In recent years, considerable debate has arisen as to the proper grammatical representation of the position of the finite verb (Vf) in early English. Van Kemenade (1987) argues that the position of the finite verb in Old English (OE) is asymmetric: in root clauses Vf is preposed to Comp; in non-root clauses it remains in sentence-final position. Pintzuk (1991, 1993) takes issue with this and argues that the position of Vf is symmetric between root and non-root clauses: movement is always to the position of Infl which is variable. The specifier position of Infl is then a topic position rather than a subject position.

In this chapter, we will examine some of the evidence for the position of the finite verb in OE and early ME, and for the nature of the specifier position of IP. We will come to the conclusion that there is no independent evidence for the topic status of this position. The only instances where it is occupied by a non-nominative element is when the verb heading the VP of the clause is one that assigns no thematic role to a subject. It will be argued that such constructions are in several ways special and cannot be advanced as evidence for the 'topic' status of the position in question. We must therefore conclude that V movement is asymmetric.

The analysis defended for OE provides an interesting perspective on the changes that take place in the course of the Middle English (ME) period. The evidence for the CV2 character is, as of the earliest ME period, even clearer than in OE, in all dialects and texts. The V2 character is in decline as of the middle of the fourteenth century.

This article is organized as follows: in section 2, the theoretical assumptions underlying my analysis are outlined. Section 3 deals with V2 and embedded topicalization in Old English. Section 4 discusses the same phenomena in Middle English, and the changes that take place in the Middle English period.
The V2 phenomenon is not entirely restricted to main clauses. V2 in embedded clauses is essentially of two types. The first type is represented by languages like Dutch, German, Frisian Continental Scandinavian, Old French. These allow embedded V2 in the complements of bridge verbs, which are verbs that allow complementizer deletion (see, e.g., de Haan & Weerman 1986; Vikner 1990). This is illustrated with (3) from Danish:

(3) a. Vi ved (at) denne bog har Bo ikke læst
   we know that this book has Bo not read
b. Vi ved (at) Bo har ikke denne bog læst
   we know that Bo has not this book read
c. Vi beklag *(at) Bo har ikke læst denne bog
   we regret that Bo has not read this book

I follow current work in analysing this type of embedded V2 as CP-recursion. In terms of the structure (1), this type of V2 language is analysed as follows: V2 in this type is movement of Vf to I, and subsequent movement of V/I to C in root clauses. V/I-to-C movement is presumably triggered by the requirement that C be lexical. In root clauses this is satisfied by moving V/I; in non-root clauses by a base-generated complementizer. The requirement that C be lexical is found in various guises in recent proposals for the analysis of V2. We shall be referring to V2 languages of the sort discussed so far as CV2 languages. Crucial for this notion is a root/non-root asymmetry for V2. In this language type, Spec,IP is the canonical position for the nominative subject.

The second type of embedded V2 is represented by languages like Yiddish and Icelandic, as analysed in Santorini (1989), Diesing (1990), Rognvaldsson & Thráinsson (1990). In these languages, embedded V2 occurs more or less freely and is compatible with a base-generated complementizer. This is illustrated in (4) with some examples for Icelandic from Rognvaldsson & Thráinsson (1990):

(4) a. Jón efast um að á morgun fari María snemma á fætur
   that yesterday has he him seen
   John doubts that tomorrow get Mary early up
   'John doubts that Mary will get up early tomorrow'
b. Jón harmarað þessa bók skuli eða hafa lesið
   John regrets that this book shall I have read
   'John regrets that I have read this book'

Given the compatibility of lexical complementizers and V2 in such languages, there is no root/non-root asymmetry with respect to V-fronting. We shall be referring to this type of language as an IV2 language. In such languages, XP-Vf-subject sequences occur more or less freely in both root and non-root contexts. However, these are to be analysed as instances of V to I. The asymmetry between root and non-root contexts can only emerge in a CV2 language. An important consequence of this is that Spec,IP in these languages is a topic position, an A-position; it is not the canonical position for the nominative subject.

Non-V2 languages (ModE and ModFr) are characterized by movement of Vf to I (or vice versa, as appears to be the case in ModE), and no movement to C, except under restricted circumstances such as in Modern English declaratives. This suggests that under these conditions, the C-level is not involved. Interestingly, in precisely those contexts where the C-level is activated, viz. in interrogative contexts, and Modern English constructions with a preposed negative constituent, we find typical CV2 properties; I-to-C movement with do-support in English and complex inversion and subject-clitic inversion in French, both crucially with asymmetry between root and non-root clauses. It seems then, that once the C-level is activated, i.e. when

2.2 Mixed languages

In the previous section, a distinction between C-orientation and I-orientation was suggested. In this typology, Modern English and Modern French are I-oriented languages, as they do not have I-to-C movement in declaratives. This suggests that under these conditions, the C-level is not involved. Interestingly, in precisely those contexts where the C-level is activated, viz. in interrogative contexts, and Modern English constructions with a preposed negative constituent, we find typical CV2 properties; I-to-C movement with do-support in English and complex inversion and subject-clitic inversion in French, both crucially with asymmetry between root and non-root clauses. It seems then, that once the C-level is activated, i.e.
there is an operator in Spec,C', C must be lexicalized.\(^7\) We will come back to this below.

So far, we have not discussed why it should be that, in I-oriented languages like English, French (and Icelandic which I analyse as an IV2 language), an operator-type of first constituent, such as a wh-element or (in English) a negative constituent, should invoke the C-level. A possible answer to this question is suggested by the wh-criterion as formulated in Rizzi (1990a) to account for ‘residual’ V2 phenomena such as ModE subject-verb inversion and ModFr complex inversion and subject–clitic inversion:

(6) Wh-criterion:
Principle A: each [+wh] X must be in a Specifier–Head relation with a wh-phrase.
Principle B: each wh-phrase must be in a Specifier–Head relation with a [+wh] X.

Once a wh-phrase moves to Spec,C', the head C must be lexicalized in order to satisfy principle B of the wh-criterion.\(^8\)

2.3 The nature of Spec,IP

The analysis presented here is motivated by a typological correlation between null subjects (both referential null subjects as in Italian, and expletive null subjects as they are typically found in a number of Germanic languages such as Dutch, Icelandic, German), preposed non-nominatives and nominatives occurring in the VP. I assume that the canonical configuration for nominative case marking is one of government by the dominant lexical head (C or I) into the specifier of the complement projection:

(7) NP - nominative iff it is governed by the dominant head C or I.

