Residual V2 & The Loss of V2 in English & French

MINDS Presentation

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Setting the Scene

- Verb Second (V2) – the finite verb always occupies the second position in main declarative clauses (Vikner 2020, 368).
- Normal in Germanic languages – except Modern English (ModE).

CPs

		CP-Spec	C°	
a.	Da.	Johan	har	ofte set denne film.
b.	Ge.	Johan	hat	oft diesen Film gesehen

IPs

		IP-Spec	I°	
c.	En.	John	has	often seen this film.
d.	Fr.	Jean	a	souvent vu ce film.

a.	Da.	Denne film	har	Johan set.
b.	Ge.	Diesen Film	hat	Johan gesehen.
c.	En. *	This film	has	John seen.
d.	Fr. *	Ce film	a	Jean vu.

En.	This film		John has seen.
Fr.	Ce film		Jean a vu.

Setting the Scene – Continued

- ModE has "Residual" V2 – As does Modern French (ModF).
  - V2 in main clause questions with *wh*-elements.
  - ModE – Topicalized negative elements (Vikner 2020, 371; Rizzi 1996, 75).
- Old English (OE) & Old French (OF) fully formed V2 languages (Haeberli and Ihsane 2016, 5; Roberts 1993, 94).
- V2 began to disappear during the Middle English (ME) & Middle French (MF) periods (Platzack 1995, 200).

Research Questions & Thesis Statement

- Research Questions
  - Is there a reason why V2 is similar in ModE & ModF?
  - How was V2 lost?
  - Did language contact between the two have any influence?

- Thesis Statement
  - V2 behaves differently in ModE & ModF
  - Loss of verb movement led to the decline of V2 in both.
  - Language contact between the two languages is not the cause – but language contact with Old Norse might be.

"Residual" V2 in Modern English

- Main clause questions with *wh*-elements & topicalized negative elements → Occupy CP-Spec.
- Only finite auxiliary verbs move to C° (Holmberg 2015, 344).

	CP-Spec	C°	IP-Spec	I°	V°	V°	Obj	
En. a.	Which film	has	John	___	___	seen	___ ___	?
b. *	Which film		John	has	___	seen	___ ___	?

	CP-Spec	C°	IP-Spec	I°	AdvP	V°	V°	Obj
En. a.	Never	has	John	___	___	___	seen	this film,
b. *	Never		John	has	___	___	seen	this film.

"Residual" V2 in Modern French

- Pronominal inversion – subject must be a pronoun.
- Not possible with topicalized negative elements (Rowlett 2007, 200).
- Possible to construct questions in more ways (Rizzi 1996, 75).

	CP-Spec		C°	IP-Spec	I°	V°	V°	Obj	
Fr. a.*	Quel	film	a	Jean	___	___	vu	___	___?
	Which film		has	Jean			seen		?
b.	Quel	film	a-t-	il	___	___	vu	___	___?
	Which film		has	he			seen		?
c.	Quel	film		il	a	___	vu	___	___?
	Which film			he	has		seen		?
d.				il	a	___	vu	quel	film?
				He	has		seen	which	film ?

"Residual" V2 in Modern French

- Possible with finite <u>main</u> verbs (Haeberli and Ihsane 2016, 2).

	CP-Spec	C°	IP-Spec	I°	AdvP	V°	Obj
Fr. a.	Quel film	<u>regarde-</u>	t-elle	___	souvent	___	___ ___?
	Which film	*sees*	*she*		*often*		

	CP-Spec	C°	IP-Spec	I°	AdvP	V°	Obj
En. a.*	Which film	<u>sees</u>	she	___	often	___	___ ___?
b.	Which film	<u>does</u>	she	___	often	see	___ ___?

V2 in Old English & Old French

Old English

- V2 in main declarative clauses.
  - Not restricted to *wh*-elements & topicalized negative elements (Haeberli and Ihsane 2016).
- Affected all finite verbs.
  - Both main & auxiliary (Fischer, De Smet, and van der Wurff 2017, 190)

CP-Spec		**C°**		
ðæs halgan weres	stefne	gehyrde	**Theoprobus**	þa
The holy man's	*voice*	*heard*	*Theoprobus*	*then*

"Theoprobus then heard the holy man's voice."

(Gregory H, 140.17.140.30, cited in Heaberli 2000, 245)

Old French

- V2 in main declarative clauses (Roberts 1993, 94).
- Not restricted to pronominals (Roberts 1993, 103).

