

## Indirect *if*-Parentheticals: Synchronic Functions and Diachronic Development

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An *indirect condition* “is not related to the situation of the matrix clause” but is “dependent on an implicit speech act of the utterance” (Quirk et al. 1985: 1089, 1095). This paper explores two sets of indirect conditionals, one expressing primarily metalinguistic meaning (*if you choose, like, prefer, want, wish*) and one expressing primarily epistemicity (*if you ask me, if I may say so*), both ultimately serving politeness functions. They are syntactically elliptical and parenthetical (cf. Kaltenböck, Heine, and Kuteva (2011) on “theticals”). Since in all cases the apodoses are missing, indirect *if*-parentheticals bear a resemblance to monoclausal constructions (Dancygier and Sweetser 2005: 217-19) or insubordinated clauses, that is “*the conventionalized main clause use of [...] formally subordinate clauses*” (Evans 2007: 367). As insubordinated clauses are assumed to derive historically from full clauses, this paper investigates whether a similar derivation – in this case from main clause to parenthetical – can be adduced here.

# Clause Combining: Conjunct Clauses and Non-Conjunct Clauses in Old and Middle English

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It has often been claimed, to the point of becoming an axiom, that Old English conjunct clauses, i.e. clauses starting with the coordinating conjunction *and* or *but*, typically have verb-final word order (see e.g. Mitchell 1985; van Kemenade 1987; Traugott 1992; Pintzuk 1995). Various explanations for this word order have been suggested, but a question that has not been raised is whether the empirical basis for the claim is correct. In this talk, I will first show that it is *not* the case that conjunct clauses are typically verb-final, and briefly discuss the reason for this misconception. However, there is nevertheless good reason to keep conjunct clauses and non-conjunct clauses apart, as there are other word order differences between the two clause types, which have to do with their different discourse functions. Some of these will be discussed and exemplified in the talk, with reference to Old and Middle English.

## References:

- Kemenade, Ans van. 1987. *Syntactic case and morphological case in the history of English*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Mitchell, Bruce. 1985. *Old English syntax*, vols. I & II. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Pintzuk, Susan. 1995. Variation and change in Old English clause structure. In D. Sankoff, W. Labov and A. Kroch (eds), *Language variation and change* 7, 229-260.
- Traugott, Elizabeth Closs. 1992. Syntax. In R. M. Hogg (ed), *The Cambridge history of the English language*, vol. I, 168-289. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# **(Relative) Adverbial Clauses in the History of German: From Correlation to Integration**

**Katrin Axel-Tober  
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The paper deals with the internal and external syntax of (relative) adverbial clauses in German. The main focus will be on diachronic developments, empirically the study is based on qualitative and quantitative investigations of Old, Middle and Early New High German texts (cf. Axel-Tober 2012). As to the internal syntax, it will be argued that certain adverbial subordinations (e.g. *da* 'when, since', *nachdem* 'after that') evolved out of a Spec-to-Head reanalysis of relative adverbs- Regarding the external syntax, it will be proposed that these clauses originally were instances of the so-called correlative relative clause, an unintegrated type of head-internal relative clause that has become marginal in Germanic (cf. de Vries 2002), but is attested in many old Indo-European languages. The analysis is independently supported by recent synchronic accounts on the syntax of temporal clauses in English and Hungarian (e.g. Haegeman 2009, Lipták 2005).

## **References:**

- Axel-Tober, K. (2012). (Nicht-)kanonische Nebensätze im Deutschen. Synchrone und diachrone Aspekte. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.
- de Vries, M. (2002). The Syntax of Relativization. Utrecht: LOT.
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- Lipták, A., (2005). Relativization strategies in temporal adjunct clauses. *LIVY Yearbook* 5. John Benjamins, Philadelphia/Amsterdam, pp. 133-185.

# **Information Density as a Factor for Embedding of Causal Clauses in Early New High German**

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In Modern German, causal clauses can be realized as embedded or non-embedded clauses. This variation is often linked to the kind of causality (propositional causality: + embedding, epistemic or otherwise mediate causality: - embedding) In Early New High German this semantic criterium is only marginally at issue. In this talk, I want to investigate whether another factor, viz. information density, influences this variation in a significant way. Information density is basically a measure of whether the form or content of a given linguistic expression is expected or not. Applied to clauses, we can say that the information density of clauses with a high proportion of expected expressions is low, whereas the information density of clauses with a low proportion of expected expressions is high. In order to manage the stream of information in an optimal way, the information density should be more or less constant. This means, all clauses should have similar degrees of information density. Consequently, we would expect that a proposition that has high information density should be distributed over several clauses. In Bavarian texts of the 14th and 15th century we see this at work: causal clauses tend to be non-embedded if the information density of the matrix clause is high. So information density is a relevant factor for the variation in Early New High German.

