

Some considerations on clitic doubling in Torlak Serbian

Jelena Živojinović

University of Verona

UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Clitic doubling is a widespread feature across Balkan Sprachbund. In fact, Spencer & Luis (2012) state that “in a number of languages of the Balkans we find that pronominal elements, which are in many respects just like the pronominal clitics of (Western) Romance languages, are freely permitted or even required as doubles to overt arguments”. Such a scenario mostly occurs around the finite verb or auxiliary or around the non-finite verb, if there is no finite auxiliary, as in the following example of Torlak Serbian (Barbiers et al., 2008:463):

- 1) *Nesam* (*ga*) *videl* *ovčaratoga*.
not+be.1SG.CL 3SG.M.ACC.CL seen.M.SG.PART shepherd+the.M.SG
I haven't seen the shepherd.

According to Bošković's (2001) analysis, it is evident that the clitic pattern is the one used by Macedonian, where we find proclitics instead of enclitics, as in Bulgarian. In the present paper I will take into consideration some rather peculiar constructions employed by Torlak speakers, involving orthotonic and enclitic personal pronouns in transitive predications. While the order of the main sentence constituents is superficially non-canonical, the patterns under investigation do not strike the speaker as marked or particularly informationally charged, which might point towards a non-peripheral interpretation of the functional slots and projections involved. Indeed, in my experience as a native speaker of this variety of Serbian, as well as in the experience of the speakers I have interviewed, the constructions under discussion simply represent the Torlak standard patterns corresponding to modern Serbian sentences with an orthotonic accusative element and no clitic pronoun, consider for instance:

- 2) *Mene* *me* *boli* *glavetinata* (Torlak Serbian)
1SG.ACC.PN 1SG.ACC.CL hurts.3SG.PRES big head+the.F.SG
I've got a headache.
- 3) *Mene* *boli* *glava*. (Standard Serbian)
1SG.ACC.PN hurts.3SG.PRES head.F.SG
I've got a headache.

The research is enriched through an extensive fieldwork in the extreme south of Serbia, in the area of Trgovište, which is close to the western boundary of Bulgaria and even nearer the northern border of Macedonia.

A preliminary analysis of data shows a tendency for clitics to constantly occur in the second position and such placements are traditionally described as following Wackernagel's law. However, certain scholars hypothesized additional reasons for this phenomenon. Namely, Schütze (1994) claims that clitics are in Comp¹ at S-structure, so that XPs that move to Spec-CP or heads that move to C⁰ are potential hosts for the clitics. Such theory will be discussed more into detail and will be followed by a meticulous analysis of data gathered in the field.

Selected references

- Barbiers, S., Koenenman, O., Lekakou, M., & van der Ham, M. (2008a). *Microvariation in syntactic doubling*. Bingley: Emerald.
- Bošković, Ž. (2001). *On the nature of the syntax-phonology interface: Cliticization and related phenomena* (Vol. 60). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Runić, J. 2014. A new look at clitics, clitic doubling, and argument ellipsis. PhD thesis, University of Connecticut.
- Schütze, C. (1994). Serbo-Croatian second position clitic placement and the phonology-syntax interface. *MIT working papers in linguistics*, 21, 373-473.
- Spencer, A., & Luís, A. R. (2012). *Clitics: an introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.