The comparative evolution of word order in French and English

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www.ling.upenn.edu/~kroch/handouts/digs11.pdf

French Data Sources

France Martineau, et. al. *Corpus MCVF, "Modéliser le changement: les voies du français."* University of Ottawa.

Six Old French texts:

- Brendan
- Le chanson de Roland
- Yvain
- Nicolette et Aucassin
- La queste de la sainte Graal
- Le somme le roi

Five Middle French texts:

- Chroniques de Froissart
- La Prise d'Alexandrie
- Cent N. N. Anonymes
- XV Joies de Mariage
- Commynes

Two Early Modern French texts:

- Étaples Bible translation
- letters of Marguerite de Valois

English Data Sources

- Anthony Kroch and Ann Taylor. *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, second edition*. CD-ROM, second edition, 2000.

- Ann Taylor, Anthony Warner, Susan Pintzuk, and Frank Beths. *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose*. Oxford Text Archive, first edition, 2003.

- Anthony Kroch, Beatrice Santorini, and Lauren Delfs. *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English*. CD-ROM, first edition, 2004.

- Ann Taylor, Arja Nurmi, Anthony Warner, Susan Pintzuk, and Terttu Nevalainen. *Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence*. Oxford Text Archive, first edition, 2006.

Decline of direct object topicalization in English

Sunday, July 19, 2009
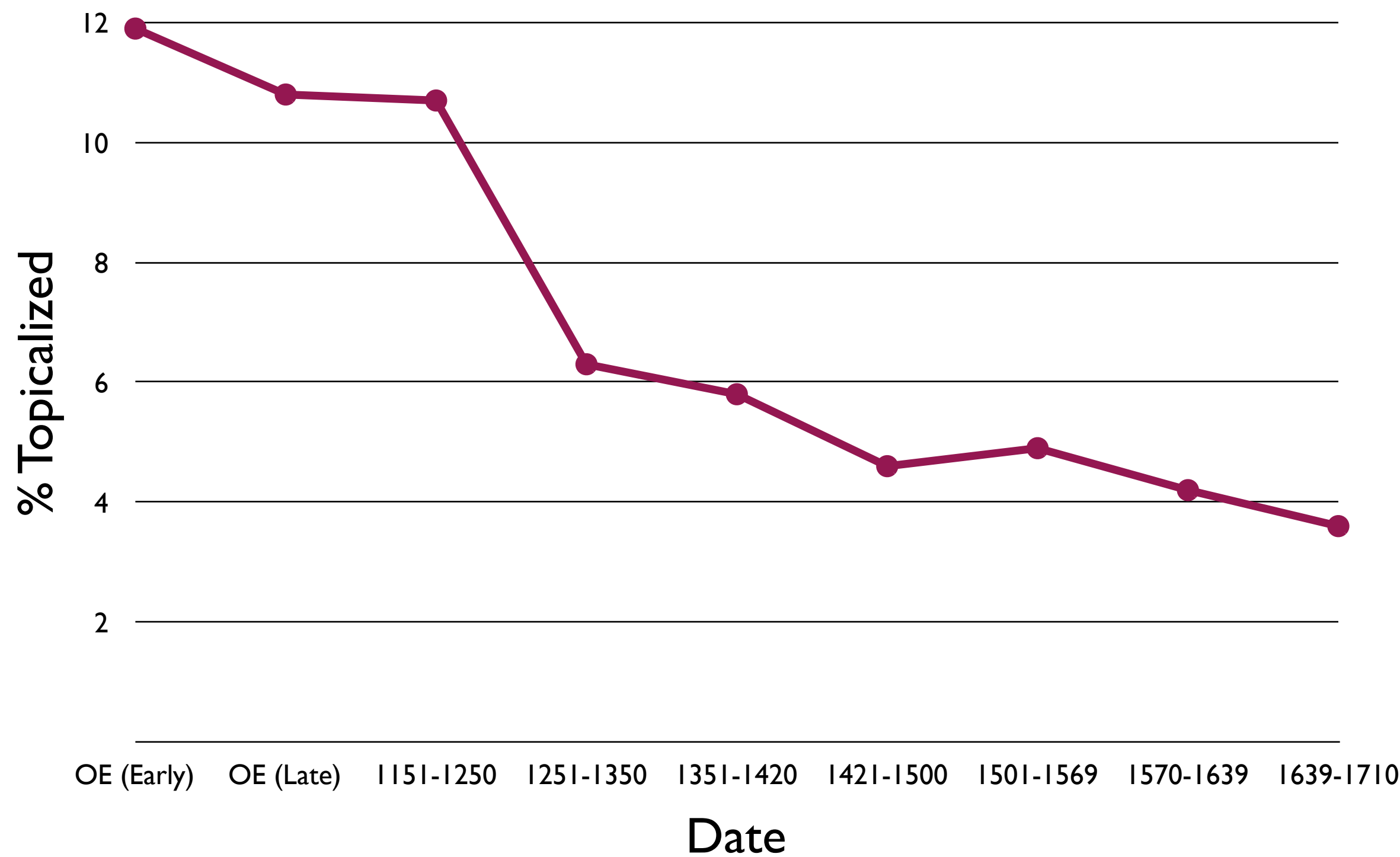
Decline of direct object topicalization in French

