) SOUTHERN BAGANDJI (Hercus 1982: 156-167)

‘... the bound personal pronouns in Southern Bagandji are normally attached to the verb ... This affixation takes place regardless of what position the verb occupies within the sentence. The only major exception is: when an interrogative adverb begins a sentence the bound personal pronouns are attached to that adverb.’

(3.3.4) YUWAALARAAY (Williams 1980: 51-53)

‘The bound pronoun forms attested in Yuwaalaraay occur almost exclusively on ... the negative and interrogatives. ... Both of these are sentence initial morphemes. ... One instance of [initial] ... expression of ... place has also been noted. ... There are instances of bound pronouns on morphemes [almost exclusively verbs] which are not sentence initial.’

(3.3.5) SUMMARY clitics not on the verb with:

Southern Bagandji	initial WH-pronoun
Arabana-Wangkangurru	initial negation, WH-pronoun
Kuyani	initial negation, WH-pronoun, other words (?)
Yuwaalaraay	initial negation, WH-pronoun, place adverb (one instance)

4 Munda languages

Subject marking either enclitic on the verb or enclitic on the preverbal constituent, though the exact conditions vary between the various languages. If the verb is the only constituent, it will always get the clitics (for a survey, see Pinnow 1966: 156-168; Bhattacharya 1975: 144-147).

(4.1) GUTOB (Zide 1997: 317-323)

Subject marking enclitic to the verb, see (a), except enclitic to these preverbal constituents:

- some WH-pronouns *ũdoj* “when”, *monoʔ* “where”, *may* “why”, see (B)
- some adverbs *eke* “here”, *aʔ* “now”, *begi* “quickly”, *dapre* “afterwards”

- a. *jom-lai* *bu-oʔ-NIŋ*
 NAME-ACC beat-PAST-1S
 ‘I will beat up Jom’
- b. *NIŋ* *ũdoj-NIŋ* *sorpei-oʔ-beʔ-tu*
 1S.PRON when-1S hand over-PAST-AUX-FUT
 ‘When will/do I hand over (the girl to the tiger)?’

(4.2) KHARIA (Peterson in press)

Subject marking enclitic to the verb, see (a), except with a sentential negation: the negative word is placed preverbally and attracts the person marking clitic, see (b). Apparently not with question words, see (c).

- a. *am-bar* *hokaʔ-te* *yo-te-bar*
 2-2.HON 3S-OBL see-PAST-2.HON
 ‘you (polite) saw him/her’
- b. *am-bar* *hokaʔ-te* *um-bar* *yo-te*
 2-2.HON 3S-OBL NEG-2.HON see-PAST
 ‘you (polite) did not see him/her’
- c. *ho* *danote* *iguʔ-ga* *tar-oʔ-gur-e-niŋ*
 DEM demon how-FOC kill-CAUS-fall-IRR-EXCL
 ‘How will we kill that demon?’

(4.3) BHUMIJ (Ramaswami 1992: 128-132, 143-151)

Enclitics appear to be rather free to attach to the verb, see (a), or to the preverbal constituent, see (b), though preverbal negation, see (c) and imperative verbs, see (d) always attract the clitic.

- a. *aiŋ* *hɔrɔta-ke* *lel-li-a-iŋ*
 1S.PRON man-ACC see-PAST-IND-1S
 ‘I saw a man’
- b. *aiŋ* *marəŋ* *daru-iŋ* *lel-ke-d-a*
 1S.PRON big tree-1S see-PAST-IND
 ‘I saw a big tree’
- c. *ka-iŋ* *sen-a*
 NEG-1S go-IND
 ‘I shall not go’
- d. *dayakate* *aiŋ-ke* *madal-rase* *om-a-iŋ-me*
 please 1S.PRON-ACC apple-juice give-IND-1SO-2S
 ‘please give me apple juice’

(4.4) SANTALI (Neukom 2001: 113-114, 146-150)

Unmarked position of person marking is on the preverbal constituent (including negation, see (a)), except when there is no preverbal constituent, see (b), and in imperatives, see (c).