Thus in the structure (1), C in a C-oriented language assigns nominative case to Spec,IP; I in an I-oriented language assigns nominative case to Spec,VP.

The presence and position of the nominative subject is in this analysis key to the agreement properties of I, elaborating on the analysis of pro-drop in Rizzi (1982, 1986b). Rizzi characterizes the properties crucial for pro-drop in the following way:

(8) Pro-licensing:

a. pro is formally licensed under government by a designated case-assigning head.

b. The content of pro (morphological Φ-features) must be identified.

It is assumed by Hulk & van Kemenade (1993) that each language has an inventory of Designated case-assigning heads (DCH) for the formal licensing of pro, and that it is also possible that languages lack such designated heads entirely. In languages with referential pro-drop such as Italian, (8a, b) are both met. Languages that allow expletive pro-drop have the possibility of formal licensing (8a) only. Crucial for the formal licensing of pro is that the dominant functional head be a DCH. The presence of overt Φ-features then further determines the possibility of referential pro-drop. The properties of I (and C) thus allow or disallow some form of pro-drop. The reverse also holds true: it is claimed that the functional features of I need to be licensed and this is crucially determined by the same properties as those licensing pro-drop. The property of being a DCH acts as a formal licencer for I; and the Φ-features of I must be visible as some form of syntactic or morphological agreement. With respect to formal licensing there are three types of I:

(9) a. I is not a DCH.
b. I is not a DCH but can be related to C which is a DCH.
c. I is a DCH.

The typology in (9) is complemented with the option for I to have morphologically overt Φ-features. There are three ways of identifying the Φ-features of I, if you will, three types of agreement relationship:

(10) a. syntactic: Spec-head Agreement with NP in Spec,IP (I is not a DCH and not related to a DCH C).
b. Agr-chain: I forms part of an agreement chain between a DCH and NP marked nominative (I is DCH or related to a DCH C).
c. morphological: Φ-features are morphologically realized (I is a DCH).

(10a) represents the ‘ordinary’ case of agreement between a preverbal subject and I, such as John hits Mary, where John is in Spec,IP and is a syntactic licencer of the Φ-features of I. (10b) represents agreement between V/I and NP in Spec,VP or an internal argument marked nominative, as in the examples in (11). The crucial insight here is that I is formally licensed. However, its Φ-features are not identified. Hence, an agreement relationship must be established between I and a nominative NP, but this relationship is not necessarily local as for (11a): the agreeing element may be more deeply embedded.

(11) a. dat mijn broer jouw verhalen niet
that my brother(DAT) your stories(NOM.PL) not
bevielen/*beviel
pleased(PL)(*SG)
b. daß meinem Bruder(DAT) deine Geschichten (NOM.PL)
that my brother was not pleased by your stories

(11) are examples of the so-called nominative–dative inversion construction in which unaccusative verbs figure. This is discussed in detail in den Besten (1985). Den Besten shows that there is good reason to assume that in Dutch and German both the nominative and the dative NP are in the VP, since
they obey tests for objecthood. This is analysed as follows: in Dutch and German, which are C-oriented and where C is a DCH for formal licensing, I is not a DCH and has no morphological φ-features. I, is, however, part of an agreement chain between the DCH C and the nominative NP in the VP. Spec,IP is presumably empty. The central insight here is that there is a typological correlation between such nominatives in the VP and the possibility of expletive pro-drop.

(9c) is the case of languages where φ-features are realized as I-morphology, also the case of full pro-drop as analysed by Rizzi (1982, 1986b) for Italian. Observe that this overlaps partly with languages ruled by (10b), since I in the relevant languages is a DCH and has overt φ-features. The cases (10b, c) are cases where one of the functional heads C or I is a DCH, hence an agreement chain can be formed with a nominative in the VP.

Nominative assignment to an NP in the VP proceeds through chain government. See definition (12) from Hulk & van Kemenade (1993), to which we refer for further motivation. This definition was adapted from den Besten (1985):

(12) a. α chain-governs β if α governs γ1, γ1 governs γ2, ..., γn governs γn, and γn governs β (n ≥ 1).
   b. If NP, is governed by a category α which cannot or may not assign structural (addition H/vK) case, NP, will acquire its case from the first structural case-assigner up by which it is chain-governed.

The result of chain government is that in those cases where Spec,VP (or Spec,IP) is occupied by NP bearing lexical case, and if V has a complement to which it cannot assign structural objective case (i.e. in unaccusative contexts), I (or C via I) transmits its nominative feature to V through chain government. Thus, an NP in object position will receive nominative case when V cannot assign accusative and the nominative cannot be assigned to a different element in its canonical government configuration.

3 Old English

In this section, I first give an initial characterization of the nature of V2 in OE as CV2 (section 3.1), and a characterization of the nature of Spec,IP as one that is the canonical position for the nominative subject, except in subjectless constructions (section 3.2). This is followed by discussion of the alternative proposal of Pintzuk (1991, 1993) who analyses OE as IV2 (section 3.3). Arguments will be given why this view cannot be correct. The conclusion will be that there is no independent evidence for general embedded topicalization in OE, and that an analysis of OE as CV2 is in order.

3.1 V2 in Old English

The history of V2 in English is treated in some detail in van Kemenade (1987). Van Kemenade analyses OE as a CV2 language in the sense understood in this chapter. We assume for OE a basic structure as in (1) modulo VP-internal OV order and I-final IP. OE is analysed as SOV with V-fronting in root clauses. The examples in (13) are an initial illustration:

(13) a. hwi wolde God swa lytles pinges him forwyman  (ÆHTh.I.14.2)

why would God so small thing him deny

  ‘Why should God deny him such a small thing?’

b. on twam pingum hæfor God þæs mennes sawle gegodod

in two things had God the man’s soul endowed

  ‘With two things God had endowed man’s soul’  (ÆHTh.I.20.1)

It seems clear that with respect to V2, there is a root/non-root asymmetry in OE; as far as we are aware, the pattern with XP first in embedded clauses occurs only in clauses after bridge verbs, i.e. in embedded root clauses as discussed above. This is illustrated in (14):

(14) Gregorius se trahtnere cwæð þæt forði wolde dritten Gregory the interpreter said that therefore wanted God

getrahtnian purh hine sylfne þægspell  (ÆHTh.I.88.13)
interpreted through himself the parable that

Given this root/non-root asymmetry with respect to V2, we predict that OE is a C-oriented language. A consequence of this is that the topic forði in (14) is in Spec,CP position in the structure (1), and the nominative subject God in Spec,IP. More generally, we analyse Spec,IP as the position for nominative subjects. Apart from occasional postposed heavy subjects as discussed in van Kemenade (1987), there is one set of contexts in which Spec,IP is apparently not the canonical position for the nominative NP and these can be broadly defined as unaccusative contexts. We come back to this in the next subsection.

