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na ingear dagum. þeod cynni
þrym ge frumon huda æþelingaf el
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- CBDA 8 -
BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Plenary Speaker 1 :

The second Xavier Dekeyser Memorial Lecture

Richard Ingham
University of Westminster

LOANWORDS AND POLYSEMY IN EARLIER ENGLISH

In contemporary contexts, monosemous borrowing appears to be the normal case (Winter-Froemel 2014: 73): loanwords tend to be borrowed in a single sense, often corresponding to a concept newly lexicalised in the recipient language. The recipient language community need not have many bilingual speakers for this kind of borrowing to occur. In the Middle English period the position differed markedly as regards loans from French. Here the normal outcome appears to have been to inherit the polysemy of a source etymon. An initial sample of about 50 polysemous French loanwords in Middle English showed that over three-quarters were polysemous in ME. Next the semantics was investigated of more specialised Middle English loan lexis in three occupational domains. Senses recorded in the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* and the *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* were compared with corresponding lexical entries in the *Middle English Dictionary*. Out of over 100 Middle English items borrowed from French, the great majority were polysemous in ways reflecting the source language item's semantics. The likelihood that senses matching those of the French etymon arose in Middle English independently of source language polysemy was considered, but rejected.

These findings are consistent with a contact situation characterised by the action of bilingual speakers exploiting the semantic range of French lexemes. The context for borrowing in Middle English was one of extensive bilingualism practised by the educated classes, which in turn rested on the use of French in childhood as an educational medium language. It is argued that the phenomenon of bilingual activation facilitated source language polysemy in bilingual communicative settings. Since the matrix for bilingualism came to an end after the 14th century, the prediction is made that polysemous borrowing sharply declined in the Early Modern English period. Two samples of 16th and 17th century loans from French into English, totalling 70 lexemes whose French etymons were polysemous, were analysed so as to validate this prediction. Data drawn from entries in the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* and the OED's *Historical Thesaurus of English* show a very marked reduction in loan polysemy in this period. The most common outcome of borrowing a polysemous French lexeme was now for the English word to inherit only one sense.

It is argued that the context in which borrowing occurs exerts a decisive influence on the range of senses adopted by the borrowing language. In the Middle English period, fluency in French was facilitated by its daily spoken use in the educational system. This practice died out after the Black Death, and a sharp drop occurred in the accuracy of French in the later 14th century. Polysemous borrowing thereafter became much rarer. The borrowing process in the Early Modern English period is hypothesised to have operated by adapting into English

items encountered in written form by individuals with a reading ability in French, rather than by being fluent in the spoken language and using it in a communicative setting.

The strong tendency towards polysemy of French loans in Middle English but not in Early Modern English thus not only endowed our language with semantically richer loans; used in conjunction with socio-historical information, it serves to understand better how the language ecology of earlier periods worked.

Plenary Speaker 2

Aude Mairey,
Sorbonne University

THE CRAFT OF ENGLISH - SOCIOCULTURAL GENESIS OF A LANGUAGE IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

At the end of the Middle Ages, a literature in English - a language that had hitherto enjoyed little prestige in the kingdom compared with Latin and French - developed rapidly at a time when England was undergoing major political and socio-cultural changes. But language and literature not only reflect social change, they also shape it.

This study of a corpus of paratexts (prologues and epilogues) from some thirty works of various kinds - political, poetic, devotional, historical, scientific, etc. -, written between 1350 and 1470, aims to shed light on the ways in which an intellectual and political language was constituted in different literary fields, in particular by examining the relationships of its producers and readers to power (secular, ecclesiastical and divine), to knowledge, to the individual and to their own identity. Both 'classical' methods of historical and literary analysis, and the tools of textometry are used.

Through a cross-analysis of the lexicon, the ideas expressed in it, and the relationships forged between the author and his readership, the aim is to show how these works, taken as a whole and in their diversity, contribute to the construction of an increasingly English, if not national, community, despite tensions of all kinds.

Francisco Alonso-Almeida, Francisco J. Álvarez-Gil, Elena Quintana-Toledo

University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

IF-YOU AND INTERPERSONAL MEANING IN WOMEN'S INSTRUCTIVE TEXTS (1700-1899)

This study investigates mitigation strategies in 18th- and 19th-century English instructive texts written by women, with a particular focus on conditional constructions such as *If you…* These structures, central to the attenuation of directives and recommendations, played a key role in shaping the pragmatic force of instructional discourse. By softening imperatives, they reflect contemporary norms of politeness and social hierarchy, providing insight into the ways female authors negotiated authority within their discursive constraints. The research is based on the COWITE18 and COWITE19 subcorpora, which were specifically compiled to analyze contemporary used of language as well as the rhetorical and pragmatic strategies employed in women's instructive writing. Despite the significance of these constructions in instructional genres, little research has systematically examined their diachronic evolution, particularly from a sociolinguistic and discourse-analytical perspective. Additionally, the broader influence of historical transformations, including industrialization, rising literacy levels, and shifting gender roles, on the frequency and function of mitigation strategies remains largely uncharted.

This study employs both quantitative and qualitative analyses to explore the frequency, distribution, and function of *If you…* constructions in women's instructive texts. The findings reveal a strong reliance on explicit politeness markers in the 18th century, exemplified by expressions such as *If you please*, which emphasize relational politeness and social deference. Over time, however, a shift towards more pragmatic and direct constructions, such as *If you want*, emerges in the 19th century. This transition aligns with broader sociocultural shifts that encouraged a more functionally driven and accessible communicative style, suited to an expanding and increasingly literate audience.

Beyond their pragmatic function in softening directives, *If you…* constructions serve as indicators of evolving discourse norms and changing social expectations regarding women's textual authority. The comparison of 18th- and 19th-century texts suggests that while earlier constructions foregrounded politeness and indirectness, later examples increasingly reflect a shift toward practicality and reader engagement. These patterns underscore how women's instructive writing adapted to ongoing historical conditions, revealing an intricate balance between politeness, persuasion, and rhetorical adaptability in instructional discourse.

