



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS



EUROPEAN UNION



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CYCL1A Workshop on the Acquisition of Clitics

Clitic constructions have received a lot of attention over the past twenty years in research on language acquisition and development. Both the comprehension and production of clitics have been studied in a variety of languages, for children and adults alike, and in different acquisition contexts (L1, L2, bi-/multilingual, impaired).

The research project "L1 Acquisition of Cypriot Greek Pronominal Clitics" (ΠENEK 0609/42), funded by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation, is organizing an international *Workshop on the Acquisition of Clitics* at the University of Cyprus aiming to bring together researchers working on clitic acquisition. The discussion will revolve around new findings on the acquisition and development of pronominal clitics in different languages regarding clitic production and/or comprehension as well as current theoretical approaches to cliticization in the light of developmental data.

There will also be a special session on the acquisition and development of pronominal clitic placement in mixed clitic languages, with emphasis on enclitic languages where proclisis is triggered by certain grammatical properties. These include European Portuguese and Cypriot Greek, from both language-internal (properties of EP or CG) and comparative perspectives (within the Romance language family and compared to Standard Modern Greek, respectively), but submissions are encouraged to go beyond these two varieties.

The workshop welcomes papers for oral and poster presentations on topics related to the development of clitics in the fields of (a)typical and impaired, first, second, and multilingual language acquisition. Oral presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes, leaving 10 minutes for questions and discussion.

Invited speakers: **João Costa (CLUNL/FCSH/Universidade Nova de Lisboa)**
Maria Lobo (CLUNL/FCSH/Universidade Nova de Lisboa)
Teresa Parodi (University of Cambridge)
Ianthi Tsimpli (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

Organizers: Kleanthes K. Grohmann (University of Cyprus)
Theoni Neokleous (University of Cambridge & University of Cyprus)
Cyprus Acquisition Team (<http://www.research.biolinguistics.eu/CAT>)

THIS WORKSHOP IS ORGANIZED AS PART OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT *L1 ACQUISITION OF CYPRIOT GREEK PRONOMINAL CLITICS* (ΠENEK 0609/42), FUNDED BY THE CYPRUS RESEARCH PROMOTION FOUNDATION (RPF) AND AWARDED TO DR. KLEANTHES K. GROHMANN (UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS) WITH DR. TERESA PARODI AND THEONI NEOKLEOUS (UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE).

<http://www.research.biolinguistics.eu/CYCLIA>

CYCL1A Project *L1 Acquisition of Cypriot Greek Pronominal Clitics*
University of Cambridge, University of Cyprus, and the Cyprus Acquisition Team
funded by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation (ΠΕΝΕΚ 0609/42), 2010–12

Workshop on the Acquisition of Clitics

Royiatiko Hotel, Old Town, Nicosia

25–26 May 2012

<i>Friday</i>		25 May 2012
09:30 – 10:00	REGISTRATION AND OPENING	
10:00 – 11:00	<u>Plenary Speaker:</u> Teresa Parodi (University of Cambridge) <i>Clitic Placement in L2 Serbo-Croatian as a Feature Learning Challenge</i>	
11:00 – 11:30	COFFEE BREAK	
11:30 – 12:00	Katerina Palasis (UMR 7320 CNRS & Université de Nice) <i>Clitics in Early L1 French: Their Morpho-Syntactic Status and the Oral vs. Standard French Dichotomy</i>	
12:00 – 12:30	Enkeleida Kapia (U of Hamburg & Center for Albanian Studies) <i>Acquisition of Dative and Accusative Clitic Doubling in Albanian: a Syntactic-Pragmatic Approach</i>	
12:30 – 13:00	Marta Maria Tryzna (Gulf University for Science and Technology) <i>L1 Acquisition of Object Clitics in Child Polish: Evidence for Three Developmental Stages</i>	
13:00 – 14:30	LUNCH BREAK	
	<i>Special Session: Mixed Clitic Placement</i>	
14:30 – 15:30	<u>Plenary Speakers:</u> Maria Lobo & João Costa (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) <i>Acquisition of Clitic Placement in European Portuguese</i>	
15:30 – 16:00	Theoni Neokleous (University of Cambridge) <i>L1 Acquisition of Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek</i>	
16:00 – 16:30	Eleni Theodorou & Kleanthes K. Grohmann (U of Cyprus) <i>Object Clitics in Cypriot Greek Children with SLI</i>	
16:30 – 17:00	COFFEE BREAK	
17:00 – 17:30	Sviatlana Karpava & Kleanthes K. Grohmann (U of Cyprus) <i>Bilingual Acquisition of Object Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek: A Comparative Study from Russian–Cypriot Greek Speakers</i>	
17:30 – 18:00	Elena Papadopoulou^{1,3}, Evelina Leivada^{2,3}, and Natalia Pavlou³ ^(¹U of Essex, ²Univ. de Barcelona, ³Cyprus Acquisition Team) <i>Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek: A Matter of Lexical and Syntactic Stimulation?</i>	
18:00 – 18:30	Kleanthes K. Grohmann (University of Cyprus) <i>CAT Research on Object Clitic Placement: Where We Are Now</i>	

POSTERS WILL BE DISPLAYED THROUGHOUT THE WORKSHOP

Saturday		26 May 2012
10:00 – 11:00	<u>Plenary Speakers:</u> João Costa & Maria Lobo (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) <i>Acquisition of Clitics: A Non-Uniform Process</i>	
11:00 – 11:30	COFFEE BREAK	
11:30 – 12:00	Larisa Avram¹, Martine Coene², and Anca Sevcenco¹ (¹ University of Bucharest, ² Free University Amsterdam) <i>Theoretical Implications of Children's Early Production of Object Clitics</i>	
12:00 – 12:30	Valentina Brunetto (University of Leeds) <i>The Pronoun Interpretation Problem in Romance Complex Predicates</i>	
12:30 – 13:00	Arhonto Terzi¹, Theodoros Marinis², Konstantinos Francis³, and Angeliki Kotsopoulou¹ (¹ Technological Educational Institute of Patras, ² University of Reading, ³ University of Athens) <i>Do Autistic Children's Problems with Binding of Clitics Reflect Problems with Case?</i>	
13:00 – 14:30	LUNCH BREAK	
14:30 – 15:00	Megan Devlin, Raffaella Folli, Alison Henry, and Christina Sevdali (University of Ulster) <i>Clitic Right Dislocation in the Absence of Clitics: A Case Study in Trilingual Acquisition</i>	
15:00 – 16:00	<u>Plenary Speaker:</u> Ianthi Maria Tsimpli (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) <i>Clitic Drop, Null Objects and Markedness</i>	
16:00 – 16:30	COFFEE BREAK	
16:30 – 17:30	<u>Speakers and Participants:</u> Roundtable Discussion	
17:30 – 20:00	RELAXATION AND/OR DRINKS	
20:00 – ...	OFFICIAL WORKSHOP DINNER	

NOTE:

The hotel is in the old town of Nicosia, with lots of bars, cafes, and restaurants around — easy to have a decent lunch nearby or drinks after the talks. As for evening meals...

We will get together for a **pre-workshop dinner on Thursday** evening. This will probably take place at **Loxandra**, a local Greek restaurant in easy walking distance from the hotel. If you're interested in joining us, please get in touch with Kleanthes (kleanthi@ucy.ac.cy).

In addition, everyone is welcome to join us all for **dinner on Friday** night. This will probably take place at **Fanou**, a local Lebanese restaurant in easy walking distance from the hotel. If you're interested in joining us, please get in touch with Kleanthes (kleanthi@ucy.ac.cy).

The **official workshop dinner will take place on Saturday** evening, once everything is over. ☺ This will definitely take place at **Palia Plateia**, an excellent Cypriot taverna — not in easy walking distance from the hotel. We will organize transportation. If you're interested in joining us, please get in touch with Kleanthes (kleanthi@ucy.ac.cy).

Please also tell us whether you have any dietary restrictions or preferences!

Theoretical Implications of Children's Early Production of Object Clitics

Larisa Avram¹, Martine Coene², Anca Sevcenco¹
University of Bucharest¹, Free University Amsterdam²

1. Aim In the literature dealing with object clitics one can identify two main research directions. Some studies address the question whether object clitics surface in their merge position (Sportiche 1996, for example) or whether they reach the pre-verbal position as a result of movement (internal merge) (Kayne 1989, Rizzi 1993, Uriagereka 1995, Boeckx & Gallego 2008). Empirical data suggest that clitics share a cluster of properties across languages but, at the same time, they might not represent a genuinely homogeneous class. Some studies focus on what pronominal clitics have in common – deficiency and distribution – and try to provide a unifying analysis (Cardinaletti & Starke 1999). Others focus on the different properties evinced by the various types of object clitics. Besides the distinction between reflexive and non-reflexive clitics, accusative (AC) and dative object clitics (DC) have also been argued to have different status (Sportiche 1996). Within the class of ACs, Uriagereka (1995) and Kayne (2000) make a distinction between 3rd person and 1st/2nd person ACs. From the perspective of acquisition, most studies are tributary to one theoretical analysis or the other, which is taken as the starting point in both the description of the empirical data in the language(s) targeted and in the analysis of the acquisition data. The goal of the present study is to investigate to what extent language acquisition results can shed light on the issues raised by the available theoretical analyses. In particular, we will be addressing the following questions: (i) to what extent can language acquisition data shed light on the merge vs. move/internal merge debate?; (ii) do language acquisition data provide evidence in favour of a unifying analysis of object clitics?; (iii) is the possible source of the vulnerability of clitics the same across languages?

2. Data The present study relies both on longitudinal and experimental data. The longitudinal data are provided by three corpora of monolingual Romanian (a total of 60 minute 42 files overall, covering an age span between 1;9–3;5). The use of ACs, DCs and RCs is investigated. The experimental data come from three elicitation tasks. The first task elicited the production of 3rd person ACs in an obligatory context by requiring a response to a question of the type: “What did X do to Y?”/ “What is X doing to Y?” about a drawing/ a set of drawings (38 monolingual children, age range 33–85 months, and 10 adult controls). The second task had a similar design, but this time the answers targeting a pre- and a post-verbal clitic were balanced (20 monolingual children, age range 35–60 months, and 10 adult controls). In the third task subjects were shown pictures with either a cartoon-figure oriented event or a researcher-oriented event and were expected to produce the relevant pronoun (a 3rd or a 2nd person AC) (20 monolingual children, age range 35–60 months, and 10 adult controls). The results are compared to those reported for other languages.

