

Second Position Clitic Phenomena in North-Central Australia: Some Pragmatic Considerations*

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1. Introduction

This paper presents a discourse-pragmatic based examination of a well-recognised grammatical phenomenon common to many Australian languages: enclitic ‘complexes’ that code grammatical categories like person/number/gender of arguments (ie. bound pronouns) and sometimes also modal and tense information. All Australian languages which have such enclitics show at least some contexts in which the clitic complex is fixed in second position, following a range of constituent types that can occur clause initially. In some languages, there is a preference for verb attachment, regardless of position. This paper is concerned with the ‘positional’ enclitics – those which primarily occur in second position, even though they may occur elsewhere in certain contexts.

Explanations for the grammatical status of these positional enclitics have focussed on their syntactic properties, considering how they should be represented in the syntax of the languages that have them (eg. McConvell 1996, Laughren 2002); relationships to ‘non-configurationality’ (eg. Austin & Bresnan 1996, Nordlinger 1998a, Pensalfini 2004); relationships between free and bound pronominals (eg. Dixon 2002). Most of this work however acknowledges that clitic attachment (to an initial constituent) is related to a pragmatic notion, usually called ‘Focus’.

In some syntactic approaches ‘Focus’ is analysed as a syntactic position, a ‘focus phrase’, to which enclitics may be associated. The precise pragmatics of the term ‘Focus’ is often left vague but is typically associated with notions like newness, newsworthiness (emphasis) and contrast (cf. Mithun’s (1987) ‘most newsworthy first’ principle). For example, McConvell (1996:317) defines Focus as:

... a pragmatic notion based on the organisation of information in discourse. The property of Focus associated with a constituent indicates that it provides new information: it is not already under discussion.

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This study is an attempt to tease out the pragmatic functions that underlie the relationship between clitic complex and clitic host – to develop a more detailed analysis than the label ‘Focus’ currently affords.

Additionally, despite the fact that the pragmatic status of information is acknowledged as a key ingredient in the development of enclitic syntax, there has been little discourse-based research of the properties of enclitics in language use, and the relationship between the pragmatic status of information and the grammaticalisation of such systems. This study represents the early stages of such an investigation.¹

This paper takes the view that the underlying motivation for second position encliticisation is primarily pragmatic, derived from communicative pressures and conceptual organisation, rather than purely morphosyntactic or prosodic/phonological. Grammatical features of second position encliticisation are assumed to have developed from a complex interaction between conventionalisation of pragmatically motivated placement, and other grammatical features of the language in question. The results of this investigation show that the constituent to which the clitic attaches associates with interactional functions related to speaker attitude, intent and action: eg. interrogatives, contrast, and modality. This can be differentiated from discourse-pragmatic functions that monitor textual coherence: eg. new/old information; topic continuity.

More generally, the placement of the grammatical information found in enclitic complexes in second position is analysed here as a kind of ‘discourse iconicity’ where the most ‘pragmatically marked’ information is offset by the least pragmatically marked information in the clause – the ‘bare bones’ of grammatical information encoded in the clitic complex - information such as person/number/gender of arguments and operator functions like tense and mood.

In section 2, I describe the formal properties of pronominal enclitic phenomena in a survey of seven North-Central Australian languages. In section 3 I examine the pragmatic status of Noun phrases, verbs and other grammatical categories respectively when they function as clitic hosts. I then present some hypotheses for the effects of these pragmatic properties on the evolution of second position clitic systems.

2. The form of pronominal enclitics

Pronominal enclitics occur in a wide range of Australian languages across North, Central and Southeast Australia (excluded areas include the Southwest, Cape York and the ‘prefixing’ languages of the Top End). The phenomenon is mostly associated with Pama-Nyungan languages, but some non-Pama-Nyungan languages also have this feature. In this paper I restrict discussion to a set of languages that form a contiguous area across North-Central Australia, although some of the claims made here may be applicable to other languages. The languages are: Mudburra (McConvell 1996), Gurindji (McConvell 1996), Warlpiri (Laughren 2002), Warumungu (Simpson 2002), Wambaya (Nordlinger 1998b), Garrwa (my field notes),

¹ The ideal data source to address such issues would be large corpuses of texts, including conversations. As such corpuses do not exist in usable form for all of the languages examined here, I have therefore used both texts and contextualised but isolated example sentences taken from various kinds of publications.

and Yukulta (Keen 1983). These include both Pama-Nyungan and Non-Pama-Nyungan languages. The enclitics in these languages do not show a grammatical preference for verb-attachment, but they vary in the degree to which the clitic complex is described as being ‘fixed’ in second position.

