Optionality in the Placement of Asturian Clitics

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I discuss in this paper some recent proposals about clitic placement in Western Romances. Focusing on Asturian data, I evaluate them exploring their extension to contexts not considered originally by their authors. I conclude that the better way to give a coherent account to all these data is the proposal (due to Rouveret) of a functional head specifically designed for the placement of clitics, which generates or not depending on the kind of sentences in which clitics appear. This hypothesis fits well with certain instances of optionality observed in infinitival contexts. It is proposed that two alternative derivations are opened in these cases, both licensed on economy grounds.

This paper explores a bunch of syntactic topics: the nature of pronominal clitics and the syntax of its placement, the nature of epistemic verbs, the optional character of certain derivations (a non welcome idea within the latest outcomes of Generative Theory), the morphological conditions for long head movement application ... They are all unified in a try to evaluate two recent hypotheses about clitic placement in Western Romances. I mainly use data from Asturian (an almost forgotten Western Romance). The paper is organized as follows: section 1 presents the basic facts about clitic placement in Asturian, and introduces Rouveret and Uriagereka's hypothesis about them; section 2 offers certain data that do not seem to fit well with any of them; section 3 concludes, finally, that only Rouveret's hypothesis, implemented with some theoretical devices independently needed by the theory, can surmount the conflictive data of the previous section.

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1. Clitic Placement in Asturian: An Overview

Asturian declarative sentences with the word order that can be considered standard or unmarked (SVO) place obligatorily the clitics after the verb ('enclisis'):

(1) a. Xuan llimpió–y los zapatos a María.
Xuan clean-PAST–3sg–cl (to her) the shoes to María
'Xuan cleaned María the shoes.'

b. *Xuan y llimpió los zapatos a María.
Xuan cl (to her) clean-PAST–3sg the shoes to María

Enclisis is thus the normal placement for Asturian clitics, as in the rest of Western Romances (Portuguese and Galician).[1]

[1] Asturian data is described by Sánchez Vicente and Rubiera Tuya (1985) and D'Andrés (1993). Its clitic paradigm is summarized in this schema:

singular			plural		
1	2	3	1	2	3
me	te	lu (ac. masc.) la (ac. fem.) lo (ac. neuter) ——— y (dat.)	nos	vos	los (ac. masc. neuter) les (ac. fem.) ——— yos (dat.)

As can be noticed from the examples in (1), dative clitics can always be doubled in Asturian. Doubling of an accusative clitic, on the other hand, is only possible when the corresponding DP has been focused, as in (6).

In certain contexts, however, the situation is exactly the opposite, and 'proclisis' becomes the only option for clitic placement. The most important of those contexts are summarized bellow:

(i) Sentences introduced by a wh–word

(2) a. ¿Cómo *los* llimpió Xuan?
how cl(them) clean-PAST–3sg Xuan
'How did Xuan clean them?'

b. *¿Cómo llimpió–*los* Xuan?
how clean-PAST–3sg–cl(them) Xuan

(3) a. ¿Qué–y dixo María?
what (ac)–cl(to him) say-PAST–3sg María
'What did María say to him?'

b. *¿Qué dixo–y María?
what (ac) say-PAST–3sg–cl(to him) María

(ii) Sentences introduced by a negative word

(4) a. Non *te* *lo* dicía por iso.
not cl(to you) cl(it) say-PAST–1sg for that
'I did not say it to you for that reason.'

b. *Non dicía*telo* por iso.
not say-PAST–1sg–cl(to you)–cl(it) for that

(5) a. Inxamás *lu* ví delante.
never cl(him) see-PAST-1sg in front
'I never saw him in front of me.'

b. *Inxamás ví–*lu* delante.
never see-PAST–1sg–cl(him) in front

(iii) Sentences with focused phrases

(6) El padre dió-y algunes perres. ⇒

the father give-PAST-3sg-cl(to him) some money

'The father gave him some money.'

a. *Algunes perres-y les* dió el padre.

some money-cl(to him)-cl(them) give-PAST-3sg the father

'Some money was given to him by the father.'

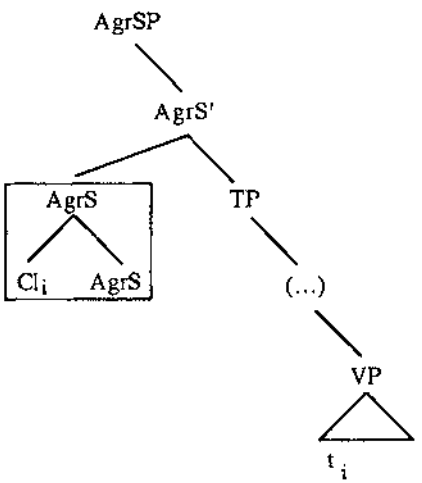
b. ?**Algunes perres* dió-y les el padre.