CP-Spec		**C°**			
Sa venoison		fist	a l'ostel	porter.	
His food		*made (he)*	*to the hostel*	*carry*	

"He had his goods carried to the hostel."

(*Le Charroi de Nimes* 11. 26-31, cited in Roberts 1993, 95)

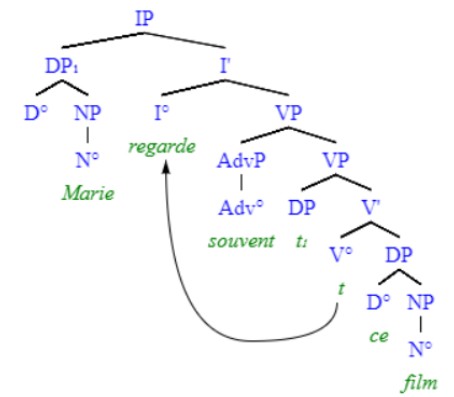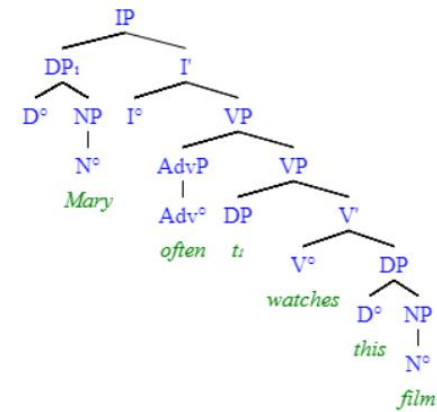| **CP-Spec**	**C°**			
Cele nuit	parla	**Boorz**	a la reine	
That night	*spoke*	*Bohors*	*to the queen*	

"That night Bohors spoke to the queen."

(*Artu* 59, I, cited in Ingham 2005, 28)

Loss of V2

- Loss of verb movement
  - OE/OF – Finiteness found in C°.
  - ME/MF – finiteness found in I° (Platzack 1995, 201-204).
- Loss of subject-verb agreement
  - Agreement found in I°.
  - Inflectional morphology
    - Weak in OE/ME – No reason to move to I°.
    - Strong in OF/MF – Verbs continue to move to I° (Platzack 1995, 214-219).
- Change in word order
  - Word order in OE/OF = XVS
  - Word order in ModE/ModF = XSV

Loss of V2

- Cases of no V2 in clauses with pronominal subjects in OE.

  OE. Forðon   **we**   <u>sceolan</u> mid ealle mod & mægene to Gode gecyrran
  Therefore   *we*   *must*   *with all*   *mind and power*   *to God turn*
  "Therefore we must turn to God with all out mind and power."

  (*HomU*.19(BlHom.8)26), cited in Fischer, De Smet, and van der Wurff 2017, 190)

  = XSV Word Order

- However, V2 obligatory with pronominal subjects in clauses with *wh*-elements & topicalized negative elements (Fischer, De Smet, and van der Wurff 2017, 190-191).

  OE. Hwæt <u>witst</u> **þu** […] us?
  What   *blame*   *you*   *us?*
  "Why do you reproach us?"

  (*Bo*.7.19.11, cited in Fischer, De Smet, and van der Wurff 2017, 190)

  = V2 Word Order

- Two different types of V2 structures.
  - Clearer for speakers that clauses with *wh*-elements and negative elements involved verb-movement & subject-verb inversion (Platzack 1995, 209-211).
  - The reason for "residual" V2.

Why was V2 lost?

- Language contact between OE & OF?
  - Norman Conquest 1066
  - Similarities
    - Loss of V°-I°-C° movement.
    - General time of loss.
  - However! "all in all, whenever a voice supporting French influence on syntax is raised, the arguments are usually not very persuasive (...)" (Fischer, De Smet, and van der Wurff 2017, 75)

Why was V2 lost? – Continued

- Language contact between OE & Old Norse (ON)?
  - Viking Invasions → Settled permanently (Kroch, Taylor and Ringe 1999, 356-357).
- Why ON?
  - Settlers integrated in local communities → more contact between languages.
  - Difficult to learn the new language → Incorporated native syntax & function words.
  - Simplification of OE → Loss of agreement & verb-movement → Loss of V2 (Kroch, Taylor and Ringe, 1999, 353-358).
- Why not OF?
  - OF reserved for an elite group → Never integrated properly with the general public.
  - Mainly lexical borrowings → Little impact on syntax (Fischer, De Smet, and van
  - der Wurff 2017, 52).

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