

# The development of Exceptional Case Marking in Romance with a particular focus on French\*

Michelle Sheehan, Anglia Ruskin University

[michelle.sheehan@anglia.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.sheehan@anglia.ac.uk)

## Abstract

This paper traces the development of so-called Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) under perception, permissive and causative verbs in Romance. Synchronically, we can observe various patterns in the distribution of ECM complements under these verbs. In Portuguese and Spanish, ECM is often possible under all permissive and causative verbs, whereas in French, Catalan and Italian it is usually restricted to perception and permissive verbs. A detail that has not been much discussed is the fact that, for many speakers, ECM with a given verb is often restricted to contexts in which the embedded ‘subject’ is a clitic. Some speakers of Modern French display this pattern with the verb *faire* ‘make’, for example (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997). In this paper, I claim that *laisser* ‘let’ probably also displayed this pattern in Middle French. In Old French, however, what appears to be the opposite pattern is observed. Following Pearce (1990), I attribute this to the morphological variability of dative case in Old French. I propose a case-based analysis of the clitic ECM pattern, whereby ECM complements in Romance are phases unlike clause union complements (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018). Where such complements are embedded under light verbs, the Phase Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky 2001) prevents accusative case from being assigned to the lower subject except in instances of cliticization. When the matrix verb is reanalysed as a full verb, however, *v* becomes the case-assigning head and so ECM becomes generally available, regardless of the clitic/non-clitic status of the causee.

**Keywords:** phases, diachrony, case, Agree, Phase Impenetrability Condition, ECM, verbs of perception, causatives, permissives, *faire-infinitif*, *faire-par*

## 1 Complements of Modern French causative perception verbs

### 1.1 The basic patterns

Three kinds of non-finite complementation are attested with causative, permissive and perception verbs in French: *faire-infinitif* (1a), *faire-par* (1b) and Exceptional Case Marking ECM (1c) (see Kayne 1975; Hyman and Zimmer 1976; Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997 amongst many others). Verbs of perception (e.g., *voir* ‘see’) and the permissive verb *laisser* ‘let’ can select all three kinds of complements. The differences are clearest when the complement of *laisser/voir* is transitive and the causee is a full DP. In such contexts, the causee surfaces as (a) a dative, (b) an oblique by-phase or (c) a bare preverbal DP:

#### *Transitive complement with DP causee*

- (1) a. *Ce gâteau, Marie l’ a laissé/vu manger à Chris.*  
that cake Marie it=has let/ seen eat.INF **DAT Chris**  
b. *Ce gâteau, Marie l’ a laissé/vu manger par Chris.*  
that cake Marie it=has let/ seen eat.INF by Chris

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- c. *Ce gâteau, Marie a laissé/vu Chris le manger.*  
 that cake Marie has let/ seen Chris it=eat.INF  
 ‘As for that cake, Marie let/saw Chris eat it.’

In *faire-infinitif* and ECM contexts, the causee can also be realised as a clitic (2), but there is no oblique clitic to realise by-phrase causees in the FP construction. In both *faire-infinitif* and ECM contexts, clitic causees must climb to the clause hosting the causative/perception verb. In transitive contexts, accusative clitics associated with the embedded verb only climb to the main clause where the causee is dative (2a), but not in ECM contexts (2b-c). This suggests that the ECM construction is more bi-clausal than the *faire-infinitif* (Kayne 1975, Rosen 1992, Guasti 1993):

*Transitive complement with clitic causee* (no clitic for *par* ‘by’ phrase)

- (2) a. *Ce gâteau, Marie le lui a laissé/vu manger*  
 that cake Marie **it=him.DAT=** has let/ seen eat.INF  
 b. *Ce gâteau, Marie l’ a laissé/vu le manger.*  
 that cake Marie **him.ACC=** has let/ seen **it=eat.INF**  
 ‘As for that cake, Marie saw him eat it.’  
 c. *\*Ce gâteau, Marie l’ a laissé/vu Chris manger.*  
 that cake Marie it=has let/ seen Chris eat.INF  
 ‘As for that cake, Marie let/saw Chris eat it.’

In intransitive contexts, full DP causees are realised as bare (accusative), with the difference between *faire-infinitif/ faire-par* (3a), and ECM (3b) reduced to the postverbal vs preverbal placement of the causee:

*Intransitive complement with DP causee*

- (3) a. *Marie a laissé/ entendu parler Chris.*  
 Marie has let/ heard speak.INF **Chris**  
 b. *Marie a laissé/ entendu Chris parler.*  
 Marie has let/ heard **Chris** speak.INF

We know this, in part, because of the semantic differences between these orders (see below), but also because only post-verbal causees are possible with *faire*, which, for all speakers disallows ECM with full DP causees, but permits *faire-infinitif/ faire-par*:

*Intransitive complement with DP causee*

- (4) a. *Marie a fait parler Chris.*  
 Marie has made speak.INF **Chris**  
 b. *\*Marie a fait Chris parler.*  
 Marie has made **Chris** speak.INF

Where the embedded verb is intransitive and the causee is a clitic, the causee must be realised as an accusative clitic and it has been argued that examples like (5) are therefore three-way ambiguous, a point to which we return below:

*Intransitive complement with clitic causee* (three-way ambiguity)

- (5) *Chris, Marie l’ a laissé/ entendu parler.*  
 Chris Marie **him.ACC=**has let/ heard speak.INF  
 ‘As for Jean, Marie let/heard him speak.’

## 1.2 The structure of these complements

The earliest generative studies of Romance causatives, posited transformations from biclausal structures to clause union with the *faire-par* and *faire-infinitif* (see Aissen & Perlmutter 1976). However, there has been an increasing tendency to take a base-generated approach to clause union whereby the *faire-par* and *faire-infinitif* simply involve the embedding of truncated clauses (see Burzio 1986, Rosen 1992, for early versions of this approach, and Ciutescu 2018 for a recent dissenting voice). I adopt the essentials of the analysis of the *faire-infinitif* and the *faire-par* in Folli & Harley (2007) whereby the *faire-par* is the smallest kind of complement, a nominalised VP lacking a true external argument and the *faire-infinitif* is a vP containing an external argument but lacking a Voice projection (see also Guasti 2017). For ECM complements, I adopt the idea that Romance ECM complements are larger, containing at least a Voice projection, though not as large as TPs (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018, contra Guasti 1993).

This gives us the following typology of complement types with Romance causative/permisive/perception verbs:

- (6) Structure of the complements of causative/permisive/perception verbs
- a. *Faire-par*                      laisser [VP [VP manger le gâteau] [PP par Jean]]
  - b. *Faire-infinitif*              laisser [VP V [VP manger le gâteau] [DP à Jean]]
  - c. ECM                              laisser [VoiceP être [VP V [VP arrêtés [DP les manifestants]]]]

Following much recent work, I assume that auxiliary verbs enter the derivation as Voice/aspect heads in a fixed functional sequence (following Ross 1969; Adger 2003; Cinque 2003, Bjorkman 2011; Sailor 2014) and that French *être* ‘be’ realises the Voice head in passives.<sup>1</sup> As expected, no auxiliary verbs are possible in the complements of *faire-par* and *faire-infinitif* as these complements are simply too small to host Voice/aspect projections:<sup>2</sup>

- (7) \**Il a laissé être descendu son ami par la police.*  
he has let be shot.down his friend by the police      (Kayne 1975 : 251)

ECM complements, on the other hand more easily contain the passive Voice auxiliary and (in some cases) aspectual auxiliaries so can be VoiceP/progP/perfP (though this needs careful investigation on a case-by-case basis) (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018 on ECM complements in English and Brazilian Portuguese):<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A potential issue, which I put to one side here is the status of the *se* ‘self’ morpheme in French. It is well known that *si* is banned under *fare* in the Italian *faire-infinitif* (Burzio 1986) and the same is true of European Portuguese *se* (Gonçalves 1999), but not of French *se* (Zubizarreta 1985).

