The diachrony of V3 in German (and what it tells us about the CP in Old English)

Introduction – The diachronic development of the prefield in the German root clause has been a much debated topic in the generative literature of the last two decades (cf. e.g. Axel(-Tober) 2007, 2018; Speyer 2008; Walkden 2014, 2017; Petrova 2012; Speyer & Weiß 2018). The main claims of these studies are that in each of the historical stages of the (High) German varieties – Old High German (OHG), Middle High German (MHG), Early New High German (ENHG) and Present-Day German (PDG) –, linear V2, V1 and verb-late(r) word orders are attested that realize more or less specific information-structural distinctions; and that the system has gradually evolved from a so-called 'relaxed' (from OHG to ENHG) to a 'strict' (PDG) V2 grammar. This means that while the older stages of the language allow for multiply-filled-prefield configurations in which more than one maximal projection occupies the left periphery (cf. (1a)-(1c)), the PDG CP appears to exhibit only one position for a preverbal constituent in the main clause (cf. (1d)). **The issue** – Given the complexity of the object of investigation and the implications of each of the aspects related to it, the results obtained with respect to the different language stages and/or language-stage-internal phenomena are part of individual research projects. Expectedly, thus, not all authors have made use of the same theoretical models and/or of equivalent methods to account for the data. This has at least two relevant consequences: on the one hand, some (theoretical) results are not necessarily comparable; on the other hand, there is still no comprehensive treatment of this phenomenon that addresses the structural evolution of the left periphery within one and the same theoretical framework. Moreover, the language stages have not all equally been investigated (e.g. MHG is underrepresented in the existing studies). **Aims of this talk** – In this paper, we present the results of a large-scale corpus study of so-called 'V3' word orders in the history of German. The umbrella term 'V3' will be used to refer to main clauses in which the finite verb has moved into a left-peripheral head and the preverbal area of the CP is occupied by more than one element, but the number of items occupying this domain is not limited to two, as the label 'V3' would suggest. In particular, the focus will be on the typology of the attested preverbal sequences in V3 clauses and their syntactic analysis at the interface with information structure. What is innovative in our approach is that: (i) we treat *all* the diachronic data, which range from OHG to PDG, in a uniform way (i.e. adopting the very same assumptions for all language stages) within the cartographic model; (ii) we consider not only non-correlative sequences (e.g. patterns of the type 'Frame > Topic > Vfin'), but also correlative ones (e.g. left dislocation, hanging topicalization, CP-internal adverbial resumption). The simultaneous investigation of both categories has the advantage that it may contribute to a more fine-grained characterization of the internal structure of the left periphery, since correlative and non-correlative patterns may co-occur in the same clause. Cf. e.g. the MHG sentence in (2a), in which a Frame precedes a Topic, which in turn precedes the pronominal element resuming it. For each these three items, a dedicated position within the left periphery must be assumed. Low German is not considered in the present investigation. **Methods** – The data relative to OHG, MHG, and ENHG have been extracted from the *Referenzkorpus Altdeutsch* (Donhauser et al. 2018), the *Referenzkorpus Mittelhochdeutsch* (Klein et al. 2016) and the *Bonner Frühneuhochdeutschkorpus* (Besch et al. 2017). The data discussed in this paper have been excerpted from four OHG texts, 13 MHG text, and eight ENHG texts of variable length and nature. In OHG, the syntax of the main clause is still relatively unstable: on the one hand, V-to-C movement is not obligatory (although frequent) in syntactically independent structures. On the other hand, virtually all OHG *prose texts* available, namely the only sources suitable for syntactic investigations, are of translational nature. For this reason, the OHG dataset only consists of sentences in which the verb can be shown to have moved to C° (using the diagnostics proposed by Axel 2007) and whose linear syntax does not reproduce the Latin one. For MHG and ENHG, in which V2 is fully grammaticalized, all clauses with a linear V3 order were considered. These data were then compared to the structures attested in PDG (for which no systematic corpus study was conducted). On the basis of the data available, the attempt was made to reconstruct the diachronic changes occurred in the structure

of the CP from OHG to PDG. **Results and analysis** – Despite apparent dramatic differences between Historical German and PDG, the left periphery of German can be assumed to exhibit *basic* historical continuity, especially from MHG onwards. Although individual phenomena of the left periphery have disappeared (e.g. left-dislocated foci, probably very marginal even in Historical German) or become less pervasive (e.g. left dislocation in general, or CP-internal adverbial resumption), it seems indeed that most V3 patterns are still available in the grammar of spoken German if one accepts the idea that some XPs surfacing to the left of the finite verb in a main clause may be merged outside of the 'inner' CP area and their position therefore does not result from movement. Cf. e.g. the corpus example (2) adapted from Auer (2000: 177), which represents a pattern attested in all historical stages of German, but which is generally considered ungrammatical in standard treatments of PDG. It will therefore be tentatively proposed that the differences observable between PDG and the previous stages of the language do not necessarily follow from a 'relaxed' or 'strict' application of V2, but are due to base-generation of some XPs in the preverbal area. **A comparison** – Extending the view to another West-Germanic language for the sake of comparison, we will also contend that an application of the diagnostics for verb movement generally used for OHG to the analysis of V3 patterns in Old English (OE) is particularly advantageous in order to discern cases of genuine multiple filling of the preverbal area from patterns in which the finite verb occupies a position lower than the head of CP/FP (Fischer et al. 2000, van Kemenade and Westergaard 2012) or CP/IP (Pintzuk 1999). This operationalization reveals that the left periphery of OE might be larger than generally agreed, since native texts with diagnostic verb movement contain V4 configurations as in (3), where a Frame-setting topic, an argument and a modal PP occupy the prefield and verb movement is witnessed by the presence of the non-extraposable light adverb *eft* below *hwearf*.

(1) a. [*Dher selbo forasago*] [*auh in andreru stedi*] *chundida, dhazs…*
          the same prophet also in other passage revealed that
          'This prophet also revealed in another passage that …' (OHG – *Isidor* 20, 22 - 21, 1)
     b. [*Des uirden tages.*] [*alle di tir*] … *suln sich samnen obene vf daz wazzer*
          the fourth day all the animals shall REFL gather above on the water
          'On the fourth day, all animals will gather on the surface of the sea.' (MHG – *MP.* b3va,18)
     c. [*Dadurch*] [*dan*] [*sunderlich vertrawn vnd hoffnung*] *haben dy krancken …*
          therefore then great faith-ACC and hope-ACC have the-NOM sick-NOM
          'Therefore, the sick will then have great faith and hope …' (ENHG – *Pill.* 180, 20-22)
     d. [*Auf die Party*] *kommt auch Maria.* / *[*Auf die Party*] [*auch Maria*] *kommt.*
          to the party comes also Maria   to the party also Maria comes
          'Maria will also come to the party.' (PDG)
(2) [Wenn Sie wirklich den Job hätten haben wollen], [Sie] hätten dann
       if you really the job had have want you had then
       schon ein bisschen auf den Punkt kommen müssen.
       PRT a bit ____ to the point come ____ must
       'If you really had wanted that job, you should have come to the point.'
(3) [Her] [Wulfred arcebisceop] [mid bletsunge þæs papan Leon] hwearf
       here Wulfred archbishop with blessing the-GEN pope Leon returned
       eft to his agnum bisceopdome.
       again to his own episcopal-seat
       'Here the Archbishop Wulfred returned again to his own episcopal seat with blessing by Pope Leon.' (cochronC,ChronC_[Rositzke]:812.1.45)

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