

## Adjuncts and the Syntax of Subjects in Old and Middle English

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Old English shows characteristic properties of a Verb Second (V2) language. However, certain phenomena can be found in Old English which suggest that V2 in this language cannot be dealt with in terms of analyses that have been proposed for the Modern Germanic V2 languages. Different alternative analyses have therefore been explored in the recent literature which account for the distinct properties of Old English. Although there seems to be a general consensus on the central points, the different analyses vary with respect to several issues. In this chapter, some of these issues will be addressed and it will be argued that important evidence can be obtained from a comparative analysis of Old English, later stages in the history of English, and the Modern Germanic languages with respect to phenomena concerning the distribution of adjuncts and subjects. In addition, it will be shown not only that the comparative evidence used provides information for the analysis of Old English, but also that the Old English data contribute to a more detailed understanding of a general Germanic word-order phenomenon.

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION: V2 AND THE SYNTAX OF SUBJECTS IN OLD ENGLISH

Apart from Modern English, all the Modern Germanic languages exhibit what has been called the Verb Second (V2) phenomenon, at least in main clauses. The characteristic property of this phenomenon is that any type of constituent can get fronted to the beginning of the clause and the verb immediately follows this constituent. At first sight, Old English seems to share this property with the Modern Germanic languages (example from van Kemenade 1987: 17).

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- (1) [Eall ðis] *aredað* se *reccere swiðe* *lyhte*  
 all this arranges the ruler very rightly  
 'The ruler arranges all this very rightly.'  
 (*Cura Pastoralis* 169.3)

In (1), an object is fronted and it is immediately followed by the finite verb, in line with the V2 constraint.

However, there is one aspect of the syntax of V2 in Old English which cannot be found in the Modern Germanic languages and which suggests that V2 in Old English cannot be analysed in exactly the same way as V2 in the Modern Germanic languages. In Old English, pronominal subjects generally precede the finite verb even when another constituent has been moved to the front (cf. e.g. van Kemenade 1987: 109 ff., Pintzuk 1991: 133 ff., 201 ff., 1993). This is illustrated in (2) (example from Pintzuk 1991: 202).

- (2) [hiora untrymnesse] [he] *sceal* ðrowian on his heortan  
 their weakness he shall atone in his heart  
 'He shall atone in his heart for their weakness.'  
 (*Cura Pastoralis* 60.17)

The example in (2) is parallel to that in (1) in that an object is fronted. But in (2), the subject and the finite verb are not inverted, and instead the pronominal subject also precedes the finite verb, giving rise to a V3 order.

Yet, there is a restricted context in which subject pronouns do follow the finite verb, namely in interrogative clauses, negative clauses, verb-initial clauses and clauses introduced by some adverbs like *þa* ('then') (cf. van Kemenade 1987, Pintzuk 1991, 1993). One of these contexts is illustrated in (3).

- (3) [hwil] *sceole* we oþres *mannes* *niman*  
 why should we another man's take  
 'Why should we take those of another man?'  
 (*Ælfric, Lives of Saints* 24.188)

In (3), subject-verb inversion applies although the subject is pronominal.

On the basis of the word-order patterns in (1) to (3), it has been concluded in the recent literature that V2 in Old English cannot be analysed simply along the lines generally proposed for the Modern Germanic languages, i.e. in terms of XP-movement to [Spec,CP] and verb movement to C. Instead, the standard analysis within most recent work is that (1) to (3) can be accounted for under the assumption that different types of subjects occur in different structural positions (pronouns, being clitics or weak pronouns, in a higher position than non-pronominal subjects) and that V-fronting in Old English targets two possible positions, C in some contexts (cf. (3)) and a lower inflectional head, which I will label X for the moment, in cases of topicalization of other elements (cf. Cardinaletti and

Roberts 1991, Hulk and van Kemenade 1997, van Kemenade 1998, Kroch and Taylor 1997, Pintzuk 1991, 1993). Schematically, this analysis can be represented as follows (+pro = pronominal; -pro = non-pronominal):

- (4) [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>1</sub>(+pro) X [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>2</sub>(-pro) . . . ]]]

C and X in (4) are two head-positions for verb fronting which are used according to the type of element that gets moved to [Spec,CP]. SU<sub>1</sub> and SU<sub>2</sub> are two subject positions which are used by different types of subjects. In terms of (4), (1) is the result of topic fronting, V-movement to X and the occurrence of the subject in position SU<sub>2</sub>. In (2), a topic is fronted again and V moves to X but the subject now occurs in position SU<sub>1</sub>. In (3) finally, the verb moves to C and therefore all types of subjects occur postverbally.

Despite the agreement of several authors with respect to the analysis of Old English along the lines of (4), there are certain theoretical issues for which there is no general consensus. Three main issues are listed in (5).<sup>1</sup>

- (5) (I) The nature of the lower landing site of V-movement (X in (4) above: Infl in Pintzuk 1991, 1993; F in Hulk and van Kemenade 1997; Agr1 in Cardinaletti and Roberts 1991; AgrS suggested by Kroch and Taylor 1997).  
 (II) The status of the lower subject position ([Spec,YP] in (4) above: [Spec,VP] in Pintzuk 1991, 1993; [Spec,TP] in Hulk and van Kemenade 1997; [Spec,Agr2P] in Cardinaletti and Roberts 1991).  
 (III) The position of the topic in (1) and (2) ([Spec,CP] in Hulk and van Kemenade 1997, Kroch and Taylor 1997; [Spec,IP] in Pintzuk 1991, 1993; [Spec,Agr1P] in Cardinaletti and Roberts 1991).

In this chapter, I will argue that by considering the distribution of subjects with respect to adjuncts in Old English and Middle English, we can shed some light on the issues in (I) to (III). Furthermore, I will show that a contrast which corresponds basically to that in (4) can also be found in the Modern Germanic languages, but that the contrast in Old English/Middle English provides additional information for the syntactic analysis which cannot be obtained from the Modern Germanic languages.

The remainder of the chapter is organized as follows. In Section 2, the word-order phenomenon that I will focus on in this chapter will be introduced on the basis of the Modern Germanic languages, and its relevance for Old English will

<sup>1</sup> An additional important issue is the question as to why a non-pronominal subject does not have to move to the subject position occupied by pronouns, i.e. to [Spec,XP] in the structure in (4) or also for example in (7c) below. Again different proposals can be found in the literature, but for our purposes a detailed analysis of this issue will not be central. I will therefore leave this point aside here. But cf. Haeblerli 1999: chs. 7 and 8 for discussion.

be discussed. Section 3 deals with the properties of Old English with respect to this word-order option. Section 4 then introduces data from later stages of the history of English and Section 5 summarizes the chapter.

## 5.2. ADJACENCY OF THE FINITE VERB AND SUBJECTS IN V2 CLAUSES

### 5.2.1. A source of cross-linguistic variation . . .

The starting point for my discussion is an aspect of the syntax of the Modern Germanic V2 languages, and more precisely the variation which can be found with respect to the occurrence of adjuncts in a position immediately preceding subjects. In some languages, we can find word orders of the type 'XP-subject', whereas such orders are impossible in some other languages. This variation is illustrated in (6) with a temporal adverb (but other types of adverbs or adjunct PPs exhibit the same variation; cf. Haerberli (1999: chapter 4), Vikner (1995) for more details).