The clitic complexes in the languages surveyed fall into two basic ‘types’: those with a ‘base’ (sometimes called an ‘auxiliary’ (AUX)) to which pronominals attach, and those which lack a ‘base’. The ‘base’ is a feature of the Ngumbin-Yapa group of Pama-Nyungan languages, represented in this survey by Mudburra, Gurindji and Warlpiri. It may itself be semantically empty (e.g. Mudburra and Gurindji), or it may contribute to the interpretation of tense/aspect/mood (e.g. Warlpiri). Syntactic analyses of the clitic complex in these languages sees the ‘base’ part as a category (COMP) to which the pronouns attach, leaving the complex ‘free’ to occur in other positions.

Examples (1) – (8) illustrate the range of clitic placement possibilities in Mudburra, Gurindji and Warlpiri, demonstrating that they may occur in clause initial position, in second position, and more unusually in clause final position. In all of these languages there is a clear discourse preference for the clitic complex as a whole to occur in second position.

Mudburra (McConvell 1996:304)

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| (1) | jalkaji
woomera
‘I will pick up a woomera’ | pa=rna
AUX=1sgS | lap
pick.up | warnta
get.FUT | |
| (2) | | pa=rna
AUX=1sgS | lap
pick.up | warnta
get.FUT | jalkaji
woomera |
| (3) | jalkaji
woomera | lap
pick.up | warnta
get.FUT | pa=rna
AUX=1sgS | (rare) |

Gurindji (McConvell 1996:304)

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|-------------------------------|--|--|
| (4) | ngu=rna
AUX=1sgS
‘I will fix it’ | pirrka ma-nku
make get-FUT | | |
| (5) | pirrka ma-nku
make get-FUT | ngu=rna
AUX=1sgS | | |

Warlpiri (Laughren 2002, Laughren et al. 2005)

- | | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| (6) | wangka-mi
speak-NPAST
‘I, a Yuendumu person, am speaking to you’ | ka=rna=ngku
CENTR-1.S=2NS | Yurntumu-wardingki
Y-habitant:NOM | |
| (7) | wati
man:NOM
‘The men must have gone’ | kaji=li
KAJI=PL.S | ya-nu
go-PAST | |

- (8) **ka=rna=jana** wangka-mi
 PRES.AUX=1sg.S=3plo talk-NONPAST
 ‘I *am* (going to) talk to them.’ (In reply to ‘You should/must talk to them’)

In Warlpiri, the choice of base form is determined by the tense/aspect/mood of the clause. In (6) it is nonpast *ka*, while in (7) it is *kaji*, which expresses epistemic modality. Note that tense is also signalled inflectionally on the verb. In some languages tense, aspect, mood and other grammatical information is encliticised or suffixed to the pronominal clitic, converse to the pattern seen in Warlpiri. Warumungu, a Pama-Nyungan language, has this feature, although it is quite restricted and tense information is also signalled inflectionally on the verb, as in (10). In Wambaya, Garrwa and Yukulta, all non-Pama-Nyungan languages, the verb typically remains uninflected so that the clitic complex is the primary signaller of such clausal grammatical information ((11)-(16)).²

Warumungu (Simpson 2002)

- (9) mananta **arnangkku**
 look.for-PRES I-you
 ‘I’m looking for you’
- (10) Pangkal **ajjila** api pangkal warraku
 Perhaps I+(s)he/it-FUTURE go-FUTURE perhaps nothing
 ‘Maybe we’ll go tomorrow, maybe not’

Wambaya (Nordlinger 1998b)

