Negative Interpolation and the Mapping between Syntactic and Prosodic Structures in the history of European Portuguese. An empirical study

Compared to the other Romance languages, European Portuguese (EP) boasts an unusual clitic grammar. First, rather than being sensitive to the [± finite] feature of the verb, the placement of clitic pronouns hinges on a series of syntactic constraints. Second, preverbal pronouns are triggered (negators, wh-words, prepositions, quantifiers, narrow information foci and some adverbs coerce them into being inserted preverbally), whereas their postverbal counterparts are not. Therefore, the latter, but not the former, represent the default position (Luís & Kaiser, 2016). Third, proclitics fail to exhibit allomorpy, while enclitics interact phonologically in very intricate ways with a verb, thus displaying an affix-like behavior (Vigário, 2003).

The central topic is interpolation, i.e. the insertion of an element between a clitic pronoun and the verb, i.e. [cl X verb]. In Romance linguistics, instances of clitic-verb non-adjacency are assumed to lend support to the post-lexical (syntactic) rather than word-internal nature of clitics (Miller & Monachesi, 2003). Throughout the history of EP, interpolation has represented, albeit at varying degrees, a viable linear ordering of pronouns (Martins, 2016). Nowadays, although its occurrences are outnumbered by an ordinary proclisis, interpolation remains extant both in written and spoken language (Magro, 2010).

For ca 200 years (mid-17th up to the mid-19th century), it used to rely uniquely on the *não* sentential negator. The specific thesis in the present paper is that the [cl *não* verb] sequence contributed greatly to the emergence of the present-day mapping between syntactic and prosodic structures in EP clitic system. In Middle EP (approx. 1500-1650), preverbal pronouns underwent phrasal attachment to their governing category (the verb; Gerlach; 2002; Spencer & Luís, 2012: 204-208). Thus, syntactically they were proclitics. At the same time, they attached enclitically to the preceding non-verbal sound material (to some of the proclisis-triggers: prepositions and the very *não* negative). Interpolation is shown to have helped do away with such a two-way architecture.

Our corpus, compiled on the basis of 36 texts released between 1614 and 1858, consists of 585 manually retrieved examples of both [cl *não* verb] and [*não* cl verb] sequences. The average ratio of interpolation to cases of clitic-verb adjacency attains 2.59 : 1 (422 : 163 occurrences). Yet, the two models are shown to have not been fully interchangeable. They were different in the type of pronouns given preference in each of them: 3rd person direct objects (*o, a, os, as*) tended to be paired with interpolation (4.9 : 1; 103 to 21 attestations), while the remaining pronouns did not depart significantly from the average ratio, thus evincing a more balanced distribution.

As a piece of evidence, the [*não* cl verb] configuration is discussed. It frequently triggered allomorphic shifts affecting pronouns: as *não* ends in the [ãw̃] nasal diphthong, it coerced the ensuing vocalic pronouns into taking a nasal onset (*o* > *no*, *a* > *na*, etc.). Indeed, the *não o* sequence frequently surfaced as *nãno* in early EP texts (see (1) below). The rationale behind the reversal of this order, i.e. interpolation, consisted in getting the preverbal domain rid of clitic allomorphy. Once *não* came to separate a clitic pronoun and the verb, the *não no*, *não na*, etc. realizations disappeared. From that period on, phrasal attachment of preverbal pronouns became dominant (Luís, 2014), and interpolation lost much of its former momentum.

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(1) ... **naõ no   fazendo**   deſde o   dia que lhe puzerem a dita pena ...
      NEG ACC-3.SG.MASC do-GERUND since   DEF.MASC day … (1639)
'… not doing this starting from the day when he will be inflicted this punishment' (*o* evolves
into *no* under the influence of the nasal nucleus in *não*) (http://purl.pt/30213)

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