- (6) (a) Wahrscheinlich *wird* (später) *Hans* dieselbe Uhr kaufen (German)  
 (b) Misschien *goa* (\*loater) *Jan* tzelste orloge kuopen (W. Flemish)  
 (c) Waarschijnlijk *zal* (%later) *Jan* hetzelfde horloge gaan kopen (Dutch)  
 (d) Wierskynlik *wol* (letter) *Jan* itselde horloazje keapje (Frisian)  
 (e) Waarskynlik *sal* (\*later) *Jan* dieselfde oorlosie gaan koop  
 probably will (later) John the-same watch (go) buy (Afrikaans)  
 'Probably, John will buy the same watch (later).'  
 (f) Minastam *vet* (shpeter) *Moysh*e koyn dem zelbikn zeyger (Yiddish)  
 (g) Sennilega *mum* (\*seinna) *Jón* kaupá sama úrið (Icelandic)  
 probably will (later) John/M. buy the same watch  
 'Probably, John will buy the same watch later.'  
 (h) Dette er *vil* (\*senere) *min far* købe (Danish)  
 (i) Den här klockan *hade* (senare) *min gamle far* köpt (Swedish)  
 (j) Denne klokka *hadde* (senere) *min gamle far* kjøpt (Norwegian)  
 this watch will/had (later) my (old) dad buy/bought  
 'This watch my dad will buy/had bought later.'

In German, Dutch, Frisian, Yiddish, Swedish, and Norwegian an adjunct can intervene between a fronted verb and a definite subject, whereas this option is not available in West Flemish, Afrikaans, Icelandic, and Danish.<sup>2</sup>

At first sight, it is surprising that a distributional option for adjuncts which occurs in certain languages cannot be found in some other, very closely related languages. The question that arises therefore is how the cross-linguistic variation with respect to V-subject (non-)adjacency can be accounted for. One possibility

would be to relate this variation to variation with respect to the placement of adjuncts. Thus, we could assume that the languages which allow 'XP-subject' orders license adjunction to, say, IP whereas in the more restrictive languages such adjunction is banned (cf. e.g. Holmberg (1993), Vikner (1995) for proposals along these lines).

But such an analysis would raise two important problems. The first problem is an acquisitional one which concerns the languages in which 'XP-subject' orders are ungrammatical. Given that, in terms of such an approach, IP-adjunction would be legitimate in principle and given that negative (i.e. ungrammatical) evidence is not part of the language learner's input, it would not be clear how in some languages a ban on IP-adjunction could be acquired on the basis of the overt evidence available to the language learner. In other words, we would have what has been referred to as a 'poverty of stimulus' problem because there is no overt evidence for the ungrammaticality of 'XP-subject' orders in the input of learners who acquire the more restrictive languages. Apart from this acquisitional problem, an adjunction analysis would also raise another problem. If the data in (6) simply illustrated a variation with respect to the availability of IP-adjunction, then the choice made by each language basically seems arbitrary and the way in which the Germanic V2 languages are divided into two groups would therefore be random. In other words, no genuine explanation could be provided for the cross-linguistic pattern found in (6).

In order to account for the variation in (6) and its acquisition, it therefore seems necessary to derive it from factors which are independent of properties of adjunct placement. An analysis along these lines is proposed in Haerberli (1999: chapter 4). The two main hypotheses made there and adopted here are: (a) adjunction to maximal projections is highly restricted universally, and in particular adjunction to functional projections such as IP or, within a richer clause structure, AgrSP and TP is ruled out; and (b) contrasts as shown in (6) are obtained through differences with respect to the syntax of subjects; more precisely, there are (at least) two structural positions available for subjects, and adjacency between the finite verb and the subject occurs when the subject has to occupy the highest structural subject position whereas non-adjacency is possible when the subject can remain in a lower subject position in the overt syntax. This variation is illustrated in (7) (e = empty position).

- (7) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>1</sub> . . . [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>2</sub> . . . ]]]  
 (b) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> SU . . . ] ] (V-subject adjacency)  
 (c) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> e . . . [<sub>VP</sub> SU . . . ]]] (V-subject non-adjacency)

One question that remains in terms of (7c) is what position an adjunct occupies when it occurs between a fronted finite verb and a subject. Given that adjunction to a maximal projection is restricted by hypothesis (cf. hypothesis (a) above), two main options are available. First, the adjunct could occupy the specifier position of an independent functional projection (FP), in line with

<sup>2</sup> Note that a similar phenomenon can also be found in Modern English in contexts of 'residual V2':

(i) *Will* (\*later) *John* buy the same watch?

proposals made by Alexiadou (1997), Cinque (1999), Kayne (1994). The second option is that the adjunct is X'-adjoined, an option which is assumed to be available for example by Chomsky (1995: 235). These options are summarized in (8).

- (8) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> e X [<sub>FP</sub> adjunct F [<sub>VP</sub> SU ... ]]]]  
 (b) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> e [<sub>X'</sub> adjunct [<sub>X</sub> X [<sub>VP</sub> SU ... ]]]]]

The main difference between the two theoretical options in (8) is that in (8a) the adjunct follows the head X whereas in (8b) it precedes this head. But given that the verb moves on to C in the Modern Germanic V2 languages and that X is therefore not overtly filled, there is no clear empirical evidence from the Modern Germanic languages for choosing between the two options in (8).

Assuming that adjuncts can occur in one of the two positions shown in (8), the variation with respect to 'XP-subject' orders among the Germanic languages can be analysed in terms of the structures in (7) and hence in terms of variation with respect to the syntax of subjects. Languages of the type (7b) show adjacency effects whereas languages of the type (7c) allow V-subject non-adjacency. As argued in Haeblerli (1999: chapter 4), this structural variation provides the basis for deriving the variation in (6) to a large extent from independent properties of the grammars of the different languages, such as the status of verbal agreement morphology or the licensing of non-overt expletives. For reasons of space, the analyses of the different Modern Germanic languages cannot be discussed here, and I refer the reader to the references cited above for more details. What will be central for our discussion, however, is the structural analysis in (7) and (8) and the observation that this structural analysis provides the basis for an analysis of a word-order variation among the Modern Germanic languages.

### 5.2.2. ... and its relevance for Old English

Given the variation in (6), it would already be of interest from a purely typological point of view to consider what the status of Old English is in this respect, in particular since Old English has a relatively peculiar status with respect to the syntax of V2 (cf. §5.1). However, the data in (6) are also immediately relevant for another reason. In the Modern Germanic languages, there is one important additional restriction with respect to 'XP-subject' orders. As observed for example by Vikner (1995: 103 ff.), pronominal subjects (weak pronouns) generally have to occur in a position which is adjacent to the finite verb even in languages like German which license 'XP-subject' orders with non-pronominal subjects. This property of subject pronouns is shown in (9a) which should be compared to (6a), repeated here in (9b).

- (9) (a) Wahrscheinlich wird (\*später) er dieselbe Uhr kaufen. (German)  
 probably will (later) he the-same watch buy

- (b) Wahrscheinlich wird (später) Hans dieselbe Uhr kaufen  
 probably will (later) John the-same watch buy

The contrast between (9a) and (9b) can be analysed by assuming that weak subject pronouns have to occupy the highest subject position even in languages like German ([Spec,XP] in (7c) and (8)). This means that we get exactly the same kind of contrast in the Modern Germanic languages as the contrast shown in (4) for Old English. The only difference is that the presence of two subject positions is not determined on the basis of a head position between the two subject positions as in Old English when the verb does not move to C but on the basis of the presence of an adjunct position. This parallelism is illustrated in (10), where (10a) represents the Old English contrast based on the data in (1) and (2) and (10b) represents the Modern Germanic contrast based on data such as (9a) and (9b) for German.