<sup>2</sup> Cinque (2003) actually claims that examples equivalent to (7) are bad because such examples are monoclausal and the passive auxiliary is merged above causative verbs in the universal functional sequence. The availability of Voice auxiliaries in ECM complements, in his terms, is due to their non-mono-clausal nature. There are challenges for this approach, however, from: (i) the fact that passives of causatives are severely restricted in Romance and Germanic languages, both in ECM and clause union contexts (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018) and (ii) the fact that verbs such as *volere* can both precede and follow *fare* in Italian (with interesting restrictions), calling into question the strictly mono-clausal status of clause-union contexts (see Schifano and Sheehan 2018 for discussion).

<sup>3</sup> In fact, Santorini and Heycock, note that the passive auxiliary *être* ‘be’ is relatively more acceptable under *laisser* in the *faire-infinitif* construction than under *faire* so there is more to be said here. They agree, though that it is most natural in the ECM construction.

- (8) ?II a laissé sa fille être embrassée par Jean.  
 he has let his daughter be.INF kissed by Jean  
 ‘He let his daughter be kissed by Jean.’ (Kayne 1975 : 252, fn. 61)

Another difference between the three complement types which falls out from these structural differences is the status of the causee. External argument causees are obligatory in the *faire-infinitif* and ECM complements as vP is obligatorily projected, but they are famously optional in the *faire-par* construction (9), and where present have the status of adjuncts, being unable to bind PRO or anaphors (Zubizarreta 1985, Rosen 1992, Guasti 1993, Folli and Harley 2007; Guasti 2017; building on Burzio 1986; but see also Pearce 1990).<sup>4</sup>

*Omission of causees* (possible with transitive/unergatives only)

- (9) a. *Ce gâteau, Marie l’a laissé/ vu manger.* [trans]  
 that cake Marie it=has let/ seen eat.INF  
 b. *Le professeur fait étudier en silence* [unerg]  
 the teacher makes.INF study.INF in silence  
 ‘The teachers makes people study in silence.’  
 c. *\*Avec son système d’amendes, le professeur fait arriver à l’heure.* [unacc]  
 with her system of fines the teacher makes arrive.inf at the time

The ungrammaticality of (9c), I assume, is due to the fact that internal arguments are contained within VP and so are obligatory even in the *faire-par* construction. Only external arguments base generated outside VP can be omitted where VP is embedded (9a-b).

The question arises, however, how we know that the (9a-b) are instances of *faire-par* rather than *faire-infinitif* or ECM. The answer is that, as Kayne (1975) showed, *faire-par* is incompatible with non-passivisable idioms and so too are omitted causees:

*Causee-less examples pattern with faire-par – non-passivisable idioms not possible*

- (10) a. Jean a fait casser la croûte à sa famille / \*par sa famille.  
 Jean has made break the crust DAT his family/ by his family  
 ‘Jean made his family have a snack.’  
 b. \*Jean a fait casser la croûte.  
 Jean has made break the crust  
 Intended: ‘Jean made people have a snack.’ (Kayne 1975: 236)

These facts, taken together, suggest that examples (9a-b) are instances of *faire-par* and that they involve embedded VPs lacking an external argument.

The analysis also makes sense of why ECM becomes possible only where the complement of these verbs is a VoiceP, once fairly common assumptions about case theory are adopted. ProgP/VoiceP have been independently argued to constitute the v-related phase (see Wurmbrand 2012; Ramchand and Svenonius 2014; Aelbrecht and Harwood 2015; Harwood 2015 on English). If Voice is also the source of accusative case then this explains why in ECM contexts we find two domains for accusative case, whereas in *faire-par* and *faire-infinitif* we find only one (hence ‘clause-union’). Note that, on this approach, the three

<sup>4</sup> Adam Ledgeway (personal communication) asks whether unaccusatives are limited to the *faire-par* construction or whether they are also possible in the *faire-infinitif*. This is a difficult question to answer and it depends partly on whether one thinks that unaccusatives also project v, even where no external argument is projected, which relates to the question of whether they are phasal or not (see Legate 2003). What is crucial for my purposes is that VP can be embedded under *faire*, without any higher projections. I leave the question of whether an unaccusative vP can also be embedded open here. It ought to be possible to ascertain this using semantic tests.

functions of (i) introducing the external argument; (ii) assigning accusative case and (iii) delimiting a phase are split between the two verbalising heads in slightly different ways from in some previous approaches: *v* does (i) and Voice (ii)-(iii).<sup>5</sup> See Sheehan & Cyrino (2018) for a defense of this proposal for English and Romance languages.

Taking phases to determine locality in syntax, the lack of Voice in clause union contexts also explains why there is a single domain for cliticization, hence the obligatory nature of object clitic climbing in (11a-b). Conversely, the ban on object clitic climbing in (11c) can be attributed to the fact that a phase boundary intervenes between the object clitic and matrix verb. We return to the cliticization of the causee in ECM contexts in Section 3.

*No clitic climbing of the embedded object in ECM contexts:*

- (11) a. \**Ce gâteau, Marie a laissé/vu le manger à Chris.*  
 that cake Marie has let/ seen it=eat.INF DAT Chris  
 b. \**Ce gâteau, Marie a laissé/vu le manger par Chris.*  
 that cake Marie has let/ seen it=eat.INF by Chris  
 c. \**Ce gâteau, Marie l' a laissé/vu Chris manger.*  
 that cake Marie it= has let/ seen Chris eat.INF  
 'As for that cake, Marie let/saw Chris eat it.'

This assumes, of course, that cliticization does not have access to phase edge escape hatches. In fact, it is probably the case that no A-movement operations can access phase-edge escape hatches (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018). As Ian Roberts (personal communication) notes, if clitics always adjoin to head positions, a ban on excorporation has the same effect here, as once a clitic has adjoined to any head, even a phase head, it will be blocked from moving further.<sup>6</sup>

Following the arguments in Pineda and Sheehan (2020), we assume that both the causee and the embedded theme receive case from the matrix Voice head in the *faire-infinitif*. For this reason, the Person Case Constraint (PCC) bans any kind of dative causee in the presence of a local (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person) embedded theme (see Postal 1981, Postal 1989; Rezac 2008, Rezac 2009; Sheehan 2020).

*PCC effects in causatives*

- (12) a. \**Je vous lui laisserai voir*  
 I you.ACC= 3S.DAT= let.1S.FUT see  
 Intended: 'I will let her see you. (Rezac 2008: 66 ; citing Postal 1981 ; Quicoli 1984)

<sup>5</sup> For example, in Pylkkänen (2008) Voice fulfils all three of these functions where Voice and *v* are split, though they can also be bundled together (see Harley 2013, Harley 2017 for discussion). As Ian Roberts (personal communication) notes, this idea is supported, for English, by Merchant's (2013) evidence of voice-mismatches under ellipsis:

- (i) This system can be used by anyone who wants to use it.

The ellipsis site is below Voice and the EA is targeted, so the latter must be introduced lower than Voice.

<sup>6</sup> Adam Ledgeway asks about the status of *se* 'self', which appears to be an exception in this respect in not undergoing obligatory clitic climbing:

*No clitic climbing of se:*

- (i) Marie fait se raser Jean  
 Marie makes SE= shave Jean  
 'Marie makes Jean shave.'

The status of SE in reflexives remains controversial. It has been claimed to be a valency reducing morpheme (Reinhart 1997, Reinhart and Siloni 1999), an external argument (McGinnis 2004) or an internal argument (Schäfer 2017). If SE is argumental, then this behaviour is unexpected. I leave this matter to one side here but note that, as mentioned above, in Italian and Portuguese, SE would be suppressed in such contexts, adding further intrigue to the plot.

- b. *Je vous laisserai voir par elle.*  
 I you.ACC= let.1S.FUT see.INF by her
- c. *Je la laisserai vous voir.*  
 I her.ACC= let.1S.FUT you.ACC= see  
 ‘I will let her see you.’

