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Martin Březina

DISTRIBUTION OF (NON-)SYLLABIC PRESENT TENSE FORMS OF THE VERB *BÝTI* IN THE 3RD-PERSON SINGULAR IN OLD CZECH

ABSTRACT

In the presented article, I follow the previous works investigating clitics in the history of the Czech language. Particularly, I aim to describe the distribution of the 3SG present tense be forms in Old Czech prosaic texts dated to the 14th and 15th centuries, and, subsequently, assess their status in the scope of the grammaticalization theory. Since each form bears several functions in a clause, I explore the effect of both the verb's function and form on its distribution. The observations made here are then contextualised, compared to the contemporary Czech, as well as the Old Czech situation, especially focusing on the 2SG forms that show a similar formal variation as the 3SG forms. The numerical data presented here are supplemented with statistical tests whose results and methods are in detail published online on GitHub.

KEYWORDS

affix; clitic; clitic cluster; grammaticalization; Old Czech; present tense be

Introduction

Present tense forms of the Old Czech (OCz) verb *býti* 'to be' bear several functions in a clause. Like other finite verb forms, present tense *be* serves as the main predicate of its clause, being semantically rich, e.g., bearing an existential meaning, such as in (1). This kind of usage is rather rare, as the present *be* forms are more frequently used as auxiliaries to express verbal features instead of nouns and nonfinite verbs –

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see the examples of a copula in (2a), a passive auxiliary in (2b), and preterite and ante-preterite auxiliaries in (2c–d) (cf. GEBAUER 1958, 420–436; KOSEK 2011, 116–119). The described situation is similar to contemporary Czech (CCz) (see KOMÁREK 1986, 424; GREPL et al. 2012, 317; NOVÁKOVÁ 2018, 9; KARLÍK 2009; 2017a; 2017b). In OCz specifically, present tense *be* was also used in periphrastic constructions with other participles, such as with an *s*-participle in (2e), rendering the same meaning as the structure in (2c), and an *nt*-participle in (2f), semantically similar to the English present continuous (*I am going*) (cf. GEBAUER 1958, 420–436).

(1) OCz (BIBLOL, 138v)

Jest li kto, ješto by ostal
 be.PRS.3SG Q someone who be.AOR.3SG be.left.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG
 z domu Saulova
 from house Saul's
 'Is there anyone left from the House of Saul?'

(2) a. OCz (KRISTA, 112r)

Duše svatý, ty **jsi** utěšitel,
 Holy Spirit you be.PRS.2SG comforter
 'Holy Spirit, you are the comforter.'

b. OCz (BIBLDRÁŽĎ, 551v)

nebo **jsú** mnozí pozváni,
 because be.PRS.3PL many invite.PTCP.PST.PASS.M.PL
 'Because many have been invited.'
 'Why are you standing (here) scrawny?'

c. OCz (LIST. LITOMĚŘ., as cited in GEBAUER 1958, 421)

Pavel dal **jest** zem'ú
 Paul give.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG be.PRS.3SG land
 'Paul gave land.'

d. OCz (ŠTÍT MUS., 26^b, as cited in GEBAUER 1958, 425)

psal **sem** byl vám
 write.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG be.PRS.1SG be.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG you
 'I had written to you.'

e. OCz (BAW., 125, as cited in GEBAUER 1958, 435)

lítá závist mu radost **jest** smutivši
 wild envy him joy be.PRS.3SG sadden.PTCP.PST.ACT.F.SG
 'Wild envy saddened his joy.'

f. OCz (BAW., 98, as cited in GEBAUER 1958, 433)

proč **jsi** v libivosti stoje
 why be.PRS.2SG in scrawniness stand.PTCP.PRS.ACT.M.SG

The plurality of the functions may be simplified by adapting KARLÍK's (2009; 2017a; 2017b) distinction of the CCz *be* functions the following way: the verb in (1) and the verbs in (2a–b) are grouped together as “lexical verb/auxiliary” (LVA), whereas types (2c–f) belong to another group, “grammatical auxiliary” (GA).¹ The reason for such a distinction comes from the morphosyntactic properties of the present tense *be* in various structures in CCz, as well as in Old and Middle Czech (MCz).

In OCz, the preterite auxiliary forms are enclitic (KOSEK 2015; 2017).² As such, they need to be supported by a host word, thus they do not occur alone in a sentence or host other enclitic particles themselves, such as *li*, proclitic conjunctions *a*, *i*, *ale*, or the negation marker *ne*, but rather they form a rigid string with other clitics in a clause (a clitic cluster). Furthermore, they avoid the initial position in the clause, and they frequent the post-initial position, supported by the initial element (as Wackernagel clitics, cf. MIGDALSKI 2010), or occupy another position further in the clause, often supported by a participle (as verb-adjacent clitics, *ibid.*).³ The LVA deviates substantially from the clitic behaviour listed above, as it is commonly attested in a non-clitic environment, e.g., occupying the initial position in a clause, hosting the enclitic particle *li*, etc. (KOSEK 2015).

Previous research done on this topic, most notably KOSEK (2015), deals with all present tense *be* forms as a whole. I continue in this work, investigating more deeply the effect of form and function on the verb's distribution. As we can see in Tab. 1, there is a noticeable variation within even a single slot of the paradigm of the OCz verb *býti* in the present tense.

