

[0587]

## AN ASPECT OF WORD ORDER IN FRISIAN

In the course of the twentieth century linguistic study has begun to tackle an aspect of language change that had been neglected if not completely ignored until then: changes in the order of words. Previously the focus of language study concerned with change had been on the word. The reason for this is evident: words are separate elements and changes in these elements are easy to identify (word form) or, if less easy to pin down, still recognizable and comparable (meaning).

In the case of the simplest type of word-group,<sup>1</sup> a one-to-one comparison is, in principle, feasible. Such a comparison becomes more difficult when the upper limit of a word-group, the clause, offers itself as the unit of comparison. A speaker (or writer, for that matter) can choose the word he thinks most suitable in a given context, but clauses as a unit of communication are attended by regulating elements that are not always within the range of the speaker's power of manipulation. He does not have much choice about the order of the words constituting the clause.

On the other hand, conscious effort on the part of linguists to discover structure, a system, in these building-blocks of human communication has revealed that language, from ancient times onward, had a far more determined word order than many scholars realized. The conclusions of certain recent monographs in the field of Old English show that even when inflectional endings were intact, Old English was by no means an exclusively synthetic language nor mainly so.<sup>2</sup> There were tendencies in the word order that often amounted to rules.

An essential question is: what are the elements in a clause that are prominent enough to figure as supports in so permanent and immutable a phenomenon as a language rule? It is clear that 'permanent' and 'immutable' should be taken in a relative sense: no rule holds good for ever and there is hardly a rule without exception(s). Still it is important to draw up rules, because it is by virtue of such 'fixed points' in language that we can compare similar language usage at various stages of its development. In this way we might be able to find certain diachronic tendencies in a language and, especially since Greenberg (1963),<sup>3</sup> even make synchronic comparisons among a variety of languages.

An early step in finding such tendencies and making such comparisons is to locate several more or less permanent elements in a clause that can figure as supports in establishing language rules. This is on the assumption that we are agreed upon what is covered by the term 'clause.'<sup>4</sup> I set myself the task of discovering, in Frisian texts ranging from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, the mutual order of S (subject), V (verb) and O (direct object) in clauses containing these three elements. Comparison of texts requires that the passages chosen be similar. Another requirement is that the non purely linguistic factors be as limited as possible. This means that some texts do not qualify, as poetry (certain motives of art may cause the language to be out of the ordinary); law-texts (the language is highly stilted and ossified to a collection of standard phrases in which there remains little room for manoeuvring except as regards details of location, time, amount and circumstance); and charters (for essentially the same reason as for law-texts). This still leaves ample choice in contemporary material, but creates a problem for earlier stages of the language. In fact the only category left for those stages of Frisian consists of a number of letters, published in P. Gerbenzon's *Friese Brieven uit de Vijftiende en Zestiende Eeuw* (Estrik XLII, Groningen, 1967). The objection that these letters deal with business and have some characteristics in common with the average charter is valid, but only to a certain extent: they contain some stock phrases, but these are limited to opening and closing phrases, and not even there in all of them; furthermore personal information is interspersed among the more essential matters, i.e., what has to be dealt with is usually some item of business, but the way in which the information is put forward is more or less personal. As this material covers almost a century, I have divided these letters into two groups: Nos. 1-16 (1489-1515), and Nos. 18-50 (1525-1578). If one takes this material as a starting-point, the rest follows naturally.

Another collection of letters can be found in *Gysbert Japicx Wurken* edited by J.H. Brouwer, J. Haantjes and P. Sipma (Bolsward, 1966), pp.320-339; it contains twenty-five letters in Frisian, written by Japicx to Mr. Simon Abbes Gabbema. Here the objection could arise from the fact that, although most of these letters deal with some specific inquiry or provide information on the composition of a poem, its evaluation and/or inclusion in some publication, the personal element of friend writing to friend touching upon everyday life is strong. This sampling has to represent Middle Frisian.

After this period there is a gap lasting until the late eighteenth century. The only material that might seem to qualify and is available at present dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century; it consists of a number of short passages in Frisian inserted in letters in French

and Latin to supply secret information. These passages are so limited and of such disputable quality that they are of no practical use.

From the end of the same century we have heartfelt cries contained in letters to the editor of *De Friessche Patriot*, and one letter by a wrathful pastor to his congregation to denounce their worldly attitude and manner. These letters were written between 1785 and 1795 and appeared in *Frysk út de 18de ieu*, 4, edited by A. Feitsma and R. Bosma (Estrik XXIII, Groningen, 1962), p. 56 ff. However, even as a non-Frisian I may safely say that not every Frisian would accept these items as representative of the Frisian language in any stage of its development. I have analysed them, but I consider the outcome as a curiosity rather than a source of serious data in the line of development.

