

A Study of Finite Complementation in late 14th Century English

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Este artículo pretende profundizar en el análisis de los modelos de complementación finita (conteniendo formas verbales marcadas) existentes en Inglés Medio y cotejarlos con los períodos lingüísticos inmediatamente anterior y posterior. Se han utilizado como corpus para dicho estudio el Prologue y el Nun's Priest's Tale de Chaucer por ser éste un autor altamente representativo de la lengua de finales del siglo XIV. Se buscan, asimismo, las razones estilísticas que pueden haber provocado el uso de ciertos modelos de complementación finita en detrimento de otros. Para ello, se tienen en cuenta factores como el uso de complementizadores, los tipos de predicados de que dependen los complementos, el modo verbal, etc.

INTRODUCTION

The major aim of this paper is to provide a picture of how the system of finite complementation (that realized by clauses with an inflected verbal form) was configured by the end of the 14th. century and, at the same time to compare to what an extent late Middle English (henceforth **IME**) syntax was configured in a similar way to the one it displays nowadays. Our main purpose here is to demonstrate that **ME** syntax in this very restricted area of finite complementation was quite similar to Present English (**PE**) and certainly different from Old English (**OE**).

My method of analysis is mainly based upon Quirk (1985), and though other authors' viewpoints have been also considered it is mainly Quirk's theoretical framework and terminology I have turned to. Thus, the term "complement clause" (**ComplCI**) is roughly equivalent to Huddleston's "content clause" (1984) and it is here used to refer to any subordinate structure depending on other part of the sentence. I have called "matrix" or "matrix clause" those parts of sentences that traditional grammar labelled "main sentence" and on which **ComplCIs** depend. The terms "subject complement" and "object complement" (henceforth **Cs** and **Co**)

are also taken from Quirk and they correspond to traditional attributes and predicative complements respectively. The abbreviation C (for Complement) is here adopted for any phrase required by the verb to complete its meaning as the prepositional phrase in

(1) I am in the garden

When dealing with word order, C is considered to be interchangeable with O (Object) only on the grounds that they are required by the verb, and this is why the notation for word order patterns will contain O/C meaning that either one or the other appears (though never both at the same time).

This study is articulated in two main parts: one dealing with semantics where mood is central and where I will try to find any correspondences between the mood of the matrix verb and that of the complement verb based on syntactical factors. For the study of this aspect I have resorted to Noonan (1985) in what respects his classification of predicates. The second part is entirely dedicated to syntax proper, though I often introduce semantic concepts and considerations, for it is almost impossible to treat both independently.

Both aspects have been organised in 13 sections, the first of which provides a general view of what are the structures we shall deal with, how many and how they are distributed. Section 2 deals with complementisers as a means of linking the sentence's two main constituents (matrix and clause) before focusing inside the structures of each of them. Complementisers will be seen to vary according to what kind of predicate they depend on and to the function fulfilled by the ComplCI. Section 3 provides an analysis of the types of verbs found in ComplCI according to their syntactical relationships and their occurrence with particular types of complementisers, while sections 4 and 5 are devoted to the study of nominal predicates inside matrices, deixis and apposition. Section 6 studies verbal predicates in ComplCI and their syntactic structure while section 7 does the same with nominal predicates. In both sections some cases deserving especial attention are extensively treated.

In section 8, I will try to establish transitivity and passive constructions as possible determiners of complementation and section 9 will be dedicated to word order. Sections 10 and 11 are the ones mainly dedicated

to semantics, both in matrices and in clauses. Finally, section 12 offers some remarks and conclusions.

1. THE CORPUS

The corpus chosen as a source of data for this study consists of two different passages of the *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer as edited by W.W. Skeat (1967), first, the *Prologue*, where the purpose of the whole work is explained and, second, *The Nonne Preestes Tale*, where a good amount of direct speech appears and where each character has a particular way of using language¹. The two fragments investigated total approximately 12,000 words and though this may not be sufficient to establish definitive conclusions I believe it will provide an idea of what was finite complementation like at the time, including the distribution of predicates and complementisers.

I have checked the behaviour of ComplCI (85 in all) in Chaucer's work considering also those syntactic patterns with extraposed constituents, most commonly subjects, such as:

Cs V it S ----- I. 385 (extraposed S)
 V it Cs S ----- I. 574 (extraposed S)
 S V it O ----- I. 725 (extraposed O)
 it V Cs S ----- I. 785 (extraposed S)
 it V S ----- I. 4502 (extraposed S)
 S IO it V ----- I. 4631 (extraposed S)

2. COMPLEMENTISERS

Complementisers or connectives (Elsness, 1984) have been sorted into three main groups, namely, **that**, **zero**, and **others**. This last label comprises *how that*, *as that* and *how*, (these last two occurring only once each in our material). Their distribution is certainly irregular:

Table 1

| TYPE OF COMPLEMENTISER | INSTANCES FOUND | % |
|------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| That | 43 | 50.59 |
| Ø | 33 | 38.82 |
| Other | 9 | 10.58 |

Table 1 shows the distribution of the different complementisers in our corpus both in absolute numbers and in percentages. 50.59% of clauses take *that*, 38.82% are unIntroduced ComplCIs, whereas 10.58% of the total of finite ComplCIs take other complementisers often *how that*

A second quantification has been made related to how the elements inside each of these groups are distributed according to whether they follow verbal predicates (v.p.), nominal predicates (n.p.) or complex predicates (c.p.). Adjective predicates have not been considered here because they do not appear in any matrix. All this information is shown in tables 3 and 4 below, and according to them the frequency of appearance of the different kinds of predicates (extracted from their relationship to complementisers) can be found in a more general way as expressed in table 2.

Table 2

| TYPE OF PREDICATE | INSTANCES | % |
|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| v.p. | 72 | 84.71 |
| n.p. | 10 | 11.76 |
| c.p. | 3 | 3.53 |

Table 3

| PREDICATES WITH <i>THAT</i> | % |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| v.p. | 76.74 |
| n.p. | 16.28 |
| c.p. | 6.98 |

Table 4

| PREDICATES WITH Ø | % |
|-------------------|------|
| v.p. | 90.9 |
| n.p. | 9.1 |

Table 4 above shows that, among the complementisers analysed only *that* takes complex predicates. In like manner, *how that* always appears with verbal predicates belonging to the realm of knowledge (or *kak* in Noonan's terminology, 1985: 118) such as *knowe*, *dreme*, *mette*, *rede*. According to Warner (1975: 186-ff), there is a tendency for Chaucer to use *how that* in the introduction to a sermon

how that was stylistically marked in WSerE, perhaps being emphatic and providing a means of focusing on the statement of sermon content, or for-

mal and reflecting the fact that a sermon might tend to have a somewhat more formal opening (...) these sermons tend to lack formal conclusions.

