

Old English Verb-Second-ish in a Typology of Verb-Second

Benjamin Bruening, University of Delaware, bruening@udel.edu

draft November 9, 2016, comments welcome

Abstract

Old English main clauses were often verb-second (V2), but sometimes they departed from strict V2, in ways that were very unlike all the modern V2 languages. Old English word order is therefore puzzling and has resisted a good analysis, and it is also problematic for theories of the typology of V2 across languages. I argue that the CP Recursion model proposed in Bruening (2016) for the peculiarities of Present-Day English subject-auxiliary inversion and cross-linguistic variation provides a new perspective on Old English V2-ish. From this perspective, Old English is just the combination of Present-Day English and modern V2 languages like German. The only historical change is the loss of the German option. This perspective therefore situates Old English nicely within a typology of V2 and the left periphery generally, and requires minimal historical change to get from Old English to Present-Day English.

1 Introduction

The manifestation of verb-second (V2) word order in Old English was very different from any other known V2 language. The peculiarities of Old English word order have so far resisted a satisfactory account, and Old English cannot be located comfortably within existing typologies of V2 across languages. In this paper I show that Old English can be fit nicely within a simple typology of V2, namely, the system of CP recursion plus V-C Alignment proposed in Bruening (2016). Within this system, Old English can be seen to have two options: the Present-Day English setting, or the setting that is common among modern Germanic languages (for instance German). We thus see that there is nothing unusual at all about Old English: it is located squarely between Present-Day English and the more common Germanic pattern, exactly where we would expect it to be. There is also much more historical continuity than previously thought: as I will show, many of the facts of Old English word order are exactly those of Present-Day English. The major change that we find is the loss of the common Germanic option, and the restriction to the Present-Day English setting. This plus other changes that we know independently took place (e.g., loss of main verb movement, restriction of V2 to certain contexts, etc.) lead to the Present-Day English grammar. This perspective therefore leads to a maximally simple account of language change, and a simple and restrictive typology of V2 that includes within it the apparently divergent Old English.

I begin by outlining the main facts of Old English word order (section 2). Section 3 discusses some previous analyses that have been proposed and how they are less than satisfactory. Section 4 then outlines the CP recursion theory proposed in Bruening (2016), and derives a typology of V2 from this theory. Section 5 then looks at Old English from the perspective of this typology, and shows how the facts are the combination of the German and Present-Day English settings. This section also outlines a proposed route of change, where minimal changes lead from Old English to Present-Day English.

2 Old English Word Order

In many cases, word order in Old English seems to be very similar to that of the modern OV Germanic languages, like German. Main clauses are often V2, as the following examples with fronted elements other than the subject

show:¹

- (1) a. *Ælc riht sculon gehadode men lufian* (WHom 10a.10)
each right must monastic men love
'Monastic men must love each right...'
- b. *þæt hus hæfdon Romane to ðæm anum tacne geworht...* (Or 59.3)
that building had Romans with the one feature constructed
'The Romans had constructed that building with the one feature...'
- c. *þær wearþ se cyning Bagsecg ofslægen* (ChronA 871)
there was the king Bagsecg slain
'The king Bagsecg was slain there.'
- d. *maran cyððe habbað englas to Gode þonne men.* (AECHom I 1,14)
more affinity have angels to God than men
'angels have more affinity to God than men'
- e. *Ac eall ðis aredað se reccere swiðe ryhte* (CP 168,3)
and all this arranges the ruler very rightly
'and the ruler arranges all this very rightly'
- f. *On twam þingum hæfde God þæs mannes sawle gegodod.* (AECHom I 1,161)
in two things had God the man's soul endowed
'God had endowed man's soul with two things.'

Embedded clause are often verb-final, and often have the order main-auxiliary if there is more than one verb:

- (2) a. ... *gif hie him þæs rices uþon,* (ChronA 755)
if they him the kingdom granted
'... if they would grant him the kingdom,'
- b. ... *and axode hwi he his bebod tobræce* (AECHom I 1,42)
and asked why he his commandment broke
'... and asked why he had broken his commandment'
- c. *Soðlice æfter þam þe apollonius afaren wæs,* (ApT 6.1)
indeed after when Apollonius gone was
'Indeed when Apollonius had gone, ...'
- d. ... *þæt hie þæt to his honda healdan sceoldon.* (ChronA 887)
that they it from his hand hold should
'... that they ought to hold it from him as overlord.'
- e. *þæt hi micclum blissian mihton...* (AECHom I 26,279)
that they greatly rejoice might
'that they might greatly rejoice'

But note that the order auxiliary-main is also common, and it is also common for constituents to follow the verb. See especially Pintzuk (1999) for discussion.

So far this is just like modern German. Unlike modern German, however, Old English also allowed V2 in clauses embedded beneath a complementizer. By far the most common constituent before the finite verb in these cases is the subject, but such embedded clauses appear to have fronting of a verb from an underlying verb-final structure because of the order of object and main verb in (3a–b) and the position of the stranded particle in (3c). There is also occasional fronting of a non-subject, as in (3d–f):

¹Old English texts are cited using the short titles employed by the Dictionary of Old English (Healey and Venezky 1980). Texts are cited by chapter (and page number) and line number or just line number, except that Or, CP, and GD are cited by page number rather than chapter number.

- (3) a. and cwæð þ we sceoldon deaðe sweltan gif... (AECHom I 1,132)
and said that we should death perish if
'and said that we should perish by death if...'
- b. and seo modor behet him þæt heo wolde hine læran (AELS 25.173)
and the mother promised him that she would him teach
'and the mother promised him that she would teach him.'
- c. forþon ne cymð naht ungelic trymnes upp (GD(C) 8,1)
because not comes in-no-way different confirmation up
'... because a different confirmation in no way comes up...'
- d. Ða cwæð se halga bisceop þæt on þam beame nære nan synderlic halignyss (AELS 31,396)
then said the holy bishop that in that tree not-were no special holiness
'Then the holy bishop said that there was no special holiness in that tree'
- e. Gregorius se trahtnere cwæð þæt for ði wolde drihten getrahtnian þurh hine sylfne þæt
Gregory the interpreter said that therefore wanted God interpret through himself the
bigspel ðe (AECHom II,6,33)
parable that
'Gregory the interpreter said that therefore God wanted to interpret himself the parable that...'
- f. ðam aðe þæt hine moton his mægas unsyngian. (LawIne 65,8)
the oath which him might his relatives exculpate
'... the oath by which his relatives might absolve him.'

See especially Pintzuk (1993, 1999) on embedded V2 in Old English.

While embedded V2 is not allowed in German, it is allowed in modern Icelandic and Yiddish (Platzack 1986, Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson 1990, Diesing 1990, Santorini 1992), and to a lesser extent in Frisian and Danish (Vikner 1995). So far, then, Old English is not unusual from the perspective of modern V2 languages.²

However, unlike all known V2 languages, Old English also sometimes exhibits V3 or even V4 order in main clauses (and occasionally in embedded clauses). The primary (but not exclusive) context for this involves pronominal arguments. Pronouns tend to appear between the first constituent and the finite verb, making the finite verb third or fourth:

- (4) a. Ælc yfel he mæg don, (WHom, 4,62)
each evil he can do
'He can do each evil.'
- b. Scortlice ic hæbbe nu gesæd ymb þa þrie dælas... (Or 9,18)
briefly I have now spoken about the three parts
'I have now spoken briefly about the three parts.'
- c. þin agen geleafa þe hæfþ gehæledne (HomS 2,27)
thine own faith thee has healed
'Thine own faith hath made thee whole.'
- d. & seofon ærendračan he him hæfde to asend. (ChronA 905)
and seven messengers he him had to send
'He had to send seven messengers to him.'

²According to Fischer *et al.* (2000, 109), 95% of main clauses in Old English had verb fronting (V2 or V3/V4), while only 35% of embedded clauses were V2 (with V3 very rare in embedded clauses). Note also that by far the most frequent initial constituent in embedded V2 is the subject of the embedded clause (non-subjects front 6.2% of the time, according to Pintzuk 1993, 21). This has led some authors to consider embedded V2 a distinct phenomenon from main clause V2 (e.g. Fischer *et al.* 2000, 109). However, I take this to indicate only that fronting of non-subjects is much less frequent in embedded clauses, and fronting of subjects is much more common. Otherwise, the analysis remains the same; see section 5.