From around the middle of the nineteenth century there is an ampler choice. I have selected a number of letters written within certain short periods of time, and -- possibly with one exception -- by writers who have some name in their dedication to the Frisian language. I have grouped them in twos and threes to limit possible idiosyncrasies. Thus there is part of the correspondence between T.R. Dykstra and H.S. Sytstra from November 1844 to January 1846, which appeared as nos. 47, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 58 and 60-70 in *Winst út Forlies*, edited by J.H. Brouwer and J.J. Kalma (Leeuwarden, 1962).

The following selection consists of a letter by Waling Dykstra to Geertruida Christina Jentink (1880), which appeared in D. Kalma's *De Fryske Skrifte-kennisse fen 1876-1897* (Dokkum, 1939); also letters 5 and 6 from *Soldate-Brieven, Skreaun út Hartoggenbosk yn 1877 en 1878 oan in Goê Frjeun yn Fryslân*, by a certain Auke<sup>5</sup> (Holwerd, 1879); and two letters by P.J. Troelstra, numbered IV and V, which appeared in *Wylde Hierren en Oar Proaza* (Drachten, 1966).

Subsequently there is a group of letters written between 1917 and 1921 by Douwe Kalma and Simke Kloosterman, which were edited by Dina Simonides and appeared under the title *De Briefwiksel tusken Simke Kloosterman en Douwe Kalma* (Estrik LII, Groningen, 1976); I have selected nos. 85, 86, 87, 88 to 1. 120, 89 and 90, pp.161-171; also nos. 91, 92, 93, 93\*, 94, 95 and 96 to 1. 173, pp.171-180. The choice is random in so far that it is based only on proximity in time. There is no doubt that the correspondents are artists and full of affection for each other, but an important element in their writing is their concern for Frisian culture and language and we are given some insight into the everyday life of individuals shortly before and after World War I. In addition to this correspondence there are some letters written by S. Huismans to Dr. G.A. Wumkes and some to G. Kamerling. They appeared in *Ta in Tinkstien. Samle Skriften fen Ds. S. Huismans* (Bolsward, 1927) and are dated 23 July 1917 to 4 May 1921.

Finally I have analysed six articles from *De Stim fan Fryslân* of January to April 1980. This choice seems justified to me, because there are practically no contemporary published letters that are readily accessible. Besides, these articles have the character of an address to a (larger) group of recipients on a given subject. I have added two letters from a private correspondence, in which Mrs. M. van der Werff-Schurer writes about her memories of her uncle Fedde Schurer.

To avoid misunderstanding I want to make it clear that, except in the case of the *Friessche Patriot* letters,<sup>6</sup> only Frisian material has been considered valid research material. This explains why Gysbert Japicx' letter I has not been included; also not included are those letters in the first two periods that the editor marked with N as well as nos. 51 and 52.

SYNOPSIS OF FRISIAN TEXTS CHOSEN FOR ANALYSIS			
Period		Text	Abbreviation
I	1489-1515	15 letters by various authors	Ger I
II	1525-1578	23 letters by various authors	Ger II
III	1654-1661	25 letters by Gysbert Japicx	Jap
IV	1785-1787 1795	7 letters to editor of <i>De Friessche Patriot</i> 1 letter by a parson to his congregation	Pat par
V	1844-1846 1845	11 letters by H. S. Sytstra 8 letters by T. R. Dykstra	Sy Dy
VI	1880 1877-1878 1881	1 letter by Waling Dykstra 2 letters by soldier Auke 2 letters by P. J. Troelstra	WD Au Tr
VII	1918 1918-1919 1917-1921	6 letters by D. Kalma 7 letters by S. Kloosterman 14 letters by S. Huismans	Ka Kl Hu
VIII	1980       1981	6 articles in <i>De Stim fan Fryslân</i> : P. Beintema: Chr. Fries Gezelschap (Jan.) Eljé: Utrikking Fryske folksforhalen, 4 (Jan.) P. Beintema: Fryske tsjerke(n) (Feb.) Th. Bakker: Al of net kristlik-frysk I (Mar.) J. Slofstra: It "Frysk lieteboek" en de koaren (Mar.) E. v. d. Veen: Krite-nijs Burgum (Apr.) 2 letters by M. van der Werff-Schurer	St 1  St 2 St 3  St 4  St 5 St 6 WS

It will be clear from my choice of texts that Frisian should be read as West Frisian.

