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Rezensentinnen und Rezensenten dieses Bandes:

Danckaert, Lieven: *The Development of Latin Clause Structure.* A Study of the Extended Verb Phrase. Oxford Studies in Diachronic and Historical Linguistics, 24. Oxford University Press Oxford, 2017. xxii, 356 Seiten. Gebunden, 78,00 GBP. ISBN: 978-0-19-875952-2.

This book investigates the diachrony of Latin clause structure from around 200 BCE to about 590 CE (in textual terms, from Plautus to the *Historia Francorum*; pp. 82–85). Latin syntax has been the subject of extensive investigation over the past decade or so and Danckaert's study is one of the most important contributions to this area of research. There are few works that bring together philological acumen, syntactic theory, and statistical modeling as masterfully as he does. Indeed, his study is a testament to the potency of this methodological troika. Danckaert is also to be congratulated for having archived the data and code used for his study (at https://dataverse.no/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.18710/NYY2DV), which allowed me to easily reproduce his results.

For Indo-Europeanists, Danckaert's monograph is important for at least two reasons. First, the methodology in this book can be profitably applied to other archaic Indo-European languages. As will be seen below, Danckaert's approach to the investigation of Latin differs considerably from that of other scholars. Second, Danckaert offers one of the most thoroughly articulated accounts of clause structure in Latin, which offers a foundation for a comparative investigation of clausal syntax in early Indo-European. One would like to know in particular how much of early Latin clause structure is also found elsewhere in the family.

The book contains six chapters, an epilogue, glossary, bibliography, and indices for authors, subjects, and passages discussed. Below I provide a chapter-by-chapter summary of the book and then offer brief thoughts selected aspects of the work.

Summary

Chapter one, „Word order, configurationality, and structural ambiguity," begins with a discussion of „free" word order and what it would mean for Latin to be a free-word order language—or rather, in generative terms, a non-configurational language. Marshaling an array of evidence in favor of a verb phrase (VP) in Latin (pp. 31–73), Danckaert concludes that Latin is a configurational language. His discussion of the Latin VP is one of best that I know of for any archaic Indo-European language.

Danckaert's claim of configurationality brings with it far-reaching consequences, since it means that swaths of data are going to be structurally ambiguous (p. 78). Consider the following pair of examples from p. 26:

(1)   a. adicies oleum.
            ‚Add oil.'   Apic. 5.2.2
        b. pisum coques.
            ‚Cook the peas.'   Apic. 5.3.3

In example (1a), the direct object follows its verb, but in (1b) it precedes it. Under other approaches, these could be straightforward examples of head-initial and head-final word order, respectively. On Danckaert's approach, however, there are multiple possibilities for the underlying configuration. In addition to the question of whether the VP is head-initial or head-final, there is also the issue of where exactly the directly objects ends up. These ambiguities are illustrated in the trees in Figure 1 (from p. 28). Danckaert contends (pp. 28–29) that it is not possible to determine the headedness of the verb phrases in example (1). To avoid such structural ambiguity, he therefore has to be selective in the data that he analyzes. This an issue to which I return below.

Figure 1: Structural ambiguity
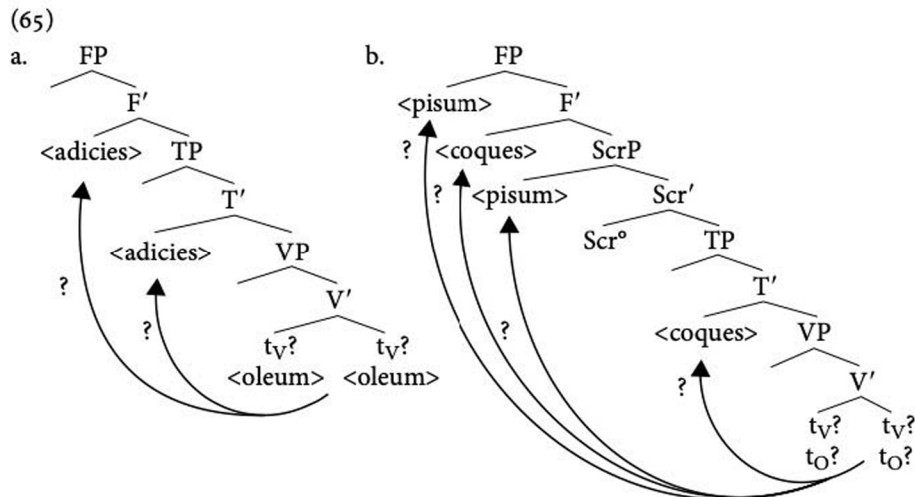
Chapter two, „Latin corpus linguistics and the study of language change," provides one of the most comprehensive discussions of the challenges involved in the investigation of diachronic syntax from corpora. Danckaert strives to create to a balanced dataset in which skew in the distribution of text types over the eight centuries

