

On Verb Movement in Middle English (for) to-Infinitives

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Abstract

In this article, it will be argued that verb movement in infinitival clauses is attested throughout the Middle English (henceforth, MidE) period. This movement is presumably necessitated by the requirement of feature checking à la Chomsky (1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001). Some empirical evidence relating to conjoined structures is discussed which shows that the infinitival verb, which we are assuming raises to Inf in both conjuncts, exhibits the infinitival suffix without the presence of (for)to. This evidence suggests that the infinitival ending is not triggered by the presence of (for)to. Furthermore, we shall argue that the optionality in the position of the so-called VP adverbs with respect to the verb can only be accounted for if we assume that these adverbs can adjoin either to InfP or to VP. A direct result of our proposed analysis is that the object is predicted to raise, hence surface OV order should be attested. In order to account for the fact that (pro)nominal objects may precede and follow the infinitival verb we shall assume that accusative Case is assigned to the object DP in [Spec, InfP] via feature checking with the verb in Inf either in the overt syntax or at LF depending on whether Inf has a strong or weak morphological features. Our conclusion is that the non-attestation of object shift in Modern English (henceforth, ModE) to-infinitives can be attributed to the absence of overt V-to-Inf movement.

0. Introduction

The questions that this article is concerned with stem from our earlier investigation into the morphological and syntactic status of the MidE infinitival marker (for)to. We argued, in contrast to Lightfoot (1979, 1981) and Roberts (1992), among others, that the infinitival marker (for)to must be identified as an independent morphological constituent base-generated in T(ense), and that the infinitival suffix -e(n) heads its own functional projection. Various factors which show the morphological unity of (for)to were established.

There is a consensus among scholars who have worked on MidE syntax that finite verbs move to C in main clauses and to I in embedded clauses. The precise details of verb movement are treated in van Kemenade (1987), Lightfoot (1991, 1997), Roberts (1992, 1995), and Rohrbacher (1994), among many others). Scholars also agree that the predominant word order in MidE is uniformly Verb-Object (VO)

and that surface OV order can be derived from the underlying order by means of a leftward movement rule applying to the object DP. If we characterise the difference between VO and OV orders in MidE in terms of features of functional heads, then the source of variation is the strength/weakness of features of some functional head or heads. This entails that non-finite verbs move out of VP to the head of a functional projection. If this turns out to be true, then we can say that there is a correspondence between the movement of non-finite verbs and the movement of finite verbs to functional heads in MidE.

In this article, it will be argued that verb movement in infinitival clauses is attested throughout the MidE period. This movement is presumably necessitated by the requirement of feature checking à la Chomsky (1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001). Some empirical evidence relating to conjoined structures is discussed which shows that the infinitival verb, which we are assuming raises to Inf in both conjuncts, exhibits the infinitival suffix without the presence of (for)to. This evidence suggests that the infinitival ending is not triggered by the presence of (for)to. Furthermore, we shall argue that the optionality in the position of the so-called VP adverbs with respect to the verb can only be accounted for if we assume that these adverbs can adjoin either to InfP or to VP. A direct result of our proposed analysis is that the object is predicted to raise, hence surface OV order should be attested. In order to account for the fact that (pro)nominal objects may precede and follow the infinitival verb we shall assume that accusative Case is assigned to the object DP in [Spec, InfP] via feature checking with the verb in Inf either in the overt syntax or at LF depending on whether Inf has a strong or weak morphological features. Our conclusion is that the non-attestation of object shift in Modern English (ModE) to-infinitives can be attributed to the absence of overt V-to-Inf movement.

The outline of this article is as follows. Section 1 will present evidence from conjoined structures (1.1.) and adverb placement (1.2.) supporting the claim that the infinitival verb undergoes overt movement to Inf. In section 2 we shall consider the issue of the correlation between verb movement and object shift. Section 3 deals with what appears to be a problem for the analysis assumed in this chapter, namely constructions where the weak pronouns and nominal objects occupy a position higher than [Spec, InfP]. We shall advance a proposal as to how to structurally represent such constructions. Section 4 addresses the loss of object shift in ModE infinitival constructions. Finally, section 5 presents the conclusion of this article.

