

# On the Relation Between Functional Architecture and Patterns of Change in Romance Object Clitic Syntax<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** Complement clitic pronouns (OCLs) in Romance are not all created equal: diachronic change in OCL syntax can at first affect some clitic forms, but not others. This paper examines two cases of variation and change in OCL syntax from two different Romance varieties. Specifically, I examine the change in progress in *OCL-infinitive* order in Fassano (Ladin) varieties, and the variation in the OCL-types which participate in a non-standard imperative construction in Spanish. I explore the idea that variation and change in these apparently unrelated cases is the result of the same underlying fact, namely, that the different OCL forms occupy distinct functional heads within the functional hierarchy of the clause, within the stretch of functional architecture I call the “clitic placement domain.” The *Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis* for clitic placement provides a framework in which to understand how syntactic variation and change affects the different OCLs in a predictable way.

## 1. Introduction

Complement clitic pronouns (OCLs) in Romance are not all created equal, in that gradual diachronic change in OCL syntax can at first affect some clitic forms, but not others. For example, a 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative OCL may start undergoing syntactic change before any other OCL-type does. Furthermore, this differential change is reflected in synchronic variation, such that closely related dialects can exhibit minimally distinct patterns of OCL syntax, according to OCL-type.

In this paper, I examine two cases of micro-parametric variation and differential change in OCL syntax from two different Romance varieties. Specifically, I look (a) at the change in progress in *OCL-infinitive* order in Fassano varieties (spoken in the Val di Fassa, in Trentino-Alto Adige; Rasom 2006), and (b) at the current variation regarding which OCL-types may participate in a non-standard imperative construction in Spanish (Harris & Halle 2005; Kayne 2009). I explore the idea that variation and change in these apparently unrelated cases is the result of the same underlying fact, namely, that the different OCL forms occupy distinct functional heads within the rigidly ordered functional hierarchy of the clause, within the stretch of functional architecture which I term the “clitic placement domain.” As we shall see, the *Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis* for clitic placement provides a framework in which to understand how syntactic variation and change over time affects the different OCLs in a predictable way.

The paper is organized as follows: in section 2, I present the facts of Fassano, and provide an explanation which exploits the idea that the different OCL forms occupy distinct syntactic positions, and which makes very clear predictions regarding the correlation between trajectories of syntactic change, and clitic ordering in constructions with more than one clitic. Then, in section 3, I look at non-standard imperatives in Spanish dialects (following Kayne 2009), and show that the apparently independent facts regarding cross-dialectal variation in OCL placement are surprisingly similar to the case of Fassano. Finally, in section 4, I conclude with some observations about variation and change in object clitic syntax in Piedmontese compound tense structures. I argue that a careful examination of the compound tenses in Piedmontese varieties reveals striking similarities to the apparently unrelated cases of subject infinitives in Fassano, and imperatives in Spanish.

## **2. The case of Fassano *infinitive+OCL* structures**

### *2.1 The Fassano facts of micro-parametric variation and diachronic change*

Let us begin with a description of some facts of variation and change in object clitic placement, in the Rhaeto-Romance group of varieties known as *Fassano*, spoken in the Val di Fassa, in the Trentino-Alto Adige region of Northern Italy. The following description is a summary of Rasom (2006). I include the paradigm of Fassano complement clitics (OCLs) in (1), as a point of reference for the ensuing discussion:

## (1) OCLs in Fassano:

Accusative:		Dative:	
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

## OTHER:

partitive: *ne*reflexive: *se*

As Rasom (2006) notes, in contrast with languages like Italian, the relative order of the OCL and an infinitival verb (which is either a “subject infinitive” or an object of a preposition) in Fassano has traditionally been **OCL > infinitive**.<sup>2</sup> This can be seen in (2), from the *Cazet* variety of Fassano, spoken in Campitello, which is in the Northern-most part of the valley (the relevant strings are underlined in the following examples):

*Cazet* (conservative)(2) a. *L' à beù l lat zenza l sciudèr.*

SCL has drunk the milk without OCL to.warm

“He drank the milk without warming **it**.”b. *I se à pissà de ve i manèr per posta, chi documents.*

SCL self has thought of OCL OCL to.send by post, those documents

“Those documents, they thought of sending **them** to **you** by mail.”

