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CLITICS IN OLD SERBIAN: WHAT DOES THE TEXT OF THE TROYAN PARABLE TELL US?

ABSTRACT

The present paper examines the diachronic development of Serbian clitics. The investigation of clitics is of special interest in Slavic languages: despite the fact that these languages display free word order, the use of clitics is subject to strict rules. Clitics were present already in the Proto-Slavic language, however, in the course of the history of the language they were totally lost in Eastern Slavic and also partially in Western Slavic. The array and function of Serbian clitics has undergone substantial change: (1) similarly to Proto-Slavic, in Old Serbian manuscripts three types of enclitics were used, namely, discourse, pronominal and auxiliary clitics; and (2) clitics in present-day Serbian (PDS) tend to cluster and, within the clusters, their order is regulated by strict rules. This ordered position of clitics within the clusters has undergone changes. Moreover, there are significantly fewer clitic clusters in the investigated manuscripts than in PDS texts. The investigation of clitics is carried out in a 15th century Serbian manuscript, the Troyan Parable (Троянска притча) and in Old Serbian documents from the Middle Ages.

KEYWORDS

clitics; Old Serbian; language change

1 Introduction

The subject of this paper is the historical change or evolution of enclitics in Serbian. Research into enclitics in Slavic languages is very topical because these languages have a free word order, however, the order of enclitics in a sentence is strictly determined. The first part of the paper will describe the basic features of enclitics as a distinct grammatical category, while the second will focus on the enclitic system of modern

Serbian. In the third part, I will discuss the differences between the old and modern enclitic system, and the fourth part contains the analysis of the transitional state in the evolution of the enclitic system on the basis of a 15th century manuscript, the Trojan Parable. In the last part of the paper I will examine the differences between the enclitics in the Trojan Parable and in Serbian documents from the Middle Ages.

2 The basic characteristics of clitics

Enclitics are always unstressed language units that attach to a host next to them, i.e. the word with which they stand and with which they form a phonetic unit. It is important to distinguish enclitics from affixes. One of the main features that can determine whether a given linguistic unit is an affix or an enclitic is that clitics, unlike affixes, can stand next to any type of word¹, as well as the fact that they can be found in preceding (proclitics) or following the host (enclitics) (SPENCER – LOUÍŠ 2012, 21, 38). VA clitics are an exception, because they can stand only next to verbs.

One of the basic characteristics of enclitics is that they form clusters in sentences. In the cluster, each enclitic has its specific place regulated by syntactic rules (ZIMMERLING – KOSTA 2013, 180).

According to the functions they occupy in a sentence, enclitics can be assigned to different groups. An important feature of verbal enclitics is the expression of time, aspect, manner, person, and number (SPENCER – LOUÍŠ 2012, 34). Pronominal enclitics express person, number, gender, and case. In sentences they often function as objects and are then in a complementary distribution with explicit nouns. In such cases, they are semantically related to the verb (SPENCER – LOUÍŠ 2012, 43–44). However, this can be refuted in the case of clitic doubling. This phenomenon can be observed in Bulgarian and Macedonian, because these languages have VA clitics (FRANKS – KING 2000, 250–251). The third group consists of discourse enclitics which attach to the whole clause.

A very dominant syntactic feature of enclitics is that different rules apply to them than to the rest of the sentence. These rules may vary depending on the language.

Semantically, enclitics can be local or phrasal. Local enclitics attach to one word and complement its meaning, while phrasal enclitics attach to the whole clause and have a more general meaning (GYÖRFI 2020, 3).

2.1 Position of enclitics

Enclitics can occur in several places in a sentence. They usually take the second place in the sentence (2P clitics) or the position next to the verb (VA clitics). In Serbian they can occur after the first stressed word, i.e. in the so-called “Wackernagel”

¹ According to Progovac: „clitics cannot attach to the first word, unless that word is a syntactic constituent which can independently find itself in the position where clitics attach” (PROGOVAC 2005, 137).