covered by his study is minimized. Due to the nature of the texts that have come down to us, however, this goal is not always attainable. For instance, the only metrical texts in his dataset are the plays of Plautus and Terence, but as he rightly notes (p. 85), one cannot afford to leave them out in a study of historical Latin syntax. Similar challenges also arise with the distribution of Christian and secular texts from the end of the second century CE onward as well as the regional distribution of texts (pp. 86–87).

Against the backdrop of these first two chapters, chapter three, „Multiple object positions and how to diagnose them," investigates the alternation between OV and VO sequences in the history of Latin. Danckaert argues (e.g., pp. 120, 173) that clauses with a modal verb are the most reliable source of information for the OV ~ VO alternation since structural ambiguity is less of an issue in this context compared to clauses with just a single verb. He claims (pp. 109–114) in addition that, contrary to what previous studies have maintained, VO word order does not increase much during the period he investigates. In fact, it arguably decreases somewhat.

In chapter four, „VOAux: a typologically rare word order pattern," Danckaert discusses the cross-linguistically rare structure in which a head-initial verb phrase (i.e., VO) is the complement of an auxiliary verb to its right:

(2) ...quia euentus dimicationis in epulas et securitatem [[compellere uictores] poterat].
    ,...because the outcome of the battle could lead the winning party to feasting and carelessness.'   Fron. Str. 2.9.6

The phrase [[*compellere uictores*] *poterat*] ,could lead the winning party' is of considerable theoretical importance because it prima facie violates the FINAL-OVER-FINAL CONSTRAINT (FOFC; Biberauer et al. 2014, Sheehan et al. 2017), which forbids a complement-head sequence from dominating a head-complement projection within the same extended projection. In other words, it predicts that [[VO] Aux] should not exist. Although Danckaert acknowledges the existence of [[VO] Aux] structures in Latin, he contends that they are only „spurious" counterexamples (p. 210) to the FOFC. The motivation for this view is deferred until the next chapter. One of the more striking empirical results of this chapter concerns the trajectory of VOAux clauses. On his analysis, they increase in frequency until about 50 CE and then undergo a precipitous decline.

In chapter five, „Changing EPP parameters: Clause structure in Classical and Late Latin." Danckaert takes up the diachrony of the VPAux ~ AuxVP alternation. He

posits two grammars, which he refers to as Grammar A (for Early and Classical Latin) and Grammar B (for Late Latin). The difference between these two involves a parametric change in a functional head in the TP-domain. This functional head has an EPP-feature (Extended Projection Principle), which requires that its host projection be lexicalized by some phonologically overt category. In Grammar A, VP movement satisfies the EPP (which makes Latin a so-called SPEC-PIED-PIPING LANGUAGE). In Grammar B, the EPP is checked by movement of the highest verbal head. As a result, the syntax of VPAux and AuxVP clauses differs between the two grammars. Grammar A generates VPAux clauses by moving the VP to a high position in the middle field of the clause, whereas Grammar B generates the same string with roll-up movement. Since no roll-up movement is involved in VPAux clauses in Grammar A, they are not subject to the FOFC (p. 236). Grammar B, by contrast, is subject to the FOFC, which is why, according to Danckaert, VOAux declines in frequency in Late Latin. It is worth noting that Danckaert assumes the LINEAR CORRESPONDENCE AXIOM (LCA), which maintains that all head-complement sequences (e.g., VO) are base-generated and all complement-head sequences (such as OV) are derived. This is a profound assumption about natural language syntax (which Danckaert is by no means alone in adopting) and one wonders not only about its empirical justification but also how his analysis would differ without it.

