DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTAL PATHWAYS FOR CLITIC L1 ACQUISITION
CYPRIOT GREEK AND STANDARD MODERN GREEK

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Clitisication in Standard Modern Greek (SMG) is accounted for in syntactic terms: proclisis is the default pattern and enclisis correlates with finiteness. For Cypriot Greek, however, there is no consensus in the literature as regards the nature of cliticisation. Different types of approaches have been put forward so far, including syntactic, prosodic and syntax-PF interface accounts. This paper discusses the first language (L1A) acquisition of clitic pronouns in CG and SMG and discusses the implications developmental patterns have for formal accounts on cliticisation in the two varieties. Acquisition data reveal two distinct developmental trajectories: SMG-speaking children are adult-like in both clitic production and placement, while CG-speaking children exhibit an exceptional pattern of clitic (mis)placement. The different developmental patterns for clitic L1A in the two varieties support their classification in two typologically distinct categories of clitic languages.

1 Introduction

One area of considerable divergence between Cypriot Greek (CG) and Standard Modern Greek (SMG) is clitic placement, even though they share the morphological paradigm of clitic pronouns. CG and SMG only have pronominal object clitics as they lack the reflexive and auxiliary clitics of the Spanish/Italian and Serbo-Croatian type respectively (Terzi, 1999a: 86, footnote 2). Clitics in both CG and SMG appear verb-adjacent in both pre- and post-verbal position. In this paper I will use the terms *proclisis* and *enclisis* descriptively to refer to the pre-verbal and post-verbal clitic placement respectively, regardless of the prosodic dependence of the clitic to its host.

SMG clitics appear pre-verbally in all contexts (1) with the exception of imperatives and gerundive constructions in which clitic placement is obligatorily post-verbal (2). In CG, on the other hand, clitics appear post-verbally in imperatives (2) and root clauses (both declaratives and interrogatives) (3), while clitics obligatorily precede the finite verb in the following contexts: negatives (4), wh-questions, clauses headed by the modal particles *na* (5) and *as*, the future

particles *enna* and *tha*, the factive complementizer *pu*, complementizers *an/otan/ama/afu* and constituents that appear in the left periphery of the CG CP and receive emphatic/contrastive focus or narrow/new information focus (see Neokleous, 2013 for a comprehensive review).

(1) Su epes-e (?) (SMG)
you-CL.GEN fell-3SG
"You dropped it / Did you drop it?"

(2) Fer(e) to! (SMG/CG)
bring-2S it-CL.ACC
"Bring it!"

(3) Epese su (?) (CG)
fell-3S you-CL.GEN
"You dropped it / Did you drop it?"

(4) (Dh)en su epese. (SMG/CG)
NEG you-CL.GEN fell-3S
"You didn't drop it"

(5) Na su pesi. (SMG/CG)
MOD you-CL.GEN fell-3S
"To drop it"

A number of syntactic accounts have been put forward to accommodate clitic placement in SMG (Mavrogiorgos, 2009; Philippaki-Warburton, 1998; Terzi 1999a) all of which share the assumption that the proclisis-enclisis alternation in SMG is the result of syntactic operations and, specifically, of verb movement that is manifested in gerundive constructions and imperatives. Mavrogiorgos (2009) and Terzi (1999a) have suggested that both the gerund and the imperative verb involve a defective T. I follow Mavrogiorgos (2009) in assuming that the imperative verb in SMG has an unvalued person feature in T. Hence, the correlation of clitic placement in SMG with finiteness. For CG, on the other hand, there is no consensus as for the nature of cliticisation. Three types of approaches have been put forward for clitic placement in CG: purely syntactic accounts (Agouraki, 2001; Terzi, 1999a, 1999b), purely prosodic accounts (Condoravdi and Kiparsky, 2001) and interface accounts (Mavrogiorgos, 2012; Revithiadou, 2006). Acquisition data is a good tool for assessing these three types of approaches.