- e. Forðon we sceolan mid ealle mod & mægene to Gode gecyrran (HomU 8,27)
 therefore we shall with all mind and power to God turn
 ‘Wherefore we must with all mind and might turn to God’

Pronouns can also appear before a fronted constituent, again making the verb third or fourth:

- (5) a. & ic gehwam wille þærto tæcan... (Or 57.15)
 and I everyone will thereto direct
 ‘... and I will direct everyone there...’
 b. he hine eft ongon wæteres weorpan, (Beo 2790–2791)
 he him again began water sprinkle
 ‘He began to sprinkle him again with water...’

These verb-third and verb-fourth orders are what distinguish Old English from all other V2 languages, and are the primary topic of the present paper.³

It should also be noted that in three particular contexts, V2 is dominant, and V3 and V4 very rare. These are, first, wh-questions:

- (6) a. Hwæt sægest þu yrþlinge? Hu begæst þu weorc þin? (AEColl 22)
 what say you ploughman how do you work your
 ‘What do you say, ploughman? How do you go about your work?’
 b. hwi sceole we oþres mannes niman? (AELS 24.188)
 why should we another man’s take
 ‘Why should we take those of another man?’
 c. To hwæm locige ic buton to ðæm eaðmodum...? (CP 298,19)
 to whom look I except to the humble
 ‘To whom shall I look but to the humble...?’

Second, with initial negation:

- (7) a. ne mihton hi nænigne fultum æt him begitan (Bede 1.10,15)
 not could they not-any help from him get
 ‘they could not get any help from him’
 b. Ne sceal he noht unalyfedes don (CP 60,14)
 not shall he nothing unlawful do
 ‘He must not do anything unlawful’

And third, with the adverbs þa and þonne in initial position:

- (8) a. þa ge-mette he sceaðan (AELS 31.151)
 then met he robbers
 ‘Then he met with robbers.’
 b. þa foron hie mid þrim scipum ut ongen hie, (ChronA 897)
 then sailed they with three ships out against them
 ‘then they sailed out with three ships against them’
 c. þonne todælað hi his feoh, (Or 17.13)
 then divides he his property
 ‘then he will divide his property...’

³According to van Kemenade and Westergaard (2011), some dialects of Norwegian permit a pronominal subject between a monosyllabic wh-phrase and the finite verb. In terms of the analysis presented here (section 4), these dialects permit CP recursion above C* just in this environment, and only with a fronted pronoun.

As can be seen from the above examples, pronouns in these three cases appear not before the finite verb, but after it.⁴

3 Previous Analyses and Issues

Several analyses have been proposed for V3 and V4 orders in Old English. I discuss three here in broad terms, and show how none of them are satisfactory.

3.1 The Clitic Analysis

One analysis proposes that V3 and V4 word order is not due to the V2 syntax of Old English, but to the peculiarities of pronouns. The idea is that pronouns are clitics, which means that their order is determined at least partially on a non-syntactic basis. Numerous publications refer to pronouns in Old English as clitics; some prominent examples include van Kemenade (1987) and Kiparsky (1995). Both van Kemenade and Kiparsky propose analyses that involve more than just this (Kiparsky 1995 in particular is very detailed and attempts to capture some of the same observations as this paper), but here I wish to focus only on the claim that pronouns are clitics.

The basic idea behind a clitic analysis is to say that pronominal clitics simply do not count for V2. The syntax assembles a V2 clause, and pronouns cliticize somewhere at the front of the clause. The problem with this analysis is that V3 and V4 order can result from elements besides pronouns. Three examples are shown here, with a full NP subject following a fronted non-subject:

- (9) a. nu ealle ðas ðing sind mid anum naman genemnode, gesceaft. (AECHom I 20,22)
now all these things are with one name named creature
'Now all these things are called with one name: creature.'
- b. Sumum monnum God seleð ægðer ge good ge yfel gemenged,... (Bo 39.11,3)
some persons God gives both good and bad mixed
'God gives some people both good and bad things.'
- c. On Grecisre spræce steorra ys aster genemned. (ByrM iii.3,189)
in Greek language star is aster called
'A star is called aster in the Greek language'

Koopman (1998) and Haeberli (2002a, 2002b) show that rates of V3 order with a fronted non-subject and a non-pronominal subject range from 6% to as high as 59.5% in different Old English texts. It is therefore not possible to maintain that V3 is the result solely of the clitic status of pronouns.

This analysis also does not connect Old English word order to patterns in Present-Day English that I will show are strikingly similar (section 5). It also does not locate Old English within a typology of V2 languages, none of which have V3 or V4 word order with pronouns (even though pronouns in many Germanic languages are often viewed as clitics). In addition, as far as I can tell, there is no independent reason to treat pronouns as clitics in Old English. They do not uniformly appear in certain positions, nor do they gravitate toward certain elements like the

⁴There are also cases of verb-initial and verb-final main clauses, like the following:

- (i) a. wæs se fruma þus awriten (Bede 1.10,10)
was the beginning thus written
'The beginning was written as follows:...'
- b. Se manfulla gast þa martine gehyrsumode. (AELS 31.1050)
the evil spirit then Martin obeyed
'Then the evil spirit obeyed Martin.'

I will not be concerned with these here, and will just assume that they are stylistically marked variants that are allowed by the in-principle optional processes of topicalization and verb-fronting. See Pintzuk 1999 for discussion. The remainder of this paper will be concerned with V2, V3, and V4 order.

finite verb. The analysis that I will propose treats them as different from other NPs only in their propensity to front to clause-initial position.

3.2 The V-to-Infl Analysis

Versions of the V-to-Infl analysis have been proposed by Pintzuk (1993, 1999), Kroch and Taylor (1997), and others. The basic idea is that in Old English, the main verb moves not to C as in standard analyses of V2 (den Besten 1983), but to Infl. This was proposed as a way of accounting for embedded V2 in Icelandic and Yiddish (Rögnvaldsson and Thráinsson 1990, Diesing 1990, Santorini 1992). In the proposed typology, V-to-C V2 languages like German and Dutch do not allow embedded V2, because the C position is taken by the complementizer. If V2 is instead V-to-Infl, then V2 can still occur below a complementizer. In V-to-Infl languages, Spec-IP is not a dedicated subject position, but is instead a general topic position. The subject can remain in a low position within VP, while any XP can move to Spec-IP. The finite verb moves to Infl. In Old English main clauses, if some other constituent also moves to Spec-CP or to some adjoined position, then the result will be V3 (XP in Spec-CP followed by YP in Spec-IP followed by V in Infl).

An attractive part of this account is that it attempts to locate Old English in a typology of V2 languages. It also seems to be supported by the fact that Old English does have V2 embedded beneath a complementizer (3), just like Icelandic and Yiddish. A major problem, though, is that Icelandic and Yiddish *never* have V3 or V4 order in main clauses. This discrepancy is completely unexpected on the V-to-Infl account, according to which Old English is supposed to be just like Icelandic and Yiddish.

Another issue is that this account does not relate Old English to patterns of word order in Present-Day English. As I will show in section 5, there is significant continuity between Old and Present-Day English in numerous respects, which an adequate analysis should account for.

3.3 Two Subject Positions

Another analysis, proposed in various forms, says that Old English had two distinct subject positions (Fischer *et al.* 2000; Haeberli 2000, 2002b, 2002a; van Kemenade 2012; van Kemenade and Westergaard 2011; Haeberli and Ihsane 2016; among others). The left periphery of the clause includes CP with its specifier and head positions, then some FP. Spec-FP is the position for pronominal subjects and subjects that are old information. F then selects TP, and Spec-TP is the position for subjects that are new information:

(10) [CP XP C [FP pronoun/old F [TP subject(new) ...]]]

Certain fronted XPs trigger V movement to C; these are *wh*-XPs, negation, and the adverbs *þa* and *þonne* from above. With these elements, the V will move to C and will precede both subject positions, resulting in strict V2. In other cases, however, the verb only moves to the head F. If an XP fronts to Spec-CP and the subject is old information like a pronoun and therefore moves to Spec-FP, the order will be XP Subject V.