The point of departure for chapter six, „The development of BE-periphrases,“ is the disparity in surface word order between BE-periphrases and modal verbs. Modal verbs exhibit an increase in head-initial syntax over time, but BE-periphrases do not. Crucial to Danckaert's account is the distinction between E-periphrases and F-periphrases:

(3)   a. *E-periphrasis*
          quidquid consecutus **erit**
          ‚Whatever he will have obtained'   Gaius *Inst*. 3.111
    b. *F-periphrasis*
          si forte collositas minime **fuerit** secuta
          ‚If by chance the hardened bit of skin will not have followed'.
                                      Cass. Fel. 20.5 Fraisse

E- and F-periphrases exhibit strikingly different diachronic trends. Head-initial E-periphrases decrease over time, whereas head-initial F-periphrases increase. Danckaert attributes this difference to prosodic phonology. In Late Latin, only monosyllabic forms of BE tend to occur after past participles (especially in affirmative clauses). These monosyllabic forms are all E-periphrases (e.g., *sum*). The chapter closes with a

discussion of the relationship between perfective E-periphrases in Latin (e.g., *amatus sum*) and Romance analytic present tense passives (e.g., Italian *sono amato*). It is often assumed that the former gave rise to the latter. By contrast, Danckaert proposes a discontinuous history in which prosodically weak (enclitic?) BE dies out. The analytic present tense passives in Romance are then created analogically on the basis of F-periphrases such as that in example (3b), which crucially involve no tense mismatch.

Discussion

Structural ambiguity and reanalysis

Given the profound role that string ambiguity plays in Danckaert's study, I would like to offer a few thoughts on this issue. Recall from the discussion above that, according to Danckaert (p. 29), it is not possible to determine whether the examples in (1) are head-initial or head-final, since their surface orders can be derived in several possible ways. His point is well taken, but the discussion left me with some questions. First, string ambiguity for Danckaert should presumably be less of an issue since as noted above he assumes the LINEAR CORRESPONDENCE AXIOM, according to which the examples in (1) are underlyingly head-initial by assumption. Second, even for scholars who do not adopt the LCA, it may be possible to resolve the structural ambiguity in examples such as (1) with more investigation of their interpretive effects. For instance, one of the surface word orders could be associated with object focus while the other one could be pragmatically „neutral," which would mean that one of the orders could arguably be more basic. In a similar vein, one wonders about the role of prose rhythm, which has long been thought to have an effect on surface word order (e.g., Habinek 1985, Holmes 2017, Keeline and Kirby 2019) and which further complicates the search for the underlying syntax of the clause. Danckaert is well aware of both of these phenomena (pp. 107–108) and makes it clear (e.g., pp. 2, 111, 294) that investigation of the synchronic factors that condition alternations such as that in example (1) lies beyond the scope of the work. The scope of every study must of course be delimited, so one cannot fault him for not carrying out this research in this book, but further work on the synchronic variation of Latin word order may reduce the amount of structural ambiguity at play and thereby increase the amount of data that could be used to probe the syntax of Latin.