1. V-to-Inf Movement

1.1. Evidence from Conjoined Structures

This subsection argues that the infinitival verb raises overtly to the head position of the functional projection which houses the infinitival feature. This implies that in an example like (1), whose simplified structure is given in (2), the verb broken moves to Inf to check its infinitival features.

- (1) ne nalde he nawt polien þe þeof forte breoken hire
 would not he at all allow the thief to break it
 (Sawles Warde 8; Bennett & Smithers (1966: 247))
 'he wouldn't allow the thief to break into it'

- (2) ...[TP forte [InfP [Inf' breoken [VP [V'
 tv ...]]]]]

The first piece of evidence for V-to-Inf movement derives from the optional reduction of (for)to in co-ordinated structures, as illustrated in (3)

- (3) a. for it sholde be koud the moore lightly for to [withholden it
 the moore esily in herte] for it should be known the more
 lightly to withhold it the more easily in heart and [helpen
 hymself] = and help himself

(c1386 Chaucer Cant. T. X 1041; Benson (1987: 326))

'for it should be known more quickly to hold it easily in heart
& help himself'

- b. it is nat good for to [take the breed of sonys] and [sende it
to houndis]
it is not good to take the bread of sons and send it to dogs
(c1382 Wyclif Mt. 15; Visser (1963-73: § 967))
'it is not good to take the bread of sons & send it to dogs'
- c. Thou syest thy princes han yeven myght both [[for to sleen] and
[for to quyken]] a
you say your princes have given power both for to die and for
to live a wight = man
(c1386 Chaucer Cant. T. VIII. 480; Benson (ibid.: 286))
'you say your princes bestowed on you power of life & death'

As shown in (3) when (for)to-infinitival complements are co-ordinated, the second conjunct may or may not repeat (for)to. The important observation about (3) is the fact that the infinitival verb exhibits the infinitival suffix -e(n) regardless of whether or not (for)to is used. The question arises here as to how the infinitival verb is derived. Since co-ordination normally involves phrasal constituents, examples like the ones in (3) suggest that the bracketed strings are phrases (cf. Larson (1988: 345, nt. 11)). Moreover, Johnson (1991) argues that the verb in conjoined structures adjoins to a functional head whose projections dominate VP. In our account, we identify this functional head as Inf. Thus, the observation (noted earlier) that the infinitival suffix is not triggered by the presence of (for)to can be captured by saying that this suffix is licensed by V-to-Inf movement, giving the following representation for (3d).

- (4) [TP forto [InfP [Inf' withholdeni [VP ti it...]]]] and [InfP [Inf'
helpeni [VP ti hymself]]]

The crucial fact to note in (4) is that head movement has taken place in both conjuncts. If head movement has not taken place in the second conjunct, the construction will not converge, i.e. it will crash, which is not the case in (4).

1.2. Verb Movement & Adverb Placement

A further justification for verb movement is based on the relative position the infinitival verb assumes with respect to VP adverbs. We take up the conventional view that adverbs should be sisters of the constituents they modify (cf. Zubizarretta (1982) and Sportiche (1988)). On this view, (5a) would have the simplified structure given in (6).

- (5) a. and forto tellen withoute ryme ?peos wordes
and to tell without rhyme those words
(Saint Kenelm 186; Bennett & Smithers (ibid: 104))
'and to tell those words without rhyme'
- b. bot now it is not so, for to suffre meekly and in mesure ?pe pyne
of ?pe original synne
but now it is not so, to suffer humbly and in moderation the pain of
the original sin
(c1360 The Cloud of Unknowing 83b, 4; Hodgson (1944: 119))
'but now it is not so...to suffer humbly and moderately the pain of
the original sin'
- c. thy desire is forto witen overmore the forme of Aristotles lore

your desire is to know too much the form of Aristotle's traditions
(c1390 Gower C.A. 7.607; Pickles & Dawson (1987))
'your desire is to know more about the form of Aristotle's
traditions'

- d. whair I ane galland micht get aganis the nixt yeir forto perfurneis
furth the work when failyit the other
where I one gentleman might get in preparation for the next year for
to perform further the work when fail it the other
(1505 William Dunbar 84; Burrow (1977: 386))
'where I as one gentleman might get in preparation for the next year;
to carry out the work further when others fail to perform it'

(6) ...[InfP [Inf' tellen [VP ADV [VP [V' tv ...]]]]]