How, appearing only once, stands by the verbal predicate *rede*. Warner (1986: 182) mentions this case also in his analysis and reaches the conclusion that *how is* a weakened form and almost equivalent to *that*. As *that*, with a weak nuance of comparison follows the verbal predicate *seme*.

2.1. DISTRIBUTION OF COMPLEMENTISERS ACCORDING TO THE FUNCTION FULFILLED BY THE COMPLEMENT CLAUSE

That, as the most frequent complementiser in the corpus, is used to introduce ComplCls of different types, not only those depending on the subject and the object, but those depending on other parts of the sentence as well. Table 5 reflects this distribution:

Table 5

| TYPE OF COMPL CL WITH <i>THAT</i> | INSTANCES | % |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Object | 33 | 76.7 |
| Subject | 9 | 20.9 |
| Other | 1 | 2.4 |

Clauses taking no complementiser are second according to their frequency. Unintroduced ComplCls have been found to appear mainly when they are functioning as object. The frequency of such unintroduced clauses regarding their function inside the matrix is shown in table 6:

Table 6

| TYPE OF COMPLCL WITH \emptyset | INSTANCES | % |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Object | 29 | 87.9 |
| Subject | 3 | 9.1 |
| Other | 1 | 3 |

It is noteworthy the fact that some subject clauses are unintroduced, which is not very common. Warner (1982: 168) points out that zero clauses do not occur as subjects unless extraposed or coordinated. We have recorded two such situations in our material:

a.- ComplCIs functioning as subjects of the predicate *bifel* when they are coordinated to a previous subject clause which is itself introduced by *that*. The pattern for this construction would be: *bifel that* (1st clause) and \emptyset (2nd clause)

b.-ComplCIs functioning as extraposed subject of constructions which have come to be an "independent that clause" (with no *that* in this case). This type of construction is certainly rare, since "independent that-clauses" are hardly ever un-introduced.

The last type of complementiser we shall deal with is *how that* included under the label **others**. *How that* introduces, in all of our instances (7), any ComplCIs occurring as objects. The modal nuance of this complementiser - if any - has been discussed earlier (cf. supra).

Only two clauses have been found to function appositionally depending on any element of the matrix: one is introduced by *that* whereas the other is un-introduced. They will be more extensively dealt with in section 4.

As shown in table 7 below, ComplCIs are, mainly, objects. Percentages do not refer to the total of ComplCIs in the corpus (85) but to each of the groups of clauses introduced by **that**, \emptyset , and **others** respectively.

Table 7

| Type of CI | THAT | | \emptyset | | OTHERS | | TOTAL | |
|-------------|-------|------|-------------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
| | Cases | % | Cases | % | Cases | % | Cases | % |
| Subject CI | 9 | 20.9 | 3 | 9.1 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 14.1 |
| Object CI | 33 | 76.8 | 29 | 87.9 | 7 | 77.7 | 69 | 81.3 |
| Other Compl | 1 | 2.3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 22.3 | 4 | 4.76 |
| Total | 43 | 100 | 33 | 100 | 9 | 100 | 85 | 100 |

2.2. VERBAL PREDICATES IN MATRICES AND THEIR COMPLEMENTISERS

Seventy two verbal predicates are overtly expressed in my material. However I will first consider only those appearing more than 4 times all along the corpus.

bifel is the v.p. on which 7 clauses depend. It appears explicitly in 5 cases, all of them accompanied by *that* as a complementiser (71.4%) and implicitly in 2 occasions with 0 complementiser (28.6%).

The form *thinketh* and its past *thoughte* appear in 7 matrices, all of them with an unIntroduced ComplCI. Only in two cases the complement taking predicate (ctp) is not explicit in the sentence.

seith, and its forms *seyde*, *seyn*, *seye* appear 13 times, of which 8 are followed by **that** (61.5% of the cases), 4 are followed by **zero** (30.8% of the cases), and one is followed by **others** (7.7%)

When the ComplCI is introduced by *that*, the ctp is explicit in the majority of the cases (87.5%). The corresponding forms of the verb (ctp) are explicitly represented in the matrix in all cases when the ComplCIs are unIntroduced or introduced by complementisers other than *that*.

wiste, and its forms *woot*, *dot*, *noot* appear 9 times. In 66.6% of the cases it is complemented by unIntroduced ComplCIs, and in some of these, the ctp in the matrix is not overtly expressed. *That* functions as complementiser or connective only in 3 of the 9 cases found in this corpus.

pray, *preyden* appear in 7 cases. In 57% of these occurrences *that* follows and in 43% it is complemented by unIntroduced clauses.

mette appears on 4 occasions (impersonal constructions which shall be discussed later on). In half the cases it is followed by *how* that and, in fact, there is a slight nuance of manner implied though only at a secondary level. It is explicit in the matrix clause and only elided when followed by *how* that in 75% of the cases.

We have also found one case with *that* and another without any complementiser.

One more point deserves commentary. *That* is the complementiser we find in passive constructions as well as in interrogatives (Quirk, 1985: 15.4), since it can never be suppressed in cases similar to the following ones. Let us consider one example of each:

- (2) 1.4108-4109 How dorste ye seyn for shame unto your love, that anything mighte make you aferd?
- (3) 1.4422 4423 Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dremes, that thilke day was perilous to thee.

3. TYPE OF VERBS IN COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

The verbs appearing inside ComplCI have been classified as transitive, of which 26 instances have been found (30.59%), intransitive in 39 cases (45.89%) and copulative in 20 cases (23.52%). But of course, not all the clauses containing the verbs inside one of these three categories are introduced by the same complementisers. However, we have found that that is the most frequent one together with unintroduced complement clauses (those with \emptyset complementiser). Other complementisers are only rarely found.

Table 8

| TYPE OF VERBS | THAT | \emptyset | OTHERS |
|---------------|------|-------------|--------|
| transitive | 13 | 11 | 2 |
| intransitive | 17 | 15 | 7 |
| copulative | 13 | 7 | 0 |

The numbers in table 8. above suggest that *that* introduces the majority of clauses either if they contain transitive verbs or not. But, taking into account that this is the most common complementiser, this is not, perhaps, an important conclusion. At any rate, we should bear in mind Warner's idea about the distribution of *that* in IME. He affirms that it may occur in all finite ComplCIs, and after conjunctions too (1982: 30). This could explain the use of *how that* where *how* has its modal meaning notably weakened. But, on the other hand, the retention of *that* for PE, as explained by Quirk (1985: @ 15.4n) could also account for its presence as a complementiser in IME. Quirk gives four possible reasons for such behaviour, to wit:

- 1.- to make clear whether an adverbial belongs to the matrix or to the ComplCI.

2.- to prevent a coordinated that-clause from being misinterpreted as a coordinated main clause (this is the reason why many ComplCls share one single matrix).

3.- *that* is also kept when the object clause is fronted.

4.- it is kept when there is another element intervening between the verb and the that-clause.