3. Results Both the longitudinal and the experimental data reveal that 3rd person ACs are the only vulnerable ones. Their omission rate is higher and they are omitted over a longer period of time than 1st/2nd person ACs (see for similar results Tsimpli and Mastropavlou 1997, Silva 2010, Tuller *et al.* 2011). In the third task, no omission was attested with 2nd person ACs. With 3rd person ACs omissions were attested only in constructions with a 3rd person subject, i.e. when the *phi*-features of the subject were identical with the *phi*-features of the antecedent of the clitic. The data also reveal that post-verbal 3rd person ACs are the first ones to emerge and also the ones for which the omission rate is the lowest in both the longitudinal and the experimental data. In two of the longitudinal corpora, during a very short stage, only the feminine clitic *o* ‘her’, placed exclusively in post-verbal position, is attested. DCs and RCs are used almost target like immediately after emergence (see Zesiger *et al.* 2011 for similar results for French), their developmental route being similar to that of 1st/2nd person ACs. There is no significant 3rd vs. 1st/2nd person developmental asymmetry in the case of DCs or RCs. No clitic placement errors have been found in any of the data.

4. Discussion We argue that the acquisition data in the present study can be interpreted as evidence in favour of the movement analysis of ACs in Romanian (Avram & Coene 2009, Ciucivara 2009). Romanian ACs generally behave like those in other Romance languages with respect to placement; but the feminine singular clitic *o* ‘her’ stands apart, in being placed in pre-verbal position in some finite structures but in post-verbal position in those which involve periphrastic verbal forms (see 1 below). The post-verbal clitic, the one which surfaces in first merge position, is also the first one which emerges in acquisition and also the one whose rate of omission is lower. The fact that only the post-verbal clitic is used during the early stage (irrespective of the *phi*-features of the antecedent) might indicate that children prefer Merge over Move, leaving the clitic *in situ*. The developmental route of ACs, DCs and RCs reveals that they are not equally vulnerable. If developmental asymmetry can be taken to reflect different properties, our data reveal that various types of clitics may have different feature make up reflected in their syntactic properties. This confirms Sportiche’s (1996) proposal that DCs are different from ACs and Uriagereka’s and Kayne’s analyses of 3rd person ACs as categorially different from 1st/2nd person clitics. We argue that our data can be accounted for in terms of a distinction among the various types of clitics with respect to feature make up reflected in their categorial status, in conjunction with an approach to feature intervention effects rooted in Rizzi’s Relativized Minimality (1990). In particular, we analyse only 3rd person ACs as Determiner pronouns, not inherently specified for person. Since they are base-generated in post-verbal position as the D of a null direct object, the Agree relation between this null object and its antecedent “crosses” over the intervening *phi*-features of the subject DP. This increases the computational complexity of those configurations where there is identity between the *phi*-features of the antecedent and those of the intervening DP subject. No feature intervention effects arise with clitics other than 3rd person ACs. The other clitics are analyzed as Person Phrases/DPs, licensed by an operator in the C-domain, like any deictic category. If the developmental asymmetry can be accounted for in terms of feature make up one expects cross-linguistic variation with respect to clitic vulnerability.

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| <p>(1) a. o vede
clitic 3rd fem sg ACC sees
‘He/she sees her.’</p> <p>b. a văzut -o
has seen clitic 3rd fem sg ACC
‘He/she has seen her.’</p> | <p>c. ar vedea -o
aux see clitic 3rd fem sg ACC
‘He/she would see her.’</p> <p>d. oi fi iubind -o
aux be love-ger clitic 3rd fem sg A
‘You may be in love with her...’</p> |
|---|--|

Selected references

Boeckx, C. & A. Gallego. 2008 Clitic climbing by (Long Distance) Agree, paper at *Meeting clitics. Workshop on explanatory proposals of clitics*, Barcelona, 18–29 August 2008; **Cardinaletti, A. & M. Starke.** 1999 The typology of structural deficiency: A case study of the three classes of pronouns. In *Clitics in the Languages of Europe*, van Riemsdijk, H. (ed.), 145–233, Mouton de Gruyter; **Ciucivara, O.** 2009 A syntactic analysis of pronominal clitic clusters. The view from Romanian. Ph.D.diss., NYU; **Kayne, R.** 2000 Person morphemes and reflexives in Italian, French, and related languages. In R. Kayne *Parameters and Universals*, 131–162, OUP; **Rizzi, L.** 1990 *Relativized Minimality*, MIT Press; **Sportiche, D.** 1996 Clitic constructions. In *Phrase Structure and the Lexicon*, J. Rooryck, L. Zaring (eds.), 213–276, Kluwer; **Tsimpili, I.M. & M. Mastropavlou.** 2007 Feature interpretability in L2 acquisition and SLI: Greek clitics and determiners, in *The Role of Formal Features in Second Language Acquisition*, H. Goodluck et al. (eds.), 143–183, Routledge. **Tuller, L. et al.** 2011 Clitic pronoun production as a measure of atypical language development in French, *Lingua* 121: 423–441; **Uriagereka, J.** 1995. The syntax of clitic placement in Western Romance. *Linguistic Inquiry* 26: 79–123.

The Pronoun Interpretation Problem in Romance Complex Predicates

Valentina Brunetto

University of Leeds

Two decades of acquisition studies have shown that, until the age of 6, comprehension of object pronouns is not adult-like in languages with non-clitic pronouns: children sometimes allow the pronoun to refer to a local referential antecedent, in apparent violation of Principle B (hence the label “Delay of Principle B Effect” originally proposed by Chien and Wexler (1990), or “Pronoun Interpretation Problem” (Coopmans 2000)). Recent cross-linguistic investigations (Baauw, Escobar and Philip 1997; Baauw and Cuetos 2003) have however revealed the presence of PIP in Romance in Exceptional Case Marking structures.

This study aims to address a number of open issues in the Romance PIP literature from a derivational perspective: a. aside from ECM, do other structures involving complex predicates give rise to PIP? b. can target-deviant coreference be explained derivationally? c. do we need a non-unitary account for PIP across-languages? Data were collected from 74 children acquiring Italian aged 3-to-5 (24, 26 and 24 children for each age group respectively) via an act-out task. I measured children’s comprehension of object and reflexive clitics in four types of complex predicates: restructuring, with clitic climbing (1); control, with enclisis (2); ECM, with (obligatory) clitic climbing (3); causative Faire-Par, with (obligatory) clitic climbing (4). Each type of predicate was tested in two conditions: reflexive and transitive. The findings indicated a significant effect of transitivity in all age groups (a significant interaction between condition and transitivity, $p=.03$; a not significant interaction between transitivity and age, $p=0.1$) and for all syntactic environments (see raw data in table1); post-hoc pairwise comparison between the transitive conditions indicated, at age 5, a significant difference in rates of correct responses between restructuring/control predicates and both ECM and FP (all $p<.05$). In the latter two structures, interpretation of object clitics was equally above chance ($p=1.000$).

The emergence of PIP in causative FP complements is a novel finding in the Romance literature. Given the defective nature of Italian causative *v* (Folli and Harley 2004) there is good indication that these constructions do not give rise to a complex restructuring head – or PIP would be left unexplained, if they were derived as monoclausal sentences. From a theoretical viewpoint, it suggests that ECM and FP must share a syntactic property which allows the clitic and a local antecedent to be covalued. I capture the property in question derivationally under the following generalization: complex predicates which give rise to Romance PIP are those in which the clitic leaves a free (i.e. non-bound) trace in the embedded *vP*. I propose that, when the clitic and the local subject are merged in the same *vP*, EPP-driven movement of the clitic to the outer edge of *vP* creates a predicate abstract and leaves a bound variable in the argument object position – hence obligatory disjoint reference. Both the ECM and the FP derivations contain a non-bound clitic trace at the first spell-out point – i.e. the embedded *vP*. As a consequence, the child resolves reference assignment early in the derivation via local coreference with the referential subject in the matrix *vP* under the appropriate phi-feature presuppositions.

These findings lend strong support to Wexler’s (2004) Universal Phase Requirement, the hypothesis that children until around age 6 interpret all *vPs* as phases. In order to allow extraction from the phasal defective v^*_{def} of FP complements, *v* must be assigned an EPP feature to probe the clitic to its spec. This is arguably the case, otherwise the derivation would crash and the structure would be uninterpretable. The presence of PIP, rather, suggests that adjunction of the clitic to such an impoverished *vP* – lacking an external argument – cannot form a predicate abstract. As a consequence, the *vP*-internal trace of the clitic cannot be bound and coreference can obtain in the next phase. Under this syntactic analysis, the pragmatic account of PIP proposed by Chien and Wexler (1990) and Thornton and Wexler (1999), which was intended to apply languages with strong pronouns only, may find cross-linguistic applicability.

Examples:

- (1) L'elefante lo può coprire con la coperta
The elephant him.can cover with the blanket
 'The elephant can cover him with the blanket'
- (2) La pecora ha il compito di togliersi dal recinto
The sheep has the task to move.herself out.of.the enclosure
 'The sheep has the task to move out of the enclosure'
- (3) La giraffa la vede saltare la staccionata
The giraffe her.sees jump the fence
 'The giraffe sees her jump the fence'
- (4) Papà lo fa abbracciare dalla scimmia
Dad him.makes hug by the monkey
 'Dad has him hugged by the monkey'

Table1: Correct responses per Age Group (N=74)

	Transitive				Reflexive			
	Restruct.	Control	FP	ECM	Restruct.	Control	FP	ECM
3 y.o.	48%	43%	47%	45%	87%	88%	72%	92%
(24 chi)	(57/120)	(51/120)	(56/120)	(54/120)	(104/120)	(105/120)	(86/120)	(110/120)
4 y.o.	58%	58%	58%	42%	99%	92%	95%	95%
(26 chi)	(76/130)	(76/130)	(75/130)	(55/130)	(129/130)	(119/130)	(124/130)	(124/130)
5 y.o.	75%	78%	60%	59%	99%	98%	98%	95%
(24 chi)	(90/120)	(93/120)	(72/120)	(71/120)	(119/120)	(118/120)	(118/120)	(114/120)

References:

- Baauw, S. and F. Cuetos (2003) The interpretation of pronouns in Spanish language acquisition and language breakdown: Evidence for the "Delayed Principle B Effect" as a non-unitary phenomenon. *Language Acquisition* 11: 219–275.
- Chien, Y.-C. and K. Wexler (1990) Children's knowledge of locality conditions in bindings as evidence for the modularity of syntax and pragmatics. *Language Acquisition* 1: 225–295.
- Chomsky, N. (2001) Derivation by Phase. In Kenstowicz, Michael (ed.) *Ken Hale. A Life in Language*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1–52.
- Folli, R. and H. Harley (2004) The composition of Italian causatives, In V. Chand, A. Kelleher, A. J. Rodriguez, and B. Schmeiser (eds.), *Proceedings of WCCFL 23*. Cambridge, MA: Cascadilla Press, 195–208.
- Thornton, R. and K. Wexler (1999) *Principle B, VP-ellipsis and interpretation in child grammar*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Wexler, K. (2004) Theory of phasal development: Perfection in child grammar. In A. Csirmaz, A. Gualmini, and A. Nevins (eds.), *MITWPL 48: Plato's Problems: Papers on Language Acquisition*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Working Papers in Linguistics, 159–209.