- (11) jiyawu **ngirr-aji** marndanga nyanyalu
 give 1PL.EXC.A-HAB.PST white.woman.II(ACC) tea.IV(ACC)
 We’d give tea to the white lady
- (12) bungmanyi-ni **gin-amany** yanybi
 old.man.I-LOC 3SG.M.A-PST.TWD get
 The old man came and got her

Garrwa (Mushin field notes)

- (13) kuyu=**nurri-ny=i** waydbala-wanyi.
 take=1pLEXC L-ACC=PAST European-ERG
 The whitefellow (station manager) took us. (28.3.00.3)
- (14) yundijba=**bul=i** mungana, ngala=**nurru** kululuka
 cook=3DU=PAST night CONN=1pEXcl sleep(PL)
 They two cooked (them) at night while we all were sleeping (15.5.01.1)

² Wambaya verbs may inflect for future tense only. Garrwa and Yukulta verbs are uninflected.

Yulkulta (Keen 1983:230)

- (15) ngumpanta ngawu-Ø partangu-Ø=**thu=yingka** pa:ja
 your+ABS dog-ABS big-ABS=me=PAST bite+IND
 ‘Your big dog bit me’

- (16) miyarlta=**yikanta** kurija
 spear+ABS=you+TR+PAST see+IND
 ‘You saw the spear’ (p242)

Table 1 presents a summary of the types of clitic complexes described for the languages investigated here.

Table 1 Summary of pronominal clitic complexes

<i>Language</i>	Bound/Free	Base?	Non pronominal meanings in complex	Positional restriction
Mudburra	Different	Yes	No	Mostly 2P, but can be elsewhere
Gurindji	Different	Yes	Yes (??)	Mostly 2P, but can be elsewhere
Warlpiri	Different	Yes	Some TAM and modal meanings in base (and verb inflection)	Mostly 2P but can be 1P, subject to phonological and morpho-syntactic constraints
Warumungu	Same form	No	Future and apprehensive enclitic to pronouns (as well as verb inflection)	Mostly 2P but can be 1P
Wambaya	Different	No	TAM and directional (minimal verb inflection)	Obligatorily 2P
Garrwa	Same form	No	TAM (no verb inflection)	Obligatorily 2P
Yukulta	Different	No	TAM and transitivity (no verb inflection)	Obligatorily 2P

While there is clear variation in the degree to which clitic complexes must occur in second position, prosodically attached to the first constituent or word in the clause, for all languages this is the predominant place for such clitics to occur.

It is interesting that the non-Pama-Nyungan languages examined here: Wambaya, Garrwa and Yulkulta share so many features of clitic attachment (eg. the encliticisation of tense/aspect markers to the pronominal clitic), even though the languages have not been described as closely related. The similarity between free and bound pronouns in Garrwa suggests that this clitic complex may be the most recent innovation of the languages investigated. The Wambaya and Yulkulta clitic systems are much more robust in their forms and code far more grammatical information in the clitic complex. These languages have very little, if any, verb inflections, but Garrwa has none at all.

In the rest of this paper I will explore some pragmatic properties of this pattern of attachment by focussing on the information status of the initial constituent – the linguistic material to which the clitic complex attaches.

3. The pragmatic status of initial position

The languages used in this investigation all have syntactically free word orders, the ordering of core constituents being driven largely by information status rather than grammatical relations. In sections 3.1 and 3.2 I investigate the types of contexts that result in noun phrase initial and verb initial utterances respectively, demonstrating that the clitic is attached to initial constituents that are ‘pragmatically marked’ in Payne’s (1992) sense, and reflect particular interactional pressures. A more precise definition of pragmatic markedness is given in section 3.1.

While the ordering of lexical constituents is syntactically free in these languages, they all have some grammatical forms which obligatorily occur in initial position (eg. question words, connectors, some discourse markers). However the pragmatic status of these initial grammatical forms which attract the clitic is highly consistent with the pragmatic status of lexical forms in this position. This is discussed in section 3.3.