Anne-Elisabeth Donzé,

University of Geneva

PROSE AND VERSE IN THE STUDY OF SYNTACTIC CHANGE: THE CASE OF SUBJECT-AUXILIARY INVERSION IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

Research in historical syntax is typically based on evidence from prose texts (cf. e.g. the focus on prose from the Penn Parsed Corpora of Historical English). The assumption is that, for example, due to metric constraints or the use of archaisms, the syntax of verse texts may be altered in ways which make them non-representative for the language spoken at the time. However, there is very little work that has tried to evaluate this background assumption (but cf. e.g. Zimmermann 2022). In this paper, I will examine the relation between the syntax of prose and verse texts by focusing on an aspect of the decline of the so-called Verb-Second (V2) – or subject-verb inversion – phenomenon in Middle English (ME). The aim of this paper is therefore twofold in that it attempts to contribute to a better understanding of the loss of V2 in the history of English as well as to evaluate the status of verse data in historical syntax.

In the early stages of the English language, the finite verb regularly occurred in second position and, thus, in a position preceding the subject when the clause-initial element was a non-subject (V2, subject-verb inversion). However, V2 in Old English was not as regular as in the modern Germanic languages. While it was systematic with certain initial elements (negation, interrogative elements, adverb *then*), with others subject-verb inversion was rare with pronominal subjects and common but not systematic with nominal subjects. In Present-Day English, only few contexts allow inverted word orders. The English language therefore underwent an important change in this domain over the centuries.

Although the "loss of V2" has been regularly discussed in the literature (cf. e.g. van Kemenade 1987 and much subsequent work), several aspects of this change have yet to be thoroughly examined. This study aims to address some remaining issues in this domain and shall provide an overview of the diachronic trajectory of V2 with auxiliaries (modal verbs, *do* and auxiliaries *be* and *have*) during the Middle English period. The development of auxiliaries is of particular interest as inversion has been lost in English except in very specific contexts, for instance, interrogative clauses. This work is based on data collected from the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus* (Kroch et al. 2000) and the *Parsed Corpus of Middle English Poetry* (Zimmermann 2021) which are analysed by means of logistic regression models.

My presentation will examine the development of V2 in Middle English with respect to the following factors: (i) type of subject (nominal vs pronominal); (ii) type of initial constituent (*then* vs any other initial non-subject); (iii) genre. The results suggest that ME prose and verse present similarities in their use of V2. Prose shows a gradual decline with nominal subjects, while with pronouns, inversion increases at first before declining in tandem with nominal subjects. Verse has similar results, while seemingly slightly more progressive than prose, which suggests that with respect to this phenomenon, there does not seem to be anything distinctive with verse data.

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Benjamin Dufour

Ecole normale supérieure-PSL University

The development of the "this my letter" formula in Early Modern English, with parallels in some Germanic languages

The diachrony of the joint use of demonstratives and possessives ("DEM POSS") is a vexed question (Wood 2007), as this combination is well attested in Old English, completely disappears from our sources in Middle English (Allen 2004 & 2006), before being once again attested in Early Modern English. This is widely unexpected, as determiners and possessives do not usually cooccur in this language stage. Detailed analyses of Early Modern data have underlined that DEM POSS was mainly found in formal "official" letters, where it appears to have often gained a pragmatic meaning as a politeness marker (Dufour 2024).

By combining the quantitative analysis of the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME) and closer surveys of Early Modern correspondences – with a special focus on Thomas Cromwell (1485?-1540), we contribute to the understanding of the diachrony of DEM POSS by showing that the puzzling number of occurrences observed during this period is influenced by the lexicalisation of a formal epistolary formula, "this my letter" (1), from a disambiguating meaning to a codified designation. This study builds on the strengthened interest in the diachrony of formulaic language (Buerki 2020), and in correspondences (Palander-Collin 2010).

(1)	*At*	*the*	*sight*	*of*	***these***	***my***	***Letters*** (Cromwell, Letter 237)
	at.PREP	the.*DEF*	sight.*N*	of.PREP	these.*DEM*	my.PREP	letters.*N*

In Cromwell's correspondence, 31 of the 74 occurrences of DEM POSS appear with the lexeme "letter". Moreover, the adjunction of a modifier prevents the use of DEM POSS, which points toward a lexicalisation:

(2)	*As*	*I*	*wrote*	*vnto*	*your*	*lordeship*	*in*
	as.*SUB*	I.PRO_PERS_S	wrote.*V_1PS*	to.*PREP*	your.*POSS*	lordship.N	in.*PREP*

my	***last***	***letteres*** (Letter 35)
my.*POSS*	last.*SEL*	letters.*N*

A browsing of contemporary corpora and correspondences from other Early Modern Germanic languages reveals that the same locution is found in Swedish (*theta woorth breff*, "this our letter" in a letter by Gustav Vasa [1496-1560]) and in Low German (*myt dessem vnsem breue*, "with this our letter", in the archives of Luneburg, early 16th century). This points toward a shared epistolary formula, which is not unexpected in a period of codification of epistolary practices and norms across Europe (Daybell & Gordon 2016, Lignereux 2023), often influenced by Latin practices (Fumaroli 2008). The sharp increase in use of DEM POSS in Early Modern English would thus be partly explained by the lexicalisation of a formula in Early Modern correspondence, contributing to the understanding of the diachrony of DEM POSS in English.

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Alexandre Etcheheguy

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF ZERO RELATIVE PRONOUNS IN MEDIEVAL ENGLISH IN RELATION TO THE SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCE: A CORPUS-BASED QUANTITATIVE STUDY

This presentation consists of an analysis tackling the development and diffusion of a linguistic strategy across the dialects of English during the medieval period: the zero relative pronoun (which forms subordinate clauses sometimes referred to as "contact clauses"). This study is part of a broader effort to better characterize the impact that the prolonged presence of Scandinavian populations in Britain had on the English language. The establishment of the Danelaw, the part of Anglo-Saxon territory colonized and administered by Vikings between the 9th and 10th centuries, marked the beginning of sustained linguistic contact between speakers of Old English and Old Norse. The consequences of these contacts are most visible in the English lexicon, but they may have also affected some of its morphosyntactic elements.

