

Enclitics in Gascon

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Gascon exhibits two possible realizations of the masculine singular accusative (MSA) pronoun: /u/ and /lú/, with the following distribution. (i) The MSA pronoun /u/ is always unstressed, and is found in proclisis or enclisis, and /lú/ is always stressed, and is found only in enclisis.

	un/stressed	proclisis	enclisis
/u/	unstressed	/ke u-kunéʃ/ 'he knows him'	/pórta-u/ 'cart it!'
/lú/	stressed	n/a	/prén-lú/ 'take it!'

Table 1:

(ii) In clusters, the same distribution of the two forms of the MSA pronoun holds, but there is also a consistent difference in the order of the pronouns in the cluster: /u/ precedes the dative: /u me/; and /lú/ follows the dative: /me lú/.

	pronoun order	proclisis	enclisis
/u/	ACC-DAT: /u me/	/k u-me-pot dá/ 'he can give it to me'	/bája-u-me/ 'give it to me!'
/lú/	DAT-ACC: /me lú/	n/a	/báje-m-lú/ 'give it to me!'

Table 2:

We conclude that a purely phonological approach cannot account for the full array of data. For example, the segmental content of the pronouns is different when stressed (/lú/) or unstressed (/u/), the form of the pronoun is restricted by its position relative to the verb (/lú/ is not permitted preverbally), and the order of the pronouns in a cluster is correlated with the form of the pronouns

(ACC-DAT only allows /u/, and DAT-ACC only allows /lú/). These facts are inconsistent with a fully phonological approach.

Instead, we will propose an alternative approach based on the idea that there is no one uniform category of “clitic”. The term clitic has been used to refer to two groups of pronouns that are morphologically distinct. We argue that the data can be better understood if we divide the pronouns into two categories: true clitics and weak pronouns in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999).

We outline some characteristics of clitic and weak pronouns identified by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) that we believe apply to the MSA pronouns illustrated above, and conclude that the Gascon data can be interpreted as follows: /u/ is a true clitic pronoun, and /lú/ is a weak pronoun.

References

- Cardinaletti, Anna and Michal Starke (1999). “The typology of structural deficiency: A case study of the three classes of pronouns”. In: *Eurotyp*. Vol. 5.1: *Clitics in the Languages of Europe*. Ed. by Henk van Riemsdijk. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton, pp. 145–234.