The largest class of potential counterexamples to a V2 analysis of OE clause structure is in the positioning of pronouns with respect to the preposed Vf. OE personal pronouns, pronouns ending in -r, and perhaps also adverbs, are reasonably analysed as Wackernagel clitics. Van Kemenade (1987) pursues such an analysis. Subject pronouns and object pronouns cliticize on the left of the preposed Vf/I. There is a curious discrepancy between topic-initial V2 sentences (including subject-initial ones), where the clitic precedes Vf/I and sentences that have an initial operator constituent such as a wh constituent, an initial negative element, or initial adverb ba, where the clitic follows Vf/I. These are illustrated with subject pronouns in (15):

(15) a. Be ðæm we magon swiðe swutule oncnawan ðæt  (CP.181.16)

by that we may very clearly perceive that

  ‘By that, we may very clearly perceive that ...’

b. for hwam noldet þu ðe sylfe me gecyðan  (ÆSL.XXXIII.307)

for what not-wanted you yourself me make known

  ‘wherefore would you not make yourself known to me’
3.2 Spec,IP in Old English

It was observed above that Spec,IP is the canonical position for the nominative subject in OE. There is one set of contexts where this is not the case and this can be broadly defined as unaccusative. By this term, we understand the classes of verbs that do not assign a thematic role to an external argument. This includes first of all the famous and much discussed impersonal verbs which can have a dative as the leftmost NP in embedded clauses, and a nominative that is presumably in the VP.

Some examples are given in (16):

(16) a. gif ðam gifran angemeticu spreec ne eglde (CP.309.3)
   if the greedy(DAT)eloquent speech(NOM)not afflicted
   ‘if the greedy are not afflicted by loquacity’

b. Gif hwam seo lar oflicige, ...
   if anyone(DAT) the doctrine(NOM) dislike(SUBJUNCTIVE)
   ‘if the doctrine should be displeasing to anybody, ...’

c. ac Gode ne licode na heora geleafleast (JEHP.XX.71)
   but God(DAT)not pleased not their faithlessness(NOM)
   ‘but their faithlessness did not please God’

It is impossible to establish conclusively the precise position for the dative in the examples (16). Note that these examples are very similar to the Dutch and German ones in (11) above. For these, it was established by den Besten that both the dative and the nominative are in the VP, on the basis of language-specific tests involving extractability. These tests are not available for OE. What we can conclude is that the nominative cannot possibly be in Spec,IP, and that Spec,IP is either empty or, if the dative is in Spec,IP, filled by a non-nominative.

Some, though not all, of these impersonal verbs, allow omission of a nominative element altogether, as in (17). This phenomenon is restricted to nonthematic subjects. The verb then shows up in the default third person singular form. This is what we have termed above expletive pro-drop, and applies also to weather verbs as in (17d).
classes of verbs for which this is not so straightforward. One reasonable criterion for deciding whether a verb assigns no external thematic role is to show that it allows expletive pro-drop, as in the examples (18) above. This seems reasonable enough in the light of the fact that OE allows no referential pro-drop. The only other context in which subjects can be omitted is in conjoined sentences. Therefore, if a verb occurs without a subject in a non-conjoined sentence, there is good reason to assume that it assigns no external role there. A further class of verbs that meets this criterion are modal verbs. On the assumption that modals are largely main verbs in OE, the fact that they occur without a subject shows that they do not assign an external role.19 This can be shown clearly on the basis of sentences that have an impersonal verb or a passive embedded under a modal. Such cases are discussed in detail in Warner (1990, 1993), Denison (1990b). Some of their examples are given in (20):

(20) a. Hwi ne sceolde me swa hyncan (Boeth.38.119.3)
   ‘Why should me(DAT) so seem’
   ‘Why should it not seem so to me?’

b. Hwam ne mag earmian swylcere tide? (Chron.E.218.4.AD1086)
   ‘Whom(DAT) not may pity such time(GEN)’
   ‘Who can fail to feel pity for such a time?’

We can identify a further group of verbs by the fact that their surface nominative subject can show agreement in case and number with an adjective or participle. According to Mitchell (1985), this group includes wesan ‘be’; weorpan ‘become’; cuman ‘come’; hwecorfan ‘return’; licgan ‘lie’; sittan ‘sit’; standan ‘stand’; gan ‘go’. Some examples in (21):

(21) a. þæt þæ þe gesunde from eodon
    ‘that they(NOM.PL) unharmed(NOM.PL) from went
    ‘that they should go away unharmed’
    (Chron.E.49.21.AD 755)

b. ond ic reotugu sæt
   and I(NOM.SG) dejected sat
   ‘and I sat dejected’
   (Wulf, 10) (from Mitchell 1985)

I analyse the verbs in (21) as raising verbs followed by a small clause that has an adjectival participial predicate. The surface subjects are generated as the subject of the small clause and raised to the matrix subject position. These verbs then do not assign an external theta-role.

We also find presentative constructions with there as in PDE. I do not wish to go into the issue whether at this chronological stage of the language þær ‘there’ is already an expletive or whether it is purely locative. Nevertheless, the examples show that the nominative NP must be in the VP:

(22) a. swulce þær were geworden sum sacu betweoh
    as if there were become a conflict(NOM.SG) between
    þær þe ... (GD Hecht.msH.46.14)
    those who
    ‘as if a conflict had arisen (there) between those who ...’

b. þæt þær byþ ypped & gehyred seo wynsunnes &
   that there is disclosed and heard the loneliness and
   dream þæs heofonlican lofes (GD Hecht.msC.281.5)
   joy(NOM.SG) of the heavenly praise
   ‘that the loneliness and joy of the heavenly praise are disclosed and
   heard (there)’

This occurs also with verbs as exemplified by (21):

(23) a. forðam þe him burston ut butu his eagan (ÆLS.19.120)
   ‘because that him burst out both his eyes(NOM)’
   ‘because both his eyes burst out’

b. þæt þær eode fyrr uth (GD Hecht.msC.123.27)
   ‘that there went fire(NOM) out
   ‘that the fire went out there’

The examples in (22) and (23) again show that in these constructions, the nominative NP can be in the VP.