While the existence of the zero relative pronoun is attested before the arrival of the Vikings in the mid-9th century and can be therefore legitimately considered as independent from contact with Old Norse, its occurrences remain very rare across all dialects of medieval English.

Furthermore, the marginal existence of that phenomenon is almost entirely restricted to cases where the relative pronoun functions as the subject of the subordinate clause, which is quite different from contemporary English syntax where the zero relative pronoun is both highly common and only occurs as the object of the subordinate clause (at least in standard English).

While it has not been interpreted as a borrowing from Old Norse, the evolution of the zero relative pronoun in English has nonetheless been attributed to Scandinavian influence, though this connection remains tenuous and is primarily based on the mere existence of similar characteristics in Old Norse.

We wish to contribute to this discussion by presenting data comparing the frequency of occurrence of the zero relative pronoun between the Old English and Middle English periods, based on its function within the subordinate clauses in which it appears. We adopt a diachronic quantitative approach, relying on two syntactically annotated corpora: the York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose and the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, 2nd edition. These corpora make it possible to browse a large quantity of edited texts from Old as well as Middle English, and to search for specific syntactic structures across all dialectal areas for both periods under study. The overall paucity of occurrences should also enable us to focus on specific examples and pursue our analysis with a more qualitative approach, which may further shed light on how the presence of Scandinavians have swayed the evolution of English.

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Chloe Hebert

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INVESTIGATING THE DIACHRONIC MORPHOSEMANTIC BEHAVIOURS OF V-*MENT,* V-*AGE* AND V-*ING* NOMINALISATIONS USING THE OED.

This presentation examines morphological competition in English nominalizations, focusing on V-ment, V-age, and V-ing. Using the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) and corpus data, my PhD investigates their historical evolution and contemporary usage, drawing on studies like Allan (2012), Hilpert (2013), and Smith (2016, 2020, 2023), which highlight the OED's value for diachronic lexical research.

As part of my PhD work, this presentation presents data from a preliminary lexicographic study where OED entries are examined to trace the chronological development of V-*ment*, V-*age* and V-*ing* constructions. The suffixes -*ment* and -*age*, both rooted in Old French and Latin despite their distinct origins, form nouns indicating a process, an action or the result or product of an action, as seen in words like *movement, management, heritage* and *coverage*. As for the suffix -*ing*, it differs in its Proto-Germanic origin, but its use seems to be very similar to the other two, since in Old English it was mainly used to form action nouns from verbs. While these suffixes might initially seem to produce nominalisations with overlapping meanings - *e.g., elopement ("the action of eloping"), plunderage ("the action of plundering"), and dumbfounding ("the action of rendering someone speechless"),* competition studies (see Goldberg 2019, etc) reveal that their competition involves complex processes beyond simple synonymy or rivalry. This study addresses the following questions: How many V-*ment*, V-*age* and V-*ing* items are listed in the OED? What are the semantic categories these items belong to (processes, results, instruments, objects, etc.)? In what ways are V-*ment*, V-*age* and V-*ing* forms representative quantitatively? What is the timeline of their attestation dates? The aim of this preliminary work is to formulate initial hypotheses as to the meanings and evolution of these nominalisations and to explore the motivations behind their competition. These inquiries serve as parameters within a broader inquiry focused on understanding the lexicographic behaviours of V-*ment*, V-*age* and V-*ing* in OED.

Our approach follows that of Smith (2016, 2019, 2020, 2023): We manually extract V-ment, V-age, and V-ing nominal derivatives from the electronic OED3 to quantify their occurrences. For each entry, we examine its emergence date, etymology, definitions, and the definitions of the source verb to assess form-meaning analysability and predictability. Using semantic feature analysis and morphological structure analysis based on OED data, we explore correlations between morphological patterns and semantic features. In addition, we compare morpho-semantic timelines to understand the evolution of these derivatives.

Finally, the presentation will include one or two examples of corpus-based analyses for alternative derivatives with each of the three suffixes. These examples aim to demonstrate how corpus-based analyses can complement lexicographic research.

Key words : Morphological competition, nominalisation, diachronic study, OED

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Anton Karasev

University of Tours

ASPECTUAL AND TEMPORAL PROMINENCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF OLD ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN VERBS

Throughout its history, the English tense-aspect system has undergone oscillating evolution between aspectual and temporal prominence. With the loss of Proto-Indo-European aspectual prominence, the newly established two-tense system in Old English required new means of expression, giving rise to an aspectual opposition based on *ge-* prefixation. Even though the distinction was half-lexical, it reflected the communicative need to convey aspectual information. At the same time, the pragmatic stance of Old English speakers led them to use existing resources to convey grammatically unexpressed meanings, that of future time in particular. Outside of descriptive constructions, future time was more likely to be expressed by the present tense of perfective verbs. In this regard, the Old English verb proves to be similar to the Russian verb, which has three tenses – present, past, and future – and two aspects, perfective and imperfective. The aspectual meaning is inherent to the semantics of the Russian verb. The present tense form of a Modern Russian verb normally refers to the future and this restriction is more consistent than it was in Old English. This paper provides a comparative study of the evolution of aspect expression in the two systems and the pragmatic implications of these shifts with a focus on the perfective verbs in the present tense form. It turns out that the English and Russian verbs have evolved in opposite directions. Aspect distinction in Old English wasn't systematic and turned out to be ineffective: for example, the perfective prefix wasn't used with the verbs that already had prefixes. As a result, verbs were unable to render the aspectual information on their own, and analytic constructions had to be used for that purpose as well as to express the future. The Old Russian verb system included eight tense-aspect forms, with the aspectual distinctions rendered analytically. Over time, the complex verb forms gave rise to the opposition of perfective vs imperfective verbs, which led to the degradation of the old verb system and the formation of three tenses marked by strong aspectual prominence. Although there has been no direct interaction between the two languages in question, a diachronic comparison of the development of their tense-aspect systems offers valuable insights. In particular, it sheds light on the use and interactions of the means of conveying aspectual meanings, as well as on the pragmatic factors and cognitive mechanisms that determine the choice of specific forms of expression.