INVITED SPEAKERS

Acquisition of Clitics: A Non-Uniform Process

João Costa & Maria Lobo

CLUNL/FCSH/Universidade Nova de Lisboa

Clitics are acquired late in some languages. The literature on the acquisition of clitics reports that they are omitted in a set of languages. There is no consensus, however, regarding the following issues:

- the nature of omission;
- the set of languages in which omission is found;
- the age at which omission ceases.

In this talk, we report on the results of our research from the past 5 years on the acquisition of clitics in European Portuguese. We show that omission is found in this language until later than what has been found for other languages, and at higher rates. We provide evidence in favor of the claim that clitic omission in European Portuguese is due to an overuse of null objects – an option available in adult grammar. The evidence for this claim comes from two sources: some correlation between the contexts of omission and the contexts of null object, and the target interpretation of null objects with correlations between production and comprehension.

These results are important, since they contribute to the current debates on the acquisition of clitics, by showing that i) clitic omission is not a side-effect of some delay in pragmatics; ii) clitic omission is not necessarily uniform cross-linguistically; iii) the understanding of clitic omission implies taking into account language specific properties.

Finally, we argue that the overuse of null objects is due to a late acquisition of subtle details in the distinction between different types of null categories. In particular, we argue that children do not master the difference between pro and vbl until late. A comparison between the acquisition of EP and Japanese will provide evidence in favor of this claim.

Clitic Right Dislocation in Absence of Clitics: A Case Study in Trilingual Acquisition

Megan Devlin, Raffaella Folli, Alison Henry, and Christina Sevdali
University of Ulster

Introduction

This paper reports on a study of simultaneous trilingual acquisition of Scottish Gaelic, Italian and English. The child speaks Italian with her mother, Scottish Gaelic with her father, and English is the language used in the nursery, the extended social circle and between parents. The data was obtained through weekly recordings in a free play environment.

The combination of the three languages is particularly interesting: first, this is a probably unique combination of these languages in acquisition, with no such cases reported in the literature; second, the three languages vary significantly in their morphosyntactic properties, including word order, null subjects and the use of clitics.

While we report on a number of characteristics of the acquisition patterns, the data examined in detail are cases where structures occur in English which are not characteristic of adult English or monolingual English acquisition. We focus on sentences with pronominal copies and right dislocation that demonstrate some sort of doubling strategy, involving a pronoun and a right-dislocated DP.

The Data

The target deviant constructions considered consist of right-dislocated, often inanimate object DPs which are doubled by the semantically weak element 'it'. This construction appears in the data from the ages of 2;3–3;7 and occurs in 6.3% of constructions.

(1)	a. We will make it bed.	[it= bed]	2;4
	b. You find it my elegetch.	[it = elegetch]	2;5
	c. Don't wake it the baby.	[it= the baby]	2;7
	d. I don't like it carrots.	[it = carrots]	2;9
	e. Then I gonna be get it the tree.	[it = the tree]	3;3
	f. I gonna put it away the baby.	[it = the baby]	3;6
	g. He didn't eat it the big big bunny	[it = the big big bunny]	3;7

The phenomenon is interesting from three points of view:

- (i) It involves doubling of the object by means of a weak element, a pronoun, a structure not characteristic of English. In general, dislocation structures of the canonical kind are not found in English L1 acquisition (Van Der Linden & Sleeman 2007) at this stage.
- (ii) It shows the tendency of the child to right-dislocate, a strategy that in many ways resembles clitic right dislocation in Italian.
- (iii) The semantic effect is precisely that of clitic right dislocation since the acoustic analysis of the data shows a pause after the pronominal element, hence confirming that these are topic comment structures.

Discussion

This might be thought to be due to influence of Italian. The equivalent structure in Italian would involve cliticisation and right dislocation:

(2)	Mother: Lo faremo il letto. it (we) will make, the bed	Sofia: si, faremo yes, we will make	[2;7]
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However, crucially, at this stage of development the child does not produce clitics in Italian (Hamann 2002 and Leonini 2006 a.o.) and in fact tends to omit the object:

- | | |
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| <p>(3) Mother: La prendo?
it take-3sg?
Shall I take it?</p> <p>Mother: Limetto?
them wear-3sg?
Shall I wear them?</p> <p>Mother: Come ti chiami?
how you-cl call-2sg
What is your name”?</p> | <p>Sofia: Predi, Prendi [2;7]
take, take!
(Target: Prendila)</p> <p>Sofia: Metti! [2;7]
wear-2sg
(Target: Mettili)</p> <p>Sofia : Chiamo Sofia
I am Called S...
(Target: Mi chiamo S)</p> |
|--|---|

Therefore we cannot see this as a case of superficial cross-linguistic transfer. Moreover, direct transfer would produce the word order in (4) and on the contrary the order we see is English SVO with a postverbal pronoun:

- (4) *We will it make bed.

Since the child’s Italian is less advanced than her English, this also cannot be seen as a straightforward case of bilingual bootstrapping (Gawlitze-Maiwald and Tracy (1996)). We argue, however, that this is in fact a type of cross-linguistic transfer of a rather subtle kind: the child is aware, to some extent, that doubling (and clitic dislocation) is a pragmatic strategy that fulfills the function of topic marking in Italian and that this strategy is more effective than a simple displace prominence strategy. Marking the topic of a clause in Italian involves displacing a constituent to a peripheral position and using a pronoun. It is this knowledge that the child transfers to English, even before she is producing the Italian equivalent which would require the use of a clitic, a weaker pronoun which is not available yet.

The data highlights that (i) the grammatical system of the two languages must be both independently developing (see (2) vs (3)), (ii) interface levels where syntax interacts with other cognitive systems are vulnerable domains in acquisition (Serratrice, Sorace & Paoli (2004), Müller (2004), hence susceptible to a form of ‘deep’ syntactic transfer where two language particular characteristics (Italian doubling and English non-clitic pronouns) can combined.

Selected References

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CAT Research on Object Clitic Placement: Where We Are Now

Kleanthes K. Grohmann

University of Cyprus and Cyprus Acquisition Team

This talk is intended as a semi-roundtable wrapping up the special session on the acquisition of clitics in Cypriot Greek. It addresses the vast testing carried out by members of the Cyprus Acquisition Team (CAT) on the clitics-in-islands tool (COST Action A33; Varlokosta et al., to appear), as presented in some of the preceding talks. Here I will present the current “state of the art” on the basis of over 360 children between the ages of 3 and 7 that have been tested all around Cyprus, looking at variables such as geographical region (across the districts of Cyprus) and area (urban vs. rural), among others, as possible factors for variation.

The bulk of this research comes from the Gen-CHILD Project (Grohmann, 2010–2012; see Grohmann, 2011 and Grohmann et al., in press, among others), but it was initiated by the participation of CAT in COST Action A33 (2006–2010) and it is also additionally informed by extensions carried out in the ongoing COST Action IS0804 (2009–2013). One of the resulting consequences are two closely related tools, the clitics-in-islands tool and a shorter version without the syntactic complexity. A comparison between the two tools recently carried out by Charalambous and Agathocleous (2012) are highly revealing with respect to our guiding hypothesis concerning the ‘socio-syntactic development’ of children growing up in diglossic speaker communities (Grohmann and Leivada, in press; Rowe and Grohmann, submitted).

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Acquisition of Dative and Accusative Clitic Doubling in Albanian: A Syntactic-Pragmatic Approach

Enkeleida Kapia

University of Hamburg and Center for Albanian Studies, Tirane

This study focuses on the investigation of the development of dative and accusative clitic doubling in 2- to 4-year-old Albanian-speaking children. Clitic doubling of dative and accusative objects in Albanian is a particularly interesting phenomenon because it allows for the study of both syntax and pragmatics. In Albanian, dative objects are invariably clitic doubled. Clitic doubling of accusative objects, on the other hand, depends on the information structure status of the object. In other words, the clitic may seem as optional, but it is not optional as it corresponds to “information structure”. This is illustrated in the examples below.

- (1) Q: What did Bora do? What did Bora lose?
A: a. *Bora e humbi dosjen.
 Bora it.CL.ACC lost file.ACC
 ‘Bora lost the file.’
- b. Bora humbi dosjen.
 Bora lost file.ACC
 ‘Bora lost the file.’
- (2) Q: Who lost the file? What did Bora do to the file?
A: a. Bora e humbi dosjen.
 Bora it.CL.ACC lost file.ACC
 ‘Bora lost the file.’
- b. *Bora humbi dosjen.
 Bora lost file.ACC
 ‘Bora lost the file.’

As evidenced above, clitic doubling of accusative objects can only happen when the accusative object is not part of the focus domain. When an accusative object is part of the focus domain, then it cannot be clitic doubled. Crucially, this rule does not hold for dative objects. For dative objects, it does not matter what the information structure status of the object is: There must always be a clitic double with it. Studying the development of clitic doubling for both dative and accusative objects allows us to look at the development of syntax independently as is the case for clitic doubling of dative objects and the development of both syntax and pragmatics in the context of the clitic doubling of accusative objects.

In addition, it provides ample ground to test whether the developmental clitic patterns observed in various languages and predicted by different theories hold true for a language such as Albanian which has been sparsely studied, especially in the context of generative framework. Languages appear seem to differ with respect to whether clitic appear right away in child language or whether they appear late (Babyonyshev and Marin, 2006). Several theories have been proposed to account for the early and late patterns observed in child language. One such theory maintains that languages with participle agreement show a Late Pattern, whereas language without participle agreement show an early pattern (Tsakali and Wexler, 2003). Albanian is a language of the latter kind, so the prediction is that it will show an Early Pattern of acquisition of clitics.

