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THE CLITIC/AGREEMENT SPLIT: ASYMMETRIES IN CHOCTAW PERSON MARKING

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1. Person markers associated with verbs are traditionally analyzed as ‘agreement’ or as ‘incorporated pronouns’.¹ Consider, for example, previous approaches to the conjugation of the verb *hilha* ‘dance’ in Choctaw, a Western Muskogean language spoken in Mississippi and Oklahoma:²

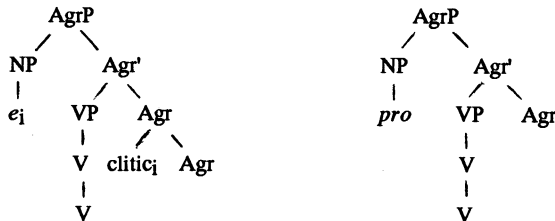
(1) Choctaw agentive (‘series I’) person markers:

	<i>Hilha</i>	-tok.	‘He/she/it/they danced.’
	<i>Hilha-li</i>	-tok.	‘I danced.’
<u><i>li-</i></u>	<i>hilha</i>	-tok.	‘We danced.’
<u><i>Ish-</i></u>	<i>hilha</i>	-tok.	‘You danced.’
<u><i>Hash-</i></u>	<i>hilha</i>	-tok.	‘Y’all danced.’

Munro and Gordon (1982), Payne (1982), Davies (1986), Ulrich (1986), and Broadwell (1988) analyze each of the agentive person markers in Western Muskogean as ‘agreement’. Jelinek (1989), in contrast, follows an older Americanist tradition in analyzing the same markers as incorporated pronouns or ‘pronominal arguments’.

The contrast between agreement and incorporated pronouns is sometimes thought to have structural correlates. An incorporated pronoun (or ‘pronominal clitic’) in Romance, for example, is generally analyzed as an argument-like element adjoined to a head-level category and linked to an empty category in argument position. Agreement, however, has been analyzed as a functional category taking phrasal complements (Pollock 1989, Chomsky 1991). The contrast appears in (2):

(2) a. Incorporation/cliticization: b. Agreement:



In (2a), the clitic is associated with an empty category in subject position. In (2b), specific properties of Agr (such as the property of having ‘rich’ agreement) license an empty category (assumed to be *pro*) in the subject position.

The contrast between (2a) and (2b) leads us to reexamine the status of person markers in Choctaw. Note, for example, that the first singular (1s) marker *-li* is postverbal, while the other person markers are preverbal. If *-li* is an agreement marker, its postverbal position might follow from a general preference for uniformly head-final phrases in Choctaw. At the very least, the difference in

placement between 1s and non-1s markers in Choctaw leads us to consider whether the clitic/agreement distinction divides persons in the language.³

In fact, we will argue in 2 that the agentive 1s marker is agreement, and that the other person markers in (1) are incorporated pronouns.⁴ In 3 we examine a similar clitic/agreement split in the nonagentive person markers, suggesting the split is based on grammatical relations (subject vs. object) rather than on person. In 4 we examine the behavior of clitics and agreement with respect to a rule of restructuring. The results are compatible with the distinction shown in (2a-b), but they are also compatible with an approach that treats agreement as ‘inside’ of clitics, and thus as less accessible to syntactic operations.

2. AGENTIVE AGREEMENT VS. AGENTIVE CLITICS. In this section, we present three types of evidence pointing to an asymmetry between the postverbal 1s marker and the preverbal markers in the agentive series of person markers.

2.1 PHONOLOGICAL EVIDENCE. To our knowledge, the first suggestion that the 1s marker might differ structurally from the non-1s markers comes from Ulrich’s (1986) study of Choctaw lexical phonology. Nicklas (1974) and Munro and Ulrich (1984) had previously described a rule of rhythmic lengthening that can be stated informally as follows:

- (3) RHYTHMIC LENGTHENING: In a string of light syllables, non-final, even-numbered syllables are lengthened. (Ulrich 1986:54)

The effect of rhythmic lengthening can be seen in forms like the following:⁵

- (4) *Apila-tok.* → [api:la-tok] ‘He/she helped.’
help-PT

In (4), the second syllable is lengthened as a result of (3). Ulrich (1986) notes that the 1s marker *-li* is within the domain of rhythmic lengthening, which we take to be the phonological word:⁶

