QUIRKY SUBJECTS IN OLD FRENCH*

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Abstract. The aim of this paper is to show that Old French makes great use of quirky subjects. Dubbed 'impersonal constructions' in the traditional literature, such structures typically involve an empty subject position that a dative or accusative comes to fill. This, I show, very much resembles the operation called Stylistic Fronting which is clearly available in Old French. The hypothesis put forward is that Stylistically Fronted elements and oblique subjects target TopP+, a special Topic position above TP. Many examples are introduced showing that oblique preverbal elements are true subjects and that *pro* is thus not the subject of impersonal constructions in Old French. The paper also argues that in Old French, tense rather than agreement is responsible for the licensing of nominative case.

1. Introduction

Quirky subjects are subjects surfacing with non-nominative case. They have long been observed in Icelandic (Andrews 1976, Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985 and Sigurðsson 1989) and have also been claimed to exist in Old English (Lightfoot 1979, 1981, Allen 1995, Kemenade 1997), as well as in older stages of Mainland Scandinavian languages (Barðdal 1997). As for Romance languages, Spanish is one language that has recently been the centre of much attention (Masullo 1993, Fernández-Soriano 1999, Rivero 2004).

The aim of this paper is to show that Old French exhibits structures which call upon a quirky-subject analysis. Dubbed 'impersonal constructions' in the traditional literature, such structures typically involve an empty subject position that a dative, accusative or genitive XP comes to fill. This, I show, very much resembles the operation called Stylistic Fronting (SF, henceforth) which is clearly available not only in Icelandic (Holmberg 2000), but also in Old French (Mathieu 2006). More generally, a connection for Old French is made between the availability of quirky subjects, SF *and* V3 structures (see Fischer 2004a for the same generalization made with respect to Scandinavian languages, old and new).

The Old French example in (1) involves the impersonal verb *plaire* 'please' and illustrates a prepositional phrase appearing in the subject position while (2) involves an oblique case XP.[1]

(1) Et   bien   set   qu'a   sa   mere   plest
    and well   know.3SG that-to his mother please.3SG
    Que rien   a feire   ne   li   lest
    that nothing   to do.INF not him.DAT   remain.3SG
    'And she knows well that it is her mother's will that she shall leave
    nothing undone for him.' (*Le Chevalier au Lion*, year 1179, lines
    5437–5438)

(2) Et se Deu   plaist,   outre s'en   passera
    and if God-OBL please.3SG others self-of.it go.FUT.3SG
    'If such is the will of God, he will force the passage.'
    (*Aliscans*, year c. 1165, line 1099, in Buridant:322)[2]

The example in (3) is the equivalent of (2), but with a clitic subject, this time morphologically specified as dative. This pattern has been traditionally treated as thematically based, i.e. the dative is an inherent case intrinsically linked to the role of Experiencer.

(3) Si li   plest,   el   l'amera
    if him.DAT please.3SG she him.ACC-love.FUT.3SG
    'If it pleases him, she will love him.' (*Lais*, year c. 1160, line 28)

The weak dative pronoun *li* is often replaced by a strong ('emphatic') pronoun of the same case, as (4) illustrates.

(4) Si lui   plaist
    if him.DAT please.3SG
    'If it pleases him.'
    (*La Chanson de Roland*, year 1080, line 519, *Le Chevalier à la
    Charrette*, c. 1180, line 2585)

Quirky subjects can also surface in the accusative form, as shown in (5) where the verb impersonal verb *covenir* 'to suit/to be convenient' selects for a quirky argument and an infinitive (the infinitive has been displaced to the left edge of the sentence via the operation Stylistic Fronting, since it would normally follow the main verb).

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[1] Case marking is considerably reduced from that found in Latin. Only nominative and accusative cases – so-called *cas sujet* and *cas régime* in the traditional literature – are marked by the form of the nominal. In (2), *Deu* 'God' is thus not morphologically dative, but is simply a non-nominative form common to all oblique nominal cases. It must be noted, however, that for pronouns, the situation is different: they are marked not only for nominative, accusative, but also for dative.

[2] The expression in (2) occurs in a wide range of texts to the point of appearing formulaic (se Dieu plaist, *Le Congé* 104; se Deu plest, *Le Chevalier au Lion* 992, *Le Chevalier à la Charrette* 4287, 6227, 6393, 6769, 6986).

(5) Car desfandre$_i$ le   covenoit t$_i$
     thus defend.INF him.ACC necessitate.PAST.3SG
     'thus it was necessary for him to defend (himself).'
     (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, line 1182)

However, the dative form comes to replace the accusative very often not only across texts, but also in some cases within the same texts as the two following examples illustrate (both examples are from *Le Chevalier à la Charrette*). Note that in (6), the infinitival PP has been Stylistically Fronted.

(6) Qu'[a remenoir]$_i$ li   covenoit t$_i$
     that-to remain.INF him.DAT necessitate.PAST.3SG
     'that he had to stay.' (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, line 3760)

The process by which an accusative form changes into a dative form is well-known from Icelandic and has been referred to in the literature as Dative Sickness (Eythórsson 2000, 2002) for that language. A definition of Dative Sickness can be found in (7).[3]

(7) Dative sickness involves the replacement of accusative experiencers by dative experiencers and is argued by Eythórsson (2000, 2002) to be driven by thematic/semantic considerations.

Finally, genitives in subject position are not common in Old French, but are attested in Icelandic.[4]

   One typical feature of quirky subjects is that, unlike other (nominative) subjects, they do not agree with the verb, an anti-agreement feature which is well-known for Icelandic. In (8) the verb takes the third person singular while the subject is third person plural. In (9) the verb also appears with third person singular whereas the subject is first person singular.

(8) Guerpir   lor   estuet   les chevals
     abandon.INF them.DAT.3PL necessitate.3SG the horses
     'They had to abandon the horses.'
     (*Le Bel Inconnu*, year 1214, line 1440)

(9) Kar mei   meïsme   estoet   avant aler
     since me.DAT.1SG myself.1SG necessitate.3SG ahead go.INF
     'Since I myself alone should go ahead.'
     (*La Chanson de Roland*, year 1080, line 2858)

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[3] A more neutral term that has been used in the literature is 'dative substitution' (Smith 1994).
[4] It turns out that in the statistical research on Icelandic case-marking reported in Barðdal (2001; see, in particular, p. 89), around 93–94% of all subjects turned out to be nominative, 4–6% dative (depending on text-types, highest in the spoken language), 1.2% accusative and only 0.2% genitive. Thus, it appears that genitive subjects are not very common in Icelandic either. This suggests that Old French and Icelandic are thus not so different.

Agreement phenomena in Old French will be addressed in Section 3. In that section, it is argued that in Old French tense rather than agreement is responsible for the licensing of nominative case. It is also shown that, despite the fact that an expletive pronoun in the form of *il* 'it' starts surfacing very early in Old French impersonal constructions, so-called little *pro* cannot be considered the subject of Old French impersonal constructions. The rest of the paper is organised as follows. In section 4, I introduce the operation Stylistic Fronting and the data from Old French showing that such a process is available at that stage of the grammar. Section 5 makes a connection between SFronted elements and oblique subject XPs, and accounts for why V3 configurations are possible in Old French. It is argued in that section that SFronted elements and oblique subjects target a special Topic position above TP. Section 6 summarizes the findings introduced in this paper. In the next section (Section 2), I show that the preverbal oblique elements introduced above have all the properties of true dative subjects rather than I-nominals in the sense of Moore & Perlmutter (2000).