1 Similar approach is taken by KOSEK (2011, 119, 157, footnote 153), see also FRANKS – KING (2000, 93–96).

2 Strictly speaking, the grammaticalization of the preterite auxiliary is not yet finished in the OCz period (KOSEK 2011, 120). Thus in some cases, the preterite auxiliary is attested in a non-clitic environment as well, similar to the LVA, such as when it hosts a negation marker *ne* in (i) or a question particle *li* in (ii). These cases are rather rare, and KOSEK (2015), for example, did not attest any non-clitic cases in his sample of Old Czech Bibles.

(i) OCz (ŽKap. 88,44, as cited in GEBAUER 1929, 646)
ne-*jsi* *pomohl* *jemu*
 NEG-be.PRS.2SG help.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG him
 ‘You did not help him.’

(ii) OCz (ML., 29^a, as cited in GEBAUER 1929, 90)
jsi *li u veliké hřiechy zablúdíli*
 be.PRS.2SG Q in great sins go.astray.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG
 ‘If you have gone astray in great sins.’

3 This kind of behaviour is attested for the preterite auxiliary only, although I expect that other OCz GAs will not deviate from it; the analysis should then prove whether this assumption is correct or not.

Tab.1. Present tense *be* forms in OCz (adapting GEBAUER 1958, 414–417; KOSEK 2011, 116; KOSEK 2015, 178)

	singular	dual	plural
1	(j)sem	(j)sva – (j)svě	(j)sme – (j)smy
2	(j)si – (j)s	(j)sta	(j)ste
3	jest – je – j – ∅	(j)sta	(j)sú – ∅

First, there is a variation regarding the presence of the initial *j-* in every paradigm slot but 3SG. There was no difference in the use of those variants in OCz, as far as is known (see GEBAUER 1958, 412; KOSEK 2011, 117, 127–131). Middle Czech (MCz) grammarians tried to distinguish between the variants functionally, their attempt was, however, not successful in every case (ibid.). The functional difference is partially reflected in spoken CCz, although in orthography, only forms with initial *j-* are allowed (*Internetová jazyková příručka*).

Second, there is a variation of the ending vowels in 1DU and 1PL. No syntactic differences are reported due to this kind of variation.

The third kind of variation comes from the 2SG and 3SG where the forms differ in the amount of phonological material and its prosodic characteristics. There is a syllabic (j)si and a non-syllabic *s* in 2SG, two syllabic forms *jest* and *je*, and a non-syllabic *j* in 3SG. Moreover, in the 3rd person, both singular and plural, the list of forms broadens with the phonetically empty (null) form. The null form is only available in the grammatical function, thus the LVA needs to be phonetically realized.⁴ In contrast to CCz, the OCz non-syllabic *s* is attested as an LVA more frequently⁵ (GEBAUER 1958, 414), and phonetically realized 3SG forms in OCz are commonly attested in the grammatical function (cf. FRANKS – KING 2000, 92).

The erosion of the verb's form – (j)si > s, jest > je > j – as well as the plurality of functions suggest that the verb underwent a process of grammaticalization (see HANSEN 2017). There is also particular evidence from other languages suggesting that the formal/prosodic differences in 2SG and 3SG may affect the distribution of the verb and its morphosyntactic status. The strongest suggestion comes from CCz, where the non-syllabic *s* is attested almost exclusively in the grammatical function, not as an LVA (KOMÁREK 1986, 412, 494; KOSEK 2011, 117; cf. FRANKS – KING 2000, 92). Due to its different distribution in the clause compared to syllabic (j)si, non-syllabic *s* is, at least in some contexts, treated as an affix instead of a clitic, whereas the syllabic form as a GA is a clitic in all cases (NOVÁKOVÁ 2018; see also KOMÁREK 1986, 412; GREPL et al. 2012, 314). Similarly in Polish, the preterite auxiliary is represent-

4 Rarely, the null form, combined with a personal pronoun, is attested in the first person, as GEBAUER (1958, 421) notes. The same phenomenon is quite frequent in colloquial CCz (cf. GREPL et al. 2012, 316).

5 In CCz, the non-syllabic *s* is only used as an LVA exceptionally in idioms and expressively marked clauses (cf. KOMÁREK 1986, 412, 494).

ed by person and number markers *-(e)m*, *-(e)šmy*, etc., while the copula's structure consists of the full stem *jest*, followed by the person and number markers, e.g., *jest-em*, *jestěšmy*; the singular forms are affixes, whereas the plural forms are clitic, and the copula is non-clitic (JAGÓDZKA 2018; FRANKS – KING 2000, 141–149; MIGDALSKI 2006; 2016). Moreover, ZIMMERLING – KOSTA (2013, 190) claim that it is possible for monosyllabic clitics to precede *heavier*, disyllabic clitics within the clitic cluster. Diachronic research devoted to the effect of the form's variation on its distribution in OCz has not yet been conducted, though.

1. Sample and methodology

1.1. Sample

The source of the language data consists of three subresources: i. ŠTÍT SVÁTA, ii. KORPUS14, iii. KORPUS15. ŠTÍT SVÁTA = a prosaic text *Řeči nedělní a sváteční* from 1392 by the medieval author Tomáš Štítný. KORPUS14 = various prosaic texts based in the OCz corpus *Staročeská textová banka*, dated to the 14th century. KORPUS15 = various prosaic texts based in the OCz corpus *Staročeská textová banka*, dated to the 15th century. At the beginning of the project, I started analysing ŠTÍT SVÁTA and later added KORPUS14 and KORPUS15 to extend the sample and get more relevant data. For this reason, however, the data from ŠTÍT SVÁTA still make up approximately one third of the sample size.