There is, however, evidence for a change in progress, whereby the order **infinitive > OCL** in certain Fassano varieties is beginning to emerge. This is exemplified in (3), from the *Brach* variety, spoken in Pera and Soraga (which are in the Central and Southern part of the valley):

*Brach* (innovative)(3) *L' é miec bever-lo subito chel caffè.* *lo*, 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative

SCL is better to.drink-OCL immediately that coffee

“That coffee, it’s better to drink **it** immediately.”

There are two facts which suggest that the innovative word order seen in (3) represents a change in progress: first, as Rasom notes, this word order is found more frequently among younger speakers than it is among older speakers; second, the change is occurring in different Fassano varieties at different rates, such that “Northern” varieties are more conservative than

“Southern” varieties (whereby e.g. the *Cazet* variety spoken in Campitello and Mazzin is more conservative than the *Brach* variety spoken further south in Pera and in Soraga).

Of most interest to us here, however, is Rasom’s observation that this change in progress is not affecting all OCLs at once. Specifically, the OCLs most likely to be enclitic on the infinitive are the 3<sup>rd</sup> acc. forms (as in (3)); the next most likely to participate in this change are the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> person accusative forms, which is illustrated in (4):

*Brach*

- (4) *Asto vedù a scutar-me me!* ✓ *me*, 1<sup>st</sup> acc.  
 you-have seen to to.listen-OCL me  
 “Have you seen (what happens) listening to **me**?”

In contrast, obliques and clusters occur very rarely in this “new” configuration; this is illustrated in (5):

*Brach*

- (5) a. *No se pel te domanar nia!* \*?dative  
 neg self can OCL to.ask nothing  
 “**You** can’t be asked anything!”
- a.' \*?*No se pel domanar-te nia!*  
 neg self can to.ask- OCL nothing
- b. *Recordete de ge telefonar per temp.* \*?dative  
 remember-you to OCL to.phone for time  
 “Remember to telephone **him** in time.”
- b.' \*?*Recordete de telefonar-ge per temp.*  
 remember-you to to.phone-OCL for time

Thus, if we compare (5b) with (5b'), for example, we see that speakers are more likely to judge the order *infinitive* > *OCL* to be infelicitous with a dative clitic; as I understand Rasom’s (2006) description, however, this order is not completely rejected by all speakers, so it is not impossible in the most innovative of contexts. This contrasts with the final class of OCLs, namely, reflexives: as Rasom notes, reflexive OCLs are never enclitic — not even in the most innovative of varieties. As the example in (6) shows, they always appear in the conservative *OCL* > *infinitive* order:

*Brach*

(6) *Dant de marena se cogn se lavar le man.* \*reflexive  
 before of lunch is necessary OCL to.wash the hands  
 “Before lunch you have to wash your hands.”

(6') \**Dant de marena se cogn lavar-se le man.*  
 before of lunch is necessary to.wash-OCL the hands

To summarize: in the change in progress in the Fassano varieties, the first OCL to change from proclisis to enclisis is the accusative (*lo, la, li, les*); the next most likely is the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person accusative (*mi*); the next most likely are datives (*ge*), and the one OCL which has yet to become enclitic in Fassano is the reflexive (*se*). This hierarchy is laid out in (7):

Hierarchy of change in progress in Fassano varieties:

- (7)
1. 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative (*lo, la, li, les*)
  2. 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> accusative (*me, te*)
  3. dative (*ge*)
  4. reflexive (*se*)

## 2.2 Accounting for the OCL hierarchy in Fassano variation and change

Given the above description of the facts, two questions arise: first, what underlies this pattern of variation and change in OCL syntax in Fassano? The second (related) question is, is the Fassano phenomenon relatable to other cases of variation and change in Romance OCL syntax? In this section, I pursue the idea that the key to understanding the pattern of change in Fassano finds itself (a) in Rasom’s own characterization of the phenomenon, and (b) in Kayne’s (2009) analysis of an apparently unrelated phenomenon in some Spanish dialects. Let us begin with the first question.