The above do not exhaust the contexts in which initial non-nominatives in embedded clauses occur. Other verbs occur in what look like contexts of nominative–dative inversion. A case in point is the verb fremian ‘benefit’. It must be noted that this verb can occur without a nominative subject:

(24) þæt eow syllum fremāð þæt ic fare
    that you self(DAT.PL) benefits that I go
    ‘that it benefits you yourselves that I go’

Note the default 3sg form of the verb. Another verb is derian ‘harm’ which occurs in both nominative–dative order and dative–nominative order. I haven’t come across examples of subjectless usage of this verb. However, there are some interesting passages in the Pope edition of homilies of Ælfric where this verb is conjoined with a series of well-established impersonal verbs. See (25) (also XI, 560):

(25) He bið swæpæah gehalead to ansundre
    he is nevertheless healed to health
    on Domes-dæg, þonne he of deæþ arist,
    on Doomsday when he of death arises
    and syþ(þan ne swylt) ne seoc ne gewyrð
    and afterwards not perishes nor sick not becomes
    ne him hyngrian ne ðæg n(e) him purst ne dæþ
    nor him hunger nor may nor him thirst(NOM.SG) not harms
    ‘nevertheless he is healed to health on Doomsday, when he arises from death, and does not perish after, nor falls ill, nor goes hungry, or
    harmed by thirst’
    (ÆHPIII.109)

Let us take stock at this point and see what properties of the verb classes we have established. In constructions with impersonal verbs, impersonal passives, and impersonals or passives embedded under a modal, it is possible to have no nominative element at all. When there is a nominative
phenomenon in OE reinforces the analysis of OE as a CV2 language. Hence we assume that I does not have the phi-feature morphology to license what may be analysed as embedded topicalization is a construction-specific discussed here as one with special behaviour. The fact that we can show that predicts that C is the dominant head for (5) and the formal licenser for given her analysis of the position of clitics. OE allows variable positioning of position in root declaratives is not Spec,CP in OE is an indirect one, based with here. The first argument that leads Pintzuk to assume that the topic two of these touch on the character of Spec,IP position and only these are dealt with here. The first argument that leads Pintzuk to assume that the topic position in root declaratives is not Spec,CP in OE is an indirect one, based on her analysis of the position of clitics. OE allows variable positioning of the pronominal subject with respect to the finite verb (Vf), as observed and analysed in van Kemenade (1987) and briefly summarized above. For convenience, the above examples (15) are recapitulated here:

3.3 An alternative analysis

The analysis of OE as CV2 goes against that in Pintzuk (1991, 1993). Pintzuk analyses OE as an IV2 language. She adduces three main arguments for this. Two of these touch on the character of Spec,IP position and only these are dealt with here.20 The first argument that leads Pintzuk to assume that the topic position in root declaratives is not Spec,CP in OE is an indirect one, based on her analysis of the position of clitics. OE allows variable positioning of the pronominal subject with respect to the finite verb (Vf), as observed and analysed in van Kemenade (1987) and briefly summarized above. For convenience, the above examples (15) are recapitulated here:

In the analysis of van Kemenade (1987), this variable positioning is analysed as follows: in (15a) the clitic subject is cliticized on the left of V/1; in examples like (15b–d) such cliticization is blocked by the operator character of the first constituent (hwi, pa, ne contracted with the verb to n+Vp). Pintzuk (1991) takes the position of the pronominal subject as a diagnostic for the position of Vf: sentences with the subject clitic preceding Vf reflect IP; (15a) is then analysed as having a topic in Spec,IP with the pronominal subject right-adjoined to Spec,IP. Sentences with the pronominal subject following Vf reflect CP: (15b–d) (with an initial wh constituent, pa or ne) are analysed as CPs, with the finite verb fronted to C and the pronominal subject left-adjoined to Spec,IP. Pintzuk analyses OE then as mixed between IV2 and CV2.

Pintzuk's second argument (Pintzuk 1993) is that topicalization in OE embedded clauses occurs at the same low but significant frequency as in languages like Modern Icelandic which are often analysed as IV2. However, the examples she gives for this all involve embedded clauses with a modal as finite verb. Given the fact that OE modals can be analysed as raising verbs, these fall under the general classes of verbs that do not assign a thematic role to an external argument, as in the previous section, and do not constitute evidence for the general availability of Spec,IP as a topic position in OE.

Pintzuk’s analysis predicts that Spec,IP in embedded clauses is generally available as a topic position, and that this triggers subject–Vf inversion. We have seen in the previous section that both these predictions are disconfirmed by the facts. Embedded topicalization is only found in subjectless contexts and, given the analysis advanced, this supports the CV2 analysis for OE. The position of clitic pronouns therefore does not discriminate between contexts with V to I movement and those with V/I-to-C movement. Since there is a root/non-root asymmetry with respect to V movement, we have to assume that root clauses involve V/I movement to the C-domain. We leave open the possibility that the landing site for topic + Vf is a lower one than that of interrogatives, negatives, pa + Vf. This would imply a more articulate structure of the C system, as in van

In conclusion, there is no independent evidence for the topic status of Spec,IP in Old English. Spec,IP is the position for the nominative subject, and is accessible for other constituents in subjectless contexts only. Given the fact that verb movement is asymmetric, a CV2 analysis for OE seems in order.

4 Middle English

The previous section was an apology for the CV2 character of Old English. This rests on two empirical arguments: the first is the asymmetry of verb movement: topic + Vf + subject generally appears in root clauses only; the second is the fact that embedded topicalization is restricted to subjectless contexts, where Spec,IP is allowed to be empty or filled by a non-nominative constituent, and where nominatives may be absent altogether, or occur in the VP.

The type of evidence adduced above for OE continues to be found in the early ME period. By this time, most texts give evidence of a VO character, although there are still quite a few OV orders and mixed orders. The position of I seems to be much more dominantly initial in the head domain than it is in OE. It is therefore easier to work out the position of Spec,IP, although with continued caution. We will first discuss in this section the asymmetry with respect to V-motion in a number of texts (§4.1). These texts do not abound in examples of subjectless constructions. Therefore, we will consider these in a separate section, drawing on data from a wider range of texts, and from secondary sources (§4.2). We will conclude by discussion of some criteria that are adduced by Kroch & Taylor (this volume) to decide between IV2 and CV2 patterns (§4.3).

