

THE GENERALIZATION OF THE VERB-SECOND CONSTRAINT
IN THE HISTORY OF YIDDISH

Beatrice Santorini

A Dissertation

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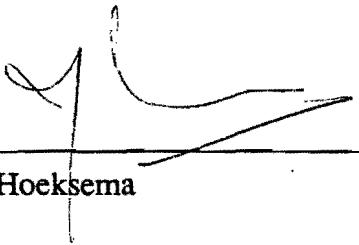
Linguistics

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

1989

Anthony S. Kroch
Anthony S. Kroch, Supervisor of Dissertation

Ellen F. Prince
Ellen F. Prince



Jack Hoeksema

Anthony S. Kroch
Anthony S. Kroch, Graduate Group Chairperson

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To my teachers at Penn,
with gratitude, respect and affection

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In writing this dissertation, I have relied on a great many people in many different ways, and it is a privilege and a pleasure to acknowledge the help that I have received from them. Intellectually and personally, I am very much indebted to my teachers at Penn, especially to the members of my thesis committee. Most of what I know about the technical methods, the intellectual history and the social practice of linguistics, I have learned from my advisor, Tony Kroch. In addition to his intellectual contribution, the moral support that he has provided over the past one and a half years has been very important to me, and I would like to thank him for it. Ellen Prince's enthusiasm for Yiddish was the catalyst that motivated me to study a language that is not my own, and she generously provided me with dictionaries, sources, references, introductions and advice. Jack Hoeksema promptly and patiently read and commented on everything I gave him and was the first to suggest that it was time to call it a day. All of their comments have made this a better piece of work than it would otherwise be, though I have not always done justice to their ideas and suggestions. Although they were not part of my committee, I would also like to acknowledge the influence of Henry Hoenigswald, who introduced me to the classical methods of historical linguistics; Bill Labov, the eloquence of whose prose have often been an inspiration; and Richard Larson, who early on gave me a valuable lesson on the way that research is conducted.

For years of financial support, including a grant that allowed me to travel to Europe to collect data, I thank the Department of Linguistics and the School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Pennsylvania. I am very grateful also to Aravind Joshi of the Department of Computer and Information Sciences for generously providing me with summer support over many years, and to Gillian Sankoff for admitting me to the Department of Linguistics under unusual circumstances.

A number of people read early versions of Chapter 3 and had comments and suggestions for improvement for which I am grateful: Molly Diesing, Tilman Hoehle, Richard Janda, Joan Maling, David Pesetsky, Susan Pintzuk, Christer Platzack and Raffaella Zanuttini.

Many people helped me with the early Yiddish data upon which Chapter 4 is based. I could not have written this chapter without the assistance of the staff of the Oriental Reading Room at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University (Yasuko Hatcher, Shuching Naughton, Stella Newman, Angela Stimpson and Margaret Tippett), the staff of the Oriental Reading Room at the British Library (Mr. M. Nolan, Miss G. Rawlings, Mr. P. Stocks and Miss N. Vail), and the staff of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, especially Dina Abramowitz and Zachary Baker. I would also like to thank Erika Timm and Walter Roell of the University of Trier for their hospitality and for generously sharing their philological expertise.

Many people provided native speaker judgments and examples, not all of which have found their way into the final draft: for Dutch, Jack Hoeksema; for Old English, Susan Pintzuk; for French, Viviane Deprez; for German (including Bavarian), Josef Bayer, Olav Hackstein, Hubert Haider and Klaus Netter; for Italian, Raffaella Zanuttini; for Japanese, Caroline Heycock; for Kashmiri, Asha Tickoo and Makhan Lal Tickoo; for Korean, Young-Suk Lee; for Polish, Marzena Gronicka and Henry Hiz; and finally, for Yiddish, Mascha Benya-Matz and David Braun. Steve Franks and Tina Kraskow provided references, vexamples and help with Slavic, and Christer Platzack provided examples from medieval Scandinavian. I thank them all.

For helpful discussions and encouragement, I would like to thank my friends in the Linguistics Department: Caroline Heycock, Tina Kraskow, Ann Taylor and Asha Tickoo, as well as my housemates: Nirajan Ramachandran, who introduced me to the concept of *shmoo*, that most delectable and necessary of abstract commodities, and Vijayendra Rao, with whom I turned out to share tastes in practical philosophy. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Ruth Herold for helping me weather some trying periods, to Young-Suk Lee for encouragement at the last minute and to Raffaella Zanuttini for her spirit of resourcefulness. Finally, it is difficult to find the right words to thank Lyle Ungar, but perhaps the best way is to say that without knowing him, I would not know a single one of those whose names appear above.

ABSTRACT

The generalization of the verb-second constraint in the history of Yiddish

Author: Beatrice Santorini

Supervisor: Anthony S. Kroch

One of the most striking syntactic phenomena in Germanic is the verb-second constraint, which requires the inflected verb to be the second constituent of a clause, regardless of whether the first constituent is the subject. While most Germanic languages--including Yiddish up to the 1700's--obey the verb-second constraint in root clauses, but not in formally subordinate clauses, modern Yiddish exhibits no such asymmetry. This dissertation investigates the generalization of the verb-second constraint that took place in the history of Yiddish from both a structural and a quantitative perspective.

Chapter 1 contrasts the approach to historical syntax prevalent in the generative literature, which is based on assumptions inherited from structuralism, with an alternative variationist approach (Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968). Chapter 2 provides background information on the history of Yiddish and highlights the importance of language contact in the development of the modern standard language. Chapter 3 discusses the verb-second phenomenon from a synchronic perspective, focusing on its occurrence in subordinate clauses. I show that four languages that allow verb-second subordinate clauses (modern Yiddish, Icelandic, Old French, Kashmiri) also allow verb-first declarative clauses, and I propose to relate this correlation, which is supported by diachronic and dialectal evidence from Yiddish and Scandinavian, to the possibility of assigning nominative case rightward in these languages. Chapter 4 presents the results of a quantitative analysis of the historical development of subordinate clause word order in Yiddish. The main finding is that the generalization of the verb-second constraint proceeded via an intermediate stage which allowed variation between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure, but did not yet allow non-subjects in clause-initial position. I show that unambiguously verb-second subordinate clauses arose only in the eastern dialects of Yiddish, and I conclude that language contact with Slavic played a crucial role in the generalization of the verb-second constraint. Finally, Chapter 5 addresses the unacceptability of topicalization in subordinate clauses in German and Dutch.

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Introduction

The verb-second constraint is easily the most striking word order phenomenon in the Germanic languages, and philologists and linguists have demonstrated a consistent interest in it for over a century (Erdmann 1886, Wackernagel 1892, Delbrueck 1900, Behaghel 1932, Fourquet 1938). This word order constraint requires the inflected verb to be the second constituent of a declarative clause, regardless of whether the first constituent is the subject. The difference between languages that obey the verb-second constraint and ones that do not is best appreciated by considering sentences in which the first constituent is not the subject. In a verb-second language like German, such sentences exhibit obligatory subject-verb inversion, as shown in (1). In this and following examples, the inflected verb is underlined.

(1)

- a. Auf dem Weg wird der Junge eine Katze sehen.
on the way will the boy a cat see
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'
- b. *Auf dem Weg der Junge wird eine Katze sehen.
on the way the boy will a cat see
Intended meaning:
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'

By contrast, in a language like English, which does not obey the verb-second constraint, the presence of a clause-initial non-subject does not affect the order of the subject and the inflected verb.

(2)

- a. *On the way will the boy see a cat.
- b. On the way, the boy will see a cat.

While the verb-second constraint is common to all Germanic languages except late Middle and Modern English, most varieties of Germanic--including Yiddish up to the 1700's--obey it in root clauses, but not in subordinate clauses that are introduced by a

complementizer or a *wh*-phrase. Rather, such formally subordinate clauses reflect the underlying phrase structure of the language in question. In German, for instance, they are verb-final, as illustrated in (3).

(3)

dass der Junge auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen wird
 that the boy on the way a cat see will
 'that the boy will see a cat on the way'

Modern Yiddish, however, exhibits no such asymmetry between root clauses and formally subordinate clauses. This is shown in (4).

(4)

- a. Oyfn veg vet dos yingl zen a kats.
 on-the way will the boy see a cat
 'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'
- b. az oyfn veg vet dos yingl zen a kats
 that on-the way will the boy see a cat
 'that on the way, the boy will see a cat'

In this dissertation, I will investigate the generalization of the verb-second constraint from root clauses to subordinate clauses that took place in the history of Yiddish from a structural as well as from a quantitative point of view.

The dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 1 discusses the significance of historical syntax and syntactic change within the framework of generative grammar. In particular, I compare and contrast the approach to historical syntax that is prevalent in the generative literature, which is based on assumptions inherited from structuralism, with an alternative approach indebted to the insights of Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968 concerning the interplay between synchrony and diachrony. Chapter 2 provides background information on the history of the Yiddish language and literature. It is intended to highlight the importance of language contact in the development of modern standard Yiddish, which is based on the eastern dialects of the language that were in contact with coterritorial Slavic languages (Polish, Byelorussian, Ukrainian and Russian). In Chapter 3, I discuss the verb-second phenomenon from a synchronic point of view, focusing on its occurrence in subordinate clauses. I show that four languages that allow verb-second word order in subordinate clauses--namely, modern Yiddish,

Icelandic, Old French and Kashmiri--also allow verb-first declarative clauses. I propose to relate this correlation, which is supported by diachronic and dialectal evidence from Yiddish and Scandinavian, to the possibility of assigning nominative case rightward in these languages. Chapter 4 presents the results of a quantitative analysis of the historical development of subordinate clause word order in Yiddish. The main finding of this chapter is that the generalization of the verb-second constraint to subordinate clauses proceeded via an intermediate stage which allowed variation between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure, but unlike modern Yiddish did not yet allow non-subjects in clause-initial position. I show that unambiguously verb-second subordinate clauses arose only in the eastern dialects of Yiddish, and I conclude from this that language contact with Slavic played a crucial role in the generalization of the verb-second constraint, just as it influenced many other aspects of the grammar of modern Yiddish. Finally, in Chapter 5, I address the unacceptability of topicalization in formally subordinate clauses in German and Dutch.

CHAPTER I

Two approaches to historical syntax

In this chapter, I discuss two different approaches to historical syntax: the approach currently prevalent in generative discussions, which is based on assumptions inherited from structuralism, and a variationist approach, which extends to historical syntax the quantitative methods originally developed to investigate synchronic variation in phonology (Labov 1966, Labov 1972, Cedergren and Sankoff 1974). For expository purposes, I will distinguish two versions of the structuralist approach. The resulting three views can be characterized in terms of the way that they treat syntactic change. Given the structuralist approach, one might on the one hand attempt to completely reduce historical syntax to synchronic syntax, ignoring syntactic change altogether. On the other hand, one might define syntactic change as grammatical reanalysis--that is, as an inherently abrupt transition from an old grammatical system to a new one. Although this view, unlike the first, acknowledges the diachronic aspect of historical data, the notion of syntactic change as reanalysis remains essentially static since it focuses on the results rather than the process of change. By contrast, a variationist approach to historical syntax considers syntactic change to have two distinct aspects: a discontinuous aspect involving the coexistence of (sets of) discrete linguistic forms in alternation, but also a continuous, dynamic aspect characterized by fluctuations in the frequency of these forms.

1.1. The structuralist approach

1.1.1. Historical syntax as comparative syntax

The main objective of generative grammar is to discover the principles of universal grammar--that set of grammatical properties common to all human languages. Closely related to this objective is the further goal of stating the parameters according to which language-particular grammars may vary. While much has been learned about the principles of universal grammar from careful studies of individual languages, notably English, discovering the parameters of syntactic variation presupposes the comparison of different grammars. For the most part, such comparative work has been carried out on the basis of contemporary languages. But since each individual stage of a historically attested language is a possible human language, the methods of generative grammar can be applied to historical data as well. From one point of view, then, the study of dead languages is no different than that of living ones, and the comparison of older and newer forms of a single language no different than the synchronic comparison of related languages or dialects. From this point of view, historical syntax is a straightforward extension of synchronic syntax, and the relevance of historical syntax to general syntactic theory follows directly from the universalist, comparative character of generative grammar. However, to the extent that the reduction of historical syntax to synchronic syntax succeeds, historical syntax loses its ability to make a distinctive contribution to syntactic theory. Given the difficulties inevitably associated with interpreting historical records, it then becomes rational to concentrate on investigating living languages, since for these we can consult native speakers for acceptability judgments and obtain negative evidence, which with very rare exceptions is absent from historical data.

1.1.2. Historical syntax as the study of syntactic reanalysis

This rather bleak assessment of the potential contribution of historical syntax is far from having been generally adopted, however. Rather, many generative syntacticians would agree with the observation that "[w]hile earlier stages of a language of course extend the data base, they more importantly provide a different perspective, one which cannot be obtained from the synchronic study of a language in a steady state" (Adams 1987b:7f.). Thus, work in historical syntax is motivated above and beyond work in synchronic comparative syntax to the extent that it takes into account the diachronic aspect of historical data and the existence of syntactic change.

A well-known apology for this point of view is Lightfoot 1979. In contrast to much earlier work on historical syntax, Lightfoot denies the existence of independent principles of syntactic change, such as a tendency towards simplification of the grammar (1979:141-154). He argues that while the outputs of old and new grammars are constrained by a substantive requirement that "communicability ... be preserved between generations" (Lightfoot 1979:149), there are no formal constraints on the relationship between the grammars themselves. Nevertheless, diachronic syntax has independent value for syntactic theory for two reasons. First, under the assumption "that things treated alike in a diachronic development are treated alike, where possible, in the synchronic grammar," diachronic data can provide evidence for choosing between competing synchronic analyses (Lightfoot 1979:16). Second, Lightfoot postulates a principle of universal grammar, the so-called Transparency Principle, which requires syntactic forms to undergo reanalysis when independent changes in the grammar cause them to attain a certain degree of complexity or markedness (1979:121-141). In his view, therefore, investigating historically attested instances of reanalysis and the degree of complexity that preceded them promises to shed light on the nature of universal grammar.

An excellent example of the use of historical syntax to choose among competing synchronic analyses is the reformulation of traditional analyses of Old and Middle French proposed by Adams 1985, 1987a, 1987b. Adams notes that Old French, like

Italian and other Romance languages, was a null subject language. In his seminal work on the null subject parameter in Italian, Rizzi 1982 conjectured that the availability of null subjects in a language depends on the concomitant availability of so-called Romance subject inversion, in which the subject is optionally postposed to the end of the verb phrase. According to Adams, Rizzi's hypothesis cannot be maintained for Old French, because Romance inversion is very seldom attested in that language.¹ However, Old French obeyed the verb-second constraint and freely exhibited Germanic inversion, in which the subject inverts with the verb in clauses that are introduced by non-subjects. Adams 1987b:65 therefore proposes a structural constraint restricting null subjects to positions in which they are canonically governed by the inflected verb. The derivational history of the licensing configuration is immaterial. While Romance inversion moves the subject into a postverbal position where it can be governed by the inflected verb, Germanic inversion moves the inflected verb into a position from where it can govern the subject. In both cases, null subjects are structurally licensed. Adams argues that her synchronic analysis of null subjects in French is supported by the diachronic fact that their loss goes hand in hand with the loss of the verb-second constraint.

A further instance in which diachronic facts can help choose between alternative synchronic analyses concerns the word order parallelism that obtains in *wh*-questions and declarative clauses in verb-second languages, as shown for German in (1). The inflected verb is underlined.

(1)

- a. Wann hast du an deine Schwester geschrieben?
when have you to your sister written
'When did you write to your sister?'
- b. Gestern hast du an deine Schwester geschrieben.
yesterday have you to your sister written
'You wrote to your sister yesterday.'

The generally accepted treatment of such sentences, following den Besten 1983 and Thiersch 1978, assigns the same structural analysis to both clause types. However, a

¹This claim turns out to be incorrect; Old French in fact allowed both Romance and Germanic inversion (Vance 1988:74ff.).

number of alternative treatments are conceivable under which (1a) and (1b) are not parallel. For instance, the *wh*-word in (1a) and the clause-initial constituent in (1b) might occupy distinct structural positions (Maling and Zaenen 1981:259). A more recent analysis reminiscent of Maling and Zaenen's is presented in Weerman 1989:51ff., who proposes that *wh*-words as in (1a) occupy Spec(CP), while non-*wh* topics occupy a left-dislocated position and bind an empty topic operator in Spec(CP). By themselves, then, the synchronic data seem to underdetermine the form of the grammar. The diachronic development, however, provides evidence against the parallel treatment of questions and declaratives. For as Maling and Zaenen 1981:260 observe, *wh*-questions consistently exhibit verb fronting throughout the history of Germanic, as do yes-no questions. On the one hand, verb fronting in questions is categorical in the earliest available texts, which date from a period when the verb-second constraint had not yet established itself as categorical in declarative clauses; and on the other hand, it remains obligatory in English even after the verb-second constraint is lost. On the basis of this and other evidence, Maling and Zaenen 1981 conclude that the parallel treatment of (1a) and (1b) is based on a spurious generalization.

The assumption that what changes together in the historical record belongs together in the synchronic grammar allows evidence from syntactic change to be brought to bear on the empirical correctness of alternative grammars for particular languages. The Transparency Principle, on the other hand, concerns the way that evidence from syntactic change can be brought to bear on the nature of universal grammar. In formulating it, Lightfoot attributes a central role in syntactic change to first-language acquisition. The idea that first-language acquisition is the locus of linguistic change goes back to Halle 1962, is elaborated by Andersen 1973 and is standard in the generative literature. First-language acquisition is the process whereby children, on the basis of experience (a set of primary data) and innate knowledge (universal grammar), infer a series of grammars for the primary data that they are confronted with. In the ideal case, children eventually settle on a grammar identical to that of their elders. Grammatical change takes place when children abduce a grammar from the primary data that differs from that of their elders. While the difference in the outputs of the old and

the new grammar must not endanger communication between generations, the formal difference between the two grammars may be quite radical. The reason for this, and indeed the reason that grammatical change is possible in principle, is that children have no direct access to the grammar of their elders, but only to the output of that grammar. Thus, the discontinuous nature of grammatical change reflects the discontinuity inherent in the acquisition process.

According to this view, the issue of the cause of syntactic change is addressed by specifying the conditions under which children abduce a different grammar from that of the previous generation. Lightfoot's hypothesis is that syntactic change becomes necessary when the accumulation of independent changes in the grammar cause the markedness of a given linguistic form to exceed a certain tolerance level--which is specified by the Transparency Principle. In support of this hypothesis, Lightfoot presents a number of detailed analyses of particular syntactic changes. Though these have also been challenged on empirical grounds, it is more important for present purposes to point out certain conceptual difficulties and confusions associated with his theory. First, the Transparency Principle and the concept of markedness upon which it is based is circular. On the one hand, every syntactic change is defined as a consequence of the Transparency Principle; on the other hand, the only way that the Transparency Principle manifests itself is through syntactic change. As a result, the criticisms that Lightfoot levels at early generative theories that attempted to explain syntactic change in terms of grammatical simplification apply with equal force against his own. For not every syntactic change results in a less marked grammar than the one that preceded it, by any reasonable definition of markedness. For instance, the possessive in Portuguese was at one time expressed by a bare pronoun, as in English (*my brother*), while today the pronoun must be preceded by an article, as in Italian (*il mio fratello*). According to Lightfoot's concept of syntactic change, the later stage must be considered as less marked than the earlier stage. Similarly, Lightfoot's assumptions would force one to consider the grammar of modern Yiddish as less marked than that of early Yiddish, despite the fact that languages like modern Yiddish, in which the verb-second constraint extends to subordinate clauses, are less common than ones which obey the constraint

only in root clauses, like early Yiddish. Second, Lightfoot's discussion shows some confusion over whether the Transparency Principle is a principle of grammar (1979:121) or a metagrammatical principle (1979:239). On the one hand, he argues that the Transparency Principle is empirically motivated; hence, it must be a principle of grammar. On the other hand, in the absence of empirical criteria for markedness that are independent of syntactic change, it can only be a metagrammatical principle, just like formal simplicity.

1.2. The variationist approach

An alternative approach to historical syntax is developed in Kroch 1989a in the course of an analysis of the rise of periphrastic *do* in the history of English. Following Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968, Kroch assumes that the raw material of linguistic change consists of the relative frequencies of linguistic forms in variation. The mere fact that linguistic forms are in variation, however, does not in and of itself trigger change, since quantitative studies have established that members of a speech community are able to reproduce linguistic alternants at the same rate at which they perceive them over long periods of time (stable variation). Rather, the prerequisite of change is that linguistic forms come to be in competition for some reason. Kroch argues that in the case of the rise of periphrastic *do*, the variants containing *do* were in many cases associated with a processing advantage over those that did not, and he proposes a model of the rise of the preferred form at the expense of the dispreferred one. According to this model, the driving force behind linguistic change is the fact that linguistic communication is subject to failure (misunderstanding, misparsing, or failure to parse). Kroch proposes that the distribution of instances of failure may not be random, but rather that failure should be more likely to occur in connection with the dispreferred form, and that linguistic forms involved in failed parses may not count for the hearer as having occurred. Thus, the dispreferred form is less likely to be perceived than to be produced. Since members of the speech community can only reproduce the variants at the rate at which they perceive them, rather than at the rate at which they are actually produced, the relative frequencies of the variants are skewed over time in favor of the preferred form, which is thus

guaranteed to rise more or less quickly in frequency (depending on its advantage in perceptibility) until it becomes categorical. The categorical frequency of the preferred variant then triggers the loss of the grammatical system that gives rise to the dispreferred variant, a very straightforward consequence from the point of view of learnability. An important property of this model of syntactic change is that it can be translated into mathematical terms. In particular, Kroch suggests that the course of syntactic change is expressed by the logistic function, an S-shaped curve which also describes the reproductive success of two unequally adapted biological species. An attractive consequence is that it becomes possible to calculate and to compare the rates of different syntactic changes by estimating one of the parameters of the logistic.

In order to account for the loss of the verb-second constraint in the history of French, Adams 1987b sketches a model of syntactic change that is similar to Kroch's, though much less explicit (in particular, she does not propose a mathematicization). In contrast to Kroch's model, however, that proposed by Adams is not based on variationist assumptions. In what follows, I will briefly review her discussion of the loss of the verb-second constraint in French and compare the two models in order to highlight the differences between the structuralist and the variationist approach to syntactic change.

Since Old French obeyed the verb-second constraint, clauses with the word order XP-Su-V occurred infrequently, and subject-initial clauses were associated with the phrase structure in (2).²

(2)

$[_{CP}Su_i \ [_{_CV-infl_j}] \ [_{IP}t_i \ v_j \ \dots]]$

Adams assumes that a prosodic change took place in the course of the transition from Old to Middle French that allowed subject pronouns (Sp) to procliticize onto the

²Adams 1987c acknowledges that subordinate clauses could be verb-second in Old French (cf. Chapter 3). This fact cannot be accommodated if the inflected verb in a verb-second clause moves into COMP, as she assumes in her dissertation (Adams 1987b). Here, I present her earlier analysis for expository convenience.

inflected verb.³ While subject pronouns continued for a time to be able to hold first position in a verb-second clause, the prosodic change gave rise to previously unattested XP-Sp-V sequences. If these new sequences are given the analysis in (3a), they are still consistent with the verb-second constraint. However, they are also compatible with a non-verb-second analysis as in (3b), where the clause-initial non-subject is in a left-dislocated position.

(3)

- a. $[\text{CP} \text{XP}_i \ [\text{C} \text{Sp+V-infl}_j] \ [\text{IP} \dots \text{v}_j \dots \text{t}_i \dots]]$
- b. $[\text{IP} \text{XP}_i \ [\text{IP} \text{Sp+V-infl} \dots \text{t}_i \dots]]$

Adams 1987b:229 argues that some language learners erroneously associated the new sequences with the non-verb-second analysis in (3b) rather than with the verb-second analysis in (3a). On the basis of the grammar underlying (3b), such speakers then produced XP-Su-V sequences even with full NP subjects, thus introducing unambiguously non-verb-second sequences into the pool of positive evidence and increasing the likelihood of others analyzing the structurally ambiguous XP-Sp-V sequences as non-verb-second. In this way, Adams argues, more and more speakers came to have the new non-verb-second grammar rather than the old verb-second grammar, a development that eventually led to the loss of the latter.

In contrast to Lightfoot's views on syntactic change, the models proposed by Kroch and Adams both allow syntactic change to proceed independently of considerations of markedness. However, they also differ in a number of important ways. Adams's discussion is based on the twin assumptions that the matrix of syntactic change is first-language acquisition and that children are constrained to abduce a single grammar from

³There is disagreement in the literature concerning the date of the cliticization of subject pronouns that Adams invokes as the trigger of the loss of the verb-second constraint, and some scholars believe that it occurred several centuries earlier than she assumes (Ans de Kok, pers. comm.). If the latter view is correct, Adams's analysis of the syntactic change is vitiated. However, since her general approach to syntactic change is independent of the particular causes of the change that she assumes, I will simply present her analysis as it stands. The interested reader is referred to Vance 1988, Chapter 4 and Kroch 1989b for an alternative approach, according to which the loss of the verb-second constraint in French is due to a rise in non-verb-second left-dislocation structures at the expense of verb-second topicalization structures.

the primary data. In communities whose language is undergoing syntactic change, some children abduce the old grammar and some, the new grammar. Syntactic variation is thus a feature of the community as a whole, while the performance of individual speakers is essentially determined by which grammar a speaker happens to have abduced. At any given point in time in the course of a change, we would therefore expect some speakers to produce only forms that are consistent with the old grammar and some, only forms that are consistent with the new grammar. However, when we examine the historical record, we find that the performance of one and the same individual can exhibit both old and new forms in variation. In order to explain this fact, Adams postulates the existence of superficial adaptive rules that result in a convergence of the performance of speakers with different grammars.

In contrast to Adams, Kroch assumes that it is the frequency of use of alternating variants that is consistent and uniform across the speech community, while syntactic variation occurs at the level of the individual. This latter assumption eliminates the need for (sets of) adaptive rules, which are conceptually unattractive since they redundantly mimic the output of independently motivated grammars. A further disadvantage associated with postulating adaptive rules is that the convergence in usage which they supposedly bring about has no bearing on the process of change. By contrast, Kroch's assumptions concerning the frequency norms of the speech community and their reproduction allow him to establish a material connection between synchronic variation and diachronic change. Finally, in recent work (1988, 1989b), Kroch explicitly assumes that language learners are not constrained to abduce a single grammar from the primary data when the positive evidence that they hear contains evidence for more than one grammatical system. This assumption is clearly independently motivated by the fact that bilingual and multilingual children successfully acquire more than one grammar.

In this dissertation, I adopt the variationist approach to syntactic change outlined above. In particular, I will show in Chapter 4 that the generalization of the verb-second constraint in Yiddish proceeded via two stages that allowed variation among distinct grammatical subsystems. At the first stage, INFL-final subordinate clauses are in

variation with INFL-medial ones which are not yet produced by a verb-second grammar. At the second stage, these two clause types are joined by unambiguously verb-second subordinate clauses. This complex system of syntactic variation among three grammatical subsystems is lost in the course of the transition from early to modern Yiddish, and all subordinate clauses come to be consistent with the verb-second constraint. This dissertation focuses on the changes in the syntax of the inflected verb. An important task that remains to be carried out in future research is the investigation of the variation between head-final and head-initial VP's and the establishment and comparison of the rate of change from INFL-final to INFL-medial phrase structure on the one hand and the rate of the concomitant change in the phrase structure of the VP on the other.

CHAPTER II

The history of Yiddish

Yiddish is the language of the *ashkenazim*, the Jews of central and eastern Europe. Genetically, it is descended from medieval German, but Hebrew, the ritual and liturgical language of Judaism, and the Slavic languages have played important roles in its history as well. As a result, modern Yiddish is, to a greater extent than any other variety of Germanic besides English, what M. Weinreich 1980 called a "fusion language." This chapter is intended to provide background information on the history of the Yiddish language and literature. Yiddish has always been recorded in the Hebrew alphabet, and I begin by presenting the system of Romanization that I have employed in transliterating my early Yiddish sources. I then outline the major social and historical developments that have shaped the face of the language. Next, I review the three linguistic components of Yiddish mentioned above, devoting particular attention to the Slavic component. Finally, I give an overview of the types of sources that are available for the study of diachronic Yiddish syntax.

2.1. Romanization

Systems of transliteration are creatures of compromise, and the Romanization of the Hebrew alphabet that I use in this dissertation is no exception. For the purposes of phonology or graphemics, the ideal Romanization would associate each letter of the Hebrew alphabet with a biunique one-letter counterpart from the Roman alphabet. But while such systems are elegant in principle, texts transliterated according to them turn out to be fairly unreadable in practice. Therefore, my goal in designing and using the

who are less familiar with Yiddish than with its sister Germanic languages.⁴

Romanization employed for early Yiddish texts

Yiddish name of Hebrew letter	Transliteration equivalent
alef	a
shtumer alef	not transliterated
komets alef	o
beyz	b
veyz	v
giml	g
daled	d
hey	h
vov	u, v
tsvey vovn	v
vov yud	oy
zayen	z
khes	kh
tes	t
yud	i, y
tsvey yudn	ey
pasekh tsvey yudn	ay
khof	kh
kof	k
lamed	l
mem	m
nun	n
samekh	s
ayen	e
pey	p
fey	f
tsadek	ts
kuf	k
reysh	r
shin	sh
sin	s
sof	s
tof	t

⁴Since this dissertation is on Yiddish, I use the Yiddish rather than the Hebrew names of the Hebrew letters.

As a rule, each Hebrew letter is associated with a unique (though not biunique) equivalent. There are two exceptions: *vov* and *yud*. In words of Hebrew origin, I have transliterated these as *u* and *i*, respectively. In words of Germanic origin, I have transliterated them as *u* and *i* when they are used as vowels, and as *v* and *y* when they are used as consonants.

While modern Yiddish orthographical convention employs diacritics to distinguish the five letters *veyz*, *kof*, *fey*, *sin* and *tof* from their unmarked counterparts *beyz*, *khof*, *pey*, *shin* and *sof*, hardly any of my early Yiddish texts do so. In words from Germanic, the absence of these diacritics has the result that scrupulous adherence to the system that I have adopted would on occasion obscure the etymological relationship between a Yiddish word and its German cognate. On such occasions, I have sacrificed consistency to the presumed interests of the reader and used the equivalent of the letter that bears the diacritic even when the diacritic is absent in the original text. In the case of vowels (simple *alef* vs. *komets alef* and *tsvey yudn* vs. *pasekh tsvey yudn*), however, which are also often not distinguished in early Yiddish texts, I have been completely consistent in following the system given below.

In transliterating modern Yiddish texts, I have adopted the standard system developed by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, which "is essentially a phonemic transcription of Standard Yiddish," except that "[t]he digraph *sh* stands for I.P.A. /ʃ/, *zh* for I.P.A. /ʒ/, *kh* for the spirant /χ/; *y* stands for the semivowel /j/, and hence *ay* is /aj/ and *ey* is /ej/" (U. Weinreich 1954:vi).

In a very few cases, I have had no access to a Yiddish text in the Hebrew alphabet, and I have had to rely on transliterations by other scholars. In the case of Olsvanger 1947, the transliteration has been modified to be in accordance with the YIVO standard. In all other cases, I reproduce examples from such texts as published, prefixing them with a hyphen.

2.2. The history of the *ashkenazim* and their language

The following synopsis of Ashkenazic culture and the history of Yiddish is indebted primarily to the monumental *History of the Yiddish language* by M. Weinreich 1980. According to him, the earliest records of uninterrupted Jewish settlement on German-speaking territory date back to the ninth century C.E. With the exception of Regensburg on the upper Danube, these first Jewish communities were located in the lower Rhine and Moselle valleys, and their adoption of German as their vernacular gave rise to the Yiddish language. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Jews began spreading to the south, the southeast and the east, partly for economic reasons and partly as a result of anti-Semitic edicts that were passed in connection with the First Crusade (1096). By the middle of the 1200's, Yiddish-speaking Jewish communities had been established along the Main, the upper Danube and the upper Rhine and as far south as northern Italy. By about the same time, Yiddish-speaking settlements had also spread far enough eastward to come into contact with speakers of Slavic. Following M. Weinreich, I will refer to the Yiddish-speaking area of central Europe, where the coterrestrial language was mostly German, as Ashkenaz I and to the area in eastern Europe that was settled later, where the majority of the coterrestrial population spoke some Slavic language, as Ashkenaz II. Over the next few centuries, both Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II continued to grow. There was much internal migration within Ashkenaz I, which came to include Austria, Silesia, Bohemia, Moravia and Hungary. Yiddish-speaking communities were established in the course of the 1500's in Switzerland, Alsace and Holland and after 1600 in northern Germany and southern Denmark. Jews also continued to migrate eastward from Ashkenaz I to Ashkenaz II until the 1600's, again partly because of periodic expulsions and violence against them by the Christian population, most notably after the massacres of 1348 in the wake of the Black Death. Ashkenaz II expanded to encompass Poland, Lithuania, Byelorussia, the Ukraine and eventually Russia itself.

Until about 1500, the center of gravity of Ashkenazic culture was located in Ashkenaz I, but as Ashkenaz II grew in area and population, so did its cultural influence.

For instance, after 1500, the leading *yeshivas*, the traditional colleges of rabbinical learning for adolescent boys, were increasingly located in eastern Europe. The growing importance of Ashkenaz II also becomes apparent when we consider the history of printed Yiddish literature. The earliest printing centers, which were established in the first half of the 1500's, were in Ashkenaz I: in Venice, Isny (near the lake of Constance), Zurich and Augsburg (near Munich). In the second half of the century, Cracow in southwestern Poland emerged as a significant printing center, where even books by authors from Ashkenaz I were published. In the first half of the 1600's, Cracow was superseded by Lublin, close to the present-day Polish-Soviet border. Since publishing and printing continued in the west as well, the period from 1500 to roughly the middle of the 1700's can be characterized as one of equilibrium between Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II.

Although the direction of Jewish migration was predominantly eastward, Jews moved back and forth between Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II quite freely throughout the entire period of expansion. The last time Jews moved from east to west in large numbers was to escape the exceptionally bloody Cossack massacres of 1648 in the Ukraine. As a result of these massacres, printing came to a virtual standstill in Ashkenaz II (Dinse and Liptzin 1978:67), and Amsterdam became the undisputed printing center for Yiddish literature in the second half of the 1600's, supplying eastern Europe in addition to the Netherlands and the German-speaking territory.

Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II continued to form a single cultural community until roughly the middle of the 1700's. The linguistic correlate of this unity was the existence of a fairly uniform supraregional literary language based on the Yiddish of Ashkenaz I, which M. Weinreich 1980 refers to as Written Language A. While Written Language A remained essentially impervious to Slavic influence even in the east, the vernaculars of Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II began to develop into the two main dialects of Yiddish, West Yiddish and East Yiddish, as a result of differential contact with Slavic. Apart from a handful of early lexical borrowings (notably *nebekh* 'poor, unfortunate' from Czech), West Yiddish shows essentially no Slavic influence. East Yiddish, on the other

hand, was profoundly affected by the contact and underwent changes at all levels of the language, as we will see in some detail in Section 2.3.3. The earliest reports of differences between East and West Yiddish date back to the beginning of the 1600's. By the middle of the 1700's, the two dialects had diverged in speech to the point of causing difficulties in mutual comprehension (M. Weinreich 1980:284). The growing rift between West and East Yiddish and the continuing eastward shift in Ashkenazic culture are reflected in the emergence around the early 1700's of a literary language based on East Yiddish--what M. Weinreich 1980 refers to as Written Language B.

After about 1750, the unity of Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II broke up, and the further history of the two halves of the Yiddish-speaking territory proceeded along separate paths. In western Europe, where Jews had both greater incentives and opportunities than in the east to be in close contact with speakers of German and hence to become proficient in German themselves, the ascendance of modern secular thought and the developments that culminated in the French Revolution of 1789 held out the promise of political enfranchisement and social advancement. Among the proponents of secularization in the Jewish community, the so-called *maskilim*, this opportunity gave rise to an ideology of cultural and linguistic assimilation that had fatal consequences for the existence of West Yiddish, at least as a written language. The *maskilim* were not content to reject the use of Yiddish as a vehicle of public discourse. They attacked the language itself as a corrupt, illegitimate, illogical, reactionary version of German, incapable of expressing the ideals of emancipation and enlightenment. In the view of the *maskilim*, Yiddish not only symbolized, but was itself in large measure responsible for, a crippling heritage of prejudice, discrimination, segregation and inequality. The Berlin circle around Moses Mendelssohn, the leading figure of the *haskalah* (the Jewish parallel to the Enlightenment), introduced the pejorative French term *jargon* to stigmatize what speakers of West and East Yiddish alike had previously referred to simply as *taytsh*--that is, German. Moses Mendelssohn himself wrote sharply, "This Jargon contributed no little to the immorality of the common Jews" (cited in M. Weinreich 1980:321; cf. also Dinse and Liptzin 1978:76). The *maskilim* established between Yiddish and New High German the invidious relationship characteristic of the relation between the basilect and

the standard language in language contact situations under imperialism. As a result of their vigorous campaign, vernacular Yiddish (and often, Hebrew as well) was banished from most domains of language use in Ashkenaz I and replaced by standard New High German, or at least a highly acrolectal version of Yiddish. While West Yiddish continued to be spoken in traditional rural communities, notably in Alsace-Lorraine, and as a home language in the cities well into the twentieth century, West Yiddish literature virtually died out after 1800.

The situation was quite different in the east, primarily because of the much higher percentage of Jews in the cities and towns of eastern Europe. In many places, the great majority of the Jewish population was not in close contact with German speakers and knew no German. In addition to the demographic factor, an important determinant of the development of Yiddish in Ashkenaz II was the rise of Hasidism in the second quarter of the 1700's, a mystical movement that valued the heart-felt expression of joyful religious sentiment over the traditionally upheld virtues of asceticism and intellectual mastery of the scriptures of Judaism. Hasidism won over the great majority of eastern European Jews, forming an effective bulwark against the influx of secular ideas from the west. While there were eastern European *maskilim* who knew German, who had studied in Berlin and who maintained close contacts with the west when they returned home, these intellectuals never made up more than a small elite compared to the entire Yiddish-speaking population. The position of Yiddish vis-à-vis German in Ashkenaz II was therefore much stronger than in Ashkenaz I. Though attempts were not lacking to replace Yiddish by German as in the west, many influential eastern European *maskilim* recognized that the demographic and cultural differences between Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II called for corresponding strategic differences in the battle of ideologies. Recognizing that the dissemination of progressive ideas could be successful only if it proceeded in the language of those who were to be its beneficiaries, many eastern European *maskilim* defended Yiddish against both German and Hebrew, the language of rabbinical scholarship, and contributed to its prestige and expressive flexibility by using it themselves in their writings. Thus, despite the greater distance in the east between the camps of tradition and secularism, the legitimacy of Yiddish as an instrument of carrying

out the ideological conflict between them never figured as prominently as it did in the west. In the end, Yiddish in the east emerged not only unscathed but even strengthened from the same contest that led to its extinction in the west.

To conclude this section, let us review the periodization of Yiddish proposed by M. Weinreich 1980. Early Yiddish, of which we have no written records apart from a few glosses, lasts from the ninth century until about 1250. From 1250 until about 1500, we have Old Yiddish, the earliest record of which is a sentence from a prayer book dating from 1272 (Roell 1966). The oldest extensive Yiddish texts are two manuscripts from 1382 and 1396. During the Old Yiddish period, the language comes into contact with Slavic, but the written language of the time reflects no more than traces of Slavic influence. From around 1500 to the early 1700's, we have the Middle Yiddish period, during which differences between West and East Yiddish emerge and the written language begins to show signs of the divergence, though continuing to be based primarily on West Yiddish. Finally, from the 1700's on, we have New Yiddish. In this period, West Yiddish dies out, East Yiddish becomes dominant, and the written language, now based on East Yiddish, extends to all domains of language use. For the purposes of this dissertation, the distinctions between Early, Old and Middle Yiddish turn out to be largely irrelevant. Where convenient, therefore, I will use the cover terms 'early Yiddish' and 'modern Yiddish,' respectively, to refer to the stages of Yiddish before and after the 1700's.

2.3. The linguistic components of Yiddish

In this section, I describe the three major linguistic components of Yiddish: German, Hebrew and Slavic. In view of the topic of this dissertation, the degree and extent of Slavic influence on Yiddish is of particular interest, for some scholars have maintained that the differences between Yiddish and German with regard to the position of the inflected verb are due to language contact with Slavic (U. Weinreich 1958:15, M. Weinreich 1980:532). The results that I will present in Chapter 4 confirm this hypothesis; in particular, while the position of the inflected verb in subordinate clauses is

more likely to be clause-medial in both West and East Yiddish than in German, only East Yiddish has come to allow the same word orders in subordinate clauses as in root clauses. Contact with Slavic thus appears to have played a significant role in the generalization of the verb-second constraint in the modern language, a conclusion that is completely consistent with the extensive Slavic influence on East Yiddish documented below.

2.3.1. The German component

The German component in Yiddish is the decisive one in establishing the genetic affiliation of the language. The German origin of Yiddish is most apparent in the lexicon: the etymology of the majority of Yiddish words is German, so that even modern Yiddish, which is based on the eastern dialects, is to some extent still mutually intelligible with New High German. The German origin of Yiddish is also reflected in the fact that Yiddish exhibits the verb-second constraint.

From the point of view of historical phonology, it is important that the Jews who adopted German as their vernacular originally settled in areas in which High German dialects were spoken. When Jews settled in areas where the coterrestrial vernacular was Low German in the 1600's, they for some reason resisted its influence, as was also largely the case with coterrestrial Dutch and Danish. In Ashkenaz I, including Bohemia, Moravia and Hungary, speakers of Yiddish remained in contact with speakers of High German throughout the entire period of migration from Ashkenaz I to Ashkenaz II (and in many cases, up until the twentieth century), with the result that modern Yiddish reflects not only the medieval German from which it is descended, but phonological and morphological developments characteristic of New High German as well. Yiddish also continued to be in direct contact with German in Ashkenaz II for some time, for there was a German colonization of eastern Europe that lasted until about 1300, and in many Polish and Lithuanian cities, the powerful German-speaking bourgeoisie did not give up its native language as the official language of municipal administration until the end of the Middle Ages. Finally, even though New High German never replaced Yiddish in

Ashkenaz II as it did in Ashkenaz I, it played a significant role in the formation of a supraregional modern Yiddish standard in the east, since the writers who created the standard in the 1800's often implicitly oriented themselves to New High German norms even when they did not adopt them outright (Schaechter 1969).

2.3.2. The Hebrew component

The Hebrew component of Yiddish is as old as the German one. Strictly speaking, what influenced Yiddish was not biblical Hebrew, but what Ashkenazic Jews refer to traditionally as *loshn koydesh* (Hebrew for ‘the language of holiness’). *Loshn koydesh* came into being when Jews adopted Aramaic, a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew, as their vernacular in the Babylonian Exile (6th century B.C.E.). For the purposes of this dissertation, the distinction between Hebrew and *loshn koydesh* is not crucial, and I will use both terms interchangeably in what follows. Since the traditional Ashkenazic system of elementary-school education guaranteed that every man had at least a smattering of Hebrew, the contribution of this component to Yiddish was great and by no means restricted to formal or learned styles. Nevertheless, since Hebrew influence is seen mainly in the lexicon, in turns of phrase and idiomatic expressions and to a lesser extent in morphology, it is the least interesting of the three components from the point of view of this dissertation.