2. Subject properties of non-nominative subjects in Old French

The purpose of this section is to show that quirky subjects in Old French have all the properties of subjects (the case of Icelandic, Andrews 1976, Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985, Sigurðsson 1989), but not of so-called I-nominals (in the sense of Moore & Perlmutter 2000).[5] The standard tests for the status of subjects in the literature are: (i) First position in declarative clauses; (ii) First position in subordinate clauses; (iii) reflexivisation; (iv) subject-verb inversion (in V1 and V2 environ-ments); (v) control (i.e. being a controllee); (vi) conjunction reduction; (vii) Subject-to-subject raising (raising contexts); (viii) subject-to-object raising (Exceptional Case Marking configurations). I was able to find conclusive examples for (i)–(vii), but not for the remaining property.

Before we proceed, it must be noted that there is cross-linguistic variation as to what can serve as a test for subjecthood.[6] I will thus show for each example that involves a quirky subject its equivalent with a nominative subject.

Quirky subjects occur in what is called in the traditional literature 'impersonal constructions'. The latter contain impersonal verbs whose properties are very different from non-impersonal, i.e. personal, predicates.

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[5] It must be noted that, although Moore and Perlmutter (2000) claim that German quirky subjects are in fact I-nominals, this hypothesis has recently been seriously challenged by Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005).

[6] A case in point is Reviewer #1's remark that conjunction reduction and clause-bound reflexivization are not possible subject tests in Old Icelandic (see for example Rögnvaldsson 1990).

Impersonal verbs in Old French were numerous and were used often: this is reported in many grammars of Old French. In the present paper, I concentrate on the following verbs:[7]

(10) a. *plaire*   'to please'
   b. *chaloir*   'to matter/to bother'
   c. *estovoir*   'to be necessary'
   d. *covenir*   'to be convenient'
   e. *loisir*   'to be possible'
   f. *faillir*   'to fail'
   g. *pleisir*   'to please'
   h. *prendre*   (in the sense of) 'to start/begin'
   i. *souvenir*   'to remember'
   j. *doloir*   'to regret/to deplore'

Some of these verbs involve a unique subcategorization frame/argument structure Dat-(Nom), while others are alternating predicates, i.e. personal predicates, with a Nom-(Dat) subcategorization frame/argument structure. The following three examples involve verbs of the first type: *chaloir* 'to matter/to bother' (11), *loisir* 'to be possible' (12) and *faillir* 'to fail' (13).[8]

(11) ne li   chaut si vait   mal ou bien
    not him.DAT care.3SG if go.3SG bad or good
    'He doesn't care whether or not he's well.'
    (*Tristan*, year 1172, line 956)

(12) Que plus   remenoir ne li   loist
    that no.more return.INF not him.DAT can.3SG
    'that it is impossible for him to return.'
    (*Le Chevalier au Lion*, year 1179, line 3342)

(13) Sa compaignie ne me   faut
    his company   not me.DAT fail.3SG
    'I do not miss his company.'
    (*Narcisus et Dané*, year between 1155 and 1170, line 807)

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[7] I concentrate on impersonal verbs that involve subject experiencers and leave aside so-called weather verbs which have also been dubbed 'impersonal verbs' (e.g. *Tone et pluet*, *vante et esclaire*, Énéas 191). I also leave aside impersonal constructions such *estre besoin* and *estre mestier* both meaning 'to be necessary' since they are marginal at best. Impersonal constructions that involve unaccusative verbs are also left out of the discussion (see Dufresne 2006 for such contexts).

[8] A note on *faillir* is in order, since at first sight it is not obvious that *faillir* in (13) is a so-called impersonal verb. The predicate *faillir* originally meant 'to fail/to lack' and later mutated into another verb *falloir* 'to be necessary', which is the form known to speakers of Modern French. Alongside personal verbs such as *devoir* 'must' which expresses obligation *faut* starts appearing from the 13th century and enters into direct competition with *estovoir*.

The second type of impersonal verbs can alternate with a personal variant. Although this kind of examples is extremely rare, (14) shows that *estovoir* 'to be necessary' can be personal. *Une pucele* 'a young girl' is the nominative subject of *estovoir*, while *l'* 'him' is its accusative pronominal object.

(14) Une pucele,   filla   d'un chivalier,
     a   young.girl   daughter   of-a knight
     L'estovoit   paistra a   un   orin   coller
     him.ACC-necessitate.3SG   feed   to a   golden spoon
     'A young girl, daughter of a knight, had to feed him with a golden spoon.'
     (*Alexandre I*, Arsenal, 5, year 1120, 37–38, in Buridant: 400)

Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005) have a very interesting discussion about alternating predicates. These are found not only in Modern Icelandic and Faroese, but also existed in Old English (Allen 1995) and in Mainland Scandinavian languages across the centuries (Barðdal 1998) as well as in Old Norse-Icelandic texts and the Gothic bible (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005). In all the examples that I introduce in this paper, I have controlled for the meaning of the verb selected and have ensured that we are dealing with an impersonal verb and not its personal alternative, should that verb have a personal alternate.

Before we go through our series of tests for subjecthood of quirky subjects in Old French, a few more points must be noted: (i) most Old French impersonal verbs can govern an infinitive. This is achieved either directly or with a preposition *a*, cf. Buridant (2000:406); (ii) in Icelandic it is possible for subjects to be not only dative but also accusative or genitive, whereas in Old French genitive subjects do not appear to be productive at all (as already mentioned at the outset), while accusative subjects, although not uncommon, nevertheless appear less productive than dative subjects; (iii) real quirky subjects, i.e. quirky subjects with the properties of Icelandic quirky subjects (not I-nominals in the sense of Moore & Perlmutter 2000), are no longer available in Modern French. Legendre (1989) argues that dative elements preceding experiencer verbs of the type shown in (15) have underlying subject properties, and are not underlying indirect objects as argued by Belletti & Rizzi (1988).

(15) Jean lui   plaît.
     Jean him/her.DAT   please.3SG
     'Jean pleases him/her.'

However, most of the evidence in support of that claim comes from the fact that dative pronouns can be controllers. The problem with this is that being a controller does not in fact appear to be a subject property, since for example in Germanic and Romance, objects can also be controllers. This is shown in the examples in (16). I will therefore not use the

'controller' test as part of my argumentation for the subjecthood of Old French quirky subjects.

(16) a. I told him$_i$ to PRO$_i$ leave.   (English)
    b. Ég sagði honum$_i$ að   PRO$_i$ fara   (Icelandic)
       I   said him   COMP   leave.INF
       'I told him to leave.'
    c. Je lui$_i$ ai   dit   de   PRO$_i$ partir.   (French)
       I to.him have   said COMP   leave.INF
       'I told him to leave.'

I take it thus that dative elements preceding experiencer verbs in French of the type in (15) are I-nominals in the sense of Moore & Perlmutter (2000).

   At this stage, we have enough relevant background information to begin the series of tests that I announced at the ouset of the present section. As already mentioned, for all the examples that I introduce, I give the nominative counterparts of the relevant quirky examples as a measure of control. First, just like nominative subjects (17), quirky subjects can appear in first position in declarative clauses (18) – *certes* 'still' does not count in the V2 calculus. The emphatic form *moi* 'me' has in this case raised to Spec-CP, a topic/focus position.

(17) **Je**   prent   cest argent qui est miens.
     I.NOM take.1SG this money that is   mine
     'I take this money that is mine.'
     (*Eracle*, year 1180, line 4452)

(18) Certes, **moi**   ne chaut   por les biens
     still   me.OBL not care.3SG for the goods
     'Still, I don't care for the goods.'
     (*L'Escoufle*, year 1200, line 3402)

Second, just like nominative subjects, quirky subjects can appear in first position in subordinate clauses. This is shown in (19) and (20) respectively.

