

Language and reality

Distribution of Pronominal Clitics in Macedonian

(*Summary*)

Pronouns are a word class characterized by its referential function, that is, by deixis. Pronouns perform deictic functions both within a text and in the extra-linguistic world. Nominal pronouns (personal pronouns, the reflexive pronoun, and possessives) perform nominal functions in a sentence. In Macedonian, the personal pronouns as well as the nominal pronoun *koj*_i, have retained their oblique forms (for dative and accusative). Macedonian pronominal forms may be short or long – the former appear as atonic, whereas the latter have potential to receive stress. Clitics, on their part, are unstressed linguistic units that attach themselves to stress-carrying hosts. The scope of this study focuses on the distribution of pronominal clitics within a given context or a contextual situation. In other words, this study examines the places pronominal clitics occupy along with the possibilities for their combinations, in both language and speech. On a broader level, (given that pronominal clitics have referential function), they are examined as exponents of the link between language and the extra-linguistic reality. Further, the pronominal clitics in Macedonian are also analyzed as both inter- and intra-textual referential markers.

This study revolves around three major concepts that are crucial for the explanation of all other processes, phenomena and actions. These fundamental concepts are: linguistic distributionalism, reference as a deictic means that is largely realized through pronominals, and, the category person. These concepts set the theoretical framework for investigating pronominal clitics, so their analysis forms the central part of this monograph. Namely, three phenomena are problematized in regards to the distribution of clitics: a) the so-called “jumping clitics”, b) combinations of dative and accusative

clitics, and c) cases with first-person singular subjects as well as objects that appear as first-person singular clitics.

Apart from the foreword and the introduction, the monograph *Distribution of Pronominal Clitics in Macedonian* includes the following seven chapters: 1. Why the distribution of pronominal clitics deserves to be examined – defining the object of the study, 2. Review of some general linguistic theories relevant to the subject matter, 3. General classification of pronominal clitics in language in general and, specifically in Macedonian, 4. Three exceptions representing the relations between language and reality, as well as those between cognition, potential, and realization, 5. Commentaries on selected problems in Balkan languages that explain genealogical exemptions and the relevance of some areal linguistic factors, 6. and 7. Concluding remarks on the results of this study.

Starting from the very beginning to the end, once “the demon of theory” is fatigued (cf. Simeon) the above general linguistic concepts (i.e., their description and definitions) are introduced by an open-ended question about language, reality and their interaction, including the paradoxes of modern linguistics. On one hand, there appears to be a crisis in the study of language in regards to new revolutionary ideas. On the other, two possible approaches may be set forth: either linguistics has to give in to specific skills, or, linguistics should necessarily morph into an inter- or multi-disciplinary science capable of describing, monitoring, and expressing logical relations and facts that connect language to the extra-linguistic reality.

The second approach has been adopted for the purposes of this study and it offers a new interpretation of some known values. Moreover, it proposes and explicates some new hypothetical ones. Admittedly, this is done at a theoretical level with the hope that these new values are yet to be confirmed in practice. Our approach aligns with those of Gamut (as qtd. in Sarakinski 2013:12) who suggest that the exploration of fixed, written matters is justified “if one succeeds in finding new data that has not been analyzed yet, or, if one deems that the interpretation of the known data is inappropriate or does not meet scientific criteria.”

The introduction provides an overview and is intended to elicit research interest in both general and Macedonian linguistics. At the same time, the introduction lays out the methodological framework that was implemented in this study. The general aim is to change the

outlook of the research in social sciences and humanities. More specifically, we aim to shift from description to hermeneutics (or, interpretation of the newly found results) albeit, in principle, the descriptions should not to be abandoned altogether. Besides social sciences and humanities, other scientific disciplines ought to be included in that research process. Linguistics is especially fit for such inter- and cross-disciplinary approach, and generative grammar seems to be especially productive since it has freed itself from meaning, which in turn, has opened possibilities to include mathematics and natural sciences in reaching formulaic conclusions about language.

