CLITIC VERSUS AFFIX: MAITHILI E AND O

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Introduction

Certain bound morphemes (e.g., clitics and inflectional affixes) in Maithili present analytic difficulties because they are neither clearly independent words nor clearly inflectional affixes. This phenomenon is not unique to Maithili; similarly problematic forms exist in many languages of the world, including English. In traditional descriptions, these forms have been treated as being a 'parts of speech'.

This article investigates the process of cliticization in Maithili, specifically, the question of clitic vs. affix.

The *dramatis personae* for the present presentation are: *e o; hi hu he ho*. Of these, *e* and *o* are the two most common markers of emphasis or focus in Maithili.

The emphatic markers can be either inclusive or exclusive. The exclusive emphatic *e* translates into English as 'only', 'alone', while the inclusive emphatic *o* translates as 'even', 'also', 'too'. These markers attach to the end of a host word and are clearly enclitic, e.g.:

```
ram - e     ram - o
'only Ram'  'even Ram'
```

*e* and *o* are not the only markers of emphasis in Maithili. *hi, hu*, and *he, ho* also attach as emphatic markers, e.g.:

```
ham - hi     ham - hu
'only I'     'even I'
o - he       o - ho
'only be (NH)' 'even he (NH)'
```
This paper, taking cue from Zwicky and Pullum (1983), demonstrates that e and o alone should be described as clitics, and that he, ho and hi, hu should be treated as inflectional affixes.

Clitic vs. Affix

Zwicky and Pullum (1983) list a set of criteria for distinguishing clitics from inflectional affixes and arrive at an unconventional conclusion that the English contracted negator n't behaves like an inflectional affix rather than a clitic. Zwicky and Pullum’s prominent criteria are:

(A) degree of selection
(B) arbitrary gaps in the set of combinations
(C) morphophonological idiosyncrasies

Zwicky and Pullum’s findings are briefly summarized below:

A. The degree of selection between the clitics and the words preceding them is low; in other words, clitics can attach to words of virtually any category, e.g.:

1. Any answer not entirely right’s going to be marked as an error. Adjective
2. The drive home tonight’s been really easy. Adverb
3. The person I was talking to’s going to be angry with me. Preposition
4. They’ve all seen this movie before. Pronoun

The inflectional affixes, by contrast, are quite particular in their selection of stems. For instance, the past attaches only to verb stems; the superlative attaches only to adjective and adverb stems.

The contracted negator n’t is highly selective, attaching only to auxiliary verbs, indeed only to the finite form of these verbs, e.g.:

5. I don’t try not to pay attention; I just can’t help it.
   * tryn’t
6. Well, for her not to understand is the last straw.
   * hern’t
7. * Would the police haven’t been informed?
8. It would be a shame to have not EVER had a chance to see it.
   * haven’t

B. Arbitrary gaps within a single category exist with regard to n’t e.g.:

   * mayn’t
   * amn’t
No positive counterpart is available for * ain't. In addition, ain't also serves as the negative form of have, has, sin, and are, and is on an optional basis in varying dialects and styles.

C. * n't also displays a number of morphophonological idiosyncrasies, e.g.:

- do don't u → o (vowel change)
- will won’t l → Ø (deletion and vowel change)
- shall shan’t l → Ø (deletion, but no vowel change)
- must musn’t t → Ø (deletion accompanied by syllability)

The Maithili Data

Looking at the Maithili data (Table 1), it is immediately evident that the emphatic markers e and o can attach with virtually any category, i.e., they can attach with pronouns, nouns, adjectives, numerals, verbs, adverbs, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>1 person ‘I’</th>
<th>2 person (MH/NH) ‘You’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ham</td>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>tō</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamra</td>
<td>Acc/Dat.</td>
<td>torā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamr-e</td>
<td></td>
<td>tor-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamr-o</td>
<td></td>
<td>tor-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*hamrā-e</td>
<td></td>
<td>*torā-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*hamrā-o</td>
<td></td>
<td>*torā-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamar</td>
<td>Poss.</td>
<td>tohar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamr-e</td>
<td></td>
<td>to(h)r-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamr-o</td>
<td></td>
<td>to(h)r-o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 person (N) human ‘He/She’</th>
<th>Proximate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Nom.</td>
<td>i Nom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunkā Acc/Dat.</td>
<td>hinkā Acc/Dat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunk-e</td>
<td>hink-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunk-o</td>
<td>hink-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*hunkā-e</td>
<td>*hinkā-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*hunkā-o</td>
<td>*hinkā-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunkar poss.</td>
<td>hinkar Poss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunkar-e</td>
<td>hinkar-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunkar-o</td>
<td>hinkar-o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 person (H) 'He/She'