(19) Et quant ge   ving   la,
     and when I   come.PAST.1SG there
     je   trovai   que **elle**   plouroit
     I   find.PAST.1SG that she.NOM   cry.PAST.3SG
     'And when I arrived there, I found that she was crying.'
     (*La vie de Saint Louis*, year 1303, line 605)

(20) bien set   que **lui**   estuet   morir
     well know.3SG that him.DAT necessitate.3SG die.INF
     (*Le Roman de Thèbes*, year 1150, line 9790)

Next, I turn to inversion contexts. Regular nominative subjects either precede the verb or immediately follow it when the verb is preposed,

as shown in (21). Quirky subjects behave identically. When the verb is preposed in a question as illustrated in (22) they appear post-verbally.

(21) ies   **tu**   ivres?
     are.2SG you.NOM drunk
     'Are you drunk?'
     (*Le Roman de Renart*, Branche XI, year 1190, line 2921)

(22) Plest   **vos**   oïr   de une corneile …
     please.3SG you.DAT hear.INF of a   carrion-crow
     'Do you want to hear the story about a carrion crow?'
     (*Guillaume d'Angleterre*, 12th century, 40, 1, in Buridant 2000:690)

Next, I turn to reflexivization. (23) shows that a nominative pronoun *je* 'I' can bind an anaphor *moi meïsme* 'myself'. In the same vein, in (24) it is the dative pronoun *lui* which binds the anaphor *soi meïsme* 'himself' (the element *de soi meïsme* has been Stylistically Fronted. More on Stylistic Fronting below).

(23) J'aim   moi meïsme, c'est folie!
     I.NOM-like.1SG me self,   it-is craziness
     'I$_i$ like myself$_i$, it's crazy!'
     (*Lai de Narcisse*, year 1170, line 588)

(24) de soi meïsme li   souvient
     of self self   him.DAT remember.3SG
     'He$_i$ remembers himself$_i$, i.e. he remembers his situation…'
     (*Eracle*, year 1180, line 2846)

Next, dative subjects in Old French can be found in raising contexts. In (25), the verb *commencer* 'start'/'begin' is the raising verb, while *trembler* 'tremble'/'shake' is the impersonal verb. In (26) *venir* 'come about/happen' is the raising verb, while *plaisir* 'please' is the impersonal verb.

(25) Lez cors   à   trembler leur   commence,
     the.PL hearts.ACC to   tremble.INF them.DAT start.3SG
     Et lez   cuers   leur   estreint   et serre
     and the.PL hearts.NOM them.DAT compress.3SG and squeeze.3SG
     Literally: 'It starts trembling in their bodies and it compresses and squeezes in their hearts.'
     (*Roman du Comte d'Anjou*, year 1316, lines 3766–3767, in Brunot & Bruneau 1956:315)

(26) se Deu   vient   a pleisir
     if God.DAT come.3SG to please.INF
     'If it be God's will.' (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, line 1120)

Next, I turn to control environments. Among the subject properties of quirky elements, control infinitives have been regarded as one of the most reliable subject tests for many languages (Moore & Perlmutter 2000, Eythórsson & Barðdal 2003). It is well known that, whereas subjetcs can be left unexpressed in a sentence, objects resist being deleted. Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005) illustrate this contraint by introducing English and Icelandic examples such as those in (27) and (28). The verb 'repeat' in English and Icelandic can select for a subcategorization frame containing two arguments, a nominative subject and a reflexive accusative object. In (27a) and (28a) the nominative subject has been left unexpressed on identity with the nominative subject of the matrix verb 'promise'. In contrast, the reflexive object cannot be omitted in control infinitives despite the fact that it refers back to the subject of both the infinitive clause and the matrix clause in both languages. This is illustrated in (27b) and (28b).

(27) a.   John promised __ not to repeat himself.
     b. *John promised __ not to repeat __.

(28) a.   Jóhannes   lofaði   að __   endurtaka sig ekki.
          Jóhannes.NOM promised to PRO.NOM repeat.INF self not
     b. *Jóhannes lofaði að __ endurtaka __ ekki.

The problem is that Old French exhibits a general lack of morphological realization of reflexive markers such as *se* 'self' which is the first lexical marker that comes to mind for the translation of 'himself/herself'. Since *se* need not be pronounced in most contexts (see discussion in Buridant 2000:308–309, and, as illustration, example (5) in which no reflexive element surfaces), another element that can function as a reflexive marker is needed to make the point achieved by the English and Icelandic examples above. I thus use pronouns such as *lui* 'him', which can be bound in Old French. The point that I wish to make with example (29) is that the object pronoun is absolutely necessary, the sentence would not be grammatical otherwise. In contrast, it is possible for the subject of the infinitive to be left unexpressed in control structures.[9] This is shown by (30) where the subject of the infinitival verb *chanter* 'sing' can be left unexpressed.

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[9] In Modern French, pronouns like *lui* et *elle* can still be used as reflexives after certain prepositions, as shown in (i).

(i) Il$_i$ est fier   de lui$_i$.
    he is   proud of him
    'He$_i$ is proud of himself$_i$.'

(29) Il$_i$ vengerat   e lui$_i$ e li.
     he avenge.FUT.3SG and him and her
     'He$_i$ will avenge himself$_i$ and her.
     (*Lais*, Yonec, year 1160, line 332)

(30) a. qu'il   veut   ceste chançon chanter
        that-he.NOM want.3SG this song   sing.INF
        'that he wants to sing this song.'
        (*Le Roman de la Rose*, year 1227, line 1768)
     b. il$_i$ veut ceste chançon PRO$_{i(NOM)}$ chanter

Now I have reviewed the evidence for the behaviorial difference between subjects and objects and concluded that, contrary to objects, subjects can be left unexpressed, let me demonstrate that a dative subject in Old French can be a controllee, i.e. that the subject of an impersonal predicate in the infinitive can be dropped. The relevant example is (31a) where *a ce* 'to this' has been topicalized and the verb has raised to C^0. (31b) shows the representation prior to the subject-verb inversion where the subject controls the dative PRO associated with *faillir* 'fail'. The PP *a ce* 'to this' has raised to Spec-CP. In sum, oblique subjects in Old French behave as nominative subjects with regard to the ability to be left unexpressed in control infinitives.[10]

(31) a. Si vos voelent   ocirre ou prandre:
        if you want.2PL   kill.INF or take.INF
        A ce ne   pueent il   faillir,
        to this not   can.3PL they.NOM   fail.INF
        'They cannot fail to kill or capture you, as they may choose.'
        (*Le Chevalier au Lion*, year 1179, lines 988–989)
     b. il$_i$ pueent PRO$_{i\ (DAT)}$ faillir

Reviewer #2 asks whether it is certain that *pouvoir* 'can' in Old French is a control verb and not a raising verb. In the corpus that I used, I have not been able to find *pouvoir* interpreted as a raising verb. It appears clear, however, that *pouvoir* is a control verb in (31) and that *pouvoir* can be a control verb independently with non-impersonal predicates, as the example in (32) shows, since it contains a nominative controller.

(32) a. car   il ne puet pas retorner
        because he not can not return.INF
        'because he cannot return.'
     b. il$_i$ ne peut pas PRO$_{i(NOM)}$ retorner
        (*Énéas*, year 1150, line 1965)

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[10] The frequency of impersonal predicates embedded under control verbs is low in Old French, just as in the case of Modern Icelandic (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005:833). Therefore, examples such as (31) are not easy to find.

Finally, I turn to conjunction reduction, a test which measures an argument's ability to control the omission of a subject in a second conjunct (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005). Example (33) shows that a nominative pronoun with the same referent can be present in both conjuncts while (34) shows a non-nominative pronoun with the same referent can appear in both conjuncts.