The current paper discusses the nature of cliticisation of CG and SMG on the basis of acquisition data and suggests that the developmental patterns attested support Mavrogiorgos' (2012) proposal as regards the typological classification of the two varieties in two distinct categories. The paper is organised as follows: the second and third part offer a comprehensive review of a number of studies investigating the first language (L1) acquisition of clitic pronouns in CG and SMG respectively and the fourth part discusses the main findings and draws the concluding remarks.

2 L1A of SMG clitic pronouns

The L1 acquisition of clitic pronouns in typically developing (TD) SMG-speaking children has been studied by Marinis (2000), Stephany (1997), Tsakali (2006) and Tzakosta (2003, 2004a, 2004b) among others. Stephany's (1997) seminal work on the L1 acquisition of SMG involved

the first report on the development of pronominal clitics in early SMG. The Stephany corpus consists of longitudinal data from 4 monolingual Greek children Spiros, Janna, Mairi and Maria and is available from the CHILDES database. Stephany makes some interesting remarks regarding clitic production and clitic placement in early SMG (1997:239). She reports omission of the 3rd person neuter accusative singular *to* in 91% of obligatory contexts (N=34) or the use of a phonetic placeholder in Spiros' data at age 1;10, while the use of clitic pronouns reaches 90% well before age 3 (Mairi and Janna at age 2;4 and Maria at age 2;10). With respect to clitic placement, she reports adult-like performance in all contexts by all children with the exception of 3 tokens of misplaced clitics which occurred in Mairi's data at age 1;10 and in Mairi's and Maria's data at age 2;4, all of which involved an enclitic used with a non-imperative verb; see example (5) taken from Stephany (1997:272).

(5) Epes-e me.
fell-3SG me-CL.ACC (INSTEAD OF: mu-CL.GEN epese)
'I dropped it' [Mairi, 2;4]

Marinis (2000) and Tsakali (2006) have also used the Stephany corpus to study the emergence of clitic pronouns in early SMG; the raw numbers of pre- and post-verbal clitics as well as the rates of clitic omission are reported in table 1 (based on table 4 in Marinis, 2000:269 and table 14 in Tsakali, 2006:152). They have also used two different longitudinal corpora: Marinis has examined the Christofidou corpus, comprised of data from one child (Christos) from age 1;7 to age 2;8, and Tsakali (2006) has examined the Doukas corpus, comprised of data from one child (Maria) from age 2;0.24 to age 2;8.27. The raw numbers of pre- and post-verbal clitics produced as well as the rates of clitic omission are reported in table 2 (based on table 3 in Marinis, 2000:267 and on table 16 in Tsakali, 2006:153/154).

Child	**Age**	**MLU**	**Pre- and Post-verbal**		**Total**	**Total**	**Rates of clitic omission**
			(Marinis 2000)			**(Tsakali 2006)**	
Spiros	1;9	1.6	3	3	6	10	.195
Janna	1;11	1.4	1	5	6	10	.155
	2;5	2.4	46	4	50	50	.011
	2;9	2.8	37	0	37	–	–
Mairi	1;9	2.0	102	41	143	143	.056
	2;3	2.2	122	62	184	184	.048
	2;9	2.5	151	11	162	–	–
Maria	2;3	2.3	18	13	31	31	.059
	2;9	2.9	67	20	87	87	.006

Table 1. Clitic production in early SMG: the Stephany corpus

Age	MLU	Pre- / Post-verbal		Total	Age	Total	Rates of clitic omission
Christofidou Corpus (Marinis 2000)[1]					**Doukas Corpus (Tsakali 2006)**		
1;11	1.4	0	1	1	–		
2;0	2.0	0	0	0	2;0.24	6	.041
2;1	2.1	23	3	26	–	–	–
2;2	2.2	13	3	16	2;2.8	39	.025
2;3	2.2	22	5	27	2;3.18	46	.037
2;4	2.0	26	6	32	–	–	–
2;5	2.4	49	4	53	2;5.4	46	.020
2;6	2.6	79	2	81	2;5.24	36	0.0
2;7	2.6	134	6	140	2;7.1	37	0.0
2;8	2.9	181	14	195	2;8.27	35	0.0

Table 2. Clitic production in early SMG: the Christofidou corpus and the Doukas corpus

The conclusion that can be drawn from both studies is that clitic production in SMG-speaking children is target-like from around age 2 onwards. Corroborative evidence for this outcome is offered by Tzakosta (2003, 2004a, 2004b). Tzakosta's study is based on longitudinal data from 6 children from two different corpora: Tzakosta's and Metaxaki's. The raw numbers of produced and omitted enclitics and proclitics are reported in table 3 (based on tables 1 and 2 in Tzakosta, 2003).