- (10) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> ... [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>i</sub>(+pro) V [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>j</sub>(-pro) ... ]]]  
 (Old English)  
 (b) [<sub>CP</sub> ... V [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>i</sub>(+pro) adjunct [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>j</sub>(-pro) ... ]]]  
 (Modern Germanic)

Thus, the Old English variation with respect to pronominal vs. non-pronominal subjects has a very close equivalent in the Modern Germanic languages. But note now that Old English can provide additional evidence for the analysis of the Modern Germanic languages and more particularly for the open issue concerning the placement of adjuncts shown in example (8), repeated below.

- (8) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> e X [<sub>FP</sub> adjunct F [<sub>VP</sub> SU ... ]]]]  
 (b) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>XP</sub> e [<sub>X'</sub> adjunct [<sub>X</sub> X [<sub>VP</sub> SU ... ]]]]]

In (8), two options for adjunct placement are presented. One of the two options involves a maximal projection between XP and YP (8a), and the second option involves adjunction to X' (8b). These two options make different predictions for Old English now. As mentioned above, Old English has V-fronting to two distinct positions, C (in interrogative clauses etc.; cf. (3)) and the functional head X which occurs right below C (in all other types of clauses; cf. examples (1), (2), and the structure in (10a)). This means now that if a pre-subject adjunct could only occur in an X'-adjoined position (cf. (8b)), then V-subject non-adjacency could only occur in cases in which the verb moves to C. In all other contexts in which the verb only moves to X, V-subject non-adjacency would not be possible because a constituent adjoined to X' would precede rather than follow the verb. In terms of a functional projection between X and YP however (cf. (8a)), V-subject non-adjacency should be possible regardless of whether the verb moves to C or to X. Old English therefore allows us to test at least one of the two hypotheses shown in (8).

Thus, we have seen two initial motivations for considering the status of Old English with respect to the variation shown in (6). First, the question arises as to where Old English is situated in this typological split and, secondly, Old English can provide evidence for the structural analysis of this variation. However, we will see that several additional results can be obtained on the basis of an investigation of V-subject (non-)adjacency in Old English (and Middle English), in particular results which are relevant for the open issues raised in (5) above.

### 5.3. V-SUBJECT NON-ADJACENCY IN OLD ENGLISH<sup>3</sup>

Let us start by considering the typological issue, i.e. the question whether Old English is a language in which verb fronting leads to adjacency between the verb and a non-pronominal subject or whether Old English belongs to the group of Germanic languages which allow 'XP-subject' orders after a fronted finite verb.

#### 5.3.1. *Some preliminary remarks*

A brief look at the Old English data shows that subjects do not need to be adjacent to fronted finite verbs. However, not all data are of equal importance for the cross-linguistic issues raised in §5.2. I will distinguish three main types of constructions in which a subject is not directly right-adjacent to the finite verb:

A. Another predicative element intervenes between the finite verbal form and the subject (generally the participle in passives as in (11), but sometimes also other non-finite verb forms, adjectives, or particles).

- (11) þy ilcan gear *was* gecoren *Æþelheard* *abbud* to biscepe  
 the same year was chosen *Æþelheard* abbot to bishop  
 'In the same year, the abbot *Æthelhard* was chosen as bishop.'  
 (CHROA2,54.790.1)

B. An argument (generally a pronoun) occurs between the finite verb and the subject.

- (12) þonne *mot* *hine* *se* *hlaford* gefreogan  
 then may him the master liberate  
 'Then, the master may liberate him.'  
 (LAW2,120.74.1)

C. The subject follows an adjunct.

- (13) þa *blou* *nicelre* *tiide* *se* *biscopdom*  
 then ceased much time the bishopric  
 'Then, the bishopric was vacant for a long time.'  
 (BEDE,252.7)

<sup>3</sup> If not mentioned otherwise, the Old English data are taken from the 1998 version of the Brooklyn-Geneva-Amsterdam-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English, a syntactically parsed and morphologically tagged corpus of Old English, and follow the referencing conventions of that corpus.

For our comparative analysis of the syntax of subjects in Old English, only Type C is crucial. As for Type A, it presumably involves a different position from the [Spec,YP] subject position in the structures in (4) or (10). For example in the passive construction in (11), it can be argued that the subject occupies an underlying object position if we assume (as e.g. Roberts 1997, Pintzuk 1998) that Old English allows VO base orders. As for Type B, its occurrence may not be related to the syntax of subjects but rather to distributional properties of pronouns. This observation is based on the fact that in languages like Icelandic and West Flemish which generally require V-subject adjacency (cf. examples (6b) and (6g)) object pronouns nevertheless can intervene between a fronted verb and a subject (cf. e.g. Hellan and Platzack 1995: 59 for Icelandic, Haegeman 1996: 142 for West Flemish). The most plausible analysis for these two languages is that, since V-subject non-adjacency is restricted to contexts involving pronouns, the properties of subjects create an adjacency configuration but that pronominal objects have properties which allow them to intervene between the verb and the subject, possibly as the result of head movement. Given these cross-linguistic observations, data of Type B may not be central for determining the syntax of subjects.

Given these observations, I will consider neither Type A nor Type B constructions here in my discussion of the syntax of subjects in Old English (but cf. Haerberli 1998 for additional observations concerning these constructions). Instead, I will focus on Type C constructions. But since, as discussed in §5.1, V-fronting targets two positions in Old English, we have to distinguish two contexts with respect to V-subject (non-)adjacency, namely V-to-C movement contexts and contexts involving V-movement to the projection below CP (cf. structure (4)). The next section deals with the former context.

#### 5.3.2. *V-subject non-adjacency with V-movement to C*

V-movement to C occurs in interrogative, negative and V1 clauses and in clauses introduced by adverbs like *þa*. That subjects do not have to be adjacent to the fronted verb in these contexts has already been observed sometimes in the literature. Pintzuk (1991: 214) and Koopman (1996) for example point out that adverbs can intervene between a verb in C and the subject. This option is shown in (14).

- (14) (a) Ne *dorste* *swa* *þeah* *se* *mæssepreost* þone bisceop geaxian  
 not dared however the mass-priest the bishop ask  
 for hwan . . .  
 why . . .  
 'However, the priest did not dare to ask the bishop why . . .'  
 (GREGD3,22.58.3)
- (b) *gielden* *syððan* *his* *mægas* þone wer  
 pay afterwards his male-kinsmen the man's legal-value  
 'Afterwards, his relatives should pay the man's legal value.'  
 (LAW2,120.74.1)

PP adjuncts can also occur in this position (cf. also (13) for a DP adjunct):

- (15) (a) & ðonne wƳrd þurh Godes mihte sona deofol swyðe  
and then gets through God's power soon devil very-much  
geƳrged  
terrified  
'Then, soon, the devil is very much terrified through God's power.'  
(WULF3,176.28)
- (b) þa wæs in þa tid Uitalius papa þæs apostolican seðles  
then was in that time Vitalius pope the apostolic see's  
aldorbiscop  
high-priest  
'At that time, Vitalius was chief bishop of the apostolic see.'  
(BEDE,1.252.1)

### 5.3.3. V-subject non-adjacency with V-movement to the head below C (X)

Having considered V-subject non-adjacency in V-to-C contexts, let us now turn to contexts in which the verb only moves to the head below C. As the following examples show, adverbs and PP adjuncts can occur between the fronted verb and the subject even in these contexts in Old English.