Faced with the fact that the adverbs in (5) follow the verb and precede complements (that are not likely to have been moved to the right), if these adverbs are adjoined to VP, then verb movement has taken place. This reasoning parallels Pollock's (1989) account of French. The position of these adverbial phrases argues for movement of the infinitival verb out of its base-generated position to a functional head which we identify as Inf.

If the assumption that the (for)to + verb + ADV order of constituents implies that the verb has moved out of its base-generated position in VP, then the question which immediately arises is how to account for the (for)to + ADV + verb order. The examples in (7) illustrate this order:

- (7) a. the prestis ben forfended to enymore takyn monee of the puple
the priests are forbidden to anymore take money of the people
(c1382 Wyclif Selected. Works II, 303; Visser (ibid: § 981))
'the priests are forbidden to take any more money from the people'
- b. we han bound us silf for to neuere touche neither bere money
we have bound ourselves to never touch neither bear money
(c1449 Pecock Repressor XIV; Babington (1860: 556))
'we have bound ourselves neither to touch nor bear money'
- c. a modir is not bounde forto alwey and for euere fede her children
a mother is not bound to always and forever feed her children
(c1449 Pecock Repressor XII; Babington (ibid.:219))
'a mother is not always & forever bound to feed her children'
- d. he schal not be able to fruytefully preie for him silf neiþ?er for op?
ere
he shall not be able to fruitfully pray for him self neither for other
(c1449 Pecock Reule of Crysten Religioun 160a; Greet (1927: 421))
'he shall not be able to pray fruitfully either for himself or for
others'

Given the (for)to + ADV + verb order of constituents in (7), and given that the infinitival verb must move to Inf to check its inflectional infinitival feature, it follows that the adverb must occupy a position higher than Inf after V-movement has taken place. Assuming that VP adverbs can adjoin either to VP or InfP, we can maintain the conclusion with respect to the examples in (5) and (7), that the infinitival verb has undergone V-to-Inf movement in both types of example. More to the point, the examples in (7) show that there is a higher position for ADV. Assuming the position of (for)to in T, (7) shows that ADV is lower than T, the infinitival verb must be in Inf. Thus any account of MidE infinitival clauses which assumes that VP adverbs can only adjoin to VP would fail to account for their ability to appear preceding the infinitival verb, since this infinitival verb

moves out of VP. On the other hand, any account which assumes that the infinitival verb does not move out of VP would fail to account for the ability of these adverbs in examples like (5) to appear after the infinitival verb. Visser (ibid) points out that the earliest examples in which the infinitive is separated from (for)to by a word or words—due to the tendency to put the modifiers of a verb as close before it as possible—date back to the 13th century.

Next we turn to the strongest piece of evidence supporting our postulation that the infinitival verb moves to Inf.

2. Object Shift

The fundamental issues raised by the phenomenon of Object Shift (OS) are the questions why and when (pro)nominal objects must overtly move to a case-checking specifier position to the left of their base-generated position. These questions have been widely discussed in the literature of the Principles & Parameters (PP) framework. Three analyses have been proposed to tackle the issue of object shift. The first analysis, which was proposed by Josefsson (1992), maintains that object shift is head movement; the second analysis holds that object shift is an instance of A-bar movement (cf. Holmberg (1986, 1991)), whereas the third one regards object shift as an instance of A-movement (cf. Branigan (1992), Chomsky (1995) Johnson (1991) Roberts (1995), and Vikner (1994)). We believe that taking object shift as head movement forces us to postulate a kind of head movement that is otherwise not attested at all in MidE (for)to-infinitives. Roberts (1995) argues against this claim which allegedly assimilates object shift to cliticisation in Romance. He points out that pronoun object shift has many properties that are quite unlike any Romance cliticisation. For instance, Romance clitics always occupy special positions, unlike Mainland Scandinavian object pronouns, which may remain in their base position if the verb does not move. Given this point of view, we reject the head-movement analysis of object shift. Our next task will be to investigate whether or not object shift is an instance of A-bar movement.