- (5) *Apila-li-tok.* → [api:la-li-tok] ‘I helped.’
help-1sI-PT

The lengthening of the 1s marker in (5) follows if *-li* is within the phonological word. Preverbal person markers, in contrast, are outside of the phonological word:

- (6) *Ish#apila-tok.* → [iʃ.a.pi:.la.tok] ‘You helped.’
* [i.ʃa:.pi.la:.tok]
- Hash#apila-tok.* → [haʃ.a.pi:.la.tok] ‘Y’all helped.’
* [ha.ʃa:.pi.la:.tok]
- Il#apila-tok.* → [il.a.pi:.la.tok] ‘We helped.’
* [i.la:.pi.la:.tok]

Note that the final consonants of clitics also fail to resyllabify with the following verb. This is a further diagnostic of the phonological word.

Evidence from rhythmic lengthening suggests the phonological structure of the verb complex in Choctaw is [non-1s [_{word} verb+1s]]. The preverbal/postverbal distinction in Choctaw person markers is thus tied to a structural distinction which we take to reflect a contrast between agreement and incorporated pronouns.

2.2 OMISSIBILITY. In 2.1, we examined evidence suggesting that the non-1s markers are outside of the phonological word, while the 1s marker is inside of the phonological word. While this type of evidence supports a distinction between word-internal and word-external markers, it does not establish the status of these markers with regard to the clitic/agreement distinction.⁷ In this section, we examine a syntactic asymmetry suggesting the 1s marker is agreement, and the non-1s markers are incorporated pronouns.

A 1s marker is required on the verb even when an independent pronoun is present:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (7) PERSON MARKER PRESENT: | PERSON MARKER OMITTED: |
| <i>An-akoosh habli-li-tok.</i> | * <i>An-akoosh habli-tok.</i> |
| I-EMPH:NOM kick-1sI-PT | I-EMPH:NOM kick-PT |
| ‘I kicked.’ | |

Non-1s markers differ in this respect. When an emphatic pronoun is present, it is acceptable to omit person marking on the verb:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (8) <i>Chishn-akoosh ish-habli-tok.</i> | <i>Chishn-akoosh habli-tok.</i> |
| you-EMPH:NOM 2sI-kick-PT | you-EMPH:NOM kick-PT |
| ‘You kicked.’ | |
| (9) <i>Pishn-akoosh ii-habli-tok.</i> | <i>Pishn-akoosh habli-tok.</i> |
| we-EMPH:NOM 1pI-kick-PT | we-EMPH:NOM kick-PT |
| ‘We kicked.’ | |

These data are analogous to facts in Spanish, where incorporated pronouns are optional in the presence of an independent pronoun:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| (10) <i>Lo veo a él.</i> ‘I see him/it.’ | <i>Veo a él.</i> ‘I see him/it.’ |
|--|----------------------------------|

Incorporated pronouns in Spanish thus differ from agreement, since agreement is not omissible in the presence of an emphatic pronoun.

We conclude from the similarity between Spanish and Choctaw that 1s *-li* is an agreement marker in Choctaw, while the non-1s markers are incorporated pronouns.

3. NONAGENTIVE AGREEMENT VS. NONAGENTIVE CLITICS. In 2, we argued that the agentive, postverbal 1s marker *-li* is an agreement marker, and that the agentive, preverbal non-1s markers are pronominal clitics. In addition to the agentive series of person markers, Choctaw has a second series of person markers

used for the subjects of many nonagentive verbs (11) and for the objects of most transitive verbs (12):

(11) *Choctaw nonagentive ('series II') person markers: For subject:*

	<i>Niya</i>	<i>-h.</i>	'He/she/it is fat./They are fat.'
<u><i>Sa-</i></u>	<i>niya</i>	<i>-h.</i>	'I am fat.'
<u><i>Pi-</i></u>	<i>niya</i>	<i>-h.</i>	'We are fat.'
<u><i>Chi-</i></u>	<i>niya</i>	<i>-h.</i>	'You are fat.'
<u><i>Hachi-</i></u>	<i>niya</i>	<i>-h.</i>	'Y'all are fat.'

