

Clitics in French Causatives: Wait and See

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We dedicate this presentation to Jean-Roger Vergnaud,
friend, colleague, mentor,
whose work has been an inspiration.

Problem

- How **efficient** is tree building? Is it (nearly) crash proof? Strictly incremental?
- Chomsky's Extension Condition (merge only to the edge) proposes a strong version of strict bottom-up incrementality;
- How are **economy** considerations, if any, integrated with this version of strict incrementality?

Goals

- Argue for some boundary conditions any analysis of French Causative constructions must meet.
- Use the analysis of these constructions to further our understanding of Clitic Placement/Case assignment/VP structure.

And in particular:

- Show that cliticization patterns in French causative constructions cannot be captured in an empirically justified way with this notion of **strict incrementality**;
- Conclude that a **finite look-ahead window** conditioning Merge is necessary, whereby Merge must be used parsimoniously.

Part I: Basic Data

Word Order

- French is SVO.

- (1) Max a lu le livre.
 Max has read the book
'Max read the book.'

Max a lu le livre.
 S V DO

- (2) Max a envoyé le livre à Flo.
 Max has sent the book to Flo
'Max sent the book to Flo.'

Max a envoyé le livre à Flo.
 S V DO IO

Assumptions about French Clitics

(3) Marie likes **him**.



(4) Marie **l_i** aime **t_i**.
 Marie him likes

- **Cliticization** involves **movement**: to simplify, it is the clitic itself which moves.
- The final cliticization site is in the T region.
- Clitics are attracted by **Clitic probes in the Functional Sequence (FS) in the spine of the clausal structure** (linked to T.)
- They need a **verbal host**.

Reordering

- Two causative verbs: *faire* ('make') and *laisser* ('let').
- *Laisser* allows 2 word orders: 'ECM' and the causative transformation order. The causative transformation is obligatory with *faire*.

'ECM':

(5) Jean **laisse** Pierre rire.
 Jean lets Pierre laugh
 S V

(6) Jean **laisse** Pierre examiner le livre.
 Jean lets Pierre examine the book
 S V DO

(7) Jean **laisse** Pierre téléphoner à Marie.
 Jean lets Pierre phone to Marie
 S V IO

Reordering

Causative transformation order (Faire à):

- (8) Jean **laisse** rire Pierre.
 Jean lets laugh Pierre
 V **S**
- (9) Jean **laisse** examiner le livre à Pierre.
 Jean lets examine the book to Pierre
 V **DO** **S**
- (10) Jean **laisse** téléphoner Pierre à Marie.
 Jean lets phone Pierre to Marie
 V **S** **IO**

- ▶ The comparison strongly suggests a **reordering process**: the **causative transformation**.
- N.B.: The subject of the embedded verb is called the **Causee**.

Basic Data: Templates (Causative Transformation)

(11) **faire/laisser** V **S** *Faire à, intrans. V*
 ACC

(12) **faire/laisser** V **DO** **S** *Faire à, trans. V*
 ACC DAT

(13) **faire/laisser** V **S** **IO** *Faire à, ind. trans. V*
 ACC DAT

Part II: Clitics in Causatives

Clitics in 'ECM' and in the causative transformation: Templates

(14) **laisser** **S** **CI** V ~~Ø~~ **Ø**
 AccAcc Acc

Laisser ECM, trans. V

(15) ***CI** **laisser** **S** V ~~Ø~~ **Ø**
 Acc Acc Acc

Laisser ECM, trans. V

Causative transformation order (+ **four** exceptions):

(16) **CI** **faire/laisser** V ~~Ø~~ **S**
 Acc Acc DAT

Causative order, trans. V

(17) ***faire/laisser** **CI** V ~~Ø~~ **S**
 Acc Acc DAT

Causative order, trans. V

Clitics in 'ECM' and in the causative transformation

'ECM':

- (18) Jean **laisse** Pierre **l'** examiner.
 Jean lets Pierre it examine
- (19) *Jean **le** **laisse** Pierre examiner.
 Jean it lets Pierre examine

Causative transformation:

- (20) Jean **le** **fait/laisse** examiner *(à) Pierre.
 Jean it makes/lets examine to Pierre
- (21) *Jean **fait/laisse l'** examiner à Pierre.
 Jean makes/lets it examine to Pierre

- The distribution of clitics is contingent on the causative transformation.

Case

- We assume that Case on S, DO (and IO) is licensed by properties of the Functional Structure (**FS**) (little *v* may be involved).

Generalizations about Case in Faire à:

If the embedded V has a **full DP object**, then the Causee DP must be **Dative**.

If the embedded V has **no DO**, then the Causee DP can be **Accusative**.

(22) **faire** V **S** *Faire à*, intrans. V
ACC

(23) **faire** V **DO** **S** *Faire à*, trans. V
ACC DAT

(24) **faire** V **S** **IO** *Faire à*, ind. trans. V
ACC DAT

Basic Data

- (25) Jean **fait** rire (*à) Marie. **V S**
 Jean makes laugh to Marie *Faire à*
- (26) Jean **fait** examiner le livre *(à) Pierre. **V DO S**
 Jean makes examine the book to Pierre *Faire à*
- (27) Jean **fait** téléphoner Pierre à Marie. **V S IO**
 Jean makes phone Pierre to Marie *Faire à*

Case

Interpretation of the above facts:

- The Causee DP gets Case from *faire*;
- French doesn't permit double Accusatives;
- The implication 'if DO then Dative Causee' follows if full DP DOs get Case from *faire* as well.

Question: Can Accusative on DO be licensed twice (in the embedded clause and in the *faire*-clause)?

Case

Clitics tell us that Case is assigned only once.

- Certain **idioms** contain DO clitics.

There are 2 kinds (revealed in causatives):

1. **Type 1:** The clitic must go low (**strongly cohesive**), e.g. *l'emporter sur* ('win out over'), *l'avoir dans le baba* ('be screwed');
2. **Type 2:** The clitic must go high (**weakly cohesive**), e.g. *la jouer fine* ('act smart'), *l'échapper belle* ('to escape by the skin of teeth'), *le donner en mille* ('dare someone to guess').

Clitics in Idioms

- Idioms of **type 1** are not frozen: verbal morphology is variable and the clitic behaves morphologically and distributionally like a normal Accusative Clitic. For example, it can be split by auxiliaries:

(28) Jean **l'**a emporté sur Pierre.

- Idioms of **type 1** show that there is no absolute bar against bare Accusative clitics in the complement.

(29) Cela a **fait l'**emporter (*à) Jean sur Pierre.
 this has made it bring to Jean on Pierre
'This made Jean win out over Pierre.'

(30) *Cela **l'a fait** emporter (à) Jean sur Pierre.

- With this idiom, the Causee must be **Accusative**.

Clitics in Idioms

- In idioms of **type 2**, high cliticization is forced (*l'échapper belle, la jouer fine, etc.*):

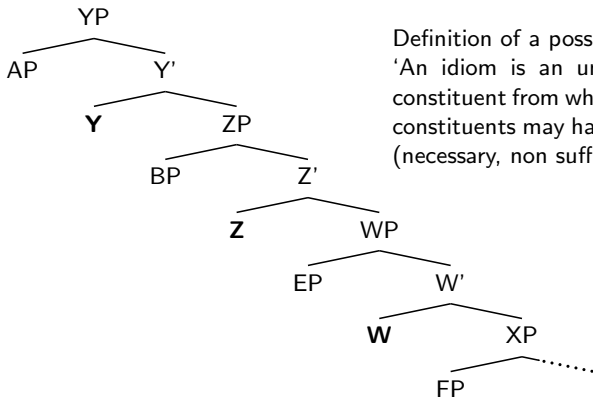
- (31) a. Cela **l'** a **fait** jouer fine *(à) Pierre.
 this it has made play fine to Pierre
'This made Pierre act smart.'
- b. *Cela a **fait la** jouer fine à Pierre.

- Just as in **non-idiomatic** cases:

- (32) a. Jean **le fait** examiner *(à) Pierre.
 Jean it lets examine to Pierre
- b. *Jean **fait l'** examiner à Pierre.
 Jean lets it examine to Pierre

Clitics in Idioms

- Idioms must contain a connected string of heads (Sportiche 2005, p. 82):



Definition of a possible idiom:

'An idiom is an underlying or derived constituent from which one or more phrasal constituents may have been subtracted.'
(necessary, non sufficient condition).

- The Accusative licensing position (or substructure), call it **ACC**, can be part of the idiom.

