

Jasmina Milićević. *Serbian clitics*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2023. xviii + 166 pp. [Studies in Language Companion Series (SLSC), 229.]¹ ISBN 9789027212979 (hbk), ISBN 9789027254641 (ebk).

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1. Introduction

1.1. Key Points

Serbian Clitics presents a comprehensive and theoretically based, formalized description of second-position clitics (henceforth 2P CLs) in standard Serbian. This monograph from the John Benjamins publishing house consists of seven chapters that previously appeared as individual papers in scholarly journals and edited volumes (Milićević 1999, 2005, 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2014, 2019a, 2019b).

The seven chapters offer new, theoretically grounded insights into both morphology and syntax of 2P CLs, primarily focusing on the written standard Serbian variety. Given that there are no similar works that investigate Serbian 2P CLs within the theoretical framework of the Meaning-Text Theory (henceforth MTT) (Mel'čuk 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999), this is a highly noteworthy work. The approach taken sets this monograph apart from most contemporary studies on Slavic CLs because of its clear focus on syntactic dependencies and its orientation toward speech production (p. xiii).

Thus, being a reference work par excellence for all those interested in an approach to CLs that takes syntactic dependencies into account, the monograph will appeal not only to theoretical linguists interested in formal approaches to (Balto-)Slavic morphology and syntax but also to general linguists, typologists, Slavists, and advanced learners of Serbian.

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1.2. Language, Terminology, Bibliography, and Supplementary (Re)sources

The monograph is written in a precise and clear style. The terminology adopted fully aligns with current standards in linguistics, particularly those used in dependency-based theory and MTT. The author alerts the reader whenever the terms used in the book diverge significantly from other uses of the same expression (e.g., on pp. 2, 21, 31, 62, 77, 89, 94, 103). Moreover, the monograph contains an index of terms (pp. 165–66), allowing quick navigation through the text and access to key passages.

The text is enriched with carefully enumerated and captioned tables and figures, rendering it reader-friendly and easy to follow. The text is additionally supplemented with remark boxes containing more detailed comments and explanations of phenomena directly related to those discussed in the main text. Examples are carefully presented, numbered, translated, and glossed according to the Leipzig rules (<https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/Glossing-Rules.pdf>). Moreover, the reader can find an exhaustive explanation of glossing procedures, including comments on pronunciation and tonal accents (pp. xxii–xxiii) and explanations of symbols, abbreviations, and writing conventions, i.e., comments on which fonts are used in which function (pp. xix–xi). The author also provides the reader with an index of languages mentioned apart from Serbian (p. 163). This feature might be especially useful to those interested in typological research on CLs. Last but not least, the text is accompanied by ten pages of references (pp. 153–62).

2. Methodology and Data

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Although Milićević's monograph diverges from mainstream approaches to the Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian (BCMS) CLs, the author herself characterizes it as mixed, assigning a greater role to syntax than to prosody (p. 22). Milićević's work on Serbian CLs was most strongly influenced by the least theory-dependent contributions, which feature authentic examples of CL usage more diverse than those usually found in the literature. These are Browne's (1974, 1975) two seminal papers written within the early generative stream and the detailed theory-neutral description of CL placement in literary Serbo-Croatian in Popović (1997: 22).

As there are only a handful of studies dedicated to CLs and CL linear placement based on syntactic dependencies (e.g., Iordanskaja 1982; Čamdžić and Hudson 2002; Hana 2007; Gross 2014), Milićević's comprehensive account of Serbian CLs was awaited with enthusiasm. For those unfamiliar with the

applied theoretical framework of MTT, Milićević (pp. 22–29) provides concise technical explanations in §3 of the first chapter, keeping the explanations as reader-friendly as possible by first giving an informal presentation, and following that, a formal description supported by abundant examples presented in graphic form. The author recommends that readers become acquainted with the technical details of MTT. However, a fair picture of the Serbian CL system can be obtained even if the reader entirely skips this part (p. xiii).

Unlike phrase-structure approaches to CLs, which strive for a good fit with the observables, the aim of MTT descriptions is to achieve a good fit with linguistic rules. An MTT account of CL placement begins with a linearly unordered syntactic dependency tree in which CLs have syntactic roles of actants or governors. CL linear positioning within (a morphological structure of) the clause takes place under the synthesis operation, which is governed by rules that take into account syntactic dependencies between clause elements and their syntactic/prosodic properties. In contrast to MTT, approaches to phrase structure rooted in classic generative syntax try to deduce CL “structural positions” in the linearly ordered phrase-structure tree, taking the possible linear arrangements in the clause as the starting point. These differences make the formalizations of the two mentioned approaches incommensurable (p. xiii).

