THE CLITIC AS AGR-O: A GB ANALYSIS OF MODERN GREEK

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0. Introduction

The object clitic in Modern Greek might not occur at all as in (1a), or might occur with the lexical NP which is identical to the clitic as in (1b), or might occur alone, without identical lexical NP as in (1c):

(1)a. o janis i ε e tin γ opela (Warburton(1977:(4)-(6)))
   John saw the girl
b. o janis tin i ε e tin γ opela
   John her he-saw the girl
c. o janis tin i ε e
   John her he-saw

The lb construction is called clitic doubling.

The object clitic functions similar to an element of object agreement, as in 1b. However, its optionality and its independence complicate its character. In my view, the occurrence of the object clitic can be analyzed as a sort of ‘split’ object-agreement phenomenon. This point of view is compatible with the AGRP (agreement phrase) hypothesis, especially the analysis proposed in Chomsky(1989). This analysis postulates AGR-O as a head of AGRP distinct from AGR-S, AGR-O as a head of AGRP distinct from AGR-S. The analysis seems to explain the asymmetry between the subject “clitic” and the object clitic well.

The purpose of this article is to show that the AGRP hypothesis is viable in dealing with so called clitics especially in object position in Modern Greek and to solve the problem of the asymmetry between subject “clitic” which occurs obligatorily and
the object clitic which occurs optionally.

Firstly an analysis of the clitics in Philippaki-Warburton (1987) is presented. In section 2, Chomsky's argument for AGRP hypothesis and the object-agreement effect is discussed. I apply the AGRP hypothesis to my analysis of clitics using evidence from word order. The occurrence of pro in object position is discussed with respect to the object-agreement phenomenon. In the section 4, the remaining problems would be pointed out.

1. Analysis of the clitic as argument

One of the main works on this subject is the analysis in Philippaki-Warburton (1987). First, she regards the clitic objects as a kind of pronominal which is base-generated at the object position as an alternative to a lexical NP. This is unlike other previous analyses of clitics, where they were treated as being in A'-position². Her analysis does not seem to work in the case of so-called clitic doubling, since in such a construction there are two distinct object NP that share the same theta-role (clitic NP and full lexical NP) at the same time, and this would result in the theta-criterion violation. To avoid this, Philippaki-Warburton analyzes the lexical accusative NP as the peripheral constituent outside the government range of the verb, i.e., as topic or background information. In this analysis, the Resumptive Pronoun Solution (RPS) is utilized. Philippaki-Warburton summarizes the RPS in the following way:

(2) i. Peripheral topic NPs are base-generated.

   ii. Missing subject and clitic object pronouns in the sentences accompanying the topic are base-generated pronominals functioning here as resumptive pronouns.

   iii. Case is assigned freely to topic NPs, and then matched with the pronominals at S-structure.

   iv. The predication rule at LF coindexes a base-generated pronominal with topic constituent.

   v. Topic NPs receive θ-role from their coindexed pronominals.

(Philippaki-Warburton (1987:4))
The subject is analyzed in the same way as the object. Missing subjects have the status of pro, although they are dominated by I' which is the daughter of the V in her analysis⁹. The lexical nominative NP is regarded as a kind of topic. The pro which occurs to the right of the V (which in the standard analysis is the V's affix position) is related to the lexical nominative NP by virtue of the theory (RPS) which she postulates. The phrase structure which is assumed by Philippaki-Warburton is given below:

\[ \begin{array}{l}
C' \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{COMP} \\
\quad V'' \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad V \text{-stem} \\
\quad I' \\
\quad \text{pro} \\
\end{array} \]

The above analysis has some shortcomings.

First, there is an asymmetry between subject and object in this analysis. The object clitic occurs optionally, whereas the subject clitic is always present. Philippaki-Warburton seems to regard the optionality of the object clitic as a sort of discourse device: that is, since the clitic is base-generated at the object position, the lexical accusative NP in the clitic doubling construction can be topic or background information.

An analysis based on the discourse does not answer the following question: why an alternation between clitic and lexical NP is not found in what we call the subject position, similar to the object position? Furthermore, she argues that S is equivalent to V" (verb phrase) in Modern Greek, while in English it is equivalent to I", as assumed by Chomsky(1986).

In addition, her analysis does not seem to work well in selection of the type of S by the element which takes S as its complement (typically COMP). According to T. Tachibana (personal communication), the complementizer, oti (that), takes only indicative in Modern Greek. Thus complementizers are subcategorized for the type of S. In this case, the features relevant to subcategorization belong to the category mood. Therefore the head
of S must have the feature of the mood. In order that the information for mood may be put under the category Infl, the S must be the maximal projection of the Infl. Thus the relation \([S=I']\) must hold in Modern Greek as well. In the structure assumed by Philippaki-Warburton, (3), mood falls under the Infl which is under the \(V^0\) level and COMP cannot select the proper maximal projection which contains the modal information of indicative.