Rasom characterizes the syntactic change in Fassano in terms of verb movement; specifically, she takes the move towards enclisis of the OCL to reflect infinitival verb movement past the OCL.<sup>3</sup> This idea is sketched in (8):

(8)

We can gather this from the following statement, which she makes in her description of the change in progress (Rasom 2006:112): “I primi pronomi ad essere scavalcati dal verbo infinito sono i pronomi clitici accusativi di terza persona (singolare e plurale)” (“The first

pronouns to be jumped over by the infinitive are the third person singular and plural accusative pronominal clitics”). But how does this idea help us make sense of the complex array of facts? The idea that the verb moves past some OCLs but not others suggests the following: the different clitic forms occupy distinct functional heads within the rigidly ordered functional hierarchy of the clause, within the stretch of functional architecture which we could term the “clitic placement domain.” This hypothesis, which I will call the *Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis* here (and which has been independently argued for by many authors, such as Manzini & Savoia 2005), gives rise to a situation in which the morphological forms themselves are arranged hierarchically within the syntactic structure.

If we adopt this hypothesis, the facts of variation and change in Fassano specifically suggest the hierarchy in (9):

(9) reflexive (*se*) > dative (*ge*) > 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> accusative (*me, te*) > 3<sup>rd</sup> acc. (*lo, la, li, les*)

This is essentially the “reverse” of the hierarchy in (7), with 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative OCLs in the lowest position within the clitic placement domain, and the reflexive clitic in the highest position. The syntactic order in (9) follows from the idea that verb movement is upward, and that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative forms are the “first to be jumped over” by the verb (Rasom 2006:112). And since reflexives never exhibit enclisis in this context, we must conclude that reflexive OCLs occupy the highest head — a head which the verb never reaches. This successive series of potential (or impossible) movements of the infinitival verb, as they are realized (or not) in the Fassano varieties, is illustrated in (10):

(10) *se* > *ge* > *me/te* > 3<sup>rd</sup> acc. (*lo, la, li, les*) **VERB<sub>inf</sub>**

\*      \*?      ✓      ✓

This illustration reiterates the syntactic hierarchy in (9), but also shows the licitness (or lack thereof) of the successive movements of the verb upward. The two checkmarks on the right indicate the movements past (a) the lowest set of OCL forms (the 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative OCLs), and (b) the second lowest set of OCL forms (*me* and *te*), two moves which are permitted in the most innovative varieties. The \*? in (10) indicates that the third move upward is less licit, while the \* indicates that no Fassano grammar has yet allowed for the fourth step upward.

A few words are in order before I summarize and turn to the next section. First, note that if the verb moves as a head, the idea that the Fassano infinitival verb can move successive cyclically through the clitic placement domain (as in (10)) suggests that there is a different head position between each of the head positions occupied by the different OCL forms. In other words, for every FP harboring an OCL, there should be another FP immediately dominating it, which can host the verb. Needless to say, this represents a proliferation of functional projections within the clitic placement domain which I do not otherwise have evidence for. I will therefore have to leave this question open.<sup>4</sup> Second, the above analysis predicts that “split clitics” are possible in the innovative Fassano varieties. In other words, in a structure where both dative *me* and accusative *lo* (for example) are present, we predict that the first single-step movement of the verb in diachronic change should give rise to the word order  $me > verb_{inf} > lo$ . Problematically, this prediction does not seem to be borne out. If the Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis is on the right track, then, we must find some independent reason for why split clitic situations of the kind just illustrated are not possible. Again, I leave this matter open.

