

Vafsi oblique pronouns at the syntax-prosody interface

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in cooperation with

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This talk

.... is about Vafsi and its oblique clitics

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My general interest:

- Behaviour of clitics at the interfaces between modules
- Conclusions for the general grammar architecture

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Vafsi:

- Northwestern Iranian language, spoken by ca. 20.000 people (in two dialects)
- Unwritten, data comes from oral descriptions (Recording of Folk tales by L.P. Elwell-Sutton)
- Transcribed, translated, and supplemented with field study material by Donald L. Stilo, from whom most of the examples come from (Stilo 2004b,a, 2010)
- Saeed Yousefi is a native speaker, currently a PhD student of linguistics at the Shahid Beheshti University in Teheran

Vafsi

- Information on Vafsi grammar is sparse
- Non-rigid verb-final language (postverbal positions determined by information structure mostly, recipients)
- Three realizations of pronouns:
 - 1 independent pronouns
 - 2 pronoun bases (with clitics attached to indicate person)
 - 3 clitics

Independent pronouns and pronoun bases

- Two sets of independent pronouns
- direct and oblique

Independent pronouns and pronoun bases

- Two sets of independent pronouns
 - direct and oblique
- Two oblique pronoun bases: *hazun* and *verewn*
 - no semantic content
 - can occur postverbally
 - person obligatorily indicated by oblique pronoun clitic

(2) xu dæsd-mozd æ-d-om **hazún=i**
 good wage DUR-give-1SG₁ OBLPR=2SG₂
 'I'll give you a good wage.'

Pronominal clitics and their 'affixal' variation

	direct (set 1)		oblique (set 2)	
	<i>enclitics</i> <i>(copulas)</i>	<i>affixes</i>	<i>enclitics/ proclitics</i>	<i>affixes</i>
1SG	=im(e)	-om(e)	=om	-im-
2SG	=i	-i	=i	-i-
3SG	=e/=oæ ¹	-e / Ø ²	=es	-is-
1PL	=am(e)	-am(e)	=owan	-iwan-
2PL	=a	-a	=ian	-ian-
3PL	=end(e)	-end(e)	=esan	-isan-

Table: Oblique and direct pronouns in Vafsi (Stilo 2010)

¹ masc/fem

² -e after consonants

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- Stilo claims that oblique clitics occur as affixes under specific circumstances

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	<i>(copulas)</i>		<i>proclitics</i>	
1SG	=im(e)	-om(e)	=om	-im-
2SG	=i	-i	=i	-i-
3SG	=e/=oæ ¹	-e / Ø ²	=es	-is-
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Table: Oblique and direct pronouns in Vafsi (Stilo 2010)

- Stilo claims that oblique clitics occur as affixes under specific circumstances
- This talk will show that
 - a) oblique affixes do not exist and
 - b) that the oblique 'affixes' are in fact clitics-under-stress

¹ masc/fem

² -e after consonants

Two sets of clitics

Most likely: Tense-based split ergative system:

Set 1: direct case

- present: subject
- past: subject of intransitive verbs
- **Position:** Suffixed to the verb

Set 2: oblique case (ergative)

- past tense subject of transitives
- **Position:**
 - clitic appears before the verbal complex, attaches mostly to the direct object
 - It can NEVER appear after the verb

Examples of 'regular' Set2 clitic placement

- (3) ya qærri=**es** [bǎé-košdǎ] _{vc}
 or witch=3SG₂ PUNCT-killed
 '... or he killed the witch.'
- (4) soan-e=ra bez-e šax=**es** [tíz=a kǎerdǎ] _{vc}
 file-F.OBL=with goat-F.OBL horn=3SG₂ sharp=ATTR did
 'He sharpened the goat's horns with a file'
- (5) bǎelke hævi-án=**es** [komǎék ær-kǎerdǎ] _{vc}
 but all-PL.OBL=3SG₂ help DUR-did
 '... but he helped everybody'
- (6) tani hæzíri=**m** [bǎé-diǎ] _{vc}
 he.OBL yesterday=1SG₂ PUNCT-saw
 'I saw him yesterday'

Another function of Set2 clitics

Oblique set2 clitics can also indicate a possessive construction

(7) æhl=e ewdan=**ian**
 inhabitant=EZ village=2PL₂
 'the people of your village'

- Clitic directly follows the possessed item (wherever it appears)

Another function of Set2 clitics

Oblique set2 clitics can also indicate a possessive construction

(9) æhl=e ewdan=**ian**
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- Clitic directly follows the possessed item (wherever it appears)
- This common use of the clitic as a possessive or a subject can lead to ambiguities

(10) a. kænizan=**es** bāwattæ '*Her* servant girls said (so)' → as possessive
 b. kænizan=**es** bāwattæ '*She* told the servant girls' → as subject

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- (12) a. kænizan=**es** bāwattæ '*Her* servant girls said (so)' → as possessive
 b. kænizan=**es** bāwattæ '*She* told the servant girls' → as subject
- **Important:** An item marked by a possessive set2 clitic cannot host another set2 pronoun clitic!