Clitics in Idioms

Interpretation of the difference between idioms:

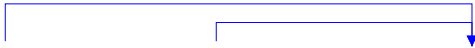
- Idioms of **type 1** must **include ACC**, while idioms of **type 2** cannot.
- In *l'emporter sur*, ACC is immediately above vP.
- Structure of the idiom:

(33) [ACC [vP emporte le [PP sur]]]

Clitics in Idioms

Interpretation (cont'd):

- Since the Causee in *l'emporter sur* must be Accusative, the Case of the clitic cannot be licensed in the *faire*-clause (otherwise the Causee should be able to be Dative);
- Therefore Accusative on this idiomatic clitic is licensed **once** (low). It cannot be licensed twice → **Phase boundary**.

(34) *  Probe_{ACC} faire [Probe_{ACC} [VP emporter le sur]]

Clitics in Idioms

Interpretation (cont'd):

- More generally, Accusative on DO is not licensed twice;
- In all other cases, i.e. idioms of **type 2**, non-idiomatic cases, full DP objects, **ACC is not available in the embedded clause**: the Case of the object is licensed high (only), and as a result the Causee must be assigned Dative.

A (personal) clitic surfaces in the clause in which its Case is licensed.

Important Implication: Case and Little *v*

- Accusative is sometimes not available in the embedded clause, although the embedded V is transitive: Accusative is **not solely** determined by little *v*, i.e. ACC is not reducible to little *v*.

- (35) a. Jean **le fait** examiner *(à) Pierre.
 Jean it makes examine to Pierre
- b. *Jean **fait** **l'** examiner à Pierre.
 Jean makes it examine to Pierre

- Reminiscent of AgrO rather than multiple Specs.

About (Personal) Complement Clitics in Faire à

1. If high cliticization is possible, then low cliticization is impossible;
2. If low cliticization is possible, then high cliticization is impossible;
3. There are cases of ineffability.

About (Personal) Complement Clitics in Faire à

Observation #1: If **high** cliticization is **possible**, then **low** cliticization is **impossible**.

- The availability of the low option depends on the availability of the high option.

- (36)
- Jean a fait examiner **le livre** à Marie.
 - Jean **l'**a fait examiner **t** à Marie.
 - *Jean a fait **l'**examiner **t** à Marie.

About (Personal) Complement Clitics in Faire à

Observation #2: If **low** cliticization is **possible**, then **high** cliticization is **impossible**.

- Reminder: Idioms of **type 1** (*l'emporter sur*).
- If **se** is merged in the complement, personal clitics **have to** be cliticized in the complement. The high option is barred.

(37) faire SE **CI** V ~~DO~~ S
ACC ACC DAT

(38) ***CI** faire SE V ~~DO~~ S
ACC ACC DAT

(39) Cela a **fait se les** acheter à Pierre.
this has made SE them buy to Pierre
'This made Pierre buy them for himself.'

(40) *Cela **les** a fait **s'**acheter à Pierre.

About (Personal) Complement Clitics in Faire à

- Similarly, if **negation** is merged in the complement, personal clitics **have to** be cliticized in the complement. The high option is barred.

(41) faire NEG **CI** V ~~ÐØ~~ S
 ACC ACC DAT

(42) ***CI** faire NEG V ~~ÐØ~~ S
 ACC ACC DAT

(43) Cela a fait ne pas les acheter à Pierre.
 this has made NEG NEG them buy to Pierre
 'This made Pierre not buy them.'

(44) *Cela les a fait ne pas acheter à Pierre.

- Similarly, if an **auxiliary** verb is merged in the complement, personal clitics **have to** be cliticized in the complement. The high option is barred.

(45) faire **CI** AUX V ~~**DO**~~ **S**
 ACC ACC DAT

(46) ***CI** faire AUX V ~~**DO**~~ **S**
 ACC ACC DAT

(47) Cela **fera** **l'** **avoir** goûté à Jean.
 this will-make it have tasted to Jean
 Intended: *'This will make Jean have tasted it.'*

(48) *Cela **le fera** **avoir** goûté à Jean.

Summary

To sum up: 4 cases that make low cliticization possible (and therefore necessary):

- Idiom of **type 1**;
- Insertion of *se*;
- Insertion of negation;
- Insertion of an Auxiliary.

In all four cases, insertion of (the relevant portion of) FS is made necessary in the low clause.

About (Personal) Complement Clitics in Faire à

Observation #3: Sometimes, neither the **low** nor the **high** option is available.