Despite the problems noted above, the present proposal has strong theoretical appeal, in that it allows us to make precise predictions which entail a correlation between the variation and change in progress seen with Fassano OCL syntax on the one hand, and an independently established OCL hierarchy on the other; the theory thus finds its strength in its falsifiability. Regarding these predictions, the question thus arises as to whether there is independent evidence for the hierarchy hypothesized in (9). That is, if this hierarchy — which was suggested by the variation and change facts described in section 2.1 — is indeed correct, then we expect to find only certain kinds of clitic orderings in clitic cluster structures (i.e., structures in which there is more than one clitic). For example, third person dative *ge* should precede 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person accusative *me/te* when both are present in the same structure. While a full paradigm of the clustering possibilities has yet to be established for Fassano, there are two observations we can make which serve as preliminary evidence that the ordering facts in clusters will independently yield the hierarchy established in (9): first, we have already seen in example (2b) that the dative (*ve* ‘you.pl’) precedes the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural accusative clitic *i*, which is consistent with our expectations. Second, as we shall see immediately below in section 3, there is a striking similarity between the Fassano hierarchy established in (9), and the hierarchy independently established in the literature for Spanish.

### 3. Evidence of OCL hierarchy: support from variation in Spanish dialect OCL syntax

Although a full paradigm of the clustering possibilities has yet to be established for Fassano, it is encouraging to note that the hypothesis for Fassano is readily relatable to Kayne's (2009) analysis of an apparently independent phenomenon found in some Spanish dialects, which was described and analyzed in detail by Harris & Halle (2005), within a *Distributed Morphology* framework. In this section I will summarize the basic facts, and Kayne's analysis of them, as I believe that the similarity between these two apparently independent cases (Fassano and Spanish) is striking enough to serve as support for the Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis.

Let us begin with a paradigm of complement clitics in Spanish, again as a point of reference for the ensuing discussion:

(11) OCLs in Spanish:

	Accusative:		Dative:	
	sing.	pl.	sing.	pl.
1	<i>me</i>	<i>nos</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>nos</i>
2	<i>te</i>	—	<i>te</i>	—
3	<i>lo (m) / la (f)</i>	<i>los (m) / las (f)</i>	<i>le (m/f)</i>	<i>les (m/f)</i>

OTHER:

reflexive: *se*

*leísta* dialects: *le / les* for acc. masc. (+human)

*laísta* dialects *la / las* for dat. fem.

As discussed extensively in Harris & Halle (2005) and Kayne (2009), there are many Spanish dialects (represented both in Spain and Latin America, as well as by Judeo-Spanish) which exhibit a non-standard behavior of the 3<sup>rd</sup> personal plural inflectional suffix *-n* in imperatives which are formally 3<sup>rd</sup> plural. To understand the non-standard form, let us first consider a formally 3<sup>rd</sup> plural imperative in the Standard variety:

Standard Spanish:

(12) *Hagan el trabajo!*

do. **3pl** the work

“(you pl.) Do the work!”

While the form in (12) is interpreted as a second person (plural), the verb is analyzable as a 3<sup>rd</sup> plural form, with the inflectional suffix *-n* taken to be the morpheme instantiating the features 3<sup>rd</sup> person and plural. Expectedly (for the Standard variety), when a complement

clitic is present in an imperative of this type, it follows the *-n* ending, as follows:

Standard Spanish:

(13) *Sirvan-se!*

serve.3pl-OCL

“(you pl.) Serve **yourselves!**”

It turns out, however, that in many Spanish dialects, the OCL can precede the inflectional suffix *-n* in this type of imperative, as follows:

Spanish dialects:

(14) *Sirva-se-n!*

serve-OCL-3pl

“(you pl.) Serve **yourselves!**”

Let us put aside here the numerous additional interesting facts and variations on the theme seen in (14) (see Harris & Halle 2005 for complete discussion), and turn directly to the fact that is of prime importance to Kayne (2009): of all the varieties which allow this non-standard placement of the OCL to the left of the inflectional suffix *-n*, most only allow the phenomenon with the reflexive OCL *se*. Less common are the speakers/varieties that allow this construction also with 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> person clitics, and less common still are those which allow it also with datives; finally, it is most rare with 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative clitics, as in (15b):

(15)a. *Vendan-lo!*

sell.3pl-OCL

“(you pl.) Sell **it!**”

b. *Venda-lo-n!*

sell-OCL-3pl

“(you pl.) Sell **it!**”