Finally, it should be also noted that those complementisers I have grouped under the label **others** usually introduce ComplCls containing intransitive verbs, and never copulative verbs, (at least as is observable in my material).

4. NOMINAL PREDICATES IN MATRICES

For the analysis of ComplCls containing nominal predicates, two different categories have been established: on the one hand, those whose semantic nucleus is a deictic form, and, on the other, those whose semantic nucleus is followed by an appositive clause. In what follows, both categories will be dealt with independently.

4.1. CLAUSES WITH A DEICTIC ELEMENT

For the present study, we have considered deictic forms from the same theoretical point of view as Quirk (1985: @5.30-32, 6.19), who defines them as words referring either backwards (anaphora) or forwards (cataphora) in the discourse². The anaphoric and cataphoric uses of demonstratives can be viewed as extensions of their situational use regardless of whether their antecedents are clauses or not.

Three cases of deixis have been found in the corpus:

- (4) ...seith thus, that whylom two fellawes wente on pilgrimage...
- (5) The sothe is this, the cut fil tu the knight
- (6) ...seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors of dremes?

of which only (4) takes a complementiser *that* to introduce the clause it refers to (the ComplCI). This may be explained by the presence of the adverb *whylom* introducing the indirect speech fragment as a necessary clause boundary marker.

Contrarily, *that* does not occur in example (6) since the ComplCI is in the borderline between the direct and the reported speech and it is fairly clear to whom each utterance corresponds. In (5), the pronoun *this* directs the reader's attention towards what follows while it subsumes it. In this particular case, the appearance of *that is* optative so that its absence may be due not to syntactical reasons but rather to a mere question of rhythm or prosody.

4.2. APPOSITIVE CLAUSES

As far as the second group of matrix clauses containing nominal predicates is concerned, the following examples may illustrate our point for they show these matrix clauses containing nominal predicates followed by appositive ComplCIs. Our concept of apposition fully coincides with Quirk et al. (1985: @ 17.65-93). Let us consider the following lines:

(7)(S) is signe that a man was repentaunt.

(8) i counseille you the beste, (...), that bothe of colere and of malencolye ye purge yow.

(9) This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf, that first he wroughte, and afterwards he taughte.

(10) (he) that heeld opinioun, that pleyn delyt was verrailly felicitee parfyt.

In each of these examples there is a nominal predicate (underlined), head of a noun phrase, that needs being explained, developed or clarified. The ComplCI following it is functioning as apposition to the underlined term to provide such information. The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive appositions is very clearly shown in these sentences though punctuation, one of the criteria for the distinction between both, is not very reliable at this stage of the development of English. But, at any rate, and somehow basing our classification upon Matthews' theories (1977: 231-232), we could affirm that only example (8) illustrates restrictive appositive clauses, for the valency - in Matthews' sense - of the head noun *signe* requires the presence of what follows. Moreover, the rest of the sentences

listed above that I shall consider as containing non-restrictive appositive clauses, show a pause (and, consequently, an intonational change) before the ComplCI. As for word order, one peculiarity deserves being mentioned: the fact that in all the cases in our material, the appositive clause is at the end of the sentence, following the matrix verb, and not in the usual pattern

NP, (apposition), rest of the sentence

These clausal appositions, though always accompanying NPs, can, of course, fulfill different functions inside the clause structure.

In (7) we find a construction where there is no possibility of interchanging the functions of S and Cs - as would happen with equative *be*- between the syntactic units realising them. We can symbolise the syntactic structure of this sentence as

S V Cs if Cs is formed by N + ComplCI.

The relationship thus established between S and Cs is not exactly one of equivalence. On the contrary, the actualisation of one (the S) somehow "shows" the other. In this particular case, the noun *signe is* a part of the semantic unit *be signe* meaning "show". The ComplCI is here required to complete the meaning of *signe* while in a case such as (11) below it could perfectly carry the meaning of the clausal apposition as if it were referring to a previously given piece of information.

(11) 1.385 But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me, that on his shine a mormal hadde he.

In fact, we could somehow "cut" it to (11a) without losing grammaticality:

(11a) But greet harm was it

However, this same process could not be applied to example (7) above to obtain the ungrammatical fragment in (7a)

(7a) *(S) is signe

(8) and (9) follow a pattern similar to that of 1.385 (example (12)) and, consequently, we could also transform them by suppressing the appositional clause with no risk of affecting their grammaticality

(8a) I counseille you the beste

(9a) This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf

The underlined pronoun in (9a) is the very reason why we can shorten the sentence without losing grammatical roundness. *This* concentrates in itself the deictic use typical of demonstratives (Quirk et al., 1985: @ 6.43) making reference to some extratextual situation or to some information previously given in the discourse. In (8a) there is no deictic form, but *the beste* is a full DO coinciding, in its referent, with that of the apposition following. In this case, the clause is a non-restrictive apposition since it is not specifying but explaining that referent.

Lastly, (10) is an example similar to (7) commented on above. *Heeld opinioun* forms a single semantic unit meaning "believe", "think" and it needs its meaning to be completed (in the sense that it is functioning as a transitive verb (Quirk et al., 1985: p.216)) by an object (O). This object function is, in this case, realised by the ComplCI. But if we stick to a syntactic analysis we can easily perceive something different. This construction's pattern would be

SVOC_o

The object function, properly speaking, would be realised by *opinioun* since it is the necessary complement of the monotransitive verb *heeld*. In this sense, the ComplCI would be fulfilling the Co function, explaining and ampliating the O (what kind of an opinion he held). This is a clear example where semantic and syntactic structure do not fully coincide.

4.3. OTHER CONSTRUCTIONS WITH NOMINAL PREDICATES

Nominal predicates may as well appear in matrices of structures containing equative forms. Equative forms can be defined as those typical of constructions in which the referents of S and Cs are interchangeable. *Be* is, in that respect, equative³. Example (11) has been used again as an illustration of such behaviour:

(11) 1.385 But greet harm was it as it thoughte me, thaton his shine a mor-
mal hadde he

(12) 1.574 Now is nat that God a ful fair Grace, thatswich a lewed mannes
wit shal pace the wisdom of an heap of lemed men?

These two examples contain anticipatory elements (underlined) which exist due to the extraposition of the functional elements realised by the *that*-clauses. They could be interpreted, according to what has been said earlier, both as S or as Cs.

