

Clitics vs Affixes & Particles

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Introduction

Clitics vs Affixes: Zwicky & Pullum '83

Clitics vs Words and Particles: Zwicky '85

A lexicalist model including clitics

Conclusion

Introduction

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- And he soon came to realize that some elements seem to be somewhat in between the two categories.
- He dubbed these elements *clitics*
- This introduction of a new concept *clitics* of course raises questions about the properties of these elements
- And whether these elements are characterized by a coherent and constant set of properties or whether they are a continuum between words and affixes.

- Zwicky (1977) already tries to identify the properties of clitics but the most coherent discussion (which serves as a reference point in all of these discussions) is found in Zwicky & Pullum (1983)
 - ↪ In this paper, the authors provide a set of morphosyntactic diagnostics to distinguish clitics from affixes
 - ↪ And they apply the diagnostics to the phenomena of (a) phonologically reduced auxiliaries and (b) phonologically reduced negation (*n't*) in English.

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- According to these authors, *clitics* are a descriptive category of language with a specific set of morphosyntactic properties.
- In the theoretical system they set up, *clitics* are *not* a primitive of the theory per se but a cooccurrence of properties:
 - Phonological dependency
 - Syntactic independency

Clitics vs Affixes: Zwicky & Pullum '83

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 - ④ Semantic idiosyncrasies are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups
 - ⑤ Syntactic rules can affect affixed words but cannot affect clitic groups
 - ⑥ Clitics can attach to material already containing clitics but affixes cannot.

- ① The degree of selection:
- Typical affixes only attach to an element of a certain syntactic category:
 - The plural /-s/ or its allomorphs in English attach only to nouns:
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 - The 3.SG /-s/ or its allomorphs in English attach only to verbs:
 - (2) love-s, chuckle-s, etc...

- The auxiliaries /-s/ (for *is* or *has*) attach to all kinds of things:
 - (3) a. The person I talked to's gonna be angry with me
 - b. Peter's the weirdest guy in town
 - c. The ball you hit's just broken into my dining room window
 - d. The drive home tonight's really been smooth
- The auxiliaries seem to be less closely tied to the morphosyntactic category they attach to.

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 - ↪ Maybe a given element only occurs in a position which simply happens to be adjacent to one and the same category at all times.

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 - ↪ Maybe a given element only occurs in a position which simply happens to be adjacent to one and the same category at all times.
- Note further that there might be cases where morphological and syntactic selection can be hard to distinguish.

- The Degree of Selection-diagnostic has been criticized a lot in subsequent literature (see amongst many others Zwicky 1987, Miller 1992, Miller & Halpern 1992)
- The main reason is that it often seems to be in conflict with the other diagnostics.
 - ↪ One example seems to be the genitive /-s/ in English which exhibits a very low degree of selection whereas the other criteria point towards it being an inflectional affix.
- We will talk about that in more detail when we talk about phrasal inflection.

② Arbitrary gaps:

- In some inflectional paradigms, certain forms are missing.

- (4)
- a. dive - dove - ???
 - b. stride - strode - ???
 - c. shoot s.o. an email - ???

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- But clearly this is very subtle diagnostic and false negatives are everywhere.

- ③ Morphophonological idiosyncrasies are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups.
- Affixes might be subject to conditioned allomorphy when attached to a given stem; Stems might be subject to allomorphy/suppletion when attached with an affix.
 - (5) sheep → sheep-∅, mouse → mice-∅, etc.
 - (6) you can, he can(*s)
- Those processes are unexpected with clitics:
 - (7) *Catch me if you can's* the best movie ever.

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- Productive phonological rules do not fall under this category:
 - (8) Liz= \emptyset gonna go clubbing tonight.
 - (9) a. It=s really cold in here.
b. There=z really no hope.

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- ④ Semantic idiosyncrasies are more characteristic of affixed words than of clitic groups.
- Sometimes stem-affix combinations are not compositional in meaning;
 - The meaning of the whole does not derive from the meaning of the parts.

(10) glass-es \neq glass-pl

- Such lexicalized meanings are not expected with clitics:

(11) The glass=s half empty

- ⑤ Syntactic rules can affect affixed words but cannot affect clitic groups.

