

V-to-T movement in Old Russian?

Context. It has been proposed that V-to-T movement satisfies the Extended Projection Principle (Chomsky 1995, EPP) in consistent null subject languages (e.g. Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 1998) whereas the EPP is only satisfied by XP-merge in Spec,TP in partial null subject and non-null subject languages (e.g. Holmberg 2005, Holmberg *et al.* 2009). V-to-T movement is also argued to be triggered by rich subject agreement morphology (Rich Agreement Hypothesis: e.g. Vikner 1995, Rohrbacher 1999). While consistent null subject languages such as Spanish and Greek feature all these correlations, Modern Russian instantiates the exact opposite type: Modern Russian lacks V-to-T movement (Bailyn 1995), features a defective agreement system without person distinction in the past tense, and does not show consistent null subject patterns (Franks 1995, Lindseth 1998). In contrast, Old Russian forms an interesting testing ground for the given correlations: Old Russian shows consistent null subject patterns and rich subject agreement in all tenses, but it has never been investigated whether this language also demonstrates V-to-T movement. Whether Old Russian features V-to-T movement crucially bears on understanding of the EPP and the relation between morphology and syntax.

Proposal. I argue that colloquial Old Russian does not feature V-to-T movement, based on the low positions of lexical verbs and auxiliaries and that this grammar is inherited by Modern Russian. In contrast, formal Old Russian shows mixed patterns, reflecting multiple grammars.

Data & Analysis. Colloquial Old Russian, reflected in *Old Novgorodian birch bark letters* and *Russkaja pravda*, shows rigid word orders, in which finite verbs are preceded by subjects (1) and vP-level adverbs (2). The position of the perfect tense auxiliary *byti* is lower than second position pronominal clitics (3).

- (1) aže žena_S sędetь_V po muži, to u svoix(ь) dětei vzet(i) častь
 if wife_{NOM.F.SG} sit_{PRST.3SG} after husband then at own children take part
 ‘If a wife remains in the husband’s family after his death, then she should take her share from her children.’ [Russkaja pravda]
- (2) ketь ti bьrьže_{ADV} poidetь_V vь gьrdь k(ь) tьmu že pristavi kьne...
 who_{REL.PRON} TOP faster will go_{FUT.3SG} to city to that one ptcl assign_{IMV} horse
 ‘Hand over the horse to the one who arrives at the city the earliest...’ [BBL 891]
- (3) cemū mę jesi pogubilь.
 why me_{ACC.1SG} AUX_{2SG} ruined_{PTCPL}
 ‘Why did you ruin me?’ [BBL 272]

Sentence (1) from *Russkaja pravda*, the legal code of Kievan Rus’, states what should be done if a wife decides not to remarry when her husband dies. The first clause isthetic, describing a general, hypothetical condition, and the subject *žena* does not bear any contrastive interpretation. Thus, the pre-verbal position of *žena* is not derived by a pragmatically motivated movement. The SV order is absolutely prevalent in the colloquial Old Russian texts and the few instances of the VS order are accounted for as a result of right-dislocation of the subject as narrow focus. In example (2), the adverb *bьrьže* and the verb *poidetь* in the middle of the sentence do not receive any emphatic interpretation that could be connected to word order. In sentence (3), the auxiliary form *jesi* follows the second position pronominal clitic *mę*. The Old Russian auxiliary, in terms of its position, is comparable to the third person singular auxiliary clitic *je* in Serbo-Croatian, which also follows second position pronominal clitics, as illustrated in (4).

- (4) Ona mu ga je predstavila.
 she_{NOM.3SG} him_{DAT.3SG} him_{ACC.3SG} AUX_{3SG} introduced_{PTCPL}
 ‘She introduced him to him.’ [S-C]

Tomić (1996) and den Dikken (1994) propose that *je* remains in vP, not raising to T, in Serbo-Croatian. In the second position clitic system, pronominal clitics occupy the specifier positions of relevant functional phrases such as Agr_oP (Stjepanović 1998, Migdalski 2006). Thus, an auxiliary form that follows pronominal clitics occupies a position lower than pronominal clitics, which should be AuxP or vP. Old Russian features a second position clitic system, and therefore the auxiliary forms following pronominal clitics are analyzed as remaining in AuxP. Cross-linguistically, languages that raise finite lexical verbs while leaving finite auxiliaries *in situ* are unattested. This means that auxiliaries *in situ* imply lexical verbs *in situ* in a language. In this respect, the low position of the auxiliary in colloquial Old Russian indirectly supports the possibility that finite lexical verbs also remain *in situ*.

In contrast with colloquial Old Russian, the formal variety of Old Russian, reflected in chronicles, shows conflicting patterns (Here I only list the data in favor of V-to-T for the sake of space).

- (5) *i pojaša_v novgorod_{bcis} Volodimira sebě.*
 and took_{AOR.3PL} Novgorodians_{NOM.M.PL} Volodimir_{ACC.M.SG} REFL_{DAT}
 ‘And the Novgorodians took Volodimir to themselves.’ [Primary Chronicle, 170]

- (6) ... *dat_v vse_{gd}a_{adv} radost_ь gradu tomu svjatym_ь blagověščeniem_ь Gospodnim_ь...*
 give_{INF} continually joy_{ACC} [city that]_{DAT} [holy Annunciation Lord’s]_{INSTR}
 ‘to give joy to that city continually by Lord’s holy Annunciation...’ [Primary Chronicle, 351]

As exemplified in (5), the VS order appears prevalent, regardless of the verb type (trans., unerg., unacc.) in formal Old Russian (see Turner 2007). The VS order necessarily indicates verb raising past the subject. Verb raising is also supported by the verb-adverb order. In (6), the adverb intervenes between the verb and the direct object, which clearly indicates that the verb raises across the adverb. Finally, while the auxiliary follows pronominal clitics, the clitic system in the language of chronicles is not the same kind as that in colloquial Old Russian: the clitic *tja* in (7) does not occupy the second position of the clause.

- (7) *Mnogo darix_ь tja.*
 a lot bestow_{AOR.1SG} you_{ACC.2SG}
 ‘I bestowed many things upon you.’ [Primary Chronicle, 154]

Implications. The compatibility of rich agreement/referential null subjects and verbs-*in-situ* in colloquial Old Russian indicates that while rich agreement is related to null subject licensing, verb raising is not related to either of them. This finding has two theoretical implications: at least in some languages, the EPP can be met without both XP-merge in Spec,TP and X⁰-merge on T. In colloquial Old Russian, the EPP is satisfied by a referential *pro* with fully specified formal features and a D-feature, i.e., a *pro*-as-DP in Holmberg’s (2005) sense. In this respect, Old Russian does not belong to the Greek-type null subject language group despite its consistent null subject patterns. Another implication of this research is that rich agreement morphology does not trigger V-to-T, which goes against the Rich Agreement Hypothesis.

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