2.3.3. The Slavic component

Contact between Yiddish and its coterrestrial Slavic languages, notably Polish, Byelorussian and Ukrainian, left its mark on all areas of the modern language: phonology, morphology, the lexicon, syntax and pragmatics. The major goal of this subsection is to document the profound influence that contact with Slavic has had on the development of modern Yiddish.

Unlike either German or West Yiddish, but like the Slavic languages, East Yiddish has phonologically distinctive palatal consonants. In the domain of the lexicon, a great many borrowings from Slavic entered East Yiddish, including a wealth of affective and

diminutive suffixes, discourse particles like *take* ‘indeed,’ the indefinite morpheme *abi* ‘any,’ the emphatic bound morpheme *-zhe*, the focus particle *ot*, as well as other closed-class items like the interrogative morpheme *tsi* ‘whether.’ Many verbs that are etymologically related to non-reflexive German verbs are constructed as reflexive verbs in modern Yiddish by analogy to reflexive translation equivalents in Slavic.⁵ Also by analogy to Slavic, the originally third person form of the reflexive pronoun, *zikh*, has become the invariant form for all grammatical persons (Lockwood 1965:244, Loetsch 1974:456). A remarkable use of the reflexive is the expression of a so-called casual voice, “which signifies that the actor is not so fully engrossed in the action as when the verb appears in the normal active voice (without [zikh]): *er zingt [zikh]* ‘he sings casually’” (U. Weinreich 1958:14).

In order to express the quintessentially Slavic category of verbal aspect, East Yiddish resorts to grammaticalized periphrastic constructions such as *Ikh fleg (tsu) shraybn* ‘I used to write’ as well as to calques on Slavic aspectual prefixes (M. Weinreich 1980:528ff.). For instance, the German-component particle *on-* ‘at’ in *Ikh hob ongeshribn* ‘I am done writing’ expresses the completion of the action, in contrast to the simple form *Ikh hob geshribn* ‘I wrote, I have written,’ which leaves aspect unspecified. It is important to note that this use of the particle has no parallel in German. In some cases, there has come to be a productive correlation between German-component particles and Slavic aspectual prefixes. A further instance in which Yiddish speakers pursue the strategy of expressing the content of Slavic grammatical distinctions and constructions by using lexical material that is formally German is the so-called stem construction, in which the verb *ton* ‘do’ or *gebn* ‘give’ combines with the indefinite article and a deverbal noun that corresponds to the verb stem or an ablaut variant of it, as in *a shprung ton* ‘make a leap’ (Birnbaum 1979:272, Taube 1987, M. Weinreich 1980:528). This construction, which is used in modern Yiddish to express the Slavic category of instantaneous aspect, is derived from a formally identical construction in

⁵This is also the case in varieties of German that have had contact with Slavic, such as Austrian (Lockwood 1965:244).

Middle High German. In contrast to its German source, however, the stem construction has become completely productive in modern Yiddish. As shown in (1), it is possible even with particle verbs like *oysshrayen* 'exclaim' and reflexive verbs like *zikh lozn* 'allow oneself (to do something).'^{6,7}

(1)

- a. az der yid git dos a geshrey-*oys*
(*Royte Pomerantsen*, 17)
that the guy gives that a shout out
'that the guy gives a sort of shout'
- b. Hot er zikh a loz geton shpringen.
(*Royte Pomerantsen*, 5)
has he REFL a let done jump
'So he dashes away and jumps.'

As in Polish, the standard of comparison may be introduced not only by a conjunction (*vi* 'than') but also by a preposition (*fun* 'from, of'), as in *Er iz greser fun mir* 'He is bigger than me.' Adjectives and possessive pronouns can follow their head nouns (Birnbaum 1979:297). Like Russian, Yiddish allows analytic comparatives, which are formed with the adverb *mer* 'more.' As shown in (2), *mer* may combine with a synthetic comparative, it may bear a comparative suffix of its own, and analytic and synthetic comparatives can be conjoined (Loetzsch 1974:454f.).

(2)

- a. -dos ponem mer opgecojgener un blaser
the face more up-drawn and paler
'the face more sunken and pale'

⁶According to Birnbaum 1979:293, *dos* 'that,' as in (1a), *epes* 'something' and *es* 'it' all "qualify [the predicate] in a vague way." Note the position of the particle, which follows the deverbal noun in (1a), in contrast to its prehead position in the corresponding infinitive *oysshrayen* 'exclaim.'

⁷The examples in (1) and many of those that follow in this thesis are taken from *Royte Pomerantsen*, a collection of anecdotes edited by Olsvanger 1947. This work is of particular interest to comparative syntacticians of Germanic because it is an excellent source of vernacular Yiddish that is available in transliteration. The numbers refer to the page on which the example occurs.

- b. -zej zoln zix filn merer krojviš,
 filn a bisl gemitlexer
 you-formal shall REFL feel morer at-home
 feel a bit more-comfortable
 'You should feel more at home, a bit more
 comfortable.'
- c. -kejn mer gebildetn un gresern menčn fun karpn
 hob ix nit gekent
 no more educated and greater person from Karp
 have I not known
 'I have never known a more educated or greater
 person than Karp.'

Yiddish also allows an analytic superlative formed with the element *same* 'very' (cf. Russian *sam-* 'the very'), which combines with the positive or a synthetic superlative, as shown in (3) (Loetzsch 1974:455).

- (3)
- a. -majn same balibter frajnt
 my very dear friend
 'my dearest friend'
- b. -der same jingster
 the very youngest
 'the very youngest'

As in many varieties of Slavic, an interrogative and relative pronoun (*vos* 'what' in Yiddish) can function as a complementizer,⁸ and as in vernacular varieties of the East Slavic languages and Polish, Yiddish permits resumptive pronouns in relative clauses introduced by *vos* (Birnbaum 1979:255,306, Loetzsch 1974:458, M. Weinreich 1980:532,616). Resumptive pronouns are optional in relative clauses on subject or direct object position and obligatory otherwise. Also like Slavic, but unlike German, Yiddish does not allow demonstrative pronouns to function as relative pronouns.

Unlike German but like Czech, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian, Yiddish allows the

⁸According to Taube 1986:1,13, fn. 2 and M. Weinreich 1980:532,616, this use is attested in Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Russian and older and non-standard varieties of Polish. The first use that I have come across in Yiddish dates from 1790. In contrast to the general complementizer *az* 'that,' *vos* is restricted to introducing complements of predicates that are simultaneously factive and emotive (Taube 1986:12). This restriction is a Yiddish innovation.

multiple fronting of *wh*-words in both root and subordinate clauses, as shown in (4) (Zaretski 1929:236, para. 733.4; 255, para. 789).⁹

(4)

- a. Ver vuhan geyt?
who where goes
'Who is going where?'
- b. Lomir geyn, ver vuhan es geyt.
let's go who where it goes
'Let's go wherever whoever is going.'
- c. Ikh veys nisht, vern vuhan (es) geyt.
I know not who where it goes
'I don't know who is going where.'

Yiddish also allows a distributive use of interrogative pronouns, as illustrated in (5) (Loetzsch 1974:456).

(5)

- jeder menč hot zajn lebens-cikl--ver a lengern
un ver a kircern
each person has his life cycle who a longer
and who a shorter
'Each person has their own life cycle--one a
longer one and the other a shorter one.'

As in Polish and Russian, violations of Ross's 1967 left branch constraint are possible (Katz 1987:250). This is shown in (6).^{10,11} The split NP is underlined.

(6)

- a. Genuq hob ikh epl.
enough have I apples
'I have enough apples.'

⁹As I discuss in detail in Chapter 3, the occurrence of expletive *es* in (4b,c) is a consequence of the verb-second constraint. The optionality of *es* in (4c) reflects the possibility of using the word order of direct questions, as in (4a), in indirect questions (Zaretski 1929:254, para. 788).

¹⁰As the examples in (6) show, left-branch violations are possible in declaratives as well as in questions. Yiddish differs in this respect from the typologically similar Icelandic, which allows left branch extraction only in questions (Zaenen 1980:74,183).

¹¹Again, the expletive *es* in (6b) is a consequence of the verb-second constraint (cf. fn. 6). Note the singular agreement in (6b), which is possible in Yiddish with plural subjects if they are postposed.

- b. Men darf tsuzamennemen vifl es iz do
shvigers in shtot. (Royte Pomerantsen, 21)
 one must together-take how-many it is there
 mothers-in-law in town
 'One has to round up however many mothers-in-law
 there are in town.'

On the basis of recent work in phrase structure, there is reason to believe that the grammaticality of examples in (6) is related to the fact that (indefinite) determiners in modern Yiddish can be preceded by a possessive phrase (Birnbaum 1979:297), as shown in (7).¹²

- (7)
- a. az dos iz hershls an oyftuakhts
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 41)
 that that is Hersh'l's a prank
 'that that is a prank of Hersh'l's'
- b. Hot im zayner a bakenter gefirt oyfn yidishn
 beys-oylem. (Royte Pomerantsen, 49)
 has him his a friend led on-the Jewish
 cemetery
 'So his friend took him to the Jewish cemetery.'

While vernacular Yiddish allows null referential subjects only to the same limited extent as vernacular German (cf. Chapter 3.2.2.4), the expletive subjects in impersonal constructions are obligatorily null, just as in Slavic (Marzena Gronicka, pers. comm.).

¹²In particular, it has been suggested in work by Szabolcsi 1984, Abney 1987 and Horrocks and Stavrou 1987 that both the possessive morpheme and the indefinite article head phrasal projections of their own, and that the specifier position of the possessor phrase acts as an escape hatch for movement out of noun phrases, just as COMP does in the case of clauses. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to develop an analysis of the facts in (6) and (7) along these lines, interesting and difficult questions immediately arise concerning the relationship between language contact and grammatical change. For while the possibility of having left branch violations in modern Yiddish is clearly a result of language contact with Slavic, the structure of noun phrases in Slavic is probably quite different from that of Yiddish. In particular, Slavic has no articles, and it has been argued that noun phrases in Slavic lack phrasal projections above NP as a result (Wayne Harbert, pers. comm., citing a talk by Juan Uriagereka). If this is correct, then the analyses associated with left branch violations in Yiddish and Slavic must be quite distinct, word order parallelism notwithstanding. In particular, the only way for Yiddish to have come to accommodate the word order associated with left branch violations--given the presence of articles in the language--would have been to reanalyze the structure of noun phrases by introducing an additional projection level.

Some examples are given in (8).¹³

(8)

mistome geyt e im shlekht ... vi dem
 andern iz e gut. Zey veln zen, az ba mir
 in shtub iz e likhtik, freylekh ...
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 81)
 probably goes him-DAT badly how the-DAT
 other is good they will see that by me
 in room is light cheerful
 'Probably he is doing badly ... that the other
 person is doing well. They will see that in
 my room, it is light and cheerful ...'

By contrast, the subject in the German counterparts of the clauses in (8) would be the lexical expletive *es* 'it.'

Furthermore, Yiddish has come to permit null objects fairly freely and under different syntactic conditions than German (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.). This property is most likely also due to Slavic influence. In German, null objects occur only in the clause-initial position of verb-second clauses (Huang 1984:546ff., Ross 1982). By contrast, Yiddish allows evoked objects to be dropped from clause-internal positions, as illustrated in (9). I assume that the null object occupies the same preverbal position that the corresponding unstressed pronoun would.

(9)

- a. Hot er opgerisn eyn polke fun der katshke un hot
e opgegesn. (Royte Pomerantsen, 3)
 has he off-torn a leg of the duck and has
 up-eaten
 'So he tore a drumstick off the duck and ate it up.'

¹³ Apparent verb-third word order as in the last clause in (8) can be reduced to verb-second word order by assuming that one of the PP's is a specifier of the other. For some discussion of this word order in German, see Fanselow 1987:99, Webelhuth 1985:242, fn. 14.

- b. un hobn shtilinkereyt aropgenumen dem oybershtn
bret fun tish mitn yidn tsuzamen un
hobn e anidergeleygt oyf der erd
(Royte Pomerantsen, 29)
and have quietly off-taken the highest
board of table with-the guy together and
have down-laid on the ground
'and quietly took off the top of the table together
with the guy and set it down on the ground'
- c. Der yid hot derzen gelt, hot er e oyfgehoyn.
(Royte Pomerantsen, 81)
the guy has seen money has he up-picked
'The guy saw some money, so he picked it up.'
- d. Du host e gebetn? (Grine Felder, 66)
you have asked
'Did you ask her?'

Like colloquial Russian (Steve Franks, pers. comm.), Yiddish permits a non-*wh* constituent to precede a *wh*-word in direct questions for special emphasis (Birnbaum 1979:304, Zaretski 1929:236, para. 733.4). This is illustrated in (10).¹⁴

- (10)
- a. Ahin ver geyt?
there who goes
'Who is going there?'
 - b. Mit di kinder vos tut men?
with the children what does one
'What is one to do with the children?'

In the domain of pragmatics, Prince 1987 has described the borrowing of the discourse functions of a Slavic focus-presupposition construction, the model for which is illustrated for Russian in (11) (= Prince's (8a) and (11a)).

- (11)
- a. Eto on'i nashl'i aykhmana. (Russian)
this they found Eichmann
'It was they that found Eichmann.'

¹⁴It is worth pointing out that this constituent order (XP - *wh*-word - verb) is the regular interrogative word order in Kashmiri and most other Indo-European languages of India (Hook 1984:146, Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985:48).

- b. Eto aykhmana on'i nashl'i. (Russian)
 this Eichmann they found
 'It was Eichmann that they found.'

In Yiddish, the word order of the Slavic construction was adapted to be consistent with the verb-second constraint. Thus, the translation equivalent of (11a) is (12a) rather than (12b) (= Prince's (4a) and (10), respectively).¹⁵

(12)

- a. Dos hobn zey gefunen aykhmanen.
 that have they found Eichmann
 'It was they that found Eichmann.'
- b. *Dos zey hobn gefunen aykhmanen.
 that they have found Eichmann
 Intended meaning:
 'It was they that found Eichmann.'

Finally, Yiddish has borrowed a further focus construction from Slavic. Consider first the examples in (13), in which only the particle *ot* is borrowed (< Ukrainian and Byelorussian *ot* 'here, there,' cf. Russian *vot*).

(13)

- a. Ot dos vil ikh.
 PART that want I
 'That's what I want.'
- b. Ot do voyn ikh.
 PART there live I
 'That's where I live.'

¹⁵The *dos*-construction in Yiddish is used mainly to focus subjects, but it is also possible, though apparently not common, to focus a non-subject, as shown in (i) and (ii).

- i. Dos meynt er mistome dos opsheln fun der
 geyresh- gzyre. (Shatzky 1927/28, 15)
 that means he probably the suspending of the
 expulsion decree
 'It is probably the suspension of the decree of
 expulsion that he means.'
- ii. Dos meynt er dem barimtn hebreistn Yohan
 Kristofar Vagnzayl. (Shatzky 1927/28, 19)
 that means he the famous Hebrew-scholar Johann
 Christoph Wagenseil
 'It is the famous Hebrew scholar Johann Christoph
 Wagenseil that he is referring to.'

By analogy to the Slavic construction illustrated in (14), Yiddish allows the demonstrative pronouns in (13) to be replaced by their [+wh]-counterparts. This is shown in (15) (Loetzsch 1974:456, U. Weinreich 1981:333).^{16,17}

(14)

- a. Vot čto ja xoču. (Russian)
here what I want
'That's what I want.'
- b. Vot gde ja živu. (Russian)
here where I live
'That's where I live.'
- c. a sputsilos vot čto. (Russian)
and happened here what
'And what happened was this.'

(15)

- a. Ot vos ikh vil.
PART what I want
'That's what I want.'
- b. Ot vu ikh voyn.
PART where I live
'That's where I live.'
- c. -un gešen iz ot vos.
and happened is PART what
'And what happened was this.'

¹⁶Thanks are due to Steve Franks, pers. comm., for the examples in (14a,b); the examples in (14c) and (15c) are from Loetzsch 1974:456.

¹⁷At first glance, the examples in (15a,b) violate the verb-second constraint; indeed, subject-verb inversion is ruled out in the *ot+wh*-word construction. However, the obligatory presence of expletive *es* in examples like (i) shows that the focused constituent in the *ot+wh*-word construction is outside the domain of the verb-second constraint (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.; cf. the examples in Loetzsch 1974:456).

- i. Ot ver *(es) lakht.
PART who it laughs
'That's who is laughing.'

The syntax of the *ot+wh*-word construction in Yiddish is thus identical to that of subordinate clauses, where fronted *wh*-constituents are also not within the domain of the verb-second constraint (Diesing 1988, Zaretski 1929:253, para. 782).

2.4. Available sources

In this section, I give an overview of the types of sources that are available as a basis for the study of the diachronic syntax of Yiddish. Early Yiddish literature is fairly extensive; according to M. Weinreich 1980:273, it "consists of some two hundred manuscripts and several hundred printed items." In Appendix I, I give an annotated list of the sources that I have examined, along with the titles of several histories of Yiddish literature. As is usual in historical syntax, vernacular sources are more difficult to come by than non-vernacular ones; fortunately, however, they do exist. After reviewing the types of non-vernacular and vernacular sources that are available, I briefly discuss the status of poetic texts as data for diachronic syntax.

2.4.1. Non-vernacular sources

2.4.1.1. Old Yiddish

The earliest sources are glosses to Hebrew texts and glossaries, which are useless for the purposes of historical syntax since they contain only words, not sentences. The next oldest sources are Bible translations. There is reason to believe that the earliest of these were written in the 1300's, but the extant manuscripts date from the late 1400's and 1500's. Like the glosses and glossaries, these early translations are too literal to be useful for the purposes of historical syntax. Finally, there are Yiddish festival prayer books (*makhzorim*) and Yiddish versions of the traditional religious code of a community (*minhagim*). All of these were particularly important in the religious life of Jewish women, who were not taught Hebrew as a matter of course, but men who did not know enough Hebrew to read it easily benefited from them as well.

From the later Middle Ages, there survive a number of secular Jewish epic poems in the tradition of courtly German literature (*Minnesang*). A late example of this type of epic literature is the extremely popular *Bovo-bukh*, which was composed in 1507. Despite the difference in subject matter, the religious epics of the period are formally very similar to their secular counterparts, often employing the same originally Middle

High German heroic couplet (*Nibelungenstrophe*). The most popular religious epics were the *Seyfer Shmuel* (Book of Samuel) and the *Seyfer mlokhim* (Book of Kings), both imaginative verse paraphrases of parts of the Bible. The distinction between religious and secular poetry is at times none too clear. This is especially true of the paraphrases of the Book of Esther and their secular counterparts, the Purim plays, which were performed in a carnival-like atmosphere to commemorate the salvation of the Persian Jews by Esther, their Jewish queen.

2.4.1.2. Middle Yiddish

Like its medieval counterparts in other languages, Old Yiddish literature was primarily an oral literature, framed in verse. The death of the courtly forms of life that gave rise to this oral tradition and Gutenberg's introduction of printing with moveable type, which made books more widely available than they had been previously, ushered in a new era of prose literature. Bible translations continued to be important. However, the prose translations of the early Middle Yiddish period were no longer word-for-word renditions of the Hebrew original. Rather, like the religious verse epics of the previous era, they included much allegorical interpretation. There were prose translations of the entire Pentateuch, such as the immensely popular *Tsennerenne*,¹⁸ as well as more literal, less popular translations, and there were also translations of single books of the Bible, particular favorites being the Book of Esther and the Song of Songs. After the relocation of printing activity from the east to Amsterdam as a result of the Cossack massacres of 1648, Yiddish Bible translations came to resemble once again the word-for-word translations of the Old Yiddish period, perhaps because of contact with the scholarly tradition of the Sephardic Jewish community in Amsterdam with its emphasis on fidelity to the Hebrew original (Dinse and Liptzin 1978:67f.). Other religious literature from the Middle Yiddish period includes festival prayer books, daily prayer books, translations of the Psalms and a special genre of women's prayers of supplication (*tkhines*). There were also religious works composed in an unabashedly entertaining tone, such as the

¹⁸The title of this so-called 'women's Pentateuch' is based on verse 3,11 of the Song of Songs: *tse'enah u-re'enah*, Hebrew for 'go forth and behold.'

Maaseh-bukh (Book of tales), which recounts episodes from the lives of two medieval religious leaders, or the *Ku-bukh* (Cow book), a collection of fables in rhymed verse. The popular Purim play remained the only type of drama in Yiddish.

A new genre of literature arose during the Middle Yiddish period: the so-called *muser* books (*musar*, Hebrew for ‘discipline, moral instruction’). In the 1500’s, these books were devoted to imparting the principles of proper conduct and religious duties, particularly to women. In the 1600’s and 1700’s, the *muser*-books became more radically orthodox and their intended audience broader. In the west, they denounced the beginnings of secularization among the emerging Jewish bourgeoisie. In the east, they castigated the relatively privileged townspeople for their lack of concern for the impoverished Jewish population in the countryside, enjoining them to live up to their social responsibilities towards the entire Jewish community.

In addition to religious literature, secular literature was well represented in the Middle Yiddish period, particularly in Ashkenaz I. Geographical works, travel diaries and historical works such as Flavius Josephus’s history of the Jews, *Antiquitates judaicae*, were translated into Yiddish, as were a great number of popular German romances of the time. The story of the false messiah Sabbathai Tsvi was told in verse, and economic and cultural conflicts between western and eastern European Jews were dramatized in satirical poetry. Several authors wrote medical self-help books, often with moralistic overtones, and grammars of Hebrew appeared in Yiddish. The destruction of the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) and the specifically anti-Semitic violence of the Cossack massacres in 1648 was depicted in the genre of the *kine* or *kloglid* (Hebrew and Yiddish, respectively, for ‘dirge, lament.’¹⁹ In Amsterdam, the first Yiddish periodical appeared in 1686. Finally, official proclamations were sometimes issued in Yiddish rather than in *loshn koydesh* so that the entire population might understand them.

¹⁹Originally, a *kine* had as its topic the destruction of the Second Temple by Titus in 70 C.E. and the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora, but the term was extended to apply to any poem commemorating the persecution and killing of Jews.

2.4.1.3. New Yiddish

Compared to its relatively flourishing state in the Middle Yiddish period, Yiddish literature went into eclipse in both Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II in the 1700's, though for different reasons. As discussed above, a literature composed in West Yiddish contradicted the linguistic assimilationism propagated by the *maskilim* in Ashkenaz I, and West Yiddish literature declined rapidly in the second half of the 1700's. Despite their avowed aversion to Yiddish, however, several *maskilim* wrote plays in West Yiddish in the late 1700's and early 1800's. Regionally, West Yiddish literature continued to be produced throughout the 1800's.

In the east, the spiritual leaders of Hasidism produced an oral literature describing their mystical experiences. But this literature was hardly ever committed to writing, and when it was, it was published in Hebrew. It is not until the early 1800's that there appeared Yiddish versions of the parables and aphorisms of the great figures of Hasidism. The early 1800's also witnessed the emergence of modern secular Yiddish literature. From this time on, there is a substantial body of East Yiddish literature that covers all the genres familiar from other modern European literatures, including novels, short stories, plays, satire and lyric poetry, in addition to traditional genres such as Bible translations, dirges and the literature of moral instruction. Sources other than belles-lettres, including medical self-help books, journalism, political propaganda and elementary-school textbooks, are also available from the very beginning of the 1800's.

2.4.2. Vernacular sources

While the great majority of extant Yiddish sources, especially early Yiddish ones, are literary texts or official documents, there are also two types of vernacular sources available to historical linguists. First, there are personal letters and memoirs not intended for publication by their authors. The oldest of these is a Yiddish letter written in Regensburg in 1478 (Dinse and Liptzin 1978:11, cf. Birnbaum 1979:155). Landau and Wachstein 1911 edited a collection of personal letters from Vienna and Prague dating from 1619. Kaufmann 1896 edited the memoirs of Glikl of Hameln, a

businesswoman of the 1600's, who started them as a series of letters to her children. Second, we are extremely fortunate to have a comprehensive edition of Yiddish court testimony (Rubashov 1929), which includes representative excerpts from all relevant surviving texts. The reason that these records are preserved is that court testimony was often included as supporting material in collections of so-called *responsa*, expert opinions prepared by religious leaders in response to questions from the community concerning the proper interpretation of traditional law. The sources in Rubashov 1929 go back to the 1400's--that is, almost as far back as we have written sources of Yiddish at all. Until about 1500, the records are from West Yiddish only, but after that time we have records for the entire Yiddish-speaking territory. Court testimony was taken down verbatim, and in many cases, the exact date and location of the trial were recorded. As a result, these texts provide us with a perspective of vernacular Yiddish that is at once broad and precise.

2.4.3. The status of poetic texts

It is often claimed that the word order of poetry is considerably freer than that of prose, and that conclusions concerning syntax that are based on the analysis of poetry are not as valid or reliable as ones based on the analysis of prose. Certainly, there are cases that bear out this point of view. For instance, it is well known that verb-final root clauses, which died out in prose during the Old High German period (before 1000), continue to occur fairly frequently in poetry throughout Middle and New High German (Ebert 1978:38, Lockwood 1968:260, Maurer 1926:182ff.). This poetic archaism is encountered in Yiddish poetry as well, as illustrated by the following examples from the *Bovo-bukh*.²⁰ The inflected verb is underlined.

(16)

- a. irr vir in ds kleyn shifln sprungn
(Bovo, 76.7)
of-them four into the small boat leaped
'Four of them leapt into the small boat.'

²⁰As (16c,d) show, non-subjects can occur in first position in such clauses. Note the unusual position of the modifier *gar* 'very' in (16d), which would be ruled out in German and English.

- b. er oyf eynm grusn helfnt reyt (Bovo, 153.1)
he on a great elephant rode
'He rode on a great elephant.'
- c. eyn un' eyn er zi im al nent (Bovo, 42.3)
one and one he them him all names
'One by one, he names them all for him.'
- d. gr mit lbin oygn zi in an zakh (Bovo, 102.5)
very with dear eyes she him on looked
'She regarded him with a very dear look.'

There are two points to bear in mind, however, with regard to the view that the word order of poetry is freer in general than that of prose. First, prose styles exist that favor exceptional word orders in a way usually attributed only to poetry. An example is the 20th-century American journalistic style in which verbs of saying occur in clause-initial position ("Said he"); a parallel phenomenon in the history of German is discussed by Maurer 1926:199. Second and conversely, the view that poetry allows greater word order freedom than prose is not true in general, and each particular case must be examined on its own merits. For instance, according to a quantitative study of Homer, whose poetry represents a non-configurational stage of Greek, clitics invariably occur in clause-second position ($N = 291$) (Taylor 1988). As we will see in Chapter 4, verb-second subordinate clauses are essentially absent from West Yiddish, whether in prose or poetry, and I conclude from the silence of the traditional historical grammars of German on the matter that verb-second subordinate clauses are not attested in that language either, even in poetry. Thus, classic poetic license is not completely unbridled. Rather, while poetry appears to allow the freer use of available syntactic options than prose (admittedly ones that are no longer productive synchronically, as in (16)), it does not permit the creation of word order patterns that are entirely unattested in prose. In view of these considerations, I have treated all my sources, whether poetry or prose, as equally representative of the grammar of Yiddish. I return briefly to the question of poetic license in Chapter 4.5.2.2, where I present quantitative evidence that style and genre differences have no significant effect on the underlying position of the inflected verb in early Yiddish.

CHAPTER III

The verb-second constraint in modern Yiddish

3.1. Introduction

As I observed in the Introduction to this thesis, all the Germanic languages except English observe the verb-second constraint, which requires the inflected verb to be the second constituent of a declarative clause. For convenience, I repeat the word order facts that illustrate the difference between a verb-second language like German and a non-verb-second language like English in (1) and (2), respectively.

- (1)
- a. Auf dem Weg wird der Junge eine Katze sehen.
on the way will the boy a cat see
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'
 - b. *Auf dem Weg der Junge wird eine Katze sehen.
on the way the boy will a cat see
Intended meaning:
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'
- (2)
- a. *On the way will the boy see a cat.
 - b. On the way, the boy will see a cat.

I observed further that while most Germanic languages obey the verb-second constraint in root clauses but not in formally subordinate clauses, modern Yiddish exhibits no such root-subordinate asymmetry. In Section 3.2, I contrast the relevant facts of German, which exemplifies the majority of verb-second languages, with those of Yiddish. In Section 3.3, I propose that there is a correlation between the occurrence of verb-second subordinate clauses and verb-first declarative root clauses in a language. In support of this hypothesis, I present synchronic evidence from three languages that are typologically similar to Yiddish (Icelandic, Old French, and Kashmiri) as well as diachronic and dialectal evidence from Yiddish and the mainland Scandinavian

languages. In Section 3.4, I review two previous analyses of the verb-second phenomenon. First, I show that the standard analysis of the verb-second constraint (den Besten 1983, first circulated 1977), which was proposed on the basis of the facts of German and Dutch, is empirically inadequate for Yiddish. I then discuss a recent analysis by Diesing 1988, who accommodates verb-second word order in formally subordinate clauses in Yiddish by relying on the Universal Base Hypothesis--that is, the assumption that subjects originate within the verb phrase. While I reject certain aspects of Diesing's analysis, I follow her in adopting the Universal Base Hypothesis in the analysis of the verb-second phenomenon in Yiddish that I present in Section 3.5. In order to permit non-subjects in the initial position of formally subordinate clauses, I appeal to variation in the directionality of nominative case assignment. In particular, I propose to capture the correlation noted in Section 3.3 between verb-second subordinate clauses and verb-first declaratives by allowing INFL to assign case rightward in modern Yiddish and the other languages discussed.

3.2. The verb-second phenomenon in German and Yiddish

3.2.1. The facts of German

3.2.1.1. The root-subordinate asymmetry

The root-subordinate asymmetry that most Germanic languages exhibit with respect to the verb-second constraint is particularly striking in verb-final languages. In what follows, I will therefore use German, which is underlyingly verb-final, to illustrate the word order facts of these languages. Of course, German is also a particularly appropriate language to examine because of its close historical relationship to Yiddish.

As the contrast between (3) and (4) shows, subordinate clauses in German directly reflect the verb-final phrase structure of the language.

(3)

dass der Junge auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen wird
 that the boy on the way a cat see will
 'that the boy will see a cat on the way'

(4)

- a. *dass der Junge wird auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen
 that the boy will on the way a cat see
 Intended meaning:
 'that the boy will see a cat on the way'

- b. *dass auf dem Weg wird der Junge eine Katze sehen
 that on the way will the boy a cat see
 Intended meaning:
 'that the boy will see a cat on the way'

The contrast between (5) and (6), on the other hand, illustrates the obligatoriness of verb-second word order in root clauses (for convenience, I repeat (1a) as (6b)).

(5)

- *Der Junge auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen wird.
 the boy on the way a cat see will
 Intended meaning:
 'The boy will see a cat on the way.'

(6)

- a. Der Junge wird auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen.
 the boy will on the way a cat see
 'The boy will see a cat on the way.'
- b. Auf dem Weg wird der Junge eine Katze sehen.
 on the way will the boy a cat see
 'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'

In what follows, I will refer to the clause-initial constituent in verb-second clauses like (6) as the 'topic' and to the position that it occupies as the 'topic position.'

3.2.1.2. Lexical expletives in topic position

If the topic position is not otherwise filled, then a lexical expletive (*es* 'it' in German) must appear there, as illustrated in (7). The subject in sentences containing topic *es* can be a definite noun phrase in German (though not a pronoun), and the verb can be transitive (Platzack 1983, Lenerz 1985:123).²¹

²¹The example in (7b) is based on Platzack's (36), and (7c) = his (38).

(7)

- a. Es/*e wurde gestern getanzt.
it was-SG yesterday danced
'There was dancing yesterday.'
- b. Es/*e spielten die Berliner Philharmoniker
unter der Leitung von Herbert von Karajan.
it played-PL the Berlin Philharmonics
under the direction of Herbert von Karajan
'The Berlin Philharmonic was conducted by
Herbert von Karajan.'
- c. Es/*e hatte ein bekannter Sterndeuter
eine zweite Sintflut vorausgesagt.
it had-SG a well-known astrologer
a second Flood predicted
'A well-known astrologer had predicted
a second Flood.'

The presence of the expletive *es* that appears in (7) is required only by the verb-second constraint. Thus, in contrast to superficially similar expletive elements like English *there* or Swedish *det* 'that,' *es* is ruled out in verb-second clauses in which some other constituent occupies topic position. It is also ruled out in questions and subordinate clauses. These facts are illustrated in (8)-(10).

(8)

- a. Gestern wurde (*es) getanzt.
yesterday was-SG it danced
'There was dancing yesterday.'
- b. Unter der Leitung von Herbert von Karajan
spielten (*es) die Berliner Philharmoniker.
under the direction of Herbert von Karajan
played-PL it the Berlin Philharmonics
'The Berlin Philharmonic was conducted by
Herbert von Karajan.'
- c. Eine zweite Sintflut hatte (*es) ein bekannter
Sterndeuter vorausgesagt.
a second Flood had-SG it a well-known
astrologer predicted
'A well-known astrologer had predicted a second
Flood.'

(9)

- a. (Wann) wurde (*es) gestern getanzt?
 when was-SG it yesterday danced
 '(When) was there dancing yesterday?'
- b. (Wann) spielten (*es) die Berliner Philharmoniker unter der Leitung von Herbert von Karajan?
 when played-PL it the Berlin Philharmonics under the direction of Herbert von Karajan
 '(When) was the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Herbert von Karajan?'
- c. (Wann) hatte (*es) ein bekannter Sterndeuter eine zweite Sintflut vorausgesagt?
 when had it a well-knwon astrologer a second Flood predicted
 '(When) had a well-known astrologer predicted a second Flood?'

(10)

- a. dass (*es) gestern getanzt wurde
 that it yesterday danced was
 'There was dancing yesterday.'
- b. dass (*es) die Berliner Philharmoniker unter der Leitung von Herbert von Karajan spielten
 that it the Berlin Philharmonics under the direction of Herbert von Karajan played-PL
 'that the Berlin Philharmonic was conducted by Herbert von Karajan'
- c. dass (*es) ein bekannter Sterndeuter eine zweite Sintflut vorausgesagt hatte
 that it a well-known astrologer a second Flood predicted had
 'that a well-known astrologer had predicted a second Flood'

In what follows, I will refer to instances of *es* that exhibit the distribution in (7)-(10) as 'topic *es*.'

3.2.1.3. Exceptions

The requirement that the topic position in a verb-second clause must be occupied by an overt constituent has two exceptions in German.

Verb-first declarative clauses: First, in vernacular usage, we find occasional instances of verb-first declarative clauses as in (11) (Maurer 1926:209).

(11)

Ich sitze gestern nachmittag harmlos bei
Kranzler und trinke meinen Kaffee. Kommt
ein grosser, schwerfaelliger Herr herein
und ...

I sit yesterday afternoon harmlessly by
Kranzler and drink my coffee comes
a large lumbering gentleman in
and

'I'm sitting at Kranzler's yesterday, minding my
own business and having a cup of coffee, when
in comes a large, lumbering gentleman and ...'

In the modern language, this word order is essentially restricted to the genre of the humorous anecdote.²² In Old High German, before the verb-second constraint was firmly established, verb-first declarative clauses occurred more freely, but they died out at the end of the Old High German period, and they have never been more than a marginal word order option since. For details concerning the history of verb-first declarative clauses in German, I refer the reader to Maurer 1924, 1926.

Null topics: Vernacular German allows a second class of exceptions to the overt topic requirement. As the examples in (12) show, the topic position can be filled by a null pronoun (Ross 1982, Haider 1986:56, Huang 1984:546ff.).²³

(12)

- a. **e** hab' ich in die Schublade gesteckt.
have I in the drawer stuck
'I put it/them in the drawer.'
- b. **e** hab' ich erst gestern getroffen.
have I only yesterday met
'I ran into him/her/them only yesterday.'

²²The same seems to be true of Dutch (den Besten 1983:62).

²³Null topics are also allowed in Dutch (Weerman 1989:54) and all the Scandinavian languages (Holmberg and Platzack 1988:33, fn. 9).

- c. **e** kenn' ich nicht.
know I not
'I don't know him/her/it/them.'
- d. **e** hab' schon zu Mittag gegessen.
have-1SG already to midday eaten
'I've already had lunch.'

Empty expletive subjects behave on a par with other pronouns. This is illustrated in (13).²⁴

(13)

- a. A: Was ist denn alles passiert,
nachdem ich nach Hause bin?
B: Wurde nur noch getanzt.

what is then all happened
after I to home am
was only still danced

A: What all happened after I went home?
B: There was only dancing.
- b. A: Wurde denn noch viel getanzt,
nachdem ich nach Hause bin?
B: Nee, wurde nur noch getrunken.

was then still much danced
after I to home am
nope was only still drunk

A: Was there a lot of dancing after I went home?
B: Nope, there was only drinking.

The distribution of null pronouns in German is subject to strict syntactic and discourse constraints. For one thing, they are restricted to topic position. Their unacceptability in clause-internal positions is illustrated for (12a) in (14); analogous variants of the remaining sentences in (12) are unacceptable as well.

²⁴I thank Olav Hackstein for his judgments on the sentences in (13).

(14)

- a. *Ich hab' e in die Schublade gesteckt.
 I have in the drawer stuck
 Intended meaning:
 'I put it/them in the drawer.'
- b. *(Wann) hast du e in die Schublade gesteckt?
 when have you in the drawer stuck
 Intended meaning:
 '(When) did you put it/them in the drawer?'
- c. *Ich hab' dir schon gesagt, dass ich e in die Schublade gesteckt hab'.
 I have you already told that I in the drawer stuck have
 Intended meaning:
 'I already told you that I put it/them in the drawer.'

Moreover, null pronouns must bear structural case. Null pronouns whose overt counterparts bear lexical case are ruled out, as shown in (15).

(15)

- a. Ihr /*e werd' ich alles zeigen, was ich hab'.
 her-DAT will I all show what I have
 'I'll show her everything I have.'
- b. Ihnen /*e bin ich erst gestern begegnet.
 them-DAT am I only yesterday encountered
 'I ran into them only yesterday.'

Finally, null pronouns in German are restricted to certain discourse contexts--namely, to contexts in which an overt or demonstrative pronoun could occur. This is shown by the contrast between (16) and (17).

(16)

- A: Kennen Sie denn meine Freundin Judith?
 B: Klar, (die) kenn' ich seit meinem
 Forschungssemester in Tuebingen.

know you then my friend Judith
 clear her know I since my
 research-semester in Tuebingen

- A: Do you know my friend Judith?
 B: Sure. I know her from my sabbatical
 in Tuebingen.

(17)

- A: Kennen Sie denn jede Linguistin im
 sueddeutschen Raum?
 B: *Klar, (die) kenn' ich seit meinem
 Forschungssemester in Tuebingen.

know you then each linguist-FEM in-the
 South-German area
 clear her know I since my
 research-semester in Tuebingen

- A: Do you know every female linguist in
 southern Germany?
 B: *Sure. I know her from my sabbatical in
 Tuebingen.

I conclude from these distributional facts that null topics in German are the result of a discourse-governed process of topic deletion, which I will assume to be peripheral to the grammar of German in precisely the same way as the English subject deletion process illustrated in (18).

(18)

- A: So he told her?
 B: Yeah, (he) told her yesterday.

It is worth noting that English subject deletion patterns with German topic deletion with respect to quantified NP's; cf. the parallel contrast between the German examples in (16) and (17) and the English ones in (18) and (19).

(19)

- A: So everyone told her?
 B: *Yeah, (he) told her yesterday.

As shown in (20), null pronouns in a true null-subject language like Italian differ in this respect from their apparent counterparts in German and English.²⁵

(20)

- A: Gianni/ogni cittadino si preoccupa dell' inquinamento ambientale.
 - B: Si, ma non si preoccupa abbastanza da votare in modo intelligente.
- Gianni/every citizen REFL worries
of-the pollution environmental
yes but not REFL worries enough
to vote in manner intelligent
- A: Gianni/every citizen worries about
environmental pollution.
 - B: Yes, but not enough to vote intelligently.

3.2.2. The facts of Yiddish

3.2.2.1. The absence of a root-subordinate asymmetry

I turn now to the facts of Yiddish. Like German, Yiddish obeys the verb-second constraint in root clauses, as shown by the contrast between (21) and (22).

(21)

- a. Dos yingl vet oyfn veg zen a kats.
the boy will on-the way see a cat
'The boy will see a cat on the way.'
- b. Oyfn veg vet dos yingl zen a kats.
on-the way will the boy see a cat
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'

(22)

- *Oyfn veg dos yingl vet zen a kats.
on-the way the boy will see a cat
Intended meaning:
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'

As in German, the lexical expletive *es* 'it' is obligatory in topic position if no other constituent occupies it, as shown in the examples in (23). The example in (23b) shows

²⁵Many thanks are due to Raffaella Zanuttini for the example in (20).

that Yiddish, like German, imposes no definiteness constraint on subjects in sentences that contain topic *es*. Finally, although such sentences usually contain intransitive verbs, transitive verbs are not ruled out, as shown in (23c) (Prince 1988a:5, her (29)).

(23)

- a. Es/*e iz mir kalt.
it is me-DAT cold
'I feel cold.'
- b. Es/*e klingt mit der meydl di velt.
(Royte Pomerantsen, 16)
it rings with the girl the world
'The whole world is talking about the girl.'
- c. Es/*e kenen fremde mentshn mikh farnarn.
it can-PL strange people me entice
'Strangers can entice me.'

In all of the examples in (23), the presence of *es* in topic position is required only by the verb-second constraint. In verb-second clauses in which another constituent occupies topic position or in direct questions, *es* is ruled out, just as in German. I illustrate this for (23a) in (24).

(24)

- a. Mir iz (*es) kalt.
me-DAT is it cold
'I feel cold.'
- b. (Farvos) iz (*es) dir kalt?
why is it you-DAT cold
'Why do you feel cold?'

In striking contrast to German, the word order in Yiddish subordinate clauses is parallel to that of root clauses; cf. (21) and (22) with (25) and (26).

(25)

- a. az dos yingl vet oyfn veg zen a kats
that the boy will on-the way see a cat
'that the boy will see a cat on the way'
- b. az oyfn veg vet dos yingl zen a kats
that on-the way will the boy see a cat
'that on the way, the boy will see a cat'

(26)

*az oyfn veg dos yingl vet zen a kats
 that on-the way the boy will see a cat

Intended meaning:

'that on the way, the boy will see a cat'

As these examples show, complementizers are outside the domain of the verb-second constraint. As in root clauses, topic *es* is obligatory in the absence of another constituent in topic position. Thus, instead of the contrast between (7) and (10) that we find in German, Yiddish exhibits a parallelism between (23) and (27).

(27)

- a. az *(es) iz mir kalt
 that it is me-DAT cold
 'that I feel cold'
- b. az *(es) klingt mit der meydl di velt
 that it rings with the girl the world
 'that the whole world is fooling around
 with the girl'
- c. az *(es) kenen fremde mentshn mikh farnarn
 that it can strange people me entice
 'that strangers can entice me'

3.2.2.2. [-Wh] subordinate clauses

In [-wh] subordinate clauses, non-subject topics as in (25b) and topic *es* as in (27) occur fairly freely, a fact that is uncontroversial in the literature (den Besten and Moed-van Walraven 1986:112,115,131, Birnbaum 1979:92, Diesing 1988:5,29, Lowenstamm 1977:209, Maling and Zaenen 1981:255, Travis 1984:115,165, Waletzky 1980:305, Zaretski 1929:253, para. 782). Some further examples are given in (28) and (29). The topic is underlined.