The first chapter elaborates on the subject of this study. The relationship between language and extra-linguistic reality drives the focus to exceptions from rules or general paradigms [language defies logic, or, logic does not yet have tools for explaining certain linguistic phenomena.] In analyzing pronominal clitics in Macedonian, this study adopts the following three approaches: distributionalism, referentiality, and the category person. These concepts are further applied in the analyses of pronominal clitics, where the emphasis is given to three major problem areas: distribution of “jumping clitics”, combinations of dative and accusative clitics, and, 1st. sing. subjects as well as 1st pers. plural object clitics.

The second chapter reviews several linguistic theories that have played major impact in contemporary linguistics: structuralism (Saussure), formal structuralism (Hjemslev), distributionalism (Bloomfield), and anthropological linguistics (Boas). Next, the commonalities between descriptivism and structuralism on one hand, and distributionalism on the other, are investigated, including some possible approaches to analyzing the relationship between language and extra-linguistic reality. In doing so, we attempt to reconstruct a deconstructed science: our approach is not only structuralist in the basic sense of distributionalism (distribution and combinations), but also recognizes the formulaic nature of language (its formal components). Hence, our approach necessarily involves analyses of propositions (i.e., meaning), while the final aim is to elucidate the semantic motivation of distribution. The last part of Chapter 2 presents a review of literature on reference, pronouns, and pronominal clitics in Macedonian (Topolinska, Minova-Gjurkova, Dučevska, and others.) This second part of the chapter offers a somewhat historical synopsis of the linguistic theories applied in the study.

The third chapter opens with categorization, as postulated in logic and philosophy (Aristotle, Kant). Next, the discussion shifts to grammatical categories that are “grammatical expression of general and specific properties of linguistic communities”, while the last section of this chapter examines the category person. Defining “person” as a grammatical category poses a problem because it presupposes defining a logical subcategory that has its own exponent in two other larger categories: that of pronouns, and that of verbal paradigms. In Macedonian, the category person is lexically expressed in pronouns, whereas in verbs, “person” gets to be morphologically marked by suffixes. Furthermore, the pronominal system in the Old Church Slavonic is analyzed, as it provides as a necessary diachronic introduction to modern Macedonian. The data in Modern Macedonian is analyzed both at the level of standard, and takes into consideration some colloquial and dialectal varieties. Thus, the system of pronouns and pronominal clitics is presented in a broader scope, within standard Macedonian, as well as in its colloquialisms and dialectal varieties.

Chapter 4 offers a distribution and semantic interpretations of Macedonian pronominal clitics. It departs from the hypothesis that the system of pronominal clitics questions the established conceptualization of pronouns and violates some logical-grammatical rules. It is noteworthy that pronominal clitics are connected to pronouns in terms of reference and to syntax, in terms of linearity. Moreover, given that clitics can be analyzed with respect to their position vis-à-vis their host, Macedonian clitics cannot be merely analyzed within the basic word order. Three cases are used to make these points. Before we analyze these cases, we ought to classify and distinguish between several types of Macedonian clitics: adnominal (that include possessive dative clitics (Mišeska-Tomić⁷⁴ 2008) and, sentential (from pronominal to verbal). The first case is the “jumping clitics”, the second are the combinations of dative and accusative clitics, while the third comprises sentence referents of the type „*Ќе ни сварам кафе*“ [*fut. tense to us (clitic) I make coffee*]

⁷⁴ The article belongs to these as well, but it is not part of this analysis as it is treated as a morpheme. This part analyzes the article in passing, as well as object reduplication. These two phenomena are very typical for Macedonian and differentiate it from the rest of the Balkan languages.

These three cases exemplify exceptions from the established distribution of clitics and suggest possible pragmalinguistic implications. Several causes for these phenomena are postulated and incorporated within the framework of testable hypotheses.

Case 1: Balkan Sprachbund influence, or, pragmalinguistic factor connected to the category person, or, structural causes (cliticization of *sum* [to be, 1st pers. sing.] and *si* [to be, 2nd pers. sing.] versus *e* [to be, 3rd pers. sing.]). With regards to “jumping clitics,” we try to answer why the place of the pronominal clitic is behind the verb *sum* (to be), i.e., between the copula and the copulative. This applies in both 1st and 2nd person singular: *jas sum mu* [I am to him (clitic)], *ti si mu* [you are to him (clitic)]. However, in 3rd person singular, the clitic occurs before the copula: *toj mi e* [he to me (clitic) is]. This distribution occurs only in present, but not in imperfect: *ti bev brat* [to you (clitic) I was a brother]; *ti beše brat* [to you (clitic) he was a brother]. On the other hand, the weaker reaction of the dative plays a part, since this phenomenon is seen in dative clitics. The accusative clitics are not used with *sum* (to be), whereas the verbal clitic is not found in 3rd pers. sing. perfective.

