

Univerbation and the afterlife of ‘simple’ clitics

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It is well known that clitics are prone to univerbation with their syntactic and/or prosodic hosts.

Univerbation turns a clitic into a bound morph which, from that time on, is just a part of a larger word and accordingly develops like bound morphs and/or segment strings of any origin. In my talk I will argue that this is actually true only for one of the two major types of clitics whereas clitics belonging to the other type may still interact with their etymological source in different ways even after the univerbation has been completed. I will also systematise the different attested patterns of such interaction and address the question of how they may help in the reconstruction of bound morphology.

In most general terms, two major types of clitics may be distinguished. The so-called ‘simple’ clitics are just prosodically weak variants of stressed word-forms (cf. German 2SG.NOM stressed *du* vs. clitic =*du* ‘you’). By contrast, clitics which may be called ‘special’ clitics deviate from their stressed counterparts not just prosodically but also phonologically and/or syntactically (cf. Vedic Sanskrit 1PL.ACC stressed *asmān* vs. clitic =*nas*). Cf. slightly differently Zwicky (1994), Nübling (1992: 24-34), Anderson (1993: 73-76, 2005: 78), Halpern (1996: ix, 1998), Meklenborg Salvesen & Helland (2013: 5-7), among others. Clitics of both types may become obligatory in a specific context and ultimately undergo univerbation. The life of a ‘special’ clitic ends at this point. By contrast, the phonological proximity of a (former) ‘simple’ clitic to its stressed counterpart often keeps the new structure synchronically analysable. This allows for a secondary interaction (a) between this structure and the stressed counterpart of the former ‘simple’ clitic, (b) between this structure and its stressed constituent used in different contexts.

In my talk, I will introduce a first preliminary typology of such interaction patterns attested in structures containing (former) ‘simple’ clitics. To this end, I intend to use two different morphological structures, both taken from the Balto-Slavonic sub-branch of Indo-European. The first will be the determinate inflection of adjectives, which is known to have only recently developed by univerbation with a ‘simple’ clitic. The second structure will be the finite verbs only recently univerbated with clitic by-forms of originally independent local adverbs. Cf. on both structures and/or developments most recently Sommer (2018, 2019), Hill et al. (2019).

Using most recent developments of these two structures in a range of different Baltic and Slavonic dialects (as partially described in Zinkevičius 1957, 1966, 1981, Hock 2016, Gelumbeckaitė 2020, Avanesov et al. 1965, Bromlej & Bulatova 1972 etc.), I will introduce several patterns of interaction between such structures and the independent words which originally provided their constituents. Cf. in particular:

- (a) phonological adjustment of the clitic part (cf. INST.SG.M. Lith *mažúo-ju*, NOM.PL.M. *-ie-ji* → Lith dial. *mažúo-juo*, *-ie-jiē*, cf. INST.SG.M. *juō*, NOM.PL.M. *jiē*),
- (b) morphological adjustment of the clitic part (cf. NOM.SG.F. ORu *dobra-ja*, Lith dial. *mažó-ja* → OPr *pirmo-i*, Lith *mažó-ji*, Latv *mazà-i*, cf. NOM.SG.F. ORu *ja* ~ Lith *ji*),
- (c) morphological adjustment of the stressed part (cf. LOC.SG.M. OLith *maža-jame* → Lith dial. *mažam-jam*, cf. LOC.SG.M. Lith *mažamè*, *jamè* > Lith dial. *maža□*, *ja□*), etc.

Taking into account these patterns of secondary interaction between a univerbated morphological structure and its (former) constituents explains a great deal of surprising variation typically observed in such structures in different dialects and/or languages. This insight may help to correctly reconstruct the evolution of bound morphology in groups of related languages.

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