(28)

- a. az aza shlak vil er nit
 (Royte Pomerantzen, 20)
 that such-a shrew wants he not
 'that such a shrew, he doesn't want'

- b. az eyn zakh hot der oyrehk zikh shoyn
 oysgelernt (Royte Pomerantsen, 106)
 that one thing has the guest REFL already
 out-learned
 'that one thing, the guest had already learned'
- c. vibald az aroys kayklt zikh yo, un
 arayn kayklt zikh nit (Royte Pomerantsen, 93)
 how-soon that out rolls REFL yes and
 in rolls REFL not
 'as soon as money rolls out all right, but doesn't
 roll in'
- d. az mit im iz geven der anderer yid
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 97)
 that with him is been the other guy
 'that the other guy was with him'
- e. az geyn iber a shtrik ken ikh nit
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 128)
 that walk over a rope can I not
 'that I can't walk a tightrope'

(29)

- a. ... hot gezen, vi es brot zikh a katshke
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 3)
 has seen how it roasts REFL a duck
 '... saw that a duck was roasting'
- b. az es felt a polke fun der katshke
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 3)
 that it misses a leg of the duck
 'that a leg of the duck is missing'

Relative clauses that contain resumptive pronouns behave like [-wh] subordinate clauses (Lowenstamm 1977:212). This is shown in (30) (cf. Lowenstamm's (34c)).

(30)

Der yid vos in Boston hobn mir im gezen
 iz a groyser lamdn.
 the man that in Boston have we him seen
 is a great scholar
 'The man that we saw in Boston is a great scholar.'

3.2.2.3. [+Wh] subordinate clauses

In [+wh] subordinate clauses, non-subject topics are not as common as in [-wh]

subordinate clauses, but they are not ruled out (Diesing 1988:28ff.; contra Lowenstamm 1977:211ff.). In general, topics in [+wh] subordinate clauses require stress, as in (31a) (= Diesing's (41)); tokens like (31b) with unstressed topics are very rare.²⁶ Note that the [+wh]-constituent, like a complementizer, is outside the domain of the verb-second constraint.

(31)

- a. Ikh veys nit far vos in tsimer shteyt di ku.
I know not for what in room stands the cow
'I don't know why the cow is standing in the room.'
- b. Kent ir mir nit zogn, ver do iz a guter dokter
ba aykh in shtetl? (Royte Pomerantsen, 138)
can you me not tell who there is a good doctor
with you in town
'Can you perhaps tell me who is a good doctor
in your town?'

It is important to note that in contrast to other non-subjects, topic *es* occurs commonly in indirect questions and free relative clauses (Diesing 1988, Prince 1988b, Zaretski 1929:254, para. 786,788). Lowenstamm 1977, to whom the generalization is due that topicalization is incompatible with *wh*-movement in Yiddish, himself gives the examples in (32) (= his (9c), (11c) and (31a), respectively).²⁷

(32)

- a. ikh freg zikh ver es hot gekhalesht
I ask REFL who it has fainted
'I wonder who fainted.'
- b. ikh veys nisht velkher es hot gekhalesht
I know not which-one it has fainted
'I don't know which one fainted.'

²⁶In Chapter 4.3.4.2, I will argue that the equivalent of *do* 'there' in (31b) occupied COMP in early Yiddish, which like Dutch, Middle English and older and non-standard varieties of German allowed doubly filled COMP structures.

²⁷Lowenstamm 1977:202, fn. 3 notes the presence of *es*, but dismisses its analysis as "irrelevant."

- c. ver es hot gekoyft ot dem vogn
 muz zayn a nar
 who it has bought just this car
 must be a fool
 'Whoever bought that car must be a fool.'

I give some further examples in (33) and (34).²⁸

(33)

- a. tsu darklern di kinder tsu vos es toygn
 ale mine khayes (Royte Pomerantsen, 4)
 to explain the children to what it are-useful
 all kinds-of-animals
 'to explain to the children what use all the
 animals are'
- b. er zol em gebn tsu farshteyn, viazoy es vert
 gefirt a milkhome (Royte Pomerantsen, 44f.)
 he shall him give to understand how it is
 led a war
 'he should explain to him how a war is carried on'
- c. er zol zikh matriakh zayn zen, vosara shikh
 un vemes shikh es lign untern bank
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 134)
 he shall REFL take-trouble see what-kind-of shoes
 and whose shoes it lie under-the bench
 'he should take the trouble to see what kind of
 shoes and whose shoes are lying under the bench'

(34)

- a. un ver es vet zen dem shensten kholem, iz
 vet er namen dem beygl (Royte Pomerantsen, 28)
 and who it will see the most-beautiful dream so
 will he take the bagel
 'and whoever has the most beautiful dream will get
 the bagel'

²⁸The free relative clause in (34a) is in a left-dislocated position; hence, the apparent violation of the verb-second constraint in the main clause. The use of the particle *iz* in (34a) is reminiscent of the use of *så* 'so' in Finland Swedish (Holmberg 1986:116). Note the left branch violation in (34b); cf. the examples in (6) in Chapter 2.3.3. The example in (34c) is Lithuanian Yiddish, which has lost neuter gender; hence the masculine gender of *vort* 'word.'

- b. un vifl es iz in ir geven tsuker, hot er
 arayngeshotn tsu zikh in zekl
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 126)
 and how-much it is in her been sugar has he
 in-poured to REFL in bag-DIMIN
 'and however much sugar there was in it, he poured
 into his little bag'
- c. ver fun zey es vet nit visn dem ershtn vort
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 149)
 who of them it will not know the first word
 'whichever one of them doesn't know the first word'

It is worth noting that two alternative analyses of the clause-initial *es* in (32)-(34) cannot be maintained. According to the first, *es* is a structural subject (Travis 1984). This analysis fails to explain why the inflected verb in clauses introduced by *es* agrees with the thematic subject when it is plural, as in (33a,c). This is problematic in view of the fact that *es*, unlike *there* in English, is inherently singular. Moreover, the dialectal distribution and diachronic development of clause-initial *es* in Yiddish parallels that of unambiguous topics, as I will show in Chapter 4.5.1. Second, one might argue that *es* is a resumptive element of some sort. Such an analysis is not convincing for several reasons. First and most superficially, the putative resumptive *es* is not referential. Second, it fails to agree with its supposed antecedent in number and gender. Third, in languages that have a productive resumptive pronoun strategy, resumptive pronouns occur in relative clauses, but not in questions or free relatives. Fourth, Yiddish does not allow resumptive pronouns in topic position unless they are stressed, which *es* can never be. Thus, for unstressed pronouns, we have the contrast in (35).

(35)

- a. der yid vos in Boston hobn mir im gezen
 the man that in Boston have we him seen
 'the man that we saw in Boston'
- b. *der yid vos im hobn mir in Boston gezen
 the man that him have we in Boston seen
 Intended meaning:
 'the man that we saw in Boston'

Finally and conversely, the putative resumptive *es* would have the following idiosyncratic distribution: it would be obligatory in clause-initial position, but ruled out

clause-internally. I know of no other language with resumptive pronouns with a similar restriction.

In headed relative clauses, non-subject topics are rare, just as they are in other [+wh] subordinate clauses. The only naturally occurring tokens that I have found are in relative clauses on subject position, as shown in (36).²⁹

(36)

- a. nokh epes, vos oyfn hitl iz geven
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 170)
 still something that on-the hat-DIMIN is been
 'something else that was on the little hat'
- b. alts vos dortn iz geven
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 175)
 everything that there is been
 'everything that was there'

Lowenstamm 1977:212 explicitly rules out examples with a non-subject topic in a relative clause on a non-subject position. Thus, he observes the contrast in (37) (cf. his (34b,d)).

(37)

- a. Der yid vos mir hobn e gezen in Boston
 iz a groyser lamdn.
 the man whom we have seen in Boston
 is a great scholar
 'The man whom we saw in Boston is a great scholar.'
- b. *Der yid vos in Boston hobn mir e gezen
 iz a groyser lamdn.
 the man whom in Boston have we seen
 is a great scholar
 Intended meaning:
 'The man whom we saw in Boston is a great scholar.'

He fails to note, however, that the word order in (37b) becomes acceptable with contrastive stress on the topic. Two examples are given in (38).

²⁹It has been argued that non-subject topics in clauses that contain subject gaps are distinct from regular verb-second clauses (Maling 1980). I discuss and reject this analysis in Section 3.3.1.1.

(38)

- a. Der yid vos mir hobn gezen in Niu-York iz
 an amorets, ober der yid vos in Boston
 hobn mir gezen iz a groyser lamdn.
 the man whom we have seen in New York is
 an ignoramus but the man whom in Boston
 have we seen is a great scholar
 'The man whom we saw in New York is an
 ignoramus, but the man whom we saw in Boston
 is a great scholar.'
- b. Der yid vos Khayim hot nekhtn getrofn iz
 an amorets, ober der yid vos shabes bay
nakht vet er trefn iz a groyser lamdn.
 the man whom Chaim has yesterday met is
 an ignoramus but the man whom Saturday at
 night will he meet is a great scholar
 'The man whom Chaim saw yesterday is an ignoramus,
 but the man whom he will see Saturday night
 is a great scholar.'

Expletive *es* is obligatory in headed relative clauses on non-subject position if no other constituent occupies topic position (Prince 1988b). This is illustrated in (39) ((39d) = Prince's (4a)).³⁰ (Headed relative clauses on subject position are exceptional and will be discussed in Section 3.2.2.4.)

(39)

- a. an ort, vu es iz geven a tifer grobn
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 5)
 a place where it is been a deep ditch
 'a place where there was a deep ditch'
- b. a posik, in velkhn es iz geven der vort "isho"
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 9)
 a verse in which it is been the word woman
 'a verse in which there occurred the word "woman"'

³⁰ Again, the example in (39b) is Lithuanian Yiddish, which has lost neuter gender; hence the masculine gender of *vort* 'word.' Cf. fn. 28.

- c. a vagon drite klas, vu es zitsn a sakh fonyes
 mit undzere yidelekh (Royte Pomerantsen, 135)
 a car third class where it sit-PL a lot Russians
 with our Jews-DIMIN
 'a third-class car where a lot of Russians are
 sitting with our Jews'
- d. der yid vos es kenen ale dayne khaverim
 vet maskim zayn
 the guy whom it know all your friends
 will agree be
 'The guy that all your friends know will agree.'

The trace of the constituent undergoing *wh*-movement cannot occupy topic position in such clauses, as shown in (40).³¹

(40)

- a. *a tsimer avu t iz geshtanen a sofke
 a room where is stood a couch
 Intended meaning:
 'a room where there was a couch'

In instances of cyclic extraction out of formally subordinate clauses, neither subject nor object traces can occupy topic position (Diesing 1988). This is shown in (41) ((41a) = Diesing's (53a), (41b) is based on her (49d)).

³¹ According to Zaretski 1929:253f., para. 784, instances of the word order in (40) occur from time to time in written vernacular usage but are unacceptable. I give the tokens he cites in (i) and (ii).

- i. di oytares vos t halt in zikh bahaltn
 der alter zokn Ural
 the treasures what continues in REFL hold
 the old old-man Ural
 'the treasures that old man Ural continues to hold
 within himself'
- ii. Di kulturarbeit, vos t firt di
 yidkultkomisie, iz nit umzist.
 the culture-work what leads the
 Jew-culture-committee is not for-nothing
 'The cultural activity of the Jewish cultural
 committee is not in vain.'

(41)

- a. *Ver hot er moyre az t vet kumen?
 who has he fear that will come
 Intended meaning:
 'Who is he afraid will come?'
- b. *Vos hot er nit gevolt az t zoln di kinder leyenen?
 what has he not wanted that should the children read
 Intended meaning:
 'What didn't he want the children to read?'

The presence of an overt topic in such clauses restores grammaticality, as shown in (42) and (43).

(42)

- a. Ver hot er moyre az morgn vet kumen?
 who has he fear that tomorrow will come
 'Who is he afraid will come tomorrow?'
- b. Vos hot er nit gevolt az di kinder
zoln leyenen?
 what has he not wanted that the children should read
 'What didn't he want the children to read?'
- c. Vos hot er nit gevolt az in shul zoln
di kinder leyenen?
 what has he not wanted that in school shall the children read
 'What didn't he want the children to read in school?'

(43)

- a. Ver hot er moyre az es vet kumen?
 who has he fear that it will come
 'Who is he afraid will come?'
- b. Vos hot er nit gevolt az es zoln
di kinder leyenen?
 what has he not wanted that it shall the children read
 'What didn't he want the children to read?'

In conclusion, the facts presented above show that the topic position in Yiddish must in general be filled by an overt constituent. Moreover, while non-subject topics are

less common in [+wh] than in [-wh] subordinate clauses, they are productive in either clause type.

3.2.2.4. Exceptions

Like German, Yiddish allows certain exceptions to the requirement that the first position in a verb-second clause be filled by an overt constituent.

Verb-first declarative clauses: First, verb-first word order in declarative clauses is productive in Yiddish. Its use generally implies some relation of the verb-first clause to the prior discourse. Therefore, verb-first declarative clauses do not occur discourse-initially, and they are particularly frequent in narrative, though not restricted to it (Hall 1979:273ff., Weinreich 1981:122f.). Most often, verb-first word order has conclusive force, as illustrated in (44). In the following examples, the relevant inflected verbs are underlined.

(44)

- a. **Zey hobn beyde gehat gedint in soldatn,**
hobn **zey gekent shisn.**
(Royte Pomerantsen, 36)
they have both had served in soldiers
have they been-able shoot
'They had both served as soldiers,
so they knew how to shoot.'

- b. **A yid hot a mol gevolt koyfn a tsig.** Iz
er gegangen in shtot. Ober keyn tsig
hot er nit gekent gefinen, hot er gekoyft
a tsap. (Royte Pomerantsen, 37)
a man has once wanted buy a nanny-goat is
he gone to town but no nanny-goat
has he not been-able find has he bought
a billy-goat
'A man once wanted to buy a goat. So he went to
town. But he couldn't find a nanny-goat, so
he bought a billy-goat.'

- c. Fun der vaytns zenen ongekumen dem soynes makhnes. Hot men geheysn shisn.
Hot der yidisher zelner oyfgehoyn dem biks un hot geshosn in himl arayn.
(Royte Pomerantsen, 45)
from the afar are on-come the enemy's multitudes has one ordered shoot
has the Jewish soldier up-lifted the gun and has shot into sky into-it
'From far away, the enemy's troops approached.
So the order was given to shoot. So the Jewish soldier took his gun and shot up at the sky.'

- d. Farvos lozt zikh zogn i "shvaygt alts"
i "s'shvaygt alts" (mit farshidene niuansn)? Heyst es, az der termin "fiktiver subyekt" derklert gornisht.
(Zaretski 1929:235, para. 730)
Why lets REFL say both is-silent everything and it-is-silent everything with different nuances means it that the term fictive subject explains nothing-at-all
'Why can one say both "shvaygt alts" and "s'shvaygt alts" (with different nuances of meaning)? What this means is that the term 'fictive subject' explains nothing at all.'

Occasionally, verb-first word order "appears even when there is clearly no causal connection" between the verb-first clause and the prior discourse (Birnbaum 1979:303f.). I give some examples in (45).

(45)

- a. Es iz geven a yid, hot er geheysn meyer eliyahu henikh. (Royte Pomerantsen, 81)
it is been a man has he been-named Meyer Elijah Henokh
'There was a man whose name was Meyer Elijah Henokh.'
- b. Dos zest du, Elkone, redt shoyn dayn yidene narishkaytn. (Grine Felder, 64)
that see you Elkone talks already your Jew-FEM foolishness-PL
'You see, Elkone, your wife is already saying silly things.'

- c. A: Ven nor dos aleyn volt geven, volt
 shoyn nisht oysgemakht.
 B: Vorem vos khalile?
 A: Shmeikt ir nisht dos esn. (Grine Felder, 63)

if only that alone would been would
 already not mattered
 why what God-forbid
 tastes her not the food

- A: If it were only that, it wouldn't matter.
 B: Why, what else is the matter, God forbid?
 A: She's lost her appetite.

Finally, verb-first word order can also express the adversative relation illustrated in (46) (Schaechter 1986:61).³²

- (46)
- a. Kh'volt tsum im gekumen, voyn er (ober)
 zeyer veyt.
 I would to him come lives he but
 very far
 'I'd visit him, but he lives very far away.'
 - b. Er volt khasene gehat, hot er (ober) moyre far
 tate-mame.
 he would wedding had has he but fear before
 father-mother
 'He would marry, but he is scared of his parents.'

Null subjects:³³ A second class of exceptions to the verb-second constraint is due to the availability of null subjects in Yiddish, as illustrated in (47).

³²According to Schaechter, the conclusive and the adversative use of verb-first word order are associated with distinct intonation patterns. Ellen Prince observes that the apparently idiosyncratic adversative force of verb-first word order can be assimilated to the typologically more usual conclusive force by assuming that the proposition associated with the verb-first clause is interpreted ironically as the consequence of a natural and social order in which one's goals and desires are thwarted as a matter of course.

³³In contrast to German, Yiddish does not allow null objects in topic position. This appears to be related to the fact that Yiddish left-dislocation structures, unlike German ones, contain clause-internal personal pronouns rather than clause-initial demonstrative pronouns; cf. Chapter 5, fn. 106. Again unlike German, null objects can occur in clause-internal positions (cf. Chapter 2.3.3) and do not appear to be restricted to vernacular usage (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.).

(47)

- a. Horevet vi an ayzl. (Grine Felder, 63)
works like a donkey
'She works like a donkey.'
- b. Vos makht epes di beheyne, hinkt nokh
alts? (Grine Felder, 63)
what makes something the cow limps still
everything
'How's the cow doing--still limping?'
- c. Badarf nokh haltn far a groysn koved, vos Tsine
khavert zikh mit ir tokhter.
(Grine Felder, 65)
needs still hold for a great honor what Tsine
is-friends REFL with her daughter
'She should consider it a great honor that Tsine
is friends with her daughter.'
- d. Iz aleyn gekumen. (Grine Felder, 67)
is alone come
'She came by herself.'
- e. Muz arumgeyn iber der velt. (Grine Felder, 70)
must around-go over the world
'He must travel around.'

As in German, null subjects in Yiddish are restricted to topic position and to vernacular usage (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.), and as in the case of German and English, I conclude that their occurrence does not reflect a central property of the grammar of Yiddish.³⁴

Subject traces in headed relative clauses: Finally, the most interesting exception to the overt topic requirement occurs in headed relative clauses on subject position. In

³⁴ Null subjects in subordinate clauses are very rare, but tokens like (i) occur (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.).

- i. Ikh vil zikh itsbt batsien tsu dayn arbet
vos pro host mir tsugeshikt a kopie.
I want REFL now refer to your paper
that have me to-send a copy
'Now, I want to refer to your paper which
you sent me a copy of.'

This token is interesting because it cannot be analyzed along the lines of the examples in fn. 31--that is, as an exception to the generalization that the trace of *wh*-movement cannot occupy topic position. The reason is that the relativization strategy used in (i) involves PP-chopping rather than movement (Tarallo 1983).

such clauses, the trace of *wh*-movement can occupy topic position (Prince 1988b)--though it need not do so, cf. (36).³⁵ Thus, the examples in (48) are grammatical and contrast with those in (40), in which a non-subject undergoes extraction.

(48)

- a. oyfn sofke vos t iz geshtanen in dem tsimer
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 144)
 on-the couch what is stood in the room
 'on the couch that was in the room'
- b. a mayse vos t hot zikh take mit im getrofn
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 146)
 a story what has REFL indeed with him met
 'a story that really happened to him'

3.3. A correlation and some comparative data

As we have just seen, German neither allows verb-second subordinate clauses nor does it productively allow verb-first declarative root clauses. Yiddish, on the other hand, allows both clause types. Thus, the data presented in Section 3.2 suggest the following generalization:

**Verb-second languages that productively allow
 verb-first word order in declarative root
 clauses also allow verb-second word order in
 subordinate clauses.**

In this section, I provide comparative evidence for this correlation between the two clause types, which has also been noted for the Scandinavian languages by Holmberg and Platzack 1988. I examine synchronic evidence from three languages that are typologically similar to Yiddish, though not closely related (Icelandic, Old French and Kashmiri) as well as diachronic and dialectal evidence from Yiddish and the mainland Scandinavian languages. In Section 3.5, I will argue that this correlation can be derived from the ability of INFL to assign nominative case rightward.

³⁵By contrast, the absence of an overt topic in free relative clauses and indirect questions on subject position is completely unacceptable and results in the misparsing of such clauses as a direct question (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.). Cf. Falkovitsh 1940:345, who attributes the obligatoriness of topic *es* in indirect questions to the need to distinguish them from direct questions.

3.3.1. Synchronic evidence

3.3.1.1. Icelandic

Verb-second subordinate clauses: As many linguists have noted, Icelandic obeys the verb-second constraint in subordinate clauses.³⁶ As in Yiddish, the topic position in [-wh] subordinate clauses can be filled by non-subjects. This is illustrated in (49) (= Zaenen 1980:21, (40) and (41) and Zaenen 1980:102, (264)). I have underlined the topic.

- (49)
- a. Ég held ad smalann muni tröll taka
á morgun.
I think that the-shepherd-ACC will trolls take
tomorrow
'I think that trolls will take the shepherd
tomorrow.'
 - b. Jón segir ad pessum hring hafi Ólafur
lofad Mariú.
Jon says that this ring has Olaf
promised Maria
'Jon says that this ring, Olaf promised Maria.'
 - c. Hann sagði ad til Reykjavíkur vaeri Ólafur kominn.
he said that to Reykjavik was Olaf come
'He said that Olaf had come to Reykjavik.'

The lexical expletive *það* 'that' can occupy topic position if no constituent is topicalized.³⁷ This is illustrated in (50) (based on Zaenen 1980:102f., her (266) and (265), respectively).

³⁶For a more detailed discussion of Icelandic word order and clause structure, I refer the reader to Holmberg 1986, Maling and Zaenen 1981, Maling and Zaenen 1989, Thrainsson 1986, Zaenen 1980 and references therein. To judge from the facts presented in Lockwood 1955:154f., Faroese, a language closely related to Icelandic, is in the process of losing the verb-second constraint in subordinate clauses, as the mainland Scandinavian languages have done in the course of their history (Platzack 1987a).

³⁷Unlike Yiddish, where topic *es* is obligatory in the absence of a topicalized constituent, topic *það* in Icelandic is in variation with an empty expletive (Sigurdsson 1989:10f., contra Holmberg and Platzack 1988:36f., Zaenen 1980:102f.). I discuss this variation in Chapter 4.6.2.2.

(50)

- a. Hann sagði að það hefði verið dansað
 í gaer.
 he said that that had been danced
 yesterday
 'He said that there was dancing yesterday.'
- b. Hann sagði að það drekki margir víн
 á Íslandi.
 he said that that drank many wine
 in Iceland
 'He said that many people drank wine in Iceland.'

As in German and Yiddish, retaining the lexical expletive in positions following the inflected verb results in unacceptability.

As in Yiddish, the acceptability of non-subject topics in [+wh] subordinate clauses has been the subject of some debate in the literature. According to Zaenen 1980:104ff., non-subject topics are unacceptable in [+wh] subordinate clauses, although she acknowledges variation among speakers (Zaenen 1980:125, fn. 32). Maling 1980:180f. states that "the fronting of object NPs within [embedded] questions and relative clauses is unacceptable for many speakers." Thrainsson 1986:179,186, on the other hand, gives some fully acceptable examples of non-subject arguments in topic position in *whether*-clauses, relative clauses and indirect questions, as shown in (51) (= his (17.2), (17.3) and (28a,b)).

(51)

- a. Jón spurði hvort bessum hring hefði
 þeir lofad mér.
 Jon asked whether this ring had
 they promised me
 'John asked they had promised me this ring.'
- b. Jón spurði hvort bessum hring hefði
 einhver stolid.
 Jon asked whether this ring had
 someone stolen
 'Jon asked whether anyone had stolen this ring.'

- c. Kennari sem sílikan þvaetting ber á bord
 fyrir nemendur er til alls víz
 a-teacher who such nonsense lays the table
 before students is to everything capable
 'A teacher who tells students such nonsense is
 capable of anything.'
- d. Ég spurði hvar henni hefðu flestir addáendur
 gefið blóm
 I asked where her had most fans
 given flowers
 'I asked where the most fans had given her flowers.'

In connection with this controversy, a construction first described in detail by Maling 1980 is relevant. Maling notes that non-subject topics in Icelandic are common in subordinate clauses that contain a subject gap and that they are accepted by all speakers. She refers to this type of non-subject fronting as "stylistic fronting," in order to distinguish it from regular topicalization in non-subject-gap clauses. The subject gap that licenses stylistic fronting can arise as the result of *wh*-movement, the use of an impersonal construction or subject postponing. Following Thrainsson 1986:179, I will assume that stylistic fronting is simply a special case of verb-second word order that arises when the favorite candidate for topicalization, the subject, is unavailable. The syntactically parallel treatment of topicalization and stylistic fronting advocated by Thrainsson is supported by the synchronic and diachronic distribution of these constructions in Scandinavian. Both are found in insular Scandinavian (Icelandic and Faroese) (Maling 1980, Lockwood 1955:155ff.) and medieval mainland Scandinavian (Platzack 1987a), and they are both lost together in the course of the history of most varieties of modern mainland Scandinavian (Platzack 1987a). I will conclude, therefore, that verb-second word order in subordinate clauses in Icelandic is fully productive from the point of view of syntax, even in [+wh] subordinate clauses.

By comparison to other topics, the acceptability of topic *þad* in [+wh] subordinate clauses is subject to considerable variation in Icelandic, even in stylistic fronting contexts (Maling 1980:189f., Zaenen 1980:105ff.). Roegnvaldsson 1984 (cited in Thrainsson 1986:186) gives some "passable" examples of topic *þad* in relative clauses

and indirect questions, but none are fully acceptable; the judgments range from ‘?’ to ‘?*.’ In an interesting footnote, Maling 1980:184 observes that some speakers find the use of topic *það* “quite acceptable, especially in *þar sem* [‘where’] relatives, and especially in spoken as opposed to written style. Use of *það* is undoubtedly on the increase.” As we will see in Chapter 4.6.2.2, Icelandic allows variation between verb-second subordinate clauses, which require an overt constituent in topic position, and INFL-medial subordinate clauses, which allow an empty expletive in clause-initial position. The increased use of topic *það* is thus an indication that the INFL-medial option is being lost in Icelandic.

In summary, the Icelandic facts concerning verb-second word order in subordinate clauses are virtually parallel to the facts of Yiddish. The only difference seems to be that the distribution of topic *það* in Icelandic is not as free in [+wh] subordinate clauses as that of its Yiddish counterpart *es*.

Verb-first declarative clauses: I turn now to the occurrence of verb-first word order in declarative clauses. Several authors have noted that verb-first declarative clauses seem “to be more common in Icelandic than in the other Germanic languages” (Thrainsson 1986:172; cf. also Sigurdhsson 1985, 1989). The discourse conditions governing their use are similar to those described above for Yiddish. According to Sigurdhsson 1989:3, “[d]eclarative V1 orders in main clauses are in general prompted by strong discourse cohesion ... Accordingly, they cannot initiate the discourse and are most common in particularly cohesive texts, such as modern memoirs of various sorts, narrative letters and diaries, some argumentative texts, many folktales, and most of the Old Icelandic sagas.” The adversative use of verb-first word order, however, is entirely absent in Icelandic.³⁸ I give some examples of verb-first declaratives in (52) (the examples are taken from Sigurdhsson 1985, = his (2a,b), (60), (62a)). The relevant inflected verb is underlined.

³⁸This is not surprising, given the cultural assumptions on which it appears to be based; cf. fn. 32.

(52)

- a. Var Jón þvi oft í húsinu.
was Jon therefore often in the-house
'Jon was therefore often in the house.'
- b. Voru þvi oft margar mys i husinu.
were therefore often many mice in the-house
'There were therefore often many mice
in the house.'
- c. Jón kom seint heim í gaer. Var hann þess vegna
mjog preyttur í morgun.
Jon came late home yesterday was he therefore
very tired this morning
'Jon came home late yesterday. As a result, he was
very tired this morning.'
- d. Höfundur kemst að röngum niðurstöðum.
Tel ég því að hafna beri
skyrslunni.
the-author comes to wrong results
think I therefore that reject should
the-report
'The author's results are wrong. Therefore, I
believe that the report should be rejected.'

Some examples from vernacular usage are given in (53) (= Sigurdhsson's (63a,b), (64)).³⁹

(53)

- a. Veit ég það vel.
know I that well
'I'm well aware of that.'
- b. Kannast ég við það.
recognize I with that
'I'm familiar with that.'
- c. Hringir siminn loksns.
rings phone at-last
'At last, the phone rings.'

In conclusion, Icelandic exhibits the same correlation between verb-second subordinate clauses and verb-first root declaratives as Yiddish.

³⁹*Pad* in (53a) is optional; cf. the German examples in (12).

3.3.1.2. Old French

Verb-second subordinate clauses: Old French is a verb-second language that allows null subjects (Adams 1985, 1987a, 1987b, Vance 1988). Like Yiddish and Icelandic, Old French exhibits verb-second word order in [-wh] subordinate clauses fairly freely (Adams 1987c, Dupuis 1988, Hirschbuehler and Junker 1988). Some examples are given in (54). The non-subject topic is underlined.

(54)

- a. Et il respondirent que de ceste nouvele
sont il moult lié. (= Adams 1987c, 5c)
and they replied that of this news
are they very happy
'And they replied that they were very
happy about this news.'
- b. Il estoit si soupris de l' amour d' elle
que tousjours convenoit il qu' il fust
en lieu ou il la peüst vecoir.
(= Adams 1987c, 6d)
he was so surprised of the love of her
that always was-necessary it that he was
in place where he her could see
'He was so taken with love for her that he always
arranged to be where he could see her.'
- c. Ço dit li reis que sa guerre out
pro finee. (= Adams 1987c, 5a)
thus said the king that his war had
finished
'Thus, the king said that he had finished his war.'
- d. Jo vos plevis qu' en vermeill sanc ert
pro mise. (= Adams 1987b:119, (20a))
I to-you swear that in vermillion blood will-be
put
'I swear to you that it will be put into
vermillion blood.'

As Adams 1985:13f. notes, the expletive "il is regularly lexical in subordinate clauses" in Old French, and its distribution is comparable to that of *es* in modern Yiddish. This fact provides further evidence for the idea that the topic position in a verb-second clause must be occupied by an overt constituent.

Non-subject topics are also attested in [+wh] subordinate clauses and adverbial adjunct clauses in Old French, though they are not common (Adams 1987c:4, Dupuis 1988:52). Some examples are given in (55) and (56), respectively (= Adams's (10a,b), (25a,e), (18c,f)). In (55a,d), the object clitics *lui* 'her' and *me* 'me' cliticize onto the inflected verb and hence do not count for the purposes of the verb-second constraint.

(55)

- a. la parfaite amour que sans deshonneur
 lui pourtez pro
 the perfect love that without dishonor
 her-DAT bear-2PL
 'the perfect love that you bear her without
 dishonor'
- b. une amor ke longement ai pro servie
 a love that long have-1SG served
 'a love that I have long served'
- c. L'an remorut Gisleberties, qui de Borgoigne
 ert t sire e dus
 the-year died Gilbert who of Burgundy
 was lord and duke
 'That year, Gilbert died, who was lord and
 duke of Burgundy.'
- d. Boines gens, ens fui jou pris par Amours,
 ki si m'ot t souspris
 good people thus was I taken by love
 who so me-had surprised
 'Good people, thus was I taken by love, who
 had surprised me so.'

(56)

- a. Sire, s' a la vostre bonté vousist
 mon pere prendre garde
 sire if-to the your good-will wished
 my father take guard
 'Sire, if my father wished to take precaution
 against your good will'
- b. si comme anciennement solciant les roys faire
 so as formerly used the kings do
 'just as formerly the kings used to do'

The similarity between the two clause types in (55) and (56) suggests that the frequency of non-subject topics is correlated not with the syntactic feature [wh], but rather with the

discourse status of [-wh] complement clauses vs. other subordinate clause types. We will see further evidence for this in Kashmiri, which I discuss directly.

Verb-first declarative clauses: Verb-first declarative root clauses, though rare in Old French prose, are attested in verse (Adams 1987b:157f., Adams 1987c:14, Hirschbuehler and Junker 1988:66ff.). I give some examples in (57) (= Adams 1987b:157, (23)).

(57)

- a. Plurent Franceis pur pitet de Rollant.
weep the-French for pity of Roland
'The French weep out of pity for Roland.'
- b. Empeint pro le ben, fait li brandir
le cors.
spears him well makes it brandish
the body
'He spears him well and brandishes his body.'
- c. Pesera e moi se je l' oci.
will-weigh me if I him-kill
'It will weigh on me if I kill him.'

It is worth noting in this connection that Old French allowed verb-first word order in subordinate clauses, in particular in [+wh] clauses and adverbial adjuncts (Adams 1987c:4, Dupuis 1988:52ff., Hirschbuehler and Junker 1988:69ff.). I give some examples in (58) (= Adams's (18a,d)). The inflected verb is underlined. Recall that pronominal objects are clitics.

(58)

- a. Quant l' ot li chapelain escrit
when it-had the chaplain written
'when the chaplain had written it'
- b. dont les devons nous bien abhominer
for-which them ought we well abhor
'for which we ought to abhor thoroughly'

In conclusion, Old French allows verb-second word order in subordinate clauses just like Yiddish and Icelandic. Verb-first word order in Old French is attested in root clauses in verse as well as in subordinate contexts.

Excursus on Breton: It is quite striking that the environments in which verb-first word order occurs in Old French are virtually identical to those in which it occurs in modern Breton. I briefly review some relevant facts concerning the word order of Breton, which strongly suggest that the syntax of Old French was influenced by language contact with coterritorial Celtic in much the same way that Yiddish was influenced by coterritorial Slavic (cf. Chapter 2.3.3).

The underlying phrase structure of Breton, like that of its sister Celtic languages, is VSO (Anderson and Chung 1977). VSO phrase structure is reflected directly in negated root clauses. In affirmative root clauses, on the other hand, verb-first word order, while grammatical, is "stylistically odd" (Anderson and Chung 1977:13, fn. 6). Rather, affirmative root clauses in Breton obey the verb-second constraint. Verb-second word order is also possible in *that*-clauses, although the underlying VSO word order is preferred. VSO word order is obligatory in all other subordinate clauses. A final fact of interest is that Breton allows null subjects except in topic position, just like Old French.

3.3.1.3. Kashmiri

Verb-second subordinate clauses: Kashmiri, like Old French, allows null subjects and verb-second word order in both root and subordinate clauses (Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985).⁴⁰ Unlike Old French, however, it is underlyingly INFL-final.⁴¹ In Kashmiri, [-wh] complement clauses are verb-second, while [+wh] subordinate clauses and adjunct clauses exhibit variation between verb-second and INFL-final word order.

I give some examples of [-wh] complement clauses with non-subject topics in (59) ((59a) = Hook and Manaster-Ramer's (16)). Many examples in what follows are originally due to Grierson 1911; in such cases, I include the original example number in

⁴⁰There is hardly any literature on the syntax of Kashmiri. For much of the following information, I am therefore greatly indebted to Asha Tickoo and Makhan Lal Tickoo, pers. comm.; examples prefixed by a hyphen reflect their personal transcription.

⁴¹INFL-final phrase structure is attested in Old French as well, where it "is generally considered archaic" (Adams 1987c:9).

parentheses. The topic of the subordinate clause is underlined. Capital letters in the Kashmiri examples stand for retroflex consonants.

(59)

- a. yim parbath chyi byeguzaar yemyi sababi
 kyaazyi tsovaapeer chyi yimen
 jangal kaThyiny (907)
 these mountains are impassable this reason-ABL
 that four-ways are them-DAT
 forests difficult
 'These mountains are impassable because they are
 surrounded on all sides by difficult forests.'
- b. -Me pyav yaad ki raath ees tam
 pani maadgi yi kath vanmits.
 me-DAT became memory that yesterday had he
 his mother the story told
 'I remembered that he had told his mother
 the story yesterday.'
- c. -Me pyav yaad ki yi kath ees tam
 pani maadgi raath vanmits.
 me-DAT became memory that the story had he
 his mother yesterday told
 'I remembered that he had told his mother
 the story yesterday.'

As in the other verb-second languages described above, the topic position must be filled by an overt constituent. Hence, null subjects are ruled out in topic position, as they are in Old French.

Conditional clauses, free relative clauses and headed relative clauses in Kashmiri exhibit variation between verb-second and INFL-final word order (Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985:51; Asha Tickoo, pers. comm.).⁴² I give examples of the variation in conditional clauses in (60) and (61) ((60a) = Hook and Manaster-Ramer's (13)).⁴³

⁴²Indirect questions exhibit the same word order as direct questions in Kashmiri (topic - *wh*-word - verb) and are hence irrelevant for present purposes.

⁴³Many subordinate clauses in what follows are left-dislocated, leading to apparent violations of the verb-second constraint in the root clause.

(60)

- a. yodivay tsi ezyikyis Daakes khath traavakh,
 tyelyi gatshyi viny Daak garyi soozun (1357)
 if you today's mail-DAT letter will-put
 then ought now post house-DAT to-send
 'If you want to send the letter by today's mail,
 you had better get it to the post office now.'
- b. -agar me suup ratsyehəna bani
 if me-DAT soup a-little will-get
 'if I get a little soup'

(61)

- a. -agar insaan kari koshish ti soori
 tagi.
 if man makes effort then everything
 will-be-able
 'If one tries, then one can do anything.'
- b. -agar me bani suup ratsyehəna
 if me-DAT will-get soup a-little
 'if I get a little soup'

The word order variation in free relative clauses is illustrated in (62) and (63), respectively.⁴⁴ The word order variation between (59e,f) reflects the process of verb raising that is well known from West Germanic, cf. Chapter 4.3.1.

(62)

- a. yi mye tsye broonTh von-m-ay
 tyiy chus-ay biye vanaan (440)
 what I-ERG you-DAT before said-1SG-2SG
 that am-2SG again saying
 'I am repeating to you what I told you before.'
- b. yi bi vanaan chus, tsi chukh-i tyi
 maanaan kyini na (13)
 what I saying am you are-Q that
 accepting or not
 'Do you agree with what I am saying or not?'

⁴⁴The examples in (59a-d) are (15) and (21) from Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985 and (h) and (o) from Hook 1984, respectively. I have not attempted to make the transliteration in the examples from Hook 1984 consistent with that used in Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985.

- c. tim chi timan thag-a:n zi yiman th gith
 heka:n chi (308)
 they are them cheating that whom cheat
 be-able are
 'They cheat whom they can.'
- d. yi tsi vana:n chukh, poz ch-a: (1611)
 what you saying are true is-Q
 'Is what you are saying true?'
- e. -Yi shili pani maadgi vanaan chi,
 su chu poz.
 what Sheila her mother telling is
 that is true
 'What Sheila is telling her mother is true.'
- f. -Yi shili pani maadgi chi vanaan, ...
 what Sheila her mother is telling
 'What Sheila is telling her mother ...'

(63)

- Yi shili chi pani maadgi vanaan, ...
 what Sheila is her mother telling
 'What Sheila is telling her mother ...'

Finally, the word order variation in headed relative clauses is illustrated in (64) and (65). Again, the examples in (64b,d) reflect verb raising.

(64)

- a. -su marad yus so kitaab raath paraan oos
 the man who the book yesterday reading was
 'the man who was reading the book yesterday'
- b. -su marad yus so kitaab raath oos paraan
 the man who the book yesterday was reading
 'the man who was reading the book yesterday'
- c. -so kitaab yos bi raath paraan eesis
 the book that I yesterday reading was
 'the book that I was reading yesterday'
- d. -so kitaab yos bi raath eesis paraan
 the book that I yesterday was reading
 'the book that I was reading yesterday'

(65)

- so kitaab yos bi eesis raath paraan
 the book that I was yesterday reading
 'the book that I was reading yesterday'

Excursus on correlation between word order and clause type: It is striking that the clause types in which INFL-final word order is preferred in Kashmiri--namely subordinate clauses that are not [-wh]-complements--are precisely the ones in which verb-initial word order is common in Old French and the only acceptable word order in Breton. The simplest generalization concerning these facts seems to be that in all three languages there is a tendency, which is stronger in Breton than in Old French or Kashmiri, for these subordinate clauses to directly reflect underlying phrase structure and for topicalization and verb-second word order to be unacceptable. If this is a correct generalization, we must assume that Old French allowed VSO phrase structure, presumably as a result of language contact with Celtic.

Verb-first declarative clauses: Kashmiri allows verb-first word order in declarative clauses even more freely than Yiddish or Icelandic. In addition to occurring within a discourse, verb-first root declaratives can also occur discourse-initially (Asha Tickoo, pers. comm.).

3.3.2. Diachronic and dialectal evidence

3.3.2.1. Yiddish

As I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 4, verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish are attested from the first half of the 1600's, but only in East Yiddish. In line with our expectations, we begin to find verb-first declarative clauses in East Yiddish texts from approximately the same time (Birnbaum 1979:172). By contrast, verb-second subordinate clauses are essentially absent in West Yiddish, and verb-first declarative clauses are marginal, just as they have been throughout the history of German (Timm 1986:9).

3.3.2.2. Mainland Scandinavian

Like present-day Icelandic, old mainland Scandinavian allowed verb-second subordinate clauses (Platzack 1987a, 1987b). Some examples are given in (66). The

topics are underlined.⁴⁵

(66)

- a. some sodhne aerw j lupinj
that boiled are in lupine
'that are boiled in lupine'
- b. huar sum ei halder kunungx dom
who that not holds king's verdict
'whoever fails to keep to the king's verdict'
- c. at eigh drap mit fae thit fae
that not killed my animal your animal
'that my animal did not kill your animal'
- d. at alla stadz bar han then priis
that everywhere carried he this price
'that he carried this price everywhere'

The old mainland Scandinavian languages also allowed verb-first declarative root clauses (Platzack 1987c:12, Trosterud 1989:1). In standard varieties of modern mainland Scandinavian, on the other hand, the verb-second constraint is no longer productive in subordinate clauses,⁴⁶ and verb-first declarative clauses have died out as well. Interestingly, however, in at least one modern variety--the dialect of Malmö (Southern Sweden)--verb-first declaratives are very common in oral narratives, and verb-second word order is possible in subordinate clauses (Platzack 1987c:13, citing Dahlbaeck and Vamling 1983).

To summarize this section, I have provided comparative evidence supporting the hypothesis that there is a correlation between the occurrence of verb-second subordinate clauses and verb-first declarative root clauses by showing that it is consistent with the word order facts of three languages that are widely separated in time and space--namely, Icelandic, Old French and Kashmiri--as well as with diachronic and dialectal variation in Yiddish and the mainland Scandinavian languages.

⁴⁵The examples in (66a) and (66b) are from Platzack 1987a:397, (29e) and Platzack 1987b:6, (16), respectively. I am indebted to Christer Platzack, pers. comm., for (66c,d).

⁴⁶Verb-second subordinate clauses are marginally possible in Norwegian (Taraldsen 1986:9,18) and Swedish (Platzack 1986b:46, Holmberg 1986:109ff.).

3.4. Previous analyses of the verb-second phenomenon

In this section, I discuss two previous analyses of the verb-second phenomenon. The first is the influential treatment proposed by den Besten 1983 (first circulated 1977) for Dutch and German. As I will show, this analysis does not extend to Yiddish. The second analysis, proposed by Diesing 1988, is empirically superior to den Besten's with regard to the Yiddish facts since it was developed in order to accommodate them. After presenting Diesing's analysis, I discuss some conceptual and empirical shortcomings which lead me to reject certain aspects of it. This will set the stage for my adopting a modified version of it in Section 3.5.