position or after the first phrase (2W or 2D clitics). According to PAVLOVIĆ (2011, 34), the positioning of enclitics after the first stressed word or phrase can be explained by reasons of rhythm, because in that position, after the first stress in the sentence, the intonation falls and therefore the place is ideal for enclitic. If the enclitics are in the postfrontal position, i.e. at the end of the first X-bar group, they are called “Wackernagel” clitics after the Swiss linguist Wackernagel, who examined Greek enclitics in the 19th century, and who later identified this tendency in Indo-European languages. In his study of the Old Russian enclitic system, ZALIZNJAK (2008) calls these enclitics phrasal, because they refer to the whole clause. Phrasal enclitics are in many cases attach to the predicate. In other cases they can also appear after the first word of the phrase, even if it is not a predicate. For example the discourse clitic *li* behaves that way (ZALIZNJAK 2008, 24, 67). In the case when enclitics do not occur in the Wackernagel position, they are called local enclitics, and then they do not refer to the whole clause but only to the phrase in which their host is located. The distribution of local enclitics in a sentence depends on the place of the phrase to which they are related (ZALIZNJAK 2008, 25). According to Pavlović, however, these enclitics also take a postfrontal position, but only within those phrases that contain their host (PAVLOVIĆ 2011, 34).

There are enclitics that tend to move to the right in a sentence. According to Zaliznjak, the older the enclitic, the stronger it is. Thus, he divides enclitics into strong and weak enclitics, and the latter are those which can move from their positions to the right. These are pronominal enclitics in dative and accusative, and verbal auxiliaries of the verb *нечати* (ZALIZNJAK 2008, 51).

2.2 Classification of enclitics into sentence (S), noun-phrase (NP) and verb-phrase (VP) enclitics

Analyzing Old Serbian documents and letters from the 12th and 13th centuries, Pavlović divides enclitics into three groups: (1) sentence enclitics – *li* in Serbian; (2) noun-phrase (NP) enclitics – enclitics in the dative that mark possessives; and (3) verb-phrase (VP) enclitics – enclitics in the dative and accusative (and reflexive pronoun), verb enclitics (the present of the auxiliary verb *јесѣмь* in the perfective or in existential sense, the auxiliary verb *быти* in the conditional, and the present tense form of the auxiliary verb *хотѣти* denoting the future tense) (PAVLOVIĆ 2011, 37).

2 Enclitics in modern Serbian

In Serbian there are several types of enclitics which often form clusters in a sentence. In some syntactic positions clitics are not clustered, split is allowed. Examples include VP ellipsis, VP fronting, parentheticals (BOŠKOVIĆ 2001, 48, 50, 86; BOŠKOVIĆ 2016, 11–12). They behave unusually and, therefore, they are considered

special enclitics, meaning that the stressed form and the enclitic have different syntax (ZWIČKY 1977, 5–6). Special enclitics, unlike ordinary enclitics, are inflected and have their own paradigms (FRANKS 2009, 5). In modern Serbian, there are three types of enclitics: discourse, verbal and pronominal enclitics. The discourse clitic is *li*. Verbal enclitics are forms of the auxiliary verb *jesam* in the present tense, the auxiliary verb *biti* in the aorist, and the auxiliary verb *hteti* in the present, while pronominal enclitics occur in the dative, accusative and genitive cases, and also the reflexive pronoun *se*.

Table 1. The enclitic system in modern Serbian

Number	Person	Pronominal enclitics			Verbal enclitics		
		Dative	Accusative	Genitive	jesam	бити	хтети
Sg.	1	ми	ме	ме	сам	бих	ћу
	2	ти	те	те	си	би	ћеш
	3	му (m,n) joj (f)	га (m,n) ју, је (f)	га (m) је (f)	је	би	ће
Pl.	1	нам	нас	вас	смо	бисмо	ћемо
	2	вам	вас	вас	сте	бисте	ћете
	3	им	их	их	су	би	ће

3 Enclitics in Old Serbian

After the disintegration of the Old Slavonic language, changes occurred in the order of the enclitics in Serbian, and new forms appeared. According to Zaliznjak, the formation of new enclitics plays a great role in the order of enclitics, because older enclitics are positioned in front of younger enclitics in the sentence, looking from the left (ZALIZNJAK 2008, 27).

