

Title	On V2 Word Order Change in Early Middle English
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Citation	聖学院大学論叢, 第 28 卷第 2 号, 2016.3 : 1 -14
URL	http://serve.seigakuin-univ.ac.jp/reps/modules/xoonips/detail.php?item_id=5573
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On V2 Word Order Change in Early Middle English

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Abstract

The *Old English Heptateuch* was composed by Ælfric during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The original texts of Crawford and Key (1969) are mainly British Museum MS, Cotton Claudius B IV (MS. B), and Bodleian MS. Laud (MS. L), which were written in the late eleventh century. Crawford indicates that Cambridge University Library MS. Ii 1. 33 (MS. C), which was written in the twelfth century, contains a different part of the text from that in MS. B and MS. L.

This paper investigates the difference in word order in the different parts of the texts between MS. C and MS. B. MS. C uses SV word order in many sentences, whereas MS. B uses V2 word order. The change in the word order from V2 to SV had already started in Old English; however, it was finished in Middle English. While the V2 word order is assumed to have become extinct by the fifteenth century according to the late theory (Biberauer & Roberts 2008), this paper shows that the diffusion of the SV word order had become highly advanced by the time MS. C was written in the early twelfth century.

Key words: Middle English, Word order, V2, The *Old English Heptateuch*, Parametric Changes

0 Introduction

The loss of V2 word order in Middle English is assumed to have been made in a series of minor changes (Biberauer & Roberts 2008). Biberauer and Roberts' theory is called cascading parameter changes, which they developed from standard P & P theory.

Contrary to the basic idea of P & P theory, however, parametric changes are not supposed to be made instantly, but result rather from a series of minor changes. This revised version of the

idea is more acceptable because it is impossible to suppose that historical linguistic changes occur instantly.

According to Biberauer and Roberts (2008), the loss of V2 word order had ended by c. 1450; however, one of the manuscripts of the *Old English Heptateuch*, which was composed in the 12th century, demonstrates a quite clear tendency for the use of SV word order rather than V2 word order in some corresponding parts of the manuscripts. This paper argues that the difference in word order among the manuscripts of the *Old English Heptateuch* reflects the stages of progress of the gradual loss of V2, and that its diffusion seems to have rapidly developed in the 12th century.

1 Syntactic Theory on Word Order Change in Middle English

1.1 Change in Word Order in the Twelfth Century

Biberauer and Roberts (2008) adopt *v*P-movement to SpecTP to analyse SOVAux word order in Old English for such sentences as given below:

(1) *Ʒa se Wisdom þa þis fitte asungen hæfde ...*

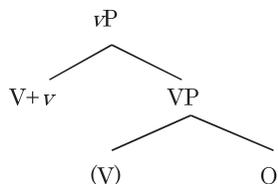
when the Wisdom then this poem sung had

'When Wisdom had sung this poem ...'

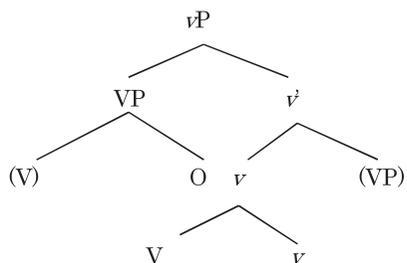
(Boethius 30.68.6; Biberauer & Roberts 2008: (7); Fischer et al. 2000: 143, 25)

The word order in the above sentence is analysed to have derived from the following stages of derivation as follows:

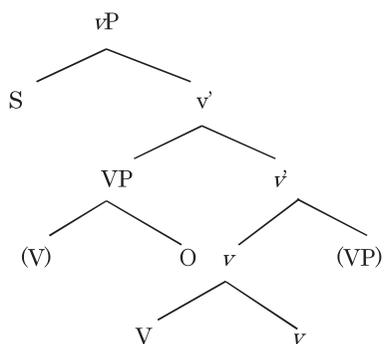
(2) i. V-to-*v* raising:



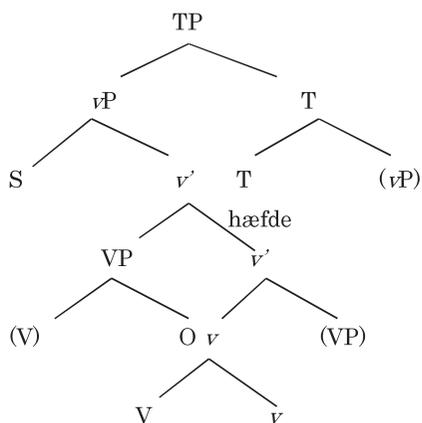
ii. VP-to-(inner)Spec v P movement:



iii. merger of the subject in the topmost Spec v P



iv. v P-movement to Spec(TP)