2. AGRP hypothesis

Pollock (1989) proposed a phrase structure where the AGR projects its own maximal projection. This analysis was extended by Chomsky (1989). Chomsky postulates the structure below:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{IP} \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{AGR-S} \\
\text{F} \\
\text{neg} \\
\text{AGR-O} \\
\text{(ADV)} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{V} \\
\end{array}
\]

According to Chomsky, this assumption is compatible with Kayne's observation in French. See the following example:

(5) i. Paul a repeint (§ repeintes) les chaises

ii. Paul les a repeinates

As in this example, only when the clitic object is moved to the pre-verbal position, the agreement holds between the object NP and the participle. According to this analysis, in (i) the object IN SITU is not properly governed by the AGR-O, while in (ii) the clitic is raised to the SPEC of the AGRP and the SPEC-head agreement arises. The motivation of the movement of the object NP to the SPEC of AGRP is explained case-theoretically. Chomsky suggests the breakdown of the case-assignment into the case-marking and the case-checking: i.e., if a verb only case-marks and AGR-O case-checks the object, then it must be moved to the SPEC of AGRP to be properly governed by it and to be case-checked. This suggestion is extended in Chikamatsu (1991).
3. The analysis of the clitic object as an AGR-O

3.1. Application of Chomsky's analysis to the clitic doubling in Modern Greek

The AGRP hypothesis can be used to explain the clitic doubling effect in modern Greek.

(6) to katsikaki, to jorγaki δεν τον αγαπεύει
the kid the Yorgakis not him loved
"The kid didn't love Yorgakis"

(Sekimoto(1987:(6)))

The verbal morphology shows no agreement with the object NP, unlike the French example cited above. In my analysis, the clitic(ton) is not at the A-position but at the position of the AGR-O in the Modern Greek, whereas the clitic(les) is base-generated at the object position(A-position) and moved to the SPEC of AGRP in French. In Greek, the full lexical NP(jorγaki) is base-generated at the complement position of the VP and raised to the SPEC of the AGRP, just as the clitic in French. Probably, the lexical object NP(jorγakis) is case-marked by the V, but it is not case-checked in (6). And so it is raised to the SPEC of AGRP in order to be case-checked by the AGR-O. The raised lexical object (jorγaki) is properly governed by the AGR-O and the SPEC-head agreement holds between them. It follows that the clitic, ton, occurs as an agreement element. In my analysis, the clitic (ton) cannot have case, since it is not the NP, but an agreement element.

3.2. Evidence from word order

3.2.1. Operational occurrence of the clitic object

The above analysis is supported by evidence from word order.

The argument in Philippaki-Warburton(1987) presupposes the VSO ([Vs 0]) order as the basic word order of Modern Greek, while Ukida(1983) states that the unmarked order of Modern Greek is SVO.

In Modern Greek the complementizer(the head of CP) occurs to
the left of the clause (CP), which means the language is head-initial. P precedes its complement, from which it follows that the case is assigned to the right. Thus it is plausible that Modern Greek is a VO language, though its word order seems to be fairly free.

In Ukida (1983) the following data are presented:

(7)a. o pavlos ay orase to spiti (S-V-O)
   "The Pavlos bought the house"

b. ??? o pavlos to spiti ay orase (S-O-V)

c. ?? ay orase o pavlos to spiti (V-S-O)

d. ay orase to spiti o pavlos (V-O-S)

e. ?? to spiti ay orase o pavlos (O-V-S)

f. ??? to spiti o pavlos ay orase (O-S-V)

Of these examples ones of OV order are unacceptable (especially b. and f.), which suggests the VO character of Modern Greek. However, according to Ukida (1983), the clitic doubling counterparts of OV sentences are acceptable, as shown below:

(7') b. o pavlos to spiti t'ay orase (S-O-(o)V)
   to spiti o pavlos t'ay orase (O-S-(o)V)

If the direction of the case-assignment and that of the theta-assignment are rightward, the object NP is base generated at the post-verbal position (see (7a)). As a result, VO order arises. But AGR-0, instead of V, sometimes case-checks the object NP, in which case the object NP must be raised to the SPEC of AGRP in order to be case-checked by AGR-0. As a result, it causes the object-agreement effect. Thus AGRP hypothesis can predict the unacceptability of the VO examples and the acceptability of the clitic doubling counterparts of the VO examples (O-(o)V) correctly.

