PROCLISIS AND ENCLISIS OF OBJECT PRONOUNS AT THE TURN OF THE 17TH CENTURY:  
THE SPEECH OF THE FUTURE LOUIS XIIIth.*

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1. Introduction

The Journal de Jean Héroard (Foisil 1989) gives us an idea of some aspects of the language spoken at the turn of the 17th century thanks to transcriptions of the speech of the child who would become Louis XIII. Louis XIII was born in September 1601; during his first years of life, Jean Héroard, who was his appointed doctor, made a record of his development and, what is particularly interesting for us, transcribed almost phonetically an important number of utterances proffered by the child from the moment he started to speak to around his 12th birthday. After that, transcriptions are less numerous and are less clearly exact renditions of the child’s speech. Given characteristics of several varieties of current spoken French, other early renditions of the spoken language (e.g. around 1830, those of Henry Monnier (1799-1877)) as well as characteristics of child language, we consider the data collected by Héroard as a trustworthy rendition, as far as the aspects of syntax discussed here are concerned. In this article, we study the relative position of object clitics and the verb in this corpus. The data is discussed in the light of the evolution of French clitic placement, showing that it reflects a combination of changes in

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clause structure and of changes in the grammar of clitics themselves. We focus on imperatives, paying special attention to coordinated positive imperatives and to negative imperatives.

2. **Positive imperatives**

2.1. **The general rule**

The first examples of simple positive imperatives with clitics are found when the child was 2;08. As can be seen in (1), clitics are postverbal, following the general rule for imperatives. (In the examples, the relevant verbs are in bold and the clitics in bold italics; other relevant elements are underlined.)

(1) a. *Alé vous en* Moucheu Eouä. (2:08; June 1604, p. 486)

   ‘Go away, Mister Héroard.’

b. *Assisé moy* enco (2:08; June 1604, p. 490)

   ‘Sit me again.’

c. *Amené le amené le* que je le voie (2:08; June 1604, p. 490)

   ‘Bring him, bring him that I see him.’

This word order in imperatives goes back to early Old French. Early Old French, as Old Romance in general, was subject to the so-called “Tobler-Mussafia law” (TM), according to which objects clitics are preverbal everywhere except when this would place them in clause initial position. The constraint held for all clause types, as illustrated in (2) and (3).

(2) a. *Pursiu les*, senz dute les prendras, sis ocras.’
‘Chase them, without doubt you will catch them, and kill them.’  (QLR:58,8 in Kok:84)

b. **Vint s’en al tabernacle;**

   ‘[She] went to the tabernacle’  (QLR I,9)

c. **Conois la tu?”**

   ‘Do you know her?’  (Queste:112,17 in de Kok:82)

(3)  a. **Un vaissel nuvel me portéz é sél m’i metéz**

   ‘Bring me a new dish and put salt in it for me.’  (QLR:176,20 in de Kok:78)

b. **Allez en est en un verger suz l’ombre.**

   ‘He went into a garden, into the shade.’  (Roland:11)

c. Sire, (…) ensi **vous avint il?**

   ‘Sire, (…) did it happen to you so?’  (Merlin II 46 in Skårup:161)

In earlier work, we showed that these facts can be expressed by an OT type constraint on clitics such as that given in (4b) (cf. Hirschbühler & Labelle 2000, 2001, Labelle & Hirschbühler 2001), viewed as one of a series of OT ranked violable constraints (4).

(4)  a. **{cl, [+T]}**

   (clitics adjoined to finite V)

b. **NONINITIAL (cl, CP)**

   (clitics noninitial in CP)

c. **LEFTMOST (cl, CP)**

   (clitics as far left as possible)

   Ranking : (a) >> (b) >> (c)  

   (‘>>’ = dominates)
This sort of approach to clitic placement has been argued for by various authors in their discussions of other languages, most notably by Anderson (e.g. 1996, 1999) and Legendre (e.g. 1996, 1997, 2001).

Lately, we have been exploring an alternative account, following work by Benincà (1991, 1995), Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991), Martins (2001 [1995]), Rivero (1997) and many others, where the postverbal position of clitics is the result of the verb moving over the clitics to a higher position (Hirschbühler & Labelle 2000, 2001, Labelle & Hirschbühler 2004). In this type of approach, verb movement is taking place independently of the presence of clitics. Here, we present an analysis along those lines, highlighting a possible limitation towards the end of the paper.