In the spirit of previous work in Spanish, Greek, and Romanian (Gavarrò and Mosello, 2008; Tsakali and Wexler, 2004; Babyonyshev and Marin, 2006) and in contrast from previous work on Albanian (Kapia, 2011), this study brings forth new evidence from naturalistic data.

The data was collected with two different age groups: 2- to 3-year-olds and 3- to 4-year-olds. Consistent with previous work on Albanian, these data also suggest that children reach an adult like performance with clitic doubling dative objects since the age of 2. They do not, however, reach an adult-like performance with accusative objects even by age 4;0. Children double topical accusative objects as adults do, but they insert a clitic about 15% of the time with focused accusative objects, which adults never do.

These results indicate that developmental patterns of clitic doubling can only be explained through both a syntactic and a pragmatic account at the same time. Specifically, this study is in full agreement with predictions made by the Unique Checking Constraint (Wexler, 1998) account according to which in a language without participle agreement such as Albanian we would expect to see no omission of clitics at all. This is exactly what we see in the realization of both dative and accusative clitic doubling. The insertion patterns observed in the realization of accusative clitic doubling will be explained via a pragmatic account which proposes that clitic doubling of accusative objects depends not only on syntax, but also on the sensitivity to conditions of pragmatics. But since the realization of dative clitic doubling indicates that syntax is developed, the effect seen here is probably attributable to pragmatics. These patterns reveal an underdeveloped pragmatic system due to which children take more referents to be given/old than adults do.

Table 1. Production rates for clitic doubling of dative and accusative objects (age)

age	dative	accusative
2–3	98.0%	84.7%
3–4	99.2%	86.3%

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Bilingual Acquisition of Object Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek: A Comparative Study from Russian–Cypriot Greek Speakers

Sviatlana Karpava and Kleantes Grohmann
University of Cyprus and Cyprus Acquisition Team

The present study investigates the acquisition of object clitics by bilingual Russian–Cypriot Greek children. It is known that there are differences in object clitic placement in Cypriot Greek (CG) and Standard Modern Greek (SMG). In CG indicative declarative clauses clitics should be placed post-verbally (enclisis), while in SMG they occur pre-verbally (proclisis).

This study aims to provide a double comparison: (i) to compare object clitic production of bilingual and monolingual groups in two elicitation tasks and (ii) to compare the performance results of these two tasks, the CG adaptation of the clitics-in-islands tool (COST Action A33; see Varlokosta et al., to appear) and the CG adaptation of the PPPC tool (developed for French and SMG by L. Tuller and I.M. Tsimpli; see Tuller et al., 2011).

18 bilingual Russian–CG children participated in the study, all born in Cyprus and residing in the Larnaca district. They represent four age groups: 4;0–4;11 (N=2), 5;0–5;11 (N=2), 6;0–6;11 (N=9), and 7;0–7;11 (N=5). The Developmental Verbal IQ Test (DVIQ), slightly adapted to CG from Stavrakaki & Tsimpli's (2000) SMG original, was administered to all participating children in order to assess their proficiency in the Greek language.

The analysis and the comparison of the results of the two tests show that the Russian–CG bilingual children produced more clitic than non-clitic sentences, but also that the clitics-in-islands tool elicited more clitics in bilingual children (82%) than the PPPC tool did (51%), as shown in Figure 1. There was no great difference between the two tools in terms of post-verbal clitic placement (12% for the clitics-in-islands tools and 16% for the PPPC tool). Null production and substitution of object clitics by NPs was more common in the PPPC tool (24% and 20%, respectively) than in the clitics-in-islands tool (4% and 6%); see Figure 2.

The correlation between age, schooling factor, DVIQ scores, and object clitic production revealed in both tests supports the Socio-Syntax of Development Hypothesis (Grohmann, 2010–12). The age group 6;0–6;11 had the highest rate of clitic production (Figure 3). Furthermore, the primary school children outperformed the kindergarten and the pre-primary bilingual children in clitic production and pre-verbal clitic placement (Figure 4). The children with high DVIQ scores had the best clitic production and high rate of proclisis (Figure 5).

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Figure 1

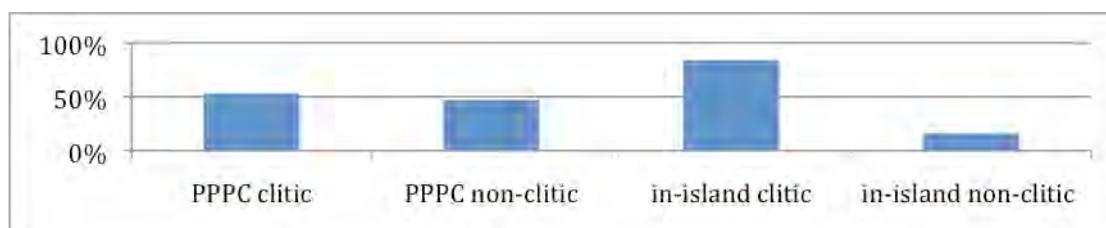


Figure 2

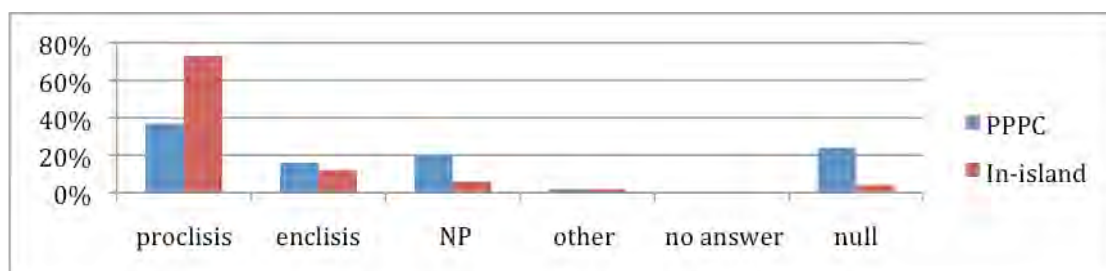


Figure 3

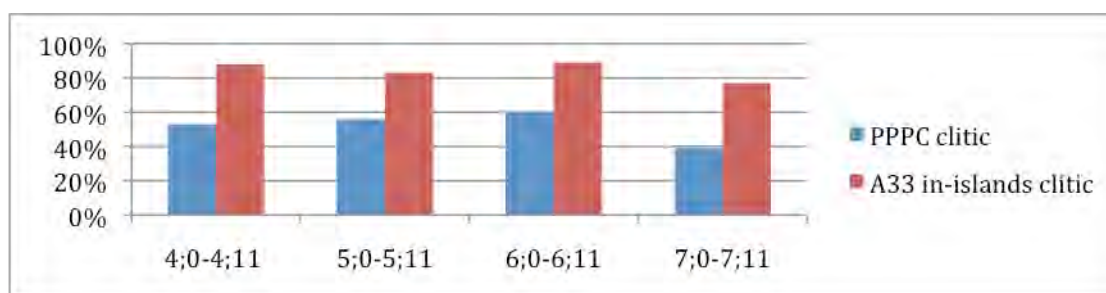


Figure 4

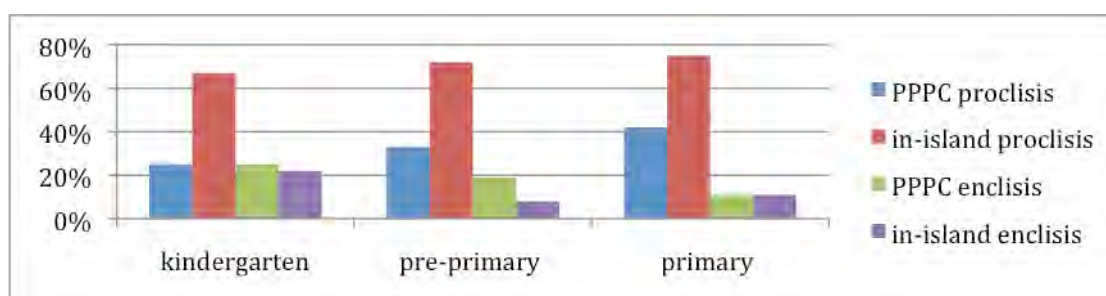
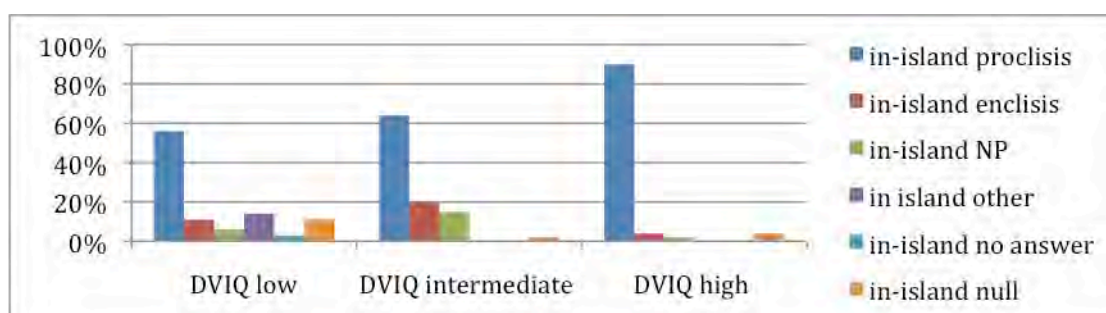
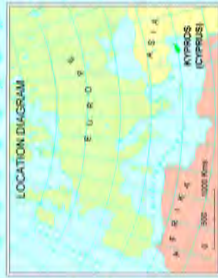