3.1 Noun phrases in first position

Noun phrases display the least amount of syntactic restrictiveness, and therefore the greatest degree of pragmatic sensitivity, of all grammatical categories in these languages. It should be noted that because of rampant zero anaphora in Australian languages, full NPs referring to core arguments are in themselves pragmatically highlighted. The following examples illustrate contexts in which we find initial noun phrases. The results show a remarkable consistency across the languages of investigation, and clearly follow the patterns of word order pragmatics described in Mithun (1987). Here I am not only interested in the position of noun phrases, but also whether or not they attract the clitic complex.

All of the languages place answers to information questions in initial position followed directly by the clitic complex, illustrated in (17) for Warlpiri. In some of the languages noun phrases that refer to the questioned element in a yes/no question also occur in first position and attract the clitic complex. This is illustrated in (18) and (19) for Warumungu and Yukulta.

Warlpiri

(17a) ngana-patu **ka=lu** wangka-mi?
 who-PL:NOM CENTR-(3)PL.S speak-NPAST
 ‘Which ones are speaking?’

(17b) yurntumu-wardingki-patu **ka=lu** wangka-mi
 Y-habitant-PL:NOM CENTR-(3) PL.S speak-NPAST
 ‘The Yuendumu people are speaking.’ (= answer to question) (p94)

Warumungu:

- (18) kuyu **angi** kunta
 Meat you1 have-PRESENT
 ‘Have you got any meat?’ (p117)

Yukulta

- (19) ngukuwa=**rna=yikari** kurtamaja
 water+ABS=INTERR=you+TR+PRES drink+IND(TR)
 ‘Are you drinking some water?’ (p242)

Another clear context for initial noun phrases attracting the clitic complex is contrast of the kind ‘A did X rather than Y’. This is illustrated in (20) for Mudburra and (21) for Garrwa. In (20), speaker B asserts that in contrast with speaker A leaving his swag in the bush, B has brought his along. The contrast lies in who has brought his swag, resulting in a free first person pronoun in initial position that itself attracts a first person pronominal clitic. The Garrwa example was uttered in the course of a narrative contrasting how people travelled in the ‘old days’ (ie. by foot) compared with how people travel nowadays (ie. by car).

Mudburra

- (20a) A: tanku **pa=rna-yi** wanyja-na kaja-ngka
 supplies AUX=1sgS-1sgO leave-PERF bush-LOC
 ‘I have left my swag in the bush’
- (20b) B: ngayi-ma=**rna** ka-ngana-rni
 1SG-TOP=1SGS take-PERF-HITHER
 ‘I have brought it’ (I have brought mine)

Garrwa:

- (21) nukami-na=**nurr=ili** jilajba
 foot-LOC=1PLEXCL=HAB go
 BY FOOT, we would walk / It was BY FOOT, we would walk. (25.8.03.1)

Noun phrases also occur initially in so-called ‘double contrasts’ or ‘double focus’ of the kind ‘A did X while B did Y’. In narrative discourse, this type of contrast also involves a shift in topic from one narrative character to another. In Wambaya, this context involves attraction of the clitic complex to the initial NP, as illustrated in (22). In Garrwa however, while the contrasted NPs occur in initial position, they do not attract the clitic complex, as in (23).³ In Mushin (to appear) these were analysed as left dislocated noun phrases which are clause external. The Yukulta example in (24) is the first line of a narrative – an inherent topic shift – which also has an initial NP that does not attract the clitic complex.

³ Third person singular pronouns are zero marked in Garrwa so only the tense/aspect component of the clitic complex is realised in this example.

Wambaya:

(22a) gambanga-ni **ngiy-a** yabu gurijbi alaji ilig-baji
 sun.II-LOC 3SG.NM.A-PST have good.I(ACC) boy.I(ACC) sore-PRIV.I(ACC)
 ‘The sun had a nice baby, with no sores’

(22b) wardangarringa-ni **ngiy-a** yabu iliga-nguji bagijbi
 moon.II.LOC 3SG.NM.A-PST have sore-PROP.I(ACC) bad.I(ACC)
 ‘The moon had a ‘no good’ baby, with sores.’ (p239, Text3: 2,3)

Garrwa (does not attract clitic)