Briefly, we assume a split-CP layer à la Rizzi (1977). The verb second character of Old French is derived as follows. Some XP with a Topic of Focus feature occupies (as a result of Move or Merge) the specifier of the highest head of the CP layer, a discourse-related head labelled Z. This Z head selects a Fin(ite) head having a V feature, and attracting the verb. We assume that clitics are adjoined to the highest head having a V feature, which is Fin in V2 clauses, as shown in (5) (for sentence (3c)).

(5) ZP

```
      ensi [+Top]
     /     \
   Z      FinP
  /     /   \   \   \ 
 Z'    Fin TP
       /   /   /   /  \\
      vous Fin il... avint
```
The TM effect is the result of the verb moving to Z, to the left of clitics. We assume that the movement of the verb reflects the fact that it too may carry a Topic or Focus feature.

(6) ZP

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Conoisi} \\
\text{Fin} \\
\text{TP}
\end{array}
\]

V2 in imperatives essentially disappeared during the XVth century, with an occasional example showing up until the beginning of the 17th century (cf. De Kok 1985:316, 321; Fournier 1998:84, §115), as in (7):

(7) a. Or me dites, si ces mutacions contre notre naturel ne sont vrayes folies, […]?

‘Now, tell me whether these changes against our nature are not real foolishness,…’

(Louise Labé (1525-1566, discours 5))

b. Escrivez-leur puis me baillez vos létres.” (Maupas [1607], in Fournier 1998:§115 bis)

‘Write to them and-then give me your letters.’

At the start of the 17th century, French was no longer a V2 language, with a Z head forcing movement of either an XP to its Spec or a V to its head in all clause types. To account for the V-cl order in unmarked positive imperatives, we assume that the Z head of Old French had been reanalyzed in the 13th century as a head carrying a [+IMP] illocutionary feature, forcing the imperative verb to move there, to the left of clitics.
2.2 Balanced and unbalanced coordination

In coordinated positive imperatives, Louis XIII relies on two grammatical systems until age 10. In positive imperatives introduced by *et* or *puis*, the corpus contains seven examples with a preverbal clitic and six with a postverbal one. The examples are listed in Tables 1 and 2 (the material between parentheses are clarifications added by Héroard.) As discussed below, the *et* V-*cl* order corresponds to a balanced coordination system, where both conjuncts have the same structure, while the *et cl-*V order corresponds to an “unbalanced coordination” system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>preverbal clitic</th>
<th>postverbal clitic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Descendé la <em>puis</em> <em>la remeté</em>. (3;09, June 1605, p. 687)</td>
<td>a’. M’amie Piolan *renvoié le moi mai que madame soi (soit) en sa chambe et puis <em>faite li a crere que vou l’avé a peti semblan</em>. (3;08, June 1605, p. 678)</td>
</tr>
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<td>‘Bring her down, then put her back.’</td>
<td>‘(...) and then make her believe that (...’</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. «Faite faite la colé (coler),» dict-il soudain, «puis <em>la meté</em> la afin qu’on ne die pa que c’é moi qui l’ay rompue»</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

1 It is not clear whether in these examples *puis* should simply be treated as an adverb meaning ‘then’ and occupying SpecCP (ZP) in a residual V2 construction, as discussed below in the text, or whether *puis* and *et puis* should be treated as a substitute of *et*, as in many dialects, among which spoken québécois.
(4:03, Dec. 1605, p. 849)  
‘(... then put it there so that (...’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preverbal clitic</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Table 2 – Coordinated positive imperatives with et</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Il le dict. « Ton regne advene etc. donne nou note pain quotidien. Fau ti dire ainsi maman ga: <em>et nou padons</em> nos offence. Ai-je bien di maman ga» … (3:08, Jun 1605, p. 688)  ‘Maman Ga, must we say so: and pardon (us) our sins’</td>
<td>a’. Vene moy sevi a maon bateme <em>et emmené moy</em> un beau cheval … (4:04, Jan. 1606, p. 863)  ‘(...) and bring me a nice horse...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Me de Montglat le faict escrire a son fils: «Petit montga voié de ma par moucheu de gan du mon onque et madame la gan ducesse ma tante <em>et leu dite</em> que je leu baise teshumbemen le main … (6:04, Jan. 1606, p. 863)  ‘(...) and tell them that ...’</td>
<td>b’. Donné mon chapon a ma soeu (souer) <em>et donné moy</em> sa tete de cheveau.  (4:07. Apr. 1606, p. 927)  ‘give my chicken to my sister and give me her goat head’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| c. «Birat allé vous en au logi de Francino et *li dite* qu’i m’envoie lé poutrai (les pourtraicts) du gran pere a maman et de mon grand pere, allé, couré». (7:04, 11 | c’. Leve moy, *et faictes moy* venir tous les garçons de la chambre (9:07, May 11 1611, p. 1920)  ‘Get me out of bed and have all the boys of
Jan. 1608, p. 1362)