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Juliette Kayenbergh, Hendrik De Smet

KU Leuven-FWO, KU Leuven

PERCEPTION VERB CONSTRUCTIONS AND THEIR ASPECTUAL INTERPRETATION IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH – YOU NEVER SAW IT COMING!

The English perception verb construction consists of verbs like *see* or *hear* that can be either followed by a *-ing*-clause or a bare-infinitive, as in *I saw them walking* vs. *I saw them walk*. According to Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 1236-7), the *-ing*-clause alternate conveys imperfective or progressive meaning and only profiles a segment of the event, while the bare-infinitive alternate construes the event holistically, and hence perfectively. The semantic contrast between the two variants is said to mirror that between the progressive construction and the simple form (*they were walking* vs. *they walked*). If correct, their claim entails that the *-ing*-clause alternate will favour different situation types (see e.g. Vendler 1957; Smith 1997) from the bare infinitive variant.

The present paper aims to investigate the differences between the two constructions and their development over time. As for Present-day English, Huddleston & Pullum's characterization predicts that the durative and atelic nature of states and activities will be more compatible with *-ing*-clauses, as in (1), while bare infinitives will likely preferentially pattern with accomplishments and achievements because of their telicity and, for the latter, their punctual nature, as in (2). Diachronically, it is unclear how the increasing use of the *-ing*-clause has affected the use of the bare infinitive.

(1) when naaman **saw him running** after him, he light downe from the charet to meete him (EEBO, 1568)
(2) I **saw them arrive** in Paris on the television. (BNC, 1993)

To address these questions, data are collected from the EEBO, CLMET and BNC corpora, covering Early Modern, Late Modern and Present-day English and consist of random samples capped at about 150 instances per pattern per period, for the matrix verbs SEE and HEAR. Each relevant token is coded for the situation type of the *-ing*-clause or bare-infinitive variant.

Preliminary results show different pictures for the bare-infinitive and *-ing*-clause variants, but the extent of the contrast varies over time. Early Modern data reveal that bare infinitives may equally be compatible with accomplishments, achievements and activities (though barely with states), while *-ing*-clauses favour activities as expected. For Present-day data, achievements constitute the highest share of the bare-infinitive pattern, and activities that of the *-ing*-clause pattern. The versatility of the bare-infinitive variant in Early Modern data may echo that of the simple form, which showed greater usage flexibility before the progressive construction grammaticalized and rose in frequency (see e.g. Bybee 1994).

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THE DATIVE EXPERIENCER SUBJECT IN OLD ENGLISH: A DISTRIBUTIONAL ANALYSIS

The loss of impersonal structures with oblique objects has been a topic of research, with the majority of studies focusing on the morphological and syntactic causes of this phenomenon in Middle English (Allen, 1995; Fischer & Van Der Leek, 1983). However, more recent studies have explored the evolution of these structures in a range of other languages, including Old English. The aforementioned languages demonstrate a shared Germanic inheritance, as evidenced by studies conducted by Barðdal and Eythórsson (2009), Barðdal et al. (2016), Barðdal, Pat-El, and Carey (2018), and Bruno and Kerkhof (2020).

The phenomenon can be attested across a variety of languages, not solely within the Indo-European family. In Old English, verbs such as *lician* (meaning 'to please'), *ofhreowan* ('to cause grief') and *sceamian* ('to be ashamed') can take a dative subject, as evidenced by the example 'I am ashamed' (Ælfc. Gr. 33; Som. 37). (24) "It grieves me" or … and *him gelicade hire þeawas … and þancode Gode* (ChronD (Cubbin), 1067.1.835) "and her virtues pleased him … and he thanked God".

In light of the most recent research on the subject and the advances in corpus linguistics, it is worthwhile to revisit Old English verbs that select for potential dative subjects. This paper will focus on the distribution of dative experiencers across the Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus, as well as the competition with non-dative subjects, based on the proximity search for the verbs appearing in the list of potential candidates in (Middeke, 2022). Godden (1978) observes that Ælfric appears to have endeavoured to standardise impersonal constructions in favour of the more prevalent dative, which suggests that the semantic distinctions had become so subtle as to be obscured by the mid-10th century. The preliminary research has indicated that Wulfstan displays a greater degree of hesitation. It is evident that this subject merits further investigation.

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TRACKING THE DYNAMICS OF SEMANTIC CHANGE:

FIGURATIVE EXPANSION IN IMITATIVE VERBS OF MOTION

The aim of this research, as part of my PhD dissertation, is to examine the dynamics driving semantic change using verbs expressing manner of motion. More specifically, the purpose is to analyse the development of figurative meanings from a diachronic perspective using a combined method (see Smith) in verbs of motion. The present paper focuses on a subset of verbs of motion that are characterized by imitative or onomatopoeic roots, i.e. iconic verbs, such as *plash*, *plod* and *plop*. We know, as shown by Dingemanse (2012, 663), that iconic words are most likely to describe conceptual categories of sound, movement, visual impressions, inner feelings, and cognitive states. By tying together, the study of semantic change in verbs expressing manner of motion and verbs of iconic origin we hope to contribute to the current research questions relating to processes of semantic change.

To construct a comprehensive dataset and subsequently an imitative subset, several methodological steps were taken following Smith(2016; 2018; 2020). Firstly, using the Oxford English Dictionary online (OED3) the keywords 'move' and 'motion' were searched within the 'definition' sections. This search yielded a list of 1419 lexemes spanning from Old English to contemporary usage. Looking at both their 'etymology' sections, the keywords 'echoic,' 'onomatopoeic,' 'imitative,' and 'expressive' were retained to identify the subset of verbs. Additionally, these keywords were searched within individual word pages, as they occasionally appeared in specific definitions rather than in the general etymology section. 'Seal v1' provides an example, as the phrase 'In the original passage the verb is not really construed with of, as in the imitative use' appears under meaning I.2.b (Oxford English Dictionary 2024c).