Child (Age)	Enclitics		Proclitics	
	Produced	Omitted	Produced	Omitted
Melitini (1;07.05−2;04.27)	90/94 (.96)	4/94 (.04)	304/328 (.92)	24/328 (.07)
Bebis 1 (1;09.22−2;10.23)	107/110 (.97)	3/110 (.03)	332/376 (.88)	44/376 (.12)
Bebis 2 (1;10−2;01.05)	16/16 (1.0)	0/16 (0.0)	9/26 (.35)	17/26 (.65)
Felina (1;11.07−3;09.19)	67/71 (.94)	4/71 (.06)	369/387 (.95)	18/387 (.05)
Dionisis (2;01−2;09)	23/23 (1.0)	0/23 (0.0)	205/220 (.93)	15/220 (.07)
Marilia (2;07.06−3;05.23)	38/38 (1.0)	0/38 (0.0)	195/195 (1.0)	0/195 (0.0)

Table 3. Clitic production in early SMG: the Tzakosta and Metaxaki corpus

The general finding of all the longitudinal studies is that SMG-speaking children have good clitic production from early on. This is confirmed on the basis of experimental data as well. Tsakali (2006) performed an elicited production task modeled after Schaeffer (2000) in 25 monolingual Greek children aged 2;4 to 3;6 to test clitic production in obligatory contexts. She reports ceiling percentages (124/125) of target-like clitic production with a single instance of clitic omission (1/125).

Tzakosta (2003, 2004a, 2004b) observes an asymmetry in the acquisition of proclisis as compared to enclisis: enclitics, both single clitics and clitic clusters, emerge first, while proclitics

[1] Even though the Christofidou corpus examined by Marinis (2000) includes recordings from age 1;7, no clitics have emerged before age 1;11, thus I report clitic production from age 1;11 onwards.

emerge in a subsequent stage. In particular, she reports that from age 1;07.05 to age 1;10 SMG-speaking children produce exclusively post-verbal clitics. This supports Stephany's (1997) observation that enclitics are correctly used by Spiros already at age 1;10, a developmental stage at which he often omit proclitics.

To recapitulate, on the basis of a number of studies (Marinis, 2000; Stephany, 1997; Tsakali, 2006; Tzakosta, 2003, 2004a, 2004b) conducted on clitic L1A in SMG children have good clitic production from around age 2 onwards, with low rates of clitic omission. Tzakosta's (2003, 2004a, 2004b) data indicate that enclitics emerge earlier than proclitics. Children's clitic placement is adult-like from the onset in both proclisis and enclisis contexts. No instances of clitic misplacement have been reported in either study with the exception of the 3 misplacement errors in proclisis contexts reported in Stephany (1997).

3 L1A of CG clitic pronouns

The first study on clitic L1 acquisition in CG was carried out by Petinou and Terzi (2002) and focused on clitic placement in proclisis contexts. Grohmann (2011) and colleagues (Grohmann et al. 2012) investigated clitic production and placement in different age groups in *jati*-clauses and the most recent study on clitic placement in early CG in both enclisis and proclisis contexts was carried out by Neokleous (2013).

