

# High and Higher Applicatives: The Case of French Non-Core Datives

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper we show that the superficially similar constructions in (1), involving non-core dative clitics, are syntactically and semantically distinct in French.

- (1) a. Elle **se** peint son portail.  
She 3.SE paints her gate  
'She paints the gate for herself.'  
b. Elle **se** fume un cigare.  
She 3.SE smokes a cigar  
'She smokes her a cigar.'

While (1a) conveys that the painter is also the beneficiary of the event of painting, (1b) cannot be so interpreted, as it does not involve a third distinct participant, which happens to be co-referential with the subject DP.<sup>1</sup> The analysis of this novel data will enable us to provide motivation for the view that applicative heads establish a relation between an individual and the event, and that applicative heads are a grammatical means to introduce affectedness into the structure.

The paper is structured as follows. In section 2 we present French non-core datives. In section 3 we provide a description of a construction involving a fairly poorly documented non-core dative, which we term Coreferential Dative. We also show how it differs from Benefactive datives. The analysis of the two non-core dative constructions is presented in section 4.

## 2. French non-core datives

French non-core datives can be introduced with a great variety of transitive agentive verbs and with some unergative and unaccusative verbs. These are benefactive datives (2) and coreferential datives, known also as personal datives (Horn 2008), where the reflexive clitic adds a pragmatic nuance of the agent's pleasure (3).

- (2) a. Jeanne **lui** a marché sur les pieds.  
Jeanne 3S.DAT walked on the feet  
'Jeanne stepped on her/his feet (affecting her/him).'

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<sup>1</sup> Similar constructions were noted to exist in Appalachian English (Conroy 2007); in this case, the constructions display a morphological distinction:

- (i) a. She buys **herself** a new car. *Appalachian English*  
b. She smoked **her** a cigar.

Throughout the paper, we will use these pronouns in the translation of the French examples into English.

- b. La tête **lui** tourne.  
The head 3S.DAT turns  
'His head spins (on her/him).'
- c. Les joues **lui** pendent jusqu'aux genoux.  
The cheeks 3S.DAT hang till knees  
'His cheeks are hanging up to his knees (on her/him).'
- d. Jeanne **lui** a garé sa voiture.  
Jeanne 3S.DAT park 3.POSS car  
'Jeanne parked her/his car for her/him.'
- (3) a. Jeanne **s'** est couru trente km.  
Jeanne 3.SE ran thirty km  
'Jeanne ran her thirty km.'
- b. Jeanne **s'** est fumé un cigare.  
Jeanne 3.SE smoked a cigar  
'Jeanne smoked her a cigar.'

Our aim in what follows is to show that examples (1a) and (1b) belong respectively to the groups of examples in (2) and (3), and that these can be distinguished according to the place of attachment of the applicative in the clausal skeleton. We contend that a low source can be attributed solely to core goals in French (cf. Folli & Harley 2006). Non-core datives are introduced higher, by an applicative head that attaches at different levels of the extended VP-TP skeleton. Indeed, French instantiates a clear structural difference between core goal datives and non-core benefactive datives in terms of the c-command relations holding between theme and dative arguments.

- (4) a. La maîtresse a rendu son cartable à chaque élève. CORE DATIVES  
The teacher gave-back his schoolbag to every pupil
- b. La maîtresse a rendu chaque cartable à son propriétaire.  
The teacher gave-back every schoolbag to its owner
- (5) a. Marie a peint sa maison à chaque habitant du village. NON-CORE DATIVES  
Mary painted his house to every inhabitant of the village
- b. \*Marie a peint chaque maison à son locataire.  
Mary painted every house to its tenant

The contrast in (5a-b) shows that the non-core argument asymmetrically c-commands the theme only in benefactive constructions, whereas the core dative and the theme in (4) are not hierarchically ordered.

### 3. Types of non-core datives

In the present section we show that non-core datives are not a homogenous class and at least two types should be syntactically and interpretatively distinguished.<sup>2</sup> We start by describing Coreferential Dative Constructions of the type exemplified in (3) above, and then we show that these are to be kept distinct from benefactive datives.