In the spirit of many analyses of the PCC, we assume that this effect results from the fact that the two internal arguments are licensed by a single functional head in the *faire-infinitif* (Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2005, Nevins 2007, Rezac 2008, Coon and Keine 2020). Note that no PCC effects arise with *faire-par* (11b) or ECM (11c) complements. This is because in *faire-par* the causee is an oblique by-phrase that so does not enter into any Agree relationship and in the ECM context, the causee and theme are licensed by different heads: the causee by matrix Voice and the theme by the embedded Voice head. Crucially, as Postal (1989) discusses at length, even full DP dative causees are blocked in the presence of a 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person embedded object in the *faire-infinitif*:

- (13) a. \**Marcel vous a fait épouser au médecin.*  
 Marcel you.ACC= has made marry to.the doctor  
 Intended: ‘Marcel had the doctor marry you.’
- b. \**On vous laissera connaître à Louise.*  
 one you.ACC=let.3S.FUT know.INF DAT Louise  
 Intended: ‘We will let Louise meet you.’
- c. *Marcel l’ a fait épouser au médecin.*  
 Marcel her.ACC= has made marry to.the doctor  
 ‘Marcel had the doctor marry her.’ (Postal 1989: 2)

The pattern in (13) shows that full DPs also agree with matrix Voice so that this is not merely an effect of clitic clusters but rather of case licensing (see Sheehan 2020 for further discussion).

The following table summarises some of the main differences between the three complement types discussed here, all of which can be attributed to their different sizes.

**Table 1. Core syntactic properties of these reduced complements (see Kayne 1975; Burzio 1986; Pearce 1990)**

	<b>Faire-par</b>	<b>Faire-infinitif</b>	<b>ECM</b>
Transitive complement	postverbal by phrase causee	postverbal DAT causee	preverbal ACC causee
Intransitive complement	postverbal ACC causee	postverbal ACC causee	preverbal ACC causee
Causee omission	Y – external arguments	N	N
Clitic climbing of causee	NA – causee cannot be clitic	Y obligatory	Y
Clitic climbing of embedded object	Y obligatory	Y obligatory	N
PCC	N	Y	N

### 1.3 The special case of *faire*

For many French speakers, ECM complements of *faire* ‘make’ are simply ungrammatical (Kayne 1975:ch3). There is considerable variation though and many authors, including

Kayne (1975: ch3, fn 30), have noted that ECM is possible for some speakers with *faire*, but only where the causee is a clitic (Grevisse 1969: 1064; Hyman and Zimmer 1976; Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997):

*ECM causatives under faire*

- (14) a. *Le professeur les fera lire Proust.*  
 the teacher them.ACC= make.FUT read.INF Proust  
 ‘The teacher made them read Proust.’  
 b. *Le professeur les fera le lire.*  
 the teacher them.ACC=make.FUT it= read.INF  
 ‘The teacher made them read it.’ (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997: 65)  
 c. \**Paul fera les élèves de seconde lire Proust.*  
 Paul make.FUT **the pupils of second** read.INF Proust  
 ‘The teacher made the second years read Proust.’

Clitic ECM also seems to be possible in intransitive contexts, though it is harder to detect. As noted above, object clitic climbing is obligatory in the *faire-infinitif* and banned in ECM contexts in French (Kayne 1975). Assuming this is also the case with partitive clitics, then the apparent optionality of clitic climbing in (15) can actually be attributed to the availability of two structures: the *faire-infinitif* in (15a) and ECM in (15b), as Abeillé et al. note:

- (15) a. *Le professeur les en a fait discuter.*  
 the teacher them.ACC= PART= has made discuss.INF  
 b. *Le professeur les a fait en discuter*  
 the teacher them.ACC= has made PART= discuss.INF  
 ‘The teacher made them talk about it.’ (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997: 63)

I will call this complementation pattern *clitic ECM*, for ease of reference.

The availability of clitic ECM with *faire* is semantically conditioned. The semantic differences between *faire-par* and *faire-infinitif* are well known (see Kayne 1975; Burzio 1986; Guasti 1993, Guasti 1996; Folli and Harley 2007). In simple terms, the *faire-par* construction is about getting something done, whereas the *faire-infinitif* is about getting someone to do something:

- (16) a. *Il fera courir le 100 mètres par Jean-Jacques.*  
 he make.FUT run.INF the 100 metres by Jean-Jacques  
 ‘He’ll have the 100 meters run by Jean-Jacques.’  
 b. *Il fera courir le 100 mètres à Jean-Jacques.*  
 he make.FUT run.INF the 100 metres DAT Jean-Jacques  
 ‘He’ll have Jean-Jacques run the 100 meters.’ (Kayne 1975: 240)

The differences between ECM and *faire-infinitif* are less well studied. In French, clitic ECM under *faire* is reported only to be felicitous where the causee is agentive but forced or coerced to act by the causer/cause (Kayne 1975: ch3, fn 30; Authier & Reed 1991; Bailard 1982; Abeillé et al. 1997). For this reason, where the embedded verb is an agentive verb such as *dévoré* ‘devour’ an accusative causee is possible (17), but where it is a non-agentive verb such as *aimer* ‘love’, only a dative causee is acceptable (18):

- (17) *la lueur d'angoisse qui réveille le tigre et lui/ le fait dévorer .*  
 the glimmer of worry that awakens the tiger and it.DAT/.ACC makes devour.INF  
*le dompteur*

the tamer

'The glimmer of worry that awakens the tiger and makes it eat its tamer.' (Bailard 1982:52)

- (18) *Faites-leur/*                      *-#les aimer Proust !*  
make.2PL.IMP=them.DAT/.ACC love.INF Proust (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997: 66)

A meaning contrast between ECM and clause union is also observed with *laisser* 'let' in French. As Kayne (1975: 232) notes, (18a) implies "a degree of collusion or of intentionality on the part of the guard", which is lacking in (18b):

- (19) a. *Le gardien a laissé le prisonnier s'échapper.*  
the warden has let the prisoner SE=escape.INF  
'The warden let the prisoner escape (intentionally).'
- b. *Le gardien a laissé s'échapper le prisonnier.*  
the warden has let SE=escape.INF the prisoner  
'The warden let the prisoner escape (unintentionally).'
- (Kayne 1975: 232)

It is not clear whether this is the same semantic contrast at some level of abstraction and nor is it clear to what extent the semantic contrast observed with *voir* is parallel. This contrast is reported to involve "a stronger sense of actual visual perception of Jean" in (19a) when compared with (19b) (Kayne 1975: 232, see also Guasti 1993, Higginbotham 1993):

- (20) a. *J' ai vu Jean faire des bêtises.*  
I have seen Jean do.INF of.the stupidities  
'I've seen John do some silly things.'
- b. *J' ai vu faire des bêtises à Jean.*  
I have seen do.INF of.the stupidities DAT Jean  
'I've seen John do some silly things.'
- (Kayne 1975: 232)

For our purposes, what is crucial is that the semantic contrast between clitic ECM vs clause union, coupled with the syntactic differences already noted (notably the presence/absence of clitic climbing), strongly suggests that the clitic ECM pattern is not merely a surface morphological effect, but rather a structural difference.

More research is needed to establish the sociolinguistic factors which determine the availability of clitic ECM under *faire* in French. This is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of the present study, but it is certainly rejected by many speakers except in one particular context.<sup>7</sup> As Abeillé, Godard and Miller (1997) note, the ECM structure becomes more generally possible in PCC-violating contexts in French (and the same appears to be true of the other Romance languages discussed below):

- (21) a. *Paul te fera nous expliquer la solution du problème.*  
Paul you= make.FUT us= explain.INF the solution of.the problem  
'Paul will make you explain to us the solution to the problem.'
- (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997: 64)

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, this suggests that ECM under *faire* is on the decrease rather than the increase and this has, in fact, been claimed in the literature (see Martineau 1990 who attributes this claim to Danell 1979 via St-Amour 1983).



Even speakers who reject examples like (14a-b) often accept (21). In other words, the ECM construction is available for many as a PCC repair, where the *faire-infinitif* is blocked (as discussed above). These patterns are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2. French complementation patterns**

	<i>faire</i> ‘make’	<i>laisser</i> ‘let’	<i>voir</i> ‘see’
Faire-infinitif	Y	Y	Y
Faire-par	Y	Y	Y
ECM	PCC contexts /%clitics only	Y	Y

This clitic ECM pattern poses a theoretical challenge. First, it suggests that the unacceptability of ECM under *faire* in (14c) is not a matter of selection alone. *Faire* clearly *can* select for an ECM complement for (some) French speakers, but the result is only grammatical if that complement contains a pronominal subject (for a subset of speakers) or a clitic causee and a 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person theme (for many more). Selection is usually taken to be a relationship between a head and the head it selects, not between a head and the arguments of that complement, making selection an unlikely explanation.

Nor can the pattern be a matter merely of the availability or non-availability of accusative case under *faire*. According to Pineda and Sheehan’s (2020) analysis, the verb *faire* can assign accusative case not only where it functions as a lexical verb but also in the *faire-infinitif* construction, where it has a similar (though distinct) meaning as a causative verb (see also Belletti and Rizzi 2012). If this is the case then accusative case should also be available with ECM complements (VoicePs). Finally, the pattern cannot be attributed to a more general property of the language which serves to block full ECM, because other verbs such as *laisser* ‘let’ permit ECM with full DPs in the same language. Rather, there must be something about the status of *faire* as it occurs in this particular syntactic context which means that ECM is possible only with clitics. In section 3, I sketch an analysis of the clitic ECM pattern as a simple effect of phase theory. First, though, I present further examples of this pattern in other Romance languages in order to make the case that it is robustly attested pattern, rather than a simple quirk of French *faire*.

## 2 Clitic ECM patterns in other Romance varieties

### 2.1 Italian

Standard Italian generally disallows ECM complements with *fare* ‘make’: causees (clitic or otherwise) cannot usually be accusative where an embedded predicate is transitive (see Burzio 1986; Guasti 1993, Guasti 1996; Folli and Harley 2007 and many others):

- (22) a. *Gianni gli/ \*l’ ha fatto lavare i piatti.*  
 G. him.DAT/ \*ACC= has made wash the dishes  
 ‘Gianni made him wash the dishes.’
- b. *Maria ha fatto lavare i piatti \*(a) Gianni.*  
 Maria has made wash the dishes DAT Gianni  
 ‘Maria made Gianni wash the dishes.’

Burzio (1986: 232) notes that ECM is relatively acceptable for some speakers, however, as long as the causee is a clitic. This clitic ECM pattern is parallel to the French pattern, though it appears to be less wide-spread in Italian:

- (23) a. ?*Maria l' ha fatto riparare la macchina*  
 Maria him.ACC= has made repair.INF the car  
 'Maria made him repair the car.'
- b. \**Maria ha fatto Gianni riparare la macchina*  
 Maria has made Gianni repair.INF the car  
 'Maria made Gianni repair the car.'

Once again, it seems that clitic ECM becomes more widely available as in PCC contexts, where dative subjects are not possible, as discussed by (Schifano & Sheehan 2017):

*ECM more acceptable in PCC contexts*

- (24) %*Lo/ \*gli fece picchiarmi*  
 3SG.ACC/ 3SG.DAT made beat.INF.=1SG.ACC  
 'She made him beat me.'

Prescriptively *lasciare* 'let' permits all three kinds of complements in standard Italian. However, it appears to be the case that some (northern) speakers allow ECM under *lasciare* 'let' only with clitic causees (see Burzio 1986: 229, 287):<sup>8</sup>

- (25) a. %*Ho lasciato Giovanni mangiare la mela.*  
 have.1SG let Giovanni eat.INF the apple  
 'I let Giovanni eat the apple'
- b. *L' ho lasciato mangiare la mela*  
 him.ACC=have.1SG let eat.INF the apple  
 'I let him eat the apple'

All three kinds of complements are possible with verbs of perception in Italian, giving the complementation patterns schematised in Table 3.

**Table 3. Italian complementation patterns**

	<i>faire</i> 'make'	<i>laisser</i> 'let'	<i>voir</i> 'see'
Faire-infinitif	Y	Y	Y
Faire-par	Y	Y	Y
ECM	N/%PCC/%clitics only	clitics only/%DPs	Y

Once again, it is not clear which sociolinguistic variables condition the availability of ECM in standard Italian, but what is striking is that we find the same clitic ECM pattern described for French. In fact the clitic ECM is found in Italian with the permissive verb as well as with causative *fare*. The patterns are different, however. All speakers allow clitic causees with *lasciare* 'let' and what varies is whether they also allow full DP causees, whereas only a minority of speakers allow even clitic causees under *fare* 'make' and none allow full DPs.

<sup>8</sup> As Adam Ledgeway (personal communication) notes, there are other regional differences regarding the use of these verbs. Southern dialects, and hence often regional southern Italian, often use *fare* 'make' rather than *lasciare* 'let' in permissive contexts, for example:

- (i) non si vuole far convincere  
 neg SE wants make convince  
 'She doesn't want to let herself be persuaded.'

## 2.2 Catalan

Catalan also makes use of all three kinds of complements described in Section 1.1, but in slightly different ways (see Solà 1994; Torrego 1998; Villalba 1992; Alsina 1992, Alsina 1997, Alsina 2002/2008; Sheehan & Cyrino 2016; Pineda & Sheehan 2020). The most widely accepted complement of *fer* ‘make’ is the *faire-infinitif*. *Faire-par* is possible in Catalan only where the causee is suppressed for many speakers (Villalba 1992, 359, fn 9; 328, fn 17), but see also Alsina (1996).

- (26) *Els meus pares van fer construir una casa (\*per aquests arquitectes)*  
 the my parents go.3PL make build a house by these architects  
 ‘My parents had a house built.’

Such examples nonetheless share the core properties of *faire-par*, unlike superficially parallel examples in Portuguese and some varieties of Spanish (Sheehan & Cyrino 2016)

For many speakers, ECM is *not* possible under *fer*, but again, some speakers allow the clitic ECM pattern, as in French and Italian (Solà 1994: § 9.3; Torrego 1998:§3).

- (27) *%Ell la feia baixar les escales de les criptes.*  
 he her.ACC= made descend the stairs of the crypts  
 ‘He made her descend the stairs of the crypts.’ (Solà 1994: § 9.3)

As in French, this is a minority/variable pattern unlike *faire-infinitif*. Consider Pineda & Sheehan’s (2020) survey data with *fer*:

- (28) *%L’ he fet rentar els plats.* [7/25 speakers]  
 him.ACC= have made wash the dishes  
 ‘I have made him wash the dishes.’
- (29) *Li he fet rentar els plats.* [25/25 speakers]  
 him.DAT= have made wash the dishes  
 ‘I have made him wash the dishes.’
- (30) *%L’ he fet escombrar el menjador.* [10/25 speakers]  
 him.ACC= have made sweep the dining room  
 ‘I have made him sweep the dining room.’
- (31) *Li he fet escombrar el menjador.* [25/25 speakers]  
 him.DAT= have made sweep the dining room  
 ‘I have made him sweep the dining room.’ [Pineda and Sheehan 2020: PP]

ECM with full DP causees is never possible under *fer*. With *deixar* ‘let’ there is also variation. While some speakers are reported to allow full ECM, others are restricted to clitic ECM, in parallel with the pattern discussed above for Italian (Alsina 2002/2008: 2424, fn. 17)

- (32) *\*El Joan ha fet (a) la Maria rentar els plats.*  
 the Joan has made (A) the Maria wash the dishes  
 ‘Joan made Maria wash the dishes.’