I created the sample by extracting 3SG forms, *jest*, *je*, *j*, in their contexts from each subresource, aiming to extract approximately 200 instances of language evidence for each of the forms. Nevertheless, I failed to achieve this goal in the case of *je*, as the form of *je* was homonymous with the pronominal accusative *je* 'them', causing me to delete a majority of the sample and add the rest to the syllabic *jest*, further marked as "*je(st)*"; and in the case of the non-syllabic *j* in KORPUS15, because of its low frequency in the whole 15th c. corpus (only 30 occurrences in total).

As I mentioned, data from ŠTÍT SVÁTA compose approximately one third of the sample. Data by T. Štítný are even more prominent in the case of non-syllabic *j* where Štítný's texts, ŠTÍT SVÁTA and *Klementinský sborník* (ŠTÍT KLEM, part of KORPUS14), make up approximately 90% of the data. The sample size and characteristics regarding each form are summarised in Tab. 2.

Tab. 2. Sample size and characteristics. The data show that the syllabic form of *je(st)* is attested in all analysed Old Czech texts, whereas the non-syllabic *j* only in a fraction of them. The number of sources here does not add up together because several of the sources are shared among the forms, i.e., we can localize them within multiple used sources.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
frequency	797	63.0%	468	37.0%	1265
sources	68	100%	9	13.2%	68

The disproportionality of the non-syllabic *j* sample is shown in Tab. 3.

Tab. 3. Frequency of non-syllabic *j* in various OCz texts in the sample. The table shows that non-syllabic *j* is mostly attested in two 14th c. texts by Tomáš Štítný.

	ŠTÍT ^S VÁTA	ŠTÍT ^K KLEM	OTGB	KRISTA	PAS ^M MUZA
frequency	220	205	26	12	1
	BIB ^L OL	GEST ^A M	PAS ^T ISK	MART ^K KRONC	SUM
frequency	1	1	1	1	468

1.2. Methodology

This work is anchored in the theory of grammaticalization. I perceive different grammaticalization outcomes not as discrete elements but rather as elements on a spectrum or a scale, possibly exhibiting properties of distinct categories, changing in one direction or the other (cf. HOPPER – TRAUGOTT 2003, 1–9; MIGDALSKI 2016, 294–296; HANSEN 2017). In this fashion, I will attempt to assess the morpho-syntactic status, i.e., the level of grammaticalization, of the analysed forms based on their distribution in the clause.

The data I extracted from OCz texts were annotated manually, largely adapting previous research methods, mostly KOSEK (2011; 2015).

I distinguish between different 3SG present tense *be* forms in terms of their syllabicity: the syllabic forms *jest* and *je*, together as *je(st)*, and the non-syllabic form *j*. This division is partially due to an insufficient amount of the form *je*, which does not permit treating it individually, even though the division by the forms' syllabicity conveys the effect postulated by ZIMMERLING – KOSTA (2013, see above). Regarding the verbal function, I adapt KARLÍK's (2009; 2017a; 2017b) classification and distinguish two functions, LVA and GA (see Introduction). As a result, I end up with two groups of forms and two groups of functions. When the representations combine, four form & function combinations (FFCs) are left, for which you can see Tab. 4.

Tab. 4. The four form & function combinations analysed in this article.

	syllabic	non-syllabic
	<i>je(st)</i>	<i>j</i>
lexical verb/auxiliary (LVA)	lexical <i>je(st)</i>	lexical <i>j</i>
grammatical auxiliary (GA)	grammatical <i>je(st)</i>	grammatical <i>j</i>

The 3SG analysis comes hand in hand with the analysis of the 2SG forms that show similar formal variation in terms of the (non-)syllabicity (see BŘEZINA 2023). I use the chi-square test of independence to test possible association between several categories: the association between the verb's form and function, and between the FFC and its absolute and relative position.⁶ Due to limited space, I only show the tests' results in this article, nevertheless, full data and procedure are presented online on GitHub at <<https://github.com/mbrezina26/Truncated-s-and-j-in-Old-Czech>>.

2. Results

2.1. Form and function association

I extracted 1,265 3SG present tense *be* forms, with syllabic *je(st)* prevailing over non-syllabic *j* due to the method of creating the sample (see above). The first question asked in this analysis is whether both forms occur as an LVA and/or a GA, and, most importantly, whether the non-syllabic *j* bears lexical function or not (similar to the non-syllabic *s* in CCz).

As we can see from the results in Tab. 5, both forms are attested in a lexical and a grammatical function. Non-syllabic *j* is attested as an LVA with approximately the same relative frequency as lexical *je(st)*, and it is also slightly more frequent than grammatical *j*. The application of the chi-square test did not, however, reveal any statistically significant association between the verb's function and form on the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$: $\chi^2(1, N = 1,265) = 0.04, p = 0.834$.

Tab. 5. 3SG form and function combination in the analysed OCz texts.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
LVA	434	54.45%	252	53.85%	568
GA	363	45.55%	216	46.15%	697
SUM	797		468		1,265

⁶ Only samples with sizes around 100 or larger were tested. For this reason, I do not apply the test in all parts of the analysis but only when the sample size is sufficient and/or when there is not a clear difference in the observed frequencies (as, for example, is the case of the phonological restriction analysis, see below).