- (16) (a) Him geaf ða se cyngc twa hund gildena pænega  
him gave then the king two hundred golden coins  
'Then, the king gave him two hundred golden coins.'  
(APOLLO,42.51.20)
- (b) & hine hæfde ær Offa Mercna cyning & Beorhtic  
and him had before Offa Mercians king and Beorhtic  
Wesseaxna cyning afliemed iii gear . . .  
West-Saxons king expelled three years  
'Offa, the Mercian king, and Beorhtic, the West-Saxon king, had  
expelled him for three years.'  
(CHIROA2,62.836.1)
- (c) Ac mycel geholode ðurh his mildheortnesse Crist for me  
but much suffered through his loving-kindness Christ for our  
þearfe  
need  
'But through his kindness, Christ suffered much for us.'  
(WULF3,227.34)
- (d) In ða tid wæs in Mercna mægðe Wulfhere cyning  
in that time was in Mercians' country Wulfhere king  
'At that time, Wulfhere was king in Mercia.'  
(BEDE,3.260.22)

In (16a-b) an object is fronted and the verb therefore only moves to the inflectional head below C (cf. §5.1). Finally, in (16c-d), adjuncts are fronted which do not trigger V-movement to C, either. We can therefore conclude that 'XP-subject' orders are possible when the verb moves to the head below C.

In summary, the data in (14) to (16) show that 'XP-subject' orders occur in Old English regardless of the position to which the finite verb moves. Old English thus clearly patterns with the more permissive Germanic languages in (6) which do not require adjacency between a fronted verb and the subject.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.3.4. A theoretical consequence: the placement of adjuncts

As discussed in §5.2.2, both Old English and the Modern Germanic languages show evidence for two subject positions in the overt syntax, one occupied by pronominal subjects and one occupied by non-pronominal subjects. But the diagnostics for the presence of these two subject positions are not the same. In Old English, the distributional contrast can be identified on the basis of the position of the finite verb, whereas in the Modern Germanic languages, it is the placement of adjuncts which allows us to distinguish the two subject positions. This contrast is repeated here in (17) (cf. (10)).

- (17) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>i</sub>(+pro) V [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>j</sub>(-pro) . . . ]]] (Old English)  
(b) [<sub>CP</sub> V [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>i</sub>(+pro) adjunct [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>j</sub>(-pro) . . . ]]] (Modern Germanic)

As discussed in §5.2.1, the Modern Germanic languages do not provide clear evidence for establishing the position occupied by the adjunct in (17b). Given that the cross-linguistic variation with respect to V-subject non-adjacency may

<sup>4</sup> For some of the Old English examples of V-subject non-adjacency, it could be argued that they do not illustrate the syntactic structure shown in (10b) for the Modern Germanic languages but that they are obtained as the result of rightward movement of the subject. Such a conclusion certainly would be plausible for clause-final heavy subjects as for example in (i).

- (i) Mycele mede geeanað æt þam ælmihtigan Gode, se þe him clænlice þenað æt his  
Great reward earns at the almighty God he who him purely serves at his  
clænne weofode.  
clean altar  
'He who purely serves the almighty God at his altar earns a great reward with God.'  
(ÆLET3,174.74)

(i) could be argued to involve movement of the heavy subject to the right edge of the clause, and such an example would therefore not provide any relevant information concerning the placement of the adjunct.

If we assume that such a postposition process is available for subjects, it may not always be entirely clear whether V-subject non-adjacency is the result of the structure (10b) proposed for the Modern Germanic languages or of postposition of the subject. However, I will assume here that rightward movement is restricted to a large extent to heavy subjects. Most of the examples given in (14) to (16) therefore do not seem to be plausible candidates for postposition analyses, and the conclusion reached in the text, i.e. that Old English allows V-subject non-adjacency of the Modern Germanic type, can be maintained. The same observations also hold for the examples discussed in (21) and (22) below.

best be analysed in terms of a restrictive system of adjunction, i.e. a system in which adjunction to XP and YP in (17*b*) is ruled out, there are two remaining options for the placement of the adjunct in (17*b*): Either it is adjoined to X' or it occupies a specifier position of an independent functional projection between XP and YP' (cf. example (8)). As pointed out already in §5.2.2, Old English can shed some light on this issue.

As the data in (16) show, the order 'XP-subject' is possible in Old English even if the verb only moves to X and not to C. This means that the adjunct in pre-subject position cannot occur in an X'-adjoined position but must occur in an independent projection between X and YP.<sup>5</sup> Thus, we obtain the following structure for 'XP-subject' orders with V-movement to X:

(18) ... [<sub>XP</sub> e V [<sub>FP</sub> adjunct F [<sub>VP</sub> SU ... ]]]

The structure in (18) corresponds to the option shown in (8*a*) above. The Old English data thus show that an adjunct in pre-subject position must be able to occupy an independent functional projection between XP and YP. Old English therefore provides evidence for the details of the structural analysis of adjuncts which cannot be obtained from the Modern Germanic languages. The reason why Old English allows us to draw more precise conclusions is that in Old English we can combine the distribution of adjuncts with the distribution of a head, given that Old English has V-movement into the domain which is relevant for our purposes. Old English thus contributes to a more detailed understanding of a general word-order phenomenon found in the Germanic languages.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The fact that PPs can precede the subject (cf. (16*c-d*)) suggests that a pre-subject adjunct also cannot simply be an element which has been cliticized to the verb, for example. Cf. also Vikner (1995: 106) for arguments against treating pre-subject adjuncts as clitics in the Modern Germanic languages.

<sup>6</sup> There may be some additional data which are relevant for the issues discussed here, however. The observations made in the text show that option (8*a*), i.e. adjunct placement in a projection between X and YP, must be available, but they of course do not mean that option (8*b*), i.e. X'-adjunction, must be ruled out. X'-adjunction cases could indeed be argued to exist in Old English. Consider the following example.

- (i) [mid py] [ða] [ongon] [fivenlust] weaxan  
with that then began riotous-living increase  
'With that, riotous living then began to increase.'  
(Bede 48.27; Pintzuk 1991: 213)

In (i), the adverb *þa* occurs between a topic and a fronted finite verb. Assuming that the verb is in X and that, as argued in the following subsection, the topic occurs in [Spec,CP], we could say that the adverb is adjoined to X' in such examples. The conclusion thus would not be that one of the two options for adjunct placement shown in (8) is not available in the grammar but that both options occur.

However, there may be an alternative analysis for (i) which does not depend on X'-adjunction of the second adjunct. It could be argued that the topic position in the CP domain is not a unique position but that multiple topics are possible (cf. e.g. Rizzi 1997: 290-1, 295 ff. on recursive topic positions in the CP domain). Hence, both adjuncts in (i) occupy topic positions, i.e. specifier positions in the CP domain, and (i) would therefore not provide evidence for X'-adjunction.

### 5.3.5. An additional observation: pronominal subjects and topics

In the previous section, I showed that V-subject non-adjacency in Old English provides evidence for the analysis of a more general Germanic word-order phenomenon. In this section, I will argue that the Old English data concerning V-subject non-adjacency are also relevant for one of the issues raised in (5) which are specific to Old English, i.e. the question as to what position topics occupy.