(12) *Choctaw nonagentive ('series II') person markers: For object:*

	<i>Tokli</i>	<i>-tok.</i>	'He/she/they pushed him/her/it/them.'
<u><i>Sa-</i></u>	<i>tokli</i>	<i>-tok.</i>	'He/she/they pushed me.'
<u><i>Pi-</i></u>	<i>tokli</i>	<i>-tok.</i>	'He/she/they pushed me.'
<u><i>Chi-</i></u>	<i>tokli</i>	<i>-tok.</i>	'He/she/they pushed you.'
<u><i>Hachi-</i></u>	<i>tokli</i>	<i>-tok.</i>	'He/she/they pushed y'all.'

Previous accounts of Choctaw have grouped the nonagentive person markers in (11) with those in (12), either analyzing them all as agreement (Munro and Gordon 1982, Payne 1982, Davies 1986, Ulrich 1986, Broadwell 1988) or as pronominal arguments (Jelinek 1989). Since the person markers in (11-12) are all preverbal, we might expect they would all be clitics. Surprisingly, the diagnostics we have developed so far suggest the subject markers in (11) are agreement markers, and those in (12) are clitics. Arguments are presented 3.1-2.

3.1 OMISSIBILITY. In 2.2, we noted that the 1s agreement marker *-li* is not omissible in the presence of an emphatic, independent pronoun, while the non-1s clitics are omissible. Nonagentive person markers associated with subjects are not omissible:

(13) PERSON MARKER PRESENT:	PERSON MARKER OMITTED:
<i>An-akoosh sa-niya-h.</i>	* <i>An-akoosh niya-h.</i>
I-EMPH:NOM 1sII-fat-TNS	I-EMPH:NOM fat-TNS
'I am fat.'	

Nonagentive person markers associated with objects are omissible, however:

(14) <i>An-akQ sa-tokli-tok.</i>	<i>An-akQ tokli-tok.</i>
I-EMPH:ACC 1sII-push-PT	I-EMPH:ACC push-PT
'He/she/they pushed me.'	

In this respect, the person markers for nonagentive subject markers pattern with the agreement marker *-li*, while nonagentive object markers pattern with clitics.

3.2 VP-INTERNAL VS. VP-EXTERNAL PERSON MARKERS. Choctaw has a VP anaphor *yohmi* 'do so' that refers to a verb phrase in the preceding discourse:

- (15) *John-at takkon apa-kmq; Bill-akkia yohmi-h.*
 John-NOM apple eat-IRR Bill-too do:so-TNS
 'John ate apples and Bill did, too.'

Yohmi replaces the entire preceding verb phrase. An object cannot appear in the *yohmi* clause:

- (16) *John-at takkon apa-kmq; Bill-akkia (*takkon/ahi) yohmi-h.*
 John-NOM apple eat-IRR Bill-too (*apple/potato) do:so-TNS
 'John ate apples and Bill did (*apples/potatoes), too.'

Nonagentive person markers can be divided into two groups according to whether they may occur in the *yohmi* clause. When they are associated with subjects, the person markers may appear on *yohmi*:

- (17) *John-at niya-kmq; an-akkia sa-yohmi-h.*
 John-NOM fat-IRR I-too 1sII-do:so-TNS
 'John is fat and I am, too.'

In this respect, subject markers pattern alike regardless of series:

- (18) *John-at chi-pisa-kmq; an-akkia yohmi-li-h.*
 John-NOM 2sII-see-IRR I-too do:so-1sI-TNS
 'John saw you and I did, too.'

When the nonagentive person marker is associated with an object, however, it may not be repeated in the *yohmi* clause:

- (19) **John-at sa-pisa-kmq; Bill-akkia sa-yohmi-h.*
 John-NOM 1sII-see-IRR Bill-too 1sII-do:so-TNS
 'John saw me and Bill did, too.'

These facts can be described if we assume the following: a) subject markers (including both agentive and nonagentive subjects) are external to the verb phrase; b) object markers are part of the verb phrase; c) *yohmi* replaces or stands for the entire antecedent verb phrase. As a result, nonagentive person markers fall into two groups (which we have labelled 'agreement' and 'clitics') according to whether they (or their referents) are VP-internal or VP-external.⁸

4. RESTRUCTURING AND THE CLITIC/AGREEMENT SPLIT. Rizzi (1978) notes that with certain modal, aspectual, and motion verbs in Italian, a pronominal clitic originating in an embedded infinitival clause may appear either on the infinitive or on the higher verb:

- (20) *Mario finisce di batter la a macchina domani (la tesi).*
Mario la finisce di battere a macchina domani.
 'Mario will finish typing it tomorrow (his thesis).'

