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## **Cliticisation in the acquisition of French as L1 and L2\***

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### **1. Introduction**

The intense debate on continuity in child grammars has largely focused on the existence of Functional Categories (FCs) in early grammars despite differences in language use with adults (e.g., omissions, word order errors, lack of case marking). Simplified, the major theoretical explanations for these properties range from Maturational accounts (Radford 1990 and later) claiming an initial absence of FCs, to Weak Continuity views (Clahsen, Eisenbeiss and Penke 1996) claiming one (or more) initially underspecified FCs that are subsequently specified by exposure to input, and further to Strong Continuity views (Poeppel and Wexler 1993) where an adult set of FCs is initially assumed and child language is claimed to be subject solely to performance constraints. A similar debate has raged in SLA (see Herschensohn this volume, for discussion) where an initial absence of FCs has been advocated by many scholars (Vainikka and Young-Scholten 1996, among others). The opposite view, i.e. initial presence of FCs, has been defended by scholars such as Schwartz and Sprouse (1996), who claim that, initially, structural representations of the L2 are based solely on the L1, and by scholars claiming direct UG-access to the FCs (White 1996, Prévost and White 2000b). Most of these studies concern adult SLA.

One way to investigate FCs is to study the acquisition of clitics. There is a strong connection between FCs and clitics; clitic pronouns in French have an especially tight relation to the finite verb, which they precede in most cases. Since French is a verb raising language, it follows that the clitic must also move to an FC at spell-out. A common argument, based on this logic, is that a structure of the type *je l'entends* (I it hear - 'I hear it') is diagnostic of the existence of (some) FC in the grammar of a particular learner. These facts have lead researchers investigating FCs in L1 and

L2 to analyse the development of clitic pronouns (Hamann et al. 1996 on L1 monolingual French, White 1996 on child L2 French, Herschensohn, this volume, on adult L2 French), and Meisel (1994 on bilingual L1 French) who uses the emergence of subject clitics and finite verbs for determining when AGR is acquired.

If scholars agree on the relation “if clitics then FCs“, the inverse relation is much more problematic. Certain data (see below) suggest that, in adult L2 acquisition of French, there may be object pronouns but not clitics. But a lack of clitics does not necessarily imply a lack of FCs. The question mirrors in a certain way the issue of Missing Inflection: if systematic and functional inflection is present, then we can conclude that FCs are accessible, but the lack of inflection does not necessarily imply the absence of FCs (Lardièrè 1998, Prevost and White 2000b).

Now, the syntax of clitics, and more generally cliticisation (pronouns and articles), is in itself a long-standing issue in theoretical linguistics and especially in Romance linguistics. A recently developed theory of pronouns provides new perspectives from which to approach acquisition data. In their detailed analysis, Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) reveal a typology that seems to have been rapidly accepted (see peer comments in van Riemsdijk 1999), where pronouns are classified as either strong, weak or clitics. The distributional and interpretative properties of clitics, weak pronouns and strong pronouns depend on the amount of (functional) internal structure they project. Cliticisation in this view can be seen as a change in structural representation during the derivation, from more to less (i.e., from XP to X<sup>0</sup>).

Since both UG-access and FCs are prerequisites for cliticisation, the study of cliticisation can contribute to a better general understanding of L1 and L2 acquisition. Indeed, the strong consensus on direct access to UG and to early instantiations of FCs in L1 acquisition is not as clear in adult L2

acquisition (see White 2000 for an overview). Furthermore, previous work on clitics in L1 and adult L2 acquisition suggests that there may be differences in the way these are acquired. There is, therefore, a need for further L1 and adult L2 comparative research addressing cliticisation and controlling for general access to FCs.

In this paper, we will address the issue of differences between L1 and adult L2 acquisition with respect to cliticisation. Adopting the framework of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), we will investigate how and to what extent subject and object pronouns and articles become clitics in developing grammars. The data come from bilingual first language acquisition (2L1) and adult second language acquisition (L2). The children are Swedish-French bilinguals and the adults native speakers of Swedish. The fact that Swedish, the “other” language here, is present in both cases allows us to separate transfer from age effects.

We will show that there are indeed major differences between the bilingual children and the adult L2 learners with respect to cliticization, both in the initial state and in the way development proceeds. These differences will neither be attributed to an absence of FCs in L2 nor entirely to transfer, but are, we believe, due to a more general difference in interpretation of pronouns on behalf of child and adult learners. Our data indicate that, for the three domains studied – subject clitics, object clitics and definite articles – there is a tendency for adult L2 learners to interpret them as non-clitics for an extended period, i.e. as XP's, whereas the child acquirers interpret them directly as clitics, i.e. as heads. We propose that the findings can be accounted for within a theory of UG, assuming two conflicting economy principles presented by Rizzi (1998).

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Pronouns and articles

#### 2.1.1 General framework – and the case of French

Since the work of Kayne (1975), it is well known that French has two sets of pronouns, strong and weak/clitic (*moi* vs. *je* etc., cf. Table 1 below). The following sets of examples demonstrate that these pronouns display differences in distribution. Only strong pronouns can be co-ordinated (1a), can occur in isolation (1b) or in peripheral position and can be modified by adverbs (1c):

(1) a. *\*Il* / *Lui* et son frère sont arrivés hier.

He.WEAK/CL /he.STRONG and his brother are arrived yesterday

b. A: *Qui l'a fait?*

Who it.CL-has done

'Who did it?'

B: *Moi* / *\*Je*

me.STRONG / I.WEAK/CL

c. *C'est \*il* / *lui* seul qui sait le faire.

It-is he.WEAK/CL /he.STRONG only who can it.CL do

The above examples demonstrate that strong pronouns such as *moi*, *lui* behave like full nominal expressions, DPs, whereas weak and clitic pronouns do not. Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) argue for a further division into three distinct classes of pronouns: strong, weak and clitic. This is supported in French by the fact that there are differences between weak and clitic pronouns. Clitics are deaccentuated, phonetically reduced and form a phonetic unit with the verb (2a) and cannot stand as the common head for co-ordinated verbs (2b) (which is possible with a weak pronoun, cf. (2c)):

(2) a. *J-lis et puis j'écris.* (Non-standard French, Lambrecht 1981: 24)

I.CL-read and then I.CL-write.

b. \**Paul le frappera et ---mettra à la porte.*

Paul him.CL will.hit and will.put to the door

'Paul will hit ---and throw him out.' (from Kayne 1977, cited in Zribi-Hertz 1994:455)

c. *Je lis et puis écris.* (Weak pronouns in Standard French)

There is currently no consensus on the status and analysis of subject pronouns in French. Whereas most authors agree that French object clitics are syntactic clitics, scholars have somewhat different conceptions of French subject clitics. In one tradition, following the work of Kayne (1975), subject and object clitics receive different analyses: the former only becoming clitic through a late PF-rule (Rizzi 1986), the latter being syntactic clitics and incorporating with the verbal host. However, many scholars consider this valid only for standard, especially formal or written, French. These scholars consider the subject pronouns in spoken, informal French as different, either as clearly affixal (Auger 1995, Pierce 1992) or as clitic pronouns in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), being a head ( $X^0$ ) even if not necessarily affixal (Zribi-Hertz 1994, Ferdinand 1996).

Arguments for the cliticness of subject pronouns in spoken informal French include a disproportionately high frequency of doubled subjects (Pierce 1992), the necessity of repeating the subject pronoun in coordinations (Auger 1995), and their phonetic reduction (Cardinaletti and Starke 1999, Auger 1995). We could add here the impossibility of inserting an element (except the negative particle *ne* or another clitic) between the clitic and the finite verb (Kayne 1975), and the impossibility of pausing between the clitic and the finite verb (in that case, the clitic is repeated). These criteria distinguish the French from the Swedish pronouns, which are non-clitic (cf. below). Here we will assume that the status of subject pronouns in French depends on the register. It is

therefore conceivable that learners will be exposed to both types of subject pronouns in the input. The weak pronouns are analysed as moved to Spec-IP and the syntactic subject clitics as heads adjoined under the verbal host (see structure in (4a)).

With respect to clitic placement and cliticisation, we will adopt (with the exception of this possible register difference) a uniform analysis of syntactic subject clitics and object clitics in spoken French. This analysis is based on the structural approach presented in Cardinaletti and Starke (1999). These authors argue that asymmetries in the distribution and interpretation of different classes of pronouns are due to the amount of internal structure that they realise. Specifically, clitic and weak pronouns are “structurally deficient” in the sense that they project less structure than strong pronouns. Deficient pronouns lack the relevant structure to assign case internally (CP-layer in the terms of Cardinaletti and Starke 1999). This means that strong pronouns do not need to move to be assigned (or recover) CASE. Deficient pronouns need to end up in a spec-head configuration of a functional projection in order to get CASE. Furthermore, clitic pronouns (as opposed to weak pronouns) also lack the layer where prosodic features are located. These features will have to be recovered in a head-head relation. Now, adopting this view necessarily implies applying a movement analysis to clitic placement for both subject and object clitics (and to articles, see below).<sup>1</sup> Put simply, the deficient pronouns must move from their base position in order to “make up for” the lack of internal structure.