The resulting subset consists of 119 verbs, including 28 categorized as 'onomatopoeic' and 17 as 'echoic.' Of these, 78 verbs exhibit figurative usage as defined by the dictionary, underscoring the significance of figurative meanings in this study. Verbs with figurative senses that are morphologically echoic are particularly noteworthy, as they exemplify Traugott and Dasher's (2002, 62) assertion that the emergence of new meanings expands a word's semantic scope, thus allowing for further and broader usage of a lexeme that would otherwise be constrained to its original morphological construction.

Some early alphabetical examples of verbs in this dataset are: *birl*[1] , *bob*[2] & *bump*[3] with figurative meanings occurring respectively in meanings 1, 2.c.[4] & I.5.a.[5].

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[1] To move on with rotatory motion, as a rifle bullet.(Oxford English Dictionary 2023).

[2] To move up and down like a buoyant body in water, or an elastic body on land(Oxford English Dictionary 2024a).

[3] To collide heavily or firmly with (a person or thing); to inflict a bump or jolt upon; to knock.(Oxford English Dictionary 2024b).

A semantic and chronological analysis of the dataset is then carried out. First, we determine the types of semantic change involved in the development of the figurative sense (metaphor, metonymy, broadening, etc.). Then we track the chronology of the semantic change, i.e. the timespan between date of attestation of the word's meanings and, the date of emergence of the figurative sense.

For instance, in the case of bump, the verb first appears, within the OED's dating reference, in 1588 and the first figurative sense being 'I.5.a' two hundred years later in 1788. There is also the case of *birl* where there is a figurative usage attested synchronically to the first definition in 1789 while the oldest meaning, 3.a, dates to 1724.

The results will provide crucial insight into the processes of semantic change relating to verbs expressing manner of motion and the potential role of iconicity in affecting this development.

Keywords:

Motion verbs, imitative, figurative motion, diachronic semantic change

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[4] To bob and weave, of a boxer: to move the head and body constantly up and down and from side to side as an evasive tactic. Also to weave and bob figurative, to move erratically or evasively, to move rapidly and unpredictably in one direction after another. (Oxford English Dictionary 2024a, 2.c.)

[5] To move with a bump or succession of bumps; to go or travel in a jolting manner. Also with along.(Oxford English Dictionary 2024b, I.5.a.)

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CHANGES IN THE MODAL DOMAIN: SOME EVIDENCE FROM MODAL COLLOCATIONS WITH *WELL*.

Considered 'a paradigm case of grammaticization' (Plank 1984 : 308), modal verbs have been the subject of much historical research (e.g. Lightfoot 1979, Warner 1993, Fisher 2007). Our paper aims to address the current practices, and especially to question the trend towards ever bigger data at the cost of detailed qualitative observations caused by the 'quantitative turn' (Kortmann 2021, Larsson, Egbert & Biber 2022). We thus present a diachronic study of the verbs *may* and *might* in combination with the adverb *well*.