Remote                                Proximate
o                                      i
okrā    Acc/Dat.                       ekrā   Acc/Dat.
okr-e                                      ekr-e
okr-o                                      ekr-o
*okr-e-o                                  *ekr-e-o
okar    Poss.                         ekar    Poss.
okr-e                                      ekr-e
okr-o                                      ekr-o

Nouns
ram 'Ram' rām-e rām-o; leru 'calf' leru-e leru-o;
beța 'son' bet-e bet-o *bețə-e *beța-o

harre 'a herb' harre-e harre-o
sairso 'mustard' sairso-e sairso-o
Po 'dawn' Po-e Po-o

Adjectives
ūc 'high' ūc-e                      ūc-o; lal 'red' lal-e lal-o;
untā 'opposite'                     ūnte  ūntə-o
*untā-e                                 *untə-o

Numerals
ek 'one' ek-e ek-o; du 'two' du-e du-o; tin 'three' tin-e tin-o

Verbs
aich 'is (3NH)'                     char-lāh 'was (3H)
aich-e                              char-lāh-e
aich-o                              char-lāh-o

gel-lāh 'went (3H)'                  parh-lāh 'will study (3H)
ge-lāh-e                              parh-lāh-e
ge-lāh-o                              parh-lāh-o

Adverbs
tar 'under' tar-e tar-o; upar 'above' upr-e upr-o; lag 'near' lag-e lag-o;
bāhar 'outside' bāhr-e bāhr-o; bhitar 'inside' bhitr-e bhitr-o
Compound Verbs

| khā   | le-l-ainh 'ate up (3H)' |
| eat   | take-Pst-(3H)          |
| khā-e | le-l-ainh              |
| khā-o | le-l-ainh              |
| uih-ā | di-a 'cause to lift'   |
| rise-Caus | give-Imp        |
| uihā-e | di-a                |
| uihā-o | di-a                |

| cail  | ge-l-āh 'went away (3H)' |
| walk  | go-Pst-(3H)              |
| cail-e| ge-l-āh                 |
| cail-o| gel-āh                  |
| la    | ge-l-āh 'took away (3H)' |
| take  | go-Pst-(3H)              |
| la-e  | ge-l-āh                 |
| la-o  | ge-l-āh                 |

Inflectional affixes, on the other hand, are selective with the host to which they can be attached. For instance, the future affix t can attach to verb stems of the 3 person subjects alone, e.g.:

9. o
   he(H) le-t-āh
take-Fut-(3H)
   'He will take'

and not to the first or second person subjects, e.g.:

10. *ham
    I le-t
take-Fut-(1)
    'I will take'

11. *tō
    you (NH) le-t-e
take-Fut-(2NH)
    'You will take'

The correct affixes are:

12. ham
    le-b
    'I will take'
13. tō le-b-e

‘You will take’

Secondly, no idiosyncratic morphophonemic changes occur in our data; only those phonological changes occur which form a part of the general phonological properties of the Maithili language.

Two types of morphophonemic changes are found to occur in the data. The first ones, marked by asterisks, relate to the examples listed in Table 1. A general phonotactic constraint disallows the attachment of a vowel (in this case, the emphatic markers e and o) to a stem of more than one syllable and ending in an unstressed ā:

\[
\begin{align*}
*\text{hām(a)ra} & - \quad e \\
& \quad 0 \\
\text{tō ra} & - \quad e \\
& \quad 0 \\
\text{I} & - \text{Acc/Dat-Emph} \\
\text{you (NH)} & - \text{Acc/Dat-Emph} \\
*\text{ō k(a)ra} & - \quad e \\
& \quad 0 \\
\text{he (NH)} & - \text{Acc/Dat-Emph}
\end{align*}
\]

