

go dag iudeon
ar thomo gra
thero uuahcun
ndun undar n
thie berehto e
ard mannon
ce thuo niuie
char uuart
godes craste
ena hardon fa
liohc. uuaf th
parrnon tefri
as ant hefad
li tehimile u
an thofaro uu
ftuod frichu b
n thuo thar h
rdel thof uu
uia liudi hua
astuod Aref
kof fatun unil
iudeo liudi fco
fcred forch u
n nahr. †

The nominal domain in Old Saxon

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Talk structure

1. Introduction to Old Saxon
2. Adjective inflection (briefly)
3. Definiteness
4. Word order

Old Saxon

- West Germanic language, closely related to Old High German and Old English.
- Broadly speaking, the ancestor of modern Low German.
- Attested in two main texts: a partial translation of Genesis, and a 5,983-line gospel harmony, the *Heliand*, written in alliterative verse, with 71 fitts (sections).
- Both are from the 9th century.
- Data for this paper are drawn from *HeliPaD* 0.4.

HeliPaD 0.4



- The *Heliand* Parsed Database, version 0.4.
- Based on Sievers's (1878) edition of the C (Cotton) manuscript, in the public domain.
- Tagged and parsed according to Penn Historical Corpora standards.
 - Addition: rich morphological information, lemmatization.
- Currently 35/71 fitts (2,973 lines, ~50%) parsed.

