EXTRACTION FROM NP Y OR Y NOT

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I. Introduction

In French, there are two clitics that Kayne 1975 calls "pro-PP's," these are the clitics y and en. They are so called because they correspond to PP's, and not to NP's as do the other French clitics, y corresponds to à + NP, while en corresponds to de + NP. Both of these clitics can be arguments to a verb or to an adjective, as in 1 through 4. Although en can be a nominal argument (5), it is accepted that the clitic y may not be an argument to a noun (Godard 1992, Kupfmann 1991). However, there are some data that suggest that extraction from NP is not entirely impossible for y. In this paper, I will show these data and argue that extraction of y from an NP is only possible when the source of y is very transparent, that is, when it is clearly neither a locative nor a verbal or adjectival argument.

1. Claude [VP parle de son travail] Claude en parle
   Claude talks about his work Claude about-it talks
   Claude talks about his work Claude talks about it

2. Claude [VP pense à son travail] Claude y pense
   Claude thinks about her work Claude about-it thinks
   Claude thinks about her work Claude thinks about it

3. Claude est [AP fier de son travail] Claude en est fier
   Claude is proud of his work Claude of-it is proud
   Claude is proud of his work Claude is proud of it

4. Claude est [AP fidèle à son travail] Claude y est fidèle
   Claude is faithful to her work Claude to-it is faithful
   Claude is faithful to her work Claude is faithful to it

5. [NP La descente du village] est dangereuse
   The descent from the village is dangerous
   The descent from the village is dangerous
   La descente en est dangereuse
   The descent from-it is dangerous
   The descent from it is dangerous

The clitic y presents certain problems. In an earlier paper (Ossipov 1995), I argued that there are in fact two y clitics: one is attached to the verb by means of
movement (all clitics in French appear in pre-verbal position, except in affirmative exclamations) This one is the argument \( y \), so-called because it is extracted from argument position to a verb or adjective. It is frequently equivalent to \( + NP \), although some other prepositions are possible, such as en "at" (not to be confused with the homophonous clitic) The other clitic \( y \) is the locative clitic that is base-generated on the verb It shows location, and can thus correspond to any locative preposition, including à (dans "in", en, sur "on", sous "under", chez "at", etc) + NP These two clitics are homophonous, which is what confuses the analysis and makes the source of the clitic unclear.

In this paper, I will examine data that show when \( y \) may not be extracted from NP, when \( y \) could be extracted from NP, and when \( y \) clearly must be extracted from NP.

II \( y \) may not be extracted from NP

The following sentences show instances where extraction of \( y \) from NP is unacceptable, although the locative reading for the clitic is available.

6 Je prépare un voyage à la campagne *J'y prépare un voyage
I prepare a trip to the country I to-it prepare a trip
I prepare a trip to the country I prepare a trip to it

7 La descente au village est dangereuse *La descente y est dangereuse
The descent to the village is dangerous The descent to-it is dangerous
The descent to the village is dangerous The descent to it is dangerous

In both of these sentences, although odd, it is possible to have a reading such that the \( y \) has a locative meaning, because the action of the verb can take place in a location. In that case, (6) means that the preparation for the trip takes place in the country, and (7) means that the village has some kind of dangerous descent located within its geographical limits. These sentences show that the locative \( y \) will override a nominal argument interpretation for the clitic.

III Ambiguous sentences

The ambiguity in these sentences resides in the fact that the source of \( y \) is not immediately apparent. While in some of the following sentences the locative reading is unavailable, it is unclear how to analyze the verb phrase. That is, the \( y \) could have its source within the VP or within the NP.

8 Je ferai un voyage à la campagne J’y ferai un voyage
I will-make a trip to the country I to-it will-make a trip
I’ll make a trip to the country I’ll make a trip to it
The next week we will make a little hop to Prescott

Next week, we’ll make a short hop to Prescott

Next week, we’ll make a short hop to it

While the locative reading is not possible here ((8) would mean that I will take a trip once I get to the country and (9) that I will hop when I get to Prescott), neither is it clear that the y is not a verbal argument Kupferman 1991 suggests that the structure for these sentences is V-NP-PP, with the verb faire ‘to make’ as some kind of ditransitive

While faire does not normally take an indirect object, there are sentences such as (10) that indicate it is a possibility

He signaled to his friends

He signaled to them

However, neither is it clear that extraction is not from within the NP. If faire is not a ditransitive verb, then there is no other source for the y except from within the NP

In the following sentences, Kupferman argues that, because the verbs are passive, and both are ditransitive, the clitic y is not extracted from the NP, but is the dative argument of the verb

The d-structure for (12) would resemble (13)

However, this is unlikely, since the dative clitic is lui or leur, even if the NP is inanimate

Note the following

What are you going to do to decorate the wall?