Definite articles in French have been proposed as clitic elements (Abney 1987) and behave very similarly in syntax (they can not stand alone, they must be repeated for each noun, etc.). Definite articles are also phonologically dependent in the sense that they must appear in the stress domain of the following adjective or noun and are subject to morphological restructuring (*le / la* reduce to *l* before vowel-initial nouns), thus suggesting that, just as in the case of pronominal clitics, articles

lack the projection with which prosody-related features are associated. Generative analyses specifically addressing the properties of the French definite article agree on its  $X^0$  status at spell-out (Abney 1987, Valois 1991 among others). Here we follow Valois (1991), where definite articles merge as the specifier of NumP and subsequently cliticise onto  $D^0$ . The analysis put forward by Valois is very much the same as that argued for subject and object clitics (see (4c)).

As mentioned, in the framework of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999), clitics must move in order to recover missing features that can not be assigned internally due to lack of structure (e.g. CASE and prosodic features). But since it is stipulated that only XP categories can be base-generated (Kayne 1994), the correct characterisation is rather that deficient pronouns (i.e. weak and clitic pronouns) are structurally “stripped” during their derivation (beginning as XPs and ending up as  $X^0$ ).<sup>2</sup> In accordance with Valois (1991), this is also the analysis we adopt for the definite article (cf. above and the structure in (4c) below). In all cases under investigation here, then, the process of cliticisation can schematically be described as:

(3)  $XP > X^0$

Reducing an element from XP to  $X^0$  implies movement. For object pronouns we assume that this movement will take place in two steps, first as an instance of A-movement (of an XP) followed by head movement. As for the intermediate landing site, we assume, in accordance with Hamann et al. (1996), that Spec, AgrOP is the relevant position. The following tree structures illustrate the process of cliticisation in the three cases under investigation here.

PLEASE INSERT TREES IN (4) ABOUT HERE

### 2.1.2 *Pronouns in Swedish*

Since both types of learners of French studied here have Swedish as an additional language, some discussion of the Swedish pronouns and articles is required. Swedish pronominal subjects (*jag, du*



*han/hon/den/det, vi, ni, de*, see further Table 1) are traditionally considered as strong, behaving syntactically as full noun phrases (cf. Hellan and Platzack 1999: 124). In addition to their use in a normal subject position, they can be co-ordinated, isolated and modified, and in clear contrast to French, they can be separated from the finite verb by an adverb (cf. 5a). They are in most cases placed preverbally, as in French or English, but due to the V2 word order, they may also occur directly after the finite verb, just as full DPs (cf. 5b). This occurs in about 40% of declarative and in all interrogative clauses. Swedish pronouns can also be weak, since there is a difference between positions in which they are accentuated and necessarily strong (5c) and those where the pronoun is ambiguous weak/strong (5d). See further Hellan and Platzack (1999:125), and also Cardinaletti and Starke (1999).

(5) a. ...*där han troligen kunde fortsätta.*

.....where he.WEAK/STRONG probably could continue

b. *Igår tog Kalle/ han med sig sina pengar.*

Yesterday took Kalle/ he.WEAK/STRONG with himself his money

‘Yesterday Kalle/ he did not bring his money.’

c. *Igår tog inte Kalle/ HAN / \*han med sig sina pengar.*

Yesterday took not Kalle/ he.STR/ \*he.WEAK with himself his money

d. *Igår tog han inte med sig sina pengar.*

Yesterday took he.WEAK/STRONG not with himself his money

Swedish object pronouns (*mig, dig, honom/henne/den/det, oss, er, dem*, see Table 1) are postverbal, similarly to English, and normally considered as strong (Hellan and Platzack 1999). In contrast to German and Dutch, they never occur in front of the nonfinite verb, as in (6a) (cf. 6b).

(6) a. \**Jag har den sett.*

I have it seen

b. *Jag har sett den*

‘I have seen it’

Swedish object pronouns, like subject pronouns, are analysed as weak in the position between the finite verb and the negation (Hellan and Platzack 1999:127). The pronouns may, in very informal spoken language, be cliticised onto the verb as an enclitic article with strong reduction.

(7) *jag såg'na* (non-clitic: *jag såg henne*)

I saw-her.CL

‘I saw her’

Cardinaletti and Starke (1999:65) argue that these should also be analysed as clitics syntactically, which would then imply that clitic pronouns are not excluded from Swedish, allowing transfer of clitic status or the cliticization process to the acquisition of French.

The similarities between Swedish and French reside on the one hand in the predominant preverbal position of the subject pronouns (but these differ with respect to clitic status), and on the other in the fact that clitic pronouns may occur in both languages. Pronouns differ, however, with respect to the obligatoriness of cliticisation: Cliticisation is obligatory for French pronouns, at least objects, whereas in Swedish clitics are only optional, and, when they occur, they are enclitic .

Tables 1a and 1b show the distribution in French and Swedish of the pronominal forms. “Isolated“ necessarily implies a strong pronoun, whereas the clitic status of subject and object pronouns varies

as shown in the presentation above. In Swedish, the oblique form is used after preposition, and is different from the strong form.

PLEASE INSERT TABLES 1a and 1b ABOUT HERE

*Table 1a. Forms of pronouns in French*

*Table 1b. Forms of pronouns in Swedish*

### 2.1.3 Articles in Swedish

In Swedish, the definite article *-en* is a bound morpheme appearing typically as enclitic on the noun:

(8) *katten*

cat.the

'the cat'

In GB-analysis, such as in Delsing (1993), the article *-en* is generated in  $D^0$  to which the noun incorporates. In a more recent framework, Giusti (forthcoming) analyses the noun as already inflected with the article before insertion in NP, which triggers movement to D ( $F^{\max}$  in her terms). There is also a free definite article preceding the noun and appearing in the context of prenominal adjectives. In these much discussed cases, both the free definite and the enclitic article are obligatory, resulting in so-called *double definiteness*:

(9) *den gamla katten*

the old cat.the

Different proposals have been put forward concerning the appropriate analysis of structures such as (9) above. Delsing (1993) assumed that the free definite *den* was in  $D^0$  and that the bound enclitic article was base-generated on the noun, in this case remaining in situ. To our knowledge there has been no attempts, yet, to use the tripartite distinction on nominal Swedish determiners (but see Holmberg, 1999 : 264 for a suggestion along these lines). However, at least the enclitic definite

article seems to fit the characteristics of clitic elements provided by Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) since it is phonologically and morphologically dependent (it agrees in gender and number) on the noun, it is subject to incorporation and it is semantically underspecified (it is compatible with both specific and non-specific readings).

## **2.2 Previous studies on the acquisition of clitics**

### *2.2.1 Subject clitics*

There seems to be general agreement that subject pronouns in early French child language are affixes or clitics, in any case heads (Meisel 1990, Kaiser 1994, Pierce 1992, Ferdinand 1996). The authors advocate as criteria the very frequent subject doubling (i.e. the fact that when a nominal subject occurs in early child language it is almost always doubled by a subject pronoun), the repetition in conjunctions, as well as the fact (Ferdinand 1996) that the nominal subject can be indefinite, which excludes the possibility of it being dislocated. Another argument mentioned is the frequent postposition of nominal subjects, which was interpreted to suggest that a) the nominal subject is generated in postverbal position and that b) the child does not yet have access to SpecIP to which the nominal subject can move (Meisel 1990: 264).

The acquisition data presented by Hamann, Rizzi and Frauenfelder (1996) are used as arguments in favour of a subject-object asymmetry: The delayed appearance in L1 acquisition of French object pronouns is accounted for by assuming a difference in status: object clitics are syntactic clitics whereas subject clitics only cliticise in PF. This conclusion relies, however, on a presupposed and questionable acquisition principle stating that deficient elements (in Cardinaletti and Starke's sense) are more "marked" and therefore acquired later. Both the subject-object asymmetry and the acquisition principle have been questioned by Jakubowicz et al. (1996) and Jakubowicz et al. (1998), who have proposed that the reason object pronouns are acquired later than subject pronouns

is not due to differences in the syntactic status of the pronoun but to pragmatic factors, giving the same results in German, where object pronouns are normally not clitic.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the doubling of the subject, however, there seems to be a development with age. It has been shown that, whereas pre-school children predominantly double a nominal subject with a pronoun, this behaviour decreases in older children (e.g. Jisa 2000). This may indicate sensitivity to a more formal register and to written French.

