

Obligatory Clitic Climbing in Old Catalan

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1 Introduction

The study of control constructions in Romance, such as the Spanish examples in (1), has long been a source of controversy and debate within generative grammar.

- (1) a. *Maria quiere presentartela*
Maria want.3sg present.inf-**you/her**
'Maria wants to present you to her'
- b. *Maria **te la** quiere presentar*

There has been one point of broad agreement, however, which runs across the analyses that have been proposed during the years: in those languages that allow for clitic climbing, clitic climbing is considered to be a sort of optional movement which may, but need not apply. In Kayne's account of clitic climbing, languages displaying this phenomenon are shown to have certain properties, induced by the nature of INFL, which make clitic extraction out of an infinitival clause available (Kayne 1989). Rizzi's account (1982), among others, that postulates a restructuring rule (which maps a bi-clausal structure into a mono-clausal one) applying optionally in some languages has the same effect: the clitic may, but need not climb up to the finite verb. As for those Romance languages which display this phenomenon not only in control but also in causative constructions the optionality of the clitic to climb to the finite verb or stay with the infinite verb is considered to have been available already for the Old Romance languages: "Patterns such as *Yo quiero comerlo* and *Yo **lo** quiero comer* (I want to eat it) are attested from the earliest documents" (Rivero 1991:241). Old Catalan data contradicts this statement. Medieval Catalan texts show that in all instances of causative

or control configurations the clitic has climbed out of the infinitival clause. Thus, at least for Old Catalan the question needs to be rephrased: instead of what allows the clitic to climb out of the infinitival, the question should rather be: what forces clitic extraction out of the infinitival?

In the following section, I will shortly summarise two analyses that have been proposed in order to explain Old Romance clitic climbing. One of the approaches treats Old Spanish, the other Old French clitic climbing. In section three, I will present Old Catalan data covering the 13th to the 15th century which contradicts the analyses proposed for the other Old Romance languages and underlines the claim that Old Catalan clitics were forced to move out of the infinitival clause. Furthermore, I will propose an analysis that captures the fact that clitic climbing is obligatory, at least, for Old Catalan. More specifically I propose that the verbs allowing clitic climbing should be analysed as auxiliary verbs that take VP complements, similar to English modal verbs.

2 Existing Analyses for Old Romance Clitic Climbing

There have been many approaches to Clitic Climbing in Modern Romance, but only a few on Old Romance, mostly treating Old Spanish and Old French.

2.1 Clitic Climbing in Old Spanish

Rivero (1991), who treats Spanish clitic climbing argues, as mentioned before, that like in Modern Spanish also in Old Spanish both variants: *quiero comerlo* and *lo quiero comer* (I want to eat it) existed already in the earliest texts¹. However, within her approach the apparently identical strings receive different treatments in Old Spanish and Modern Spanish. She relates old clitic climbing to NP/PP climbing and attributes the possibility of the clitic to climb out of the infinitival clause to the fact that clitics during this period can be analysed as phrases. Thus, the contrast in the two stages follows from

¹ Strangely enough, the only examples Rivero (1991) provides in order to discuss clitic climbing in Old Spanish show clitics having climbed out of the infinitival clause. So, maybe theoretical implications have clouded the view on the data.

the status of modern and old clitics as nonmaximal and maximal items, respectively. Sentences (2) exemplify medieval Spanish clitic climbing whereas sentences (3) exemplify medieval Spanish NP/PP climbing.

- (2) a. *Qui **la** quiesiera uender al monasterio*
 who **it** wanted.3sg sell.inf to+the monastery
 "Whoever would want to sell it to the monastery."
- b. *Antes que **la** queria conplir*
 before that **it** wanted.3sg fulfill
 "Before he wanted to fulfill it."
- (3) a. *Qui **esta nuestra uendida** ...quiesiere crebeantar... aya la ira Dios*
 who **this our sale** wanted.3sg break.inf have the wrath of God
 "Let the one who wants to break our sale have the wrath of God."
- b. *Yo **ati** vin buscar*
 I **to+you** came.1sg look.inf
 "I came looking for you."