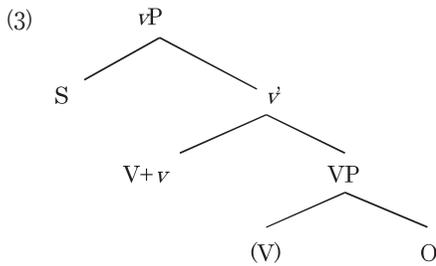
(Biberauer & Roberts 2008: (8i-iv))

The main theory of the above analysis is v P-movement to Spec(TP), which is a pied-piping movement.

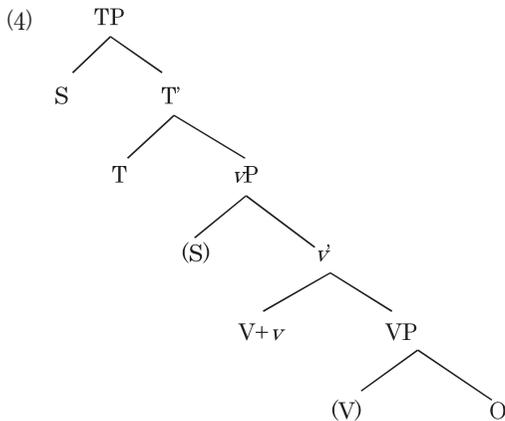
This operation is considered optional because Aux in Old English can also be placed in the

post-subject position. The stranding option is taken instead of the pied-piping movement in both stages (ii) and (iv), which can explain other variations of Old English. Further analysis will not be conducted here, however, as this is not the main focus of this paper.⁽¹⁾

Biberauer and Roberts (2008) assume that the loss of VP-to-Spec*v*P movement occurred in the late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries in Middle English. This event led to the reduction of OV word order. Skipping VP-to-Spec*v*P movement, it is expected that SV(O) word order was derived by V-to-*v* raising in stage (i), and the following stage (iii) and with the following result:



The merger of *v*P and T will derive SVO word order, followed by the EPP effect of T as follows:⁽²⁾



Biberauer and Roberts (2008) assume that the structure shown in (4) emerged through reanalysis of *v*P-movement to SpecTP ((2iv)), which led to the loss of *v*P-movement to SpecTP in the early fifteenth century.

1.2 The Loss of V2

Old English was not a genuine V2 language like Modern German. Pronouns preceded main verbs as follows:

- (5) a. *hiora untrymnesse he sceal rowian on his heortan.*
 their weakness he shall atone in his heart
 (CP 60.17; Pintzuk 1999: 136; Biberauer & Roberts 2008: (21a))
- b. *Þin agen geleafa þe hæfþ gehæledne*
 thy own faith thee has healed
 (BIHom 15.24–15; Biberauer & Roberts 2008: (22a))

Many theories have been proposed to account for this problem. These pronouns need not be counted as V2 phenomena if they can be considered to be subject clitics (SCL). van Kemenade (1987: 204f) is the pioneering study to have proposed this idea.

When SCL ceases to be clitic, V2 word order will not be collapsed in such a word order as (5). Biberauer and Roberts (2008) propose this change in the following reanalysis:

- (6) a. $[_{CP} XP [_C SCL-[_C [_T V v T] C]] [_{TP} [_{vP} (SCL)([_v V v])(V v T)]](vP)$
 ➤
 b. $[_{CP} XP C [_{TP} SCL [_T [_v V v T]]]] (vP)$
 (Biberauer & Roberts 2008: (22))

According to Biberauer and Roberts (2008), vP moves to SpecTP by the pied-piping option in (6a) to satisfy T's Epp_D feature. In (6b), SCL instead moves to SpecTP to satisfy this feature through the reanalysis that resulted from the loss of the pied-piping option.

It has been observed that the loss of V2 was a gradual change. Biberauer and Roberts (2008) argue that DP-movement to SpecTP was optional before the reanalysis began in c. 1450, and their analysis can explain this gradualness. The decliticisation in this construction is considered to have occurred by analogy with DP-movement to SpecTP.

