Clitic placement with infinitives in the diachrony of French

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September 8, 2021
1. Infinitives: various clitic placements in the diachrony of French
2. Methods and corpus
3. Non-restructuring clauses
4. Restructuring clauses
5. Comparison with Romance
1. Background
Clitic complements of infinitives: word orders

- **Proclisis** [clitic $V_{INF}$]
  (1) Alex ira **les voir**.
  Alex go$_{FUT.3SG}$ them=see$_{INF}$
  ‘Alex will go see them.’

- **Enclisis** [$V_{INF}$ clitic]
  (2) *E cum li angeles nostre Seignur estendid sa main sur Jerusalem pur destruire la...* [Old French]
  and like the angel our Lord extend$_{PST.3SG}$ his hand on Jerusalem to destroy$_{INF}$=it
  ‘And like the angel, our Lord extended his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it...’ (QLR: 108,16, de Kok 1985: 115)

- **Clitic climbing** [clitic $V_{FIN}$ $V_{INF}$]
  (3) *Il le sait bien faire.* [Middle French]
  he it=know$_{PRS.3SG}$ well do$_{INF}$
  ‘He knows how to do it well.’ (CNNV : 36/3, Martineau 1990: 62)
1. Background
Changes in clitic placement with infinitives in French

**Restructuring contexts**: \([V_{\text{MODAL}} + \text{Lexical } V_{\text{INF}}]\)

- Shift from Clitic Climbing (4) to Proclisis (5)

\[(4) \text{ il } \text{ le } \text{sait} \quad \text{bien faire.} \quad \text{(Middle French)}\]
\[
\text{he it=know}_{\text{PRS.3SG}} \quad \text{well do}_{\text{INF}}
\]
\[\rightarrow\]
\[\text{‘He knows how to do it well.’}\]

\[(5) \text{ il } \text{sait} \quad \text{bien le faire.} \quad \text{(Modern French)}\]
\[
\text{he know}_{\text{PRS.3SG}} \quad \text{well it=do}_{\text{INF}}
\]

**All other contexts:**

- Shift from Enclisis (6) to Proclisis (7)

\[(6) \text{ ... pur } \text{ destruire la} \quad \text{(Old French)}\]
\[
\text{to destroy}_{\text{INF}=\text{it}}
\]
\[\rightarrow\]
\[\text{‘... to destroy it’}\]

\[(7) \text{ ... pour } \text{ la détruire} \quad \text{(Modern French)}\]
\[
\text{to } \text{it=destroy}_{\text{INF}}
\]
2. Methods
Research questions

**Central theme**: How did clitic placement change with infinitives in the diachrony of French?

1. When and how did the language transition from *enclisis* to *proclisis* in non-restructuring contexts?
2. And from *clitic climbing* to *proclisis* in restructuring contexts?
3. How does *pro-/enclisis* interact with *clitic climbing*?
2. Methods
Corpus

• **Metadata**
  - **Register**: epistolary, legal
  - **Region**: mostly Normandy
  - **Sources**: acts, letters, customs
  - **Period**: ↔ 700 years

• **Tools**
  - **Data extraction**: AntConc
  - **Annotation**: NVivo

• **Constructions**
  - The clitic cliticises on $V_{INF}$ (enclisis & proclisis)
  - The clitic cliticises on $V_{FIN}$ (clitic climbing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Old French</th>
<th>Middle French</th>
<th>Early Modern French</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
<td>1150-1300</td>
<td>1302-1614</td>
<td>1676-1856</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Words</strong></td>
<td>319,377</td>
<td>306,314</td>
<td>188,141</td>
<td>813,832</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clitics</strong></td>
<td>1,039</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>1,096</td>
<td>3,546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Non-restructuring contexts

Findings: percentage per century

- Too little data for the 12\textsuperscript{th} c.
- Enclisis available until the early 14\textsuperscript{th} c.
- Proclisis is the only ordering after 1350
- Interpolation available until the 19\textsuperscript{th} c.

Interpolation $\rightarrow$ [... clitic XP $V_{\text{INF}}$]

Figure 1: Findings for non-restructuring contexts
3. Non-restructuring contexts
Contexts of enclisis

(8) &  se les freres  les poent  marier [pp sanz desparagier soi ... ]

and if the brothers them can. PRS.3PL marry. INF without disparage. INF =REFL

‘and if the brothers can marry them without disparaging themselves ...’ (Grand Coutumier, 1300)

(9) tu  mobliges  a fere le.

you me-force. PRS.2SG to do. INF =it

‘you force me to do it.’ (Grand Coutumier, 1300)

(10) et à ce jor est-il  tenuz de venir i.

and at this day be.PRS.3SG-it hold. PP to come. INF =there

‘and to this day it is mandatory to come here.’ (Établissements et coutumes 13th c)
3. Non-restructuring contexts
Clitic placement theory

**Enclisis**
(11)

**Proclisis**
(12)

Enclisis: long V-movement (Cinque 2004)
e.g. Standard Italian

Proclisis: short V-movement (Cinque 2004)
e.g. Modern French

(Kayne 1991, Roberts 2010)
Old French

(13) ... et aiser *tousjours* icelle sentence de la pitié divine.
   and establish-INF always this sentence of the pity divine
   ‘... and always establish this sentence with the divine pity.’
   (La vie et les Epistres p.155, 1290)

Modern French

(14)a. ... et *toujours établir* cette sentence avec la pitié divine.
   and always establish-INF this sentence with the pity divine

b. */?* ... et *établir toujours* cette sentence avec la pitié divine.