I have divided the clauses into three types: declarative main clauses, relative clauses, and the other subordinate clauses, with the exception of clauses not introduced by a subordinating conjunction and expressing a condition or concession (e.g., *should he arrive earlier*, tell him .. , *he may be powerful*, but he is not omnipotent). Each of these three types has been subdivided into simple tense clauses and compound tense clauses, thus providing six types for the analysis. No clauses expressing a question, a wish or an order have been included, because such clauses are nondistinctive in the history of language change in Frisian and other West Germanic languages.

In the course of my analysis it soon became apparent that I should have to make a few more decisions. They concern the following:

1. Form and function. Some clauses have a form that does not match their function, e.g., Ger II, 23, 11.3-4: *Ick byerry vryondelycken y willet jnt aerst tot her Goslick seynde al so ....* I have given precedence to form, and included this clause among the main clauses. Another example is VII, KI, 94, 11. 41-42: *Anneke sei, de Zee rekkene den síver al op, hy scoe komme ....* In other words, those clauses with the finite verb in second position and without an introductory word which are syntactically dependent on a preceding predicate have been considered main clauses. But in Ger II, 23, 11. 5-6: *by auentwur her goslick mocht sulx qualyken nemme ...* is taken to be a subclause, because of the subordinating character of the opening adjunct.

2. Incomplete clauses. Only fully-developed clauses, with S, V and O expressed, have been considered valid material in this study. Consequently Ger II, 41, 1.2: *jon brewen ontfensen* has not been included, although it is quite evident what should be added if the clause were to be completed. Only if the absence of S or Vf (= finite verb) is the result of contraction and could be supplied without any doubt as to its location, has the clause been included and given its full pattern. An example of this is Ger II, 25, 11. 21-22: *Disse brief seynt my her goslick ongeopbritten weer ende woldze naet lesse (SVfOV).*

3. What to do when there are more than two verbal forms. In passages like Ger II, 49, 11. 4-5: *soe hab ick het naet kennen lette*, the pattern is XVfSOVV, but since I am concerned with the mutual order of S, O and V, the double V is an unnecessary complication and therefore the pattern is taken to be XVfSOV. In the course of the analysis it became apparent that the two V's, wherever they occur, are consecutive only.

Table I gives a survey of the number of clauses in the various texts by period, divided into the six types named

earlier. The left-hand column gives the numbers, the right-hand one the attendant percentages. It appears that throughout these eight periods there is a proportional increase in the total number of main clauses (percentages: 23, 40, 47, 56½, 60½, 62, 68½, 69), and an almost uninterrupted proportional decrease in the total number of subclauses (percentages 58½, 48½, 35½, 35½, 32, 22½, 23½, 20½). The percentage of the total number of relative

TABLE I

Period	MAIN CLAUSES			SUBCLAUSES			RELATIVE CLAUSES		
	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %
I	24 44½	30 55½	54 23	53 42½	78 57½	136 58½	17 39½	26 60½	43 18½
II	115 41½	161 58½	276 40	142 42	195 58	337 48½	30 38½	48 61½	78 11½
III	82 53	73 47	155 47	69 59½	47 40½	116 35½	37 63½	21 36½	58 17½
IV	137 66	71 34	208 56½	77 59	53 41	130 35½	19 62½	11 37½	30 8
V	195 50½	192 49½	387 60½	134 65	72 35	206 32	28 58½	20 41½	48 7½
VI	233 63½	133 36½	366 62	81 62	50 38	131 22½	67 75½	22 24½	89 15½
VII	495 61½	307 38½	802 68½	173 63	102 37	275 23½	62 63	33 37	95 8
VIII	333 68	158 32	491 69	98 67½	47 32½	145 20½	48 64	27 36	75 10½

clauses fluctuates, though always within a relatively small margin.