all subjects

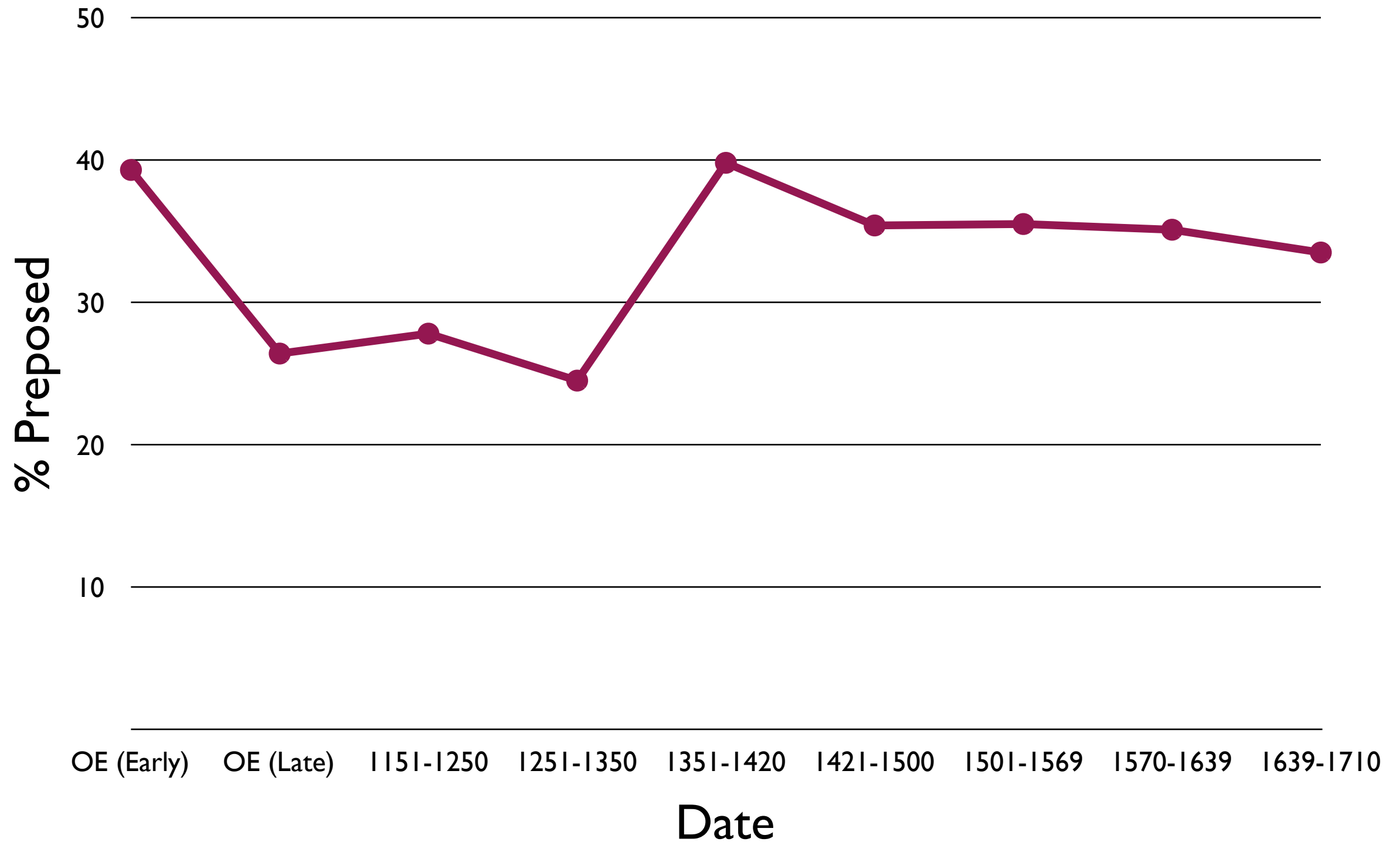all overt subjects

% Topicalized

Date
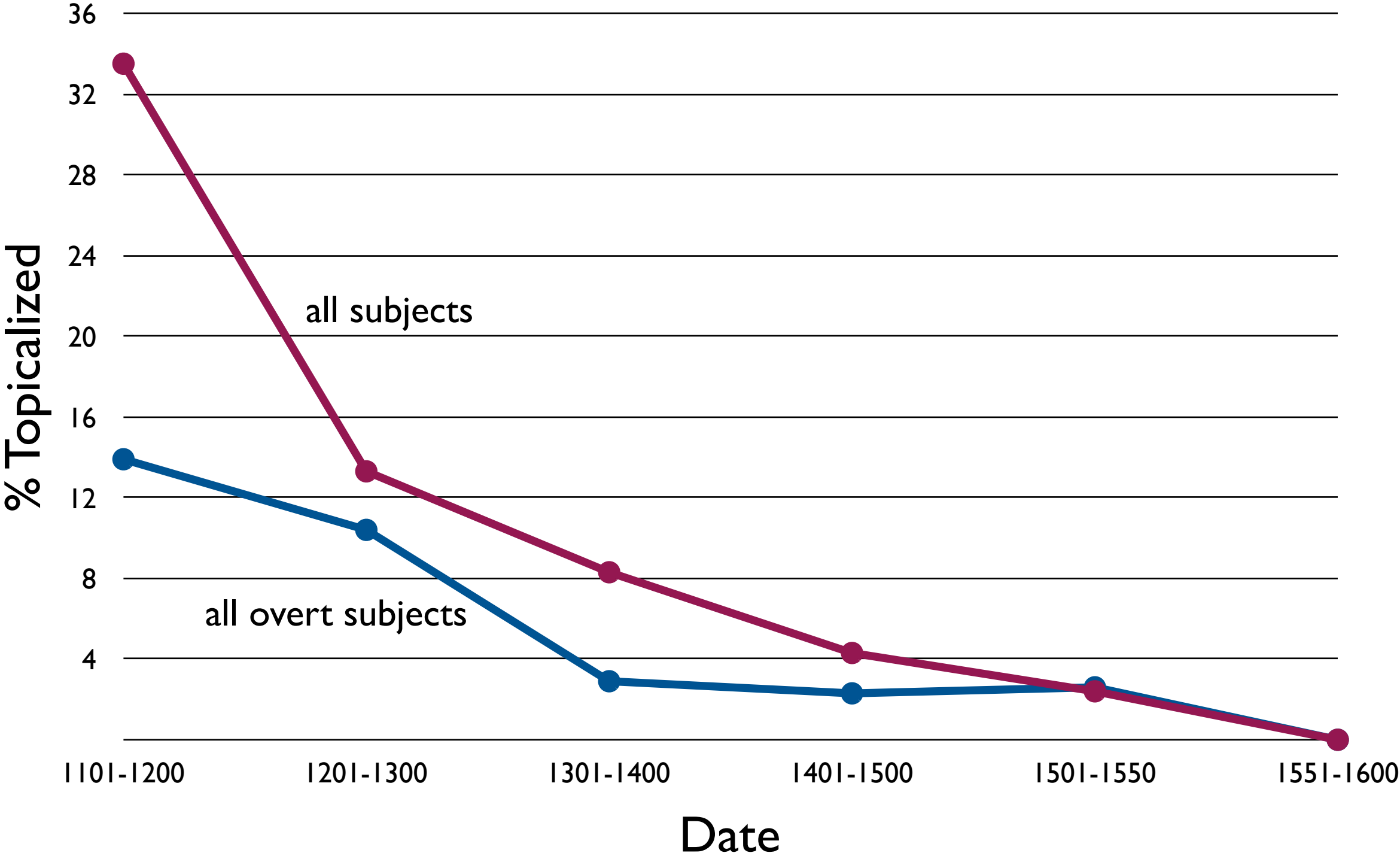
Frequency of direct object topicalization in modern spoken Dutch (Bouma 2008)

Table 4.2: Summary of Vorfeld occupation of arguments.

Argument	Vorfeld		Prop est (%)
	yes	no	pt
subject	43 523	18 597	**70.1**
direct object	3 418	20 432	**14.3**
indirect object	38	815	**4.5**

Evolution of PP preposing in English

Evolution of PP preposing in French

all subjects

all overt subjects
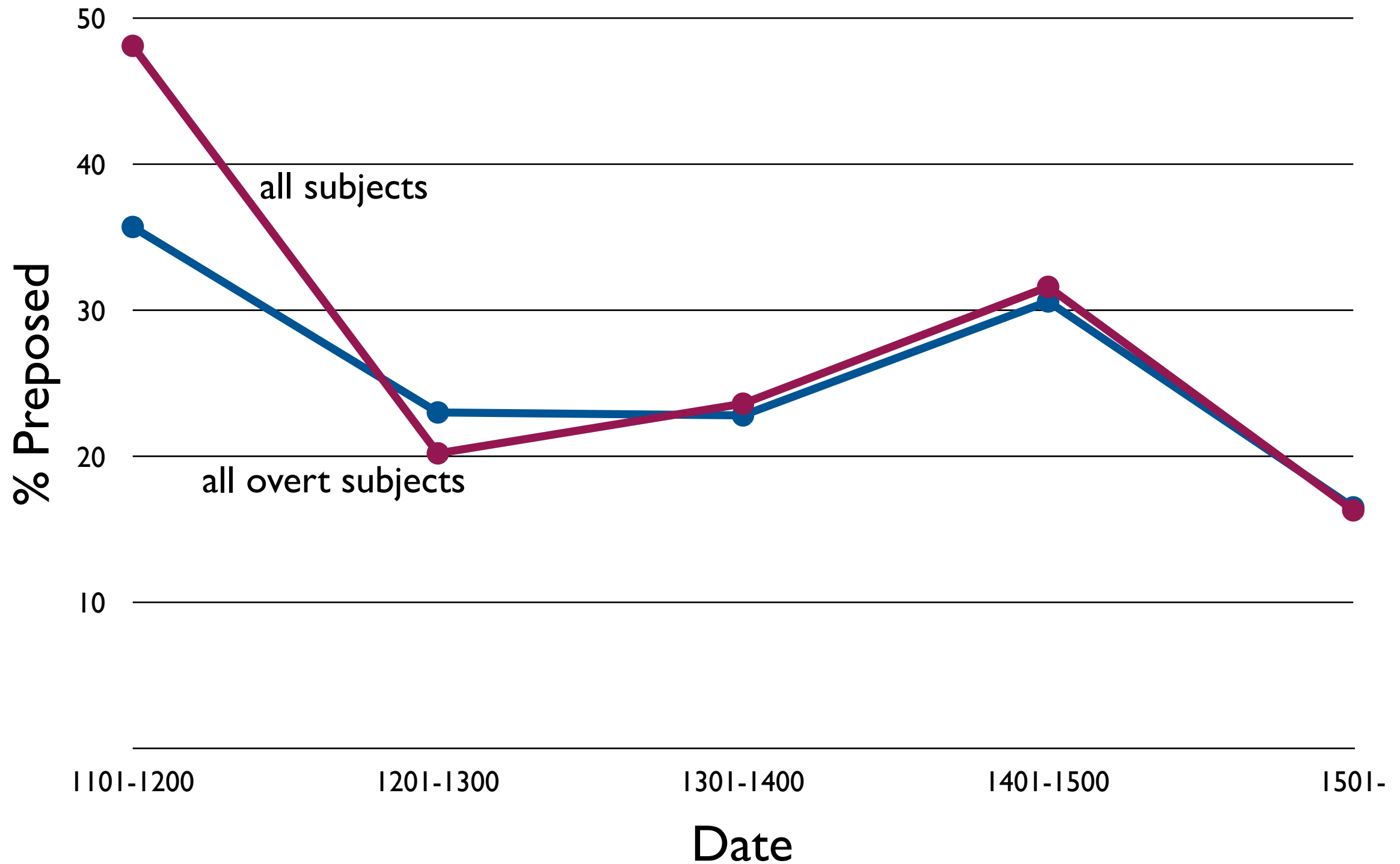
Evolution of adverb fronting in English

temporal adverbs

locative adverbs

% Preposed

90

75

60

45

30

15

OE (Early)　OE (Late)　1151-1250　1251-1350　1351-1420　1421-1500　1501-1569　1570-1639　1639-1710

Date

Sunday, July 19, 2009
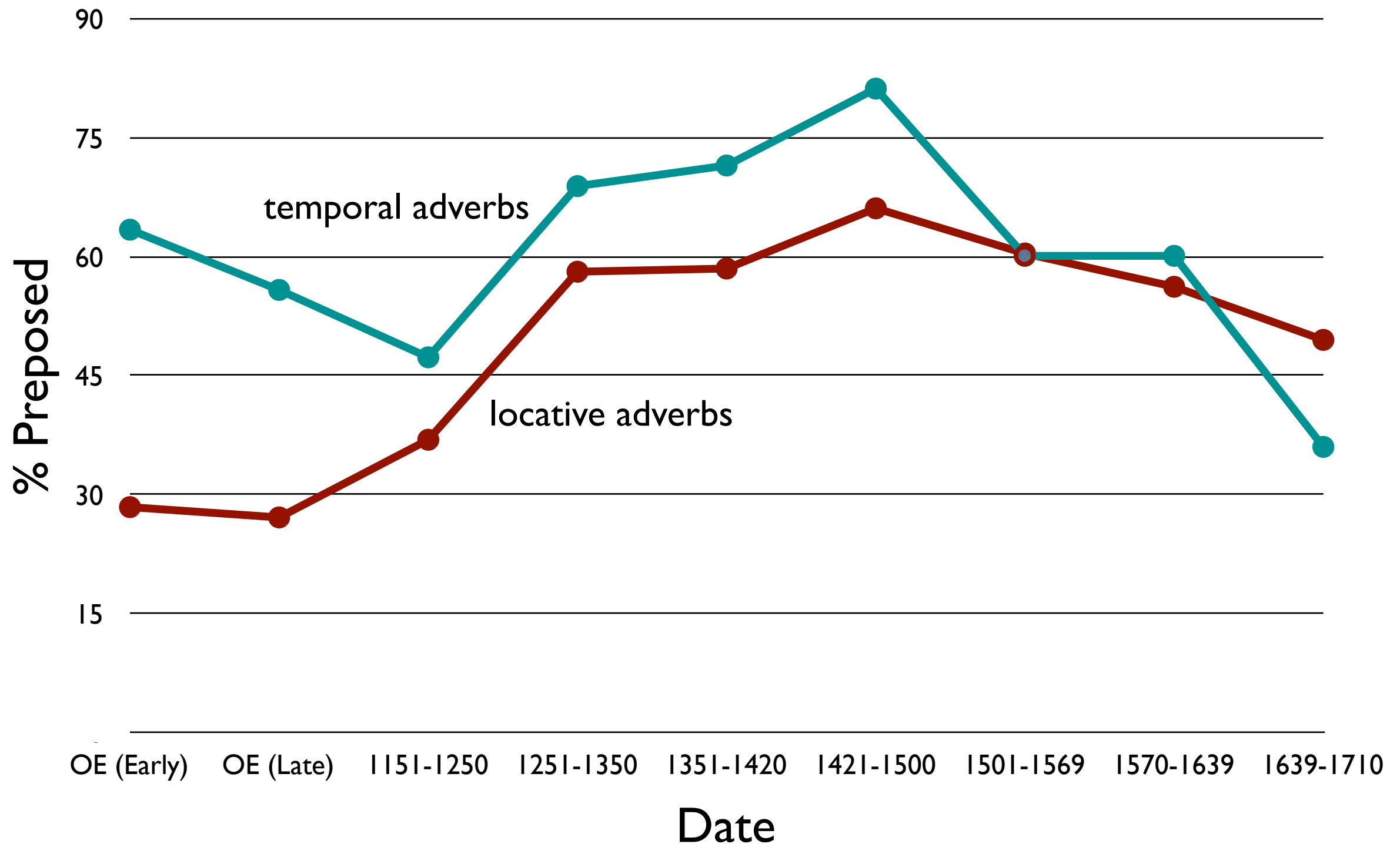
Evolution of adverb fronting in French