Importantly, then, there is an entailment, whereby if a variety allows this construction with a 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative clitic, as in (15b), then it necessarily allows it with all the other OCL forms. Likewise, if a variety allows the construction with dative forms, it does not necessarily follow that 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative OCLs are licit, but it does necessarily follow that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> and reflexive forms are licit. This hierarchy of entailments give rise to four different possible grammars, as in (16) (modified from Harris & Halle 2005:210, ex. (25)):

Spanish:

- |      |    |   |                  |
|------|----|---|------------------|
| (16) | a. | se                                      | Grammar A        |
|      | b. | se, me                                  | Grammar B        |
|      | c. | se, me, le                              | Grammar C        |
|      | d. | <b>se, me, le<sub>dat</sub>, lo, la</b> | <b>Grammar D</b> |

There are two observations we can make about (16): first, note that the sequence of OCLs in Grammar D is highly reminiscent of the Fassano OCL hierarchy in (9), repeated here as (17):<sup>5</sup>

(17) Fassano:

$se > ge_{dat} > me > lo / la$

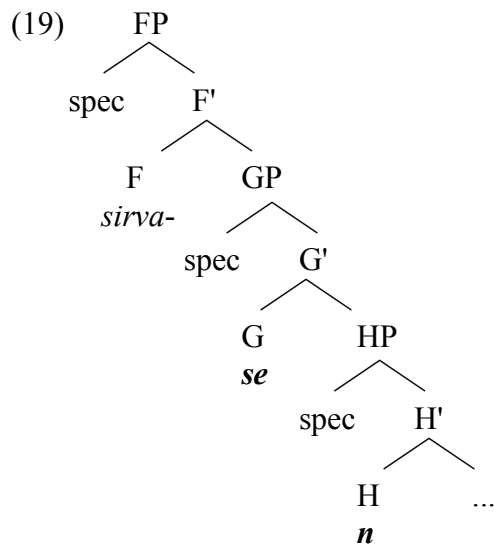
Second, and just as importantly, the hierarchy in Grammar D in (16) is exactly that which is independently established by examining clitic ordering in Spanish (cf. Perlmutter 1971). In fact, this second observation suggests to Kayne (2009) a syntactic analysis of the phenomenon seen in (14) and (15b), which involves a hypothesis that is exactly along the lines of the one I put forth in section 2.2 for Fassano, whereby the *Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis* is claimed to be at play. Specifically, following independent observations made by Zanuttini (1997) regarding the relative ordering of OCLs and pre-verbal negative markers in some Northern Italian dialects, Kayne proposes that the reflexive OCL occupies the highest head within the rigidly ordered functional hierarchy of the clitic placement domain, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> acc. OCL occupying the lowest. He thus interprets Grammar D in (16) to reveal an underlying syntactic hierarchy in Spanish, as follows:

(18) Spanish (cf. (17)):

$se > me > le_{dat} > lo / la$

Kayne then exploits this hypothesized hierarchy to account for why reflexive *se* would be the OCL most likely to appear in the non-standard imperative construction in Spanish.

Specifically, he further assumes (a) that the 3<sup>rd</sup> plural suffix *-n* resides in an independent syntactic head, and (b) that the OCL *se* is the most likely to appear to its left because it is the highest in the OCL hierarchy. The analysis is depicted in (19):



I refer the reader to Kayne (2009) for further details of his analysis of the Spanish imperative, and move on to a summary of the main point of this section.

We have seen that a completely independent fact of cross-dialectal variation in complement clitic syntax in Spanish varieties reveals a hierarchy of behavior among the different morphological forms which looks strikingly like the hierarchy of behavior among the different morphological forms in the Fassano varieties. Given that the variation and change in the two different Romance families (Spanish and Fassano) clearly cannot be attributed to any contact between the two communities, and given that the variation and change in the two families implicates two completely different construction types, we must conclude the following: the similarity in behavior of the two OCL hierarchies in the realm of variation and change is the reflex of a underlying universal fact about grammar. Specifically, I propose that these two apparently independent phenomena regarding micro-parametric variation and change from Fassano and Spanish are arguably the consequence of a single property of the syntax, namely, the rigid functional hierarchy of the clitic placement domain (*Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis*).