(23a) bawanganja nanga-ngi kirrijba=**yi** kingkarri
 older.brother 3SG-DAT climb=PAST up
 his older brother climbed up

(23b) nani bayakada jungku=**yi** wayka, lalanba=**yi** kingkarri
 that kid sit=PAST down, look.up=PAST up
 that little brother sat down (at the base of the tree). He looked up (8.5.01.1)

Yukulta:

(24) papiyapa-nguluku kalangingta-**yingka** rlapitja kamu-**yingka** waratya
 name dry.country+ABS=PAST get.up+IND and=PAST go+IND
 ‘Papiyapa-nguluku got up from Kalanginta and went’ (Text 1, line 1, p261)

Table 2 presents a summary of the contexts for initial NPs in the languages of investigations. Some gaps are inevitable, given the variability in the amount of data available for this analysis. However there are clear patterns of ordering that apply across the languages.

Table 2 Pragmatics of noun phrase first (ignoring grammatical functions)

<i>Language</i>	NPs in first position (attracting clitic)	NPs in first position (not attracting clitic)
Warlpiri	Answers to questions, contrast	No examples
Mudburra	Answers to questions, contrast, double focus	No examples
Warumungu	Yes/no questions	No examples
Garrwa	contrast	‘double focus’, topic shift
Wambaya	Answers to questions, contrast, double focus	Certain types of topic shift.
Yukulta	Yes/no questions	1 st line in narrative

The results allow for a development of the pragmatic profile of initial NPs that attract the clitic complex. In all cases the information encoded by the initial NP is ‘pragmatically marked’ in Payne (1992)’s sense,

“Either given or new information can be pragmatically marked. Briefly, information is highly pragmatically marked when the speaker assumes that the information, or information network in which the speaker wishes to establish the information, will directly contradict the hearer’s current expectations or presuppositions... The use of a pragmatically marked structure is essentially a type of speech act in which the speaker says: “I hereby instruct you, the hearer, to change what I assume are your current expectations deriving from the current state of your knowledge network” (p141)

‘Pragmatically marked’ information thus includes answers to information questions, ‘single and double focus’, topic shifts and new topics. Pragmatic markedness in this sense is clearly related to the more formal characterisations of ‘focus types’. Here certain types of focus are linked to some kind of set-membership, filling in different kinds of information gaps as answers to questions or as contrastive alternatives. This is what Vallduví & Vilks (1998) call “kontrast” (also ‘identificational focus’ É Kiss 1998). This is contrasted with simply ‘new’ or ‘rhematic’ information (what É Kiss 1998 calls ‘information focus’):

If an expression is kontrastive, a **membership set** $M = \{...,a...\}$ is generated and becomes available to semantic computation as some sort of quantificational domain. (p83)

Initial NPs which do not attract the clitic may in some cases be left-dislocations. These are very often signalled prosodically with some kind of intonation break between the NP and the rest of the clause. Whatever the syntactic status, NPs in this position tend to have text-related functions – signalling new topics and topic shifts. The functions that attract the clitic complex (e.g. answers to questions and contrasts) are associated less with textual coherence and more with signalling how the speaker wants the hearer to receive the information – a function more closely aligned with the interactive context.⁴ Indeed this is one of the underlying factors distinguishing the two types of focus described above: ‘rheme’ or ‘information focus’ being associated with the status of information with respect to preceding text; ‘kontrast’ or ‘identificational focus’ being more associated with a speaker’s rhetorical purposes in interaction.⁵

It is therefore possible to hypothesise that clitic attachment is most sensitive to the interactional status of the element to which it attaches, and less sensitive to purely textual functions, like newness of information. There is of course a great deal of overlap, and the two functions may not always be separable. However, the variation in the treatment of ‘double

⁴ A distinction consistent with the difference between ‘textual’ and ‘interpersonal’ functions in Systemic-Functional linguistics. (eg. Eggins 2004)

⁵ Note that ‘newness’ of information is not really the issue here (many non-initial NPs are new and many initial NPs do not express new information) (cf. McConvell’s (1996) characterisation of ‘focus’)

focus' contexts in the languages investigated here may reflect the different aspects of double focus as both contrastive and a topic shift.⁶