(cited in Rivero 1991:255)

According to Rivero, "old" climbing is adjunction of X_{max} to I', the one-bar projection for the Tense + Agreement complex, with clitics escaping complement clauses through adjunction to IP. Climbing is attraction to the I-node. Rivero claims that the process cannot be Head-movement like in modern climbing (Kayne (1989) among others) because of the nonadjacency in old climbing. Old Spanish clitic climbing allowed the clitic to climb across adverbs and across negation (4), whereas modern climbing must meet adjacency requirements.

- (4) a. *Fue**las** luego guardar con ábito qual suelen los pastores usar*
 went.3sg+**them** after keep.inf with clothes that use the shepherds use.inf
 "After, he went to keep them with clothes like the ones shepherds use."
- b. *Beemos que **lo** non fazen así*
 see.1pl that **it** not do so
 "We see that they do not do it this way".

(cited in Rivero 1991:250/262)

A second argument she sees in the fact that in the old period, VPs and/or projections of V could be preposed, and climbing was possible (5) which contrasts with Modern Spanish which allows climbing out of VPs *in situ* exclusively (6).

- (5) *E pues yo gradescer no vos lo puedo*
and since I thank.inf not **you it** can.1sg
"And since I cannot thank you for it."

(cited in Rivero 1991:265)

- (6) a. *No **le** quiero leer el libro*
not him want.1sg read.inf the book
"I do not want him to read the book."

b. *Leer**le** el libro no quiero*
"Read him the book I do not want."

c. **Leer el libro no **le** quiero.*

The last and maybe strongest argument in favour of her analysis of Old Spanish clitics as phrases is seen in the fact that they are allowed to move across different heads. The separation of the clitic-verb sequence is called interpolation in the literature and interpreted differently according to the different analyses. In most modern analyses, however, the interpolation data of Old Romance is seen as proof of the clitic's categorial status as XPs (Maaßen (1994), Fontana (1993), (1996) among others).

- (7) *Beemos que **lo** non fazen así*
see.1pl that it not do.2pl so
"We see that they do not do it this way."

(cited in Rivero 1991:250)

Hence, this analysis takes clitics to be phrases that may but need not move, thus the movement is phrasal movement comparable to the scrambling analyses proposed for weak pronouns in German.

2.2 Clitic Climbing in Old French

A rather different picture has been observed for Old French. Pearce (1990), working on Old French infinitival complements, states that the placement of the weak pronouns in front of the finite verb in control infinitival constructions presents the typical pattern in Old French (Pearce 1990:2). Martineau (1988) even claims: "However, it remains to be understood why the clitic should obligatorily climb before the main verb in Old French" (Martineau 1988:237). See sentences (8) as examples for Old French clitic climbing².

- (8) a. *Mes ele ne **la** pot veoir*
but she not **her** can.1sg see.inf
"But she cannot see her"
- b. *il **les** pourroit sauve*
he **them** could.3sg save.inf
"he could save them"

(cited in Martineau 1988:235ff)

This seems especially surprising since Modern French does not belong to those languages that allow clitic climbing in control constructions. In Modern French, the clitic pronoun complement of control infinitivals is exclusively attached to the verb on which they depend, i.e. by which they are assigned their thematic-role (9). Only in causative constructions the clitic climbs out of the infinitival clause (10).

- (9) a. *Je veux **te** donner ce livre.*
I want.1sg **you** give.inf that book
"I want to give you that book."
- b. **Je **te** veux donner ce livre.*

² It is generally assumed that *pouvoir* (can) belongs to the class of control verbs across Romance dialects.

- (10) a. *Tu me fais rire.*
 you **me** make.2sg laugh.inf
 "You make me laugh"
- b. **Tu fais me rire*

