

Stress-Affected LFG Account of Vafsi Clitic PAMs

Saeed Reza Yousefi¹
Mahinnaz Mirdehghan²
Tina Bögel³

Received: 06/06/2020

Accepted: 05/09/2020

Article Type: Research

Abstract

The present research aims to investigate the effect of stress on Vafsi oblique clitic PAMs and accordingly determine their placement based on LFG analysis by using the prosody-syntax interface.

Vafsi is one of the Iranian languages belonging to the Tati group of Iranian North-Western languages which is spoken only in four villages of Vafs, Chehrehghan, Gurchan, and Fark in Markazi province.

This research is library-based, but, in cases of need for more evidence, linguistic productions of the native middle and old-aged male residents of Chehrehghan and Vafs are used.

The theory in this research is bifurcated. First, the theory of clitics is introduced, and based on Zwicky & Pullum's (1983) criteria for discriminating clitics from affixes, 8 types of Vafsi clitics are classified. Vafsi distinguishes between direct and oblique case person-agreement markers (PAM) (Stilo, 2010). While the PAMs representing the direct case (set 1) are suffixal to the verb, the oblique PAMs (set 2) are usually enclitic. Based on the transformational generative grammar, the last type of Vafsi clitics, which is Vafsi oblique PAMs create challenges in determining cliticness, as they act as affixes in some placements but as enclitics in others. Hence, based on the transformational generative grammar, earlier studies (Stilo, 2004a, 2004b; 2010), have classified Vafsi oblique PAMs (set 2) into two categories of "affixal form" and "clitic form".

There are several criteria in determining the placement of clitics: syntactic factors, phonological/prosodic processes, a combination of syntactic-phonological/prosodic processes, and semantic/pragmatic factors. Therefore, the second part of the theory which is LFG will be used to determine Vafsi oblique

¹ PhD candidate, Linguistics Department, Faculty of Letter and Human Sciences, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran; sr_yousefi@sbu.ac.ir

² Associate Professor, Linguistics Department, Faculty of Letter and Human Sciences, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran (corresponding author); M_Mirdehghan@sbu.ac.ir

³ Professor, FB Sprachwissenschaft, Fach 184, Universität Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany; Tina.Boegel@uni-konstanz.de

PAMs clitichood condition.

The direct case PAMs (set 1) are always suffixed to the verb. The verbal complex (VC) also hosts many different particles (for example negation, duration and punctual markers, and preverbs) which precede the verb itself. The clitic PAMs (set 2) usually appear directly preceding the VC and must never occur directly following the verb. Depending on whether the host ends in a consonant or a vowel, the clitic adjusts its form and either retains its vowel (refer to Stilo. 2010. pp. 53-57 for examples).

The clitic is not limited to the preverbal position. Besides further positions in the clause, the clitic can also appear within the VC in VC-initial sentences. However, this position (and the clitic's 'form') is constrained by the co-occurrence of other VC-related particles. Consider the following example of the 1Sg PAM clitic in combination with the punctual marker *bá* (b- before vowels) in a sentence with a non-initial VC ((1a)) and a sentence-initial VC ((1b)) (Stilo. 2010. p. 247).

- | | | | | |
|--------|-------------|------------|----|------------------|
| (1) a. | án=om | [bá-diæ]vc | b. | [b-ím-diæ]vc |
| | that=1S.OBL | PUNCT-saw | | PUNCT-1S.OBL-saw |
| | I saw that. | | | I saw. |

Another stressed particle preceding the verb, which shows the same pattern concerning the clitic (and cannot co-occur with the punctual marker) is the negative marker *né*. In contrast, if the clitic co-occurs with the unstressed duration marker *ær*, the pattern changes ((2)) (Ibid).

- | | | | | |
|--------|--------------|----------|----|---------------------|
| (2) a. | án=om | ær-góæ | b. | [ím-ær-góæ]vc |
| | that=1S.OBL | DUR-want | | [1S.OBL-DUR-want]vc |
| | I want that. | | | I want. |

Examples like (1b) and (2b) led to Stilo's conclusion that the clitic has an affixal counterpart. Note, however, that these combinations are the only ones where the clitic appears as an affix. In all other combinations (VC-external and VC-internal), the clitic retains its original form.

An alternative explanation that goes without this bi-categorical analysis is the assumption that the clitic is sensitive to prosodic constraints in the sense that it has a 'stressed' form (*ím*) and an 'unstressed' form (*om*). Therefore, we can conclude that if the clitic is stranded in the sentence-initial position, it is placed after the first stressed element of the following VC. In (1b), this is the punctual marker *bá*, which is shortened to *b-* preceding vowel-initial material. The stress is then assigned to the clitic which assumes its 'stressed' form *ím*.

In (2b), stress is on the main verb, so the clitic should be placed following the whole verbal complex. However, as noted above, the clitic is banned from that position. It thus remains in its original position as the first item in an intonational phrase, again assuming its 'stressed' form to compensate for the missing prosodic host on its left.

It can thus be assumed that the PAM clitics originate in the position preceding the verbal complex which usually provides them with a prosodic host to their left in c-structure and p-structure. However, in sentences where the clitic is the sole element preceding the verbal complex, Vafsi seeks to repair this prosodic violation by a) prosodic inversion or b) adaption of the clitic to a 'stressed' form, both assumed to take place in p-structure.

In conclusion, it can be claimed that in this research, we showed that the oblique Vafsi PAMs do not have an affixal counterpart, since all instances and forms of the clitics can be justified regarding prosodic constraints. In cases where the

prosodically deficient oblique enclitic is left without a suitable host, prosodic inversion aims to place the clitic accordingly. The so-called 'affixal form' corresponds to the cases where the clitic is forced to carry stress itself and consequently assumes a 'full form'. Therefore, the 'affixal forms' in Stilo's classification are in fact clitics carrying stress. In the end, a complete formal analysis of the oblique pronoun clitics at the syntax-prosody interface in LFG is provided based on Bögel (2015).

Key words: Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG), Syntax-Prosody Interface, Vafsi Syntax, Vafsi Pams, Vafsi Clitics