Relevant elements in the verbal complex

- 1 The durative marker *æ**r*
- 2 The punctual marker *bæ*
- 3 The negation marker *næ*
- 4 The preverbs *dæ(r)-*, *ó(r)-*, *há(r)-*

Tense-aspect markers *æt-* and *bæ-*

- The durative marker **ær-**:
 - Unstressed, Form depends on phonological environment

(13) an=om ær-góæ
 that=1SG₂ DUR-want
 'I want that'

Tense-aspect markers *æ*t- and *bæ*-

- The durative marker **æ**r-:

→ Unstressed, Form depends on phonological environment

(15) an=om ær-góæ
 that=1SG₂ DUR-want
 'I want that'

- The punctual marker **bæ**-:

→ Stressed, Form depends on phonological environment

(16) an=om bæ-diæ
 that=1SG₂ PUNCT-saw
 'I saw that'

⇒ If the following item starts with a vowel, the *æ*-vowel is dropped and stress shifts to the following vowel:

*bá*wæ "s/he came" ← *bæ*- + -av ('come') + -e (3SG)

→ Suppressed by negation (*bæ*-*ssim* 'I went', but *næ*-*ssim* 'I didn't go'), but also by preverbs and complex predicates

Negation and preverbs

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 - Stressed
 - In case of a vowel following, *ǎe* is dropped and stress shifts to the following vowel

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 - Stressed
 - In case of a vowel following, *æ* is dropped and stress shifts to the following vowel
- The preverbs **dǎe(r)-**, **ó(r)-**, **há(r)-**
 - Stressed
 - Originally directional particles
 - Create lexical extensions, finer nuances, or total meaning changes of the verb

Vafsi	English
girætt	grab, catch
ó(r)-girætt	pick up, lift
há(r)-girætt	take, get, bury
dǎe(r)-girætt	gather up

- Suppressed by negation
 - Meanings of the different preverbs fall together
- Some verbs do not have any preverbs, some occur only with a subset, and some only occur with preverbs

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics

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- There are many cases where the clitic precedes the complex predicate

(19) bálke hævi-án=**es** [komáék ær-kærdæ]_{vc}
 but all-PL.OBL=3SG₂ help DUR-did
 '... but he helped everybody'

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics

- There are many cases where the clitic precedes the complex predicate

(21) bálke hævi-án=**es** [komáék ær-kàerdæ]_{vc}
 but all-PL.OBL=3SG₂ help DUR-did
 '... but he helped everybody'

- But the clitic can also occur within the complex predicate, where it attaches to the first element

(22) æ-cu ešden báe-vær-i ya [komáék=**i** kær-òm]_{vc}
 DUR-an SELF PUNCT-take-2SG₁ or help=2SG₂ do-1SG₁
 'Can you carry it yourself or should I help you?'

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics II

- The clitic can occur preceding the unstressed duration marker in its clitic form (a.) or verb-initially in its 'affixal' form (b.):

(23) a. an=**om** ær-góæ
 that=1SG₂ DUR-want
 'I want that'

b. **im**-ær-góæ
 1SG₂-DUR-want
 'I want'

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics II

- The clitic can occur preceding the unstressed duration marker in its clitic form (a.) or verb-initially in its 'affixal' form (b.):

(25) a. an=**om** ær-góæ
 that=1SG₂ DUR-want
 'I want that'

 b. **im**-ær-góæ
 1SG₂-DUR-want
 'I want'

→ The affixal form is not restricted to sentence-initial positions:

(26) bá-waz ya ì-r-koš-ome
 PUNCT-tell or 2SG₂-DUR-kill-1SG₁
 'Tell (me) or I will kill you'

→ Because of examples like these, Stilo assumes affixal status

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics III

- The clitic can occur verb-medially following either the punctual marker or the negative marker (in its 'affixal' form), or a preverb (as a clitic):