#### ***4. Application to other cases, and conclusions***

As part of my concluding remarks, I would like to explore an idea for future research, which essentially takes the treatment of variation and change in Fassano and Spanish OCL syntax, as laid out in sections 2 and 3 above, as a potential clue on how to understand the historical change in OCL syntax in other Romance varieties. In this regard, I believe it is worth

considering the facts of Piedmontese.

#### 4.1 Historical Piedmontese and the change in OCL syntax in the compound tenses

Historical Piedmontese was like modern day Fassano and the Spanish, in that it too underwent a change in the syntax of its OCLs (and as we shall see below, there is evidence that the change is still in progress, for some Piedmontese varieties). In contrast with Fassano and Spanish, however, the syntactic change in Piedmontese regarded complex predicate structures, i.e., modal + infinitive constructions and compound tenses (auxiliary + past participle). For the purposes of exposition, I will just discuss the case of compound tenses.

As Parry (1991; 1995) shows, the textual evidence indicates that Piedmontese varieties, like other Romance varieties, started out with *proclisis* of the OCL on the inflected verb in compound tense constructions; thus, in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, the syntax of OCLs in Piedmontese, was like that of Italian; consider in this regard an example taken from *La sentenza di Rivalta* (1446), as quoted in Parry (1991) (taken from Brero & Gandolfo 1967):

Old Piedmontese:

(20) ...**ma** apresenta... (= Italian *mi ha presentato*)  
       OCL has.presented  
       ‘He has presented **me**.’

However, a process of change from *proclisis* on the auxiliary verb to *enclisis* on the past participle began to appear in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. This change first involved what we could in hindsight call an “intermediate” stage of change, whereby the OCL appeared both *proclitic* on the inflected verb and *enclitic* on the non-finite verb, in the same structure. This can be seen in the following examples, from *Il Conte Pioletto* (1784), as quoted in Parry (1991) (taken from Tana 1784):

(21) **L** ’eu smentia-**lo**. (= Italian *l’ho dimenticato*)  
       OCL I-have forgotten-OCL  
       ‘I have forgotten **it**.’

This phenomenon, which I will call here *clitic repetition*, is still exhibited in modern day Cairese (the dialect of Cairo Montenotte), as noted by Parry (1995; 2005), and I will comment on this fact below.

Generally speaking, Piedmontese varieties ended up with *enclisis* of the OCL on the

participle in compound tense constructions (again, with the exception of Cairese, which still exhibits clitic repetition). This “final” stage can be seen in the examples from Torinese and the dialect of Biella in (22), taken from the *Atlante Sintattico Italia* (ASIt):

Torinese (example from the ASIt)

- (22)a. L' hai vist-**la** jer.  
 SCL you-have seen-OCL yesterday  
 ‘You saw **her** yesterday’

Dialect of Biella (example from the ASIt):

- b. Antè ca l' à büta-**lu**?  
 where that SCL has put-OCL  
 ‘Where did he put **it**?’

To summarize: Piedmontese historically started out like Italian, in that the OCL was to the left of the auxiliary verb in complex predicate structures, and as far as the written texts go, it seemed to be just like Italian until about the 15<sup>th</sup> Century; by around the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, however, most Piedmontese dialects completed the change in object clitic syntax, such that we now have strict enclisis on the non-finite verb.