HeliPaD 0.4



```
( (IP-MAT-SPE (CODE <R_2142>)
  (ADVP-LOC (ADV Thar-thar))
  (MDPI^3^SG mag-mugan)
  (NP-SBJ (MAN^N man-man))
  (GE+VB gihorean-horian)
  (CODE <C>)
  (IP-INF-SPE (NP-SBJ (N^A^PL helithos-helith))
    (VB quithean-kwithian)
    ( , , - , )
    (CODE <R_2143>)
    (CP-ADV-SPE (ADVP-LOC (ADV thar-thar))
      (C 0)
      (IP-SUB-SPE (NP-SBJ (PRO^N^3^PL sia-he))
        (ADJP-1 (PRO$^D^3^PL iro-iru))
        (NP-ADT (N^A^SG torn-torn)
          (Q^A^SG manag-manag))
        (CODE <C>)
        (NP-OB2 (ADJP *ICH*-1)
          (N^D^PL tandon-tand))
        (VBPI^3^PL bitat-bitan))))))
  ( . ; - ; ))
(ID OSHeliandC.1102.2142-2143))
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Adjective inflection

- Both attributive and predicative adjectives are inflected for agreement
 - Some gender neutralization in predicative position (Hock 2009)
- Adjective dualism: strong vs. weak (Schuhmann n.d.: 56):
 - Some quantifier-like items (*al* ‘all’, *manag* ‘many’, *fao* ‘few’ etc.) only inflect strong
 - Most comparatives and superlatives only inflect weak
 - Weak forms found with ‘articles’ (almost always) and in certain nominalizations
 - Variation with vocative attributives, after possessives, and after *these*

Definiteness: demonstratives

- Two demonstratives:
 - *the* (distal, ‘that’): 1330 examples in *HeliPaD*
 - *these* (proximal, ‘this’): 232 examples
- Intuitively, the former is some way towards full grammaticalization as obligatory definite article
 - *Ef thu nu ni bist that barn godes*
if you now NEG are DEM child God.GEN
‘if you are not the/?that child of God’
(OSHeliandC.495.919-921)

Bare definite NPs?

- Count NPs can be definite without an article/demonstrative:
 - *Segel upp dadun uuederuuisa uueros*
sail up did weather-wise men
'weather-wise men put up the sail'
(OSHelilandC.1167.2238-2239)
 - *Sia gibod lestun*
they command followed
'they followed the command'
(OSHelilandC.1189.2258-2259)
- Haven't yet quantified this (would require manual inspection of examples)

Indefinite article

- Numeral *en* ‘one’ is, intuitively, some way towards full grammaticalization as an indefinite article
 - 70 examples of *en* in *HeliPaD*
 - *endi is iungron hiet oþar enna seu sithon* and his disciples told over NUM sea travel ‘and (he) told his disciples to travel over a/?one sea’ (OSHeliandC.1577.2896-2897)

Bare indefinite NPs?

- Count NPs can be indefinite without an article/numeral:
 - *that the helago Crist thar an them huse*
that the holy Christ there in the house
innan tecan uuarahta
inside sign worked
‘that the holy Christ there inside the house
worked a miracle’
(OSHeliandC.1072.2066-2069)
- Again, not yet counted the examples.

Possessives

- Two types of personal possessive:
 - Possessive adjectives: *min* (1sg), *unka* (1du), *usa* (1pl), *thin* (2sg), *inka* (2du), *iuwa* (2pl), *sin* (3rd reflexive)
 - Inflect like adjectives.
 - Possessive pronouns: *is* (3sg masc./neut.), *iru* (3sg fem., 3pl)
 - Do not inflect.

Demonstrative + possessive 1

- Demonstrative may co-occur with:
 - a possessive nominal phrase (154 ex.)
 - *te* *them* *godes* *uuihe*
to DEM.DAT God.GEN temple.DAT
‘to God’s temple’
(OSHeliandC.590.1080-1083)
 - *them* *Iudeono* *cuninga*
DEM.DAT Jews.GEN king.DAT
‘to the king of the Jews’
(OSHeliandC.374.696-698)

Demonstrative + possessive 2

- Demonstrative may co-occur with:
 - possessive adjective *min*, *iuwa*, *sin* (9 ex.)
 - thes sinas *rikeas*
DEM.GEN REFL.GEN kingdom.GEN
‘his kingdom’
(OSHeliandC.728.1319-1320)
 - possessive pronoun *is* (5 ex.)
 - *an* thia is *miklun* *maht*
in DEM.ACC his great.ACC power.ACC
‘in his great power’
(OSHeliandC.374.696-698)
- All but one (!) have DEM > POSS order

go dag iudeon
ar themo gra
thero uuahcun
ndun undar n
thie beretho e
ard mannon
ce thuo niuie
char uuayr
godes crafce
ena hardon fa
liohc. uuaf thi
parrnon tefri
as ant hefad
li tehimile u
an thefaro uu
ftuod frichu b
n thuo thar h
rdel thef uu
uia liudi hua
astuod Aref
kof fatun unil
iudeo liudi fco
fcred forch u
n nahr. †

George's favourite part

WORD ORDER

Generalizations

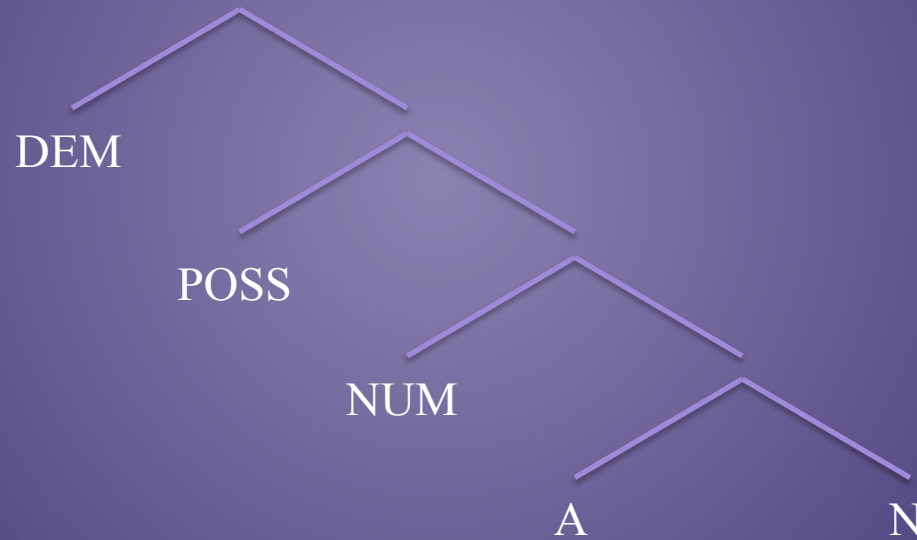
- Demonstratives and possessive pronouns are pre-nominal.
 - (class of exceptions to be discussed)
- Numerals, adjectives, and other possessives may be pre- or post-nominal, but are usually pre-nominal.
- Possible orders follow straightforwardly from a simple theory of Greenberg's Universal 20.

Universal 20

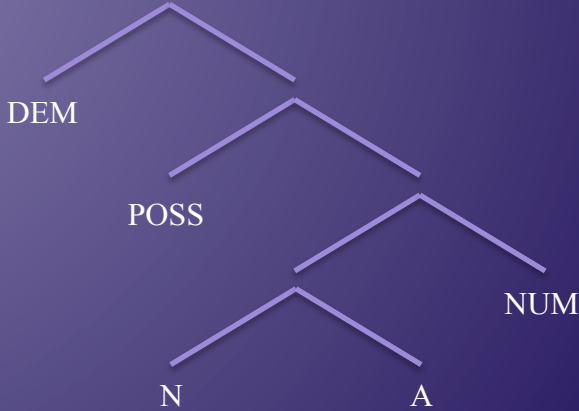
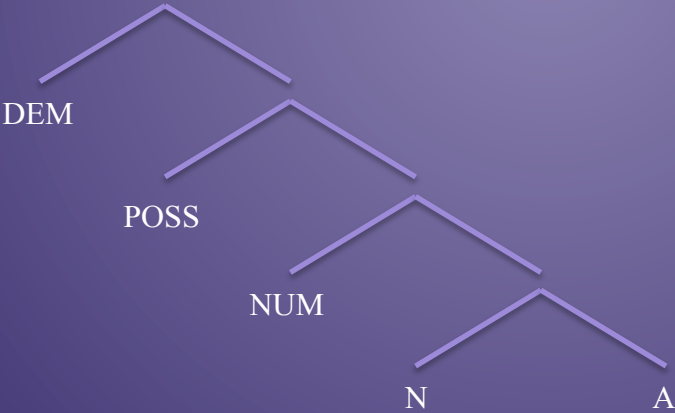
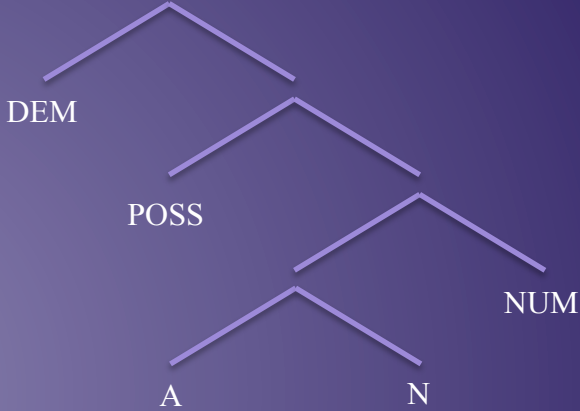
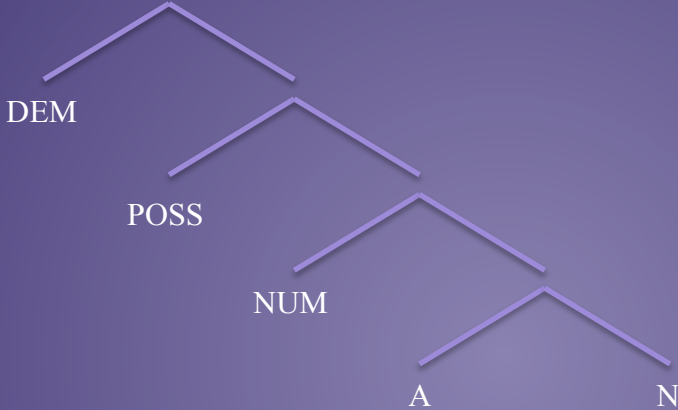
- Greenberg (1963):
 - “When any or all of the items (demonstrative, numeral, and descriptive adjective) precede the noun, they are always found in that order. If they follow, the order is either the same or its exact opposite.”
- Applies to basic word order.
- Rules out e.g. A > NUM > DEM > N.