#### 3.1. Coreferential Dative Constructions

In Coreferential Dative Constructions (CDCs) the dative clitic refers to the grammatical subject.

<sup>2</sup> A third type of non-core dative constructions would be ethical datives (cf. Jouitteau & Rezac 2007).

- (6) a. Jeanne **s'** est couru trente km. b. Je **me** suis maté un film avec ma copine.  
 Jeanne 3.SE ran thirty km I 1.SE watched a movie with my girlfriend  
 'Jeanne ran her thirty km.' 'I watched me a movie with my girlfriend.'

CDCs are equivalent in their truth conditions to the sentences in (7), without the reflexive SE:

- (7) a. Jeanne a couru trente km. b. J' ai maté un film avec ma copine.  
 Jeanne ran thirty km I watched a movie with my girlfriend  
 'Jeanne ran thirty km.' 'I watched a movie with my girlfriend.'

The interpretative difference between sentences in (6) and in (7) is pragmatic. CDCs express how the subject, primarily agentive, experiences the event in question, implicating that the subject experiences enjoyment and easy-goingness. This effect depends on the volitional involvement of the agent in the event. The following examples contrast on the basis of whether a volitional action was carried out by the agent:

- (8) a. Je me suis cassé quelques bagnoles de riches (quel kif!)  
 I 1.SE broke a few cars of rich people (what fun)  
 'I went and smashed me some rich folks' cars (that was fun!)'  
 b. Je me suis cassé quelques bagnoles, sans le faire exprès... (quel kif!)  
 I 1.SE broke a few cars, unintentionally (#what fun)  
 'I went and smashed me some cars, unintentionally (#that was fun!)'

(8a) is appropriate if uttered by a vandal, acting volitionally, contrary to (8b) where the CD is inappropriate if the breaking is carried out unwillingly. The latter sentence is felicitous if the non-core dative is understood as a malefactive, which has nothing to do with whether the underlying event was carried out volitionally or not.

### 3.2. Coreferential datives vs. benefactive datives

The description of Coreferential Dative Constructions (CDCs) in the previous section does not specify whether and how they differ from Benefactive Dative Constructions (BDCs). Let us consider again example (1) presented at the outset and repeated in (9), where CDCs and constructions containing benefactive reflexive datives are homophonous. We proceed immediately to show how they differ.

- (9) a. Elle **se** peint son portail b. Elle **se** fume un cigare.  
 She 3.SE paint her gate She 3.SE smokes a cigar  
 'She paints the gate for herself.' 'She smokes her a cigar.'

First, the reflexive dative clitic in (9a) can alternate with a non-reflexive clitic as shown in (10a) and is interpreted as the beneficiary. However, the reflexive SE in (9b) cannot alternate in the same fashion, as shown in (10b).

- (10) a. Elle **s'** / **m'** / **lui** peint son portail.  
 She 3.SE / 1S.DAT / 3S.DAT paint her gate  
 'She painted the gate for herself/me/him.'  
 b. Elle **se** / \***me** / \***lui** fume un cigare.  
 She 3.SE / 1S.DAT / 3S.DAT smokes a cigar  
 'She smokes/is smoking her a cigar.'

This shows that BDs and CDs differ distributionally. All agentive verbs can be “enriched” by the CD given the right context. But only a subclass of these verbs can be combined with a non-core benefactive dative clitic. The subclass of verbs that may occur in CDCs but not with benefactive arguments include verbs of ingestion and unergative verbs which may optionally take a (cognate) direct object.

- (11) a. Je me / \*lui sirote un petit cocktail.  
 I 1.SE/3S.DAT sip a small cocktail  
 'I sip me a cocktail.'
- b. Jeanne se / \*lui court trente km.  
 Jeanne 3.SE/3S.DAT runs thirty km  
 'Jeanne runs her thirty km.'
- c. Les enfants se sont / \*leur ont maté un DVD.  
 The children 3.SE BE.AUX / 3P.DAT HAVE.AUX watched a DVD  
 'The children watched them a DVD.'