A question which arises (especially given what we saw for Fassano and Spanish in sections 2 and 3) is the following: did this change hit all OCLs at once, or did it happen gradually, one clitic-type at a time? There seem to be conflicting positions in the literature regarding this question. For example, Meyer-Lübke (1900) and Albin (1984) suggest that the change began with the 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative OCLs; however, Tuttle (1992) argues against their reasons for this hypothesis, but does not offer any viable alternative hypothesis, nor does he particularly argue against the claim that the 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative OCLs were the first to undergo the change. Most importantly, however, Parry notes (personal communication) that unfortunately, the textual evidence seems to be “insufficient to prove conclusively if the process started with one person and then another.” In fact, as Parry (1991) notes, the first Piedmontese text to reveal a change in OCL syntax was the *Ordinamenti dei Disciplinati e dei Raccomandati di Dronero* (end of 14<sup>th</sup>, beginning of 15<sup>th</sup> Century). And as can be seen by the examples in (23), already in this text we see various OCL types with enclitic syntax in modal+infinitive constructions (*se, gli, lo*) (which for our purposes is equivalent to the compound tenses):

*Ordinamenti dei Disciplinati e dei Raccomandati di Dronero* (Parry 1991)

- (23)a. e se no volesa confesar-**se** *se*

and if neg wanted to.confess-**SE**

b. e lo prior debia acordar-**gli** da piaton *gli*  
and the prior must concede-**GLI** in secret

c. gli fregl deben aver misericordia e seccorer-**lo** *lo*  
the brothers must to.have compassion and to.help-**LO**

Thus, as can be seen in these examples, by the time the syntactic change actually starts to make its appearance in text, it already seems to affect clitic forms of different types. In fact, given the hierarchies seen for Fassano and Spanish in (17) and (18), the Piedmontese OCLs  $se_{\text{refl}}$ ,  $gli_{\text{dat}}$ , and  $lo_{\text{acc}}$  are very different clitic types indeed. And although it is likely that this syntactic change began to take place long before it started appearing in written texts, the fact remains that the written text itself cannot give us clear clues as to whether only certain clitic forms were affected at the genesis of the change, but not others. Parry's observation thus confirms that, regardless of the different hypotheses in the literature which try to explain the actuation of the change (namely, what could have caused it, and which OCLs were affected first), there is precious little in the textual evidence to confirm or disconfirm any of the hypotheses regarding differential behavior in clitic types.

#### 4.2 Evidence for reflexive *se* as last OCL to undergo change?

Given this state of affairs, do we throw in the towel, declaring it impossible to know if and how this change in Piedmontese affected the object clitics differentially? I believe we should not give up just yet, as we might actually have a piece of evidence, which at least suggests something about the reflexive clitic *se*: specifically, there may be evidence that the reflexive clitic was the last of the object clitics to undergo the change from proclitic on the auxiliary, to enclitic on the non-finite verb. And given that the reflexive clitic was also the stand-out clitic in Fassano and in non-standard Spanish, as we saw earlier, it is worth looking into the Piedmontese situation a bit further.

Importantly, Parry (1995:138) notes that although modern Torinese exhibits a virtually complete change to OCL enclisis (in contrast with Cairese, which still exhibits robust clitic repetition, as in (21)), a “residual instance” of the clitic repetition construction can be found in modern Torinese with the 3<sup>rd</sup> person reflexive form *se* “...(in all its various meanings — less frequently in its reflexive than in its passive, middle and impersonal senses).” This can be seen in (24):

Modern Torinese (Parry 1995:138)

- (24)...a s' é trova-**sse** ant na leja.  
 ...SCL **SE** is found-**SE** in an avenue  
 'He found **himself** in an avenue.'

I believe that this serves as evidence that *se* was the last OCL to undergo the syntactic change from proclitic to enclitic, for the following reason: recall the observation that the clitic repetition construction served as an intermediate stage in the syntactic change from pure proclisis on the auxiliary verb, to pure enclisis on the non-finite verb. If this is the case, then the fact that *se* still participates in clitic repetition in a Piedmontese dialect (Torinese) which otherwise solely exhibits enclisis of the OCL indicates that *se* is “lagging behind” the other OCLs. That is, *se* it is still in an earlier stage of change from proclitic to enclitic. We could, in turn, take this to mean that *se*, of all the OCLs, was the last to begin the change to enclisis in the complex predicate constructions.