5. SYNTACTIC PATTERNS OF COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

In this section some of the syntactic patterns found in ComplCI will be enumerated. But to start with, I will specify the occurrences of each of them before commenting the possible conclusions reached. After revising the material, 5 different syntactic patterns have been quantified:

A) patterns with S, V and x⁴ (34 cases in all)

| | |
|-----------|----|
| S V x | 17 |
| S V | 9 |
| V x | 2 |
| S v x V | 2 |
| X S V x | 3 |
| X V x S x | 1 |

B) patterns with Cs (total 19 cases)

| | |
|------------|----|
| S V Cs | 15 |
| Cs V S | 1 |
| S x V x Cs | 3 |

C) patterns with DO (total 23 cases)

| | |
|-------------|---|
| S V O | 8 |
| S V O x | 3 |
| S x V x O x | 6 |
| O S V | 1 |
| X V x O x | 4 |
| X O V S | 1 |

D) patterns with IO (5 cases)

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| S V IO | 3 |
| S IO V O | 1 |
| S x V x DO x IO | 1 |

Besides those listed in A)-D), I have also come across 1 case of split subject (SVS) and some others, my fifth class, containing extraposed elements, such as it V S, S IO it V, S V it O and it V Cs S.

Generally speaking and basing upon my evidence, the syntactic structure inside ComplCI seems to be quite developed at the time the text of the *Canterbury Tales* was written since only 12.9% of the clauses analysed are formed by less than three constituents. These constituents are hierarchically organised in different ways both in matrices and in ComplCIs. As far as ComplCIs, the syntactic pattern more frequently found is S V x⁵, which shows that the language of the period tends to stick to a fixed word order, the one English shows nowadays. This pattern appears in 20% of the cases.

The relationship existing between these five most frequent syntactic patterns inside ComplCIs and their complementisers is shown in table 9 below where numbers express percentages.

Table 9

| SYNTACTIC PATTERN | THAT | Ø | OTHERS |
|-------------------|------|------|--------|
| S V x | 35.3 | 47 | 17.7 |
| S V Cs | 66.6 | 33.4 | 0 |
| SV | 44.4 | 33.3 | 22.3 |
| S V O | 50 | 37.5 | 12.5 |
| S x V x O x | 33.3 | 50 | 16.7 |

6. VERBAL PREDICATES IN COMPLEMENT CLAUSES: THEIR SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE

I will now turn to the study of verbal predicates. As was said earlier, verbal predicates appear in 72 matrices, 84.71% of the whole of the corpus analysed. But let us consider first how they are distributed inside ComplCIs:

As regards unIntroduced ComplCIs, 30 cases out of 33 unIntroduced ComplCIs contain a v.p. which represents 90.9% of the total. Two of them are complex predicates: *lye in dede* and *be afright*.

Similarly, the vast majority of ComplCIs introduced by the complementiser *that* include a v.p. In fact, 42 cases of a total of 43 (97.7%) contain such predicates. Among these, we have found the six complex predicates listed below, all of them referred to a single semantic unit:

take ...a grief
make...aterd
be lykend
be in dette
be war
be significaciouns

Complement clauses introduced by complementisers other than *that* have all verbal predicates, none of which could be said to be complex.

Only six cases of extraposed clauses appear in the whole corpus (cf. section 1). of these, three contain verbal predicates as well, as illustrated by examples (13)-(15) following:

- (13) I. 725 But first I pray yow, of your courteisye that ye narette it nat *my villeinye* [s V it extraposed O]
 (14) I. 4502 I have wel rad in daun Burnel the Asse, among his vers, how that ther was a cok [it V S extraposed S]
 (15) I. 4631 For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is, to our doctryne it is y-write [S it V extraposed S]

The anticipatory term *it* or existential *ther* are present in all these cases. Their function varies according to the one realised by the clauses inside the matrix as well as according to the necessity of having an anticipatory element or not. Let us have a look at each in some detail:

In (13) line 725 the matrix contains a verbal manipulative predicate in Noonan's terms. Its ComplCI, on the other hand, includes a *that* complementiser and a verbal predicate. The verb of this clause is transitive, being the object *my villeinye*. *It* and *my villeinye* are co-referential and they are put together, only separated by a reinforcing negative form *nat* (rein-

forcing since it also appears as a part of the verbal form *n-arette*). Taking all these data into consideration we can safely affirm that this is a case of vacuous extraposition, since there is no apparent need to introduce *it* between the verb and its object. This vacuous extraposition may be attributed to stylistic reasons. It is the way the addresser wants us addressees to pay attention to the idea the clause conveys.

The matrix in example (14) line 4502 contains a verbal predicate, a *kak* according to Noonan's classification. The verb in this matrix is transitive and it takes the ComplCI as its object. Inside the ComplCI we find that *how that*, a complementiser we have included under the label **others**, it contains a verbal predicate, *to be* in its meaning of "exist" (which in PE is always formed by means of existential *there + be*, being *there* an anticipatory form of the subject). *There* has the same referent as *the cok*. In fact, though the construction is the usual one now in PE, it was only beginning to be used in the ME period, because OE did not have this type of extraposed S (in OE the normal thing was to use the subject NP directly followed by the corresponding form of the verb *beon*). In the present construction *ther* is regarded as an existential subject (Quirk et al., 1985: ch. 2).

Our last example, (15) line 4631, yields the following information as regards the matrix clause: it has a v.p., an utterance predicate in Noonan's terminology. This predicate is a transitive verb, so that the ComplCI is its object. As for the ComplCI it is introduced by *that* and has a verbal predicate. The verb of this clause is intransitive in this context, because we are dealing with a passive form. The referent of the subject clause inside the ComplCI, *al that writen is* is co-referential with *it*. In this case, the presence of this anticipatory form can be explained by the necessity the author may have felt to sum up such a long subject and make sure his addressees understand the idea he wants to convey.

As we have seen, each of these cases is different from the others, having found only one instance of vacuous extraposition (example (13), I. 725) which though was apparently very common at this time, is however extremely rare in our corpus. The other cases of extraposition found in the corpus contain nominal predicates in the matrices and have been, therefore, included in the discussion in section 4 above.

7. NOMINAL PREDICATES IN COMPLEMENT CLAUSES: THEIR SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE

Nominal predicates in matrices were not very frequent, or a least not so frequent as verbal predicates during the IME period. In complement clauses they are distributed in the following manner:

Of the 33 un-introduced ComplCI in our corpus, only 3 (representing 9.1%) have a nominal predicate. However, since our examples are *be worth*, *be cosin* and *be accordaunt to reson*, we could doubt of their entirely nominal nature. Among ComplCI introduced by *that*, our more numerous group with 43 such clauses as well as among those introduced by different complementisers (**others**), none has been found to contain a nominal predicate. This reveals that nominal predicates are significantly less frequent inside ComplCI than inside matrices, at least in this particular corpus.

When analysing the types of predicates appearing in extraposed structures, only one of the four cases recorded in our corpus contained a non-verbal predicate inside the complement clause and it was example (16):

(16) I. 785 Us thoughte it was noight worth to make it wys.

This sentence's syntactic pattern could be represented as OI V ObjCI. In a deeper analysis, the structure of the ComplCI would be revealed as it V Cs S.