The shifting of these percentages for main clauses, subclauses and relative clauses may point to an increasing directness of style. Although it was not my purpose to pay special attention to style, the unequivocal nature of the tendency is worth noting and can be accepted as an example of serendipity.<sup>7</sup>

TABLE II

Period	MAIN CLAUSES			SUBCLAUSES			RELATIVE CLAUSES		
	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %	STC No. %	CTC No. %	TOTAL No. %
I	9 34½	17 65½	26 23½	26 39½	40 60½	66 60	6 33½	12 66½	18 16½
II	46 33½	92 66½	138 42	43 30	100 70	143 44	15 33½	30 66½	45 14
III	45 46	53 54	98 52	28 50	28 50	56 30	22 61	14 39	36 18
IV	54 60½	35 39½	89 57	26 53	23 47	49 31½	9 50	9 50	18 11½
V	90 42	126 58	216 69	42 54½	35 45½	77 24½	9 45	11 55	20 6½
VI	77 54½	64 45½	141 60	25 59½	17 40½	42 18	36 70½	15 29½	51 22
VII	190 54½	157 45½	347 68½	64 58	46 42	110 21½	36 73½	13 26½	49 10
VIII	104 62	63 38	167 68½	31 69	14 31	45 18½	22 69	10 31	32 13

The survey in Table II is similar to the one in Table I, but it gives data on those clauses that contain at least S, V and O as their constituents. Their total number is 2080 (out of 4731) = 44%. It appears that, roughly speaking, the tendencies established for all the clauses under discussion hold for these particular clauses as well.

It is often assumed, though by no means universally, that Germanic languages originally had a surface word order in which the SOV pattern was dominant. In the course of time there was a shift in the direction of SVO, possibly via VSO. In English the SVO pattern has been firmly established, also in subordinate clauses, from about 1500 onwards; see C.C.Fries, 'On the Development of the Structural Use of Word Order in Modern English,' in *Language* 16 (1940), p. 201; and especially Elizabeth Closs Traugott, *A History of English Syntax* (New York, 1972), p. 106 ff. and 160 ff. The Scandinavian languages seem to have developed largely along the same lines as English, as can be seen, e.g., in Marinel Gerritsen, *Aspekten van Woordvolgorde in het Nederlands* (Leiden, 1978 esp. p. 22).

What about German, Dutch and Frisian in this respect? Dutch today presents both SVO and SOV patterns. Simple tense (declarative) main clauses have the SVO pattern as a rule, or the inverted word order (VSO) if the clause opens with a constituent different from S, V or O. Sometimes, mainly for the sake of emphasis, O is the opening constituent. In compound tense main clauses there is at least one verbal element following O; in other words, these clauses have a pattern in which O is embedded between Vf (the finite verb) and V, consequently a mixture of SVO and SOV. Dependent clauses never have O for their final constituent (unless O stands for a clause, fully developed or rudimentary, as, e.g., in Dutch:

Hij liep weg, omdat hij niet wist wat daarna zou gebeuren;  
He walked off because he not knew what then would happen;  
Hij liep weg, omdat hij niet wist wat te zeggen; what to say;

but this is not limited to dependent clauses, and is true of English as well). Dependent clauses are mainly SOV and the same applies to relative clauses. Modern German and Modern Frisian seem to present a similar mixture of SVO and SOV patterns.

Does this mixture indicate a permanent situation or are these languages still in a process of transition? There are two hypotheses. Some say that Primitive Germanic was characterized by SOV and then a change set in which resulted in SVO. In English and the Scandinavian languages this process was completed long ago. In German, Dutch and Frisian this process is still going on and what SOV

patterns exist are remnants of the original pattern. Others say that the change from SOV to SVO was in progress, but for as yet unknown reasons was checked around the fifteenth century; SVO has been losing ground since then and the change has been and still is in the direction of SOV. See, e.g., Marinel Gerritsen, 'An Analysis of the Rise of SOV Patterns in Dutch,' which appeared in *Papers from the Fourth International Conference on Historical Linguistics*, edited by Elizabeth C. Traugott, Rebecca la Brum and Susan Shepherd (Amsterdam, 1980).

In order to discover the relevant data for Frisian, I have analysed the aforementioned texts and arranged my findings in Table III, which gives a survey of the various patterns in which S, V and O occur in the pertinent clauses. Since this study is mainly concerned with the relative order of S, V and O, other constituents have been ignored with one exception: if neither S, V or O opens a clause, the constituent(s) that do(es) open the clause is/are marked as X. For each of the patterns the number of occurrences is indicated, as well as what the O is composed of: n stands for nominal (group), pr for pronoun, cl for clause and rc for rudimentary clause.