Assuming that object shift is an instance of A-bar movement, the null hypothesis is that it could make use of the [Spec, CP] position and thus be able to move DPs into higher clauses successive cyclically. However, this is not the case, as the following examples illustrate.

- (8) a. & for þelliche þ?ing hine forhowest & forlatst ðat tu ne wilt to him
 clepiyen ne to
 & for such things him despise & hate that you neither wish to him call
 nor to
 his niede him helpen = his need him help
 (1200 Vices & Virtues 28; Holthausen (1921: 65))
 'and for such things you despise him and omit to call on him, not to help
 him in his need'
- b. swo hi nomen conseil betuene hem þ?et hi wolden go forto hyne anuri
 so the consulted between them that they wanted to go to him greet
 (13... Kentish Sermons 9; Bennett & Smithers (ibid: 214))
 'so they would consult with each other that they wanted to go to greet
 him'
- c. summe heeres or reders being moche redier forto suche writingis lette &
 distroie
 somehearers or readers being much readier to such writings let and
 destroy
 þ?an forto eny suche bi her owne laboure fynde, make & multiplie
 than to any such by their own labour find, make & multiply...
 (c1445 Pecoock The Donet 3a, 25; Hitchcock (1921 :6))
 'hearers or readers are being prepared to abandon & destroy such writings
 than to find...'

- d. Y have no peny, quod Piers, polettes forto begge
 I have no penny, said P. chickens to buy
 (c1370 Langland P. Plowman 281; Burrow (ibid.: 121)
 'Piers said that he had no penny to buy chickens'

The examples in (8) show that object shift is a non-wh-type of movement, i.e. object shift is not an A-bar movement. How do they show this? The position of the object in (8a,b,c) clearly shows that the shifted object is not in [Spec, CP]. Since it occurs between *forto* and the infinitival verb, object shift appears to be bounded. Therefore, in what follows, we shall assume that OS is an instance of A-movement, and that [Spec, InfP] qualifies as the landing site for OS, as partially represented in (9):

(9) AgrSP

DP AgrS'

AgrS TP

T InfP

Obj Inf'

Inf VP

DP V'

Subj V tobj

Under minimalist assumptions, this movement is triggered by the need to satisfy the Case filter, i.e. that the accusative Case feature is checked by a functional head, Inf in this case, under Spec-Head agreement. In order to support this assumption, we shall first present evidence relating to weak pronouns. Then, we shall extend the analysis to full DPs and argue that MidE has an optional leftward object shift.

Concerning the first point, consider the following examples.

- (10) a. gif þ?e hosebonde wiste whanne ?pe þeof wolde come wake he wolde
 ffor to him
 if the husband knew when the thief would come wake he would to
 him
 ffounde= attack
 (c1280 S. Leg.Pass. (Pep) 526; Visser (ibid: § 978))
 'if the husband knew when the thief would come, he would wake up
 to attack him'
- b. he sal þ?e send Angels for to þe defend
 he shall you send Angels to you defend
 (13.. Curs. M. 12965; Visser (ibid.: § 978))
 'he shall send you angels to defend you'
- c. & such op?ere of which y am not ware, & þ?erfore forto hem avoid
 & agenstonde
 Y may not in special labore and wirche
 (c1443 Pecock Reule of Crysten Religioun 67a; Greet (ibid.: § 978))

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'and others of which I am not aware, and therefore I may not avoid and endure them in special work'

- d. thoug thei not rede and studie in the Bible only forto it leerne
though they not read and study in the Bible only to it learn
(c1449 Pecock Repressor XI; Babington (ibid: 59))
'though they do not read & study in the Bible only to learn it'