As a matter of fact, the non-finite construction *to make it wys* is functioning as the subject of *was*. But most remarkable is the fact that *worth*, functioning -according to the pattern I propose - as a complement of the subject is said to be a unity together with the verb *to be*. Thus considered, a new difficulty would arise: whether to regard it in a whole as a complex predicate or to consider *worth* as a substantive and *was* as an equative form, so that the predicate would indeed be a nominal one.

Contrarily, *worth* could also be considered a preposition. In this case it would not have its complement as in the case mentioned by Quirk et al. (1985: @ 9.6) that I quote in (17):

(17) He's worth listening to.
where the sentence has a passive meaning.

This ambiguity can be solved by choosing any of the options proposed above, since all of them are possible though very different from one another. In all of the cases, it continues to be a preparatory form of the subject *to make it wys* which is extraposed. Extraposition would not be necessary in PE because we would use the form *worthwhile* as a complement of the subject, but in the Prologue of the *Canterbury Tales* where this line belongs, extraposition seems to be, once more, exacted by rhythm and rhyme.

8. MATRIX VERBS: TRANSITIVITY AND PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

As we saw in section 2, most ComplCIs in the corpus occur in object function depending on the verb of the matrix. Transitivity, as the necessity of a verb to have some other linguistic unit to complete or complement its meaning (be it a noun phrase or a that-clause or even a prepositional phrase as Quirk discusses in 1985: ch. 16) could be defined as a semantic feature of the verb having some syntactic consequences.

Restricting now our scope to that-clauses as objects or complements of the matrix verb, we can observe how monotransitive verbs (i.e: verbs requiring one single linguistic unit or argument to complete their predication) determine the verbs appearing in the finite ComplCI due to this semantic relation existing between them (Quirk et al., 1985: @ 16.30). In this sense, factual verbs in the matrix seem to require that the verb in the ComplCI should take the indicative mood, whereas suasive verbs in the matrix demand putative *should* or a mandative subjunctive.

In agreement with Quirk et al. (1985: @ 2.16) I have classified the verbs in my material according to their transitivity. As regards monotransitive structures, the method proposed by Warner (1982: 100-ff) has been adopted, basically the active-passive transformation and the existence of "deep objects". I have thus checked the frequency with which intransitive, monotransitive and ditransitive verbs appear in matrices and considered what kinds of objects - if any - they take. I have also quantified the passive verbs in matrices obtaining the following results:

8.1. INTRANSITIVE MATRICES

8 examples, 7 of which contain the verb *bifel*.

For all intransitive matrices, the ComplCI occurs in subject position and always extraposed without any anticipatory subject. (cf. for instance line 4381-3 in ex. (18) below)

(18) Bifel that Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,/ his seven wyves walking by his syde,/ caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne...

8.2. COPULATIVE MATRICES

4 examples, all of them containing the verb *be*. Two are subject clauses or could be interpreted as such due to the reversibility of equative *be*. However, the other two can only be considered appositional structures since they belong into it as complements of a head noun (cf. section 4 *supra*, ex (7)).

8.3. MONOTRANSITIVE MATRICES

44 examples. In all of them the finite ComplCI functions as DO of the matrix verb as in (19):

(19) l.4341-4343: Shortly I seye as for conclusion, that I shalhan of this avisioun adversitee.

8.4. DITRANSITIVE MATRICES

26 examples complemented by finite clauses in DO function. The second objects of these ditransitive verbs are all realised by personal pronouns such as *yow*, *him*, etc. one particular type of construction (generally called impersonal) in my material deserves comment.

(20) l. 682: Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe let.

The verb in (20) is inflected for 3rd p sg and has no overt subject. The personal pronoun inflected for the dative case fully coincides with the notional subject, though, syntactically, it is an IO, i.e., the second object of

the verb apart from the DO realised by the *that*-clause. We could consider that in these constructions the DO is extraposed since the normal word order inside the verb phrase in this period was being established as V IO DO. The word order that we have is, as a matter of fact, IO V DO. From my point of view, this could be regarded as evidence of a subtype of extraposition without *it*. These impersonal constructions are very frequent in IME. In fact, of the total of ditransitive constructions found, 42.3% belong to the impersonal constructions type.

But ditransitive verbs may take other objects realised by finite clauses in the way 4 instances show in our corpus:

- (21) 1.454-455 They weyeden ten pound that on sonday were upon hir heed.
 (22) 1.4310-4311 By God, I hadde lever than my sherte that ye had rad his legende, as have I.
 (23) 1.4148-4149 I dar wel leye a grote, that ye shul have a fevere terciane.
 (24) I. 336-338 For he was Epicurus owne sone, that heeld opinioun, that pleyndelyt was verraily felicitee parfyt.

In the examples above the clauses introduced by *that* are illustrative of what Crystal (1987: 118) defines as factitive objects. Though he first applies this label to verbs⁶, other linguistic entities seem to be able to function as factitive predicators. Evidence of such factitive predicators in examples (21)-(24) are:

- a) *ten pound* is the DO in (21).
 b) *than my sherte* is also necessary to complete the meaning of the verb in (22).
 c) *a grote* is the DO in (23), though in a semantic level it is forming a single unit together with the verb
 d) *the opinioun* is the DO in (24) and it has a status identical to the one mentioned in c)

8.5. PASSIVE MATRICES

1 example

- (25) 1.4422-4423 Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dremes, that thilke day was perilous to thee.

On my survey of the different kinds of verbs appearing inside matrices, I have included this sole instance of passive matrix in the group of ditransitives. In fact, *warn* needs two kinds of complementation: one [-animate] coreferent with the matter of the warning (DO) and another [+animate] functioning as the recipient of that same warning (IO).

After having analysed all the matrices in the corpus, their distribution can be illustrated in table 10 below:

Table 10

| VERBS IN MATRICES | INSTANCES |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Intransitive | 8 |
| Copulative | 4 |
| Monotransitive | 44 |
| Ditransitive | 26 |
| total | 82 |

Only 82 matrix clauses are represented in table 10 because though the corpus is formed by 85 ComplCls three of them are independent that-clauses. On the other hand, we must take into consideration that not all the 82 matrices are overtly expressed since we have already mentioned that two or more ComplCls may depend on one same matrix, if they are object clauses as in (26) and (27):

(26) I told him that I hated him and that I would never come back.

(27) It happened that he came and that it was snowing a lot⁷.

9. WORD ORDER

ME word order has been much explored and discussed, and the conclusions reached vary widely. This lack of agreement must be attributed not to a similar lack of scientific precision but to the changing order of the elements in ME sentence structure rather. Traugott (1972: 120-ff) is of the opinion that ME was a period of extensive transitivity, and that this transformation produced a change not only in the semantic and syntactic structures, but in word order too. She defends the existence of three basic syntactic patterns, to wit:

1 S (Aux) V (Obj)

2 (x) V S O or (x) Aux S V (O)

3 S (O) V (Aux)

- 1) would be the typical word order of statements, both coordinated and subordinated. 2) would symbolise the structure of interrogatives whereas. 3) tends to disappear all along the ME period - mainly by the 12th century.

