

CHANGES IN CLAUSAL ORGANIZATION AND THE POSITION OF CLITICS IN OLD FRENCH

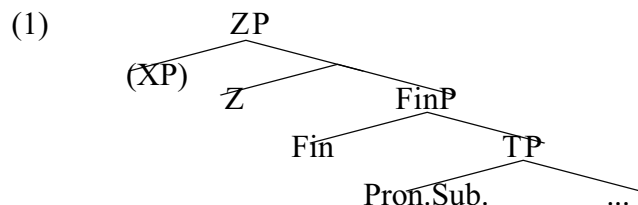
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From the perspective of language change, grammaticalization is generally viewed as the process whereby “a lexical item or construction in certain uses takes on grammatical characteristics” (Hopper & Traugott 2003:2). Roberts and Roussou (1999) account for this type of change as resulting from the reanalysis of lexical heads into functional heads. The diachronic changes we discuss in this paper do not fall under this definition, but we view them as exemplifying a type of grammaticalization whereby illocutionary features come to be associated with distinct functional heads. We analyse the changes in the clausal organisation of Old French as following from the fact that the Topic/Focus functional head common to all clause types of the first stage gives way to a system with a number of separate illocutionary heads. We argue that the weakening of the Tobler-Mussafia (TM) constraint excluding object clitic pronouns from initial position in main clauses in Old French (OF) results from a gradual replacement of a common representation for V1 initial clauses by a new system where 1) satisfaction of a discourse-related [Top]/[Foc] feature by V is minimized, and 2) there is a reanalysis of the CP layer, with grammaticalization of illocutionary type features.

1. Old French as a V2 language.

Old French is considered a V2 language (see e.g. Adams 1987, Roberts 1993), with the verb generally following a topic or focus element in main clauses. We account for that characteristic by adopting a split-CP approach (Rizzi 1997), and assume that the C system is composed of two functional projections ZP and FinP, as shown in (1). Z bears a discourse-related Topic or Focus feature, which we label [+D] (Discourse) for simplicity. Fin is the interface of the C

system carrying a [+/- tense] feature, as in Rizzi. TP is the highest projection below the CP layer.



Early Old French is a strong Top/Foc language in the sense that every main clause starts with a topic or focus element. We attribute this characteristic to the fact that the highest head in main clauses is Z. The [+D] feature of Z must be checked by a Topic or Focus element. We assume that a Z head with a [+D] feature selects a Finite head with a V feature forcing movement of V to Fin. V2 clauses result from an $XP_{[+D]}$ merging in or moving to SpecZP and V moving to Fin (to the left of pronominal subjects in SpecTP¹); V1 clauses result from a $V_{[+D]}$ moving to the Z head. Crucially, this holds for all illocutionary types: declaratives, questions and imperatives. If distinct [+IMP], [+WH], [+DECL] features are present for interpretative reasons, they have no visible effect on the overt syntax of V in early Old French.

2. V1 clauses and Tobler-Mussafia effects.

The so-called “Tobler-Mussafia law” corresponds to the observation made by Tobler (1875) and Mussafia (1886) that, in Medieval Romance languages, object clitics appear postverbally only when being preverbal would place them in clause initial position. Thus, in V2 clauses, clitics precede the verb, while in V1 clauses they follow it. The Tobler-Mussafia constraint is illustrated below with declaratives (2), questions (3), and imperatives (4) (relevant verbs are in bold, object clitics in bold italics, and subject pronouns in plain italics).

- (2) a *Allez en est en un verger suz l' ombre.*
 went GEN is in an orchard under the shade
 'He went in an orchard under the shade.' (Roland:11)
- b *Vait s'en li pople.*
 Goes REFL-GEN the people
 'The people goes away.' (Alexis: CXXI, 1)
- (3) a *Sire, purquei m' as decéüé?*
 Sire, why me-ACC have deceived
 'Sire, why did you deceive me?' (QLR, in Kok:78)
- b *Amerai le je s' il ne m' aime?*
 will-love him-ACC I if he NEG me-ACC love
 'Shall I love him if he does not love me ?' (Cligès: 493)
- (4) a *Car m' eslisez un barun de ma marche.*
 thus me-DAT chose a baron from my march
 'Thus chose for me a baron from my march.' (Roland:275)
- b *Pursiu les, senz dute les prendras, sis ociras.*
 chase them-ACC, without doubt them you-will-catch, ADV-them you-will-kill
 'Chase them, without doubt you will catch them, and kill them.'
 (QLR:58,8 in Kok:84)

While many recent analyses of South Slavic languages attribute the post-verbal realization of clitics in V1 clauses to their prosodic requirements (Franks 1999, Bosković 2001, Pancheva 2003, and references therein), in Old French, prosodic requirements play no role in the Tobler-Mussafia effects displayed by object clitics. Thus, in Old French, object

clitics can be first in the intonational domain of which they are part, as shown in (5), which contrasts with the Serbo-Croatian examples in (6) (Franks 1999)²:

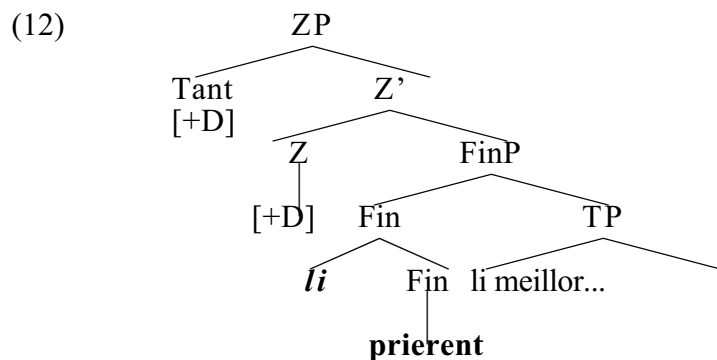
- (5) *Jo, qui voldreie parler a tei, le receverái.*
 I, who would-like talk to you, him-ACC will-receive
 ‘I, who would like to talk to you, will receive him.’ (QLR, in Kok:173)
- (6) a **Ja, tvoja mama, sam ti obećala igračku.*
 I, your mother, AUX you-DAT promised toy
 ‘I, your mother, promised you a toy.’
- b *Ja, tvoja mama, obećala sam ti igračku.*
 I, your mother, promised AUX you-DAT toy

Moreover, contrary to Wackernagel-type clitics, the object clitics of Old French were always adjacent to the verb. This distinguishes them from subject pronouns, always adjacent to Fin (cf. (1)):

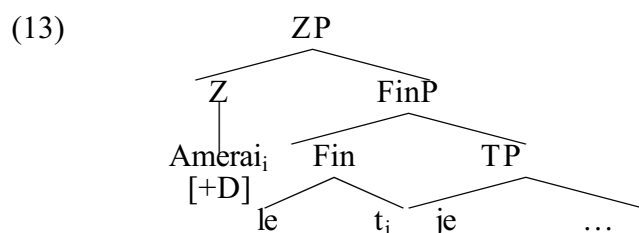
- (7) *se il vers terre de Israel s'en vunt.*
 if they towards land of Israel REFL GEN go
 ‘If they go towards the land of Israel’ (QLR I, p. 13)

Old French object clitics were generally proclitic and could even lean on a following word in the V-cl order:

- (8) **Dunez m'** un feu.
 ‘Give me a fief’ (Roland:866)



To account for the Tobler-Mussafia effect, we assume that V, bearing a [+D] feature, moves from Fin to Z, to the left of the clitic. This is similar in spirit to analyses proposed by Benincà (1995) and by Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991). Thus (3b) is analysed as in (13):



Notice that V and cl are in the C-system, to the left of subject pronouns in SpecTP. Again, distinct illocutionary type features don't play a role in the movement of V_{FIN} to Z.

In negative main clauses, the verb is preceded by object clitics.

- (14) a De cest services ne *vos* **membre** *il* gaires
of this service NEG you-REFL remember EXPL-SUBJ much
'You don't remember much of this service' (Charroi:180)
- b N' *i* **perdrat** Carles, li reis ki France tient,
NEG LOC will-lose Carles, the king who France holds,
'Carles, the king who holds France, will not lose' (Roland:755)

In V2 negative clauses (14a), the initial XP occupies SpecZP, and the verb occupies Fin, as it precedes subject pronouns. Therefore object clitics are preverbal. As the verb also precedes subject pronouns and follows object clitics in V1 questions (15), we assume that it also occupies Fin in these clauses. We take the position that the finite verb also occupies Fin in V1 negative declaratives (14b) even though the absence of postverbal pronominal subjects in V1 declaratives makes it difficult to show independently that the verb is within the CP layer in these clauses.

- (15) Nel veez vos donques? (Lancelot:1701)
 NEG-him see you thus
 ‘Don’t you see him?’

The philological tradition attributes the preverbal position of object clitics in such V1 negative clauses to the presence of clause-initial *n(e)*. Within the present framework, the syntactic position of *ne* is not clear. One could assume that *ne* occupies Z (which would then host some polarity feature) or that it occupies a negative head above Fin, preventing V from moving higher (to Z) in V1 constructions. For concreteness, we will adopt the first view.

3 Changes in the position of clitics

3.1 Adverbial clauses.

In early OF, clitics were postverbal following an initial adverbial clause (16). We argue that the adverbial clause is ZP-external and that the main clause is structurally a V1 declarative: the verb is under Z and the clitic is adjoined to Fin.