(33) Quant **il**   ot   feite   sa   proiere
     when   he.NOM have.3SG done   his   prayer
     Et   **il**   s'an   revenoit   arriere
     and   he.NOM self-of.it come.PAST behind
     'When he had done his prayer and he came back.'
     (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 1857–1858)

(34) que   la viande **lor**   failloit et **les**   covenoit
     that   the meat them.DAT fail.3SG and them.ACC suit.3SG
      departir li un   ça   et   li autre   la.
      leave.INF the one here   and   the other   there
     'that they lacked meat and that it was convenient for them to leave one here, the other there.'
     (*La Queste del Saint Graal*, year c. 1220, p. 149)

Examples where a nominative pronoun appears in the first conjunct while a non-nominative pronoun with the same referent appears in the second conjunct are extremely difficult to find. A priori, this may be due to the fact that object pronouns in Old French are, contrary to subjects pronouns, clitics. Thus, it is a possibility that the conjunction reduction test cannot be applied to Old French. There could also be a constraint of the sort described by Fanselow (2002) for German, namely that object-initial structures may be reduced only if the cases of the two objects match (the case identity condition). When the two cases match, the second pronominal form can be deleted as shown by (33) on the one hand and (34) on the other.

   Nonetheless, I have found one example that seems to involve conjunction reduction with a nominative subject in the first conjunct and a dative subject in the second conjunct. The pronoun *lui* in (35) is the indirect object of *demander* 'ask': normally, such pronouns should appear before the highest verb (Old French had clitic climbing), but the form in (35), although archaic in the period mentioned, is attested (Buridant 2000:443). The form *prist* is from *prendre*, which here is used as an impersonal verb, see Pearce (1990) and the examples in (36) – Modern French still has expressions of the type *Tout d'un coup*, *il lui prit de partir* 'suddenly, he decided to leave' (literally: it took him to leave). The quirky subject in (35) is dropped, possibly to avoid repetition of the pronoun *li/lui*, an example of so-called haplology. The fact that the lower *lui* has not undergone clitic climbing suggests that

the higher pronominal form, although phonologically deleted, is really there syntactically.[11]

(35) **Il**   la   regarde e   Ø prist   lui
      he.NOM her.ACC   stares   and   take.3SG her.DAT
      a   demander
      to   ask.INF
      'He stares at her and starts to ask her.'
      (*Guillaume d'Angleterre*, 12th century, line 1281 in Buridant 2000:443)

(36) a. De plusurs choses a   remembrer   li   prist,
          of several things Comp remember.INF him.DAT take.PAST.3SG
          'He started to remember several things.'
          (*La Chanson de Roland*, year 1080, line 2376)
      b. Talent   li   prist   d'aler   chacier
          eagerness him.ACC take.PAST.3SG Comp-go.INF hunt.INF
          'He felt like going hunting.'
          (*Lais*, year 1160, line 76)

This concludes section 2. Its aim was to show that non-nominative subjects in Old French had all the properties of subjects. They could: (i) appear in first position in main clauses; (ii) appear in first position in embedded clauses; (iii) bind a reflexive; (iv) undergo subject-verb inversion; (v) be a controllee; (vi) undergo conjunction reduction; (vii) be part of raising constructions. The next section deals with agreement in Old French in the context of impersonal verbs.

3. Agreement

One question that arises at this point has to do with agreement: if preverbal dative elements are subjects, and thus occupy the canonical subject position, why is it the case that no agreement can occur between the quirky subject and the verb? As was shown in the introduction, in Old French when a quirky subject is present, the verb always appears as third person singular. This is also what happens in Icelandic as illustrated by (37).

(37) Stelpunum   var   hjálpað.
      the girls.DAT.3PL.FEM was.3SG helped.NEUTER.3SG
      'The girls were helped.'
      (Sigurðsson 1992:3)

One possibility worth investigating is the idea that agreement between the quirky subject and the verb actually obtains, as suggested by Boeckx

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[11] Haplology is a deletion process best described as the avoidance of identical phonetic or phonological material in morphologically complex words. It occurs in almost any language with enough morphology to create phonetically identical sequences which requires adjacent phonemes to be contrastive.

(2000:365), thus making quirky subjects fully fledged subjects. The proposal is that the agreement cannot be morphologically realized for independent reasons and surfaces as default (third person singular). This is an idea compatible with Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993; Noyer 1997; Embick & Noyer 2001) and has been popular in the literature lately (Rivero 2004, Sedighi 2005, etc.). It allows the unification of structural and inherent case, a welcome result from the perspective of minimalism.

However, there are problems with such a proposal as highlighted by Boeckx (2003) himself. Some of these problems are irrelevant to the issue at hand, thus I will leave them aside. One problem worth mentioning, however, has to do with the licensing of nominative case. Let me explain.

Although the verb in an Icelandic quirky subject construction surfaces as default third person when the preverbal element is dative, accusative or genitive, in case the postverbal element is nominative, the verb agrees with the nominative NP, not with the quirky subject. This is illustrated in (38).

(38) Henni   voru   gefnar bækurnar.
     her.DAT were.3PL given books.NOM.PL
     'She was given the books.'
     (Sigurðsson 1992:5)

This Agree relation, however, is blocked when there is an intervener between the verbal agreement and the postverbal nominative element as illustrated in (39): a case of defective intervention in the sense of Chomsky (2000, 2001). The φ-set of *henni* (her) blocks the satisfaction of Match between the φ-sets of T and *þeir* (they), i.e. the φ-set of *henni* (her) constitutes a defective intervener.

(39) Mér   fannst/*fundust henni leiðast þeir.
     me.DAT seemed.3SG/3PL her.DAT be-bored they.NOM
     'It seemed to me that she was bored with them.'
     (Boeckx 2000:370)

The postverbal NP nevertheless appears in the nominative case. Boeckx (2000) has no explanation as to why the nominative can be licensed without agreement. This is because Boeckx (2000, 2003), like Chomsky (1981, 1995, 2000, 2001) and others (e.g. Schütze 1997), follows the so-called George-Kornfilt hypothesis according to which nominative case is incumbent on agreement properties within the functional domain.

In order to save the George-Kornfilt hypothesis, Boeckx (2003) proposes that when the subject surfaces with a non-nominative case, v^0 is responsible for the assignment of nominative case if a postverbal NP is present (see also Alexiadou 2001); or rather v^0 is endowed with the relevant φ-features that permit the assignment of nominative case to the postverbal nominal. However, I note that in Old French the verb can

surface as third person singular even in the presence of a nominative-marked DP and without a defective intervener. This is illustrated by (40).

(40) Buenes   armes   li   covanroit
    good.NOM.3PL weapons.NOM.3PL him.DAT need.3SG
    'He needs good weapons.'
    (*Enéas*, year 1150, line 4327)

The DP is not in a postverbal position because it has undergone Stylistic Fronting (more on this in the next section). The important point, however, is that Nominative valuation is clearly possible in the absence of agreement. There is no intervener between T^0 and the postverbal XP because *li* 'him' has cliticized to T^0 and has thus shifted out of the way. This means that matching does occur between the φ-set of T^0 and the φ-set of *buenes armes* (good weapons) prior to movement of the DP to the left periphery of the clause.

   It turns out that such nominative-agreement mismatches are also exhibited in Icelandic. The following set of examples is parallel to the French one introduced in (40), since there is in this case no intervener.[12]

(41) a. þeim   likaði   ekki   þessar athugasemdir.
       them.DAT.3SG liked.3SG not   these comments.NOM.3PL
       'They did not like these comments.' (Sigurðsson 1992)
    b. Honum   myndi   alltaf   líka   þeir.
       him.DAT.3SG would.3SG always like they.NOM.3PL
       'He would always like them.' (Eythórsson & Barðdal
       2005:860).