It is immediately apparent that in main clauses the second position is invariably taken up by the finite verbal form (Vf). It is also evident that from the fifteenth century onward Frisian has known SVO and SOV patterns in its surface structure, in which SVO is dominant in simple tense (declarative) main clauses (SOV does not occur here), and SOV in compound tense (declarative) main clauses and in both types of relative and subordinate clauses (with the exception of certain conditional and concessive clauses). In order to have a clear insight into possible change of pattern distribution, I had to draw up one more set of diagrams concerning the frequency of occurrence of SOV, SVO (and OSV) in compound tense main clauses and in both simple and compound tense subordinate and relative clauses. The O representing cl or rc in final position has occurred until the present time, is non-distinctive and has on that ground been ignored. In compound tense clauses the patterns contain both V and Vf, in which case V is taken as the basic form. The resulting data appear in Table IV.

In compound tense main clauses the SVO pattern occurs only eleven times in our entire material. Of these only Ger I, 11, 11. 35-36: Ende soe hab jck gytta...baeden dae decknye ... could probably not be used in Modern Frisian. In the other instances the noun (5 times) or pronoun (4 times) is immediately followed by a qualifying clause or phrase, e.g., VII, Hu, Sept. 1920, 11. 7-8: Ik kin net folbringe alles hwet ik op my naem; and VIII, St 6, 11. 80-81: De foarsitter koe mei reden tankje elkenien dy't meiwurke hie ... In the only remaining instance, Ger II, 37, 11. 45-46, the object gives an enumeration of what soldiers have consumed. We can only conclude that in this type of clause, as in the simple tense variety, the



TABEL III A  
MAIN CLAUSES

SIMPLE TENSE CLAUSES				COMPOUND TENSE CLAUSES					
Period	SVfO	OVfS	XVfSO	SVfOV	SVfVO	OVfSV	XVfSOV	XVfSVO	XVfOSV
I	<u>6</u> pr-3 cl-3	-	<u>3</u> n -2 cl-1	<u>7</u> n -4 pr-3	<u>3</u> cl-3	<u>1</u> pr-1	<u>3</u> n-3	<u>2</u> n-2	<u>1</u> pr-1
II	<u>26</u> n - 6 pr- 3 cl-14 rc- 3	<u>4</u> n -2 cl-2	<u>16</u> n - 4 cl-12	<u>33</u> n -21 pr-12	<u>21</u> n - 3 cl-15 rc- 3	<u>3</u> n-3	<u>23</u> n -11 pr-12	<u>11</u> cl-11	<u>1</u> pr-1
III	<u>33</u> n-17 pr-8 cl-6 rc-2	<u>3</u> n -2 cl-1	<u>9</u> n -5 pr-1 cl-1 rc-2	<u>22</u> n - 7 pr-15	<u>5</u> pr-1 cl-2 rc-2	<u>7</u> n -4 pr-2 cl-1	<u>12</u> n -8 pr-3 rc-1	<u>5</u> pr-1 cl-2 rc-2	<u>2</u> pr-2
IV	<u>32</u> n -13 pr- 5 cl-14	<u>5</u> pr-3 cl-1 rc-1	<u>17</u> n-11 pr-2 cl-4	<u>15</u> n -6 pr-9	<u>2</u> n -1 cl-1	<u>4</u> n -1 pr-3	<u>12</u> n -6 pr-6	<u>2</u> cl-2	-
V	<u>49</u> n -17 pr- 8 cl-19 rc- 5	<u>16</u> n -5 pr-4 cl-6 rc-1	<u>25</u> n-16 pr-4 cl-5	<u>48</u> n -35 pr-13	<u>12</u> cl-7 rc-5	<u>16</u> n-13 cl-3	<u>34</u> n -22 pr-12	<u>16</u> n - 1 cl-10 rc- 5	-
VI	<u>44</u> n -22 pr-13 cl- 9	<u>12</u> n -6 pr-4 cl-2	<u>21</u> n-12 pr-4 cl-5	<u>22</u> n-19 pr-3	<u>8</u> cl-8	<u>13</u> n -1 pr-6 cl-6	<u>17</u> n-12 pr-5	<u>4</u> cl- 4	-
VII	<u>134</u> n -69 pr-28 cl-30 rc- 7	<u>11</u> n -6 pr-1 cl-4	<u>45</u> n -26 pr- 9 cl-10	<u>67</u> n -45 pr-22	<u>16</u> pr- 1 cl-12 rc- 3	<u>27</u> n-19 pr-7 cl-1	<u>36</u> n -22 pr-14	<u>11</u> cl-7 rc-4	-
VIII	<u>77</u> n -39 pr-10 cl-22 rc- 6	<u>7</u> pr-7	<u>20</u> n -8 pr-5 cl-6 rc-1	<u>29</u> n -18 pr-11	<u>9</u> pr-1 cl-7 rc-1	<u>7</u> n -4 pr-3	<u>14</u> n-10 pr-4	<u>4</u> cl-3 rc-1	-