Milićević (p. xiii) argues that it is the synthesis orientation of the MTT approach and its reliance on syntactic dependencies that makes it possible to gain essential insights into the Serbian CL system (and 2P CLs in general). The author claims that the use of MTT and syntactic dependencies permitted the role that syntactic and prosodic factors play in CL linear placement to be elucidated. Their interplay is characterized by syntactic relations that operate “behind the scenes” and shape the prosodic features of sentence elements to which CL placement is sensitive. Also, in Milićević’s opinion, the approach taken allows one to pinpoint the differences between 2P and ad-verbal CLs with respect to the mechanism called clitic climbing (the author uses the term clitic pseudo-climbing, henceforth CPC). In contrast to ad-verbal CLs, 2P CLs, which are syntactically dependent on an infinitive outside the infinitive phrase, only pseudo-climb, merely displaying “climbing effects” in the matrix clause.

2.2. Language Data

The author focuses exclusively on CLs in contemporary standard Serbian, leaving out their diachronic and dialectal aspects. Some frequent divergent characteristics of CL usage in the press and colloquial registers are sporadically considered (p. xiv).² Still, the monograph analyzes contemporary

² For more information, see sections 4.5 and 5.

standard Serbian CLs within a broader BCMS context and draws attention to the major differences between the CL systems in these three closely related languages. Moreover, the author also offers a brief comparison with CL systems in other Slavic languages, arguing that BCMS CLs are the most representative example of the classical Wackernagel system (p. 152).

Milićević adopts a methodological approach regularly applied by linguists in formal theoretical and typological linguistic research: her data was gathered primarily through existing linguistic literature on Serbian CLs and on CLs in other languages of interest, the Corpus of Contemporary Serbian (Vitas et al. 2000; Utvić 2011; and www.korpus.matf.bg.ac.rs), the Serbian electronic and printed press, the Internet, examples provided by BCMS native speakers, and self-constructed examples (p. xv). The sources of linguistic data are clearly indicated only for languages other than BCMS. For BCMS examples, sources are provided only if Milićević's acceptability judgment differs from the acceptability judgment in the original source. Otherwise, there is no trace of data sources (pp. xv, xvii). This might be somewhat problematic since scholarly work is both incremental and collaborative, demanding that both data and analysis procedures are (re)traceable (Stefanowitsch 2020: 133–34).

The possible biases and issues that might have been caused by the methodology adopted were not mentioned explicitly. However, diverging opinions on the acceptability of specific structures are discussed on the margin and partly ascribed to the infrequency of the structures in question (p. 92). Although the methodology adopted is in line with the current state of the art in theoretical and typological linguistic research, follow-up studies embracing alternative methodological approaches based either on big data from corpora (spoken, written, or web-mediated) or on behavioral data (elicited production or acceptability) would be more than welcome in the future. This could be done with respect to selected issues raised in the monograph and possibly within a collaboration, e.g., with corpus linguists or psycholinguists.

3. Organization of the Monograph

The following sections each present one of the seven chapters in the monograph.

3.1. Chapter 1: Clitics and Syntactic Dependencies

Chapter 1 (pp. 1–29), offering a general introduction to the phenomenon of CLs, sets the scene for a more detailed presentation of issues closely related to Serbian CLs (chapters 2–7). The general concept of the CL described in §1 (pp. 1–9) is followed in §2 (pp. 9–22) by basic facts about the Serbian CL system. The final §3 (pp. 22–29) introduces the fundamentals of dependency syntax and morphology in MTT, i.e., the theoretical framework used in the work

to describe Serbian CLs.³ Using Mel'čuk's (1993: 225) work as a point of departure, the author states that "[a] wordform *w* of language *L* is called clitic if and only if it lacks the prosodic features that characterize (almost) all wordforms of *L*" (p. 2). Moreover, she explicitly asserts that the prosodic deficiency of CLs is a language-specific feature (p. 3).