some money give-PAST-3sg-cl(to him)-cl(them) the father

1.1. Some Analysis

All along this paper I will assume that Asturian clitics behave as X^0s that in a certain point of the derivation adjoin to the higher inflectional head, a position that they reach by a movement operation from an argument position (see section 2.1.1 below). This is represented in (7):

(7)



I will not deepen here into the question about the trigger of such an operation. I will follow Kayne's (1991) prohibition against cliticisation over traces, and I will consider without further

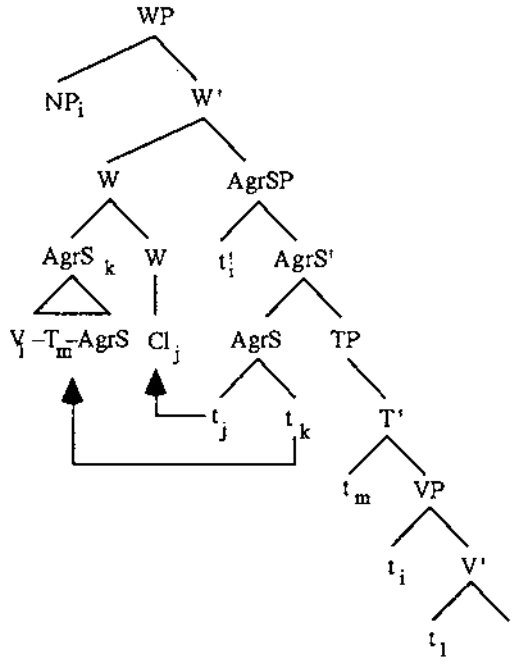
reasoning that it can explain why clitics need to go out of the lexical projection of verbs. I will accept (also as Kayne) that the higher inflectional head is the final target of this movement operation in most Romance languages. What I really want in this paper is to evaluate two recent proposals about the ordering restrictions observed by clitics in Western Romances, that I will try to summarize in a few paragraphs.

1.1.1. Rouveret (1992). The gist of Rouveret's (1992) proposal is the existence in the lexicon of Western Romances of a special functional head, whose mission is to receive clitics from the lexical projection of verbs, where they find no conditions for cliticisation. Rouveret calls *W* this functional head.[2] W, projected higher than AgrS, asks for the satisfaction of certain conditions within its checking domain: namely, the presence of either a verbal and a nominal element. Rouveret says that this property derives from a mixed morphological character of W. The sentential subject, once satisfied the agreement conditions of the AgrS head, moves up to the specifier of WP, checking the nominal feature of W.

Up to this point, clitics (already located in W) appear before the verbal complex (which is located in AgrS). But W still waits for the checking of its verbal feature. This circumstance will work as a trigger for the movement of the verbal complex, which adjoins to W and finishes the derivation before clitics. (8) summarizes all these steps:

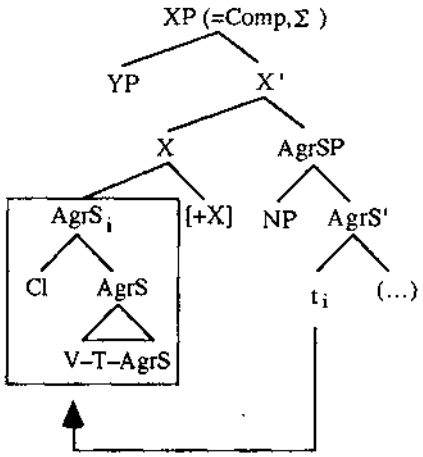
[2] The *W* is after Wackernagel, who proposed the law that clitics must appear following the first sentential constituent in Indo-European. The extension of this law to Romances Languages in known as Tobler-Mussafia Law. See about these questions Anderson (1993) and Salvi (1990).

(8)



This derivation explains the ordering of clitics within declarative sentences exhibiting an unmarked word order. How can we explain the opposite ordering, observed in the remaining cases? Rouveret explains that the common aspect of all these cases is the presence of another functional head: Comp in sentences introduced by a wh–word, and (I will assume following Laka (1990)) Σ in sentences with negative items or focused phrases. All this functional heads manifest as abstract features, which impose a requirement of lexical identification on the representation. Rouveret assumes that such a requirement cannot be satisfied by a head labelled as W. Thus, Grammar avoids its generation in this kind of contexts, and it is the verbal complex (labelled as AgrS) which adjoins to those heads identifying the abstract features. A Cl–V ordering is obtained in this way, as represented in (9):

(9)



1.1.2. Uriagereka (1993). Uriagereka tries to explain the peculiarities of clitic placement in Western Romances without introducing any distinctive functional category in their lexicons. He maintains that the responsible of this idiosyncrasy is a category which is actually present in all Romances, though with different morphological specifications in each of them. He calls this category *F*, and he says that it serves to code syntactically the point of view of the speaker or the discursive subject. F is, among other things, the position for clitics.