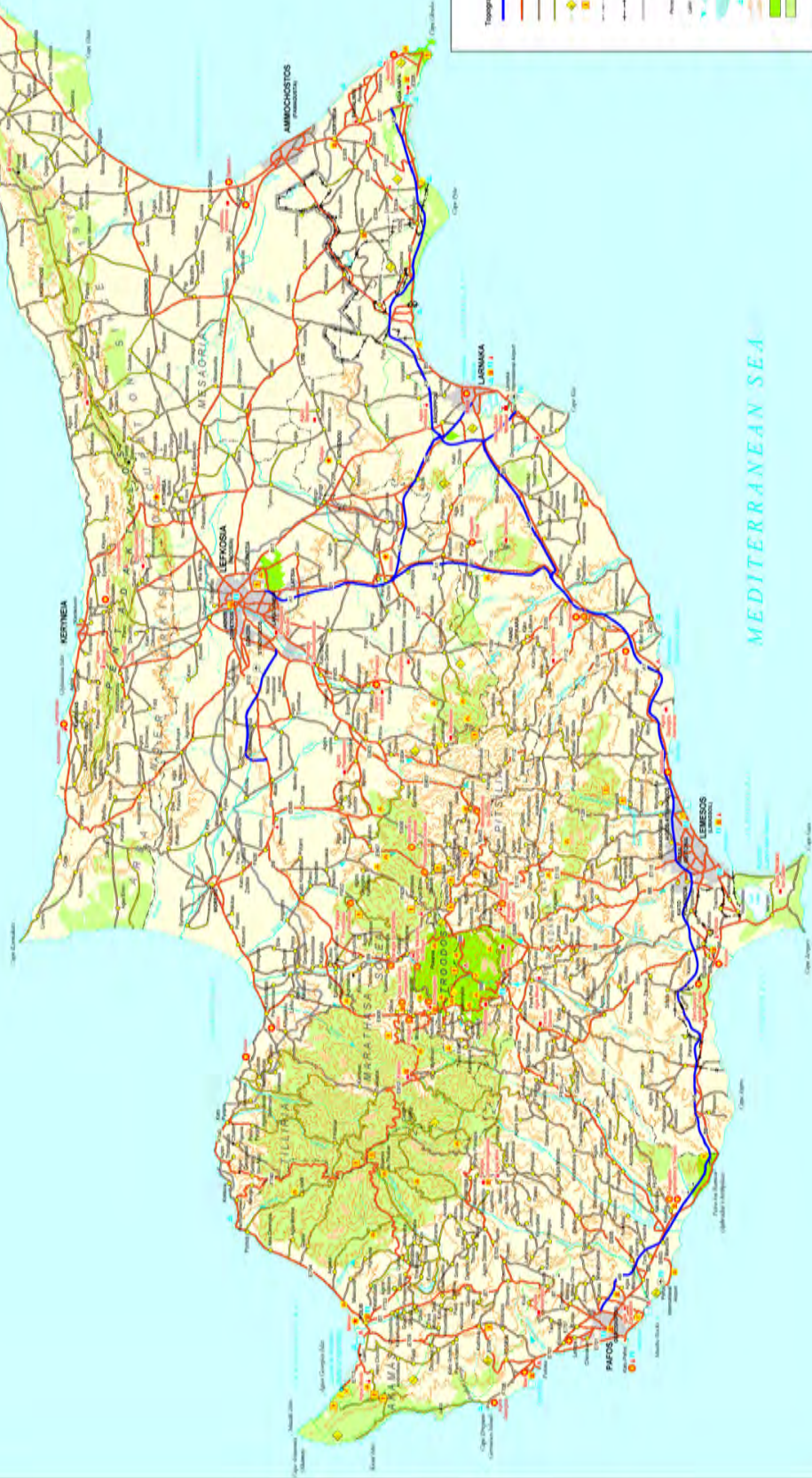
Figure 5



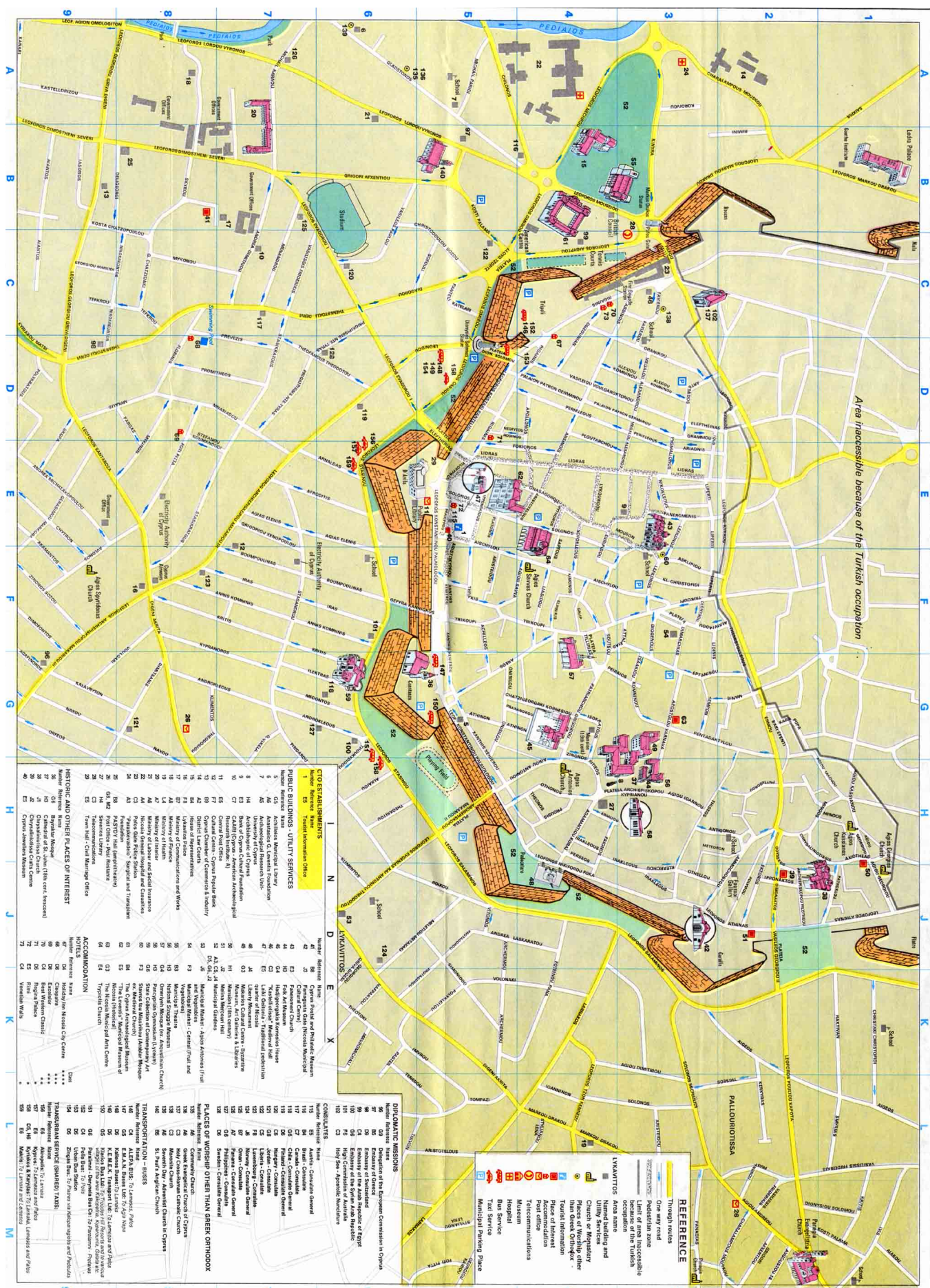


A Visitor's Map of Cyprus

Scale 1:350000



REFERENCE	
Topographical Features	Tourist Interest Features
Motorway	Camping site
Main road	Place of interest
Secondary road	CTO Public beach
Lower section road	CTO Tourist position
European long distance path E6	Church
Natural trail (start of)	Monastery
Sovereign Base Area boundary	Cable, Fort
Direct boundary	Museum
Limit of area under Turkish occupation prior 1974	Artillery
Place	Antique site
Locality name	Place of interest
Settlement	Golf course
Cliff	UNESCO World Cultural Heritage
Sandy beach	Tourist Information Office
Fishing shelter	
Cultural lines, Vertical interval in metres	
Natural forest park	
Forest area	



INVITED SPEAKERS

Acquisition of Clitic Placement in European Portuguese

Maria Lobo & João Costa (CLUNL/FCSH/Universidade Nova de Lisboa)

Unlike other Romance languages, clitic placement in European Portuguese is not only dependent on finiteness. In this language, there is variation between **enclisis** (postverbal clitic), **proclisis** (preverbal clitic) and **mesocclisis** (clitic within the verb) in finite clauses. Proclisis depends on different types of **triggers**. Mesocclisis is restricted to future and conditional tenses in enclitic contexts and for many people is a structure learnt at school.

Acquiring clitics in this language implies mastering placement. The literature on this topic shows, based on spontaneous production data, that children tend to overuse enclisis. However, the data are not entirely reliable, since one can also find cases of proclisis-pro-enclisis and double use of the clitics.

The goal of this talk is to present the results of an elicitation task targeting the production of clitics in proclitic and enclitic environments by 5-year-old children.

We hope to be able to provide answers to the following questions:

- a) Is there a preference for enclisis as reported in the literature?
- b) If so, is enclisis generalized across the board or is it found more pervasively in specific proclisis-triggering environments?

We will also discuss different approaches to clitic placement (syntactic, prosodic and morphological), and check how the acquisition data contribute to a distinction between these analyses.

L1 Acquisition of Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek

Theoni Neokleous
University of Cambridge

The first language acquisition of pronominal clitics has been widely studied in a number of languages, such as Catalan and Spanish (Wexler et al. 2004), French (Hamann et al. 1996), Italian (Guasti 1993/94), Romanian (Babyonyshev & Marin 2005) and Serbo-Croatian (Ilic & Ud Deen 2003). Studies on the acquisition of clitics focused on the phenomenon of clitic realisation and omission, trying to account for clitic omission in some early languages, as in European Portuguese (Costa & Lobo 2007 *et seq.*), contrary to some other early languages with adult-like clitic production from the onset, like Standard Modern Greek (Marinis 2000, Stephany 1997). Yet, there is another interesting discrepancy among clitic languages that remains understudied: languages that exhibit clitic misplacement at the onset of L1 acquisition and languages that do not. So far, the phenomenon of clitic misplacement has been observed in early European Portuguese and early Cypriot Greek. Clitic misplacement in European Portuguese has been reported (Costa & Lobo 2007 *et seq.*, Duarte & Matos 2000), but has not been studied systematically yet, whereas Petinou and Terzi (2002) investigated clitic misplacement in early Cypriot Greek on the basis of five typically developing children and five children diagnosed with SLI.

European Portuguese and Cypriot Greek are languages that exhibit a mixed pattern for clitic placement in finite contexts: the pronominal clitic either precedes or follows the finite verb depending on the syntactic context. Interestingly, the phenomenon of clitic misplacement has not been observed in languages exhibiting the proclisis pattern (with the clitic preceding the verb) in finite contexts, like Standard Modern Greek, Italian, or Spanish.