3.2. Chapter 2: Cliticization of Serbian Personal Pronouns and Auxiliary Verbs

This chapter (pp. 31–39) directly builds on the phenomenon, presented in Chapter 1, §2.1.1 (pp. 10–11), of Serbian personal pronouns and auxiliary verbs⁴ having both full (tonic, stressed) and CL (atonic, unstressed) forms. Section 2 of Chapter 2 (pp. 33–37) examines in some detail the syntactic and communicative (information structural) factors that influence cliticization, i.e., determine whether the choice of CL over full forms of pronominal and verbal lexemes during sentence synthesis is obligatory or free.⁵ Section 3 (p. 38) presents the corresponding rules for cliticization within an MTT model of Serbian.

According to the author, the CL forms of Serbian personal pronouns and auxiliary verbs are the default (pp. 32, 36). In contrast, full forms are either triggered by specific prosodic environments or syntactic configurations (including prosodic breaks, coordination, after prepositions, presence of a specific (co)-dependent), or freely chosen to express marked Focalized or Emphatic values of communicative oppositions (pp. 33–36). In §4, which contains a summary, the author argues that tonicity as a syntactic inflectional category has been "enlisted" to express information structure, as gender conversion is used to express derivational meanings (e.g., in Spanish) and a change of nominal class, to express plurality (e.g., in Bantu languages) (p. 39).

3.3. Chapter 3: Serbian Clitic Cluster

This chapter (pp. 41–60) also expands directly on Chapter 1: in this case, §2.1.3 (pp. 12–16). First, in §1, Milićević (pp. 41–45) provides a detailed description of the CL cluster in Serbian. Section 2 discusses the general and specific syntactic

³ Section 3.1 of this review contains a brief overview of the benefits of the theoretical model applied for describing Serbian CLs.

⁴ The author often uses auxiliary verbs as a cover term for both auxiliary and copular/locative verbs (see p. 31).

⁵ Cliticization conditions for the interrogative particle *da li* were not considered in the monograph, whereas its dated CL form *li* is examined in Chapter 3 (pp. 43, 56–57). The emphatic particle *li* is not discussed in this chapter either since it is a CL lexeme without a corresponding full form (pp. 10, 25, 31).

and morphonological constraints on the co-occurrence of CL1 ~ CL2 within the cluster (pp. 46–56), and specific restrictions placed on some CL ~ host combinations (pp. 56–58). The author explains in what contexts dative and genitive CLs, genitive and accusative CLs, and accusative CL and reflexive CL *se* can, or cannot, appear together in a CL cluster and models restrictions as filter rules (pp. 46–56). Moreover, she also formulates rules for detecting and repairing illicit combinations. Regarding restrictions on CL ~ host combinations, Chapter 3 brings insights into which linguistic forms cannot host the interrogative particle CL *li* and the auxiliary CL *hteti* (pp. 56–58). The penultimate §3 (pp. 58–60) proposes examples of CL cluster building rules within MTT, whereas §4 (p. 60) provides a summary of the whole chapter.

3.4. Chapter 4: Linear Placement of Serbian Clitics

While §2.1.3.2 in Chapter 1 (pp. 14–16) presents a preliminary and concise description of the linear placement of Serbian CLs within the clause, this chapter offers a comprehensive presentation of the issue, including specific rules formulated within the MTT framework. More precisely, in Chapter 4 the author deals with the placement options that are, in principle, available to all clausal CLs.⁶

Section 1 (pp. 61–63) gives an overview of Serbian CL linear placement and introduces some considerations relevant to the dependency-oriented approach. A detailed informal description of CL placement within the clause follows in §2 (pp. 64–76), and §3 (pp. 76–86) presents an MTT-based description of the syntactic operations that drive CL placement in a clause.

The host of a CL in the morphological structure of a clause does not have to (and consequently often does not) correspond to its governor in the syntactic structure. In other words, Serbian 2P CLs do not have to be placed adjacent to their syntactic governors (p. 63). Consequently, all the CLs that appear in one clause and are linearly grouped in a cluster can have different governors in the syntactic structure, or can themselves be governors like, for instance, finite auxiliary/copular CL verbs (pp. 27, 87). Still, Milićević (pp. 82, 87) considers that syntactic dependencies in interplay with communicative oppositions play a crucial role in determining constituents and their properties necessary for CL placement. More specifically, they control all the properties of constituents on which CL placement depends, including prosodic properties (pp. 62, 67–68, 70–71, 78–79). In other words, although only indirectly, CL placement as a syntactic operation is essentially governed by syntactic dependencies. The role of prosodic factors is reflected merely in the prosodic features of sentence

