The reanalysis of encliticised pronominal forms in Arabic

Maris Camilleri

University of Essex

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This study addresses an end grammaticalisation path involving a functional reanalysis of erstwhile non-SUBJ enclitic pronominal forms in vernacular Arabic. In the canonical context, encliticised pronouns in Arabic are ACC (1) or DAT-marked when attached onto verbal forms and GEN when attached onto nominal and prepositional forms (2).

(1) šif-t-**ni**
see.PFV-2SGM-1SG.ACC

You (M) saw me.

(2) ʔumm-**i**
mother-1SG.GEN

my mother

The above facts are nothing extraordinary and find semi-parallels in typologically different languages, including Romance and Celtic. It is what ends up happening to nominal and prepositional forms, in particular, that is most significant to the further development of these enclitic forms.

Several nominal and prepositional forms across the different vernaculars partake in grammaticalisation and lexicalisation processes involving functional and semantic change that yields a peripheral word category. This in turn results in a reanalysis of the very function of the enclitic forms. These forms are referred to as *pseudo-verbs* or *verboids* across the vernacular Arabic system. This category identifies forms that synchronically take on various verbal functions, including auxiliary and matrix predicate functions, but are erstwhile prepositions (3a), nouns (3b) or quantifiers (Comrie (1991, 2008), Brustad (2000), Eid (2008)).

(3) a. mona **il-ha** ʔanf ṭawīl
Mona have-3SGF.GEN nose.SGM long.SGM

Lit: Mona to-her nose long
Mona has a long nose.   Palestinian: Boneh and Sichel (2010)

b. **šakla-ha** ʔet-ḥassin-it
seem-3SGF.GEN REFL-become.better.PFV-3SGF

Lit: shape-her got better
She seems to have got better.   Egyptian: ElSadek and Sadler (2015)

In (3a), the erstwhile preposition meaning 'to, for' has reanalysed into a transitive verbal predicate expressing a possessive relation, displaying what Stassen (2009) refers to as a HAVE-Drift. In (3b), a previous nominal form meaning 'form, shape' that solely took a GEN-marked NP or enclitic complement now functions as a 'seem, appear' raising-type predicate (Camilleri and Sadler, 2019). Both these pseudo-verbal forms exist along with their source lexical forms in the grammar.

Shared across both pseudo-verbs in (3) and across this peripheral word class more broadly, is the non-canonical SUBJ realization that results. The grammaticalisation of this word class in Arabic has rendered a new paradigm of SUBJ inflection that constitutes a reanalysis of the erstwhile non-SUBJ enclitic pronominal complements of the predecessor prepositional and nominal lexical forms. There is grounds on the basis of which to argue along with Comrie and Stassen that the development of pseudo-verbs has come about via the mediation of a topicalisation stage, and that, extending further this line of reasoning, the non-canonical SUBJ realization is in essence the reanalysis of a resumptive pronominal form that otherwise functioned as the argument of the erstwhile nouns and prepositions. In addition to this morphosyntactic effect, reference will here be made to what is in the literature referred to as prominent internal possessor behaviours (Bárány et al., 2019) as further diachronic motivations for the development of non-canonical SUBJ inflection. Reference to how the verbal function of the new lexical formations is consolidated in the grammar will also be made, displaying how the enclitic's new role is often accompanied by a GEN to ACC shift.

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