This finding does not correspond with the CCz situation. In CCz, 2SG non-syllabic *s* is restricted to a grammatical function (it only exceptionally occurs as an LVA). In OCz, lexical *s* was already less frequent than grammatical *s* but cannot quite be labelled as rare (BŘEZINA 2023). KOSEK (2011, 122) shows that in MCz, the use of non-syllabic *s* was already restricted to the GA (rare exceptions are due to stylistic reasons). However, we can see that the 3SG forms are not under any restrictions regarding verbal function in OCz. If we take the phonetically empty form into account, it seems plausible that the null form – the perfect outcome of the formal reduction during grammaticalization process – is being associated with the grammatical function, and the phonetically realised forms are underspecified for function, thus available both in lexical and grammatical function.⁷

2.2. Position in the clause

2.2.1. Absolute position

OCz (verbal) enclitics are subject to word order restrictions in terms of their absolute position in the clause. Adapting KOSEK's (2015) system, I distinguish three clausal positions: initial (i.), i.e., the first position in the clause, post-initial (pi.), i.e., a position after the first clausal element (word or phrase), and non-post-initial (npi.), i.e., a position further in the clause. The OCz clitics avoid the initial position of the clause and frequent the pi., with some occurrence in the npi. All three positions are also attested in the analysed sample, see examples in (3).

(3) a. OCz (EVKLEM, 45r)

Jest_{i.} *jedno dítě zde,*
be.PRS.3SG one child here
'Here is one child.'

b. OCz (ŠTÍT KLEM, 98v)

*To*_{i.} **j**_{pi.} *šestý prospěch člověčí*
it be.PRS.3SG sixth virtue human
'It is the sixth virtue of humankind.'

c. OCz (ŠTÍT SVÁTA, 10v)

*Tvá panna*_{i.} **nalezla**_{pi.} **je**_{npi.} *velím lepší zboží*⁸
your maiden find.PTCP.PST.ACT.F.SG be.PRS.3SG much better goods
'Your maiden has found much better goods.'

⁷ KOSEK (2011, 123) found out that in MCz texts, *je* was more frequent in the lexical function compared to *jest*. In my sample, within the syllabic *je(st)*, the relative frequency of lexical *je* is actually the lowest within the three forms I analysed: lexical *jest* 58% > *j* 54% > *je* 37%. The number of extracted *je* forms is however relatively small (134 in total), and the assessed frequency may not be dependable.

d. OCz (PASMUZA, 434)

Svatý Vavřinec troji čest v svatěj cěrkvi
 Saint Lawrence triple honour in holy church
obdiržal nad jiné svatě jest.
 receive.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG above other saints be.PRS.3SG

'Saint Lawrence received triple honour above other saints in the Holy Church.'

Previous research showed that the VAP is especially frequent when the clitic is in the *npi*. (KOSEK 2011; 2015; cf. KOSEK – ČECH – NAVRÁTILOVÁ 2021; KOSEK et al. 2018 for reflexive clitics). For this reason, I treat the relative order of the GA in the *pi*. and the *npi*. separately.

As Tab. 7 shows, we can see that, within the *pi*., the two most frequent positions are the pre-verbal and the isolated position (with the regent to the right);¹² the post-verbal position is rather rare, especially in the case of the non-syllabic *j*. After applying the chi-square test (only the top three rows in Tab. 7 were used), the result indicates there is an association between the GA's form and its relative position on the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$: $\chi^2(2, N = 478) = 15.89, p < 0.001$.

Tab. 7. The relative position of the GA within the post-initial position.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
pre-verbal	116	41.58%	99	49.75%	215
post-verbal	45	16.13%	9	4.52%	54
isolated (regent right)	118	42.29%	91	45.73%	209
isolated (regent left)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0
SUM	279		199		478

The *npi*. provides a different picture (see Tab. 8). Within the *npi*., the frequency of the isolated position is considerably low and the forms occupy mostly the VAP, especially the post-verbal position. This conveys KOSEK et al.'s (2018; 2020) and ČECH et al.'s (2023) assumption that when the post-initial position is not available (e.g., for prosodic, stylistic, or semantic reasons), the verb-adjacent placement is triggered.¹³ In contrast with previous testings, the application of the chi-square test

¹² Interestingly, KOSEK et al. (2020, 117) showed that pronominal and reflexive clitics in the OCz Bibles demonstrate relatively low frequency of the isolated position even within the post-initial position. This is probably caused by stylistic reasons, *dictating* the OCz Bible translators to place the main predicate clause-initially. The OCz Bibles generally manifest higher frequency of the VAP compared to non-biblical texts, see KOSEK et al. (2021).

¹³ The variation between post-initial and verb-adjacent placement has been a subject of interest in previous research, notably KOSEK (2015; 2017) and KOSEK et al. (2018; 2020). KOSEK et al. argue that one of the reasons for such behaviour of OCz clitics is the length of the initial constituent. When the initial

(again, only the top three rows in Tab. 8 were used) did not in this case reveal any statistically significant differences in the relative position among the GA's forms on the level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$: $\chi^2(2, N = 99) = 0.815$, $p = 0.665$ (Yates' correction was applied, too).