‘(...) and tell him that...’

the room come to me’

d. «Tené porté cela a maman ga, couvré cela et li dite que je li envoie de tou ce que j’ay». (8;02; 10 Nov. 1608, p. 1536)

‘(...) and tell her that...’

d’. «Gardés vous bien et soiés le plus fort quand vous irés a la guerre; et escrivés moy souvent». (9;11. Aug. 4, 1611, p. 1941)

‘(...) and write to me often.’

e. «Madame envoiés leur dire qu’ils s’assemblent et me y envoiés ils ne me refuseront point». (10;07, 20 May 1612, p. 2022)

‘(...) and send me there,’

e’. «Portés, dict-il, cela a Mousseu de Souvré et dictes luy que vela des hortolans des Tuilleries que je luy envoie». (10;0. Sept. 1611, p. 1957)

‘(...) and tell him that...’

The early Old French order et V-cl was supplanted by et cl-V during the first half of the 13th century. This new word order arose towards the end of the 12th century and lasted until the end of the 17th century. (Skárup:366; de Kok: 315).

(8) Nicole, apportez-moi mes pantoufles et me donnez mon bonnet de nuit.

‘Nicole, bring me my slippers and give me my nightcap’ (Molière, B.G.II,4)

We analyze the et cl-V order in examples like (8) and similar ones in Tables 1 and 2 as due to an “unbalanced coordination” of the type proposed by Kiparsky (1995:149) for Old Germanic languages. Kiparsky shows that, in Old English, in a non-initial conjunct, besides the normal V2 order, V may be final (as in embedded clauses), or it may immediately follow the coordinating
conjunction (with the subject in postverbal position). He derives these words orders by assuming that “Spec-C and C⁰ may be omitted in non-initial conjuncts.” For French, we suggest that the second conjunct of an imperative clause is FinP instead of ZPₜ[IMP].

(9) &P (from 1170 to classical French)

In this construction, the Z head, which carries the illocutionary force feature, has scope over both conjuncts. Let us add, for completeness, that the coordinator mais introduces full CPs (not FinP), as indicated by the fact that mais V-cl rather than mais cl-V is generally found in positive imperatives (Foulet 1972:§172, de Kok 1985:76, 79, 314-316). This divergent behavior is not unexpected, given contrasts such as those below (present-day French), where the two coordinated clauses have a distinct illocutionary force. The facts suggest that mais requires each conjunct to express its own illocutionary force, and therefore to project a full CP.

(10) a. [Pierre est doué], mais/*et/*ou [a-t-il la volonté de faire les sacrifices nécessaires?]

‘Peter is talented, but/*and/*or has he the will to make the necessary sacrifices?’

b. [Suis-moi si tu veux], mais/*et/*ou [sais-tu à quoi tu t’engages?]

‘Follow me if you want, but/*and/*or do you know what you are committing yourself to?’

c. [Pierre n’est pas rapide], mais/*et/*ou [fais-lui confiance pour faire de l’argent!]

‘Peter is not quick, but/*and/*or put your trust in him to make money!’
As can be seen in the right-hand column of Tables 1 and 2, examples of type *et V-cl* are found in the corpus of Louis XIII, where they are as frequent as those with the *et cl-V* word order. In texts written around 1600, in coordinated imperatives, the *cl-V* order was the general rule. The *et V-cl* order re-emerged as early as in the middle of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, as illustrated in (11).