We compiled a dataset of 3751 sentences with *may well*, *well may*, *might well* and *well might*, all extracted from the COHA (Corpus of Historical American English) from 1830s to 1970s. Though *well* is the most preferred collocate of these two modals (Flach 2021), there has been hardly any research on these four patterns (Hoye 1997, Shibasaki 2009). Yet recent studies have shown that pathways of change are best understood at the micro-level of specific constructions rather than the macro-level of the verbs themselves (e.g. Daugs 2020, 2021, Kranich 2021). The goal was therefore to pin down potential developments that may reflect idiomatic features of formal and/or functional change. A careful annotation of the data reveals complementary quantitative and qualitative observations. The first discomfirmed our initial, tentative hypothesis that these patterns may have caused the overall increase of concessive *may* and *might* in the 1970s (Leclercq 2024). It was found however that these patterns do show unique functional profiles across different time periods. Contra general assumption, they have not always served as epistemic markers, but were largely used in earlier decades as speech act boosters (Visser 1963), a type of meaning which can qualify as post-modal (van der Auwera & Plungian 1998). But this meaning was indeed soon replaced by an epistemic interpretation, as reflected for instance in the change of verbal collocates in Figure 1.
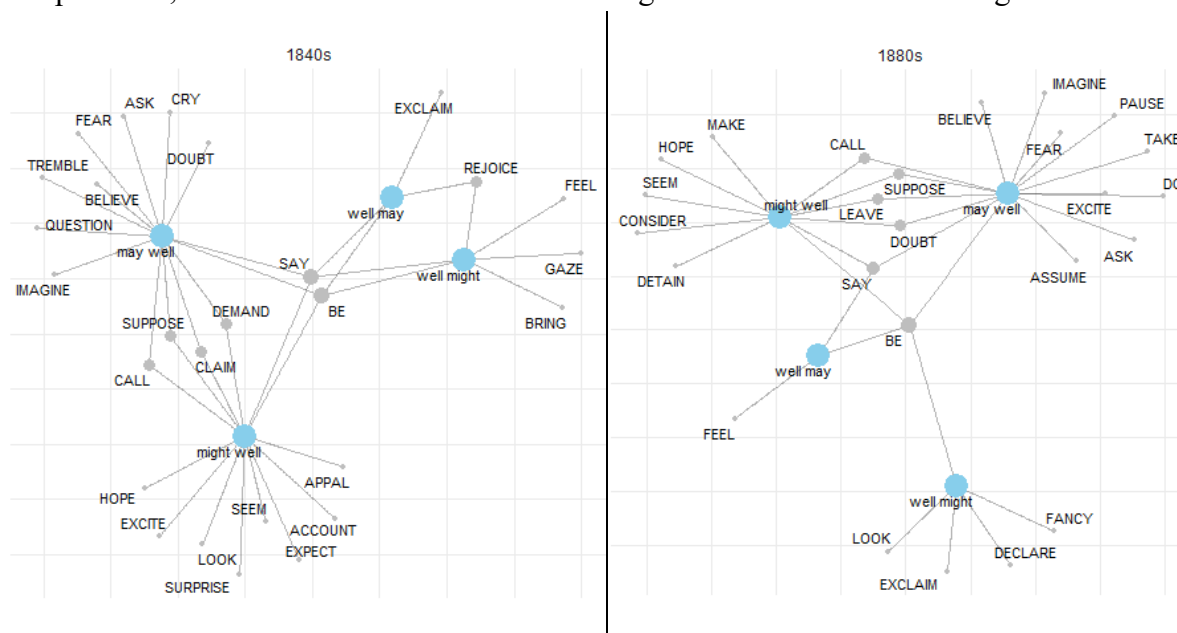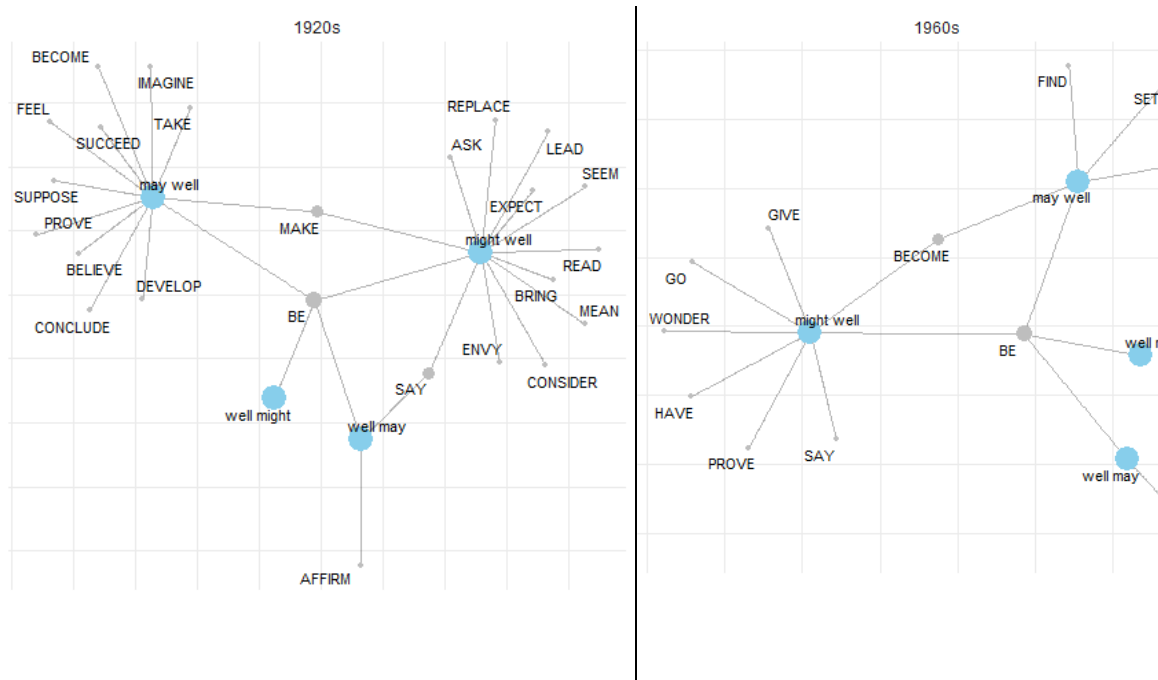
Figure 1. Network representation of collocational preferences.

In addition, it is shown that this functional shift correlates with the loss of the adverb-initial patterns *well may*/might, a trend that we explain in terms of (lack of) politeness and democratization (Goffmann 1955, Kranich, Hampel & Bruns 2020). In addition, in keeping with Hoye (1997), we argue that *well* does not simply strengthen the epistemic value that increases in more recent decades, but rather transforms it from epistemic *possibility* to espitemic *probability*.

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EVOLUTION OF [ɣ] IN THE SURTEES PSALTER : THE CASE OF THE VANISHING FRICATIVE IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

The Middle English period, approximately between 1150 and 1500, represents a long transitional time between Old English and Modern English. During this period, the language underwent significant lexical, syntactic, and phonological changes. For instance, Old English had two velar fricatives, voiced [ɣ] and voiceless [x] (two allophones of the phoneme /g/), which weakened during the evolution of English. While [x] survived in some varieties of Modern English, [ɣ] vanished during the Middle English period. This consonant first transformed into [w] in the 13th century before merging with the preceding vowel. Written as <g> in Old English, it was gradually replaced by the digraph <ou> and later by <w>, which remained in Modern English: e.g., Old English *būgan* > Middle English *bŏuen* or *bŏwen* > Modern English *bow* (verb).

The text of the *Surtees Psalter* (a Middle English metrical psalter from the 13th and 14th centuries), with its corpus consisting of six versions extant in six manuscripts, presents multiple spelling variants for [w], specifically in words that had the voiced velar fricative [ɣ] in Old English. Taking the example of the verb **bow**, Middle English *bŏuen* or *bŏwen*, the corpus has the following spellings: *boẏe, boye, bogh, boẏhe, boyhe, or begh*. Yet, the grapheme <w> was extensively used by the *Surtees Psalter* scribes (nearly 20,000 occurrences in the corpus), indicating that the letter was part of their writing systems. For the noun **bow**, Middle English *bŏue* or *bŏwe*, the corpus includes occurrences like *bow* or *bowe*, in addition to the other variants such as *boẏe, boye, bogh, boẏhe*, or *boyhe*.

This paper will examine specific features found in the Middle English corpus of the *Surtees Psalter*, regarding the evolution of [ɣ] from Old English to Middle English. Special attention will be given to the differences in the use of <y> and <ẏ>, the connection between [ɣ] and the phenomenon of palatalization in the context of front vowels ([ɣ] > [j]), and the study of the use of <yh> or <ẏh> as a potential digraph.