One of the observations that we can make with respect to V-subject non-adjacency in Old English is that in cases where (weak) pronominal subjects occur postverbally (i.e. in V-to-C contexts) the subject pronoun is always adjacent to V. I have not found a single example in my corpus in which a constituent intervenes between the finite verb and a postverbal pronominal subject. Thus, it seems that the following restriction holds even in contexts where V occupies C.

#### (19) \*V(finite)-adjunct-pronominal subject

This observation is relevant for issue (5 III) which concerns the position occupied by topics in Old English as for example in (1) above, repeated here in (20).

- (20) [Eall ðis] aredað se reccere swiðe rylhte  
All this arranges the ruler very rightly  
(*Cura Pastoralis* 169.3)

One option that has been proposed, on the basis of analyses of languages like Icelandic and Yiddish, is that topics occupy a position below CP in Old English ([Spec,XP] in the structures used so far, [Spec,IP] in Pintzuk's 1991, 1993 analysis, and [Spec,AgriP] in Cardinaletti and Roberts 1991). Thus, [Spec,XP] in (20) is an A'-position. Furthermore, in order to obtain the order *Topic-pronominal subject-V* (cf. (2) above), it has to be assumed that the pronominal subject somehow can occur between the specifier and the head X. Pintzuk (1991, 1993) and Cardinaletti and Roberts (1991) therefore argue that subject pronouns can cliticize to a position between [Spec,XP] and the verb in X. However, such an assumption is problematic for deriving (19). (19) should be possible as the result of: (a) placement of an adjunct in [Spec,XP] given that [Spec,XP] is an A'-position; (b) cliticization of the subject pronoun to the right of the element in [Spec,XP]; (c) movement of the verb to C. Given these possible derivational steps, it seems to be difficult to rule out the word-order pattern shown in (19).<sup>7</sup>

The point made in the text does not depend on the status of (i), however. Old English provides evidence for the option of inserting an adjunct in a specifier position between XP and YP and such evidence cannot be found among the Modern Germanic languages. As for the status of X'-adjunction and hence of data like (i), I will leave it open for future research.

<sup>7</sup> Some cases of (19) could possibly be ruled out as Relativized Minimality violations. For example a *wh*-element generally cannot move past a topic (cf. e.g. Vikner 1995: 73 ff.). However, for V-initial cases, such an approach is more difficult to motivate. If V1 is analysed in terms of an empty

In terms of an alternative analysis of topicalization in Old English, however, i.e. in terms of topicalization to [Spec,CP], the adjacency requirement between the verb in C and a pronominal subject can be accounted for straightforwardly in terms of a restrictive system of adjunction to maximal projections. Assuming still that adjunction to XP is restricted (cf. §5.2.1), the adjacency required by (19) is obtained through movement of the pronominal subject to [Spec,XP] (i.e. position SU, in example (4), which is repeated below) and movement of the verb to C.

- (4) [CP C [XP SU<sub>1</sub> (+PRO) X [YP SU<sub>2</sub> (-PRO) . . . ]]]

In summary, the distribution of adjuncts and pronominal subjects supports an analysis of topicalization in Old English in terms of movement to CP.

#### 5.4. V-SUBJECT NON-ADJACENCY IN MIDDLE ENGLISH AND DIALECT VARIATION<sup>8</sup>

Having considered the status of Old English with respect to 'XP-subject' orders, let us now turn to the distribution of adjuncts and subjects in Middle English. I will focus here mainly on the two Middle English dialects that Kroch and Taylor (1997) have identified on the basis of the syntax of V<sub>2</sub>, and I will show that the two dialects also seem to vary with respect to the phenomena discussed here, i.e. with respect to the occurrence of adjuncts between a fronted verb and the subject. Furthermore, I will argue that the Middle English data also provide evidence for dealing with the issues (I) and (II) raised in (5) above.

##### 5.4.1. *The southern dialects*

Kroch and Taylor (1997) show that the V<sub>2</sub> syntax of Old English as illustrated in (1) to (4) is maintained to a large extent in the Early Middle English of the West Midlands and the South. Pronominal subjects still follow the finite verb in the contexts shown in (3) (interrogatives etc.) but they precede the finite verb in all other contexts. Non-pronominal subjects generally follow the fronted verb in both contexts. Thus, southern Early Middle English can still be analysed in terms of V-movement to C or to X and in terms of different positions for pronominal and non-pronominal subjects (cf. (4)).

operator in [Spec,CP] (e.g. an interrogative operator in yes/no questions or different types of operators in declarative and negative V1), the most straightforward assumption would be that this empty operator is generated in [Spec,CP] (in the same way that even certain *wh*-elements seem to be generated in CP, cf. Vikner 1995: 75–6 on *how*). Thus, it would not be clear why and from where empty operators would have to move past the topic for ruling out (19).

<sup>8</sup> The Middle English data are all taken from the first edition of the Penn–Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, a syntactically parsed corpus of Middle English, and follow the referencing conventions of that corpus (cf. <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/mideug>).

If we now consider the distribution of adjuncts and subjects, we can again observe that southern Early Middle English patterns like Old English. Adjuncts can still occur in a position between the finite verb and a postverbal non-pronominal subject, and again this word-order option can be found in contexts of V-movement to C as well as in contexts of V-movement to X. This is shown in (21) (V-to-C) and (22) (V-to-X).

- (21) (a) *Wende þa porphire to freinen þis meiden*  
turned then Porphire to question this maiden  
'Then Porphire turned to question this maiden.'  
(Kathe 39.328)
- (b) *Ne don swa ðe heðene?*  
not do so the heathens  
'Do not the heathens do so?'  
(Vices1 77.338)
- (22) (a) *þis singeð þenne iweddede*  
this sing then wedded  
'The wedded sing this then.'  
(Hali 142.221)
- (b) *Forði us menegeð allre ðinge arst ure launde of ðestre eadi*  
for-this us admonishes all things first our lord of this blessed  
mihte  
virtue  
'Therefore, our lord admonishes us of this blessed virtue first of all things.'  
(Vices1 121.544)
- (c) *Se þicke is þrinne þe þosternesse þt . . .*  
so thick is therein the darkness that . . .  
'The darkness is so thick in there that . . .'  
(Sawles 171.80)

##### 5.4.2. *The northern dialect*

Considering the *Northern Prose Rule of St Benet*, a text from around 1400 which is the oldest surviving prose document from the North, Kroch and Taylor (1997) argue that the northern dialect of Middle English differs significantly from the southern dialects with respect to the syntax of V-movement. The Benet text exhibits basically a regular V<sub>2</sub> syntax as found in the Modern Germanic languages, instead of the complex V<sub>2</sub> pattern found in Old English and southern Early Middle English. Thus, when some constituent is fronted in the Benet text, subject–verb inversion applies regardless of whether the subject is a pronoun or a full DP. The Old English/southern Early Middle English contrast between subject pronouns (no inversion except in certain syntactic contexts) and

non-pronominal subjects (generally inversion) therefore cannot be found in the northern dialect.<sup>9</sup>

As Kroch and Taylor (1997: 314) point out, the categorical subject–verb inversion pattern of the northern dialect can best be accounted for by assuming that the verb always moves to C in this dialect, as it has been proposed for Modern Germanic V2 languages. The difference between the southern and the northern dialect would therefore be that while in the southern dialect (and Old English) the verb can occur in two distinct positions when it is fronted (C or X), V-fronting always targets C in the northern dialect.