(11) \[ \textit{et pardonnez moy toutesfoiz.} \]

(\textit{CNN :164 , year 1466, in Kok:314})

‘and pardon me however’

This word order reflects a balanced coordination system where both clauses are full articulated CPs (i.e. ZPs). It supplanted the older system during the 17\textsuperscript{th} century, examples of *et cl-V* being only occasionally found during the 18\textsuperscript{th} century. At this point we speculate that the emergence of postverbal clitics in coordinated imperatives is an ultimate consequence of the loss of V2. With the disappearance of constructions of type *XP cl-V*, *et* and *ou* provide the only remaining context where the clitic may be preverbal in positive imperatives. Since *et* and *ou* have no effect on clitic position in declaratives and questions, there would have been a tendency to make the paradigm uniform through syntactic regularization, with coordination being uniformly reinterpreted as done at the highest level in the CP layer, the cue provided by examples with preverbal clitics being insufficient now to maintain the earlier analysis.

3. **Negative clauses**

3.1 **Omission of ne**
In the corpus of Louis XIII, in addition to negatives with *ne* (12), negative declaratives, questions, and imperatives are found without *ne* in large number. After the age of 10, there are more examples with *ne*.

(12) a. *A ne* tare dire (je ne le sçauroit dire)  
    ‘I couldn’t say that’

b. *A ne* tare dire tela (je ne sçauroit dire cela)  
    ‘I couldn’t say that’

c. *je ne* pante a nu ma (je ne pense à nul mal)  
    ‘I think of no evil.’

The first negative clause of the corpus is a negation without *ne*:

(13) … on lui présente son sabot, respond: «Fai *pa* beau saboté»  
    ‘one presents him with his clog, answers: “One is not beautiful, with clogs”.’

But, even before the child turns three, there is variation between presence (14) and absence (15) of *ne*:

(14) Negative clauses with *ne*  

a. *Je né pas* encore equivé  
    ‘I have not yet written’

b. *je ne* sui *pu* petit enfan … *je ne* pui *pu* equivé …  
    (2;08. May 1604, p. 482)
‘I am no more a little kid... I can’t write anymore...

c. je ne veu poin voë le cu de Madame,… (2;09. May 1604, p. 486)
   ‘I don’t want to see the ass of Madame,’

d. …mai je ne le veu pa voi. (2;10. June 1604, p. 489)
   ‘...but I don’t want to see him’

e. Je n’ay pa bien joué (2;11. Aug 1604, p. 506)
   ‘I didn’t play well.’

(15) Negative clauses without ne

a. Vou passeré pa. (2;11. Aug 1604, p. 504)
   ‘You won’t pass.’

b. J’ay pa bien joué (2;11. Aug 1604, p. 506; twice on that page)
   ‘I didn’t play well.’

d. Je sui pa gentilhomme. (2;11. Aug 1604, p. 510)
   ‘I am not gentleman.’

Negative clauses without ne are found to the end of the corpus. A representative set of examples is given below.

(16) a. «Hoo je mangeré (ne mangerois) pu (plus)).» (5;02. Dec. 11, 1606, p. 1127)
   ‘Hoo, I will not eat anymore.’

b. «Non, je je le veu pa (ne le veulx pas)» (6;02. Dec., 1607, p. 1352)
   ‘No, I don’t want it.’
c. «I son pa (ils ne sont pas) fai pu cela (pour cela)» (6;02. Dec., 1607, p. 1352)

‘They are not made for that (purpose).’

d. «Dite a maman ga que j’avé pa (je n’avois pas) bien faict le deu (deux) ligne(es) et que
j’en recommence deux aute (tres)» (7;11. Aug. 1608, p. 1474)

‘Tell Maman Ga that I didn’t do well the two lines and that I am doing two more.’

e «Maman ga, j’ay fai troi ligne (es) mai vené pa icy ba, ne bougé (és) de dessu un coffre,
je m’en va achevé (er) encore deu ligne (deux lignes)»…. (7;11. Aug. 1608, p. 1474)

‘Maman Ga, I have done three lines, but don’t come down here, don’t move from chest,
I will finish two more lines.’

f. «Parlon pa de cela, parlon de cela». (11;11. Aug. 1612, p. 2046)

‘Let’s not talk about that, let’s talk about that.’