⁶ Special placement options (i.e., CPC out of dependent infinitive phrases and non-standard clause-initial and post-prosodic-break CL placement) are examined more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

elements (e.g., phonological heaviness, capacity to induce a prosodic break, contrastive stress) that affect those elements' capacity to host the CLs (p. 87). A prosodic break introduced by a constituent, as well as its prosodic contour, indicates its specific syntactic/communicative role, whereas the prosodic heaviness of a constituent results from its syntactic composition (pp. 67–69, 83–84).

Since various syntactic/communicative underlying factors can be reduced to the same prosodic expression, the author tries to capture and model them as the features [$\pm$ heavy], [$\pm$ detached], and [$\pm$ contrastive] (p. 67). In variable CL placement, a constituent's suitability as a host depends both on the syntax and on the prosodic traits mentioned. Nevertheless, according to the author, the features [$\pm$ heavy], [$\pm$ detached], and [$\pm$ contrastive] alone do not play a deciding role in CL placement. First, in the case of fixed CL placement, only syntactic factors, that is, the syntactic class of a constituent, are relevant (p. 66). Moreover, as Milićević (p. 68) argues, even in the case of variable placement the role of the features [$\pm$ heavy], [$\pm$ detached], and [$\pm$ contrastive] can be overridden by syntactic factors. According to the author, some instances of variable CL placement in which syntax supersedes prosody occur when:

1. the syntactic role prevents skipping of the contrastive constituent, e.g., one that functions as (the lexical part of) the Main Verb of the clause (pp. 67–72);
2. the syntactic role and syntactic composition of a constituent are the dominant factors in making its splitting obligatory or blocking it (pp. 72–75);
3. there are syntax constraints on hosts of clusters containing the interrogative particle *li*: a non-finite verb cannot take such a role (p. 85).

Finally, some hosts must be lexically marked in order to act as hosts (p. 68).

To conclude, this chapter provides arguments for the crucial role of syntactic dependencies and communicative oppositions in the placement of Serbian 2P CLs. The author recognizes that factors expressed by prosody, such as the features [$\pm$ heavy], [$\pm$ detached], and [$\pm$ contrastive], play a significant part in CL placement. However, in Milićević's opinion (pp. 62, 69, 88), CL placement cannot be entirely reduced to prosodic factors.

3.5. Chapter 5: Special Issues in the Linear Placement of Serbian Clitics

Chapter 5 (pp. 89–111) focuses on two unusual cases of CL linearization, each in its own section. Section 1 (pp. 89–108) deals with placement options available to CLs governed by an infinitive that is syntactically dependent on another clause element (verb, noun, or adjective), i.e., with CPC.

Section 2 (pp. 108–11) examines the atypical tendency seen in colloquial and journalistic registers of some Serbian 2P CLs to appear as PROclitics, both clause initially and after a post-prosodic break.

Unlike in Romance languages, Serbian infinitive CLs do not have to change their surface-syntactic governor in order to be placed non-locally. Since Serbian 2P CLs only display climbing effects and not genuine clitic climbing, Milićević (p. 103) argues that in their case, CPC is a more accurate term. Several factors play a role in resolving whether CPC will be obligatory, optional, or blocked. These are: the linear position of the infinitive phrase and the syntactic role of V_{INF} , prosodic features of clause elements, type and number of CLs involved, whether CPC will result in semantic ambiguity, whether CPC will result in a high number of CLs, whether CPC will result in case and case-person incompatibilities, and whether CPC will result in the sequences $*[se\ je]$ (REFL AUX.3SG) or $*[se\ se]$ (REFL REFL) (pp. 99–102). After a detailed discussion of these factors, the author presents linearization rules for infinitive CLs within MTT (pp. 105–08). Although CPC is obligatory if V_{INF} functions as the object of so-called restructuring verbs (e.g., modal and emotional state verbs) and if there are no prosodic factors at work, Milićević (pp. 90, 111) does not consider the phenomenon itself to be significant in Serbian. This is because the completive *da*-clause is usually used to replace the infinitive.