Sekimoto (1987) looked at corpus and found the following:

(8) category of main object \ order  O-V  V-O
   not clitic doubling noun  53  883
   clitic doubling pronoun  57  34
   clitic doubling noun  27  14
   clitic doubling pronoun  16  17

The cases where the main object is a noun gives support. If the clitic doubling effect is not found, VO order is prominent, which
shows that the VO order is basic (53 cases versus 863). Conversely, if the clitic doubling effect arises, OV order is prominent. The raising of the object NP (which brings OV order) causes the object-agreement phenomenon.

Sekimoto (1987) comments that the word order is pretty free and that it is determined stylistically in the case that the main object is pronoun, judging from the fact that there is not a very sharp contrast between the frequency of OV order and that of VO order.

Here note that when the main object is pronoun, there are more OV examples than VO ones in cases without clitic doubling. VO is the underlying basic order. The object must be able to be moved to the preverbal position in these cases. Then, why doesn't the object-agreement effect hold in these cases? Perhaps it is because the movement in these cases is not the raising to the SPEC of AGRP but an adjunction to VP. If so, the adjoined NP is not governed by AGR-O. This assumption is plausible, because the pronoun is ready to be the word with old information which often precedes the phrase with the old information. Probably the movement is scrambling which adjoins the phrase with old information from the grammatical function position inside the VP. With this operation OV construction without clitic doubling is derived.

Next, let us return to the issue of “low frequency of the OV construction with clitic doubling”. I would like to claim that the pronoun which is adjoined to the VP cannot be raised to the SPEC of AGRP. Let us assume that any phrase \( \alpha \) cannot be properly governed by a given lexical head \( \beta \), where \( \alpha \) is adjoined to \( \beta P \), the maximal projection of \( \beta \), since the lower node of \( \beta P \) in the adjoined structure blocks the government. If a pronoun is adjoined to VP by some scrambling type of operation and if it is further raised to the SPEC of AGRP further, then the intermediate trace is left ungoverned and ECP violation would arise. The ill-formed s-structure is something like this:

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As we observed above, in the case where the main object is a pronoun, OV order does not reveal the object-agreement effect (clitic doubling) exceptionally. I would ascribe this observation to the incompatibility between the scrambling (or pronoun fronting) and the raising to the SPEC of AGRP. Namely a sentence with the scrambled pronoun cannot be clitic doubling construction.

Yet we are still left with the question as to: why is the clitic doubling possible even in the VO constructions? One possible analysis would be to assume the undecided linear ordering of the SPEC of X" and the X'. Namely object NP α can be raised to either NP1 or NP2 in the tree below:

NP2 is also governed by AGR-O. As (8) shows, NP2 is more marked than NP1. Probably, the raising to the NP2 is utilized as a kind of discourse device, just as the extrapolation or something like that.

Thus clitic doubling as an object-agreement phenomenon is typically found basically in OV order construction, unlike its unmarked VO order. This effect is caused by the movement of the object NP from its post-verbal grammatical function position to the preverbal position, probably SPEC of AGRP. Thus our analysis can properly answer the question which is a serious problem in Philippaki-Warburton (1987): why the occurrence of the object clitic is optional, whereas the subject clitic always occurs? Our answer is that the subject NP is base-generated at the position which is properly governed by the AGR-S, while the object NP is properly governed by the AGR-O, only when it is raised to the SPEC of AGRP.
from its grammatical function position ungoverned by AGR-O.

3.2.2. The evidence of the post-negative position

Our analysis is also supported by the position of the negative in linear ordering. Ukida(1983) describes the following distribution of the negative element:

(11)a. Indicative
   NEG-tha-genitive clitic-accusative clitic-V
   
b. Subjunctive
   na-NEG-genitive clitic-accusative clitic-V

Thus, clitics occur just between the negative element and V.

Here let us recall the structure which is proposed by Chomsky(1989). See below:

(12)
\[
\text{IP} \\
\text{NP} \downarrow \text{I'} \\
\text{AGR-S} \\
\text{FP} \\
\text{F} (\text{negP}) \\
\text{neg} \downarrow \text{AGR-P} \\
\text{AGR-O} \downarrow \text{VP} \\
\text{(ADV)} \downarrow \text{VP} \\
\text{V} \ldots
\]

The AGRP is located between negP and VP. The linear ordering would be something like “...neg--AGR-O--V...”. The position of clitics in Ukida’s description corresponds to AGR-O in the structure assumed by AGRP hypothesis.