Like the previous analysis, this analysis does not relate Old English to Present-Day English in any appreciable way. It also does not locate Old English in a typology of V2 languages, unlike the V-to-Infl analysis. On the empirical side, the order Subject-XP-V is also attested as an instance of V3:

- (11) a. ic þæm godan sceal for his modþræce madmas beodan. (Beo 384–385)
 I that good.man must for his daring treasures offer
 ‘I must offer treasures to that good man for his daring.’
- b. & ic gehwam wille þærto tæcan... (Or 57.15)
 and I everyone will thereto direct
 ‘... and I will direct everyone there...’
- c. þæt he þæt godes hus wolde mid fyre forbærnan (AELS 25,613)
 that he the God’s house would with fire burn
 ‘... that he would burn the house of God with fire...’

This order is not permitted by the two-subject template, which only allows a subject to *follow* a fronted XP.

Another empirical problem is that V3 often results from *object* pronouns as well as subject pronouns:

- (12) a. God him worhte þa reaf of fellum (AECHom I 1,147)
God them wrought then garments of skins
'then God made garments of skin for them'
- b. Fela spella him sædon þa Beormas ægþer ge of hiera agnum lande,... (Or 14,27)
many stories him told the Permians both of their own country
'the Permians told him many stories, both about their own country'

There is a variant of this analysis where the position for pronominal subjects is a position for pronouns in general, not just subject pronouns (Fischer *et al.* 2000). However, even this analysis runs afoul of examples like those in (11). There are also examples of V3 word order where neither of the XPs before the finite verb is a pronoun (or a subject), like the following:

- (13) a. On þæm dagum on Tracia þæm londe wæron twegen cyningas ymb þæt rice winnende
in those days in Thrace the land were two kings about that kingdom fighting
'In those days, in the land of Thrace, two kings were quarreling about that kingdom.' (Or 63,7)
- b. ðysne yrmung æfter his forðsiðe wurðodon þa hæðenan eac for healicne god,
this poor-wretch after his death worshiped the heathens also instead-of high God
'After his death, the heathens also worshiped this poor wretch instead of God.' (WHom 12,60)

Koopman (1998) shows that multiple fronting of non-subjects is quite common (23 V3 examples in just one text, AECHom I). Additionally, there is a good number of exceptions to the dominant V2 pattern with negation, like the following:

- (14) a. on cristes naman ne forhtige ic for þinum tintregum; (AECHom I 29,197)
in Christ's name not fear I for your torments
'In the name of Christ I fear not for your torments'
- b. buton twyn ne mihte he beon ælmihtig god (AECHom I 20,27)
without doubt not could he be Almighty God
'without doubt he could not be Almighty God'

If the negative element *ne* is viewed as the first constituent in the dominant pattern in (7), so that the dominant pattern of V2 with negation is indeed V2 (and not V1), then such examples have V3 word order with two fronted elements that are neither pronouns nor subjects nor even arguments.

All the facts therefore indicate that V3 and V4 word orders in Old English are not the result of two subject positions, or a dedicated position for pronouns.

3.4 Summary

As can be seen, none of the analyses that have been proposed are satisfactory. None adequately locate Old English within a typology of V2 languages. None relate the Old English facts to Present-Day English. All struggle with various empirical facts.

In the next section, I will propose a simple typology of V2 languages with a small number of points of variation. Old English fits squarely within this typology. I will also show (in section 5) that Old English and Present-Day English have many facts in common, which need to be related. The analysis that I propose does so relate them, and proposes complete historical continuity in many respects.

4 A Typology of V2

In this section I build a typology of V2 languages from the analysis of English subject-auxiliary inversion in Bruening (2016). Bruening (2016) makes two proposals to account for ordering facts across languages in the left periphery. The first has been proposed before, namely, that one CP can embed another in an instance of *CP recursion* (Reinhart 1981, Platzack 1986, Bhatt and Yoon 1991, Culicover 1991, Authier 1992, Vikner 1995, McCloskey 2006, among others). The idea is that fronted elements are always in a specifier of CP and are never adjoined. If there are multiple fronted elements, then there are recursive CPs. Similarly, if V2 can be embedded below a complementizer, then that complementizer must be able to merge with another CP as its complement. To illustrate with English, negative inversion can occur below a complementizer, and this is an instance of CP recursion, as shown in (15b):⁵

- (15) a. She said that never again would she buy vinyl socks.
b. ... said [_{CP} that [_{CP} never again [_{C̄} would [_{TP} she ...

An indication that CP recursion is the correct analysis is that multiple complementizers can sometimes be pronounced, one on each side of a fronted constituent (McCloskey 2006):

- (16) a. He says **that** if that happens **that** he must be warned immediately.
b. My fervent prayer is **that** for the sake of the president and the sake of this nation **that** this matter is resolved soon. (AP wire report cited by McCloskey 2006, (69c))

CP recursion accounts for this better than a split CP with Force, Finiteness, and Topic and Focus projections (Rizzi 1997); in such a split CP, it is not clear how two different positions could both be pronounced as the complementizer, which is supposed to be one (or more) of the dedicated heads. (See Abels 2012 for further criticism of the split CP approach.)

The second proposal is that, in many languages, some C heads are distinguished as having certain properties, chief among them that they require movement of the finite verb to that C head. In Bruening (2016), this follows from a phonological Alignment theory (McCarthy and Prince 1993), where the tensed verb is required to Align with some projection of the distinguished C head. The Alignment aspect of this proposal will not be important here. What is important is that languages have such a dedicated C head, which Bruening (2016) designates “C*,” and this C* always requires movement of the finite verb to its position. We can think of C* as a feature assigned to a C head, or the class of C*s as a subset of the lexical items that are Cs, or we could define C* configurationally within a given language. Whatever approach we choose, the important part is that languages can choose which C in cases of CP recursion is the distinguished C*.

In Present-Day English inversion contexts (questions, negative inversion, conditionals, etc.), the *lowest* C in CP recursion is C*. This results in it being possible for elements to intervene between a fronted wh-phrase or negative phrase, say, and the fronted finite verb:

- (17) a. And why in Paris did the Americans modify the agreement at the last minute...? (*The Guardian*, cited by Haegeman 2000, note 2)
b. To whom at last will the government turn? (*The Guardian*, cited by Haegeman 2012, 51, note 49)
c. I promise that on no account during the holidays will I write a paper. (Sobin 2003)
d. What under no circumstances would John do for Mary? (Maekawa 2006, 230, (6a))

Elements can also come to the *left* of fronted wh-phrases and negative phrases:

- (18) a. And at that point, who did he visit?
b. Next Christmas whose parents should we go to? (McCloskey 2006, (32a))
(19) a. During the holidays, at no point did I write a paper.

⁵I use T(ense)P for the highest functional head below C, but this is equivalent to IP as described above for the V-to-Infl analysis.

- b. Most of the time, when she is working on a paper, only rarely does she leave her office. (McCloskey 2006, (33a))

In the CP recursion analysis, these have CP recursion, with fronted elements in Spec-CPs and fronting of the finite verb to the lowest C, which is the dedicated C*:

- (20) a. [CP to whom [CP at last will_{C*} [TP the government turn]]]?
 b. I promise [CP that [CP on no account [CP during the holidays will_{C*} [TP I write a paper]]]].

Since the lowest C is C*, nothing can intervene between the fronted V and the subject in Spec-TP (Rizzi 1997, Haegeman 2012):

- (21) a. When at last the sun came up, . . .
 b. * When will at last the sun come up?
 (22) a. I think that, unfortunately, the gorilla has escaped.
 b. * Only once has, (un)fortunately, the gorilla escaped.
 (23) (Rizzi 1997, (59))
 a. If yesterday John had done that, . . .
 b. * Had yesterday John done that, . . .

The (a) examples are embedded clauses, where there is no C*. In these clauses, elements can freely intervene between a higher C and the subject in Spec-TP:

- (24) a. [CP if [CP yesterday [TP John had done that]]] . . .
 b. [CP when [CP at last [TP the sun came up]]] . . .

In the (b) examples, however, nothing can come between the finite verb in C* and the subject in Spec-TP. This is because C* is always the *lowest* C, and there is no such thing as adjunction to TP:⁶

- (25) a. * [CP had [CP yesterday C* [TP John *t*_{had} done that]]] . . .
 b. * [CP when will [CP at last C* [TP the sun come up]]]?