If we assume, following Chomsky (1986b) and Williams (1994), that immediate sisterhood is a necessary condition for θ -role assignment to take place, then the non-sister-hood relation of the verb and its object in the surface string must be the result of movement. It is worth mentioning that English was preponderantly Verb-Object (VO) after the 12th century (cf. Canale (1978) & Lightfoot (1991)). Therefore, the OV order in (10) must be derived. Crucially, the overt movement of *him* in (10a), *þe* in (10b) *hem* in (10c), and *it* in (10d) to [Spec, InfP] to have their accusative Case features checked is possible only if the verb has moved overtly to Inf. But what makes the verb move overtly to Inf? The reason for this movement, we assume, is that MidE has overt verbal morphology; there are thus morphological features in Inf triggering V-to-Inf movement in (10). Put another way, Inf's features trigger movement into its checking domain. For this reason, when the infinitival verb moves to the checking domain of Inf, the object pronouns in examples like (10a-d) are required to move to [Spec, InfP] in order to check the Case feature of Inf. While this accounts for the derivation of the verb, it raises the question as to how (i) the object should move across the subject in [Spec, VP] and (ii) how the subject should move across the object to a higher position. For an answer to these questions, see Branigan (1992) and Chomsky (1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001).

One of the properties of OS in Mainland Scandinavian (MSc) languages is that it distinguishes between weak pronouns and full DPs. According to Holmberg (1986) MSc weak pronominal objects are required to move to a position which nominal objects do not move to because weak pronominals show morphological case. This is also true of Icelandic nominal objects which exhibit morphological case and undergo object shift but only optionally. However, the attestation of examples like those in (11) poses a serious problem for Holmberg's analysis. That is, the nominal objects in (11) exhibit no morphological case but they nevertheless undergo object shift (cf. also Faroese, as discussed in Vikner (1994)).

- (11) a. he sal bath regn in pes and rest to temple makie he sal be best
he shall both reign in peace and rest to temple make he shall be best
(13.. Curs. M. 8318; Visser (ibid: § 978))
'he shall rule both in peace & rest & be the best to build a temple'
- b. wel lever is me liken yow and dye than for to anythyng or thynke or seye yow myghte offende in any tyme
That well better is me to like you and die than to anything or think or say that you might offend in any time
(c1374 Chaucer Compl. Lady 122; Benson (ibid: 643))
'it is better to me to like you and die than to think of or say anything that might offend you in any time'
- c. Triacle schal be leide to... forto þe posteme breke
Treacle shall be laid to to the boil break
(c1398 Trevisa tr. De Propr. rerum 98 b/a; Visser (ibid: § 978))

- d. it folewith that forto eny of hem bothe holde is not feyned
 waar
 it follows that to any of them both hold is not stop war
 (c1449 Pecock Repressor III; Babington (ibid: 14))
 'it follows that holding any of them is not going to stop the
 war'

What these examples show is that there is an A-position in which accusative Case is checked, and that both pronominal and nominal objects requiring this Case raise overtly to the same position. More specifically, we contend that the movement of the pronominal and nominal objects to [Spec, InfP] to have their Case and agreement features checked in examples like (11) is obligatory. In order to support this contention, consider the following examples where the shifted object is preceded by an adverb.

- (12) a. seopp??e in alle londes, hi eoden vor to prechen, and for to fully
 pat folk and godes
 then in all lands they went to preach and to fully those people
 and God's lawe techen = law teach
 (c1275 Passion Our Lord 674; Visser (ibid: §982))
 'then they went all over the world to preach and teach God's law
 in full to those people'
- b. whanne the peple were vnkinde and vndeouout forto sufficiently hem
 fynde in
 when the people were unkind and undevout to sufficiently them find
 in necessaries = unnecessary
 (c1449 Pecock Repressor XI, Babington (ibid: 342))

Examples like (12) are consistent with our analysis of the so-called VP adverbs, which we have assumed can adjoin either to VP or InfP. Here they are adjoined to InfP and the object is shifted to [Spec, InfP], as illustrated in the simplified structure given in (12').