Other scholars such as Mossé (1952: 122-ff) have certainly found a larger number of word-order patterns, because they consider some other elements of the sentence that Traugott has altogether disregarded for this purpose. The word order patterns that I consider relevant are listed below⁸. Letter C symbolises any complement which is required by the verb though it does not need be an object noun phrase. Such an element is often represented by x and is equivalent to what Quirk labels "adjunct".

a] S V O/C: mostly used in statements

(28) Hi læiden gæildes on the tunes.

b] S O/C V

(29) Ac hi nan treuthe ne heolden.

c] V S O/C: found in interrogatives and in comparatives.

(30) Ða macod he his gadering æt Oxeneford

(31) Hu þinc þe nu bi mine songe?

d] V O/C S

(32) And fynd þam þaire necessities.

(33) so priketh hem nature.

e] O/C V S: for emphasis in pompous style

(34) And pilgrimes were they alle.

f] O/C S V: inverse order found when an adverbial occurs in first position.

(35) of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende.

All the patterns above refer to matrices, regardless of whether each function is fulfilled by phrases or clauses. At any rate, there seems to be some evidence of a tendency to the order S (Aux) V O/C or to S (Aux) O V. In this last case, the O is a demonstrative or substantive and the subject does not have to be overtly expressed.

One more pattern could be yet added to the six already mentioned, the one V S. where no object or complement is involved but only an intransitive verb and its subject (realised by the ComplCI as in *bifel than*). Another type of impersonal construction -of which only one case has been found in the corpus - has been included in the V S pattern, not taking into account the anticipatory *it*

(36) l. 4591 It semed as that heven sholde falle.

Impersonal constructions of the type *me mette that* have been included in S V O though they do not have an overt subject. Thus the distribution illustrated in the list below is representative of the word order patterns found in my material.

| List 1 | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| WORD ORDER IN MATRICES | INSTANCES |
| s v o/c | 67 |
| s o/c v | 0 |
| v s o/c | 3 |
| v o/c s | 1 |
| o/c v s | 1 |
| o/c s v | 1 |
| v s | 8 |
| TOTAL | 81 |

To these 81 clauses we must add three independent (unintroduced) that-clauses (already mentioned above) and one case of split subject. The independent that-clauses are, all of them, subjects of omitted matrices containing a copulative verb *be* and an adjective functioning as Cs. This is why they have not been included in the general classification. In any event, their structure could be both

S V C -- non-extraposed S

V C S -- extraposed S (with anticipatory it as discussed in section 2.)

On the other hand, our only instance of split subject is:

(37) I. 524 A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.

Noon and *a bettre preest* have the same referent though the former is a noun phrase and the latter is a personal pronoun. This splitting, that at first sight could be considered to be an apposition, does not take place inside the matrix, but inside the S of the ComplCI. Consequently, we could consider that the matrix is the fragment stretching from the comma onwards with S V O word order. This is, however, a slippery question due to the ambiguity of interpretation of the whole line.

Some other peculiar cases found in our corpus such as that expressed below deserve being mentioned:

(38) I. 280 Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette.

Existential *there* functioning here as an anticipatory subject makes the verb (*wiste*) precede the real subject (*no wight* where *wight* is a nominative substantive meaning "person"). The fact that the verb precedes the S begins to be rare by the time the *Canterbury Tales* were written and this V S order is mostly found in interrogatives or whenever any emphasis is given to the sentence.

Certainly, what has been said before and the figures shown in the list above, are suggestive of a trend: that by this stage of development of the English language the common, almost fixed word order in matrix clauses was that in which the S has to precede the verb and where any other elements such as objects, complements or adverbials follow it. In this respect, IME word order patterns were very similar to the ones we can apply to PE.

As for word order inside complement clauses the more representative patterns in our corpus are shown in list 2.

One substantial difference between this table and the one referring to matrices can be observed, to wit, the fact that this has incorporated a new

word order pattern, S V, corresponding to the second more numerous group of clauses, intransitive constructions of the type:

(39) I. 4285 I see that thou wont heer abyde.

List 2

| WORD ORDER IN CLAUSES | INSTANCES |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| s v o/c | 52 |
| s o/c v | 1 |
| v s o/c | 0 |
| v o/c s | 1 |
| o/c v s | 2 |
| o/c s v | 1 |
| v s | 0 |
| s v | 24 |
| TOTAL | 81 |

Though it is surprising that no clause follows the V S pattern typical of interrogatives - not even interrogatives themselves -, most outstanding is the fact that the pattern V S O/C which both Mossé and Fernández identify with subordinate noun clauses (the type of ComplCls we are dealing with) is not represented in our corpus at all. This may suggest that, by the end of the 14th century, word order inside ComplCls (at least, as regards this text) was identical to the one we find now in PE, this is to say, S V O/C. Apart from the two main groups (S V O/C and S V), the rest of the cases seem to obey to the necessity to adequate themselves to prosodic requirements which may produce some alteration in the "normal" word order.

Lastly, a few instances need be dealt with separately. Let us consider (40) below:

(40) I. 4503 ...how that ther was a cok.

where *ther* is an existential form whose referent is *a cok*. This, once more, makes the copula precede the real subject (this point has been discussed earlier in the section devoted to word order in matrices).

(41) I. 4592 Now, gode men, I pray you herkneth alle!

where the vocative *gode men* is doubled in the subject pronoun *you* and in the reinforcing form *alle*. This could be considered as a case of split subject, though the vocative does not belong in the ComplCI and *alle* is

not functioning as a subject properly, but as a complement or modifier of *you* in the noun phrase *you alle*.

(42) I. 785 ...it was nocht worth to make it wys.

In (43) an anticipatory S it is filling in the gap left by the extraposition of the non-finite subject *to make it wys* that is preceded both by its copula and by its Cs.

(43) I. 4131 ...ne do no fors of dremes!

Contrarily, the structure illustrated in (43) does not correspond to any of the word order patterns mentioned before since it is an imperative form that, exactly the same as in PE, lacks a subject, thus resulting in the pattern V C which has not been included in our scheme.

All that has been said leads us to consider that ME word order at the moment the text was written (late 14th century) was already almost fixed and very similar to PE both in matrices and in ComplCIs, leaving behind a period during which declensions favoured a more flexible collocation of syntactic units.

10. TYPES OF PREDICATES IN MATRICES AND THEIR FREQUENCY AS DETERMINERS OF STYLE

In order to investigate the influence of the different types of predicates on style, a careful consideration of such types is required. As was stated in section 1, the theoretical framework and, consequently the terminology adopted for this semantic study are based on Noonan's (1985). However, to the list he proposes I have added **others**. Predicates not mentioned by Noonan such as existential *be*, nominal predicates and complex predicates, for instance, have been included inside this particular group. Table 11 shows the absolute number of each type of predicate⁹ found in my material whereas Table 12 presents this same information in more detail, since it includes the distribution of type of predicates depending also on the type of complementiser introducing the ComplCI.