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LEXICOGRAPHY AND CONTEXTUALISATION, A CAVEAT: ME *SHELDEHED*

The noun *scheldehed* is recorded only once in English. It is found in a mid fifteenth-century manual of orthodox pastoral instruction known as *Jacob's Well* (JW), of which there is as yet no complete edition. The word is noticed in Middle Englis Dictionary but not, apparently, in OED, which is puzzling.

The definition proposed by MED is 'the condition of being shield-shaped', giving the correct reference to Brandeis's partial edition (1900), p. 168/18. I would like to argue that this definition is false, and that the reason for this misinterpretation can be explained by an absence of contextualisation on the part of the lexicographers. Although the etymology of the word may be to some extent obscure (the question will be addressed), a careful reading of JW shows that, in this case, contextualisation in literary writings, is an essential part of dictionary work.

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CATEGORICAL EXPANSION OF THE PAST PARTICIPLES OF VERBS OF MENTAL ATTITUDES SUCH AS *PLEASED* AND *SURPRISED* IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In Denison (1998), changes in English syntax since 1776 are addressed, including changing uses of *may* and *might* and the emergence of the epistemic *have got to*. Mair (2006) lists various suspected changes happening in Present-day English, such as the increase of *been being* and *be being* along with *going to*-future.

With such changes in mind, it also seems to be the case that, in addition to the function as past participles, verbs of mental attitudes such as *pleased* and *surprised* began to work as adjectives in the twentieth century. Originally, they employed *much* as an intensifier. Over the course of the twentieth century, however, they began to adopt the adverb *very*. This fact means that they acquired the grammatical status as adjectives, just as *afraid*—originally the past participle of *afray*, *affray*—acquired an independent standing, and its past participle *affrayed* acquired the meaning of 'in a state of fear,' having since the sixteenth century been treated as its own distinct word (Online *OED*). In Hansard corpus, which contains nearly every speech given in the British Parliament from 1803-2005, the usage with *much* switched to that of *very* in the following order: *pleased* in 1880; *delighted* in 1900; *surprised* 1910; *interested*, *shocked* in 1920; *alarmed* in 1930. In British English (BrE), *pleased* was the original fashion leader. American English (AmE) takes on a different aspect on the whole; in COHA corpus, for example, the adoption of *very* was slower and the use of *much* seems to have been a deep-rooted tradition, contrary to the usage in Time corpus.

Some studies focus on syntactic patterns following the above *-ed* words in present-day English in terms of verb complementation, as in Huddleston & Pullum (2002) and others. Since it seems few comprehensive studies dealing with when and how these past participles evolved into adjectives have been undertaken, however, this presentation aims to explore such variation across time and varieties of English by scrutinising the time in which there was a steady movement for the past participles above to co-occur with the adverb *very/rather* and copular verbs such as *appear*, *feel*, *look* and *seem* as well as considering the time around which the entry "surprised *adjective*" emerged in eleven versions of *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, five versions of *American Heritage Dictionary*, twelve versions of *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, five versions of *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* and ten versions of *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. In doing so, this presentation will show, based upon 64,829 examples, how past participles such as *pleased* and *surprised* began functioning as adjectives in Modern English. The electronic corpora examined in this undertaking includes (a) contemporary BrE: LOB, FLOB and BNC; (b) contemporary AmE: Time, Brown, Frown, COCA and SOAP; (c) other varieties of contemporary English: ACE, Kolhapur and Strathy; (d) historical BrE: EEBO ver. 3, BE part of ARCHER ver. 3.2 and Hansard; and (e) historical AmE: AE part of ARCHER, ver. 3.2, US Supreme Court decisions and COHA.

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THE APPEARANCE OF SEQUENCES OF TENSES IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH

The aim of this paper is to show that the sequence of tenses has been brought about into English as a result of grammaticalization. The grammaticalization concerned is the appearance of TP and CP. I assume the absence of embedding using TP and CP in OE, since these functional categories have appeared after OE (Gelderen 2004, Roberts and Roussou 2003). This claim has been confirmed by examining the historical data and by the syntactic evidence like the lack of syntactic constructions which are dependent on these functional categories such as auxiliaries, EPP (subject requirement) and VP fronting. The lack of auxiliaries in OE and their subsequent emergence are a typical instantiation of grammaticalization.
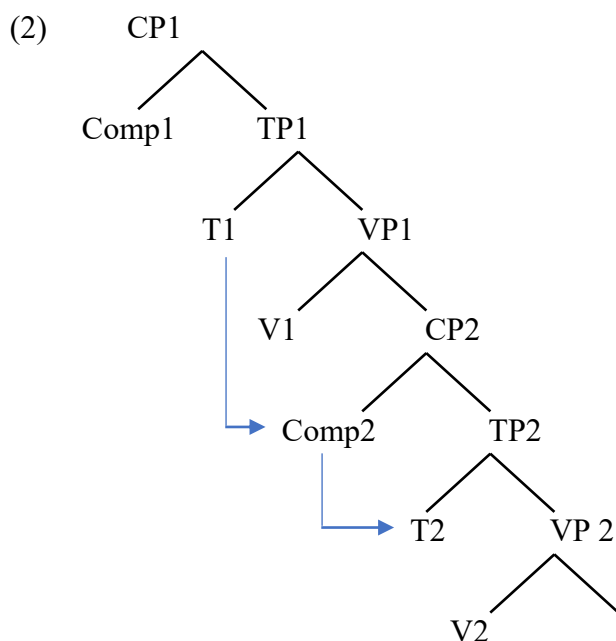
'The sequence of tenses' is a set of grammatical rules of how to deal with multiple tenses in complex sentences with subordinate clauses. The issue is how to decide the tense of the embedded clause. The instruction of grammar books is that the tense of subordinate clauses is solely decided by the tense of the matrix clause. Many grammar books are just describing details of rules without giving reasons.