- (12') ...[TP (for)to [InfP ADV [InfP obj [Inf' V + e(n) [VP [V' tv
 tobj]]]]]]

The question that arises is: what has the positioning of the adverb got to do with object shift? Since OS is contingent on overt verb movement for reasons having to do with equidistance and since the position of the moved verb can be shown by the position of the adverb, the object moves to [Spec, InfP] to form the surface strings illustrated in (12a,b) above.

If the conclusion that object (pro)nominals must overtly undergo A-movement to [Spec, InfP] to have their morpho-logical features checked is correct, then the occurrence of sentences like (13) and (14) is clearly a problem.

- (13) a. and sitte bi þ?is holi bodi al ?pe logue dai, ase it were forto
 honouri him for hit...
 and sit by this holiy bodi all the long day as it were to honour him
 for it
 (Saint Kenelm 150; Bennett & Smithers (ibid: 102))
 'and sit by this holy body all day long, as it were, to honour him
 for it...'
- b. he bad hem forto telle it plein
 he asked them to tell it plain
 (c1390 Gower C.A. 7. 3968; Pickles & Dawson (ibid))

- (14) a. all his entente is forte tweamen heorten, forte bineomen luue þ?et
halt men togeders
all his intention is to attack hearts to destroy love that holds men
together
(c1230 Ancrene Wisse. 165; Bennett & Smithers (ibid: 229))
'all his intention is to attack hearts & destroy the love that holds
men together'
- b. it is nogt possible forto make articulaciouns
(c1425 Chauliac (1) 13a\b; MED)
'it is not possible to make articulations'

In order to account for the fact that the pronominal objects in (13) remain in situ we must appeal to the principle of Procrastinate. This principle rules out any movement which is not driven by strong morphological features, i.e. features which must be checked before SPELL-OUT. So the strong features of Inf must have driven the movement of the verbs to Inf in the examples above. But the features in question must have the option of being weak in (13) and (14) above. Chomsky (1993, 1995) proposes that there must be some optionality in the strength of features at the point at which lexical items are selected from the lexicon. When strong D-features of Inf are chosen, the object must be raised to [Spec, InfP] in overt syntax. When weak D-features are chosen, the overt movement will be blocked by Procrastinate. We conclude that the optionality of OS in MidE can be ascribed to the strength or weakness of morphological features in Inf. In conclusion, we should stress that overt verb move-ment in MidE (for)to-infinitives is always found, but the connection between overt verb movement and object shift is not systematic. What this shows is that verb movement only facilitates object shift, but it does not require it.

3. A Remaining Problem

Having established that object shift is an instance of A-movement and that [Spec, InfP] qualifies as the landing site for the shifted object, we can now formulate the A/A-bar distinction as follows:

- (15) a. A chain *a* is an A-chain iff the head of *a* is in an L-related position
- b. A chain *a* is an A-bar chain otherwise (Chomsky & Lasnik (1993))

Chomsky (1993, 1995) defines the A/A-bar distinction in terms of the notion L-related. A position is L-related if it is in the domain of an L-head, where L-heads are lexical heads and heads which check the features of lexical heads. V, N, A, and P as lexical heads are L-heads. T, Inf and Agr are L-heads because they check the features of lexical heads, whereas C and Neg are not L-heads. A-positions are L-related, whereas A-bar positions are not. Movement to [Spec, AgrSP/InfP] for Case-theoretic reasons is an instance of A-movement while adjunction, topicalisation, and scrambling are instances of A-bar movement.