This paper investigates the acquisition of clitic placement in Cypriot Greek on the basis of experimental data. Fifty monolingual Greek Cypriot children from three age groups (A: 2;6–3;0, B: 3;0–3;6 C: 3;6–4;0) performed an elicited production task for 3rd person singular object clitics. Three types of clitic constructions were elicited: (i) bare finite clauses, (ii) negatives and (iii) subjunctives. Each construction corresponds to one of the two experimental conditions: enclisis (i) and proclisis (ii & iii) contexts.

The findings revealed a different pattern for the acquisition of clitic placement in the two experimental conditions. Enclisis contexts are adult-like from the onset, whereas proclisis contexts are problematic for a subset of children aged 2;6 to 3;0 (group A), who produced post-verbal instead of pre-verbal clitics in proclisis environments. Statistically significant differences have been found between group A and group B, as well as between group A and group C with regard to correct clitic placement in subjunctive clauses. Data analysis shows a bi-modal distribution in children's clitic placement and, more importantly, that their choices are not characterised by true optionality but, instead, by systematicity.

The overgeneralization of the enclisis pattern in early CG is explained as a consequence of verb movement: assuming that enclisis is the result of verb movement (Agouraki 2001, Terzi 1999a, 1999b), it is proposed, in lines with Petinou and Terzi (2002), that enclisis-pro-proclisis is attested because verb movement is overgeneralized across syntactic contexts. Yet, contra Petinou and Terzi (2002), this phenomenon is not attributed to non-adult-like checking of the verbal features of some functional projections, but to children's misconception of requirements imposed on CG clitics.

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Clitics in Early L1 French: Their Morpho-Syntactic Status and the Oral vs. Standard French Dichotomy

Katerina Palasis

‘Bases, Corpus, Langage’ (BCL), UMR 7320 CNRS & Université de Nice – Sophia Antipolis

French nominative clitics have been the centre of much attention in generative grammar ever since Kayne's (1975) pioneering work. More specifically, their morpho-syntactic status in oral French has been and still remains a matter of lively debate (e.g. De Cat, 2005 vs. Culbertson, 2010, among many others). This particular issue is of crucial importance in L1 acquisition. Indeed, if these clitics are analysed as syntactic arguments: (i) French speaking children initially acquire a non pro drop language, and (ii) oral and standard French are alike in this respect (Rizzi, 1986). To the contrary, if these clitics are analysed as preverbal agreement markers in oral French: (i) native speakers initially acquire a pro drop language on a par with many other Romance languages, and (ii) oral French differs from standard French with regard to the status of its nominative clitics (Palasis, 2009). The latter configuration then raises further questions with regard to L1 vs. L2 acquisition, and possible diglossia in France (Barra-Jover, 2010; Massot, 2010; Zribi-Hertz, 2011).

Moreover, nominative clitics solely represent part of the picture. Indeed, Zwicky and Pullum's (1983) often referred to criterion that ‘clitics can attach to material already containing clitics, but affixes cannot’ entails that any constituent intervening between a nominative agreement marker and a finite verb would also have to bear an affixal status. This includes accusative, reflexive, and dative constituents, the so-called adverbial clitics *y* ‘there’ and *en* ‘from there’, and the negative particle *ne*. Furthermore, restrictions such as unavailability for syntactic operations, and the doubling analysis of co-occurring clitics and DPs also seem to hinder the morphological analysis (De Cat, 2005; Labelle, 2008).

The aim of this talk is to discuss the morpho-syntactic status of the above-mentioned clitics drawing on two sets of spontaneous child data recently collected with a total of 37 French children between 2;3 and 4;0 (Palasis, 2010). The investigation first focuses on the different types of ‘subjects’ young natives spontaneously utter (cf. Table 1). The data show the following characteristics: (i) pervasive presence of nominative clitics, (ii) overwhelmingly preverbal clitics whether in declarative or interrogative contexts, and (iii) possible co-occurrence with indefinite DPs. This first set of features suggests a morphological handling of these clitics in early French. The second part of the investigation focuses on accusative clitics. Their purported morphological status entails at least two predictions: (i) no availability for syntactic operations, i.e. no enclisis, and (ii) possible doubling.

Two configurations are hence investigated, i.e. imperatives and the ‘Doubling/Agreement Correlation’ submitted by Tsakali and Anagnostopoulou (2008). It is shown that neither configuration invalidates the morphological analysis. Finally, the emergence of the negative particle *ne* is surveyed, and the following characteristics are highlighted: (i) by age 4, only 1 child out of 5 seldom utters discontinuous negation (16 occurrences of *ne* in total), and (ii) its emergence is correlated with two other rare phenomena in the corpus, i.e. the absence of the nominative clitic, as illustrated in (1a) below, and the non-elided form of *il* ‘he/it’ before a consonant, as shown in (1b), in contrast with the overwhelming elision pattern exemplified in (1c).

Following De Cat (2005) and Culbertson (2010), it is suggested that *ne* is not available as a verbal prefix in child French, contrary to some Northern Italian dialects (Zanuttini, 1997), and it is additionally submitted that the emergence of *ne* as an independent negative projection forces the emergence of syntactic clitics. This proposal hence also raises the question of whether current French can be accounted for within one single grammar displaying variation (Coveney, 2011) or two complementary grammars (Palasis, submitted).

- (1) a. *ta photo n'est pas là?* 'your photo is not there' (Lucille, 2;10)
 b. *il ne chante plus* 'he no longer sings' (Mathilde, 3;2)
 c. *i nage sur moi* 'he swims on me' (Lucille, 3;4)

Table 1: The different types of 'subjects' uttered by two different groups of children

Types	Group 1: 2;3-3;1		Group 2: 2;5-4;0		Examples	Glosses
	#	%	#	%		
Clitic	459	50.9	5,831	64.6	nan <i>je</i> veux mes épées	no I want my swords
Clitic +DP	203	22.5	2,804	31.1	<i>mon papa i</i> vient me chercher	my father comes to pick me up
Null	240	26.6	348	3.9	veut pas manger	does not want to eat
DP	0	0	39	0.4	<i>le train</i> est là	the train is there
Total	902	100.0	9,022	100.0		

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Clitic Placement in Cypriot Greek: A Matter of Lexical and Syntactic Stimulation?

Elena Papadopoulou^{1,3}, Evelina Leivada^{2,3}, and Natalia Pavlou³

University of Essex¹, Universitat de Barcelona², Cyprus Acquisition Team³

This paper investigates clitic placement in Cypriot Greek (CG), for which pre- or post-verbal placement varies across syntactic environments (see Terzi 1999, Grohmann et al., in press, for a general overview). The environment under examination involves simple indicatives which give rise to one of the most salient differences across CG and Standard Modern Greek (SMG); one of the two official languages of the Republic of Cyprus. CG involves enclisis (1) where SMG involves proclisis (2).

(1) O Yiannis θcavazi to. [CG]
the Yiannis reads it.CL
'Yiannis is reading it.'

(2) O Yiannis to ðjavazi. [SMG]
the Yiannis it.CL reads
'Yiannis is reading it.'

Previous studies on the acquisition of clitic placement in CG (Grohmann et al. in press, among others), suggest that clitic placement in *because*-islands (COST A33 clitics-in-islands tool) is mainly post-verbal before 59 months in Greek Cypriot children and it later shows mixed placement patterns, possibly due to the schooling factor which revolves around the formal insertion of SMG in pre-school education. However, experimental findings in first language acquisition research should be evaluated through having a clear understanding as to what counts as target placement in adult CG indicatives. The claims found in the literature show some degree of divergence with respect to the performance of adult populations (i.e. used as control groups) even for the same clitics-in-islands test. More specifically, the control group in Grohmann et al. (in press) showed 100% post-verbal production.

When the same experiment was conducted in both SMG and CG (Leivada et al. 2010), monolingual Greek Cypriot participants produced nearly 100% pre-verbal clitics in the SMG version of the test and 76.6% post-verbal clitics in the CG version. Considering the small number of adult participants in both these studies as well as the use of *because*-islands instead of a simple declarative, this study aims to identify which factors drive and affect target placement in adult CG, by hypothesizing that lexical stimulation (i.e. input effects) is the main factor for the conscious choice of producing pre- or post-verbal clitics. In this context, the different results elicited by different testing rounds in previous experiments are the consequence of using CG specific lexical items, albeit not consistently, in the sense that an SMG word was sometimes employed whereas a CG-specific word was also available.

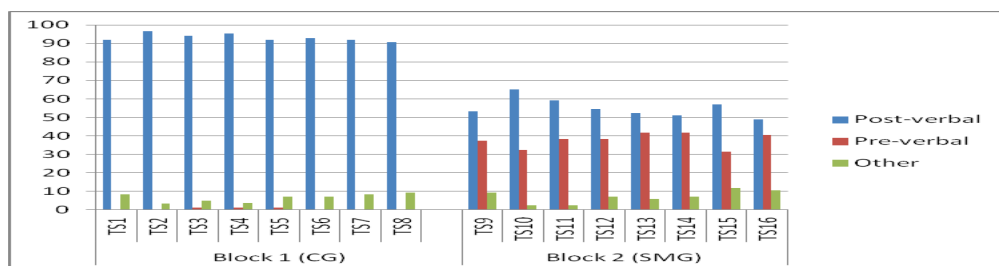
112 Greek Cypriot monolingual adults, born and raised in Cyprus have participated in the present experiment so far; yet this is an ongoing study hence the number is expected to increase. The experiment consists of 16 questions, and 4 fillers, equally divided, 8 in a CG-specific and 8 in an SMG-specific block. Each block makes use of verbs and nouns that are as much specific to the attested variety as possible — given that CG is very heterogeneous — in an effort to see to what extent do lexical items affect placement. Moreover, the effects of syntax are tested through word order, since we followed a strict VOS pattern for CG, hence establishing the difference between the two varieties in the following way:

(3) O Yiannis esasen to ermarin. [CG]
the Yiannis fixed the wardrobe
'John fixed the wardrobe.'

- (4) I Katerina eftçakse tin kuŋa. [SMG]
the Katerina fixed the swing
 ‘Katerina fixed the swing.’