(27) an=**om** bǎé-diǎ
 that=1SG₂ PUNCT-saw
 'I saw that'

b. b-**ím**-diǎ
 PUNCT-1SG₂-saw
 'I saw'

Some odd occurrences of the Set2 clitics III

- The clitic can occur verb-medially following either the punctual marker or the negative marker (in its 'affixal' form), or a preverb (as a clitic):

(29) an=**om** bǎe-diǎ
 that=1SG₂ PUNCT-saw
 'I saw that'

b. b-**ím**-diǎ
 PUNCT-1SG₂-saw
 'I saw'

- This is (again) not restricted to sentence-initial positions:
 (here following a preverb, in this case *not* in its 'affixal' form)

(30) tinan vǎexdi=ke nahar=esan hár=**es**=da ...
 they.OBL when=SUB lunch=3PL₂(*poss*) PVB=3SG₂=gave
 'When she (=es) gave them (*tinan*) their (=esan) lunch'

Distribution oblique pronouns

	Position	Form
1.	preceding the verbal complex (non-initial position)	clitic
2.	between the members of a complex predicate and after the preverbs	clitic
3.	preceding the duration marker	'affix'
4.	following the punctual or the negation marker	'affix'

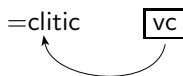
} Only if there is
no host to the left

áwæ=**s** bǎe-paša jaru=**s** kærd=o dǎer=**es**=rua qǎesheng=o
 water=3SG₂ PUNCT-sprinkled broom=3SG₂ did=and PVB=3SG₂=swept beautiful=and
 'He sprinkled water, swept and swept nicely...'

qeylán=**es** b=**ís**=keša=vo jens-a suræt=**es** ú-girættæ=o
 water.pipe=3SG₂(*poss*) PUNCT=3SG₂=smoked=and good-PL inventory=3SG₂ PVB-took=and
 '... and he smoked his waterpipe and took inventory of the goods ...'

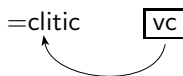
Underlying mechanism: Fronting?

- Stilo assumes that the clitic/affix originates within the verbal complex/the verb and is 'fronted' if an adequate host is available



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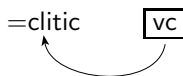
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- **But:** no unified reason why clitic would be fronted in some constructions but not in others

Underlying mechanism: Fronting?

- Stilo assumes that the clitic/affix originates within the verbal complex/the verb and is 'fronted' if an adequate host is available



- **But:** no unified reason why clitic would be fronted in some constructions but not in others
- **Question:** Is there a different explanation?

These examples can be explained with respect to prosody!

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- The oblique clitics are syntactically placed just before the verbal complex:
XP* CL₂ VC

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- Set2 clitics are *enclitics*: they need a preceding host

These examples can be explained with respect to prosody!

Claim:

- The oblique clitics are syntactically placed just before the verbal complex:
XP* CL₂ VC
 - Set2 clitics are *enclitics*: they need a preceding host
 - If stranded in the initial position of a prosodic phrase or if left without an adequate host, the clitic is 'moved' into an adequate position
- via *prosodic inversion* (Halpern 1995)



What we know about Vafsi prosody?

(Based on Stilo (2004a,b)) larger prosodic boundaries (ι , φ) can be found:

- at the beginning of a clause
 - in subordinate clauses, stress usually falls on the subordinate conjunction, but not on *ke* (which thus cannot act as a host for a clitic)
 - *sustained intonation* (pitch level remains high, with a long syllable duration, followed by a short pause $\rightarrow \varphi$ boundary)
 - after coordinating conjunctions -o ('and') and ya ('or'),
 - often after the subject of a sentence in Vafsi (also Persian)
- \Rightarrow This explains all instances where the clitic appears following
- the preverbs
 - the first element of a complex predicate

This explains constructions with preverbs

- clitics following the stressed preverbs

(31) [hár=**om**-da]_{VC} yey kelj-i < (_l =om [há ...
 PVB=1S.OBL=gave one girl-OF
 'I gave (it) to some girl.'

→ clitic would be stranded in initial position of a prosodic phrase

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(33) [hár=**om**-da]_{VC} yey kelj-i < (_i =om [há ...
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 'I gave (it) to some girl.'

- clitic would be stranded in initial position of a prosodic phrase
- vs. constructions where the clitic finds an adequate host

(34) tæmen ketab=**es** [há-baxǎa]_{VC}
 1S.OBL book=3S.OBL PVB-gave.away
 'He gave a book away to me.'