Studies on French L2 acquisition in English-speaking children (about 5 to 8 years) have shown that these children from early on use subject pronouns with a clitic status, according to the criteria mentioned above (Paradis, Le Corre and Genesee 1998, White 1996). White's conclusion has been questioned by Schwarz (1999), who argues that the clitic status of these pronouns is not absolutely evident, but that the subject pronouns can be ambiguously clitic vs. non-clitic, which allows a transfer interpretation.

As for older L2 learners, Prevost and White (2000b:124) argue for access to AgrS using the criterion of agreement between subject clitics and the nominal subject they are doubled with, and show that "subject clitics agree in person, number and gender with the NP to a large extent". They do not, however, discuss possible cases of misinterpretation of subjects as regards clitic status. This is, however, discussed by Larsson Ringqvist (2000), who supposes that certain errors in Swedish-speaking learners of French are caused by the learners' inability to perceive the clitic status of the pronouns. Herschensohn (2001) also questions the clitic status of the subjects used by the university students she was studying, but unlike Larsson Ringqvist, she argues that since the learners used the reduced forms "*j'entends*" and not "*je entends*", these rather advanced learners had already acquired the clitic status of the pronouns.<sup>4</sup>

### 2.2.2 Object clitics

Studies on object pronouns in L1 acquisition of French, whether monolingual or bilingual, show practically error-free acquisition, such that the anaphoric pronoun is placed correctly in preverbal position from the first time it appears in the child's production (Hamann et al. 1996, Müller et al. 1994, Jakubowicz et al. 1996). Object clitics appear later than subject clitics. The authors do not question the clitic status of the object pronouns, since these occur in preverbal position in a target-like way, indicating that they must have cliticised. However, Hulk (2000) observes some SVO patterns in the bilingual Dutch-French child she studies (age about 3 years), and several occurrences of the intermediate position between the auxiliary and the participle (type: *j'ai le vu*), both target-deviant positions. Hulk points out that the child's acquisition of both subject and object clitics is dissimilar to that of a monolingual child, and proposes that there is an influence from the dominant language, Dutch, where pronouns are weak and, furthermore, occur in such a VOV position.

In her study of child L2 learners of French, White (1996) argues for a development that is very similar to that of L1 acquisition: from the time the children start using anaphoric object pronouns, (like in L1 somewhat later than subject pronouns) these are essentially correct in form and position, and there are only a few cases of misinterpretation or incorrect position. This shows that these children interpret object pronouns as clitics from the outset of using them.

As for adult L2 acquisition, it has been observed that English-speaking adult learners of French pass through roughly four stages (Towell & Hawkins, 1994:137-8, Herschensohn this volume):

- |                                     |                     |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1) Postverbal position              | <i>*je vois lui</i> |
| 2) Omission of the object           | <i>*j'ai vu 0</i>   |
| 3) Intermediate position            | <i>*j'ai le vu</i>  |
| 4) Pre-finite position, target-like | <i>je l'ai vu.</i>  |

The same progression has been observed in Swedish-speaking learners (Schlyter, 1997). Towell and Hawkins (1994:137) account for the first type by assuming that the learners follow the canonical “head first - complement last“ parameter setting for French, that they subsequently omit the object assuming that French has object *pro*, then in stage 3) analyse the object pronoun as an affix agreeing with *pro*. The authors do not, however, discuss the clitic status of these pronouns. Herschensohn (2000, this volume) accounts for the postverbal position as transfer from English, and for the intermediate one as adjunction to the participle. She points out that the intermediate and the final stages (types 3 and 4) demonstrate that L2 learners are able to master functional features and the movement associated with them.

An older study of the forms of object pronouns in Danish school pupils' acquisition of French (Andersen 1986) may be reinterpreted today as arguing in favour of initial incorrect use of strong pronouns. The author does not discuss positions, but shows that the forms are used in tripartite opposition: *lui* for masculine human, *le* for non-human, and *la* or *elle* for human feminine. Jakubowicz et al. (1998) propose that the difference between clitics and non-clitics is not, as Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) claim, only that strong pronouns are exclusively +human, but that they are marked as either + or -human (since they have the feature +N). If we adopt that analysis, it means that the form *le* can also be considered as strong, since it is clearly marked for non-human in this sample. Anderson refutes a transfer hypothesis, referring to similar data on German learners' acquisition of French, since German does not distinguish +/-human in this way.

### 2.2.3 Definite articles

In L1 and 2L1, French articles are learned as part of the noun in the one word stage and are not analysed initially (Sourdout 1977, Carroll 1989, Granfeldt 2000a). The definite article is normally

acquired before the indefinite article. We know of no study on the syntactic status of definite articles in French L1.

Previous research has shown that the provision of articles *per se* is not a major difficulty for learners of an L2 where the L1 has overt determiners (Parodi, Schwartz and Clahsen, 1997 on L2 German, Granfeldt, 2000b, Gess and Herschensohn, 2001 on L2 French). But few studies have analysed the categorial status of articles in L2 grammars. Carroll (1989:577) mentions in passing, however, that Canadian immersion students (aged 8-12 years) “will stress articles” and “pause between the determiners and nouns”. Both observations indicate that the immersion students have not learned the correct phonetic properties of French articles at this point. Carroll presents no data to suggest that L1 children produce the same type of non-clitic determiners. The difficulty of proclitic articles is a subset problem, according to Carroll. English determiners can cliticise optionally, whereas all French determiners do so obligatorily. If they were to apply the English value of the parameter (“determiners cliticise sometimes”) to French, the immersion students would find no evidence that this is incorrect in the target language.

## **2.4 Rationale and hypothesis**

Previous research has shown that when pronouns emerge in the speech of children acquiring French (L1 or L2), the children predominantly know their syntax and distribution from their first occurrence. We can interpret this as early access to the process of cliticisation. This is in sharp contrast to object pronouns in adult L2 acquisition, where a large amount of (clearly target-deviant) SVO-structures has been reported in the literature. These studies, along with some observations on subject clitics and articles, suggest that cliticisation has perhaps not occurred in L2.



In addition to the careful studies on the clitic status of French pronouns in the L2 acquisition of younger children, where initial clitics have been found, a parallel study is therefore needed on older L2 learners of French. Furthermore, there is no study directly comparing child and adult learners using the same method, in a manner similar to that employed by Prevost and White (2000a) for verb morphology. In order to fill this gap and to further develop the study of clitics in L1-L2 acquisition, we propose to include definite articles since the cliticisation process can be assumed to be the same in all three cases (schematically as in (3) above). Below we outline a hypothesis for the acquisition of cliticisation in child and adult learners based on previous research in this area. It is followed by three theoretical explanations that will be discussed in the conclusion:

#### (10) Hypothesis

Empirically, we hypothesise that adult L2 learners do not cliticise pronouns and articles in initial stages of development, whereas bilingual L1 children do. Theoretically, we hypothesise that adults treat pronouns and articles as XPs at spell-out, whereas the bilingual children treat them as  $X^0$ -heads, in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999).

If we were to find pronouns and articles that have *not* been cliticised in L2, then there are three possible *a priori* explanations:

- (a) there is an absence of relevant FCs (in L2: The Minimal Trees Hypothesis, Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1996).
- (b) the relevant FCs have the parameters or feature specifications of the other language (i.e. transfer from Swedish).
- (c) the process of cliticisation is itself subject to development independent of the development of phrase structure and feature specification.

In order to evaluate the hypothesis and its possible explanations, the following empirical analysis will be conducted:

- Coherent studies of the process of cliticisation, i.e. the status of pronouns with respect to the tripartite division (strong, weak or clitic) and a study of cliticisation of articles, will be carried out in 2L1 and L2, using the same methods and criteria;
- If the hypothesis is verified, a further control for evidence of other properties related to the FCs in the adult L2 learners will be made. Moreover, there will be need for a discussion of the question of possible transfer;
- If the absence of cliticisation can not be explained by a lack of FC or by a transfer effect, the adult-child difference will have to be discussed in more general terms of different mechanisms used in child and adult language acquisition.

### **3. Corpus - the children and adults studied**

In this study, four Swedish-French bilingual children were studied from about 2;0 to 4;0, and 11 adult Swedish-speaking learners with varying proficiency in French were studied in a semi-longitudinal study.

The children (Jean, Anne, Mimi, Dany) were living in Sweden, in middle-class families, their mothers being French-speaking and their fathers Swedish-speaking, in keeping with the 'one-parent-one-language' strategy. They were recorded at home every second month (Jean, Anne) or every fourth month (Dany, Mimi) up to the age of about 4;0, in spontaneous interaction and in each language separately.