Tab. 8. The relative position of the GA within the non-post-initial position.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
pre-verbal	13	15.66%	3	17.65%	16
post-verbal	59	71.08%	10	58.82%	69
isolated (regent right)	10	12.05%	4	23.53%	14
isolated (regent left)	1	1.20%	0	0.00%	1
SUM	83		17		100

In CCz, 2SG syllabic (*j*)*si* occupies the pi. like other CCz clitics. Only non-syllabic *s* may be placed further in a clause, following the participle; such behaviour signals that non-syllabic *s* might be an affix in these cases (NOVÁKOVÁ 2018). As we can see from the analysed OCz data, the situation in OCz 3SG is different. The post-verbal position is more popular overall within syllabic *je(st)* compared to non-syllabic *j*. And even though both syllabic *je(st)* and non-syllabic *j* occupy mostly the pi., non-syllabic *j* ranks higher.¹⁴ Based on these results, it seems plausible both forms are enclitic in OCz, transitioning from verb-adjacent clitics into Wackernagel clitics (cf. MIGDALSKI 2010). The transition may be accelerated by the form's reduction, as non-syllabic *j* ranks higher in the pi. and lower in the post-verbal position than syllabic *je(st)*. The total amount of cases where non-syllabic *j* occupies the npi. is however rather low, to the extent that it is difficult to make strong assertion based on these data.

The last remark goes to the variants of the isolated position. When the *be* forms and their regents are isolated, in most cases, the regent is placed to the right (further in the clause). The only exception comes from the example (4d). This position is treated as non-clitic (KOSEK 2011, 159, 199; cf. FRANKS – KING 2000, 142 for Polish), and this one example may then serve as evidence of a non-clitic behaviour of grammatical *je(st)*. However, given that it is the only example, and that its word order is clearly motivated by rhythmic factors (word stress distribution and, especially, rhyme), as schematically shown in (4d', capital 'X' symbolises a stressed syllable), it seems that this construction is artificial.

constituent is long enough, a pause in speech is generated after it, and the enclitic, which cannot follow immediately after a pause, must occupy a third position in the clause (or further).

14 Comparable results were attested in the analysis of 2SG in OCz, where the non-syllabic *s*, contrary to the CCz situation, lacked in the post-verbal pos. behind the syllabic (*j*)*si* (cf. BŘEZINA 2023). Needless to say that there were no statistically significant differences between the analysed forms, both 2SG and 3SG, in terms of the relative position within the npi.

- (4) d'. OCz (PAsMuZA, 434)
- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Sva-tý</i> | <i>Va-vři-nec</i> | <i>tro-ji</i> | <i>čest</i> | XxXxxXxX |
| <i>v sva-těj</i> | <i>cě-rek-vi</i> | <i>ob-dir-žal</i> | | XxXxxXxX [?] |
| <i>nad-ji-ně</i> | <i>sva-tě</i> | jest | | XxxXxX [?] |

2.3. Phrasal splitting (2W/2D position)

If the initial host phrase is complex, composed of two or more elements, the clitic virtually has two options: to follow either the last (rightmost) element of the phrase (2D position in HALPERN's 1998 approach) or any previous element, thus splitting the phrase into two parts (2W position). In CCz, the clitics cannot split the phrase, otherwise ungrammaticality would be rendered (e.g., FRIED 1994, 161). In OCz, on the other hand, both options are available as the examples from the analysed sample show: in (5a), the lexical *je(st)* splits the phrase (2W position), whereas in (5b), it follows the last element of the phrase (2D position) (cf. KOSEK 2015, 185–186).¹⁵

- (5) a. OCz (ŠTÍTsvÁTA, 10r)
- | | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Poklad_a</i> | jest | <i>skrytý_b</i> | <i>viera naše křestanská;</i> |
| treasure be.PRS.3SG | | hidden faith our | Christian |
| ‘Our Christian faith is a hidden treasure.’ | | | |
- b. OCz (ŠTÍTsvÁTA, 19v)
- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <i>Druhý_a</i> | <i>lotr_b</i> | jest | <i>svět.</i> |
| second scoundrel be.PRS.3SG | | | world |
| ‘The second scoundrel is the world.’ | | | |

As we can see from data in Tab. 9, three out of four analysed FFCs prefer splitting the phrase (grammatical *je(st)* and lexical *j* are not even attested in the 2D position), only the lexical *je(st)* mostly follows the last phrasal element. Based on these data, it may seem that non-syllabic *j* and grammatical *je(st)*¹⁶ can move inside the phrase more freely compared to lexical *je(st)*. It resembles the situation regarding the absolute position in the clause, but the total number of complex phrases hosting the

15 An anonymous reviewer points out that the ambiguous definition of the second position in OCz, allowing for both 2W and 2D, is similar to contemporary South Slavic languages (SSL). Simultaneously, it differs from CCz, where only 2D is possible. Based on an overview of contemporary SSL grammars and linguistic literature in KOLAKOVIĆ et al. (2022, 110–126), a diachronic change may currently be underway within SSL over the last 100 years: while Croatian speakers often permit 2W, Serbian texts, once in coherence with Croatian ones, now predominantly use 2D (there is admittedly a lot of variation). It also seems that the preference for 2W correlates with the possibility of *npi.* placement in the language (ibid.). In Czech, the *npi.* placement was only abandoned in the late 20th century, as demonstrated by KOSEK et al. (2021), and the prohibition of 2W apparently went hand in hand. However, this matter requires further research.

16 It may be worth mentioning that all three cases of the syllabic form in the grammatical function occupying the 2W position happen to be the cases of the truncated *je*, not *jest*.

analysed forms is too small (35), and getting more data is crucial for a proper analysis of this phenomenon.

