

## Variation and change in German embedded V2, Svetlana Petrova, Wuppertal

**Object.** In modern German, the distribution of asyndetic argumental clauses with V2 word order (aV2) is standardly taken to be limited, in that they occur as semantically and pragmatically restricted variants of canonical *that*-Vfinal clauses (see Reis 1997, *i.a.*). Data cited in the earlier literature suggest that in historical German, this distribution was probably less restricted, compared to modern German (see Axel-Tober 2012 for a recent overview). This paper seeks to determine the extent of this variation, and to elaborate on changes that took place over time. In particular, it concentrates on two classes of verbs which strictly reject aV2 in modern German and embedded root transformation in general (see Hooper & Thompson 1973, Classes C and D therein, respectively): i. inherently negative (non-assertive) predicates like *doubt* or *deny* and ii. factive emotive predicates like *regret*, *resent*, *be sorry*. In historical German, at least Class C predicates are attested as selecting aV2-arguments, see (1). **Method.** The available electronic corpora of OHG and MHG were searched for lexical equivalents of Class C and D predicates. The items, determined by way of lemma search, are given in (2)a-b. The search for MHG was restricted to prose texts.

**Results.** Class D predicates provide a clear picture and will be discussed first. Of the total of 84 occurrences of these verbs in OHG and 223 in MHG, only 5 (6%) in OHG and 15 (6.7%) in MHG involve sentential complements. In OHG, they are always *thaz*-Vfinal, see (3). In MHG, this order occurs in 12 of the cases, see (4), while the remaining 3 cases are aV2, as in (5). Crucially, all 3 clauses are selected by *klagen*, which is ambiguous between a factive emotive interpretation, meaning ‘to regret’, and a verb of saying meaning ‘to lament’. In all 3 examples, the factive emotive interpretation fails (note that the dependent proposition in (5) can hardly be conceived of as repentance but is perfectly natural as the subject of uttered lament). In sum, in view of the data considered here, there is no evidence for aV2 complementation with Class D predicates in OHG and MHG. With Class C predicates, the picture is different. The total of occurrences of such predicates is 120 in OHG and 110 in MHG, of which only 10 (8.3%) in OHG and 21 (19.1%) in MHG display sentential complements. The word order in these complements crucially depends on the presence of overt negation in the matrix clause. With affirmative matrix clauses, the complements always display the canonical *thaz*-Vfinal, see (6) and its MHG version in (7). If the matrix clause is negated, the complement displays superficial V2-order plus additional preverbal negation, see (8) to (10). Note that this is expletive (paratactic) negation, as it does not affect the polarity of the dependent proposition. In addition, there is evidence suggesting that the dependent negator (glossed NI) differs from normal sentential negation in terms of syntactic position. In OHG and partially in MHG, sentential negation (glossed NEG) is enclitically bound to the finite verb, as in the matrix clause in (8), see Jäger (2008). In the oldest examples from OHG, NI does not precede the finite verb but is in distance to it, further left. Jäger (2008: 76) argues that in such clauses, NI is in the C-domain of the clause. As a consequence, the dependent negator in the V2-examples from late-OHG and MHG, (9) and (10) should be interpreted as an instance of the (phonologically reduced) expletive negator NI in the left periphery of the clause, while the verb attaches to it by way of analogy to NEG (for a similar scenario on OE, see Kemenade 2000). This means that the structural analysis of ‘usual’ aV2 clauses is not the same as the one of V2-clauses with NI in OHG and MHG. The decline of *ne* leads to the loss of this type of sentential complementation. In sum, the licensing of aV2 does not enforce a scenario requiring a typological shift in the properties of clause-embedding predicates over time but is rather related to changes in the C-domain of the clause.

