

A criterial approach to cliticisation

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In Latin, pronouns denoting given, non-corrective information usually occur after focalised constituents (denoting either contrastive or new information), see (1)a, and operators such as *wh* elements or bare quantifiers, see (1)b (Adams 1994 a.o.).

- (1) a ALIUM *illa* amat, non illum (Lat.; Plaut. *Bacch.* 593)
Another she loves, not him
'She loves another, not him'
- b QUID *tibi* vis dicam nisi quod viderim? (Lat.; Plaut. *Miles* 300)
What to.you you.want I.say if.not that I.say
'What would you have me say to you, but that I did see her?'

The above data show that the embryonic mechanism of cliticisation was originally located in C and that Romance clitic systems emerged from the displacement illustrated above (Salvi 2004), after syntactic changes affected the structure of Latin pronouns (see below) and clauses (Ledgeway 2017 a.o. on T-to-C).

Evidence of C-oriented clitics in early Romance comes from patterns of *productive interpolation* in old Spanish and old Portuguese, i.e. the insertion of material between the verb and the clitic(s) in context where the verb does not move to C.

- (2) a *lhe* [el rrei] taxava que... (o.Port; D. Pedro IV.64; from Salvi 1997)
to.him= the king ordained that
'The king ordained to him that...'
- b Syel físico *la* [bien] connoçe (o.Sp.; Rivero 1997)
if the physician it.F= well knows
'If the physician knows it well'

The other Romance languages, however, have exhibited a robust system of *ad-verbal* clitics since the earliest attestations. Adverbial clitics always attach to the inflected verb, either enclitically or proclitically, regardless of the position of the verb in the structure of the clause.

This amounts to saying that, while Ibero-Romance (save for old Catalan) exhibited relics of second-position/C-oriented clitics (cf. (2)), the other Romance languages – e.g. old Italian, old French, etc. – already displayed a mechanism of *incorporation*, merging the clitics to their verbal host and disallowing interpolation effects.

The talk focuses on two main turning points in the history of clitic placement: the emergence of C-oriented/Wackernagel clitics in the Latin/Romance transition and their successive evolution into ad-verbal clitics (I will not address here the alternation between proclitic and enclitic placement in early Romance, the so-called Tobler-Mussafia law). The talk elaborates on the following claims:

- the Wackernagel position was a criterial position in the sense of Rizzi 2006, 2007;
- the number, size, and type of elements frozen in the Wackernagel position was progressively reduced; such reduction results when a category-neutral criterial head is turned into a Criterial Probe, which targets a closed class of Criterial Goals;
- adverbial clitics, i.e. incorporated clitics, emerged after reanalysis of the above freezing configuration; the diachronic analysis of clitic phenomena supports the hypothesis that incorporation is a form of sub-lexical freezing (Rizzi 2016).

As shown in (1), pronouns and other types of constituents (adverbial particles, light PPs, etc.) were systematically placed in a post-focal position (dubbed Wackernagel Position, W) when referencing G-topics (Bianchi and Frascarelli 2010 a.o.), i.e. given, non-contrastive information that cannot trigger reference shift and has no 'aboutness' flavour. In this respect, W was therefore a category neutral attractor, a criterial position in the sense of Rizzi 2006, 2007.

The criterial head *W* was progressively reanalysed as a Criterial Probe. This change turned *W* into an *atrophic* position, attracting only a certain class of bare pronouns. Such pronouns ended up being the only Criterial Goals allowed in *W*, where they were eventually frozen. This mechanism yielded C-oriented clitics (or Wackernagel, or second-position clitics), which, in origin, were not subject to any form of incorporation, as witnessed by patterns of interpolation such as (2).

Incorporation came later on, after reanalysis of the word order deriving from the interplay of C-oriented cliticisation and generalised T-to-C movement (Ledgeway 2017 a.o.). Wackernagel clitics were originally frozen in *W*, cf. (3)a, and lately reanalysed as elements incorporated to the finite verb in *Fin*, as shown in (3)b (the notation [...]_{lex} stands for a complex head, see below).

(3) a [w clitics [_{Fin} [_v T]_{lex}] → b [_{Fin} [clitics v T]_{lex}

Four possible analyses of incorporation may account for the rebracketing in (3): 1) incorporation is a morphological operation (Marantz 1988; Matushansky 2006 a.o.); 2) incorporation is a side-effect of Agree (Roberts 2010); 3) incorporation results from remnant movement (Poletto & Pollock 2006 a.o.); 4) incorporation is a form of freezing (Rizzi 2016).

I will argue in favour of the fourth analysis. In Rizzi's model, any minimal element drawn from the lexicon bears the feature *lex*. When a *lex* element is merged with another minimal element, the *lex* feature may project with the categorial feature or not. If the resulting structure is labelled as *lex*, cf. (4a), it will be eventually computed as a complex head; otherwise, we get a non-*lex* category, i.e a phrase, cf. (4b). In Rizzi's word, the *lex* feature 'demarcates the zone of the tree in which syntactic processes apply "below the word"'.

The second tenet of Rizzi's theory is that only maximal objects can be moved. Crucially, maximality in Rizzi's sense is orthogonal to the X/X_{lex} divide. Both objects in (4)a and (4)b are maximal since they contain an element with the same label, but only the latter is a phrase:

(4) a [X Y_{lex} X_{lex}]_{lex} b [X X Y]

Since non maximal elements cannot undergo movement, Y_{lex} in (4)a and Y in (4)b cannot move further, yielding freezing at the head/phrase level, respectively. Freezing of a *lex* element is what is normally called 'incorporation'. In this view, bare elements may play a pivotal role in processes of reanalysis as frozen bare elements and incorporated elements are in fact undistinguishable.

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