TABLE III B  
SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

Period	SIMPLE TENSE CLAUSES			COMPOUND TENSE CLAUSES						
	SOVf	SVfO	OSVf	SOVfV	SOVfV	SVfOV	SVfVO	SVfO	OSVfV	OSVfV
I	$\frac{17}{n-9}$ pr-8	$\frac{3}{n-1}$ cl-2	$\frac{6}{pr-6}$	$\frac{11}{n-7}$ pr-4	$\frac{13}{n-9}$ pr-4	$\frac{6}{n-6}$	$\frac{3}{n-1}$ cl-2	$\frac{5}{n-1}$ cl-3 rc-1	-	$\frac{2}{pr-2}$
II	$\frac{22}{n-13}$ pr-9	$\frac{17}{n-2}$ pr-1 cl-13 rc-1	$\frac{4}{n-2}$ pr-2	$\frac{36}{n-17}$ pr-19	$\frac{45}{n-29}$ pr-16	$\frac{4}{n-2}$ pr-2	$\frac{6}{n-2}$ cl-4	$\frac{5}{n-1}$ cl-3 rc-1	$\frac{3}{pr-3}$	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$
III	$\frac{25}{n-13}$ pr-12	$\frac{2}{cl-1}$ rc-1	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	$\frac{25}{n-17}$ pr-8	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	$\frac{1}{n-1}$
IV	$\frac{18}{n-14}$ pr-4	$\frac{7}{n-1}$ pr-1 cl-5	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	$\frac{15}{n-5}$ pr-10	$\frac{4}{n-4}$	$\frac{2}{n-2}$	$\frac{1}{rc-1}$	$\frac{1}{cl-1}$	-	-
V	$\frac{34}{n-21}$ pr-13	$\frac{3}{cl-2}$ rc-1	$\frac{5}{pr-5}$	$\frac{29}{n-17}$ pr-12	$\frac{1}{n-1}$	-	-	$\frac{3}{cl-3}$	$\frac{1}{n-1}$	$\frac{1}{n-1}$
VI	$\frac{17}{n-11}$ pr-6	$\frac{6}{cl-5}$ rc-1	$\frac{2}{pr-2}$	$\frac{15}{n-2}$ pr-13	-	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$
VII	$\frac{52}{n-35}$ pr-17	$\frac{6}{cl-4}$ rc-2	$\frac{6}{pr-6}$	$\frac{39}{n-20}$ pr-19	$\frac{2}{n-1}$ pr-1	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	-	$\frac{1}{cl-1}$	$\frac{3}{n-1}$ pr-2	-
VIII	$\frac{21}{n-17}$ pr-4	$\frac{5}{pr-1}$ cl-4	$\frac{5}{n-2}$ pr-3	$\frac{13}{n-9}$ pr-4	-	-	-	-	$\frac{1}{pr-1}$	-

TABLE III. V  
RELATIVE CLAUSES

Period	SIMPLE TENSE CLAUSES			COMPOUND TENSE CLAUSES					
	SOVf	SVfo	OSVf	SOWf	SOVfV	SVfVO	SVVfo	OSVfV	OSVfV
I	<u>1</u> n-1	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>4</u> pr-4	<u>1</u> pr-1	<u>2</u> pr-2	-	-	<u>4</u> pr-4	<u>5</u> pr-5
II	<u>7</u> n -2 pr-5	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>7</u> pr-7	<u>1</u> pr-1	<u>7</u> n -2 pr-5	-	-	<u>13</u> pr-13	9 pr-9
III	<u>13</u> n -7 pr-6	<u>4</u> n -1 cl-2 rc-1	<u>5</u> n -1 pr-4	<u>1</u> n-1	-	-	-	13 pr-13	-
IV	<u>4</u> n-4	<u>2</u> n -1 cl-1	<u>3</u> pr-3	<u>3</u> n -1 pr-2	-	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>1</u> rc-1	<u>3</u> pr-3	<u>1</u> pr-1
V	<u>3</u> n-3	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>5</u> pr-5	<u>4</u> n -4 pr-2	-	-	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>6</u> pr-6	-
VI	<u>20</u> n -17 pr- 3	<u>3</u> cl-3	<u>13</u> pr-13	<u>9</u> n -7 pr-2	-	-	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>5</u> n -1 pr-4	-
VII	<u>21</u> n-13 pr-8	-	<u>15</u> pr-15	<u>7</u> n -5 pr-2	-	-	-	<u>5</u> pr-5	<u>1</u> pr-1
VIII	<u>19</u> n-16 pr-3	<u>1</u> cl-1	<u>2</u> pr-2	<u>7</u> n -5 pr-2	-	-	-	<u>2</u> pr-2	<u>1</u> pr-1

