

JUNK IN A CHAIN SHIFT: NOMINATIVE CLITICS IN THE ROMANCE LANGUAGES

This is a prosodico-morphological analysis of how pronominal paradigms with nominative clitics were created in some Romance varieties like French and Northern Italian dialects, combining Lass’ (1990) evolutionary views with the dynamics of Martinet’s (1955) and Labov’s (1994) chain shift studies, see (1) below. The result is a law that predicts the morphological source and the directionality of the syncretism in the tonic sub-paradigm of French and North Italian pronouns, see (2) below.

Most interestingly, junk recycling is needed to make sense of the evolution of the Romance pronoun systems, a clear challenge for the neogrammarians at least since D’Ovidio (1885), as morphological connections between correspondents are not linear and the changes are mostly spontaneous or involve substantial restructuring (Wanner 1987, Sornicola 2013).

If seen large scale from Lass’ (1990) perspective, many pronominal changes are clear examples of *exaptions*. In a nutshell, the Latin type has morphological case and lacks true clitics. In reverse, the Romance type massively neutralizes morphological case contrasts in the tonic sub-paradigm and creates a new sub-paradigm of clitics. The highly unfaithful relation between tonics and clitics results from massive suppletion taking place mostly by recycling morphological junk coming from the old declensions once this junk, abundantly produced by the old system, had become functionally redundant, see (3) below.

OT provides all that is needed, if only inputs have not a flat but a three-layered stringent base. The three layers contain, first, the strict morphological counterpart, ONE SOURCE; second, related morphs of the same lexeme, or JUNK; and, finally, any conceivable structure, RoB, for Richness of the Base (Smolensky 1995). Regular change results when the ONE SOURCE element is privileged. Otherwise, all morphs of the same lexeme are freely eligible as input, whenever Faithfulness includes JUNK, see (4) below.

(1) The chain shift in French and North Italian.

a. French		b. chain shift		c. Donceto, Piacenza (N. Italy)	
<i>(tu)</i> ↓	← <i>toi</i>	Tonic (NOM) ↓	Tonic (OBL)	<i>(tu)</i> ↓	<i>ti</i>
<i>tu</i> ↓	<i>te</i>	New Clitic (NOM)	Clitic (OBL)	proclitic (ət)	enclitic (ət)
					<i>te</i>

(2) A law on the directionality of syncretism in the Romance Languages (tonic subsystem)

- a. In general, syncretism goes in both directions, i.e. Catalan *tu, a tu*; but Salentino *tia, a ttia*.
- b. If there are nominative clitics, the oblique becomes the only tonic pronoun (and the old nominative tonic becomes the new nominative clitic in a chain-like fashion), see (1).

(3) Recycling morphological junk in Romance, a few examples.

- a) Nominative *tu* -> Oblique *tu* (Catalan); b) Dative *mihi* -> Oblique *mi* (Spanish); c) Genitive *illorum* -> Nominative *loro* (Italian); d) Augmented *te+ne* -> Accusative *tene* (Old Tuscan)...

(4) Schematic OT with layered clouds in the input can distinguish between regular pronoun weakening in Vulgar Latin and suppletive clitic creation in Romance.

NOTE: Faith_α is faithfulness to the only privileged morphological input, while Faith_β is faithfulness to any form of the same paradigm.

- A. **Vulgar Latin:** Faith_{α/ONE} >> PROSODIC SHAPE >> Faith_{anything}
(Result: strong and weak pronouns)
- B. **Romance:** Faith_{β/JUNK} >> PROSODIC SHAPE >> Faith_{anything}
(Result: tonic and clitic suppletion)