What is interesting for our purposes now is that the dialect variation described by Kroch and Taylor (1997) also seems to be reflected in the distribution of adjuncts and subjects. As discussed in §5.4.1, the southern dialect behaves like Old English with respect to this issue, since adjuncts can still occur in a position between the finite verb and a postverbal non-pronominal subject in contexts of V-movement to C as well as in contexts of V-movement to X. In the northern text, however, the situation is substantially different. Within the entire text, not a single instance of the word-order pattern *V–adjunct–subject* can be found. The only examples in which a subject is non-adjacent to a fronted finite verb are cases which I classified as Type A and Type B in §5.3.1, i.e. cases with passivized verbs and with intervening pronouns. Illustrations of these two constructions are given in (23).

- (23) (a) And eftir *sal he reddde þe lescun of apostils* wid gude  
And afterwards shall be read the lesson of the apostles with good  
deuocion  
devotion  
'And afterwards, the lesson of the apostles shall be read with devo-  
tion.' (Benrll 16.441)
- (b) In þis first sentence *bidis us sain benet* ...  
In this first sentence commands us Saint Benet  
'In this first sentence, Saint Benet commands us ...'  
(Benrll 1.7)

As discussed in §5.3.1, (23a) can be argued to involve a subject in its underlying object position, whereas (23b) may not be related to properties of subjects but

<sup>9</sup> As Warner (1997: 389–90) points out, there may be an alternative to Kroch and Taylor's (1997) conclusion, however. Since Kroch and Taylor's claim is based on a single text, it could be argued that Benet is simply a stylistically marked text rather than a text representing the grammar of a different dialect. Yet, the points discussed below may provide some support for analysing the Benet text as a text with a different grammar. As we will see, the distinct behaviour of the Benet text with respect to V2 seems to coincide with another syntactic peculiarity, namely the absence of 'XP–subject' orders. In terms of a stylistic interpretation of the V2 pattern in the Benet text, the co-occurrence of the two phenomena would seem accidental. However, as I will argue below, an analysis of the Benet text in terms of a distinctive grammatical property allows us to link the two phenomena to a common underlying source. I will therefore continue using Kroch and Taylor's distinction between different dialects.

rather to the syntax of pronominal elements. Hence, neither of the two cases in (23) are genuine cases of V-subject non-adjacency as discussed in the earlier sections (i.e. 'XP–subject', Type C). As for Type C non-adjacency, it is entirely absent from the Benet text.

The question that arises then is how to interpret the absence of Type C examples in the Benet text. In particular, we may wonder whether the absence of 'XP–subject' orders in the northern dialect is the manifestation of an underlying grammatical property which bans such orders (as for example in West Flemish, Afrikaans, Danish, or Icelandic, cf. example (6)) or whether the absence of 'XP–subject' orders is simply due to a gap in the corpus, possibly because the corpus is not large enough. Based on statistical evidence, I will argue here that the latter option is not very likely.

In order to test whether the absence of 'XP–subject' orders in the Benet text is simply due to the size of the corpus, I compared the northern text to several Old English and southern Early Middle English text samples with respect to the frequencies of V-subject non-adjacency. More precisely, for each text, I counted the number of examples in which the subject follows the finite verb and an 'XP–subject' order therefore could have occurred, and the actual occurrences of such orders. The relevant numbers are given in Tables 5.1 to 5.3. Four different figures are given in these tables. The first figure represents all the cases in which V-subject non-adjacency could have occurred because a non-pronominal subject follows the finite verb (listed under 'Total V-SU' in the tables).<sup>10</sup> Then,

TABLE 5.1. *V-subject non-adjacency in some Old English texts*

|                         | Total V-SU | Type A  | Type B  | Type C   |
|-------------------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|
| ÆL <sub>et</sub>        | 91         | 7 7.7%  | 2 2.2%  | 16 17.6% |
| ÆL <sub>S</sub>         | 97         | 6 6.2%  | 1 1.0%  | 11 11.3% |
| Ap <sub>T</sub>         | 99         | 2 2.0%  | 4 4.0%  | 6 6.1%   |
| Bede                    | 92         | 4 4.3%  | 9 9.8%  | 19 20.7% |
| Boethius                | 78         | 2 2.6%  | 1 1.3%  | 5 6.4%   |
| Chron <sub>A</sub>      | 364        | 15 4.1% | 4 1.1%  | 16 4.4%  |
| GDC                     | 37         | 2 5.4%  | 1 2.7%  | 2 5.4%   |
| GDH                     | 48         | 6 12.5% | 4 8.3%  | 11 22.9% |
| Laws                    | 144        | 1 0.7%  | 11 7.6% | 19 13.2% |
| Orosius                 | 95         | 8 8.4%  | 4 4.2%  | 7 7.4%   |
| WHom                    | 144        | 5 3.5%  | 0 0.0%  | 19 13.2% |
| average % <sup>11</sup> |            | 5.2%    | 3.8%    | 11.7%    |

<sup>10</sup> Thus, VS orders with pronominal subjects are not included in my counts. Clauses containing the indefinite element *man* ('one') are also not included in the totals of VS orders, since this element seems to have pronoun-like syntactic properties (cf. van Bergen 1998).

<sup>11</sup> The average percentage is calculated purely on the basis of the percentages obtained for the individual texts and not on the basis of the total number of the examples in all texts. The aim of calculating the percentages this way is to give each text sample the same weight, independently of its size. If the percentages were calculated on the basis of the total number of examples in the entire Old English corpus, the figures would be slightly lower: Total V-SU: 1289; Total Type A: 58 (= 4.5%); Total Type B: 41 (= 3.2%); Total Type C: 131 (= 10.2%).

I counted the number of occurrences of the three types of V-subject non-adjacency among the 'V-SU' cases (Type A, B, and C). As mentioned above, the crucial pattern is Type C, but I added Types A and B for comparative purposes. Apart from the absolute numbers for the different types of V-subject non-adjacency, I have also given their frequencies in each text, calculated on the basis of the total number of 'V-SU' orders. Table 5.1 shows the results for the Old English period, Table 5.2 the results for southern Early Middle English and Table 5.3 the results for the northern Middle English Benet text.

TABLE 5.2. *V-subject non-adjacency in some southern Early Middle English texts*

|                         | Total V-SU | Type A  | Type B  | Type C   |
|-------------------------|------------|---------|---------|----------|
| AncRiw                  | 42         | 3 7.1%  | 1 2.4%  | 3 7.1%   |
| Hali                    | 63         | 4 6.3%  | 2 3.2%  | 12 19.0% |
| Käthe                   | 49         | 5 10.2% | 6 12.2% | 9 18.4%  |
| Lambeth                 | 118        | 2 1.7%  | 3 2.5%  | 7 5.9%   |
| Sawles                  | 28         | 1 3.6%  | 2 7.1%  | 7 25.0%  |
| Trinity                 | 48         | 2 4.2%  | 1 2.1%  | 2 4.2%   |
| Vices                   | 110        | 4 3.6%  | 3 2.7%  | 7 6.4%   |
| average % <sup>12</sup> |            | 5.2%    | 4.6%    | 12.3%    |

TABLE 5.3. *V-subject non-adjacency in the Northern Prose Rule of St Benet*

|          | Total V-SU | Type A | Type B | Type C |
|----------|------------|--------|--------|--------|
| St Benet | 126        | 6 4.8% | 3 2.4% | 0 0.0% |

Tables 5.1 to 5.3 show that, compared to the other text samples, the number of contexts in which 'XP-subject' orders could occur (cf. 'Total V-SU') is relatively high in the Benet text. Several other texts have considerably lower figures for 'V-SU' orders but they nevertheless all contain at least two examples of Type C, in contrast to the Benet text which does not contain a single example of this type.