## Subordinate + Declarative Sequences in Old French

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In this presentation, I discuss my recent and ongoing work on how sequences of subordinate clause + main declarative clause combine in Old French, a verb-second (V2) language (e.g., Vance, 1997). The issue that I will address concerns variation in the position of an initial subordinate with respect to the following declarative: the subordinate appears either in a left-peripheral scene-setting position of the clausal left periphery or in the first position of the (V2) declarative clause itself. In examples (1) and (2), an initial *ainz que* “before” subordinate and an initial *quant* “when” subordinate, respectively, occupy the first position of the main declarative clause. Brackets delimit relevant maximal projections:

- (1) Mais, [ainz qu’il l’ait fors del fuerre gitee,] [li FU] Bauduc devant  
but before that-he it-had out of.the sheath pulled to.him was Bauduc in.front.of  
a l’encontree.  
to the-encounter  
*“But, before he could pull the sword from the sheath, Bauduc was in front of him.” (Aliscans, 7347-7348)*
- (2) E [quant li moinie vindrent lur complie chanter,] [QUIDIERENT il] pur veir  
and when the monks came their Compline to.sing believed they for true  
que se dormist li ber.  
that reflexive slept the baron  
*“And when the monks came to sing their Compline, they truly believed that the baron was sleeping.” (Becket, 1991-1992)*

In contrast, in (3) and (4), an initial *ainz que* subordinate and an initial *quant* subordinate, respectively, occupy a position to the left of the main declarative per se:

- (3) [Ainz que Guillelmes fust el palés montez,] [En Gloriete] [FIST l’en]  
before that Guillaume was in.the palace climbed in Gloriete made the-one  
l’eve  
the-water corner.  
announce-with-trumpets  
*“Before Guillaume went up to the Gloriete palace, one had signaled with trumpets that*  
*it*  
*was time to wash hands [in anticipation of a meal].” (Aliscans, 7641- 7642)*
- (4) [Quant il est vostre huem liges,] [il] [vus DEIT] fei porter.]  
when he is your man liege he to-you must fidelity bring  
*“When he is your vassal, he must show you fidelity.” (Becket, 1856-1857)*

Drawing on over 7,000 tokens from 30 Old French texts spanning the 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, I will discuss (a) how the syntactic position of the initial subordinate varies by subordinate type; (b) the role of semantics in the position of the subordinate; (c) the role of phonological weight (length) in the position of the subordinate; (d) the role of discourse structure in the position of the subordinate; and (e) the interaction of this variation with grammatical change over the course of the Old French period.

# **The Impact of Discourse Information on Intersentential Anaphor Resolution**

**Anke Holler**  
**University of Göttingen**

Previous research has identified several factors influencing intersentential anaphora resolution, such as the position of the antecedent candidate (first-mentioned vs. second-mentioned entity), its grammatical role (subject vs. object) or its information structural status (topic vs. non-topic) (e.g. Gernsbacher, 1990; Crawley et al., 1990; Lambrecht, 1994 and others). In the current talk, I would like to present data from several psycholinguistic experiments investigating the influence of discourse information on anaphor resolution in German. I will discuss to which extent structural and/or semantic-pragmatic information contributes to the salience of antecedent candidates.

## **A Quantitative Approach to Information Structural Research**

**Caitlin Light**  
**University of York**

The fundamental goal of this talk is to demonstrate that quantitative data from parsed corpora provides a unique and crucial resource in exploring questions of information structure and the syntax-pragmatics interface. As a case study, I will present a comparative and diachronic study of the information structure of passive constructions, based on collaborative work with Joel Wallenberg. The study draws data from parsed historical corpora of Icelandic, English, and German. The corpora in question are not annotated for information structural categories, and indeed, recent work suggests that information structural annotation is inconsistent and will require a deeper theoretical understanding of the categories in question (Bech 2013; Cook 2013). Instead, I will show how we may use corpus data for research on information structure without relying on information structural annotation. I hope to demonstrate that access to multiple parsed corpora can allow us to generate and test complex and sensitive predictions in order to investigate a theoretical hypothesis within the field of information structure.