These are ungrammatical because the verb has moved to the *higher* C, which is not C* in English.

One point of cross-linguistic variation in this system is now which C in CP recursion is the distinguished C*. Strict V2 languages (all Germanic languages except English) designate the *highest* C as C*. This means that only one Spec-CP can precede the finite verb in C*, and we have strict V2. German is an example, where any XP can precede the finite verb, but only one:

- (26) a. Im Park spielten die Kinder vor der Schule Fussball.
 in.the park played the children before the school soccer
 b. vor der Schule spielten die Kinder im Park Fussball.
 before the school played the children in.the park soccer
 c. * Im Park vor der Schule spielten die Kinder Fussball.
 in.the park before the school played the children soccer
 d. * [CP Im Park C* [CP vor der Schule spielten [TP die Kinder Fussball]]]

⁶In Bruening (2016), this adjacency requirement follows from the proposed Alignment theory. All that is important here is which C in CP recursion is C*.

In this system, strict V2 is the result of requiring the highest C in CP recursion to be C*. (26d) is ungrammatical because the verb has failed to move to C*.

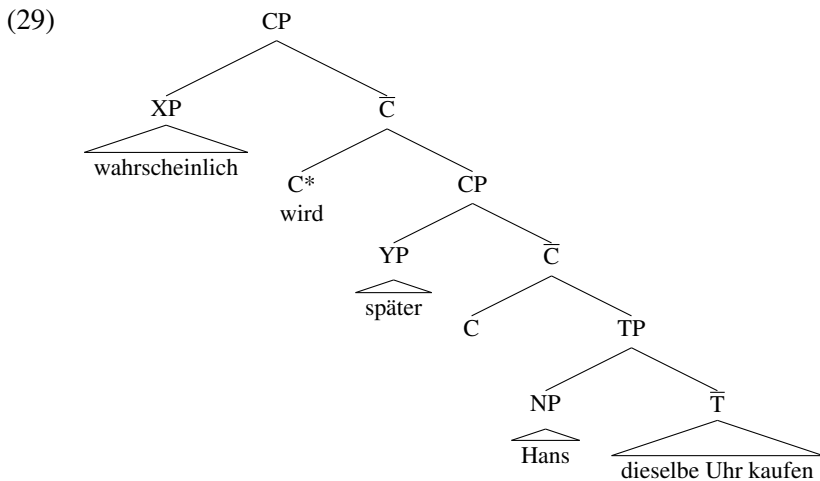
A second point of variation is whether CP recursion is allowed at all. Some V2 languages permit a fronted constituent to come between the finite verb and the subject, while others do not. According to Haeberli (2000, 112), German, (some speakers of) Dutch, Frisian, Yiddish, Swedish, and Norwegian permit a constituent in this position. The following example illustrates German:

- (27) Wahrscheinlich wird später Hans dieselbe Uhr kaufen.
 probably will later Hans the.same watch buy
 ‘Hans will probably buy the same watch later.’ (Haeberli 2000, (6a))

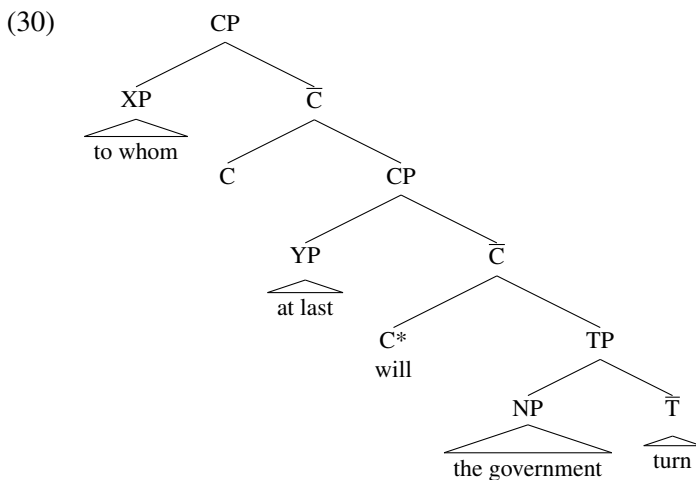
Based on facts from particle placement in German, the subject in such cases is high, in Spec-TP. Particles like *ja* and *doch*, which are standardly taken to separate TP from VP (Webelhuth 1992, Diesing 1992, Struckmeier 2014, among others), follow the subject when it is preceded by an adverb (Solveig Bosse, Uli Sauerland, p.c.):

- (28) Vielleicht wird später Hans ja/doch dieselbe Uhr kaufen.
 maybe will later Hans PART the.same watch buy
 ‘Maybe Hans will buy the same watch later.’

This means that the adverb must be higher than TP; given that adjunction to TP is never allowed, it must be in a specifier of a lower CP. I take this to indicate that German permits CP recursion below C*, as follows:



In contrast, as described above, Present-Day English permits CP recursion only *above* C*:



Some other Germanic languages, namely, W. Flemish, Afrikaans, Icelandic, and Danish, do not allow anything to come between the finite verb and the subject (Haerberli 2000). The following example is Icelandic:

- (31) Sennilega mun (*seinna) Jón kaupa sama úrið.
 probably will (*later) John buy the.same watch
 ‘Probably, John will buy the same watch later.’ (Haerberli 2000, (6g))

This means in the CP recursion analysis that these languages do not permit CP recursion at all (in main clauses). Only one constituent can precede the finite verb, and nothing can follow it before the TP boundary.

A third point of variation concerns whether some embedded Cs can take a C*P as their complement. Icelandic and Yiddish, which allow embedded V2 below a complementizer, do allow this, as the following Yiddish example shows:

- (32) Ir zolt visn . . . , az vayn ken men makhn fun troybn oykh.
 you.PI should know that wine can one make from grapes also
 ‘You should know that one can make wine from grapes also.’ (Diesing 1990, 44, (5a))

Present-Day English also allows this, as in example (17c) above.

These three points of variation lead to the following typology of V2 languages:

- (33) Main Clauses: CP Recursion?
 a. No: W. Flemish, Afrikaans, Icelandic, Danish
 b. Yes, C* is Highest: German, Dutch, Frisian, Yiddish, Swedish, Norwegian
 c. Yes, C* is Lowest: Present-Day English
- (34) Embedded Clauses: CP Recursion?
 a. Yes: Icelandic, Yiddish, Present-Day English
 b. No: German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, W. Flemish, Afrikaans

(Additionally, Present-Day English only has C* in a restricted set of environments. This is a fourth point of variation: whether C* occurs in all matrix clauses, or only in restricted environments.)

We are now in a position to see how Old English fits into this typology, in the next section.

5 Old English from the CP Recursion Perspective

We can now examine Old English from the perspective of the typology outlined in the previous section. As we will see, Old English is like Present-Day English in permitting recursion above C*, but it is also like German in permitting CP recursion below C*.

5.1 Recursion Above C*

We have already seen that Old English permits more than one constituent to precede the finite verb in a V2 context, exactly like Present-Day English and unlike all modern V2 languages. Two examples of more than one constituent before the finite verb are repeated below, with an analysis in terms in CP recursion (strikethrough indicates an unpronounced copy, in a lower argument position):

- (35) a. he hine eft ongon wæteres weorpan, (Beo 2790–2791)
 he him again began water sprinkle
 ‘He began to sprinkle him again with water. . .’
- b. [CP he [CP hine [CP eft ongon [TP ~~he~~ ~~hine~~ wæteres weorpan]]]]

- (36) a. & ic gehwam wille þærto tæcan... (Or 57.15)
 and I everyone will thereto direct
 ‘...and I will direct everyone there...’
 b. [CP ic [CP gehwam wille [TP ic þærto tæcan]]]

Like Present-Day English, C* must be the lowest C in CP recursion environments in such cases.

This is exactly a point of historical continuity that I would like to emphasize here, since it unifies Old and Present-Day English and distinguishes both of them from all other Germanic languages. It is striking that Present-Day English regularly puts multiple constituents at the beginning of the sentence:

- (37) a. At the same time, back on the ranch, the cowhands were readying their firearms.
 b. Then, before anyone could react, without even thinking about it Susan ran for the exit.