Table 11

| TYPE OF PREDICATES | INSTANCES |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| kak predicates | 16 |
| pap predicates | 15 |
| Utterance predicates | 15 |
| Other predicates | 10 |
| Commentative predicates | 9 |
| Manipulative predicates | 9 |
| Immediate perception predicates | 6 |
| Achievement predicates | 1 |

Table 12. This table shows the distribution of semantic predicates according to the type of predicates they belong to in Noonan's classification and to the complementiser they take

| TYPE OF PREDICATE | THAT | OTHERS | ZERO |
|------------------------|------|--------------|------|
| Utterance | 9 | 1 (how that) | 5 |
| Propositional attitude | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| Pretence | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Commentative | 7 | 0 | 2 |
| Kak | 7 | 3 | 6 |
| Modal | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Manipulative | 5 | 0 | 4 |
| Desiderative | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fearing | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Achievement | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Phasal | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Immediate Perception | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Others | 6 | 1 | 3 |

I daresay that the presence or absence of certain kinds of predicates is directly related to the style and intention of the author. Though in this paper I examine the *Prologue* and the *Nonne Preestes Tale* together, we cannot forget that every single tale has its morais and that even the *Prologue* wants to enhance the sense of justice and social order of the time. In the *Nonne Preestes Tale* something is learned on the part of both characters and this may be the reason for the abundance of kak predicates. Pap predicates or predicates "expressing an attitude regarding the truth of the proposition expressed as their complement" (Noonan, 1985: 113) are second. This seems to be extremely natural for the texts we are dealing with contain

-mainly the tale itself - logical argumentations which many a time are defended or answered with such predicates.

For the same abundance of logical discussion do utterance predicates appear, mostly being a part of an argument. The characters look back at History to find some support for their ideas as in (44):

(44) 1. 4313-4316: Macrobeus, that writ the avisioun in Affrike of the worthy Cipioun, affermeth dremes, and seith that they been warning of thinges that men after seen.

This logical nuance of the tale - and of the Prologue according to the logical social order of the time - may account for the larger number of some types of predicates such as the mentioned above compared to others of the immediate perception type. Not only "what" is said but also "how" it is said are inevitably linked since words do always convey something and this is probably the reason why one particular type of predicates is used and not other. The subject matter determines the style, so to speak, though there is some parody on style in the particular case of Chauntecleer's speech.

11. SEMANTICS OF THE COMPLEMENT CONSTRUCTION

My major interest in this section, will not be the semantics of ComplCI on its own, but modality as well considering modality a semantic feature - and the relationship established between mood of the verb phrase inside the ComplCI and that of the verb in the matrix clause. Mood will be, thus, regarded here as a grammatical category.

For the purpose of investigating how mood or any other feature of the matrix clause's verb determines the mood of the ComplCI's verb, I have distinguished Indicative, Subjunctive, and Neutralised forms. Indicative and Subjunctive are recognisable due to the inflectional differences (still existing, though certainly weakened in ME) between them. Notwithstanding this, there are occasions in which a form cannot be safely ascribed to the indicative or subjunctive paradigms according to its inflectional ending. Such cases, normally originated by the weakening of unstressed vowels, are considered "neutralised forms" (Warner, 1982: 188-ff).

Though I do not reject Visser's proposal to use "modally marked form" and "modally zero form" respectively (1970: @786), I use the traditional nomenclature "indicative-subjunctive". This is so because I study modality regarding mood as a grammatical category and the terms "Indicative" and "subjunctive" can perfectly refer to inflectional entities inside verbs though they affect the content of the whole utterance from a semantic point of view.

The difference between indicative and subjunctive moods was not new in ME though their usage was not the same as in OE. Generally speaking, we can say that ME used the subjunctive in a matrix clause in the following situations (Mossé, 1952: 97-ff):

- 1.- to express a realisable wish (present tense)
- 2.- to express an unrealisable wish (past tense)
- 3.- equivalent to an imperative with the 3rd person
- 4.- if it was followed by a hypothetical ComplCI.

In any case different from the above mentioned, the indicative was the expected mood of the verb in the matrix clause (for instance, to express facts, verification or reality).

In ComplCIs, the use of subjunctive or indicative depended on the characteristics of the matrix clause's verb. Thus, an object clause in ME took a subjunctive after verbs of wishing, commanding, asking or after verbs of doubt and estimation. If the ComplCI belonged to a second level of embedding, this is to say, if it was not functioning as a primary constituent of the matrix, the subjunctive was used when following an imperative in the matrix with \emptyset complementiser. This same phenomenon has been observed to take place with indirect questions. Warner (1982, 189) affirms that subjunctive appeared in ComplCIs "when not apparently motivated by the complement clause construction" either after a word expressing "thinking" or in a ComplCI which, had it been a matrix, the subjunctive Would have been used (conditionals, wishes, etc).

Warner mentions three types of ComplCIs with subjunctive, only two of which - those referring to finite that clauses - are of any significance

for our purpose. On the one hand, in that-clauses after verbs of ordering, requesting, wishing and ensuring. This idea has been also supported by Visser (1970: vol II, @ 869; vol III, @ 1546). On the other, subjunctive appears also in that-clauses with verbs of evaluation taking a subject complement.

After checking my material, present indicative was found to occur in 31 matrix verbs, of which:

1] 11 exhibit present indicative in the CompCl. All matrices contain *kak* and utterance predicates.

2] Only 1 has a neutralised form, the matrix verb expressing prevention (*kepe*).

3] 5 clauses contain periphrases expressing tense such as *shal han* (future), *wolt abyde* (future), *is ago* (past), and *are shapen* (past).

4] 3 clauses contain periphrases expressing modality: *is for to drede*, *mote be* and *can clepen*. All of them depend on *kak* and utterance predicates.

5] 6 clauses contain a past indicative form in the complement because the matrix expresses the present influence that the past (the clause) has on the speaker as in:

(45) He says that Peter went there.

6] 4 clauses have a subjunctive verbal form due to the conditional character of the matrix in one case and to the presence of manipulative predicates in the other.

Table 13 contains data concerning the distribution of mood in complement verbs, being the verb in the matrix in its turn always inflected for present indicative. Table 12 also proves that Mossé's and Warner's affirmations on the use of the subjunctive (as inflectional category) are certainly accurate as we have seen in 6] and shall see below when dealing with periphrases expressing subjunctive mood.