There are cases of **ineffability**: **PCC** and **Bare IO clitics**.

- (49) ***CI** faire V **S** **IO** Faire à, ind. trans. V
 DAT ACCDAT
- (50) *faire **CI** V **S** **IO** Faire à, ind. trans. V
 DAT ACCDAT
-

Placement of the Bare Dative Clitic

(51) *Jean **lui** **fait/laisse** téléphoner Pierre **t.**
 Jean to-her makes/lets phone Pierre
'Jean makes/lets Pierre call her.'

(52) *Jean **fait/laisse** **lui** téléphoner Pierre **t.**
 Jean makes/lets to-her phone Pierre
'Jean makes/lets Pierre call her.'

- Comparing *Faire à* and ditransitive constructions: **no complex predicates.**

(53) Jean **lui** **fait/laisse** examiner le livre **t.**
 Jean to-him makes/lets examine the book
'Jean makes/lets him examine the book.'

(54) Jean **lui** donne le livre **t.**
 Jean to-him give the book

Placement of the Bare Dative Clitic: Templates

(55) ***CI** faire V **S** **⊕**
 DAT ACCDAT

Faire à, ind. trans. V

(56) *faire **CI** V **S** **⊕**
 DAT ACCDAT

Faire à, ind. trans. V

(57) **CI** faire V **DO** **S**
 DAT ACC DAT

Faire à, trans. V

(58) **CI** donner **DO** **⊕**
 DAT ACC DAT

Simple Ditransitive

⇒ The Dative internal arguments cannot cliticize in *Faire à*. No such problem in ditransitive constructions, which we call **monoclausal**.

Summary

Conclusions

1. Causative constructions are not (always) **monoclausal**.
2. ACC functional structure is available low in principle.
3. Clitics appear in the clause in which their Case is licensed (in causatives, there is only one such clause).
4. **Case is a property of FS.**

Summary

Three descriptive generalizations:

1. If low cliticization is possible for personal clitics (SE, neg, auxiliary, strongly cohesive idiom), high cliticization is impossible.
 - ▶ If FS is inserted low, the clitic must appear low;
2. If high cliticization is possible for personal clitics, low cliticization is impossible;
3. Ineffability with bare IO clitics and PCC.

Part III: What System?

What governs the merger of FS?

- ▶ The property we want is:

FS can be merged low unless high cliticization is possible.

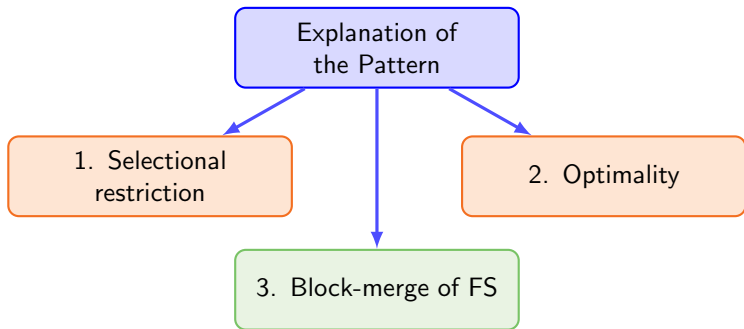
This can't be obtained strictly incrementally in a motivated way.

Suppose we derive the sentence bottom-up (as is standard¹) starting from the complement of *faire*.

Question: Can FS be freely inserted above V?

- Superficially, it looks like yes: at the point where the question arises, the fact that what is being built is the complement of *faire* is not known (nor that the complement is tensed).
Problem: sometimes, bare low personal cliticization is impossible.

¹Going top-down wouldn't change anything.



- **Option 1:** One might say that when ACC is merged low, it is guaranteed that high cliticization is not going to be possible. How to guarantee this? By imposing a selectional restriction.

Option 1: Selectional Restriction

Selection

To be ruled out

- *Faire ACC V

To be ruled in

- Faire ACC idiom_{type1}
- Faire SE ACC V
- Faire NEG ACC V
- Faire AUX ACC V

Acceptable complements
of non-causative verbs

- **Stipulate** (i.) that idiomatic ACC is special; and (ii.) that *faire* can only take a complement whose FS contains *se*, an **auxiliary** or **negation**, i.e. it doesn't select an FS which only contains '**normal**' ACC.
- Equivalent to a surface filter which would exclude constituents of the form [AccCl V] in which the causative rule has applied *and* would rule in *Faire* ACC idiom_{type1}.