3.4.1. Den Besten 1983: The standard analysis

3.4.1.1. V-to-COMP movement

The root-subordinate asymmetry with respect to the verb-second constraint that we find in most Germanic languages is so striking that most attempts to explain the verb-second phenomenon have focused on it. The insight underlying the approach that is generally accepted at present goes back to structuralist theories of German and Dutch clause structure, according to which the inflected verb in a verb-second clause occupies the same 'positional field' as a complementizer in a subordinate clause. Credit for formulating this approach in generative terms is due to den Besten 1983, who proposed what has become the standard generative analysis of the verb-second phenomenon in Germanic. According to this analysis, the asymmetry between root and subordinate clauses follows from the fact that the inflected verb in a verb-second clause moves into COMP. Since COMP is lexically filled in formally subordinate clauses, verb movement into COMP is blocked and the verb-second phenomenon is restricted to root clauses as a result.

Den Besten 1983 gives a number of compelling arguments for treating complementizers and inflected verbs in second position in root clauses as occupying the same structural position. He points out, for instance, that weak subject pronouns in

Dutch are enclitic on the complementizer in a subordinate clause, and on the inflected verb in a verb-second clause. This is illustrated in (67) and (68) (= den Besten's (25) and (30), respectively). In this and following examples, I have underlined the complementizer and the inflected verb.

(67)

- a. dat je /ze gisteren ziek was
that you she yesterday sick was
'that you/she were/was sick yesterday'
- b. *dat gisteren je /ze ziek was
that yesterday you she sick was
Intended meaning:
'that you/she were/was sick yesterday'

(68)

- a. Toch was ze gisteren ziek.
yet was she yesterday sick
'But she was sick yesterday.'
- b. *Toch was gisteren ze ziek.
yet was yesterday she sick
Intended meaning: 'But she was sick yesterday.'

Furthermore, in clauses of comparison, the complementizer is in complementary distribution with the inflected verb (den Besten 1983:117). This is shown for German in (69) ((69a,b) = den Besten's (7a,b), Appendix II). Analogous facts hold for Dutch.

(69)

- a. als ob er es nicht gesehen haette
as if he it not seen had
'as if he hadn't seen it'
- b. als haette er es nicht gesehen
as had he it not seen
'as if he hadn't seen it'
- c. *als ob haette er es nicht gesehen
as if had he it not seen
Intended meaning: 'as if he hadn't seen it'

Similarly, in conditional clauses, the complementizer *wenn* 'if' is in complementary distribution with the inflected verb, as shown in (70). Again, analogous facts hold for Dutch (and in this case, even for English).

(70)

- a. wenn sie hier waere
if she here were
'if she were here'
- b. waere sie hier
were she here
'if she were here'
- c. *wenn waere sie hier
if were she here
Intended meaning: 'if she were here'

3.4.1.2. Topicalization as movement to Spec(CP)

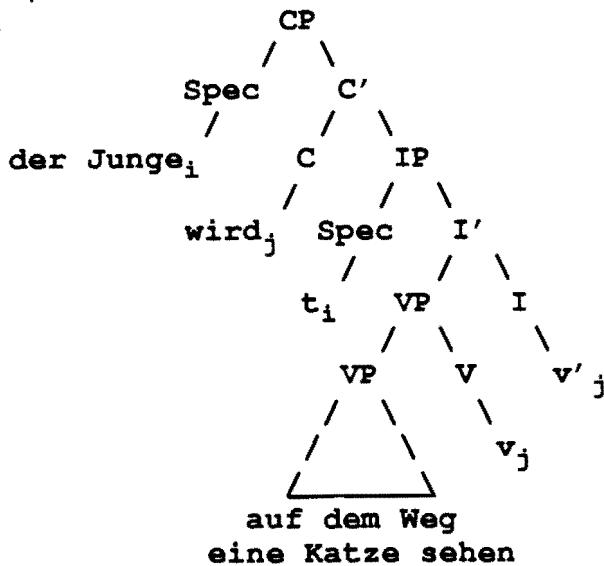
The standard analysis of the verb-second phenomenon further assumes that the topic position, Spec(CP), is filled by the movement of some constituent. The derived structure of a subject-initial verb-second clause is thus held to be parallel to that of its non-subject-initial variants. Given current conceptions of phrase structure, the derived structures that are associated with (6a) and (6b), repeated here in (71), are shown in (72).

(71)

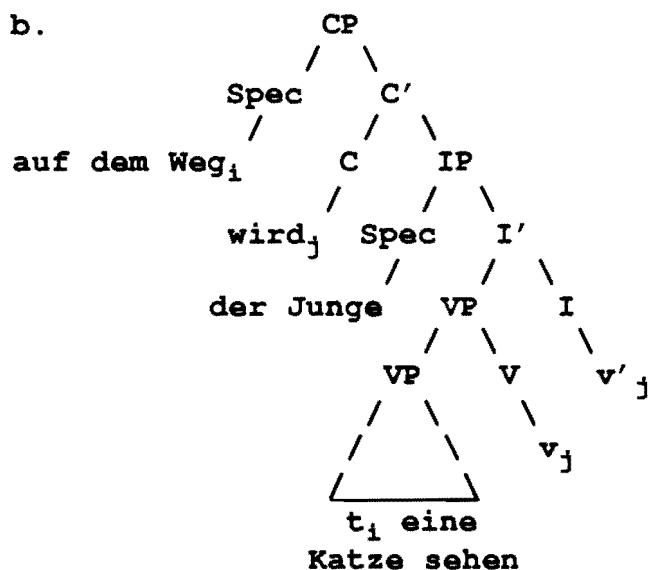
- a. Der Junge wird auf dem Weg eine Katze sehen.
the boy will on the way a cat see
'The boy will see a cat on the way.'
- b. Auf dem Weg wird der Junge eine Katze sehen.
on the way will the boy a cat see
'On the way, the boy will see a cat.'

(72)

a.



b.

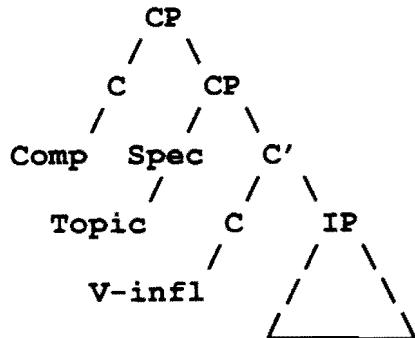


3.4.1.3. The inadequacy of the standard analysis for Yiddish

The standard analysis of the verb-second phenomenon was proposed on the basis of Dutch and German, and it is an accurate and elegant description of the facts of these languages. Clearly, however, it is incompatible with the existence of verb-second word order in formally subordinate clauses. In order to accommodate such clauses, adherents

of the standard analysis have suggested that they contain two COMP nodes, as shown in (73) (den Besten and Moed-van Walraven 1986:116, Travis 1984:165, fn. 2).

(73)



In (73), the complementizer occupies the higher COMP node, the topic moves into the specifier node of the lower CP, and the inflected verb can move into the lower COMP node.

Although they violate general well-formedness conditions on phrase structure, structures as in (73) are empirically motivated in languages which allow embedded root clauses, such as Frisian (de Haan and Weerman 1985:87) or Swedish (Holmberg 1986:111). In these languages, such clauses are islands. Following Lowenstamm 1977:211ff., den Besten and Moed-van Walraven 1986:129f. and Travis 1984:118 assume that verb-second subordinate clauses are islands in Yiddish as well. But this assumption is incorrect, for *wh*-movement, both local and long-distance, is possible out of the alleged islands, as we have seen in (31)-(34), (36), (38)-(39) and in (42)-(43), respectively. Therefore, since there is no reason to postulate structures like (73), I reject the double-COMP analysis of verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish.

3.4.2. Diesing 1988: An alternative to the standard analysis

3.4.2.1. The Universal Base Hypothesis

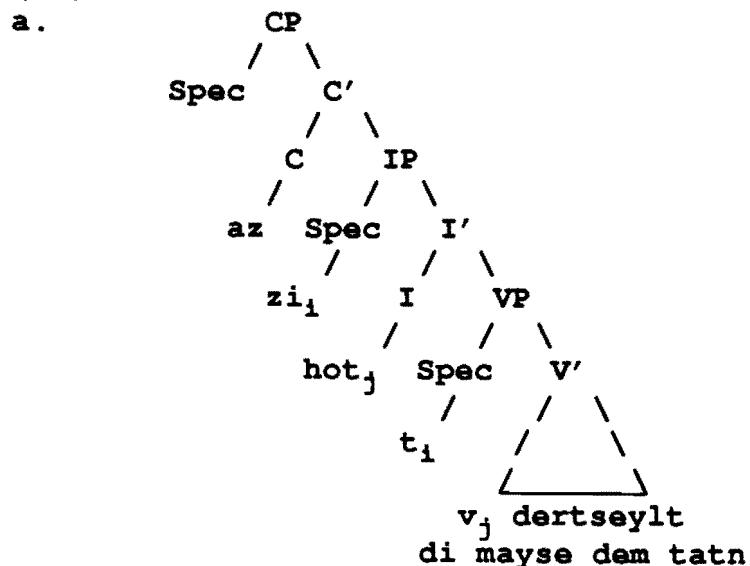
More recently, an alternative analysis of Yiddish clause structure has been proposed by Diesing 1988, who accommodates verb-second word order in formally subordinate clauses by adopting the Universal Base Hypothesis--that is, the assumption that subjects

originate within the maximal projection of the verb rather than in Spec(IP) (Fukui and Speas 1986, Kitagawa 1986, Koopman and Sportiche 1988, Kuroda 1986, Sportiche 1988).⁴⁷ According to her analysis, the inflected verb in a verb-second clause in Yiddish moves to INFL rather than to COMP. Since she assumes the underlying position of the subject to be within VP, the topic position, Spec(IP), which is empty in underlying structure, is available as a landing site for topicalized constituents. The derived phrase structures that Diesing would give to a subject-initial subordinate clause like (74a) and a non-subject-initial one like (74b) are shown in (75).

(74)

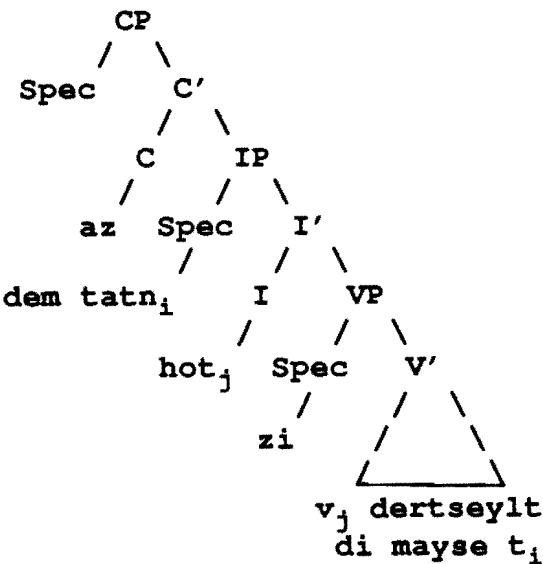
- a. az zi hot dertseylt di mayse dem tatz
that she has told the story the father
'that she told Father the story'
- b. az dem tatz hot zi dertseylt di mayse
that the father has she told the story
'that she told the story to Father'

(75)



⁴⁷A similar analysis is proposed to account for verb-second subordinate clauses in Old French by Adams 1987c.

b.



Since root clauses obey the same word order constraints as subordinate clauses in Yiddish, Diesing analyzes them as IP as well, rather than as CP.

3.4.2.2. The A/A-bar parameter

Diesing argues that the difference between a verb-second language like German, which exhibits a root-subordinate asymmetry with respect to the verb-second constraint, and one like Yiddish, which does not, can be stated in terms of two parameters. The first parameter concerns the landing site of the inflected verb in a verb-second clause: the landing site is COMP in German, but INFL in Yiddish. The second parameter concerns the status of Spec(IP). Following Kitagawa 1986, Diesing assumes that in some languages, for instance English, Spec(IP) can only function as an A-position and is restricted to subjects. By contrast, Spec(IP) in Yiddish has a dual status: it can function either as an A-position, in which case it is restricted to subjects, or as an A-bar position, in which case it can be filled by non-subjects as well.

3.4.2.3. The ECP

Finally, Diesing proposes that the overt topic requirement in a verb-second language should be reduced to the ECP. An ECP approach leads us to expect that the

topic position can be phonologically empty if Spec(IP) is properly governed. As Diesing shows, Yiddish allows just such structures in connection with extraction out of embedded clauses. I give two examples in (76), which are based on ones in Diesing 1988:36ff.

(76)

- a. Ver hot zi gezogt vet kumen?
who has she said will come
'Who did she say would come?'
- b. Vos hot zi gevolt zoln di kinder leyenen?
what has she wanted should the children read
'What did she want the children to read?'

The structures that she would assign to the sentences in (76) are shown in (77).

(77)

- a. Ver_i hot zi gezogt [C_iP_t"i [C_jVet_j]
[IP_{e/t'}_i [IV_j] t_i kumen]]
- b. Vos_i hot zi gevolt [C_iP_t"i [C_jZoln_j]
[IP_{e/t'}_i [IV_j] di kinder leyenen t_i]]

According to Diesing, the COMP nodes of the complement clauses are empty at underlying structure. The inflected verb of the subordinate clause must move into COMP, for otherwise the empty COMP node would violate the ECP. Diesing assumes that the inflected verb in COMP lexically governs the Spec(IP) position of the complement clause, which may remain empty as a result.

Unlike verbs in COMP, complementizers themselves do not count as lexical governors in Yiddish. This is the reason that empty topics are ruled out in formally subordinate clauses (cf. (27)). Thus, the variants of (76) given in (78), in which the complement clauses are introduced by a complementizer, rather than having undergone verb fronting, are ungrammatical.

(78)

- a. *Ver hot zi gezogt az vet kumen?
who has she said that will come
Intended meaning:
'Who did she say would come?'

- b. *Vos hot zi gevolt az zoln di kinder
 leyenen?
 what has she wanted that should the children
 read
 Intended meaning:
 'What did she want the children to read?'

The structures associated with the examples in (78) are given in (79).

- (79)
- a. *Ver_i hot zi gezogt [cp^t_i [ca^z]
 [IP^{e/t'}_i [I^vet] t_i kumen]]
 - b. *Vos_i hot zi gevolt [cp^t_i [ca^z]
 [IP^{e/t'}_i [I^{zoln}] di kinder leyenen t_i]]

According to Diesing, antecedent government of a trace in Spec(IP) by an intermediate trace in Spec(CP) is ruled out by the minimality condition proposed in Chomsky 1986--that is, antecedent government is blocked by the presence of the closer "possible governor" *az* 'that.'

3.4.2.4. Against the A/A-bar parameter

Although Diesing's analysis is superior to previous treatments of the verb-second phenomenon in Yiddish, it has a number of shortcomings. These concern the conceptual consequences of permitting Spec(IP) to function as either an A-position or an A-bar position and the empirical motivation for doing so. I discuss these issues in turn.

The dual status of Spec(IP): First, as Diesing herself points out (1988:11), her treatment of Spec(IP) as an A-position when it ends up being filled by a subject, but as an A-bar position when it does not, means that the concepts of A-position and theta-position are divorced in her analysis (in contrast, for instance, to Chomsky 1981:47, for whom A-positions are defined as potential theta-positions, and Fukui and Speas 1986:143, who equate A-positions and theta-positions). In the worst case, this means that the notions of A-position and A-bar position assume the status of independent theoretical primitives, a conceptually undesirable result. Diesing therefore tentatively suggests an alternative approach, according to which A-positions are equated with ones that are assigned case. While such an approach would reduce the inventory of

grammatical primitives, it is problematic because it implies a non-movement analysis of passive and more seriously, of subject-to-subject raising.

Empirical motivation for considering Spec(IP) an A-position: Second, Diesing's empirical argument for the status of Spec(IP) as a potential A-position is flawed. This argument is based on the contrast in (80), which is originally due to Travis 1984:117.

(80)

- a. Es hot gegesn dos broyt.
it-NOM has eaten the-ACC bread
'It ate the bread.'
- b. *Es hot di froy geleyent.
it-ACC has the-NOM woman read
Intended meaning: 'The woman read it.'

In the acceptable (80a), *es* is the subject of the clause, while in the unacceptable (80b), it is the object. Diesing argues that allowing Spec(IP) to function as either an A-position or an A-bar position makes it possible to state the contrast in (80) in a natural way. Since under her analysis, (80a) is derived by A-movement, but (80b) is derived by A-bar movement, she proposes to rule out (80b) by invoking the pair of constraints in (81) (= her (11)).

(81)

- a. Pronouns which are topicalized via A-bar movement must be stressed.
- b. *Es* cannot bear stress.

While the constraint in (81b) or its equivalent seems to hold across the Germanic languages, there is evidence that the constraint in (81a) is too strong. In particular, unstressed non-subject pronouns may occur in Spec(IP) in Yiddish if they bear an experiencer theta-role, and analogous facts hold for the topic position of German verb-

second clauses.⁴⁸ Some examples are given in (82).⁴⁹ The oblique experiencer is underlined.

(82)

- a. farvos aykh iz nisht gut bay undz
(Grine Felder, 81)
why you-ACC is not good by us
'why you don't feel at home with us'
- b. az aykh zol zayn gut bay undz
(Grine Felder, 81)
that you-ACC shall be good by us
'that you should feel at home with us'
- c. Kum tsu mir in tsirk. Mir felt
oys a leyb. (Royte Pomerantsen, 24)
Come to me in circus. me-DAT misses
out a lion
'Come join my circus. I need a lion.'
- d. vi ikh bin nit shuldik un vi mir iz
keyn mol nit ayngefahn tsu ganvenen
(Royte Pomerantsen, 96)
how I am not guilty and how me-DAT is
no time not occurred to steal
'that I am not guilty and that it never
occurred to me to steal'
- e. Ir kent zikh moln, vi gut mir iz ...
(Royte Pomerantsen, 124)
you can REFL paint how good me-DAT is ...
'You can imagine how happy I am ...'

⁴⁸These facts are also problematic for the analysis proposed in Travis 1984, who argues for a phrase structure asymmetry between subject-initial and non-subject-initial clauses in Yiddish and German. She proposes to derive non-subject-initial root clauses as under the standard analysis of the verb-second phenomenon, by topicalization and by verb movement via INFL into COMP; hence, her analysis implies the existence of double-COMP structures in Yiddish as in (73). Subject-initial root clauses, on the other hand, are derived from an INFL-medial phrase structure (in both Yiddish and German) by verb movement into INFL only. Travis proposes to rule out (80b) by invoking a constraint against moving unstressed pronouns into Spec(CP).

⁴⁹Further examples can be found in Katz 1987:248. Negative concord as in (82d) is standard in modern Yiddish. The examples in (82f,g) are taken from Taube 1986:6f.; I have left Taube's orthography unchanged.

f. -mir gefelt, wos in der konferenc hobn
 zix bateilitk litwiner un jidn.
 (A. Wergelis, Tsvantsik teg)
 me-DAT pleases what in the conference have
 REFL participated Lithuanians and Jews
 'I am pleased that Lithuanians and Jews alike
 participated in the conference.'

g. -im hot alc geart, wos meir der
 blinder hot zix azoi cekomandewet.
 (I. Wergelis, Tsum lebn)
 him-DAT has constantly bothered what meir the
 blind has REFL so risen-to-command
 'It constantly bothered him that Meir the blind
 man had risen to such commanding position.'

It might be objected that the topicalized experiencer pronouns in (82), despite their oblique case-marking, are subjects, and hence only apparent exceptions to the constraint in (81a). For instance, unlike other oblique arguments, experiencers can function on a par with syntactic subjects for the purposes of conjunction. This is illustrated by the parallelism between (83) and (84a) on the one hand and the contrast between (83) and (84b) on the other.^{50,51}

⁵⁰The example in (83) is from Birnbaum 1979:304. Analogous examples are found in early Yiddish, as shown in (i) and (ii).

- i. hertsug dudun dem tet es vast tsurn un' sprkh
 (Bovo, 55.1)
 duke Dodon him-DAT did it vastly enrage and said
 'This vastly angered Duke Dodon and he said'
- ii. dem kunig vas es vun hertsn leyd
 un' shvaur tuyyer (Bovo, 287.1)
 the-DAT king was it from heart sorry
 and swore dear
 'The king was saddened in his heart and he solemnly swore'

The unusual coordination type in (83) is discussed for German in Hoehle 1983.

⁵¹Lightfoot 1979:234, citing Visser 1963-1973, para. 38, notes the existence of cases like (83) in Middle English, "where an impersonal construction is conjoined with a personal," and interprets these as evidence that the oblique argument in such constructions is a syntactic subject. The case for this view from the history of English is much stronger than it is in Yiddish. In contrast to Yiddish, for instance, we find oblique arguments triggering subject-verb agreement in Middle English.

(83)

Es vert ir eng in shtub un vil aroys.
 it becomes her-DAT tight in room and wants out
 'She begins to feel claustrophic in the room
 and to want out.'

(84)

- a. Nekhtn hob ikh zi getrofn
 un hob ir dertseylt di mayse.
 yesterday have I her met
 and have her told the story
 'I met her yesterday and told her the story.'
- b. *Nekhtn hob ikh zi getrofn
 un hot mir dertseylt di mayse.
 yesterday have I her met
 and has me told the story
 Intended meaning:
 'I met her yesterday and she told me
 the story.'

Furthermore, it is well known that the typologically similar Icelandic has oblique subjects (Andrews 1982, Thrainsson 1979, Zaenen, Maling and Thrainsson 1985), and oblique experiencer subjects have been described in many other languages as well (Perlmutter and Rosen 1983). In what follows, I will present three arguments that Yiddish patterns with German in that oblique experiencers do not behave as syntactic subjects. On the basis of these arguments, I conclude that the clauses in (82) are true counterexamples to the constraint proposed in (81a).

First, unlike Icelandic, oblique arguments cannot function as subjects of infinitival clauses in Yiddish or German. The parallelism in this respect between nominative and oblique subjects in Icelandic is illustrated in (85) and (86) (Zaenen, Maling and Thrainsson 1985:454, = their (28) and (29)).

(85)

- a. Ég vonast til ad̄ fara heim.
 I hope for to go home
 'I hope to go home.'
- b. Ad̄ fara heim snemma er óvenjulegt.
 to go home early is unusual
 'To go home early is unusual.'

(86)

- a. **Mig vantar peninga.**
me-ACC lacks money-ACC
'I lack money.'
- b. **Ég vonast til ad vanta ekki peninga.**
I hope for to lack not money-ACC
'I hope not to lack money.'
- c. **Ad vanta peninga er alltöf algengt.**
to lack money is all-too common
'To lack money is all too common.'

Yiddish, on the other hand, exhibits a contrast between the grammatical (87b) and (88b) and the ungrammatical (89b) and (90b).^{52,53}

(87)

- a. **Der tate iz gevorn in kas.**
the-NOM father is become in anger
'The father got angry.'
- b. **Es iz nit fayn tsu vern in kas.**
it is not polite to become in anger
'It is not polite to get angry.'

⁵²It is important to bear in mind that in the analysis that I am arguing against, there are no empty expletive subjects in (89b) or (90b) that would need to be licensed by receiving nominative case from a finite AGR.

⁵³An objection that might be raised in response to this argument is that the PRO subject of infinitival clauses is inherently nominative, and that sentences like (89b) and (90b) are ruled out not because of the non-subject status of the oblique experiencer arguments, but because of the case clash that would result from the attempt to assign oblique case to nominative PRO. Apparent evidence for this view comes from sentences like (i).

- i. **Ikh hob im ibartsaygt tsu vern mayner a khaver.**
I have him persuaded to become my-NOM a friend
'I persuaded him to become my friend.'

It might be argued that the nominative case-marking on the predicate nominal *mayner a khaver* in (i) is due to agreement of the predicate nominal with PRO, the subject of its clause, and that since PRO does not receive case from a case assigner, it must bear inherent nominative case. However, as Anthony Kroch has pointed out to me, the absence of agreement between the predicate noun *dayner a khaver* 'a friend of yours' and its subject *mikh* 'me' in the exceptional case-marking construction in (ii) shows that nominative case is inherent in predicate nouns in Yiddish, rather than due to agreement with PRO.

- ii. **Loz mikh zayn dayner /*daynem a khaver.**
let me-ACC be your-NOM/ your-ACC a friend
'Let me be a friend of yours.'

(88)

- a. Mir hobn zikh zeyer gefreyt.
we-NOM have REFL very gladdened
'We were very glad.'
- b. Es iz nit tomid laykht zikh tsu freyn.
it is not always easy REFL to gladden
'It is not always easy to be glad.'

(89)

- a. Im iz gegangn zeyer gut.
him-DAT is gone very good
'He was doing very well.'
- b. *Es kumt on shver tsu geyn zeyer gut.
it comes on difficult to go very well
Intended meaning:
'It is difficult to do very well.'

(90)

- a. Mir iz nit-gut.
me-DAT is not-good
'I feel nauseous.'
- b. *Es iz umayngenem tsu zayn nit-gut.
it is unpleasant to be not-good
Intended meaning:
'To feel nauseous is unpleasant.'

The Yiddish facts are parallel to the corresponding facts of German. I give the German counterparts of (87) and (90) in (91) and (92), respectively.

(91)

- a. Der Vater ist wuetend geworden.
the-NOM father is angry become
'The father got angry.'
- b. Es ist nicht hoeftlich, wuetend zu werden.
it is not polite angry to become
'It is not polite to get angry.'

(92)

- a. Mir ist uebel.
me-DAT is nauseous
'I feel nauseous.'

- b. *Es ist unangenehm, uebel zu sein.
 it is unpleasant nauseous to be
 Intended meaning:
 'It is unpleasant to feel nauseous.'

On the basis of contrasts like that between (91b) and (92b), Zaenen, Maling and Thrainsson 1985:476ff. conclude that oblique arguments are not subjects in German, and the same conclusion is warranted for Yiddish.

A second argument against analyzing oblique experiencers as subjects is based on the different behavior of subject and non-subject traces in relative clauses. As I discussed in Section 3.2.2, traces of subjects can occupy topic position in relative clauses, while traces of non-subjects cannot. If the oblique arguments in (82) were subjects, their traces should be able to occupy topic position. But as the contrast between (93) and (94) on the one hand and (95) and (96) on the other shows, this expectation is not fulfilled (Prince 1988b:13, fn. 7).

(93)

- *der yid, vos /vemen t iz nit-gut
 the man that who-DAT is not-good
 Intended meaning:
 'the man who feels nauseous'

(94)

- *der yid, vos /vemen t felt eyn oyg
 the man that who-DAT misses one eye
 Intended meaning:
 'the man who is missing an eye'

(95)

- a. der yid, vos es iz im nit-gut
 the man what it is him-DAT not-good
 'the man who feels nauseous'
- b. der yid, vos im iz nit-gut (slightly marked)
 the man that him-DAT is not-good
 'the man who feels nauseous'
- c. der yid, vemen es iz nit-gut (stilted)
 the man who-DAT it is not-good
 'the man who feels nauseous'

(96)

- a. der yid, vos es felt im eyn oyg
the man that it misses him-DAT one eye
'the man who is missing an eye'
- b. der yid, vos eyn oyg felt im
the man that one eye misses him-DAT
'the man who is missing an eye'
- c. der yid, vos im felt eyn oyg
(slightly marked)
the man that him-DAT misses one eye
'the man who is missing an eye'
- d. der yid, vemen es felt eyn oyg (stilted)
the man who-DAT it misses one eye
'the man who is missing an eye'
- e. der yid, vemen eyn oyg felt (stilted)
the man who-DAT one eye misses
'the man who is missing an eye'

A third and final argument against analyzing oblique experiencers as subjects is based on the fact that nominative pronouns cannot occur in their underlying position (immediately after the inflected verb) in clauses that contain topic *es* (Weinreich 1981:330, para. 75, Zaretski 1929:235, para. 730).⁵⁴ This constraint is independent of the thematic role of the pronoun, as shown in (97), and it is observed regardless of whether the pronoun is stressed or not.⁵⁵

(97)

- a. *az es iz zi gezesn nebn mir
that it is she sat next-to me
Intended meaning:
'that she sat next to me'
- b. *az es iz er gevorn in kas
that it is he become in anger
Intended meaning:
'that he became angry'

⁵⁴For relevant discussion, cf. Prince 1988b.

⁵⁵If the pronoun is stressed, the *dos*-construction discussed in Chapter 2.3.3 is possible (Weinreich 1981:333, para. 82).

- c. *az es hobn mir zikh gefreyt
 that it have we REFL gladdened
 Intended meaning:
 'that we were glad'

By contrast, the preferred position for oblique experiencer pronouns is precisely the one from which nominative pronouns are barred (Weinreich 1981:330, para. 75); cf. the examples in (95a) and (96a,b). This is very puzzling if experiencer arguments are syntactic subjects.⁵⁶

In summary, I conclude that oblique experiencer arguments in Yiddish are not subjects and that their acceptability in Spec(IP) shows that the constraint in (81a) is too strong. As a result, the empirical motivation for Diesing's proposal to derive subject-initial clauses by A-movement and non-subject-initial ones by A-bar movement collapses. I would like to make it clear that I am not claiming that there is no need for a constraint to rule out (80b). However, I assume that the relevant constraint must be formulated in terms of a hierarchy of thematic roles (Agent > Experiencer \geq Theme), rather than in terms of the A/A-bar distinction. The thematic hierarchy approach leads us to expect unstressed pronouns bearing the thematic role of theme to be able to occupy topic position if no higher-ranking argument is available for topicalization. As shown in (98), this expectation is borne out when the subject is postposed, at least in early Yiddish. It is worth noting that the meter shows that the object pronoun is unstressed.

(98)

- a. er varkhtt es hitn gizehn di loyt di
 dr nebn varn gizesn (Bovo, 112.1-112.2)
 he feared it had seen the people who
 beside were sat
 'He feared the people who had sat close by
 had seen it.'

⁵⁶The fact that the preferred position of unstressed oblique experiencer pronouns is immediately after the inflected verb does not vitiate my objection to the constraint in (81a). My point is only that such pronouns must be able to occur in Spec(IP), not that they are required to do so.

- b. Es hut gitun eyn yungr vun akhtsihn
 yarn. (Bovo, 189.3)
 it has done a young-one of eighteen
 years
 'A boy of eighteen years of age did it.'

In the modern language, the insertion of topic *es* appears to be preferred over the preposing of object *es*, as shown in (99).

- (99)
- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-------|
| bkdi | <i>es</i> | zalin <i>es</i> | kenin |
| ali fr steyn (Geography, 1) | | | |
| so-that it-EXPL shall it-OBJ can | | | |
| all understand | | | |
| 'so that all can understand it' | | | |

Note that while the word order in (99) does not provide evidence in favor of the thematic hierarchy approach, it does not provide counterevidence to it, since expletives do not bear thematic roles.

In conclusion, I reject Diesing's attempt to derive the availability of verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish from the A/A-bar parameter on the following grounds. First, I have argued that permitting Spec(IP) to function as both an A-position and an A-bar position is conceptually undesirable. Second, I have shown that Diesing's empirical motivation for treating Spec(IP) as a potential A-position in Yiddish is flawed.

3.5. The direction of nominative case assignment

In this section, I present an analysis of the verb-second phenomenon in Yiddish in which I follow Diesing 1988 in relying on the Universal Base Hypothesis and the ECP. However, instead of appealing to the A/A-bar parameter, I propose to derive verb-second word order in Yiddish subordinate clauses by appealing to variation in the direction in which INFL assigns nominative case--a parameter which Diesing must invoke as well, though she does not focus on it in her discussion. In particular, I argue in Section 3.5.1 that INFL in Yiddish, in contrast to English or German, is able to assign case rightward. In Section 3.5.2, I argue that the exceptional status of subject relative clauses, which are the only subordinate clauses in Yiddish to allow an empty category in topic position, constitutes strong evidence for an ECP approach to the verb-second constraint.

3.5.1. Rightward case assignment by INFL

If we assume the Universal Base Hypothesis, the subject in an INFL-medial language like English, in which INFL assigns case leftward, must move from its underlying position within VP to Spec(IP) in order to receive case, just as in a classical movement analysis of the passive or subject-to-subject raising. In such a language, non-subjects cannot occupy Spec(IP), since the subject would not receive case. Hence, the only constituent allowed in Spec(IP) is the subject. I propose that in Yiddish, unlike in English, INFL is able to assign case rightward. Since the subject can receive case within VP, it is free to remain in its underlying position. As a result, subjects and non-subjects alike can land in Spec(IP), which functions as a topic position rather than as the subject position.

3.5.1.1. Verb-first declarative clauses

The assumption that INFL can assign nominative case rightward in Yiddish permits a fairly straightforward explanation of the correlation between verb-second subordinate clauses and verb-first declaratives noted in Section 3.3. Following Sigurdsson 1989:13ff., I will assume that verb-first declaratives are derived by movement of the inflected verb into COMP. Verb-first subordinate clauses are then correctly ruled out in Yiddish for the same structural reason that verb-second subordinate clauses are ruled out in German and Dutch under den Besten's analysis of the verb-second phenomenon. However, since verb movement into COMP in root clauses is allowed and indeed obligatory in all verb-second languages, the question arises why verb-first word order in root declaratives is available in only some of them. I propose that the difference between verb-second languages that allow verb-first declaratives and ones that do not has to do with the way that the topic position is defined.⁵⁷ As I observed above, in languages in which INFL assigns case rightward to the underlying position of the subject within VP, Spec(IP) is free to function as the topic position. By contrast, in verb-second languages in which INFL assigns case leftward (German, Dutch and the modern

⁵⁷Thanks are due to Anthony Kroch for this suggestion.

mainland Scandinavian languages), the topic position is Spec(CP). Under the assumption that the topic position must be filled by an overt constituent in both types of languages, the difference between them regarding the acceptability of verb-first declaratives follows.

Diesing 1988:48, fn. 14 assumes that verb-first declaratives in Yiddish are verb-second clauses with an empty category in topic position meaning something like ‘then’ or ‘therefore.’ That is, for her, verb-first declaratives are akin to the German root clauses containing empty topics discussed in Section 3.2.1.3. This analysis fails to capture the correlation between the occurrence of verb-first declarative root clauses and verb-second subordinate clauses, since the root clauses are considered to be only apparently verb-first. Thus, under her analysis, there is no more reason to expect verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish, in which verb-first declarative clauses are productive, than in German, where they are marginal. Moreover, in verb-first clauses which do not have conclusive force, like those in (45), the motivation for postulating an empty topic is weak.

A question arises concerning the discourse distribution of verb-first declarative clauses. Under Diesing’s analysis, such clauses are ruled out in discourse-initial position because the empty adverb in topic position must be linked to a preceding discourse. Under the approach proposed above, one might assume that what must be discourse-linked in these clauses is the tense element of the inflected verb.⁵⁸ It is worth noting that this assumption makes available an alternative analysis of verb-first declaratives to the one presented above. According to this analysis, verb-first root declaratives in Yiddish simply do not contain a topic position--that is, they are dominated by I’ rather than IP. This view is reminiscent of that advanced by Hall 1979:283, who considers verb-first clauses to represent the basic word order option in Yiddish. Under this analysis, verb-first declaratives in Yiddish have the same phrase structure as their counterparts in Welsh (Sproat 1984) and other underlyingly verb-first languages like Irish or Breton. A

⁵⁸Thanks are due to Anthony Kroch for this suggestion.

difficulty for this approach is the absence of verb-first subordinate clauses in Yiddish, which is unexpected since the inflected verb is not assumed to move into COMP. In the spirit of Thrainsson's 1986 analysis of verb-first clauses in Icelandic, one might assume that verb-first subordinate clauses are syntactically well-formed in Yiddish, but that they are unacceptable because the discourse linking of the tense element in the subordinate clause is blocked. An analysis along these lines would be supported by the parallelism between verb-first declaratives in Yiddish and their functional equivalents in English, the *so*-clauses illustrated in (100).

(100)

- a. **She needs the money, so she took the job.**
- b. ***She wrote me that so she took the job.**

Since it is difficult to see how the contrast in (100) can be explained in purely structural terms, whatever non-structural explanation of it turns out to be correct would presumably extend straightforwardly to rule out verb-first subordinate clauses in Yiddish.

3.5.1.2. Postposed subjects

If INFL is able to assign nominative case rightward in Yiddish, we might expect subjects to appear not only in the position adjacent to INFL, but further to the right as well. This expectation is borne out, for Yiddish allows postposed subjects of the type familiar from the Romance languages under appropriate discourse conditions (Prince 1988a). Some examples are given in (101). The postposed subject is underlined.

(101)

- a. **In a kleyn shtetl hobn zikh gelebt a melamed mit a melamedke. (Royte Pomerantsen, 38)**
in a small town have REFL lived a teacher
with a teacher-FEM
'In a small town, there lived a teacher with
his wife.'
- b. **In Rige iz ongekumen a magid.**
(Royte Pomerantsen, 77)
in Riga is on-come a preacher
'In Riga, there arrived a preacher.'

- c. Amol iz gekumen a yid fun a yor zibetsik
 tsum rov. (Royte Pomerantsen, 23)
 once is come a man of a year seventy
 to-the rabbi
 'One day, a man of seventy years of age came
 to the rabbi.'
- d. Es iz amol gegangen a shif keyn amerike.
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 66)
 it is once gone a ship to America
 'A ship once sailed to America.'

Subject postposing is not limited to unaccusative verbs. As in Italian, it is also possible with intransitive verbs, as shown in (102).

(102)

- Es hot ongerufen mayner a khaver.
 it has on-called my-NOM a friend
 'A friend of mine called.'

In raising constructions, the subject can either intervene between the raising verb and its infinitival complement, or it can follow the infinitival complement.⁵⁹ This is shown in (103) and (104), respectively.⁶⁰

(103)

- a. Un es hot im ongehoybn dos gezunt tsu geyn
 barg-arop.
 and it has him-DAT begun the health to go
 hill-down
 'And his health began to go downhill.'
- b. Un es hot ongehoybn a kvort bronfn kostn
 finefuntsantsik kopikes.
 and it has begun a quart brandy cost
 twenty-five copecks
 'And a quart of brandy started costing
 twenty-five copecks.'

⁵⁹The canonical raising predicate 'seem' cannot be used in this connection, since it does not select infinitival complements in Yiddish. Hence, I use *onheybn* 'begin,' which subcategorizes either *to*-infinitive or bare infinitive complements.

⁶⁰The word order in (104) requires high intonation on the subject and an intonation break following it (David Braun, pers. comm.).

(104)

- a. Un es hot im ongehoyn tsu geyn dos gezunt
 alts barg-arop.
 and it has him-DAT begun to go the health
 constantly hill-down
 'And his health began to go downhill.'
- b. Un es hot ongehoyn kostn a kvort bronfn
 finefuntsvantsik kopikes.
 (Royte Pomerantsen, 35)
 and it has begun cost a quart brandy
 twenty-five copecks
 'And a quart of brandy started costing
 twenty-five copecks.'

3.5.2. More evidence for an ECP approach

We saw in Section 3.2.2 that the topic position in Yiddish subordinate clauses must in general be filled by an overt constituent--a requirement that I have been referring to as the overt topic requirement. As discussed in Section 3.4.2, Diesing 1988 proposes to reduce the overt topic requirement to the ECP. In this subsection, I argue that the exceptional status of subject relative clauses with respect to the overt topic requirement, which Diesing does not address, provides further evidence in favor of an ECP approach to the verb-second constraint.

As we saw in Section 3.2.2, the trace in a relative clause on subject position is the only empty category to be able to occupy topic position in Yiddish. Examples illustrating the contrast between subject traces in relative clauses and other traces are repeated in (105) and (106), respectively.

(105)

Subject trace in relative clause:

oyfn sofke vos t iz geshtanen in dem tsimer
 on-the couch what is stood in the room
 'on the couch that was in the room'

(106)

Non-subject trace in relative clause:

- a. *a mayse vos t hot dertseylt mayner a khaver
 a story what has told my a friend
 Intended meaning:
 'a story that a friend of mine told'

Subject trace of cyclic extraction:

- b. *Ver hot er moyre az t vet kumen?
 who has he fear that will come
 Intended meaning:
 'Who is he afraid will come?'

Non-subject trace of cyclic extraction:

- c. *Vos hot er nit gevolt az t zoln di kinder
 leyenen?
 what has he not wanted that shall the children
 read
 Intended meaning:
 'What didn't he want the children to read?'

For present purposes, the contrast between (105) and (106b) is of particular relevance. As shown in (107), the contrast between the Yiddish sentences is parallel to the contrast between their English counterparts.

(107)

- a. on the couch that t was in the room
 b. *Who is he afraid that t will come?

As is well known, the well-formedness of *that* relative clauses on subject position as in (107a) is puzzling given the ECP. A number of different solutions to this problem have been proposed in the literature (see the references in Engdahl 1985). It is not my purpose here to discuss and evaluate them. Rather, my point is that the unexpected well-formedness of the English relative clauses with respect to the ECP is echoed by the unexpected well-formedness of the Yiddish relative clauses with respect to the overt topic requirement. I take this to be strong evidence that the overt topic requirement is a manifestation of the ECP.

In conclusion, I briefly recapitulate the analysis of verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish proposed above. I follow Diesing 1988 in adopting the Universal Base Hypothesis, according to which Spec(IP) is empty in underlying structure, and in deriving the overt topic requirement in Yiddish from the ECP. Unlike her, however, I do not invoke the A/A-bar parameter to accommodate verb-second word order in subordinate clauses. Rather, I derive their acceptability in Yiddish from the assumption that INFL can assign nominative case rightward. This allows the subject to receive case in its underlying position, and Spec(IP) to function as the topic position.

CHAPTER IV

The history of Yiddish subordinate clauses

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I present and analyze the results of a quantitative investigation of the diachronic syntax of subordinate clauses in Yiddish. We know that Middle High German, from which Yiddish evolved, was underlyingly INFL-final, like modern German, and that it exhibited the root-subordinate asymmetry with respect to the verb-second constraint that is common to most varieties of Germanic. As we saw in Chapter 3, modern Yiddish no longer exhibits this asymmetry. According to one hypothesis, then, the diachronic change that took place involved the analogical extension of the verb-second constraint from root clauses to subordinate clauses. This hypothesis leads one to expect a transition period in the history of Yiddish during which there was variation between INFL-final and verb-second subordinate clauses. According to de Haan and Weerman 1986:83ff., Frisian exhibits precisely this sort of variation, and we saw in Chapter 3.1.3 that Kashmiri does as well. However, the investigation of a pilot sample consisting of the first 228 subordinate clauses from an early West Yiddish text (*Bovo*) suggested that the transition from early to modern Yiddish proceeded in a somewhat less straightforward manner. The phrase structure of most subordinate clauses in the sample is INFL-final, but it also contains an appreciable number of subordinate clauses in which a clause-initial subject is immediately followed by the inflected verb. I will refer to such clauses as Su-INFL clauses. While the word order of Su-INFL clauses is consistent with the verb-second constraint, a verb-second analysis of them does not explain the fact that the sample of *Bovo* contains no subordinate clauses in which the inflected verb immediately follows a clause-initial non-subject--a word order that I will refer to as XP-INFL word order. The categorical absence of such clauses has both synchronic and diachronic implications. On the one hand, it shows that the grammar of early Yiddish

Su-INFL clauses differs from that of their modern Yiddish counterparts. On the other hand, it suggests the hypothesis that the syntactic change in the history of Yiddish from INFL-final to verb-second subordinate clauses proceeded not directly, but via an intermediate stage. During this stage, INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure were in variation in subordinate clauses. However, in both cases, INFL assigned nominative case leftward, as in English, rather than rightward as in the modern language. As a result, the only constituent able to occupy Spec(IP) in INFL-medial clauses at this stage was the subject.