Uriagereka proposes that in Western Romances F is a sort of affix that asks for the help of another element in order to acquire phonetic shape. In his opinion, this requirement can be satisfied in two ways:

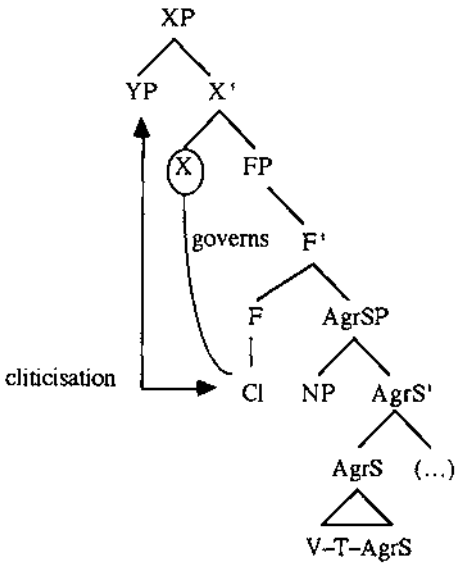
(i) cliticisation under the influence of a governing element, or

(ii) incorporation into it of another head.

(ii) is the situation observed in declarative sentences with the unmarked order: clitics are located in the position F and, there being no governing element, the verbal complex adjoins to them. The resulting derivation is exactly as (8), except for the presence of F instead of W. The

remaining cases are explained by the fact that in all of them there is an element which governs the clitics in F; so, alternative (i) is accomplished. It is represented in (10):

(10)



It is worth noticing at this point that Uriagereka's proposal about clitic placement in Western Romances makes some wrong predictions. For instance, his hypothesis is incompatible with the verb–subject inversion observed in interrogative contexts in all these languages, as shown in (11) with Asturian data:

(11) a. ¿Ónde trabayaba Xuan el añu pasau?
where work-PAST–3sg Xuan the year last
'Where does Xuan work last year?'

b. *¿Ónde Xuan trabayaba el añu pasau?
where Xuan work-PAST–3sg the year last

If this phenomenon is explained (as usually is) as movement of the verbal complex into Comp, cliticisation might take place over the verbal complex placed in Comp (as in (12)), and not over the wh–word in [Spec, SC]. (12) is, however, an ungrammatical sentence:

(12) *¿[$_{CP}$ qué [$_{Comp}$ dió$_i$–y Xuan t$_i$ a María]]?
what give-PAST-3sg-cl (to her) Xuan to María

So, Uriagereka's hypothesis is problematic even in some matrix sentences. We will see in the next section that in no matrix contexts it is absolutely useless.

2. Clitic Placement within Infinitival Constructions

Clitics located in embedded infinitival constructions exhibit in most of the cases the possibility of appearing before or after the infinitive, even in sentences in which typical triggers of proclisis are present:

(13) a. Ye una tontería non face*lo*.
is a nonsense not do–cl(it)
'It is nonsense not doing it.'

b. Ye una tontería non *lo* facer.
Is a nonsense not cl(it) do
'It is nonsense not doing it.'

(14) a. Preguntó ónde face*lo*.
ask-PAST–3sg where do–cl(it)
'He asked where to do it.'

b. Preguntó ónde *lo* facer.
ask-PAST–3sg where cl(it) do
'He asked where to do it.'

(15) a. Talantaba cómu face*lo*.
wonder-PAST–3sg how do–cl(it)
'He wondered how to do it.'

b. Talantaba cómu *lo* facer.
wonder-PAST-3sg how cl(it) do
'He wondered how to do it.'

In the previous section it was shown that negative and wh–words obligatorily trigger proclisis in the context of inflected verbs. Sentences as those proposed in (13) to (15) show now that in the context of an infinitive proclisis is possible, but not obligatory.

However, in infinitival constructions directly subcategorized by certain verbs, enclisis is sometimes the only option (as in (16)), but sometimes both placements are possible again (as in (17)):

(16) a. Llamenté abandona*lo*.
regret-PAST–1sg leave–cl(it)
'I regretted leaving it.'

b. *Llamenté *lo* abandonar.
regret-PAST–1sg cl(it) leave

(17) a. Talanta face*lo* güey.
wonder–3sg do–cl(it) today
'He is thinking about doing it today.'

b. Talanta *lo* facer güey.
wonder–3sg cl(it) do today
'He is thinking about doing it today.'