Second, adding a CD to a simple clause does not induce truth-condition modifications. Thus, *Jean s'est fumé un narguilé* and *Jean a fumé un narguilé* 'Jean smoked (him) a narghile' are semantically identical. This fact already suggests that the SE clitic does not introduce another participant in the smoking event. (12) is an attested example further illustrating this point. Here, the clitic *me* cannot be understood to be the beneficiary, or the recipient of the selling event; only two event participants are made explicit in this example.

- (12) Salut, j'ai besoin d'argent, du coup je me vends quelques trucs. (Google)  
 Hi I have need of money so I 1.SE sell some stuff  
 'Hi, I am in need of money, so I sell me some stuff.'

On the other hand, benefactive reflexives *do* change the meaning of the sentence. (13) has three event participants: (i) some shirts, (ii) a beneficiary (*me*) and (iii) the agent (*je*).

- (13) Ce matin, je me suis repassé quelques chemises.  
 This morning, I 1S.DAT ironed some shirts  
 'This morning, I ironed some shirts for myself.'

Two of the participants happen to be coreferential in the sentence. This coreference is by no means obligatory, as shown in (14) where the three participants are referentially disjoint.

- (14) Ce matin, Paul m' a repassé quelques chemises  
 This morning, Paul 1S.DAT ironed some shirts  
 'This morning, Paul ironed me some shirts.'

In fact, the sentence (13) is ambiguous. In addition to the reading just discussed, it has the CD reading and can be interpreted as follows: *I just ironed some shirts, not necessarily for my benefit*:

- (15) Ce matin, je me suis repassé quelques chemises (pour me calmer).  
 This morning, I 1.SE ironed some shirts (to me calm-down)  
 'This morning, I ironed some shirts (just to calm down).'

Under the benefactive reading, the subject (*I*) is the beneficiary, whereas under the CD reading, there is no specified beneficiary, the activity is carried out with a pragmatic implication having to do with the grammatical subject's/speaker's attitude towards the described event.

Because CDs and benefactives are different, they can co-occur in the same sentence. However, the benefactive argument cannot appear as a clitic in such cases, due to the general ban against double dative

clitics in French. When a sentence contains both a referentially disjoint PP benefactee and SE, the latter can only be interpreted as CD.

- (16) Ce matin, j'ai juste à **me** repasser quelques chemises  
 This morning, I have only to 1.SE iron several shirts  
**à toute ma petite famille.**  
 to all my small family  
 'This morning, I only have to iron some shirts for my small family.'

In this example, the reflexive dative clitic cannot be interpreted as the beneficiary, since it is already expressed by a PP. The possibility to cumulate both CD and beneficiary further indicates that reflexive dative clitics as in (1)/(9) are morphologically identical but syntactically distinct.

Related evidence that CDs and BDs are not to be collapsed into one category comes from the possibility to add an emphatic benefactive PP:

- (17) a. Elle s' peint son portail, à elle-même.  
 She 3.SE paints her gate to herself  
 'She paints her gate for herself (not for Paul).'  
 b. \*Elle se fume une cigarette, à elle-même.  
 She 3.SE smokes a cigarette to herself

(17) further confirms that CDs do not have full PP/DP counterparts, whereas BDs do. It may be concluded then that the two clitics instantiate two separate entities: CDs are not a subclass of BDs, nor vice versa.

#### 4. Syntactic analysis

In this section, we propose to account for the differences between CDs and BDs described in the previous section in syntactic terms. The general idea we will try to defend is that CDs and BDs are hierarchically distinct: the former attach above *vP* while the latter are attached below, between VP and *vP*.

We saw that CDCs are necessarily SE configurations, while BDCs can contain either SE-marked predicates or referentially disjoint dative clitics. The following question needs to be addressed: What is the interpretative contribution of the SE head in CDCs and in BDCs?