Tab. 9. Splitting initial complex host phrases.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
	LVA	GA	LVA	GA	
2W position	2	3	7	3	15
2D position	19	0	0	1	20
SUM	21	3	7	4	35

Both in OCz and in CCz, it is possible to split complex phrases by non-clitic elements, see example in (6a) and FRIED (1994, 161). If we discard the LVA evidence because they may be non-clitic, and look at the GA only, we can see that it is syllabic *je(st)* which is only attested splitting the phrase, in contrast to what was said earlier when taking the LVA into account. However, the number of evidence is even smaller here (seven cases in total), and as (6b) shows, grammatical *j* occupying the 2D position is actually a part of the cluster *mě j*, therefore it is possible that the syllabicity of the whole cluster may keep it outside the complex phrase¹⁷ (there are no regular clusters inside the phrase).¹⁸

(6) a. OCz (ŠTÍTsvÁTB, 9)

ješto svá těla od plaché_a zadrželi_i ukrutnosti_i
 who their bodies from wild restrain.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.PL cruelty
 ‘Who restrained their bodies from wild cruelty.’

b. OCz (ŠTÍTKLEM, 151r)

To_a prodlévání_b mě j oblídilo.
 that postponing me be.PRS.3SG deceive.PTCP.PST.ACT.N.SG
 ‘That postponing deceived me.’

17 It is possible to split the determiner and the noun, see (i):

(i) OCz (PAsMuZA, 142)

k téj_a s nemúdrosti_i přišel.
 to such be.PRS.2SG foolishness come.TO.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG
 ‘You came to such foolishness.’

18 By *regular clusters* I mean clusters formed by the permanent clitics only, i.e., clitic elements that are not attested in the non-clitic environment. There were a few cases when the clusters *j to* and *j nám to* split the complex phrase (*to* and *nám* are not permanent clitics in OCz).

2.4. Clitic cluster

If there are two or more clitics in a clause, they form a cluster, i.e., a string of clitics that cannot be interrupted by any non-clitic element (ZIMMERLING – KOSTA 2013, 181). Within a cluster, clitics follow a rigid order that by some (*ibid.*, 189) corresponds with the history of grammaticalization of an independent language element into a clitic.¹⁹

In OCz, the clitic cluster pattern corresponds with (7a): the GA occupies the position on the left, following enclitic particles, such as *li*, *ť*, *ž*, and preceding pronominal datives, reflexive *se/sě* and pronominal accusatives, respectively; the LVA, for its non-clitic behaviour, is usually treated not as a part of the cluster, although it can sometimes assume the same position within the cluster as the GA (see FRANKS – KING 2000, 96; LENERTOVÁ 2004, 142; HANA 2007, 87 for CCz examples and discussion). This pattern contrasts with the CCz one (7b), where the reflexive precedes all pronominal clitics – it even precedes 2SG GA *s*.²⁰ The CCz cluster also misses the slot for the 3SG auxiliary, as it is a language with no overt 3SG GA. In other contemporary Slavic languages with overtly pronounced third person GA, such as Serbo-Croatian, the 3SG usually occupies the right edge of the cluster, see (7c).²¹

- (7) a. OCz (KOSEK 2015, 193)
 particle – GA – DAT – REFL – ACC
 b. CCz (UHLÍŘOVÁ et al. 2017)
 particle – GA (except *s*) – REFL – GA *s* – DAT – ACC
 c. Serbo-Croatian (FRANKS – KING 2000, 205; KOLAKOVIĆ et al. 2022, 100)
 particle – GA (except 3SG) – DAT – ACC – REFL – GA 3SG

I focus on the position of the analysed present *be* forms in the 3SG relative to the pronominal and reflexive clitics (position to the left or to the right of the reflexive and pronominal clitics). I exclude the particles (*li*, *ť*, *ž*) from my analysis as their position towards the analysed forms is unproblematic (particles always occupy the very left periphery of the clitic cluster).

19 ZIMMERLING – KOSTA (2013, 189–190) claim that the clitic cluster is organised into blocks according to the class the clitics belong to (particles, auxiliaries, pronominal and reflexive clitics). Within each block, the so-called *Diachronic Principle* (possibly along with the *Prosodic Principle*) affects the clitic order. In a perspective proposed by MIGDALSKI (2020), the clitic cluster pattern corresponds with the number of *phi*-features expressed by clitics. In his analysis, 1st and 2nd person auxiliaries express both person and number features, whereas the 3SG auxiliary expresses only the number feature, and therefore occupies different position in the structure (i.e., the cluster).

20 This is yet another context in which NOVÁKOVÁ (2018, 69) treats the CCz non-syllabic *s* as an affix.

21 An interesting counterexample comes from Lower Sorbian, where the 3SG GA shares the position with other GAs on the left (FRANKS – KING 2000, 214). The only case the authors provide comes from the context with pronominal clitics, not reflexives.

As examples in (8) show, both positions are attested in the analysed OCz texts: in (8a), the lexical *j* precedes the reflexive *sě*, whereas in (8b), the grammatical *je(st)* follows the pronominal *mi*.

(8) a. OCz (ŠTÍTĀKLEM, 107F)

A že zde na světě nelze j sě
and that here in world not.possible be.PRS.3SG REFL
té žádosti nasytiti
such desire fill.up

‘And that it is not possible to fill yourself up with such desire here in this world.’

b. OCz (ŠTÍTĀKLEM, 25V)

jakož mi jest buoh přikázal
as me be.PRS.3SG God command.PTCP.PST.ACT.M.SG
‘As God commanded me.’