Following Kayne (1989), Martineau proposes that clitic climbing in Old French is due to the fact that INFL of the infinitival clause L-marks VP. This L-marking neutralises the barrier status of VP. Thus, it allows the object clitic, an X° element, to be extracted out of VP and be attached to INFL, another head, and then moved by a head-to-head movement into the main clause. Only lexical categories have the property of L-marking. INFL of the infinitival clause has this property only if the Agreement node is marked for the feature [+pron] as in pro-drop languages. This feature has the effect of making INFL a lexical category. Old French, being a pro-drop language, has the feature [+pron], thus the clitic may climb out of the infinitival clause. In Modern French, which is not a pro-drop language anymore³, INFL of the infinitival clause cannot L-mark VP since the Agreement node does not have the feature [+pron]; consequently, the object clitic cannot climb into the main clause. However, under this analysis it remains to be understood why the clitic should obligatorily climb in front of the main verb in Old French. If INFL L-marks, both constructions, i.e. with and without clitic climbing, should be allowed. In order to explain the obligatory climbing of Old French clitics, Martineau connects it to what has been called the Tobler-Mussafia-Law (TML) in the literature. The TML was named after the linguists who first formulated the observation (Tobler (1875), Mussafia (1988)) that clitic elements never appeared in sentence initial position. The constraint on clitic first positions has been explained – throughout the long history of studies on this topic – with the clitics inherent enclitic character. Being enclitics they cannot appear in sentence initial position, nor after coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. Martineau in her paper on clitic climbing proposes that a similar constraint existed for the infinitival constructions in Old French. Clitic pronouns could not appear in the initial position of a subordinate clause and thus had to move to the main clause.

³ For a different view on this aspect see Kaiser (1991).

Looking now at the Old Catalan data, one can see that neither of the two analyses hold for Old Catalan.

3 Old Catalan Clitic Climbing

3.1 The Data

The data I use is from a corpus of more than 7000 sentences, and covers the last eight centuries. To make sure that a certain pattern of syntactic structure was not only part of an author's idiolect, but part of the language of the whole community, I chose two texts of different authors to represent each century. Each century is represented by at least 800 sentences taken from continuous text, i.e. at least 400 sentences of each text. In each text all sentences were marked which contained an object clitic, a partitive or locative clitic. The sentences containing only a partitive or locative clitic were marked as well because of the interaction with the object clitics concerning clitic clusters⁴. All marked sentences were then listed in a data base and encoded according to different features: whether they contained a negation, a relative pronoun, a complementizer or a verb cluster, whether the clitic turned up in a pre- or postverbal position, what kind of a clitic it was: a partitive, locative, reflexive, or object clitic etc. For the 13th until the 15th century the following picture is obtained:

Table (A)

Century	13th	14th	15 th
Verb-cluster allowing clitic climbing in Modern Catalan	79	67	95
Clitic -FiniteVerb-Infinitive	79	67	95
Finite Verb-Infinitive- Clitic	0	0	0

⁴ I refer to opaque forms which appear when two object clitics or one object and one partitive or locative clitic form a cluster (see Bonet (1995)).

In general, the verbs that regularly behave as clitic climbing verbs across the Romance dialects have modal, aspectual or temporal import. In Modern Catalan we find three types of configurations which allow the clitic – originating in an embedded infinitival clause – to be extracted: Control verbs, ECM (causative) Verbs, and Subject Raising configurations. In Old Catalan clitic climbing is attested with control verbs and causative verbs. Raising verbs could not be attested in clitic climbing constructions during the 13th and 14th century of my corpus⁵.

The sentences from (11) to (16) give an overview of all three centuries, and all possible variations. Clitic climbing with control verbs is illustrated in examples (11), (13), (15), and with causative verbs in example (12), (14), (16). In sentences (12) and (16) it is the accusative clitic that climbs, sentences (14) and (15) exemplify dative clitics, sentence (13) displays the accusative neuter **ho**, and sentence (11) is an example of a locative clitic.

(11) *e null home no y poch abitar;*
 and no man not **there** can live
 "and no man could live there;"
 (13a/202)

(12) *e sia plaer de Déu que.ls vos fa comensar,*
 and is.3sg pleasure of God that they **you** make.3sg to begin
 "and it is God's pleasure that makes you begin,"
 (13b/401)

(13) *Fort ho volria saber.*
 strong **it** want.3sg to know
 "Urgently he wants to know it."
 (14a/269)

⁵ This means: these verbs are attested during the 13th and 14th century but they very seldom took infinitive complements. Only two examples are attested for the whole period, and these sentences display full NPs (Fischer 2000).