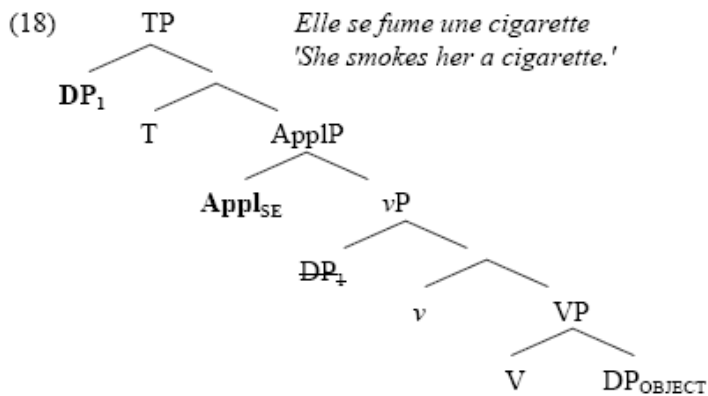
The phenomenon of adding an optional benefactive/possessive/recipient argument to core arguments in VP is a fairly well studied one. Categorially, these non-core arguments can be either PPs headed by a benefactive/locative preposition or DPs bearing the dative (or abstract object) case. We adopt a widely acknowledged approach to argument structuring according to which the latter – benefactive DP arguments – are introduced into an extended VP domain by special heads, Appl (cf. Marantz 1993, Pykkänen 2008). An interesting difference has been often reported concerning this class: non-core arguments introduced via Appl, unlike synonymous PPs, are interpreted as affected (Kayne 1975, Larson 1990). It has always been a challenge to understand where this 'affectedness' flavour came from and whether there could be a possible link between the presence of this feature and the properties of Appl.

We suggest that such a link exists. Affectedness is the intrinsic interpretable feature of Appl. Its other, more obvious, property of argument-introduction is structurally constrained, in our view. Namely, Appl introduces an argument only when it is projected within *vP*-VP, traditionally known as the thematic domain of the predicate – this happens in benefactive dative constructions. The novelty of our analysis consists in projecting ApplP even higher, above *vP*, in CDCs. In this non-thematic domain, Appl may not introduce a new argument and its function is restricted to assigning the interpretable feature [affectedness] to the most local argument in Spec*vP*, the Agent. This is the structural mechanism underlying the phenomenon of pragmatic enrichment of the agent that we have observed in CDCs. In sum, CDCs constitute a syntactic environment where affectedness can be teased apart from argument introduction.

#### 4.1. The syntactic difference between BDCs and CDCs

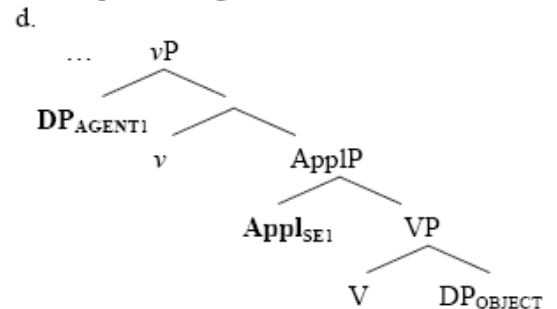
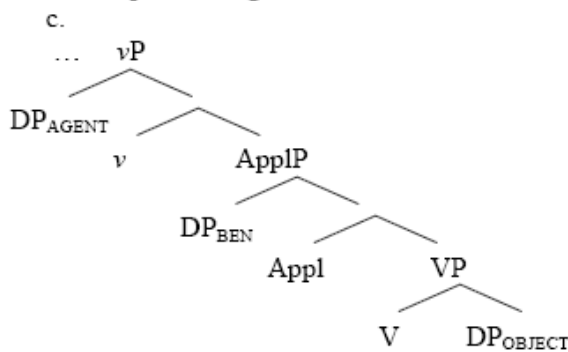
We view the clitic SE as a defective realization of an argument-introducing head (Labelle 2008, Embick 2004). An argument-introducing head  $v$  or Appl is spelled out as SE when it lacks the specifier occupied by a referential argument.<sup>3</sup> Put differently, referentially independent arguments cannot be introduced by a head spelled out as SE. It is therefore natural that Appl above  $vP$  may only be realized as SE: the non-thematic environment in which Appl finds itself prohibits adding new event arguments. APPL<sub>SE</sub> in CDCs marks the agent in Spec $vP$  as an “affected” agent.