- (1) Íh        ne-zuifelon    óuh .    tú        ne -múgîst    iz        keléisten  
I        NEG-doubt    also    you    NEG-may    it        fulfil  
‘Neither do I doubt that you can fulfil it’ (NBoeth IV 186, 8f., Axel-Tober 2012: 158)

- (2) a. non-assertives (Class C): OHG *abohon, firsagen, firsahhan, (fir)louganen* ‘deny’, *blugison, zwifalon* ‘doubt’; MHG *loug(en)en* ‘deny’, *zwîvel(e)n* ‘doubt’  
 b. factive emotives (Class D): *anton, irruofen, karon, klagon, kumen, riuwon, riozan* ‘regret’, *buozen* ‘repent’, *truoben, mornen, mornenti wesan* ‘be sad’; MHG *(be-)riuwen, klagen, riuwesen*, ‘regret, repent’, *lèid sîn* ‘be sorry’
- (3) want er in ímo buazta thaz er ér ju in war mín  
 because he in himself repented that he earlier already indeed  
 so thiko lóugnita sin  
 so often denied him  
 ‘because he repented in himself that he had indeed denied him so often previously  
 O\_Otfr.Ev.5.15 (edition 272 - 292)
- (4) lat iv leit fín daz ir îe wider fínen huldin getâtít  
 let you sorry be that you ever agains his mercy-PL did  
 ‘Be sorry that you ever acted against his mercy’ 12\_2-bairalem-PV-X > M214y-N1
- (5) fiklagt ovch fí waz éin felíc wip vnd behielt gotes gebot  
 she lamented also she was a blessed woman and obeyed God’s law  
 ‘she also lamented that she used to be a blessed woman who obeyed God’s law’ 13\_2-bair-P-X > M403y-N0
- (6) aer auuar laucnita mit eidu daz ær den man ni uuisti  
 her again denied on oath that he the man-ACC NEG knew  
 ‘he again denied swearing that he did not know this man’ MF\_1\_M.XXIII
- (7) vnd er lavgent aber mít aiden daz er ín iht erchant  
 14\_1-bair-PUV-G > M323-G1
- (8) In dhesemu quhide ni bluchisoe eoman, ni dhiz sii  
 in this sentence NEG doubt-SBJ no one NI that is-SBJ  
 chiuuisso dher ander heit godes  
 truly the other shape God-GEN  
 ‘Nobody should doubt that this sentence presents the other shape of God’ DDD-AD-Isidor\_1.0 > I\_DeFide\_3
- (9) Íh neuerságo nîeht . éin substantia ne-sî  
 I NEG-deny NEG one substance NI-is-SUBJ.PRES  
 hártôr substantia dánne ánderiu  
 harder substance than other  
 ‘I do not deny that one substance is harder than the other one’ N\_Cat\_notkbcat-Boeth.Cat.Boeth.Cat.33
- (10) ih neloukene def niet · iz ne fí min wille  
 I NEG-deny this-GEN NEG it NI is-SUBJ.PRES my will  
 ‘I do not deny that it is my will’ M213-N1

*Referenzkorpus Altdeutsch* (ReA 1.0), <https://korpling.org/annis3/ddd> • *Referenzkorpus Mittelhochdeutsch* (ReM), <https://www.linguistics.rub.de/rem/> • Axel-Tober, K. 2012. *(Nicht-)Kanonische Nebensätze im Deutschen: Diachrone und Synchrone Aspekte*. Berlin: de Gruyter. • Hooper, J. and S. Thompson. 1973. On the applicability of root transformations, *Linguistic Inquiry* 4: 63–84. • Jäger, A. 2008. *History of German Negation*. Amsterdam: Benjamins. • Kemenade, A. van. 2000. Jespersen’s cycle revisited: formal properties of grammaticalization, in S. et al. (eds.) *Diachronic Syntax: Models and Mechanisms*. Oxford University Press, 51–75. • Reis, M. 1997. Zum syntaktischen Status unselbständiger Verbzweit-Sätze’, In C. Dürscheid et al. (eds), *Sprache im Fokus. Festschrift für Heinz Vater zum 65. Geburtstag*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 121–144.