Towards the typology of PCC: Hittite argument clitics call for two licensing conditions[1]

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Annotation. In this talk, we analyse the configurations of Person Case Constraint (PCC) in Hittite, which include both bitransitive and passive/unaccusative construals (Lyutikova and Sideltsev 2020). We show that Hittite is unique among languages exhibiting PCC with subject weak elements (e.g. Basque, Chinook, Icelandic — see Rezac 2010; Sigurðsson and Holmberg 2008) in that it involves two loci of licensing clitic pronouns. First, since clitics are only licit as internal arguments in Hittite, clitic licensing characterized with the PCC effects should take place at the vP level. Secondly, since subject clitics are case-dependent on the finite T, they should be case-licensed at the TP level, after their vP-level clitic-licensing. In this way, Hittite introduces a new cell in the typology of PCC languages and demonstrates that PCC may result from agreement processes distinct from case assignment.

Background. ϕ-agreement has been claimed to be a licensing condition for at least two linguistic phenomena. First, at least since Chomsky 2000, ϕ-agreement is considered as a precondition for valuation of the structural case feature on DP. This hypothesis assumes that any DP that is not lexically governed needs to agree with a functional head. Secondly, numerous cross-linguistic studies of agreement phenomena in the last decades (see Anagnostopoulou 2017 for a recent review) revealed specific restrictions on the distribution of weak pronominal elements that can be subsumed under a uniform requirement that marked values of the interpretable person feature have to enter agree relation with a functional head (e.g. Person Licensing Condition axiom of Béjar and Rezac 2003). Crucially, PCC and related phenomena affect only a subpart of nominals, including clitics and weak pronouns.

It is often assumed (Anagnostopoulou 2003; Rezac 2007, 2011, a.m.o.) that the failure of the structural case assignment is a driving force of PCC: in the situation where a single functional head agrees with two goals, the lower goal cannot have its case feature valued — either because the probe is not ϕ-complete or because the indirect object intervenes. In this way, the Person Licensing Condition axiom derives from a single case-licensing condition on DPs.

Problem. The approach reducing agreement-based licensing conditions to a single case-licensing, although highly appealing, encounters several problems. One issue, often neglected in these studies, is the exact mechanism ensuring that only phonologically weak elements show restrictions like PCC, and at the same time, case be universally assigned to all (full-fledged) DPs. The other concern is that for some languages, structural case assignment can be shown to depend on a higher functional head that has not yet entered the derivation at the moment when PCC-inducing agreement takes place. In this paper we present the data of Hittite, a dead Indo-European language (Anatolian group), and show that the distribution of Hittite argument clitics calls for positing two distinct licensing processes in the clausal functional domain.

Data. Hittite argument clitics exhibit the following properties.
(a) Hittite argument clitics form part of the Wackernagel enclitic chain.
(b) Hittite argument clitics distinguish 3 case forms: nominative (subject), accusative (DO), dative (IO); subject clitics are only licit as internal arguments (the subject of unaccusatives and passives).
(c) The constraint of the distribution of Hittite argument clitics is traditionally described as a ban on doubly filled slots; in Authors (submitted) it is reinterpreted as PCC. PCC in Hittite affects both the combination of accusative and dative clitics (1) as well as the combination of nominative and dative clitics (2):

(1)   =dative 2nd person plural=accusative 3rd person plural:
     nu=šmaš=at   *lē*   *āra*   *iyenzi*
     CONN=**you.DAT.PL=them.ACC.PL**   PROHIB   right do.3PL.PRS
     'They will not make **them** right for **you**.' (KBo 5.3+ obv. ii 8).

(2)   =nominative 3rd person singular=dative 1st person singular:
     n=aš=mu   *ariyašešna-za* GIM–*an*   SI×S[Á-*at*]
     CONN=**it.NOM.SG.C=me.ACC**   inquiry-ABL   as   determine-3SG.PST.MED
     'And just as **she** has been ascertained **for me** through the inquiry.' (KUB 50.87 rev.$^{?}$ 7).