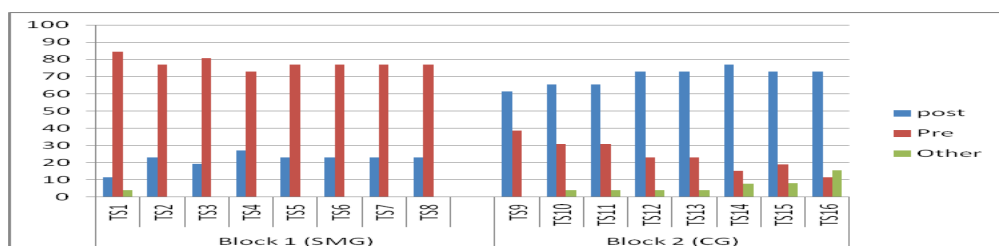
Taking (3)–(4) as input, participants were asked what the person do to the relevant object; a question for which the target response involves the production of a verb and a clitic. Block order was treated as a between-subjects variable with 86 participants completing the CG-SMG order and 26 participants the SMG-CG order so far. This switch of block order aims to investigate any cross-over effects from one variety to another. The questionnaire was administered online and it was presented in Facebook writing — CG and SMG written in the Latin alphabet. This was employed due to the lack of codification for CG; a lack that poses some restrictions to the presentation of written language, which usually appears in the form of Facebook writing (Leivada et al. to appear, Themistocleous 2008, 2012) when appearing online. Therefore, the simplest phonological adaptation of a number of spontaneously written responses by native speakers of Cypriot Greek was adopted.

Initial results for the CG-SMG order of blocks (i.e. CG-specific items and VOS word order come first) show participants produce above 90 % post-verbal clitics in the CG-specific block, an effect carried over to the items in the SMG-specific block. This was unexpected since we assumed that participants would be more sensitive to lexical and syntactic choices and code-switch across blocks (Graph 1), as happened across different versions of the clitics-in-islands test according to the overall findings reported in Grohmann & Leivada (to appear).



Graph 1: CG-SMG block order

When participants were introduced first to the SMG-block they produced 70% and more pre-verbal clitics as expected, and above 60% post-verbal clitics in the CG block (Graph 2).



Graph 2: SMG-CG block order

So far, initial results suggest a carry-over effect between blocks; an effect which appears to be more robust in the CG-SMG block order. On the contrary, the effect gradually fades away when the block order is reversed (Graph 2, Block 2). These effects will be made more precise once more participants complete the second block of the study. Such findings give a new spin to the wheel by investigating what counts as target placement in adult CG indicatives as well as to what extent lexico-syntactic stimulation influences participants' choice with respect to clitic placement in CG, especially in experimental settings.

INVITED SPEAKER

Clitic Placement in L2 Serbo-Croatian as a Feature Learning Challenge

Teresa Parodi

University of Cambridge

The question of what is learnable has been at the core of language acquisition studies for decades and has taken different shapes in the course of time in parallel with developments in linguistic theory. Within the Principles-and-Parameters framework developed in the 80s (Chomsky 1981) crosslinguistic differences were seen as clustering in parameters with binary choices. The acquisitional task consisted in setting parameters (in L1 acquisition) and re-setting them (in L2 acquisition). Following developments in the theory which highlight the role of different features in the representation, acquisitional research has shifted from looking at parameters to looking at the features involved and the values assigned to them.

The other side of the coin is the question of what is *not* learnable. Answers to this question take either the view that there is a deficit in the L2 learners' representation (representational view) or that the problem is computational, while there is no problem with the representation.

In this presentation I will join this debate by discussing the acquisition of second-position (P2) clitics in Serbo-Croatian by speakers of French and English, basing the discussion on Novaković (2004). The languages differ with respect to the availability of clitics, which, as opposed to French, do not exist in English; this means that English learners of SC will have to learn a new category, as opposed to French. In contrast to Serbo-Croatian, however, French does not have P2-clitics; this means that French learners of SC will need to change the feature specification of clitics. Against this background, I will explore the learnability challenges speakers of different L1s encounter.

Do Autistic Children's Problems with Binding of Clitics Reflect Problems with Case?

Arhonto Terzi¹, Theodoros Marinis², Konstantinos Francis³, and Angeliki Kotsopoulou⁴
Technological Educational Institute of Patras¹, University of Reading², University of Athens³

Background In a recent study of the grammar of 20 Greek-speaking high functioning children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), aged 5-8 (mean 6;9), it was found that they fall behind their typically developing (TD) age and vocabulary matched controls on binding of clitic pronouns, but not of the corresponding strong ones (Terzi et al. to appear). In particular, while TD children performed almost at ceiling (99.2%), ASD children performed correctly at 88.3%. This difference was significant, and constituted the *only difference* between the two groups. The most common error children made for (1) was to interpret 'mom' as the patient. The same error was found for Greek-speaking children with SLI (Stavrakaki & van der Lely, 2010). These authors attribute SLI children's performance to problems in feature checking associated with complex structures that involve movement (i.e., clitics). The ASD children of the aforementioned study are unlikely to have problems with movement structures since they were not different from TD controls on passive sentences. We hypothesized that children with ASD (mis)interpret sentences in (1) as clitic left dislocation structures, (2). All it takes for such an interpretation to arise, is problems with case, i.e., mistaking *i* 'the-nom' as *ti* 'the-acc' in (1). This study tests this hypothesis via a grammaticality judgment task of the case of the determiner.

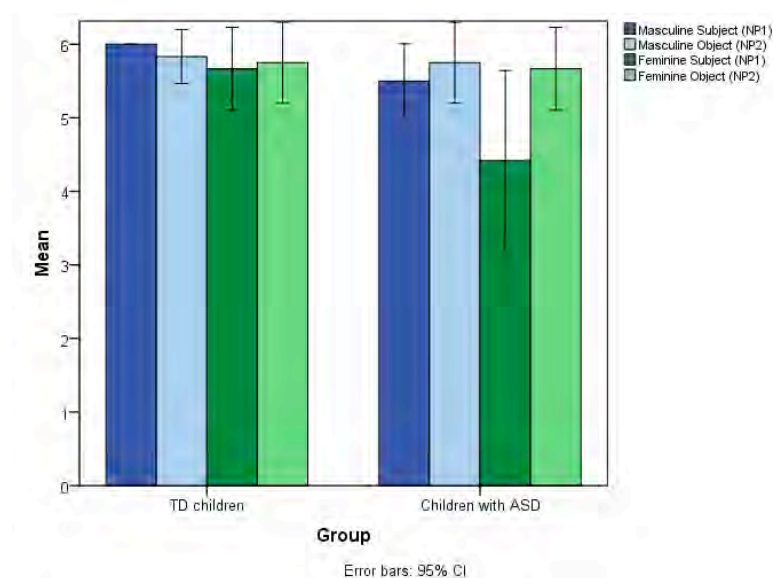
- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) I mama tin pleni
the-acc mom her-acc-cl washes.
'Mom washes her.' | (2) Ti mama tin pleni <i>pro</i>
the-acc mom she-acc-cl washes
'She/he washes mom.' |
|---|---|

The experiment We used a test based on Zachou & Guasti (2010), constructed by Zachou for the purposes of the present study. It consisted of 24 ungrammatical sentences, pre-recorded and accompanied by the associated picture. Children had to judge whether sentences were 'right' or 'wrong', and correct the wrong ones. 8 grammatical filler sentences of the same type were also used. 6 sentences had a masculine subject with an accusative determiner, (3), 6 had a masculine object with a nominative determiner, (4), 6 had a feminine subject with an accusative determiner, (5), and 6 a feminine object with a nominative determiner, (6).

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| (3) ton likos xeretai ton kokora
the-acc wolf-nom greets the-acc rooster-acc | 'the wolf greets the rooster' |
| (4) o kokoras kitazi o liko
the-nom rooster-nom looks at the-nom wolf-acc | 'the rooster looks at the wolf' |
| (5) tin kota akolouthi ti xelona
the-acc chicken-acc/nom follows the-acc turtle-acc/nom | 'the chicken follows the turtle' |
| (6) i xelona xeretai i kota
the-nom turtle-nom/acc greets the-nom chicken-nom/acc | 'the turtle greets the chicken.' |

Feminine nominative and accusative nouns are syncretic in Greek, hence, ungrammaticality of (5) and (6) becomes apparent only when participants encounter the second NP. In masculine nouns there is no syncretism. Therefore, there is a mismatch in case between article and noun in the first NP, which creates a clear grammaticality effect at the beginning of the sentence – reinforced when participants encounter the second NP that has the same case marking as the first. This predicts better detection of ungrammaticality with masculine nouns. We were unable to test some children of the previous study. Moreover, three ASD children did not seem to understand the task and they were excluded, along with their controls. Hence, results come from 12 out of the 20 ASD children of the original study, and their controls.

Results-Discussion Results appear in the graph of the following page. We had three main findings: **a)** the two groups differed on the conditions involving the subject position, i.e., the first NP, both feminine and masculine. This indicates that children with ASD may indeed have problems with case marking and this factor may be responsible for errors in comprehending clitics, hence, interpreting (1) as (2) in the binding task, as hypothesized. **Moreover:** **b)** both groups have more difficulties rejecting ungrammatical sentences when the ungrammaticality is in the first NP (subject) in feminine nouns and has accusative case, (5), than in similar sentences with masculine nouns, (3). This pattern can be explained from the nature of the NPs used in the task. In feminine nouns, as a result of case syncretism of the noun, there is concord between the article and the noun, whereas there is no concord in masculine nouns. Therefore, in masculine nouns we have two ungrammaticalities, one within the NP (concord) and the other on the case of the determiner. Hence, children are better at detecting ungrammaticality of masculine nouns because they are good in detecting concord violations. In feminine nouns it is ambiguous whether case error is in the first or second NP. **c)** both groups have more difficulties to reject ungrammatical sentences when the ungrammaticality is in the first NP (subject) in feminine nouns and has accusative marking, (5), than when the ungrammaticality is in the second noun (object) in feminine nouns marked as nominative, (6). This pattern could be explained if we assume that children use case to assign thematic roles as they listen to the sentence. In the first example, they assign the patient role to the first NP in the accusative case and expect nominative case for the second NP to assign the agent role. However, the second NP is also in the accusative case, so they have to reanalyse the thematic role of the first NP. In the second example, they assign the agent role to the first NP in the nominative case and expect accusative case for the second NP to assign the patient role. This time they get another nominative marked NP, which is clearly ungrammatical. In the latter case, they don't have to reanalyse the thematic role of the first NP. Since reanalysis is costly, it may have caused lower accuracy in the first condition.