Sunday, July 19, 2009
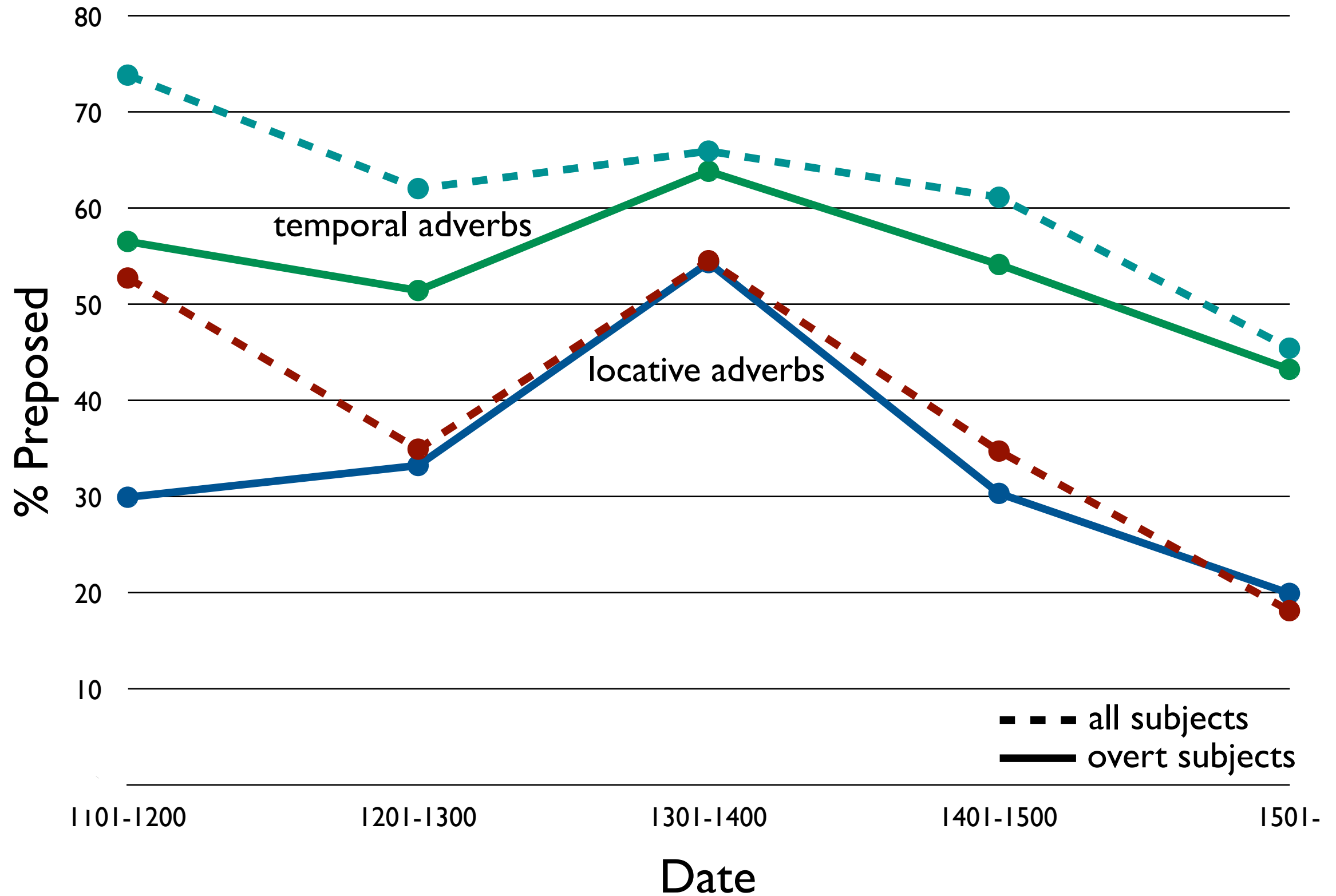
The history of topicalization in English (Speyer 2008)

- Why does topicalization decline in Middle English but not disappear? If the change a parametric one, it should go to completion. Otherwise, topicalization, a clear case of stylistic variation might be expected to be stable in frequency over time.

- This question has answer in the specific interaction between parametric settings and stylistic variation in the history of English.

Decline of direct object topicalization by subject type
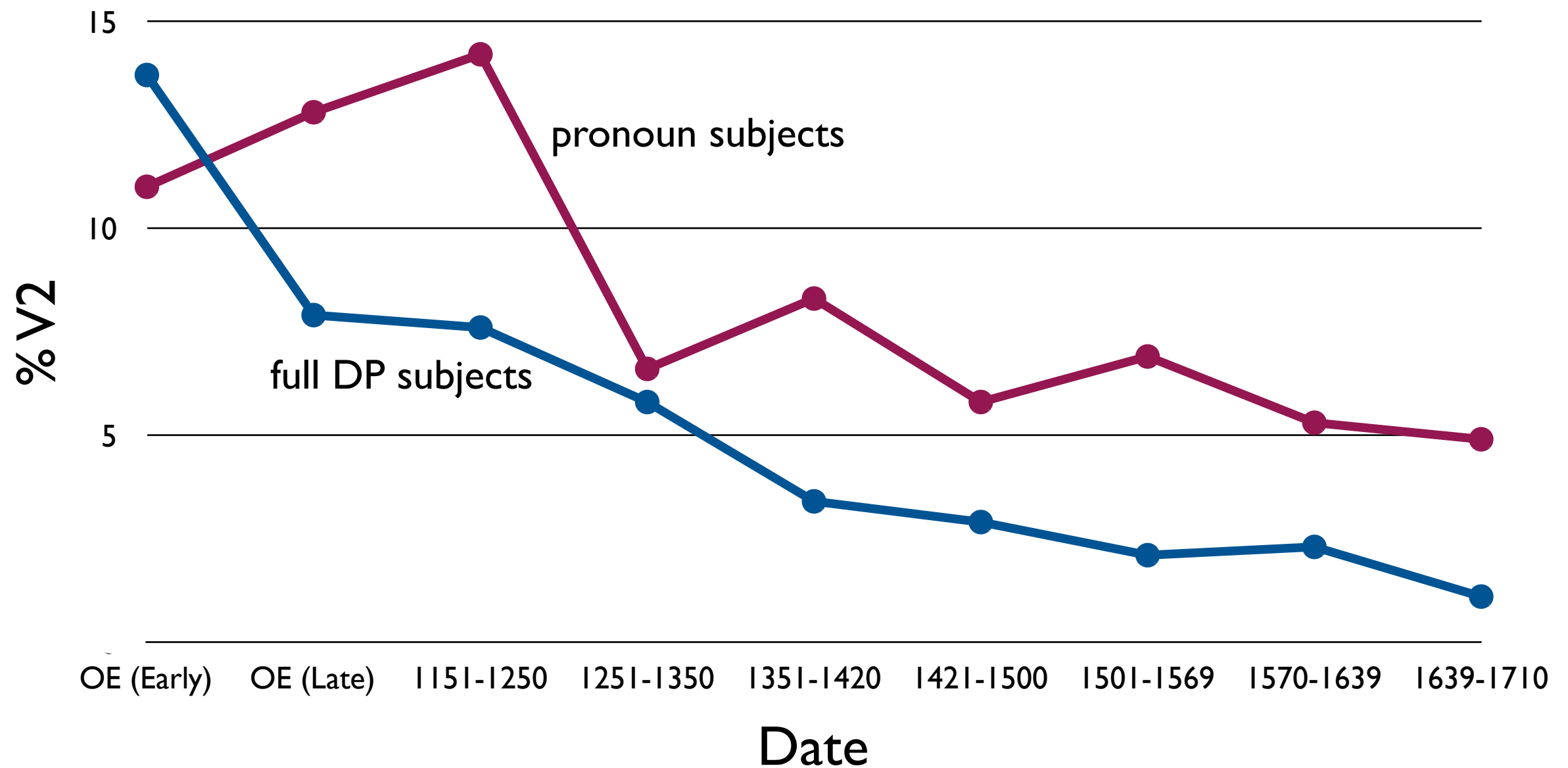
Correlation between frequencies of object topicalization and of V2 in Middle English texts (Wallenberg 2007)

