

Second Position in Ancient Greek:  
Clitics and Particles in the Oratory of Demosthenes

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*This talk provides an overview of the behavior of second position in Ancient Greek, based on a corpus study of all of the texts associated with Demosthenes, a 5<sup>th</sup> century BC Athenian orator. Cross-linguistically, theories have been proposed which position clitics by means of syntactic mechanisms, prosodic mechanisms, or some combination of the two. Ancient Greek contains a large set of second position clitics and stressed sentence particles. Though accounts of certain clitics or particles in Ancient Greek have been made, no theory attempts to handle second position as a whole. I note here that the prosodic deficiency of a word is seemingly irrelevant when describing second position in Ancient Greek. Also, none of the proposals in the literature given above can handle both the sentence particles and pronominal clitics in this corpus. Movement within PF seems more applicable for sentence particles, whereas it is unclear which placement method is applicable for pronominal clitics.*

**1. Introduction**

1. Ancient Greek word order is often described as being very free. Thus, any possible permutations of the words given in (1) form a grammatical sentence.

(1) Μοίρας ου πείθουσιν θεοί  
*Moiras ou peithousin theoi*  
Fates-acc not persuade-3pl gods-nom  
“the gods do not persuade the fates”

2. However, certain words have a fixed position, such as the bolded particles in (2) and (3).

(2) δέομαι **οὖν** ὑμῶν, ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, καὶ ἱκετεύω καὶ ἀντιβολῶ  
*deomaioun humon O andres dikastai kai hiketeuo kai antibolo*  
beg-1s Part you-gen men of the jury-voc and beseech-1s and entreat-1s  
“Therefore, I beg you, men of the jury, and I beseech you and I entreat you...”

(D. 27,68.1)<sup>2</sup>

(3) Πρῶτον **μέν**, ὧ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχομαι πᾶσι καὶ πάσαις  
*Proton men o andres athenaioi tois theois euchomai pasi kai pasais*  
First Part O Athenian men-voc the gods-dat pray-1s all and all-dat  
“First, then, O Athenian men, I pray to all the gods and goddesses...” (D.18,1.1)

<sup>1</sup> This project would not have been possible without the assistance of Mary Paster and Stephanie Harves at Pomona College.

<sup>2</sup> This citation refers to Demosthenes, Speech 27, section 68, and line 1. I have relied on the Oxford Classical Texts (OCT) throughout this paper.

3. From sentences like these, Wackernagel (1892) made the observation that in Ancient Greek, as well as many other Indo-European languages, certain words have a strong tendency to appear in a position directly following the first word of a sentence or clause.
4. These words are collectively referred to as *Postpositives*, *Wackernagel Clitics*, *Second Position (2P) Enclitics*, etc.
5. Cross-linguistically, the majority of words that tend to appear in second position are *enclitics*<sup>3</sup>, words that are prosodically dependent on the preceding word, e.g. Latin ‘-que’:

(4) Senatus            Populus**que**    Romanus  
 Senate            people=and    Roman  
 “the senate and the people of Rome”

6. Second Position in Ancient Greek is filled by two groups of words, *discourse particles* and *pronominal enclitics*. Furthermore, some discourse particles are graphically accented, others are enclitic.
  - a. *Enclitic pronouns*: all cases of the indefinite pronoun τις, and the oblique cases of the first and second person singular personal pronouns (μου, μοι, με, σου, σοι, σε).
  - b. *Discourse Particles*: accented: ἄρα, γάρ, δή, δῆτα, μέν, μήν, οὖν, μέντοι, τοίνυν, ἄν, and enclitic: γε, περ, τε, τοι.

## 2. Accounting for Second Position, Competing Theories

1. *Syntactic Positioning*. Many have theorized that clitics are moved by syntactic processes into their sentential second position or positioned relative to the syntactic structure of the utterance.
2. *Klavans’ Proposal*:<sup>4</sup> clitics are positioned by three language-wide parameters (5). In addition, specific clitics are associated with a specific syntactic *Domain of Cliticization* (e.g. IP, DP, etc.).
  - (5) i. Dominance: Initial / Final (whether it attaches to the initial or final node of its domain)
  - ii. Precedence: Before / After (whether it precedes or follows its host)
  - iii. Enclitic / Proclitic (in which direction the clitic is prosodically dependent)

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<sup>3</sup> The unifying property of a clitic is the fact that it does not form a prosodic word on its own and must take a host word within the sentence. The distinction is made between a proclitic, which must take a following word as a host, and an enclitic, which must take a preceding word as a host. The first significant attempt to formally distinguish between types of clitics comes from Zwicky (1977). He divides them into three groups: simple clitics (normal position), special clitics (irregular position within the syntax), and bound words (practically suffixes, like –que above), based on their syntactic properties.

<sup>4</sup> This can be found in Klavans (1982) and (1985). In addition, this theory has been directly applied to Ancient Greek in Taylor (1991) and Cervin (1988).