In order to test this hypothesis, I tracked the relative frequencies of INFL-final, Su-INFL and XP-INFL subordinate clauses in samples of Yiddish texts over time. Section 4.2 describes my sampling procedure and the types of derivationally ambiguous clauses that I excluded from consideration. In Section 4.3, I define and illustrate the three types of subordinate clauses that I distinguished: INFL-final, Su-INFL and XP-INFL. In Section 4.4, I examine the syntax of Su-INFL clauses in detail and argue that there is evidence in early Yiddish for a grammatical system like English--that is, one in which INFL, while clause-medial, does not assign nominative case to the right as it can in the modern language.⁶¹ At the heart of the chapter is Section 4.5, in which I present and analyze my findings concerning the change in the syntax of subordinate clauses from early to modern Yiddish. These findings confirm the hypothesis that the transition from INFL-final to verb-second subordinate clauses proceeded via an intermediate stage of variation between INFL-final and Su-INFL subordinate clauses. In Section 4.6, I compare the syntactic variation that I find in early Yiddish with comparable instances of syntactic variation in the Scandinavian languages. Section 4.7 discusses possible sources for INFL-medial phrase structure and XP-INFL word order, both of which represent syntactic innovations with respect to the INFL-final phrase structure of medieval German. Finally, Section 4.8 briefly summarizes my findings.

⁶¹I am not claiming that the grammatical subsystems of early Yiddish and English are identical. Such a claim would be incorrect since early Yiddish, unlike English, has person and number agreement on the inflected verb (Holmberg and Platzack 1988, Platzack and Holmberg 1989). As a result, the verb moves into INFL in INFL-medial clauses in Yiddish, while it remains within the VP in English.

4.2. Sampling procedure

My sampling procedure was simple. For each of the sources at my disposal, I extracted the first 100 subordinate clauses that were derivationally unambiguous as defined in Section 4.2.2, or as many as the source contained. Two sources (*Anshel, Sam hayyim*) proved to be extremely difficult to decipher, and I broke off extracting tokens before reaching the end of the text or the one-hundredth token because the expected increase in statistical confidence to be gained from proceeding did not seem to justify the effort involved.

4.2.1. Definition of subordinate clause

I analyzed only clauses that were introduced by an overt complementizer or *wh*-word and that were clearly subordinate from the point of view of both syntax and semantics. In particular, I excluded the following clause types from consideration:

1. Governed root clauses without an overt complementizer.
2. Conjoined subordinate clauses (except for the first conjunct), since they tend to behave syntactically like root clauses.^{62,63} Note the topicalized constituent in (1a) and the contrast between the first and second clauses in (1b) with respect to the relative position of the modal and negation.

⁶²The anacoluthic behavior of non-first conjoined subordinate clauses has been noted in other contexts as well. For instance, the occurrence of resumptive pronouns in English is favored in non-first conjoined relative clauses (Anthony Kroch, pers. comm.). The same seems to be true of early Yiddish, which in contrast to modern Yiddish did not freely permit resumptive pronouns. Nevertheless, we find tokens as in (i). The resumptive pronoun is underlined.

i. *vas zi hvek verfn un' vein es nit han*
(Preface to Shir ha-shirim, 2)
what they away throw and want it not have
'what they throw away and don't want to have'

Note the position of the inflected verb in the second conjunct. Cf. also Reis 1985:288f. for some interesting German cases.

⁶³Negative concord as in (1b) is variable in early Yiddish and has become categorical in the modern language.

(1)

- a. zi zakh vi er zs azu val tsu pferd un'
mit zeyn spurn tet ers hoyan
(Bovo, 100.1-100.2)
she saw how he sat so well to horse and
with his spurs did he-it hit
'She saw how well he rode his horse and [how]
with his spurs he urged it on.'
- b. dz di zun nit sheynn kant nakh keyn likht
kunt nit brenn (Megilat Ester, 4)
that the sun not shine could nor no light
could not burn
'that the sun could not shine nor any light burn'

3. Asyndetic relative clauses, as in (2) (cf. Ebert 1986:157 for the corresponding phenomenon in German). I have underlined the relative clauses.

(2)

- a. da kam dar tsu reytn oyz vremdn landn
eynr zas vun armniah bey hundrt meyln
(Bovo, 114.5-114.6)
then came there to ride from foreign lands
one sat from Armonia with hundred miles
'Then there came riding from foreign lands one who
lived a hundred miles away from Armonia.'
- b. bin gleykh az eyn shaf veys zikh nit tsu vendn
(Kine, 30.1)
am like as a sheep knows REFL not to turn
'I am like a sheep that doesn't know where to turn.'

4. Clauses that are ambiguous between a root clause and a relative clause reading due to the use of the demonstrative pronoun as a relative marker, as in (3) (cf. Ebert 1986:158 for the corresponding phenomenon in German). The ambiguous clauses are underlined.

(3)

- a. nun ht er eyn burg gruvn den bat er
ds er im zult hibn den knabn
(Bovo, 8.3-8.4)
now had he a count whom/him asked he
that he him-DAT should keep the boy
'Now he had a count whom he asked to take care
of the boy for him.'

- b. dz akh varn etlikhi bizi yudn di valtn
nit oys gin (Megilat Ester, 9)
 that also were some bad Jews who/they wanted
 not out go
 'that there were also some bad Jews who didn't
 want to leave'

5. Clauses introduced by *ven*, which is either a coordinating conjunction meaning 'for' or a subordinating conjunction meaning 'if, when,' unless a root clause reading was clearly impossible.

4.2.2. Derivational ambiguity

In addition, I excluded subordinate clauses that were derivationally ambiguous in the following ways:

1. The inflected verb is simultaneously the second and the last constituent, as in (4).

(4)

- oyb ir man lebt (Court testimony, 261)
 whether her man lives
 'whether her husband is alive'

2. The position of the inflected verb as the second constituent could be the result of verb raising, which permutes verbs and their infinitival or participial complements in many varieties of West Germanic (the verb raising construction is discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.1).

(5)

- daz eyn yungr man fun kraka iz gstarbn
 (Court testimony, 124)
 that a young man of Cracow is died
 'that a young man from Cracow died'

3. The presence of a gap obscures the structural significance of the position of the inflected verb. For instance, the subordinate clause in (6) is ambiguous between the two

derived structures schematically illustrated in (7).⁶⁴

(6)

ver das kul hat oyf gibrakht
 (Court testimony, 89)
 who the voice has up brought
 'who brought up the rumor'

(7)

- a. ver_i t_i das kul t_j hat [oyf gibrakht]_j,
 (INFL-final and verb raising)
- b. ver_i [das kul]_j hat t_i oyf gibrakht t_j,
 (INFL-medial and verb-second)

In a parallel way, the subordinate clause in (8), in which the subject has been postponed, is ambiguous between the structures in (9).

(8)

dz fer unz iz kumn r' nkhmih bn raubn
 (Court testimony, 74)
 that before us is come R. Nekhamiah ben Reuben
 'that Rabbi Nekhamiah ben Reuben has come before us'

(9)

- a. dz t_i fer unz t_j iz kumn_j [r' nkhmih bn raubn]_i,
 (INFL-final, verb raising and subject postposing)
- b. dz [fer unz]_i iz t_j kumn t_i [r' nkhmih bn raubn]_j,
 (INFL-medial, verb-second and subject postposing)

Any subordinate clause that was not excluded on the basis of the criteria above counted towards my quota of a hundred tokens per source.

⁶⁴In INFL-medial clauses in early Yiddish, the headedness of VP is variable. For expository convenience, I give only the representation with a head-initial VP.

4.3. INFL-final, Su-INFL and XP-INFL subordinate clauses

As I noted above, in order to determine whether the transition from INFL-final to verb-second subordinate clauses proceeded via an intermediate stage, I distinguished three types of subordinate clauses: INFL-final, Su-INFL and XP-INFL. In what follows, I define and illustrate each of these in turn.

4.3.1. INFL-final

INFL-final subordinate clauses are ones in which more than one constituent precedes the inflected verb. In the simplest case, the surface position of the inflected verb directly reflects its underlying clause-final position, as shown in (10). The inflected verb is underlined.

- (10)
- a. **ven der vatr** **nurt doyts** **leyan kan** (Anshel, 11)
if the father only German read can
'provided that the father can read German'
 - b. **ds zi** **droyf** **givarnt vern** (Bovo, 39.6)
that they thereon warned were
'that they might be warned about it'

The inflected verb in an INFL-final clause may also appear between second and final position as a result of various types of rightward movement, including PP extraposition, subject postposing and (rarely) heavy NP shift. This is illustrated in (11). I have underlined the inflected verb and enclosed the constituents that have undergone movement in brackets.

- (11)
- a. **dz ikh reyn verde** [fun der ashin]
(Purim-shpil, 1004)
that I clean become of the ash
'that I may become clean of the ash'
 - b. **dz es nit esin** [di rabin] (Purim-shpil, 1374)
that it not eat the ravens
'lest the ravens eat it'

- c. **ven er nit veys** [eyn guti veyd] (Sam hayyim, 41)
 if he not knows a good pasture
 'if he does not know a good pasture'

Moreover, early Yiddish exhibits verb raising, a common and much-studied phenomenon in the syntax of the West Germanic languages (den Besten and Edmondson 1983, Bresnan et al. 1982, Evers 1975, Evers 1981, Haegeman 1988, Haegeman and van Riemsdijk 1986, Hoeksema 1980, Hoeksema 1986, Kroch and Santorini 1987, Loetscher 1978, Reuland 1980, Zaenen 1979). Briefly, verb raising permutes the expected head-final order of auxiliary verbs and their infinitival or participial complements. This is illustrated in (12); the inflected verb is underlined, and the raised verbs are in brackets.⁶⁵

(12)

- a. **di ir der hertsug ht** [lusn [boyan]]
 (Bovo, 14.2)
 that her-DAT the duke has let build
 'that the duke had built for her'
- b. **az men drey ihudim oys irr herbrg hat** [ginumn]
 (Court testimony, 104)
 that one three Jews from their inn has taken
 'that they took three Jews from their inn'
- c. **vaz unzrim mlkh shbsi fr nism
zeyn [gishehn]** (Messiah, 59.2)
 what our-DAT king Sabbathai for miracles-NOM
 are happened
 'what kind of miracles happened to our king
 Sabbathai'

As in other varieties of West Germanic, verb raising in early Yiddish is not restricted to bare infinitives or participles, but may include their syntactic dependents as well. Some examples of such so-called verb projection raising are given in (13); again, I have underlined the inflected verb and enclosed the raised constituents in brackets.

⁶⁵The token in (12c) is an instance of the *was fuer*-split construction described for German and Dutch in den Besten 1985, which is grammatical in modern Yiddish as well.

(13)

- a. ds zi zikh mugn [dinn dr meyan]
(Bovo, P.9)
that they REFL may therein take-pleasure
'that they may take pleasure in it'
- b. za ikh den livn het [vas fun ir shpeyz ginumn] (Preface to Shir ha-shirim, 2)
so I the-DAT lions had what of their food taken
'as if I had taken some of the lions' food'
- c. dz zikh eyn yedr zal [fr mir neygn un' bukin] (Purim-shpil, 268)
that REFL an everyone shall before me bow and bend
'that everyone shall bow and scrape before me'
- d. vas zi di gntsi vakh tunin [di kristn ab loygnn un' ab shverin] (Purim-shpil, 406)
what they the whole week do the Christians off lie and off swear
'what they spend the whole week getting from Christians by lying and swearing false oaths'
- e. dz man den king lezt [lng droysn stan]
(Purim-shpil, 24)
that one the king lets long outside stand
'that the king is left to stand outside for a long time'

4.3.2. Su-INFL

Su-INFL clauses are ones in which the first constituent following COMP is the subject of the clause, and the second constituent is the inflected verb. I classified INFL-medial clauses containing subject gaps as Su-INFL since the position of the gap is unambiguous.

The great majority of Su-INFL clauses are consistent with three distinct syntactic analyses. The subordinate clause in (14) is a case in point.

(14)

dz zi verdn bshirmt fun irh bitrh peyn
 (Purim-shpil, 876)

that they are protected from their bitter pain
 'that they are protected from their bitter pain'

First, the word order in (14) might be derived from an INFL-final base by verb raising and PP extraposition, both of which I have just shown to be independently motivated in early Yiddish. This derivation is indicated schematically in (15).

(15)

dz zi t_i t_j verdn bshirmt_j [fun irh bitrh peyn]_i

Second, (14) might be derived from an INFL-medial phrase structure in which INFL assigns case to the left, forcing the subject to move from its underlying VP-internal position to Spec(IP). Depending on the headedness of VP, which is variable in early Yiddish, the position of the PP either directly reflects underlying structure or results from PP extraposition. The resulting alternative structures are shown schematically in (16a) and (16b), respectively.

(16)

a. dz zi_i verdn t_i bshirmt fun irh bitrh peyn

b. dz zi_i verdn t_i t_j bshirmt [fun irh bitrh peyn]_j

Finally, as in modern Yiddish, the subject in (14) might move to Spec(IP) not in order to receive case, but in order to satisfy the overt topic requirement. The resulting derived phrase structures would be identical to those in (16), but INFL might assign nominative case to the right. For expository convenience, I will refer to these three analyses of (14) in what follows as INFL-final, INFL-medial and verb-second, respectively.

4.3.3. XP-INFL

XP-INFL subordinate clauses are ones in which the first constituent following COMP is a non-subject topic, which in turn is immediately followed by the inflected verb. Some examples are given in (17). The topics are underlined.⁶⁶

⁶⁶Though the token in (17c) is from court testimony from Lvov in the Ukraine, the construction of unaccusative verbs like 'escape' with the passive auxiliary is presumably due to the contact of Yiddish with Lithuanian, a language that permits passives of unaccusative verbs (Baker 1987:329). This usage has remained characteristic of speakers of the Lithuanian dialect of modern Yiddish (Ellen Prince, pers. comm.).

(17)

- a. di al ir tag habi<n> zikh nit vi
 gitan tsu lernn khkhmut fun dr turh
 (Preface to Sefer ha-Magid, 4a)
 who all their day have REFL not than
 done to learn wisdom-PL from the Torah
 'who all the days of their life have done
 nothing but learn wisdom from the Torah'
- b. ven da var eyn tsigil arbr gifalin
 (Magen Abraham, 6)
 if there was a brick over fallen
 'if a brick had fallen over'
- c. das in zeyn her tsihn iz eyn goyh
 tsu ihm gikumin (Court testimony, 174)
 that in his here pulling is a Gentile-FEM
 to him come
 'that in his wanderings a non-Jewish woman
 came up to him'

At the outset of the investigation I was uncertain whether the clause-initial expletive *es* in clauses like (18) was the topic *es* required by the verb-second constraint or whether expletive *es* was able to function as a structural subject in early Yiddish, like *there* in English or *det* in the mainland Scandinavian languages. The latter view is defended for modern Yiddish by Travis 1984.

(18)

- a. abr ven es mekht eyn muk dreyn flin
 (Purim-shpil, 389)
 but if it might a mosquito into-it fall
 'but if a mosquito happens to fall in'
- b. ub es geyt enk keyn ihudi ab
 (Court testimony, 157)
 whether it goes you-DAT no Jew off
 'whether you aren't missing a Jew'
- c. ver es iz antlafin gvarn (Court testimony, 207)
 who it is escaped become
 'whoever escaped'
- d. dz es zal zikh ibr zi dr brmn hs"i
 (Vilna, 213)
 that it shall REFL over them take-pity God
 'that God shall take pity on them'

In order to avoid prejudging the issue, I distinguished expletive *es* as in (18) from unambiguous topics as in (17).

It is worth noting in this connection that the proper analysis of clause-initial expletive *es* is a matter of debate not only among contemporary syntacticians, but among traditional grammarians of Yiddish as well. The preferred view is that it is an anticipatory subject (Weinreich 1981:330, para. 75), "The pronoun *es* may take the place of the subject at the beginning of the sentence, while the logical subject is placed after the verb." Zaretski 1929:235f., para. 730, on the other hand, argues that the presence of *es* is required only by the verb-second constraint. The relevant passage is worth quoting both for its syntactic insight and for its characteristically forceful style (the translation is mine):

"The prefix <'prefiks' in the original--BES> *es* is sometimes called 'fictive subject.' This analysis fails. It ought to mean that if the subject does not occur at the beginning of the clause, the prefix *es* occurs as a substitute for it. But then why doesn't it occur when the subject is 'I,' 'you,' 'we' or 'you (pl.)'? Or when the subject is 'he,' 'she' or 'they'? ... What this means is that the term 'fictive subject' explains nothing. It is more correct to consider *es* as a 'fictive constituent,' whose function it is to keep the inflected verb from occupying first position."

4.3.4. Doubtful cases

4.3.4.1. INFL-final or INFL-medial?

In a handful of subordinate clauses, more than one constituent precedes the inflected verb, as in INFL-final subordinate clauses, but there is evidence that the inflected verb has moved leftward to a clause-medial INFL position. This evidence, which I discuss in detail in Section 4.4.1.1, comes from the fact that an inflected main verb precedes certain elements (such as particles in a particle-verb combination) which do not undergo rightward movement. Some examples of such clauses are given in (19). The inflected verb is underlined, and the diagnostic constituent for verb movement is enclosed in brackets.

(19)

- a. vi zikh di yudins varn [tubl]
in vasir fun irn ndh (Megilat Ester, 6)
how REFL the Jews were ritually-immersed
in water from their impurity
'how the Jews cleansed themselves of their
impurity by ritual immersion in water'
- b. ven eynr fun dem andrn iz [mkbl] eyn hlkhh
(Sam Hayyim, Assaf 226)
if one of the other is accept a halakah
(legal part of the Talmud)
'if one accepts a halakah from the other'
- c. dz zikh der shpitsig berg ris [oyz]
fun zeynm urt (Shir ha-shirim, 10)
that REFL the pointy mountain tore out
of his place
'that the pointy mountain dislodged itself'

According to a liberal count, my early Yiddish data contain 15 such tokens, out of a total of 2247 relevant subordinate clauses (0.7%). Since the relative frequency of these tokens is in the same range as the relative frequencies attested for exceptions to well-established linguistic generalizations in Yiddish (cf. fns. 67 and 69) as well as for phenomena such as resumptive pronouns in non-island environments in English (Anthony Kroch, pers. comm.), I concluded that the tokens in (19) and others like them are performance errors, and I excluded them from further consideration.

4.3.4.2. Su-INFL or XP-INFL?

The question arises whether relative clauses or indirect questions of the type illustrated in (20) should be classified as Su-INFL or as XP-INFL clauses.

(20)

- a. dburh di nbiah di da rikhtt
kl isral (Megilat Ester, 3)
Deborah the prophet-fem who there judges
all Israel
'the prophet Deborah who judges all of the Jews'

- b. der da hat flegin tsu handlin mit glaz
 (Court testimony, 202)
 who there has be-wont to do-business with glass
 'who used to do business in glass'
- c. ver da vr brent di bildr (Magen Abraham, 4)
 who there burns the pictures
 'whoever burns the pictures'

The alternative derived structures for (20a) are shown schematically in (21a) and (21b).

(21)

- a. [C_Pdi_i [C_{da}] [I_Pt_i rikhtt kl isral]] (Su-INFL)
 b. [C_Pdi_i [C_e] [I_Pda rikhtt t_i kl isral]] (XP-INFL)

In modern Yiddish, clause-initial *do*, which must be analyzed as in (21b), is very rare in relative clauses and indirect questions. Sequences consisting of a relative or interrogative pronoun immediately followed by *do* fail to occur in my samples of Yiddish texts after 1800 (N = 824 subordinate clauses). I have found one example in the 159 pages of *Royte Pomerantsen* that do not form part of my sample of that text (cf. Chapter 3, example (31b)). By contrast, there are 142 such sequences in my Yiddish data prior to 1800, out of a total of 2247 relevant subordinate clauses (6%). These data suggest that *da* in early Yiddish was a complementizer, as in (21a). Hence, I classified clauses like those in (20) as instances of Su-INFL word order.

The analysis of *da* as a complementizer in early Yiddish is consistent with what we know of the history of other varieties of Germanic. According to Lockwood 1968:251, the occurrence of *da* together with a relative pronoun in German was "very common and remained in frequent use until modern times," and various modern dialects still permit sequences of the relative pronoun followed by the complementizers *wo* 'where' (Franconian and Bavarian) or *was* 'what' (Austrian). As is well known, sequences of relative pronouns and complementizers are also attested in Dutch and Middle English (Radford 1988:486 and references therein).

4.4. The grammar of Su-INFL clauses

As I noted in Section 4.3.2, most Su-INFL subordinate clauses in early Yiddish are consistent in principle with three distinct analyses: INFL-final, INFL-medial and verb-second. In this section, I will argue that early Yiddish in fact allows an analysis of such clauses that is neither INFL-final nor verb-second. First, I demonstrate on the basis of structural evidence that not all Su-INFL clauses can be derived from an INFL-final base, and I present quantitative evidence to support this conclusion. I then show that there are Su-INFL subordinate clauses in early Yiddish that cannot be analyzed as verb-second because they fail to satisfy the overt topic requirement.

4.4.1. INFL-medial vs. INFL-final phrase structure

4.4.1.1. Structural evidence

In modern Yiddish (as in German and Dutch), certain constituents invariably precede uninflected verb forms, but are stranded after an inflected main verb. Such stranding provides evidence that the inflected verb has moved from its underlying position within VP to a clause-medial INFL position (Travis 1984, den Besten and Moed-van Walraven 1986; cf. Koster 1975 for Dutch). In this subsection, I show that four arguments that have been proposed to this effect for modern Yiddish extend to early Yiddish as well.

Particles: As the examples in (22) show, the particle in a particle-verb combination immediately precedes an infinitive or a participle with which it is in construction. In this and following examples, I have underlined the verb and enclosed the particle in brackets.

(22)

- a. ven eynr fun uns tuht irn veyn [an] xirn
(Purim-shpil, 383)
if one of us does their wine on touch
'if one of us touches their wine'
- b. biz di nshmh iz im [oys] gigngin
(Court testimony, 189)
until the soul is him out gone
'until his soul departed from him'

- c. da zi gut ... hat [lib] giht min ven
 di andrn umut (Preface to Shir ha-shirim, 5)
 since them God has dear had more than
 the other peoples
 'since God loved them more than the other nations'

Particles in Yiddish, as in German and Dutch, do not undergo movement.⁶⁷ This fact allows us to use the position of particles as a diagnostic for the underlying position of verbs. Clauses in which a particle is stranded after the inflected verb, as in (23), then provide evidence that the inflected verb has moved from the position immediately following the particle to a clause-medial INFL position.

(23)

- a. dz der mensh git erst [oyf] in di hikh
 (Preface to Shir ha-shirim, 6)
 that the human goes first up in the height
 'that people first grow in height'
- b. ven mn hibt shme isral [an]
 (Ashkenaz un polak, 141)
 when one lifts Shma Israel on
 'when one begins to recite the Shma Israel
 (the Jewish credo)'
- c. di da habin [lib] iri leybr
 (Ellush, n.p.)
 who there have dear their bodies
 'who love their bodies'

Loshn koydesh compounds: So-called *loshn koydesh* compounds behave like particle-verb combinations. The compounds in question consist of a *loshn koydesh*

⁶⁷I have found two exceptions to this generalization in my early Yiddish data, out of a total of 212 potential instances (0.9%).

- i. vi zi irn zun valt rikhtn [hin] (Bovo, 62.5)
 how she her son wanted-to adjust forth
 'how she wanted to execute her son'
- ii. dz di umut zalm [oys] zi nit lakhn (Vilna, 218)
 that the people shall out them not laugh
 'that people shall not laugh at them'

element (formally usually a participle) combined with the verb 'be' or 'become'.⁶⁸ Like the particle in a particle-verb combination, the *loshn koydesh* element in a *loshn koydesh* compound immediately precedes an uninflected verb form, as shown in (24). The verb is underlined, and the *loshn koydesh* element is enclosed in brackets.

(24)

- a. dz ikh hb den rekhtn sud nit [mglh]
givezin (Court testimony, 232)
 that I have the right secret not disclose
 been
 'that I didn't disclose the right secret'
- b. vi ikh mikh hab [nuhg] gvezn in meynh tagin
 (Moses, 51)
 how I REFL have wont been in my days
 'how I conducted myself in my day'
- c. i ikh mikh hb [tubl] givezin
 (Court testimony, 227)
 before I REFL have ritually-immerse been
 'before I ritually immersed myself'

Therefore, when a *loshn koydesh* element is stranded following an inflected verb, as in (25), we again have evidence for verb movement to a clause-medial INFL position.

(25)

- a. vi der ben adam iz zikh [nuhg]
 mit dem menshn (Ellush, n.p.)
 how the son of-man is REFL wont
 with the human
 'how the son of man conducts himself with people'
- b. gleykh az mn iz [mkrb] eyn krbn trh
 oyf dr merkh (Vilna, 218)
 same as one is befriend a martyr Torah
 on the [market?]
 'as if one befriends a [victim of anti-Semitic
 persecution?] on the [market?]

Pronouns: Personal pronouns can be stranded as well. Like particles, unstressed

⁶⁸The resulting collocation has quasi-lexical properties; for instance, while the periphrastic past tense of 'be' and 'become' is formed with the auxiliary 'be,' the periphrastic past tense of transitive *loshn koydesh* compounds is formed with 'have' (Birnbaum 1979:87). (Intransitive *loshn koydesh* compounds are formed with the auxiliary 'be'.)

pronouns precede rather than follow uninflected verb forms.⁶⁹ The word order in clauses like (26) must therefore be the result of verb movement to INFL. The inflected verb is underlined and the pronoun is enclosed in brackets.

(26)

- a. dz iz [mir] ydue (Court testimony, 197)
that is me known
'that it is known to me'
- b. vi es izt [mir] zu klt (Purim-shpil, 424)
how it is me so cold
'how I feel so cold'

The token in (26a) is especially interesting since it shows that verb movement to INFL is independent of the verb-second constraint; I discuss such clauses in more detail directly.

Sentence negation: In INFL-final clauses, sentence negation precedes the inflected verb, as shown in (27). I have underlined the inflected verb and enclosed the negative element in brackets.

⁶⁹I have found a single exception to this generalization in my early Yiddish data, out of 95 potential instances (1%). The pronoun occurs after an untensed verb form.

- i. az zi ha<t> gfirt [zi] vau di rtskhnim
zenn givezn (Kine, 43.2)
that she has led her where the murderers
were been
'that she led her to where the murderers were'

In modern Yiddish as well, rare exceptions occur after infinitives.

- ii. nor di ihudim fun der stot habin zikh an
gihoybin tsu verin akegin di pukhzim
un avek tsu yogin [zey] (Ukraine 2, 37)
but the Jews of the town have REFL on
lifted to defend against the [enemy?]
and away to drive them
'but the Jews of the town started to defend themselves
against the [enemy?] and to drive them away'

I have come across no instance of pronoun movement to a position following an underlyingly clause-final inflected verb.

(27)

- a. dz mir yusf di h' zhubim
 [nit] gebn vil (Court testimony, 58)
 that me-DAT Joseph the five guilders
 not give wants
 'that Joseph doesn't want to give me the
 five guilders'
- b. der veyl dz der mensh yu [nit] kan zeyn
 an gesn (Lev tov, 51)
 since that the human yes not can be
 without eaten
 'since people just cannot exist without eating'
- c. ver da [nit] vil lernn (Megilat Ester, 2)
 who there not wants learn
 'whoever doesn't want to learn'

The occurrence of sentence negation following an inflected verb, as in (28), therefore again implies that the verb has moved to a clause-medial INFL position.⁷⁰ As above, the inflected verb is underlined, and the negative element is enclosed in brackets.

(28)

- a. dz der mensh bidarf [nit] tsu zukhn eyn mgid
 (Preface to Sefer ha-magid, 4b)
 that the human needs not to seek a preacher
 'that people don't need to look for a preacher'
- b. ven shun mir kanin [nit] vern ginezin
 (Vilna, 218)
 if even we can not become recovered
 'if we can't recover'
- c. az unzre kindr zaln [nit] vern fun unz
 fryagt (Sarah bas Tovim, 85)
 that our children shall not become from us
 driven-away
 'that our children shall not be driven away from us'
- d. dz keynr zul zikh [nit] dr vegn (Ellush, n.p.)
 that no-one shall REFL not dare
 'that no-one shall dare'

⁷⁰In (28b), the unaccusative verb 'recover' is constructed with the passive auxiliary; cf. fn. 66. Note also the occurrence of negative concord in (28d); cf. fn. 63.

- e. az di nshmh zal [nit] oys gin (Ellush, n.p.)
 that the soul shall not out go
 'that the soul shall not depart'

It might be objected here that certain varieties of West Germanic such as West Flemish or Swiss German allow negation to follow the inflected verb in spite of being underlyingly INFL-final. For instance, in West Flemish, we observe word order alternations as in (29) (Haegeman and van Riemsdijk 1986:443--their (55), my glosses). I have underlined the inflected verb and enclosed the negative element *nie* 'not' in brackets.

(29)

- a. da Jan [nie] hee willen weggoan
 that Jan not has want away-go
 'that Jan didn't want to go away'
- b. da Jan hee willen [nie] weggoan
 that Jan has want not away-go
 'that Jan wanted not to go away'

In (29a), the position of negation directly reflects its underlying position. In (29b), on the other hand, the position of negation is the result of raising the verb projection *nie weggoan*. The derived structures in question are shown schematically in (30a) and (30b), respectively.

(30)

- a. da Jan nie t_i t_j hee [willen]_j [weggoan]_i
- b. da Jan t_i t_j hee [willen]_j [nie weggoan]_i

Since verb (projection) raising is available in early Yiddish, as we saw in Section 4.3.1, the clauses in (28) appear to be consistent with an INFL-final analysis analogous to that in (30b). Such an analysis, however, cannot be maintained for the following reason. It is a striking and well-established fact that when negation is raised together with an infinitive, as in (30b), it can no longer take scope over the entire clause. Rather, the scope of negation is restricted to the raised infinitive, as reflected in my translation of (29b) (Loetscher 1978, Haegeman and van Riemsdijk 1986, Kroch and Santorini

1987).⁷¹ Since the only reading that is consistent with the contexts of the examples in (28) is the one where negation takes scope over the entire clause, a verb projection raising analysis of these clauses is ruled out, forcing us to treat them as underlyingly INFL-medial.

4.4.1.2. Quantitative evidence

In the preceding section, I showed that not all Su-INFL clauses in early Yiddish can be derived from an INFL-final base. Out of a total of 719 Su-INFL clauses in my data, however, only 73 (10%) must be derived from an INFL-medial base by the criteria discussed above. The remaining 646 Su-INFL clauses might therefore still all be derived from an INFL-final base by rightward movement. In what follows, I will present two arguments against this view which are based on quantitative evidence.

The first argument against analyzing all ambiguous Su-INFL clauses as underlyingly INFL-final is based on comparing the diachronic development of two comparable subsets of Su-INFL and INFL-final subordinate clauses: (i) ambiguous Su-INFL clauses that are potential instances of verb projection raising (Su INFL ... V) and (ii) unambiguous instances of verb projection raising (Su ... INFL ... V). If the

⁷¹ My early Yiddish data contain one counterexample, given in (i).

i. dz mn mikh fr eyn krbn vil [nit] bgerin
(Vilna, 219)
that one me for a martyr wants not desire
'that they will not want me as a martyr'

In (i), only the reading where *nit* takes wide scope with respect to the modal is consistent with the context. My feeling is that the unexpected availability of the wide scope reading has to do with the interpretation of the inflected verb *vil* as an aspectual auxiliary rather than as a full-fledged modal. As (ii) shows, verb projection raising does not rule out a wide scope reading of negation with respect to aspectual auxiliaries.

ii. vi er deyn falk isral hat [nit] vein lazn oy<s>
zeyn lnd gen (Moses, 186)
how he your people Israel has not want let out-of
his land go
'how he didn't want to let your people, the Israelites,
leave his country'

Presumably, this difference between aspectual auxiliaries and modals is related to differences concerning their thematic grids. It would be interesting to know the status of the West Flemish and Swiss German equivalents of (ii), but I have not seen them discussed in the literature.

ambiguous Su-INFL clauses were all or even mostly underlyingly INFL-final, one would expect their relative frequency with respect to the total of putatively INFL-final subordinate clauses (that is, the sum of INFL-final and ambiguous Su-INFL clauses) to develop in a parallel way to their unambiguously INFL-final counterparts. However, as Table 4-1 shows, the relative frequency of the ambiguous clauses rises monotonically, while the relative frequency of unambiguous instances of verb projection raising remains low and constant over time.

Table 4-1

Diachronic development of ambiguous vs. unambiguous instances of verb projection raising (VPR)

	Ambiguous VPR	Unambiguous VPR	Total taken as INFL-final
1400-1489	4 (4%)	4 (4%)	92
1490-1539	8 (6%)	4 (3%)	136
1540-1589	47 (14%)	17 (5%)	338
1590-1639	71 (18%)	16 (4%)	400
1640-1689	83 (23%)	14 (4%)	355
1690-1739	43 (32%)	6 (4%)	134
1740-1789	26 (37%)	3 (4%)	71
TOTAL	282 (18%)	64 (4%)	1526

Taking the subset of ambiguous Su-INFL clauses to be representative of ambiguous Su-INFL clauses in their entirety, I conclude from the results in Table 4-1 that not all ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are underlyingly INFL-final.⁷²

⁷²In principle, analogous arguments could be constructed on the basis of other rightward movement phenomena, such as PP extraposition or heavy NP shift. However, presumably due to the small number of relevant tokens in my data, the diachronic development of these processes is very irregular, and it is not possible to construct convincing arguments based on them.

My second argument against analyzing all Su-INFL clauses as underlyingly INFL-final is based on a comparison of the relative frequency of preverbal vs. postverbal NP's in INFL-final and Su-INFL subordinate clauses. My reasoning is as follows. In clauses with INFL-medial phrase structure, the position of an NP that follows its verb may directly reflect an underlyingly head-initial VP. In INFL-final clauses, on the other hand, an NP that follows its verb must have undergone rightward movement.⁷³ For simplicity's sake, I analyzed only clauses containing exactly one full NP. I took only full NP's into consideration since unstressed pronouns with very rare exceptions do not appear postverbally (cf. Section 4.4.1.1). In Table 4-2, I compare the frequency of preverbal and postverbal full NP's in unambiguously INFL-final subordinate clauses on the one hand and in Su-INFL subordinate clauses that are unambiguously INFL-medial on the other. This comparison reveals that rightward movement of NP's in INFL-final clauses is relatively infrequent.

Table 4-2

**Position of full NP's with respect to
main verbs in early Yiddish**

	NP-V	V-NP	Total
INFL-final	203 (89%)	24 (11%)	227
INFL-medial	4 (27%)	11 (73%)	15
Total	207 (86%)	35 (14%)	242

Let us now assume that all 646 derivationally ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are INFL-final in underlying structure. On the basis of the results in Table 4-2, we would expect postverbal NP's to be relatively infrequent in such clauses as well. Table 4-3 shows the observed and expected frequencies of preverbal and postverbal NP's given our

⁷³V-XP-INFL sequences do not normally occur in natural language (cf. the discussion of example (34) in Section 4.5.2.2).

assumption.⁷⁴

Table 4-3

Observed and expected frequency of preverbal
and postverbal NP's assuming that ambiguous
Su-INFL clauses are INFL-final

	NP-V	V-NP	Total
INFL-final			
Observed	203	24	227
(Expected)	(148)	(79)	
Ambiguous Su-INFL			
Observed	100	137	237
(Expected)	(155)	(82)	
Total	303	161	464

Clearly, there is a considerable discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies in Table 4-3--a discrepancy which must be due to chance if ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are all INFL-final in underlying structure. However, the likelihood of the observed frequency distribution in Table 4-3 being due to chance is exceedingly small ($\chi^2 = 114.161$, $p << 0.001$). I conclude from this that ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are not all INFL-final in early Yiddish.

Let us now proceed to test the converse assumption that ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are all INFL-medial. Table 4-4 shows the observed and expected frequency of preverbal and postverbal NP's given this alternative assumption.

⁷⁴Each cell in a two-dimensional frequency matrix such as that in Table 4-3 has two marginals associated with it. The expected frequency for a cell is found by reasoning that the ratio of the expected frequency of a cell with respect to one of its marginals should be the same as the ratio of the other marginal with respect to the sum of all the tokens.

Table 4-4

Observed and expected frequency of preverbal
and postverbal NP's under the assumption
that ambiguous Su-INFL clauses are INFL-medial

	NP-V	V-NP	Total
INFL-medial			
Observed (Expected)	4 (6)	11 (9)	15
Ambiguous Su-INFL			
Observed (Expected)	100 (98)	137 (139)	237
Total	104	148	252

The fit between observed and expected frequencies in Table 4-4 is much closer than in Table 4-3, and the likelihood of the discrepancy between the observed and the expected distribution being due to chance is fairly high ($\chi^2 = 1.403$, $0.30 > p > 0.20$). I conclude from the results in Table 4-4 that most, though perhaps not all, Su-INFL clauses in early Yiddish are INFL-medial in underlying structure.

4.4.2. Su-INFL clauses and the verb-second constraint

In what follows, I show that not all Su-INFL subordinate clauses in early Yiddish are consistent with the verb-second constraint. As we saw in Chapter 3.2.2, the clause-initial position in a modern Yiddish subordinate clause must be overt. In early Yiddish, on the other hand, this position can be filled by an empty category in clauses that contain a subject gap. We have already seen an example containing a clause-initial empty expletive in (26a), which I repeat here as (31).

- (31)
- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|-------|------|
| dz | <u>e</u> | <u>iz</u> | mir | ydue |
| (Court testimony, 197) | | | | |
| that | is | me-DAT | known | |
| 'that it is known to me' | | | | |

Empty expletives also occur in instances of subject postposing, as shown in (32). The postposed subject is enclosed in brackets.

(32)

- a. vi e zeynn da avek kunn [eyn par yungi leyt] (Court testimony, 131)
how are there away come a pair young people
'how a couple of young people disappeared there'
- b. dz e zoyn zikh dran kern [manin un' veybr oykh ali leytn] (Duties, n.p.)
that shall REFL thereon turn men and women also all people
'that men and women, also all people, shall take heed of this'

Finally, the clause-initial empty category can arise as a result of *wh*-movement, as shown in (33).^{75,76}

(33)

- a. ir zult shoyan vs unglidk e kumt
vun den buzn veybn (Bovo, 32.2)
you shall see what misfortune comes from the wicked women
'you shall see what misfortune comes about through women's wickedness'
- b. vil zehn ... velkhr ihudi e vil mir
nitn vr zi tsu msptn (Court testimony, 74)
want-to see which Jew will me-DAT force for them to [exert-influence?]
'[I] want to see which Jew will force me to [exert influence?] on their behalf'

⁷⁵Headed relative clauses on subject position cannot be used as evidence in this connection, since the subject trace in such clauses counts for first position throughout the history of Yiddish (cf. Chapter 3.2.2.3).

⁷⁶The matrix clause in (33b) exhibits the subject deletion process discussed in Chapter 3.2.2.3. Note also the irregular singular agreement in the headed relative clause in (33c); cf. Chapter 2, example (3b). These phenomena are clear indications of the vernacular character of the court testimony sources.

- c. ver e veyz di simnim vas givezin iz an di
 kleydr da zal zgin (Court testimony, 171)
 who knows the signs that been is on the
 clothes there shall say
 'whoever knows the signs that were on the clothes,
 he shall say'
- d. velkhr e vert gifindn eyn hurg fun di hrugi gzirh
 hn"l da velin zi eyn talr gebin
 (Court testimony, 200)
 which will find a body from the massacre
 said there want they a taler give
 'they would give a taler to whoever found the body
 of a person killed in said massacre'
- e. ver e vert leyann di kinh vert zikh gvis
 bzinh tshubh tfilh tsdkh tsu tan
 (Kine, Preface)
 who will read the lament will REFL surely
 decide penitence prayers charity to do
 'whoever reads the lament will surely decide
 to repent, pray and give to charity'

In summary, I have argued, relying on a combination of structural and quantitative evidence, that most Su-INFL subordinate clauses in early Yiddish must be derived from an INFL-medial base. I then showed on the basis of subordinate clauses like those in (31)-(33) that not all Su-INFL subordinate clauses are consistent with a verb-second grammar. Together, these results suggest that Su-INFL clauses in early Yiddish should in many cases be given an INFL-medial yet non-verb-second analysis. As we will see in the next section, the diachronic results provide strong evidence in support of this analysis.

4.5. From INFL-final to verb-second

In this section, I present the results of my quantitative investigation of the diachronic syntax of Yiddish subordinate clauses. In Section 4.5.1, I give a brief overview of my findings. In Section 4.5.2, I describe the variation between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure in detail, devoting special attention to the social circumstances in which it took place. Section 4.5.3 discusses the emergence of XP-

INFL subordinate clauses and the reanalysis of Su-INFL clauses from INFL-medial to verb-second that marks the transition from early to modern Yiddish syntax.

4.5.1. Overview of findings

In Tables 4-5 and 4-6, I give the frequencies of XP-INFL, Su-INFL and INFL-final subordinate clauses by time period, distinguishing between the two major dialects, West Yiddish and East Yiddish.⁷⁷ As discussed in Section 4.3.3, I broke down XP-INFL subordinate clauses according to whether the clause-initial constituent is expletive *es* or not. It is evident that the results in Tables 4-5 and 4-6 bear out the hypothesis that the generalization of the verb-second constraint in subordinate clauses in Yiddish proceeded via an intermediate Su-INFL stage during which XP-INFL word order was not available.

⁷⁷The relevant frequencies for each individual source are given in Appendix II. The totals of Tables 4-5 and 4-6 ($N = 2245$) do not agree with the total number of subordinate clauses listed in Appendix II ($N = 2286$). This is due to the fact that in Tables 4-5 and 4-6, I excluded four assimilationist sources ($N = 57$), which are discussed in Section 4.5.2.2, while including a number of isolated tokens that I came across in my reading, whose sources I have not listed in Appendix II ($N = 16$).

Table 4-5

**Diachronic development of subordinate clauses
in West Yiddish**

	XP- INFL	Expl. <u>es</u>	Su- INFL	INFL- final	TOTAL
1400-1489	-	-	10 11%	83 89%	93
1490-1539	-	-	37 24%	120 76%	157
1540-1589	-	-	143 43%	192 57%	335
1590-1639	-	-	6 23%	20 77%	26
1640-1689	-	-	79 39%	123 61%	202
1690-1739	2 2%	3 3%	46 46%	49 49%	100
1740-1789	-	-	54 69%	24 31%	78
1790-1839			NO DATA AVAILABLE		
1840-present			NO DATA AVAILABLE		
TOTAL	2 0%	3 0%	375 38%	611 62%	991

Table 4-6

**Diachronic development of subordinate clauses
in East Yiddish**

	XP- INFL	Expl. <u>es</u>	Su- INFL	INFL- final	TOTAL		
1400-1489			NO DATA AVAILABLE				
1490-1539			NO DATA AVAILABLE				
1540-1589	-	-	9 60%	6 40%	15		
1590-1639	3 0%	-	177 45%	210 54%	390		
1640-1689	3 2%	6 3%	104 60%	60 35%	173		
1690-1739	-	1 2%	54 92%	4 7%	59		
1740-1789			NO DATA AVAILABLE				
1790-1839	14 4%	20 6%	287 87%	10 3%	331		
1840-present	6 2%	32 11%	248 87%	- -	286		
TOTAL	26 2%	59 5%	879 70%	290 23%	1254		

The results in Tables 4-5 and 4-6 can be summarized as follows:

First, the earliest records at my disposal, which date from the 1400's, already show variation between INFL-final and Su-INFL subordinate clauses. Su-INFL clauses tend to rise in relative frequency at the expense of INFL-final ones throughout the early Yiddish period in both East and West Yiddish. East Yiddish is clearly more progressive than West Yiddish with regard to the change. For while INFL-final subordinate clauses remain well established in West Yiddish throughout the 1700's, they have already become marginal in East Yiddish by the beginning of the century. By the early 1800's, INFL-final subordinate clauses have become virtually extinct in East Yiddish.