Table 2. The enclitic system in Old Serbian

Number	Person	Pronominal enclitics		Verbal enclitics		
		Dative	Accusative	БЫТИ	ИСТЬ	ХТѢТИ
Sg.	1	ми	ме	быхъ	сьль	кю
	2	ти	те	бы	си	кѣш
	3	моу (m,n) юи (f)	га (m,n) ю (f)	бы	ѣ истъ	кѣ
	reflexive pronoun	си	се			

Number	Person	Pronominal enclitics		Verbal enclitics		
		Dative	Accusative	ВЫТИ	ЈЕСАМЪ	ХТѢТИ
Sg.						
Pl.	1	НЪ, НАМ	НЪ, НАС	ВЫ	СМО	КЕМО
	2	ВЫ, ВАМ	ВЫ, ВАС	ВЫСТЕ	СТЕ	КЕСТЕ
	3	ИМЪ	ИХЪ	ВЫХОУВЫ	СОУ	КЕ

In Old Serbian, in contrast to the modern language, the enclitics occurred in the following order: (1) *li*, (2) the forms of the aorist of the auxiliary verb *biti*, (3) the pronoun enclitics in the dative and the accusative, (4) the reflexive pronoun *se*, and (5) the forms of the auxiliary verbs *jesam* and *hteti* (TOLSTAJA 1991, 202).

- (1) и да имъ се плати
 and that CL.DAT.3PL CL.refl.pron pay.PRS.3SG
 како имъ сѣ и прьво
 how CL.DAT.3PL CL.beAUX.PRS.3PL too at.first
 ‘And so they would pay it to them, as they did the first (TOLSTAJA 1991, 202) time’

The main difference in the order is that the pronominal enclitics occur before the enclitic forms of the auxiliary verbs *jesam* and *hteti*, while in modern Serbian they follow these verbal enclitics.

4 Enclitics in the Trojan Parable

The corpus of the research was the Trojan Parable, a 15th century manuscript. The manuscript in which this novel is located is the Софијска илустрована Александрида. This manuscript is kept in the National Library of St. Cyril and Methodius in Sofia, under inventory number 771 (381).

In addition to the Trojan Parable, the book contains other texts. Namely, the manuscript begins the so-called Alexandrida, and contains other liturgical texts, while the Trojan Parable begins on page 220. The manuscript is written in two different persons’ handwriting: one scribe’s up to the Trojan Parable and another’s from the beginning of the Trojan Parable to the end of the manuscript. The language of this novel is Old Serbian, very close to the spoken language, and that is why it is important and interesting for research. The present paper investigates – as has already been mentioned – the distribution of enclitics in the Trojan Parable. The aim of the analysis is to demonstrate the differences in the order of clitic clusters. A new enclitic emerged and the old order in the cluster was disrupted. In the novel, the distribution of enclitics shows a transitional state. One can see the old order, and, in

addition to it, the new one with the presence of new enclitic forms. Examples with the old order from the novel:

- (2) СВЪКЛИ СЕ СМО СУДИ НАМЪ
undress.PTCP CL.refl.pron CL.be.AUX.PRS.1PL judge.IMP.2SG CL.DAT.1PL
'We undressed, judge us!' (227v)

In this example the reflexive pronoun *se* precedes the auxiliary clitic *smo*.

- (3) ЕРЪ ГДЕ ТЕ КУ НАИТИ ЗНАИ
because where CL.ACC.2SG want.AUX.PST.1SG find.INF know.IMP.2SG
ЩО ТИ ХОКУ ОУЧИНИТИ
what to.you.CL.DAT.2SG will.V.PST.1SG do.INF
'Because wherever I will find you, you should know what I will do.' (253r)

Here the enclitic in the accusative occurs in the first place and is followed by the verbal enclitic.

In these examples, the old order of enclitics can be observed, i.e. pronominal enclitics are positioned before the enclitic forms *jesam* and *hteti*.

With the appearance of new forms in the dative, a new order can already be noticed. These new forms receive a different status; thus the old order is disturbed. These enclitics are placed after verbal enclitics, as in contemporary Serbian.

- (4) КАКО^и ГА СЪ^и ВА^и ДАА
how CL.ACC.3SG CL.be.AUX.PST.1SG CL.DAT.2PL give.PTCP.SG
ЖИВА
alive.ADJ.GEN.SG
'How I gave him to you alive.' (264v)

In this example, the enclitic *ra* is still in the old place, while the new form *ва^и* occupies the new place after the auxiliary verb *съ^и*. However, the new order has not yet been established. There are examples in the manuscript in which we find new enclitics in the dative, but in the old position.

- (5) ГРЪСЦИ ОУРОВЕ СЪДА ВА^и СЪ^и
greek.ADJ.PL men.VOC.PL now CL.DAT.2PL CL.be.AUX.PST.1SG
СПОМЕНЪ^и
mention.PTCP.SG
'Greek men, I have just mentioned to you.' (264v)

In this example, the enclitic *башѣ* occurs in front of the verbal enclitic *сѣ*, so it behaves like the old form.