Clearly, the absence of *ne* in negative clauses is not a question of late acquisition, as *ne* is
used productively from very early on (before three), and there is a sizeable proportion of negative
clauses with and without *ne* to the end of the corpus. To us, this shows that Louis XIII has two
grammars in competition, one with *ne* and one without. If this is right, the omission of *ne* in
spoken speech, which is typical of contemporary spoken French, has its origin earlier than what
Martineau and Mougeon (2001) suggest.

### 3.2 Negative imperatives without *ne*

The omission of *ne* is also found in negative imperatives. We now turn to the effect of the
omission of *ne* on clitic placement. In Old French, clitics always preceded the verb in negative
clauses, this being attributed to the presence of *ne*, which occupies the clause-initial position, allowing clitics to remain preverbal.

(17)  

a. *N’i ad* castel ki devant lui remaigne

‘There is no castle that resist him’  

(Roland 004)

b. De ces service *ne vos membre* il gaires

‘You don’t remember this help’  

(Orange:180)

In an approach where encliticization is the result of movement of the verb to the left of clitics, we have to assume that *ne* occupies a head position, either a Neg head between Z and Fin or the Z head itself. In either case, its presence blocks verb movement. We simply assume here, pending further work on the subject, that the Z head may carry some type of affirmative/negative polarity feature allowing it to host *ne*, thereby preventing V from moving to it. In this approach, if *ne* is omitted in negative imperatives, we expect the verb to move to Z over the clitics, yielding the V-cl order. Indeed, in the corpus of Louis XIII, the first relevant example has a postverbal clitic:

(18)  

Madame esternue, chacun luy dit «Dieu vous soit en aide». Il s’en fasche : «Non, *dite luy* pa Dieu vous soit en aide».  

(3:02. Nov. 1604, p. 548)

‘Madame sneezes, everyone says to her “God bless you”. He gets angry: “No don’t tell her God bless you”.’

This word order is attested in many French dialects (Hirschbühl & Labelle 2001, 2003).
(19) a. Québécois:

*Occupe-toi pas* de ça. (‘Ne t’occupe pas de ça.’)
‘Don’t bother about it.’

*Dis-moi* pas ça. j’vas t’embrasser encore…  (Larose 1898:180)
‘Don’t tell me that, I’ll kiss you again...’

b. Bourbonnais:

... les curés je les aime point. *Aime-les* point, mon gars, ....
‘... priests I don’t like them. Don’t like them, boy, ...’  (Fallet 1973:12)

In the dialect of Vendée described by Rézeau (1976), clitics are postverbal in negative imperatives without *ne*, but preverbal after the conjunction *pi*, the local equivalent of *et* (19).

(20)  a. *Argard moe pa*. (‘Ne me regarde pas.’)
‘Don’t look at me.’

b. *Va ché li pi yi di*... (‘Va chez lui et dis-lui...’)
‘Go to him and tell him...’

The first example of (20) shows that in this dialect, V raises to a functional projection to the left of clitics in non-coordinated negative imperatives, just as it does in positive imperatives; the second one is a case of unbalanced coordination, with the verb remaining under Fin.

This is not the grammar developed by Louis XIII, however, as, after example (18) of a negative imperative with a postverbal clitic, the corpus contains 30 distinct utterances where
clitics are preverbal in the absence of *ne*, the first one at 4:06 and the last one at 8:00 years of age (several occurrences of the same cl-V sequence in a single utterance count for one). See Table 3. This word order in negative imperatives without *ne* is the most common one today in European French.

