

The Anatolian Innovation of Subject Clitic Pronouns: Motivating a Syntactic Change

Notwithstanding its well-known genetic anomalies, Anatolian shows the typical Indo-European distribution of double marking for subjects of a clause, both on the verb and optionally on independent nominal or pronominal items. Like other early Indo-European languages (and some modern ones such as Spanish), Anatolian has been classified within the framework of generative syntactic theory as a null subject language (e.g. Garrett 1990a et seq.), with the person markers on the verb interpreted as agreement morphology co-referencing an independent subject which functions as the argument of the verb and which may be overt (a lexical nominal or an independent pronoun) or, optionally, null. In other frameworks, outside mainstream generative theory, verbal subject markers of the Indo-European type are interpreted as incorporated pronouns (originating in independent pronouns first post-cliticized to the verb and eventually fully incorporated) and functioning as core arguments of the verb (although the latter claim is often implicit). (For IE e.g. Szemerényi 1996, Bomhard 1988, Sihler 1995; for pronominal affixes as arguments (with data from Yup'ik and Navajo) Mithun 2003; for Greek (and *a fortiori* Indo-European) as (in origin) a pronominal argument language Devine and Stephens 2000.)

Apart from the verbal morphology, Core Indo-European had only nominals or full pronominals morphologically marked for 'subject'; it had no pronominal subject clitics. Here Anatolian has innovated in the creation of a third-person definite referential clitic pronoun, marked for gender, common and neuter, but restricted to a particular class of (predominantly stative) intransitive verbs (Watkins 1968-69, Garrett 1990a et seq.). This clitic pronoun is in complementary distribution with both the full (emphatic) demonstrative pronoun used for third-person reference and lexical items marked as subjects.

The question is this: If early IE 'subject' verb markers were incorporated pronouns functioning as arguments, why did Anatolian develop a clitic subject pronoun? As noted above, the clitic subject pronouns are restricted to one very particular category of verb: predominantly stative and change-of-state verbs. As Watkins pointed out in 1968, the subject clitics are not used with transitive verbs. Subsequently, Garrett (1990a, 1990b, 1996) minutely dissected the Hittite verbal classes and showed that, in addition to their absence with transitives, clitic subjects also are not used with unergatives but only with unaccusatives. The situation, however, may in fact be simpler than Garrett's detailed analysis might suggest, the conditioning of the Anatolian subject clitics being on the whole adequately captured in Watkins' initial observation. The verbs in question fall naturally into two broad groups (as Garrett's lists themselves show: 1990a, 1990b, 1996) and it is evidently this grouping which was most salient to the speakers of these languages: on the one hand verbs that were regarded as transitive or potentially transitive (used transitively in some contexts and 'intransitively' – that is, without *overt* objects - in others) and, on the other hand, verbs that were regarded as absolutely (inherently) intransitive (the unaccusatives). For Anatolian speakers, for whom the animate/inanimate opposition (whether innovated or inherited) was very much alive, the first group (the unergatives) expressed action carried out by *agents*, perceived as animate and categorized as common gender; the second (the unaccusatives), indicated states (or the like)

predicated of patients. Only here, in the stative category, was explicit designation of animacy relevant. Since the inherited verbal subject markers showed only person and number, Anatolian created (or restored) a gender/animacy contrast for this one category of verb where specification of animacy aligned with agency was indeterminate, and in the only ‘person’ category of the verb in which the contrast of animate agency was salient: precisely the *non*-person (Watkins 1962, Benveniste 1966; see also Watkins 1969), the 1st and 2nd persons (the *persons* proper) not permitting inanimate/nonagentive reference.

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