The adult learners were Swedish students of about 20 years or older, some of them acquiring French in France in a natural setting only (as students of music, art etc.), others as university students in Sweden only, more precisely:

- a. Informal learners (Henry, Björn, Sara, Petra, Martin, Johan, Karl and Knut), acquiring French in a natural setting;
- b. Formal learners (Lisa, Sama, Nina), acquiring French at school and during their first term of university studies, without any residence in a French-speaking country.<sup>5</sup>

The two categories of adult learners have similar social conditions, all of them being middle class, having completed primary and secondary school, and able to speak English. Both groups have been recorded during informal conversation, discussing similar subjects, and have completed the same elicitation procedures. Some of them were recorded from the earliest time they were able to produce their first two or three word utterances, after about 3 months' residence in France, others after about two years' residence, or many years of studies at school. They were recorded two to five times at one- or two-month intervals, but not for a period longer than 6 to 12 months. This means that the adult data are half cross-sectional, half longitudinal, a design necessary due to the restricted number of Swedes acquiring French in a natural setting. In this way, both the children and the adults were studied from practically their first use of multiword utterances, and up to a level of fluency, using different tenses, varying subordinations, etc.

To give a general idea of the developmental level of the learners, we have divided each group into three levels (Tables 2 and 3 below), according to data obtained through earlier studies on this corpus (Schlyter 1997 and forthcoming, Granfeldt 2000a and b). These levels should be seen as rather rough indications – there are individual differences as well as certain differences in terms of

the phenomena studied – but we find it necessary to indicate whether we are talking about beginners, intermediate or very advanced learners.

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Table 2. *Bilingual Swedish-French children - levels of development*

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Table 3. *Adult L2 learners - levels of development*

These stages evidently vary according to each feature studied and each individual, and they are more difficult to establish for the formal learners, due to greater variation.

## **4. Analysis of the data**

### **4.1. Acquisition of subject pronouns**

Our main hypothesis is, as mentioned above, that children interpret pronouns and articles as clitics, i.e. as heads, whereas adults do not. This will be studied first in the domain of subject pronouns, then in object pronouns and definite articles.

#### *4.1.1 Subject pronouns in child learners - 2L1*

The children begin using subject pronouns, first in one, then in different forms, at the age of 2;0 (Jean) and 2;5 (Anne), and Mimi has them from the start of the observation time (at 2;0). In the presence of a nominal subject, the children predominantly double the subject with a subject pronoun, without any intervening pause (see Table 4, below, column “NP+scl“ compared to the column “NP“). The first NPs occur mostly in final position (see example 11 a) as they do in most studies on French early child language (cf. above).

(11) a. \*JEAN: *il est pas à toi ce camion.*

it is not to you this lorry

b. \*JEAN: *moi je veux du cidre.*

me.STR I want PART cider (Jean 5,6, 2;6-2;9)

(12) \*MIMI: *oui, la place elle est comme ça.*

yes, the place it is like that (Mimi 2, 2;2)

In line with the reduction criteria, the children also treat subject pronouns as clitics, in that they (with some exceptions in Jean) reduce 'je' to 'j' before a vowel (see Table 4, column “Elided“ vs “Non-elided“). Example:

(13) \*MIMI: *j'ai trouvé!*

I.have found (Mimi 2, 2;2)

The children never separate the subject pronoun from the finite verb by an adverb (see Table 4, column Scl+A+V), nor do they modify them. Since they use “aussi” at these early stages, and “moi aussi” (‘me too’) is a frequent combination, the combination “je aussi” would have been quite possible. As for the criterion co-ordination with a common subject, we have not found a sufficient number of clear cases.

The findings on doubling, elision, non-separation, non-modification all argue for the cliticood of the subject pronouns in children, and thereby confirm earlier studies.

#### 4.1.2 Subject clitics in adult learners - L2

Subject pronouns occur in contexts where they are not found in the speech of the children and inversely. We will argue that, in the production of these L2 learners, subject pronouns are often not treated as clitics; this is based on the following facts:

First, there are very few doubled NP-subjects in the speech of the adult learners, and the nominal subjects without clitic doubling dominate in most learners (see Tables 5 and 6, column “NP+scl“ compared to “NP“). A striking fact is that these adults never use a NP subject in final or postverbal position, but always place them in preverbal position. This suggests that the adults have access to the SpecIP node where the subject NP can be placed. Since the learners place the negation (*pas*) postverbally, even in very early stages (Schlyter, forthc.), the verb must have been raised to I, which constitutes further evidence for IP in their grammar. Second, pronouns can be accentuated freely and used in contrast, as seen from (14):

(14) \*HEN : *JE comprendre, e la / la dame comprendre.*

I understand.INF the the woman understand.INF (Henry 1, informal learner)

Third, pronouns can be separated from the finite verb by an adverb, (which occurs in some of the least advanced learners; see (15) and column “Scl+A+V“ of table 5 and 6):

(15) \*LIS : *je seulement habite...*

I only live.PRES (Lisa 1, formal learner)

Fourth, pronouns are frequently not elided preceding a vowel; see Tables 5 and 6, column “Elided“ and “Non-elided“. Example:

(16) \*HEN : *je je aime.*

I I like.PRS (Henry 1, informal learner)

Fifth, the subject pronouns are often separated from the finite verb by a pause (without being repeated as they normally are in native French, see Candea 1998); see (17) where # indicates a pause:

(17) \*PTR: *et je # vais aller avec un ami.*

and I will go with a friend (Petra 1, 5 months)

Like strong stress, this has not been quantified (since the quality of the tapes did not allow acoustic analysis), but is very obvious in the least advanced learners.

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

*Table 4. Subject pronouns in 2L1*

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

*Table 5. Subject pronouns in L2, informal learners*

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

*Table 6. Subject pronouns in L2, formal learners*

Learners at low and intermediate level vary in their use of elided and non-elided subject pronouns, whereas data from the more advanced learners (Nina, Knut, possibly Sama) show a clear dominance of elided forms. This suggests that elision of subject pronouns is acquired late. See Nina (stage 3) in Table 6, and Knut (stage 3) in Table 7 (cf. the elision of articles below, for more clear-cut data).

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

*Table 7. Elision of subject pronouns in Johan and Knut*

Practically all learners also produce subject pronouns like *je* with a consonant-initial verb and *tu, il, ils*. These are not shown here since they are neutral as regards clitic status.

It is not the case that all learners have problems with the cliticness of subject pronouns, as shown by the criteria studied, but the learners of the lowest level generally do. There are also certain

individual differences, above all Sama who mostly speaks quite correctly, elides and does not insert adverbs, in spite of her initially low proficiency level (cf. also her articles, below).

## 4.2. Acquisition of object pronouns

In our investigation of the clitic status of object pronouns, we have studied the forms used by the learners in their different positions (two preverbal, two intermediate, and one postverbal position, see Tables 8-13). Target-deviant forms or positions are marked in the tables with \*.

### 4.2.1 Object pronouns in child learners - 2L1

We can observe that the children begin using object pronouns in all target-like positions from the moment these appear at about 2;6 (somewhat later than subject pronouns); see Tables 8-10 and the examples below. There are some very rare instances of incorrect placement (*\*il a l'acheté*), and these occur in the last stage.

(18) \*ANNE : *Je le mets dans l'eau.*

I it put into the.water (Anne 4, 2;10)

Already at this stage, forms are normally reduced (except 2 examples from Jean 6).

(19) \*JEAN : *Je l'attrape.*

I it.catch (Jean 8, 3;1)

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 8-9-10 ABOUT HERE

*Table 8-9-10. Forms and positions of object pronouns in children.*

The three cases of postverbal pronouns are *ça*, in a usage that is not clearly deictic, but possibly anaphoric. They are noted here because of their similarity with the adult data.



#### 4.2.2 Object pronouns in adult learners – L2

In the adult learners studied here, we find, just as previous researchers have found for English-speaking learners, an initial stage where object pronouns occur essentially in postverbal position.

The great majority of these (see Table 11 below) are in the strong form, as in (20):

(20) *il dit lui. / je veux manger toi.*<sup>6</sup>

he says him / I want eat.PRES you. (Petra 1, 5 months)

In the tables, we counted *nous* and *vous* as strong forms, since they never occur preverbally and therefore do not seem to be perceived by the learners as clitics.

The learners also use many pronouns postverbally in a form that looks like a clitic pronoun, (21) and (22), but since they have individual stress – which is clearly different from, e.g., Spanish and Italian (or Swedish) postverbal clitics – these pronouns should be considered as non-clitic.

According to what we proposed above for the analysis of the Andersen (1986) data, we may consider them as strong in terms of semantics, since there is a tendency also in our data towards a distribution of forms according to humanness (= *le*), human feminine (= *la*) and human masculine (= *lui*).

(21) *elle demande la. / elle croit la.*

she asks her / she believes her (Petra 1, 5 months)

(22) *on prend le gaz et refroidir le. / on refroidir le dedans.*

one takes the gas and cool it / one cool it in.there (Karl 1, 8 months)

To avoid overinterpretation, however, we have counted these as “weak“ in Tables 8-13. If we count them as strong, the dominance of strong forms will be still more evident: 37 strong vs. 8 possible

clitics, of which just one is before a finite verb. This shows that there is no cliticisation process, neither for forms nor for positions.