Capturing (the revised) U20

- Based on Cinque (2005), Abels & Neeleman (2012) and assuming no movement:



Capturing U20



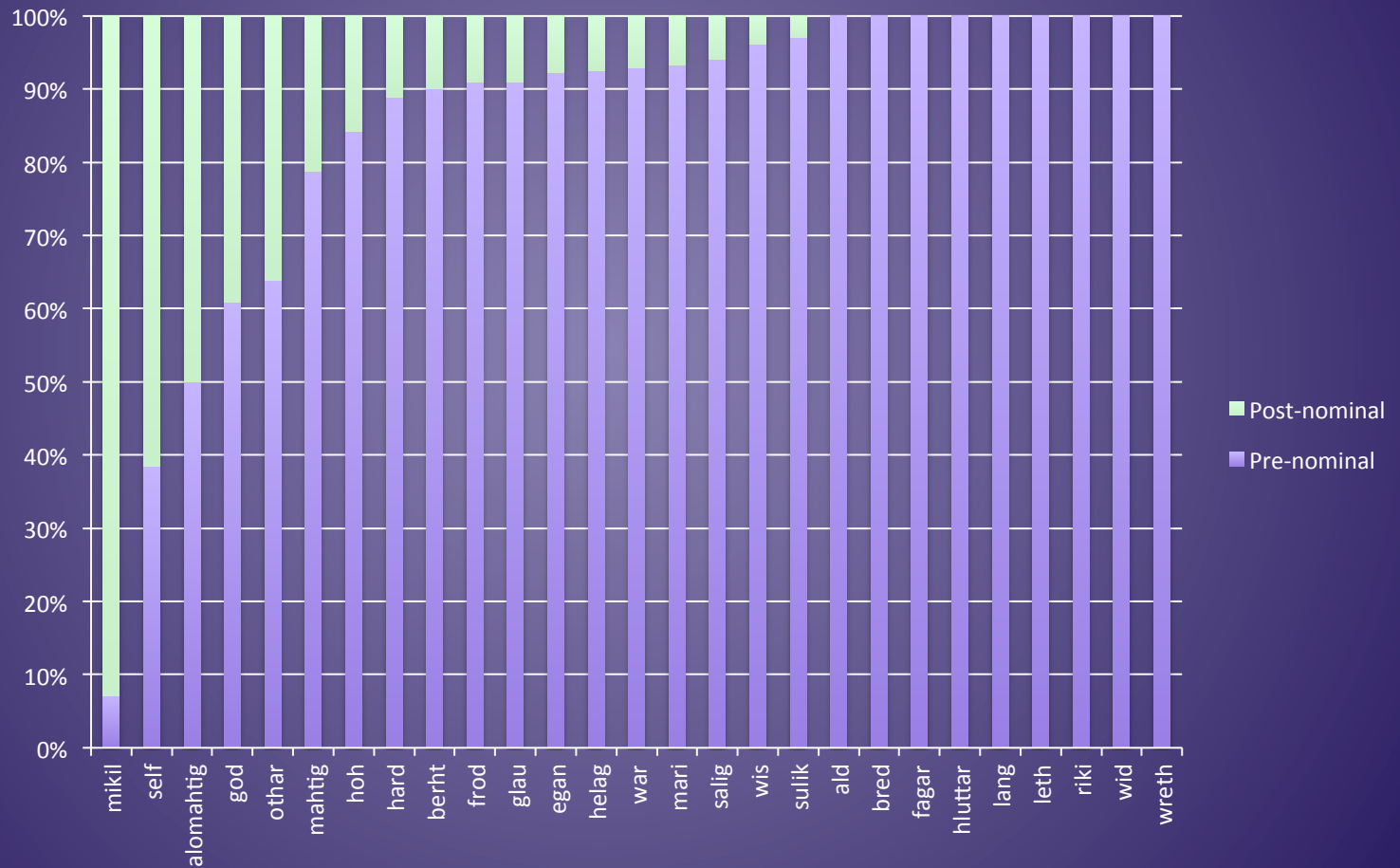
Adjectives and nouns

- Adjectives:
 - Precede nouns: 772 (81.3%)
 - helag uuord
holy word
'holy word' (OSHeliandC.2.5-9)
 - Follow nouns: 177 (18.7%)
 - niud mikil
need great
'great need' (OSHeliandC.86.182-184)
 - Both: 15

Adjectives flanking nouns

- In all of the 15 ‘both’ examples, the post-nominal adjective is separated from the noun by a caesura or break:
 - *uuisa man <R_202> snella*
wise men fast
‘wise men, fast (ones)’
(OSHeliandC.100.201-202)
- This suggests that we may be dealing with apposition here.

Position by lemma (10 or more)



Personal possessives

- Possessive adjectives (inflected):
 - Precede nouns: 208 (83.5%)
 - Follow nouns: 41 (16.5%)
- Possessive pronouns (*is* ‘his’, *iru* ‘her/their’ always precede the noun (322 and 153 examples respectively).
- The adjectives *unka* ‘1du’, *inka* ‘2du’ and *usa* ‘1pl’ are also unattested following the noun, though these could be accidental (7, 4 and 18 examples respectively).

Numerals and nouns

- Numerals:
 - Precede nouns: 65 (82.3%)
 - *after them* fiuuartig *dagen*
after DEM.DAT forty days
'after the forty days'
(OSHeliandC.575.1059-1062)
 - Follow nouns: 14 (17.7%)
 - *is* *sunu* tuena
his sons two
'his two sons' (OSHeliandC.641.1172-1175)

Numerals, adjectives, nouns

- Logically possible orders: (*prediction*)
 - Num A N: (66.9%) 13 (72.2%)
 - A N Num: (14.4%) 1 (5.6%)
 - Num N A: (15.4%) 4 (22.2%)
 - N A Num: (3.3%) 0 (0.0%)
 - A Num N: 0
 - N Num A: 0
- (But all other than Num A N involve a line break or caesura after the N)

Numerals, adjectives, nouns

- Examples:
 - *en gigamalod mann*
an aged man
'an old man' (OSHeliandC.21.72-73)
 - *gerstin bruod <R_2845> fiui*
of-barley bread five
'five loaves of barley bread'
(OSHeliandC.1544.2842-2845)
 - *en uuiscuning <R_583> mari endi mahtig*
a wise-king great and powerful
'a wise, great and powerful king'
(OSHeliandC.308.582-584)

Demonstratives and nouns

- Demonstratives (and definite articles?):
 - Precede nouns: 1219 (97.6%)
 - that *hoha hus*
DEM high house
'the/that high house'
(OSHeliandC.1030.1999-2002)
 - Follow nouns: 30 (2.4%)
 - *Ioseph* thie *guodo*
Joseph DEM good
'Joseph the good' (OSHeliandC.199.356-359)

Post-nominal demonstratives

- Examples:
 - *Erodase* *thena* *cuning*
Herod.ACC DEM.ACC king
'King Herod' (OSHeliandC.412.760-763)