Sunday, July 19, 2009
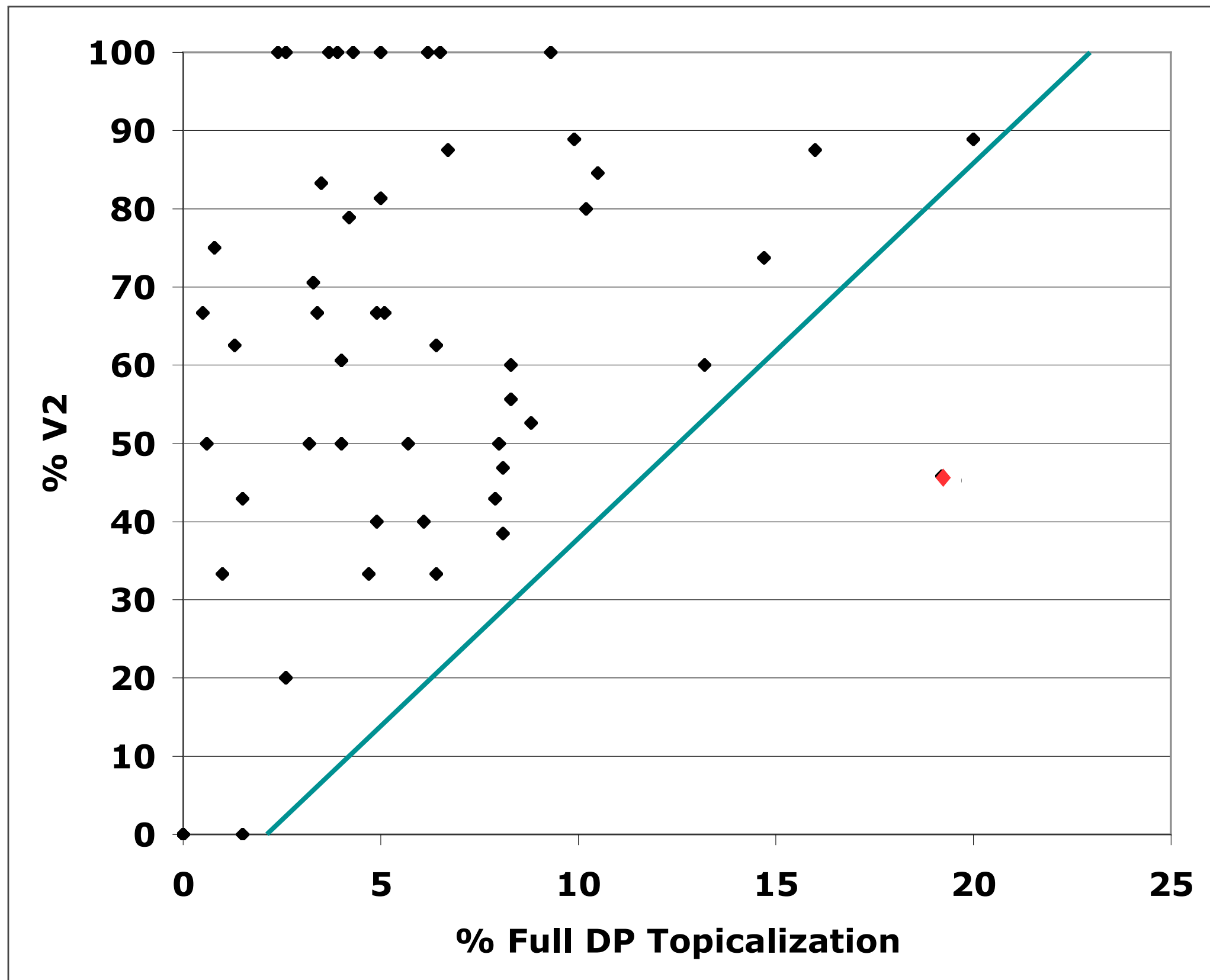
Distribution of subject types in a corpus of topicalized and non-topicalized sentences in natural speech

personal pronoun	demonstrative pronoun	full noun phrase
140	20	142
46.4	**6.6**	**47.0**

Subject type in sentences with *in situ* objects

personal pronoun	demonstrative pronoun	full noun phrase
181	2	17
90.5%	**1%**	**8.5 %**

Subject type in sentences with topicalized objects

Clash avoidance

- The type of topicalization that declines:

  (1) The nèwspaper Jóhn read; the nòvel Máry did.

  (Compare: The nèwspaper read Jóhn.)

- The type of topicalization that doesn't:

  (2) The nèwspaper I réad; the nòvel I dídn't.

Translating German topicalized arguments into English in three modern German novels
[by Böll, Dürrenmatt and Grass]

Topicalized to topicalized:

G: Mahlkes Haupt bedeckte dieser Hut besonders peinlich.

E: On Mahlke's head this hat made a particularly painful impression.

Topicalized to non-topicalized:

G: Zu den sechs kamen noch drei weitere.

E: Three others joined these six in the afternoon.

Accent placement and topicalization frequencies in translating German topicalized arguments into English

	2nd accent on the German subject	accent elsewhere
topicalization in the English translation	0	31
no topicalization in the English	25	100

Rate of V2 loss in English with topicalized objects and PPs

topicalized objects

topicalized PPs

% V2

Date
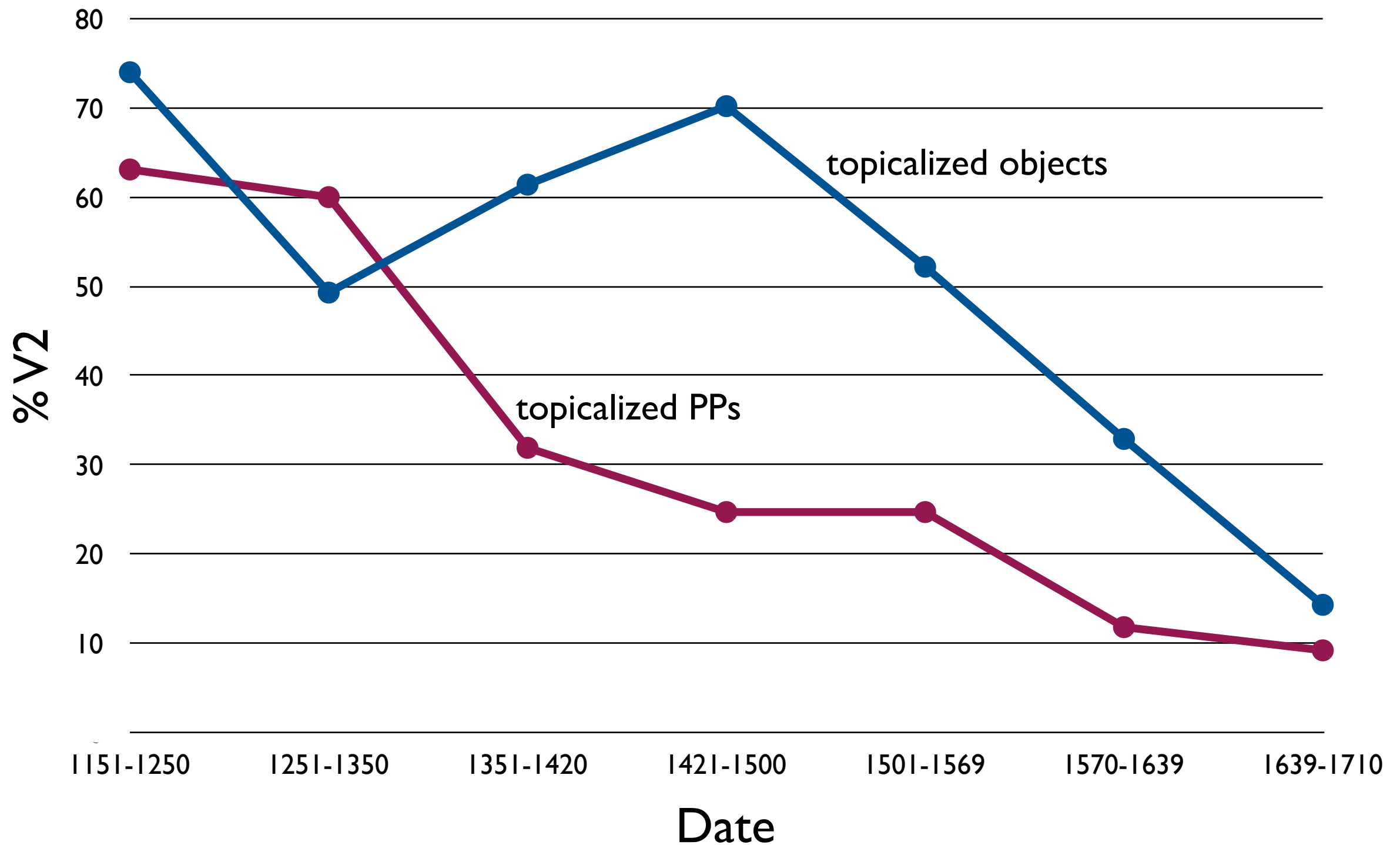
Rate of V2 loss in English corrected for clash avoidance

Sunday, July 19, 2009
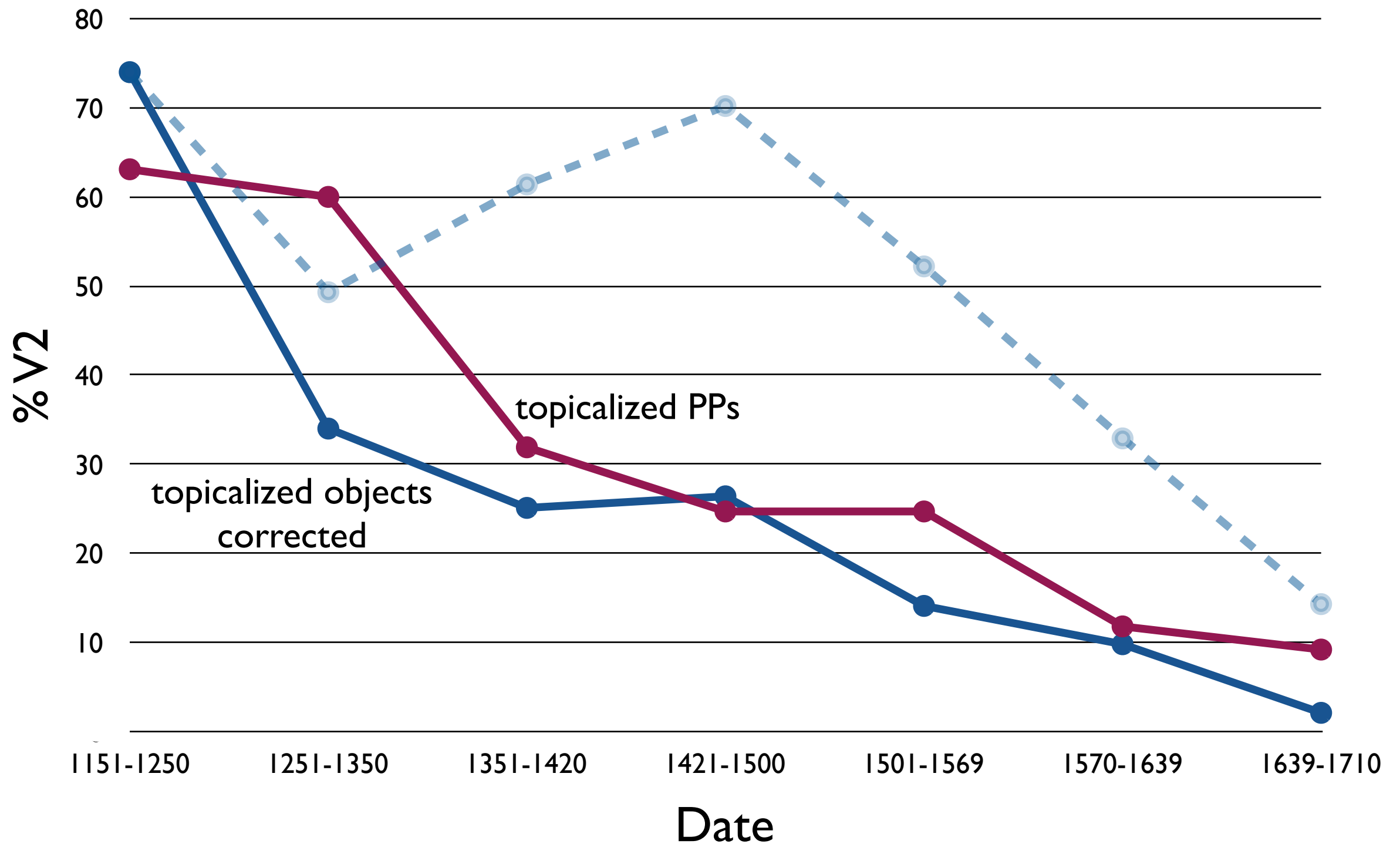
The V2 constraint in Old English:
the pronoun exception

(1) Þæt hus hæfdon Romane to ðæm anum tacne geworht.

(2) Ælc yfel he mæg don.

(3) Þin agen geleafa þe hæfþ gehæledne.
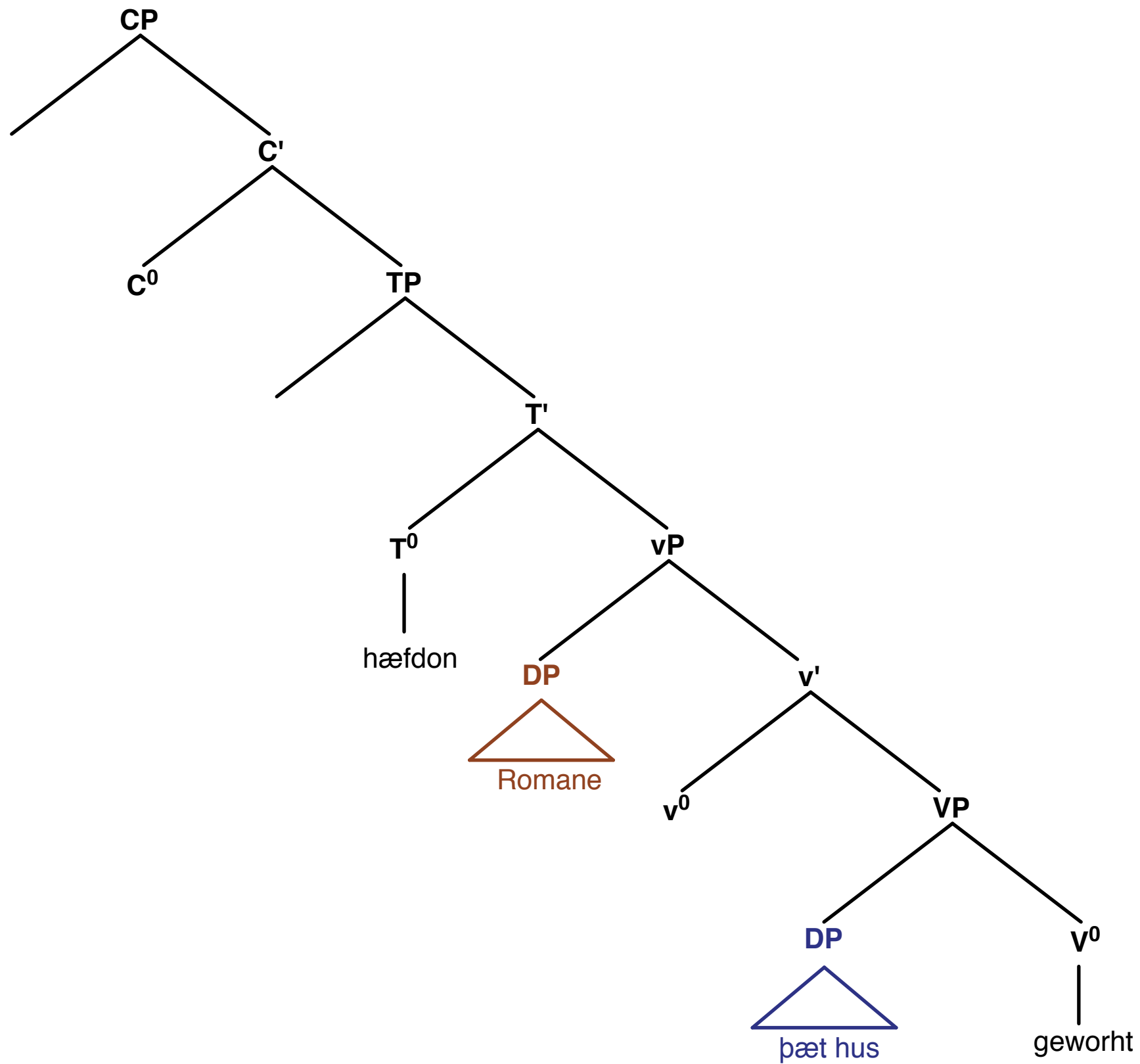
(4) & seofon ærendracan he him hæfde to asend.

Was Old English a V2 language?