Table 3 – Negative imperatives without *ne* and with preverbal clitics

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Gade bien de me faire mal, <strong>me meté pa</strong> l’epingle dan la teste (3;06, March 1605, p. 620)</td>
<td>‘Take care not to hurt me, don’t put the needle in my head.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>He maman ga <strong>m’appelé pa</strong> moveu, <strong>m’appelé pa</strong> moveu, appellé-moi moucheu daulphin (3;10, June 1605, p. 675)</td>
<td>‘Hey Maman Ga, don’t call me snotty-nosed, call me Monsieur Le Dauphin’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hee maman ga <strong>me donné pa</strong> le fouet…. (4;03, Dec. 1605, p. 851)</td>
<td>‘Hey Maman Ga, don’t whip me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Me faite pu</strong> de conte (des contes), chanté (és) je veu domi (dormi). (4;04, Jan. 1606, p. 873)</td>
<td>‘Stop telling me stories, sing, I want to sleep.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fefé <strong>le dite pa</strong> a papa, je fairay pu (je ne le fairay plus)… (4;07, Apr. 1606, p. 931)</td>
<td>‘Fefe, don’t tell it to my dad, I won’t do it again.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>«Hee maman ga <strong>me donné (és) pa</strong> le fouet, hee <strong>me donné pa</strong> le fouet maman ga» (4;08, May 1606, p. 954) (Two other examples on this page)</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>«…, je serai pu opinante, je vou pie (prie) <strong>ly dite pas</strong>». (4;08, May 1606, p. 961)</td>
<td>‘…, I won’t be stubborn anymore, please, don’t tell him.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>le dite pas</strong>. (4;08, June 1606, p. 983)</td>
<td>‘Don’t say it (to anyone)’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>French Text</td>
<td>English Translation</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>«Hé <em>li</em> dite <em>pa</em> j’en mangeray pu (plus)». (4;09. June 1606, p. 984)</td>
<td>‘Don’t tell him, I won’t eat of that anymore’</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>«Maman j’ay fai l’opinat au matin, <em>me donné</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em> le fouet demain matin, …» (4;10. July 1606, p. 1011)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>«Maman je vos pie (<em>prie</em>), <em>me vené</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em> voi (pas voir) si matin» (4;10. July 1606, p. 1012)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>«He maman ga padoné moy, <em>me donné</em> (<em>donnés</em>) <em>pa</em> le fouet». (4;10. July 1606, p. 1014;)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>«He maman ga <em>me donné</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em> le fouet, <em>ne me le donné pa</em> ». (4;10. July 1606, p. 1017)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>«He maman ga <em>me baillé</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em> le fouet,… ». (4;10. July 1606, p. 1020; also p. 1053)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>«He maman <em>me donné</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em> le fouet». (4;11. Aug. 1606, p. 1028; also p. 1029, 1032, 1049 (four times), 1053 (two times), 1072, 1249, 1289.)</td>
<td>‘Maman, please, don’t come to see me so early (in the morning)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>« Je vous pie (<em>prie</em>) <em>vous en allé</em> (<em>és</em>) <em>pa</em>». (5;10. July 1607, p. 1251)</td>
<td>‘Please, don’t go away.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>«Je veu ete (estre) le valé de pié (valet de pied) mai <em>le dite pas</em>». (5;11. Aug. 1607, p. 1275)</td>
<td>‘I want to be the footman, but don’t tell that (to anyone)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>… disant a Mr de la court: «La Cour <em>le laissé pa</em> enté (trer), …». (5;11. Aug. 1607, p. 1289)</td>
<td>‘saying to Mr de la Cour: “La Cour, don’t let him come in”’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>« J’aime mieux estre foueté et <em>le dicte pas</em> au roi mon pere». (8;00. Sept. 1609, p. 1664)</td>
<td>‘I prefer to be whipped, and don’t say that to the king my father.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *cl-V* order in these sentences suggests that, in such negative imperatives without *ne*, there is a syntactically present but phonetically null *ne*, i.e. a null negative head preventing verb-
movement to the left of clitics (Hulk 1996). Present-day speakers of French who use the same cl-V word order often comment that they “feel” that there is a suppressed ne in these examples. For contemporary French, this hypothesis is discussed, and rejected, in Hirschbühler & Labelle (2001) on the basis of a contrast in the behavior of clitics en and y as opposed to the other clitics, and on the basis of negative imperatives where the negative element is a negative quantifier like rien ‘nothing’ or personne ‘nobody’. In the next section, we discuss the case of en and y in the corpus of Louis XIII; this corpus does not contain relevant examples with rien or personne.

3.3. Negative imperatives with en and y

For speakers of contemporary French, en and y, are excluded from the preverbal position of negative imperatives without ne when they are not preceded by another object clitic (21)-(22), (Hirschbühler & Labelle 2001, 2003).

    ‘Don’t talk about it’

b. *En mettons pas.
    ‘Let’s not put any (on)’

c. ??Y vas pas.
    ‘Don’t go there’

d. *Y goûte pas.
    ‘Don’t taste it’

(22) a. Vous en faites pas.
    ‘Don’t worry about it’
b. *Vous y fiez* pas.