Case 2: Dative and accusative clitics do not combine due to the hierarchy of the category person, pragmalinguistic factors, or the specificity of utterances in terms of their semantics and low frequency of occurrence. An example of this is: *Sakam da vi nè preistavam* [I want to to you (clitic) us (clitic) I introduce]. There is a multitude of examples that can be logically and systemically corroborated; however, these are not activated and are not in use. More specifically, we deal with a proposition that implies that the subject is the doer of the action, while the object is complex and composed of a subject + an additional element. This results in a semantic blocking: a co-referential form is not possible because the object and the subject are not equivalent. Moreover, it is necessary to emphasize that the agent belongs to the group of patients (or undergoers) of the action.

Case 3: The causes may be located within the same hypothesis proposed for Case 2 that applies to the relation subject-object. Namely, example 3 is representative of case such as „*Ќе ни сварам кафе*“ [Fut. tense particle to us (clitic) I make coffee]. So, we have a subject/doer of the action in 1st pers. sing. and object/patient in 1st pers. plural.

The first person is the doer of the action, yet is an object at the same time, together with others. This interpretation is more or less valid for the previous example *Sakam da vi nè pretstavam* [*I want to to you (clitic) us (clitic) I introduce*].

The summary of the above discussion on clitics and the postulated hypotheses are a somewhat “theory within a theory”. This theory proposes certain exemptions from logic, because the above utterances have not been fully activated in practice, in spite of their intrinsic semantics and logic.

Chapter 5 introduces the abovementioned Balkan perspective. This is necessary since the study of clitics has its commonalities within the Balkan Sprachbund. Thus, Macedonian pronominal system is compared to the corresponding ones in Bulgarian, Albanian, and in the South Serbian dialects. This chapter synthesizes some typological commonalities of the Balkan languages, along with some analyses of the systems of personal pronouns, the sentence-initial position of clitics, and object reduplication.

Chapters 6 and 7 offer some concluding remarks and commentaries. These chapters summarize the results of other researchers in the field, and offer new possible outlooks that postulate some necessary exceptions in the logical conceptualization of clitics.

Eugen Simion claims that “The demon of theory is fatigued.” If so, why then so much theory in a thesis, or in any research study for that matter?! It is because it is time, through human prism and with reference to the extra-linguistic reality, as well as drawing upon language universals and logic, to redefine classical linguistic definitions, theories and interpretations. If the demon of theory is fatigued, then the angel of practice should propose a new, fresh, and productive theory.

The striving towards precise mathematical formulae to describe operations in language is not a mere tendency in modern linguistics, but also a realistic need to postulate a Saussurean point of view and a hermeneutics of a single angle of vision or a unique criterion.

Reality enfolds linearly and unidirectionally; so, from a temporal standpoint, reality poses its rules according to which our entire existence is depicted and measured. Language, in its pursuit to represent reality in the most objective and true sense, has developed its own intrinsic logic, that, when and if necessary, goes against natural logic and expectations. This parallels our own reflection in a mirror:

we are, but not quite so, identical reflections of ourselves (since, our image may be rotated, for instance). However, the mirrored image of ourselves offers a valuable insight about us.

This study is an attempt to classify pronominal clitics, i.e. those pronominal forms that lack lexical stress. In a sense, this classification has been already proposed in both general and Macedonian linguistic. However, this study focuses on cases where pronominal clitics are used in specific environments that trigger exceptions from general rules and go against some general notions in linguistics and logic. By situating such exceptional cases in a broader scope, we offer possible new interpretations of the causes and the related phenomena. Whether we have succeeded in this endeavor is yet to be seen. Future studies in this field will be instrumental in either confirming or invalidating the hypotheses and interpretations of this thesis.

ⁱ Glosses are represented in rectangular brackets.