



Diagnosing embedded V2 in Old French and Old English

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Preliminaries

- ▶ Old English (OE, 450 – ca. 1100) and Old French (OF, 842 – ca. 1350) both exhibit verb second (V2) word order in main declarative clauses, even though OE also has verb final clauses (“a mixed grammar”, Lightfoot 1999).
- ▶ Both languages have embedded V2.



V-movement in V2 languages

- ▶ Landing site of the finite verb in modern V2 languages: **C°** (left periphery) (den Besten 1977, Evers 1981 and Schwartz & Vikner 1996) or **I°** (IP field) (Travis 1984 and Zwart 1993)?
- ▶ It has been widely debated whether OE and OF are “true” V2 languages, and whether verb-movement is to CP or IP. Two possible landing sites for the finite verb; three different classes of analysis:
 - ▶ **The C-V2 hypothesis:** A head in the left periphery (OE: van Kemenade 1987, 1997; Roberts 1996; Walkden 2012; OF: Adams 1987, Roberts 1993)
 - ▶ **The I-V2 hypothesis:** A head in the IP-field (OE: Pintzuk 1993, 1999; OF: Dupuis 1989, Rinke & Meisel 2009)
 - ▶ **Mixed verb placement:** A head in the left periphery and in the IP-field (OE: Eythórsson 1995; Haeberli 2005; OF: Vance 1997, Labelle 2007)



Object of this presentation

- ▶ Analyse embedded V2 in OE and OF, and compare the results.
 - ▶ Why OE and OF? Because:
 - ▶ a) similar analytical and methodological issues arise for both
 - ▶ b) OF is widely known to exhibit "Germanic" properties (see Mathieu 2009 for overview).
- ▶ Evaluate the I-V2 and the C-V2 hypotheses by using embedded V2 as a tool in order to determine which head the finite verb moves to in main declarative clauses.



I-V2

- ▶ The finite verb moves to a head in the IP-field (T°), and an XP moves into its specifier position.
- ▶ T° carries a V feature and an EPP feature.
- ▶ SpecTP is an A' position.



C-V2

- ▶ The finite verb moves to a head in the left periphery (e.g. C° or Fin°), and an XP moves to its specifier position.
- ▶ The head in question carries a V feature and an EPP feature.
- ▶ The specifier position is an A' position.
- ▶ SpecTP is a A position reserved for the subject.



Predictions

- ▶ It's accepted that complementizers are first merged in a head in the left periphery. So:
 - ▶ I-V2: predicts that embedded V2 will be found in the complement clauses of all kinds of verbs (the complementizer cannot block verb movement).
 - ▶ This may be the case for e.g. Icelandic (though complications arise with respect to Stylistic Fronting).
 - ▶ C-V2: predicts that embedded V2 will only be possible in the complement clauses of certain verbs (the complementizer may block verb movement).
 - ▶ This is the case for modern Mainland Scandinavian (Vikner 1995, Julien 2009).



Method

- ▶ Electronic corpora
- ▶ OE: The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose (YCOE; Taylor et al. 2003). <http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/YCOE/>.
- ▶ OF: *La Queste de Graal* in the *Base du français médiéval* online corpus (BFM; Heiden et al. 2010). <http://txm.bfm-corpus.org/>.



Key data

- ▶ OE:
 - ▶ Exhaustive sample of 400 non-subject-initial XP-V-... verbal complement clauses.
 - ▶ This includes a large number of examples that we may not want to consider evidence for true V2, i.e. V-in-C.
 - ▶ Sample of 879 of *all other* verbal complement clauses (every 13th example).
- ▶ OF: 896 clauses; 190 of these having V2 properties (true V2 or *pro* in the subordinate clause)



What is embedded V2?

- ▶ Embedded V2 in OE and OF may have two manifestations
 - Embedded clause with (non-subject-initial) V2 word order
 - Embedded *pro* (not in OE)



V2 and Stylistic Fronting in OF

- ▶ Is embedded V2 actually embedded Stylistic Fronting (SF) (Mathieu 2006, 2012)?
- ▶ SF typically ...
 - ... **involves a subject gap**
 - ... the fronting of a head
 - ... is clause-bound
 - ...obeys the Accessibility Hierarchy (see Maling 1982 and subsequent literature)
- ▶ Note that SF can also involve phrases (Holmberg 2000, Mathieu 2006)
- ▶ The subject gap condition may have two interpretations: Either there must be a *pro* subject (strong version) or SpecTP must be empty (weak version).