Table 13

| CLAUSES | % |
|----------------------|------|
| Present Indicative | 36.7 |
| Past Indicative | 20 |
| Periphrases tense | 16.7 |
| Past Subjunctive | 13,3 |
| Periphrases modality | 10 |
| Neutralized forms | 3.33 |

More abundant in our corpus matrices is the past indicative (39 instances). This can be attributed to the nature of the corpus itself (narration). Of these past indicative verbs, 7 can be said not to be overtly expressed, for instance, in those cases where two or more ComplCI are coordinated. Witness:

(46) 1.711-712: For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe, he moste preche, and (wel affyle his tonge).

61.5% of all these clauses depending on matrices with past tense verbs also contain a verb inflected for the past indicative denoting facts or opinions considered as facts in the matrix.

Though Mossé and Warner have different theoretical bases, they both conclude that the use of the subjunctive in ME is limited. But modality could be expressed in ME also by resorting to analytical constructions as evidenced by several examples from our corpus. In fact, clauses depending on past indicative verbs in the matrix which take periphrastic forms are 12 in all. There are three periphrases expressing tense or aspect: *gan calle*, *was come*, and *gan gronen*. The rest of them - 9 - express modality or mood.

The relationship between the mood in the verb of the matrix and that of the ComplCI, is, in this case, represented in Table 14 where all the matrices considered (39) have a verb inflected for the past indicative.

Table 14

| VERBIN CLAUSES | INSTANCES | % |
|-------------------|-----------|------|
| Past Indicative | 27 | 69.2 |
| Periphrases tense | 3 | 7.7 |
| Periphrases mood | 9 | 23.1 |

But the possibility of expressing modality is not exclusive of ComplCIs. As regards matrices, modality is also expressed in different ways. Some of them also contain these periphrastical constructions. Those expressing modality such as the eight following:

| Matrix | Clause |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| <i>hadde lever</i> | <i>had rad</i> |
| <i>may seen</i> | <i>been to drede</i> |
| <i>maist lere</i> | <i>shade been</i> |
| <i>wolde shewe</i> | <i>coulde pleyne</i> |
| <i>dorste seyn</i> | <i>mighte make</i> |
| <i>dar leye</i> | <i>shul have</i> |
| <i>dorste make</i> | <i>wiste</i> |
| <i>dorste swere</i> | <i>weyeden</i> |

As can be seen, the last four instances express factual matrices and correspond to factuality in the ComplCI (2 of them expressed in the indicative with *wiste* and *weyeden*). The other four examples are non-factual and their ComplCIs refer to hypothetical situations such as:

(48) I. 4310-4311: By god, I hadde lever than my sherte that ye had rad his legende, as have I.

where the idea conveyed by the complement clause could have existed, but has not.

All through the corpus I have only found 1 imperative (suasive, if we use Quirk's terminology) matrix with a subjunctive in the ComplCI. The imperative expresses a manipulative predicate.

As regards the 3 cases of independent that-clauses that we mentioned many a time before, they all contain verbal forms or periphrases expressing subjunctive modality.

In the light of the evidence examined we can say that modality in Chaucerian English seems to perfectly correspond to the strictest ME canons.

1 2. CONCLUSIONS

The impersonal constructions of the type *me mette, us thoughts* dealt with in section 8 when discussing ditransitive constructions are very frequent in ME and typical of this period. They are central in the discussion of finite complementation in ME first, because they always take finite ComplCls and, second, because such constructions have disappeared from the language. Less common is the type *it seemed to me* that was only beginning to be used by the end of the 14th century and that does always need a *that*-clause functioning as its extraposed subject (Quirk et al., 1985: @16.34). Our corpus has rendered one single example of this second type of impersonal construction only recently beginning to be used.

As regards periphrases some final remarks have to be made. In the first place, perfective tense was still expressed with different auxiliaries depending on the transitivity of the verb. However, the paucity of instances in which *ben* or *habben* are differently used according to the transitivity or intransitivity of the verb (common in OE) shows that this difference begins to disappear by this time and *habben* is used in every case except with *gime*. Second, the extensive use of periphrastical verbal forms which were pretty rare in OE but are very frequently used nowadays is also worthy of mention. This means that certain verbs were losing their lexical content in order to convey grammatical meaning only accompanying other uninflected verbal forms. Thus, it could be affirmed that ME was the period which saw, among many other changes, the transformation of some OE verbs into modals.

By way of conclusion, and though some partial considerations have been already announced all along this paper, Chaucerian English can be said to be modern as regards its use of finite complementation. In fact, *that* is the complementiser more frequently used by Chaucer in these two pieces of writing. Of course, this does not exclude other types of complementisers slightly more archaic such as *how that*.

That is almost always introduced by verbal predicates. This is due to a clear majority of verbal predicates as well as to the total lack of adjective-predicates in this corpus. But what may be most outstanding is that *that* can never be suppressed when introducing a clause in subject function exactly the same as in PE.

Moreover, anticipatory elements were becoming more and more frequent in cases of extraposition, thus marking another important difference with OE. Likewise, ME resembles PE in the fact that apposition realised by clauses follows, roughly speaking, the same rules as nowadays.

As for the opposition Indicative vs. Subjunctive it has already begun to fade due to the weakening of final unstressed vowels in inflections. Mood distinctions (as well as tense and aspect) are now more and more often expressed by means of periphrases formed with verbs which were not yet considered modals in OE (i.e: *wolde, shade*). The abundance of periphrases expressing modality such as *hadde lever* shows a tendency to the PE use of analytical verbal forms.

One more similarity with PE shown in our examples is that word order begins to be fixed in Chaucer's time. Generally speaking, this Chaucerian English of the late 14th century can be said to share more features typical of PE than of OE, since the Norman influences are settled by this period as well as some other intrasystemic mechanisms that will be characteristic of PE and make it so different from OE and other Germanic languages in its syntactical organisation exactly the same as many other elements that have made of English the language it is today.

NOTAS

1. Though this aspect has not been treated I would like to point out that both the syntax of the narrator of the *Prologue* and of Chauntecleer are much more complex (according to their level of embedding) than that of Pertelote, for instance. This corroborates the idea that Chaucer interrupts the tradition of "high subject, high style".
2. This discourse deixis is not considered as such by Huddleston (1984: 274-284) who makes a distinction between anaphora, as something textual, and deixis, as something with an extra-textual reference.
3. This type of clauses are discussed separately since I do not consider they are similar to the two last ones except because they all contain nominal predicates.
4. Where x is any adverbial different from complements.
5. Let us not confound this with the kernel clause in which x is a necessary element (Huddleston, 1984: © 1.4) because in the cases analysed it is not always so.
6. Factitive refers to a verb which takes a complement clause, and where the speaker presupposes the truth of the proposition expressed in that clause.
7. This example is intended as an imitation of the *bifel* construction.
8. For its drawing-up I have resorted to both Mossé's and Fernández's patterns, a mixture of which, I think, gives the most accurate idea we could have of what ME word order was. Examples have been also taken from both authors.
9. Noonan's abbreviations have been also adopted here.

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