On the Nature of Embedded V2 in Old French
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Embedded clauses in Old French (OF) often display V2-like word orders, a fact at odds with its traditional analysis as an asymmetric V2 language. Mathieu (2006, to appear) proposes that these orders result from Stylistic Fronting (SF), much as has been argued for Icelandic, while Labelle (2007) argues that, at least for the earliest period (1100-1150, designated as E(arly)OF), they reflect a type of V2 available in embedded clauses. Drawing on data from a close study of two OF texts, we argue that both Labelle and Mathieu are correct, but for different stages of OF. The possibilities for embedded non-SVO word orders in EOF are distinctly different from those we find in our latest text, Villehardouin's *Conquête de Constantinople* (prose; very early 13th c.), whose characteristics conform closely to those of SF. Our second text, Chrétien de Troyes' *Perceval ou le Conte du Graal* (verse; late 12th c.) is mixed in character; non-SVO orders are more limited in nature than Labelle's EOF generalized V2, but more liberal than Mathieu's SF. We suggest that a change in embedded clause structure is underway between the early 12th and early 13th centuries, similar to changes in matrix clauses suggested by Labelle and Hirschbühler (2005) and Rouveret (2004).

Mathieu (2006, to appear) argues that V2 in OF displays the sorts of restrictions common to SF in Icelandic; most notably, the subject must be null (e.g., as in subject relatives) or in *v*P (as in impersonal constructions), the fronted element is subject to an accessibility hierarchy, and fronting is not obligatory. However, Labelle (2007) shows that V2 orders in EOF are not subject to the restrictions of SF. Furthermore, all types of constituents can front, and the order occurs in all types of embedded clauses. This is significant in that earlier analyses (e.g., Vance 1997) found V2 only in conjunctional clauses (essentially, declaratives introduced by C^0 *que*). In Labelle's data, however, V2 occurs in subject, object, and free relatives; adverbial clauses; and indirect questions. V3 orders are also relatively abundant in Labelle's data; these facts lead her to argue for three embedded clause structures: a V2 within CP (for conjunctional V2), a V2 within IP, and a V3 within IP.

Because Mathieu appears to draw his data primarily from texts after 1150, while Labelle's data comes from texts prior to that date, it is possible that their competing analyses in fact reflect different stages of the language. The data we have drawn from work in progress on Villehardouin's *Conquête* and Chrétien's *Perceval* appear to confirm this. Of the approximately 500 embedded clauses we have from the *Conquête*, only 14% have XV order. Of these, only 10 are true instances of fronting with overt subjects and these all occur in conjunctional clauses. All other cases occur in clauses introduced by *qui* (subject relatives) or by *que* and have null subjects. This is a strikingly different situation from the fronting found by Labelle; clearly, embedded V2 is not possible here.

The situation in *Perceval* is less clear. In the approximately 630 clauses we have so far, XV orders occur more frequently (30%; possibly due to the demands of meter and rhyme) but are even more rare with overt subjects than in the *Conquête* (7%) (and all but two of these are in conjunctional clauses). Thus, fronting appears to conform to the SF requirement for a null subject, as was the case in the *Conquête*. However, fronting occurs in a much wider variety of types of clauses than in the *Conquête*— object relatives, embedded questions, and adverbial clauses—as was the case with embedded V2 in Labelle's EOF data. In addition, *Perceval* shows a much wider variety of fronted elements that the *Conquête*; in the latter these are mostly limited to DOs, PPs, adverbs, and predicate NPs/APs, while in the former, we find negative elements, CPs, nonfinite verbs, quantifiers, [O $V_{nonfinite}$] constituents, and double objects as well. Finally, the data from *Perceval* also attest to a fairly large number of V3 and V4 clauses (10% of all clauses), with a wide variety of possible orders. V3 and V4 in the *Conquête* are quite rare (3% of all clauses), and all have either a subject pronoun or negative element in first position. In these respects, *Perceval* is more reminiscent of EOF.

We propose that the data outlined above reflect the existence of distinct grammars in the EOF period (1100-1150) and the L(ater)OF period (post-1200). In particular, we follow Labelle in arguing that the EOF embedded clause had a more articulated IP structure which allowed for embedded V2 and V3, but we suggest that LOF had a reduced structure along the lines of Mathieu, which allowed only limited SF. This change in embedded clause structure echoes similar proposals for changes to matrix clause structure from EOF to LOF offered by Labelle and Hirschbühler (2005) and Rouveret (2004). Finally, we propose that our *Perceval* data suggest the existence of competing grammars in the period between EOF and LOF. Future research must thus take care to examine separately texts from at least these three periods (1100-1150, 1150-1200, 1200-1250) in order to assemble more accurate synchronic descriptions which will in turn allow a more nuanced account of the diachronic change underway in OF.

Texts

Chrétien de Troyes, *Le roman de Perceval ou le conte du graal*. Digital transcription of ms. A, Paris, B.N. fr. 794 by Pierre Kunstmann, made available through the Laboratoire de Français Ancien, University of Ottawa.

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