Rather than assuming that v^0 and its relevant φ-features are responsible for the licensing of nominative case in the relevant contexts, I follow a growing trend according to which Case and agreement are not reflexes of a unique syntactic relation after all. For example, Bejar (2003) shows that in Georgian, as (42) illustrates, an object can be assigned nominative Case even though it cannot control number agreement. In (42a), person agreement is with the subject, not the object *cigni* 'books', while (42b) and more explicitly (42c) show that number agreement is not possible with the object despite the fact that it receives nominative case.

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[12] Like in Icelandic (i), it is also possible in early Old French for the predicate to agree with the postverbal nominative logical subject, as shown in (ii):

(i) Honum myndu   alltaf líka þeir.
   him.DAT would.3PL always like they.NOM
   'He would always like them.' (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005:860).
(ii) Il i   vont ci   vieil   prestre.
    it there go.3PL these.NOM.MAS.3PL old.NOM.MAS.3PL priests.NOM.MAS.3PL
    'There go these old priests.'
    (*Aucassin et Nicolette*, year 1220, 111, 6, in Arteaga & Herschensohn 2004:5).

(42) a.   (Me)   cign-i   da-v-c'er-e
          I.1SG.ERG book.NOM   PREV-1SG-write-INDIC.AOR
          'I wrote the/a book.' (Hewitt 1995:117)
     b.   (Me)   cign-eb-i   da-v-c'er-e
          I.1SG.ERG book.NOM.PL PREV-1SG-write-INDIC.AOR
          'I wrote the books.'
     c. *(Me)   cign-eb-i   da-v-c'er-en/t
          I.1SG.ERG book-NOM.PL PREV-1SG-write-INDIC.AOR.PL/PL
          'I wrote the books.' (Bejar 2003:180)

A rising consensus is that tense rather than agreement is responsible for nominative Case assignment (Haeberli 1999, 2002, Pesetsky & Torrego 2001, Rivero & Geber 2004, Alboiu 2005, etc.).[13] We know independently that in Old French it is possible for tense to license Nominative subjects: Old French had so-called personal infinitives where nominative subjects could surface without the presence of agreement features on the verb (Roberts 1993). The example in (43) is an illustration of this phenomenon: the verb is in the infinitival form, while a nominative subject is nevertheless licensed (the nominative subject *sa color* 'his color' is postverbal).

(43) Lors por revenir   sa   color…
     then for return.INF his.NOM color.NOM
     'Then, in order for his color to return…'
     (*Erec et Enide*, 12th century, line 5222)

Another possibility worth entertaining at this point is that Old French quirky subject constructions involve an empty category akin to *pro* that would be equivalent to the expletive pronominal form *il* (which contrary to English *there* has the relevant φ, D and Case features) and that it is this element that enters into an Agree relation with the verb. In fact, overt expletives in Old French start developing rather early, but are in competition with their null counterparts until quite late (16th century, see Buridant 2000). Hence the availability of strings such as *Il me faut* 'I need', *Il me souvient* 'I remember', etc. This would make quirky subject constructions equivalent to existential sentences, where the postverbal element surfaces in nominative while the verbal form is third person singular as (44) illustrates.

(44) Tant   i   avrat   de besanz   esmerez
     so-many there be.FUT.3SG of need.NOM pure-gold.NOM
     'There will be so much need of pure gold.'
     (*La Chanson de Roland*, year 1080, line 132, in Buridant 2000:427)

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[13] Another possibility, which is worth investigating, but which I will not pursue here, is that Case is not part of narrow syntax, but part of PF as in Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993, Embick & Noyer to appear).

On this view, the difference between (45a) and (45b) would thus be a simple alternation between a null subject expletive, i.e. *pro*, and a fully specified expletive pronoun *il* 'it'.

(45) a. si li   covenoit   a remenoir
      if him.DAT necessitate.PAST.3SG to stay.INF
    b. si il   li   covenoit   a remenoir
      if it.EXPL him.DAT necessitate.PAST.3SG to stay.INF
      'if he had to stay.'

However, there is a better solution. Empty categories have not been very popular since the advent of minimalism, and many researchers have abandoned *pro* in favor of an alternative analysis (see, however, Rezac 2004 and Alboiu 2005 for a revival of *pro*). Thus, unless shown otherwise, postulating *pro* is theory-dependent, since it presupposes the existence of null arguments (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005). Like Haeberli (2002), I would like to propose that the licensing of default agreement does not involve movement of some XP (overt or non-overt) to an agreement projection. It is sufficient for the verbal head containing φ-features to enter into an Agree relation with T^0. When the verb raises overtly to T^0, as it did in Old French, it also satisfies the D feature associated with T^0 (Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998). It remains to be determined what the trigger is for the raising of quirky subjects to Spec-TP in Old French. An answer to this question will be provided in the next section. Suffice it to say for the moment that, as in Boeckx (2003), Move may take place solely under Match; Agree not being a prerequisite for Move.

Interestingly, Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005) discuss the case of German, a language which exhibits impersonal constructions with and without overt expletives: (46a) versus (46b).

(46) a. Mir   ist   kalt.
      me.DAT   is   cold
    b. Es   ist mir   kalt.
      it   is me.DAT cold
      'I'm cold.'

The fact that German *es* can optionally cooccur with the dative *mir* in the impersonal predicate in (46), while *það* in Icelandic cannot cooccur with the dative *mér*, as shown in (47), has been taken to support the claim that subject-like obliques in German are not syntactic subjects while their Icelandic counterparts are.

(47) *það   er mér   kalt.
    it.EXPL is me.DAT cold
    'I'm freezing.' (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005:865)

However, Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005) show that this is not a valid comparison, since only indefinite arguments can occur with *það* in Icelandic while the same is not true, or at least not to the same extent, for German. Whereas definite oblique subjects cannot occur with *það* in Icelandic, it turns out that indefinite oblique subjects can as illustrated by (48).

(48) það   er einhverjum strákum kalt.
     it.EXPL is some.DAT   boys.DAT cold
     'Some boys are freezing.' (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005:865)

Eythórsson & Barðdal (2005) give many other arguments against treating impersonal constructions German and Icelandic differently. The point about Old French is that it definitely patterns with Icelandic when it comes to inversion contexts. Whereas German *es* 'it' can occur optionally with impersonal predicates in inverted positions (49a), *það* is unacceptable in such contexts in Icelandic (49b).

(49) a. Mir   ist   (es)   kalt.
        me.DAT   is   it.EXPL cold
     b. Mér/Einhverjum strákum er   (*það) kalt.
        me.DAT/some.DAT boys.DAT is   it.EXPL cold
        (Eythórsson & Barðdal 2005:866)

In Old French, strings of the sort illustrated in (50) where *il* 'it' surfaces in Spec-TP are not attested (this has been noted before (Arteaga & Herschensohn 2004), in non-inversion contexts, *il* is used to maintain V2 order according to Arteaga 1994).

(50) *Moi ne chaut   **il** por les biens.
      me   not care.3SG it for the goods
      'I don't care for the goods.'

In embedded contexts, strings of the kind found in (51) are not found either. These are the putative cases where the expletive subject would be rejected in a postverbal position.

(51) *Si a sa mere plest   **il**.
      if to his mother please.3SG it
      'If it pleases his mother.'

Finally, I would like to point out that if *pro* was really the subject in impersonal Old French constructions, then it would be difficult to explain why oblique subjects have properties of subjects rather than of objects (see the series of tests introduced in section 2, especially cases like that of conjunction reduction).