Sentences (13) to (17) raise the following problems:

(i) According to Rouveret's hypothesis, the presence of a negative or an interrogative operator in a sentence serves to block the generation of the W head. Sentences with this kind of elements demand a movement operation of the verbal complex up to the head of the projection in which the operators are located. A complex labelled as W does not have the faculty of feature identification supposed to this sort of movement. So, Grammar avoids the generation of W in such a situation. Rouveret furthermore establishes a necessary relation between the blocking of the generation of W and proclisis: (b) sentences of (13) to (15) accord with that; the problem is set by the (a) version of each pair, in which this necessary relation seems to be broken. Besides, the judgments which appear in (16) are also in perfect accord with Rouveret's proposal: no element blocks the generation of W and enclisis is the only option. But (17) betrays Rouveret again: nothing seems to block the generation of W, and enclisis should be the only option.

(ii) According to Uriagereka's hypothesis, the presence in (13) to (15) of a governing element higher than the clitic should be enough to sustain its phonetic shaping. However, (a) sentences show the verb in a position where it seems to have climbed in order to help the clitic with that. This movement has no justification in the context of Uriagereka's explanation. Turning to (16a), it seems to exhibit an obligatory movement over the clitic, which implies that the main verb does not have the ability to govern it. However, (16b) seems to show exactly the opposite.

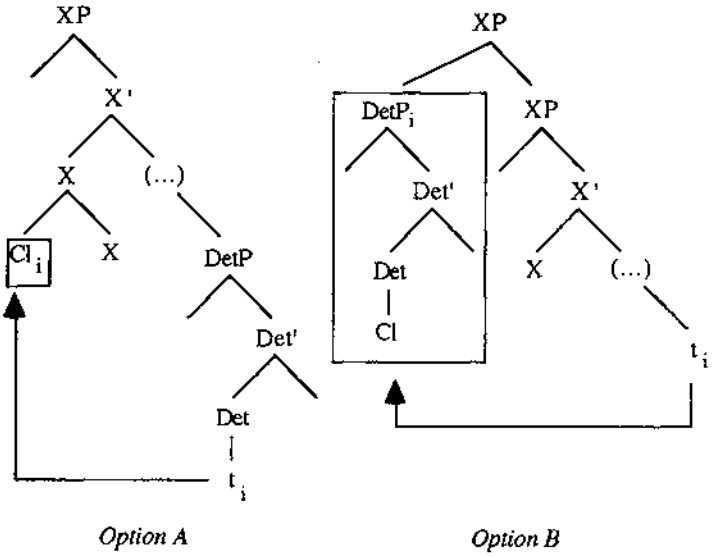
In the following pages I will try to give an explanation to all the circumstances presented in (13) to (17). My aim is to decide which one of the hypothesis introduced in section 1 can be implemented in such a way as to give a coherent account to them.

2.1. Optionality (1)

Barbosa (1994) develops an interesting hypothesis about the optionality of clitic placement in the Portuguese equivalents of (13) to (15). In her opinion, Romance languages can be divided

into two different patterns according to the nature of their pronominal clitics. The common ground of the clitics of all Romance languages is that they are Determiners, which serve as heads of DP projections based generated in argument positions. In most Romance languages clitic movement is a X^0 movement operation; however, there remain a few languages of the family in which clitic movement affects to the whole DP structure. The fixing of one or the other of these parametric options explains certain peculiarities of verbal complexes which include clitics in the different languages. By instance, X^0 clitic movement operates by successive application of the movement operation to different heads. Clitics incorporate in each application to the head immediately higher. XP clitic movement, in the other hand, drives the clitic to a specifier or an adjunct position of other maximal projection. It is illustrated in (18):

(18)



Option A *Option B*

A phenomenon which seems to reflect if Option B is at work in a given language is, according to Barbosa, the capability of interpolating items between the clitic and the verb. Such a possibility can be observed in Portuguese. Languages as Spanish, in which interpolation is not an option, seem to fix Option A:

(19) a. o libro que lhe *ainda não* entreguei
the book that cl(him/her) already not give-PAST–1sg
'the book that I didn't already give to him'

b. *el libro que le *aún no* entregué
the book that cl(him/her) already not give-PAST–1sg

(19b) shows that once the clitic incorporates to a head, introduction of lexical material in between becomes impossible. (19a), in the other hand, shows that adjunction does not prevent the presence of some other element in between of the clitic and the verbal head; as in (20), where a subject, located in [Spec, AgrSP], appears after the clitic and before the verb:

(20) a. O Carlos pediu para o *nos* irmos buscar.
the Carlos ask-PAST–3sg for cl(it) we go–1pl look for
'Carlos asked us to go to look for it.'

b. O Carlos pediu para [$_{AgrSP}$ o [$_{AgrSP}$ *nos* [$_{AgrS}$ irmos buscar]]]

Barbosa thinks that her hypothesis also contains a way of accounting for the optionality of clitic placement in infinitival sentences headed by a complementizer (as those in (13) to (15)). Inspired by Kayne (1991), Barbosa assumes that Portuguese infinitives operate an adjunction process, which locates them in an adjunct position of the higher projection of the inflection. Given that adjunctions do not respect any ordering restriction, Barbosa concludes that the free ordering observed between clitics and infinitives, being both adjuncts, is explained.