Second, XP-INFL subordinate clauses do not appear in Yiddish until the first half of the 1600's; that is, their emergence postdates the emergence of Su-INFL ones by at least two centuries. Moreover, with the exception of a single source, they are restricted to East Yiddish. These facts show that Su-INFL and XP-INFL subordinate clauses reflect distinct grammatical options in early Yiddish, and they clearly confirm the hypothesis that the transition from INFL-final to verb-second subordinate clauses in Yiddish proceeded via an intermediate Su-INFL stage.

Finally, the results in Tables 4-5 and 4-6 show that the provisional distinction that I drew in Section 4.3.3 between true topics and expletive *es* is unfounded. There are two reasons to treat both types of clause-initial constituent alike. First, expletive *es* tends not to occur independently of XP-INFL word order in the data. In particular, like XP-INFL word order, it occurs (with one exception) exclusively in East Yiddish sources. This is unexpected if expletive *es* is a structural subject rather than an element that satisfies the verb-second constraint. Second, the relative frequencies of XP-INFL subordinate clauses and ones containing expletive *es* rise in tandem. In what follows, therefore, I no longer distinguish expletive *es* from other topics.

I present the results in Tables 4-5 and 4-6, revised in light of the considerations concerning expletive *es*, in graphic form as Figures 4-1 and 4-2.

Figure 4-1: Diachronic development of subordinate clauses in West Yiddish

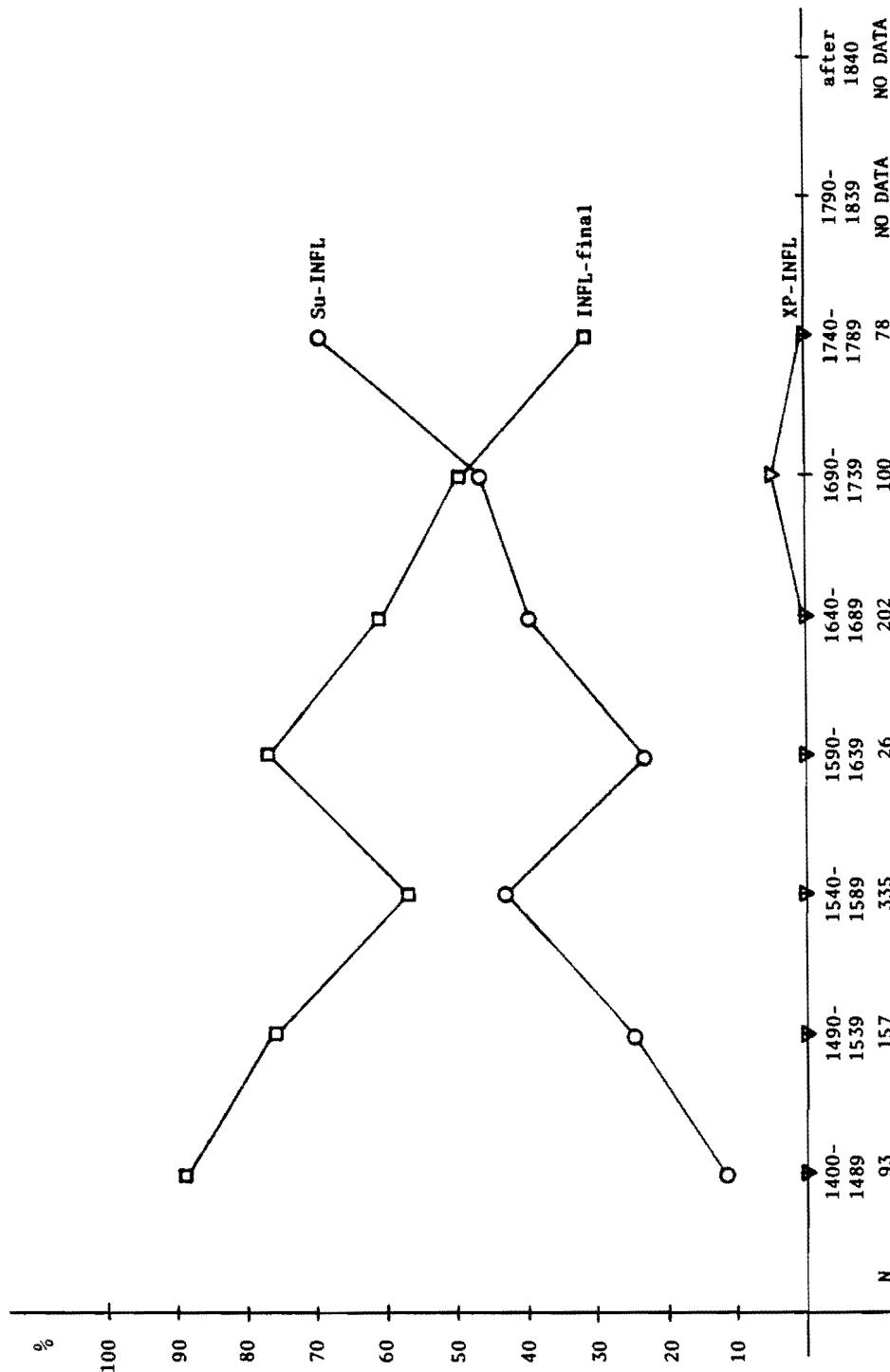
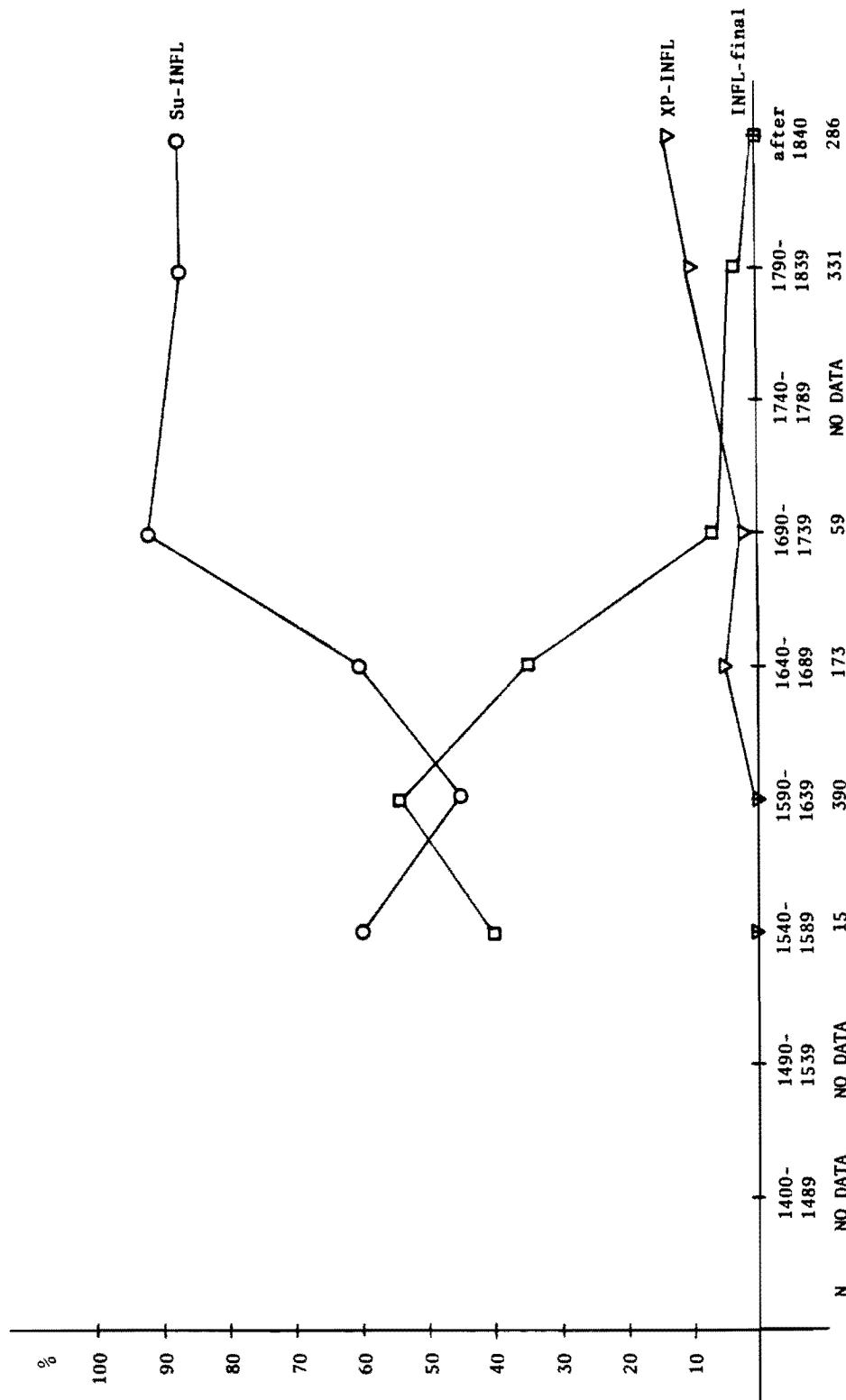


Figure 4-2: Diachronic development of subordinate clauses in East Yiddish



4.5.2. The loss of INFL-final phrase structure

4.5.2.1. The transition problem

In what follows, I investigate the decline and loss of INFL-final phrase structure in detail. I begin by focusing on West Yiddish. In Figure 4-3, I have plotted against time the percentage of INFL-final subordinate clauses in each of my West Yiddish sources as a fraction of the total number of subordinate clauses. I distinguish two levels of style, literary and vernacular, and three subdialects, Bohemian-Moravian, Cracow and West Yiddish proper. Sources containing less than ten subordinate clauses are underlined. As Figure 4-3 shows, the relative frequency of INFL-final subordinate clauses in West Yiddish declines steadily from the 1400's through the 1700's. The literary language reflects vernacular usage. Figure 4-3 also suggests that Bohemia and Moravia form a distinct dialect area that is more conservative with respect to the phrase structure change than the remainder of the West Yiddish-speaking territory.

In Figure 4-4, I show the percentage of INFL-final subordinate clauses in East Yiddish sources.

It is evident that vernacular East Yiddish is considerably less INFL-final than West Yiddish. Literary East Yiddish, on the other hand, conforms to West Yiddish usage up to the end of the 1600's. At the turn of the 17th to the 18th century, the percentage of INFL-final subordinate clauses in East Yiddish literary sources drops sharply as the literary sources line up with the vernacular. In statistical terms, then, the effects of dialect, time period and style are not independent of one another in early Yiddish; rather, they interact in the manner just described. While the first East Yiddish sources without INFL-final subordinate clauses date from the first quarter of the 1700's, INFL-final phrase structure survives as a marginal grammatical option well into the 1800's.

4.5.2.2. The embedding problem

In presenting the facts of the decline and loss of INFL-final phrase structure in Yiddish, broken down by dialect and style, I have provided a solution for this particular

Figure 4-3: Decline of INFL-final subordinate clauses in West Yiddish

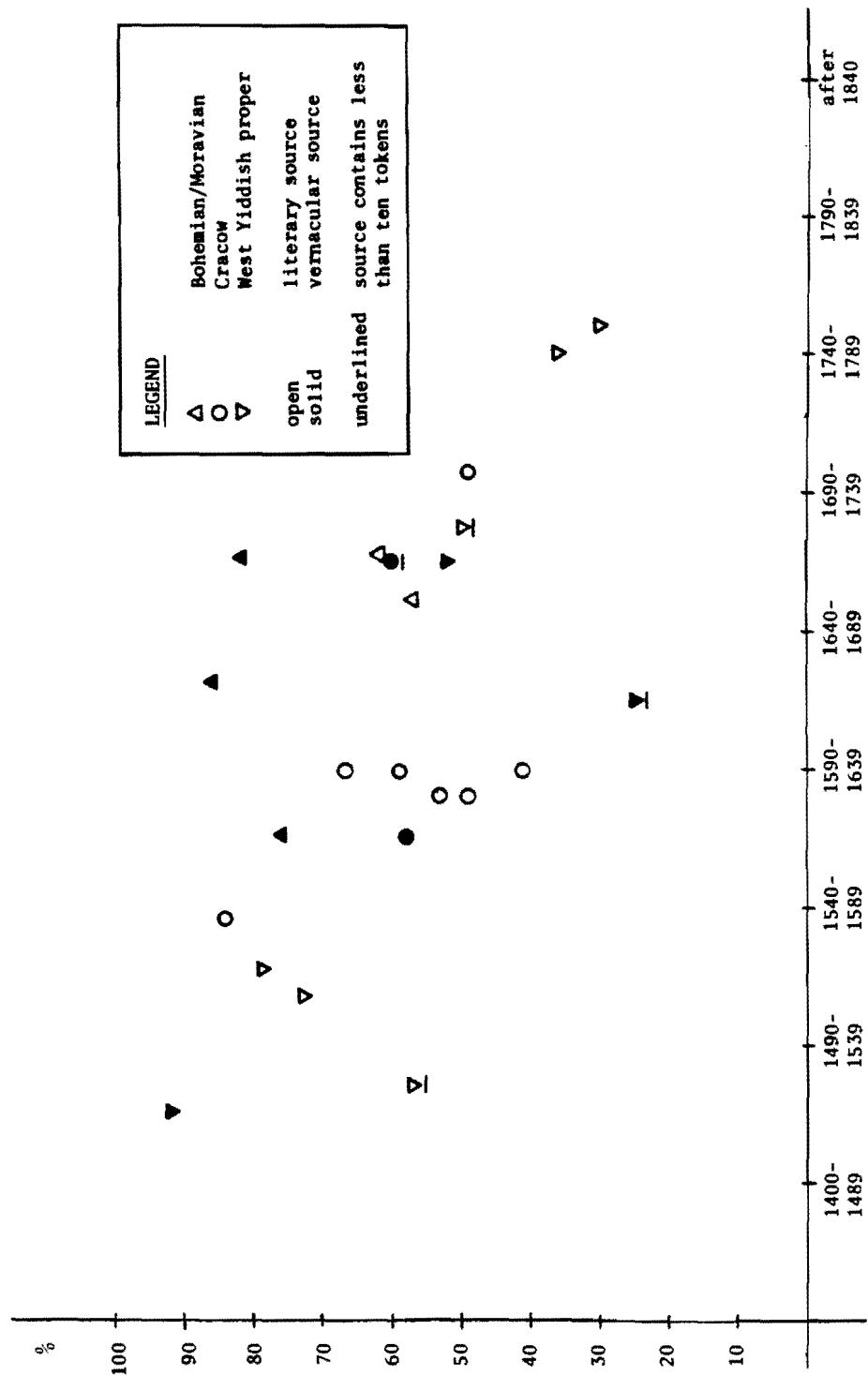
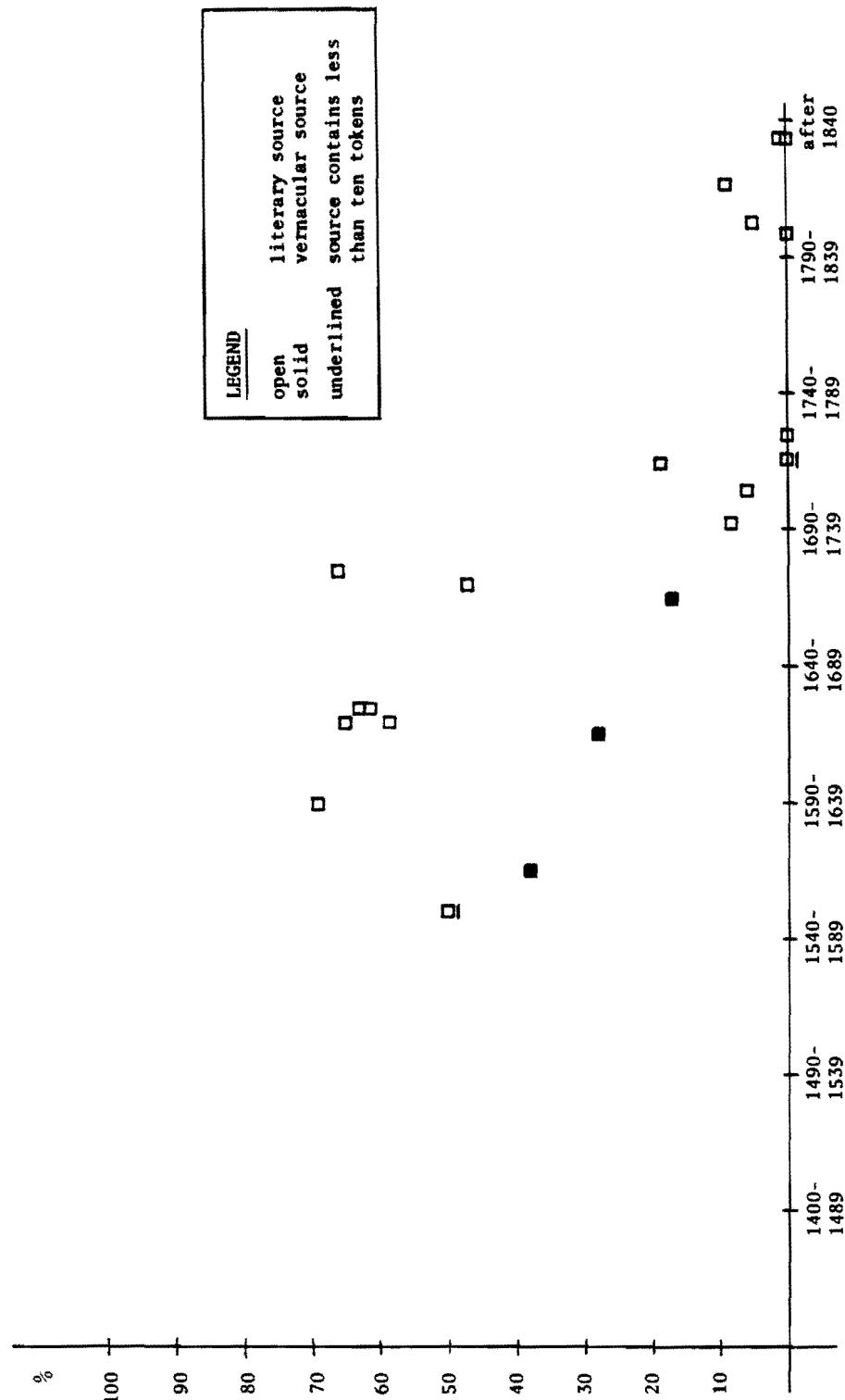


Figure 4-4: Decline of INFL-final subordinate clauses in East Yiddish



change to what U. Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968 refer to as the transition problem for linguistic change. I turn now to what they call the embedding problem, the problem of "find[ing] the continuous matrix of social and linguistic behavior in which the linguistic change is carried" (Labov 1972:162). I will discuss the social and linguistic aspects of the embedding problem in that order.

The social aspect of the embedding problem: As is evident from the preceding tables and figures, West and East Yiddish sources are not distributed equally across time. Prior to 1540, I have no East Yiddish sources and conversely, after 1800, I have no West Yiddish ones. This distribution is no statistical accident. Rather, it reflects what in Chapter 2 I described, following M. Weinreich 1980, as a shift in the center of gravity of Ashkenazic Jewish culture from western to eastern Europe. It will be recalled that from the middle of the 1200's, there was a steady stream of migration from Ashkenaz I, the original area of Jewish settlement, to Ashkenaz II, in east central and eastern Europe. In the course of the history of Yiddish, Ashkenaz II grew increasingly more influential. During the Old Yiddish period (1250-1500), Ashkenaz I is dominant and the transition to Ashkenaz II begins. In the Middle Yiddish period (1500-1700), Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II are in a state of equilibrium. The transition from Middle to New Yiddish coincides with the language of Ashkenaz II, East Yiddish, gaining the upper hand in the history of Yiddish. In the mirror of the written language, the gradual shift in the relative importance of Ashkenaz I and Ashkenaz II is reflected with some time lag and more abruptly than in the vernacular. Weinreich distinguishes between two written languages in the history of Yiddish: Written Language A, based on vernacular West Yiddish, and Written Language B, based on vernacular East Yiddish. Written Language A is dominant throughout Old and Middle Yiddish (though in the east, it shows increasing signs of vernacular influence in the Middle Yiddish period). Written Language B emerges rather suddenly, in the course of the transition from Middle to New Yiddish.

The findings reported above regarding the decline and loss of INFL-final phrase structure are in complete agreement with Weinreich's observations concerning the history of Yiddish. As we saw in Figure 4-3, the usage of West Yiddish authors

conforms to what we might call an internal standard, the standard of their vernacular. On the other hand, while my first East Yiddish vernacular sources have already clearly diverged from West Yiddish with respect to the relative frequency of INFL-final subordinate clauses, the authors of East Yiddish literary texts continue to reproduce West Yiddish usage as a matter of literary convention until the end of the 1600's. For them, West Yiddish usage represents an external standard markedly more INFL-final than their own vernacular. Written Language B emerges at the end of the 1600's as some East Yiddish authors adopt a new literary convention--one that reflects a switch of allegiance from an external to an internal standard. The adoption of the new convention is sudden, and the divergence between the two standards is considerable; hence, the striking discontinuity in East Yiddish literary usage that we find at the end of the 1600's in Figure 4-4.

The fact that Bohemia and Moravia as well as Cracow belong linguistically with West Yiddish rather than East Yiddish reflects the very close ties that existed between these transition areas and the west.⁷⁸ According to Weinreich 1980:542,

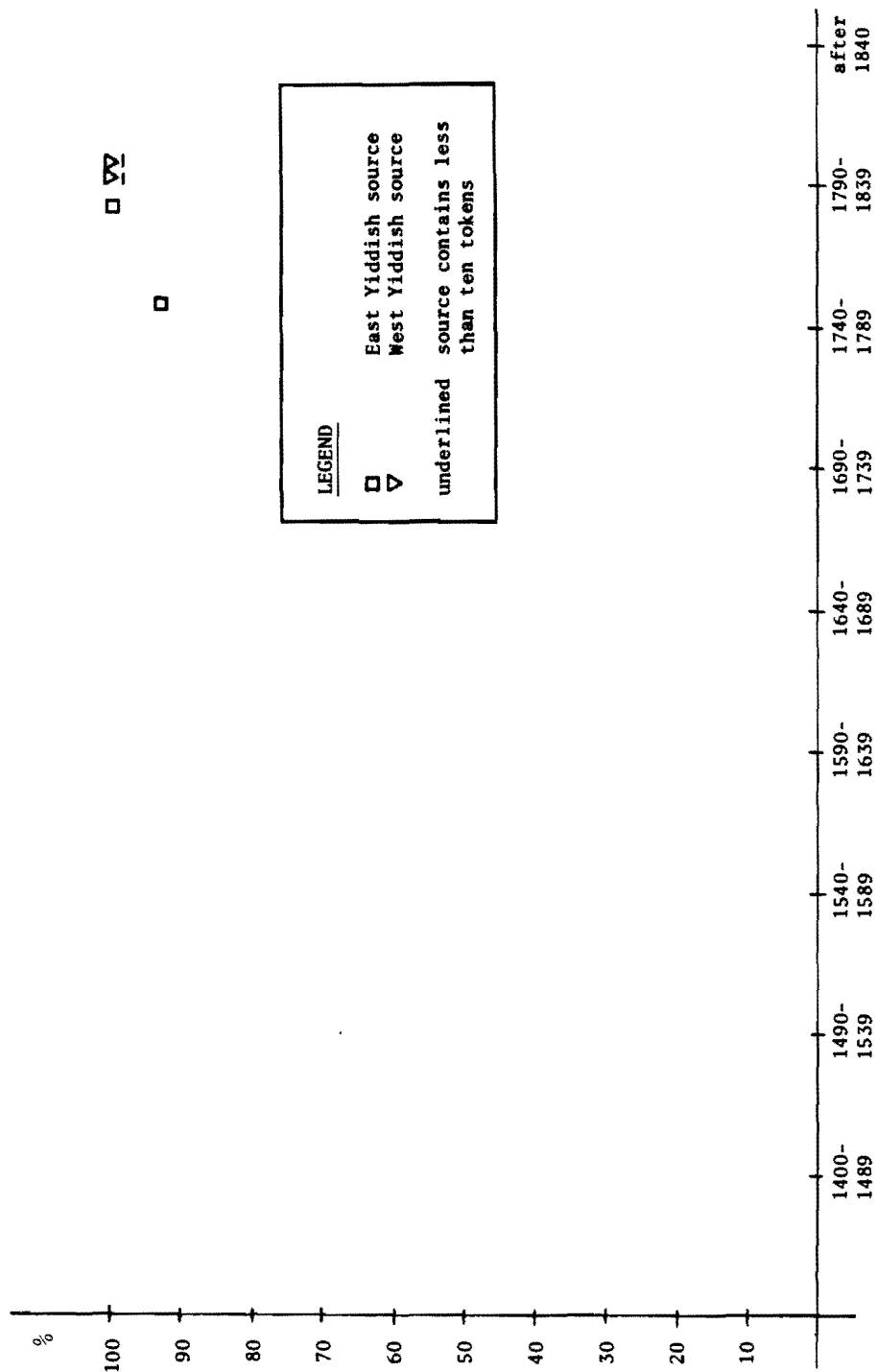
"[o]n the way to Ashkenaz II the Czech territory was usually the first leg of the journey ... From Bohemia-Moravia there was an Ashkenazic migration further east. In Cracow, for example, the arrivals from the west were so numerous that in the beginning of the sixteenth century two separate Jewish communities existed there: a local one and a Moravian one. The western type of Yiddish reached deep into the Cracow and Kielce regions almost to the twentieth century; this indicates linguistic and hence ethnic connection with Bohemia-Moravia."

As I discussed in Chapter 2.1, the New Yiddish period is characterized not only by the growing independence of East Yiddish and the birth of Written Language B, but also by the decline of West Yiddish and the death of Written Language A as a result of assimilation. The effects of linguistic assimilationism are evident in a group of sources from the 1700's shown in Figure 4-5.

In sharp contrast to the general decline of INFL-final phrase structure established above, 56 out of the 57 subordinate clauses in these sources (98%) are INFL-final, and the single Su-INFL exception is consistent with a derivation from an INFL-final base by PP

⁷⁸I am grateful to Erika Timm for having alerted me to this possibility prior to my analysis.

Figure 4-5: Assimilationist sources from the late 1700's



extraposition. At first glance, therefore, these sources appear to reflect an extreme retrograde development towards a stage of Yiddish more than 300 years in the past. But given what we know about the social and ideological context of the history of the language, we must conclude that the sources in question reflect the adoption of the syntactic norms of modern Standard German advocated by the *maskilim*.⁷⁹ As we saw in Chapter 2, the influence of the *maskilim* was strongest in Ashkenaz I, but it extended to Ashkenaz II as well. We therefore have assimilationist sources from both parts of the Yiddish-speaking territory.

A striking illustration of the artificial status of this maskilic variety of Yiddish is provided by the token in (34), in which the clause-final verb sequence is interrupted by a prepositional phrase.⁸⁰

(34)

das zi niks an nemn fr di ihudim zalltin
 (Ukraine 1, 35)
 that they nothing on take for the Jews should
 'that they should accept nothing for the Jews'

We know from studies of both recent and earlier stages of the West Germanic languages that clause-final verb sequences obey a strict adjacency constraint and that they cannot in general be interrupted by extraposed constituents (Evers 1975:22, Kohrt 1975:169, Lightfoot 1979:106, fn. 1). Moreover, den Besten 1986:250 has observed that base-generated V-XP-INFL sequences do not appear to occur in INFL-final languages (cf. also Pintzuk and Kroch 1985:6). I therefore interpret the occurrence of V-XP-INFL word order in (34) as an indication that the author's vernacular was not INFL-final.

Having established the existence of statistical interaction in literary East Yiddish and having recognized the influence of assimilationism in certain 18th-century Yiddish sources, we are now in a position to carry out a meaningful multivariate analysis of the

⁷⁹This is not to deny that the syntax of modern Standard German may itself be characterized by retrograde developments.

⁸⁰Note the use of *das*, cognate with modern German *dass* 'that,' instead of *az*, as the complementizer. According to Taube 1986:13, fn. 1, *dos* is still used as a complementizer "in modern literature, in archaizing style."

variation that we find between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure in early Yiddish (which I define as ending in 1789). The algorithm that I have used to calculate the correlation of the phrase structure variation with the factors to be discussed below is the maximum-likelihood method developed for quantitative linguistic analysis that is described in Cedergren and Sankoff 1974 and Rousseau and Sankoff 1978. In what follows, I refer to this algorithm as VARBRUL. I have controlled for the interaction among the three factors under consideration in this subsection (dialect, time period and style) by classifying literary East Yiddish sources up to 1689 along with all other literary sources from the West as West Yiddish (Written Language A), and I have controlled for the effects of linguistic assimilationism by simply excluding the four German-influenced INFL-final sources from further consideration. The analysis is based on a total of 1636 tokens. For simplicity, I have assumed that all Su-INFL clauses reflect INFL-medial phrase structure.

Of the three factors under consideration here, dialect is selected as having the strongest effect on the variation between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure. Table 4-7 shows the effects of this factor.⁸¹ As above, I distinguished four dialect areas: West Yiddish proper, Bohemia and Moravia, Cracow and East Yiddish.

⁸¹The figures in this and the following tables do not always agree with those in Tables 4-5 and 4-6; I have been unable to locate the source of the discrepancies, which are small enough not to vitiate the conclusions that I draw below.

Table 4-7
**Effect of dialect
on phrase structure variation**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
Bohemia- Moravia	14 18%	63 82%	77	0.24
West	524 40%	787 60%	1311	0.45
Cracow	7 41%	10 59%	17	0.47
East	174 78%	49 22%	223	0.82
TOTAL	719 44%	909 56%	1628	

The VARBRUL probabilities for INFL-medial phrase structure reflect the corresponding percentages. They clearly confirm the dialect difference between West and East Yiddish as well as the close linguistic relationship between Cracow and the remainder of the West Yiddish-speaking territory. They also confirm that Bohemia and Moravia form a separate dialect area, which is distinctly more INFL-final than West Yiddish proper.

The relations between the dialects of Yiddish that are evident from Table 4-7 are further supported by the results of a finer-grained, trinomial analysis, which is based on all early Yiddish subordinate clauses that contain one or more infinitives. I distinguished three types of clauses: Su-INFL subordinate clauses, INFL-final clauses that exhibit verb raising (VR) and INFL-final clauses without verb raising. Due to the small number of tokens from Cracow ($N = 14$), I grouped them together with the West Yiddish tokens. These results of this ancillary analysis are shown in Table 4-8.

Table 4-8

**Effect of dialect on variation between Su-INFL
word order, verb raising and absence of verb raising**

		Su-INFL	VR	No VR	TOTAL
Bohemia-Moravia	N	13	18	26	57
	%	23%	32%	46%	
	p	0.111	0.324	0.565	
West (incl. Cracow)	N	322	299	133	754
	%	43%	40%	18%	
	p	0.278	0.372	0.351	
East	N	137	15	7	159
	%	86%	9%	4%	
	p	0.509	0.181	0.110	
TOTAL	N	472	332	166	970
	%	49%	34%	17%	

In West Yiddish, both variants of INFL-final phrase structure are favored over the Su-INFL variant. In contrast to West Yiddish proper, Bohemian-Moravian Yiddish favors V-INFL word order over INFL-V word order, regardless of the phrase structure of the latter. Finally, East Yiddish strongly favors the Su-INFL variant over both of the variants that reflect INFL-final phrase structure.

The decidedly conservative position of Bohemian-Moravian Yiddish among the West Yiddish dialects is quite unexpected in view of the intense and long-lived contacts among all three of the subareas of the West Yiddish-speaking territory. In particular, the syntactic conservatism of Bohemian-Moravian does not appear to be correlated with conservatism in other areas of the grammar; at least, neither Birnbaum 1979 nor Weinreich 1980 makes mention of any relevant phonological or morphological facts. Presumably, then, the word order preference of Bohemian-Moravian Yiddish is due to the influence of the coterritorial dialects of German. While I do not know whether the relevant varieties of German favored superficially INFL-final word order during the time period of interest here, it is worth noting that Maurer 1926:57f. fails to find evidence for

verb raising in the modern dialects of Bohemia and Moravia (though there is some evidence for INFL-medial phrase structure) and cites an earlier investigation according to which verb raising is atypical of the Bohemian dialect of Plan (Schiepek 1899-1908).

The second strongest factor affecting the variation between INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure is time period. Table 4-9 shows the effect of this factor.⁸²

Table 4-9
**Effect of time period
on phrase structure variation**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
1400-1489	10 11%	84 89%	94	0.19
1490-1539	37 24%	120 76%	157	0.32
1540-1589	153 43%	199 57%	352	0.54
1590-1639	183 44%	233 56%	416	0.47
1640-1689	185 49%	195 51%	380	0.57
1690-1739	100 63%	59 37%	159	0.61
1740-1789	54 69%	24 31%	78	0.75
TOTAL	722 44%	914 56%	1636	

As in the case of dialect, the VARBRUL probabilities for the INFL-medial variant

⁸²The discrepancy between the totals in Tables 4-7 and 4-9 is due to the fact that I have been unable to ascertain the geographical origin of eight early Yiddish tokens.

reflect the corresponding percentages. Both the percentages and the probabilities show an increase of INFL-medial phrase structure over time. I have no explanation for the non-monotonicity at the end of the 1500's.

Finally, the third factor of interest in this section, style, is rejected as insignificant. The results reported in Table 4-10 were the basis for my decision to treat prose and poetic texts as equally representative of Yiddish grammar.

Table 4-10

**Effect of style
on phrase structure variation**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
Literary				
Prose	295 43%	389 57%	684	0.51
Poetry	243 46%	291 54%	534	0.51
Vernacular	184 44%	234 56%	418	0.46
TOTAL	722 44%	914 56%	1636	

The rejection of style as a significant factor affecting phrase structure variation in early Yiddish is consistent with some comparative evidence from Early New High German, which I give in Table 4-11. Since I have no evidence as to whether Early New High German allows INFL-medial phrase structure, I will present these results in terms of variation of word order than phrase structure. The figures for Geiler, a high church official, are based on my own analysis of a sample taken from his sermons and official correspondence,⁸³ while those for Luther are taken from an analysis of after-dinner talks

⁸³For details on Geiler, see Ebert 1976.

presented in Stolt 1964:161.⁸⁴ Stolt's figures, like my own, do not include tokens in which the position of the inflected verb is ambiguous between second and final.

Table 4-11

**Effect of style on word order
variation in Early New High German**

	SU- INFL	INFL- final	TOTAL
Geiler (ca. 1500)	9	91	100
Literary	9%	91%	
Luther (ca. 1525)	12	79	90
Vernacular	13%	87%	

$$\chi^2 = 0.853, p < 0.5$$

While samples from two authors are clearly not representative of Early New High German usage, the figures in Table 4-11 do suggest that the stylistic difference between the literary and the vernacular language fails to have an appreciable effect on the variation between Su-INFL and INFL-final word order in Early New High German, just as is the case in Yiddish.

In conclusion, the multivariate analysis shows that the factors of dialect and time period have a significant effect on phrase structure variation in early Yiddish, while style does not.

The linguistic aspect of the embedding problem: I turn now to the linguistic aspect of the embedding problem. In what follows, I investigate the effects of three linguistic factors: the type of inflected verb (*have/be*, modal or other), the status of clause-initial subjects (pronoun or full noun), and clausal complexity. My interest in the first two factors is prompted by the well-known hypothesis of Wackernagel 1892, according to whom the verb-second constraint arose as a result of clitic-like prosodic

⁸⁴The error in arithmetic is hers.

properties of the inflected verb in Indo-European. I included the factor of clausal complexity in order to test whether INFL-medial phrase structure is associated with a processing advantage over INFL-final phrase structure.

Wackernagel 1892 demonstrated that the inflected verb in many Indo-European languages acts like a sentence clitic and gravitates towards the second position of its clause. This prosodic tendency is the source of the verb-second constraint in the Germanic languages. If this tendency is still alive in early Yiddish, then Wackernagel's observation leads us to expect INFL-medial phrase structure to be favored with light verbs, such as *have* or *be*, over main verbs. We might also expect INFL-medial phrase structure to be favored with clause-initial subjects that are full NP's over ones that are pronouns, since the inflected verb might tend to cliticize onto a heavy constituent.

VARBRUL selects the status of the subject as having the strongest effect of the linguistic factors under consideration in this section, and the third strongest effect overall. The results are shown in Table 4-12.⁸⁵

Table 4-12

**Effect of status of subject
on phrase structure**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
Full NP	244 49%	250 51%	494	0.56
Pronoun	350 38%	563 62%	913	0.46
Total	594 42%	813 58%	1407	

⁸⁵I have excluded XP-INFL clauses from the data on which the results in Table 4-12 are based. The remaining discrepancy between the total in Table 4-12 and that in Tables 4-9 and 4-10 is due to the existence of subject-gap clauses.

The VARBRUL probabilities reflect the percentages and are consistent with our expectations.

The type of the inflected verb has the second strongest effect of the linguistic factors and the fourth strongest effect overall. I distinguished three types of verbs: *have* and *be* (auxiliary or main verb), modal verbs and main verbs. The results are shown in Table 4-13.

Table 4-13

**Effect of type of inflected verb
on phrase structure variation**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
Modal	226 51%	221 49%	447	0.55
<u>Have</u> or <u>be</u>	348 45%	419 55%	767	0.51
Main verb	148 35%	274 65%	422	0.43
Total	722 44%	914 56%	1636	

Of the three verb types, main verbs favor INFL-medial phrase structure least, as expected. Modals favor the INFL-medial variant more than the prosodically lighter *have* or *be*, though only slightly. I have no explanation for this fact.

I turn now to the factor of clausal complexity. Bach, Brown and Marslen-Wilson 1986 have shown that the infinitive sequences produced by verb raising in Dutch are easier to process than their counterparts in standard German, which do not undergo verb raising. Since verb raising gives rise to INFL-V sequences and since the same linear precedence relation holds between auxiliary and main verbs in INFL-medial clauses, we might expect INFL-medial subordinate clauses to exhibit a processing advantage

analogous to that documented for verb raising clauses. Although we cannot gain access to processing data from historical stages of Yiddish, we know from descriptions of varieties of West Germanic that verb raising, while optional in verb sequences containing one infinitive, becomes obligatory in more complex ones that contain more than one infinitive (den Besten and Edmondson 1983, Loetscher 1978, Zaenen 1979), a fact that is plausibly due to the processing advantage associated with the verb raising order. If my hypothesis concerning the processing advantage associated with INFL-V word order is correct, then we would expect INFL-medial phrase structure to be favored in clauses containing more than one infinitive in the historical data, just as verb raising is favored in the synchronic data. This expectation is clearly confirmed by the results of a trinomial analysis of the data that distinguishes Su-INFL subordinate clauses, INFL-final clauses that exhibit verb raising (VR) and INFL-final clauses without verb raising, as in Table 4-8. The results are shown in Table 4-14.⁸⁶

Table 4-14

**Effects of clausal complexity on
variation between Su-INFL word order,
verb raising and absence of verb raising**

		Su-INFL	VR	No VR	TOTAL
One infinitive	N	426	303	167	896
	%	48%	34%	19%	
	P	0.160	0.160	0.679	
More than one infinitive	N	49	31	1	81
	%	60%	38%	1%	
	P	0.447	0.447	0.106	
Total	N	475	334	168	977
	%	49%	34%	17%	

In clauses that contain one infinitive, the V-INFL option is clearly favored, and the two INFL-V options are equally disfavored. In clauses that contain more than one

⁸⁶The discrepancy between the totals in Tables 4-8 and 4-14 is due to the fact that I have been unable to ascertain the geographical origin of seven tokens.

infinitive, on the other hand, the V-INFL option is disfavored, and the two INFL-V options are favored equally. I conclude from these facts that there is a processing advantage associated with INFL-V word order. Since the processing advantage is associated with superficial word order rather than with phrase structure, it is not surprising that in a binomial analysis of the same data with respect to underlying phrase structure, clausal complexity is rejected as a significant factor. However, both the VARBRUL probabilities and the percentages remain consistent with our expectations, as shown in Table 4-15.⁸⁷

Table 4-15

**Effect of clausal complexity
on phrase structure variation**

	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL	Prob. of INFL-medial
No infinitive	246 38%	402 62%	648	0.49
One infinitive	426 47%	477 53%	903	0.50
More than one infinitive	49 60%	33 40%	82	0.59
Total	721 44%	912 56%	1633	

In summary, we have seen that the effect of prosodic factors such as the heaviness of clause-initial subjects and the lightness of the inflected verb on word order in early Yiddish is significant, though not as strong as the effect of the external factors discussed earlier. Moreover, I have shown that INFL-V word order in early Yiddish is associated with a processing advantage. This processing advantage is independent of underlying phrase structure. As a result, clausal complexity is rejected as a significant factor affecting phrase structure variation.

⁸⁷The discrepancy between the totals in Tables 4-9 and 4-15 is due to some anacoluthic tokens that contain modals but no infinitives.

4.5.3. The generalization of the verb-second constraint

In this section, I discuss two aspects of the generalization of the verb-second constraint in Yiddish: first, the emergence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses in Middle Yiddish and second, the loss of non-verb-second INFL-medial subordinate clauses that marks the transition from early to modern Yiddish.

4.5.3.1. The emergence of XP-INFL clauses

As is evident from Table 4-6, XP-INFL subordinate clauses date back to the early 1600's. The earliest example in my corpus is given in (35).

(35)

di al ir tag habi<n> zikh nit vi
 gitan tsu lernn khkhmut fun dr turh
 (Preface to Sefer ha-Magid, 4a, 1623-27)
 who all their day have REFL not than
 done to learn wisdom-PL from the Torah
 'who all the days of their life have done
 nothing but learn wisdom from the Torah'

Further examples, some of which I have already given in Section 4.3.3, are given in (36). I have underlined the topic.⁸⁸

(36)

- a. ds da hut nbukhd ntsr givarfn
 in klikh uvn (Magen Abraham, 5, 1624)
 that there has Nebuchadnezzar thrown
 into [?] oven
 'that Nebuchadnezzar threw into the [?] furnace'
- b. ub es geyt enk keyn ihudi ab
 (Court testimony, 157, second quarter of 1600's)
 whether it goes you-DAT no Jew off
 'whether you aren't missing a Jew'

⁸⁸In (36a), I take *da* to occupy Spec(IP) rather than COMP, since the traces of non-subjects are barred from topic position in modern Yiddish as well as other verb-second languages, as discussed in Chapter 3. Even if *da* is taken to occupy COMP, however, (36a) cannot be analyzed as a Su-INFL clause.