TABLE IV

CT MAIN CLAUSES					
Period	SOV		SVO		OSV
	No.	%	No.	%	No. %
I	10	72	2	14	2 14
II	56	89	3	5	4 6
III	33	76	2	5	8 19
IV	27	84	1	3	4 13
V	82	85	1	1	13 14
VI	39	85	-	-	7 15
VII	103	79	1	1	26 20
VIII	43	84	1	2	7 14

  

ST SUBCLAUSES					
	SOV		SVO		OSV
	No.	%	No.	%	No. %
	17	71	1	4	6 25
	22	76	3	10	4 14
	25	96	-	-	1 4
	18	86	2	9	1 4
	34	87	-	-	5 13
	17	89	-	-	2 11
	52	90	-	-	6 10
	21	77	1	4	5 19

  

CT SUBCLAUSES					
	SOV		SVO		OSV
	No.	%	No.	%	No. %
	30	88	2	6	2 6
	85	92	3	3	4 5
	26	93	-	-	2 7
	21	100	-	-	-
	30	94	-	-	2 6
	15	88	-	-	2 12
	43	93	-	-	3 7
	13	93	-	-	1 7

  

ST REL CLAUSES					
Period	SOV		SVO		OSV
	No.	%	No.	%	No. %
I	1	20	-	-	4 80
II	7	50	-	-	7 50
III	13	69	1	5	5 26
IV	4	50	1	12	3 38
V	3	37	-	-	5 63
VI	20	61	-	-	13 39
VII	21	58	-	-	15 42
VIII	19	90	-	-	2 10

  

CT REL CLAUSES					
	SOV		SVO		OSV
	No.	%	No.	%	No. %
	3	25	-	-	9 75
	8	27	-	-	22 71
	1	7	-	-	13 93
	3	43	-	-	4 57
	4	40	-	-	6 60
	9	64	-	-	5 36
	7	54	-	-	6 46
	7	70	-	-	3 30

patterns have remained fairly stable and certainly from the sixteenth century onward.

In simple tense subordinate clauses the SVO pattern is rare; it occurs seven times in all, of which three times immediately followed by a qualifying clause or phrase. In the other four passages (of which one was written in 1981) there is no particular context to account for its use. They are: Ger II, 23, 1. 10: *byeerrijende ij ... seyndet... tot her goslick*; Ger II, 25, 11. 2-3: *dat wy reed hadde ten besten van salige sicke lyauckema wesen trye hondert enckel gounen*; IV, Pat, 1785 C, 11. 14-15: *Dear woe nin Wetter trog/ oermits wy hiene sokke goede wyn*; VIII, WS 1, 11. 39-41: *... dan soe ik raar út 'e toan falle want in Fries en de v. d. Werffen benammen binne fierstente ynbannich dat ik lit it hjirby*. In other words, there is stability throughout.

In compound tense subordinate clauses the SOV and OSV patterns have remained fairly stable throughout the material. The purely SVO pattern occurs five times before the end of the sixteenth century, but not after that time. In each of these occurrences the O stands for n. Three times O is immediately followed by a qualifying clause or phrase: Ger I, 3, 1. 4; Ger I, 10, 11. 3-4; and Ger II, 18, 1.3. Twice the SVO pattern occurs in a context that is not distinguishing: Ger II, 44, 11. 25-26 and Ger II, 46, 11. 3-4.

Included in the SOV listings is the mixed pattern of SVfOV, which occurs in Ger I six times, in each of which O represents a noun(-group): 6, 11. 13-14; 10, 11. 7-11; 12, 11. 3-4; 12, 11. 6-7; 13, 1. 4 and 15, 11. 1-2. This mixed pattern occurs in Ger II four times, two in which O is n (44, 11. 17-18 and 11. 25-26) and two in which O is pr (23, 11. 5-6 and 48, 1. 2). After the end of the sixteenth century the occurrence of this pattern is rare: twice in IV, Pat, 1786 D, 11. 15-17 and 11. 19-21, in which O is n both times. The only example after 1800 occurs in VII, Ka, 90, 11. 26-27: *... hja hat Mem bioppast sa goed, det eigen hie it net better kinnen*. Summing up, we can say that in this type of clause the SVO character of Frisian, always slight, has become negligible since the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

In simple tense relative clauses the occurrence of SOV and OSV patterns, though it fluctuates, is to be found throughout the centuries. The SVO pattern is limited to two instances once in Jap, II, 11. 4-5: *... histoarieferssen ... dy ick winschje in gledde fordgong to uwz tyd to*; and once in IV, Pat, 1785 C, 11. 2-4: *... ien schyp... wear yn wier tzien man/ de iene fen wa hie ien greate reade noos*.