In accounting for these data, Rizzi (1978) motivates a rule of restructuring that optionally transforms an underlying biclausal structure into a simple sentence (see also Burzio 1986, ch. 5, among others). Following Burzio's (1986:324ff) account in all essential details, we assume that restructuring optionally applies in Italian to convert (21a) into (21b):

- (21) a. *Mario finisce* [_S PRO [_{VP} *di battere* [_i *e_i*] *a macchina*]]
 b. *Mario* [_i *finisce* [_{VP} *di battere* [_i *e_i*] *a macchina*] [_S PRO —]]

That is, restructuring allows the embedded verb phrase to become part of the matrix sentence. Pronominal clitics appear on the highest verb in the clause in each case.

Choctaw has something like restructuring. In Choctaw, two auxiliaries *tahli* and *taha* are generally used to indicate that an event is completed or that an argument of the verb is completely affected. A preliminary characterization of the distinction between them is that *tahli* is used for agentive predicates and *taha* for nonagentive predicates and verbs of motion. What we have called clitics generally appear on either the auxiliary or on the main verb:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (22) ON AUXILIARY: | ON EMBEDDED VERB: |
| <i>Bashli-t ish-tahli-tok.</i> | <i>Ish-bashli-t tahli-tok.</i> |
| cut-PRT 2sI-complete-PT | 2sI-cut-PRT complete-PT |

'You finished cutting it.'

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Iya-t ii-taha-h.</i> | <i>Il-iya-t taha-h.</i> |
| go-PRT 1pI-complete-TNS | 1pI-go-PRT complete-TNS |

'We all went.'

As the data in (22) show, the agentive clitics may appear on the auxiliaries *taha* and *tahli* or on the embedded verb. Nonagentive clitics (the nonagentive person markers associated with syntactic objects) have a similar distribution:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (23) <i>Fammi-t sa-tahli-tok.</i> | <i>Sa-fammi-t tahli-tok.</i> |
| whip-PRT 1sII-complete-PT | 1sII-whip-PRT complete-PT |

'He/she finished whipping me.'

What we have called agreement, however, is more constrained. The agentive agreement marker (1s -*li*) cannot appear on the embedded verb:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (24) <i>Bashli-t tahli-li-tok.</i> | * <i>Bashli-li-t tahli-tok.</i> |
| cut-PRT complete-1sI-PT | cut-1sI-PRT complete-PT |

'I finished cutting it.'

The nonagentive agreement markers (those associated with syntactic subjects) are acceptable on the embedded verb, but not all speakers permit the nonagentive agreement markers on the auxiliary:

- (25) %*Niya-t* *sa-taha-h.* *Sa-niya-t* *taha-h.*
 fat-PRT 1sII-complete-TNS 1sII-fat-PRT complete-TNS

'I'm completely fat.'/'I've gotten really fat.'

The data can thus be summarized as follows: clitics may appear on the auxiliary or on the embedded verb; agreement appears to split, with the agentive agreement marker favoring the auxiliary, and the nonagentive agreement marker favoring the embedded verb. These data generally support the distinction we have made between clitics and agreement, but the details of the analysis need to be refined.

We will make two assumptions in accounting for these data: a) whether clitics appear on the embedded verb or on the auxiliary will depend on restructuring (as in Italian); b) the contrast between the agentive and nonagentive agreement markers in (24-25) is due to differences in the auxiliaries (*tahli* and *taha*, respectively) rather than to differences in the agreement markers. Specifically, we propose that *tahli* takes a VP complement and that *taha* takes a clausal complement (here, AgrP).

- (26) a. [AgrP NP [VP [v VERB]] [v *tahli*] Agr -tok]
 b. [AgrP NP [AgrP NP [VP [v VERB]] Agr] [v *taha*] Agr -h]

The contrast between (24) and (25) now follows in part from these structures: if *tahli* takes a VP complement, an agreement marker will be impossible on its complement (as in (24)); if *taha* takes AgrP as its complement, however, agreement markers will be possible on the embedded verb (as in (25)).