Compare the structure in (18) to benefactive constructions in (19), where Appl is attached between  $v$  and V. When Appl is merged within the thematic domain  $vP$ , an extra event argument is added to the thematic information carried by the verb semantics. If Appl is realized as SE the introduced argument must be interpreted as anaphoric (i.e. lacking independent reference) and as affected. The highest argument DP<sub>AGENT</sub> is co-indexed with it and the missing argument is interpreted as an affected benefactee, coreferent with the agent.



(19) a. *Elle me peint le portail.*  
She 1S.DAT paints the gate  
'She paints the gate for me.'

b. *Elle se peint le portail.*  
She 3.SE paints the gate  
'She paints the gate for herself.'



<sup>3</sup> Labelle (2008) presents an analysis of SE according to which an argument introducing head (in her terms, Voice) is spelled as s when it *selects* a VP complement with an unsaturated (non-projected) argument. In her account, Voice<sub>SE</sub> itself *does* project a referential argument in its specifier which is coindexed with the open slot in VP.

#### 4.2. Support: embedding under causative-*faire*

A major piece of evidence for distinguishing the syntactic source of benefactive reflexive constructions and CDCs comes from the following contrasts in embeddability under causative-*faire*. (20a) is the example of embedding a BDC under the causative verb *faire*, while (20b) is the example of embedding a CDC. The embedded agent (the causee), which surfaces as the dative PP *à Paul*, can be co-referential with a benefactive SE, (20a). However, the same causee in (20b) cannot be coreferential with an affected SE. This contrast suggests that in causative constructions, Appl<sub>SE</sub> is licit in embedded BDCs, but not in embedded CDCs. (21a) and (21b) provide the parallel constructions without SE.

- (20) a. Elle a fait **se** peindre son portail **à Paul**.  
 She made 3.SE paint his gate to Paul  
 'She made Paul paint his gate for himself.'
- b. \*?Elle a fait **se** fumer un cigare **à Paul**.  
 She made 3.SE smoke a cigar to Paul  
 intended: 'she made Paul smoke a cigar.'
- (21) a. Elle a fait peindre son portail à Paul.  
 She made paint his gate to Paul  
 'She made Paul paint his gate.'
- b. Elle a fait fumer un cigare à Paul.  
 She made smoke a cigar to Paul  
 'She made Paul smoke a cigar.'

Interestingly, (20b) can be 'saved' if the embedded agent is realized not as a full DP, but rather as a clitic or a dislocated *wh*-phrase. In both cases, it is positioned higher than its base position, to the left of *faire*:

- (22) a. Elle **lui** a fait **se** fumer un cigare.  
 She 3S.DAT made 3.SE smoke a cigar  
 'She made him smoke a cigar.'
- b. **A qui** elle a fait **se** fumer un cigare?  
 To who she made 3.SE smoke a cigar?  
 'Who did she make smoke a cigar?'

In (23), we present another set of *faire* constructions manifesting the embeddability possibilities of a CDC under causative-*faire*. (23b) shows that the embedded agent (causee) in CDCs cannot surface as a dative PP contrary to a construction without a CD (23a). (23c) illustrates that the displaced embedded agent – here in the guise of the clitic *leur* – becomes licit in CDCs embedded under *faire*.

- (23) a. Ça a fait mater des films débiles à mes voisins.  
 This made watch movies dumb to my neighbours  
 'This made my neighbours watch dumb movies.'
- b. \*Ça a fait **se** mater des films débiles **à mes voisins**.  
 This made 3.SE watch movies dumb to my neighbours  
 intended: 'This made my neighbours watch dumb movies.'
- c. Ça **leur** a fait **se** mater des films débiles.  
 This them made 3.SE watch movies dumb  
 'This made them watch dumb movies.'

We propose the following explanation to this contrast. It is a well-known fact that in *faire-à* constructions the causative-*faire* and the embedded verb form a tight syntactic unit and internal arguments of the embedded verb must precede the embedded agent, marked with dative case:

- (24) a. Isa a fait fumer un cigare à Béa.      b. \*Isa a fait fumer (à) Béa un cigare.  
 Isa made smoke a cigar to Béa              Isa made smoke Béa a cigar  
 'Isa made Béa smoke a cigarette.'

