

Leftward Stylistic Displacement (LSD) in Old and Middle French

Marie Labelle, UQAM

Paul Hirschbühler, retired, Université d'Ottawa

In this presentation, we study cases of LSD, where an element (X^0/XP) has been fronted to the left of a finite verb in Old and Middle French.

- (1) **Ensi vint à un parlement à Soissons qui només fu**
thus came to a parliament at Soisson which nominated was
'Thus he came to a parliament in Soisson which was chosen.'
[La Conquête de Constantinople, p. 17; M2006b (20a)]
- (2) **come cil font qui en queste doivent entrer**
like those do who in quest must enter
'Like those, who must start the quest, do'
[La Queste del Saint Graal 3, p. 23; M2006b (1)]

It has been argued that in embedded clauses, this construction is a case of Stylistic Fronting (for Old French, see Cardinaletti & Roberts, 1991/2002; Dupuis, 1989; Mathieu 2006, 2009, 2013; Molnár, 2010; Roberts 1993; Salvesen, 2011; for other Medieval and Modern Romance languages, see Benincà, 2006; Cardinaletti 2003; Egerland, 2011; Fischer, 2010, to appear; Fischer and Alexiadou, 2001; Fontana, 1993; Franco, 2009, 2012). Among these authors, some argue that the displaced element is moved to the left periphery (e.g. Fischer and Alexiadou; Franco, Mathieu, Salvesen), sometimes to a Topic-like position (Mathieu, 2006, 2009, 2013), sometimes to a Focus position (Benincà, 2006), sometimes to the FinP projection (Franco, 2009, 2012; Salvesen, 2011).

Mathieu, following Hrafnbjargarson (2004) for Icelandic/Old & Middle Danish, in particular, argues that two elements may be SF-ed (3) and he extends the analysis to main clauses, particularly when a verbal head is fronted (4), or when a V3 word order is observed.

- (3) **Se lieve sus, et cil le voient /Qui avoec lui aler devoient**
self get-up quickly and those him see who with him go must
'He gets up quickly and they, who should have gone with him, see him.'
[Le Chevalier à la Charrette, 2203-2205; M2006b (24b)]
- (4) **Parlé as a ton amant**
spoken have to your lover
'You have spoken to your lover'
[Aucassin et Nicolette 24-25; M2006b (32b)]

It will be argued that LSD encompasses at least three distinct constructions.

1. In main clauses with a V2 order, we argue that non-finite verb fronting involves movement to the left periphery. We analyze it as involving movement to the first position of a normal V2 clause.
2. In embedded clauses, we argue that in Old French the LSD-ed constituent follows the canonical subject position, since a nominal or pronominal subject may precede it (an order also attested in other medieval Romance languages, e.g. Benincà, 2006 :23; Cardinaletti, 2003; Molnár, 2010; Fischer, 2010).

3. The $X(P)_{LSD}$ *Subject Verb* word order is essentially a Middle French phenomenon; in that case it appears to involve movement to the left periphery, possibly to FocusP.

We discuss the distribution and the evolution of each of these constructions from Old French (9th c.-1350) to the end of the Middle French (1350-1600) period.

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