- This makes the selectional properties of *faire* (and *laisser*) unique. No other verb taking an infinitival complement disallows bare Accusative clitics.

Example: *vouloir* ('want')

(59) a.	Pierre veut le raser.	AccCI
	Pierre wants him shave	
b.	Pierre veut se raser.	SE
c.	Pierre veut ne pas raser Jean.	NEG
d.	Pierre veut avoir rasé Jean avant six heures.	AUX
	Pierre wants have shaved Jean by six hours	
e.	Pierre veut l'emporter sur Jean.	ID.

⇒ No necessary categorial distinction.

- But *faire* and *laisser* are also unique in triggering the causative rule.

Question: Could these selectional properties be explained by the independently existing causative rule?

- **Answer: No.**

- The causative rule **preposes** chunks of variable size (Kayne 1975, Burzio 1986, Homer, Ishizuka & Sportiche 2009, etc.). There doesn't have to be a categorial distinction.

(60) **faire** V **S** *Faire* à, intrans. V

ACC

(61) **faire** V **DO** **S** *Faire* à, trans. V

ACC DAT

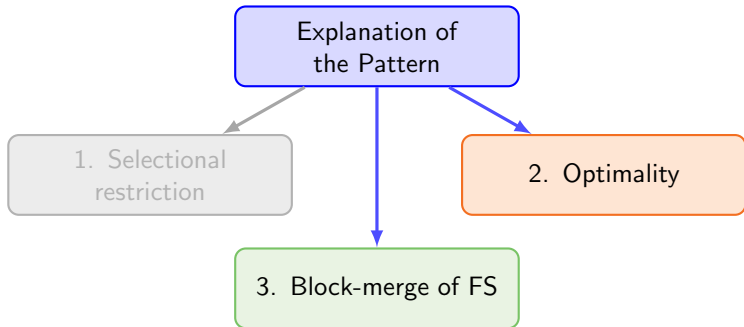
(62) **faire** V **S** **IO** *Faire* à, ind. trans. V

ACC DAT

(63) **faire** V **DO** **IO** **S** *Faire* à, ditrans. V

ACC DAT DAT

- **Option 1** is totally **ad hoc**: the four cases where low cliticization is forced have nothing in common, except the fact that high cliticization is prohibited.
- Pandora box opened: non-local selection.



Option 2: Optimality

- Multiple derivations in parallel with the same numeration.
- Ranking: high cliticization better than low cliticization.
- The optimal derivation gets chosen among e.g.:

(64) **CI** faire V ~~DO~~ **S**
 ACC ACC DAT

(65) faire **CI** V ~~DO~~ **S**
 ACC ACC DAT

Problems

- It is not always true that low cliticization is good if high cliticization is bad.
- **Three cases:**
 1. Bare IO clitics (ineffability);
 2. 1st and 2nd p. object pronouns degraded; this doesn't make the low option possible:

(66) ??Il **m'** a **fait** photographier à Jean.
 he me has made photograph to Jean
 Intended: *'He had Jean photograph me.'*

(67) *Il a **fait** **me** photographier à Jean.

Problems (cont'd)

3. Double Dative (non-standard) PCC: a 1st/2nd person pronoun is incompatible regardless of Case, with an adjacent 3rd person Dative clitic in the same cluster.

(68) Cela fera rendre **le livre à la bibliothécaire à**
 this make.FUT return the book to the librarian to
moi.
 me

(69) Cela **me le lui** fera rendre.

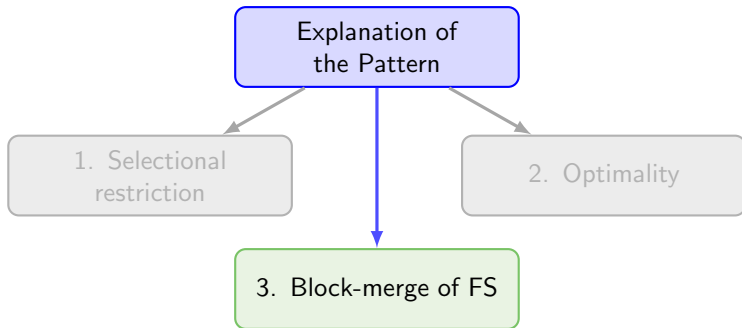
(70) *Cela **me lui fera** rendre le livre.
 this me to-her make.FUT return the book
 'This will make me return the book to her.'