Phrase structure of an English V2 clause

Phrase structure of an English V2 clause
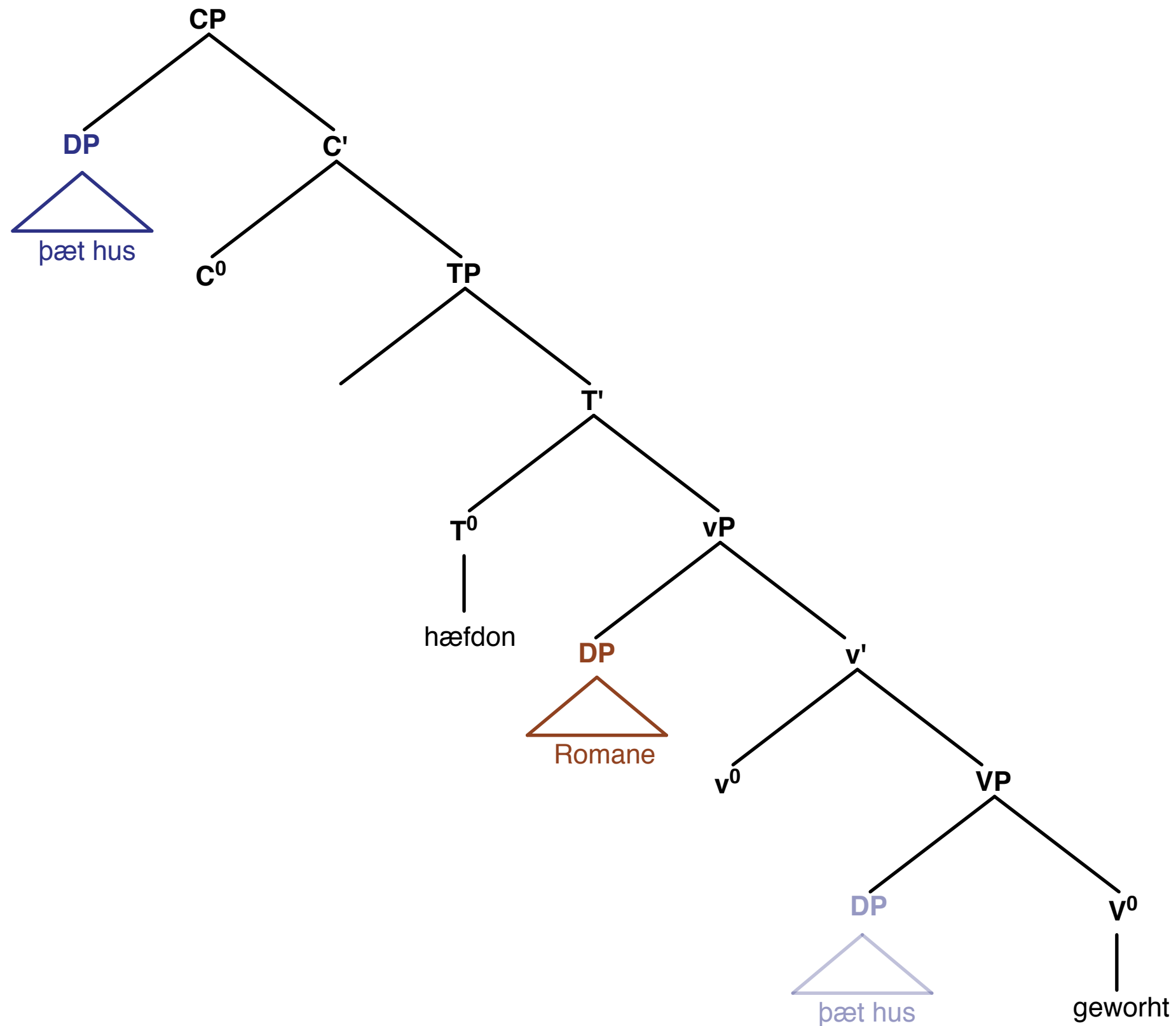
Phrase structure of an English V2 clause
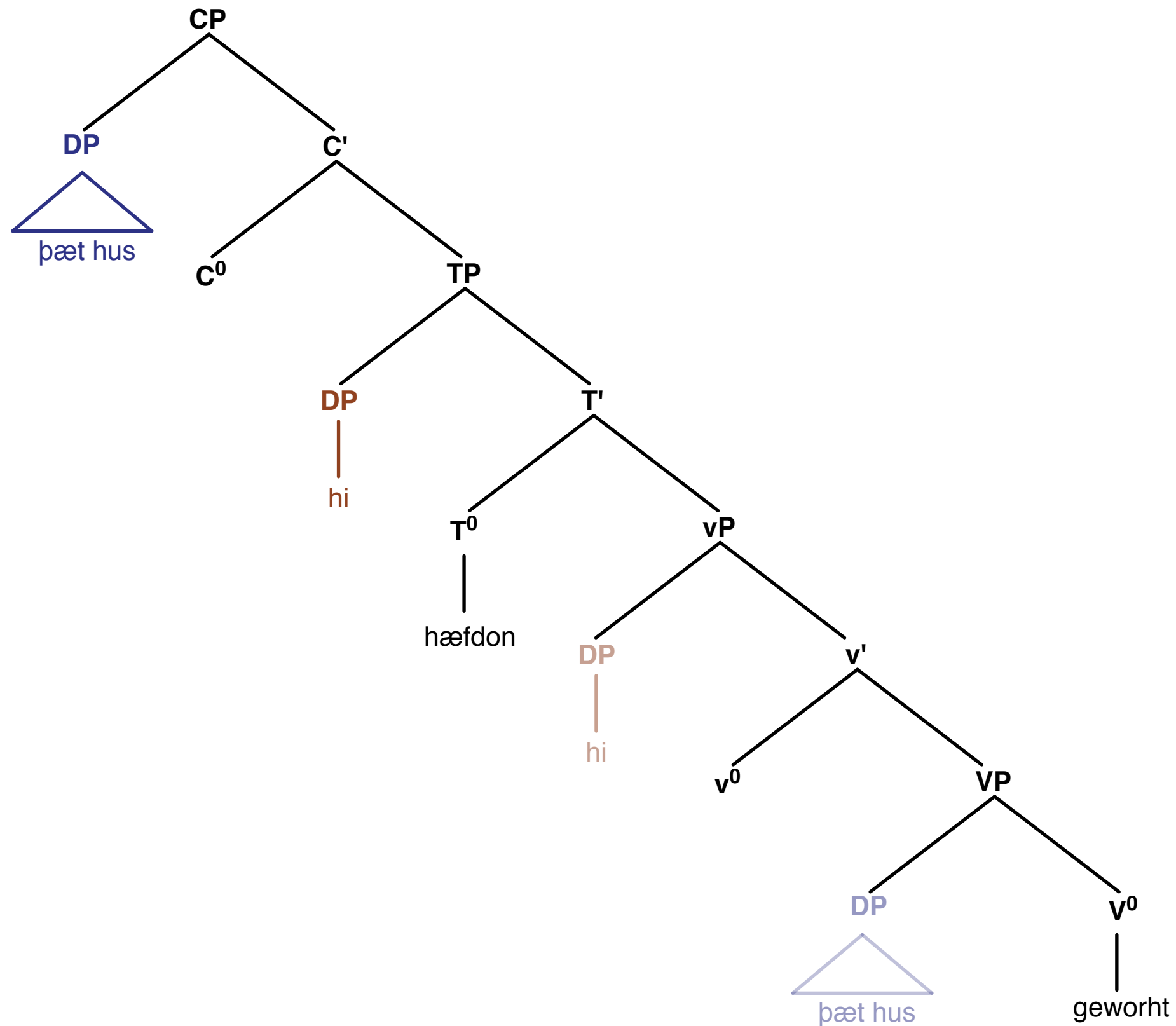
Object topicalization with V2 in Old and Middle French

(1) l'estreu   li   tint   sun uncle Guinemer
the stirrup him held his uncle Guinemer
Roland 27.329

(2) messe e matines ad   li   reis escultet
mass and matins has the king heard
Roland 11.139

(3) si grand paour avoit   que a pou qu'il   ne mouroit
so great fear   he-had that at little that he ne died
CNNA 51.488

Object topicalization with V2 and pronoun subjects in Old and Middle French

(1) Espaigne vus durat   il en fiet
    Spain   you will-give he in fief
                    Roland, 36.446

(2) chars avoient ils   assés
    meat had   they   enough
                    Froissart, 135.569

(3) une chose ont-ilz   asez   honneste
    one thing have-they   enough honest
                    Commynes, 120.1634

Object topicalization with V3 and pronoun subjects in Middle French

(1) aultre remyde je n'y   voy
     other remedy I not there see
                         XV Joies, 111v.1209

(2) deux chose je diray   de luy
     two things   I   will-say of him
                         Commynes, 38.478

(3) nul enfant il   n'ot   onques eu   de sa fenme
     no child   he not-had ever   had of his wife
                         Froissart, 462.6477

Adverb preposing with V2 in Old and Middle French

(1) Er   matin   sedeit   li   emperere suz   l'umbre
yesterday morning sat   the emperor under the shade
Roland 29.363

(2) or   est   ele   bien venue
now is   she   welcome
Yvain 43.1440

(3) ben   l'entendit   il   arcevesques Turpin
well it understands the archebishop   Turpin
Roland 96.1237

Adverb preposing with V3 in Old and Middle French

(1) unkes nuls hom ne vit tel ajustee.
    never no man not saw such joust
                    Roland 238.3299

(2) premierement il devient taverniers
    first   he becomes innkeeper
                  Somme 47.306

(3) doucement li oisel chantoient
    sweetly   the birds sang
                  Yvain 15.451

Frequency of V2 in main clauses with topicalized XPs in Old French (no *Somme*)

	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	40 [.98]	146 [.97]
XSV	1	4

Topicalized objects

	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	40 [.67]	286 [.78]
XSV	20	81

Topicalized PPs

Frequency of V2 in main clauses with topicalized XPs in Middle French

	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	21	64 [.93]
XSV	26	5

Topicalized objects

	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	58	422 [.61]
XSV	438	274

Topicalized PPs

Frequency of V2 in main clauses with topicalized XPs in Middle French
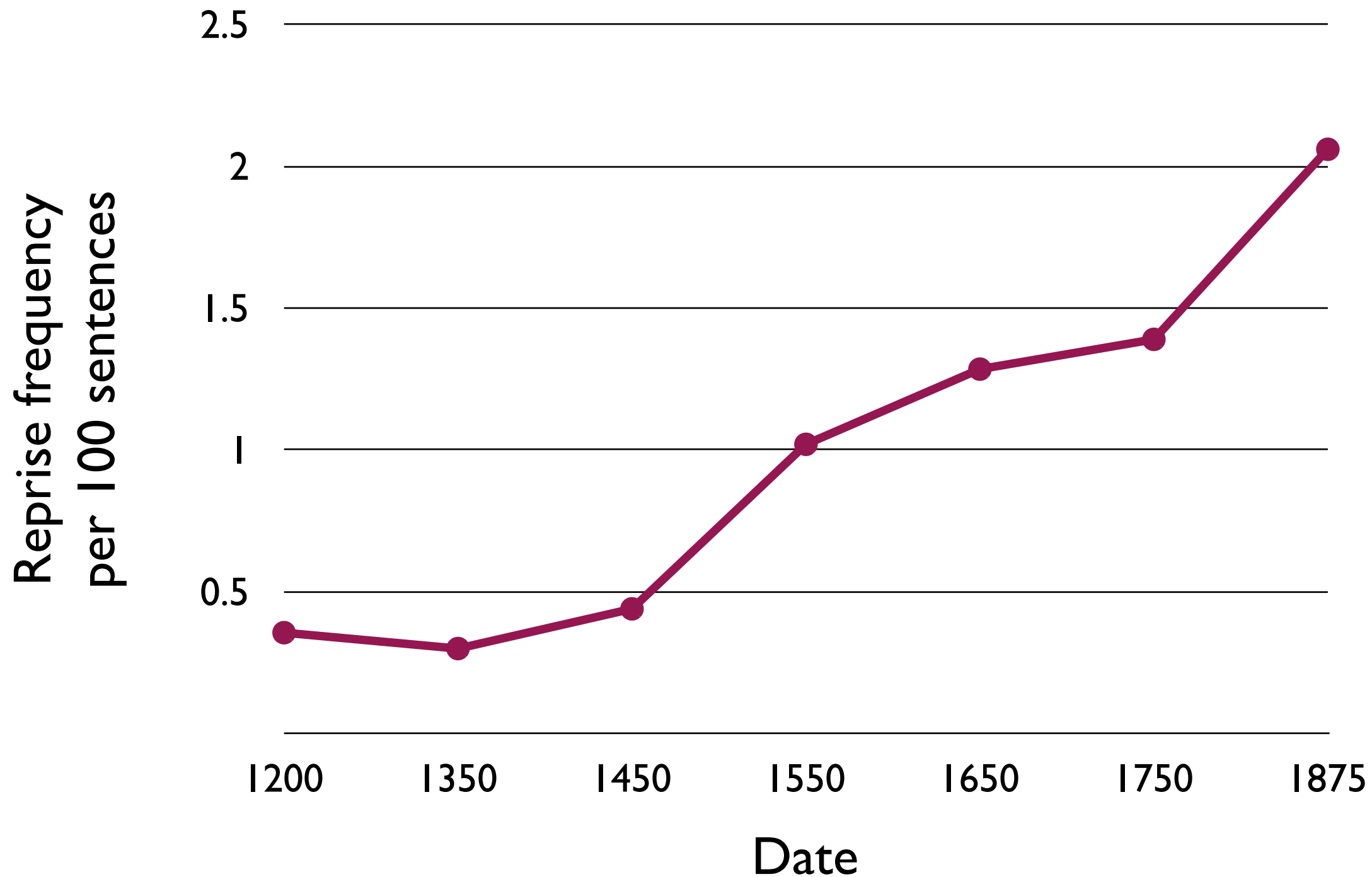
	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	21 [.45]	64 [.93]
XSV	26	5

Topicalized objects

	pronoun subject	full DP subject
XVS	58 [.12]	422 [.61]
XSV	438	274

Topicalized PPs

Why does French completely lose object topicalization?

