

Forgotten roots and their implications for Main Clause Phenomena

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Plan

1. Quick overview of root phenomena
 - ▶ English
 - ▶ (spoken) French
2. The syntactic approach
3. Gradience
4. Towards an analysis
5. Forgotten roots
6. Implementation(s)

Root phenomena

typically occur in matrix clauses but are also allowed in a restricted set of embedded (“root-like”) clauses (Heycock 2005).

- (1) a. Man, are we in for it!!
b. *He discovered that boy, was I in over my head.
- (2) a. Her regular column, she began to write again. The other ones, she never resumed.
b. *When her regular column she began to write again, I thought she would be OK.
- (3) a. In the deepest part of the forest lived a scary Gruffalo.
b. He told me that in the deepest part of the forest lived a scary Gruffalo.

The traditional approach (following Emonds 1970)

Root phenomena are due to a syntactic property of clauses.
Association between

- ▶ the ability for a clause-type to stand alone
- ▶ its ability to host root phenomena

→ Boolean [+/- root] feature.

Embedded [+ root] clauses: essentially finite clauses selected by verbs of assertion (+ some adjunct clauses).

Recent syntactic approaches

1. Cartographic approach (Haegeman 2002, 2006):
[+ root] requires the presence of a dedicated functional projection (ForceP or SpeakerDeixisP)
2. Movement approach (Haegeman 2010):
Movement of an epistemic operator blocks subsequent movement (e.g. argument fronting).

Some key data: adverbial clauses

	Central	Peripheral
syntactically integrated	✓	✗
prosodically integrated	✓	✗
direct anchoring		
. to speech time	✗	✓
. to speaker	✗	✓
can host		
. high modal markers	✗	✓
. argument fronting	✗	✓
[+ root]	✗	✓

Table: Adverbial clauses

Some key data: adverbial clauses

- (4) He will send the text by email today, so that it probably will reach me on time.
- (5) I think we have more or less solved the problem for donkeys here, because those we haven't got, we know about.
- (6) *?? John works best while his children are probably asleep.
- (7) *When her regular column she began to write again, I thought she would be OK.

Navigation icons

Root phenomena in French

- CLLD tends to be rejected or absent from the following:
- 1. non-finite clauses
 - 2. subjunctive clauses
 - 3. restrictive relative clauses
 - 4. clauses that are not assertive (with some variation)
 - 5. clauses selected by a negated verb (with some variation)

Navigation icons

Root phenomena in French

CLLD also shows a clear contrast between central and peripheral adverbial clauses:

- (8) a. #On était bien plus heureux quand, les lettres, on one was much more happy when the letters one les recevait le matin. them received the morning 'We were much happier when we received the letters in the morning.'
- b. C'était mieux avant, parce que les lettres, on les it-was better before because the letters one them recevait le matin. received the morning 'It was better because we received the letters in the morning.'

Navigation icons

Root phenomena in French

CLLD also shows a clear contrast between central and peripheral adverbial clauses:

- (8) a. #Elle a commencé à aller mieux quand l'éditorial, she has started to go better when the-editorial elle a recommencé à l'écrire. she has restarted to it-write 'She started getting better when she started writing the editorial again.'
- b. Elle va mieux parce que l'éditorial, elle a she goes better because the-editorial she has recommencé à l'écrire. restarted to it-write 'She's better because she has started to write the editorial again.'

Navigation icons

Root phenomena in French

CLLD also shows a clear contrast between central and peripheral adverbial clauses:

- (8) a. #Depuis que cette boulangerie je l'ai découverte, since that this bakery I it-have discovered j'adore mon quartier. I-adore my neighbourhood 'Since discovering this bakery, I adore my neighbourhood.'
- b. Comme cette boulangerie, je ne la connaissais pas, je as that bakery I NEG it knew not I n'aimais pas trop mon quartier. NEG-liked not too-much my neighbourhood 'As I didn't know that bakery, I didn't like my neighbourhood too much.'

Navigation icons

Root phenomena in French

CLLD also shows a clear contrast between central and peripheral adverbial clauses:

- (8) a. #Il ne faisait jamais de pub quand des he NEG made never PART publicity when INDEF clients, il en avait beaucoup. clients he of-them had many 'He never made any publicity when he had many clients.'
- b. Il ne fait jamais de pub, alors que des he NEG makes never INDEF publicity, however he's clients, il en a toujours eu beaucoup. always had many clients.'