3. The particle and clitic cluster has a strong tendency to appear as the second word in a sentence, after virtually any type of word. Thus, in (7) the particles follow the wh-word τί ‘why’ and in (8) the adjective σκέτλιον ‘horrid’.

(7) τί οὖν ταύτας τὰς προφάσεις λέγουσιν;  
*ti oun tautas tas profaseis legousin?*  
 Why Part these-a excuses-a speak-3pl  
 “Why, then, do they speak these excuses?” (D.35,32.11)

(8) σκέτλιον γὰρ ἄν εἴη τοῦτό γε  
*schetlion gar an eie touto ge*  
 Horrible-n Part would be-3s that-n Part  
 “For that would be horrible!” (D.18,2.1)

4. The tendency for the particle & clitic cluster to appear as the second word often results in constituents being divided by sentence particles. It is very common for noun phrases (9) and prepositional phrases (10) to be divided by particles.

(9) [τὸν γὰρ ἐν Ἀμφίσσῃ πόλεμον] <sub>dp...</sub>  
*Ton gar en Amphisse polemon*  
 The-acc Part in Amphissa war-acc  
 “The war in Amphissa...” (D.18,143.1)

(10) [παρὰ γὰρ τοῖς Ἑλλησιν ...] <sub>pp</sub>  
*Para gar tois Hellenin*  
 Throughout Part the-dat Greek states-dat  
 “Throughout the Greek states...” (D.18,61.1)

5. It is not always the case that the particle will appear as the second word of the clause. If the clause begins with a prepositional phrase, there are a number of possible positions (11-14). The position of the particle is not dependent on the structure of the prepositional phrase, but rather it is free to appear in any of the possible positions in (15), (e.g. D.40,3.6: παρὰ δὲ τούτων; and D.55,19.8: παρὰ τούτων δὲ).

(11) [εἰς τὰς δὲ] <sub>pp</sub> (D.18,71.8)  
*Eis tas de*  
 Into The-acc Part “Into another”

(12) [εἰς δὲ τὰς Ἀμφικτυονικάς] <sub>pp</sub> (D.18,158.1)  
*Eis de tas Amphiktuonikas*  
 Into Part The-acc Amphicytonic decrees-acc  
 “in Amphictyonic decrees.”

(13) [ἐκ παντὸς δὲ τρόπου] <sub>pp</sub> (D.18,78.3)  
*Ek pantos de tropou*  
 From every-gen Part means-gen “by every means”

(14) [κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν δὲ ἀναλογίαν]<sub>pp</sub>  
*Kata ten auten de analogian*  
 According to the-acc same-aacc Part Proportion –acc  
 “according to the same proportion” (D.18,106.11)

(15) [<sub>pp</sub> Prep **I** [<sub>DP</sub> Dem **II** Art **III** [<sub>NP</sub> Adj **IV** Noun **V**]]]<sup>8</sup>

6. Certain emphatic particles (δή, γε, περ, μὴν) can appear either in sentential second position or in second position in an internal XP. For example, it appears with an internal Adverbial Phrase in (16). Concerning their positioning in internal XPs, these particles show similar tendencies to the sentence particle in (11-14) above.

(16) ὅταν δ’ οὗτος [αὐτίκα δὴ]<sub>advp</sub> λέγει πρὸς ὑμᾶς  
*Hotan d’ houtos autika de lege pros umas*  
 whenever Part He-nom then Part say-2s to us  
 “If just then you should say to us” (D.19,171.3)

7. Enclitic pronouns can optionally appear in sentential second position (17). In earlier Greek, the enclitic pronouns almost always appear in sentential second position. By the time of Demosthenes they can also remain in their base generated position (18).<sup>9</sup>

(17) Ἀπήγγελλε τοίνυν τίς μοι [ἔρπειοντ’ αὐτὸν συλλέγειν...  
*Apelege toinun tis moi periiont’ auton sulegein*  
 Told-3s Part Someone-n me-d goes about-a he-a collect-inf  
 “Someone told me, then, that he goes about collecting” (D.21,36.1)

(18) ὥς [ὁ πατήρ =σου Τρόμη] ἐδούλευε παρ’ Ἐλπίᾳ  
*Hos ho pater sou Tromes edouleue par’ Elpia*  
 How the-n father-n you-g Tromes-n was a slave to Elpias-d  
 “how your father, Tromes, was a slave to Elpias” (D.18,129.2)

8. The clitic indefinite pronoun τις can act as a determiner in a noun phrase. Within a noun phrase it can appear in a few possible positions.

(19) ἔν [τινι τοιούτῳ καιρῷ]<sub>dp</sub>...  
*En tini toiouto kairo*  
 In some-dat such-dat time-dat (D.16,4.3)  
 “in some such time”

<sup>8</sup> See Black and Marlett (1996) for a survey of Koine Greek DPs.