Postverbal pronominal subjects

- ▶ In OF the pronominal postverbal subject occupies SpecTP; the nominal postverbal subject sits lower (Vance 1997; Bech & Salvesen forthcoming).
- ▶ Strong version: SF is only possible with a *pro*.
- ▶ Weak version: SF is possible with *pro* and postverbal DP subjects.
- ▶ In either case SF is incompatible with postverbal pronominal subjects.

Pro	46	29.1 %
V2 – DP	51	32.3 %
V2 – pron	61	38.6 %
	158	



V2 in OF is not SF

- ▶ We conclude that OF has embedded V2.
- ▶ We make the assumption that in either case, SF and V2 involves verbal movement to the same head (*contra* Mathieu 2006).



There is no SF in OE

- ▶ Okhado (2010) and Fischer (2010: 102–106) claim that OE also exhibits SF. But:
 - ▶ Okhado's (2010) results are not unequivocal
 - ▶ Haeberli (2011) demonstrates that there is no clear evidence for SF in OE: the proportion of fronting in subjectless clauses is not consistently significantly higher than in clauses with subjects (either full or pronominal)
- ▶ We will therefore assume that SF was not operative in OE.



Hooper & Thompson

- ▶ Hooper & Thompson (1973) distinguish between five different classes of verbs (A–E) according to the discourse status of their complement clauses.
 - ▶ A: strong assertion, typically verbs of saying. (*Ex.: say, report, exclaim, assert, claim, vow, be true, be certain, be sure, be obvious*)
 - ▶ B: weak assertion, typically verbs denoting mental processes. (*Ex.: suppose, believe, think expect, guess, imagine, it seems, it happens, it appears*)
 - ▶ C: neither presupposed nor assertive. (*Ex.: be (un)likely, be (im)possible, be (im)probable, doubt, deny*)
 - ▶ D: semi-factive, presupposed; typically expressing an emotion or subjective attitude. (*Ex.: resent, regret, be sorry, be surprised, bother, be odd, be strange, be interesting*)
 - ▶ E: factive/presupposed (*Ex.: realize, learn, find out, discover, know, see, recognize*)



Predictions

- ▶ Complements of classes A, B and E should be able to exhibit main clause phenomena such as embedded V2.
- ▶ Complements of classes C and D should not.



Difficulties using H&T's classification

- ▶ H&T describe verbs that take finite complements in Modern English.
- ▶ More verbs in OE and OF take finite clausal complements than in their modern counterparts. Especially verbs of 'volition' are difficult to fit into the system.

gyf we willað þæt us gehyre se heofonlica God
if we want that us hear the heavenly God
'if we want heavenly God to hear us' (OE; *coaelhom*,+AHom_5:178.795)

Dame, fait il, que volez vos que je vos face
lady made he what want you that I you do
'Milady, he said, what do you want me to do?' (OF; *Graal*, 132,36)

- ▶ These verbs are neither assertive or factive, but express the protagonist's attitude towards a hypothetical, possibly future, state of affairs. In OF these verbs typically take the subjunctive mood.
- ▶ We have chosen to treat these **volitives** as a separate group, *Class V*.



Distribution

	Old English			Old French		
	Total	V2	%	Total	V2	%
A	444	140	31.5 %	286	93	32.5 %
B	217	81	37.3 %	196	25	12.8 %
C	13	4	30.8 %	0	0	0.0 %
D	99	16	16.2 %	44	0	0.0 %
E	267	111	41.6 %	235	33	14.0 %
V	239	48	20.1 %	118	5	4.2 %
Total	1279	400	31.3 %	878	158	18.0 %

NB: OE and OF percentages not comparable!
(since the OE sample of non-V2 clauses is not exhaustive)



Remarks on the distribution

- ▶ For Old English, there exist some apparent counterexamples to our hypothesis: 20 V2 examples in classes C and D.
 - ▶ However, most of these are only apparent (as will be discussed later!).
 - ▶ The difference A/B/E/V vs. C/D is in any case statistically significant (Fisher's exact test; $p=0.0013$).
 - ▶ Significant differences between classes ($p<0.05$) are A vs. D, A vs. E, A vs. V, B vs. E, D vs. E, E vs. V.
- ▶ For Old French, there are no V2 complements of verbs of classes C or D.
 - ▶ There are no examples at all of class C verbs, and relatively few of class D.
 - ▶ Still, the difference A/B/E/V vs. C/D is significant ($p=0.0003$).
 - ▶ All differences between classes are significant ($p<0.05$) except B vs. E and D vs. V.