Rise of clitic left-dislocation and loss of topicalization (Priestley 1955)

"Adjunction to CP" in French

(1) ... de priere aide li font les dames

of prayer help him do the ladies

Yvain, 137.4788

(2) ... puis si chevalchet od sa grant ost li ber

then so rides with his great army the baron

Roland, 179.2438

(3) ... aussi telle oppinion tiennent les Angloys

also such opinion hold the English

Commynes, 26.279

Adjunction to CP in Modern French / English

(1) Jean sûr elle/Marie l'aimera bien (mais Pierre pas)
    John sure she him-will-like well

(2) sûr Jean elle/Marie l'aimera bien (mais Pierre pas)

(3) sure John you will like (him) (but you won't like Bill)

(4) John sure you will like *(him)

Left dislocation in Old French

(1) Que *pro* comandas$_i$, ço$_i$ ad *pro* enpris
What you commanded, that has he undertaken
(Brendan, 30.4)

(2) Qu'en avendrat$_i$ bien le$_i$ purveit *pro*
What-of-it would-come well it forsaw he
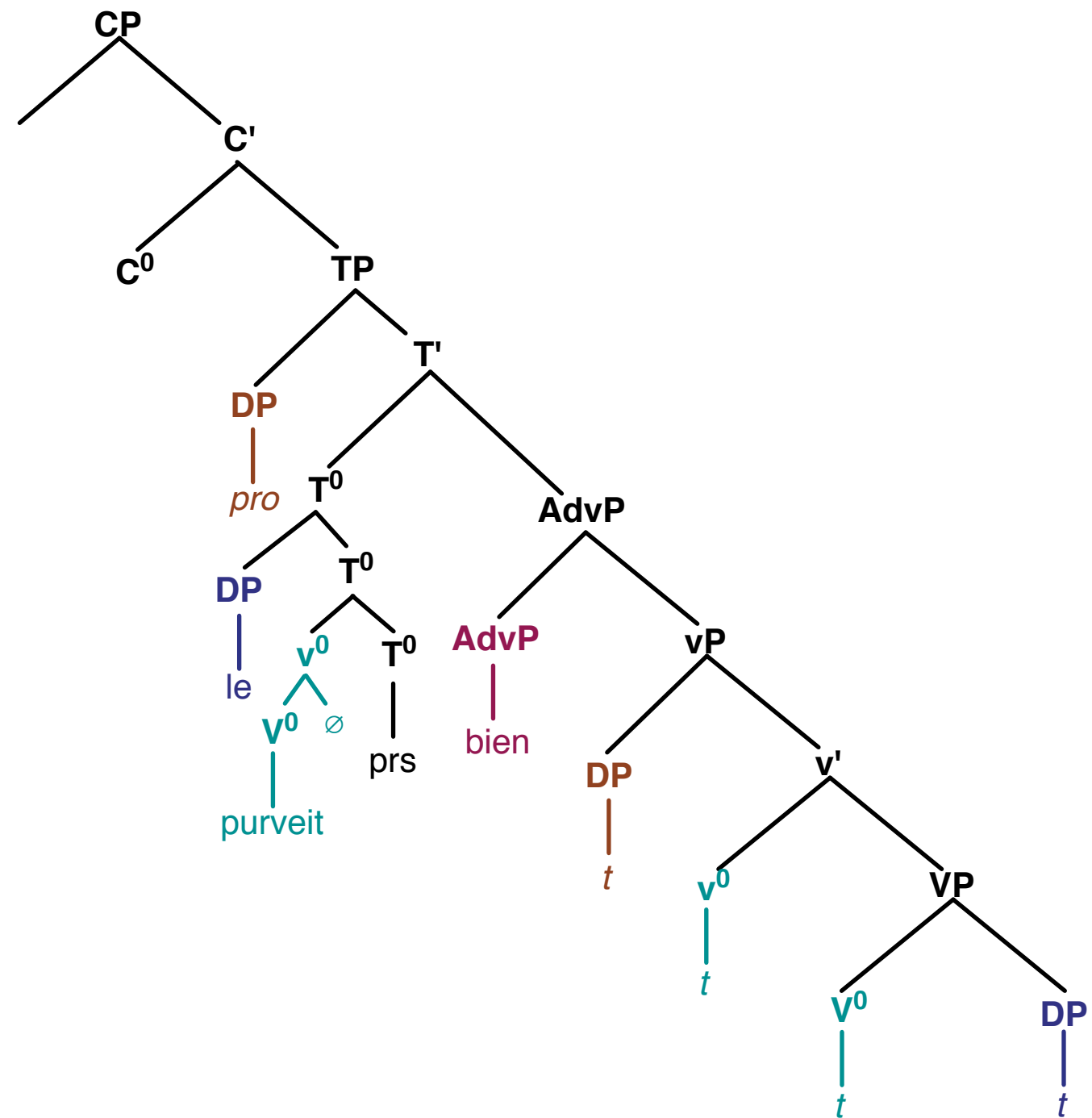(Brendan, 35.106)

Clitic left dislocation in Middle French

(1) le tant peu que ce fut$_i$, si l'$_i$ avez vous forfait
    the little bit that it was still it have you forfeited
                                    (CNNA,420.6403)

(2) qui là   vaillans ne sera$_i$, jamais honneur ne l'$_i$ amera
    who there valiant not will-be never honor not him will-love
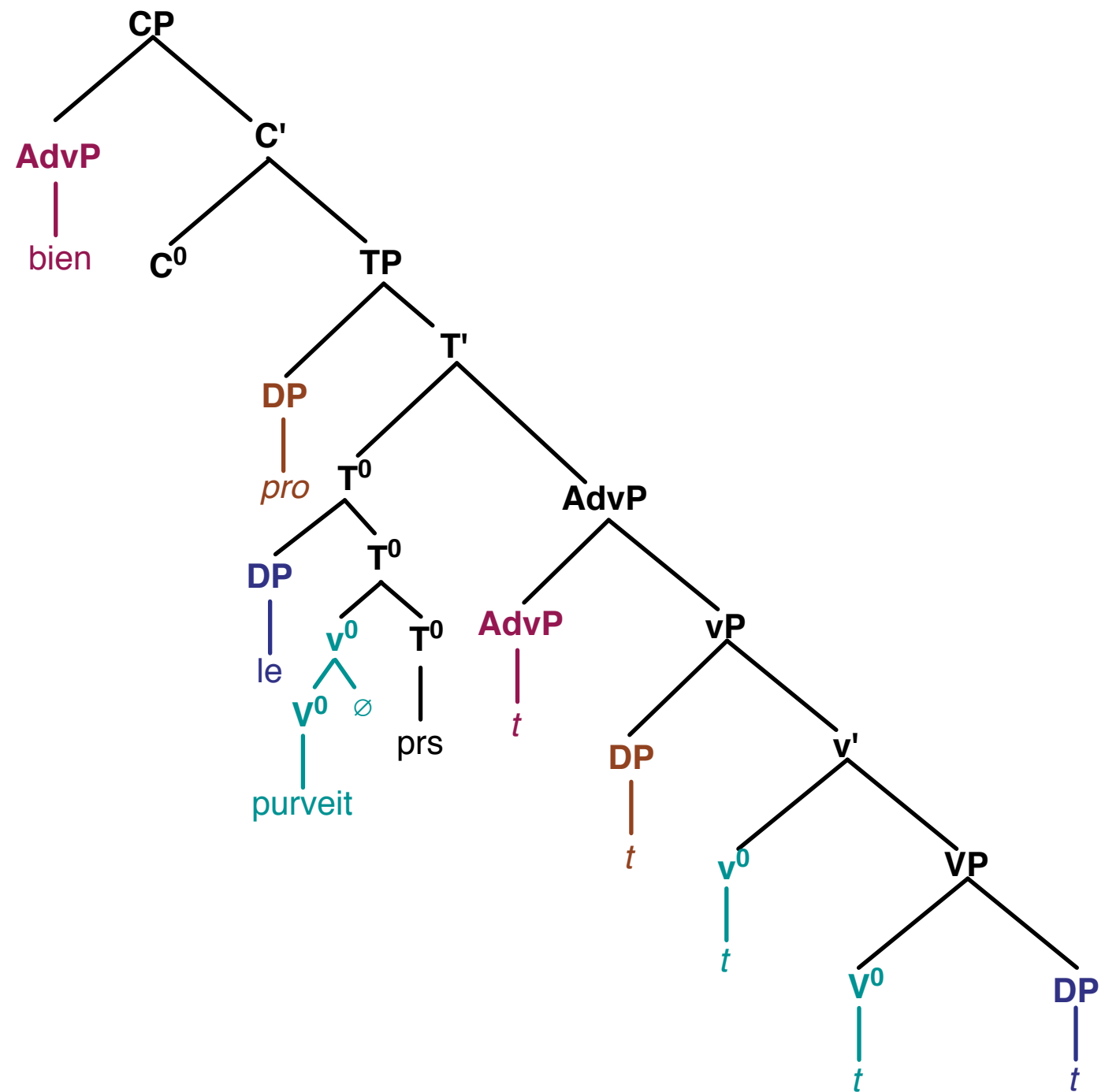   (Prise, .2855)