Two types of solutions have been proposed to account for this. The first solution involves positioning the embedded agent in some right hand specifier of the embedded clause (Guasti, 1996, Folli & Harley 2007). Depending on analyses, this right-hand specifier is either the locus of the base-generated embedded agent in VP, or is projected by a functional head selecting the embedded VP where the agent (causee) raises. It is in the right-hand specifier position that the embedded agent is marked with dative case. Besides positioning and case-licensing of the embedded agent in the right-hand specifier, the derivation of *faire à*-constructions also involves incorporation of the embedded verb into *faire*.

The second solution involves VP-preposing (Burzio 1986, Kayne 2004). The embedded Agent stays *in situ*, in the left-hand SpecvP position. Moving VP (the verb and its internal arguments) to the left of vP is a necessary step for the subsequent *faire*-VP reanalysis. The vP layer is stranded behind, with the embedded agent in its specifier. It is in this base position that the embedded agent gets its dative case from the reanalyzed *faire*-VP complex. Notice that the case of the embedded agent is conditioned by the nature of the embedded predicate: agents of embedded intransitive verbs are assigned accusative case, agents of embedded transitive verbs are marked with dative case. This case choice clearly depends on the global number of arguments present in the sentence as the result of *faire*-VP reanalysis. We adhere to the second approach to *faire*-constructions.

The grammaticality of (25) argues in favour of the second approach. The type of analyses where the agent alone is found in a high right-hand specifier wrongly predicts that this argument (i.e. the causee) asymmetrically c-commands the embedded object. If this were indeed the case, the pronominal *son* in *à son auteur* could not have been bound by the quantified embedded object, contrary to fact. The fact that the embedded object can bind into the embedded agent suggests that the former is hierarchically higher, or at least at the same level, as the latter.<sup>4</sup>

- (25) Marie a fait décrire chaque livre à son auteur.  
 Marie made describe every book to its author

In this light, let us consider again (20a) and its structure in (26). First, the VP is preposed to the left of vP, then the clitic SE cliticizes (moves by head-movement) to the preposed V. This derivation yields a configuration in which SE is hierarchically higher than the DP<sub>AGENT</sub>. Yet, the structure is licit since the c-command relation Agent-Benefactive has been established prior to movement and can be therefore reconstructed.

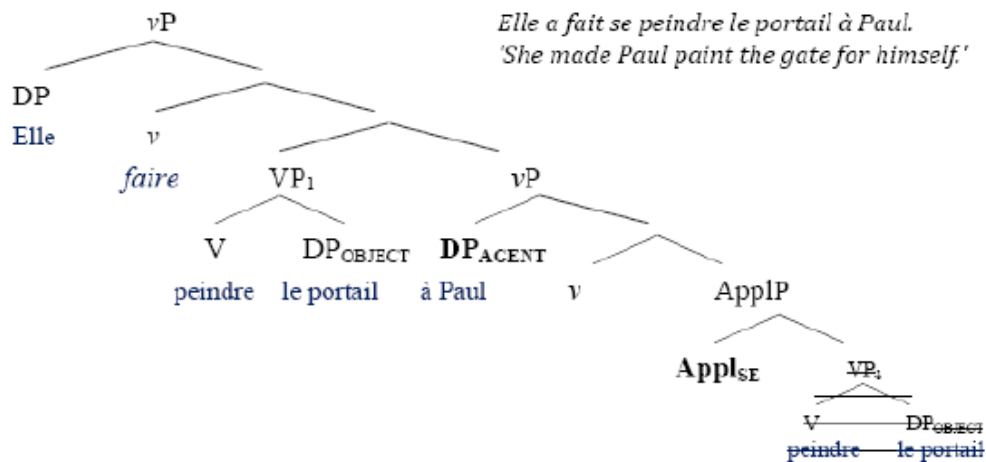
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<sup>4</sup> Less crucially to our purposes here, an incorporation analysis would fail to explain the possibility for an adverb to intervene between *faire* and the embedded verb, as illustrated in the following examples attested in French:

- (i) a. faire souvent venir      b. faire de nouveau réparer  
 'make often come'              'make again repair'              (from Google, inspired by Ippolito 2000)