- (14) *E faç-me refrescar les cames ab aigües precioses;*
 and made.3sg-**me** to refresh the legs with water precious
 "And he refreshed my legs with precious water;"
 (14b/220)
- (15) *e besà los peus e les mans e la boca a la mare, e suplicá-la que **li** volgués donar la sua benedicció ...*
 and kissed.3sg the feet and the hand and the mouth to the mother, and asked.3sg-her that **him** wants.3sg to give the her blessings
 "and he kissed the feet, hands and the mouth of his mother, and he begged her that she please gave **him** her blessings ..."
 (15a/314)
- (16) *e sovén **la** feya venir a menjar ab ell,*
 and often **her** made.3sg come to eat with him
 "and often he made **her** come to eat with him,"
 (15b/37)

In all medieval texts in all causative and control configurations all clitic elements had climbed out of the infinitival clause. This leads to the conclusion that in Old Catalan clitic climbing should rather be seen as obligatory than optional, i.e., the clitics needed to be extracted out of the infinitival clause. Hence, at least with respect to Old Catalan the question needs to be rephrased, instead of what allows the clitic to climb out of the infinitival, the question should rather be: what forces clitic extraction out of the infinitival clause?

Neither of the two presented analyses for Old Romance clitic climbing can be extended to Old Catalan. Rivero's proposal (1991) is contradicted by the exclusiveness of the Old Catalan clitic to precede the finite verb in every "restructuring" constructions in all medieval texts, that I have evaluated. Additionally, it has been shown by Fischer (1999) and (2000) that Old Catalan clitics never appear to the left of the negation, and that they are always adjacent to the verb, i.e., no interpolation effects were attested which strongly suggests that Old Catalan clitics need to be analysed as heads from the first

existing texts onwards. Thus, any analysis treating Old Catalan clitics as phrases, and clitic placement as some kind of “optional” scrambling is doomed to fail.

Even though Old French seems to behave similar to Old Catalan with respect to clitic climbing in that the clitics obligatorily climbed out of the infinitival clause, the analysis presented by Martineau (1988) cannot be extended to Old Catalan. It has been shown by Fischer (2000) that the distribution of the Old Catalan clitics cannot be explained with their status as phonologically enclitic elements: Old Catalan clitics appear pre- and postverbally in matrix as well as in embedded sentences, irrespective of whether the verb is preceded by a constituent or not; as for phonological cliticisation: Old Catalan clitics lean to their right as well as to their left, i.e., they are enclitic as well as proclitic. The constraint on clitic first orders, that is held responsible for the obligatory clitic climbing in Old French, can, thus, not be held responsible, under any circumstances, for the obligatory clitic extraction out of the infinitival clause in Old Catalan. Furthermore, Catalan belongs to those Romance languages in which the clitic follows the infinitive and this feature did not change from the 13th to the 20th century (Fischer 2000). With respect to the analysis proposed by Martineau this means that the clitic is not in an initial position in the subordinate (infinitival) clause, therefore the clitic does not need to climb out for inherent phonological reasons.

3.2 A proposal

In this section I will look more closely at the behaviour and the syntax of those verbs that are usually called control verbs. I will propose that these modal and aspectual verbs are rather analysed as auxiliary verbs that occur within the same simple clause as the dependent verb, unlike “normal” infinitive-taking verbs, like *provar* (try), as in *la Mercè ha provat de cantar* (Mary tried to sing), whose complement is supposed to constitute a separate clause. I shall also assume that genuine auxiliary verbs do not affect the argument structure of the dependent verb. This restriction is made to exclude causative verbs such as *fer* (make) which add an extra causal argument with consequent demotion of the subject of the dependent infinitive (Jones 1988). Although these verbs show some similarities with auxiliaries, they have other syntactic properties which are beyond the scope of this paper. The discussion of this section is entirely based on Jones

(1988), who focussed on the problem of defining a class of auxiliaries in Sardinian. He isolated different potential syntactic criteria that can be assumed to operate within the simple clause and can thus be used in order to define auxiliaryhood. The criteria are as follows:

- (17) a. “bare” infinitive
 b. intervening adverbs
 c. possibility of fronting of the complement
 d. possibility of negation of the complement
 e. clitic climbing

Applying the criteria the following results are found:

Although most infinitival complements in Old Catalan are introduced by a preposition *a* or *de*, the verbs in question can only take "bare" infinitives. See the following contrast:

- (18) *assò és cosa a la qual vós no us podets excusar;*
 so is.3sg thing to the which you no you can.2pl excuse
 “such is the cause that you cannot excuse it,”

(13b/43)

- (19) *en qual loc comensarem de tenir nostre setge.*
 in which place start.1pl to hold our siege
 “where should we start out siege.”