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Object Clitics in Cypriot Greek Children with SLI

Eleni Theodorou and Kleanthes K. Grohmann

University of Cyprus and Cyprus Acquisition Team

Researchers have found that the production of object clitics is an area of difficulty for children with SLI who acquire languages such as French (Jakubowicz et al., 1998; Hamann et al., 2002; Paradis & Crago, 2002), Italian (Bortolini et al., 2006; Arosio et al., 2010) and Spanish (Jakobson & Schwartz, 2002). In Greek SLI, studies based on spontaneous speech data have not been adjacent until now, given some suggest that (accusative) direct object clitics are largely omitted by children with SLI (Tsimpli & Stavrakaki, 1999; Tsimpli, 2001), while other studies do not confirm that finding (Varlokosta, 2002; Terzi, 2007). The above suggests a cross-linguistic variation in the production of clitics by children with SLI emerging the need for deep investigation for each language.

This study investigates whether clitics can be regarded as a clinical marker for children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) in Cypriot Greek (CG), the variety of Modern Greek spoken on the island of Cyprus; similar to what has been suggested for other languages.

The COST Action A33 Clitics-in-Islands testing tool (COST Action A33, 2006–2010; cf. Varlokosta et al., to appear), which was adapted to CG (Grohmann, 2011; Grohmann et al., in press), was used to elicit clitics. The tool is a production task for 3rd person singular accusative object clitics within syntactic islands where the target-elicited clitic was embedded within a *because*-clause. With pronominal object clitics, CG is largely enclitic as opposed to proclisis found in SMG, that is, particular syntactic environments enforce pre-verbal clitic placement, otherwise post-verbal clitics are found. The pictures were displayed on a laptop screen which both experimenter and participant could see. Participants heard the description of each picture that the experimenter provided and then had to complete 12 *because*-clauses (and 4 fillers). All expected answers require a clitic.



I mam:a xtenizi ti ngorua tje i korua en omorfi. jati i korua en omorfi?
I korua en omorfi jati i mam:a tis... [xtenizi tin].

'Mommy is combing the girl and the girl is beautiful. Why is the girl beautiful? The girl is beautiful because mommy... [combs her-CL].'

Two groups of typically developing (TD) monolingual CG children and two groups of SLI children participated. The first group consisted of 7 children aged 5;0 to 6;0 while the second group was made up of 13 school children aged, 6;0 to 8;0 years old. The third group was 9 young children diagnosed as SLI aged 5;0 to 6;0 years. The last group consisted of 6 SLI school aged children 6;5 to 8;0 years of age. Given the absence of standardized tests in order to diagnose children with SLI in CG, a battery of translated and standardized tests from SMG were employed, based on established knowledge concerning specific areas of language that should be examined in order to set the diagnosis of SLI. The majority of SLI children had received speech-and-language therapy at various length/intensity.

Both groups of TD children performed nearly at ceiling in clitic production while, in line with previous research (Grohmann et al., in press), even though the children's expected answers should have involved post-verbal clitic placement, the majority of the children mixed pre- and post-verbal clitics, while others placed most if not all of the clitics pre-verbally, and yet a third group among the typically developing children placed them post-verbally. On the other hand, the groups of SLI children performed also at ceiling in clitic production but the group made up of the younger SLI children produced less pre-verbal clitics than the younger TD group.

Summarizing our results, clitic placement had been already acquired earlier than 5 years of age confirming previous research suggested that clitics are acquired by the age of 3 (Petinou & Terzi, 2002; Neokleous, 2011), but an influence from SMG is observed perhaps in association with sociolinguistic or metalinguistic factors revealing different issues in respect of the bilingual situation of CG that has been already discussed in previous study (Grohmann et al., in press). Regarding the central issue that this study investigates is whether clitics can serve as a clinical marker for the diagnosis of SLI in Cypriot Greek, the answer is no. However, investigation of the production of clitics in other structures like subjunctives is needed.

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L1 Acquisition of Object Clitics in Child Polish: Evidence for Three Developmental Stages

Marta Maria Tryzna

Gulf University for Science and Technology

Cross linguistic variation in L1 acquisition of object clitics is limited and well-governed. Attributing it to a syntactic mechanism called the Unique Checking Constraint (UCC), Wexler, Gavarró, and Torrens (2003) hypothesize that children acquiring languages with clitic-past participle agreement (e.g. Catalan) initially go through a clitic omission stage, while those acquiring languages without clitic-past participle agreement (e.g. Spanish) produce clitics early on. In terms of pragmatic constraints, Schaeffer (2002) argues that children omit clitics as a result of their inability to mark referentiality on *pro*, which is underspecified for features. Consequently, object clitics cannot be licensed as a referential element (Failed Referentiality). Polish has no clitic-past participle agreement, so children acquiring Polish are expected to produce clitics from the beginning. If, however, clitics are omitted, it may be accounted for by Failed Referentiality, as long as there is no evidence of clitic comprehension.

The present paper tests the predictions following from the above theories. The data was collected from 53 monolingual Polish children aged 2;9-5;01, divided into 3 age groups. Each child participated in a clitic elicitation and a clitic comprehension experiment in one 45-minute session. The elicitation experiment focused on the production of object clitics in obligatory contexts with monotransitive verbs (6 tokens). After the production experiment, the children were tested for object clitic comprehension using a Truth Value Judgment task (6 tokens) similar to the one for testing the knowledge of Principle B.

The results show that Polish children initially omit clitics at a rate of 60% (Table 1), contrary to predictions following from Wexler et al. (2003). At the same time, children exhibit early clitic comprehension (Table 2), contrary to predictions following from Schaeffer's Failed Referentiality. Based on group and individual results, it is concluded that comprehension of objects clitic precedes production and that production is extremely unlikely without comprehension, age being a statistically significant factor in both experiments ($p < .0001$). More importantly, based on individual results, the paper argues for three stages of object clitic acquisition: Stage 1 characterized by low comprehension and low production, Stage 2 characterized by high comprehension and low production, and Stage 3 characterized by both comprehension and adult-like production (Figure 1).

A maturational account is proposed utilizing the Strong Continuity approach, where syntactic mechanisms are believed to be in place from the beginning. Clitics are believed to be initially phonologically null and syntactically unanchored. Following Borer and Rohrbacher (2002), it is argued that clitics are anchored through discourse (D-linking), as long as the morpho-phonological material necessary to produce them consistently in adult-like fashion is not acquired.

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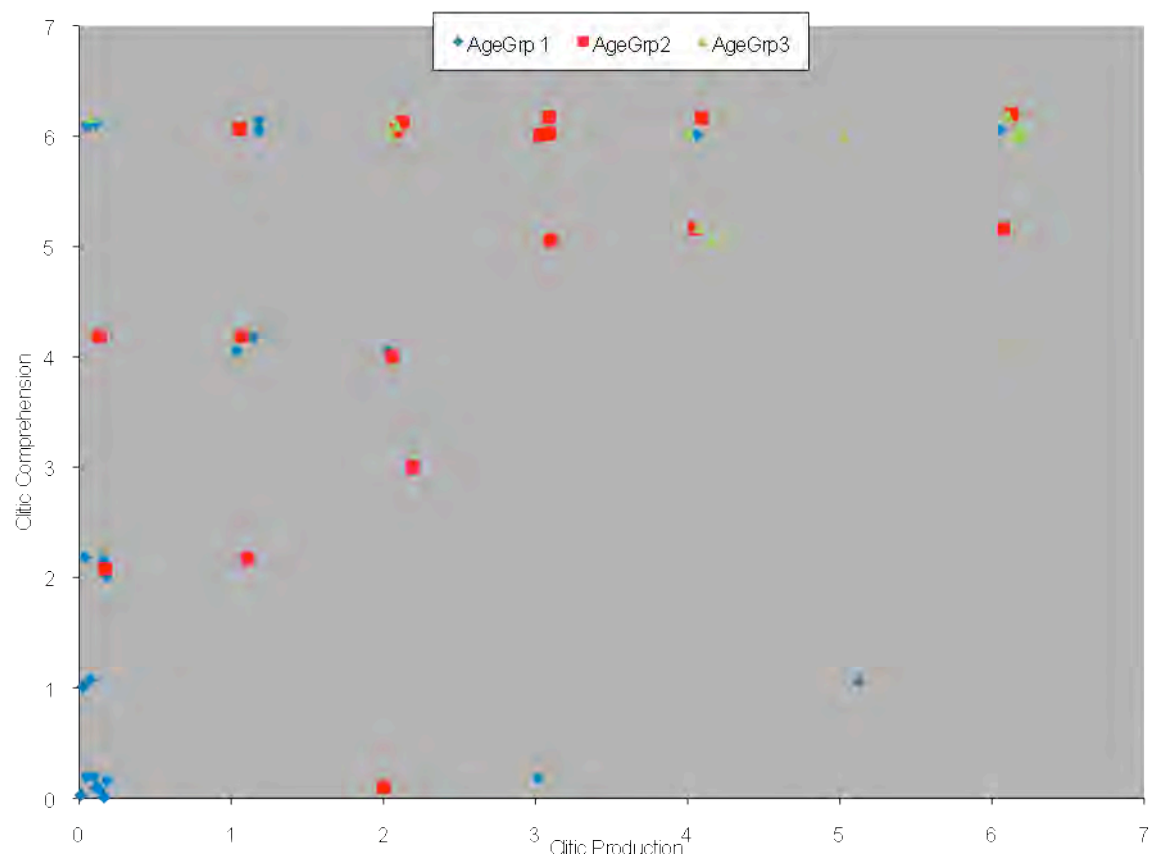
Table 1. Children's responses in the clitic production experiment.

		Production	Substitution	Omission	Random
Age Group	1	17%	2%	62%	19%
	2	43%	7%	32%	18%
	3	81%	7%	12%	0

Table 2. Children's responses in the clitic comprehension experiment.

		Target	Non-target	Random
Age Group	1	41%	43%	16%
	2	76%	16%	8%
	3	94%	6%	0

Figure 1. Individual results in clitic comprehension and production experiments.



INVITED SPEAKER

Clitic Drop, Null Objects and Markedness

Ianthi Maria Tsimpli

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Null objects have been attested in early language production cross-linguistically, with differences in the frequency but also in the length of the period of target-deviant object drop (Costa and Lobo 2006, 2010; Perez-Leroux, Pirvulescu and Roberge 2011; Wexler, Gavarrò and Torrens 2003). One of the questions arising from this phenomenon is how to distinguish between null objects and clitic drop: are there different constraints regulating each phenomenon (discourse-related factors, input properties, markedness issues; Schaeffer 1997; Perez-Leroux et al. 2008) or is clitic drop a subset case of null objects in developing grammars? Based on different data sets from Greek typical and atypical acquisition I will discuss these questions evaluating the role of grammatical constraints and the interaction between universal vs. language-specific properties on object realization in different stages and types of development.



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Teresa Parodi (Cambridge)

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