- (16) [Cum il vint a únes loges á pasturs en cel chemin] **truvad i** les freres Achazie,

as he came to one hut to shepherd in this road found LOC the brothers Achazie
 ‘As he came to..., (he) found there the Achazie brothers’ (QLR IV, p. 195-6)

Around 1170, object clitics start being found in preverbal position after adverbial clauses (17). This change occurs in declaratives and yes-no questions, but not in imperatives.

(17) [Quant nos lor donons nos aumosnes] *lor* **faisons** bien as cors.
 when we them-DAT give our alms them-DAT make good to-the body
 ‘When we give them alms, we do good to their body’ (Sully, in Kok:91)

Since the change occurred at a time when V1 declaratives were disappearing (Skårup 1975), we interpret these concomitant changes as indicating the emergence of a new grammar where, in declaratives, focussing the V (resulting in narrative inversion) is excluded. This can be expressed by saying that, in declaratives, V may no longer carry a [+D] feature. As a result, V stays under Fin and some other element must check the [+D] feature of Z. This leads to the reanalysis of the adverbial clause in examples like (17) as being merged in SpecZP. The incorporation of adverbial clauses in SpecZP is, however, not the preferred option, the prevailing strategy favoring adjunction of the adverbial clause to a V2 main clause.

The emergence at the same time of postverbal subject pronouns in declaratives introduced by an adverbial clause (18) is thus accounted for, as, in declaratives, postverbal subjects occur only in V2 clauses.

- (18) [Ainz qu' eüssiez...]/ **I avroit** il feru M. cops d'espee
 before that would-have LOC would-have he dealt 1000 blows of sword
 'Before you would have ... / he would have dealt you a thousand blows with his
 sword' (Prise d'Orange , in Skårup: 279)

In yes-no questions starting with an adverbial clause, an identical change affects the position of object clitic pronouns (19). This confirms that adverbial clauses may fill SpecZP.

- (19) se je descent a pié/ **me porrai** je en vos fier/ De ... ?
 if I go-down on foot / me-DAT can-FUT I in you trust/ to
 '... if I go on foot, can I trust you to ...?' (Perceval, in Skårup: 357)

However, the V1 construction survives in yes-no questions, and in that case, the word order continues to be *V-cl* (20). This shows that in interrogatives, V could still carry a [+D] feature, and raise to Z.

- (20) **Conois la** tu?
 know her-ACC you
 'Do you know her?' (Queste:112,17, in Kok:82)

Adverbial clauses never fill SpecZP in imperatives, and V always moves to Z in these clauses.

Thus this first change results from the fact that the [+D] feature on tensed verbs is now excluded from declaratives. This is the first sign of a breakdown of the uniform system characterizing early Old French. While illocutionary features did not seem to play a syntactic

role in the first stage, the different behavior of declaratives on the one side and questions and imperatives on the other creates a situation where such features are more likely to come to play a syntactic role. Verbs having a [+WH] or a [+IMP] feature raise to Z in V1 clauses, but not verbs having a [+DECL] feature. Notice that the change does not concern V2 clauses. Despite this first change, there is no change in clause structure, i.e. Z continues to carry a [+D] feature, forcing the CP layer to be projected.

3.2 Coordination.

In early OF, object clitics are postverbal after a coordinator joining main clauses, which indicates that, in main clauses, coordinators selected full ZPs:

- (21) *é mist la al lit David (...) é de dras bien la cuvrid...*
 and put her-ACC in-the bed David (...) and of sheets well her-ACC covered
 ‘... and placed it on David’s bed (...) and covered it well with sheets....’

(QLR I, p. 39)

Clitics start being preverbal after *et* ‘and’ and *ou* ‘or’ in declaratives, yes-no questions, and imperatives (22), around the time they start being preverbal following an adverbial clause.

- (22) *Levés sus et me prestés trois pains*
 get-up and me give three breads
 ‘Get up and give me three loaves of bread’

(Sully, in Kok:93)

Following insights by Benincà (1995) and Kiparsky (1995), we suggest that *et* and *ou* now take FinP as a second conjunct when this conjunct is a V1 clause. This results in the clitic-

- b [IMP Suis-moi si tu veux], mais/*et/*ou [QU sais-tu dans quoi tu t' embarques?]
 follow me if you want but / and/or know you in what you REFL are-getting
 [IMP Follow me if you want], but/*and/*or [QU do you know what you are getting into?]
- c [DECL Pierre n'est pas rapide], mais/*et/*ou [IMP fais-lui confiance!]
 Pierre NEG is not quick but / and/or do him trust
 [DECL Peter is not quick], but/*and/or [IMP trust him!]

3.3 Object clitics in absolute clause initial position.

About thirty years after the preceding change, object clitics start being found in absolute initial position of declaratives and yes-no questions, but not imperatives.