4.1 The asymmetry of V2

From the earliest ME texts and in all dialects, the OE pattern continued in full force. We begin by looking at some texts that are recognized as the closest successors of the dialect of late Old English prose: West-Saxon. The twelfth-century 'Poema Morale' (Egerton ms., ed. Morris, whole text) is an immediate candidate for this. Illustrating the various patterns, (26) shows inversion of NP-subject with a topic; (27) shows the noninversion of pronominal subjects with a topic; (28) shows inversion of all types of subject in wh-initial and negative-initial sentences:

(26) Per inne boð pa be was to lof wreche men to swenchen (PM.175.250) 
   therein are those who delighted poor men to prosecute
   'Therein shall be those who delighted to prosecute poor men'

(27) a. well late ich habbe bi-poht 
   full late I have repented
   'full late I have repented me'

(28) a. Hwet sculen ordlinghes don pa swicen and ta forsworene
   what shall whoremongers do, the traitors and the perjured
   why are many called and so few chosen
   wi hwi weren ho bijeten to hwon weren ho iborene ...
   why were they conceived wherefore were they born ...
   "What shall whoremongers do, the traitors, and the perjured? Why are so many folk called and so few chosen? Why were they conceived wherefore were they born ..."

b. nolde he for al middenerd pe perdde per abiden
   not-would he for all middle earth the third there abide
   'He would not for all middle earth abide there the third' (PM.169.1)

c. Ne lipnife wif to hire were
   not trust wife to her husband
   'let no wife trust to her husband'

There are no instances of embedded topicalization in this text. V2 is asymmetric. There is one example in this text that according to Kroch & Taylor (this volume) is diagnostic for topicalization to a C-oriented context. We give the example here, and will come back to this below:

(29) Ac drihte crist he 3iue us strencpe. stonde
   but lord Christ he give us strength stand that we may
   'but may Christ give us strength that we may stand'

The infinitive stonde must be assumed to be topicalized to the left of the C-position in its own clause, which is signalled by hat. This shows that the topic position is presumably Spec,CP. In early ME, there is a further source of evidence for determining the topic position. If sentences with a negated Vf, followed by a subject pronoun, are to be analysed unequivocally as reflecting movement of Vf to C (recall that this is so even in Pintzuk's analysis), it is telling that this pattern is found preceded by a topic in all the texts examined.22 Here are some examples from Poema Morale:

(30) For per ne þerf he bon of-dred of fure ne of poue
   for there not need he be afraid of fire or of thief
   'for there he needn't be afraid of fire or of thief'

(31) þer ne þerf he habben kare of þele ne of þeide
   there not need he have care of gifts or of rewards
   'there he needn't be worried about gifts or rewards'

I now turn to examination of data from several other texts that are from areas closely related to the West-Saxon/southern Mercian dialect areas in
OE. The first of these is Sawles Warde, a prose treatise in the dialect of the SW Midlands in the early thirteenth century (ed. Morris, whole text). Example (32) illustrates the inversion pattern with a nominal subject; (33) the noninversion of pronominal subjects in topic-initial sentences; (34) shows inversion of subject in wh-initial and negative-initial sentences:

(32) pat ne mei na tunge telle  
that not can no tongue tell

(very few examples) (SW.249.35)

‘noone can tell that’

(33) a. bi pis 3e mahen seon ant witen ...  
by this you may see and know

(bi pis 3e mahen seon ant witen ...  
by this you may see and know

(SW.263.23)

b. i wis ich habbe prin isezen a puseht siode wurse  
truly I have therein seen a thousand times worse

(truly I have therein seen a thousand times worse)

(SW.253.25)

(34) a. Hweonone cumest tu ...  
whence comest thou

‘where do you come from ...’

(SW.249.29)

b. Ne mei ich he seið. nohwer speoken  
not may I he says, nowhere speak

not may I he says, speak anywhere

(SW.249.12)

In this text too, V2 is asymmetric. Example (35) is an example of embedded topicalization occurring after a bridge verb:

(35) ... as ha soð seið pat purh unweotennesse ne mei ha ...  
as she truly says that through ignorance not can she

(SW.255.33)

‘as she truly says that through ignorance she may not sin’

Note that this is a CP-recursion environment. We will have to allow that in this text, CP-recursion is not entirely restricted to complements of bridge verbs. There are several examples of fronting of a negated Vf, with or without topic:

(36) a. he is warde ... pat onont him ne schal nan un-peaw  
he is ward that anent them not-shall no vice

cumen in

‘he keeps watch..., so that no vice shall come in through them’

(SW.249.1)

b. pat ne mahte ich longe hwile elles hwider lokien  
that not could I long while else where look

‘that I was unable for a long while to look elsewhere’

(SW.261.5)

c. pat al is hare blisse, se muchel pat ne mei hit munne  
that all is their bliss so great that not may it mention

na muð  
no mouth

‘that all their bliss is so great that no mouth may mention it’

(SW.263.20)

Note that the context with a negated Vf, followed by a pronominal subject, is uncontroversially analysed as a CV2 context. Sawles Warde further contains a number of examples of topic-initial negated sentences with a subject pronoun following Vf:

(37) a. for in pe ne mei hit naneswis neomen in  
for in thee not-can it in no way enter

‘for in thee may it in no wise enter’

(SW.263.35)

b. for of al his strengeðe ne drede we nawiht  
for of all his strength not dread we not

‘for of all his strength we don’t have any dread’

(SW.255.8)

Patterns such as those encountered in Sawles Warde are representative of all the southern Midlands texts from this period. Another example from the Southeast Midlands, from around 1200, is the Book of Vices and Virtues (ed. Holthausen, whole text). The patterns are the same as in the other texts. (38) illustrates inversion with a topic and a nominal subject; (39) the noninversion of pronominal subject with a topic; (40) the inversion of all types of subject with a wh, panne, or negative first constituent:

(38) 3ewiss hað godd forworpen ðan ilche mann ...  
certainly has God rejected that sameman

‘certainly God has rejected that same man...’