Navigation icons

How to capture this gradient

Traditional approach:

- ▶ focus on the properties of clauses
- ▶ little attention paid to the interpretive import of the root phenomena themselves (beyond assertiveness)

Hypothesis.

- ▶ Gradience points to the need to consider the relation between the two.
- ▶ Impossible to capture gradience with a mere typology of clauses.



The interpretive import of root phenomena

Agreement from the speaker or commitment to the truth of the proposition (Green 1976, 1996) → emphasis:

- ▶ VP fronting
- ▶ PP fronting + inversion
- ▶ Neg preposing + inversion
- ▶ exclamatory inversion

Information structure import

- ▶ Argument fronting
- ▶ CLLD
- ▶ locative inversion



The interpretive properties of root(-like) clauses

Roundabout way: exploring stylistic inversion in French.

- (10) Quand arriva la tante, cela se fit tout naturellement.
when arrived the aunt that REFL did very naturally
'When the aunt arrived, that happened very naturally.'

- ▶ Not restricted to root contexts (only banned from yes-no clauses)
- ▶ but sensitive to the contrast between central and peripheral adverbial clauses



French VS: in thetic contexts only

Lahousse (2003, to appear): French VS requires overt thetic markers in peripheral adverbial clauses, but not in central adverbial clauses:

- (11) Quand arriva la tante, cela se fit tout naturellement.
when arrived the aunt that REFL did very naturally
'When the aunt arrived, that happened very naturally.'
- (12) Un nom prédestiné, parce que là renaîtrait
a name predestined because there would-be-born-again
le phénix.
the phoenix



The Information Structure of adverbial clauses

	peripheral clauses	central clauses
- allow root phenomena	yes	no
- allow epistemic qualification	yes	no
- VS needs extra licensing conditions	yes	no

Table: Properties of adverbial clauses

(Haegeman 2010, Lahousse to appear)



The Information Structure of adverbial clauses

My interpretation:

- ▶ Embedded clauses that do not allow root phenomena are *thetic* by default.
- ▶ The ban (?) on aboutness topics in such clauses suggests that they are obligatorily *thetic*.
- ▶ Stage topics are not more acceptable in these clauses: they cannot have a topic different from that of the matrix clause.
- ▶ Non-root clauses inherit their topic from the matrix clause.



IS and rootness

- ▶ Information Structure is the level at which the truth of propositions is evaluated with respect to their topic (Reinhart 1981).
- ▶ Assertoric root-like clauses
 - ▶ allow epistemic qualification
 - ▶ can have their own Information Structure

IS and rootness

	root-like	not-root-like
overt epistemic qualification	✓	✗
values of topic	own	inherited

Table: Declarative clauses

Semantic import (Larson & Sawada, GIST2)

- Root phenomena are ok
- ▶ in the scope of adverbial quantifiers
 - ▶ not in their restriction
- Scopes (but not restrictions) naturally allow
- ▶ independent I.S.
 - ▶ direct anchoring to speech time / speaker
- Need an interface account: the interpretive properties of clauses (upon which root phenomena depend) are semantically constrained (at least in adverbial clauses).
- Semantic phenomenon with information structural and pragmatic repercussions on adverbial clauses
- Not needed to account for rootness of all clauses? (e.g. complement clauses)

Accounting for the gradience observed

- Gradience here is a function of the (mis)match between
- ▶ the interpretive properties of the host clause
 - ▶ anchoring to speaker / speaker deixis
 - ▶ independent Information Structure
 - ▶ and the interpretive requirements of the hosted phenomenon.
 - ▶ agreement/ point of view of speaker
 - ▶ emphasis
 - ▶ information-structural import

Accounting for the gradience observed

Requirements	anchoring to speaker	independent I.S.
VP fronting	✓	✗?
Neg preposing	✓	✗?
Emphatic inversion	✓	✗?
CLLD	✗	✓
Argument preposing	✗	✓

Capturing 'semi-roots'? (Miyagawa, GIST2)

	anchoring to speaker	independent I.S.
roots	allow both types of root phenomena	
	✓	(✓)
semi-roots	allow only the information-structural type	
	✗	✓
non-roots	allow neither	
	✗	✗

Predictions

- ▶ CLLD should not be so sensitive to point of view / speaker agreement:

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Predictions

- ▶ CLLD should not be so sensitive to point of view / speaker agreement:
- ▶ Phenomena requiring anchoring to speaker will tend to need an embedding clause introducing the point of view of the speaker.

