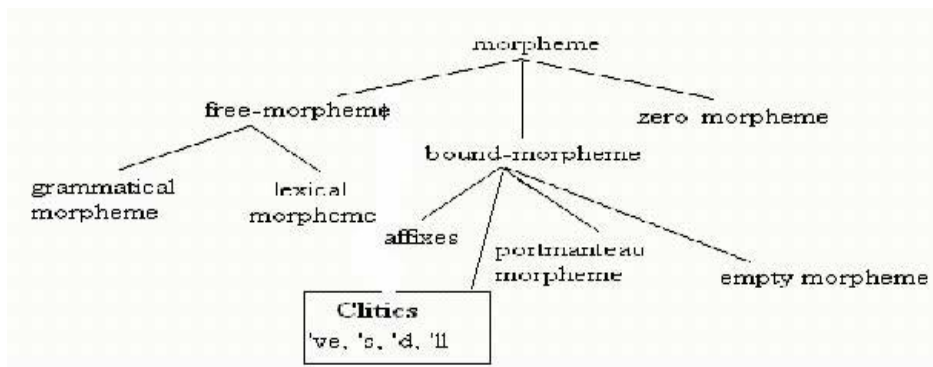


Clitic: an introduction

A clitic is a type of obligatory bound morph which is generally distinguished from affixes in the literature. The clitic is called a bound morph and it seems to occupy an intermediate position between an affix and a word. In its clearest case, a Clitic is a reduced form of a word with an existence of a full form elsewhere in the language. The forms [- 's, - 'd, - 've and - 'll as the reduced form of ' has, had, have and will'] are respectively the instances of Clitics in English. We can plot the Clitic in the tree-diagram of 'morpheme' like this:



Typology of Clitic:

There are differences in the positions in which the clitic can occur in different languages. The occurrences of the clitic in different languages can be captured under the following headings:

1. The issue of ‘freedom of movement’ Vs ‘no freedom of movement’
2. Second-position clitic

Languages show great variation with regard to the ‘freedom of movement’ of clitic. In some languages, clitic seems to have ‘full freedom of movement’ but in other, there is no such flexibility for the clitic to move to any other place except from its real host. For example, in Polish, there is a third person object pronoun ‘jegɔ’, ‘him’, of which there exists a clitic form ‘gɔ’. This cliticized form of the object pronoun can occur at different positions of the sentence. For instance:

a.	tak	bardzo=gɔ	chcia-tby-m	spotkac	w	p ^h olend	
	so	much	him	want-Hyp-1Sg	meet	in	Poland

- b. tak bardzo chcia-tby-m=**g** spotkac w p^holend
 so much want-Hyp-1Sg him meet in Poland
- c. tak bardzo chcia-tby-m spotkac=**g** w p^holend
 so much want-Hyp-1Sg meet him in Poland
 'I would so much like to meet him in Poland'.

[Haspelmath, M. 2002, Pp 152 (with some changes in the glosses)]

As has been mentioned by Haspelmath, this freedom of movement of clitic is possible in languages that allow freedom of movement of the full form of the element of which the clitic is formed. Thus, in English the clitics forms ‘ - 've, - 'll, - 's etc’ can not move out of their hosts because the corresponding full form of these clitics do not have any freedom of movement in the language, e.g.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| a. √They've done it. | } | BECAUSE: a.√ They have done it. |
| b. * They done've it. | | b. * They done have it |

Another variation amongst the languages with regard to the occurrence of the clitic is known as ‘second-position clitic’. In such group of languages, there is no freedom of the clitic to move to any position. However, there is a lesser degree of freedom for the clitic in some languages such that the clitic should be attached to the first element of the sentence, i.e. the clitic will always occur at the second-position in the sentence. For instance, the Serbian/Croatian, the auxiliary verb *je* is such a clitic. The occurrence of this clitic is such that it has to occur always at the SECOND position in the sentence and what occurs at the first position is not relevant to the occurrence of this clitic in this language. For example:

- a. čovek -je voleo karina. But * čovek voleo -je karina.
 humanhas loved animal -----do-----
- b. voleo -je čovek karina But * voleo čovek karina-je
 loved- has human animal -----do-----
- c. karina -je čovek voleo
 aminal-has human loved
 'The human has animal'.

[Haspelmath, M. 2002, Pp 152 (with some changes in the glossing)]

Differences between Clitics and Affixes:

There seems to be a problem for Morphologists in distinguishing Clitics from affixes, since both are instances of bound morphemes (except the cases where the clitic is a free but grammatical morpheme). There are number of ways to differentiate between the two but the fundamental distinction is that a Clitic is more of a syntactic phenomenon than the affixes are. The other distinctions are as follows:

A). Affixes are attached to lexical categories such as Noun, Adjective and Verb. For example, an affix ‘-ed’ is attached to the most of verbs in English to mark the pastness of the action.