This is very different from all other Germanic languages, which strictly limit the constituents at the beginning of the clause to one before the finite verb. This is what makes them V2 languages. In Present-Day English, though, even in inversion contexts (the counterpart of V2), multiple constituents can precede the finite verb, as was shown above. Additional examples follow:

- (38) a. Why at that point did you not call the police?
 b. After the liquid starts boiling at no point should you allow the other chemical to come into contact with it.

In this Old English patterns with Present-Day English. Pintzuk (1999, 65–68) and Kroch and Taylor (1997, sec.3.4) note that Old English main clauses often have fronted phrases before the initial constituent, as in the following examples:

- (39) a. & on þam .xlii. geare his rices Crist wæs acenned. (ChronA 1)
 and in the 42nd year his reign Christ was born
 ‘And Christ was born in the 42nd year of his reign.’
 b. þæs cyninges tidum se Arrianisca gedwola wæs upcumen (Bede 1.8:16)
 that king’s time the Arian heresy was arisen
 ‘The Arian heresy arose in that king’s time.’
 c. On þisum geare Willelm cyng geaf Raulfe eorle Willelmes dohtor Osbearnes sunu. (ChronE
 in this year William king gave Ralph earl William’s daughter Osborn’s son
 1075)
 ‘In this year King William gave William FitzOsborn’s daughter in marriage to Earl Ralph.’
 d. & fullice .lxx. wintra syððan on an wæs se ðeodscype eall geðeowod under heora
 and fully 70 years afterwards continually was the nation all enslaved under their
 feonda gewealde, (WHom 6.120)
 enemies’ power
 ‘And for fully 70 years afterwards, all the nation was continually enslaved under their enemies’
 power...’
 e. þa æfter sumum fyrste he wearð on swefne gemynegod (AELS 31,145)
 then after some time he was in dream admonished
 ‘Then after some time he was admonished in a dream’

Examples like these show that V3 and V4 orders are not just the result of pronouns acting as clitics, or the result of two subject positions. In (39d), for instance, the verb is third, but the two constituents preceding it are both adverbial expressions. In (39e), the verb is fourth, but two of the three constituents preceding it are adverbial expressions and only one is a subject pronoun.

Even in the contexts that are supposed to require strict V2 like negation and with the adverb *þa* in initial position, it is possible for constituents to come to the left of the initial constituent. Some examples of this with negation appeared above in (14). Similarly, in (40a), a left-dislocated NP precedes negation, which as initial constituent is supposed to strictly require V2. Note that the pronoun subject follows the verb in this case, as is typical with negation. This might be a true instance of left-dislocation, where the dislocated element does not even count for V2, but even this is striking because it is not allowed in the modern Germanic languages. According to Kroch and Taylor (1997), a left-dislocated NP can only precede the initial constituent of a V2 sentence in German if the initial constituent is the pronoun that is coindexed with it. This is not the case in (40a), where the initial constituent is the negative particle *ne*.

- (40) a. Ða onsaegdnysse, þa ðe fram eow deoflum wæron agoldene, ne magon hi ðam underðeoddu
the sacrifices which by you devils were offered not can they the devotees
gefulltumian (Bede 1.7,49)
help
‘The sacrifices, which you offered to devils, they can’t help the devotees...’
- b. þa under þæm þa bestæl he hine on niht onweg
then meanwhile then stole he him in night away
‘Then, meanwhile, he stole away in the night...’ (ChonA 901)
- c. Mid þy ða ongon firenlust weaxan (Bede 1.11,15)
with that then began riotous-living increase
‘With that, riotous living then began to increase.’

Similarly, in (40b), the verb is fourth, following the adverb *þa*. The subject pronoun follows the finite verb. At the same time, however, two other constituents precede *þa*, neither of which is a pronoun or a subject. In (40c), the verb is third, following a PP and the adverb *þa*. V3/V4 word order therefore has nothing to do with clitic pronouns or subject positions.

I conclude from this that Old English was just like Present-Day English in fronting constituents to specifiers of multiple CPs above C* in CP recursion. Both Old English and Present-Day English differ significantly from all other modern Germanic languages in this respect. All other Germanic languages allow only one constituent before the finite verb.⁷ (According to Kroch and Taylor 1997, note 8, older West Germanic languages tolerated constituents on the left to a much greater degree than do the modern Germanic languages. If this is correct, then English may preserve the older pattern, and strict V2 is a more recent innovation.)

In terms of the typology outlined in the previous section, then, Old English was just like Present-Day English in permitting CP recursion in main clauses. It was also just like Present-Day English in having the *lowest* C in such cases be C*. The one difference that we have to recognize so far is that Old English, unlike Present-Day English, regularly fronted pronouns to the left edge of the clause, including to Spec-CP in a recursive CP. One example of this is repeated below:

- (41) he hine eft ongon wæteres weorpan, (Beo 2790–2791)
he him again began water sprinkle
‘He began to sprinkle him again with water...’

Pronouns often move to Spec-CP, and in examples like the above, this puts them to the left of the finite verb, which moves to the lowest C (C*).

This fronting of pronouns to the left periphery can be seen independently in subordinate clauses where there is no C* and no V2:

⁷According to McCloskey (2006, note 6), while most Germanic languages strictly ban more than one constituent before the finite verb in declarative clauses, many do permit a constituent to occur in an interrogative clause, before the *wh*-phrase. Apparently these languages do permit a restricted form of CP recursion just in this context. See also note 3.

- (42) a. & ic forþam hit nu yldan ne mæg (GD(H) 21,19)
and I therefore it now delay not may
'...and therefore I may not delay it now.'
- b. Gif him ðonne God ryhtlice & streclice deman wile (CP 44.21)
if them then God rightly and severely judge will
'If God will then judge them rightly and severely...'
- c. & heom man syððan þær frið wið nam (ChronA 1001))
and them one afterwards there peace with made
'And afterwards they made peace with them there.'

Fronting of pronouns takes place even in the three contexts where strict V2 predominates. In these contexts the pronoun occurs to the right of the finite verb, but it can be seen clearly to have fronted, for instance when it is an object (43a–c) or when it strands a preposition (43d):

- (43) a. Ne geseah hine nan man nates-hwon yrre (AELS 31,306)
not saw him no man so-little angry
'No man ever saw him so little angry.'
- b. þa sticode him mon þa eagan ut, (Or 90.14)
then stuck him someone the eyes out
'then his eyes were gouged out,'
- c. þonne mot hine se hlaford gefreogean (LawIne 74,1)
then may him the master liberate
'Then the master may liberate him.'
- d. þa becom him Antigones mid firde on (Or 79.23)
then came him Antigones with army against
'...then Antigones came against him with an army...'

Pronouns can also be seen to have moved when there is a doubling negative particle after the verb. Fischer *et al.* (2000, 125) observe that pronouns occur to the left of the doubling negative particle (*na* in the examples below), but full NPs occur to the right:

- (44) a. Ne het he us na leornian heofonas to wyrce~~n~~e (AELS 16,127)
not ordered he us Neg learn heavens to make
'He did not bid us learn to make the heavens'
- b. Ne wende na Ezechias Israhela kyning ðæt he gesyngade... (CP 39.2)
not thought Neg Ezechias Israel's king that he sinned
'Ezechias, king of Israel, did not think he was sinning...'

In the CP recursion theory, we can account for these facts by moving pronouns to specifiers of recursive CPs, as shown below:

- (45) a. he hine eft ongon wæteres weorpan, (Beo 2790–2791)
he him again began water sprinkle
'He began to sprinkle him again with water...'
- b. [CP he [CP hine [CP eft ongon [TP he hine wæteres weorpan]]]]

Fronting to specifiers of recursive CPs can put pronouns first, or second, or even third:

- (46) a. & ic gehwam wille þærto tæcan... (Or 57.15)
and I everyone will thereto direct
'...and I will direct everyone there...'

- b. *Ælc yfel he mæg don, (WHom, 4.62)*
 each evil he can do
 ‘He can do each evil.’
- c. *& seofon ærendracan he him hæfde to asend. (ChronA 905)*
 and seven messengers he him had to send
 ‘He had to send seven messengers to him.’