During the entire development, the learners also often use reflexive clitic pronouns. These are essentially used in the chunks *je m'appelle, il s'appelle, je me rappelle (pas)*, which is thus not a sign of cliticisation. In the tables we just mark their occurrence with a “+“.<sup>7</sup>

In the second stage, the adult learners still use a rather large number of strong forms in postverbal position, see Table 12. They now also have many pronouns in the intermediate position, before infinitives – target-like (23a) or target-deviant before a past participle (23b):

(23) a. *je peux le faire ...*

I can it do

b. *j'ai # j'ai le vu*

I.have I.have it seen

(Karl 2, 10 months)

At this stage, object pronouns still often have the strong form, which is mostly the case when they occur (target deviantly) before a past participle:

(24) *il a ass- ... il a lui assis.*

he has he has him sat

(Petra 2, 7 months)

However, in a number of cases, the pronouns in this position now have the clitic/weak form (23).

There are no reduced forms found in the corpus in this position and this stage, but one – incorrectly – unreduced form before vowel:

(25) *je veux te écouter.*

I want you listen

(Karl 3, 12 months)

The fact that many of these forms are strong (24) casts doubt on the analysis (Towell and Hawkins 1994) that learners treat these as agreement affixes. The non-reduction in (26) rather indicates that the pronoun has a weak status.

We find 7 reduced forms before an auxiliary at this stage. However, 6 of these are an apparent chunk used by Lisa 3: “X m'a Verb“, indicating that the object clitics are still not very productive at this stage. If we deduce these later six, we get a rather equal repartition over the three main positions and also over forms.

This pattern suggests that the learners have started to move the object pronoun to a higher position above VP, however not yet to the final, target-like position. The forms vary, but one hypothesis is that they often lose part of the full structure and consequently have the status of weak pronouns.

This would mean that the cliticisation is gradual and proceeds in two steps.

For the third stage, Table 13 shows that there are practically no target-deviant pronouns in postverbal position, only three postverbal instances of *ça*. The great majority of the object pronouns are now in a target-like position; most of them occur before the finite verb, and also before the auxiliary – where they are necessarily reduced before the vowel of the auxiliary.

(26) (Knut 1,3, ca 20 months)

*je l'ai pris. / ça m'a changé. / je t'ai dit.*

I it.have taken / it me.has changed / I you.have said

At this stage, we find many reduced forms, which in this way can be considered as clearly clitic. These forms, together with the weak=clitic pronouns before a finite verb, are now in clear majority. Thus it is evident that, at this stage of development, the learners have succeeded in moving the object pronoun up to its final position (under IP) and accordingly learned its clitic status.

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 11 ABOUT HERE

*Table 11. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, first stage.*

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 12 ABOUT HERE

*Table 12. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, second stage.*

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 13 ABOUT HERE

*Table 13. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, third stage.*

#### **4.3. Acquisition of the definite article**

The proclitic nature of the definite article is morphologically apparent before a non-consonant-initial noun or adjective. In these cases, the singular articles *le* and *la* reduce to *l'*:

(27) a. *l'orange*

the.orange

b. *l'autre orange*

the.other orange

In the following analysis of this aspect of acquisition, we will deal with the cases in (27a) and (27b) and analyse the extent to which the bilingual children and the adult Swedes elide the article before a vowel. This will be taken as an indication of whether they treat articles as proclitic elements. We begin again with the child learners.

#### 4.3.1 Elision of the definite article in child learners - 2L1

In Table 14, the development of elision is reported. Recordings are divided into two time spans, one span up to the point (recording) where determiners are clearly productive and one span after this point.<sup>8</sup>

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 14 ABOUT HERE

*Table 14. Articles before vowel – 2L1*

The results in Table 14 show that elision is respected almost throughout. The few errors might, however, be revealing since they all appear in the second time span where determiners are proposed to be really productive (defined independently, see note 8). This difference between the first and the second time span could then reflect the possibility that some nouns are first acquired with the article as an unanalysed part (cf. Sourdot, 1977, Carroll, 1989). The data presented here is however only suggestive.

More importantly, Table 14 demonstrates that there are very few cases where elision is not respected (5 cases out of 128). If we include the doubled articles, which are not erroneous in the same way since they (probably) reveal problems with segmentation, we obtain 9 cases out of 132, i.e. less than 7% incorrect usage. It is hard to say anything further about the status of these productions, and it could well be that several of them are performance errors.<sup>9</sup> Examples of elided articles in the children appear below:

(28) a. \*MIMI: (*il passe*)<sup>10</sup> *aussi, l'auto.* (Mimi 2, 2;2)

it passes also, the.car

b. \*ANNE: *l'arbre encore ?* (Anne 6, 3;1)

the.tree again

c. \*JEAN: (*mais l'autre*) *je sais pas.* (Jean 6, 2;9)

but the other I now not

To summarise, it is clear that the clitic status of the definite article is acquired very rapidly and almost without error.

#### 4.3.2 Elision of the definite article in adult learners – L2

Turning now to the adults, previous studies on these adults have shown that, with some specific exceptions, they generally use all determiners from the outset (Granfeldt 2000a, 2000b). In Table 15, the development of cliticisation is reported. Only DPs occurring in argument positions are considered here (DPsubjects or DPobjects).<sup>11</sup> The learners can be divided into three independent levels of proficiency with respect to proclitic definite articles.

##### **Level 1: Articles are never elided**

In the least advanced learners, the definite articles are never elided before a following adjective or noun beginning with a vowel. Table 15 shows that Henry 1-2, Sara 1-2 and Petra 1-2 and are all at level 1 with respect to this property of the definite article. Some examples are given below:

(29) a. \*INT: *alors quelle est quelle est l'école que tu fais? # les études # qu'est-ce que tu fais ?*

‘so what , what school do you go to? the studies what do you do?’

\*SAR: *eh ... le école Etienne Decrous.* (Sara 1, 3 months)

the school

b. \*PTR: *eh je regarde la artiste....* (Petra 1, 5 months)

I look (at) the artiste

##### **Level 2: Elided articles appear with some nouns**

Learners at an intermediate stage produce both elided and non-elided articles in the relevant contexts. Table 15 shows that the recordings with Karl 1-4, and possibly Lisa 1-3, are indicative of such a stage of variation. At this level of proficiency, it can be hypothesised that the proclitic status

of the definite article depends on the noun/adjective type with which it occurs. This is a more advanced system than the previous one, but arguably still indicative of a grammar without cliticisation of articles. It is more like a first step where some units (i.e., chunks) come out correctly in production. Due to space limitations, we cannot seriously develop this here (see Granfeldt, 2003).

### **Level 3: Articles are always elided**

In the learners at this level, the definite article is nearly always elided in the relevant contexts. Karl arguably reaches this level in his last recording, Karl 5, while Sama, a very monitoring formal learner (student of French), seems to be conscious of the elision rule from the beginning of the data collection period (cf. figures in Table 15 below). Moreover, Knut, the most advanced informal learner, had acquired this property of French definite articles in his first recording after about 20 months' residence in France:

PLEASE INSERT TABLE 15 ABOUT HERE

*Table 15. Articles before vowel – L2*

To summarise, we have seen that, just as in the case of subject and object clitics above, there are clear differences between the children's and the adults' initial use of articles. The elision rule, indicative of the proclitic property of French definite articles, is difficult for the L2 learners to acquire but applied by the children immediately. If adopting the analysis in Valois (1991), where articles merge as XPs in Spec, NumP and subsequently cliticise onto  $D^0$ , we might, in fact, see a development parallel to that shown in previous sections on subject and object clitics.

## **5. Cliticisation and not – on possible explanations**

We have discussed the fact that 2L1 learners use subject and object pronouns and definite articles as clitics from their first appearance, i.e. children have no problems with cliticisation. This is not the

case for adult L2 learners, who initially perceive these elements as XP's, and acquire cliticisation through a long, stepwise and difficult process, where there is clear evidence of cliticisation only after at least one year of frequent French input. Since access to FCs is a prerequisite for cliticisation, it is natural to first explore evidence for their existence in the child and especially in the adult grammars.