Class A verbs – Old English

- ▶ OE: 43 different verbs, 444 clauses. 22 verbs followed by V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
444	140	31.5 %

- ▶ *secgan* and *cweðan* 'say' account for 66.4 % of all class A clauses between them. Distribution when *secgan* and *cweðan* are kept apart:

Other A	149	46	30.9 %	
<i>secgan/cweðan</i>	295	94	31.9 %	(p=0.9184; not significant)



áwritan 'write'

Be ðam is awriten ðæt **betera** beo se geðyldega wer ðonne se gielpna

by that is written that **better** be the patient man than the boastful

'Therefore it is written that the patient man is better than the boastful one.'

(cocura,CP:33.217.10.1449)

secgan 'say'

and ge secgað þæt **on Hierusalem** si seo stow þær þær gedafenað to
gebiddenne

and you say that **in Jerusalem** be the place where there is-suitable to worship

'And you say that the place where we should worship is in Jerusalem.'

(coaelhom,+AHom_5:39.709)



Class A verbs – Old French

- ▶ OF: 23 different verbs, 286 clauses. 10 verbs followed by V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
286	93	32.5 %

- ▶ *dire* 'say' accounts for 69.9 % of all class A clauses. Distribution when *dire* is kept apart:

Other A	6	21	24.4 %
<i>dire</i>	200	72	36.0 %

(p=0.1858; not significant)



creanter 'promise', 'grant'

aiez de moi merci, et ne m' oci mie, et je te creant que **ja mes** ne guerrierai
la juene dame tant com je vive

have of me mercy and NEG me kill not and I you promise that **never more** NEG
fight the young lady much as I live

'Have mercy of me, and don't kill me, and I will promise you that I will never go
to war against this young lady, not as long as I live.'

dire 'say'

Et distrent cil qui onques mes ne l' avoient veu que **hautement** avoit
comenciee chevalerie

and said those who never more NEG him had seen that highly had begun
kighthood

'And those who never before had seen him, said that in him kighthood had
started well.'



Class B verbs – Old English

- ▶ 23 different verbs, 217 different clauses. 11 verbs followed by V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
217	81	37.3 %

limpan 'happen'

And þa gelamp nywan þæt **ðær** comon of Galilean to Hierusalem þry mære
weras

and then happened recently that **there** came from Galilee to Jerusalem three
more men

'It recently happened that three more men came from Galilee to Jerusalem.'
(conicodA,Nic_[A]:14.1.1.263)



geliefan 'believe'

Ac ic gelyfe æfter domes dæge þæt **us** ne beo nanwiht dyhle

but I believe after doom's day that **us** NEG be nothing secret

'But I believe that after Doomsday nothing will be hidden from us.'

(cosolilo,Solil_3:66.23.925)

þyncan 'think/seem'

hym þuhte þæt **hym** beporften þæt hi his mare wiston

them seemed that **them** needed that they his more knew

'It seemed to them that they needed to know more of him.'

(cosolilo,Solil_1:20.8.263)



Class B verbs – Old French

- ▶ 11 different verbs, 195 different clauses. 6 verbs followed by V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
195	25	12.8 %

avenir 'happen'

Il m' avint anuit en mon dormant que **devant moi** venoient.ii. dames donc l'
une estoit montee sor.i. lyon

it me happened this-night in my sleep that before me came 2 ladies of-whom
the one was mounted on 1 lion

'I dreamt last night that two ladies came before me; one of them rode on a
lion.'



cuidier 'believe, think'

car il ne cuidassent mie que **en.i. an** poïst estre einsi li chastiax destruiz par tempeste

for they NEG thought NEG that **in 1 year** could be this-way the castle destroyed by tempest

'... for they had not thought that the castle could be destroyed like this in one year, by a tempest.'

penser 'think'

Et par les signes que nos en avons ja veuz pensons nos bien que **encore** verra il et ravra le pooir de ses membres.

and by the signs that we of-it have already seen think we well that **again** see he and re-have the power of his body parts

'Because of the signs that we have seen, we believe that he will see again and that he will regain control of his body.'