These examples nevertheless do not depict the whole situation comprehensively. For that we must turn to data in Tab. 10, which provides with individual frequencies regarding the position of the analysed FFCs within the clitic cluster.

Tab. 10. Relative position of the analysed FFCs within the clitic cluster. P = pronominal dative/accusative, R = reflexive *se/sě*.

	<i>je(st)</i>	%	<i>j</i>	%	SUM
	LVA	GA	LVA	GA	
left (P, R)	1	0	3	13	17
right (P, R, PR)	6	47	1	20	74
SUM	7	47	4	33	91

We can see that in the majority of cases, the 3SG forms follow the pronominal and reflexive clitics, although they are attested preceding them, too. The only exception is grammatical *je(st)*, attested only at the right edge of the cluster; the lexical *je(st)* is once attested on the left but mostly occupies the right position. Both lexical and grammatical *j*, on the other hand, often occupy the left position whilst still frequent the right position.

The position of the GA thus shows a difference between the syllabic *je(st)* (fixed position on the right) and the non-syllabic *j* (variable position) in the clitic cluster with pronominal/reflexive clitics in OCz. The LVA evidence mostly supports this claim, though I consider this evidence unreliable due to its low occurrence and unstable clitic status. The formal difference within the GA may be characterized as follows: the syllabic forms occupy only the left position, supposedly the original position of the GA in the Slavic cluster (cf. JUNG 2020, 10). Non-syllabic *j*, contras-

tively, oscillates between the designated 3SG position on the right, and the position on the left (corresponding with other auxiliaries). It therefore seems that the non-syllabic form is more mobile. This observation conveys JUNG'S (2020) claim that only after the form's reduction, the form can move from its original position on the right to the left. Similarly, ZIMMERLING – KOSTA (2013, 190) assume that lighter clitics, in terms of the number of syllables, have a higher chance of moving to the left within the cluster (*Prosodic Principle*).

It may also be the case that the position of the 3SG forms in the clitic cluster varies because the authors could not be sure where to place them correctly. The overtly expressed 3SG forms in the written text might have felt archaic already in the 14th and 15th c., competing with the null form in the spoken language. This argument fails when other things are taken into perspective, such as the initial position aversion or phonological restrictions on the non-syllabic *j* (see below) that, in my opinion, support the idea that the usage of the 3SG forms might still be productive in OCz.

2.5. Supporting other clitics

Clitics, in need of their own host, do not serve as hosts to other clitics. In the analysed sample, lexical *je(st)* is, however, attested hosting enclitic particle *li* and/or following proclitic conjunctions *a*, *i*, *ale* in many cases, such as (9). Lexical *j* and both GAs are not attested in such non-clitic environment. These observations add to the claim that lexical *je(st)* behaves as a non-clitic, at least in some cases, whereas grammatical *je(st)* and the non-syllabic form are enclitics.

(9) OCz (ŠTÍT SVÁTA, 61r)

A **jest** li, ež beze lsti žádáme [...]

and be.PRS.3SG Q that without deceit ask.PRS.1PL

'And is it like this, that we ask (to be with him here) without a deceit?'

2.6. Phonological restrictions

GEBAUER (1958, 415) observed that after words that end with a vowel, the form of *je* may be truncated to non-syllabic *j*.²² Following his observation, I counted in how many cases the (prosodic) host ends with a vowel and in how many cases it ends with a consonant in the analysed OCz sample.

As results in Tab. 11 show, both lexical and grammatical *je(st)* follow consonants and vowels with almost the same frequency. The non-syllabic form, however, bearing lexical or grammatical function, avoids words ending with a consonant with a 100% success rate – in all of the nearly five hundred cases there is no exception to it. With a high enough probability, this proves that non-syllabic *j* was a productive form (possibly other phonetically realised 3SG forms, too), otherwise the authors

22 "Z je pak, když předchází samohláskou zakončené slovo těže věty, bývá odsuvkou stč. j', připojené k slovu řečenému [...]"

would, at least in some cases, simply have written it after the consonant, the same way they often wrote syllabic *je(st)* or the 2SG non-syllabic *s* (cf. BŘEZINA 2023).

Tab. 11. The frequency of the analysed FFCs following a vowel/consonant.

	<i>je(st)</i>				<i>j</i>			
	LVA	%	GA	%	LVA	%	GA	%
vowel	207	50.0%	164	45.3%	252	100.0%	216	100.0%
consonant	207	50.0%	198	54.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
SUM	414		362		252		216	

It is rather uncommon for clitics to interact with their hosts on the phonological level (as affixes do, see NOVÁKOVÁ 2018); however, these kinds of changes correspond with the notion of *internal sandhi*, a phonological interaction between an independent word and a clitic (see ZWICKY 1985, 286).²³ This matter calls for a broader investigation that exceeds the scope of this analysis.

Conclusion

In this paper, I analysed the distribution of 3SG present tense *be* forms bearing lexical and grammatical function in the sample of OCz prosaic texts dated to the 14th and 15th c. In particular, I focused on the distributional properties previously identified as characteristic of OCz enclitics in order to assess the grammaticalization status of the analysed forms, and, finally, position them on the grammaticalization scale.²⁴ The analysis results are summarised in Tab. 12.

Tab. 12. The summary of the analysis' results.