This explains constructions with complex predicates

- clitics following the first member of a complex predicate

(35) æ-cu ešden bæ-vær-i ya [komǽk=i kær-ò̃m]_{vc} < ...ya)_φ(=i...
 DUR-an SELF PUNCT-take-2SG₁ or help=2SG₂ do-1SG₁
 'Can you carry it yourself or should I help you?'

→ ya is followed by sustained intonation = a prosodic phrase boundary

This explains constructions with complex predicates

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(37) æ-cu ešden bæ-vær-i ya [komǽk=i kær-òm]_{vc} < ...ya)_φ(=i...
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- vs. constructions where the clitic finds an adequate host

(38) bálke hævi-án=**es** [komǽk ær-kærdæ]_{vc}
 but all-PL.OBL=3SG₂ help DUR-did
 '... but he helped everybody'

And with the other markers?

- prosodic inversion is impossible after the unstressed durative marker
- marker is not an adequate host
- clitic also can't be positioned after the verb

And with the other markers?

- prosodic inversion is impossible after the unstressed durative marker
- marker is not an adequate host
- clitic also can't be positioned after the verb
- ⇒ the clitic remains **in situ**
- ⇒ Takes on a clitic-under-stress-form (the former 'affixal form') to account for the phrase-initial position

with an adequate host:

- (40) a. an=**om** ær-góæ
 that=1SG₂ DUR-want
 'I want that'

clitic-under-stress:

- b. **ìm**-ær-góæ *=**om**-ær ...
 1SG₂-DUR-want
 'I want'

Similarly with the negation and punctual marker næ-/bæ-

- Both, negation and punctual marker are stressed
- are adequate hosts, prosodic inversion can be applied (if needed)

Similarly with the negation and punctual marker $n\acute{a}e-/b\acute{a}e-$

- Both, negation and punctual marker are stressed
- are adequate hosts, prosodic inversion can be applied (if needed)

But: if these markers are followed by a vowel, they drop their vowel ($\acute{a}e$), and stress is shifted to the following vowel

- The clitic is again 'under stress'

with an adequate host:

(42) a. $an=om$ $b\acute{a}e$ - $di\acute{a}e$
 that=1SG PU-saw
 'I saw that.'

clitic-under-stress:

b. $b=im$ - $di\acute{a}e$
 PU-1SG-saw
 'I saw.'

- Derivation of 'I saw'

1.	<i>input</i>	$=om$ $b\acute{a}e$ - $di\acute{a}e$
2.	<i>prosodic inversion</i>	$b\acute{a}e=om$ - $di\acute{a}e$
3.	<i>vowel deletion, stress shift</i>	$b=om$ - $di\acute{a}e$
4.	<i>clitic under stress</i>	$b=im$ - $di\acute{a}e$

A cumulation of examples

áwæ=s báe-paša || jaru=s kærd=o || dær=es=rua qæšeng=o ||
 water=3SG₂ PUNCT-sprinkled || broom=3SG₂ did=and || PVB=3SG₂=swept beautiful=and ||
 'He sprinkled water, swept and swept nicely...'

qeylán=es b=ís=keša=vo || jens-a suræt=es ú-girættæ=o ||
 water.pipe=3SG₂(*poss*) PUNCT=3SG₂ =smoked=and || good-PL inventory=3SG₂ PVB-took=and ||
 '... and he smoked his waterpipe and took inventory of the goods ...'

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- **Question:** How can we represent this in Lexical-Functional Grammar?

Demonstration examples

(43) a. b=**ím**-diæ
PU-1SG-saw
'I saw.'

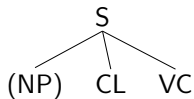
b. an=**om** bǎe-diæ
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Demonstration examples

(44) a. b=**ím**-diæ
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b. an=**om** bæ-diæ
 that=1SG PU-saw
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- A very initial c-structure (XP* CL VC) ...

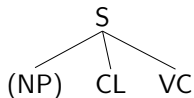


Demonstration examples

(45) a. b=**ím**-diæ
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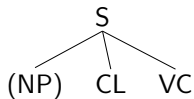
→ C-structure works for b. (which is straightforward), but not for a.!