   This concludes section 3. In this section, it was shown that nominative case is dependent, not on agreement, but on tense and that the

pronominal features of the Old French verb check the [D] feature of T^0 in impersonal constructions (just as in the case of personal constructions). Finally, it was shown that *pro* cannot be the subject in Old French impersonal constructions. This means that, at the relevant stage of French grammar (in fact very early on) impersonal constructions with expletive *il* and impersonal constructions with oblique subjects were in competition. Eventually, the latter disappeared. An explanation as to why this option was no longer available in later stages of French grammar will be given in Section 5.

4. Stylistic Fronting

The goal of the present section is to introduce an operation called Stylistic Fronting. Consider first the examples in (52). At first blush, they appear to involve V2 order in embedded clauses, when it is otherwise well known that Old French was an asymmetric V2 language (Roberts 1993).[14] Mathieu (2006) follows Cardinaletti & Roberts (1991/2002) and Roberts (1993) in arguing that this kind of example is best viewed as SF. In (52a), the PP *a eus* 'to them' is fronted, whereas in (52b) it is the PP *a la vostre bonté* 'against your good will' that is displaced.[15]

(52) a. quant [a eus]ᵢ est   li rois venus tᵢ, ...
        when to them be.3SG the king come
        'When the king came to them, ...'
        (*Guillaume d'Angleterre*, 12th century, in Dupuis 1989:148)
     b. s'[a   la vostre bonté]ᵢ vousist   mon pere
        if-against the your   good–will want.PAST.3SG my   father
          prendre garde tᵢ
          take.INF precaution
        'If against your good will my father wanted to take precautions.'
        (*Huon le Roi – Le Vair Palefroi*, 13th century, in Adams 1987:19)

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[14] An asymmetric V2 language is a language where V2 is only possible in main clauses whereas a symmetric V2 language is a language where V2 is attested not only in main, but also in embedded clauses. Icelandic and Yiddish have been claimed to be symmetric V2 languages (Rögnvaldsson & Thráinsson 1990 for Icelandic and Santorini 1994 for Yiddish; note, however, that the claim according to which Icelandic is a symmetric V2 language is not uncontroversial).

[15] Labelle (2006) makes a distinction between Early Old French and Late Old French in her study of the left periphery in that language. She argues like Côté (1995) that Early Old French is a symmetric V2 language. Therefore, according to her, inversion in embedded contexts are not cases of Stylistic Fronting.

Apparent V2 patterns also turn up in impersonal constructions involving embedded clauses as illustrated by the examples in (53) and are very common with impersonal verbs.[16]

(53) Amors le vialt   et   il i   saut,
     love it want.3SG and he there jump.3SG
     Que   [de   la honte]ᵢ ne li   chaut tᵢ
     because of   the shame not him.DAT   care.3SG
     'So he jumps in, since love will have it so, feeling no concern about the shame.' (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 379/380)

The example in (54) shows that not only XPs can be SFronted in impersonal constructions, but so can heads. The infinitive *aler* 'go' has been raised from the complement position of *estoet* 'be necessary' to the front of the clause. Since this clause is embedded, it cannot be a case of V2 topicalization since Old French is a symmetric V2 language.

(54) En Sarraguce sai   ben qu'alerᵢ   m'estoet   tᵢ
     to Zaragoza know.1SG well that-go.INF me.DAT-necessitate.3SG
     'To Zaragoza I know well that it is necessary for me to go.'
     (*Chanson de Roland*, 1080, line 292, in Buridant 2000:317)

In Mathieu (2006) it is shown that SF of heads cannot be analysed as remnant movement (i.e. movement of a VP rather than a simple V). Part of the argumentation against a remnant analysis is that there are examples that involve the raising of a verbal head while its complement is left behind. Second, German remnant movement presupposes that VP topicalization and scrambling are independent options in the language, which indeed they are (Müller 2000). However, VP topicalization to Spec-Top does not appear to be possible in Old French (it is not available in Icelandic either, Holmberg and Platzack 1995:223, Holmberg 2000: 470). In addition, it turns out that VP is not a category that is among those that can be SFronted. This is a fact for Icelandic (cf. Holmberg 2000) and this appears to be the case for Old French too. Third, although (a kind of) object shift appears to be available in Old French (Zaring 1998), scrambling does not seem to be operative in the language. In any case, it must be noted that in (55) the constituent *une femme de hault lignage* 'a woman from a high rank' has not evacuated the VP (or *v*P). The verbal head that has raised past the main predicate of the sentence has left behind an XP which forms a tight unit with that verb (the verbal expression *prendre a marriage*). The complement of the *prendre en mariage* appears after rather than before the constituent *a marriage*.

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[16] Fixed expressions of the kind *si besoin est* 'if need be' have remained in the present form of the language (*si besoinz est*, Aliscans, 1586–1587).

(55) et   pour cela   Vouldroye   que vous alissiez
    and   for   this   want.COND.1SG that you contact.SUBJ.2PL
    Au   Saint Pere   et   empetrissiez
    to-the Holy Father and   ask.SUBJ.2PL
    Que   prendre$_i$ peusse   t$_i$ a   marriage
    that   take.INF   can.SUBJ.1SG   in   marriage
    Une   femme   de   hault   lignage
    a   woman   of   high   lineage
    'and for this I would like you to contact and ask the Holy Father
    whether I can marry a woman from a higher rank.'
    (*L'Estoire de Griseldis*, year 1395, 1926–1929)

Moreover, non-specific indefinite complements of SFronted verbs can be stranded. This suggests that the stranded nominal could not have been scrambled, since as is well-known that Germanic scrambling does not tolerate movement of non-specific indefinite phrases. Since Old French has Germanic properties, one of them being V2, I take it that scrambling in Old French if it existed should resemble Germanic scrambling. In (56a) we have a bare noun (which typically takes low scope and is generally non-specific, Carlson 1977, Van Geenhoven 1998, Farkas & de Swart 2003, among many others) and in (56b) a PP which is part of an complex expression (*prendre a la letre*). The PP *a la letre* is also non-specific, *la* being in this case non-referential (in this respect, *a la letre* functions exactly like *a marriage* in (55)).

(56) a. Ocis fu   mes amis,   sans   faille,
       killed be.PAST.3SG my friends without   fail
       Qui   faire$_i$ me voloit   t$_i$ honnor
       who   be.INF me want.PAST.3SG   honor
       'My friends, who wanted to honor me, were killed.'
       (*Le Bel Inconnu*, year 1214, lines 1616–1617)
    b. et   tu   les   as   bien entenduz,
       and   you them have.2SG   well heard
       qui   pris$_i$ doivent   estre t$_i$ a   la   letre
       who   taken must.3PL   be.INF   to   the letter
       'and you heard them well, those who must be taken literally.'
       (*Le Roman de la Rose*, year 1227, lines 3124–3125)

In Mathieu (2006) it is argued that SFronted XPs move to the specifier of a Topic projection and that SFronted heads raise to the head position of that functional head. The postulation of a special functional category to host SFronted elements is motivated by the main pattern that emerges from Mathieu's (2006) study of old texts in Old French: two elements can undergo SF at the same time, but the two elements cannot both be XPs or both be heads. To illustrate double SF constructions, the following examples are given: they show raising of a

DP + negation in (57a), a PP + infinitive in (57b), and a DP + a past participle in (57c).