2.1.1. Clitic Movement is X^0 Movement in Asturian. However, the parameter proposed by Barbosa does not fall in with the dialectal variation observed among the Romance Languages in relation with the peculiarities of clitic placement. Asturian, by instance, is a language which completely rejects the interpolation of elements between the clitics and the verb, phenomenon on which crucially relies Barbosa's hypothesis:

(21) a. *el llibru que–y *ainda nun* entregué
the book that–cl(to him) already not give-PAST–1sg
b. *Xuan falaba de–y *nosotros* dar les llaves.
Xuan talk-PAST-3sg about–cl(to him) we give the keys

Even in Galician it is not an active phenomenon, in spite of certain folkloric examples given by grammarians, as the following:

(22) Trigo que lle *a palla* doura / logo está para o fouciño.
wheat that cl(to it) the straw gild-3sg then is to the reaping–hook
'Wheat that it is gilded by the straw / it is ready for the reaping–hook.'
(Alvarez, Regueira y Monteagudo (1992:205–206))

Summing up, even if we recognize the operativity of the parameter proposed by Barbosa, it is necessary to make clear that Western Romance languages fix its values in different ways: in the one hand, Asturian (and I think that Galician too) moves its clitics as X^0; on the other hand, Portuguese moves them as XPs. As a consequence, Barbosa's hypothesis about alternations similar to those shown in (13) to (15) is not operative in the Asturian cases, because it crucially relies in a parameter value opposite to that fixed by Asturian about clitic movement.

2.2. *Epistemic / Factive*

I will start my explanation by focusing on the contrast between (16b) and (17b), repeated as (23):

(23) a. Talanta lo facer güey.
wonder–3sg cl(it) do today
'He is thinking about doing it today.'

(23) b. *Llamenté lo abandonar.
regret-PAST–1sg cl(it) leave

The main verb of each of these sentences belongs to a different conceptual kind: *talantar* is an epistemic verb; *llamentar* a factive verb. According with Raposo's (1987) analysis about Portuguese inflected infinitive, these two kinds of verbs differ in their subcategorization properties. On the one hand, factive verbs select AgrPs with nominal properties. This is the reason of the alternations in (24):

(24) a. llamenté [$_{AgrSP=DP}$ abandonalo]
regret-PAST–1sg leave–cl(it)
b. llamenté [$_{DP}$ el [$_{AgrSP}$ abandonalo]]
regret-PAST–1sg the leave–cl(it)
c. llamenté [$_{DP}$ el fechu [$_{AgrsSP}$ d' abandonalo]]
regret-PAST-1sg the fact of-leave–cl(it)

On the other hand, epistemic verbs select full sentential structures, that is, CPs. Alternations equivalent to those in (24) are not possible in the context of an epistemic verb:

(25) a. talanta [$_{CP}$ [$_{SConc}$ facelo güey]]
wonder-3sg do–cl(it) today
b. *Talanta el facelo güey.
wonder–3sg the do–cl(it) today
c. *Talanta el fechu de facelo güey.
wonder–3sg the fact of do–cl(it) today

Raposo's idea is that epistemic verbs select sentential complements in whose head an abstract temporal operator is located. So, a more detailed analysis of (25a) would be (26):

(26) talanta [CP [Comp <tense>] [AgrSP [AgrS facer (lo)] güey]]

Notice that in (26) a potential trigger for the clitic anteposition is present. According to the kind of analysis developed in this paper (see 1.1.1), the abstract operator which appears in (26) must be lexically identified: the movement of the verbal complex from AgrS up to Comp could satisfy this requirement. But such an operation would result in an important defect for the representation, because the clitic would be left stranded. However, we can imagine again that the clitic itself adjoins to Comp after the movement of the verbal complex, arising a string with the Cl–V order of (25a). In (27) all the steps of this derivation are represented:

(27) i. talanta [CP [Comp <tense>] [AgrSP [AgrS lo [AgrS facer] güey]]]
ii. talanta [CP [Comp facer$_i$] [Comp <tense>] [AgrSP [AgrS lo [AgrS t_i] güey]]]
iii. talanta [CP [Comp lo$_j$ [Comp facer]] [Comp <tense>] [AgrSP [AgrS t_j [AgrS t_i] güey]]]

With a factive verb as *llamentar* a Cl–V order is not obtained, because its context lacks a trigger for a derivation as (27).

Up to this point we have an partial account of the contrast exhibited in (23). Anyway, (23a) is not the only possible ordering of the elements of an infinitival clause in the context of an epistemic verb. (28) is also correct in Asturian:

(28) Talanta facelo güey.
wonder–3sg do–cl(it) today
'He is thinking about doing it today.'

