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Authors	Rowlett, PA
Type	Conference or Workshop Item
URL	This version is available at: http://usir.salford.ac.uk/10367/
Published Date	2006

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Perception, movement and causative verbs: biclausal and monoclausal structures

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1 Introduction

French PMC verbs:

- (1) a. Perception verbs: *apercevoir, écouter, entendre, regarder, sentir, voir*
- b. Movement verbs: (*em*)*mener, envoyer, porter, monter, descendre*
- c. Causative verbs: *laisser, faire*

(Generally) compatible with two kinds of structure:

- (2) a. Jean voit Marie manger (le gâteau). b. Jean voit Marie *le* manger.
- c. Jean la voit manger (le gâteau). d. Jean la voit *le* manger.
- (3) a. Jean voit manger le gâteau à Marie. b. Jean *le* voit manger à Marie.
- c. Jean lui voit manger le gâteau. d. Jean *le* lui voit manger.

Three differences:

1. Position/form of nominal 'underlying subject of infinitive'
2. Form of pronominal 'underlying subject of infinitive'
3. Position of pronominal 'underlying object of infinitive'

Flexibility isn't without limits. Purpose of paper = explore limits.

2 Theoretical framework

– Contemporary Chomskyan syntactic theory (Chomsky 1991; 1993; 1995a, b; 2000; 2001; 2005).

– Grammatical dependence = head-to-head relation: grammatical requirement of one head = satisfied by merging, and checking, another head;

– lexical dependence = head–specifier relation: thematic requirement of head = satisfied by merging, and checking, a specifier.



3 Bare infinitival structures: biclausal and monoclausal

– Infinitives usually = marked by *de/à*: dependants of V, N, A.

– Some infinitives = bare: only ever dependants of V.

– Variable relationship between bare infinitive and V: distinction between monoclausal and biclausal structures.

3.1 Biclausal structure

Biclausal structure illustrated in (2), repeated here:

- (5) a. Jean voit Marie manger (le gâteau). b. Jean voit Marie *le* manger.

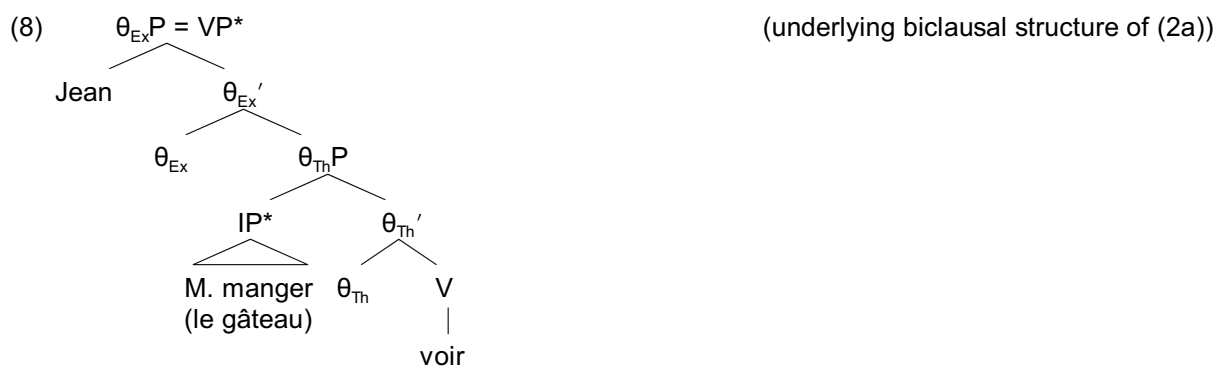
- c. Jean la voit manger (le gâteau). d. Jean la voit /e manger.

Reasons for biclausal analysis: infinitive behaves like an independent clause:

- First, no clitic climbing, as in (2b, d).
- Second, infinitive = compatible with independent sentential negation, as in (6):

- (6) a. Jean voit Marie NE PAS manger (le gâteau). b. Jean voit Marie NE PAS /e manger.
 c. Jean la voit NE PAS manger (le gâteau). d. Jean la voit NE PAS /e manger.