There is, however, no reason to question the presence of the relevant FCs in the grammar of the children. Not only do the children show evidence for correct cliticisation, they also very early on use opposing verb forms, postverbal negation after finite verbs, prenominal adjectives etc., just as has been presented in many earlier studies.<sup>12</sup>

The situation is less clear for the L2 learners, but we argue that a lack of FCs is not part of the explanation. Even the least advanced L2 learners, Henry, Sara and Björn, with only 3 months of French input, all have some evidence of Functional Categories. They all oppose nominative and non-nominative case with at least *je/moi*, evidence for a nominative-distributing IP (Lardière 1998), and they all use at least some auxiliaries, and some cases of postverbal negation, even from the very first recording (for further details, see Schlyter forthcoming). All of the learners have several instances of subordinate clauses with a complementizer (*parce que* or *quand* clauses) and/or relatives (mostly occurring with the incorrect form of the complementizer), both evidence for C<sup>0</sup> and arguably (some) FCs of the Middle Field. In the following examples from Petra 1 (5 months of residence), we can observe evidence for non-cliticisation in the same utterance as she uses subordination, i.e. evidence for C<sup>0</sup>:

(30) a. \*PTR: *c'est parce que eh quand je # essaie parle eh sué suédois, ...*

it.is because when I try speak.PRES Swedish



b. \*PTR: *et ma mon bouche est gros parce que je veux eh # mange toi.*

and my mouth is big because I want to eat you

(Petra 1, 5 months)

With respect to the definite article elision data, it is not the case that the L2 learners at level 1 (without cliticisation) lack access to DP or NumP at this time. They have no problem in conveying Definiteness (31a), a feature generally taken to be associated with the DP-layer (Valois 1991 and many others) or Number (31b) (associated with NumP) or in producing sequences of D-N-A (30c) (cf. Granfeldt, 2000a ; b for further details):

(31) a. \*INT: *aha hm hm c'est c'est donc aussi de mime ?*

‘Oh, so that is also miming ?’

\*SAR: *oui, le même eh mime .*

yes, the same mime

b. *jamais je viens eh dans les bars et les restaurants.*

(Sara 1, 3 months)

never I come in the bars and the restaurants

c. *je joue saxo classique avec la garçon suédois.*

(Petra 1, 5 months)

I play saxophone classique with the boy Swedish

Rather it would seem as if the non-proclitic articles are associated with the DP-layer. A possible interpretation is that instead of cliticising onto  $D^0$ , articles remain XPs (possibly moved to Spec,DP) during the whole derivation in the adults' initial grammar. They pattern in this respect more with demonstratives than with articles in the target language (Valois 1991) and are still XP-elements at spell-out. As for development, then, the adult learners have to unlearn movement to Spec,DP and acquire cliticisation onto  $D^0$ . As we have seen above, adult Swedes normally do so within two years of immersion in a French-speaking society.<sup>13</sup>

A second possible explanation for the initial lack of cliticisation in L2 is to consider transfer of parameters or of features of the relevant FCs. Even though it is not excluded, a transfer account of the present data involves a number of problems. First, if Swedish structures were transferred generally, we would also expect that the very frequent post-finite verb position of the subject pronoun in main clauses, due to the V2 parameter, would also be transferred. This is, however, never the case. In the entire L2 corpus, there is no single instance of a subject in this position, neither clitic, pronominal or nominal. One postverbal subject in a subordinate, a position in which a Swedish subject is excluded, is instead an argument against transfer:

(32) \*KAR: *non et tu ne sais pas où se trouve moi, n'est-ce pas?*

no, and you not know where is found me, isn't it?

'no and you don't know where I am, do you?' (Karl 2, 10 months)

Native French would have been *tu ne sais pas où moi je me trouve*, but Karl here uses the position that would have been normal with a nominal object: *tu ne sais pas où se trouve ton collègue*.

Second, the target-deviant type of object pronoun position, of the type *j'ai le vu*, is not the result of a transfer either. Since it occurs neither in the source language nor in the target language, it must imply direct access to UG, and since moved, there must be a FC to attach to, probably AgrOP.

Third, the very fact that children and adults behave differently is a problem for a general transfer account. Since transfer between two first languages has been proposed (Hulk, 2000), we might expect the children to have at least some of the problems with cliticisation we find in L2, due to their other language, Swedish. As we have clearly shown, this is not the case.

Fourth, the initial lack of cliticisations applies to all three areas under investigation, strongly indicating that it is indeed a general phenomenon. Schwartz (1999) argues in her re-analysis of White's (1996) study, that transfer is the factor to be considered in L2 French acquisition of clitics where the L1 is English. She shows that there are possibly both subject and object clitics in English and that the relevant projections (NomP and AccP, following the approach to clitics in Sportiche, 1996) are projected in English. Schwartz then goes on to assume that the English children studied by White (1996) have transferred these FCs to French. Following this logic, it is predicted that we should see a differentiated pattern with respect to cliticisation in the three areas under investigation. Whereas spoken informal Swedish might contain some object clitics (cf. *-na*), there are probably no syntactically clitic subject pronouns in Swedish. If transfer were the unique explanation, Swedes would project AccP, but not NomP, in early L2 French. This differentiation is not supported by our data. Moreover, definite articles in Swedish are clearly clitic (*enclitic*), but this does not help adults in early stages to acquire the clitic status of French articles. Carroll's observation that L1 speakers of English do not at first produce proclitic articles is also relevant here. Basing her arguments on those of others, Carroll says that articles in English can be proclitic. This property is apparently not transferred initially to French. This suggests then in conclusion that the clitic status of determiners in the L1 (be it enclitic or proclitic) does not facilitate the acquisition of clitic determiners in the L2.<sup>14</sup>

## **6. General discussion and conclusion**

We have shown that the process of cliticisation displays sharp differences in child and adult learners of French. In three separate domains where cliticisation is involved in French, it has been demonstrated that adult learners do not apply cliticisation initially. On the other hand, cliticisation poses no problem to the bilingual child learners. What characterises the child-adult comparison is

that when the children begin producing clitic forms, they seem to know their syntax and distribution in all three domains. The adults, on the other hand, clearly do not, but only learn cliticisation during a long process. We find, thus, that the hypothesis on cliticisation in L1 and L2 (see section 2.4) has been confirmed.

In discerning among the possible explanations put forward in the same section, a first attempt was made to control for a structural explanation. Since clitics are by definition firmly associated with FCs acting as hosts, it could be that, in the L2 case, the relevant FCs are absent or not projected initially (cf. Vainikka and Young-Scholten 1996). In the preceding section, we demonstrated that, in the case of adults, the lack of cliticisation does not co-occur with an absence of other properties associated with the relevant FCs of the clause or of the DP. We conclude, then, that a lack of FCs can not be the reason cliticisation does not apply in the adult grammars.

The second possible explanation concerns transfer from Swedish. Again, as demonstrated in the previous section, there are many problems with a transfer account. We therefore refute transfer as the sole explanation, even if we do not exclude the possibility that transfer can be a contributing factor.

With respect to the inventory of possible explanations outlined in section 2.4, we are therefore left with the third one: the process of cliticisation is itself subject to development, but only in the adult grammars. Since early cliticisation has been shown for child L2 acquisition at the age of 5 years, (White 1996) we believe that the acquisition of cliticisation should above all be discussed in terms of age and not in terms of L1 vs. L2 acquisition only. Studies on age differences have proposed a difference in treating language before and after the age of about 6-7 years (see, e.g., Long 1990), a notion that may be related to the differences observed here, even if the details of this relation remain

to be worked out. Andersson and Strömquist (1990) proposed processing differences between children and adults to account for differences in L1 and adult L2 acquisition. We will now propose an explanation founded on the theory of UG to account for this finding.

It is well known from earlier comparative research (Wode 1981, Parodi 1998, etc.) that an essential difference between L1 and adult L2 acquisition is that L1 learners have easy access to bound morphology, whereas adult L2 learners have great problems with this, but much less with free morphemes and lexical items. In the ongoing discussion on Missing Inflection (Lardière 1998, etc.), the difficulty of acquiring bound morphology in adult L2 learners is in conflict with evidence for FCs and the presence of free grammatical morphemes such as complementizers. In this type of categorisation (free vs. bound morphemes), clitics are more similar to bound morphemes (cf. Auger 1995 and many others). Furthermore, in the syntactic framework we have adopted here, the distinction between clitic and non-clitic elements has structural consequences. This account allows a structural approach to the issue of free versus bound morphemes in L1 and L2 acquisition.

According to our syntactic framework, cliticisation is the result of a reduction: a *decrease* in structural representation (from XP to X<sup>0</sup>). At the same time, grammatical systems having clitics and weak/strong pronouns (like French), in order to express one and the same function (that of the subject, the object), *increase* the number of different elements with which the computation must deal.

This tension between structure and the number of different categories is the basis of a recent proposal for first language acquisition put forward by Rizzi (1998). He argues that two different principles of economy, one applying to the structure and the other applying to the number of categories entering the computation, are responsible for specific patterns in child language

development. We present these two principles below and discuss how they might account for the data on cliticisation presented here.

Rizzi (1998) speculates that two principles govern linguistic computations:

(Rizzi 1998: 33)

-Structural Economy: Use the minimum of structure consistent with well-formedness constraints.

-Categorial Uniformity: Assume a unique canonical structural realisation for a given semantic type.