2 The Manuscripts of the *Old English Heptateuch*

The Heptateuch is the first seven books of the Bible which consist of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus,

Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges. The *Old English Heptateuch* was composed in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries by Ælfric, who was abbot of Eynsham and a famous sermons author in late Old English.

2.1 The *Old English Heptateuch* (Cambridge University Library, li, 1. 33)

The catalogue of manuscripts of Cambridge University Library describes MS. li, 1. 33 as follows:

A quarto, on vellum, 450 pages of 24 lines each, handwriting Normanno-Saxon, and ascribable to the early part of the xii century.

HOMILIES, PASSIONS OF SAINTS, AND OTHER SACRED PIECES, in Anglo-Saxon.

1. *The Twenty-four Chapters of Ælfric's translation of Genesis* (pp. 4-44)

The text, though somewhat modernized, is substantially the same as that printed in the *Heptateuch*, ed. Thwaites, Oxf. 1698. Ælfric's dedicatory letter to the ealdorman Æthelweard is prefixed.

The point of the above description is that the manuscript was composed by a Norman scribe, in the first part (pp. 4-44) of which is Genesis in the Heptateuch. The language of the text is modernized in comparison to the standard printed version of 1698.

2.2 Crawford (1969)

Crawford (1969) adopts mainly MS. British Library, Cotton, Claudius B. IV and MS. Bodleian Laud Misc. 509, which were composed in the eleventh century. In accordance with Crawford (1969), these manuscripts will be referred to as MS. B and MS. L, respectively. MS. Cambridge University Library li, 1.33 will be referred to as MS. C.

Crawford (1969: 425) indicates the differences among these manuscripts as follows:

- (i) Preface to Genesis, Gen. caps. i-iii., vi.-ix., xii.-xxii. 19
= Text identical with that of B and L.
- (ii) Gen. iv.-v., x.-xi. = Completely new text.
- (iii) Gen. xxiii.-xxiv. = Text where C and B L are interdependent.

According to Crawford, part (2) of MS. C is completely different text from MS. B and MS. L.

2.3 The Language of MS. C

We will review the phonological characteristics of MS. C by Crawford (1969) to briefly examine the language therein. The words in the following examples are quoted from Crawford (1969). The list is not exhaustive.

(7) WS. $\bar{a} > \acute{o}$: *abód* (viii)

(Crawford 1969: 433, § 14)

This is a general change in Middle English except for the northern dialect. Crawford insists that the language of MS. C is not Kent dialect, rejecting the following change as evidence for this:

(8) WS. $\bar{\alpha}^1 < \bar{a} + i\text{-umlaut} > e$: *clennesse* (P.)

(Crawford 1969: 433, § 15)

In this phonetic change, α changed to e through raising, which occurred in LWS, after a : changed to α : by I-Umlaut if this language is not a Non-WS dialect (Nakao 1985: 75–6, 161–2).

(9) WS. $\bar{\alpha}^2 < \text{WG. } \bar{a} > e$: *hiuredence* (X), *megþum* (XI)

(Crawford 1969: 433, § 16)

While $\bar{\alpha}^2$ was retained during OE in WS, which is known in traditional phonology, it changed to e : by raising in Kent (Nakao 1985: 75–6, 223).

Crawford (1969) insists that such spellings as in the following example are not observed in Surrey dialect.

(10) WS. $\bar{e}a > (1) ia, ya$: *briac* (IV), *sciap* (XX)

(Crawford 1969: 434, § 20)

According to Ono and Nakao (1980: 176), $\bar{\alpha}e, \bar{\alpha}e$: α /changed to $[ja, ja:]$, $\langle ia, ya \rangle$ by raising of the first constituent in late Kent dialect.

The above examinations of phonological aspect lead to the tentative ideas that the language of MS. C is a dialect close to Kent dialect, reflecting the influence of LWS. Crawford (1969: 437)

admits that ‘the dialectal forms of C are by no means homogeneous, and cannot be assigned to a single dialect’. The language of MS. C may have some characters of ‘a “standard” in Early Middle English’ (Milroy 1992).

Crawford (1969: 428) insists that the C-text (MS. C) cannot be as late as 1150. However, his conclusion relies on the data from all parts of MS. C, which are not limited to the different parts of MS. B or MS. L. We do not have to accept all of his conclusions, however, and rather must shed light on the syntax from the point of view of current theory.