(VV.13.31)

(39) a. alle ðese bebodes ic habbe ihealde fram childhade  
all these commandments I have kept from childhood

(VV.67.32)

b. For hire we sculen alle deado polien  
for it we shall all death suffer

‘we shall suffer death for it’

(VV.7.23)

(40) a. hwat hafst ou swa lange idon on oare woreld?  
what have you so long done in the world

‘What have you done so long in this world?’

(VV.17.18)

b. Danne wunest ou sikerliche on Gode  
then abide you truly in God

‘Then you abide truly in God’

(VV.39.8)

c. Ne cam ic noht te bidden 3ew forbisne ...  
not came I not to give you example

‘I did not come to give you example...’

(VV.15.9)

A topic can precede a negated Vf followed by a subject pronoun, showing that the topic position is Spec,CP:

(41) a. þis ne habbe ic nauht ofearned  
this not have I not earned

‘This I have not earned’

(VV.17.9)

b. for his zemelste ne latt he naht te donne  
for his carelessess not omitted he nought to do

(VV.63.9)
Another text from further south is the Kentish sermons (ms. C13, full text). The patterns are the same as in the other southern texts: (42) illustrates inversion with a topic and a nominal subject; (43) the non-inversion of pronominal subject with a topic; (44) the inversion of all types of subject with a wh first constituent, and illustrates that the differentiating factor between inversion and noninversion of pronominal subjects is the negation on Vf:

(42) Nu loke euerich man toward himseluen now look every man to himself 'now it's for every man to look to himself'

(43) a. Nu ye habbej iherd pe miracle now you have heard the miracle
b. þerefore we sollen habe ure peni' for that we shall have our penny
(44) a. Wat belongeth hit to me oper to pe, wyman? what matters it to me or to you woman?
   b. þo dede he somoni alle þo wyse clerkes then did he summon all the wise clerks
   c. ne solde noman targi forto... not should noone delay to 'Noone should delay to ...'

A topic can precede a negated Vf, followed by a subject pronoun:

(45) a. þet ne seide he noht that not said he not
   b. Nu ne dorste hi namore sigge now not dared he nomore say
      'That he did not say'
      'Now he did not dare say more'

Again, as in the other texts, no examples are found of embedded topicalization; V2 is asymmetric. We conclude that in all the early ME dialects of the south, V2 is asymmetric.

When we move further north, we still find V2 patterns similar to the southern ones. A major example is the Peterborough chronicle, from the Northeast Midlands, with noncopied continuations up to 1154 (ed. Clark, full text). The patterns are the same as in the southern texts: (46) illustrates inversion with a topic and a nominal subject; (47) the noninversion of pronominal subject with a topic; (48) the inversion of all types of subject with a wh, pa or negative first constituent:

(46) a. Dus waes se mynstre of Burch forbernd (PC.AD 1070.56) thus was the monastery of Peterborough burnt down 'Thus, the monastery of Peterborough was burnt down'

From areas more northern than Peterborough, there is an unfortunate sparsity of material in the early ME period. The only texts of any size from this area are the poetic Cursor Mundi and the northern prose version of the Benedictine Rule. The nature of the verse of Cursor Mundi is such that an investigation would need special consideration beyond the scope of this chapter.

In the northern Rule of St Benet (ed. Kock), we find an interesting and apparently systematic deviation from the pattern that we established for the other dialects, cf. also Kroch & Taylor (this volume). V2 inversion is systematic with all types of first constituent and with all types of subject. There is no discrepancy between the behaviour of nominal and pronominal subjects when the first constituent is a topic. This is illustrated in (50):

(50) a. Allekin mekenes sal man muster til þe gestis (Benet.35.11) all manner of meekness shall man muster to the guests 'all manner of meekness shall be shown to the guests'

b. Opir labur sal þei do other labour shall they do 'they must do other labour'
In the previous section, evidence was given that V2 in early ME is asymmetric, and that subject-Vf inversion is restricted to root contexts. Non-inversion is only restricted to subject pronouns for which a clitic analysis is indicated. Let us now consider some instances of constructions with unaccusatives of the types that were exemplified in section 3.2. Recall that in OE constructions with impersonal verbs, impersonal passives, impersonals or passives embedded under a modal, it is possible to have no nominative element at all. When there is a nominative element in impersonal constructions and in passives, the nominative may be in the VP. In all such constructions, and in constructions with verbs like go, it is possible to have a non-nominative element as the first constituent in embedded clauses. It must be noted that examples do not come frequently. Exemplification is therefore not restricted to the texts examined for the previous section and extended to data culled from other texts and from secondary sources like Elmer (1981) and Allen (1995). Let us first give some examples evidencing pro-drop; (51) are root clauses, (52) non-root clauses:

(51) a. 

b. 

(52) a. 

b. 

The last two examples (from Allen 1995) are interesting in that the position of Vf/I is distinct from that of the nonfinite verb. This makes it very plausible that the dative pronoun is in Spec,IP. We conclude that the syntactic properties of Spec,IP in early ME have not changed in any essential way since OE, and that the analysis advanced for OE in section 3 is still relevant at this stage.

4.3 Discussion: the nature of V2 in early Middle English

I have presented arguments for regarding both OE and early ME as an asymmetric V2 languages. The arguments are the lack of embedded topicalization, and, in early ME, the compatibility of a topic with a post-verbal subject pronoun. The latter shows that the topic position is Spec,CP. The evidence in early ME is quite uniform in all non-northern dialects. Divergent behaviour is shown in the northern dialect of the Rule of St Benet. This has uniform asymmetric V2, whether the subject is nominal or pronominal.

Kroch & Taylor (this volume) adapt Pintzuk’s (1991) analysis of V2 in OE, and carry it over to such ME texts as exhibit the same patterns as in OE, i.e. all the non-northern texts. They analyse the evidence from the Rule of St Benet as characteristic of asymmetric V2 and hypothesize that the northern dialect of ME became CV2 under the influence of the extensive language contact situation with Scandinavian settlers.

The evidence I have quoted and the way we have analysed it suggests a different perspective on the nature of the dialect differences in ME. If our analysis of V2 in OE and early ME is correct and all V2 is asymmetric, the
divergence in patterns between the southern and northern dialects is of a
different nature: the southern dialects are CV2 and have a clitic position in
the C-system, whereas the northern dialects are CV2 and do not have this
clitic position. The absence of the clitic position in the northern dialect may
due to the contact situation with the Scandinavians, but we have no
evidence for the Scandinavian languages at this stage.

Kroch & Taylor advance some further arguments for the difference
between IV2 in the South and CV2 in the Benet text. The first is that the
Benet text has a number of examples of topicalization over a complementizer,
as in (54):

(54) I sal yu lere þe dute of God, his wille þat ȝe may do
'I shall teach you the duty of God, that you may do his will'

However, such examples are not entirely nonexistent in the South, witness
the example (29) above, from Poema Morale. The second argument they give
is that in examples like (54), the second clause introducer should plausibly
be in the same position as that of the first, which is to the left of a that-
complementizer, hence in Spec,CP. There is no parallel inversion in such
clauses in the South:

(57) for þe mare þat sho es heȝid our toþer, þe mare aȝh sho at
for the more that she is raised over the other the more ought she to
hold the commandment of þe reule

This is hardly a conclusive argument, since these clause introducers in the
South may well have different properties.

4.4 Late Middle English

From the middle of the fourteenth century, V2 declines. The reader will
recall that in OE, there was an asymmetry with respect to the position of the
pronominal subject between topic-initial sentences and operator-initial
sentences, as discussed in section 2.3. Van Kemenade (1987) analyses this as
a process of cliticization of the pronominal subject to V/I, Pintzuk (1991) as
difference between CV2 and IV2 patterns in OE. This asymmetry gradually
disappears in the course of the second half of the fourteenth century and
first quarter of the fifteenth century. I do not wish to go into the nature of
this process here. For some discussion, see van Kemenade (1987: ch. 6). The
loss of this asymmetry is, I claim, the main trigger for the loss of V2. Pronominal
subjects regularly appeared on the left of V2 in root clauses, while
nominal subject regularly 'inverted'. As this discrepancy between nominal and
pronominal subjects got lost, nominal subjects adopted the
pronominal pattern. This is subject to some dialectal variation, cf. van
Kemenade (1987). In the dialect of Chaucer, pronouns adopted the nominal
subject pattern. For instance, in one of Chaucer's prose works, the Treatise

on the Astrolabe, V2 inversion is completely regular. This is in marked
contrast to the dialect of Wycliffe, who is a near-contemporary of Chaucer.
Interestingly, there is good reason to assume that the Wycliffite sermons
represent an important literary standard, see Warner (1982). I illustrate this
with some examples from the Wycliffite writings; the case is discussed in
considerable detail in van Kemenade (forthcoming a):

(56) a. wip newe wenchis is Crist now weddid and
with new wenches is Christ now wedded and
b. And by þis same skyle hope and sorwe schulle iugen us
and by this same skill hope and sorrow shall judge us
b. And by þis same skyle hope and sorwe schulle iugen us
and by this same skill hope and sorrow shall judge us

In these texts, we regularly find these three patterns: non-inversion of a
subject pronoun (50c), non-inversion of a subject noun (50b); and inversion
of a subject noun (50a). There are very few examples of inverted subject
pronouns, except with an operator type of first constituent like a who-element.
What these examples indicate is that in this dialect, which there is
some reason to assume played an important role in the rise of the standard
language, the nominal subjects tended to adopt the pattern of pronominal
subjects. The result of this was that fronting of XP to Spec,CP no longer
went hand in hand with V/I to C.

Hence V2 declined and English changed from a C-oriented language to
an I-oriented language. Since Spec,IP was, from the earliest times, the
canonical position for the nominative subject, and I was never itself a
formal licenser for null subjects, the language did not become IV2, but lost
its V2 character completely except in constructions with an operator in
Spec,CP. Let us consider the relationship between the loss of V2 and the
other constructions under consideration more closely.

The loss of V2 goes hand in hand with changes in the subject position as
discussed here. This can be illustrated with several well-studied cases from
the literature. Expletive pro-drop is lost in the last part of the fourteenth and
shows that, in easy to please constructions, which in earlier stages could
remain subjectless (is hard to do this rather than it is hard to do this), it-
insertion becomes obligatory in the same period. Similarly, Butler (1980)
shows that at the same stage, insertion of there became obligatory in
shows that in impersonal constructions with preposed dative experiencers
and in dative-fronted passives, the preposed dative, were reinterpreted
as nominative during the same span of time.
At the stage when English was still V2 with expletive pro-drop, say c. 1250, the basic sentence structure may be represented as in (I). C is the dominant head, hence it must be lexicalized, either by a complementizer or by a finite V. C is the DCH that acts as a formal licenser for pro. I does not have inherent φ-features, hence referential pro-drop is excluded; only expletive pro-drop is possible. The φ-features of I must therefore be licensed by movement of the nominative NP to Spec,IP to ensure licensing of I under Spec-head agreement in IP. In subjectless constructions, a DCH C may form a chain with the VP-internal nominative. As in the course of the latter part of the fourteenth century, subjects come to appear more and more frequently to the left of the finite verb, V2 declines; English changes from a C-oriented language to an I-oriented language. I is then the dominant head and must be lexicalized. V/1 to C is lost, except in operator-first constructions. I was never a DCH for the licensing of pro-drop, hence expletive pro-drop is lost, and nominatives in the VP cease to occur. Since now the language becomes subject-NP initial rather than XP-initial, pro-drop native experiencers come to be reanalyzed as nominative subjects. The loss of V2 and the loss of expletive pro-drop, or rather the emergence of obligatory nominative subjects, coincide historically.

Notes

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1. In this article, the labels C-oriented vs I-oriented refer primarily to the position for the finite verb in root clauses. But there is an obvious relationship between the functional orientation as employed here, and that advocated in Rivero (this volume) for the typology of clitics.

2. We leave open the possibility that the labels C and I should actually represent a more elaborate functional structure than the one presented here. While there is some evidence that this is the case, it is not of immediate relevance to the issue at hand.

3. Note, however, the argument in Vikner (1991, 1995) that Continental Scandinavian has no V to I movement.

4. The term IV2 is somewhat misleading here, since it suggests that, as in CV2 languages, the term V2 applies as an absolute word order constraint. This does not seem to be the case in IV2 languages. Crucial for our notion of IV2 language is that Spec,IP is an XP position rather than a NP subject position. This results in many XP-Vf sequences, but does not prohibit intervention of other elements between XP and Vf. For the sake of comparison with CV2 languages, however, we continue to use the term IV2.