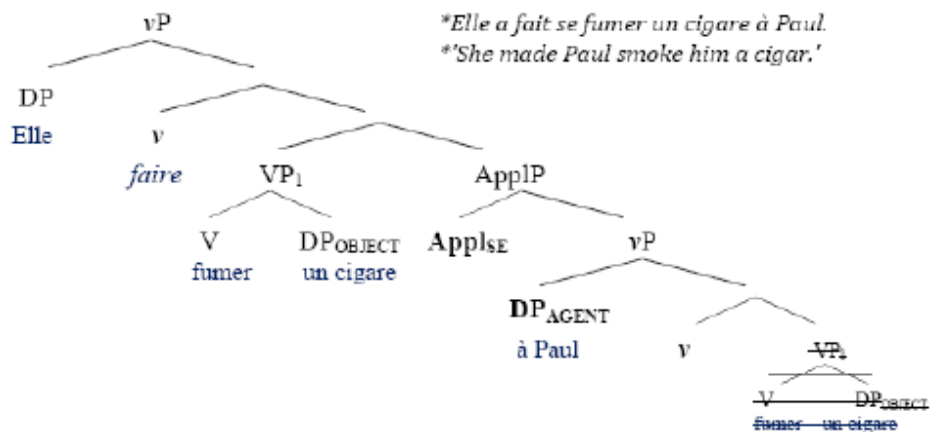


(26)



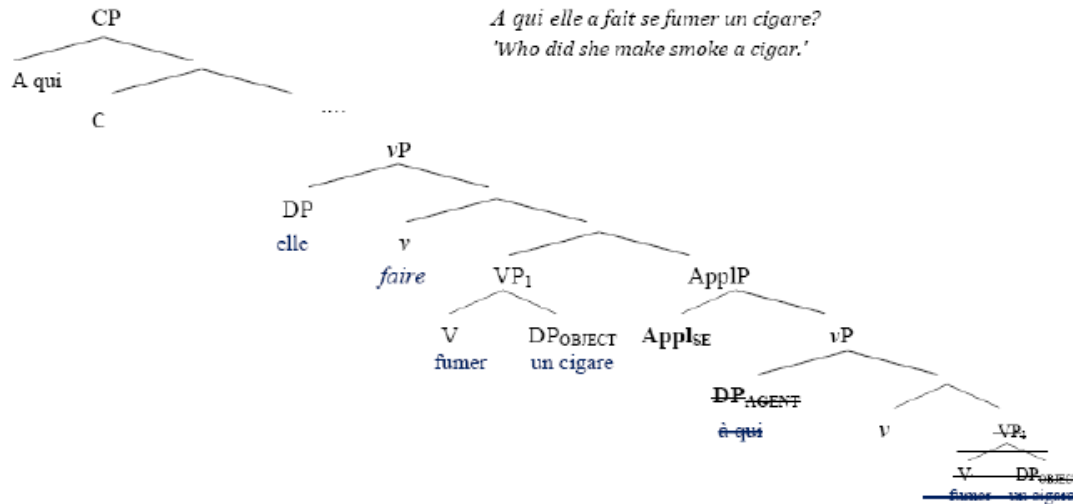
In CDCs, the embedded VP moves to the left of ApplP (to be linearly adjacent to *faire*) and the head of Appl<sub>SE</sub> cliticizes to the fronted VP. If the embedded  $DP_{AGENT}$  stays *in situ* as in (27), the right c-command relation between SE and the embedded agent cannot be established at any level of representation.

(27)



This situation can be salvaged if the embedded agent moves to the higher clause headed by *faire* either as a clitic *lui* or as a *wh*-constituent. This derivation is illustrated by the tree in (28), resulting in constructions (22), where the embedded agent comes to c-command SE subsequent to movement.

(28)



## 5. Conclusion

This paper is a contribution to the growing body of work on the applicative typology. We have shown that French non-core datives are not a uniform class, by providing distributional evidence for distinguishing between Benefactive Datives and Coreferential Datives. Then we argued that syntactically they differ as to the attachment site of the applicative head introducing them.

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