We go to start by to-him to give a good coat of paint
Furthermore, there are semantic reasons for not accepting Kupfman's analysis in (13), the interdiction applies to anyone who tries to enter the room, and not to the room itself. It is the latter, incorrect, interpretation that obtains if the PP is a verbal argument.

The following sentences show that the y must be extracted from the NP because both the dative and accusative argument positions are filled. There is no other source for y because the locative reading is also unavailable.

15 On leur a donné la réponse à ta demande
We to-them have given the answer to your request
We've given them the answer to your request

16 L'accès au film est interdit au moins de quinze ans
The access to the film is forbidden to less than fifteen years
Access to the film is forbidden to those under fifteen
L'accès leur y est interdit
The access to-them to-it is forbidden
Access to it is forbidden to them

The only truly ambiguous sentences then are those that have the verb faire in them, and then, extraction from the VP is only possible if one accepts that faire is ditransitive. Otherwise, the y must be extracted from the NP.

IV Unambiguous sentences
There are some sentences where the y is clearly not a locative or a verbal argument, but must have its source within the NP. Note that in these sentences, the verb is an experiencer verb (17-19), which does not easily take a locative adverb. If the chtic in (19) is the locative y, then the meaning of the sentence would be that I like people when I am in Paris and not otherwise, an unnatural reading.

17 Je trouve la réponse à ta demande suffisante
I find the answer to your request sufficient
I y trouve la réponse suffisante
I to-it find the answer sufficient

18 Je déteste le voyage à Paris
I hate the trip to Paris
Je y deteste le voyage
I to-it hate the trip

I hate the trip to Paris
I hate the trip to it

On va commencer par y donner un bon coup de peinture
We go to start by to-it to give a good coat of paint
We'll start by giving it a good coat of paint
19 J'aime les gens en France  J'y aime les gens
I like the people in France I in-it like the people
I like the people in France I like the people there

20 Sa participation au congrès est surprenante
Her participation in the meeting is surprising
Her participation in the meeting is surprising
Sa participation y est surprenante
Her participation in-it is surprising
Her participation in it is surprising

In all of these sentences, the locative reading is impossible (17) or very odd (18-20), and the verbal or adjectival argument is unavailable. Kupferman (1991 143-44) lists other sentences where the only possible source for y is within the NP

21 [Cette pièce], l'accès y, est commode
This room the access to-it is convenient
This room, access to it is convenient

22 [La demande qu'il a formulée], la réponse y, est negative
The request that he has made the answer to-it was negative
The request he made, the response to it was negative

23 [Les sports de combat], une bonne aptitude y, était requise
The games of combat a good aptitude to-them was required
Combat games, a good aptitude for them was required

24 [Les postes les plus prestigieux], la promotion y, était devenue possible
The jobs the most prestigious the promotion to-them has become possible
The most prestigious jobs, promotion to them had become possible

25 [Ces produits-la], une allergie y, était apparue
these products there an allergy to-them had appeared
These products, an allergy to them had appeared

In (21-23), the adjective does not take an à + NP argument, which is usually the source for y. In (24-25), a locative reading is only possible without the Left Dislocated NP, which must be co-indexed with a clitic inside the sentence.

V Conclusion

If the clitic y can have a locative meaning, it will have that meaning. If it can be a verbal or adjectival argument, it will be such an argument. All other possible interpretations of y must be unavailable before it can have a nominal argument.
interpretation. With these constraints, extraction of y from NP is only possible if the verb heading the VP which contains the NP cannot easily have a locative adverb, examples of such verbs are such as experiencer verbs. Extraction from NP is not impossible, but extremely rare.

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