Clause-initial and post-prosodic break CL placement, often criticized by purists, is restricted to the Serbian substandard. Milićević (pp. 108–09) considers the first to be more common in polar questions in highly colloquial speech and in social media exchanges, attributing the latter to the language of the press. According to the author, post-prosodic break CL placement is primarily encountered for auxiliary/copular verb forms and the reflexive marker *se* (p. 108). Milićević (pp. 109–10) points out that in Serbian, the acceptability of this substandard CL position is a matter of degree, and that clause-initial CL placement is probably a result of the deletion of the clause-initial interrogative particle *da li* (colloquial *dal'* and *jel'*). As similar placement patterns are found in standard Slovene and colloquial Czech, i.e., languages that do not have classic Wackernagel CLs (Toman 1986: 127), the author speculates that the same fate might await Serbian 2P CLs (p. 111).

3.6. Chapter 6: Morphological Makeup of Serbian Clitics

Chapter 6 (pp. 113–27) offers a formal description of the morphology of Serbian pronominal and verbal CLs within MTT. The central MTT morphological concepts introduced in Mel'čuk (1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2006) are taken as a given and are not explained in detail. Needless to say, the author understands the term morphology as referring to the composition of CL wordforms, which are non-elementary linguistic signs, in terms of quasi-elementary and elementary signs (radical and affixal morphs, megamorphs)

(p. 113). Milićević (p. 113) uses “formal” to refer to establishing correspondences between “reasonable” deeper representations of the CLs and their phonemic signifiers (and vice versa) in such a way that they can be manipulated by a logical device (e.g., a computer program) and ultimately used in automatic text synthesis/analysis.

Pronominal CLs are dealt with in §1 (pp. 114–22), whereas the focus of §2 (pp. 122–26) is on verbal CLs. For both CL types, the author provides information on inflectional categories and the corresponding inflectional values (pp. 114–16, 123–24), a morphological description of the CLs (pp. 119–22, 125–26), including a discussion of their unique morphological properties (pp. 116–19).

3.7. Chapter 7: Serbian Clitics as a Challenge for Linguistic Theory

In the seventh and final chapter (pp. 129–50), the author raises two theoretically challenging questions concerning Serbian verbal CLs. Section 1 (pp. 129–37) deals with their unclear syntactic status as either heads or dependents, while the focus of §2 is Serbian future-tense markers that behave as both wordforms and affixes (pp. 137–49). They are followed by a short summary in §3 (pp. 149–50).

Early in Chapter 7, Milićević (p. 129) admits that the answers to the questions are already evident from how the CLs were treated (as lexemes functioning as clausal heads) throughout the monograph and that the two discussions presented in that chapter are merely demonstrations of appropriate diagnostics in ambiguous cases such as those.

The author starts the discussion of the first problem with the observation that, by default, an auxiliary appears in the clause as a CL, i.e., as a prosodically deficient element (p. 129). It is placed with respect to a host and seemingly lacks a key property of clausal heads: the ability to serve as the reference point for fully fledged clause elements (pp. 130, 149). However, a CL auxiliary does not differ from a full form as regards controlling the distribution of the phrase corresponding to a surface-syntactic subtree $V_{(AUX/FIN)} - V_{(LEX)}$ (pp. 131–33). Moreover, it interacts morphologically with elements external to the phrase just like a finite lexical verb does (pp. 135–37). Milićević (p. 149) concludes that according to the formal criteria and informal considerations generally applied (Mel'čuk 1988: 129–31, 138–40; Mel'čuk 2009: 28–35), only the finite auxiliary in its full or CL form, and not the participle (the non-finite lexical verb), can be the governor and, therefore, the syntactic head of the entire clause. In other words, the discussion of the first theoretical problem demonstrates that CL auxiliaries have all the properties of syntactic heads.

To answer the second question of whether Serbian future tense auxiliary CLs are wordforms or affixes, Milićević (pp. 137, 142) uses MTT (Mel'čuk 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1999) as a starting point and additionally applies morphological

criteria proposed by Zwicky and Pullum (1983). While Zwicky and Pullum's (1983) morphonological criteria did not lead to conclusive answers, syntactic criteria provided compelling evidence that Serbian future tense markers are CLs (pp. 149–50). It goes without saying that, for this question, the syntactic criteria which confirmed the CL status of future tense auxiliary CLs are more valuable since the CLITIC ~ AFFIX opposition is more of a syntactic one (p. 150).