<sup>9</sup> Thus, the genitive and dative enclitics can appear within noun phrases when they are acting as possessors, as in (17) above. The accusative, genitive, and dative enclitics can appear within the verb phrase when acting as objects, either direct or indirect. The indefinite relative pronoun can act as the head of a noun phrase or as a demonstrative pronoun in a noun phrase (19-22).

- (20) πλὴν [πολύ            **τι**            σκότος]<sub>dp</sub>.  
*Plen polu            ti            skotos*  
 Except much-nom    some-nom    darkness-nom            (D.18,159.9)  
 “except that there is some great amount of darkness”
- (21) [παραγωγὰς            δέ            **τινας**            τοιαύτας]            ἐρεῖ  
*Paragogas            de            tinas            toiautas            erei*  
 misleadings-acc    Part    some-acc    such-acc    say-3s  
 “and he speaks any of these types of misleading comments”(D.23,95.3)
- (22) ...[**τινές**            οἱ            πρεσβύτατοι            μάρτυρες]  
 ... *tines            hoi            presbutatoi            martures*  
 ...Some-nom    the-nom            old-nom            witnesses-nom(D.20,77.7)  
 “...some old witnesses”

9. Thus, in Ancient Greek, second position is not only clausal second position, but a similar position appears within smaller XPs. These positions are filled by both enclitics and accented particles. In addition, second position itself shows some variability. It is not always the second word in the sentence or the second word in its phrase.

#### 4. Handling Second Position

1. *Analyses for Sentence Particles.* Klavans’ parameters given in (5) can only account for one possible position for a second position particle within a prepositional phrase (11-14, 15). Even if we were to change the Domain of Cliticization to one of the internal projections (PP, DP, NP), we would still not be able to predict all of the possible positions (23).

- (23) Domain S:    [PP Prep [DP Dem            Art            [NP Adj            Noun ]]] **PART**  
 Domain PP:    [PP Prep **PART** [DP Dem            Art            [NP Adj            Noun ]]]  
 Domain DP:    [PP Prep [DP Dem            Art            **PART** [NP Adj            Noun ]]]  
 Domain NP:    [PP Prep [DP Dem            Art            [NP Adj            Noun **PART**]]]

2. Placement of such a particle entirely based on prosodic domains in PF would also run into the same problem. We would have to restrict its prosodic domain to something illogical in order to derive the attested surface forms.
3. Movement of particles entirely within syntax would require prosodic material to be moved syntactically into a position ahead of the particles. While some constituents in Ancient Greek can be divided (cf. τοῖς θεοῖς ... πᾶσι καὶ πάσαις in (3) above), prepositions cannot be separated from their object.<sup>10</sup> Thus, for a particle to follow directly after a preposition would not be allowed.

<sup>10</sup> This is shown to be true for Serbo-Croatian as well, by Progovac (1996), who advocates this type of proposal. In Ancient Greek, prepositions can at times be separated from their object, though it is much less frequent and typically avoided.

4. Perhaps, the best account for the position of sentence particles in second position is a combination of syntactic and prosodic mechanisms, i.e. the ‘prosodic inversion’ mechanism. This would entail that the particle moves to the front of the clause within syntax (or merges there initially) and then moves behind the preposition in PF. Although this seems like the best proposal, there are some questions unanswered:
  - a. What triggers the ‘prosodic inversion? Prosodically deficient enclitics require hosts, but it is unclear why a stress-bearing particle would require such movement.
  - b. What determines how far back the particle will move?
5. *Clitics in second position.* Because second position clitics can be positioned either in their normal position or in second position, it seems natural to assume some form of optional movement places them in their surface position. Does this movement take place in PF or does it take place in the syntax? I think this is still an open question.
6. Perhaps clitic pronouns are moved to the margins of CP (or TopicP) within syntax. This is perhaps suggested by the fact that, unlike particles, the clitic pronouns do not tend to split constituents.
7. Is second position in XPs similar to sentential second position? If we reconsider a concept like Domain of Cliticization to be more congruent with the concept of a scope, we can see that both the particles and enclitics in their domain of influence show similar tendencies to how they behave in sentential second position. They tend to appear second within their constituent and show similar ordering properties.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

1. The data from Ancient Greek show that prosodic dependency, which has usually been considered to be the primary reason for a word to appear in second position, does not seem to play a role in how particles and clitics are placed.
2. Furthermore, second position is not limited to second position within a sentence, but there is also another second position within smaller XPs.
3. Given the data for sentence particles, the best proposal for handling their position has been the ‘prosodic inversion’ approach, which combines both syntactic and prosodic mechanisms. Nevertheless, this approach leaves a number of questions unanswered.
4. The data from Demosthenes suggest that movement to second position is optional for enclitic pronouns. The movement could possibly be within syntax or within PF.

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