The first principle is more or less self-explanatory (it mirrors the *Minimise structure* principle of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999)). The second principle, *Categorial Uniformity*, Rizzi suggests, is “acting upon the inventories of elements that enter the syntactic computation, rather than on the syntactic computation itself. Under Categorial Uniformity the inventory of categories to be used for the syntactic computation will be maximally simple and transparent for the translation to semantics” (Rizzi 1998: 33). Put somewhat differently, adult native grammars are economical in a different sense than child grammars: adult grammars assume the fewest possible *different* elements. As for development, Rizzi's idea is that in child grammars only the first principle is activated, whereas in native adult grammars the Categorial Uniformity principle prevails.

Applying Rizzi's theory to cliticisation provides a straightforward way of accounting for our findings, which is also in accordance with empirical facts described in other frameworks. If Structural Economy prevails in the initial state of (2)L1 acquisition, this correctly predicts that children will have few problems treating subject and object clitics as well as determiners as syntactic heads, in the sense of Cardinaletti and Starke (1999). In terms of the (internal) structure projected, these options are economical ways of realising the function of arguments and expressing

definiteness. Cliticisation is therefore a favoured option since it limits the projected structure at spell-out.

In sharp contrast, if the adult UG, where the Uniformity Principle prevails, guides adult learners, then as few different categories as possible will be posited. Under this principle, a unique structural representation is preferred in order to express the function of subjects and objects. This representation must be modelled on DPs in order to include Noun Phrases. The result is an overgeneralisation of XP-categories (i.e. weak and strong subject pronouns) to contexts where a ( $X^0$ ) would be the target-like choice. The same line of reasoning applies to definite articles. It can be assumed that representations of the definite article are modelled on a more general category of “modifiers” (demonstratives, adjectives etc), which are also XPs. Cliticisation is therefore a clearly disfavoured option since it challenges the Uniformity Principle.

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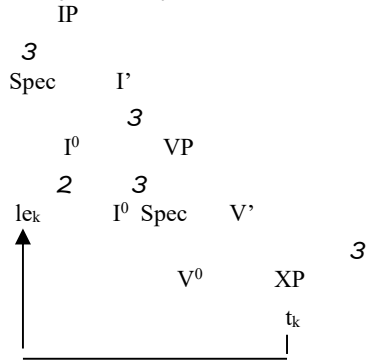
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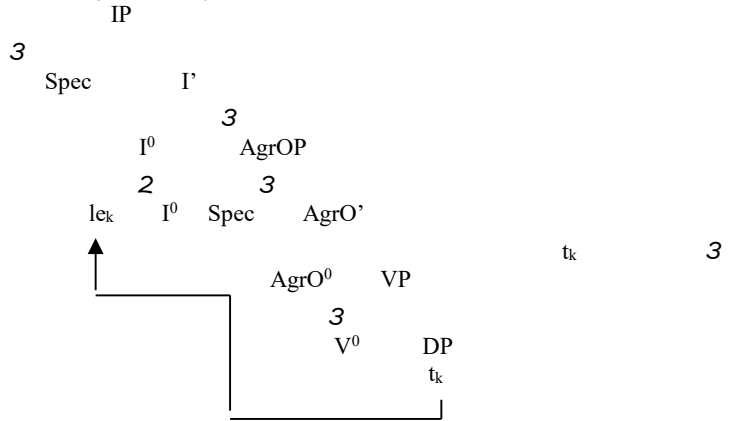
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(4)

a. Object clitics *je le vois*



b. Object clitics *je l'ai vu*



c. Definite articles

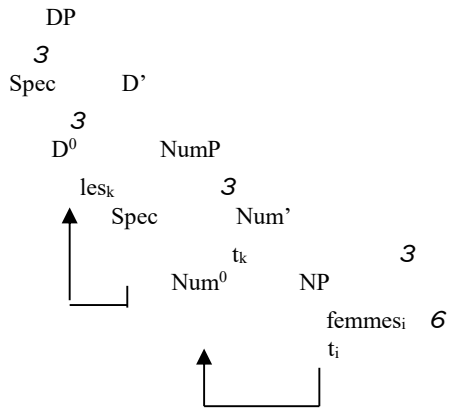


Table 1a. *Forms of pronouns in French*

FRENCH				
	subject	isolated	after prp	object
1ps	je	moi	moi	me
2ps	tu	toi	toi	te
3ps +/-hum	il, elle	lui, elle	lui, elle	le, * la*
1ppl	nous	nous	nous	nous
2ppl	vous	vous	vous	vous
3ppl	ils, elles	eux,elles	eux,elles	les**

\* indirect object: lui

\*\* indirect object: leur

Table 1b. *Forms of pronouns in Swedish*

SWEDISH				
	subject	isolated	after prp	object
1ps	jag	jag	mig	mig
2ps	du	du	dig	dig
3ps +hum	han, hon	han,hon	honom, henne	honom, henne
-hum	den, det	den, det	den, det	den, det
1ppl	vi	vi	oss	oss
2ppl	ni	ni	er	er
3ppl	dom	dom	dom	dom



Table 2. *Bilingual Swedish-French children - levels of development*

Levels	Criteria	Interpretation	Age / MLU	Recordings
1	Mostly lexical items ("telegraphic speech")	No or few FC instantiated	Age around 2;0  MLU under 2,0	Anne 1-3 Jean 1-4 Dany 1 Mimi 1
2	Frequent subject pronouns; Auxiliaries; Modals; Postverbal Neg.; Articles productive	IP / DP instantiated	Ca 2;6-2;10  MLU up to 3,0	Anne 4-6 Jean 5-7 Dany 2-3 Mimi 2-4
3	Subordinates productive; Imparfait; Text structure	TP / CP instantiated	Ca 2;11 - 4;0  MLU 3 - 4,5	Anne 7-13 Jean 8-12 Dany 4-7 Mimi 5-8

Table 3. *Adult L2 learners - levels of development*

Levels	Criteria	Months of residence etc	Recordings
1	Bound verb morphology not productive; Hardly any PC; Hardly any modals; Many Neg+X	3 – 10  Begin of 1 <sup>st</sup> term of university	Henry 1 Björn 1-2, Sara 1-2 Petra 1 Martin 1 Johan 1-2 Karl 1 Lisa 1-2 Sama 1
2	PC for past tense but not yet Imparfait; Verb morphology getting productive (some learners)	7 – 16  1 <sup>st</sup> term of university	Petra 2 Martin 2-3 Karl 2-3 Johan 2-4 Lisa 3-4 Sama 2-4
3	PC and Imparfait; Verb morphology Target-like	14 – 35  2nd term of university	Karl 4-5 Knut 1-3 Nina 1-6 Sama 5

Legend: PC=Passé Composé



Table 4. Subject pronouns with respect to clitic status - 2L1

Learner Rec.	Age	NP +scl	NP	Elided	Non-elided	Scl +A+V
Jean 1-4	1;10-2;4	-	3	-	-	-
Jean 5	2;6	2	2	-	-	-
Jean 6-8	2;9-3;1	15	-	1	-	-
Jean 9-11	3;3-3;7	44	5	4	4	-
Jean 12	3;9	6	-	3	-	-
Anne 1	2;3	-	-	-	-	-
Anne 2	2;6	4	2	-	-	-
Anne 3	2;8	-	-	-	-	-
Anne 4	2;10	-	-	-	-	-
Anne 5	2;11	5	5	-	-	-
Anne 6	3;1	10	2	-	-	-
Anne 7	3;3	3	1	-	-	-
Mimi 1	2;0	3	-	-	-	-
Mimi 2	2;2	9	-	2	-	-
Mimi 3	2;6	8	1	4	-	-
Mimi 4	2;10	19	1	4	1	-
Mimi 5	3;2	21	-	3	-	-

Legend: NP+scl: "le prof il parle"; "moi je pense" (clitic use)  
 NP: "le prof parle" (excluded: "ça") (non-clitic use)  
 elision: "j'écoute, j'ai" etc (clitic use)  
 non-elision: "je écoute" (non-clitic use)  
 The frequent cases of subject pronouns without doubling and before a consonant-initial verb are not considered.