- (33) *%Hauríem de deixar la Maria explicar la seva proposta*  
 Should.1PL of let the Maria explain the her proposal  
 (Alsina 2002: 2424)

9 Many thanks to Anna Pineda for help with this section.

Again, it is striking that the same clitic ECM pattern is attested in Catalan with permissive and causative verbs. Verbs of perception permit both *faire-infinitif* and ECM (as in French and Italian):

(34) *He vist la Maria córrer darrere l' autobús*  
 Have.1SG seen the Mary run behind the bus

(35) *He vist córrer la Maria darrere l' autobús*  
 Have.1SG seen run the Mary behind the bus

In Catalan too, clitic ECM appears to become more acceptable in PCC contexts, where the embedded object is 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person, but survey data are needed to ascertain how generally acceptable such examples are:

- (36) a. \**Me li va fer insultar.* (Bonet 1991: 195)  
 1S.ACC= 3SM.DAT= goes make.INF insult.INF  
 Intended: 'He/she made him insult me.'  
 b. %*El va fer insultar-me*  
 3SM.ACC= goes make.INF insult.INF=1S.ACC  
 'He/she made him insult me.'

Again, further investigation is required to identify the sociolinguistic variables conditioning the availability of ECM in Catalan but what is striking is that the clitic ECM pattern is again attested with both causative and perception verbs, though in different ways, as discussed above for Italian. This is summarised in Table 4.

**Table 4. Catalan complementation patterns**

	<i>faire</i> 'make'	<i>laisser</i> 'let'	<i>voir</i> 'see'
Faire-infinitif	Y	Y	Y
Faire-par	Y (no overt by phrase)	?	?
ECM	N//%PCC only %clitics only	clitics only/%DPs	Y

### 2.3 Spanish and Portuguese

In relation to Spanish and Portuguese, ECM is much more developed. In Brazilian Portuguese, clause union is no longer possible even under *fazer* 'make' and *mandar* 'have/order' (Cyrino 2010a; Cyrino 2010b; Bonfim and Salles 2016; Sheehan & Cyrino 2016), and in European Portuguese and some Spanish varieties full ECM is possible with all perception/permissive and causative verbs (Strozer 1976; Davies 1992; Treviño 1994; Davies 1995; Torrego 2010, but see also Bordelois 1988 for a conservative variety). The Portuguese facts are further complicated by the fact that inflected infinitival complements with nominative subjects are also possible in both European and Brazilian Portuguese, and by the fact that, in Brazilian Portuguese, for independent reasons accusative clitics are increasingly replaced by full pronominals (identical to nominative pronouns) (Martins 2004; Martins 2018; Hornstein, Martins and Nunes 2008; Sheehan & Cyrino 2018).

Davies (1992) shows that, in diachronic terms, ECM is an innovation which developed in the following way in these languages:

- (37) The development of ECM in Spanish and Portuguese (Davies 1992)  
**perception/permission > causation**

In transitive contexts, virtually all ‘causees’ are dative in Old Portuguese with all three verb types (causative/perception/permissive). In Middle Portuguese, however, the permissive and perception verbs begin to surface with accusative in transitive contexts. This ECM pattern is then extended to causative verbs (*mandar/fazer*) in Modern Portuguese, with just under 50% of examples displaying this pattern with both DP and clitic causees. Unfortunately, in Davies’ data, there are too few examples of permissive and perception verbs in Middle Portuguese to draw any conclusions about whether this development included a stage of clitic ECM. The history of Spanish shows the same pattern of development with the exception that the onset of ECM comes a little later, after the Middle Spanish period and, possibly as a result, ECM is has a narrower distribution in Modern Spanish than in Modern Portuguese. The added complication of differential object marking in Spanish means that it is not easy to ascertain whether Spanish ECM developed first with clitics or full DPs, as all transitive causees in Davies corpus are introduced by ‘a’.

What is interesting about the diachronic development of Spanish and Portuguese is that the attested patterns partially mirror the synchronic patterns discussed above for French, Catalan and Italian. In all cases, there is a distinction between the causative verbs with which ECM is unavailable, limited to clitics or attested later, and the permissive/perception verbs with which it is more readily available or attested earlier. The synchronic patterns also suggest a further difference between the verbs of perception vs permissive verbs, based on modern Italian and Catalan. It is possible that the sparsity of historical data obscures this pattern diachronically.

**Table 5: distribution of ECM and FI complements**

	Italian	Catalan	French	Spanish	E. Portuguese	B Portuguese
SEE	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
LET	FI/ cl ECM/ %ECM	FI/ cl ECM /%ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
MAKE	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/%ECM/ %cl ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
MANDARE	prep. infinitive <sup>10</sup>	*	*	%FI	FI/ECM	ECM

From this perspective, the clitic ECM pattern looks like an intermediate step in the extension of ECM, as illustrated by Table 5. A language first has the clause union pattern with these verbs then the clitic ECM patterns develops until finally full ECM becomes possible:

- (38) Extension of ECM under causative/permissive/perception verbs  
 Clause union > clitic ECM > full ECM

<sup>10</sup> As Adam Ledgeway notes, Italian has a much reduced/rarer ‘*mandare a + infinitive*’ with a causative reading:

(i) *Mi mandavano a chiamare*  
 1SG=sent.3PL.IMP to call.INF  
 ‘They would have me sent for.’

This is clearly a different kind of complement again as it contains a preposition and requires an arbitrary null subject. He further notes that in some Italo-Romance varieties, including old Italian, we also find a gerundival complement in place of the infinitive under *mandare* ‘order’.

In the remainder of this paper, I propose an analysis of the clitic ECM pattern before considering its relevance to the history of French.

### 3 Towards an explanation

#### 3.1 More on ECM complements

Recall, from Section 1.2., the proposed structure for the reduced complements of causative/permissive/perception verbs, adopted from Folli & Harley 2007 and Sheehan & Cyrino 2018):

- (39) Structures of the complements of causative/permissive/perception verbs
- a. Faire-par                    laisser [VP [VP manger le gâteau] [PP par Jean]]
  - b. Faire-infinitif            laisser [vP v [VP manger le gâteau] [DP à Jean]]
  - c. ECM                        laisser [VoiceP être [vP v [VP arrêtés [DP les manifestants]]]]

Something which remains unexplained by these structures is the word order of ECM complements, which, in modern varieties, at least, is always SV, even where the embedded verb is unaccusative/passive:

- (40) (?) *Le chef de police a laissé les manifestants être arrêtés.*  
 the chief of police has let the demonstrators be arrested  
 'The chief of police had the demonstrators arrested.' (Santorini & Heycock 1988: 39)

This word order implies that the causee must move either (i) to a position in the matrix clause (raising to object) or (ii) to a 'subject' position at the edge of the ECM complement (raising to subject) (Guasti 1993). I assume a raising-to-object account of this SV word order (see Sheehan & Cyrino 2018 for further discussion). More specifically, the causee Agrees with matrix v, is assigned accusative case and then moves to matrix spec vP to satisfy an EPP feature on v. The matrix verb, which has raised to v, then moves higher, to the matrix Voice position, yielding the correct word order:

- (41) ECM            [VoiceP laisser+v+Voice [vP [DP les manifestants] t t ... [VoiceP être [vP v [VP arrêtés ti ]]]]

Sheehan and Cyrino (2018) provide indirect evidence for a raising to object analysis from the ban on passivisation with Romance ECM, which they derive from phase theory.

Further potential evidence that such examples involve raising to object comes from the fact that no expletive/quasi-expletive subjects are possible under causative/perception verbs. If the SV order in ECM were due to raising to a subject position to satisfy an EPP in the ECM complement, then we might expect, in French at least, which disallows null subjects, that this position would display the same EPP-related properties as the canonical subject position. Instead, we find that expletives are impossible in ECM complements (Kayne 1975: 233):

- (42) a. *Je (\*I) entends pleuvoir.*  
 I it= hear rain.inf  
 b. *Elle (\*I) a regardé neiger.*  
 she it= has seen snow.inf  
 c. *Je (\*I) ai vu pleuvoir pendant 48 heures.*  
 I it= have seen rain.inf during 48 hours  
 d. *Les savants sont maintenant capables de (\*le) faire pleuvoir.*  
 the wise are now capable of it make rain.inf

‘Scientists are now capable of making it rain.’

Of course, this could simply be because these embedded clauses are non-finite, or because French lacks object expletives more generally, as Adam Ledgeway (personal communication) notes. It is also as expected, however, if the canonical EPP is associated with a T-related projection and these ECM complements are too small to contain such a projection. Indeed, although passive auxiliaries are available in ECM contexts, aspectual auxiliaries are generally not (though this is subject to variation and so requires further investigation) (see Sheehan and Cyrino 2018).

There is a potential challenge for the raising-to-object view, however, from the distribution of negation. Negation is permitted in ECM complements in Italian (Guasti 1993), European Portuguese (Gonçalves 1999; Martins 2004), Spanish, Catalan (Villalba 1992; Tubino Blanco 2010) and French (Kayne 1975) (see also Ciutescu 2013 for a pan-Romance perspective). In most of these languages, there is a sharp contrast between ECM complements and clause union because in the latter context negation is ruled out. French permits clausal negation (somewhat marginally, sometimes) also with *faire-infinitif/faire-par*, however (Guasti 1993:80; Labelle 1996:15):

- (43) a. *J' ai vu Pierre ne pas chanter*  
I have seen Pierre NEG not sing.INF.  
‘I’ve seen Pierre not singing’  
b. *\*J' ai vu ne pas chanter Pierre.*  
I have seen NEG not sing.INF Pierre  
c. *?Cela a fait ne pas manger la soupe à l' enfant.*  
that has made neg not eat.INF the soup to the child  
‘That made the child not eat its soup’

As Ian Roberts (personal communication) notes, French allows double *ne pas*:

- (44) *Le film était tellement émouvant qu' on ne pouvait pas ne pas pleurer.*  
the film was so moving that one NEG could not NEG not cry.INF  
‘The film was so moving that one could not help but cry.’

The second of these is probably constituent negation and the same could be true of (43c). The ungrammaticality of (43b) then, would have to be due to a semantic incompatibility rather than a grammatical restriction. For this reason, it is not clear what to make of the negation patterns, especially in French, and I leave this matter to one side here. Note that it is crucial for the analysis of clitic ECM proposed here that the SV order with ECM complements results from raising to object rather than raising to subject, for reasons that will become clear in the next section.

### 3.2 The clitic ECM pattern

The question remains how we can account for the clitic-only ECM pattern attested in French, Italian and Catalan, repeated here as (45):

- (45) a. *Le professeur les fera lire Proust.*  
the teacher them.ACC= make.FUT read.INF Proust  
‘The teacher made them read Proust.’  
b. *Le professeur les fera le lire.*  
the teacher them.ACC=make.FUT it= read.INF  
‘The teacher made them read it.’ (Abeillé, Godard and Miller 1997: 65)

- c. \**Paul fera les élèves de seconde lire Proust.*  
 Paul make.FUT the pupils of second read.INF Proust  
 ‘The teacher made the second years read Proust.’

As discussed above, this cannot be attributed merely to selection, as heads do not select for the properties of the arguments contained in their complement. Nor can it be attributed to a general case-deficiency of the verbs in question, as where they surface in the *faire-infinitif*, they are able to assign accusative case, and in any case clitics presumably need to be case licensed too, especially as they display morphological case. Rather, the clitic ECM pattern must be a fact about the particular structure in which these verbs occur and some independent difference between clitics vs full DPs.

Interestingly a superficially similar pattern is described by Kayne (1981) for ECM under *croire* ‘believe’, whereby a full DP subject is banned but a clitic subject is marginally possible:

- (46) a. \**Je crois Jean être le plus intelligent de tous.*  
 I believe Jean be.INF the most intelligent of all.PL (Kayne 1981: 356)  
 b. ?*Je le crois être le plus intelligent de tous.*  
 I him= believe be.INF the most intelligent of all.PL  
 ‘I believe him to be the most intelligent of all.’ (Kayne 1981: 361, fn 16)

As Rooryck (2000) notes, however, clitic ECM in this context is extremely restricted, and apparently possible only where the embedded clause contains a comparative or superlative. As he notes, superlatives/comparatives have been argued to involve A-bar movement, and in fact, other kinds of A-bar movement feed ECM under *croire* ‘believe’ (and related verbs):

- (47) a. \**Je le crois être malade/au lit avec la fièvre jaune.*  
 I him= believe be.INF ill/ at.the bed with the fever yellow  
 ‘I believe him to be ill/in bed with yellow fever.’ (Rooryck 2000 : 27)  
 b. *Quel gargon crois/reconnais/constates- tu être le plus intelligent de tous?*  
 which boy believe/recognise/determine=you be.INF the most intelligent of all.  
 ‘Which boy do you believe/acknowledge/determine (to) be the most intelligent of all?’  
 (Kayne 1981: 356)  
 c. *Voilà la linguiste qu’ on a cru/ dit avoir été mal comprise*  
 here.is the linguist.F that one has believed/said have.INF been badly understood  
 ‘This is the female linguist who they believed/said to have been misunderstood.’  
 d. \**Cette personne a été cru(e)/ dit(e) avoir été mal comprise.*  
 this person has been believed.(F)/said.(F) have.INF been badly understood  
 Intended: ‘This person was believed/said to have been misunderstood.’  
 (Rooryck 2000 : 29)

The contrast between (47b-c) and (47d) shows that ECM is possible only where the ECM subject undergoes A-bar movement and not A-movement. The pattern under *faire* ‘make’ is different. For speakers who accept clitic ECM under *faire* ‘make’, ECM is not usually fed by A-bar movement, the only exception being (48a), which is marginally possible:

- (48) a. ?*Qui est-ce que tu as fait lire Proust ?*  
 who is=this that you have made read.INF Proust  
 ‘Who did you make read Proust.’  
 b. \**??Quels étudiants as- tu fait lire Proust ?*  
 which students have= you made read.INF Proust  
 c. \**Ce sont/\*c’ est les élèves de seconde que j’ai fait lire Proust.*



these are/ this is the pupils of second that I have made read.INF Proust

As passivisation of *faire* is independently blocked (Burzio 1986), it is not possible to test whether A-movement feeds ECM here. The pattern in (48) suggests that under *faire* ‘make’, it is the pronominal status of the causee that is crucial, not whether it undergoes A-bar movement. I assume that the marginal acceptability of (48a) is due to the acceptability of clitic ECM, and that A-bar movement does not feed ECM under *faire*. The pattern is therefore subtly different from the pattern with *croire* ‘believe’ and I leave open here how to account for the distinct pattern described by Kayne/Rooryck.

My proposal is that the clitic ECM pattern is what we find where the matrix verb is a light verb rather than a lexical verb. Lexical verbs are instances of V which, in non-truncated clauses are dominated by external-argument-introducing little v and a phasal Voice head. I adopt the assumption that accusative case features originate on Voice (the phase head) but are inherited by v, all else being equal (Chomsky 2008). I further assume that light verbs differ from lexical verbs in that they are instances of v (see Folli and Harley 2007).<sup>11</sup> My proposal is that where v is lexicalised it fails to inherit case features from Voice. These assumptions serve to derive the clitic only ECM pattern from the Phase Impenetrability Condition (PIC). Let us consider how.

First, consider an example where a verb of perception or permission selects an active ECM complement (a VoiceP). Phase heads are rendered in **bold**, for expository reasons:

(49) [<sub>VP</sub> V<sub>[ACC]</sub> [<sub>VP</sub> *voit/laisse* [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice** [<sub>vP</sub> causee v [<sub>VP</sub>...]]]]]

Following the arguments in Sheehan and Cyrino (2018), I adopt the second, less restrictive version of the PIC, often labelled PIC2 (Chomsky 2001). PIC2 differs from the original PIC in Chomsky (2000) in allowing A-relations to be established in a ‘window of opportunity’ after a phase has been constructed before the next phase head is merged. This means that in (49), as only one phase head is present (**Voice**), none of the material in the lower vP has been transferred to the interfaces at this point in the derivation and so the matrix little v, which inherits an ACC case feature can probe the causee and agree with it, assigning it accusative case and attracting it to the matrix clause, as outlined in the Section 3.1. In this example, the embedded VoiceP is active but nothing would change if it were passive as there would still be no phase boundary between the matrix v and the embedded arguments. Whether the causee is a clitic or a full DP, ECM is perfectly possible.

Now consider a minimally different scenario where the matrix verb is a light verb realising v rather than V. In this case, by hypothesis, the light verb fails to inherit accusative case features and so Voice is the case-assigning head. For this reason, matrix Voice probes for a DP to Agree with and assign ACC case to. Where the complement of the light verb is non-phasal (a vP or VP), there is no phase boundary and so all arguments are accessible for case licensing. This is the case in both *faire-infinitif* and *faire-par*:

(50) [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice**<sub>[ACC]</sub> [<sub>vP</sub> fait [<sub>vP</sub> causee v [<sub>VP</sub> V DP]]]]]

Where the light verb selects a phasal ECM complement, however, the problem is that there are now two phase heads in the structure and by the time the matrix Voice probes, all of the arguments of the embedded VoiceP have been spelled out. This makes all of the arguments of the embedded vP inaccessible for accusative case assignment:

<sup>11</sup> As Folli and Harley (2007) note, this would explain why French causative *faire* generally cannot be passivised.

(51) [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice**<sub>ACC</sub>] [<sub>vP</sub> fait [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice** [<sub>vP</sub> causee v [<sub>VP</sub>...]]]]]

This explains why French *faire* ‘make’ does not permit full ECM. Where this verb functions as a causative, it always has the status of a light verb (little v) and light verbs are incompatible with full ECM.

The question remains, though, why ECM is possible in such contexts as long as the causee is a clitic (for some speakers, more in PCC contexts). My proposal is that clitics, unlike full DP arguments, escape the embedded phase by undergoing obligatory movement to matrix v. However cliticization is formalised, it can be observed that clitics undergo obligatory argument-related movement to a c-commanding verb in a local domain. This movement does not appear to be case-related, as in restructuring contexts we can observe optional clitic climbing. In this ECM context, is it obligatory with the accusative causee but blocked for lower arguments. All that is crucial in order to derive the effect in question is that local cliticization is a kind of movement which is unconnected to case assignment (see the different approaches to cliticisation in Sportiche 1996, Roberts 2010). The effect of cliticization is that clitic causees move out of the embedded vP and in doing so become accessible to matrix Voice. In a simple tense, we can assume that the clitic is simply attracted by v:<sup>12</sup>

(52) [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice**<sub>ACC</sub>] [<sub>vP</sub> le+fait [<sub>VoiceP</sub> **Voice** [<sub>vP</sub> le v [<sub>VP</sub>...]]]]]

It follows, then, that the only way for ECM to converge where the matrix verb is a light verb is for the accusative causee to be a clitic which, for independent reasons, raises into the domain of the accusative-case assigning head (matrix Voice).

Essentially, what I am proposing is that there are two crucial changes required in order for a verb to develop full ECM. First, there is a change in selection whereby a larger phasal VoiceP complement is permitted under a permissive/causative verb. Then, when such a complement is possible, a further change can take place whereby the selecting causative/permissive verb is reanalysed as a lexical verb as opposed to a light verb. It is only when this second change takes place that full ECM becomes possible. Why does the change in selection precede the change from light verb to lexical verb status? I propose that this is not necessarily the case. There is no evidence, from example that perception verbs go through a clitic ECM phase. Intuitively, perception verbs are more lexical than permissive verbs which are in turn more lexical than causatives, in terms of their semantics (see Higginbotham 1983). It is the latter two kinds of verbs that are most likely to be light verbs and hence to display the clitic ECM pattern. There is also a sense in which the more coercive semantics found in instances of ECM are suggestive of a more lexical use of the matrix verb. Recall the following contrast:

(53) a. *Le gardien a laissé le prisonnier s'échapper.*

the warden has let the prisoner SE=escape.INF  
 ‘The warden let the prisoner escape (intentionally).’

b. *Le gardien a laissé s'échapper le prisonnier.*

the warden has let SE=escape.INF the prisoner  
 ‘The warden let the prisoner escape (unintentionally).’

(Kayne 1975: 232)

<sup>12</sup> There many unanswered questions here about the precise mechanics of cliticization and clitic climbing which I leave open, notably the question of how clitics end up associated with finite auxiliary verbs such as *avoir/être*. This is essentially the question of how clitic climbing is to be analysed, which I leave to one side here.

In the ECM construction (53a), *laisser* ‘let’ has a more agentive reading, compatible with it being a lexical verb.

Note that in instances of clause union, the embedded complement is non-phasal and so accusative (and dative) case can be assigned by the matrix clause even if the matrix verb has the status of a light verb, as schematised in (50) (for a full analysis of these complements see Pineda and Sheehan 2020). Where the complement is non-phasal it makes no difference whether the matrix verb is V or v: the fact that there is no lower (Voice) phase head in this structure means that matrix Voice can access all arguments of the embedded vP. In short, the light verb status of the matrix verb has no implications for case assignment in instances of clause union, as there is no lower phase boundary. It is only where the complement of a causative/permissive/perception verb is itself phasal, that the light verb status of the matrix verb affects case assignment, giving rise to the clitic ECM pattern.

#### 4 The history of ECM in French

Thus far, I have presented synchronic evidence for an intermediate step in the development of ECM which I have called clitic ECM. This pattern is observed in varieties of modern Italian, Catalan and French, raising the question of whether it is also attested historically in the cells in Table 5 (repeated here) in which full ECM is now available.

**Table 5: distribution of ECM and FI complements**

	Italian	Catalan	French	Spanish	E. Portuguese	B Portuguese
SEE	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
LET	FI/ cl ECM/ %ECM	FI/ cl ECM /%ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
MAKE	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/ %cl ECM	FI/%ECM/ %cl ECM	FI/ECM	ECM
MANDARE	prep. infinitive	*	*	%FI	FI/ECM	ECM

As noted above, a paucity of data in Davies (1992) makes it difficult to draw conclusions about older stages of Portuguese, and two independent facts about Spanish (differential object marking and *leísmo*) make it impossible to observe whether Spanish also displayed such a tendency. In this section, I consider the history of French, in order to establish whether it displayed the clitic ECM pattern historically with *laisser* or *voir*. I begin by summarising previous work on the history of French causative/permissive/perception verbs by Pearce (1990) and Martineau (1990) and then present new data from the Base de Français Médiéval on the history of *laisser*.<sup>13</sup>

The Old French data described by Pearce (given here in Table 6) seem, on the surface, to support the idea that ECM developed first with verbs of perception. Verbs of perception overwhelmingly occur with intransitive verbs, but with transitives, both accusative and dative causees are attested in Old French, though numbers are very small. With the causative *faire* ‘make’ and the permissive *laisser* ‘let’, in Old French, 90% of causees in transitive contexts

<sup>13</sup> Pearce (1990) bases her study on 50 Old French texts. The parsed Base de Français Médiéval comprises 170 texts from IX - XVI centuries (see Guillot-Barbance, et al. 2017). There is minimal overlap between Pearce’s corpus and the texts in the Base de Français Médiéval: the BFM includes OF texts not considered by Pearce, as well as later Middle French texts.

are dative, suggesting that ECM emerged later, as described by Davies (1992) for Spanish and Portuguese.