4. Language Variation

The value of the presented monograph lies not only in its examination of Serbian CLs within MTT but also in its approach to CLs that recognizes the issue of variation. While the primary focus of the book is on the contemporary standard variant, some non-standard features of Serbian CLs receive special attention from the author. For instance, the post-prosodic break and clause-initial placements increasingly present in the language of the press and everyday colloquial speech are very extensively dealt with in Chapter 5 (pp. 108–10). Furthermore, some aspects of language change that affect Serbian CLs, such as further grammaticalization of the conditional⁷ and future tense auxiliaries, are also analyzed in the monograph (pp. 123–24). These variation phenomena indicate that Serbian 2P CLs may be moving away from a purely Wackernagel system (p. 152).

In Chapter 2, Milićević (p. 31) openly admits that she does not examine cliticization conditions for the interrogative particle *da li* since, in her opinion, its CL form *li* is becoming outdated in standard Serbian. According to the author, the usage of the interrogative *li* in contemporary Serbian is more “a matter of register and/or individual style” (p. 31). Additionally, in the same chapter, while presenting the rule that the full form of *biti* ‘be’ is obligatory after an internal prosodic break/punctuation, Milićević (p. 34) comments that it is not always obeyed in journalistic and informal styles. As may be seen from the above, even though she does not directly or exhaustively deal with issues of variation, a reader who is interested in the topic can still obtain valuable information.

In Chapter 5, while discussing local vs. CPC placement, the author directly asserts that she will analyze preference rules that emerge as a function of syntactic context, i.e., only linguistic preferences proper. In contrast, variation emerging from the style/register or sociolinguistic factors (dialectal/idiolectal), are not examined (p. 107).⁸ Milićević (p. xiv) comments that CLs in dialects have a different morphological makeup and that some dialects ex-

⁷ More precisely, the conditional auxiliary is slowly becoming an invariable particle *bi* in colloquial Serbian (p. 137).

⁸ In the Preface, the author emphasizes that she will not examine CLs in dialects (cf. Milićević 2023: xiv).

hibit CL doubling, which is not present in standard Serbian (Mišeska-Tomić 2008; Runić 2014).⁹ Once again, the author openly indicates the focus of research, while giving useful hints to those who are interested in variation in the Serbian CL system.

In the Preface, Milićević (p. xiv) clearly states that she will abstain from discussing whether Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian are distinct languages or variants of the same language. The author points out that they are all mutually intelligible, comparing them to American and British English. However, she also emphasizes that differences between these four languages may grow in the future due to the current social and political climate (cf. p. xiv). Milićević (p. xiv) underlines that the Serbian CL system has many commonalities with CL systems in Bosnian, Croatian, and Montenegrin, and thus many of the reported findings may also be valid for CLs in these closely related South Slavic languages. Still, she also specifies that some significant differences exist and promises to refer to them where relevant (p. xiv). Milićević (p. xiv) accurately identifies one of the problems stemming from the close similarity of the CL systems in question: at times, native speakers can be uncertain as to which structures with CLs are acceptable or preferable in which CL system. Accordingly, these discrepant acceptability judgments “spill over” into linguistic literature (p. xiv).

Indeed, the author stays true to her promise: CL phenomena that exhibit variation within BCMS standard varieties are dealt with throughout the book, either in the main text, in special remark boxes inserted into the main text, or in footnotes. For readers who are highly interested in variation within BCMS only as it concerns CL phenomena, the remaining part of this section summarizes the crucial observations made by Milićević.

According to Milićević (pp. 72, 74, 152) the most salient differences between CL systems in the closely related South-Slavic languages Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian are the types of insertable hosts and preferences regarding their usage (Čavar 1996: 58; Popović 1997: 306; Kolaković et al. 2022: 417). The author also emphasizes that many types of split phrases, now obsolete in contemporary Serbian, can be found in older Serbian texts, for instance in the literary style (pp. 72, 74).