(d) Predicate agreement targets the subject irrespective of whether it is instantiated by a clitic (3) or by another nominal (4):

(3)   *n=aš*   *āppa*   *QATAMMA*   *kiš-**aru***
     CONN=**he.NOM.SG.C** back   likewise   become-**3SG.IMP.MED**
     'May he become likewise.' (KUB 33.66+ obv. ii 21').

(4)   *k[u]itman=wa=za*   **weš**   *INA* ^{URU}*Ḫattuš-i*   *eš-**wen***
     while=QUOT=REFL   **we.NOM.PL**   in   Hattusa-DAT.SG   be-**1PL.PST**
     'While we were in Hattusa...' (HKM 17 obv. 5-6).

(e) Non-clitic noun phrases (stressed pronouns, DPs) are licit in those structural positions where clitics are attested. They get (structural) case and bring about predicate agreement, but do not cause PCC. Thus, in (5), the accusative 2nd person clitic is licit in the presence of the dative DP.

(5)   **DINGIR–*LIM*–*n*-*i*=wa=*tta***   *ammuk*   *tarna-ḫḫi*
     CONN=**deity-DAT.SG=QUOT=you.ACC.SG**   I.NOM.SG   lead-1SG.PRS
     'To the deity of the process I will lead **you**!' (KUB 1.1+ obv. i 37-8)

To sum up, argument clitics in Hittite are like other nominals with respect to case issues but are special in that they show PCC and are only licensed *v*P-internally.

Proposal. We claim that in Hittite, two distinct licensing processes based on ϕ-agreement are at work: marked interpretable person licensing and case licensing. They differ in (a) suitable goals (clitic pronouns *vs*. all nominals), (b) probes (clitic-licensing head H *vs*. traditional structural case assigners v_{TR} and T), and (c) MS-exponence on the goal and on the probe (licensing + movement *vs*. structural case + predicate agreement).

As clitics are only licensed as internal arguments, the person licensing functional head can only be lower than *v*P; at the same time, case-assigning heads can clearly be higher than *v*P (e.g. T for subject clitics). Thus, a configuration with the two kinds of ϕ-probes obtains: the lower ϕ-probe undergoes (split/multiple) Agree with clitic goals exclusively; the higher ϕ-probe(s) enters the Agree relation with any nominal goal (6).

(6)   [$_{TP}$ T+ϕ-Probe [$_{vP}$ (EA) v(+ϕ-Probe) [$_{HP}$ H+ϕ-Probe [$_{ApplP}$ IO Appl [$_{VP}$ DO/SU V …]]]]]

In order to ensure the visibility of clitic arguments for the person-licensing probe and the invisibility of non-clitic arguments for it, we propose that in Hittite, clitic pronouns and stressed pronouns represent two different classes of Pro-forms in the typology of Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002: stressed pronouns are Pro-DPs, whereas clitic pronouns are Pro-ϕPs. ϕP possesses the full set of ϕ-features in their interpretable variant, whereas DP aquires ϕ-features' values via agreement of D with its complement ϕP.

This assumption allows us to effectively resolve the two problems posed by non-clitic pronouns: their invisibility to person-licensing ϕ-probes and their ability to license marked person features on their own. We suppose that the person-licensing head H is only looking for *interpretable* ϕ-features, whereas case-licensing functional heads v_{TR} and T probe for *any* variant of ϕ-features. Then clitic arguments will be visible for both person-licensing and case-licensing probes, and non-clitic arguments will be exempt from person-licensing (and PCC) but still visible for case-licensing. Moreover, the interpretable marked person features of ϕPs

embedded under D (= stressed pronouns) can be licensed exactly in the way the PLC axiom states — by entering into an Agree relation with a functional category, in this case — the functional head D.

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