If cliticisation and negation = clausal phenomena, then infinitive = clausal dependant of PMC V, merged in Spec θ P, as in (7):



Underlying subject of infinitive in (2a) *Marie* raises out of local IP* and realised as direct object, by Exceptional Case Marking (ECM). Evidence? Pronominalisation, as direct-object clitic in (2c, d), and PPA, as in (9):

- (9) a. Marie, Jean l'a vue manger (le gâteau).
 b. Quelle fille tu as vue manger (le gâteau)?

3.2 Monoclausal structure

Monoclausal structure illustrated in (3), repeated here:

- (10) a. Jean voit manger le gâteau à Marie. b. Jean /e voit manger à Marie.
 c. Jean lui voit manger le gâteau. d. Jean /e lui voit manger.

Reasons for monoclausal analysis: infinitive doesn't behave like an independent clause:

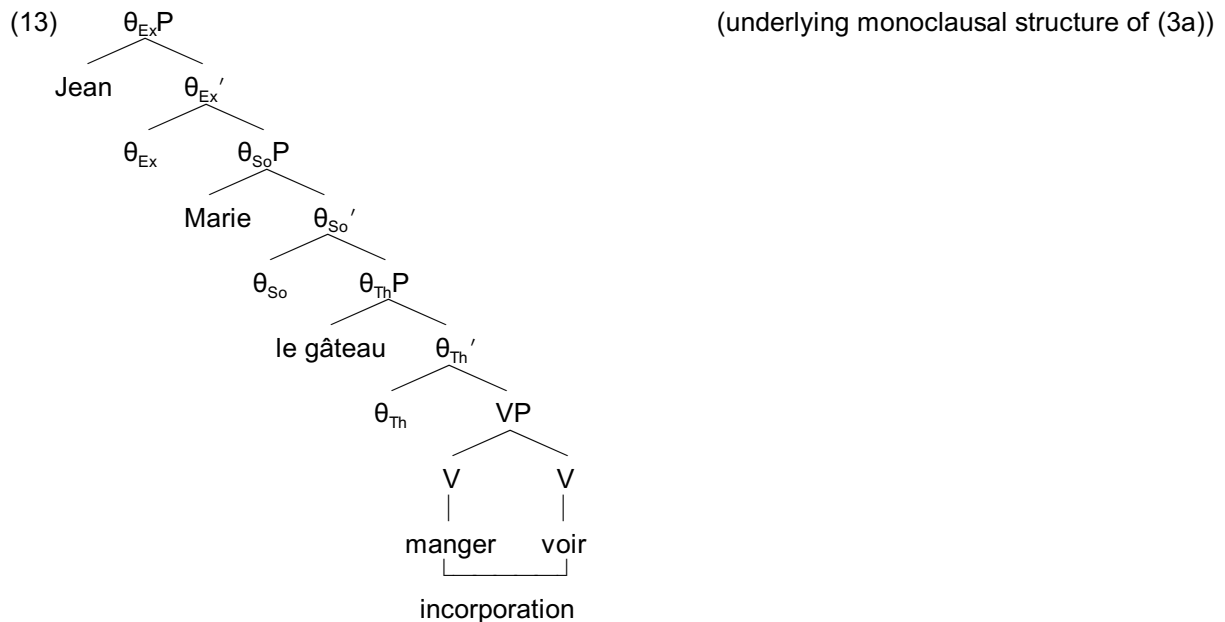
- First, clitic climbing, as in (3b, d).
- Second, infinitive = incompatible with independent sentential negation, as in (11):

- (11) a. *Jean voit NE PAS manger le gâteau à Marie. b. *Jean *le* voit NE PAS manger à Marie.
 c. *Jean lui voit NE PAS manger le gâteau. d. *Jean *le lui* voit NE PAS manger.