If we put this conclusion together with Meyer-Lübke's suggestion that *lo* was the first OCL to be affected by the change in Piedmontese, then what we have is the following hierarchy of change in Piedmontese:

Hierarchy of change in Piedmontese OCL syntax in compound tenses:

- (25) 1. *lo*  
 2. *se*

As the reader might realize, this order of change in (25) in fact represents the first and last items on the list of change for Fassano, seen in (7), and repeated here:

Hierarchy of change in progress in Fassano varieties:

- (7) 1. 3<sup>rd</sup> accusative (*lo, la, li, les*)  
 2. 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> accusative (*me, te*)  
 3. dative (*ge*)  
 4. reflexive (*se*)

That is, in both Fassano and historical Piedmontese, the first OCL to undergo change is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person accusative, and the last is the reflexive. This may turn out not to be a coincidence. In fact, I would argue that this identity suggests that the historical change in Piedmontese OCL syntax is also bound to find an explanation in the Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis. Note furthermore that if the order in (25) represents a hierarchical organization in the syntactic structure whereby *se* is higher than *lo*, then we also make the clear prediction that

this is the order of OCLs in Piedmontese clitic clusters. Given that the prediction is borne out, I conclude that the hierarchy of change seen in (25) reflects a syntactic ordering as in (26) (much as the hierarchy of change seen in (7) suggested the syntactic ordering in (9) for Fassano):

Piedmontese functional hierarchy in the clitic placement domain:

(26) se > lo

What is most interesting about this convergence between Fassano, Spanish, and Piedmontese is that we are dealing with three relatively unrelated Romance varieties, and three unrelated cases of syntactic change (i.e., subject infinitives vs. imperatives vs. compound tenses). This in itself further supports the hypothesis that the variation and differential change seen in OCL syntax in these three cases has as its basis a fundamental property of the grammar.

#### *4.3 Conclusions*

The data from Fassano varieties and the Spanish dialects show that when a change in OCL syntax takes place, it generally does not strike all OCLs at once, but rather, affects them type by type. This in and of itself suggests that the change in Piedmontese syntax may likely have obtained in the same way (OCL-type by OCL-type), so for Piedmontese, it becomes a question of figuring out a way to reveal what the historical pattern might have been.

In this regard, one suggestion for revealing the pattern of change in Piedmontese could be to examine the synchronic situation in a variety like Cairese (e.g., Parry 2005). This variety currently exhibits various stages of change, where (a) proclisis, (b) clitic repetition, and (c) enclisis are all possible (of course, depending on sociolinguistic factors). A study of the relevant corpus could potentially reveal that certain OCLs occur in the clitic repetition configuration far more frequently than others. This in turn could reveal which OCLs are at an earlier stage of change, and which are at a later stage of change (whereby the OCL types which are at a more advanced stage would be predicted to occur more frequently in purely enclitic configurations, with no repetition). This could serve as a window onto what happened with other Piedmontese varieties, which have (virtually) completed the change to pure enclisis in complex predicate structures.

Whether or not a study of this kind will be possible remains open. In any case, I hope to

have shown that the *Functional Hierarchy Hypothesis* allows us to make strong predictions regarding the trajectories of change in OCL syntax across Romance in general.

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**ENDNOTES:**

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<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgments to be inserted here.

<sup>2</sup> This word order does not obtain with infinitives that form the part of a complex predicate structure (i.e., modal+infinitive structures).

<sup>3</sup> Rasom (2006:112) states, in describing which are the first OCLs to become enclitic on the infinitival verb: “I primi pronomi ad essere scavalcati dal verbo infinito sono i pronomi clitici accusativi di terza persona (singolare e plurale).” (“The first pronouns to be jumped over by the infinitive are the third person singular and plural accusative pronominal clitics.”)

<sup>4</sup> A possible alternative analysis is to take verb movement to be phrasal movement, whereby the mobile XP dominating the verb (and pied-piping it along) moves to the specifier positions of the FPs projected by the heads hosting the OCLs.

<sup>5</sup> The one (obvious) difference between the Spanish hierarchy and the Fassano hierarchy is that in the former, the 1<sup>st</sup> person clitic precedes the dative (*le*), while in the latter, the 1<sup>st</sup> person clitic follows the dative (*ge*). I put this difference aside for now.