2.2.1. Pensar *is Not an Epistemic Verb in Asturian.* An alternative idea about the Cl–V/V–Cl alternation within infinitival clauses introduced by epistemic verbs relies on the possibility of rejecting the presence of the abstract temporal operator in Comp (or in liberating it of the

requirement of lexical identification), and on the supposition that we are in front of an instance of 'clitic climbing'.[3] In other words, it could be that what is at stake in sequences of the type 'epistemic verb + infinitive' is a structure which allows the movement of the clitics of the infinitive up to the clitic positions of the main verb.[4]

Following this idea, in a sentence as (23a) (repeated below as (29a)) a clitic which is serving as an argument of the infinitive does not find any obstacle in its way to the main inflection. Once there, it should obey the standard conditions introduced in section 1. Therefore, in an unmarked situation it should appear after the main verb. (29b) represents that:

(29) a. Talanta lo facer güey.

b. [$_{WP}$ [$_{W}$ talanta$_j$ [$_{W}$ lo$_i$]]] [$_{AgrSP}$ [$_{AgrS}$ t$_i$ [$_{AgrS}$ t$_j$]]] (...) [$_{XP}$ t$_i$ facer güey]]]

But it must be noticed that if *lo* had really cliticised over the main verb in (29), it might happen that the introduction of any of the standard triggers of proclisis should obligatorily place the clitic before the verb. This prediction is not borne out:

(30) *Non lo talanta facer güey.
not cl(it) wonder–3sg do today

The conclusion is that the clitic still relies on the infinitive in (29).

The curious thing about this conclusion is that epistemic verbs are usually introduced as typical mediators of clitic climbing contexts, as can be seen in (31) with the verb *pensar* ('to think'):

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[3] This possibility was suggested to me by Amaya Mendikoetxea (p.c.).

[4] See Kayne (1989) for an specification of the characteristics of such a structure.

(31) a. Pensaba facelo güey.
think-PAST-1sg do-cl(it) today

b. Pensabalo facer güey.
think-PAST-1sg-cl(it) do today

c. Non lo pensaba facer güey.
not cl(it) think-PAST-1sg do today[5]

Pensar is usually offered as a prototypical epistemic verb, and it maybe behaves as such in Portuguese. I believe, however, that *pensar* does not belong to this kind of verbs neither in Asturian nor in Spanish. This idea seems to be clear in sentences as (32), in which *pensar* has a modal value that can be translated as 'to have the intention/will to do x'. In Asturian (as in Spanish), *pensar* is only able to develop an authentic epistemic value in a compositional way, with the participation of a preposition. These two values are clearly distinguished in the Spanish sentences bellow:

(32) a. *Modal*
Pensaba acabarlo hoy.
think-PAST-1sg finish-cl(it) today
'I have the intention of finishing it today.'

b. *Epistemic*
Pensaba en acabarlo hoy.
think-PAST-1sg in finish-cl(it) today
'I was imagining a situation in which I finished it and such a situation was a part of today.'

[5] I am consciously avoiding to give a literal translation to the sentences in (31). In this section I am precisely trying to fix the correct equivalencies to them.

The translations in (32) are certainly artificial, but I am only trying to fix and to distinguish the two different values of *pensar*. What is important in this context is that only a sentence as (32a) allows clitic climbing:

(33) a. Lo pensaba acabar hoy.
cl(it) think-PAST-1sg finish today
'I have the intention of finishing it today.'
b. *Lo pensaba en acabar hoy.
cl(it) think-PAST-1sg in finish today

Summing up, *pensar* can be classified within the verbs that Picallo (1990) calls 'semi–modals', which sometimes exhibit all the properties of modal verbs (among them, to allow clitic climbing), and sometimes behave as standard verbal heads. My conclusion is that while *talantar* is a pure epistemic verb,[6] *pensar* it is not in its basic meaning. It can only develop an epistemic value in a derivative way. *Talantar*, as an epistemic verb, subcategorizes CPs, in whose head an abstract temporal operator is located;[7] *pensar*, as a modal verb, subcategorizes an infinitival VP (if we follow Kayne (1989:240–241)) or it is generated as an VP adjoined to an infinitival VP (if we follow Picallo (1990:289)). Within any of those theoretical frameworks it is possible to justify the clitic climbing operation, which becomes impossible if we suppose the presence of a CP projection in between, as in my analysis of sentences with epistemic verbs (as *talantar*). Given this analysis, sentences of this kind share their basic structure with those of (14) and (15) (repeated as (34b) and (34c), with an interrogative operator in Comp. In all the cases, an abstract element in Comp starts a derivational process which concludes with the Cl–V order. The situation is similar to that in (13) (repeated as

[6] *Talantar* is translated by Neira and Piñeiro (1989:571) as 'pensar', 'cavilar' (i.e. , 'to think', 'to ruminate').