- a. *ba-ko* *badae-a*
 NEG-3P know-IND
 ‘they don’t know’
- b. *met-a-pe-kan-a-ŋ*
 say-APPL-2SO-IPFV-IND-1S
 ‘I tell you’
- c. *mase* *mit’* *ghəri* *dɔhɔ-ŋɔŋ-ɛŋ-pe!*
 PTCL one moment put down-little-1SO-2P
 ‘put me down for a moment’

(4.5) SUMMARY clitic on preverbal constituent clitics on verb

Gutob	WH-pronouns, time/place adverbs	unmarked
Kharia	negation	unmarked
Bhumij	negation, unmarked (focus?)	imperatives, unmarked
Santali	negation, unmarked	imperatives

5 Iranian languages

- A: Iranian had originally Wackernagel-type object clitics: **MIDDLE PERSIAN/PARTHIAN** (Boyce 1964; Brunner 1977)
 B: Some Modern Iranian languages have retained them: **OSSETIC** (Abaev 1964: 126-127), **PASHTO** (Tegey 1978; Roberts 2001)
 C: Most modern Iranian languages lost them, or have them affixed on the verb.

Some languages are inbetween second position and verbal enclitics:

(5.1) PERSIAN (Majidi 1990: 119, 123)

Enclitic to the verb, see (a), though in colloquial usage attached to an initial WH-pronoun, see (b):

- a. *mî-bin-ad-am*
 DUR-see-3SG.NOM-1SG.ACC
 ‘He sees me’
- b. *kojáj-at* *dárd* *mî-kon-ad*
 where-2SG.ACC pain DUR-make-3SG
 ‘Where do you have pain?’ (colloquial)

(5.2) SULEIMANIYE KURDISH (Edmonds 1955: 497-499; McCarus 1958: 104; MacKenzie 1961: 78; Bynon 1979: 216 ff.)

The clitic is attached to the verb, but in transitive clauses the enclitic is found attached to the first word, though not all words can function as hosts. Possible hosts:

- negation, see (a)
- WH-pronouns, see (b)
- adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, preverbs can function as hosts (focus?), but not subject, prepositional phrases, interjections, conjunctions, see (c)

- a. *war-tan* *nagirt* (*leman*)
 NEG-2S obtain (from us)
 ‘you did not obtain is (from us)’
- b. *cón-tan* *zaní*
 how-2S know
 ‘how did you know?’
- c. *márek-im* *kúšt*
 snake-1S kill
 ‘I killed a snake’

(5.3) NORTHERN TALYSH (Schulze 2000: 55, 53)

Enclitic most commonly on the preverbal element, marking focus on this element, see (a), (b). Incidentally, the clitic is also found on the first element of the clause, see (c).

- a. *de* *cic-e* *epist-a?*
 2SG.PRON what-2SG tie up-PERF
 ‘What did you tie up?’

- b. *cay leng-on-em epest-a*
 3SG.POSS leg-PL-1SG tie up-PERF
 ‘I tied up his leg.’
- c. *albahal-em tifang ba po pekeru-i*
 this moment-1SG rifle to down take up-AOR
 ‘In this moment I took up the rifle from below.’

(5.4) SOUTHERN TATI (Yar-Shater 1969: 155-157)

Appears to be highly alike to the neighbouring Northern Talysh.

(5.5) SUMMARY	clitics on first constituent	clitics on verb
Middle Persian	all	none
Persian	WH-pronoun (colloquial)	unmarked enclitic
Suleimaniye Kurdish	negation, WH-pronoun, focus(?)	unmarked enclitic
Northern Talysh, Southern Tati	focus (?)	on preverbal focus

6 Udi (Lezgian, Caucasus)

Udi (Harris 2000: Ch. 3, 6) is exceptional among other Lezgian languages in having clitics (cf. Haspelmath 1993). Udi adds clitics either on (in!) the verb or on the preverbal constituent. The default position is on the verb. But enclitics are attached on preverbal constituent after:

- negative particle (in some conditions postverbal), see (a)
- questioned constituent
- other focused constituents, see (b), (c), (d)

- a. *nana-n te-ne buyab-e p'a ačik'alšey*
 mother-ERG NEG-3S find-AOR two toy.ABS
 ‘mother did not find two toys’
- b. *äyel-en p'a eš a-ne-q'-e*
 chiled-ERG two apple take-3S-take-AOR
 ‘the child took two apples’
- c. *äyel-en p'a eš-ne aq'-e*
 chiled-ERG two apple-3S take-AOR
 ‘the child took TWO APPLES’
- d. *äyel-en-ne aq'-e p'a eš-n-ux*
 chiled-ERG-3S take-AOR two apple-OBL-DAT
 ‘THE CHILD took two apples’

However, verbs in the imperative, future II and subjunctive attract the clitics also in those circumstances (Harris 2000: 118)

- e. *baba-n eš nut eč-al-le k'wa*
 father-ERG apple.ABS NEG bring-FUT-3S house.DAT
 ‘father will not bring apples to the house’

SUMMARY	enclitic on preverbal constituent	clitics on verb
Udi	negation, WH-pronoun, focus	unmarked, imperative, irrealis

7 Sandawe (Khoisan)

In the realis (the situation in the irrealis is much more complicated), the pronominal clitic is attracted to the focus, see (a) (Elderkin 1986; 1991; Eaton 2001; 2002). The WH-pronoun also appears to attract the clitic, see (b). The situation with negation and imperatives is unclear in the sources.

- a. *nam hóts hò-sà à:mè*
 NAME what-3FS break
 ‘what did Nam break?’
- b. *nam sómbá úte-sà thímè*
 NAME fish yesterday-3FS cook
 ‘Nam cooked the fish YESTERDAY’

SUMMARY	enclitic on
Sandawe	focus, WH-pronouns

8 Sonora Yaqui (Uto-Aztecan)

Second position clitics, except in imperatives, in which the verb attracts the clitics (Dedrick & Casad 1999: 242, 60, 92, 98).

- a. *tú'uli-s-e'e áa hi'ohte*
 pretty-ADV-2S able write
 ‘you can write beautifully’
- b. *kát-te bit-wa-k*
 NEG-1P see-PASS-PRF
 ‘we were not seen’
- c. *haí-sa-te án-nee*
 how-Q-1P do-FUT
 ‘what shall we do?’
- d. *bín-a'abo katé-'em*
 this direction-here come-2P
 ‘You (plural), come here!’

SUMMARY	enclitic on first constituent	enclitic on verb
Sonora Yaqui	unmarked	imperative

9 Focus hierarchy of clitic attraction

Summary of clitic-variation:

Focus Hierarchy:

Cliticization away from verb	Strongest non-verb focus
↑	↑
Negation, WH-pronouns	inherent focus
↑	↑
Focused NPs	intended focus
↑	↑
Clause linkers, Adverbs of time/place	stage setting
↑	↑
Indefinite/quantified NPs	sentence operators (?)
↑	↑
... (?)	unmarked sentence
□	□
Irrealis, Future	focus on verb
□	□
Imperative/hortative	strong focus on verb
□	□
Cliticization on the verb	Strongest verb focus

If there is some flexibility for the placement of pronominal clitics, they will be attached to the most focal element in the clause. As a pronominal clitic is highly topical (non-focal) marker, this combination is a juncture of opposites: the less focal element binds itself on the most focal element.

Most languages only use the extremes of the focus hierarchy: either only the strongest verb focus (imperative) has a special clitic placement or the strongest non-verb focus (sentential negation, WH-pronouns) has a special clitic placement. Some languages move further on the hierarchy, from either side.

Probably, there is a grammaticalisation cline, on which the patterns described in this paper represent the first stage:

Pragmatic host attachment (onto focus)
 □
 Syntactic host attachment (onto a position)
 □
 Morphological host attachment (onto a word-class ~ ‘agreement’)

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