Class C verbs – Old English

- ▶ 9 different verbs, 13 different clauses. 4 verbs followed by apparent V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
13	4	30.8 %

Very infrequent overall – and **all four V2 examples are dubious in some way.**



twéonian 'doubt'

oððe hwa tweoð þæs, þæt **þær æt** ne sy Ængla þreat in þam geryne þæs
hælandan Cristes

or who doubts that.GEN that **there at** NEG be angles.GEN host in the mystery
the.GEN healing Christ.GEN

'Who doubts (it) that there are groups of angels in the mysteries of holy Christ?'
(cogregdC,GDPref_and_4_[C]:60.348.29.5349)

forsacan 'reject/refuse'

þe seo godcunde gesomnung forsoc, þæt **hire fore** wære fore þam dome
þara bisceopa

that the sacred council refused that **her.DAT for** were for the judgment the.GEN
bishops.GEN

'he who the holy council refused her because of the bishops' judgment'
(cogregdC,GDPref_and_4_[C]:42.329.14.4962)



twyn wesan 'to be in doubt'

Nis nan twyn þæt **eow** ne beo forgolden ælc ðæra stapa ðe ge to Godes huse stæppað

NEG-is no doubt that **you.DAT** NEG be repaid each those.GEN steps.GEN that you to God's house step

'There is no doubt that you will be repaid for every step you take towards God's house'

(cocathom2,+ACHom_II,_34:259.113.5787)

wiðsacan 'deny/refuse'

Forþon se ylca wer wiðsoc, þæt **him** moste beon ænigu nydþearfnes geþegnod þurh þæt wif

therefore that same man denied that **him.DAT** must be any necessity served by that woman

'this man therefore refused to allow the woman to serve him in any way'

(cogregdC,GDPref_and_4_[C]:12.276.9.4027)



Class C verbs – Old French

➤ None





Class D verbs – Old English

- ▶ 41 different verbs, 99 different clauses. 13 verbs followed by V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
99	16	17.0 %

ondrædan 'to dread'

hie magon ondrædan ðæt **him** weorðen ða wyrtruman færcorfene

they may dread that **them** become the roots carved-out

'They may dread that their roots might be carved out.'

(cocura,CP:45.339.19.2286)



***cynn wesan* 'to be proper'**

ðonne is cynn ðæt **him** spiwe ðæt wif on ðæt nebb
then is proper that **him.DAT** spit the woman in the face
'Then it is proper that the woman spits in his face'

(cocura,CP:5.45.2.249)

- ▶ All but two of the 16 examples of apparent V2 that the search returns can be interpreted as having:
 - ▶ a quirky subject (6)
 - ▶ an extraposed heavy subject (6)
 - ▶ no subject at all, thus 'accidental' V2 (2)
- ▶ The two given above are the only potentially problematic examples.



Class D verbs – Old French

- ▶ 12 verbs, 44 clauses. No instances of V2.
- 



Class E verbs – Old English

- ▶ 27 verbs, 267 clauses. 18 verbs followed by a V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>
267	111 41.6 %



witan 'to know'

Us is to witenne þæt **on ðreo wisan** bið geðyld æteowod

us is to know that **on three wises** is patience manifested

'We should know that patience is manifested in three ways'

(cocathom2,+ACHom_II,_42:315.155.7126)

séon 'see'

He geseah ða þæt **hine** ne mihte nan læce gehælan

he saw then that **him.ACC** NEG could no doctor heal

'He saw then that no doctor could heal him'

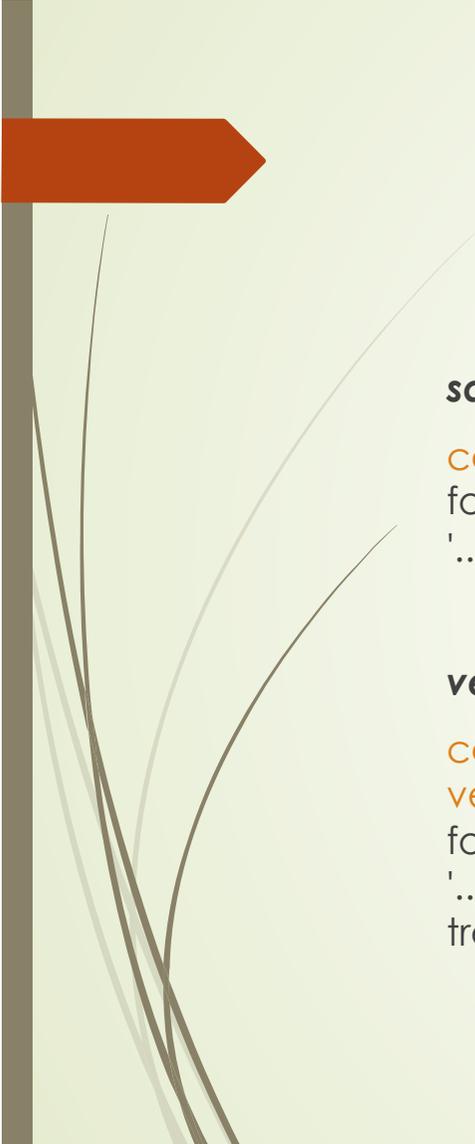
(cocathom2,+ACHom_II,_37:279.213.6277)