[7] As can be noticed from examples (15) and (17) above, these CPs can contain both declarative or interrogative sentences.

(34d)), with an abstract negative operator in Σ. Therefore, the optionality of clitic placement in the context of an epistemic verb is due to the same reason of the optionality in the context of an interrogative or negative word:

(34) a. Talanta face*lo* güey. = Talanta *lo* facer güey.
wonder–3sg do–cl(it) today wonder–3sg cl(it) do today
'He is thinking about doing it today.'

b. Preguntó ónde face*lo*. = Preguntó ónde *lo* facer.
ask-PAST-3sg where do–cl(it) ask-PAST-3sg where cl(it) do
'He asked where to do it.'

c. Talantaba cómu face*lo*. = Talantaba cómu *lo* facer.
wonder-PAST-3sg how do–cl(it) wondered how cl(it) do
'He wondered how to do it.'

d. Ye una tontería non face*lo*. = Ye una tontería non *lo* facer.
is a nonsense not do–cl(it) is a nonsense not cl(it) do
'It is nonsense not doing it.'

It is important to notice that if it is true that all the cases in (34) ask for an unitary explanation, Uriagereka's hypothesis seems to be unoperative in non-matrix contexts. Leaving the question of the optionality aside and focusing only on the versions with proclisis, (34a) finds no explanation within his framework, because in such a sentence there is no lexical element whose presence serves to prevent the movement of the verbal complex, and the main verb is unable to govern the clitic, given the presence of a CP projection.

2.3. Optionality (2)

Sections 1.1.1 and 2.2 contain a possible explanation for the version with proclisis of the sentence types represented in (34). In all these cases there is an abstract operator in a functional head position which needs to be lexically identified by the infinitival complex. The

infinitive moves up to that position, and the clitic is left stranded, against a general condition on representations. In order to repair this situation, the clitic itself adjoins to a higher head, giving rise to the Cl–V order. But this explanation still leaves two questions unresolved:

(i) how is the derivation in the alternative version with enclisis?, and

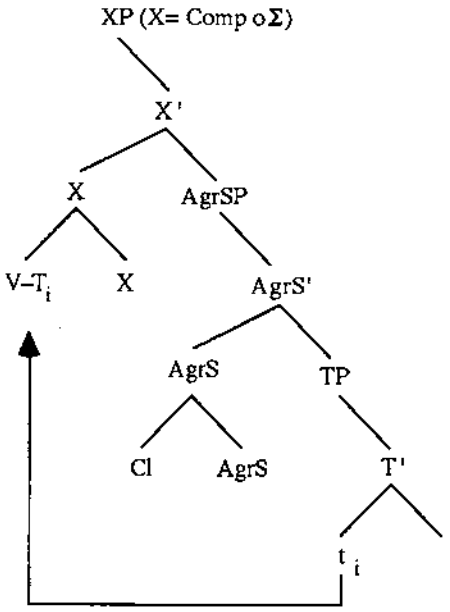
(ii) how it is possible that Grammar leaves open two alternative derivations, which seems to be against economy considerations?

2.3.1. Long Head Movement. Thus far I have explained proclisis as an effect of an adjunction operation triggered by the necessity of avoiding clitic stranding. Consequently, the versions with enclisis should be explained by a derivation which does not leave the clitic in such a situation. I will defend in this section that this is what we obtain if the verb avoids adjunction to AgrS in its way to Σ or Comp.

From a morphological point of view, a derivation like that finds certain motivation in the fact that Asturian infinitives lack agreement features lexically manifested. We can think that Asturian infinitives are able to rise up to Σ or Comp in order to identify their abstract features avoiding the abstract AgrS head. This derivation is represented in (35):[8]

[8] I understand (following Kayne (1991)) that the clitic is in a legitimate environment in (35), assuming that prohibition again cliticisation over traces does not preclude cliticisation over other kinds of empty elements (as an empty agreement feature).

(35)



Actually, Portuguese data show that enclisis is not possible within clauses with inflected infinitives (see Benucci (1992)), as shown in (36):[9]

(36) a. de nos entenderdes ...
if cl(us) understand–2pl

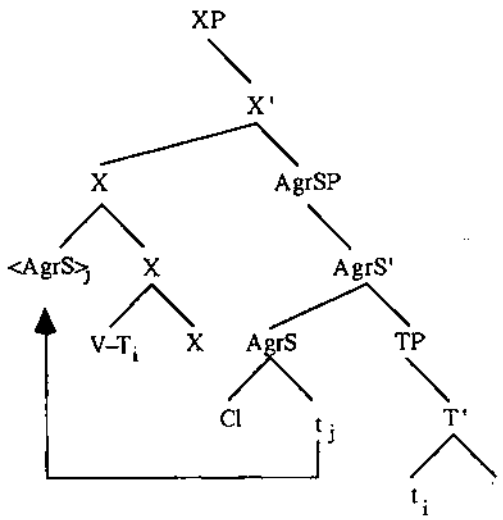
b. *de entendérdesnos ...
if understand–2pl–cl(us)

[9] Some problematic data for this hypothesis is offered by Longa (1994), who shows that Galician speakers marginally accept sentences as (36b). I will avoid the problem here, under the assumption that the different structures attributed by Longa to clauses with inflected infintives in Portuguese and in Galician contain a potential solution to the problem.