‘Don’t trust it’

There is no constraint against clause-initial *en/y* in questions & declaratives, as seen in (23):

(23) a. *En voulez-vous?*

‘Do you want some?’

b. *Y allez-vous?*

‘Are you going there?’

c. *En acheter* serait inutile.

‘To buy some would be useless’

d. *Y aller* serait inutile.

‘To go there would be useless’

Instead of producing (21), some speakers reintroduce *ne* (24); others allow the *V-cl* order in that specific case (i.e. only with *en, y*) (25).

(24) a. *N’en parle* pas.

‘Don’t talk about it’

b. *N’y va* pas.

‘Don’t go there’


‘Don’t talk about it’
b. Vas-y pas.
   ‘Don’t go there’

In the corpus of Louis XIII, we find a number of negative imperatives with *en* and *y*. As shown in (26), all of them are with *ne*. This suggests that Louis XIII is a speaker of the dialect which requires *ne* in negative imperatives when *en* or *y* would otherwise be initial.

(26) a. «N’en meté pa su du pain e (elle) me fai mal au coeu (coeur).» (3;09. June 1605, p. 687)
   ‘Don’t put any on (my) bread, it makes me sick’

b. «He Mamie d’Agre, n’en mangé (és) pa,… » (5;01. Oct 1606, p. 1093)
   ‘Hey, Mamie d’Agre, don’t eat that’

c. «Ma soeur, n’en mangé pa, i n’e pa bon.» (7;02. Nov. 1608, p. 1543)
   ‘My sister, don’t eat that, it’s not good.’

d. «N’y faite poin mette de febvre.» (7;04. Jan. 1609, p. 1558)
   ‘Don’t have someone put a bean in it’

e. «He mousseu de Souvré n’y allon point allon la dedans.» (7;07. Apr. 1609, p. 1597)
   ‘Hey Monsieur de Souvré, let’s not go there, let’s go in here.’

f. «Durle ne y touché (és) pa, …» (9;09. June 1611, p. 1931)
   ‘Durle, don’t touch it’

Louis XIII produces negative declaratives with *en* not preceded by *ne*. The absence of *ne* in (27) shows that there is no general obligation for *en* to be preceded by *ne* in negative clauses. We have no relevant example for *y*.
These examples pose a challenge for a purely syntactic approach of the type we have been developing. Let us consider first the word order $cl-V$ in negative imperatives without $ne$ for clitics other than $en$ and $y$ (when these would be initial). Attributing the $cl-V$ word order in negative imperatives without $ne$ to the presence of a phonologically null negative head as in (28) leads one to expect (21). An abstract $ne$ would fill the Z head, blocking V-movement, and we should expect these sentences to be acceptable.

\[(28) \quad \text{le dis pas: } \left[ \text{FinP le dis [IP...pas...]} \right] \]

For the speakers who raise the verb to the left of $en/y$ (24), we have an indication that there is no abstract $ne$ in (21). But if there is no abstract $ne$, we have no explanation for the $cl-V$ order with the other clitics. One could say that whatever blocks movement of the verb when other clitics are there is absent when $en$ or $y$ is initial. For example, assuming that the blocking of V-movement is not due to an abstract $ne$ but to a negative feature on the verb (Hirschbühler & Labelle 2003), it could be proposed that, as a repair strategy, such a formal feature is deleted or rendered inactive in the presence of $en/y$. Obviously, this is not very interesting, although one
could always say that the particular demands of \textit{en}/\textit{y} are responsible for the emergence of a word order otherwise excluded for these speakers.

Descriptively, what seems to be the case is that there is a surface restriction that excludes the sequence \#\textit{en}/\textit{y} \textit{V} in imperatives, i.e. a residual Tobler-Mussafia effect excluding clitics from clause-initial position, but limited to \textit{en} and \textit{y} in imperative clauses. In order to avoid violating this constraint, speakers either place the clitics postverbally or fall back on an alternative construction that probably most speakers of the \textit{cl}-\textit{V} order have, i.e. \textit{ne-}-(\textit{cl}*\textit{)}\textit{V}.\textsuperscript{2} For speakers who place the clitic postverbally, we could assume a late linearization rule \textit{à la} Halpern (1995) in the case of \textit{en}/\textit{y}.

\[(29) \quad [z_p \; \emptyset \; [\text{FinP} \parles-en \; [\text{ip} \ldots \text{pas} \ldots ]]]\]