- c. das in zeyn her tsihn iz eyn goyh
 tsu ihm gikumin (Court testimony, 174,
 second quarter of 1600's)
 that in his here pulling is a goy-FEM
 to him come
 'that in his wanderings a non-Jewish woman
 came up to him'
- d. ver es iz antlafin gvarn
 (Court testimony, 207, 1648)
 who it is escaped been
 'whoever escaped'

The fact that XP-INFL subordinate clauses first occur when they do is important because it rules out an otherwise plausible hypothesis concerning the generalization of the verb-second constraint in Yiddish. According to this hypothesis, INFL-final and INFL-medial phrase structure are in competition in early Yiddish, with INFL-medial phrase structure eventually winning out. When INFL-medial phrase structure becomes categorical, subordinate clauses, being consistent with the verb-second constraint, are reanalyzed as verb-second by analogy to root clauses. As a result of reanalysis, non-subjects become available as initial constituents in subordinate clauses. According to this view of the change, categorical INFL-medial phrase structure is a prerequisite for the emergence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses in Yiddish, and analogy plays a crucial role in the generalization of the verb-second constraint. Appealing as it may be, this attempt to relate the phrase structure change and the generalization of the verb-second constraint must be rejected given the results in Table 4-6, which show that XP-INFL subordinate clauses begin to appear in East Yiddish texts in which INFL-final phrase structure is still a fully productive grammatical option.

Upon further reflection, however, the emergence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses in the first half of the 1600's provides us with a clue as to their origin. According to M. Weinreich, it is in the course of the 1600's that the divergence of East Yiddish from West Yiddish begins to be noticeable (1980:722,726). From this perspective, the chronology of the appearance of XP-INFL subordinate clauses is materially related to the fact that they occur--with one exception--only in East Yiddish texts. Indeed, the

pedigree of the one source that I have classified as West Yiddish that contains XP-INFL subordinate clauses, the *Purim-shpil* of 1697, turns out to be suspect. According to Weinryb 1936, it is based on an older West Yiddish play, and with regard to the frequency of INFL-final subordinate clauses, it reflects West Yiddish usage. However, the 1697 version was recorded by a native of Cracow in the service of a Gentile scholar with an interest in Yiddish (Dinse and Liptzin 1978:56), and it is tempting to speculate that the language of the *Purim-shpil* reflects an even more eastern usage than that of Cracow as far as the occurrence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses is concerned. When we take into account the single most important difference between West and East Yiddish, namely the fact that only speakers of East Yiddish were in contact with speakers of Slavic languages, the convergence of criteria based on time and space leads us to conclude that language contact with Slavic is the source of XP-INFL word order in subordinate clauses in Yiddish. I will return to this issue and examine it in more detail in Section 4.7.2.

4.5.3.2. The loss of non-verb-second INFL-medial clauses

While considerations of chronology rule out analogy to verb-second root clauses as a trigger for the reanalysis of Su-INFL subordinate clauses as verb-second, there is another way that analogy might have played a role in the generalization of the verb-second constraint: Su-INFL subordinate clauses might have been reanalyzed as verb-second by analogy to XP-INFL subordinate clauses once these entered the language. Since XP-INFL clauses emerge in the first half of the 1600's and become reasonably frequent in the second half, this view leads us to expect the reanalysis of Su-INFL clauses to be complete a generation later--say, by the first half of the 1700's.

In general, of course, it is impossible to tell whether reanalysis has taken place, since it is impossible to tell with most Su-INFL clauses whether they are the product of an INFL-medial or a verb-second grammar. However, as we saw in Section 4.4.2, there is a subset of Su-INFL clauses in early Yiddish that do not obey the verb-second constraint. Such clauses contain a subject gap, and the clause-initial position is filled by an empty category. For convenience, I repeat two examples in (37).

(37)

- a. *velkhr e vert gifindn eyn hurg fun di hrugi gzirh hn'l* (Court testimony, 200, 1638)
 which will find a body from the massacre said
 'whoever finds the body of a person killed in said massacre'
- b. *dz e zoyln zikh dran kern manin un' veybr oykh ali leytn* (Duties, n.p., 1716)
 that shall REFL thereon turn men and women also all people
 'that men and women, also all people, shall take heed of this'

The investigation of such clauses provides two kinds of evidence against the view that the emergence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses triggered the reanalysis of (non-verb-second) INFL-medial clauses. First, INFL-medial subject-gap clauses co-occur with their more modern verb-second counterparts in sources in which XP-INFL word order is productive, and second, such clauses are attested in such sources a century later than expected (as late as 1834). These facts are shown in Table 4-16.

Table 4-16

Co-occurrence of INFL-medial and verb-second subject-gap subordinate clauses

Source and date	INFL-medial	Verb-second	Total
Court testimony East, 1640-1689	1 (2%)	3 (5%)	58
Geography 1818	1 (1%)	9 (13%)	69
Ukraine 2 1834	2 (2%)	9 (9%)	100

Taking subject-gap clauses to be representative of Su-INFL clauses in general, I conclude from the figures in Table 4-16 that the generalization of the verb-second constraint did not go to completion until the first half of the 1800's, roughly simultaneously with the loss of INFL-final phrase structure.

It is worth noting that my finding concerning the timepoint of the generalization of the verb-second constraint agrees with the conclusions reached in M. Weinreich 1980 concerning the transition from early to modern Yiddish. In view of the fact that Weinreich established his periodization of Yiddish on the basis of an extensive analysis of phonological, morphological and lexical criteria, while my results are based on a much narrower range of syntactic facts, this agreement is quite remarkable. It is clear that this convergent development of the various subsystems of Yiddish cannot be reduced to structural factors. Rather, I conclude from the convergence between Weinreich's findings and my own that different subsystems of the grammar tend to vary and change in tandem rather than independently of one another because they are affected by the same social forces.

4.6. Variation among syntactic subsystems

4.6.1. Yiddish

We have just seen that the generalization of the verb-second constraint in Yiddish spans two centuries in the written language--from the emergence of XP-INFL subordinate clauses in the first half of the 1600's to the disappearance of INFL-medial subordinate clauses in the first half of the 1800's. In conjunction with the facts concerning the transition from INFL-final to INFL-medial phrase structure, which partially overlaps the generalization of the verb-second constraint, the results established in Section 4.5 mean that speakers of early Yiddish used three distinct syntactic subsystems, which can be characterized in terms of syntactic parameters as in Table 4-17.

Table 4-17

**Parametric analysis of grammars available
to speakers of early Yiddish**

Grammar	Phrase structure	Direction of nom. case assignment
1. INFL-final	VP-INFL	leftward only
2. INFL-medial	INFL-VP	leftward only
3. Verb-second	INFL-VP	rightward possible

As a result of the small number of unambiguously INFL-medial and verb-second clauses, there are relatively few texts that contain unambiguous evidence for variation among all three syntactic subsystems. But such texts do exist, as shown in Table 4-18.

Table 4-18

**Early Yiddish sources containing unambiguously verb-second,
INFL-medial and INFL-final subordinate clauses**

Source and date	Verb- second	INFL- medial	INFL- final	N
Court testimony East, 1640-1689	3 (5%)	1 (2%)	10 (17%)	58
Ellush 1704	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	18
Geography 1818	9 (13%)	1 (1%)	6 (9%)	69
Ukraine 2 1834	9 (9%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	100

It is worth noting in this connection that the diachronic distribution of clause-initial expletive elements in clauses with INFL-medial phrase structure supports the analysis of the syntactic change proposed here in terms of the directionality of case assignment. We

find that the variation between *es* and the empty expletive exhibits a striking correlation with the occurrence of the structurally unambiguous clause types XP-INFL and INFL-final. My sources divide into three groups. In the first group, which contains no XP-INFL subordinate clauses (that is, in sources where there is no unambiguous evidence for rightward case assignment by INFL), we find only empty expletives in clause-initial position. In the second group, which contains both XP-INFL and INFL-final subordinate clauses (that is, in sources where there is unambiguous evidence for both leftward and rightward case assignment by INFL), we find both empty expletives and expletive *es*. Finally, in the third group, which contains no INFL-final subordinate clauses (that is, in sources where there is no unambiguous evidence for leftward case assignment by INFL), we find only expletive *es*. These results are shown in Table 4-19.

Table 4-19

**Type of clause-initial expletive correlated
with occurrence of clause types**

Sources dating from	Empty expl.	Expl. <u>es</u>	INFL- final	XP- INFL
1507-1740	yes (12)	no (0)	yes	no
1624-1834	yes (8)	yes (17)	yes	yes
1800-1947	no (0)	yes (30)	no	yes
Case assign- ment by INFL	<--	-->	<--	-->

An alternative analysis of these facts in terms of the strength of inflection as proposed by Holmberg and Platzack 1988 and Platzack and Holmberg 1989 for similar facts in the Scandinavian languages cannot be maintained, since inflectional morphology has not undergone significant changes in Yiddish.

4.6.2. Other languages

Early Yiddish is not unique in permitting variation among a number of distinct syntactic subsystems. A number of recent studies provide evidence that the performance of speakers of a language can reflect more than one grammar. For instance, Adams 1987b:9 observes that in addition to canonical head-initial phrase structure, Old French allowed head-final phrase structure, particularly "in poetic, expressive, and latinate contexts," but not limited to these. Pintzuk 1988 uses the distribution of particles to demonstrate that Old English must be analyzed as allowing variation between INFL-medial and INFL-final phrase structure, contra van Kemenade 1987. Taylor 1988 relies on the distribution of clitics to show that Classical Greek allows variation among increasingly configurational grammars. Finally, recent work on the diachronic and synchronic syntax of the Scandinavian languages proves to be extremely relevant from the point of view of a comparison with Yiddish.

4.6.2.1. Medieval mainland Scandinavian

Work by Platzack shows that medieval mainland Scandinavian exhibits variation among precisely the same grammatical systems as early Yiddish. First, as was noted in Chapter 3.3.2.2, it allowed verb-second subordinate clauses. I repeat some examples in (38).⁸⁹

(38)

- a. at eigh drap mit fae thit fae
 (from the Old Westergotia Law, ca. 1300)
 that not killed my animal your animal
 'that my animal did not kill your animal'
- b. at alla stadz bar han then priis
 (from the late 1400's)
 that everywhere carried he this price
 'that he carried this price everywhere'

⁸⁹I thank Christer Platzack for the examples in (38a,b). The sources of the examples in (38c-e) are Platzack 1985:47, (77c); Platzack 1987b:6, (16); and Platzack 1987a:397, (29e), respectively. Recall that I am analyzing stylistic fronting as a subcase of verb-second word order.

- c. of aei maelaes e laghlik aeftær
if not is-spoken legally after
'if it is not legally handled'
- d. huar sum ei halder kunungx dom
(from Magnus Eriksson's Law, ca. 1350)
who that not holds king's verdict
'whoever fails to keep to the king's verdict'
- e. some sodhne aerw j lupinj
(from the 1500's)
that boiled are in lupine
'that are boiled in lupine'

For a time (before the lexical expletive subject *det* became obligatory as a result of the loss of verbal inflection), medieval mainland Scandinavian also allowed INFL-medial clauses with empty expletives in clause-initial position, as illustrated in (39) (Platzack 1985:47, = his (77a)). The inflected verb is underlined.

(39)

Hoera the, at e rymbaer j iortho.
hear they that rumbles in earth
'They hear that it rumbles inside the earth.'

Finally, it exhibited INFL-final subordinate clauses as a result of Low German influence (Platzack 1987b:5f.), as illustrated in (40) (= Platzack's 14c)). The inflected verb is underlined.

(40)

at the kirkia byggiae mughu
that they church build should
'that they should build a church'

4.6.2.2. Modern insular Scandinavian

While the modern Scandinavian languages have all completely lost the INFL-final phrase structure option, modern insular Scandinavian (Icelandic and Faroese) continues to exhibit variation between verb-second and INFL-medial subordinate clauses. I illustrate this using Icelandic data. As we saw in Chapter 3.3.1.1, Icelandic allows verb-second subordinate clauses. According to Sigurdsson 1989:10f., Icelandic also allows INFL-medial clauses, identified by the presence of an empty expletive in subject position. Some examples are given in (41) (= Sigurdsson's (27b) and (28b)). The inflected verb is underlined.

(41)

- a. *Pvi er sennilegt ad e verði mikil rigning á morgun.*
 thus is likely that becomes much rain tomorrow
 'Thus, it is likely that there will be heavy rain tomorrow.'
- b. *Pvi er sennilegt ad e rigni meira á morgun.*
 thus is likely that rains more tomorrow
 'Thus, it is likely that it will rain more heavily tomorrow.'

Clause-initial empty expletive subjects are particularly frequent in Icelandic subordinate clauses which themselves inherently contain gaps, e.g., relatives, questions, and comparatives, [fn. omitted] although the gap that leads to apparent V/1 order need not be the result of subject extraction" (Maling 1980:189). Some examples from Maling 1980:188f. are given in (42).

(42)

- a. *Hann spurði, hvar e vaeri ennþá ekid vinstra megin. (= (41))*
 he asked where was still driven left side
 'He asked where people still drove on the left side of the road.'
- b. *Bretland er eina landið, þar sem e er ennþá ekid vinstra megin (= (45))*
 Britain is a country where that is still driven left side
 'Britain is a country where people still drive on the left side of the road.'

The fact that Icelandic allows INFL-medial subordinate clauses explains an otherwise puzzling pattern of similarities and differences between Icelandic and Yiddish. As in Yiddish, non-subject traces in Icelandic are barred from topic position in verb-second clauses because they violate the overt topic requirement. I give some relevant examples in (43) (= Zaenen 1980:107, (285d) and Maling and Zaenen 1981:266, (21b)).

(43)

- a. *Vodka er drykkjarfoeng, sem t drekkur Ólafur
 í Rússlandi.
 vodka is the-drink that drinks Olaf-NOM
 in Russia
 Intended meaning:
 'Vodka is the drink that Olaf drinks in Russia.'

- b. *Hverjum heldur þú ad t hafi Ólafur hjálpað?
 who-DAT think you that has Olaf-NOM helped
 Intended meaning:
 'Who do you think that Olaf has helped?'

In contrast to Yiddish, however, subject traces in Icelandic can occupy clause-initial position in instances of extraction out of formally subordinate clauses, in apparent violation of the overt topic requirement. This is shown in (44).

(44)

- Hver_i heldur þu ad _i sé kominn til Reykjavíkur?
 who think you that was come to Reykjavik
 'Who do you think came to Reykjavik?'

Given the independently motivated possibility of analyzing such clauses as not obeying the verb-second constraint, they cease to be an exception to the overt topic requirement.

4.7. Potential sources of innovation

Given the INFL-final phrase structure of the medieval High German from which Yiddish is derived, the question arises how the other syntactic options that are in variation with it in early Yiddish came to be. In this section, I discuss some potential sources of INFL-medial phrase structure and XP-INFL word order.

4.7.1. INFL-medial phrase structure

4.7.1.1. Potential sources

The INFL-medial phrase structure option is a syntactic innovation that Yiddish shares with most varieties of Germanic. One hypothesis concerning its source is that the position of the verb in a subclass of root clauses, namely Su-INFL root clauses, is reanalyzed in early Yiddish as reflecting the underlying position of INFL rather than the

result of verb movement to COMP. The reanalysis in question is indicated schematically in (45).

- (45)
- a. $[_{CP}Su_i \ [_{_CV-infl_j}] \ [_{IP}t_i \dots t_j]]$
 - b. $[_{IP}Su \ [_{_V-infl}] \dots]$

As a result of reanalysis, Su-INFL word order becomes available in subordinate clauses.

This hypothesis assumes that Su-INFL clauses in a verb-second language have a privileged status--an assumption that is consistent with the intuitions of many theoretically naive native speakers, with the distinction drawn by most⁹⁰ 19th-century historical syntacticians between Su-INFL word order as regular and XP-INFL word order as exceptional, and with the tenet of typologists that Su-INFL word order in verb-second languages counts as basic (Greenberg 1966). In recent work in Government-Binding theory, this view has been defended most vigorously by Travis 1984, who argues that there is an asymmetry between Su-INFL and XP-INFL clauses with regard to phrase structure. As we have seen in Chapter 3, Diesing 1988 reformulates Travis's analysis in terms of the A/A-bar parameter.

An objection to this hypothesis is that it fails to extend to cases of change from INFL-final to INFL-medial phrase structure in languages that we have no reason to believe have ever observed the verb-second constraint.⁹¹ According to Koopman 1984:152, fn. 5, such a change seems to have occurred in Vata, a Kru language spoken in West Africa. A more attractive hypothesis, therefore, which covers the change in both Vata and Germanic, is that it is extraposition structures rather than Su-INFL root clauses that are reanalyzed as representing underlying phrase structure. As shown schematically in (46), extraposition can result in word orders that could be derived from an INFL-medial base.

⁹⁰Most, but by no means all. Erdmann 1886:182 (cited in Haider and Prinzhorn 1986:1), for instance, defends a parallel treatment of Su-INFL and XP-INFL clauses.

⁹¹Maurer 1926:157f. also rejects the hypothesis that Su-INFL subordinate clauses arise through the reanalysis of root clauses.

(46)

- a. Su t_i v_j [_iV_j] XP_i
- b. Su [_iV_i] v_i XP

4.7.1.2. INFL-medial phrase structure in German dialects

As mentioned above, German, Dutch and Frisian are all INFL-final (with or without verb raising), and I have found no mention of word orders reflecting INFL-medial phrase structure in Behaghel 1932. However, Maurer 1926, who investigated the position of inflected verbs in subordinate clauses with respect to its diachronic development as well as its synchronic dialectal variability, found that while the great majority of German dialects give evidence of INFL-final phrase structure only, a number of them exhibit variation between INFL-medial and INFL-final phrase structure. Maurer distinguishes two dialect groups: ones that are not in direct contact with Romance or Slavic languages and ones that are. The first group includes Swabian, the dialect of Egerland (in Middle Bavaria on the border to Bohemia) and a number of dialects of Bohemia and Moravia. INFL-medial clauses are attested in Swabian sources from the 1300's on (Maurer 1926:156f.). I give some examples in (47).

(47)

- a. wie mer senn gestern zur Nacht heimkomme
(Swabian, 30)
how we are yesterday to-the night home-come
'when we came home last night'
- b. wenn er waer emal nach Tachau herumgekommen
(Egerland, 56)
if he were once to Tachau around-come
'if he had once come to Tachau'
- c. wei ma sen gestan aumds tsruck khuma
(Bohemia, 58)
how we are yesterday evening back come
'when we came back home last night'
- d. Als wie sie haetten ihn zum Dreschn
bestellt (Bohemia, 58)
as how they had him to-the threshing
hired
'as soon as they had hired him to do the threshing'

The second group includes dialects that are in contact with either Romance, as in the case of Cimbrian (Italian) and Nosnian (Rumanian), or Slavic, as in the case of Silesian (Polish). Maurer 1926 gives no relevant examples from Nosnian; some examples from Cimbrian and Silesian are given in (48) and (49), respectively. Note that the subject-gap examples in (48c-e), while INFL-medial, are unambiguously non-verb-second.⁹²

(48)

- a. von alten Zimbern, wo sen gewest unter
dem Tritte von Krieg, Hunger und Not
(Cimbrian, 63)
of old Cimbrians where are been under
the tread of war hunger and poverty
'of old Cimbrians who were oppressed by war,
hunger and poverty'
- b. Wer weiss, wo und wie die haben gerastet
die erste Nacht ohne eine sichere Herberge
(Cimbrian, 63)
who knows where and how they have rested
the first night without a safe inn
'Who knows where and how they rested the first
night without a safe place to stay?'
- c. Der Berg, wo ist gewest in den alten Zeiten
ein Wald (Cimbrian, 63)
the mountain where is been in the old times
a forest
'the mountain, where in the old days there used
to be a forest'
- d. wo haben genistet die Baeren und die Woelfe
und keine Leute (Cimbrian, 63)
where have nested the bears and the wolves
and no people
'where there lived bears and wolves and no people'
- e. wo regiert der welsche Koenig
(Cimbrian, 82)
where reigns the Italian king
'where the Italian king reigns'

⁹²The position of the subject in these clauses is presumably due to language contact with Italian, which allows subject postposing. Note also the use of the definite article in (48c,d), which is not characteristic of standard German but also probably due to Italian influence.

- f. dass wir sollten halten stark beide Sprachen
 (Cimbrian, 82)
 that we should hold strong both languages
 'that we should keep both languages strong'

(49)

- a. wi se hon bei ons de Bon gebaut
 (Austrian-Silesian, 67)
 how they have by us the railway built
 'when they built the railway here'
- b. Statt dass er haette ein wenig gewartet
 (Silesian, 66)
 instead that he had a little waited
 'instead of waiting a little'
- c. Der Brief, den Bruder hat mich geschrieben
 (Silesian, 83)
 the letter REL brother has me-ACC written
 'the letter that my brother wrote me'

I conclude from the facts presented by Maurer 1926 that the INFL-medial phrase structure option in Yiddish arose independently of language contact with Slavic. This is consistent with the fact that West Yiddish exhibits INFL-medial phrase structure, as do various German dialects which are not in contact with other languages. On the other hand, the higher frequency of INFL-medial subordinate clauses in East Yiddish than in West Yiddish (cf. Tables 4-5 through 4-7) is probably due to language contact with Slavic (or perhaps conversely, to the loss of contact with German). In support of this explanation, it is worth noting that the virtual loss of INFL-final subordinate clauses in East Yiddish in the second half of the 1600's follows closely on the cessation of large-scale Jewish migration between Slavic-speaking and German-speaking territory.

4.7.2. Potential sources of XP-INFL word order

I turn now to potential sources of XP-INFL word order. As we saw in Section 4.5, this word order is essentially absent in West Yiddish. It is also absent from German. Maurer 1926 in his survey of German dialects cites only one example of an XP-INFL

subordinate clause, which I give in (50).⁹³

(50)

Wei affe is de Vode kumme (Egerland, 56)
 how [?] is the father come
 'when Father came [?]'

Thus, XP-INFL word order appears not to occur in German and to have emerged in Yiddish as a result of language contact with Slavic.

It is clear that speakers of Yiddish cannot simply have borrowed the verb-second constraint in subordinate clauses directly, since the Slavic languages are not verb-second, let alone verb-second in subordinate clauses. However, what speakers of East Yiddish could have borrowed from the coterrestrial Slavic languages is topicalization in subordinate clauses, since they all permit it (Steve Franks, pers. comm.). This is illustrated for Polish in (51)-(53).⁹⁴ The topic is underlined.

(51)

- a. Jestem przekonany, że czekoladę Jan lubi najbardziej.
 am convinced that chocolate Jan likes best
 'I am convinced that Jan likes chocolate best.'
- b. Myślę, że do Hiszpanii Marzena pojedzie tego lata.
 I-think that to Spain Marzena goes this summer
 'I think that Marzena is going to Spain this summer.'

⁹³It is worth noting that the infinitive in this example is the unaccusative verb *kommen* 'come.' The word order in (50) is thus perhaps consistent with an analysis in which a verb projection containing the subject undergoes raising. Analogous cases (though admittedly with indefinite or quantified subjects) occur in West Flemish (Haegeman and van Riemsdijk 1986:447), Zurich German (Harry Leder, pers. comm.) and early Yiddish, as shown in (i).

i. ub im am lebn ver etsvs vidr varn
 (Bovo, 289.8)
 if him at-the life were something happened
 'if something had happened to him'

⁹⁴Many thanks are due to Marzena Gronicka and Henry Hiż for the Polish data.

(52)

- a. Zastanawiam się, czy czekoladę Jan lubi najbardziej.
 I-wonder REFL whether chocolate Jan likes best
 'I wonder whether Jan likes chocolate best.'
- b. Zastanawiam się, czy do Hiszpanii Marzena pojedzie tego lata.
 I-wonder REFL whether to Spain Marzena goes this summer
 'I wonder whether Marzena is going to Spain this summer.'

(53)

- Zastanawiam się, kiedy do Hiszpanii Marzena pojedzie.
 I-wonder REFL when to Spain Marzena goes
 'I wonder when Marzena is going to Spain.'

Now we know that in the Germanic languages that are verb-second, topicalization is obligatorily associated with verb fronting. Thus, Taraldsen 1986:18 observes that topicalization in formally subordinate clauses in Norwegian, while not common, invariably goes hand in hand with verb movement when it does occur. This is shown by the contrast in (54) (= Taraldsen's (48) and (49)).

(54)

- a. Vi tenkte at pengen ville han ikke ha.
 TOPIC V-INFL
 we thought that money would he not have
 'We thought that he wouldn't have any money.'
- b. *Vi tenkte at pengen han ikke ville ha.
 TOPIC V-INFL
 we thought that money he not would have
 'We thought that he wouldn't have any money.'

Given this association, borrowing topicalization in subordinate clauses would have immediately given rise to verb-second word order in subordinate clauses.⁹⁵ Since verb-second subordinate clauses appear to be at least marginally possible in all Germanic languages that exhibit INFL-medial phrase structure, it may be that verb-second

⁹⁵This hypothesis was suggested to me by Anthony Kroch.

subordinate clauses already occurred in early Yiddish at a very low frequency. The rise of verb-second subordinate clauses in East Yiddish under the influence of Slavic would then be comparable to the rise of INFL-medial phrase structure (cf. Section 7.1.2) and subject postposing (cf. Chapter 2.2.3) in that the productivity, rather than the existence, of these syntactic phenomena would be due to Slavic influence.

This hypothesis is attractive because it provides a straightforward explanation for the difference between West and East Yiddish. However, it does not capture the syntactic similarity between Yiddish on the one hand and Icelandic, Old French and Kashmiri on the other, since we have no reason to believe that any of the second group of languages was in contact with a language that permits topicalization in subordinate clauses. Therefore, an alternative hypothesis concerning the generalization of the verb-second constraint in Yiddish is that Yiddish speakers borrowed verb-first word order from Slavic and interpreted its productivity as evidence for the ability of INFL to assign case rightward--a precondition for verb-second word order in subordinate clauses. Some examples of verb-first clauses are given for Polish in (55).⁹⁶ The inflected verb is underlined.

(55)

- a. Pojedzie do Hiszpanii tego lata Marzena.
goes to Spain this summer Marzena
'It's Marzena who's going to Spain this summer.'
- b. Marzena nudzila się bardzo znudzona zeszlego
lata. Postanowil jej moz pojechac
z nia tego lata do Hiszpanii.
Marzena felt REFL very bored last
summer decided her husband to-go
with her this summer to Spain
'Marzena felt very bored last summer. So her
husband decided to go with her to Spain
this summer.'

⁹⁶ According to Marzena Gronicka, the verb-first word order in (55a,b) is characteristic of vernacular rather than written Polish, precisely the variety that Yiddish speakers would have been in contact with.

- c. Zastanawiam się, czy pojedzie Mary
do Hiszpanii tego lata.
I-wonder REFL whether goes Mary
to Spain this summer
'I wonder whether Mary is going to Spain
this summer.'

In Icelandic, the rightward case assignment option appears to be a retention from early Germanic (Sigurdsson 1989:18, fn. 1) rather than due to language contact. In Old French, on the other hand, we saw in Chapter 3.3.1.2 that there is reason to believe that rightward case assignment may be due to language contact with Celtic. For the time being, the availability of rightward case assignment in Kashmiri must remain a puzzle, since "[a]ll geographically contiguous languages ... have SOV word order in all classes of clauses" (Hook and Manaster-Ramer 1985:54).

4.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, I briefly recapitulate the findings of this chapter. Having distinguished between three word order types in early Yiddish subordinate clauses (namely, INFL-final, Su-INFL and XP-INFL), I argued on the basis of a combination of structural and quantitative evidence that instances of Su-INFL word order largely reflect INFL-medial phrase structure, and I showed further that some Su-INFL clauses in early Yiddish require a non-verb-second analysis.

I showed that variation between the first two clause types (INFL-final and Su-INFL) is already present in the earliest Yiddish sources at my disposal, which date from the early 1400's. Over the next few centuries, the relative frequency of Su-INFL subordinate clauses rises at the expense of INFL-final ones in both West and East Yiddish--a shift in usage that reflects the gradual replacement of INFL-final by INFL-medial phrase structure. I suggested that INFL-medial phrase structure, for which we find evidence in most varieties of Germanic, including some dialects of German, and which has become categorical in the Scandinavian languages and English, is an internally motivated syntactic innovation that arises through the reanalysis of structures derived from an INFL-final base by extraposition. The higher frequency of Su-INFL

subordinate clauses in East Yiddish than in West Yiddish, however, is likely to be due to language contact with Slavic. The third word order type (XP-INFL) emerges in the first half of the 1600's in East Yiddish. I argued that this innovation is the result of language contact with Slavic, since West Yiddish does not share it with East Yiddish, and I suggested two (mutually compatible) hypotheses concerning its origin.

Finally, I showed that until the loss of INFL-final phrase structure in the early 1800's, Yiddish allowed variation among three distinct syntactic subsystems. Variation among precisely the same subsystems is found in medieval Scandinavian. Moreover, a number of instances of variation between two syntactic subsystems have been described in the recent literature. The occurrence of such synchronic variation is difficult to reconcile with the often-held view that syntactic change is motivated by structural economy--a view that is also inconsistent with the chronology of the syntactic changes presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

Topicalization in subordinate clauses in German and Dutch

This chapter addresses some questions concerning the distribution of clause-initial non-subjects in subordinate clauses in the languages most closely related to Yiddish--namely, German and Dutch. In general, unlike Yiddish, neither German nor Dutch permits non-subject arguments to occupy the initial position of such clauses. This is illustrated for German by the contrast between the root clauses in (1) and the corresponding subordinate clauses in (2). Except where otherwise noted, the Dutch facts are analogous to the German ones.

(1)

- a. Diesen Apfel will die boese Stiefmutter Schneewittchen anbieten.
this apple wants the evil stepmother
Snow-White offer
'This apple, the evil stepmother wants to offer to Snow White.'
- b. Geld haben die Kinder heute nicht dabei.
money have the children today not there-with
'The children don't have any money on them today.'

(2)

- a. *Ich wusste nicht, dass diesen Apfel die boese Stiefmutter Schneewittchen anbieten will.
I knew not that this apple the evil stepmother Snow-White offer wants
Intended meaning:
'I didn't know that the evil stepmother wants to offer this apple to Snow White.'
- b. *Vergiss nicht, dass Geld die Kinder heute nicht dabei haben.
forget not that money the children today not there-with have
Intended meaning:
'Don't forget that the children don't have money on them today.'

In Section 5.1, I show that a derivation of the subordinate clauses in (2) involving adjunction of topics to IP cannot be ruled out on syntactic grounds, and I argue that the word order in these clauses should be ruled out by appealing to a discourse constraint requiring presupposed constituents to precede focused constituents within IP. In Section 5.2, I discuss substitution analyses of topicalization. I argue that movement of the topic into Spec(IP)--that is, topicalization as defined in Yiddish--is ruled out in German and Dutch by the same word order constraint that rules out adjunction to IP. In order to rule out movement of the topic into Spec(CP)--that is, topicalization as in root clauses--I propose a licensing condition according to which topics in a verb-second language must be within the c-command domain of the inflected verb. I then discuss two apparent counterexamples to the proposed licensing condition and show that there are alternative analyses of them that are consistent with it. Finally, in Section 5.3, I present quantitative evidence showing that topicalization in INFL-final subordinate clauses was ruled out in early Yiddish just as it is in German and Dutch.

5.1. Topicalization as adjunction to IP

In this section, I present evidence from the distribution of infinitival complements that German (though not Dutch) allows adjunction to IP. I then argue, following Lenerz 1977, that the failure of NP and PP arguments to undergo adjunction in a parallel way is due to discourse rather than syntactic constraints.

5.1.1. Adjunction of infinitival complements

In addition to remaining in their underlying position and extraposing as in English, infinitival complements in German can adjoin leftward to IP (such adjunction is ruled out in Dutch) (Grewendorf 1986:416). The three word order possibilities in question are

illustrated in (3). I have enclosed the infinitival complement in brackets.⁹⁷

(3)

- a. ?Du weisst, dass ich ihr [solche Geruechte zu verbreiten] niemals erlauben wuerde.
you know that I her such rumors
to spread never permit would
'You know that I would never permit her to spread
such rumors.'
- b. Du weisst, dass ich ihr niemals erlauben wuerde,
[solche Geruechte zu verbreiten].
you know that I her never permit would
such rumors to spread
'You know that I would never permit her to spread
such rumors.'
- c. Du weisst, dass [solche Geruechte zu verbreiten]
ich ihr niemals erlauben wuerde.
you know that such rumors to spread
I her never permit would.
'You know that I would never permit her to spread
such rumors.'

Infinitival complements as in (3c) can be shown to be adjoined to IP (Grewendorf 1986) rather than being base-generated in clause-initial position (Haider 1984). One strong piece of evidence for the adjunction analysis that is not discussed in Grewendorf 1986 comes from the interpretation of sentence negation. In German infinitival complementation structures in which the complement occupies its base-generated

⁹⁷ Adjoined infinitival complements contrast with other constituents in that they freely precede pronominal subjects, which in general occupy clause-initial position in subordinate clauses (Grewendorf 1986:426; contra van Riemsdijk 1985:187, fn. 5). This is shown by the contrast between (3c) and (i).

- i. *Du weisst, dass gestern ich ihr begegnet bin.
you know that yesterday I her met am
Intended meaning:
'You know that yesterday, I met her.'

In earlier forms of German, the word order in (i) appears to have been more acceptable than it is in the modern language (Behaghel 1932:47, para. 1462). This fact is presumably related to the availability of non-verb-second topicalization structures in medieval German and Dutch analogous to those in English. The acceptability of (3c) makes it impossible to rule out the word order in (i) by assuming that unstressed personal pronouns obligatorily cliticize onto COMP in German. The acceptability of (3c) is also problematic for attempts to extend to German the proposal that nominative case in Swedish is assigned to the subject from COMP under adjacency (Platzack 1986:40ff.).

position, sentential negation, which occurs within the most deeply embedded clause, is ambiguous between taking scope over its own clause, as in (4a),⁹⁸ or over the matrix clause, as in (4b) (Kroch and Santorini 1987, our (6)). The infinitival complement is enclosed in brackets.

(4)

- a. dass ich [die Arbeit nicht mit Verspaetung einzureichen] versuche
that I the paper not with delay
in-to-hand try
'that I am trying not to hand in the paper late'
- b. dass ich [die Arbeit nicht mit Verspaetung einzureichen] wage
that I the paper not with delay
in-to-hand dare
'that I do not dare to hand in the paper late'

In what follows, I will refer to the scope of negation in (4a) and (4b) as narrow and wide, respectively. Though negation prefers to take wide scope in these structures, it is possible to construct cases in which wide scope is virtually unavailable, as in (5) (= our (7)).

(5)

- dass Julia [ihren Spinat nicht essen zu muessen]
versucht
that Julia her spinach not eat to have-to
tries
'that Julia is trying not to have to eat her
spinach'

In order to account for these facts, Kroch and Santorini 1987 proposed that sentence negation can escape out of its clause by quantifier raising (May 1985) when the clause is governed by the verb which subcategorizes for it, and we assumed that negation can take scope over a clause that it c-commands after quantifier raising. These assumptions correctly lead us to expect that in infinitival complements that have undergone movement to A-bar positions, sentence negation can only take narrow scope. The contrast with respect to the scope of negation between infinitival complements *in situ*

⁹⁸This interpretation of negation is not available in Dutch.

and in A-bar positions is illustrated for extraposition in (6) and (7). Analogous examples can readily be constructed for instances of leftward movement such as topicalization or pied piping in relative clauses.⁹⁹

(6)

- a. dass er [keinen Wein zu trinken] versuchen
 darf (non-extraposed)
 that he no wine to drink try
 may

Wide scope reading preferred:

'that he is not permitted to try to drink
 any wine'

Narrow scope reading dispreferred but available:

'that he is permitted to try not to drink
 any wine'

- b. dass er [den Roman nicht zu lesen] versuchen
 darf (non-extraposed)
 that he the novel not to read try
 may

Wide scope reading preferred:

'that he is not permitted to try to read
 the novel'

Narrow scope reading dispreferred but available:

'that he is permitted to try not to read
 the novel'

(7)

- a. dass er versuchen darf, [keinen Wein zu trinken]
 (extraposed)
 that he try may no wine to drink

Only narrow scope reading available:

'that he is permitted to try not to drink
 any wine'

- b. dass er versuchen darf, [den Roman nicht zu lesen]
 (extraposed)
 that he try may the novel not to read

Only narrow scope reading available:

'that he is permitted to try not to read
 the novel'

⁹⁹Examples containing indefinite negative elements like *kein* 'no' cannot be constructed for the pied piping case due to the semantics of relative clauses.

In (8), I illustrate the interpretation of negation for clauses structurally parallel to (3c).

(8)

- a. Du weisst doch, dass [keine Geruechte zu verbreiten] sie sich einfach weigern wuerde.
 you know PART that no rumors to spread she REFL simply refuse would
 Wide scope reading unavailable:
 'You know that she wouldn't simply refuse to spread rumors.'
 Only narrow scope reading available:
 'You know that she would simply refuse not to spread any rumors.'
- b. Du weisst doch, dass [solche Geruechte nicht zu verbreiten] sie sich einfach weigern wuerde.
 you know PART that such rumors not to spread she REFL simply refuse would
 Wide scope reading unavailable:
 'You know that she wouldn't simply refuse to spread such rumors.'
 Only narrow scope reading available:
 'You know that she would simply refuse not to spread such rumors.'

In contrast to instances of *in situ* complementation, but parallel to instances of A-bar movement, negation must take narrow scope in (8). This shows that clause-initial infinitival complements as in (3c) and (8) must have undergone adjunction to IP.

5.1.2. Adjunction of other categories

Given the possibility of adjoining infinitival complements to IP, the question arises how to bar such adjunction in the case of other categories--in particular, in the case of NP's--since such adjunction would result in the unacceptable word orders in (2). One approach that comes to mind is to relate the impossibility of adjoining NP arguments leftward to the impossibility of moving them to the right, as shown in (9), presumably in terms of a constraint on the transmission of case via chains.

(9)

- *Ich wusste nicht, dass die böse Stiefmutter
 Schneewittchen anbot diesen Apfel.
 I knew not that the evil stepmother
 Snow-White offered this apple
 Intended meaning:
 'I didn't know that the evil stepmother
 offered Snow White this apple.'

This approach is not very plausible, however, since the case transmission constraint would be freely violated in verb-second clauses. Further, Weerman 1989:19f. observes that movement of focused NP's to the right of the inflected verb is actually possible in subordinate clauses in Dutch, and Felix 1985 has shown for German that NP arguments can undergo leftward adjunction to VP, from where they license parasitic gaps. This latter fact is shown by the contrast in (10) (cf. Felix's (50d)).

(10)

- a. Gestern hat die Firma [vpHans_i [vpohne
 ihn_i/e_i zu verstaendigen t_i entlassen]].
 yesterday has the company Hans without
 him to tell fired
 'Yesterday, the company fired Hans without
 telling him.'
- b. Gestern hat die Firma ohne ?ihn_i/*e_i zu
 verstaendigen Hans_i entlassen.
 yesterday has the company without to
 tell Hans fired
 Intended meaning:
 'Yesterday, the company fired Hans without
 telling him.'

Finally, this approach offers no explanation for why predicate adjectives and PP arguments, which do not need to receive case, behave in a parallel way to NP arguments, as shown by the contrast between (11) and (12).

(11)

- a. Langweilig wird dieses Buch erst ganz zum
 Schluss.
 boring becomes this book only all to-the
 end
 'This book becomes boring only toward the very end.'

- b. Ins Fenster haette der Baecker den Kuchen
 stellen sollen.
 into-the window had-SUBJ the baker the cake
 put should
 'The baker should have put the cake in the window.'

(12)

- a. *Ich finde, dass langweilig dieses Buch erst ganz
 zum Schluss wird.
 I find that boring this book only all
 to-the end becomes
 Intended meaning:
 'I find that this book becomes boring only
 toward the very end.'

- b. *Ich finde, dass ins Fenster der Baecker
 den Kuchen haette stellen sollen.
 I find that in-the window the baker
 the cake had-SUBJ put should
 Intended meaning:
 'I think that the baker should have put the
 cake in the window.'

A more plausible alternative is to allow the adjunction of arguments to IP in the syntax, but to assume, following Lenerz 1977, that the output of adjunction is subject to a constraint which requires presupposed constituents to precede focused constituents within IP. In general, subjects are presupposed and will therefore precede other arguments. However, if the subject is the focus of a clause (or a quantified NP), this approach leads one to expect that other constituents, including arguments, should be able to precede it. This expectation is borne out, as shown in (13). The subject is underlined.

(13)

- Es ist klar, dass dieses Buch bis morgen alle
 gelesen haben muessen.
 it is clear that this book until tomorrow all
 read have must
 'It is clear that by tomorrow, everyone must have
 read this book.'

This solution is consistent with the fact that adverbial and PP modifiers can precede subjects (at least full NP subjects), even ones that are not in focus position, as shown in (14). Here, I have underlined the pre-subject constituent.

(14)

- a. Es ist klar, dass bis morgen alle dieses Buch gelesen haben muessen.
it is clear that until tomorrow all this book read have must
'It is clear that by tomorrow, everyone must have read this book.'
- b. Ich weiss nicht, wie in Zukunft das Institut mit solchen Schwierigkeiten fertigwerden will.
I know not how in future the institute with such difficulties ready-become wants
'I don't know how the institute wants to deal with such difficulties in the future.'

5.2. Topicalization as substitution

In this section, I first show that Spec(IP) is an available structural position in INFL-final clauses in German, and I take the position that while topicalization--defined, as in Yiddish, as movement of a non-subject into Spec(IP)--is syntactically possible in INFL-final subordinate clauses, it is ruled out by the same discourse constraint that rules out the adjunction of topics to IP. I then discuss topicalization as substitution into Spec(CP)--that is, topicalization as in root clauses--which must also be ruled out in formally subordinate clauses. I propose to do so by imposing a locality constraint on topics which requires them to be within the c-command domain of the inflected verb in verb-second languages. Finally, I discuss some apparent counterevidence to the proposed constraint from Bavarian and Dutch.

5.2.1. Substitution into Spec(IP)

One apparently promising way of ruling out examples like (2) is to adopt and extend the approach to phrase structure advocated by Fukui and Speas 1986, which requires syntactic positions to be licensed independently of phrase structure rules. Fukui and Speas distinguish between the lexical categories N, A, V and P on the one hand and the functional categories INFL, COMP and DET on the other. The latter assign so-called F-features, which include nominative case, genitive case and [+wh]. Fukui and

Speas argue that specifier positions are licensed if and only if the heads associated with them have an F-feature to discharge. For instance, Spec(IP) in English is licensed by the fact that INFL needs to discharge nominative case to the left; as a result, English has a structural subject position. In German (which Fukui and Speas do not discuss), INFL assigns nominative case to the left, as in English. But since the phrase structure of German is INFL-final rather than INFL-medial as in English, it might be argued that INFL in German is able to discharge nominative case to subjects in their underlying VP-internal position. In that case, Spec(IP) would not be licensed, and there would be no phrase structure position for either subjects or topics to move into. As a result, topicalization in subordinate clauses would be ruled out as desired.

Simple and appealing as this proposal may seem, there is evidence against the assumption on which it rests--namely, that specifier positions must be licensed by the presence of F-features. Heycock 1989 points out that Fukui and Speas's approach leads one to expect sentences as in (15) (= her (2e)) to be grammatical in English, since a subject in such clauses is licensed neither by thematic considerations nor by the requirement that nominative case be discharged.

(15)

*It is important to appear that senators are sincere.

However, such sentences are clearly ill-formed. Following Rothstein 1983, Heycock argues that sentences like (15) are ungrammatical because while a subject position is required by a syntactic principle of predication, there is no appropriately licensed empty category in English to fill it. In particular, PRO cannot be expletive, *pro* is not available, and the trace of the lexical expletive which occupies the matrix subject position would not be properly governed.

The German counterparts of (15) are ruled out as well, as illustrated in (16). The examples show that whether the raising complement is extraposed or not is irrelevant.