5. Sometimes a non-root C position can remain lexically null in C dominant languages. This is restricted, however, to environments where the complementizer is selected by the matrix verb, cf. Rizzi & Roberts (1989). Also, in indirect questions, the C-position may count as lexical if Spec,C is filled by a wh-constituent, as in I was wondering [Spec,C who - e i f we should turn to]]. Presumably, Spec,C' and C are co-indexed here, in the vein of Pesetsky (1982).

6. Or in non-root clauses with a selected complementizer, C can remain empty, or be lexical by being coindexed with a wh-element in Spec,CP, cf. note 5.

7. Unless the operator is saturated by movement of the subject to Spec,CP and I to C is blocked, as in Who saw John? vs *Who did see John? See Koopman (1984), Rizzi (1990a); for a treatment of this that is compatible with ours.

8. It must be noted that French differs from English (and Icelandic, as I see it) in that I to C movement is not obligatory when Spec,CP is filled in the syntax, cf. the grammaticality of (i) with non-inversion:

(i) A qui tu as parlé?
to whom you have spoken

Rizzi (1990a) suggests that French has an additional way of licensing a [+wh] specification under agreement in CP. Halk (1990) argues that the mechanism invoked by Rizzi (1990a) is redundant in French, and that French does not have I to C in interrogatives.

9. For further motivation and discussion of this analysis, the reader is referred to Hulk & Van Kemenade (1993).

10. Pintzuk (1991) gives evidence that IP is variable between I-final and I-initial order in the head domain. This does not affect the arguments presented here.

11. These examples are suggestive of a fairly homogeneous word order in OE, but in fact this is far from being the case. Van Kemenade (1987) analyses the core exceptions as (heavy) NP shift to post-verbal position; a relatively free process of verb raising as attested in various West Germanic languages; and a clitic analysis of personal pronouns. Pintzuk (1991) presents an analysis in terms of phrase structure variation between an I-medial and I-final IP and various types of rightward movement as in van Kemenade.

12. Only a pattern with a fronted XP is valid as evidence here, as examples with Subject-Vf-(XP)–Vf-(XP) occur quite frequently in non-root clauses. The latter may be analysed either as an instance of a variant pattern with I-medial order in OE (cf. Pintzuk 1991), or as an instance of verb-projection-raising (cf. van Kemenade 1987).

13. Pintzuk (1993) observes that embedded topicalization occurs at a low rate in the complements of non-bridge verbs. This will be discussed below.


15. There is another set of counterexamples that is not easily handled in this analysis: Vf to C is not entirely obligatory in OE. There are (infrequent) examples where V-funding simply does not apply. In van Kemenade (forthcoming a) a refinement of this analysis is suggested that handles these cases.


17. This set of verbs is discussed in detail in Elmer (1981), Allen (1993). I assume that this set is generally characterized by not assigning an external thematic role. Allen (1986a, 1995) analyses the preposed dative arguments of a number of these verbs as subjects in the sense that they control coordinate subject deletion. I do not wish to enter into this issue here. While I find her case convincing, it is not clear whether her argument would lead to the conclusion that these datives should be analysed as external arguments in our analysis. I merely wish to address the syntactic properties of the position SpecIP here.

18. It must be noted that weather verbs in the vast majority of cases have an If subject in OE. Denison (1990b) and Warner (1990) take the co-occurrence of modals with impersonals (and passives) to suggest that they could already be auxiliaries in OE. This is worked out considerably more fully in Warner (1993). Van Kemenade (1993a) suggests that these instances of modals are best analysed as raising verbs. The idea that they are not modals at this stage is supported by the fact that they occur in V-(projection) raising structures, as in van Kemenade (1987), since V-(projection) raising is a main-verb phenomenon.
20. The third argument is a quantitative comparison of V-position in root and non-root clauses. Her figures show a large discrepancy of Vf position between root and non-root clauses that, in my opinion, does not warrant an analysis of OE V-placement as symmetric between root and non-root clauses. This is discussed in detail in van Kemenade (forthcoming a).


22. This pattern, though attested, is very rare in OE, for reasons that are not entirely clear to me. A suggestion might be that the preverbal negation ne was stronger in OE and acted itself as a topic. There is independent evidence that ne in OE is stronger than the same element in ME, in that in OE, it could occur as a single sentential negation element. In ME, it came to be reinforced by a second negation element. This is discussed in van Kemenade (forthcoming b).

23. This solves a dating puzzle in Allen's (1986a) analysis. I have always been puzzled by the fact that dative experiencers were reinterpreted as nominative late in the fourteenth century, if this is due to a large extent to the loss of inherent case, as Allen (1986) hypothesizes. There is clear evidence for the loss of inherent case from the early thirteenth century. One would therefore expect datives that already behaved like subjects to be reanalyzed as nominative earlier. On the analysis here, we view the preposed datives as being in topic position. They were therefore generally reanalyzed as nominative when the topic position was generally reanalyzed as nominative.

24. At a later stage, even V to I is lost. This change does not concern us at present, but should be dated as later than the general loss of V2. Roberts (1985) dates the loss of V to I to the sixteenth century.

13 Qu'est-ce que ce que? The diachronic evolution of a French complementizer

Laurie Zaring and Paul Hirschbühler

1 Introduction*

In contemporary Modern French, the morpheme ce has a variety of uses:

(1) a. Nominal determiner: ce beau lac 'this beautiful lake'
   b. Subject pronoun:
      C'est dommage que tu partes
      'It's too bad that you leave'
   c. Clausal arguments preceded by à, de:
      Je m'attends à ce qu'il vienne
      'I am expecting that he will come'
   d. Heading relative clauses and indirect questions:
      Ce que tu as dit est ridicule
      'What you said is ridiculous'
      Je me demande ce qu'il a fait
      'I wonder what he did'

Our purpose here is to focus on ce's use in association with non-Wh clausal arguments, i.e. those illustrated by (1c), in order to understand how and why this construction evolved over time. In contemporary Modern French, this combination of ce plus a tensed clause (henceforth referred to as ce que) is limited for most speakers to occurring with the prepositions à and de (see Zaring 1992, 1993). In Old French (OF), however, ce que appeared not only with a wide variety of prepositions, but also as subject and direct object clauses. Our account of ce que's evolution will propose that ce here is not a pronoun, but a determiner which selects for a clause rather than for a nominal, and whose use begins to become limited at the same time that another ce-morpheme, the masculine singular demonstrative determiner illustrated in (1a), begins to develop in the language. We propose the existence of a parameter based on Grimshaw's (1991) Extended Projection