3.2 Verbs in first position

In all of the languages surveyed, verbs may occur in initial position, attracting the clitic. Verbs tend to not attract the clitic when they occur elsewhere in the clause. There appears to be variation across the languages however in the pragmatic status of verbs when they do occur in initial position. For all of the languages, verb only or verb+ clitic only clauses are very common in discourse because of the frequent use of zero anaphora and the infrequent use of free pronouns in favour of the bound pronouns in the clitic complex. What is of interest is the pragmatic status of initial verbs in clauses which also have other constituents that could potentially also occur in initial position (eg. noun phrases).

The Warlpiri examples in (25) provide evidence that like noun phrases, verbs are also sensitive to features of pragmatic markedness. (25) is a response to a question about the nature of an activity, while (25b) is a response to a question about identity. The word order associated with the answers to these questions places the most relevant information associated with the question in initial position. In (24a), this is the predicate *wangka-mi* 'talk-NONPAST' while in (25b) it is the noun phrase *kurdu-kurdu-ku* 'child-child-DAT'. Like noun phrases, Warlpiri verbs occur in initial position when they are kontrastive, fulfilling a highly salient interactional role.

Warlpiri (Laughren et al 2005, Exx 30c-d):

(25a) *wangka-mi ka=rna=jana kurdu-kurdu-ku*
 talk-NONPAST PRES.AUX=1SG.S=3PLO child-child-DAT
 'I'm talking to the children' (in reply to 'what are you doing?')

(25b) *kurdu-kurdu-ku ka=rna=jana wangka-mi*
 child-child-DAT PRES.AUX=1SG.S=3PLO talk-NONPAST
 'I'm talking to the children' (in reply to 'Who are you talking to?')

In contrast, verb-initial is the preferred order for Garrwa. Verbs occur initially, even when there are other constituents present (see above exx 13 & 14), and even when the verbs cannot be analysed as pragmatically marked. While kontrastive noun phrases will end up in initial position attracting the clitic, as seen in example (21), clauses lacking kontrast will be verb-initial, also attracting the pronominal clitic.

The pragmatic status of initial verbs in the other languages of this survey are less clear. Wambaya shows a discourse frequency for verb-initialness but more information is required before it can be analysed as a Garrwa-type or a Warlpiri-type. There is even less information on the pragmatic sensitivity of verb-initial utterances in Mudburra, Gurindji and Yukulta at this stage.

⁶ Further evidence may also come from the fact that enclitics are rarely found attached to sentence connectors (see Yukulta ex (24)), even though this grammatical category is typically obligatorily clause initial. Connectors primarily have textual functions in this sense.

If second position clitics systems evolve into verb-attachment systems, as is claimed to be the case for a number of Australian languages to the West and South of the area examined here, then the pragmatic status of verbs in initial position should be of particular interest. McConvell (1996) shows that even verb-attachment clitics show some pragmatic sensitivity, gravitating to pragmatically marked initial constituents that are not verbs (eg. interrogatives). In all of the languages examined here enclitics will attach to verbs most frequently in discourse by virtue of the fact that so many utterances lack any other constituent that could function as a clitic host. One can see how this might lead to the conventionalisation of clitic placement to verbs, rather than to second position. In Garrwa the relative frequency of clitics attached to verbs is bolstered by its basic verb initial order, and yet Garrwa clitics are more rigidly found in second position than languages like Warlpiri. What this suggests is the relatively recent development of the clitic system in Garrwa, where second position has been conventionalised as the site for clitic attachment, with less attention now paid to pragmatic markedness.

3.3 Grammatical categories in first position

In all of the languages examined here, certain types of grammatical categories are obligatorily found in initial position, attracting the clitic complex: interrogatives, negative particles, modal/evidentials, future/irrealis and some types of connectors. The association is hardly coincidental – these grammatical categories are ‘pragmatically marked’ by definition, functioning to alter hearer expectations through questions, negations, epistemic modification, hypotheticality and counterfactuality. Most strikingly they exhibit features of kontrastiveness and interactivity which were hypothesised in section 3.1 to be the pragmatic basis for clitic placement.