For the speakers who reintroduce \textit{ne} one might want to say that there is, in the general case, an abstract \textit{ne} in negative imperatives, but that the selection of this abstract \textit{ne} when \textit{en}/\textit{y} are clause-initial in imperatives yields a violation of the surface restriction. Assuming such a residual TM constraint places the burden of the explanation not on syntactic facts, but on a diacritic mark on \textit{en}/\textit{y}. Notice that this idea treats \textit{en}/\textit{y} as more conservative than the other clitics: while the other clitics can be clause initial in imperatives, \textit{en} and \textit{y} resist.

It is probably not accidental that it is precisely these clitics that behave differently from the other clitics. Throughout the history of French, \textit{en} and \textit{y} have been known to function exceptionally. For example, in the middle of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, Restaut (1766: 241, in de Kok

\textsuperscript{2} For an OT approach of the facts, see Hirschbühler & Labelle (2001, 2003).
1985: 315) states that while the other clitics may be placed before or after the verb following et in imperatives, en and y are preferred postverbally in the same context:

(30) “il est plus ordinaire de dire, écoutez ma proposition, et réfléchissez-y; recevez ma remontrance, & profitez-en; que y réfléchissez, en profitez.”

‘it is more normal to say écoutez ma proposition, et réfléchissez-y; recevez ma remontrance, & profitez-en than to say y réfléchissez, en profitez.’

Interestingly, en and y display here a more ‘modern’ grammar. This observation, however, is consistent with the idea of a surface constraint against clause-initial en and y in imperatives.

En and y also behaved exceptionally, and, in this case, more conservatively, by raising to T in infinitival clauses longer than the other clitics. In Old French, both the infinitival verb and the clitics appeared under the T head of infinitival clauses, that is, between ne and pas in negative infinitives. Then, infinitival verbs stopped raising to T, but not clitics. Today, clitics appear on the infinitival verb to the right of pas. But en and y continued to raise to T longer than the other clitics. They are still occasionally used in that position (cf. Kayne 1989: 240 and notes 3, 4), and their use, as in (30), does not seem to be limited to literary French.

(31) a. Je préfèrerais n’en rien dire

‘I would prefer not say anything about it’

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3 For the XVIth century, we have found four examples of et y V-imperative in the ARTFL database, one by Rabelais and three by Beroalde de Verville.
b. J’ai regretté de n’y pas être allé
   ‘I regretted not to have gone there’

To summarize, the syntactic approach in terms of verb movement that we have been developing cannot readily explain the facts relative to \textit{en/y}. The restriction on \textit{en/y} does not find a syntactic explanation if one doesn’t take into account the fact that these clitics, as opposed to the other clitics, reject the initial position in imperative clauses.

4. \textit{Conclusion}

The corpus collected by Jean Héroard allows us to observe features of the French spoken by a child at the turn of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century. We studied the position of clitics with respect to imperative verbs in this corpus, examining it in the light of the history of French. In coordinated imperatives, the \textit{et cl-V} order was very much alive, but was in competition with a more recent trend in favor of the \textit{et V-cl} order. These word orders were explained by assuming that, in the unmarked case, V moves to \textit{Z}$_{(+imp)}$ in imperative clauses. We assumed that the \textit{et cl-V} word order in imperatives resulted from the fact that the second conjunct was less than a full CP. The \textit{et V-cl} order in imperatives was attributed to a regularization of the pattern of imperative clauses. Turning to negative clauses, we observed that the negative marker \textit{ne} was regularly omitted; this is much sooner than was previously thought. In negative imperatives without \textit{ne}, the word order used by Louis XIII is the one generally observed today in France, \textit{cl-V pas}. But the contrast between the absence of imperative examples of the type \textit{en/y-V pas} and the presence of imperative examples of the type \textit{n’en/y-V pas} suggests that, as in current varieties of French, there is a restriction on \textit{en/y}, which cannot be initial in imperative clauses. Here we reach the
limits of an explanation of clitic placement in terms of syntactic features forcing V movement independently of the clitics. In the case of en/y, we must take into account a surface restriction attached to these clitics.

References


Legendre, Géraldine. 2001. “Morphological and Prosodic Alignment of Bulgarian Clitics”.


Primary sources