In other words, there is no dedicated position for pronouns, they simply need to front to some Spec-CP. Additionally, both subject and object pronouns regularly front, although fronting is more common with subject pronouns (e.g., van Kemenade 1987).

This analysis therefore accounts for the pronoun data much better than the analysis that proposes two subject positions. Pronouns clearly do not occupy fixed positions, and the phenomenon is not limited to subjects.

5.2 Recursion Below C*

In many cases, then, Old English has the *lowest* C in CP recursion be C*, just like Present-Day English. However, wh-phrases, negation, and the adverbs *þa* and *þonne* generally do not have recursion above the finite verb. Instead, they seem to have recursion *below* the finite verb. As we just saw, fronted pronouns are clearly fronted, and yet they are often to the right of these elements (and the finite verb). Apparently, with wh-phrases, negation, and the adverbs *þa* and *þonne*, C* is usually the *highest* C in CP recursion rather than the lowest. When a pronoun fronts, it fronts to a specifier of a CP *below* C*, as shown in (47b):

- (47) a. *þa becom him Antigones mid firde on (Or 79.23)*
 then came him Antigones with army against
 ‘... then Antigones came against him with an army...’
- b. [_{CP} *þa becom*]_{C*} [_{CP} him [_{TP} Antigones mid firde on ~~him~~]]]

In other words, just with wh-phrases, negation, and the adverbs *þa* and *þonne*, Old English is just like other Germanic languages in C* being the highest C in CP recursion. Even this is not completely strict, however, given examples like (40a–40b) and (14).

Other constituents can also occupy Spec-CPs below C*. As Haeberli (2000) shows, Old English is just like German in permitting a constituent between the finite verb in a V2 clause and the subject:

- (48) a. *Ne dorste swa þeah se mæssepreost þone bisceop geaxian for hwan...*
 not dared however the mass-priest the bishop ask why
 ‘However, the priest did not dare to ask the bishop why...’ (GD(H) 58,3)
- b. *þa wæs in þa tid Uitalius papa þæs apostolican seðles aldorbiscop*
 then was in that time Vitalius pope the apostolic see’s high-priest
 ‘At that time, Vitalius was chief bishop of the apostolic see.’ (Bede 4.1,15)
- c. *In ða tid wæs in Mercna mægðe Wulfhere cyning. (Bede 4.3,1)*
 in that time was in Mercians’ country Wulfhere king
 ‘At that time, Wulfhere was king in Mercia.’

It therefore appears that Old English had two grammars. One has been maintained to Present-Day English. In this grammar, the lowest C in CP recursion is C*. This results in V3 or even V4 word order with multiple fronting to Spec-CPs. In the other grammar, the highest C is C*. This is the same grammar as German, Dutch, Frisian, Yiddish, Swedish, and Norwegian. In this grammar, the verb is always second in V2 clauses but fronted constituents can come between the finite verb and the subject. With wh-phrases, initial negation, and initial *þa* and *þonne*, this grammar predominates. It is not limited to these contexts, however, as (48c) illustrates.

5.3 The Relation between the Two Grammars

The question that arises now is what the relation between these two grammars is. One possibility is that they would be in competition, and so any given Old English clause would have *either* recursion above C*, or below C*, but not both. To test this, I used the CorpusSearch program to search the York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose. I searched for cases where the finite verb precedes the subject but something else comes between them. I further narrowed this down to cases where the subject precedes the non-finite verb, because without this restriction, numerous cases turn up where the subject is at the end of the clause, typically as a negative or indefinite. I assume that in these types of clauses, the negative or indefinite subject is not in the canonical subject position, Spec-TP, and so cannot tell us whether recursion is taking place above or below C* (the position of the finite verb).

461 examples turned up in this search. The majority had only one constituent before the finite verb, or none at all (they were verb-initial). However, there were several classes of cases with more than one constituent before the finite verb and one or more constituent between the finite verb and the subject. One such class can be dismissed immediately. This is the case of if-clauses. It is common for an if-clause to be followed by *þonne* and then the finite verb. In such cases, other elements can come between the finite verb and the subject. However, it appears that if-clauses simply do not count for V2. They are left-dislocated, and resumed by the element *þonne*, which seems to be playing a pronominal role in this use. I therefore exclude these from consideration, as they do not have recursion above C*.

Even dismissing if-clauses, there were still several classes of cases with multiple elements to the left of the finite verb and at least one constituent between the finite verb and the subject. The largest such class involves unaccusative and (predominantly) passive main verbs. I give one example of each below:

- (49) a. *þa ne mihte swaðeah seo Romana burh buton papan wunian.* (AECHom II, 9:75.93)
 then not could however the Roman town without pope continue
 ‘But the city of Rome might not, however, continue without a pope’
- b. *þy syxtan dæge ær underne þonne biþ from feower endum þære eorþan eall*
 the sixth day before the.third.hour then be from four ends of.the earth all
middangeard mid awergdum gastum gefylled, (HomS 7:93,35)
 world with accursed spirits filled
 ‘On the sixth day before the third hour from the four ends of the earth all the world shall then be filled with accursed spirits,’

The nominative subject in these types of clauses, which is underlyingly an object, seems to remain in a low position, perhaps even in object position (cf. Haeberli 2000, 116–117). If this is indeed what is happening, then these types of clauses also do not tell us whether recursion is above C* or below C*. (Given that they have more than one constituent before the finite verb, by assumption they have recursion above C*.) It should also be noted that in many of the passive cases that appeared in this search, a dative NP or PP immediately followed the finite verb, as in example (49b). It is possible that this NP/PP occupies the subject position (Spec-TP).

The next class of examples with more than one constituent before the finite verb and a constituent between the finite verb and the subject involved negative subjects. Negative subjects frequently appear to the right of constituents other than the finite verb. Here are some examples:

- (50) a. *þa ne meahte hine mon gebindan;* (Bede 4.23,21)
 then not could him no.one bind
 ‘Then no one could bind him’
- b. *þa ne mehte hine mon ofridan;* (ChronA 901)
 then not could him no.one overtake.riding
 ‘No one could overtake him’
- c. *þa ne mihte na lengc manna ænig hine sylfne bedyrnan,* (LS 23 [SevenSleepers], 114)
 then not could Neg long of.men any his self conceal
 ‘Then none of the men could any longer conceal himself,’

As mentioned above, negative and indefinite subjects frequently occupy a position other than Spec-TP, often at the right edge of the clause. One possibility is that in examples like these, the subject is not in Spec-TP, and so it does not tell us where CP recursion is taking place. Since more than one constituent precedes the finite verb, by assumption recursion is taking place above C*. One possible location for the subject is its base position at the edge of VP. In this analysis, pronouns that are fronted would not necessarily front to Spec-CP; they might, for instance, front to Spec-TP if the subject does not move there. Alternatively, these examples show us that recursion is possible both above and below C* at the same time. However, given that negative and indefinite subjects can be seen to occupy other positions in general, it seems more likely that that is what is going on here.

So far, then, there is little reason to think that recursion can take place both above C* and below C* in the same clause. However, there was a small number of examples (namely, five) that did not fall into one of the above classes. I reproduce all of them here:

- (51) a. þone hehne God ne mæg hine man þurh ofermeta geræcen, (Alc 35.98,7)
 the.Acc lofty God not can him.Acc man by pride reach
 ‘Man cannot reach lofty God through pride.’
- b. For þan ne sceal næfre se cristena man beon orsorghleas. (HomU 22.17)
 therefore not shall never the christian man be unsorrowless
 ‘Therefore the Christian man shall never be unsorrowless.’
- c. Forðon hine mæg nu ælc mon oforswiþan, (HomS 3:31.98)
 wherefore him may now every man overcome
 ‘Wherefore now may every man overcome him;’
- d. Ac forhwy ne mæg ðonne micle ma ðæs modes læce gehælan ða adle ðæra
 and why Neg can then much more the mind’s physician heal the diseases of.the
 unðeawa monigra monna mid anre lare, (CP 457,1)
 vices of.many men with same teaching
 ‘Why cannot then much more the physician of the mind heal the diseases of the vices of many men with the same instruction’
- e. þy dæge ne mæg þe se gemædla sceþþan. (Lch II 3:57.1)
 that day not may you.Acc the chatter injure
 ‘that day the chatter cannot harm thee.’