If cliticisation and negation = clausal phenomena, then infinitive not = clausal: PMC V and infinitive = in *single* clause, merged as complex predicate, as in (12):

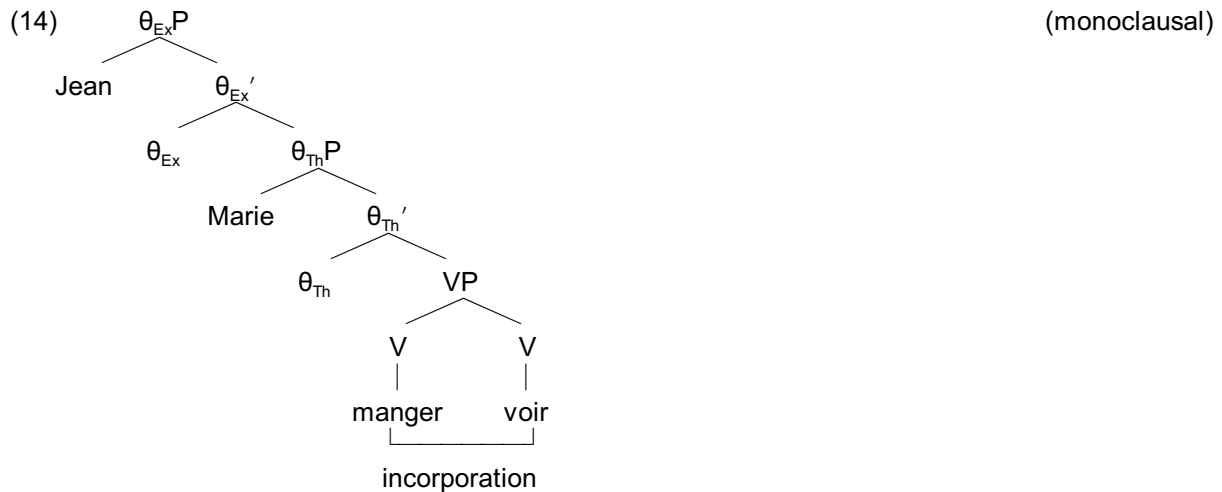


What gets realised as direct object? Depends. If infinitive is transitive:



- *le gâteau* = direct object of *voir-manger*; see cliticisation in (3b, d).
- *Marie* = indirect (that is, second) object of *voir-manger*; see nominal and pronominal realisation in (3).

If infinitive is intransitive:



– *Marie* = realised as direct object of *voir-manger*, as in (ca, b):

- (15) a. Jean voit manger Marie. b. Jean la voit manger.

– Difference re: cognitive salience: *Marie* is cognitively salient Theme in (15a); the cake in (3a).

Notion ‘underlying subject of infinitive’ = meaningless in both (13) and (14): *Marie* = just one of number of arguments of complex predicate (Guasti 1997), surfacing as (in)direct object by regular syntax (not ECM).

In addition to cliticisation/negation facts, analysis also predicts triadic infinitives are excluded from monoclausal construction (require a four-argument structure, independently ruled out), hence ungrammaticality of (16)¹:

- (16) *Jean voit donner un cadeau à sa maman à Marie.

Underlying biclausal needed instead, as in (17):

- (17) Jean voit Marie donner un cadeau à sa maman.

3.3 Semantic distinction?

- Two PMC structures, bi- vs monoclausal: ?semantic distinction.
- Baschung and Desmets (2000) re causative *faire*: subtle semantic difference re whether or not causer exercises direct causation over causee.
- Biclausal structure = ‘strong control’, direct causation, only; monoclausal structure = compatible with ‘loose control’, indirect causation. Cf. (18a, b):

- (18) a. Je l’/lui ai fait manger des épinards. b. Je *l’/lui ai fait aimer des épinards.
 (NB: *l’* = biclausal; *lui* = monoclausal)

Extend B&D’s distinction re: *faire* to all PMC structures.

