

Reference and polarity markers as clitics: contrasting demands on form
Dieter Wanner

The Ohio State University

Establishing personal and space orientation is essential for the functionality of discourse. Using clitic elements for these functions may not seem the best solution in view of the clitics' essence as reduced, unobtrusive elements. This dichotomous view can be challenged with a deeper, more historical understanding of the trajectory, rather than the nature of clitic elements. While clitics tend to be reduced as a kind of background, they regularly derive from stronger forms and may eventually disappear, i.e., they are transitory manifestations always adapted for the specific purpose. At the same time, the special properties of clitics in (morpho)syntax and (morpho)phonology provide these elements with highlighting power (position, shape, expected limited functions) beyond their formal appearance.

The paper will explore these dimensions in broad brushstrokes through the diachronic examples of the negation cycle (French, Raetoromance) and the trajectory of Portuguese and again Raetoromance referential expression. A non-categorical clitic notion based on dynamic configurations will permit a resolution of the tension between shape and function.