Clitics in contrast are attached to the phrasal categories, although they will always be phonologically attached to a single word in that phrase. For example,

Affixes:

I have work-**ed** hard for this.

I walk-**ed** home last night.

Clitics:

He is leading **a dog’s** life.

The **king of Spain’s** daughter is in India.

B). Affixes can show a high degree of selection with respect to their hosts while Clitics show a low degree of selection with respect to their hosts. This means that the affixes obey a restriction in the selection of the word-class they get attached to while this restriction is relatively less discriminating in case of Clitics.

For example, in English ‘-est’ attaches to adjectives, ‘-ing’ attaches to verbs, plural marker ‘-s’ attaches to nouns, and so on. In case of a homophonous Clitic ‘-’s’, it appears that there is no such boundary of restrictions.

For example:

Affixes:

He is the smart-**est** in the class.

He is work-**ing** hard for his exam.

There are many smart boy-**s** in the class.

Clitics:

The house I was born **in’s** (in is) been sold.

Any minister who is **corrupt’s** (corrupt is)

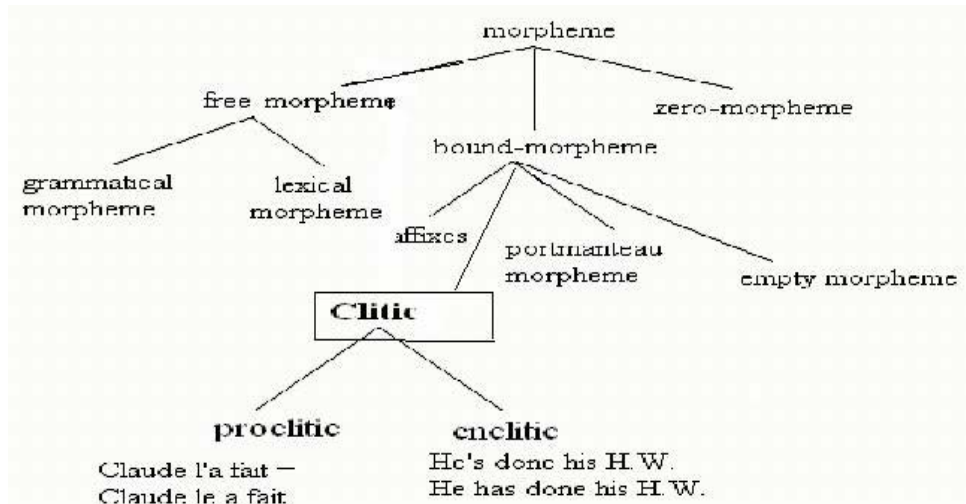
The gift she **sent’s** (sent is) lovely.

C). Semantics of Clitics and Affixes also help in distinguishing the two from each other. Semantically all contracted form of Clitics can always be equated with their full form in the language. For example, ‘*He’ll come tomorrow*’ is equal to ‘*He will come tomorrow*’ or ‘*I’ve done the H.W.*’, is equal to ‘*I have done the H.W.*’.

This is not true with regard to the affixes in many cases. For example, the degree marker ‘-est’ being attached to an adjective gives us a paradigm like, ‘smart-smarter-smartest’, or ‘good-better-best’ etc. ‘He is the *best* student in my class’, here ‘*best*’ has a meaning ‘...surpassing all other students in the qualities of studies’. However, in an example like, ‘John was the *best* man at their wedding’ the word ‘*best*’ does not mean the same thing as being described above.

Types of Clitic:

The Clitic is divided into two groups, Proclitic and Enclitic. The diagram given below shows the place of ‘Clitic and its subtypes’:



A). **Proclitic:** A subgroup of clitic which is attached at the beginning of a stem is called a proclitic. For example,

1) Je	vois	Claudia.	1a) Je	la	vois.
I-1MS-Nom	see-pres	Claudia	I-1MS-Nom	clitics(she)	see
'I see Claudia'.			'I see her = Claudia'.		

* Je la vois Claudia.

Another instance of proclitic is the contracted-form of articles in French. The articles in French, ‘le (masculine indefinite)’, la (feminine indefinite) and ‘des (m/f definite)’ occur in their full form when they precede nouns and if these nouns begin in a consonant sound. They, however, go into their clitic-form if the nouns begin in a vowel sound. For example,

La fille. (A girl). But l'idée. (an idea).

Le chien (A dog). But l'ami (a friend).

B) Enclitic: Another group of clitic which is attached at the end of a stem is called an enclitic. For example,

I've been to that house.= 'I have been to that house'.

I'll come to the party. = 'I will come to the party'.

It's hard to believe. = 'It is hard to believe'.

John's brother is here. = ' Brother of John is here'.

NOTE: A clitic is classified as a bound morpheme only when it is used as a clitic, it, however, in its free form must be interpreted as a FREE MORPHEME but of course grammatical morpheme.