Sequences of pronominal clitics in Mantauran Rukai: V-deletion and suppletion
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This study investigates the fact that in Mantauran Rukai (an endangered Austronesian language spoken in southern Taiwan) a vowel in some pronominal-clitic combinations can be deleted but not in others. For each case, the attested combination results from interacting constraints on the morphophonology of pronominal combinations within an Optimality-theoretic model.

In Mantauran, Zeitoun (1997b) suggests, NOM, OBL, and GEN pronouns are bound; a pronoun changes phonologically if it precedes an OBL pronoun. Hence, such clitic sequences form a morphological unit with fixed ordering. All OBL pronouns are /i/-initial in Mantauran. If a V-final pronoun precedes an OBL pronoun, then its final V is deleted (with one exception further below): =ʔʊ=inə ‘=GEN.2SG=OBL.Vis3SG’, =mitə=iʔə ‘=NOM.INCL1PL=OBL.Vis3SG’, =də=ilina ‘=GEN.Vis3SG=OBL.Vis3PL’, and =nomi=inə ‘=NOM/GEN.2PL=OBL.EXCL1PL’. In these examples, underlining indicates deleted underlying segments. If the shape is /=…CV=i../ (as exemplified above) or /=CVV=i../ (i.e., =aʊ=inə ‘=NOM.1SG=OBL.2PL’ or =nai=inə ‘=NOM/GEN.EXCL1PL=OBL.Vis3SG’), the pronoun-final V will be deleted: [=…C_=i…] and [=…CV_=i…], respectively; however, if the shape is /=V=i../ (namely, with the preceding pronoun consisting of just a single V), then there is no deletion: =i=imitə ‘=GEN.Vis3SG=OBL.INCL1PL’. Our study investigates three complications: (i) the lexical GEN.Vis3SG allomorph /=i/, mentioned immediately above, where the V is not deleted; (ii) pronouns ending in VV, /=aʊ/ and /=nai/ above, delete only the latter V but not both; and (iii) suppletion in one (NOM.2SG) pronoun, with the C-final allomorph /=miʔ=/ only if it precedes an OBL pronoun, and V-final /=moʔə/ elsewhere.

First, the GEN.Vis3SG variants /=ni/ and /=i/ are in complementary distribution: /=i/ merges with hosts ending in a velar stop (hereafter abbreviated as K) plus /ʔ/; /=ni/ is used elsewhere. Two constraints require faithfulness to this lexical subcategorization in these special hosts, */…Ka=ni/; and the use of only the unmarked /=ni/ allomorphic elsewhere, MKD/=i/. Two more constraints, in a markedness subhierarchy, prohibit pronoun-final VV and V if an OBL pronoun follows (where *VV]cl[clonl ] *V]cl[clong]. We also propose a MAXX constraint prohibiting deletion of adjacent segments; it too is in a subhierarchy, dominating MAX (prohibiting deletion of any single segment). Finally, we use Kurisu’s R[REALIZE]M[ORPHEME] constraint, prohibiting the deletion of an entire morphe.

RM » *V]cl[clonl (accounting for the nondeletion of a lone V in /=i/), and *V]cl[clonl ] MAX (accounting for the deletion of the final V in other combinations). Next, deletion of only the latter V in a VV-final pronoun is formalized by the ranking MAXX » *V]cl[clonl ] MAX. Finally, as for suppletion of NOM.2SG /=miʔ=/ and /=moʔə/; a MKD/=miʔ=/ constraint is proposed to select the right allomorph.

The overall hierarchy is thus {RM, MAXX, *VV]cl[clonl , */…Ka=ni/ } *V]cl[clonl ] MAX » MKD/=miʔ=/; also */…Ka=ni/ » MKD/=i/. The two subhierarchies above support these rankings as well.
Beyond strictly formal issues, this study also makes a methodological point. Careful field research on a highly endangered language, resulting in quality documentation (by Li 1996/2004; Zeitoun 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 2000, 2002, 2007; Zeitoun & Lin 2003—which our data come from), allows the wider linguistic community to see this theoretically interesting phenomenon.

**SAMPLE TABLEAU**

| NOM [+me, −you, −PL]; OBL [−me, +you, +PL]. | MAXX | *VV|el[obl] | *V|el[obl] | MAX |
|-------------------------------------------|------|-----|--------|--------|-------|
| a. =ao=inoma                               | *    | W   | *      | L      |
| b. =a=inoma                                 | *    | W   | *      | *      |
| c. ==inoma                                  | L    | W   | **     |

The ranking of *V|el[obl] » MAX is established in a different tableau (not shown). In addition, deletion of the nonfinal V here (i.e., *|=\=o=\=inoma) would violate undominated CONTIGUITY (Billings 2002:66–68).

**REFERENCES**


Zeitoun, Elizabeth & Hui-chuan Lin. 2003. We should not forget the stories of the Mantauran: Memories of our past (Language and Linguistics Monograph Series A–4[.1]). Taipei: Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica.