

Parsimonious Merge

The Intricate Syntax of French Causatives and their Clitic Distribution

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Introduction. French *Faire-infinitif* (FI) causative constructions exhibit multiple analytical challenges: seemingly irregular θ -role/grammatical function pairing and unusual full constituent order ((1) and (2)), unusual pattern of argument cliticization (3). To meet the former two, we motivate a novel analysis requiring substantial derivational depth. To meet the third, noting that no current locality theory accounts for the distribution of clitics in such (or other) constructions, we propose an account in terms of **Merge Parsimony** prohibiting Merging of non truth functional material not required for convergence (a condition requiring some look-ahead in bottom up derivations).


1. Complexity and Movement. The placement of clitic pronouns reveals that the architecture of causative constructions is significantly more complex than has been recently assumed (*pace* Alsina 1992, Guasti 1996, Ippolito 2004, Folli & Harley 2007 a.o.). **i.** Cliticization (Sportiche, 1995) requires the presence of some functional structure **FuncStruc** hosting clitics and “leaning” on some verbal element. Complements cliticize freely in simplex clauses (see (4)-(5)), but such clitics are illicit on the verb embedded under *faire* (3), and some of them, namely Bare Dative IO clitics, which can cliticize in simple clauses (5), are *altogether illicit* (6). **ii.** Causative constructions crucially differ from double object constructions (witness the striking difference in cliticization options (4) *vs.* (6)). This shows that Causatives do not reduce to the formation of a single (but complex) predicate made up of *faire* and the embedded verb (*contra* Guasti 1996 a.o.). Biclausal analyses (Kayne 1975, Rouveret and Vergnaud 1980 or Burzio 1986 a.o.) appealing to VP preposing of a projection of the embedded V do not suffice either. Indeed, it can be shown, by means of new observations about e.g. pronominal binding or anaphor binding (see Charnavel 2009 on the anaphoric status of *son propre*) that in (1) under *Faire*, S can c-command O and IO, O c-commands S, IO c-commands O (under reconstruction as in prepositional double object constructions) but IO does not c-command S (see (7), (8), (9), (10), (11)). More movements are needed: one preposing O (by A-movement given the binding facts) out of the VP-preposed constituent itself preposed past S, one preposing V past O, given the word order, as shown in (14) (with S having raised to the main clause for Dative Case see Kayne 2005 - not a relevant assumption here).

2. Cliticization. Cliticization used to be thought of as being constrained by the presence of an intervening subject (starting with Kayne 1975). Such proposals, not tenable in current theories as probes for subjects and clitics are of a different nature, must be replaced by an appeal to either of the locality inducing constraints: Phase theory or Closest Attract. We adopt (without justifying it here) the simple (and independently motivated) idea (C**losest**C**litic**) that Clitics must cliticize in the smallest domain allowing the presence of FuncStruc (and a V). **Puzzle1:** Why can’t arguments of V in (3) cliticize on V (see (17))? **Puzzle2:** Why can’t a Bare IO cliticize on *Faire*? It is tempting to solve Puzzle1 by hypothesizing, as customarily, that the complement **CompFaire** of *Faire* necessarily lacks the necessary FuncStruc, but we show this is insufficient by demonstrating that the size of CompFaire is *variable* (a novel claim): it can be as small as to lack FuncStruc but it can also be big enough to include it. Examples (12)-(13) provide evidence that *Faire* can also embed a bigger infinitival constituent, which may contain negation and may (and sometimes must) contain clitic versions of V’s internal arguments (if any). As a matter of fact and this is **Puzzle3:** low cliticization of V’s internal arguments is the forced option when an internal argument of V is “reflexivized” with the reflexive morpheme *se*.

3. Size and Merge Parsimony. We first solve Puzzle2 by treating, as Pylkkänen (2008) suggests, bare IOs as high Applicatives in their clause, so high that they are stranded (in a way reminiscent of Quicoli 1979), by VP-preposing, in a lower phase (lacking a V, hence disallowing any cliticization). To solve Puzzle 1, we must guarantee that FuncStruc in CompFaire cannot be introduced unless CompFaire includes negation or a reflexive clitic. Reasoning first with negation, merging negation high or low makes scopal differences (neg in the scope of *Faire* or not). Merging low negation ipso facto guarantees that CompFaire can be (and therefore must be - cf. C**losest**C**litic**) large

enough to include FuncStruc (in part because CompFaire with Negation is a Phase). But surely (cf. non negated simple clauses) FuncStruc does not require the presence of negation. Why then can't it be merged in CompFaire allowing (impossible) low cliticization in the absence of negation? Merge Parsimony prevents this: since *Faire* independently allows FuncStruc in its clause and VP preposing allows "clitic climbing" (by "smuggling"), Merging the non truth functional FuncStruc in CompFaire is blocked since it is not required for convergence.

Puzzle3 is solved in a similar way: reflexivizing an internal argument of V cannot be done with the reflexive clitic *se* (re-)Merged high (an independent prohibition derived from locality considerations as *se* cliticization, unlike other kinds of cliticization, must involve "A-movement"). Low cliticization of *se* being the only option ipso facto guarantees that FuncStruc must be Merged low for convergence, thus allowing all of V's internal arguments to in principle cliticize low, and therefore requiring - by ClosestClitic all clitics (if any) originating low to cliticize low.

- (1) Simple clauses: [S V O (IO)] or [S V (IO)]; under *Faire*: [Faire V O (IO) à S] or [Faire V S (IO)]
 - (2) Faire envoyer une lettre au maire à Jean (make John send a letter to the mayor) / Faire parler Jean au maire (make John speak to the mayor)
 - (3) In [Faire V O (IO) à S], S, O and IO cliticize on *Faire*¹. In [Faire V S (IO)], S cliticizes on *Faire*, the "Bare Dative" IO cannot cliticize at all. Cliticization on V is excluded throughout.
 - (4) Marie le_i lui_j a donné (le livre_i) (à Jean_j). (Marie has given it (the book) to him (Jean))
 - (5) Marie lui_j a parlé (à Jean_j). (Marie spoke to him (Jean))
 - (6) Marie le_i(*lui_j) a fait parler (Pierre_i) (à Jean_j) t_i (Marie him to-him has made speak (Pierre) (à Jean))
 - (7) Marie a fait réparer [chaque voiture]_i à son_i propriétaire. (lit. Marie has made repair each car to its owner) 'Marie had each car be repaired by its owner.'
 - (8) Marie a fait réparer sa_i voiture à [chaque propriétaire]_i. (Marie has made repair his car to each owner)
 - (9) Le général a fait encercler la caserne_i des mutins à son propre_i régiment d'élite. (The general has made surround the mutineers' barracks to its own regiment of elite)
 - (10) *Le professeur a fait apporter un livre à [chaque enfant]_i à ses_i parents. (The teacher has made bring a book to each child to his parents)
 - (11) Le professeur a fait apporter un livre à son enfant à chaque parent. (The teacher has made bring a book to his child to each parent)
 - (12) ?Marie (*la_i) a fait ne pas (?la_i) réparer (la voiture_i) à Jean. (M. has made not repair it/the car to J.)
 - (13) Ceci a fait se les(=chaussures) acheter à Jean. (This has made REFL them=shoes buy to Jean)
 - (14) *faire* V DO [VP t_V t_{DO} IO] S_i *faire* [_{VP} t_i t_{VP}]
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- (15) Jean a fait rendre un livre à la libraire à Marie. (J. has made return a book to the bookseller to M.)
 - (16) Jean l'_i a fait rendre t_i à la libraire à Marie. (J. it has made return to the bookseller to M.)
 - (17) *Jean a fait le_i rendre t_i à la libraire à Marie. (J. has made it return to the bookseller to M.)

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¹This is often not recognized for IO, see however: Elle me la lui fera envoyer (She will make me send it to him)