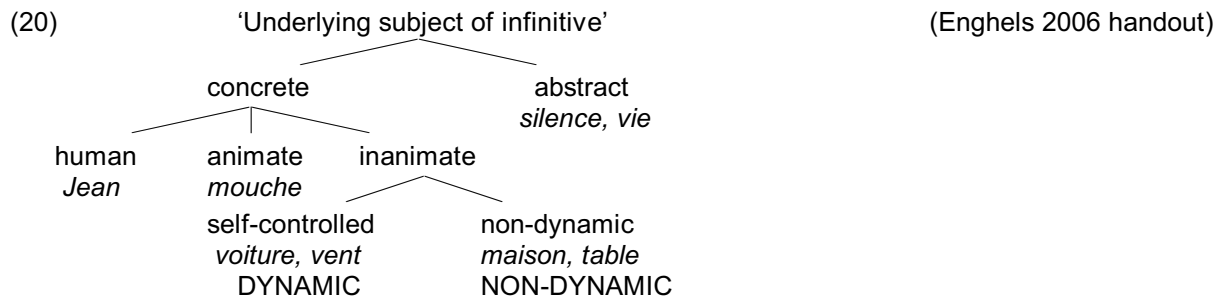
- (19) a. Je l’ai vu manger des épinards. b. Je lui ai vu manger des épinards.

Engels (2005; 2006): biclausal = dynamic ‘underlying subject of infinitive’; monoclausal = non-

¹ But see (i):

- (i) On lui a vu donner [une petite pension] [à un homme qui a fui deux lieues].

dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive'.



- Dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive': 75.7% biclausal (n = 1439);
- non-dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive': 52.6% biclausal (n = 418);
- non-dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive' more likely than dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive' to trigger monoclausal structure.

(Also, biclausal more common with auditory perception verbs than with visual perception verbs.)

- Particularly non-dynamic: unexpressed 'underlying subject of infinitive', as in (21a):

- (21) a. Marie a entendu chanter le refrain.
 b. Marie l'a entendu chanter. c. *Marie a entendu le chanter.

(21a) looks compatible with *either* biclausal *or* monoclausal structure. But examples (21b, c) suggest only one structure = available: (21a) *cannot* have a biclausal structure (associated with dynamic 'underlying subject of infinitive'). Expected since there's nothing for PMC verb to have strong control over.

4 Passivisation

Pollock (1994: 302), cited in Miller and Lowrey (2003: 153), maintains passivisation = ungrammatical, as shown in (22):

- (22) *Jean a été vu manger une pomme.

Veland (1998): 'in principle' impossible in modern language (although previously OK):

- (23) a. *Paul a été laissé/vu/entendu/mené sortir.
 b. *Le ministre a été entendu dire que ces mesures seraient rapportées.

But: Google search found (24)²:

- (24) a. Hurley et Grant ont été vus faire des emplettes ensemble.
 b. Pierre Nicolas a été vu faire des tours de terrain bien après minuit.

Veland (1998) gives (25):

- (25) a. . . . ayant été vu tomber de quinze cents mètres.

² Miller and Lowrey (2003: 155): informants sometimes uneasy about these examples, happier if *en train de* inserted immediately before infinitive. Veland (1998): infinitive = supposed to be replaced by a present participle.

b. . . . si une banshee venue d'Irlande n'avait pas été entendue pleurer.

So: uncertainty re whether PMC constructions passivise. Why? Because PMC verbs = compatible with two configurations. (See also Abeillé et al. 1997.) One (biclausal in (8)) = compatible with passivisation; the other (monoclausal in (14)/(13)) = incompatible.

Re (24a): if *voir-faire* = biclausal, then active sentences in (26a, b):

(26) a. On a vu [Hurley et Grant] faire des emplettes ensemble. (biclausal)
≈ (24a)

b. On les a vus faire des emplettes ensemble.

If PMC verb passivises, external argument = suppressed, Agent of infinitive escapes and = realised as subject instead, as in (24a).

if *voir-faire* = monoclausal, then active sentences in (27a, b):

(27) a. On a vu faire des emplettes ensemble [à Hurley et à Grant]. (monoclausal)
≈ (26a)

b. On leur a vu faire des emplettes ensemble.
≈ (26b)

Since French doesn't have object shift/applicative construction (**Jean a donné Marc le livre*, **Marc a été donné le livre*), H&G can't become Theme, and can't become subject following passivisation of PMC verb. Thus, native-speaker uncertainty re grammaticality of examples like (24a) = due to existence of two possible underlying PMC structures, only one of which = compatible with passivisation.