- Rules of syntax (i.e. movement, ellipsis) etc will treat stem+affix combinations as a word but host+clitic combinations not:

- (12) a. You could=ve been here.
 b. *Could=ve you been here *Q-Inversion*
- (13) a. She=ll have eaten already.
 b. *Have she=ll eaten already? *Q-Inversion*
- (14) a. What=ll we do?
 b. *What=ll did I ask him we do? *LD Mvmt*

- ⑥ Clitics can attach to material already containing clitics but affixes cannot.
- There's a strict order: Affixes attach to stems before clitics. Anything outside of a clitic must as well be a clitic.
- (15) a. The llama=d=ve run for his life.
b. *The llama=d=ve-s run for their lives.

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 - It seems plausible to treat the contracted negation *n't* as a clitic version of the fully articulated counterpart *not*.

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 - After all, the auxiliaries - which were the poster childs for simple clitics - also have fully articulated counterparts.
 - So let's do the tests...

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- The forms of *ain't* have no real positive counterparts as they can replace all sorts of negated auxiliaries:

(18) a. I/he ain't got nobody
 b. I/he ain't your mama.

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- ④ Semantic idiosyncrasies

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- (22) a. *I=d=n't be doing this unless I had to
b. I hadn't been doing this unless I had to.

To conclude:

- Somewhat surprisingly, *n't* is not a contracted version of *not*.
 - ↪ Historically, they are clearly related. But synchronically, they are not.
- *n't* is not even a clitic; all six diagnostics point towards it being a regular affix like plural or third person singular.

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- They emphasize that these tests are not definitional. They might fail to apply in a given case or obscured by additional factors.
 - ↔ In fact, Zwicky is keen to note that there is no point defining linguistic categories outside of a theoretical framework at all.
- All of these tests are formulated as tendencies, not as universals. *“They are symptoms, not diagnoses.”*

Clitics vs Words and Particles: Zwicky '85

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- The main goal of this paper is to figure out whether so-called *particles* in the world's languages are actually clitics or words.
- The paper also contains an illuminating (though somewhat off-topic) discussion about the nature of linguistic testing in general.

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- The phonological criteria may or may not be plausible
 - ↪ But as we will see in the next session, the phonology of a clitic is typically considered independent from its grammatical status.
- The morphological criteria mostly seem to be derivative of the phonological ones
- And the syntactic criteria are obscure, self-contradicting or simply wrong.

- Phonological criteria to distinguish clitics and words:
 - Clitics and independent words can be distinguished on the basis of word-level and phrase-level phonology:
 - ↪ Tone, length, sandhi can be sensitive to the difference
 - ↪ Segmental processes such as vowel harmony are often word bound.

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 - ↪ Tone, length, sandhi can be sensitive to the difference
 - ↪ Segmental processes such as vowel harmony are often word bound.
 - Accent, stress is word bound.
 - ↪ Note that many independent words (often function words) such as prepositions etc also do not bear stress.

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 - **Distribution:** Affixes and clitics have a single principle governing their distribution (attaches to the highest verb; to the first word of the clause) whereas words do not.

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- The alternative ordering criterion simply does not apply anymore (very few syntactic movements are nowadays viewed as stylistic).
- As for the distribution criterion, I would submit that many words actually exhibit the same pattern.

- Finally, some syntactic tests:
- **Deletion:** Parts of word+clitic combinations cannot be subject to deletion.
 - **Replacement:** Parts of word+clitic combinations cannot be replaced by pro-forms.
 - **Movement:** Parts of word+clitic combinations cannot be moved

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- As for the deletion test, it (a) faces tons of empirical problems and (b) it to the extent that it holds, it might again be a derivative property of the phonology and the ability to bear focus.
- The question about movement is always what you take as a basis. At least pretheoretically, it looks like a part of a word-clitic combination has undergone inversion whereas the other part has not.

- (23) a. You would've come.
b. Would you've come?

To conclude:

- Differences between affixes and clitics are relatively well-established.
 - ↪ That does not mean that they must be a part of the grammar though.
 - ↪ They can derive from orthogonal differences, which, as we will see, is in one way or another the standard approach taken by most (if not all) formal frameworks.
 - ↪ In both lexicalist (Zwicky & Pullum, Anderson) as well as non-lexicalist (Halle & Marantz, DM) frameworks, the difference between clitics and affixes derives from independent factors.

- Differences between clitics and words are much more tricky:
 - ↪ There might be some phonological or prosodic differences
 - ↪ But given that the phonology is conceived of as independent of the morphosyntactic behavior, those differences are not necessarily indicative of whether clitics are an existing morphosyntactic category.
 - ↪ And the few reliable criteria that Zwicky lists as morphological or syntactic might simply be derivative from the phonology or the semantics.