The suggested contrast between *tahli* and *taha* in (26a-b) allows us to capture an additional fact: negation is not allowed on the complement of *tahli*, but it is allowed on the complement of *taha*. In Choctaw, negatives are formed by: a) suffixing *-o* to the verb (similar to French *pas*); b) putting the verb in the lengthened grade; and, c) attaching a clitic *ik-* to the verb. The auxiliaries *tahli* and *taha* are negated differently:

- (27) ON AUXILIARY: ON EMBEDDED VERB:
 Taloowa-t ik-tahl-o-h. **Ik-taloow-o-t tahli-h.*
 sing-PRT N-complete:L-NEG-TNS N-sing:L-NEG-PRT complete-TNS

'He/she/they didn't finish singing.'

- (28) *Niya-t ik-taah-o-h.* *Ik-niyy-o-t taha-h.*
 fat-PRT N-complete:L-NEG-TNS N-fat:L-NEG-PRT complete-TNS

'He/she/they aren't completely fat.'

Note that in sentences with *taha*, negative morphology may appear on the auxiliary or on the embedded verb. In sentences with *tahli*, negative morphology cannot

NONAGENTIVE SERIES:

<i>Agreement:</i>	markers used for subjects
<i>Pronominal clitics:</i>	markers used for objects

A further result of the proposed distinction between agreement and clitics is that it helps account for the placement of person markers within the verb complex. As noted in 2.1, agentive clitics are outside of agentive agreement for the rule of rhythmic lengthening:

(32) [agentive clitics # [[VERB] agentive agreement]]

Among the preverbal person markers, the following order holds:

(33) [agentive clitics # [nonagentive clitics [nonagentive agreement [VERB]]]]

The best generalization appears to be the following: Within each series of person markers, what we have called 'agreement' is inside of 'clitics'. It is perhaps this layering that is responsible for the grammatical differences we have discovered, rather than the labels 'agreement' and 'clitic'.

A final result is that we have motivated a rule of restructuring in Choctaw (analyzed here as verb incorporation), and have briefly explored the interaction of this rule with agreement and clitics.

Throughout the paper we have ignored the status of independent pronouns and noun phrases. We hope that future work will establish whether these are uniformly arguments, uniformly adjuncts, or split in some way.

NOTES

¹Special thanks to Gus Comby, Henry Willis, and the late Josephine Wade for providing the Choctaw examples in this paper. All mistakes are ours.

²Choctaw is written here in a practical orthography in which *lh*=[ɬ], *sh*=[ʃ], *ch*=[ç], doubled vowels are long, and underlined vowels are nasal. The extant Western Muskogean languages include Choctaw and Chickasaw.

³As in Romance, we tend to use 'clitic' rather than incorporated pronoun: in Choctaw (as in Romance), the 'clitics' include nonpronominal elements as well as pronouns. The terms 'agentive' and 'nonagentive' are used here as convenient labels for the series I and II markers.

⁴The proposal that the 1s marker was an agreement marker and the non-1s markers were clitics in Muskogean was defended in Martin (1992). The Choctaw diagnostics used in this paper were discussed in Broadwell (1992).

⁵Abbreviations used in glosses: ACC=accusative; EMPH=emphatic; IRR=irrealis; N=negative/hypothetical clitic; NEG=negative suffix; NOM=nominative; PRT=particle; PT=past/perfect; TNS=tense. L is an aspectual grade appearing in negatives. Person markers are glossed 1s (first person singular), 2p (second person plural), etc., followed by the series (which, following Munro and Gordon 1982 we label I (agentive) and II (nonagentive)).

⁶The data cited here are from Mississippi Choctaw. For many speakers of Oklahoma Choctaw, the tense marker *-tok* is outside of the phonological word when the prohibition on final long vowels is enforced. For these speakers, the form in (5) surfaces as [api:la-li-tok].

⁷The agreement/incorporated pronoun contrast is logically distinct from the clitic/affix contrast. Thus, Ulrich (1986) analyzes the 1s and non-1s markers as "agreement" markers, yet argues that the non-1s markers are phonologically clitics.

⁸The acceptability of (17) also shows that *yohmi*, unlike English 'do so', is not tied to agency. The VP-internal vs. VP-external contrast must be kept distinct from the agent/nonagent contrast.

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