Demonstration examples

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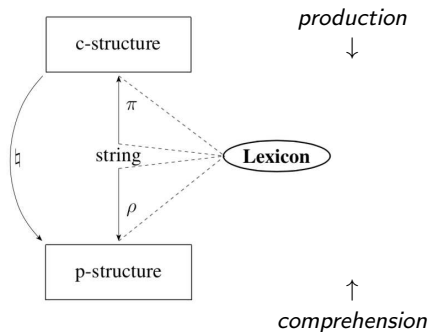
- C-structure works for b. (which is straightforward), but not for a.!
- Resolved via the syntax-prosody interface (as proposed in Bögel (2015))

The Prosody-Syntax interface (Bögel 2015)

Two perspectives:

(Roughly following models as proposed by, a.o., Levelt (1999) and Jackendoff (2002))

- *Production*: from meaning to form (syntax \rightarrow prosody)
- *Comprehension*: from form to meaning (prosody \rightarrow syntax)



ζ : The *Transfer of structure* \rightarrow Information on (larger) syntactic and prosodic phrasing, and on intonation is exchanged

ρ : The *Transfer of vocabulary* \rightarrow Associates morphosyntactic and phonological information on lexical elements and projects them to their respective structures

P-structure – the p-diagram (during production!)

- Linear representation in the p-diagram
 - structured syllablewise
 - ⇒ Each syllable is part of a vector associating the syllable with relevant values:
 - *lexical stress, segments, prosodic phrasing, ...*
- Input to the p-diagram comes from c-structure (*Transfer of structure*) and the lexicon (*Transfer of vocabulary*)

↑	↑	↑			
PHRASING	$(\iota = \sigma$	$(\omega \sigma$	σ	$\sigma) \omega$	ι
...
LEX_STRESS	-	prim	-	-	
SEGMENTS	/om/	/bæ/	/di/	/æ/	
V. INDEX	S₁	S₂	S₃	S₄	

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V. INDEX	S₁	S₂	S₃	S₄	

- Includes language-specific phonological processes ('postlexical phonology')
- But first: transfer processes to p-structure to create this initial p-diagram

The Transfer of Vocabulary

- Associates morphosyntactic and phonological information on lexical elements
- Via the multidimensional lexicon, which projects them to their respective structures

s(yntactic)-form			p(honological)-form	
bæ-diæ V	(↑ PRED)	= 'diæ<SUBJ>'	P-FORM	[bædiæ]
	(↑ TENSE)	= past	SEGMENTS	/b æ d i æ/
	(↑ ASPECT)	= punctual	METR. FRAME	('σσσ) _ω
	...			
om PRON	(↑ PRED)	= 'pro'	P-FORM	[om]
	(↑ PERS)	= 1	SEGMENTS	/o m/
	(↑ NUM)	= sg	METR. FRAME	=σ
	(↑ CL-TYPE)	= set2		
	...			

The Transfer of Vocabulary

- Associates morphosyntactic and phonological information on lexical elements
- Via the multidimensional lexicon, which projects them to their respective structures

s(yntactic)-form			p(honological)-form	
bæ-diæ V	(↑ PRED)	= 'diæ<SUBJ>'	P-FORM	[bædiæ]
	(↑ TENSE)	= past	SEGMENTS	/b æ d i æ/
	(↑ ASPECT)	= punctual	METR. FRAME	('σσσ) _ω
	...			
om PRON	(↑ PRED)	= 'pro'	P-FORM	[om]
	(↑ PERS)	= 1	SEGMENTS	/o m/
	(↑ NUM)	= sg	METR. FRAME	=σ
	(↑ CL-TYPE)	= set2		
	...			

- Each lexical dimension can only be accessed by the related module
- Modular: strict separation of module-related information
- Translation function: Once a dimension is triggered, the related dimensions can be accessed as well.
- ⇒ Associated **p-form is selected and made available to p-structure.**

The Transfer of Vocabulary II

p(honological)-form	
P-FORM	[bædiæ]
SEGMENTS	/b æ d i æ/
METR. FRAME	('σσσ) _ω
P-FORM	[om]
SEGMENTS	/o m/
METR. FRAME	=σ

		↓		
PHRASING	=σ	(σ	σ	σ) _ω
LEX_STRESS	-	prim	-	-
SEGMENTS	/om/	/bæ/	/di/	/æ/
V. INDEX	S₁	S₂	S₃	S₄