Table 5. Subject pronouns with respect to clitic status in L2, informal learners

Learner Rec.	NP+scl	NP	Elided	Not Elided	Scl+A+V
Henry 1	-	8	-	3	1
Martin 1	12	2	-	-	-
Martin 2	5	2	2	2	-
Martin 3	-	3	4	-	1
Petra 1	7	16	4	3	-
Petra 2	3	6	-	2	-
Karl 1	4	28	2	-	-
Karl 2	5	30	8	8	-
Karl 3	7	42	1	2	-
Karl 4-5	3	51	-	-	-

Legend: see Table 3

Table 6. Subject pronouns with respect to clitic status in L2, formal learners

Learner Rec.	NP+scl	NP	Elided	Not Elided	Scl+A+V
Lisa 1	1	5	9	3	2
Lisa 2	5	16	10	2	1
Lisa 3	-	16	9	1	1
Lisa 4	2	27	12	4	2
Sama 1	-	5	8	-	-
Sama 2	2	17	-	-	-
Sama 3	3	9	5	-	-
Sama 4	-	12	2	-	-
Nina 1	3	4	9	-	-
Nina 2	5	4	2	-	-
Nina 3	2	4	7	-	-
Nina 4	2	2	6	1	-

Legend: see Table 3

Table 7. Elision of subject pronouns in Johan and Knut

Learner, Rec.	Elided	Not Elided
Johan 1	6	4
Johan 2	3	1
Johan 3	6	1
Johan 4	9	2
Knut 1+2	13	1
Knut 3	7	-

Table 8. Forms and positions of object pronouns in children, first stage (around 2;0).

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong					
Weak					
Cl=Weak		1			
Reflexive cl					
Cl reduced		1			

Legend: Strong : lui, elle, moi, toi, nous, vous;

Weak: postverbal le, la; unreduced le;

Clitic=Weak: le, la les, me, te;

+ for reflexives: more than 10 occ;

Clitic reduced: l', t', m' (non-reflexive);

\*target-deviance of form or position.

Table 9. Forms and positions of object pronouns in children, second stage (around 2;6-2;10).

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong					
Weak			*2		
Cl=Weak		5	15		
Reflexive cl		10	1		
Cl reduced	1	1	1		

Legend: see Table 7

Table 10. Forms and positions of object pronouns in children, third stage (around 2;11-4;0).

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong					3
Weak					
Cl=Weak	2	14	22	*1	
Reflexive cl	1	+	2	*1	
Cl reduced	15	2			

Legend: see Table 7

Table 11. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, first stage.

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong		*1	*1	*2	*23
Weak					*10
Cl=Weak		1 <sup>a</sup>	7		
Reflexive cl		+			
Cl reduced					

Legend: see Table 7

<sup>a</sup>There are, furthermore, four cases of pronouns incorrectly placed before a modal by Sara, who is clearly influenced by Italian at this point.

Table 12. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, second stage.

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong		*1	*1	*3	*10
Weak			*1	*1	
Cl=Weak		11	4		
Reflexive cl	1	+	4	*3	
Cl reduced	7				

Legend: see Table 7

Table 13. Forms and positions of object pronouns in adults, third stage.

	Pre-Aux	Pre-Vfinite	Pre-infinitive	*Pre-past ptc	Post-Vlex
Strong		*1			3
Weak	*1				
Cl=Weak	2	27	9		
Reflexive cl		+	1	*2	
Cl reduced	13	3	3	*1	

Legend: see Table 7

Table 14. Articles before vowel – 2L1

Child Recs.	Elision		Doubled (ex. le l'homme)	% correct use
	Elided	Not Elided		
J1 – J4	2	-	-	100
J5 – J13	36	3	1	90
A1-A2	2	-	-	100
A3-A15	38	1	3	93
D1-D4	8	-	-	100
D5-D9	18	-	-	100
M1	-	-	-	-
M2-M10	19	1	-	95
Total/mean :	123	5	4	93

Legend: J= Jean A=Anne D=Dany M=Mimi

Table 15. Articles before vowel – L2

Learner Rec.	Months in France	Elision				% correct use
		Elided		Not Elided		
		NounTyp	NounTok	NounTyp	NounTok	
<b>Informal learners</b>						
Henry 1	< 3	-	-	3	3	0
Henry 2	<3	-	-	2	2	0
Sara 1	3	-	-	3	4	0
Sara 2	7	-	-	5	5	0
Petra 1	5	-	-	4	4	0
Petra 2	7	-	-	4	5	0
Martin 1	7	2	5	-	-	83
Martin 2	14	1	1	1	2	33
Martin 3	16	-	-	2	3	0
Karl 1	8	6	13	3	3	68
Karl 2	10	8	12	4	4	63
Karl 3	12	8	16	7	7	53
Karl 4	14	5	8	3	6	50
Karl 5	16	5	10	1	1	83
Knut 1	ca 20	8	13	-	-	94
Knut 2	ca 22	6	6	-	-	100
Knut 3	ca 35	8	11	-	-	100
<b>Formal learners (FL): university students</b>						
Lisa 1	FL	11	20	2	3	80
Lisa 2	FL	6	9	1	1	82
Lisa 3	FL	5	6	2	2	75
Lisa 4	FL	7	9	1	1	90
Sama 1	FL	4	9	-	-	90
Sama 2	FL	7	11	-	-	92
Sama 3	FL	7	15	-	-	100
Sama 4	FL	6	9	-	-	90

Legend: Typ = Types, Tok = Tokens

## Endnotes

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\* Previous versions of this work have been presented at "Structure, Acquisition, and Change of Grammars: Phonological and Syntactic Aspects", Hamburg 27-29 October 2000, at "Grammar in Focus", Lund February 2001 and at FAS-seminariet, Stockholm, November 2001. We thank all the audiences present for valuable comments. Special thanks to Verner Egerland, Jürgen Meisel and Natascha Müller for discussing our ideas with us. All errors remain our own. This research is supported by a grant from The Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HSFR) to the DURS-project directed by Suzanne Schlyter, grant number F0686/1998.

<sup>1</sup> With respect to object clitic placement it is still an open question whether it is obtained through derivation or base-generation. Object clitics have been analysed as either moved from the object position in VP (Kayne, 1975 and later, Manzini, 1998) or as an agreement marker agreeing with a DP or a pro in this position (Kaiser, 1994; Müller et al. 1994 etc.). There are also approaches attempting to reconcile both positions, such as Jakubowicz et al. (1998:116) and Sportiche (1996). (See Cardinaletti 1999 for an overview of these proposals).

<sup>2</sup> The details of this implementation are not necessary for our present aims. Cardinaletti and Starke (1999: 204-207) assume that the level at which cliticisation occurs is between a (pre)syntactic lexicon and a full (language specific) lexicon. The presyntactic lexicon is an "abstract" or a "core" lexicon where all entries share a fixed array of underspecified features. This is thus the level at which only XP-categories may exist. Only after some derivation, which seeks to reduce structure in accordance with a general principle of economy, the full lexicon is accessed. Therefore, deficient pronouns exist only in the full lexicon. See Cardinaletti and Starke for further details and discussion.

<sup>3</sup> C. Hamann (p.c.) pointed out problems with this analysis. Whatever the status of the "pragmatic argument" is, there may be many reasons other than differences in clitichood to account for the later appearance of object clitics, such as the fact that object pronouns are much less frequent than the - obligatory - subject pronouns, the non-canonical place of object pronouns, etc.

<sup>4</sup> There is a contradiction between this criterion and the fact that these forms are quite normal in written French – where subject pronouns should have a 'weak pronoun' status. For the moment we cannot resolve this problem.

<sup>5</sup> We have not always studied all of these learners in each partial study.

<sup>6</sup> Utterances in the CHAT format, including speaker indications, are copies of the transcriptions, whereas other examples are sampled and simplified.

<sup>7</sup> It is probable that these serve as triggers for non-reflexive object clitics (Schlyter, 1997), but we will not go into this question here.

<sup>8</sup> The criteria used for deciding when determiners are productive were: 60% compliance of determiner in obligatory contexts and use of different determiners (except the indefinite plural *des*). The first time span corresponds more or less to the first level of general development defined independently, cf. Table 1 section 2.1.

<sup>9</sup> As a measure of comparison, it can be noted that in the monolingual child, Grégoire, (corpus assembled by C. Champaud, transcriptions available from CHILDES, MacWhinney, 2000), we found only one (1) violation of the elision rule in 23 contexts (recordings G5-G10, 2; 0,5 – 2; 5,27), i.e. 96% correct use. No doubled articles were found in the Grégoire corpus.

<sup>10</sup> We use parenthesis as a transcription convention for parts of speech that are less clearly produced.

<sup>11</sup> All learners also produce doubled articles (e.g. *le l'homme*), like the children, but these are not reported on here.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that this is not equal to an initial access of FCs. In fact we have argued elsewhere (see Granfeldt 2000a, b, Schlyter forthc.) that FCs in the DP and the clause are instantiated in sequence.

<sup>13</sup> One reviewer asks what might trigger the unlearning of movement to Spec-DP. This questions can not be dealt with seriously here for reasons of space. One possibility, although, is that prosodic development might help. Even the least advanced learners who never cliticise articles when the DP is in argument position have some occurrences of elided articles after prepositions. In these cases the learners typically produce all three morphemes within a single rythmique group (e.g. | *à l'hôtel* |) whereas in many other cases articles and nouns receive individual stress in a DP (e.g. |*le* | *hôtel*|)

<sup>14</sup> A serious discussion of transfer in the domain of cliticisation would, however, require further L1-L2 combinations.