Description of Autoclitics
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Four Kinds of Autoclitic Activity

a. 1. Descriptive autoclitics
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1. Descriptive autoclitics

This kind of verbal activity may be designated as one sort of "autoclitic tact." The autoclitic activity here is controlled by properties of the antecedent circumstances that occasion the elementary verbal response. That is, this kind of autoclitic activity is controlled by something of the circumstances in which a response is emitted, something of the source of the response, or something of the emotional or motivational condition of the speaker, including the strength of the response. For example, if a speaker starts a sentence with such phrases as "I am sure...," "I doubt...," "I think...," "I believe...," the speaker is tacting something about the strength of the response. If the speaker starts a sentence with "I heard...," "I see from...," "To coin a phrase," "Presumably," the speaker is tacting something about the source of the stimulus control over the response.

2. Quantifying autoclitics

This kind of verbal activity may be designated as a second sort of "autoclitic tact." The autoclitic activity here is controlled by properties of the antecedent circumstances that occasion the elementary verbal response. This kind of autoclitic activity affects the listener by indicating either a property of the speaker's behavior or the circumstances responsible for that property. Examples include such modifiers as few, many, some, all, all but, however, almost, always, perhaps, too. Articles such as the, this, that, and a are also quantifying autoclitics. Consider the statement "all swans are white." No one has ever seen all swans, so presumably the response is not a tact. Rather, according to a behavioral translation, the statement means that "100% of the time when I am asked what color a swan is, I will say white."

3. Qualifying autoclitics
Perhaps it is meaningful to designate this kind of verbal activity as one sort of "autoclitic mand." The autoclitic activity here is reinforced when the listener behaves in a particular way after hearing the utterance. This kind of autoclitic activity qualifies an accompanying verbal response in such a way that the intensity or direction of the listener's behavior is modified.

Examples include negation, assertion, certain adverbs, suffixes (-like, -less). For example, assertion ("yes!") involves attempting to persuade (mand) the listener to accept comments on a given state of affairs as relatively pure tacts. Negation involves adding "no" or "not" to verbal commentary to signal (mand) the listener that the commentary should not be construed as a tact. The negation indicates that the speaker is not emitting the verbal response under the same conditions as a tact would be emitted, and that the listener should understand this controlling relation for the verbal response.

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4. Relational autoclitics

Perhaps it is meaningful to designate this kind of verbal activity as a second sort of "autoclitic mand." The autoclitic activity here is reinforced when the listener behaves in a particular way after hearing the utterance. This kind of autoclitic activity is controlled by relations among elementary verbal operants.

Sometimes the responses are unique words that in everyday language are called *spatial prepositions*: above, below, far, near.

Other times they are more complex: predication (use of "to be"), punctuation, syntactical word ordering, possessives and the use of 's, and grammatical agreement in tense, case, and number. Consider Roman numerals: Speakers will emit "IV," that is, one order of "I" and "V," when the listener is to take the response as being under the control of four units of something, and "VI," that is, a different order of "I" and "V," when the listener is to take the response as being under the control of six units of something.

In the case of syntactical word ordering, no unique "words" are involved. In addition, one presumably doesn't want to say that the person first covertly emits scrambled words, then covertly arranges them into a complete sentence that is grammatically and syntactically correct according to some mysterious mental editorial process involving mental "rules," and then finally emits audible speech.

Rather, one simply acknowledges that early words in what will eventually be a complete utterance have some bearing on later words. The verbal community reinforces complex statements about events (or whatever) from speakers, but those statements must take forms that are conventionally acceptable to the verbal community. Given that early words in what will become a sentence have been emitted, later words will follow from the earlier according to the form acceptable to the verbal community, and according to the context of the speaker's utterances. (The term context here means both variables present and their functional role in contingencies.) The verbal community may even go so far as to condition "autoclitic frames," which are conventionally prescribed formats or sequences for emitting verbal behavior, as in subject-verb-object or actor-action-object sentences. These frames may become very generalized, such that they come to be applied in many other situations than the original. For example, if a speaker has
learned to say “the boy’s shoe,” “the boy’s coat,” and “the boy’s hat,” the verbal frame “the boy’s ____” has now become established, and the speaker may now be able to say “the boy’s glove” when the boy acquires a glove, without the direct action of reinforcement connected with saying “the boy’s glove.”

Similarly, in predication, the speaker uses some form of the verb "to be" to indicate that there is an important relation between, say, two tacts, such that a tact specifying an object and a tact specifying a property are related in the sense that the speaker is signifying that the object has the tacted property. That is, the same physical object occasions both tacts.

To illustrate, consider the statement, "The apple is red."
"The" is a quantifying autoclitic, designating one specific object.
"Apple" is one tact concerning that object, and "red" is another.
The verb "is" is a relational autoclitic of predication, indicating that the particular physical object that is being talked about is an apple, rather than a fire hydrant, and that the object is red, rather than green.
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