Phrase structure of a French V2 clause
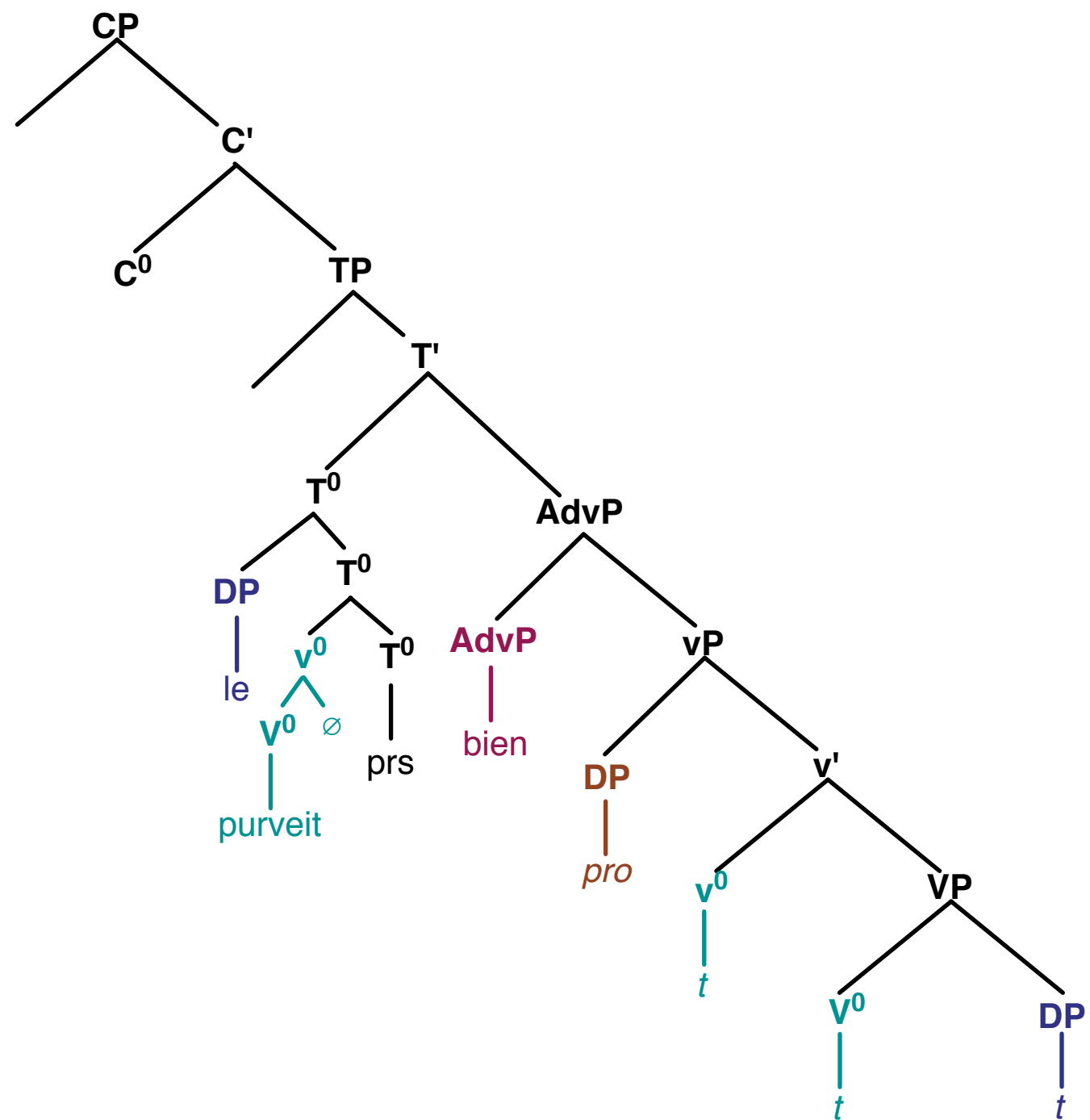
Phrase structure of a French V2 clause

Phrase structure of a French V2 clause

Phrase structure of a French V2 clause

CP
- DP — qu'en avendrat
- CP
  - AdvP — bien
  - C'
    - C⁰
    - TP
      - DP — pro
      - T'
        - T⁰
          - DP — le
          - T⁰
            - v⁰
              - v⁰ — purveit
              - ∅
            - T⁰ — prs
        - AdvP
          - AdvP — t
          - vP
            - DP — t
            - v'
              - v⁰ — t
              - VP
                - V⁰ — t
                - DP — t
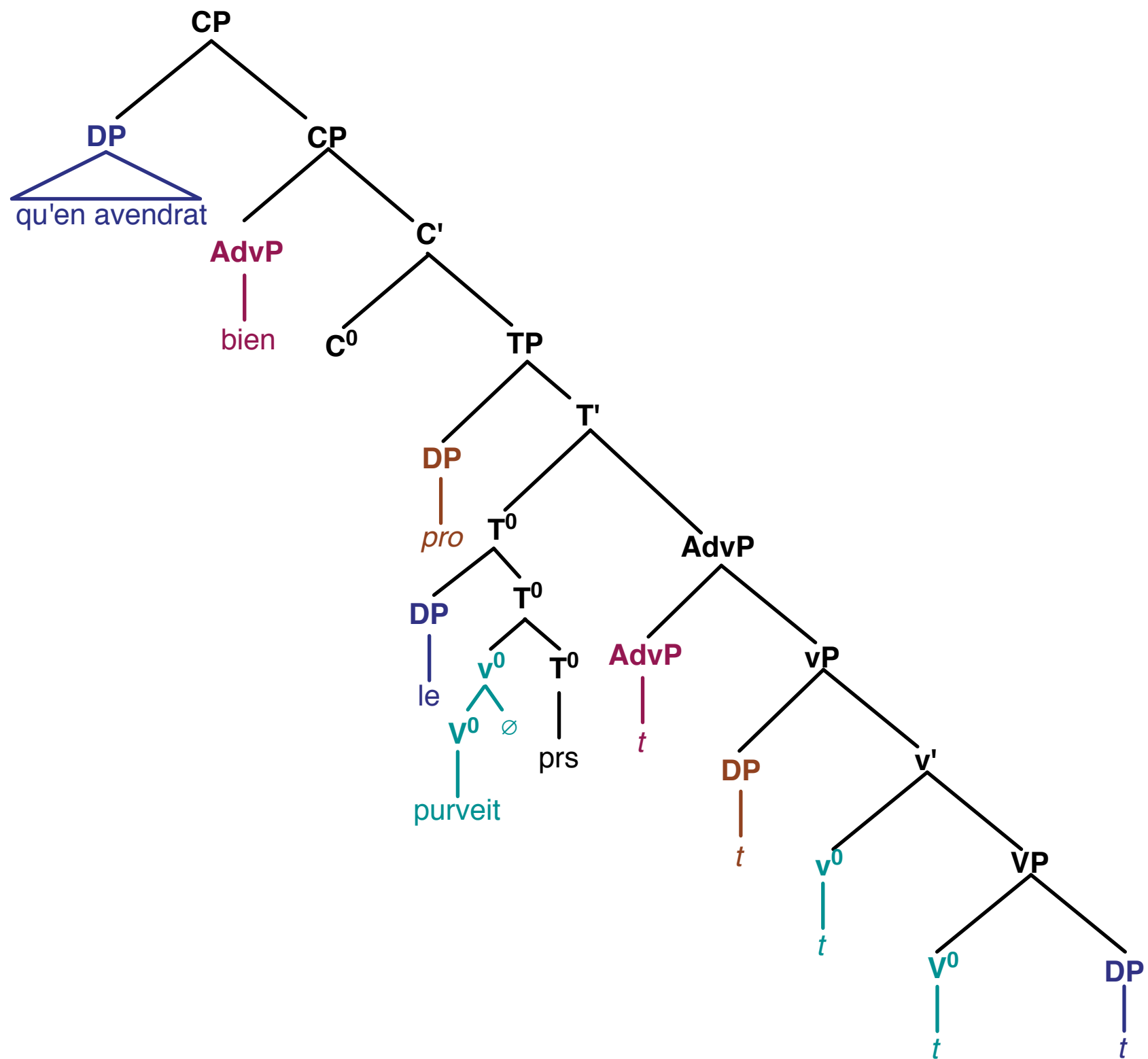
Clitic left dislocation in Modern French

(1) *Le Figaro*$_i$, Jean *(le$_i$) lit tous les jours.
The Figaro John it reads every day

(2) Ma femme$_i$ elle$_i$ travaille à la Bibliothèque Nationale.
My wife she works at the library national

Focus preposing in Modern French

(1) Jamais, je n'accepterais de telles conditions.
    never   I   not-will-accept   of   such conditions

(2) Dix euros$_i$ ça   m'a   couté t_i.
    ten euros that me-has cost

(3) Tant de malheurs$_i$ ils   ont   vécu t_i!
    So many troubles they have experienced

The temporal evolution of subject and object left dislocation frequencies per thousand sentences

	frequency of subject left dislocation	frequency of object left dislocation	number of matrix clauses
Old French	2.6	2.2	12022
Middle French	3.8	1.8	24634
Early Modern	28	4.3	3514

The temporal evolution of subject and object left dislocation frequencies per thousand sentences

	frequency of subject left dislocation	frequency of object left dislocation	number of matrix clauses
Old French	2.6	2.2	12022
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Early Modern	28	4.3	3514

Cleft sentences in Modern French

(1) C'est *Le Figaro$_i$* que Jean lit t$_i$ tous les jours.
It's *The Figaro* that John reads every day

(2) C'est ma femme$_i$ qui t$_i$ travaille à la BN.
It's my wife that works at the BN

(3) Il y a un an$_i$ qu'elle travaille à la BN t$_i$.
It's one year that-she works at the BN

The temporal evolution of cleft sentence frequencies per thousand sentences

	frequency of temporal clefts	frequency of subject and object clefts	number of matrix clauses
Old French	1.2	0.25	12022
Middle French	0.41	0.61	24634
Early Modern	0.56	5.4	3514

Finis