(57) a. Quant la   pucele   le   salue,
        when   the young-girl   him   salute.3SG
        Qui   [sa boche]$_j$ pas$_i$
        who   his mouth   not
        n'en   palue   t$_i$ t$_j$
        not-EN   turn-white.3SG
        Ne   ne   li   a   neant   costé.
        neither not to-him have.3SG   nothing cost
        'The young girl's greeting which was not unpleasant did not cost him anything.' (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 1570–1573)
     b. Se   lieve   sus,   et   cil   le   voient
        self get-up.3SG quickly   and   those him see.3PL
        Qui [avoec lui]$_j$ aler$_i$ devoient   t$_i$ t$_j$;
        who   with   him go.INF must.PAST.3PL
        'He gets up quickly and they, who should have gone with him, see him.'
        (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 2203–2205)
     c. Cele dame une fee   estoit
        that lady a   fairy be.PAST.3SG
        Qui [l'anel]$_j$ doné$_i$ li   avoit   t$_i$ t$_j$,
        who   the-ring   give to-him have.PAST.3SG
        'That woman was a fairy who had given him the ring.'
        (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 2357–2358)

The pattern illustrated in (57) suggests that SF involves movement to a functional category: XPs raise to a specifier while X^0s move to a head.

   Icelandic also exhibits the double SF pattern as has been recently described by Hrafnbjargarson (2003, 2004). On this view, in (58) *áreiðanlega* 'undoubtedly' moves to the specifier of a Focus phrase while the head *ekki* 'not' raises to the Focus head. According to Hrafnbjargarson, both Sfronted elements are focalized; hence the capital letters in the translation.

(58) Hann   henti   öllu sem áreiðanlega$_i$ ekki$_j$ hafði t$_i$ t$_j$
     he   threw-away all   that undoubtedly not   had
        verið tæmt.
        been emptied
     'He threw away everything that had UNDOUBTEDLY NOT been emptied.'
     (Hrafnbjargarson 2004:124)

The difference between Hrafnbjargarson's proposal and mine is that he postulates a Focus rather than a Topic projection for SFronted elements

(see also Fischer 2004b for the same kind of idea in relation to Old Catalan). On my view, SFronted elements are the opposite of focused elements: although they can be anaphoric, they cannot be contrastive or presupposed. They are simply asserted background topics (with the same semantics as appositive relative clauses as described by Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet 2000). I refer to this Topic phrase as TopicP+ to differentiate it from TopicP which hosts topicalized elements raised in V2 contexts (Roberts & Roussou 2002, Labelle & Hirschbühler 2005). In fact, it is because an element α has been shifted out of the way that the most embedded element can receive focus (this is reminiscent of P-movement as in Zubizarreta 1998).

In order to account for the subject gap requirement that accompanies SF, it is further proposed that SF is movement through Spec-TP (rather than movement *to* Spec-TP, as in Holmberg 2000). In order to reach Spec-Top+, an XP must pass through Spec-TP, which must in that case be empty. Spec-TP is available as an escape hatch, because TP is a (strong) phase in Old French.[17] T^0 thus comes with a *p* (peripheral) feature (an optional feature which is added in accordance with the Have an Effect on Output Condition) that attracts elements to Spec-TP for further movement higher up when the need arises.

The connection between the possibility of SF and subject gaps is thus accounted for without the inconvenience of postulating movement of phonological matrices *into* Spec-TP as in Holmberg (2000). The problem raised by movement of heads into specifiers is also avoided under the current analysis while an explanation is given for the fact that two elements can undergo SF (this is not expected under Holmberg's analysis). My proposal nevertheless relies on the idea as in Holmberg (2000) that the EPP can undergo feature fission between [D] (a categorial feature) and [P] (a feature requiring visibility, i.e. a specifier to be filled), with the added twist that: (i) the EPP need not undergo fission; (ii) the features [D] and [P] may not necessarily come packaged as a bundle ([D] can appear on T^0 while [P] can be on Top+; this builds on work from Ritter 1992, 1993, Taraldsen 1994, McGinnis 1995, Sigurðsson 1996, Béjar 2003 where φ-features do not come packaged as bundles). The optionality of SF does not require any special mechanism to circumvent it as in Holmberg's analysis (especially since SF and expletives are not in complementary distribution in Old French as shown in Mathieu 2006). Either the EPP is split with its features scattered on different heads: then, SF is possible; or the EPP is not split (the EPP is a simple [D] or [D] and [P] form a bundle): then, SF cannot be operative.

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[17] See Gallego (2005) for a similar idea in relation to Spanish; since it is a pro-drop language, subjects need not raise to Spec-TP, when they do, they are interpreted as topics, see Barbosa (1995), Alexiadou & Agnostopoulou (1998), among many others, for the idea that Spec-TP is an A′-bar position in pro-drop languages.

One clear prediction that the present theory makes is that although SFronted XPs will not be allowed whenever overt subjects are present, SF of heads will be possible even when an overt subject is present in the sentence. This is because heads do not need to pass through Spec-TP. The prediction is borne out as the example in (59) shows.[18] In this case, the EPP has been split, but both [D] and [P] appear on the same head, i.e. T^0.

(59) L'an   m'a   conté   ce   poise   moi
     L-one to-me-has   told   this   saddens   me
     Que   partir$_i$ <u>vos</u>   volez   del   roi   t$_i$
     that   leave.INF   you   want.2PL   of-the king
     'I've been told – this is what saddens me – that you want to leave the king.'
     (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, lines 141–142)

To summarise section 3, Old French had a position above TP that served as a host for Stylistically Fronted elements. This higher functional category was accessible because the EPP in that language was not only split (as in Holmberg 2000), but its sub-features were scattered on different heads.

5.   The proposal

The aim of the present section is to draw a parallel between SFronted elements and quirky subjects. The hypothesis is that oblique quirky subjects and SFronted XPs target the same position, i.e Spec-Top+ . The prediction is thus that once an oblique quirky subject has been shifted to the left in a pre-verbal position, it is no longer possible to SFront another XP. This prediction is borne out: this is exactly the pattern that we find. (60a) and (60b) are impossible while (60c) and (60d) are well-formed because only one element has been shifted to the left. These facts are not well-known, but stem from the present analysis.

(60) a. *que [de la honte] [a sa mere]   ne chaut
            that of the shame to his mother not matter.3SG
     b. *que [a la mere] [de sa honte] ne chaut
     c. ✔que [de la honte] ne chaut [a sa mere]
     d. ✔qu'[a sa mere] ne chaut [de la honte]
            'that the shame doesn't bother his mother.'

In main clauses two XPs can co-occur. However, this is because V2 is possible, hence one XP, i.e. *de l'otroier* 'to give consent' in (61), can move to Spec-Top (Roberts & Roussou 2002) while the other, i.e. *li cuers* 'the heart', raises to Spec-Top+ .

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[18] Hrafnbjargarson (2004) shows that SF of heads is also possible in Icelandic even when a subject is present.

(61) De   l'otroier   li   cuers li   dialt
  COMP him.ACC-give.INF the heart him.DAT grieve.3SG
  'His heart grieves to give consent.'
  (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, line 968)

These cases of V3 can only be explained if it is assumed that while the first XP raises to the traditional Topic position associated with V2 structures, the second XP raises to a position higher than Spec-TP. It is not possible to assume that *li cuers* 'the heart' has remained in Spec-TP, since this would entail that the verb has not raised to C^0.[19]

 Next, example (5), repeated here as (62), shows that a head can be SFronted beside the fact that a quirky subject in the form of a pronominal is present in the derivation. This is expected if SFronted verbs raise to $Top+^0$ without passing through Spec-TP.