(Comments: (i) Maithili is basically a CV.CV language. (ii) Vowel clustering within a syllable is permissible, but it tends to diphthongize. (iii) Closing diphthongs ending in i or u are the most common ones, e.g., bhāi ‘brother’; laṛāi ‘war’; bāu ‘father’; dear boy’; kā-ā-u ‘have (it) cut’

The second morphophonemic change relates to a highly productive (almost exceptionless) rule of schwa deletion (of the type ... VCaCV → VC Ø CV):

(a) The rule says that the final schwa of a verbal/adverbial or nominal stem is deleted if that stem is followed by a vowel initial morpheme, e.g.:

- hamar-e hamre (Pronoun)
- my-Emph ‘only mine’
- kamar-o kamro (Noun)
- waist-Emph ‘even the waist’
- pajār-ā-eb pajāreb (Verb)
- light fire-Caus-Inf ‘cause to light fire’
- bāhar-e bahre (Adverb)
- outside-Emph ‘only outside’

(b) Schwa syncope does not occur if the schwa is preceded by a consonant cluster, e.g.:
- Pustak + ālae Pustakālae ‘library’
(c) Schwa syncope does not occur if the schwa is followed by a consonant cluster:
    Palang-o    Palango
    cot-Emph    ‘Even the cot’

(d) Even though schwa syncope does apply to a suffixed stem, it does not apply to a prefixed stem, e.g.:
    a-samae    ‘inopportune’
    be-parhal   ‘uneducated’
    an-kahal    ‘stupid’

With inflectional affixes, idiosyncratic morphophonemic changes are quite common:
    Kar-l-aính    Kaelainh    r→Ø
    do-Pst-(3H)   ‘did (3H)’    Ø→e
    jà-t-áh      jaétáh        ā→a
    go-Fut-(3H)   ‘will go (3H)’ Ø→e

Finally, the data listed under ‘Compound names and Proper names’ deserve attention (Table 2). They are interesting because in such examples the clitic is positioned after the first element of a larger unit with which the clitic is semantically associated. That is, say, in Kāthomāndu a pertains to, i.e., emphasizes, Kāthmāndu ‘even Kathmandu’, yet it is positioned after only the first constituent of Kāthmāndu. This is reminiscent of Latin Quē ‘and’ whose semantic effect is to conjoin an expression X to some earlier expression, even though it is positioned after the first constituent of X:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>boni</th>
<th>pueri</th>
<th>bellarque</th>
<th>puellae</th>
<th>X</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>boys</td>
<td>pretty-and</td>
<td>girls</td>
<td>‘good boys and pretty girls’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

**Compound Place and Proper Names**
- rāmpur rām-epur rām-opur rāmpur-e rāmpur-o
- rānjagar rāj-enagar rāj-onagar rānjagār-e rānjagār-o
- Kāthmāndu kāth-emāndu kāth-omāndu kāthmāndu-e kāthmāndu-o

**Proper Names and/or Family Names**
- rām misr rām-e misr-o misr-o rām misr-e rām misr-o
- ḣā ḣā-e ḣā-o vādab vādwb-e vādb-o
The Maithili data further show (Table 3) that *hi hu and he ho are attached to no grammatical category other than pronouns. There is thus a high degree of selection. Looking at their distributional properties, he and ho attach only to demonstrative pronouns, indeed only in the nominative case forms. *hi and hu, on the other hand, attach only to demonstrative pronouns in the accusative-dative case forms, 1 and 2 HH, H, MH, NH in the nominative case forms, and to 2H,HH in the accusative-dative and possessive case forms. To sum up, like inflectional affixes, he ho and hi hu show a greater degree of selection, and they are extremely particular in their selection of hosts to which they can attach. Obviously, there are arbitrary gaps in the set of combinations even within a single category.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>2 person (MH NH) ‘You’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person ‘I’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ham Nom.</td>
<td>to Nom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ham-hi</td>
<td>to-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ham-hu</td>
<td>to-hu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 person ‘You’</th>
<th>Honorific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Honorific</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apne Nom.</td>
<td>aha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apni-hi</td>
<td>a-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apna-hu</td>
<td>a-hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hi</td>
<td>*aha-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hu</td>
<td>*aha-hu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apne ke Acc/Dat</td>
<td>aha ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apna-hi ke</td>
<td>a-hi ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apna-hu ke</td>
<td>a-hu ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hi ke</td>
<td>*aha-hi ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hu ke</td>
<td>*aha-hu ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apne-k Poss.</td>
<td>aha-k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apna-hi-k</td>
<td>a-hi-k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apna-hu-k</td>
<td>a-hu-k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hi-k</td>
<td>*aha-hi-k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*apne-hu-k</td>
<td>*aha-hu-k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, the idiosyncratic morphophonemic changes that occur in the attachment of he ho and hi hu are most typical of inflectional affixes rather
than of clitics, e.g.:

\[
\begin{align*}
i - & \quad \text{he} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{he} \\
& \quad \text{ho} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{ho} \\
& \quad i \rightarrow \quad \text{e} \\
& \quad i \rightarrow \quad \text{ahike} \\
& \quad i \rightarrow \quad \text{a} \\
& \quad i \rightarrow \quad \text{ahuke} \\
& \quad i \rightarrow \quad \text{a} \\
& \quad \text{hā} \rightarrow \quad \text{āhu} \\
& \quad \text{āhā-hu} \rightarrow \quad \text{āhi} \\
& \quad \text{hā} \rightarrow \quad \text{ō} \\
& \quad \text{ohi-hu ke} \rightarrow \quad \text{ohu ke} \\
& \quad \text{hi} \rightarrow \quad \text{ō} \\
& \quad \text{ohi-hi ke} \rightarrow \quad \text{ohi ke} \\
& \quad \text{hi} \rightarrow \quad \text{ō}
\end{align*}
\]

**Conclusion**

Analysis of the Maithili data calls for a 'mixed' analysis of emphatic markers of Maithili. It is suggested that \( e \) and \( o \) should be treated as clitics, while \( hi \) and \( he \) ho should be treated as inflectional affixes.

Also, \( hi \) \( hu \) and \( he \) ho might be thought of as synthetic (inflectional) expressions of emphasis, while \( e \) \( o \) are analytic expressions of emphasis in Maithili. Comparison with the English *er* and *more* as synthetic and analytic markers of adjectival comparison might provide further support to this analysis.

Finally, one further independent motivation to treat \( e \) and \( o \) as clitics, rather than as inflectional affixes, comes from the following phonological fact of the Maithili sound system.

An important feature of the lexical phonology of Maithili is the \( ā \rightarrow a \) rule which occurs regularly and systematically upon addition of a suffix containing a vowel, e.g.:

- \( \text{kāṭh} \) ‘wood’
- \( \text{māus} \) ‘meat’
- \( \text{kām} \) ‘work’
- \( \text{hāthi} \) ‘elephant’
- \( \text{pākal} \) ‘ripe’
- \( \text{kāri} \) ‘black’
- \( \text{māṭi} \) ‘soil’
- \( \text{pāgal} \) ‘mad’

- \( \text{kat̪gar} \) ‘woody/hard’
- \( \text{mausgar} \) ‘meaty’
- \( \text{kamāi} \) ‘wages/earnings’
- \( \text{hathini} \) ‘female elephant’
- \( \text{pakalhā} \) ‘the ripe one’
- \( \text{karikki} \) ‘the black one (female)’
- \( \text{matjā} \) ‘soily’
- \( \text{pagli} \) ‘mad woman’
- \( \text{paglā} \) ‘mad man’
Note, however, that clitization does not participate in the lexical phonology involving the aÆ a rule, e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘wood’</th>
<th></th>
<th>‘only wood’</th>
<th></th>
<th>‘even wood’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kāh</td>
<td>kāh-e</td>
<td>kāh-o</td>
<td></td>
<td>*kāh-e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*kāh-o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhāṭ</td>
<td>bhāṭ-e</td>
<td>bhāṭ-o</td>
<td>‘only rice’</td>
<td>bhāṭ-e</td>
<td>‘even rice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*bhāṭ-o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acār</td>
<td>acār-e</td>
<td>acār-o</td>
<td>‘only pickle’</td>
<td>acār-e</td>
<td>‘even pickle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*acār-o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*acār-e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*acār-o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cāur</td>
<td>cāur-e</td>
<td>cāur-o</td>
<td>‘only rice’</td>
<td>cāur-e</td>
<td>‘even rice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*cāur-o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference

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