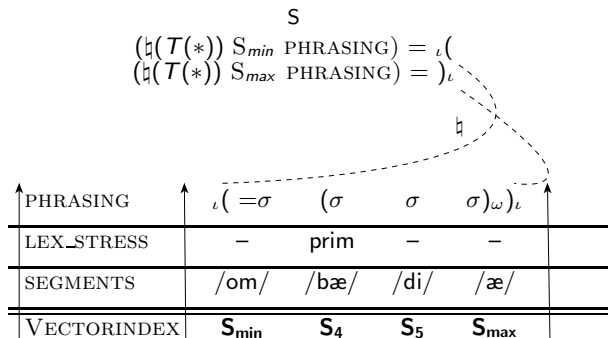
The Transfer of Vocabulary II

p(honological)-form	
P-FORM	[bædiæ]
SEGMENTS	/b æ d i æ/
METR. FRAME	('σσσ) _ω
P-FORM	[om]
SEGMENTS	/o m/
METR. FRAME	=σ

		↓		
PHRASING	=σ	(σ	σ	σ) _ω
LEX_STRESS	-	prim	-	-
SEGMENTS	/om/	/bæ/	/di/	/æ/
V. INDEX	S₁	S₂	S₃	S₄

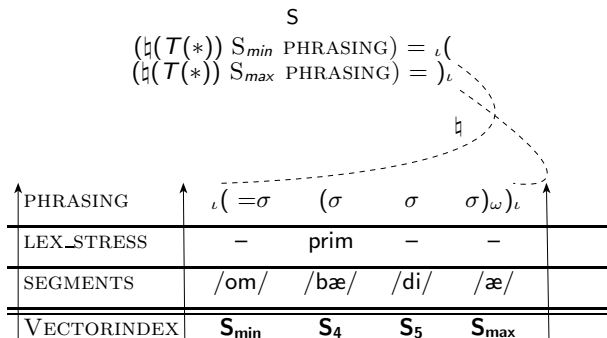
- Also needed: Information on larger prosodic constituents
- Via the *transfer of structure*

The Transfer of Structure ... from syntax to prosody



- where S_{min} refers to the *first* syllable within the scope of a node
 - where S_{max} refers to the *last* syllable within the scope of a node
- Roughly following Selkirk (2011)'s *Match theory*

The Transfer of Structure ... from syntax to prosody



- where S_{min} refers to the *first* syllable within the scope of a node
 - where S_{max} refers to the *last* syllable within the scope of a node
- Roughly following Selkirk (2011)'s *Match theory*
- But problem still unresolved → postlexical phonology

Postlexical phonological processes

Input to p-structure:
(via transfer processes)

PHRASING	$(\iota = \sigma \quad (\sigma \quad \sigma \quad \sigma)_{\omega}) \iota$
LEX_STRESS	- prim - -
SEGMENTS	/om/ /bæ/ /di/ /æ/
V. INDEX	S₁ S₂ S₃ S₄



Postlexical phonology:
(sandhi rules, mismatches etc ...)

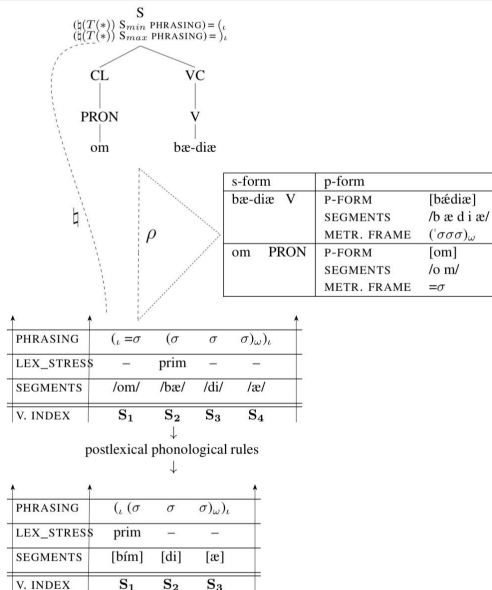
<i>input:</i>	=om bædiæ
<i>prosodic inversion:</i>	bæ=om=diæ
<i>stress shift:</i>	bím=diæ



Output of p-structure:

PHRASING	$(\iota (\sigma \quad \sigma \quad \sigma)_{\omega}) \iota$
LEX_STRESS	prim - -
SEGMENTS	[bím] [di] [æ]
V. INDEX	S₁ S₂ S₃

Overall framework



Conclusion

- Vafsi oblique clitic pronouns do *not* have an affixal counterpart

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- If necessary, they are prosodically 'replaced' to account for their need of an host
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Conclusion

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- The difference in form can be accounted for by assuming an unstressed and a stressed version of the clitic
- The resulting analysis can be straightforwardly implemented at the syntax–prosody interface as proposed in Bögel (2015).

Thank you!

... questions, comments...?

References