Class E verbs – Old French

- ▶ 13 verbs, 235 clauses. 5 verbs followed by a V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
235	34	14.5 %



savoir 'know'

car je sai bien que **l' aventure** acheveroiz vos legierement.
for I know well that the adventure achieve you lightly
'... for I know well that you will easily succeed in the adventure.'

veoir 'see'

car il virent tot apertement que **de l' arbre** issoient goutes de sanc ausi
vermeilles come roses
for they saw all overtly that of the tree emerged drops of blood so red as roses
'... for they saw clearly that rose-red drops of blood emerged (???) from the
tree.'



Class V verbs – Old English

- ▶ 18 verbs, 118 clauses. 6 verbs followed by a V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
239	48	20.1 %



bebéodan 'command'

& him bebead, þæt **on þa ylcan tid** sceoldon beon heora hors gegearwode
and them commanded, that **on the same time** should be her horses readied
'and commanded them that at that time his horses should be readied'

(cogregdC,GD_1_[C]:4.38.8.429)

willan 'want'

swa ge willon þæt **eow** sy eft gedemed on þon ytmaestan dæge þisse worlde
as you want that **you.DAT** be after judged on the utmost day this.GEN world.GEN
'as you want to be judged on the last day of this world'

(coblick,HomS_17_[BIHom_5]:61130.758)



Class V verbs – Old French

- ▶ 9 verbs, 118 clauses. 4 verbs followed by a V2 structure.

<u>tot</u>	<u>V2</u>	
118	5	4.2 %



***commander* 'command'**

Et encor vos commant je que **tant com vos seroiz en ceste queste** ne mengiez
de char ne ne bevez de vin

and again you commande I that all-that as you will-be in this quest NEG eat of
meat and NEG drink of wine

'And again I command you that as long as you take part in this quest, you
should not eat any meat nor drink any wine.'



Summing up

- ▶ We find that embedded V2 is allowed after verbs of classes A, B and E.
- ▶ There are hardly any instances of embedded V2 after classes C and D.
- ▶ This asymmetry is expected if V2 is C-V2 and not I-V2.



Embedded V2 and the complementizer

- ▶ If V2 involves movement to the CP field, the complementizer cannot block this movement if verb movement does not target the same head as the complementizer.
- ▶ In the case of class A, B and E verbs we will therefore posit that these verbs select a higher complementizer, possibly one under Force^o.
- ▶ Class C and D verbs select a lower complementizer, possibly under Fin^o.



Evidence for a higher complementizer

- In OF the two complementizer positions may contain overt material

*Or dit li contes **que** quant Melianz se fu partiz de Galaad **que** il
now says the story that when Meliant REFL was gone from Galaad that he
chevaucha tant que il vint a une forest ancienne
rode all that he came to a forrest ancient*

*'The story tells that when Meliant had left Galahad, he rode until he came
to a very old forest.'*

- Analysis

Or dit li contes [_{ForceP} *que* [_{TopP} *quant ...* [_{Fin} *que* [_{TP} *il chevaucha ...*]]]]

Evidence for a higher complementizer

- ▶ The same kind of example is found in OE:

*Hu ne wost ðu nu **þæt** ælc þara manna þe oðerne*
how NEG know you now that each the.GEN men.GEN that other-ACC

*swiðe lufað **þæt** hine lyst bet þaccian and cyssan*
dearly loves that him.ACC.SUBJ likes better touch.INF and kiss.INF

ðonne oðerne on bær lic ... ?
the.ACC other-ACC on bare body

'Don't you know that every man who loves another would prefer to touch and kiss the other's naked body?' (cosolilo,Solil_1:42.14.539)

- ▶ Analysis

Hu ne wost ðu nu [_{ForceP} þæt [_{TopP} ælc ... [_{FinP} þæt [_{TP} hine lyst ...]]]]



Conclusion

- ▶ Old English and Old French V2 in complement clauses appears to be sensitive to the type of predicate it is embedded under.
- ▶ In Old English, embedded V2 in general is very rare.
 - ▶ There are few apparent examples of embedded V2 under class C and D predicates in the YCOE, and vanishingly few that stand up to scrutiny.
- ▶ In Old French, embedded V2 is not uncommon.
 - ▶ But there are no examples at all under class C and D predicates in our dataset.
- ▶ **For OE and OF, a CP-V2 analysis fits the facts where an IP-V2 analysis fails.**
 - ▶ For future work: check embedded topicalization and other kinds of embedded clauses!



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