 - *drohtin* *thie* *guodo*
lord the good
'the good Lord' (OSHeliandC.558.1024-1026)
 - *enon* *berage* *them* *hohon*
NUM mountain.DAT the.DAT high
'a high mountain'
(OSHeliandC.598.1095-1096)

‘Demonstratives’?

- 4/30 are proper noun-Dem-N
 - (‘Herod the king’ x3, ‘Solomon’ x1)
- 26/30 are N-Dem-Adj!
 - Function of Dem does not seem to be that of a normal article or demonstrative (e.g. occurs in vocatives)
 - Can co-occur with prenominal article (?)
 - More similar to ‘linkers’ as in French, Thai, Aromanian, Mandarin etc. (e.g. den Dikken & Singhapreecha 2004)

Demonstrative, adjective, noun

- Logically possible orders:
 - Dem A N: 148 (not inc. A N A exx.)
 - A N Dem: 0
 - Dem N A: 12 (6 have line breaks)
 - N A Dem: 0
 - A Dem N: 1 (dubious: *selbon* ‘self’)
 - N Dem A: 26 (see previous slides)
- Adjectives with Dem N A: *othar* ‘other’ (x3), *andheti* ‘pious’, *self* (x2)

Demonstrative, adjective, noun

- Examples:
 - *thie gierodo man*
DEM aged man
‘the aged man’ (OSHeliandC.40.102-103)
 - *That uuerod oðer*
DEM people other
‘the other people’ (OSHeliandC.41.103-106)
 - *uuid selbon thena suno drohtines*
against self.ACC DEM.ACC son lord.GEN
‘against the Lord’s son himself’
(OSHeliandC.1211.2288-2290)

Demonstrative, numeral, noun

- Logically possible orders:
 - Dem Num N: 4 (3 ordinal)
 - Num N Dem: 1 (see previous)
 - Dem N Num: 2
 - N Num Dem: 0
 - Num Dem N: 0
 - N Dem Num: 0

Demonstrative, numeral, noun

- Examples:
 - *after them fiuartig dagon*
after DEM.DAT forty days
'after the forty days'
(OSHeliandC.575.1059-1062)
 - *thiu sinhiun tue*
the married-people two
'the couple' (OSHeliandC.562.1032-1039)

Word order: summary

- Demonstratives, articles and possessive pronouns occur phrase-initially.
 - Exceptions occur systematically only with adjectives; different analysis needed.
- Numerals and adjectives precede the noun about 80% of the time.
 - Conditioning factors not well understood. (At least, not by me.)

Conclusions

- The Old Saxon nominal domain:
 - has definite and indefinite articles (but not obligatorily)
 - is mostly right-branching, under an Abels & Neeleman (2012)-style approach to nominal structure
 - Exclusively right-branching for demonstratives and possessive pronouns
 - ~80% right-branching below that
 - has interesting demonstratives acting as nominal linker elements
 - should be studied more closely!

References

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