3.3. Clitic and pro

So far we have mainly looked at the cases of clitic doubling. However, the object-clitic can occur without any lexical NP, as below:

(13) ton ksero (Philippaki-Warburton(1987:(42)))
   him know-I
   “I know him”

I postulate a pro which is generated at the object position in d-structure and is raised to the SPEC of AGRP just as the overt NP. Philippaki-Warburton(1987) hypothesizes that clitics are
pronominal just as pro. On the other hand, in our hypothesis, clitics themselves are not NP and so not pronominal. There is a pro at an NP position in the case when a clitic occurs alone at a "visible" level. See the next example:

(14) tha fiji (Philippaki-Warburton(1987:(42)))

will leave-he

"He will leave"

This sentence has no overt subject NP and the personal ending of the verb shows the subject agreement with the missing subject. Modern Greek seems to be pro-drop language. If the missing subject of the previous example is pro, then it would be plausible that the missing object is also pro, since the clitic seems to be a kind of agreement element, as we have assumed so far.

Rizzi(1986:(49)) postulates the following to license pro:

(15) pro is Case-marked by Xo.

The content of Xo is parameterized. By virtue of this condition, a case-theoretic explanation of the movement of the object to the SPEC of AGRP is still viable, even though the object is pro.

4. Conclusion

In this article, it was shown that the AGRP hypothesis was feasible in dealing with clitics in Modern Greek. In addition, the asymmetry between subject clitic which occurs obligatorily and the object clitic which occurs optionally was explained by virtue of the raising of the object to the SPEC of AGRP which is assumed by Chomsky(1989)'s AGRP hypothesis.

However there are some further problems.

In 3.2.2. we looked at the linear ordering of negative, clitics and the verb. There are counter examples regarding the ordering of these elements. When the verb is put into imperative, we would have the following ordering(Ukida(1983)):

(16) V-genitive clitic-accusative clitic

Imperative is incompatible with negative. So the negative position is to be ignored. Next, see the ordering with the participle (Ukida(1983)):
In both of these orderings V occurs to the left of the clitics. Both imperative and participle are, in a way, non-finite forms, although there are no infinitive in its strict sense. One possibility might be the movement of the V to some position higher than the AGR-O, which is motivated by the finiteness. But the detailed mechanism of such a movement is unclear at present.

Another problem is how to handle what I may call IO-agreement phenomenon. See the sentence below:

(18) tu to eōse (to vivlio) (tu jani) to-him it he-gave (the book) (to-John)
"He gave the book to John"
(Warburton(1977:(59)))

In this sentence indirect object is also doubled. Ukida(1983) says that such a sentence is a little archaic and that in a colloquialism the indirect object is changed into PP and it agrees with the "genitive" clitic, as follows:

(19) To peponi ston petro tu arese the melon(NOM) to-the P. to-him like
"Peter liked the melon(The melon was desirable for Peter)"
(Ukida(1983:(32')))

If agreement holds for PP, it would undermine the case-theoretic explanation of the raising of the complement of the VP, since PP need not be case-assigned.

NOTES
1. This paper is based on the one which was read at the third general meeting of the Society of Greek Linguistics and Literature (in Hiroshima) on July 7th. 1991. I thank those who gave me good comments and advice.
2. A means argument. The position to which a theta role(e.g., agent, theme, experiencer, etc.) is assigned is the A-position. A'-position is the position to which a theta role is not assigned. For instance, the subject, the object, etc. are the A-positions. The COMP, IP-adjoined position, etc. are the A'-positions.
3. 'I' means the single bar level of projection of the category Inflection. Rough representation of the phrase structure based on the X-bar-theory is something as below:

\[
X'' (\text{XP, maximal projection}) \\
... \\
x' \\
(\text{t-head})
\]

4. The headedness parameter determines the linear ordering between a head and its complement. VO order is an instance of head-initial order, since the V is the head of the VP and the O is its complement.

5. What case-checks an NP is either V or AGR-O.

6. This analysis is to be depicted as follows:

\[
\alpha \xleftarrow{\beta^o} \beta'' \xleftarrow{\ldots} \text{a barrier for the government by } \beta^o
\]

Chomsky (1986) analyzes \( \alpha \) as governed by \( \beta^o \) in the case like this (cf. VP adjunction case). However, I assume here that some sort of 'more restricted version of the government' which does not hold in the case like (9).

7. Usually, it is supposed that the specifier occurs to the left of the head. In this respect, my analysis is weak, though I regard that NP2 in (10) is marked position. One possible alternative is the rightward adjunction to the AGRP. AGRP-adjoined NP is regarded as governed by the head of AGRP, in terms of agreement, although the adjoined element is not properly governed for ECP, as I assumed for (9).

8. An overt NP must be case-assigned by virtue of the case filter. Rizzi assumes that pro must be also case-marked, although it is an empty category.

REFERENCE