Danckaert's diachronic accounts rely on the reanalysis of structurally ambiguous surface strings (e.g., pp. 253, 255). Consider for instance AuxVP clauses, such as the following (from p. 238):

(4) ...donec cremor crassus erit factus.
　　'...until it becomes a thick cream.'   Cato *Agr.* 86

Danckaert argues (p. 255) that we need to distinguish two distinct underlying structures, which yield the same surface word order:

(5) *AuxVP syntax*
　　a. *Archaism*
　　　[$_{GP}$ T°+F°+G° [$_{FP}$ [$_{VoiceP}$ **<DP$_\varphi$> V <DP$_\varphi$>**] [$_{F'}$ t$_{F°}$ [$_{TP}$ t$_{T°}$ tVoiceP]]]]
　　b. *Innovation*
　　　[$_{FP}$ T°+F° [$_{TP}$ t$_{T°}$ [$_{VoiceP}$ **<DP$_\varphi$> V <DP$_\varphi$>**]]]

The basic idea is that Latin learners reanalyze the structure in (5a), in which a fronted auxiliary occupies G°, as (5b), where the auxiliary occupies the lower F head and no movement of VoiceP occurs.

The catalyst for this change, according to Danckaert (pp. 249–252), is the reduction of negation in Latin from a phrasal negator NegP to a prosodically proclitic head negator Neg°.[1] This change allegedly took place in Late Latin, although the empirical evidence for this assertion is not laid out and I was left wondering about the evidence for proclitic *non* at earlier stages of Latin. Danckaert relies on van Gelderen's Head Preference Principle to motivate the reduction of *non*:

(6) *Head Preference Principle* (van Gelderen 2011:13)
　　Be a head, rather than a phrase.

This alleged principle makes no predictions about the temporal location of changes. That is, *non* could have undergone the change from NegP to Neg° at any point in its history. So why did the change happen only in Late Latin (if that is when it really occurred)?

Danckaert frames the reduction of *non* in the context of Jespersen's cycle (pp. 248–249) and begins by noting: „My starting point in this section is the well-known generalization that the expression of sentential negation is typically not diachronically stable but subject to a very systematic type of cyclic change." There are two aspects of change here, diachronic stability and cyclicity. Jespersen's cycle is a claim about

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1　It is worth noting that *non* has also been analyzed as an adjoined negator (see Zeijlstra 2004).

the latter, not the former. That is, it makes predictions about patterns of change (namely that they be cyclical), but it does not make any predictions (at least that I am aware of) about how long a language will spend in each of the alleged stages of the cycle or about how long it will take a language to proceed through the whole cycle. At any rate, it was not clear to me why Jespersen's cycle was relevant at all for the change that Danckaert argues for (i.e., NegP > Neg°), since presumably such developments occur that are not necessarily part of a „negation cycle."

The emergence of V2 in Romance

According to Danckaert, verbs move higher in Late Latin than in Classical or Early Latin. On pp. 254–255, he connects this aspect of his analysis with the alleged verb-second (V2) syntax of early Romance. Generative analyses of V2 standardly postulate movement of the verb to the left periphery (e.g., to C°). Danckaert speculates (p. 255) that his proposal of higher verb movement in Late Latin brings this stage of the language closer to the V2 syntax of early Romance: „As it seems unlikely that the individual Early Romance varieties independently developed a V2-like system, it might very well be the case that patterns of finite verb placement in Early Romance derive from a common, Late Latin source." This is an interesting idea that would ultimately link over a thousand years of syntactic history. Danckaert may well be right, but I would just like to mention two aspects of this issue that warrant further consideration. First, there is the issue of homoplasy. Danckaert is right that the most parsimonious history of early Romance would posit a single V2 innovation in Proto-Romance (or earlier). The big question, however, is whether the syntactic history of Late Latin and early Romance was maximally parsimonious. Second, it is standardly claimed that Proto-Romance is a descendant of Vulgar Latin (a term that I feel compelled to use despite its lamentable ambiguity), aspects of which can only be observed intermittently in extant texts. The question we have to wrestle with is the extent to which we can infer syntactic history from our stock of Late Latin texts. Are they accurate reflections of the Latin that became Proto-Romance? To be sure, Danckaert's corpus contains Vulgar Latin texts, but they constitute only a portion of his Late Latin data. It is also worth bearing in mind that Ledgeway (2017) argues that V2 syntax can already be found in the *Itinerarium Egeriae*.

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