

## The rôle of initial subordinate clauses and resumptive adverbs in the transition from V2 to non-V2 in the history of French

B. Devan Steiner & Barbara Vance (Indiana University)

In this paper we focus on the nature of so-called “V3” clauses in 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century French and the precise ways in which resumptive adverbs such as *si* (‘thus’, ‘then’), *lors* (‘then’), *adont* (‘then’), *et* (‘thus’, ‘then’), *puis* (‘then’) pattern and evolve in combination with initial subordinate clauses over these two pivotal centuries. Steiner 2014 shows that, given theoretical criteria established by e.g. Roberts 2004 and Holmberg 2011, the medieval French language -- as analyzed crucially according to the information structure properties of its preverbal elements -- does not lose its underlying V2 grammar until the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, her empirical study also confirms the claims of Vance, Donaldson & Steiner 2010 and Donaldson 2012 that there is a gradual reduction over the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries in the rate of use of resumptive adverbs to maintain unambiguous V2 structure following a frame-setting adverbial clause beginning with elements such as *quant* ‘when’ or *se* ‘if’. More precisely, we observe an apparent competition between examples like (1) below, which can only be generated by a V2 grammar – albeit one in which certain frame-setting adverbial clauses can occur outside of the V2 core – and examples like (2), which could be generated by either a V2 grammar (supposing that the subject pronoun is in CP) and by a non-V2 grammar (supposing that the subject pronoun is in TP).

(1) Quant la dame ot ce entendu, si dist ... (*Cassidorus* I, p. 87)  
‘when the lady had heard this, then (she) said...’

(2) Quant Askarus l’entent, il s’est emerveilliez et dist ... (*Cassidorus* I, p. 70)  
‘when Askarus hears it, he is amazed and says...’

Our particular task in this presentation is to examine the regression in the use of resumptive elements over this time period. We show that in the 13<sup>th</sup> century the choice between (1) and (2) is still driven by context and meaning, and even more so for *quant* contexts than for *se* contexts. A true competition (in the sense of Kroch 1989), in which (1) and (2) are simply alternate ways of saying the same thing, does not reach all contexts until the 14<sup>th</sup> century. By exposing the details of the interaction between resumptive elements and the initial subordinates that they resume, and especially by examining the order in which these special relationships are lost, we shed new light on the nature of these resumptive elements themselves. By way of comparison, we also briefly examine some similar contexts in the medieval Romance language most closely related to Old French, Old Occitan.