Interrogatives, for example, are canonically kontrastive and interactive (as they elicit an answer) and they almost always function as clitic hosts. Negatives are also kontrastive, picking out what didn’t occur from what did occur in these cases, although their interactive functions are perhaps less obvious than for interrogatives, and requires further analysis. The Non-Pama-Nyungan languages in this sample seem stricter in their positioning of the negative than the Pama-Nyungan languages, as seen in examples (26) and (27), but in all cases the negative particle attracts the clitic.⁷

Gurindji:

(26)	kula= rna NEG=1SGS	warrkuj pick.up	ma-ni get-past	warlmayi woomera
	warlmayi woomera	kula= rna NEG=1SGS	warrkuj pick.up	ma-ni get-PAST
	‘I did not pick up a woomera’			

⁷ In the case of the Gurindji examples, the apparent movement of the Neg+clitic to second position may in fact be because the NP is in a left dislocated position in this clause: “A woomera, I didn’t pick it up”.

Warlpiri:

(27a) (ngaju) kula=**ka=rna** ya-ni
 (I:NOM) NEG-CENTR-1SG.S go-NPAST
 ‘I’m not *going* / don’t *go*’ (focussed verb)

(27b) kula=**ka=rna** ngaju ya-ni
 NEG-CENTR-1SG.S I:NOM go-NPAST
 ‘I’m not *going* / I don’t *go*’ (focussed pronoun)

Garrwa:

(28) miku=**ngay=ili** ngamulujba ngaki wawarra
 NEG=1SG=HAB feed.baby my child
 I didn’t (get to) nurse my child. (28.3.00.2)

Wambaya:

(29) Guyala **irr-agba** yarru
 NEG 3PL.S-HYP go
 ‘They won’t go’

Yukulta:

(30) walira=**thayi** rdalmathari ngijinyja
 NEG=I+FUT chop+IND+NEG wood+DAT
 ‘I won’t chop the wood’ (p238)

I can only be speculative about the pragmatic status of modal, future and irrealis categories at this stage. Modal particles and clitics expressing possibility and evidentiality clearly attract the clitic. In the languages in my sample which have a ‘base’ form as part of the clitic complex, these (obligatorily) occur before the clitic complex in initial position. In the languages which lack a base, these forms are themselves clitics which attach to initial position. For these languages the modal forms seem to be the only type that can ‘bump’ the rest of the clitic complex out of its canonical position. One possible analysis is that like the ‘base’ languages, the modals can be analysed as part of the clitic complex – an incipient base.

Garrwa:

(31) wurdumba=**wali=ngayu** ngalurr
 get-MIGHT=1SG cold
 ‘I might be catching a cold.’

Wambaya:

(32) mugunjana=**miji gi-n** mirra
 louse.II(NOM)=INFER 3SG.S(PR)-PROG sit
 ‘It must be a louse (because I keep scratching my head)’ (p204)

Modal forms are not typically analysed in terms of *kontrast*, but rather reflect an *evaluative* function. As they are an expression of speaker attitude, modals are instrumental in guiding

listeners to how speakers want them to understand information status. This may be why interrogatives, negatives and modals so often share morphosyntactic features. This may be used as further evidence of the close connection between interactive functions of language (grammaticalised in certain categories like interrogatives and modals), and the placement of grammatical clitics.

While there is not the space here to discuss ‘future’ and irrealis forms (also modal) in this respect, it should be noted that these also interact consistently with the clitic complex and with word order.⁸ Their properties in individual languages may be related to the extent to which future is a tense or modal category in the language in question, but this is a question for another paper.

Table 3 summarises the properties of grammatical categories with respect to word order and clitic attachment in the languages under examination.

⁸ Mary Laughren (pc) has pointed out that in most Ngumpin-Yapa languages, imperative verbs must function as clitic hosts, although this is optional in Warlpiri. This pattern also applies to Yukulta.