In Chapter 3 on the Serbian CL cluster, Milićević (pp. 41–60) touches on several CL combinations possible in Croatian that are either not present in standard Serbian at all or are found in very limited contexts only. One of them is the combination $CL_{ACC} + se$ (REFL), which exists in Bosnian and Croatian beyond CPC contexts. This is due to a special grammatical voice present in these languages, the subjectless suppressive from transitive verbs, marked with the reflexive adjunct *se* (pp. 49–50; Mel’čuk 2006: 181–263), not present in

⁹ See Mrazović and Vukadinović (2009: 345) for more information on the emphatic expressions that are the closest to CL doubling in standard BCMS variants.

contemporary standard Serbian. The author also indicates that some Serbian native speakers find the [*se je*] (REFL AUX.3SG) CL sequence acceptable. However, she emphasizes that contemporary standard Serbian greatly inclines toward its circumvention. In contrast, the CL sequence [*se je*] is common in contemporary standard Croatian (p. 56). In Chapter 3, Milićević also acknowledges that in Croatian, unlike in standard Serbian, the accusative feminine singular CL *ju* can appear in contexts other than the allomorph (suppletion) rule context triggered by the third-person singular verbal CL *je* directly following it (p. 53; Kolaković, Jurkiewicz-Rohrbacher and Gradischnig 2023).

In Chapter 5, the author states that, unlike Croatian and Bosnian, Serbian exhibits more restricted use of the infinitive, preferring the competing *da*-complement (p. 111). Milićević (pp. 94–96) argues that in Serbian, V_{INF} is most naturally used to complement (quasi-)modal, phase, and emotional state verbs. In contrast, its application in Serbian with verbs from other classes, particularly object control, causative, and motion verbs, is dated. Moreover, nowadays it triggers a “Croatian feel”, thus making the *da*-complement more preferred. This has tremendous consequences on CPC, which, though obligatory in restructuring contexts, is not a significant phenomenon in Serbian as compared to Croatian (pp. 90, 94–96, 111). It has to be pointed out that, according to the author’s intuition, CPC out of *da*-complements is only marginally possible in Serbian literary and journalistic registers, and presumably more common in Bosnian (p. 97). The reader is offered two Serbian examples of the phenomenon, one from the literary register and the other from the press, and another from Bosnian, spontaneously produced in a conversation (p. 97).

In Chapter 6, in the subsection describing the morphology of personal pronouns, Milićević (p. 119) comments that unlike in Serbian, the dative reflexive CL form *si* is still used in Croatian. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that she cannot give any information on how frequent it is. In the same chapter, in the subsection dealing with forms of auxiliary verbs, using Belić’s (1962: 6) and Radanović-Kocić’s (1988: 47) observations as a point of departure, the author notes that, unlike in Croatian, the use of the third-person singular auxiliary stressed form *jè* is possible in Serbian only in polar questions marked with the CL interrogative particle *li* (p. 123). In colloquial Croatian, this form can also be used to answer polar questions. The standard Croatian third-person singular auxiliary form *jěst*, specialized for this function, is present in Serbian only in some phraseological expressions, such as *to jěst* ‘that is’ (p. 123).

5. Concluding Remarks on Milićević’s (2023) Value and Originality

The volume of existing literature on CLs is immense: Nevis et al. (1994) list 1,550 bibliographical entries on CLs between 1892 and 1991. Moreover, research on CLs in world languages has been particularly intensive over the last 30 years, and so the number of studies must have greatly increased by now.

Needless to say, Serbian pronominal and verbal CLs occupy a salient place in this line of linguistic research. First and foremost, because they are of the Wackernagel, i.e., 2P CL, type (p. xi). As a brief overview of the existing body of research reveals, this CL subtype is especially interesting to theoretical linguistics. Nevertheless, as the reviewed monograph demonstrates, there is still much left to say about these not very “well behaved” words that are similar to affixes.

I personally consider Milićević’s book a major contribution not only to the study of Slavic languages in particular but also to linguistics in general. As already stated at the beginning of this review, Milićević’s MTT approach to morphology and syntax of Serbian CLs, and particularly its clear focus on syntactic dependencies and orientation toward speech production, is precisely what makes this monograph rare and exceptional. Consequently, *Serbian clitics* will be a primary reference source for researchers interested in studying CLs in the context of syntactic dependencies. Beyond that, the monograph will be thought-provoking for theoretical linguists specializing in formal descriptions of (Balto-)Slavic morphology and syntax as well as for general linguists, typologists, and Slavists. Although the author primarily examines the CL system in contemporary standard Serbian, it is safe to assume that many comments on various aspects of variation could arouse the interest of variationists. Finally, since CLs are challenging for language learners, Milićević’s work might be useful to applied linguists and advanced learners of Serbian.

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