3 Word Order Change

3.1 Word Order Change from V2 to SV

We will examine the change from V2 to SV by comparing MS. B with MS. C, quoting the corresponding part from Latin (the *Vulgate*), from which those manuscripts were translated. The following sentence is Genesis 4: 3 as follows:

(11) MS. B *Ða wæs hit geworden æfter manegum dagum ðæt Cain brohte*
then was it became after many days that Cain brought
Drihtne lac of eorðan tilingnum
to the Lord offering from earth gain

MS. C *Hit wæs þa æfter manegum dagum þæt Cain ofrode Gode lac of*
it was then after many days that Cain offered God offering from
þare eorþan wæstmum.
the earth’s fruits

Latin *factum est autem post multos dies ut offerret Cain de fructibus terrae*
munera Domino (Vulgate)

(Genesis 4: 3)

While *ða*, the initial constituent of MS. B in (11), is an adverb, MS. C ‘*Ða wæs hit ...*’ is V2 word order, while ‘*hit wæs*’ is SV word order.

We will compare each pair of first sentences of Genesis 4: 6, 8–10, and 15 in (12)–(16) below.

(12) MS. B *7 Drihten cwæð to Caine: ...*⁽³⁾
and the Lord said to Cain

MS. C *God cwæð þa to Cain: ...*
 God said then to Cain
 Latin dixitque Dominus ad eum ... (*Vulgate*)

(Genesis 4: 6)

(13) MS. B *Ða cwæð Cain to Abele his breðer: ...*
 then said Cain to Abel his brother

MS. C *Cain cwæð þa to Abel his broþer: ...*
 Cain said then to Abel his brother
 Latin dixitque Cain ad Abel fratrem ... (*Vulgate*)

(Genesis 4: 8)

(14) MS. B *Ða cwæð Drihten to Caine: ...*
 then said the Lord to Cain

MS. C *God cwæð þa to Cain: ...*
 God said then to Cain
 Latin et ait Dominus ad Cain ... (*Vulgate*)

(Genesis 4: 9)

(15) MS. B *Ða cwæð Drihten to Caine: ...*
 then said the Lord to Cain

MS. C *God cwæð to him: ...*
 God said to him
 Latin dixitque ad eum ... (*Vulgate*)

(Genesis 4: 10)

(16) MS. B *Ða cwæð Drihten to Caine: ...*
 then said the Lord to Cain

MS. C *God cwæð þa to him: ...*
 God said then to him
 Latin dixitque ei Dominus ... (*Vulgate*)

(Genesis 4: 15)

In each pair of sentences above, the sentences in MS. C have SV word order while the sentences in MS. B have V2 word order. The first constituents in V2 word order in MS. B, which precede the verbs, are a conjunction, followed by the number 7 in (12) and the adverb *ða* in (13)–(16). In the pair of (16), *þa* follows the finite verb, which is in the T(ense) position in the

syntactic structure while *ða* in MS. B takes the sentence-initial position, which is in the C(omp) position in the syntactic structure. As we reviewed in 1.1, the loss of *vP*-movement to SpecTP is considered to have occurred in the early 15th century, while the word order in MS. B in (16) could have been derived without VP-to-Spec *vP* movement, the loss of which is supposed by Biberauer and Roberts (2008) to have occurred in the late 12th century.

3.2 The Change of Subject Clitics in V2

As we reviewed in 1.2, subject pronouns in Old English are regarded as pronominal clitics because they are not counted as constituents in V2 word order. Pronoun subjects in MS. B often appear in such circumstances as follows:

- (17) 7 *he forðferde, ða he wæs nygouhundwintre 7 tynwintre.*
 and he died then he was 900 years and 10 years
 (MS. B, Genesis 5: 14)
- (18) 7 *he forðferde, ða he wæs eahtahundwintre 7 fif 7 hundnygontigwintre.*
 and he died then he was 800 years and 5 and 90 years
 (MS. B, Genesis 5: 17)
- (19) 7 *he forðferde, ða he wæs nigonhundwintre 7 fif 7 sixtigwintre.*
 and he died then he was 900 years and 5 and 60 years⁽⁴⁾
 (MS. B, Genesis 5: 20)

A pronominal clitic *he* is not counted as a constituent in V2 word order in the above sentences. It must be a subject clitic if the above sentences adopt V2 word order. Contrary to MS. B, *he* should be counted as a constituent in V2 word order if the sentences below are V2 as follows:

- (20) *He lyfede seðen he gestrinde Enos .viii. hund geare 7 seofon gear,*
 he lived since he begat Enos 800 years and 7 years
 (MS. C, Genesis 5: 7)
- (21) *He lefede siððan he gestrinde Malaleel .viii. hund geara,*⁽⁵⁾
 he lived since he begat Mahalaleel 800 years
 (MS. C, Genesis 5: 13)

(22) *He lifode siððan he gestrinde Jared .viii. hund geare 7 .xxx. geare*
 he lived since he begat Jared 800 years and 30 years

(MS. C, Genesis 5: 16)

In the above sentences in MS. C, the pronominal subjects and finite verbs are in the sentence-initial position while the object DPs are stranding after the AdvPs. Those constructions are considered to be derived through *v*P-movement to SpecTP, the loss of which is believed to have occurred in the early 15th century by Biberauer and Roberts (2008). The difference between MS. C and MS. B can be regarded as reflecting this gradual change.

3.3 Summary

The comparison between MS. B and MS. C in relation to SV and V2 word order is shown in the following table.

Table1. The Occurrences of SV and V2 in MS. C (GEN. 4 and 5)⁽⁶⁾

	MS. B			MS. C		
	SV	V2	SV/SV + V2 (%)	SV	V2	SV/SV + V2 (%)
GEN. 4	18	10	64.3	25	7	78.3
GEN. 5	8	1	88.9	17	1	94.4
Sum	26	11	70.2	42	8	84.0

Table 1 shows that the decline of V2 in MS. C is more decisive than in MS. B. We can conclude, therefore, that the language of MS. C is probably later than that of MS. B.⁽⁷⁾

4 Conclusion

Historical syntactic changes have been treated as instant occurrences according to the basic idea of P & P theory. However, parametric changes are not believed to have been instantly made, but rather occur gradually. The revised version of this idea is cascading changes, a theory that is easier to reconcile with linguistic facts.

Cambridge University Library describes how MS. Ii, l. 33, which is a manuscript of the *Old English Heptateuch*, composed in the 12th century, shows the quite clear tendency for SV word order to be used instead of V2 word order in some corresponding parts among the other

standard manuscripts composed in the 11th century. The difference in word order among the manuscripts of the *Old English Heptateuch* reflects the stages in the progress of gradual loss of V2, and that its diffusion seems to have developed rapidly in the 12th century. This change can be regarded as reflecting the minor syntactic changes, which are assumed by the theory of cascading changes.

Acknowledgment

This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 23520588.

Notes

- (1) Biberauer and Roberts (2008) discuss further details of the OV word order and its variants by pied-piping movements.
- (2) T's D feature attracts DP to the TPSpec position.
- (3) *Cain* is added to -e, which is called scribal -e by scribes.
- (4) According to the standard versions of the Bible, *he* (Jared) lived for 862 years.
- (5) According to the standard versions of the Bible, *he* (Cainan) lived for 840 years.
- (6) Such main clauses as starts with coordinate conjunct *and* are excluded in Table 1.
- (7) Though, Crawford (1969: 425) indicates that GEN. 10-11 are also completely different in terms of MS. B and MS.C, as showed in 2.2. The comparison of these chapters cannot be straightforwardly drawn considering those parts of MS. B are comparatively abridged translations, as Marsden (1995: 406) states that '[t]he Old English *Heptateuch* does not provide a full translation of all seven biblical books'.

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初期中英語における V2 語順の変化

小林 茂之

抄 録

『古英語版七書』はアルフリッチによって、10 世紀末から 11 世紀にかけて著された。Crawford and Key (1969) の底本は、主に大英図書館 MS. Cotton Claudius B IV (B 写本) とオックスフォード大学ボドリアン図書館 MS. Laud (L 写本) であるが、これらは 11 世紀末に書かれた写本である。Crawford は、ケンブリッジ大学図書館 MS. li 1. 33 (C 写本) は 12 世紀に書かれた写本であるが、それが B 写本や L 写本と異なる部分を含んでいることを示している。

本論文は、C 写本が B 写本と異なる部分において、語順の違いについて調査した。C 写本は、B 写本が V2 語順を用いているのに対して、多くの文において SV 語順を用いている。V2 から SV への変化は既に始まっている。しかしながら、その変化は中英語の間に完了した。最近の理論的研究によれば、V2 語順は 15 世紀までに消滅したとされているのに対して、本論文は、V2 語順に取って代わった SV 語順の拡散は C 写本が書かれた 12 世紀初期にはかなり進んでいたことを示す。

キーワード：中英語, 『古英語版七書』, 語順, V2, パラメータ変化