➢ From Old French to Middle French: loss of long V-movement; rise of proclisis
Non-restructuring contexts

Further evidence: *Amuïssement* (-r muting)

From 1150 (Fouché 1966), completed by the 14th c. (Vising and Andersson 1899)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to speak:</th>
<th>parle-r</th>
<th>parle-z</th>
<th>parle-Ø</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to die:</td>
<td>mouri-r</td>
<td>mouri-z</td>
<td>mouri-Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to see:</td>
<td>voi-r</td>
<td>voi-z</td>
<td>voi-Ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From Old French to Middle French: amuïssement;* loss of long V-movement; rise of proclisis
3. Non-restructuring contexts
Analysis of change

[Old French; long V-movement; enclisis]
(15)

[French after 1300; loss of -r; short V-movement; proclisis]
(16)
3. Non-restructuring contexts
The loss of interpolation in the 19th c.

(17) Pourquoi ne **le pas** **anneler**.  \[\text{Modern Fr.: [ne pas l’anneler]}\]
‘Why not put a ring in it?’ (Pesnelle, 1771)

(18) & **à le bien** **visiter** **avant de l’acheter**.  \[\text{Modern Fr.: [à bien le visiter]}\]
‘and to visit it correctly, before buying it.’ (Merville, 1731)

- Evidence of **phonological cliticisation** in Middle French (the clitic must cliticise on a prosodic word)
- Loss of interpolation: **syntactic cliticisation** (the clitic must cliticise on a particular element: V)

(Ledgeway and Lombardi 2005)
4. Restructuring contexts
Widespread clitic climbing

(19)a. et où il *le* pouet faire.
   and where he *it* can.PST.3SG *do* INF
   ‘and where he could *do it*.’ (Corpus Philippicum, 13th)

   b. et où il peut *le faire*. [Modern French]

(20)a. Bertrans ne *le* volt rendre.
   Bertran.NOM not it=want.PRS.3SG give-back INF
   ‘Bertran does not want to *give it back*.’ (Établissements et C., 13th)

   b. Bertrans ne veut *le rendre*. [Modern French]

- **From 1150 to the 15th c: 99.12%** of clitic climbing

Figure 2: Findings for restructuring contexts
4. Restructuring contexts
Assumptions about structure


- Lack of clause-boundedness (Wurmbrand 2004)
- The main verb is a functional head (Cinque 2004)

**Restructuring structure:**
(21) $\overline{CP} \overline{TP} \overline{VP \ modal \ VP \ infinitive \ ...}$
- **Old and Middle French**
  
  [(\(\varphi\)-defective lower v, (obligatory?) *clitic climbing*)](22)

- **Modern French**
  
  [(obligatory *proclisis*)](23)
5. Relationship between pro-/enclisis and CC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diachrony of French</th>
<th>Similar systems in Romance</th>
<th>Restructuring contexts</th>
<th>Non-restructuring contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old French</td>
<td>Spanish, Catalan, Gascon, Standard Italian</td>
<td>Clitic climbing: yes&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Enclisis: yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle French</td>
<td>Sardinian, Occitan, Francoprovençal</td>
<td>Clitic climbing: yes&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern French</td>
<td>Brazilian Portuguese</td>
<td>Proclisis: yes&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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1. Clitic climbing is optional in the similar systems, where enclisis is an alternative. Clitic climbing seems obligatory in Old French.
2. Clitic climbing is obligatory in Sardinian (and Middle French?). Proclisis is an alternative in Occitan and Francoprovençal.
3. Proclisis is obligatory in most varieties of Brazilian Portuguese whilst clitic climbing is still attested in others.
Concluding remarks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-restructuring contexts</th>
<th>Restructuring contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- shift from enclisis to proclisis ca. 1300</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- loss of infinitival morphophonology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- loss of long V-movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ the clitic did not change its position</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- shift from clitic climbing to proclisis during 18th c</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ lower v became richer with [uφ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ the clitic started targeting a more local position</td>
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Further implications:
- Restructuring was not lost in French, but most transparency effects were (clitic climbing, auxiliary switch, se-passive...) (Pearce 1990, Roberts 1997)
  - Long object movement is still available (Hobæk Haff and Lødrup 2016)
  - Quantifier climbing is still available (Cinque 2002)

- There is no obvious connection between enclisis and clitic climbing despite the fact that numerous Romance languages have both
Selected references

- de Kok, A. (1985), La place du pronom personnel régime conjoint en français: une étude diachronique, Rodopi, Amsterdam.