(62) Car desfandre le   covenoit
  thus defend.INF him.ACC necessitate.PAST.3SG
  'thus it was necessary for him to defend (himself).'
  (*Le Chevalier à la Charrette*, year 1180, line 1182)

As illustration of the derivation involved in Stylistic Fronting, consider now the phrase marker (63) for the relevant part of example (1).
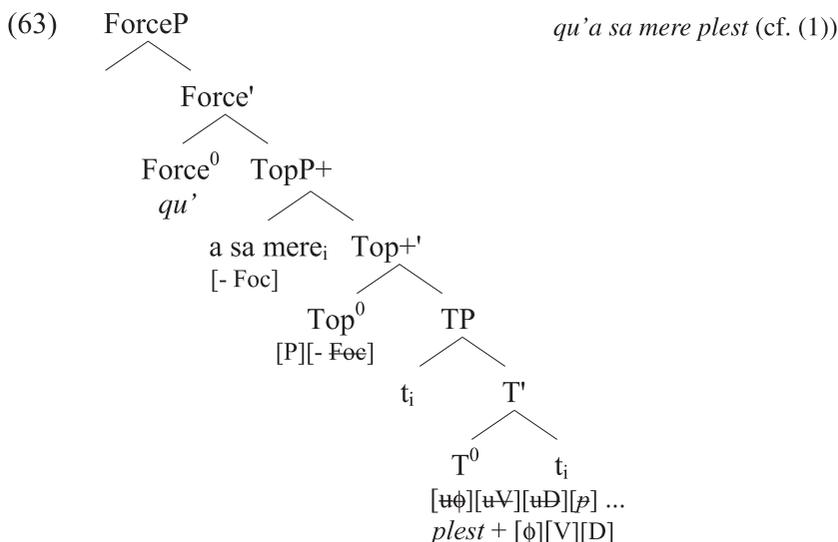
(63) ForceP   *qu'a sa mere plest* (cf. (1))

The verb checks the [D] feature of T^0 because it has the relevant pronominal properties. In Old French, TP is a phase as was established in the previous section. The constituent *a sa mere* 'to his mother' first moves to Spec-TP since it is empty. The constituent *a sa mere* thus becomes a subject in that position (it can bind). It is able to check the p feature associated with T^0. It further raises to check the P feature of Top+. Another XP would not be able to raise though Spec-TP and then to Spec-TopP+ since the [P] feature of Top+^{0} has already been checked. This is why it is impossible to SFront anything else in the sentence. When a full-NP nominative subject is present it raises to Spec-Top+, therefore barring the possibility of anything else moving to that position.

Turning now to the examples where the quirky subject is a pronominal form, it must be noted that in these cases, SFronting of an XP is possible (as in (53)). I take it that this is because the relevant pronominal forms have raised from Spec-vP and adjoined to T^0, leaving the canonical subject position empty. An element α can thus be SFronted, satisfying the p feature associated with T^0 then it checks the [P] feature on Top+^{0}.

Before closing section 5, I would like to address the diachronic issue raised by oblique subjects in relation to French. Fischer (2004a: 208) has recently argued that oblique subjects and SF disappear roughly at the same time as a consequence of the loss 'of the extra functional material', namely the higher projection that hosts both SFronted elements and quirky subjects. However, the proposal is rather vague. What I argue is that there has been no loss of functional material *per se*. Rather, SF and quirky subjects were lost when the verb lost its pronominal properties (null subjects are not possible in Modern French). Since the [P] feature of EPP+ is dependent on [D] when both features are scattered on different heads, it is no longer possible for the EPP to be split. Hence, Spec-Top+ is no longer accessible rather than completely lost. This analysis is superior to the account where loss of SF is connected to the loss of V-to-T movement. Falk (1993:184) observes that in languages like Old Swedish the loss of V-to-T movement and the loss of SF took place simultaneously in the 16th and 17th centuries. The generalization usually made is that languages like Danish and Swedish do not have V-to-T movement, thus SF is not available, whereas Icelandic has V-to-T movement, thus SF is a possibility in that language. According to Holmberg (2000), once the verb does not raise to T^0, it cannot check the [D] feature associated with T^0, thus SF is no longer possible. However, since Modern French has not lost V-to-T movement (Pollock 1989), but crucially lacks SF as shown by the impossibility of (64b,c and d), this account needs a slight revision.[20]

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[20] See Fischer & Alexiadou (2001) for the same argument made in connection with Old versus Modern Catalan.

(64) a. L'homme qui __ a   acheté une voiture
       the-man who   have.3SG bought a   car
    b. *L'homme qui une voiture __ acheté a
    c. *L'homme qui une voiture __ a acheté
    d. *L'homme qui acheté __ a une voiture
       'The man who bought a car.'

What appears to be essential for SF is that, regardless of whether the verb has raised to T^0, the verbal agreement should have the relevant pronominal properties so that null subjects are possible. In other words, a subject gap is crucial for SF to apply.

    The analysis that I propose in this paper for the loss of quirky subjects is also superior to previous analyses that account for the loss of quirky subjects from the loss of morphological case (Lightfoot 1979, 1980). It seems that the loss of morphological case has no consequence for the availability of quirky subjects. In all Germanic languages at least, quirky subjects were maintained for centuries after the breakdown of the morphological system. This is documented in Allen (1995) for English and Falk (1997) for Swedish. A prediction that is made by the present proposal is that because Faroese is in the process of losing quirky subjects, it should also be in the process of losing SF.

    To summarise section 5: I argued that Quirky Subjects in Old French sit in the same position as Stylistically Fronted elements. When the Quirky Subject is a pronoun, it cliticizes to T^0 leaving the canonical subject position free for XPs to pass though it and further raise to the specifier position of a Stylistic Fronting dedicated projection.

6. Summary

In this paper, I have shown that quirky subjects have all the properties of real subjects: (i) they can appear in first position in main clauses; (ii) they can appear in first position in embedded clauses; (iii) they can bind an anaphor; (iv) they can undergo subject-verb inversion (in V1 and V2 environments); (v) they can be a controllee; (vi) they can participate in conjunction reduction; and (vii) they can participate in raising constructions. In the section on agreement, I have also shown that: (i) nominative is licensed by tense in Old French and not by agreement; (ii) third person agreement in Old French Quirky Subject constructions is self-contained (the D feature of T^0 is checked by the pronominal features of the verb); (iii) *pro* is not the subject of Old French impersonal constructions. Finally, a correlation between Stylistic Fronting, Quirky Subjects and V3 order in Old French was made. Quirky Subjects were argued to be in complementary distribution with Stylistically Fronted elements. A special category that these elements target was introduced: Top+.

Texts used

Frantext
Le Chevalier au Lion – Yvain (Chrétien de Troyes) 1179
Lais (Marie de France) 1160
La Chanson de Roland (anonymous) 1080
Énéas (attributed to Benoît de Sainte-Maure) 1150
Narcisus et Dané (anonymous) between 1155 and 1170.
Roman de Renart (anonymous) 1190
L'Escoufle (Jean Renart) 1200
Eracle (Gautier d'Arras) 1180
La vie de Saint Louis (Jean de Joinville) 1303
Tristan, Thomas 1172
Le Roman de Thèbes (anonymous) 1150
Lai de Narcisse (anonymous) 1170
L'Estoire de Griseldis (anonymous) 1395

The Charrette Project (Princeton University)
Le Chevalier à la Charrette (Chrétien de Troyes) c. 1180

Other
Aliscans (anonymous) c. 1165
Aucassin et Nicolette (anonymous) 1220
Roman du Conte d'Anjou (Jean Maillart) 1316
Huon le Roi – Le Vair Palefroi 13th century
Guillaume d'Angleterre (Chrétien de Troyes) 12th century
L'estoire de Griseldis (anonymous) 1395
Le Bel Inconnu (Renaut de Beaujeu) 1214
Le Roman de la Rose (Jean de Meun) 1227
Erec et Enide (Chrétien de Troyes) 12th century
Le Roman d'Alexandre (Albéric de Pisançon) c. 1120
La Queste del Saint Graal c. 1220 (1225 ?) Published by Albert Pauphilet.
Paris: Éditions Champion (2003). Translation by Emmanuèle Baumgartner *La Quête du Saint Graal*. Paris: Editions Champion (2003).

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