(13b/25)

One way of accounting for this fact would be to postulate that pre-infinitival *a* and *de* are complementizers (items which introduce complement clauses) and that the presence of a complementizer is obligatory with all genuine infinitival clauses. The occurrence of “bare” infinitives with modals and causative verbs could then be attributed to the fact that these infinitives do not constitute separate clauses. Rather the contrary, the occurrence of a “bare” infinitive is always indicative of a monoclausal structure typical of auxiliary verb constructions (Jones 1988).

As for criteria (b) and (c) see the following examples:

- (20) a. *com lo podets tant amar sens conexença, (...);*
 how him could.2pl so love.inf without knowledge
 "how can you love him so much without knowing him"
 (13a/27)
- b. *que no es pot visiblement provar;*
 that not ref. can visibly prove.inf
 "that it cannot be visibly contradicted;"
 (14a/125)
- (21) a. *que alegrar no la podia,*
 that to enjoy no it could.3sg,
 "to enjoy, that he cannot,"
 (13a/31)
- b. *car contrestar no li porien*
 since answer.inf no him could.3pl
 „since they couldn’t answer him“
 (13a/50)

From the 13th until the 15th century only nine examples of intervening adverbs could be attested, three in each century. The adverbs which occurred between a control verb and the infinitival complement were all simple adverbs. Phrasal expressions, i.e. “heavier” adverbs could not be attested at all. Jones (1988) takes this restriction as being symptomatic of the closer syntactic relation which holds between auxiliary and the dependent verb as compared to that which obtains between a main verb and its infinitival complement, like in *provo donzi die a travallare* (I try every day to work) (Jones 1988:179).

As for fronting, Jones claims, that although there is a correlation between fronting of the dependent verb and the auxiliary status of the governing verb, it may be coincidental and therefore maybe unreliable. However, Roberts (1992), using the same diagnostics in order to explain grammaticalisations effects with respect to the future tense in Old Romance, argues that the fronting operation can be accounted for by assuming that the trace left by this operation is properly governed by the modals, being lexical auxiliaries, in contrast to functional auxiliaries that do not allow fronting of complements (see also

Lema & Rivero's (1990) discussion for a difference between lexical and functional auxiliaries).

Criterion (d) regards the possibility of negation of the complement. In the texts of my corpus I did not find any negation of the complement in these structures. However, under the assumption made in Fischer (2000) that in Old Catalan NegP forms a projection of its own, namely (Σ P), which is situated above TP (see Laka (1992) and Martins (1993) for a similar approach), this is what we would expect. Since these modal verbs only have VP complements, Σ P cannot appear following them.

With respect to the last criterion, remember all sentences listed in section 3.1 and see below:

- (22) *Fort ho volria saber.*
strong **it** want.3sg to know
"Urgently he wants to know it."

(14a/269)

Clitic climbing was obligatory during the medieval period, i.e., from the 13th until the 15th century. Clitic placement is considered to be a clause-bound process (Kayne 1989, 1991), the position of the clitic in front of the modal therefore indicates that these examples have a monoclausal structure always i.e., the modals and aspectual verbs have auxiliary status.

4. Conclusion

The syntactic criteria used in order to determine the auxiliary status of verbs are met by the Old Catalan modal verbs. Thus, I conclude that this class of verbs should be treated as auxiliary verbs that occur within the same clause as their dependent verb. Since Kayne (1991) it has been argued that clitics left-adjoin to an Infl-type position, in Fischer (2000) this position has been argued to be T° for the Old Catalan clitics. Under this assumption Old Catalan clitic climbing has to be obligatory because the complement of these verbs contains no AgrP and TP, i.e., the clitics have to climb out of the infinitival clause in order to adjoin to an Infl-type position.

5. References

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