The contrast between the Benet text and the other texts can also be illustrated by calculating the expected number of occurrences of the different word-order patterns for the Benet text on the basis of the average frequencies found in the other texts. As shown in Table 5.1, the average frequency for Type A is 5.2%, for B 3.8% and for C 11.7% in Old English. For southern Early Middle English, the averages are 5.2% (A), 4.6% (B) and 12.3% (C) (cf. Table 5.2). For both

<sup>12</sup> In terms of the total numbers of occurrences in all Early Middle English text samples together, the percentages would again be slightly lower (cf. also note 11 for Old English): Total V-SU: 458; Total Type A: 21 (= 4.6%); Total Type B: 18 (= 3.9%); Total Type C: 47 (= 10.3%)

Old English and southern Early Middle English, this gives average frequencies of 5.2% (A), 4.1% (B) and 11.9% (C). On the basis of these frequencies, we would expect the following numbers of occurrences in the Benet text.<sup>13, 14</sup>

TABLE 5.4. *Expected and observed occurrences in St Benet based on all V-SU clauses*

|          | Total V-SU | Type A | Type B | Type C |
|----------|------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Expected | 126        | 6.6    | 5.2    | 15.0   |
| Observed | 126        | 6      | 3      | 0      |

While the numbers for Type A and Type B constructions are very close to the expected numbers, there is a considerable discrepancy with respect to Type C constructions. Instead of the expected fifteen examples showing 'XP-subject' orders, we do not find a single example of this type.

However, there is one additional aspect which should be considered at this point. A closer investigation of the St Benet data shows that many 'V-SU' clauses are characterized by the fact that they contain a fronted constituent, the verb and the argument(s) but no additional adjunct(s) which could intervene between the

<sup>13</sup> Here, the question may arise however as to whether Tables 5.1-2 and Table 5.3 are entirely comparable. As discussed earlier, 'V-SU' orders in Old English and southern Early Middle English can be the result of V-movement to X or to C. In northern Middle English however, the verb always moves to C in 'V-SU' orders according to Kroch and Taylor's (1997) analysis. Thus, one may wonder whether the inclusion of V-to-X contexts in the Old English/Early Middle English data has undesirable effects for the comparison with northern Middle English since northern Middle English only has V-to-C.

If we distinguish between V-to-C contexts and V-to-X contexts in the Old English and southern Early Middle English text samples studied here, we obtain the following results with respect to Type C orders. In Old English, the likelihood of Type C is almost equally high in V-to-X contexts as in V-to-C contexts. In southern Early Middle English, however, there is a slight contrast between the two V-movement landing sites. 'XP-subject' is found more frequently in V-to-C contexts than in V-to-X contexts (roughly 15% vs. 10%). Thus, if V-to-X movement contexts were eliminated from the Old English/Early Middle English data, the expected number in northern Middle English for Type C would be slightly higher than shown in Table 5.4 (17.3 expected examples of Type C rather than 15.0). The distinction between V-to-X and V-to-C contexts would thus reinforce the point made in the text below, since the gap between the expected number of 'XP-subject' orders in northern Middle English and the observed number would be even bigger.

However, given the fact that a contrast between V-to-C and V-to-X can only be identified clearly in the Early Middle English data but not in Old English, and given that the contrast in Early Middle English is relatively small, I tentatively conclude here that the contrast between V-to-C and V-to-X contexts is not a substantial general factor determining the status of 'XP-subject' orders, and I will therefore base my quantitative data for Old English and Early Middle English on both V-to-C and V-to-X contexts.

<sup>14</sup> In terms of total numbers for the Old English and Early Middle English texts (cf. notes 11 and 12), the expected figures would be slightly lower. Among the 1747 'V-SU' examples in the Old English and Early Middle English text samples studied, 79 are of Type A (4.5%), 59 of Type B (3.4%) and 178 of Type C (10.2%). The expected numbers for northern Middle English would therefore be as follows: Type A: 5.7; Type B: 4.3; Type C: 12.9.

finite verb and the subject. Thus, many clauses contain no additional adjunct(s) at all or they only contain heavy adjuncts like adjunct clauses or adjuncts modified by an entire clause which generally do not occupy the XP-position in 'XP-subject' orders in Old English/Early Middle English. Leaving aside such heavy adjuncts, we can observe that in the Benet text only 31 out of the 126 'V-SU' clauses or 24.6% contain an adjunct in a position following the finite verb, and hence that in terms of the elements which are available in the clause, only 24.6% of the 'V-SU' clauses could have given rise to a Type C order.

The question that arises then is whether the absence of 'XP-subject' orders in the Benet text is a consequence of the general low frequency of adjuncts in postverbal position. The answer to this question seems to be negative. A comparison with Old English and southern Early Middle English text samples shows that the low frequency of postverbal adjuncts among 'V-SU' orders cannot be identified as a clear factor determining the absence of Type C orders in the Benet text. Two observations are relevant here. First of all, although the frequency of postverbal adjuncts is indeed lower in the Benet text than in the Old English/Early Middle English text samples studied here (24.6% vs. 43.0%), the Benet text is by no means exceptional in terms of absolute numbers. Three Old English and five Early Middle English text samples contain fewer instances of 'V-SU' order with a postverbal (non-heavy) adjunct than the Benet text (Boethius 29 examples; GDC 13; GDH 27; Ancrhw 14; Katho 20; Sawles 16; Trinit 13; Vices 21). Furthermore, three Old English and two Early Middle English text samples show similar numbers as Benet (*ÆLS* 38; *ApT* 34; *Bede* 39; *Hali* 33; *Lambeth* 37). Finally, there are only five Old English text samples which show considerably higher numbers of 'V-SU' orders with postverbal adjuncts (*ÆLet* 52; *ChronA* 147; *Laws* 77; *Orosius* 47; *WHom* 66). Hence, most Old English/Early Middle English text samples have comparable or lower numbers of postverbal adjuncts in V-SU structures. On the basis of the absolute numbers, it would therefore not be expected that the Benet text is the only text among those considered here which does not contain any Type C orders.

The conclusion that the low frequency of 'V-SU' orders with postverbal adjuncts does not seem to be a clear source of the absence of Type C orders in the Benet text is supported by a calculation of the expected number of Type C orders on the basis of the Old English/Early Middle English data. For each Old English/Early Middle English text, I calculated the percentage of Type C orders among those cases of 'V-SU' which contain all the necessary elements for potentially giving rise to Type C orders (i.e. cases which contain at least one non-heavy adjunct following the finite verb). I then calculated the average percentages for Old English, Early Middle English and Old English/Early Middle English together. The results are as follows. Among the Old English text samples, the average percentage for Type C orders among the 'V-SU' clauses containing a postverbal adjunct is 25.6%. For Early Middle English, the average percentage is 29.5% and for Old English/Early Middle English together 27.1%.

On the basis of the Old English/Early Middle English figure, we obtain the following expected and observed numbers of Type C orders in the Benet text.<sup>15</sup>

TABLE 5.5. *Expected and observed occurrences of Type C in St Benet based on V-SU clauses containing a postverbal adjunct*

|          | Total V-SU with a postverbal adjunct | Type C |
|----------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Expected | 31                                   | 8.4    |
| Observed | 31                                   | 0      |

Although the discrepancy between the expected and the observed figures is smaller in Table 5.5 than in Table 5.4, the difference is still considerable.