Petinou and Terzi (2002) were the first to report the phenomenon of clitic misplacement in early CG. They studied clitic placement on the basis of a longitudinal corpus consisting of data from 5 typically developing (TD) children, while they also performed a follow-up test with 3 younger children. The 5 children that took part in their original study were followed longitudinally and recorded bimonthly over a period of 4 months (at 32, 34, and 36 months). Petinou and Terzi studied clitic placement in two proclisis triggering contexts: in *na*-clauses and negatives and calculated misplaced clitics out of children's overall clitic production. Since both contexts require a pre-verbal clitic in adult grammar, the use of post-verbal clitics in *na*-clauses and negatives constituted instances of clitic misplacement. Table 4 (based on table 2 in Petinou and Terzi, 2002:13)reports the Proportion of Clitic Misplacement (PCM) in the corpora examined per developmental stage, which is represented by the age in months and the Mean Length of Utterance in words (MLU/w). A follow-up study included data from 3 younger children. The children were recorded once and the same procedure was followed. The results are reported in table 5 (based on table 4 in Petinou & Terzi 2002:15).

Child	**32 months**		**34 months**		**36 months**	
	PCM	**MLU/w**	**PCM**	**MLU/w**	**PCM**	**MLU/w**
OX	0.10 (3/30)	3.0	0.02 (1/52)	3.6	0.0 (0/61)	3.3
NA	0.66 (16/24)	2.8	0.28 (5/18)	3.1	0.12 (4/33)	3.3
AM	0.07 (2/26)	2.8	0.0 (0/17)	3.2	0.0 (0/34)	4.0
AI	0.21 (3/14)	2.4	0.14 (3/21)	3.0	0.5 (2/37)	3.4
AX	0.62 (20/32)	2.9	0.44 (13/29)	3.1	0.0 (0/38)	4.0

Table 4. Clitic misplacement in CG (Petinou and Terzi, 2002; original study)

Child	Age	PCM	MLU
AI	28 mo.	1.0 (0/4)	2.8
IP	28 mo.	1.0 (0/7)	3.0
OK	28 mo.	1.0 (0/11)	3.0

Table 5. Clitic misplacement in CG (Petinou and Terzi, 2002; follow-up study)

The most important finding of Petinou and Terzi's (2002) study is an exceptional pattern of clitic placement with the clitic pronoun following the finite verb in negatives and *na*-clauses attested in CG-speaking children aged 32-34 months. Based on the results reported in table 4, the proportion of clitic misplacement in proclisis contexts at the age of 32 months ranges between 7-66%, while at age 34 it drops to 0-44%, with most children performing adult-like by the age of 36 months.

However, there are two important drawbacks of this study. First, the small sample, since the original study is based on data from 5 children and the follow-up study on data form 3 children. Secondly, the pattern attested in the data of all the children examined in the original study was not attested in the data of the 3 additional children in the post-hoc investigation, as no instances of clitic misplacement were reported for the follow-up study. These two parameters challenge the generalisability of the results obtained.

Grohmann (2011) and colleagues (Grohmann et al. 2012) investigated clitic production and clitic placement in *jati*-clauses. They administered the COST Action A33's clitics-in-islands test (adapted for CG), an elicited production task for 3rd person singular accusative object clitics in *jati*-clauses, to CG-speaking children. Grohmann (2011) administered the test to 24 TD children aged 5 to 6 years, as well as to a group of 10 TD children aged 3 to 4 years. The results of the study are reported in table 6 (based on tables 1 and 2 in Grohmann, 2011). Grohmann et al. (2012) administered the same test to 117 TD children aged 2 to 7 years.

Age Group	N	Clitics	Omission	NP	No answer	Other
3;0–4;0 (N=10)	120	110 (.92)	2 (.02)	3 (.02)	0 (0.0)	5 (.04)
5;0–6;0 (N=24)	288	276 (.96)	2 (.01)	2 (.01)	1 (0.0)	7 (.02)

Table 6. Clitic production in CG (Grohmann, 2011)

As shown in table 6, CG-speaking children have ceiling percentages of clitic production from age 3 onwards. Grohmann (2011) reports that all the clitic pronouns produced by 3- to 4-year-olds were placed post-verbally (110/110), while a different picture emerged for 5- to 6-year-olds, with half of them placing the clitic pre-verbally (137/276) and the other half (139/276) placing the clitic post-verbally. The outcome of the follow-up study carried out by Grohmann et al. (2012) who administered the same test to a larger population replicated the results of the original study. The results of the follow-up study are reported in table 7 (taken from Grohmann et al., 2012: table 3).