Researching old Serbian documents from the 14th and 15th centuries, Tolstaja had similar examples. She also concluded that with the appearance of new enclitic forms in the dative, fluctuations in the enclitic system can be observed, because the process of adopting new forms was not yet fully completed (TOLSTAJA 1991, 204).

5 Comparison of the enclitics in the Trojan Parable and in medieval old Serbian documents

Medieval Serbian documents provide an insight into the spoken language of that time and are therefore crucial for linguistic analysis.

In the old Serbian documents we can also see this phenomenon, namely, that when the new dative enclitics appear, the old order changes. In 13th century documents we observe the old order:

- (6) *да вы е ѡтворена наша земља*
 so CL.DAT.2PL CL.be.AUX.PST.3SG open.PTCP.SG POSS.PRON.1PL
 country.NOM.SG
 'So our country is open to you.' (STOJANOVIĆ 1929, 5)

- (7) *ѡнѣмъ сѣ ѡтѣтѣ*
 so CL.DAT.3SG CL.be.AUX.PST.3PL kidnap.PTCP.SG
 'So they kidnapped them from him.' (STOJANOVIĆ 1929, 32)

But in 15th century documents we can see the fluctuations, as in the Trojan Parable.

- (8) *како си намъ ѡбѣтовала*
 how CL.be.AUX.PST.2SG CL.DAT.1PL promise.PTCP.2SG
 'How you promised to us.' (MLADENOVIĆ 2007, 67)

In this example the auxiliary clitic precedes the new form *nam* in the dative.

- (9) *јеръ пишеть да ю емашь рекъ*
 because write.PST.3SG that CL.be.AUX.PST.3SG CL.DAT.2PL tell.PTCP.3SG
 'Because he writes that he told you.' (STOJANOVIĆ 1929, 407)

We can see that the new dative form *вамъ* follows the verbal enclitic.

In the Trojan Parable we can find the following number of enclitics:

Table 3. The number of enclitics in the Trojan Parable

Discourse enclitics	4
Enclitics in the dative	109
Enclitics in the accusative	138
Reflexive enclitics	86
Forms of <i>къ/ль</i>	98
Forms of <i>ь/и</i>	21
Forms of <i>хъ/ь/и</i>	2
Clusters	28

Table 4. The number of clusters in the Trojan Parable

Clusters with the old order	15
Clusters with the new order	3
Clusters with mixed order (the new enclitic is in the new position, but other pronominal enclitics are in the old position)	1
Other clusters (without pronominal and verbal enclitics together)	13
All clusters	32

Table 5. The number of enclitics in medieval documents

Document	Discourse enclitic	Enclitics in the dative	Enclitics in the accusative	Reflexive enclitic	Forms of <i>рьсьмь</i>	Forms of <i>бъ/и</i>	Forms of <i>хъ/ь/и</i>	Clusters
Stojanović 8.	2	3	/	6	5	/	/	2
Stojanović 14.	5	24	6	7	10	/	/	7
Stojanović 32.	1	5	2	1	5	4	/	4
Stojanović 412.	/	3	/	1	1	1	/	1
Mladenović I/44.	/	19	1	2	8	/	/	2
Mladenović I/45.	/	31	3	9	19	4	/	6
All	8	85	12	26	48	9	0	22

Table 6. Clusters in medieval documents

Clusters with the old order	16
Clusters with the new order	1
Clusters with mixed order (the new enclitic is in the new position, but the old enclitics are in the old position)	/
Other clusters (without pronominal and verbal enclitics together)	9
All	26

From these data, we can see that pronominal enclitics are the most common in the analyzed manuscripts. There are many examples in the Dative that are phrasal enclitics with possessive semantics.

As observed, there are not many clusters: 28 in the Troyan Parable and 22 in the documents. This is an important feature of old Serbian, and we can see language change here, because in modern Serbian clusters have become more common and widespread.

6 Conclusion

In the Troyan Parable we can see a transitional state, where, with the appearance of new forms, the old order is disturbed. Medieval documents from the 15th century also testify to this: we have seen that in the older documents the order is still the old one, with the old forms in dative. From this we can establish that the changes in the enclitic system began in the 14th century.

This changes the ranking among enclitics and creates a new system that we can find in the modern language. As can be seen from the above examples, in this text the new order is not yet widespread, and, therefore, there is a fluctuation between the old and the new orders.

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