My assumption is that overt morphology forces the raising of the verb to AgrS, while non–overt morphology does not have this effect. I will try to justify the role of this step (and of its absence) in the placement of clitics.

It is true that from a syntactic point of view (36) contains a violation of the Head Movement Constraint (HMC; see Travis (1984)), which determines that X^0 movement can not avoid any head position. Lema and Rivero (1990) defend, however, that certain head movements can pass along a head position if another operation is able to correct the ungoverned character of the trace left behind by the moved head: for instance, the LF incorporation of the head which has been passed along to the next head (i.e., the target of the X^0 overtly moved). This operation is represented in (37):

(37)



In (37) <AgrS> represents an abstract agreement feature, whose adjunction to the head X (Σ or Comp) gives a governor to the trace of the verbal complex moved from the T head position. This solution relies on the Government Transparency Corollary (GTC) of Baker (1988:63–68), which says that if a head X incorporates to a head Y, Y becomes the governor of the domain which X originally governed. In (37), <AgrS> governs the TP and its head

from its original position: given the GTC, when it adjoins to X (which contains the verbal complex at this point of the derivation), it transfers to X the property of governing its original government domain, and the V–T complex becomes the governor of its own trace.

It is true that (37) seems to contain a violation of the prohibition against clitic stranding (see Kayne (1993:8–12)). However, the derivational step represented in (37) takes place in LF, where such a condition is probably irrelevant. It must be taken into account that the prohibition against clitic stranding is a condition on the phonetic processing of clitics, which loses its relevance once the LF/PF split has taken place.

We have, therefore, two alternative derivations, both apparently allowed by Grammar:

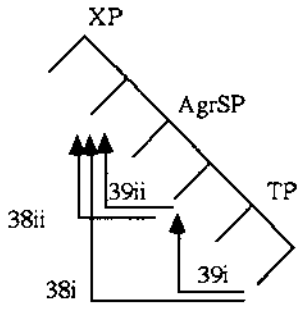
(38) (i) V–T adjoins to X passing along (Cl) AgrS; and
(ii) <AgrS> adjoins to V–T –X in LF.

(39) (i) V–T adjoins to AgrS; and
(ii) (Cl) V–T–AgrS adjoins to X.

2.3.2. Economy of Derivations. The introduction of economy principles among the mechanisms of Grammar aims to restrict the number of possible derivations for each representation, favoring the less costly ones attending to certain criteria (see Chomsky (1991, 1993)). Therefore, the conclusion reached in the previous section must be considered problematic from the point of view of the theory of derivations.

The two alternative derivations proposed up to here are schematically represented in (40):

(40)



Both derivations have the same number of steps. From a purely numerical point of view, both are equally optimal. An aspect of those derivations that could favor (38) is that one of its steps takes place at LF. Under a certain interpretation of Chomsky's (1993) Procrastinate Principle, we could conclude that derivation (38) is more economical than derivation (39). However, what Procrastinate actually establishes is that a derivation must refrain their steps as much as possible, in terms of the level at which they apply: LF movement are less costly, and derivations must choose this option unless the structure contains an element which determines its processing in the Overt Syntax. Attending to this, Procrastinate cannot serve as a referee in our case, because the LF step in (38) does not contrast with an overt equivalent in (39). Actually, both derivations apply their own steps in the optimal level, considering the conditions that intervene in each case. Therefore, it must happen that the two derivations that have been introduced are equally economical for the Grammar, which can maintain both.

A potential problem for this solution is why it does not apply in the context of finite verbs, where only derivation (39) is possible. But what is at stake here is probably the fact that all the features of the finite inflection are overtly manifested, as is also the case with Portuguese inflected infinitives (see again (36)), which determines a strict application of the HMC.[10]

[10] Which is compatible with Lema and Rivero's (1990:14) idea about the morphological character of this condition.

3. Conclusion

In this paper I have dealt with some problems of clitic placement within infinitival contexts in Asturian. I have used them in order to evaluate Rouveret and Uriagereka's hypothesis about clitic placement in Western Romance. My conclusion is that only the former can be extended to contexts not considered originally by any of the authors without introducing any new stipulation in the theoretical framework that they use.

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