It is clear that (15), in conjunction with the postulate that object shift moves DPs into a Case-checking position and that Case-checking positions are always and only L-related, derives the required result that chains formed by object shift are A-chains, as opposed to A'-movement (e.g. WH-movement), where Case features are checked at the foot of the chain. Put another way, A-moved DPs check their Case features with a functional head in their landing site, whereas A-bar moved DPs do not. With this distinction in mind, let's consider the following examples:

- (16) a. he hoved over a hive the hony forto kepe
he stood over a hive the honey to keep
(c1402 Mum & the Sothsegger 966; Burrow (ibid.: 263))

'he stood over a hive to keep the honey'

- b. first he clad him in his clothes the colde forto were
first he clothed him in his clothes the cold to ward off
(c1360 Sir G. & the Gr. Knight 2015; Burrow (ibid.: 79))
'first he clothed him in his clothes to ward off the cold'
- c. mony a mery mason was made þer to werk, harde stones forto hewe
with eggit toles, mony grubber in grete þe grounde forto seche
many a merry mason was made there to work hard stones to shape
with sharp-edged tools many diggers in earth the (solid) ground to
search
(c1390 St. Erkenwald 41; Burrow & Turville (1992: 202))
'many a merry mason was made to work there, to shape hard stones
with sharp-edged
tools; & many diggers search in the solid ground'
- d. for everi wight that hath an hous to founde ne renneth naught the
werk for to bygynne
for every man that has a house to build ne runs not the labour to
begin
(c1387 Troli. I. 1066; Benson (ibid.: 488))
'for any man who has to build a house does not run at once to
begin the labour'

- (17) a. & þrattest hine to slænne and his cun to fordonne
& threaten him to slay & his kin to destroy
(C1200-20 Laʒamon's Brut 9351; Barron & Weinberg (1989: 8))
'& threaten to slay him & destroy his kin'
- b. þat Octa scal ifinden that he þrattede me to binden
that Octa shall find that he threatened me to fetter
(c1200-20 Laʒamon's Brut 9745; Barron & Weinberg (ibid.: 26))
'as Octa shall discover that he swore to fetter me'
- c. he ne oghte nat hyt for to telle
he ne ought not it to tell
(c1303 R. of Brunne Handlyng Synne 3659; Sullens (1983: 93))
'he ought not to tell it'
- d. forþi me forto fynde, if þou fraystez, faylez þou never
therefore me to find if you ask fail you never
(c1360 Sir G. & the Gr. Knight 455; Burrow & Turville (ibid.: 196))
'therefore if you ask you won't fail to find me'
- e. none othir noote to eneve is nede but latte us haste hym forto
hange
no other business to talk about is need but let us haste him to
hang
(c1463-73 The York Play 28; Burrow & Turville (ibid.: 251))
'there is no need to talk about any other business but to let us
hasten to hang him'

Still assuming that (for)to is in T, these examples show that OS can go higher than T. Observe that examples like (16) and (17) seem to involve movement to an A-bar position, given that the landing site of the moved object is not [Spec, InfP], and we assume it's not [Spec, AgrSP] and [Spec, TP]

too as PRO and its trace must be there. In other words, the surface position of the object DPs in the above examples violates the requirement of Spec-Head relationship between the accusative Case assigner [Inf + V] and the accusative Case assignee. It is tempting to analyse (16) and (17) as instances of scrambling. There is good reason for analysing these examples as cases of scrambling. First note that scrambling affects definite DPs, as in (16). Secondly, weak pronouns are often scrambled (except where they stay lower, as in the examples cited in section 2), as in (17).

Interesting confirmation for our analysis comes from Dutch: in Dutch definite DPs are more likely to scramble than indefinite ones, as the following examples illustrate:

(18) a. dat zij dat boeki na eenmaal ti gekocht heeft
that she that book after all bought has

b. dat zij na eenmaal dat boek gekocht heeft

(19) a. dat zij na eenmaal een huis gekocht heeft
that she after all a house bought has

b. ?dat zij een huis na eenmaal ti gekocht heeft

The data above show that scrambling can affect only definite DPs in Dutch as well as MidE. However, (20) shows that scrambling in MidE does affect indefinite