A lexicalist model including clitics

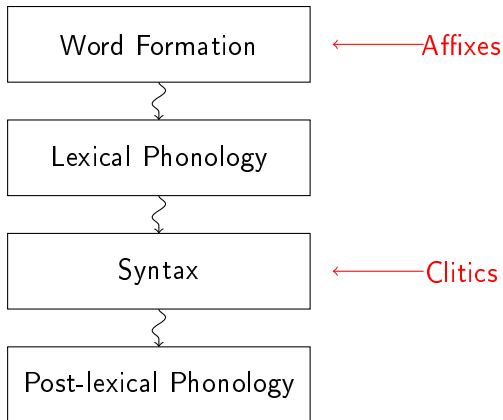
- The discussion above suggested that clitics should be treated at least as different from affixes in various respects.

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- That does not necessarily provide an answer to the question whether they are a morphosyntactic category on their own.
 - ↪ Maybe they are a subtype of another category with special properties.
- And in fact, much of the literature since Zwicky & Pullum (1983) was influenced by their modular explanation for the difference between clitics and affixes (see amongst many others Anderson 1992, Miller 1992, Stump 2001).

- According to Zwicky & Pullum (1983) - and relevant discussion in Zwicky & Pullum (1982) - the difference between affixes and clitics follow from them fundamentally belonging to different modules:
- Affixes are subject to morphology. They are generated by whatever means the morphology uses and do not interfere with syntax.
 - Clitics are a subject of syntax. Due to their additional requirement to find a prosodic host, they attach to other syntactic elements but their are not part of the morphosyntactic words.

(24)

A lexical model:



- Consider a stem-affix=clitic combination like *would-n't=ve*

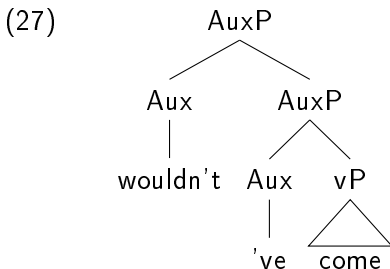
(25) I would-n't=ve come.

- The stem *would* and the affix *n't* are combined in the morphology:

(26) $PF(\langle \text{will}, \sigma : \{IND, 1, SG, PAST, NEG\} \rangle) = \langle \text{wouldn't}, \sigma \rangle$

↪ The result is then subject to Lexical Phonology.

- Afterwards, the word *wouldn't* is then inserted into the syntactic derivation where it happens to be adjacent to the clitic 've:



- In search of a proper prosodic host, the clitic will attach to whatever is to the left of it after the syntax.
- The output of the syntactic derivation is then subject to the Postlexical phonology.

- This derivation has a couple of advantages. Most of the properties of affixes and clitics fall right out of the system:

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 - Similarly for morphophonological idiosyncrasies such as allomorphy and suppletion; they are morphological phenomena and are thus only found with affixes.
 - Further, it is clear, why affixes always need to precede clitics.
 - And it becomes clear why syntactic rules cannot refer to parts of word+affix combinations but sometimes affect parts of word-clitic combinations.

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- If you recall, all the diagnostics in Zwicky & Pullum 1983 are formulated in terms of tendencies.
 - ↪ In each case, affixes tend to exhibit a property x whereas clitics tend not to exhibit x.
- But: The system as it stands provides not much wiggle room in this respect.
 - ↪ By definition, clitics, as syntactic formatives, cannot exhibit allomorphy, semantic or phonological idiosyncrasies, etc.

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- But: The system as it stands provides not much wiggle room in this respect.
 - ↪ By definition, clitics, as syntactic formatives, cannot exhibit allomorphy, semantic or phonological idiosyncrasies, etc.
 - ↪ Thus, whenever it seems that such cases are found, the system has severe trouble deriving it.

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- In (28), the determiner is treated as an affix, whereas the possessor is treated as a clitic even though distributionally, they show the exact same behavior and always occur adjacent to each other.

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- All kinds of diagnostics (phonological, morphological and syntactic) criteria have been proposed.
- But it is often unclear whether these properties cluster and lead to coherent classifications.

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- But: Such classifications are crucial for lexicalist models in which affixes are treated fundamentally different from clitics.
 - The former are morphological elements combined with stems in accordance to the rules of the lexicon (i.e. the morphology)
 - And the latter are syntactic formatives which are active in the syntax and combine with whatever is adjacent to them after the syntactic derivation.
- Frameworks in which all word formation is postsyntactic can be a little bit more relaxed about the problems that clitics pose.
 - ↪ But they also want to keep some predictive power as to which elements are allowed to undergo allomorphy, alloosemy etc.