5 Causative *faire*

Causative *faire* = different.

5.1 Bi- versus monoclausal structures

Causative *faire* not = so flexible:

(28) a. *Jean fait Marie manger (le biscuit).³ b. Jean fait manger (le biscuit à) Marie.

(28a, b) = expected word orders for bi- and monoclausal PMC structures. (28a) = ungrammatical. Why? Can't be that causative *faire* induces clause union. See (18a). Also, see (29):

(29) Le professeur les fera le lire/y aller. (B&D 2000: 210)

Position of *le/y* (cliticised onto infinitive) and form of *les* (*direct-object* rather than *indirect-object* clitic) point to biclausal structure.⁴

³ See (i), from the writings of Lacan, 'a phenomenon of very literary written language' according to Goosse (2000: 138):

(i) . . . qui fait la femme être ce sujet.

⁴ See (i), from B&D (2000), suggesting formal distinction between the bi-/monoclausal structures not perfect:

(i) a. Je l'ai fait le lire. (biclausal) b. Je le lui ai fait lire. (monoclausal)

See (ii):

NB: examples suggesting causative *faire* = compatible with biclausal structure all involve cliticisation of 'underlying subject of infinitive'. But in (28a), underlying subject of infinitive = nominal. Observation supports approach to problem adopted by Bouvier (2000). Suggests answer lies in morphological properties of causative *faire*: unlike other PMC verbs, causative *faire* is morphologically defective in being unable to mark accusative case or trigger PPA. Relevance of morphology = supported by absence of PPA in (30) (cf. (9))⁵:

(30) a. Quelle fille a-t-il fait(*e) entrer? b. Il l'a fait(*e) entrer.

5.2 Passivisation

Passivisation of causative *faire*: Cf. grammatical (24b) (with *voir*) and ungrammatical (31) (with *faire*):

(31) *Pierre Nicolas a été fait faire des tours de terrain bien après minuit.

Unlike other PMC verbs, *faire* doesn't allow passivisation of biclausal structure. Abeillé and Godard (n.d.) give the example in (32):

(32) *Marie a été fait(e) manger (le biscuit).

But, consider (33):

- (33) a. Ce banc avait été fait faire pour nous (par mon père). (Veland 1998)
 b. Ce reliquaire a été fait faire (par Hervé Gouzien).
 c. Le château médiéval à Fontainebleau a été fait construire (par Louis).

Thus, causative *faire* not = incompatible with passivisation per se.

NB:

- First, 'underlying subject of infinitive' not = realised as argument of verb but within (optional) adjoined Agent phrase. Given (21), (33) = mono- rather than biclausal.
- Second, DP*s raised to subject are underlying Theme/Patient of infinitive.
- Third, raised subjects have default M.SG ϕ features (otherwise ungrammatical, as shown in (34)):

(34) *Des chemises ont été fait(e)(s) faire.⁶

Contrast between (33) and (34) again points to Bouvier's (2000) analysis of morphological defectiveness of causative *faire*: (33) = grammatical because raised subject has default ϕ features.

6 Conclusion

- Featural makeup of PMC verbs in principle flexible enough to license bi- and monoclausal structures.
- Syntactic distinction plausibly related to semantic distinction relating to the 'underlying subject of

(ii) Je lui ai fait le lire.

Pronominalised direct object of infinitive cliticises onto infinitive (suggesting biclausal structure), pronominalised 'underlying subject of infinitive' cliticises as indirect object onto causative *faire* (suggesting monoclausal structure). See (iii):

(iii) Je lui ai fait lui téléphoner / y aller / le lui donner / lui en parler.

⁵ See 'non-standard French' (i):

(i) La secrétaire, le patron l'a faite pleurer.

(B&D, p. 226)

⁶ Cf. Italian, where causative passivisation is grammatical even with F/PL DP*s.

infinitive’.

- Syntactic flexibility explains varied acceptability of passivised PMC structures.
- Causative *faire* = slightly different properties due to morphological defectiveness.
- This morphological defectiveness maybe explains the apparently unmotivated use of *lui*.

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