**Table 6: Dative causees with causative/permissive/perception verbs (Pearce 1990: 140)**

	Intransitive			Transitive		
	ACC	DAT	%DAT	ACC	DAT	%DAT
<i>faire</i>	189	3	2%	8	69	90%
<i>laisser/laier</i>	90	1	1%	1	9	90%
<i>voir</i>	140	0	0%	7	12	63%
<i>oïr</i>	29	0	0%	2	8	80%

Because the crucial context is transitive contexts with 3<sup>rd</sup> person causees, the numbers in Pearce's sample are very small for everything but *faire*, however, so there is reason to be cautious of the percentages in Table 5. The breakdown of clitic vs full DP by Pearce (shown in Table 7) paints a different picture of what is really going on in Old French. What this breakdown shows is that although full DP causees are much rarer overall than clitic causees, virtually all examples of accusative causees in transitive contexts are full DPs.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 7: Case marking of DPs and clitic pronouns in transitive contexts (Pearce 1990: 149)**

	Accusative			Dative		
	DP	pronoun	%DP	DP	pronoun	%DP
<i>faire</i>	7	1	88%	24	45	35%
<i>laisser/laier</i>	-	1	0%	2	7	22%
<i>voir</i>	7	-	100%	3	9	25%
<i>oïr</i>	2	-	100%	4	4	50%

The results in Table 7 are surprising given what we have seen above in synchronic varieties. Rather than a clitic ECM pattern, we seem to be observing a DP ECM pattern, whereby ECM is limited to contexts where the causee is a full DP for both causative and perception verbs.

It is likely that the examples of accusative causees in transitive contexts in Old French are not true examples of ECM, however. As Pearce (1990) notes, citing Herslund (1980), DPs often fail to be overtly marked for dative case in Old French in other contexts where we would expect it (see also Morin et St-Amour 1977; Martineau 1990). This is true, for example, when they function as recipients/goals:

(54) a. *Ne ben ne mal ne respunt sun nevuld.*

nor well nor bad NEG responds his nephew

'He responds neither well nor badly to his nephew.'

(*Roland*, 216, cited by Morin et St-Amour 1977:124)

b. *Prestez vostre oncle et mon seignor vostre palefroi*

lend your uncle and my lord your steed

'Lend your uncle and my lord your steed.'

(*Vair*, 795, Pearce 1990: 158, citing Herslund 1980)

<sup>14</sup> I have modified Pearce's terminology minimally here for ease of exposition.

This introduces a confounding factor into the French data with full DPs, making it impossible to tell whether ECM was really attested in Old French with these verbs. In fact, the virtual absence of ECM with pronominal causees suggests that it was perhaps not available.

Given the data presented by Martineau (1990) for Middle French from two texts from the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles* (late 15c), the most likely scenario is that it was not, at least not with *faire*. The data presented by Martineau are summarised in Table 8.

**Table 8 Case patterns with causative/permisive/perception verbs in the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles (Martineau 1990: 81, 83)**

	dative pronouns in intransitive contexts	dative pronouns in transitive contexts	Dative DPs in intransitive contexts	Dative DPs in transitive contexts
<i>faire</i>	2% (2/90)	96% (69/72)	0% (0/76)	97% (28/29)
<i>laisser</i>	3% (1/30)	67% (8/12)	0% (0/11)	40% (4/10)
<i>ouyr</i>	0% (0/9)	33% (1/3)	0% (0/24)	57% (12/21)
<i>voir</i>	0% (0/29)	0% (0/3)	0% (0/52)	8% (1/13)

Although numbers are again small, a clear contrast emerges in Middle French between *faire* on the one hand, which appears not to permit ECM and the other verbs, which display ECM with both clitics and full DPs, indicated by the lower percentages for datives in transitive contexts. There is no evidence in these data for the clitic ECM pattern, however. Rather ECM seems to be available with all four verbs regardless of the kind of causee. It would appear then, that these texts from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century are too late for us to observe the clitic ECM pattern.

Pearce reports only one example of ECM with *laisser* (from *Le roman de Rou de Wace*, 1160-70), but this is one of only ten transitive examples with *laisser* in her corpus. It is interesting to note that this example involves a clitic causee:

(55) *ne le voudrent lessier, [...] lor villes essillier et lor mesons ardoir,*  
 NEGhim.ACC wanted.3pl let, their towns ruin and their houses burn  
 ‘...did not want to let him ruin their towns and burn their houses.’

A lemma search of the Base de Français Médiéval 2019 using the forms cited in *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* (1330-1500) <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/> brings up 4471 hits for *laisser*:

(56) [lemma contains "laisser|laier|layer|laissier|lessier|laxare"]

To isolate tokens followed by an infinitive and including an overt causee preceding or following *laisser*, we can search for:

[cattex-pos="PROper|NOMcom|NOMpro"] [ ]\* [lemma contains  
 "laisser|laier|layer|laissier|lessier|laxare"] [ ]\* [cattex-pos="VERinf"] within 5  
 1155 hits in the BFM2019

[lemma contains "laisser|laier|layer|laissier|lessier|laxare"] [ ]\* [cattex-  
 pos="PROper|NOMcom|NOMpro"] [ ]\* [cattex-pos="VERinf"] within 5  
 490 hits in the BFM2019

The 1645 examples were then manually categorised to isolate instances where the infinitive is transitive and the causee 3<sup>rd</sup> person and sorted for type (DP/clitic) and case (ACC/DAT). The results for Old French are as we might expect, in that they mirror the results reported by

Pearce for *faire*. The Middle French results are, however, different, showing a potential skewing towards clitic ECM.

**Table 6: *laisser* in Old and Middle French texts from the Base de Français Médiéval 2019**

	Accusative			Dative		
	DP	clitic	%DP	DP	clitic	%DP
Old French	4	2	67%	3	15	17%
Middle French	1	4	20%	2	7	16%

In Old French, I have been able to identify four accusative DP causees in transitive contexts vs three dative DPs. This includes one minimal pair in the same text:

- (57) a. *Que nus laissum le mort Ensevelir le mort.*  
 that we let.1PL the dead bury the dead  
 ‘...that we let the dead bury the dead.’  
 [bestiaire, 1121-1135, p. 99, v. 2735]
- b. *E cist laissent al mort Ensevelir le mort*  
 and these let DAT.the dead bury the dead  
 ‘...and they let the dead bury the dead.’  
 [bestiaire, 1121-1135, p. 48, v. 1294]

Example (57b) lends support to the idea that (57a) is not a real example of ECM but rather an instance of covert marking of dative case on full DPs, as the meaning of these two examples seems identical.

By Middle French, genuine ECM has begun to develop with clitics, and I have only been able to identify one example with a full DP causee.

- (58) [...] *car l' empereor ne laissoit nul de ses chapitaines passer l' année*  
 for the emperor not let.imperf none of his captains pass the year  
 ‘For the emperor did not let any of his captains last more than one year...’  
 [moree, 1320-1324, p 240]

The majority of Middle French examples involve clitics, as one would expect if early Middle French passed through a clitic ECM phase.

- (59) [...] *pour quoy Abilant ne le laissa point faire la joust,*  
 for what Abilant not him let neg do the joust  
 ‘...why Abilant does not let him joust,’ [berinI, 1370, p. 339]
- (60) [...] *s'il ne veult, le laisse Faire la guerre,*  
 if he not wants him let make the war  
 ‘...and is he doesn't want to, let him go to war,’ [ressource, 1498, p. 132, v. 1061]

Although few transitive infinitives under *laisser* with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person causee are available in the *Base de Français Médiéval 2019*, there are more examples than in the corpus used by Pearce and comparable numbers to those in Martineau's late Middle French texts. The numbers suggest that French *laisser* most probably passed through a clitic ECM phase in early Middle

French before full ECM became available, in parallel with what can be observed in present day Italian and Catalan. Of course, clitic causees are more common than full DP causees with *laisser*, so this must also be considered.

## 5 Conclusions

In this article, I have argued for the existence of a clitic ECM stage in the development of ECM. This can be observed in several modern Romance varieties and it may also have existed in Middle French with the verb *laisser*, though the available data are limited. The explanation for this pattern, I have argued, can be found in phase theory, more specifically, the PIC. Because *laisser/faire* are light verbs, where they select a phasal complement, the PIC blocks accusative case assignment except in instances where a clitic raises into the matrix phase for independent reasons (i.e. cliticization). The full ECM pattern only becomes possible when the matrix verb *laisser/faire* is reanalysed as a lexical verb with concomitant semantic changes.

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