PCC

- This fact doesn't make the low option possible²:

(71) *Cela **me fera lui** rendre le livre.

²In some dialects, *faire* can embed an ECM complement, and (71) is fine.



Option 3: Block-merge of FS

Make merge dependent on what is coming up (**countercyclic**).

Two outcomes:

1. If a truth-functional element (negation or an auxiliary or *se*) is to be merged:
 - ★ The complement of *faire* behaves just like a plain infinitival clause. Case assignment takes place within the complement (hence the cliticization pattern: high cliticization is blocked).

Phase boundary inserted.

- (72)
- a. Cela a **fait se les** acheter à Pierre.
 - b. *Cela **les** a **fait s'**acheter à Pierre.

Option 3: Block-merge of FS

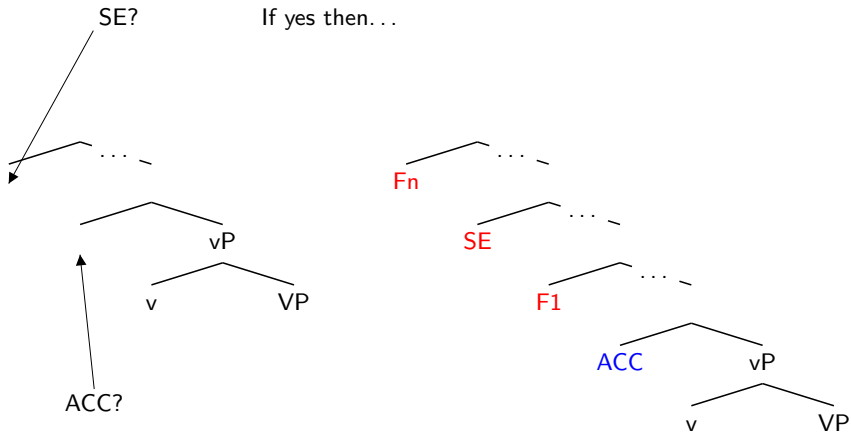
2. If neither negation nor an auxiliary nor *se* is merged, then there is **a problem**.

- ★ We predict that personal clitics should be cliticizable low, contrary to fact.

- (73) a. *Cela a **fait les** acheter à Pierre.
b. Cela **les** a **fait** acheter à Pierre.

Procedure: Merge ACC? (Wait and see)

1. If next thing up is *faire*: NO.
 2. If FS contains truth-functional elements, YES.
- ⇒ **Parsimonious merge.**
- ACC is lowest in FS (cf. *l'emporter*).
 - Therefore finite look-ahead window is required.
 - If FS is to contain truth-functional elements, the whole FS is merged.



Question: Why is low cliticization impossible if high cliticization is possible?

- ▶ If FS is not merged, no phase boundary, the clitic is not prevented from moving towards its probe.

Question: Why is high cliticization impossible if low cliticization is possible?

- ▶ If FS is block-merged, a phase boundary is inserted.

Truth-functionality

- FS is inserted low if it is to contain truth-functional elements;
- That negation and (temporo-aspectual) auxiliaries are truth-functional elements is uncontroversial;
- *Se*: reflexive is a voice. There is a functional head whose denotation applies to a n-ary relation (denoted by VP) and returns an n-1-ary relation.

Reuland 2011, *Anaphora and Language Design*, Sportiche 2010 'French Reflexive *se*: Binding and Merge Locality' (unpublished ms.), Byron Ahn 'Agentive Focus and Clausal Reflexivity', WCCFL 29.

Difference with Italian Restructuring

- Clitic climbing in Italian with restructuring verbs:

- (74) a. Voglio andarci.
 I-want go-there
 b. Ci voglio andare.

◇ In causatives, the low option is **not always available**.

- (75) Gli voglio parlare.
 to-him I-want speak

◇ In causatives, bare IO clitics are not possible.

Conclusion

1. Clitics appear in the clause in which their Case is licensed;
2. Accusative is not solely determined by little *v*;
3. Causative constructions are not monoclausal;
4. Parsimonious merge.

Acknowledgments

Thank you!

Kayne (1975, 2005), Quicoli (1979), Rouveret & Vergnaud (1980), Burzio (1986), Authier & Reed (1991), Alsina (1992), Guasti (1993), Ippolito (2004), Folli & Harley (2005).