- (25) a Ou est sa feme ? *La nos mosterez vos* ?
 where is his wife ? her-ACC us-DAT show-FUT you-NOM ?
 'Where is his wife ? Will you show her to us ?' (Orange: 528)
- b Sire, *l' ai tant quis que je l' ai trouvé en vostre cort.*
 Sire, him-ACC have so-much searched that I him-ACC have found in your court
 'Sire, I have looked for him so much that I have found him in your court.'
 (Perceval, in Skårup:354)

The fact that, here, clitics precede the verb indicates that there is no movement of V to Z in V1 declaratives and questions. Moreover, the fact that no XP precedes the clitics indicates that Z is not projected in these clauses. While early Old French was a strong Topic/Focus language where ZP was always projected, this is not the case anymore.

In V2 clauses, the verb precedes pronominal subjects (26), as before. Given that these clauses have an XP checking the [+D] feature of Z, it appears that when ZP is projected, FinP must also be projected, which forces V-movement to Fin.

- (26) et pui *i fu* *ele* portee (Clari, 67, 77, in Kok: 75)
 and then LOC was she carried
 ‘and then she was carried there’

In V1 questions (25a), the verb in clause-initial position precedes the subject pronoun as it did in previous stages, indicating that V is within the CP layer. But here, the position that the verb occupies is not selected by Z with a [+D] feature. We suggest that, at this stage, this position comes to be analyzed as a head position bearing a [+WH] feature.

In V1 positive declaratives, pronominal subjects do not occur. It is thus not clear whether V is within the CP layer or in T in sentences like (25b). It could be that the verb is under Fin. But, in the absence of Z selecting a Fin head with a V feature, it is also possible that the CP layer is simply no longer projected in declaratives. Adams (1987) claimed that null subjects were always postverbal in Old French, but Hirschbühler and Junker (1988) showed that preverbal null subjects could be found in embedded clauses, opening up the possibility that they could also be preverbal in V1 declaratives. Also, Vance (1997) argues that SVO clauses were TPs at that time. We will thus adopt the view that, in the new V1 declaratives of type (25b), the verb remains within TP.

In V1 imperatives, just as in previous stages, the verb precedes the clitics, and it must therefore occupy the highest position in the CP layer.

To sum up, we suggest that the grammatical system of that period is the following. V2 clauses, have, at least superficially, the same grammar as in early Old French: the verb

occupies a position above TP, probably Fin, and there is a higher projection above FinP, ZP, whose Spec hosts an XP. This ZP is, however, no longer obligatorily projected.

In V1 clauses, the uniform CP layer syntax for all clause types typical of early Old French has been replaced by a system where imperatives, questions and declaratives have a distinct syntax. We observe the emergence of a typological change where distinct illocutionary force features are associated with distinct verb positions:

- In topicless declaratives, V remains within TP.
- In yes-no questions, V is higher than TP, but lower than Z, as it follows object clitics.
- In imperatives, V occupies the highest position of the CP layer, to the left of object clitics.

Thus, while Z and Fin remain in V2 clauses, in V1 clauses we see the emergence of specialized functional heads *a la* Rizzi.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we looked at changes which are manifested most clearly in the respective position of the clitics and the verb in main clauses. We adopted an analysis that derives these changes not from changes in the syntax of clitics but from a reorganization of the CP layer.

We suggested that there was a reanalysis of the uniform CP layer, with grammaticalization of illocutionary type features. While features like [+DECL], [+WH], [+IMP] did not play a syntactic role in the earliest stage, they came to be crucially involved in the syntax of the clause. We suggest that in the last stage discussed, these features were checked in different heads : [+DECL] is checked with T, allowing V to remain within TP in the absence of a motivation for raising higher; [+WH] is checked above TP, suggesting that speakers have reanalyzed the Fin position in V1 interrogatives as Rizzi's Focus projection (Rizzi 1997);

[+IMP] is checked in the highest position, which is perhaps not Z in this case, but a distinct head (like Rizzi's Force) bearing a [+IMP] feature.

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¹ We follow Vance (1997) who argues that the position of pronominal subjects is never lower than SpecTP, while nominal subjects can occupy lower positions.

² Some examples, such as (i) below, may look as though the clitic *les* is postverbal because of a prosodic constraint. However, in this clause, *li duze per* is a left dislocated element, taken up by *les*. Just as fronted adverbial clauses always behave as clause external in the initial stage, as discussed below, left-dislocated elements are external to the minimal clause (Beninca 1995). Similarly, the fact that the verb is clause-initial is reflected by the postverbal clitic.

(i) Li duze per, pur ço qu'il l'aiment tant, / **Desfi** *les* ci, sire, vostre veiant.

‘The twelve Peers, because they love him so/ (I) desfy them, sire, in your presence.’

(Roland:325-6)