Clitic	2;0–2;11	3;0–3;11	4;0–4;11	5;0–5;11	6;0–6;11	Adults
Overall	.986	.867	.885	.943	.873	1.0
Post–verbal	.90	.89	.88	.68	.47	1.0

Table 7. Clitic production and clitic placement in CG (Grohmann et al., 2012)

As shown in table 7, CG-speaking children have adult-like clitic production from as early as age 2. As regards clitic placement, children older than 5 prefer to place clitics pre-verbally unlike younger children who place clitics post-verbally. The latter is not a surprising result since *jati*–clauses in CG allow for both patterns of placement. Pappas (2011) reports that 38 CG-speaking adults who performed an acceptability judgment task accepted both enclisis and proclisis in *jati*-clauses depending on whether the pre-verbal subject carried contrastive or new information focus or not. Grohmann suggests that the preference for pre-verbal placement by 5- and 6-year-olds in *jati*-clauses unlike in younger children and adults is the result of the "schooling" effect, namely the result of the interference from Standard Modern Greek, a mainly proclitic language, used as the language of instruction in Cyprus government schools. This observation is relevant for issues pertaining to code-switching or to sociolinguistic parameters in linguistic environments such as that of Greek-speaking Cyprus, which Grohmann (2011) calls "bi–x".

Neokleous (2013) carried out the most recent study on the L1 acquisition of clitic pronouns in CG and investigated clitic placement in enclisis and proclisis contexts. She administered an elicited production task for the elicitation of 3rd person object clitics in two experimental conditions: root clauses, which constitute enclisis context, and clauses headed by the modality markers *na* and *enna* (the CG future particle), which constitute proclisis context. Fifty monolingual Greek Cypriot children aged 2;6 to 4, grouped together into three age groups: age group A (2;6-3), age group B (3-3;6) and age group C (3;6-4), performed the task. The results obtained are reported in table 8 (taken from Neokleous, 2013).

Context	Age Group (N)	Clitic Placement	
		COR	INCOR
Root Clauses	A (N=18)	48/48 (1.0)	0/48 (0.0)
	B (N=22)	61/62 (.98)	1/62 (.02)
	C (N=10)	28/28 (1.0)	0/28 (0.0)
	Overall (N=50)	137/138 (.99)	1/138 (.01)
Modality Markers	A (N=18)	25/38 (.66)	13/38 (.34)
	B (N=22)	55/58 (.95)	3/58 (.05)
	C (N=10)	27/27 (1.0)	0/27 (0.0)
	Overall (N=50)	107/123 (.87)	16/123 (.13)

Table 8. Clitic placement in CG (Neokleous, 2013)

The data in table 8 reveal an interesting discrepancy between the two types of contexts. While children of all age groups place clitics in an adult-like manner in root clauses, for clauses headed by the modality markers *na* and *enna* a different picture emerges. Children aged 2;6 to 3 (age group A) place the clitic in the adult-like position only 66% of the time. In age group B this proportion raises to 95% and as for age group C, no child produces any misplaced clitics.

To recapitulate, CG-speaking children have good clitic production from as early as age 2 (Grohmann, 2011; Grohmann et al., 2012) resembling SMG-speaking children in this respect. As for clitic placement, Neokleous (2013) reports a different pattern for the acquisition of enclisis and proclisis contexts: only enclisis contexts are adult-like from the onset. Clitic placement in proclisis contexts in children younger than 3 shows a bi-modal distribution: some children perform adult-like, while a subset of them misplaces clitics, namely they use post-verbal clitics irrespectively of the presence of proclisis triggers. The attested clitic misplacement in proclisis contexts alone replicates Petinou and Terzi's (2002) findings.