In compound tense relative clauses the only patterns are SOV and OSV, with a slight change in the direction of SOV in the course of the past hundred years or so. The same tendency is to be found in the simple tense variety.

According to Greenberg's Language Universal 16 an inflected auxiliary always precedes the main verb in languages with dominant order VSO, whereas in languages with dominant order SOV, an inflected auxiliary always follows the main verb. A relevant analysis for the auxiliary verbs *hawwe*, *wêze*, *wurde*, *sille*, *wolle*, *kinne*, *meije*, *moatte* and *litte* in compound tense subordinate and relative clauses in our material results in the following survey.

TABLE V

V - Aux.					Aux. - V				
Period	Subcl.	Rel. Cl.	Total No.	%	Period	Subcl.	Rel. Cl.	Total No.	%
I	36	12	48	50	I	38	10	48	50
II	98	23	121	52	II	95	17	112	48
III	42	22	64	98	III	1	0	1	2
IV	36	7	43	83	IV	8	1	9	17
V	71	23	94	99	V	1	0	1	1
VI	43	21	64	98	VI	1	0	1	2
VII	90	28	118	98	VII	2	0	2	2
VIII	43	22	65	97	VIII	2	0	2	3

Greenberg warns that a universal, e.g., 'given  $x$  in a particular language, we always find  $y$ ,' the reverse 'given  $y$ , we always find  $x$ ,' does not necessarily hold (p. 73). Still it is noteworthy that, supposing Frisian showed a tendency for its SOV character to increase until the seventeenth century and that it has been stationary in this respect since, our findings about the relative position of Aux. and V as recorded in TABLE V are in accordance with this supposition.

It is remarkable that there is only one example of Aux.-V in a clause with subordinate word order in the past two centuries. It occurs in V, Sy, 56, 1. 6. ... mar liafst den nawt lang wachtje; om 't hit oars nawt mear yn bl. 7 ken, end dos ta bl. 8 scoe lidsen bliue matte. All the other occurrences are similar to, e.g., VI, W.D., 11.80-81: do se wer op 'e foetten stiene, rekke frou de Boer sa oan 't laeitsen dat hja koe hast net wer ophâlde.

## General Conclusion

The mutual order of S, V and O in Frisian in its various stages represented in the texts under analysis seems to have been rather stable during the last five centuries. There was a slight tendency away from SVO and towards SOV, especially prior to the end of the sixteenth century.

*Ede, April 1981*

*A. Bor*

*Notes*

1. By word-group I mean a unit consisting of a nucleus with a complement dependent on it. For a more extensive treatment of this concept, see A. Bor, *Word-groups in the Language of the Skeltana Riucht* (Wageningen, 1971), pp. 3-6.
2. See, e.g. Faith F. Gardner, *An Analysis of Syntactic Patterns of Old English* (The Hague, 1971), pp. 12-15.
3. See Ch. 5 in Joseph H. Greenberg, ed., *Universals of Language* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978; reprint of 2nd edition of 1963 work).
4. I take a clause to be an interrelated group of words containing a subject and a finite verb. See Bor, p.6, and especially note 40; also J. van den Broeck, *Social Conditioning of Syntactic Variation* (Leuven, 1977), pp. 156-160.

5. Pen name for Jouwert Jouwertsma. See R.A. Faber, 'Ut it libben fan Jouwert Jouwertsma,' in *Trotwaer* (1972, 5, pp. 297-299).
6. Generally speaking the results of the analysis of these letters fit in rather well with the rest after all.
7. Cf. Richard W. Bailey, 'Statistics and Style: A Historical Survey,' esp. pp. 228-229, in Lubomír Doležal and Richard W. Bailey, eds., *Statistics and Style* (New York, 1969).
8. Although my written material supplies the data that I have given, I suspect that in modern spoken Frisian the 'dat + S + Vf' type of clause is fully alive, a suspicion which has been confirmed by a number of native Frisians.