

Clause-internal scrambling and focus movement in Old English

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In van Kemenade and Milićev (to appear) it was proposed that the initial part of the OE (subordinate) clause, corresponding to the area between the complementizer and TP, is occupied by the projection SigmaP. This projection essentially attracts d-linked subjects and anaphoric elements (pronouns), and serves to link the current utterance with the preceding discourse.

In this talk it will be shown that the rest of the proposition is also structured with respect to information structural considerations. While the VP domain is the locus of the information/presentational focus, the TP domain is the area where elements move to escape the wide focus interpretation of the VP, i.e. when they are d-linked in the relevant sense, either by being 'given'/presupposed or when they involve selection out of a contextually defined set of alternatives.

Primarily relying on weak (accusative) pronouns in the clause internal position, and to some extent on VP adverbs, as rather clear indicators that the material preceding them is VP-external, we will show that movement out of the focus domain of VP applies not only to arguments, but also to adjuncts (1) and non-finite verbs (2). Furthermore, it will be argued that certain Verb Raising and Verb Projection Raising constructions (3) involve processes of presupposition-focus structuring.

- (1) a. Ða he þa ne mihte **mid þæm** hi oferswiðan, þa het he hi lædan to beheafdianne
 when he then not might with these her overpower, then ordered he her lead to
 beheading
 'Then when he could not overpower her with these, then he ordered that she be taken
 to beheading' (comart3,Mart_5_[Kotzor]:Ap27,A.12.642)
- b. For þy nis nan man þæt he þonne **aweg** hine astyrian mæge
 because not-is no man that he then away him move may
 'Because there was no man who could move it (=devil's arrow) away'
 (coverhom,HomS_4_[ScraggVerc_9]:118.1309)
- (2) & beadon hine þæt he sceolde **healdan** hi rihtlice. & **lufian** hi
 and asked him that he should hold them rightly and love them
 'and asked him to treat them rightly and to love them'
 (cochronE,ChronE_[Plummer]:1083.4.2763)
- (3) a. Gif he ðonne ðæt wif **wille** forsacan, ðonne hræce hio him on ðæt nebb foran
 if he then the woman wish refuse, then spit she him on the face
 'if he wishes to refuse the woman, she should spit him in the face'
 (cocura,CP:5.43.15.238)
- b. and sege gif hi **nellað** þone sang gelæstan, þonne geswicað eac sona ða wundra, and gif
 hi þone lofsang **willað** æt þam wundrum singan, [...] þonne wurðað mid him wundra
 and say if they not-will the song perform, then cease also soon/straightway the miracles,
 and if they the hymn will at the miracles sings, then be with them miracles
 'and tell them that if they would not perform the hymn, straightway the miracles shall
 also cease, and if they will sing Te Deum at the miracles, then shall miracles be done
 among them' (coaelive,ELS_[Swithun]:237.4375)