3 Discussion

The previous discussion has revealed that children acquiring CG and SMG follow two different developmental pathways for clitic L1 acquisition. SMG-speaking children have adult-like clitic production and clitic placement from the earliest stages of L1 acquisition, namely by age 2 (Marinis, 2000; Stephany, 1997; Tsakali, 2006; Tzakosta, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). Enclitics seem to emerge earlier than proclitics (Stephany, 1997; Tzakosta, 2003 *et seq*.) but clitics are placed in an adult-like fashion in both proclisis and enclisis contexts[2]. CG-speaking children resemble their SMG peers in exhibiting good clitic production from around age 2 with very low rates of clitic omissions (Grohmann, 2011; Grohmann et al., 2012). As regards clitic placement, however, an exceptional pattern is attested in early CG. Children acquiring CG misplace clitics in proclisis contexts alone (Neokleous, 2013; Petinou and Terzi, 2002) before the age of 3. The question is how can this divergence regarding the acquisition of enclisis and proclisis in CG be accounted for.

There is no consensus in the literature regarding the nature of cliticisation in CG. Agouraki (2001) and Terzi (1999a, 1999b) argue in favor of a syntactic account and propose that enclisis in CG derives from proclisis with the manifestation of verb movement past the clitic (V-to-C according to Agouraki, 2001 and V-to-M according to Terzi, 1999a, 1999b). Condoravdi and Kiparsky (2001), on the other hand, assume that enclisis derives upon the manifestation of the Prosodic Inversion (Halpern, 1995) when no suitable host is available for the clitic pronoun. The basic tenet of a third type of approaches suggested by Mavrogiorgos (2012) and Revithiadou (2006) is that cliticisation in CG involves both syntactic and PF operations. Acquisition data seem to provide clear and strong indications regarding the nature of cliticisation in CG.

Following Neokleous (2013), I take the syntax-PF interface to be the domain of cliticisation in CG. Neokleous (2013) building on ideas in Revithiadou (2006) and Bošković (2001) argues that clitic placement in CG is regulated by both syntax and prosody as follows: the syntactic

[2] Stephany (1997) mentions 3 misplacement errors attested in proclisis contexts. However, this finding is not replicated by any other follow-up study.

output is filtered out by language-specific prosodic constraints. Moreover, the way enclitics and proclitics prosodify differs, with enclitics alone forming a single prosodic word with their verbal host, while pre-verbal clitics can appear either as affixal proclitics or as different prosodic words. This difference in prosodification may explain the dominance of enclisis over proclisis in CG reflected in the overgeneralisation of enclisis at the initial stages of L1 acquisition.

Let us turn, now, to the attested divergence between CG and SMG regarding L1 acquisition of clitics: SMG-speaking children perform target-like in both clitic production and clitic placement, while CG-speaking children of the same age misplace clitic pronouns. As suggested in Mavrogiorgos (2009), Philippaki-Warburton (1998) and Terzi (1999a) the proclisis-enclisis alternation in SMG is the result of syntactic operations. Mavrogiorgos (2009) argues that the imperative verb in SMG has an unvalued person feature in T. Hence, the correlation of enclisis in SMG with that unvalued person feature in T. As regards the developmental trajectory, once this correlation is established in the grammar of SMG-speaking children, clitic placement is target-like. Based on the findings of Marinis (2000), Stephany (1997), Tsakali (2006) and Tzakosta (2003, 2004a, 2004b) this correlation seems to be established from very early on.

In CG, on the other hand, clitic placement is regulated by syntactic operations as well as by prosodic constraints. Clitic placement in CG is the result of the complex interaction of syntax and prosody. Therefore, CG-speaking children need to acquire both the syntactic and the prosodic operations involved. This causes an extra burden that results in a delay in the acquisition of clitic placement, hence the misplacement errors.

In sum, despite the similarities in the morphological paradigm of clitic pronouns in CG and SMG, the two varieties represent two different categories of clitic languages. The different developmental pathways attested in CG- and SMG-speaking children mirrors the typological classification of CG and SMG by Mavrogiorgos (2012): SMG is a finiteness-sensitive language in which clitic placement correlates with finiteness, in the form of the presence of a (un)valued person feature in T, while CG is a Tobler-Mussafia language in which clitic placement is regulated by the syntax-PF interface.

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