	<i>je(st)</i>		<i>j</i>	
	LVA	GA	LVA	GA
initial position	11	none	none	none
post-initial position	72%	77%	90%	92%

²³ In South Slavic languages, phonological changes targeting clitics are also attested, such as the dissimilation of pronominal *je* into *ju* before 3SG auxiliary *je*, as well as the auxiliary deletion after the pronominal *je* or the reflexive *se* (KOLAKOVIĆ et al. 2022, 103–106; FRANKS – KING 2000, 30).

²⁴ The 3SG non-syllabic *j* in OCz is frequently attested in the lexical function, which is not available for the 2SG non-syllabic *s* in CCz (with only few exceptions). As the parallel analysis of the OCz 2SG forms showed (BŘEZINA 2023), the OCz non-syllabic *s* was also not restricted to grammatical function only, although its frequency as GA was significantly higher than as LVA. Possible explanation is that the 3SG null form was fully grammaticalized and as such specified for the grammatical function, whereas the overt 3SG forms, either syllabic *je(st)*, or the non-syllabic *j*, were underspecified for function.

	<i>je(st)</i>		<i>j</i>	
	LVA	GA	LVA	GA
npi. post-verbal position (only GA tested)	–	71%	–	59%
2W/2D position	2/19	3/0	7/0	3/1
hosting the enclitic particle <i>li</i>	yes	none	none	none
hosting conjunctions <i>a, i, ale</i>	yes	none	none	none
left/right position in the clitic cluster	1/6	0/47	3/1	13/20
phonological restrictions (host ending)	no	no	yes	yes

Based on these results, I position the analysed FFCs on the grammaticalization scale between two extremes, less and more clitic (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. The position of the analysed FFCs on the grammaticalization scale.

less clitic		more clitic
lexical <i>je(st)</i>	grammatical <i>je(st)</i>	lexical <i>j</i>
		grammatical <i>j</i>

The scale reflects the fact that only lexical *je(st)* is attested in the non-clitic environment, i.e., in the initial position and/or supporting other clitics (particle *li*, conjunctions *a, i, ale*). It thus seems that lexical *je(st)* is either non-clitic or at least semi-clitic (FRANKS – KING 2000, 93–96 offer a discussion on this topic in CCz). In contrast to lexical *je(st)*, grammatical *je(st)* and both lexical and grammatical *j* behave as enclitics.²⁵ However, there are differences among them attributed to the formal factor. In other words, the form proved to be an important, perhaps crucial factor in terms of distribution.

Overall, syllabic *je(st)* is less frequent in the post-initial position compared to non-syllabic *j*, and vice versa. It is thus more frequent in the npi., as well. What this seems to reveal is that these clitics in general are transitioning from the verb-adjacent clitics into the Wackernagel clitics, and that the process might be facilitated by the form's reduction. Moreover, the reduction of the form apparently allows the non-syllabic form to split the complex host phrase, whereas the syllabic form prefers to stay on its right edge. Non-syllabic *j* is also more mobile within the clitic cluster and moves from the right to the left more often than syllabic *je(st)*, which occupies the right position with but one exception. It is also possible that the higher

²⁵ None of the analysed 3SG forms manifest affixal behaviour in contrast to non-syllabic *s* in CCz. Nevertheless, the 2SG analysis showed that non-syllabic *s* in OCz does not behave as an affix either. Thus, it seems plausible that non-syllabic *s* was reanalysed as an affix later in the MCz period, around the same time it was incorporated into 2SG conditional *by-Ø* → *by-s* to overtly express the number and person features (cf. GEBAUER 1958, 428; KOSEK 2011, 165; 2014, 190–191; see also NOVÁKOVÁ 2018, 69).

frequency of syllabic *je(st)* in the *npi.* in comparison with the non-syllabic form is due to a smaller tolerance of the heavier forms to long initial phrases that cause the syllabic forms to *search for* a more suitable host further in the clause (cf. KOSEK et al. 2018; 2020).

These assumptions are, to substantial extent, supported by the 2SG analysis in BŘEZINA (2023). With both results put together, I argue that the (en)cliticness of the present tense *be* forms in OCz is influenced by several morphosyntactic and prosodic factors. In particular, the grammatical function, the lack of the root *-e-* (cf. MIŠESKA-TOMIČ's 1996a approach, as cited in FRANKS – KING 2000, 212–215), and/or non-syllabicity (cf. KOSEK 2011, 157; ZIMMERLING – KOSTA 2013, 190) are factors that promote the (en)cliticness of the present tense *be*. The variability of the position within the clitic cluster in case of the 3SG forms, especially non-syllabic *j*, contrasts with the fixed position of both 2SG forms that occupy the left position only, and leads me to believe that there are other factors involved, possibly the number of *phi*-features expressed, as MIGDALSKI (2020) claims.

Needless to say, the nature of the analysed sample, that is, the prevalence of the texts by single medieval author, Tomáš Štítný, does not allow me to accept any strong assumptions at the moment. The sample of non-syllabic *j* was especially impaired by this reason. The absence of non-syllabic *j* in a larger number of texts may suggest that this non-syllabic form was a peripheral element, used in older texts written by a small group of authors, possibly stylistically and regionally restricted.²⁶ It is therefore of the highest priority to broaden the sample to confirm or dispute the findings presented here, as well as to account for the stylistic and other factors potentially involved in the distribution of the present tense *be*.

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²⁶ Similarly, truncated *je* is still perceived as a colloquial element in MCz (KOSEK 2011, 161). The 2SG non-syllabic *s* is a colloquial, however standard (*spisovný*) element in CCz (GREPL et al. 2012, 314).

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