Example (51a) appears to have a left-dislocated NP resumed by a pronoun after the finite verb. In such a case, the left-dislocated NP might not count at all for V2, so that (51a) has only recursion below C*. The other four examples appear to be genuine instances of recursion both above and below the finite verb. However, given how few such examples are, I tentatively conclude that it is reasonable to view the two grammars as being in competition. A speaker would either select the C*-highest grammar (giving strict V2 and the possibility of constituents between the finite verb and the subject) or the C*-lowest grammar (with V3 or V4 and no constituent between the finite verb and the subject). With wh-questions in particular the C*-highest grammar dominated, and to a lesser extent it also did with negation and the adverbs þa and þonne.

Consistent with this, many of the examples with a constituent between the finite verb and the subject are exactly these three contexts. Many are wh-questions:

- (52) a. Hwæt mæg ðonne elles seo earc tacnian buton ða halgan ciricean, (CP 170,2)
 what could then else the ark signify except the holy church
 ‘What signifies the ark but the holy church,’
- b. Hu grades mæg ðonne se biseþ brucan ðære hirdelican are, (CP 133,3)
 how exactly can then the bishop enjoy the pastoral dignity
 ‘How, then, can the bishop properly enjoy the pastoral dignity,’

Many have initial negation:

- (53) a. Ne magon þis þeah ealle men don; (HomS 3:37,34)
not can this however all men do
'All men however cannot do this;'
- b. Ne magan þonne halige men on þam timan ænige tacna openlice wyrcan, (WHom 5,62)
not could then holy men in those times any miracles openly work
'In those times holy men could not openly work miracles;'

And many have the adverbs þa and þonne in initial position:

- (54) a. þa ongan eft þæt wif sprecan to þam ealdan (LS 23,248)
then began again the woman speak to the old.man
'Then began the woman again to speak to the old man,'
- b. þonne wæs ongean ðyssum wæterscipe glæsen fæt on seolfrenre racenteage ahangen
then was by this water.patch glass vessel on silver chain hanging
'By this piece of water was a glass vessel, hung on a silver chain' (BIHom 17:209,4)

It appears, then, that recursion below C* predominantly took place in these three environments, as expected.

5.4 Old English's Place in the Typology

We can now locate Old English within the typology proposed in section 4. Old English has two settings for main clauses, one with CP recursion above C*, and one with CP recursion below C*. The one with C* highest is regularly used with wh-questions, negation, and certain adverbs. In addition, Old English permits CP recursion below some embedded complementizers:

- (55) Main Clauses: CP Recursion?
- No: W. Flemish, Afrikaans, Icelandic, Danish
 - Yes, C* is Highest: German Dutch, Frisian, Yiddish, Swedish, Norwegian, **Old English**
 - Yes, C* is Lowest: Present-Day English, **Old English**
- (56) Embedded Clauses: CP Recursion?
- Yes: Icelandic, Yiddish, Present-Day English, **Old English**
 - No: German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, W. Flemish, Afrikaans

Note that two of these three settings are exactly the same as Present-Day English. These two continuities are listed below, along with a third pattern of the language identified above:

- (57) *Continuities with Present-Day English:*
- Embedded clauses permit CP recursion.
 - C* is lowest C in CP recursion.
 - Multiple constituents regularly front to Spec-CP.

The second two distinguish Old English and Present-Day English from all other Germanic languages. These commonalities have not been identified before, although they are striking, and strikingly different from other Germanic languages. The present analysis captures them, while no other analysis does.

There are also several ways in which Old English differed from Present-Day English:

- (58) *Differences from Present-Day English:*
- The highest C can be C* (like modern V2 languages).
 - Pronouns regularly front to Spec-CP.

Pronouns stopped fronting to Spec-CP. Interestingly, this change resulted in more V2 with pronoun subjects through the Middle English period, even while V2 was in general declining. As Haeberli (2002b), van Kemenade and Westergaard (2011), and van Kemenade (2012) note, subject-verb inversion actually increased with pronoun subjects during the Middle English period, although subject-verb inversion overall was declining in frequency. The explanation for this is that pronouns, and subject pronouns in particular, stopped fronting to Spec-CP. When the verb moved to C, it therefore inverted more with pronominal subjects, even though verbs were moving to C less and less (see more on changes with pronouns immediately below).

To the two differences listed above we can add the following, although they have not yet been a focus of the present paper:

(59) *Further Differences from Present-Day English:*

- a. Main verbs could move to C*.
- b. Most main clauses had C*.

These both changed to get to the present-day grammar. C* became restricted in its distribution to questions, conditionals, clauses with a preposed negative phrase (although this seems to have been a new innovation), and a few other environments. Additionally, main verbs lost the ability to move to C*, so that verb movement became restricted to auxiliary verbs.

Finally, the option of the highest C in CP recursion being C* was lost, so that in Present-Day English only the lowest C is ever C*.

5.5 Proposed Route of Change

I propose that these changes took place in the following manner:

First, the general headedness of the language changed. The VP changed from OV to VO, and the TP changed from VP-T to T-VP. This was already taking place in the Old English period, and has been argued to have been largely completed by around the year 1200 (van Kemenade 1987, citing Canale 1978 and Hiltunen 1983). One important consequence of this change is that it makes it harder for a language learner to distinguish movement to C from movement to T when it is the subject that precedes the finite verb (by far the most common pattern).

Second, pronouns stopped fronting to Spec-CP. In particular, object pronouns stopped fronting and largely became confined to post-verbal position. According to van Kemenade (1987, 200), object pronouns had stopped fronting entirely by the mid-fourteenth century, and predominantly appeared after the verb as early as the twelfth century. In contrast, subject pronouns continued to occur before the finite verb for a longer period (van Kemenade 1987, 197). That is, V3 word order predominantly occurred only with the subject as the second constituent (XP-Subj-V). I suggest that this was reinterpreted by language learners as the verb only moving as far as T. The positions for pronouns had already changed, object pronouns in particular, so rather than taking XP-Subject-V order to indicate fronting of the subject, language learners instead took it to indicate failure of the verb to move to C. Similarly for the V2 order Subject-V: rather than fronting of both the subject and the verb, it was reinterpreted as the subject being in Spec-TP and the verb in T.

At the same time, however, V2 was still very robust with *wh*-questions. So the actual change was for C* to become restricted in its distribution, not to be lost altogether. Alongside the old grammar where almost all main clauses had a C*, there now arose a grammar where C* only occurred in certain main clauses, chief among them *wh*-questions. When C* did not occur, the verb moved only as far as T. According to van Kemenade (1987, 183ff), V2 began declining around the year 1400. In the current account, that is when the new grammar arose where C* occurs only in a restricted set of main clauses. This grammar existed alongside the earlier one where C* occurred in all main clauses and gradually supplanted it. This took a long time, however, with V2 occurring well into the Early Modern period.

One possibility is that the grammar where C* was the highest C in CP recursion, which was already tied to *wh*-questions, negation, and certain adverbs, turned into a grammar where C* is restricted to certain environments. That is, because there was already a relation between a restricted set of environments and the C*-highest grammar, that grammar turned into one where C* is restricted in its distribution. At the same time, though, there was regular

fronting of more than one constituent to a preverbal position, so this grammar also turned into C* being lowest. That is, C* being lowest was generalized, while the C*-highest grammar turned into a C*-lowest grammar where C* is restricted to questions and a few other environments.

The only other change that we need to get to the Present-Day English grammar is the restriction on verb movement to auxiliary verbs. This restriction is independent of the development of V2, so I will not address it here.

5.6 Further Support: Two Dialects in Middle English

The present analysis receives further support from the two dialects of Middle English discussed by Kroch and Taylor (1997). According to Kroch and Taylor (1997), the southern dialects of Middle English are just like Old English with respect to V2, at least initially. However, a northern dialect strikingly exhibits strict V2, just like modern V2 languages. Kroch and Taylor (1997) suggest that this is due to influence from Scandinavians settling in England at the time. However, this makes no sense in the V-to-Infl analysis that they adopt (described in section 3.2). In their analysis, Old English V2 was of the V-to-Infl type rather than the V-to-C type. The Scandinavian of the time was probably also V-to-Infl, like modern Icelandic. It is not clear how the influence of one V-to-Infl language could turn another V-to-Infl language into a V-to-C language.