In summary, the Old English and Early Middle English data studied here would lead us to expect 15 or, calculated in a more restrictive way, 8.4 examples of Type C in the Benet text (cf. Tables 5.4 and 5.5). Instead, we do not find a single instance of such an order. Although it is not possible to determine the ungrammaticality of a construction conclusively on the basis of positive evidence as found in corpus data, the difference between the expected and observed numbers of Type C is high enough to suggest that the absence of 'XP-subject' orders in the Benet text is not simply an accidental gap in the data, but that it is the result of a restriction on such orders in the grammar of the northern dialect of Middle English.

The conclusion thus is that the only Old English or Middle English text studied here which shows a clearly distinct V<sub>2</sub> syntax (cf. Kroch and Taylor 1997) also shows a clearly distinct behaviour with respect to V-subject non-adjacency. The question that arises now is whether the two phenomena are related. In the remainder of this section, I will argue that a uniform account of the two phenomena is indeed possible on the basis of Kroch and Taylor's (1997) proposals and the assumptions made so far.

One important property of northern Middle English is that, compared to Old English and southern Middle English, it has a very impoverished verbal agreement system. The only morphological ending that remains in the Benet text is an *-(e)s* ending in the present tense of the second and third person singular and of the third person plural. In the past tense, no agreement distinctions are made in this text (cf. Kock 1902: xlviij §120, Haeblerli 1999: 391). Kroch and Taylor (1997: 317 ff.) propose that the fact that the Benet text only exhibits V-movement to C but no V-movement to the position below C (i.e. X in structure (4)) can be

<sup>15</sup> In terms of the alternative methods of calculation discussed in notes 11 to 13, the figures would again be slightly different. First, if we use percentages based on the total numbers of Old English and Early Middle English examples rather than average percentages (cf. notes 11 and 12), the expected number of occurrences of Type C in Benet would be slightly lower, namely 7.6. However, if only V-to-C movement contexts are taken into account in the Old English/Early Middle English text samples (cf. note 13), the expected number would be 9.4.

related to the impoverished agreement system of the northern dialect. Such a correlation is possible under the assumption that the lower V-fronting position in Old English (i.e. X) is AgrS and that weak agreement does not trigger V-movement to AgrS any more. As a consequence, V-fronting can only be obtained through V-movement to C in the northern dialect. This dialect therefore does not exhibit the characteristic properties of Old English illustrated in (1) to (4) because these properties depend on the availability of two landing sites for V-fronting.

I will pursue Kroch and Taylor's (1997) proposal here, but I will adapt it to Thráinsson's (1996) system according to which impoverishment or absence of verbal agreement can mean the absence of the AgrSP level (cf. also Bobaljik 1995, Bobaljik and Thráinsson 1998). Assuming again that XP in (4) corresponds to AgrSP, the absence of AgrSP means that one of the two V-fronting options found in Old English have disappeared from the syntax of the northern dialect, in line with Kroch and Taylor's (1997) analysis. However, the absence of AgrSP also has a second consequence. Reconsider first the structure (4) (repeated in (24a)) and the same structure in (24b) under the assumption that XP is AgrSP and hence that YP is presumably TP (cf. also e.g. Bobaljik and Jonas 1996 for analysing AgrSP and TP as distinct subject positions).

- (24) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>XP</sub> SU<sub>1</sub> (+pro) X [<sub>VP</sub> SU<sub>2</sub> (-pro) ... ]]]  
 (b) [<sub>CP</sub> C [<sub>AgrSP</sub> SU<sub>1</sub> (+pro) X [<sub>TP</sub> SU<sub>2</sub> (-pro) ... ]]]

Recall furthermore that I have been assuming that 'XP-subject' orders occur when the subject occurs in the lower one of the two subject positions in (24) (cf. examples (8) and (18)). What is crucial now is that once AgrSP disappears, we also lose a subject position. The lower subject position in (24) therefore becomes the highest subject position and, assuming still that adjunction is restricted (cf. §5.2.1), this position then becomes a position which is adjacent to V.

The change described above is illustrated in (25).

- (25) (a) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>AgrSP</sub> SU<sub>1</sub> V [<sub>TP</sub> SU<sub>2</sub> ... ]]]  
 (Old English/Middle English (South))  
 ⇒ (b) [<sub>CP</sub> ZP V [<sub>TP</sub> SU ... ]]] (Middle English (North))

Once AgrSP is lost in the North, we not only lose a position for V-fronting but we also lose the higher subject position. V-fronting therefore has to target C and the subject in TP is now adjacent to V in C.

The phenomenon of V-subject (non-)adjacency and in particular its development within Middle English thus provides evidence for the analysis of issues (5 I) and (5 II), i.e. for the question of what the nature of the projections below CP is in the structure in (4) (i.e. (24a)). By identifying XP as AgrSP and YP as TP, the specific syntactic properties of the northern dialect can be directly linked to its morphological properties, and the contrast to Old English and southern Middle English can be accounted for.

One additional point remains to be addressed, however. V-subject adjacency

in (25b) means that FP, which occurs above TP and hosts adjuncts (cf. (8a) or (18)), has to disappear together with AgrSP. I propose that this result can be obtained in terms of an analysis of AgrSP as a 'proxy category' (cf. Nash and Rouveret 1997), i.e. a category which has no features of its own but is created in the course of a derivation for the purposes of feature checking. More precisely, I propose that FP in (8a) or (18) is a proxy category which is created for AgrS checking but which can be occupied 'parasitically' by an adjunct due to the lack of intrinsic features of proxy categories. Hence, once no AgrS checking is necessary, no proxy categories above TP get created, and FP therefore disappears together with AgrSP (cf. Haeblerl 1999: chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion of this point).

##### 5.5. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have considered the status of Old English and Middle English with respect to a word-order pattern which gives rise to considerable variation among the Modern Germanic V<sub>2</sub> languages, i.e. the occurrence of adjuncts between a fronted finite verb and a subject ('XP-subject'). I showed that Old English and southern Early Middle English allow 'XP-subject' orders regardless of the position to which the finite verb moves. The northern dialect of Middle English, however, seems to be more restrictive in this respect, and 'XP-subject' orders cannot be found in this dialect. This dialect variation coincides with a dialect variation identified by Kroch and Taylor (1997) with respect to the syntax of V<sub>2</sub>.

I have argued that the data related to V-subject (non-)adjacency provide evidence for several theoretical issues related to the analysis of Old English and to the more general structural analysis of adjuncts in pre-subject position. First, I argued that the absence of 'XP-subject' orders with pronominal subjects can be used as an argument in favour of analysing topics as occupying a position in the CP-domain in Old English rather than a position in the inflectional domain, as has sometimes been proposed for symmetric V<sub>2</sub> languages such as Icelandic or Yiddish. And secondly, on the basis of the dialect variation in Middle English, I proposed that the projection below CP in Old English and southern Early Middle English should be identified as AgrSP, because such a clause structure allows us to relate the peculiar syntactic properties of the northern dialect of Middle English directly to the impoverished agreement morphology in this dialect. Finally, the Old English data also provided evidence for the analysis of pre-subject adjuncts as occupying a specifier position of an independent projection, and I showed that this type of evidence can only be obtained from Old English but not from the Modern Germanic languages. Hence, a comparative study of V-subject (non-)adjacency in the history of English not only provides evidence for the analysis of Old English, but also contributes to a better understanding of a more general word-order phenomenon found in the Germanic languages.