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Forgotten roots

- ▶ Stand-alone non-finite clauses

(13) Les manger crus, les chicons ? Avec plaisir.
 them to-eat:-FIN raw the chicory with pleasure
 (lit: To eat chicory raw? With pleasure.)

Predictions

- ▶ CLLD should not be so sensitive to point of view / speaker agreement:

- ▶ ok embedded under negated verbs,
- ▶ ok under verbs expressing point of view other than that of speaker's
- ▶ the more likely the embedded clause can have its own I.S., the more it will tolerate CLLD (e.g. ILPs)

(13) Si les supermarchés, c'était les bibliothèques du
if the supermarkets it-were the libraries of-the
futur, ça serait vraiment déprimant.
future that would-be truly depressing

A set of small navigation icons typically found in Beamer presentations, including symbols for back, forward, search, and other slide controls.

Predictions

- ▶ CLLD should not be so sensitive to point of view / speaker agreement:
- ▶ Phenomena requiring anchoring to speaker will tend to need an embedding clause introducing the point of view of the speaker. → sensitivity to
 - ▶ subject of embedding verb,
 - ▶ negation of matrix verb,
 - ▶ overt disagreement from speaker

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Forgotten roots

- ▶ Stand-alone non-finite clauses

(13) Les manger crus, les chicons ? Avec plaisir.
 them to-eat:-FIN raw the chicory with pleasure
 (lit: To eat chicory raw? With pleasure.)

- ▶ Complex fragments

(14) a. Toujours, moi.
always me
'Me, (I am) always (hungry).'

b. Deux pattes, le canard ?
two legs the duck
'The duck (has) two legs?'

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Forgotten roots

- ▶ Stand-alone non-finite clauses
- ▶ Complex fragments

Predicted not to allow root phenomena because

- ▶ non-finite
- ▶ non-clausal

But pragmatically asserted in the apparent absence of syntactic Force.



Non-finite roots

- ▶ Syntactically propositional clauses must have Tense.
- ▶ Non-finite clauses typically don't occur on their own.

But... over-ruled under certain discourse conditions?

- (13) a. Promener ton chien ? Jamais de la vie.
b. Elle, promener ton chien ? Ça m'étonnerait.
- (14) Les manger crus, les chicons ? Avec plaisir.
them to-eat:-FIN raw the chicory with pleasure
(lit: To eat chicory raw? With pleasure.)



Non-finite roots

Root status after all?

- ▶ dislocated topic
- ▶ ban on overt complementiser
- ▶ impossibility of embedding unless the dislocated topic is removed

- (15) a. *Elle, de promener ton chien ? (Ca m'étonnerait.)
b. *De les manger crus, les chicons ? (Avec plaisir.)
- (16) a. *?Je lui ai demandé, elle, de promener ton chien.
b. *Je lui ai demandé de elle, promener ton chien.
c. *?J'ai envie, les chicons, de les manger crus.
d. *J'ai envie de les chicons, les manger crus.
- (17) a. Elle, je lui ai demandé de promener ton chien.
b. Les chicons, j'ai envie de les manger crus.



Complex fragments

Verbless utterances interpreted as full propositions with assertoric force. The unpronounced environment is retrieved from the context.

- ▶ Non-sentential assertion (Stainton 2004, 2006)
- ▶ Bare Argument Ellipsis (Culicover & Jackendoff 2005)

- (18) a. Oh un mouton à pois !
oh a sheep with dots
b. Difficile à imaginer.
hard to imagine
c. D'où son malaise.
from-where his uneasiness

(Hankamer 1979, Barton 1990, Ginsburg & Sag 2000, Merchant 2004,...)



Fragments are not full structures

- ▶ There isn't always a **clear** form the context

- (19) A: Why don't you fix me a drink?
B: In a minute, ok?
- (20) A: Are you hungry?
B: How about pizza?



Fragments are not full structures

- ▶ There isn't always a **simple** form the context
- ▶ Full structure would sometimes violate **simplicity** :

- (19) A: Harriet drinks scotch that comes from a very special part of Scotland.
B: (i) Where?
(ii) *Where does Harriet drink scotch that is from?
- (20) A: John met a woman who speaks French.
B: (i) With an English accent?
(ii) *With an English accent, John met a woman who speaks French.