In the analysis proposed here, in contrast, Icelandic (and, presumably, earlier Scandinavian) is like all other V2 languages in having the highest C be C* in main clauses. This influence pushed the northern Middle English dialect to generalize the option of the higher C being C*, so that the lower C never was. The result is strict V2.

Furthermore, Haerberli (2000) shows that the northern Middle English dialect also did not allow the order V2 XP Subj, just like Icelandic. In current terms, this means the northern Middle English dialect did not allow CP recursion below C*, either. Just like Icelandic, northern Middle English did not allow CP recursion at all in main clauses.

In short, in the current typology it makes perfect sense for Scandinavian influence to push a Middle English dialect into strict V2. This dialect of Middle English took on the settings of modern Icelandic. One of these settings was already an option in the language, so this was not a large change at all.

6 Conclusion

Old English V2, V3, and V4 receives a natural account in the typology of the left periphery proposed in Bruening (2016). In many ways Old English was just like Present-Day English, with CP recursion above C* and fronting of multiple elements. This results in more than one constituent being possible before the finite verb. This is a feature that has been maintained from Old English to Present-Day English, but it is something that is not allowed in all the other Germanic languages. In these languages, if CP recursion is allowed at all, it is only allowed below C*, so that fronted elements intervene between the finite verb and the subject in Spec-TP. Old English actually allowed this option, too, in certain environments.

The proposed analysis not only locates Old English within a typology of V2, it also explains historical continuity from Old English to Present-Day English, while positing minimal change to get from Old English to Present-Day English. The empirical coverage of the analysis is superior to other accounts that have been proposed, which all stumble on various aspects of the data. None of them connect the Old English facts to patterns of Present-Day English. Finally, to the extent that the analysis is successful, it provides further support for the CP recursion analysis proposed in Bruening (2016).

References

- Abels, Klaus (2012), "The Italian Left Periphery: A View from Locality." *Linguistic Inquiry* 43: 229–254.
- Authier, J.-Marc (1992), "Iterated CPs and Embedded Topicalization." *Linguistic Inquiry* 23: 329–336.
- den Besten, Hans (1983), "On the Interaction of Root Transformations and Lexical Deletive Rules." In Werner Abraham, ed., *On the Formal Syntax of Westgermania*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 47–131.

- Bhatt, Rakesh, and James Yoon (1991), "On the Composition of COMP and Parameters of V2." In Dawn Bates, ed., *The Proceedings of the Tenth West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*, Stanford: CSLI Publications, pp. 41–52.
- Bruening, Benjamin (2016), "Alignment in Syntax: Quotative Inversion in English." *Syntax* 19: 111–155.
- Culicover, Peter W. (1991), "Topicalization, Inversion and Complementizers in English." In Denis Delfitto, Martin Everaert, Arnold Evers, and Frits Stuurman, eds., *Going Romance and Beyond*, Utrecht: University of Utrecht, pp. 1–45.
- Diesing, Molly (1990), "Verb Movement and the Subject Position in Yiddish." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 8: 41–79.
- Diesing, Molly (1992), *Indefinites*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Fischer, Olga, Ans van Kemenade, Willem Koopman, and Wim van der Wurff (2000), *The Syntax of Early English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haerberli, Eric (2000), "Adjuncts and the Syntax of Subjects in Old and Middle English." In Susan Pintzuk, George Tsoulas, and Anthony Warner, eds., *Diachronic Syntax: Models and Mechanisms*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 109–131.
- Haerberli, Eric (2002a), "Inflectional Morphology and the Loss of Verb-Second in English." In David Lightfoot, ed., *Syntactic Effects of Morphological Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 88–106.
- Haerberli, Eric (2002b), "Observations on the Loss of Verb Second in the History of English." In Jan-Wouter Zwart and Werner Abraham, eds., *Studies in Comparative Germanic Syntax*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 245–272.
- Haerberli, Eric, and Tabea Ihsane (2016), "Revisiting the Loss of Verb Movement in the History of English." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 34: 497–542.
- Haegeman, Liliane (2000), "Inversion, Non-Adjacent Inversion, and Adjuncts in CP." *Transactions of the Philological Society* 98: 121–160.
- Haegeman, Liliane (2012), *Adverbial Clauses, Main Clause Phenomena, and the Composition of the Left Periphery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Healey, Antonette diPaolo, and Richard Venezky (1980), *A Microfiche Concordance to Old English*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies.
- van Kemenade, Ans (1987), *Syntactic Case and Morphological Case in the History of English*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- van Kemenade, Ans (2012), "Rethinking the Loss of Verb Second." In Terttu Nevalainen and Elizabeth Closs Traugott, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 823–834.
- van Kemenade, Ans, and Marit Westergaard (2011), "Syntax and Information Structure: Verb-Second Variation in Middle English." In Anneli Meurman-Solin, Maria José López-Couso, and Bettelou Los, eds., *Information Structure and Syntactic Change in the History of English*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 87–118.
- Kiparsky, Paul (1995), "Indo-European Origins of Germanic Syntax." In Adrian Battye and Ian Roberts, eds., *Clause Structure and Language Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 140–169.
- Koopman, Willem (1998), "Inversion after Single and Multiple Topics in Old English." In Jacek Fisiak and Marcin Krygier, eds., *Advances in English Historical Linguistics*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 135–150.
- Kroch, Anthony, and Ann Taylor (1997), "Verb Movement in Old and Middle English: Dialect Variation and Language Contact." In Ans van Kemenade and Nigel Vincent, eds., *Parameters of Morphosyntactic Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 297–325.
- Maekawa, Takafumi (2006), "Configurational and Linearization-Based Approaches to Negative Inversion." In O. Bonami and P. Cabredo Hofherr, eds., *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics 6*, Electronic publication: <http://www.cssp.cnrs.fr/eiss6/maekawa-eiss6.pdf>, pp. 227–247.
- McCarthy, John, and Alan Prince (1993), "Generalized Alignment." *Yearbook of Morphology* : 79–153.
- McCloskey, James (2006), "Questions and Questioning in a Local English." In Raffaella Zanuttini, Héctor Campos, Elena Herburger, and Paul H. Portner, eds., *Negation, Tense and Clausal Architecture: Cross-Linguistic Investigations*, Georgetown, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, pp. 86–126.
- Pintzuk, Susan (1993), "Verb Seconding in Old English: Verb Movement to Infl." *The Linguistic Review* 10: 5–35.
- Pintzuk, Susan (1999), *Phrase Structures in Competition: Variation and Change in Old English Word Order*. New York and London: Garland.
- Platzack, Christer (1986), "COMP, INFL, and Germanic Word Order." In Lars Hellan and Kirsti Koch Christensen, eds., *Topics in Scandinavian Syntax*, Dordrecht: Reidel, pp. 185–234.

- Reinhart, Tanya (1981), "A Second Comp Position." In Adriana Belletti, Luciana Brandi, and Luigi Rizzi, eds., *Theory of Markedness in Generative Grammar: Proceedings of the 1979 GLOW Conference*, Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, pp. 517–557.
- Rizzi, Luigi (1997), "The Fine Structure of the Left Periphery." In Liliane Haegeman, ed., *Elements of Grammar*, Dordrecht: Kluwer, pp. 281–337.
- Rögvaldsson, Eiríkur, and Höskuldur Thráinsson (1990), "On Icelandic Word Order Once More." In Joan Maling and Annie Zaenen, eds., *Modern Icelandic Syntax*, San Diego: Academic Press, pp. 3–41.
- Santorini, Beatrice (1992), "Variation and Change in Yiddish Subordinate Clause Word Order." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 10: 595–640.
- Sobin, Nicholas (2003), "Negative Inversion as Nonmovement." *Syntax* 6: 183–212.
- Struckmeier, Volker (2014), "Ja doch wohl C? Modal Particles in German as C-Related Elements." *Studia Linguistica* 68: 16–48.
- Vikner, Sten (1995), *Verb Movement and Expletive Subjects in the Germanic Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Webelhuth, Gert (1992), *Principles and Parameters of Syntactic Saturation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.