(16)

- a. *dass (es) wichtig ist zu scheinen, dass Senatoren
 aufrichtig sind
 that it important is to appear that senators
 sincere are
 Intended meaning:
 'that it is important for it to appear that senators
 are sincere.'

- b. *dass (es) zu scheinen wichtig ist, dass Senatoren
 aufrichtig sind
 that it to seem important is that senators
 sincere are
 Intended meaning:
 'that it is important for it to appear that senators
 are sincere.'

Presumably, the reason that the sentences in (16) are ruled out is the same as in English: there is no appropriate empty category to fill the subject position required by Rothstein's predication principle. Note that while expletive *pro* is possible in German, in contrast to English, it needs to be licensed by finite INFL (cf. Safir 1985:206)--a condition that is not met in (16).

The ungrammaticality of (15) and (16) shows that Spec(IP) is required in German even in the absence of licensing F-features, contrary to Fukui and Speas's view. Thus, its unavailability as a landing site for topicalization is surprising if INFL is able to assign nominative case directly to VP-internal positions. I propose, therefore, that topics in Spec(IP) should be ruled out by appealing to the discourse constraint that is independently motivated by the necessity of ruling out the adjunction of topics to IP.

5.2.2. Substitution into Spec(CP)

Even if Spec(IP) cannot function as a topic position in German, we might still expect Spec(CP) to do so, just as it does in root clauses. However, sentences like (17) are unacceptable in all varieties of German--even in Bavarian, which allows doubly-filled COMP structures (Fanselow 1987:64, his (67) and (68)).

(17)

- a. *Ich glaube nicht, die Franca dass du kennst.
 I believe not the Franca that you know
 Intended meaning:
 'I don't believe that you know Franca.'
- b. *Es ist nicht wahrscheinlich, die Franca dass
 geheiratet hat.
 it is not probable the Franca that
 married has
 Intended meaning:
 'It is not probable that Franca has married.'

The ungrammaticality of (17) shows that topicalization in German (and in verb-second languages more generally) depends not only on the availability of a structural landing site, but also on the topic remaining within the c-command domain of the inflected verb. I state this requirement as the licensing condition in (18).¹⁰⁰

(18)

Licensing condition on topicalization:

In a verb-second language, the inflected verb must c-command the topic.

I assume the definition of c-command in terms of minimal phrasal projection given in (19).

¹⁰⁰This condition is intended to have an effect equivalent to a generalization proposed by Weerman 1989:65, "[t]he specifier of C can only serve as a landing site for Wh-phrases (which may be empty or not) and never for other XP-s." It is not clear to me whether Weerman's generalization, unlike the licensing condition in (18), is intended as a universal. If so, there is at least *prima facie* evidence against it. First, structures as in (17) occur in modern Greek, as illustrated in (i) (Philippaki-Warburton 1987:297, her (30)), which she argues has the structure in (ii).

- i. perimena o janis pos tha efevje.
 I-expected the-NOM John that FUT he-left
 'I expected that John would leave.'
 ii. perimena [CPo janis [Cpos] [IPtha efevje]]

Second, the English concessive construction illustrated in (iii) involves movement of non-wh constituents into Spec(CP).

- iii. I can't bring myself to admire Thatcher, intelligent
 though she may be.

(19)

Definition of c-command:

A c-commands B if the phrasal projection of A, AP, dominates B and there is no phrasal projection XP such that AP dominates XP.

In root clauses, the inflected verb moves into COMP and licenses topics in Spec(CP). In formally subordinate clauses like (17), on the other hand, movement of the inflected verb is blocked by the complementizer. The c-command domain of the inflected verb is thus restricted to IP and Spec(CP) is unavailable as the topic position. As I have stated it, the licensing condition in (18) concerns only the hierarchical relation between the topic and the inflected verb of a clause. I assume that the linear order of the topic and the inflected verb follows from a discourse constraint requiring the topic to precede the remainder of its clause, which unlike the licensing condition is shared by verb-second and non-verb-second languages alike.

The licensing condition in (18) is consistent with the word order facts from Norwegian discussed in Chapter 4.7.2 (Taraldsen 1986:9,18) and analogous facts from Swedish (Holmberg 1986:109ff.). In these languages, the verb of a subordinate clause in general remains in its underlying position within VP rather than moving to INFL. As we saw, however, topicalization in formally subordinate clauses requires the inflected verb to be adjacent to the topic. The relevant Norwegian evidence is repeated here for convenience as (20) (= Taraldsen's (48) and (49)).

(20)

a. Vi tenkte at pengen ville han ikke ha.
 TOPIC V-INFL

we thought that money would he not have
 'We thought that he wouldn't have any money.'

b. *Vi tenkte at pengen han ikke ville ha.
 TOPIC V-INFL

we thought that money he not would have
 Intended meaning:

'We thought that he wouldn't have any money.'

The adjacency of the topic and the inflected verb in (20a) shows that the inflected verb has moved from within VP to INFL, from where it can c-command the topic.

5.2.3. Apparent counterevidence

In this subsection, I present apparent counterevidence from Bavarian and Dutch to the licensing condition on topicalization proposed in (18), and I show that there are plausible alternative analyses of the data that are consistent with it.

5.2.3.1. Bavarian

In contrast to standard German, Bavarian allows the word order variants of (17) that are given in (21) (Bayer 1983-84:213; Fanselow 1987:64, his (69) and (70)).¹⁰¹

(21)

- a. Die Franca dass du kennst glaube ich nicht.
the Franca that you know believe I not
'I don't believe that you know Franca.'
- b. Die Franca dass geheiratet hat ist nicht wahrscheinlich.
the Franca that married has is not likely
'It is not likely that Franca has married.'

Fanselow 1987:64ff. relates the availability of sentences like (21) to the availability in Bavarian of doubly-filled COMP constructions as in (22) (cf. his (78)-(80)).¹⁰²

(22)

- a. Ich frage mich, wer dass Maria heiraten koennte.
I ask REFL who that Maria marry could
'I wonder who could marry Maria.'
- b. der Mann, der wo Pferde stehlen will
the man who where horses steal wants
'the man that wants to steal horses'

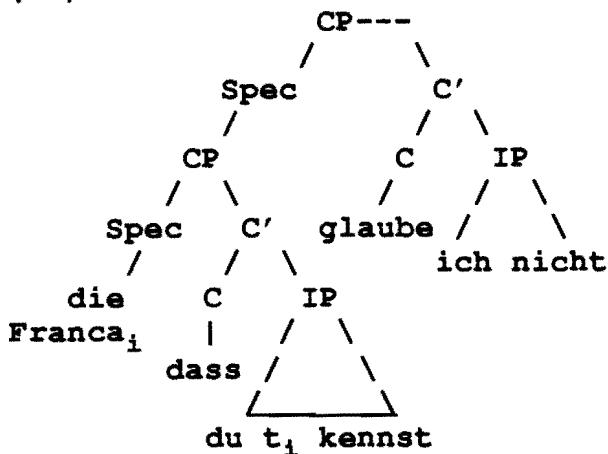
Accordingly, he gives the sentence in (21a) the analysis in (23) (cf. his (72)).¹⁰³

¹⁰¹The sentences in (21) do not reflect Bavarian phonology.

¹⁰²The doubly-filled COMP structures in (22) involve *wh*-movement, which I take not to be subject to the licensing condition on topicalization proposed above. Evidence that topicalization and *wh*-movement are (structurally) distinct comes from the occurrence of topicalization in subordinate *wh*-clauses in Yiddish, Icelandic (Thrainsson 1986) and English (Baltin 1982).

¹⁰³For expository reasons, I have slightly modified Fanselow's representation. In particular, I have replaced his S? and S' by C' and CP, respectively.

(23)



In (23), the topic of the entire clause is the subordinate clause. The topic of the subordinate clause in turn is *die Franca*, which violates the licensing condition in (18) since it is not c-commanded by the inflected verb.

Given the supposed parallelism between (21) and (22), the ungrammaticality of (17), repeated here for convenience as (24), is surprising.

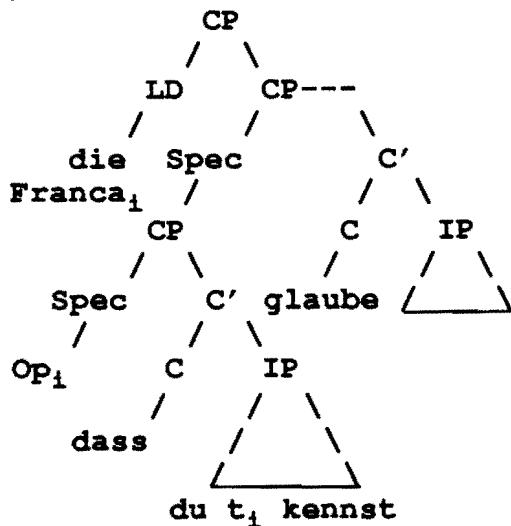
(24)

- a. *Ich glaube nicht, die Franca dass du kennst.
I believe not the Franca that you know
Intended meaning:
'I don't believe that you know Franca.'
- b. *Es ist nicht wahrscheinlich, die Franca dass
geheiratet hat.
it is not probable the Franca that
married has
Intended meaning:
'It is not probable that Franca has married.'

Fanselow 1987:65 attributes this ungrammaticality to the inability of constituents in Spec(CP) to receive an appropriate operator interpretation in subordinate contexts. In order to derive the contrast between (21) and (24), he stipulates that in Bavarian, unlike standard German, an index percolation mechanism allows the index associated with the operator in a matrix Spec(CP) to trickle down to the Spec(CP) of a subordinate clause just in case the subordinate clause occupies the matrix Spec(CP).

Fanselow's index percolation analysis is not the only conceivable one. The contrast between (21) and (24) is also consistent with an analysis according to which the clause-initial constituent occupies a left-dislocated position (indicated by LD), as shown in (25).¹⁰⁴

(25)



In (25), the topic is not *die Franca*, but rather the *dass*-clause, which is within the c-command domain of the inflected verb of the matrix clause (*glaube*), in conformity with the licensing condition in (18). The correlation in Bavarian between the availability of the word order in (21) and doubly-filled COMP constructions as in (22) is captured by assuming that the Spec(CP) position of the subordinate clause in (25) is filled by the null topic discussed for standard German in Chapter 3.2.1.3.¹⁰⁵ It is this category, rather than the left-dislocated constituent, that locally binds the trace in the subordinate clause.

The left-dislocation analysis is conceptually superior to Fanselow's on two counts. First, consider the sentences in (26), which function as the counterparts of (21) in those

¹⁰⁴I thank Anthony Kroch for suggesting the possibility of a left-dislocation analysis. A similar analysis of this construction is proposed by Felix 1985:184.

¹⁰⁵In order for this analysis to go through, I must assume that the null topic is a *wh*-operator rather than a true topic.

varieties of German that do not permit doubly-filled COMP constructions.¹⁰⁶

(26)

- a. Die Franca, dass du die kennst,
glaube ich nicht.
the Franca that you her-DEM know
believe I not
'Franca, I don't believe that you know her.'
- b. Die Franca, dass die geheiratet hat,
ist nicht wahrscheinlich.
the Franca that she-DEM married has
is not likely
'Franca, it is not likely that she has married.'

Unlike Fanselow's analysis, the left-dislocation analysis allows us to treat the functionally equivalent structures in (21) and (26) in a structurally uniform way. Second, the left-dislocation analysis eliminates the need for an index percolation mechanism and succeeds in completely reducing the availability of (21) in Bavarian to the availability of doubly-filled COMP structures in that dialect.

A phenomenon related to (21) occurs in Bavarian relative clauses like (27) (Felix 1985:177, cf. his (13)). I have underlined the inflected verb of the relative clause.

(27)

- der Wein, den₁ wenn ich t₁ trink, krieg
ich Kopfweh
the wine whom when I drink get
I headache
'the wine that I get a headache from when
I drink it'

In striking contrast to other formally subordinate clauses in German, INFL-final word

¹⁰⁶ Left-dislocation structures parallel to (26) occur in Yiddish as well, as shown in (i).

i. Un a foni, az me heyst im, tut er.
(Royte Pomerantsen, 62)
and a Russian-soldier, if one orders him, does he
'And a Russian soldier, whatever he is given orders
to do, he does.'

It is worth noting that Yiddish left-dislocation structures, unlike German ones, contain personal rather than demonstrative pronouns. This difference between Yiddish and German is probably related to the fact that Yiddish, unlike German, does not allow null objects in topic position (cf. Chapter 3.1).

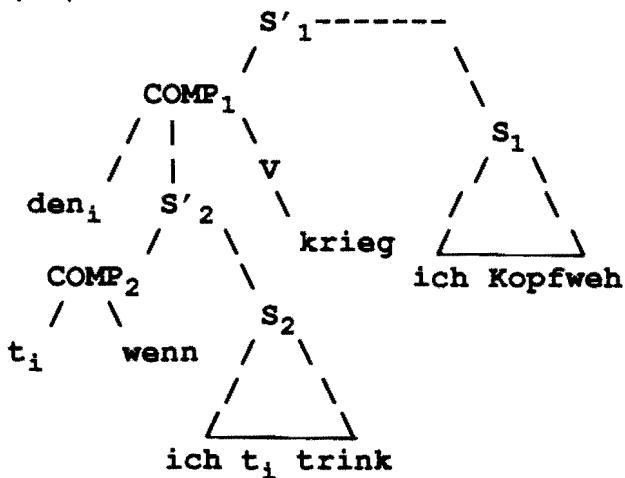
order in such relative clauses is ruled out. This is shown in (28) (Felix 1985:176, cf. his (10)). Again, I have underlined the relevant inflected verb.

(28)

*der Wein, den_i wenn ich t_i trink, ich
 Kopfweh krieg
 the wine whom when I drink I
 headache get
 'the wine that I get a headache from when
 I drink it'

The analysis that Felix 1985:182 proposes for the relative clauses in (27) is illustrated in (29). The relative pronoun moves twice: once from its underlying position within S_2 to a position in $COMP_2$ where it immediately precedes the complementizer *wenn*, and then from $COMP_2$ to a position immediately dominated by $COMP_1$. Felix 1985:180 relates the second instance of movement to a constraint according to which relative pronouns must occupy the COMP closest to the head of the relative clause.

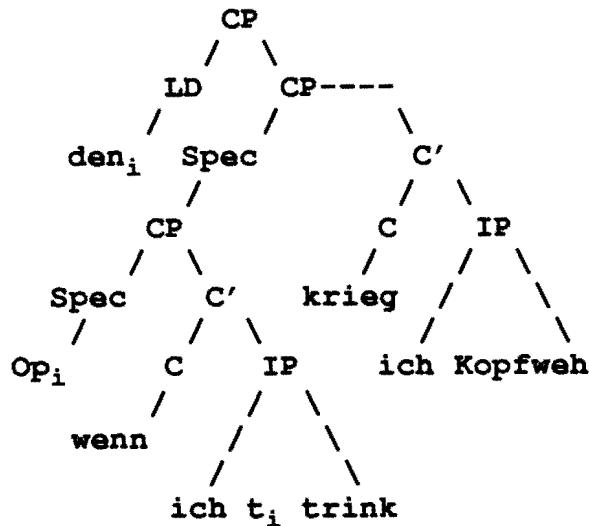
(29)



Unlike (23), the representation in (29) does not violate the licensing condition in (18), since the trace of the relative pronoun in $COMP_2$ is the trace of a *wh*-operator (cf. (22)). Nevertheless, there are reasons to reject the analysis embodied in (29). Apart from the unorthodox ternary-branching structure of $COMP_1$, it is unclear given this analysis why the inflected verb *krieg* undergoes fronting rather than remaining in clause-final position (Santorini 1987:264). Rather, what the contrast between (27) and (28)

suggests is that the sequence introduced by *wenn* has the structure of a root clause and that the relative pronoun again occupies a left-dislocated position (indicated by LD), as shown in (30).

(30)



5.2.3.2. Dutch

Dutch allows exclamations of the type illustrated in (31) (den Besten 1983:52,62, Weerman 1989:66).¹¹

(31)

- a. Vaak dat/ of je tevergeefs gekomen bent!
 often that whether you in-vain come are
 'How often you came for nothing.'

¹¹For the examples in (31a,b), cf. Weerman's (128a,b); (31c) = den Besten's (16), (62a). Dutch also allows *wh*-exclamations corresponding to (31), as shown in (i)-(iii). The *wh*-counterparts of (31a,b,) are given by Weerman 1989:66; for the *wh*-counterpart of (31c), I am indebted to Jack Hoeksema, pers. comm.

- i. Hoe vaak dat/ of je tevergeefs gekomen bent!
 how often that whether you in-vain come are
 'How often you came for nothing.'
- ii. Wat een rotzooi dat/ of hij heeft aangericht!
 what a mess that whether he has on-made
 'What a mess he has made.'
- iii. Wat een platen dat ie heeft!
 What a records that he has
 'What a lot of records he has.'

- b. Een rotzooi dat/ of hij heeft aangericht!
 a mess that whether he has on-made
 'What a mess he has made.'
- c. Een platen dat ie heeft!
 a records that he has
 'What a lot of records he has.'

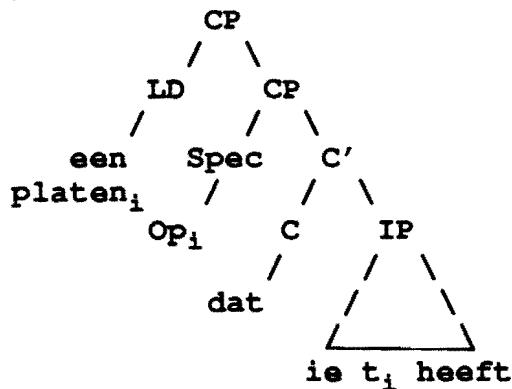
In current terms, den Besten would assign (31c) the phrase structure in (32).

- (32) [CP [Een platen_i] [C_{dat}] [IP [ie t_i heeft]]]

In (32), the topic violates the licensing condition on topicalization by having moved outside the domain of the inflected verb.

Extending the analysis of the Bavarian constructions presented above, I propose that examples like (31) contain a null topic operator bound by a left-dislocated element, as illustrated for (31c) in (33).

- (33)



Just like den Besten's analysis, the analysis in (33) is consistent with the fact that these exclamations occur in Dutch, which allows doubly-filled COMP constructions, but are ruled out in standard German, which does not.

It is worth noting that Weerman 1989:68 explicitly rules out an analysis like that in (33). He argues that the relation between empty topic operators and their antecedents is "probably not determined by a rule of sentence grammar, since the empty phrase [can] refer to something in the immediate non-verbal environment in the case of Topic Drop," and he concludes that "if a connection is not determined by the rules of sentence

grammar, it is by definition not available *within* a sentence, but only when a new sentence starts." Clearly, however, this conclusion is untenable. Consider the discourse in (34) (Lasnik 1976:6, = his example (11)).

(34)

I spoke to Oscar yesterday. He finally realized that Mary is unpopular.

Here, the possible interpretation of *he* as referring to *Oscar* cannot be established on the basis of rules of sentence grammar. Nevertheless, the same interpretation is available within a single sentence, as shown in (35).

(35)

Oscar told me yesterday that he finally realized that Mary is unpopular.

In summary, then, the apparent counterexamples to the licensing condition on topicalization from Bavarian and Dutch, in which a clause-initial non-*wh* constituent is outside the c-command domain of the inflected verb, are consistent with an alternative analysis according to which the clause-initial constituent is in a left-dislocated position and binds an empty null topic with the properties of a *wh*-operator. In the case of the first apparent counterexample, the alternative analysis that I propose is conceptually superior to one that violates the licensing condition on topicalization.

5.3. Comparative evidence from early Yiddish

In this section, I present comparative evidence showing that topicalization was ruled out in INFL-final subordinate clauses in early Yiddish just as it is in German and Dutch. In my analysis, I treated two types of sentences that might be argued to be instances of topicalization on a par with non-topicalized sentences. The first type contains unstressed personal pronouns, reflexive pronouns and unstressed adverbs, which can float to pre-subject position in early Yiddish, as is also true of German and certain dialects of Dutch (Weijnen 1966:327). I give some examples in (36). The pre-subject constituent is underlined.

(36)

- a. vi in yeni in di nav ginumn hitn
(Bovo, 277.7)
how him-ACC those into the ship taken had
'how they had taken him on board the ship'
- b. vi zikh rundelh hut ab girisn (Bovo, 326.8)
how REFL Rundela has off torn
'how Rundela had torn herself free'
- c. da nun als iz bishfn givest (Lev tov, 41)
there now all is created been
'now when everything was created'
- d. dz nit di heylgh nshmh zal zeyn
eyn knekht tsu dem trifh guf (Lev tov, 51)
that not the holy soul shall be
a servant to the impure body
'that the holy soul shall not be a
servant to the impure body'
- e. dem neyart unzri rid vern eyn gin
(Preface to Sefer ha-Magid, 3b)
who-DAT only our talks will in go
'whoever understands what we say'

Second, I did not treat as instances of topicalization clauses whose subjects occupy VP-internal positions because they contain passive or unaccusative verbs (den Besten 1985) or a focused subject. Two examples are given in (37). The subject is underlined.

(37)

- a. vaz unzrim mlkh shbsi fr nism
zejn gishehn (Messiah, 59.2)
what our-DAT king Sabbathai for miracles
are happened
'what kind of miracles happened to our
king Sabbathai'
- b. az nun in der shuln leyt zeynn
di keyn kvnh nit habn in der shuln
in iri tfilh
(Preface to Lev tov, 2r)
that now in the synagogue people are
who no fervor not have in the synagogue
in their prayer
'that there are people in the synagogue
who exhibit no fervor in their prayers
in the synagogue'

In Table 5-1, I give the frequency of topicalization vs. its absence in INFL-final subordinate clauses in early Yiddish.

Table 5-1

**Topicalization vs. its absence in INFL-final
subordinate clauses in early Yiddish**

	N	%
Topicalization	2	0.3
No topicalization	698	99.7
TOTAL	700	

As Table 5-1 shows, topicalization in INFL-final clauses in early Yiddish is virtually not attested. I give the two exceptional instances of topicalization in (38). The topic is underlined.

(38)

- a. der veyl dz keyn fleysh nakh keyn blut
 zi bey zikh habn (Lev tov, 4r)
 since that no meat nor no blood
 they with REFL have
 'since they have no meat or blood with them'
- b. ven oyz pulin di mlmdim nit zeltn tsu eykh
 in ashknz kumn (Ashkenaz un polak, 160)
 if from Poland the teachers not should to you
 in Germany come
 'if teachers didn't come to you in/to Germany
 from Poland'

It is worth noting that the clause-initial PP in (38b) is arguably a subconstituent of the subject. In particular, if we treat noun phrases as maximal projections of Det (Abney 1987), the PP can be analyzed as occupying Spec(DP) (I assume, as above, that specifier positions are generated independently of F-features such as genitive case). If this analysis of (38b) is correct, then (38a) becomes the only exception to the generalization that topicalization is ruled out in INFL-final subordinate clauses.

5.4. Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the unacceptability in German and Dutch of topicalized subordinate clauses as in (2). In Section 5.1, I argued that adjunction to IP of non-subject arguments, while possible in the case of infinitival complements, is in general ruled out due to a discourse constraint requiring presupposed arguments to precede focused ones. In Section 5.2, I appealed to the word order constraint proposed in Section 5.1 to rule out the movement of topics to Spec(IP). In order to rule out the movement of topics to Spec(CP) in formally subordinate clauses, I then proposed a licensing condition according to which the inflected verb must c-command the topic of its clause. I presented two apparent counterexamples to the proposed licensing condition and gave alternative analyses of them that are consistent with the licensing condition. Finally, I presented quantitative evidence showing that the ban against topicalization in INFL-final subordinate clauses in German and Dutch held in early Yiddish as well.

Appendix 1: Sources

A.1. Abbreviations

- C Cowley, A.E. 1929. *A concise catalogue of the Hebrew printed books in the Bodleian Library*. Oxford.
- DL Dinse, Helmut and Sol Liptzin. 1978. *Einfuehrung in die jiddische Literatur*. (Sammlung Metzler M 165, Abteilung D, Literaturgeschichte). Stuttgart: Metzler.
- E Erik, Max. 1979. *Di geshikhte fun der yidisher literatur* (The history of Yiddish literature). New York: Congress for Jewish Culture.
- IDC Catalog of Inter Documentation Company AG, Poststrasse 14, 6300 Zug, Switzerland.
- St Steinschneider, Moritz. 1852-1860 (reprinted 1964). *Catalogus librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*. Berlin.
- Ze Zedner, J. 1867. *Catalogue of the Hebrew books in the British Museum*.
- Zi7 Zinberg, Israel. 1975. *A history of Jewish literature. Volume 7: Old Yiddish literature from its origins to the Haskalah period*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press/New York: KTAV Publishing House.
- Zi9 Zinberg, Israel. 1976. *A history of Jewish literature. Volume 9: Hasidism and Enlightenment (1780-1820)*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press/New York: KTAV Publishing House.

A.2. Primary sources, in chronological order

Information for each source (uncertain information enclosed in square brackets):

1. Date of composition and/or publication.
2. Author.
3. Full title and/or contents.
4. Place of publication.
5. Secondary sources, bibliographical information, additional comments.
6. Dialect and style.

Court testimony. 1. Ca. 1400 to ca. 1700. 2. Various speakers. 3. Court testimony. 4. Originally published in various Hebrew works on questions of law and ethics. 5. Rubashov 1929. 6. Various dialects, vernacular.

Mints. 1. Third quarter of the 1400's. 2. Moses Mints. 3. *Responsum*. 4. Cracow. 5. Excerpt in Bin-Nun 1973, 45-46. Tsherikover 1929, 135-136. 6. West Yiddish, literary.

Bovo. 1. 1507 (published 1541). 2. Elia ha-Levi ben Asher Ashkenazi (Elia Bakur, Elia Levita). 3. *Bovo bukh*. 4. Isny im Allgaeu. 5. Joffe 1949, vol. 1. Smith 1968, vol. 1, 96-317a. C 171 (Prague 1660). St 4960. Zi7 67. Translation of Italian romance *Buovo d'Antona* in rhymed verse (ottava rima). 6. West Yiddish, literary.

Goetz. 1. 1518. 2. Goetz of Fiderholtz. 3. Complaint about his stepfather to the Jewish community of Regensburg. 4. Unpublished. 5. Birnbaum 1979, 159-160. From a photo of the document in Munich: Kreisarchiv, Generalregistratur, Fasz. 1260. 6. West Yiddish, literary.

Anshel. 1. Ca. 1534. 2. Anshel ben Joseph (Asher Leml). 3. Preface to *Mirkevet ha-mishneh* (or *Sefer shel Rabbi Anshel*). 4. [Cracow]. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 169. C 40. DL 30. IDC 91. St 4423. Ze 105 (preface missing). Zi7 49. Preface to

Bible concordance in Hebrew and Yiddish. Not all subordinate clauses extracted due to illegibility of copy. 6. Cracow, literary.

Meineket Rivkah. 1. Ca. 1550 (first published 1607 (Timm) or 1609 (Zi)). 2. Rebecca (Rivke) bath Meir of Tiktin. 3. *Meineket Rivkah*. 4. Unknown. 5. Very brief excerpt in Assaf 1942, 45. Zi7 241, 374. *Muser* literature. Extremely rare (Zi7). 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Shir ha-shirim, preface. 1. 1579. 2. Isaac ben Aaron Prossnitz. 3. Preface to *Sefer shir ha-shirim* (Song of songs). 4. Cracow. 5. C 115, 276. DL 33. IDC 95. St 1212; 5432. Zi7 121. 6. Cracow, literary.

Shir ha-shirim, text. 1. 1579. 2. Isaac Sulkes. 3. *Sefer shir ha-shirim* (Song of songs). 4. Cracow. 5. C 115, 276. DL 33. IDC 95. St 1212; 5432. Zi7 121. Translation with excerpts from Midrash, with a preface by the publisher, Isaac ben Aaron Prossnitz. 6. Cracow, literary.

Officials. 1. 1588. 2. Community officials of Cracow. 3. Letter from the officials of the community to absent community leaders. 4. Unpublished. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 170. Weinryb 1937, 43-67. Only excerpt coded. 6. Cracow, literary.

Megilat Ester, preface. 1. 1589. 2. Isaac ben Aaron Prossnitz. 3. Preface to *Megilat Ester* (Book of Esther). 4. Cracow. 5. C 83. DL 29. IDC 90. St 287; 1225. Zi7 126. 6. Cracow, literary.

Megilat Ester, text. 1. 1589. 2. Leib bar Moses Melir. 3. *Megilat Ester* (Di lange Ester, Lang megile) (Book of Esther). 4. Cracow. 5. C 83. DL 29. IDC 90. St 287; 1225. Zi7 124. Paraphrase of Book of Esther, with a preface by the publisher Isaac ben Aaron Prossnitz. 6. Cracow, literary.

Sam hayyim. 1. 1590. 2. Abraham Apotheker Ashkenazi. 3. *Sam hayyim*. 4. Prague. 5. Excerpts in Assaf 1942, 226-227. C 10. IDC 92. St 4183,1. Ze 30. Zi7 154, 371. Author pharmacist from Ludomir, Volhynia, Poland (now Ukraine) (Zi7).

Edited by Moses ben Shabbethai (C). *Muser* literature. In Hebrew and Yiddish, in rhyme. Not all subordinate clauses extracted due to illegibility of copy. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Court testimony. 1. 1614 (published 1697). 2. Anonymous. 3. Witness's evidence before the Jewish court at Florianow. 4. Frankfurt am Main. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 171-172. C 320. St 5840. Ze 325. First published in Joel Sirkes ben Samuel ha-Levi Jaffe (alias 'Bakh'), *Bayis khudosh*, responsum 57, fol. 37r. Coded together with **Court testimony**. 6. East Yiddish, vernacular.

Letters. 1. 1619. 2. Various authors. 3. Private letters from Prague. 4. Unpublished. 5. Excerpts in Birnbaum 1979, 166-168. Landau and Wachstein 1911. Only excerpts coded. 6. Bohemian, vernacular.

Lev tov, preface. 1. 1620. 2. Isaac ben Eliakum. 3. Preface to *Lev tov* (The good heart). 4. Prague. 5. C 264. DL 59. IDC 88. St 5344,1. Zi7 159. Conflicting information on author: either from Poznan, Poland (C, Zi7) or Prague (Timm, pers. comm.). *Muser* literature. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Lev tov, text. 1. 1620. 2. Isaac ben Eliakum. 3. *Lev tov* (The good heart). 4. Prague. 5. C 264. DL 59. IDC 88. St 5344,1. Zi7 159. Conflicting information on author: either from Poznan, Poland (C, Zi7) or Prague (Timm, pers. comm.). *Muser* literature. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Ha-magid, preface. 1. 1623-1627. 2. Jacob ben Isaac Rabbino Ashkenazi. 3. Preface to *Sefer ha-magid* (The book of the preacher). 4. Lublin. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 170. C 87, 297. DL 34. IDC 85. St 447; 5545,1. Ze 301. Zi7 130. Author from Yanov, Poland (1550-1628). Paraphrase of and commentary on Prophets and Hagiographa, with Hebrew text. Date and place of publication of first edition disputed (Zi7 130): either Prague 1576 (Benjacob, Schulmann) or Lublin 1623-1627 (Staerk and Leitzmann 1928:296). 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Magen Abraham. 1. 1624. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Magen Abraham*. 4. Lublin. 5. C 404. IDC 89. St 3879. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Kine. 1. 1648. 2. Joseph ben Eliezer (Eleazar) Lippmann Ashkenazi of Prossnitz. 3. *Kinh el gzirut hkhilut dk"k akreyni*. Lament concerning the Chmielnitzki persecutions of 1648-1649. 4. [Prague]. 5. M. Weinreich 1928, 198-211. C 329. St 5912. Zi7 279. Author from Prossnitz in Moravia. 6. Moravian, literary.

Messiah. 1. 1666. 2. Jacob ben Benjamin Taussig (Tausk). 3. *Eyn shoyn neyya lid fun msikh* (A beautiful new song of the Messiah). 4. [Amsterdam]. 5. M. Weinreich 1928, 219-252. M. Weinreich n.d., *Tsaytshrift* 1, 158-173. C 306. DL 65. St 3652, 5628. Zi7 282. Author called "Pragensis" (St), "von Prag" (M. Weinreich 1928, 220-221). 6. Bohemian, literary.

Vaad. 1. 1671. 2. Vaad Arba Aratsoth (Council of the Four Lands). 3. Two proclamations. 4. Drafted in Lublin; proclaimed in Yaroslav (Galicia) and elsewhere in Poland. 5. Dubnov 1929b. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Ashkenaz un Polak. 1. Ca. 1675. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Di bshreybung fun ashknz un palk* (The description of the German Jew and the Polish Jew). Mocking poem in verse concerning conflicts between Polish, German and Czech Jews after the persecutions of 1648-1649. 4. Prague. 5. M. Weinreich 1929, 540-551. DL 63. Zi7 296, 375. Author beyond doubt Polish (M. Weinreich 1929). 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Witzenhausen. 1. 1677. 2. Yoslin Witzenhausen. 3. Preface to his Bible translation. 4. Amsterdam. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 162-163. 6. West Yiddish, literary.

Vilna. 1. 1692. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Der Vilner blut-blbul fun 1690* (The Vilna blood-libel case of 1690). 4. Amsterdam. 5. M. Weinreich 1927, 201-220. Author Lithuanian (203, 220: 'zetige' instead of 'azelkhe'). 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Purim-shpil. 1. 1697. 2. Johann Jakob Christian (alias Moses Katz). 3. *Eyn sheyn purim shpil* (A beautiful Purim play). 4. Unknown. 5. Shmeruk 1979, 155-210. Weinryb 1936. DL 56. Recorded for Johann Christof Wagenseil, a Christian scholar and missionary. Author falsely assumed to have taken the surname 'Loeber' (Weinryb

1936:417). Text based on older West Yiddish original (Weinryb 1936:418), about whose author nothing is known. Ms. composed in Altdorf (near Nuernberg). 6. Cracow, literary.

Sarah. 1. First half of 1700's. 2. Sarah bas Tovim. 3. Preface to *El shloyshe sheorim*. 4. Unknown. 5. Excerpts in Niger 1959, 83-85. Zi7 252. Author from Satnov. Body of text *tkhine* (woman's prayer). 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Ellush. 1. 1704. 2. Ellush bath Mordecai Michaels of Sluzk. 3. *Kitsor maavar yabbok*. Translation of a text by Aaron Berechiah. 4. Frankfurt an der Oder. 5. C 2, 187. St 5030. Zi7 242. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Duties. 1. 1716. 2. Isaac ben Moses Israel Schwerin. 3. *Khovos ha-l'vavos* (Duties of the heart). Translation of a work by Bachya ben Joseph ibn Bakuda (Pakuda). 4. Amsterdam. 5. C 55, 272. St 4526, 5397. Ze 73, 375 (Fuerth 1765), 796. Zi7 223. Author from Poznan. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Poznan. 1. 1717. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Di bishreybung fun gzyres kehillah kedoshah Puzna*. Persecution lament in rhymed verse. 4. Berlin. 5. Bassin 1917, vol. 1, 84-86. C 531. Zi7 278. First published in Amsterdam periodical *Israelitische Letterbode* 11, 166. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Zeeb. 1. 1740. 2. Zeeb (Wolf) ben Joseph. 3. *Sefer drises*. 4. Berlin. 5. C 722. St 7165. Ze 789. *Muser* literature. 6. Probably West Yiddish (Timm, pers. comm.), literary.

Teshuat. 1. 1742-1745. 2. Khaim Alshech. 3. Preface to *Teshuat Israel*. 4. Fuerth. 5. Shatzky 1928. Zi7 232. Translator rich merchant from Lublin, who translated three apologetic documents concerning blood libel while in Germany. 6. East Yiddish, assimilationist.

Moses. 1. Ca. 1750. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Moshe rbinu bshreybung* (The description of Moses our Teacher). 4. Unknown. 5. Shmeruk 1979, 695-706. Shmeruk 1964. Ze 565. Rhymed verse. 6. West Yiddish, literary.

Ukraine 1. 1. 1783. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Maase gedola min k"k Uman b'medina Ukraina*. Description of massacre in the Ukraine. 4. Fuerth. 5. Dubnov 1929a, 31-36. Author eyewitness, presumably East Yiddish. 6. East Yiddish, assimilationist.

Historie. 1. [1792] 2. Anonymous. 3. *Eyn shinh histarie fun eyn palak* (A nice story about a Polish Jew). 4. [Prague]. 5. M. Weinreich 1929, 551-553. 6. West Yiddish, assimilationist.

Diskurs. 1. 1798. 2. Ioukhenen Levi Roufe. 3. *Diskurs gehaltn tsvishn yehudem in shiffun Itret nokh Amsterdam* (Conversation among Jews on the boat from Utrecht to Amsterdam). 4. Unknown. 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 164. 6. West Yiddish, assimilationist.

Nakhman. 1. Ca. 1800 (published [1815] (C)). 2. Nakhman Bratslaver. 3. *Sippurei maasiyyot* (Collected tales). 4. Berdichev (Birnbaum, Zi7); Lemberg? (C); Ostrog (Shmeruk 1969). 5. Excerpt in Birnbaum 1979, 172-173. Pp. 7-10 in Shmeruk 1969, 102-108. C 512. St 3873. Zi7 175, 188. Edited by Nathan ben Naphthali Hertz (Sternhartz, Hirsch). Listed in Cowley under Nissim Gaon ben Jacob ben Shahin of Kairwan. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Naphthali. 1. 1803. 2. Anonymous. 3. Translation of a work by Naphthali ben Isaac Kohen. 4. Vilna. 5. Ze 606. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Geography. 1. 1818. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Reshit* (Elements). Introductory geography textbook. 4. Vilna. 5. Ze 655. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Nakhman. 1. 1819. 2. Joseph Perl. 3. *Hasidic tales and letters*. 4. Vienna. 5. Shmeruk and Werses 1969, 102-108 (= *The story of the lost princess*, from *Sippurei maasiyyot* 1815, 7-10). C 524. St 6723. Zi9 164. Author Galician Maskil (1773-1839). Coded together with **Nakhman**. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Ukraine 2. 1. 1834. 2. Anonymous. 3. *Maase gedola min Uman u'min Ukraina*. 4. Sudilkov (Volina). 5. Dubnov 1929a, 37-49. Completely revised and expanded version of **Ukraine 1.** Volina dialect. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

El Male Rakhamim. 1. 1834. 2. Anonymous. 3. *El male rakhamim.* 4. Sudilkov (Volina). 5. Dubnov 1929a, 49-54. Prayers concerning the Ukraine massacres of 1768; published together with **Ukraine 2.** Volina dialect. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

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Grine Felder. 1. Ca. 1910. 2. Perets Hirshbeyn. 3. *Grine felder* (Green fields). 4. Unknown. 5. Bass 1977, 61-106. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

Royte Pomerantsen. 1. 1949. 2. Immanuel Olsvanger. 3. *Royte pomerantsen* (Red oranges). 4. New York: Schocken. 5. Not applicable. 6. East Yiddish, literary.

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Appendix 2: Breakdown of clause type by source

Abbreviations:

Dialect	Style
b Bohemian/Moravian	a assimilationist
c Cracow	l literary
e East Yiddish	v vernacular
w West Yiddish	

	Verb- second	Expl. <u>es</u>	INFL- medial	INFL- final	TOTAL
Court testimony (wv)	-	-	7	79	86
1400-1490	-	-	8%	92%	
Mints (wl)	-	-	3	4	7
Third quarter of 1400's	-	-	43%	57%	
Bovo (wl)	-	-	27	73	100
1507	-	-	27%	73%	
Goetz (wl)	-	-	4	15	19
1518	-	-	21%	79%	
Anshel (cl)	-	-	6	32	38
ca. 1534	-	-	16%	84%	
Court testimony (bv)	-	-	4	13	17
1540-1589	-	-	24%	76%	
Court testimony (cv)	-	-	5	7	12
1540-1589	-	-	42%	58%	
Court testimony (ev)	-	-	8	5	13
1540-1589	-	-	62%	38%	
Meineket Rivkah (el)	-	-	1	1	2
ca. 1550	-	-	50%	50%	
Shir ha-shirim (cl)	-	-	34	33	67
Preface, 1579	-	-	51%	49%	

Shir ha-shirim (cl)	-	-	47	53	100
Text, 1579	-	-	47%	53%	
Officials (cl)	-	-	7	10	17
1588	-	-	41%	59%	
Megilat Ester (cl)	-	-	13	9	22
Preface, 1589	-	-	59%	41%	
Megilat Ester (cl)	-	-	33	67	100
Text, 1589	-	-	33%	67%	
Court testimony (ev)	-	-	67	26	93
1590-1639	-	-	72%	28%	
Court testimony (wv)	-	-	3	1	4
1590-1639	-	-	75%	25%	
Sam Hayyim (el)	-	-	15	34	49
1590	-	-	31%	69%	
Letters (bv)	-	-	3	19	22
1619	-	-	14%	86%	
Lev Tov (el)	-	-	17	32	49
Preface, 1620	-	-	35%	65%	
Lev Tov, Text (el)	-	-	41	59	100
1620	-	-	41%	59%	
Ha-magid (el)	1	-	14	23	38
Preface, 1623-1627	3%	-	37%	61%	
Magen Abraham (el)	2	-	16	31	49
1624	4%	-	33%	63%	
Court testimony (bv)	-	-	7	31	38
1640-1689	-	-	18%	82%	
Court testimony (cv)	-	-	2	3	5
1640-1689	-	-	40%	60%	
Court testimony (ev)	1	2	45	10	58
1640-1689	2%	3%	78%	17%	
Court testimony (wv)	-	-	30	32	62
1640-1689	-	-	48%	52%	
Kine (bl)	-	-	16	21	37
1648	-	-	43%	57%	
Messiah (bl)	-	-	20	32	52
1666	-	-	38%	62%	

Vaad (el)	-	-	10	9	19
1671	-	-	53%	47%	
Ashkenaz un Polak (el) ca. 1675	2 3%	-	18 31%	38 66%	58
Witzenhausen (wl) 1677	- -	- -	4 50%	4 50%	8
Vilna (el) 1692	- -	4 11%	31 82%	3 8%	38
Purim-shpil (cl) 1697	2 2%	3 3%	46 46%	49 49%	100
Sarah (el) First half of 1700's	- -	- -	16 100%	- -	16
Ellush (el) 1704	- -	1 6%	16 89%	1 6%	18
Duties (el) 1716	- -	- -	13 81%	3 19%	16
Poznan (el) 1717	- -	- -	9 100%	- -	9
Zeeb (wl) 1740	- -	- -	7 64%	4 36%	11
Teshuat (ea) 1742-1745	- -	- -	1 7%	14 93%	15
Moses (wl) ca. 1750	- -	- -	47 70%	20 30%	67
Ukraine 1 (ea) 1783	- -	- -	- -	32 100%	32
Historie (wa) 1792	- -	- -	- -	4 100%	4
Diskurs (wa) 1798	- -	- -	- -	6 100%	6
Nakhman (el) ca. 1800	5 9%	3 5%	49 86%	- -	57
Naphthali (el) 1803	- -	3 5%	60 91%	3 5%	66
Geography (el) 1818	4 6%	5 7%	54 78%	6 9%	69

Ukraine 2 (el)	1	8	90	1	100
1834	1%	8%	90%	1%	
El Male Rakhamim	2	2	31	-	35
(el) 1834	6%	6%	89%	-	
Judah (el)	-	20	66	-	86
1848	-	23%	77%	-	
Grine Felder (el)	4	3	93	-	100
ca. 1910	4%	3%	93%	-	
Royte Pomerantzen	2	9	89	-	100
(el) 1949	2%	9%	89%	-	

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