

Clitic-second in European Portuguese¹

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Abstract

The conditions which determine the alternation between proclisis and enclisis in European Portuguese appear at first sight to be entirely different from those found in other Romance languages such as Spanish and Italian. In this paper I argue that these differences can be explained by assuming that clitic movement in European Portuguese targets a higher functional head, namely the C-node. Building on Kayne (1991), I propose a theory of clitic placement which derives enclisis from movement of the clitic into an empty C (assumed to be a non-operator position), followed by left-adjunction of the verbal complex to the clitic. Proclisis, on the other hand, is assumed to result from left-adjunction of the clitic to the functional head to which the verbal complex has raised. Proclisis is hence taken to have last-resort status, as it is only found in clauses where no empty functional head is available for clitic movement, or where such a movement is blocked. The paper concludes by showing how this analysis derives the whole range of clitic-second effects found in European Portuguese.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to consider the facts of pronominal clitic placement in European Portuguese and show how an analysis along the lines of Kayne

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