Table 3 Grammatical forms that attract the clitic complex / part of clitic complex

<i>Language</i>	Interrogative	Negative Particle	Epistemic modality / Evidentiality	Future/Irrealis	Past / Realis
Warlpiri	1P – usually attracts clitic complex	Generally 1P – attracts clitic complex	1P – attracts clitic complex	Part of the ‘base’, coreference with verb inflection.	Verb inflection – interacts with form of base
Mudburra	1P – attracts clitic complex	1P – attracts clitic complex	??	Verb inflection	Verb inflection
Gurindji	1P- attracts clitic complex minus Base	Mostly 1P- attracts clitic complex minus Base	??	Verb inflection	Verb inflection
Warumungu	1P – attracts clitic complex	No data yet	1P – attracts pronouns	verb inflection, optional attachment to pronoun	Verb inflection
Garrwa	1P – attracts clitic complex	1P – attracts clitic complex	2P clitic- attracts clitic complex	1P or 2P- attracts clitic complex – can also be enclitic to verbs.	Attaches to pronouns or verbs
Wambaya	1P – attracts clitic complex	1P – attracts clitic complex	2P – attracts clitic complex	Attaches to pronouns in AUX, coreferential verb inflection	Attaches to pronouns. No verb inflection
Yukulta	1P – attracts clitic complex	1P – attracts clitic complex	Part of clitic complex, attaches to pronouns (future irrealis)	Part of clitic complex, attaches to pronouns (future)	Part of clitic complex – attaches to pronouns.

4. Conclusion

Although more fine tuning is clearly needed, these findings do demonstrate that we can do better than simply assigning a category label ‘focus’ or a vague pragmatic notion such as ‘newsworthy’ to the first position constituent that attracts the clitic complex. All of the languages investigated share the attraction of the clitic complex to a family of information types that represent aspects of speaker attitude and action. Some of these may be considered types of focus (eg. ‘kontrast’ - Vallduví & Vilkuuna 1998), while others are not typically found under the rubric of ‘focus’ (eg. ‘evaluation’). The notion ‘kontrast’ (or ‘identificational focus’) is mostly defined as indicating some set-membership relationship – something with scopal or quantificational properties (as apposed to simply asserted or new information). In

actual discourse contexts, kontrastive expressions have a strong evaluative and/or interactive function (what would be called ‘interpersonal functions’ in Systemic-Functional linguistics) which links such expressions to other evaluations, like epistemic modality and evidentiality. This would account for the attraction of clitic complexes to modal information, not traditionally analysed in terms of ‘focus’.

In the absence of kontrastive information, there seems to be a preference for verb/predicate-attachment of clitics, although this needs to be verified for the Ngumpin-Yapa languages through an analysis of textual material. It is this preference, in less ‘pragmatically marked’ contexts, which may be the driving force behind the shift to verb-cliticisation in some languages.

As noted in the introduction, second position clitic systems of the kind examined here occur in languages all over the world. They are widespread because they represent the grammaticalisation of universal features of cognition and interaction. This close examination of seven Australian languages provides some evidence of how this has transpired. These languages are typically described as ‘free word order’ languages, but utterances are clearly structured to restrict clause-initial position to information that is highly pragmatically marked, organising the discourse to highlight how speaker want recipient to understand the status of the information.

The basic schematic features of the clause – e.g. grammatical categories of person, number, gender, tense and mood (and others) – are expressed as a prosodically weak unit (ie. as enclitics) that immediately follows this most interactionally salient information. The result is a kind of structural iconicity where the most pragmatically marked information is in the most structurally prominent position and the least pragmatically marked information is in perhaps the least structurally prominent position.

This paper has presented the starting point of this investigation. It is hoped that the comparison of these languages will clarify the range of variation in Australian second position clitic systems, even in such a tightly defined area. It is also hoped that the comparison of these seven languages shows the robustness of the relationship between the pragmatics of initial position and the attraction of grammatical clitics, even in Warlpiri, whose system is clearly highly grammaticalised. To fully understand the pragmatic import of positional clitic complexes, it is necessary to investigate a wider corpus of data than has been possible here – one which includes interactional data as well as narrative data of the kind used for this investigation.

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