(20) a. shold not a ladde be in londe a lord forto serve
should not a lady be in land a lord to serve
(1352 Winner & Waster 388; Burrow (ibid.: 42))
'shouldn't there be a lady on earth to serve a lord'

b. forto shake to the shawe and shewe him the estres, in ich holt
that they had
to go out to the wood and show him the coverts in each wood that
they had
an hare forto finde = a hare to find
(c1352 Winner & Waster 404; Burrow (ibid.: 43))
'they would go out to the woods and show him the coverts, and
that they had found a hare in each wood'

c. this is a mervail message a man forto preche among enmies so many
and marsed
this is a marvel message a man to preach among enemies so many
and cursed
fendes= devils
(c1360 Gawain Patience 81; Burrow (ibid.: 49))
'this is a marvel message to preach to a man who lives among so
many enemies and cursed devils'

d. that is so horrible a tale for to rede
(C1386 Chaucer Cant. T. II. 84; Benson (ibid: 88))
'the tale is too horrible, it can't be read'

e. was I so besy no man forto preche
(c1387 Chaucer Troil. II.569; Benson (ibid.: 497))
'was I so busy that I couldn't preach any man'

We have to take these examples to be untypical cases of scrambling. On the assumption that the

scrambled DP is adjoined to AgrSP, (16a) would have the following partial representation:

- (21) [AgrSP DP [AgrSP DP [AgrS' AgrS [TP T [InfP DP [Inf' Inf [VP DP [V' V DP]]]]]]]]]

The object DP *the honey* goes first to [Spec, InfP] and then scrambles to an AgrSP-adjoined position. Such a claim is unsatisfactory because it gives rise to a (crucial) problem. That is, it does not explain why the object DP must move past [Spec, InfP]. It merely states that the object DP is adjoined to AgrSP, begging the very basic question of how the accusative Case would be assigned to that DP. The answer to this question is that Case is transmitted to the object DP via its trace in [Spec, InfP]. More to the point, the morphological features of the object DP are checked with the foot of the chain in [Spec, InfP] and then transmitted to the head of the chain in its AgrSP-adjoined position. This results in two linked chains. The lower chain is a uniform A-chain, with its head in [Spec, InfP] and its foot or tail inside VP (i.e. the object position). The higher chain is a non-uniform A'-chain, with its head in A'-position (adjoined to AgrSP) and its foot or tail in A-position, i.e. in [Spec, InfP].

4. The Loss of Object Shift

Recall that object shift in MidE infinitival constructions required the overt adjunction of the verb to the functional head Inf (and the projection of the Spec of InfP to host the shifted object). By the beginning of the 15th century, the infinitival ending died out, so there was no trigger for overt infinitive movement, and accordingly overt object shift disappeared. Thus the absence of object shift in ModE to-infinitives is keyed to the absence of overt verb movement. The disappearance of overt object shift implies that speakers of ModE replaced shifted objects with a simpler and less costly construction. In finite clauses, object shift with weak pronouns seems to have been possible in the 16th century, as argued for in Roberts (1995). The loss of object shift is also keyed to the general loss of overt verb movement in finite clauses. A crucial aspect of Roberts' (1995) analysis and of ours is that they lead to the conclusion that the English object pronoun system has not changed at all since the MidE period. What has changed since then is the position of both the finite and the infinitival verbs. Since these two verbs never move to Agr0 or Inf, they neither trigger nor license object shift.

5. Conclusion

Given the evidence presented above for verb movement in MidE for-to-infinitives and the evidence presented in van Kemenade (1987), Roberts (1992), and Rohrbacher (1994) for verb movement in finite clauses, we conclude that there is a correspondence between non-finite verb movement and finite verb movement in MidE. On the basis of morphological and syntactic evidence we have argued in this article that the infinitival verb must raise to the functional head of InfP in MidE. Support for this conclusion was drawn from conjoined structures, the position that VP adverbs adopt relative to the verb, and from object shift. Concerning object shift, we have shown that analysing object shift as an instance of A-movement provides a more straightforward and coherent description of the syntactic behaviour of (pro)nominal objects in MidE (for)to-infinitives. Further and more importantly, we have shown that the optionality of object shift is attributable to the optional strength or weakness of D-features in Inf, and that the absence of object shift in ModE is ascribable to the loss of verb movement to Inf, which took place in the early part of the 15th century.

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