I claim that this rule of tense interpretation is dependent on TP and CP and therefore, the sequence of tense was made available after the appearance of these functional categories.

A typical context in which rules of sequence of tenses apply is that of indirect speech. The most important rule of them is 'back-shift.' When the main clause is in the past tense, 'back-shift' (Leech (1971: 105, 106)) becomes necessary:

(1) John said, 'I have a cold.' →   John said that he *had* a cold.

I claim that the indirect speech is dependent on TP and CP in the structure. For tense interpretation, the speech time and the E(vent) time are necessary (Reichenbach 1947). The problem is how to give an appropriate tense interpretation to the embedded tense, because the embedded tense has no direct access to the speech time. The solution is Enç's (1987) *The Anchoring Principle,* which says that each tense must be anchored (= should be located in the stream of time). I propose that this anchoring is effected only structurally, that is, by TP and CP:

(2)

```
           CP1
          /    \
      Comp1    TP1
              /    \
            T1      VP1
            |      /    \
            |    V1      CP2
            |           /    \
            +------> Comp2    TP2
                     |       /    \
                     +---> T2     VP 2
                                  /    \
                                V2
```

The embedded Tense is linked to the speech time (= the time of main verb) which is located in the lower Comp. This speech time of lower Comp is percolated from the matrix Tense. The lower Tense is linked to the speech time via the lower Comp. Hence, the lower Tense is anchored. Tense anchoring can accommodate back-shift operation.

   In OE the sequence of tenses was not operative, since there were no embedding constructions which are dependent on TP and CP. Later, TP and CP appeared and the indirect speech has appeared. That is, the sequence of tenses was made available.

   I used indirect speech sentence as an indicator of the presence of the sequence of tenses. Looking through historical corpora, although tentatively, I hypothesize that indirect speech constructions have appeared in early Modern English.

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Corpora

The Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, second edition

The Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of early Modern English

The Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Modern British English

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FROM AN INTRAPREDICATIVE PURPOSIVE PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE TO A POLYFUNCTIONAL DISCOURSE MARKER: THE CONSTRUCTIONALIZATION OF *F(OR) Y(OUR) I(NFORMATION)*

The emergence of discourse markers has become a major focus of the research on the evolution of English (e.g. Brinton 1996, 2008; Heine et al. 2021; Traugott 2020, 2022). In this corpus study, I document the constructionalization of *for your information* from an intrapredicative purposive prepositional phrase to the mobile polyfunctional discourse marker *FYI*, using the corpora CLMET, COCA and especially COHA, which serves as the basis for a quantitative analysis (364 occurrences).

Non-constructionalized examples include cases like (1), which are fully compositional and syntactically integrated within the sentence:

*(1) Wee beseech your Lordships giue vs leaue to referre you **for your information** in that point to the Iournall which herewithall we send.* (1601, quoted in the OED)

Then, in the 18th and 19th centuries, *for your information* became used as a parenthetical, but only with intrapredicative scope over a predicate expressing speech or writing:

*(2) I will observe, **for your information**, William, that Mr. Rising is our Episcopal minister, and has done as much as any man among us to redeem this community from its pristine state of semi-barbarism.* (1867, COHA, Fiction)

The first extrapredicative use in COHA is (3):

*(3) "**For your information**, Doctor, I have told my men to follow you closely, gun in hand. At the slightest sign of hesitation, or at the first attempt to escape, they will fire."* (1932, COHA, Fiction)

When used extrapredicatively, *for your information* develops projecting functions with discursive and/or interpersonal values akin to those identified by Kaltenböck and Ten Wolde (2022: 902-905) for *just so you know*: topic/focus shift, elaboration, emphasis and mitigation.

The mitigating function of *for your information* in particular deserves in-depth analysis. This pragmatic shift can be explained by Grice's maxim of quantity, which states that utterances should be informative (not more and not less than necessary). Consequently, explicitly saying that upcoming discourse is informative is redundant and is likely to develop intersubjective functions linked to the face of the interlocutor.

During the 20th century *for your information* saw an increase in token frequency and the initialism *FYI* (originally a wire service abbreviation) found its way into spoken discourse. By the years 2010s, according to COHA, the initialism had even become more frequent than the full phrase (33 occurrences of FYI vs. 20 occurrences of the full form). (4) illustrates the mitigating function of FYI in initial position:

*(4) ROCKWELL: The first witness does not necessarily identify him. The second witness sees somebody walking away from the car. Does it have to be him? I'd want to know a little more about the lighting, what time it was, how far away she was. Was she looking out the window with her glasses on? Does she wear glasses? I'm not ready to execute this guy yet, Nancy. GRACE: Well, you know, Renee, no one has mentioned execution. And **FYI**, Michigan does not have the death penalty.* (COCA, Spoken, 2011)

Like *well* and *you know*, *FYI* is used to mitigate an impending Face Threatening Act, namely the contradiction that renders Rockwell's intervention irrelevant.

A second constructionalization is now underway, with the emergence of the mobile digressive marker *just FYI*:

(5) Oh, hey! Just having a few friends over to watch the fight. We might be a little loud, **just FYI**. (COCA, TV, 2013)

It is hoped that this study will contribute to the understanding of the processes at play in the emergence of discourse markers.

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RE-ASSESSING THE ANGLO-NORMAN LEXIS OF THE MIDDLE ENGLISH *GENESIS AND EXODUS*

This paper aims to return to a complex topic I addressed earlier (Pouzet 2005): the lexis (words and word-parts) of Anglo-Norman origin found in the Early Middle English *Genesis and Exodus* (hereafter *GE*: ed. Morris 1865, 1873; Arngart 1968), which Laing 1993 assigns dialectally to West Norfolk. Indeed, in the course of my current work (towards a new critical edition and commentary) I am finding reasons for revisiting my earlier research:

1°) I am keen to interact further with some of the recent developments in the lexicography of the 'French of England', notably when applied to how borrowed lexis and 'loanblends' may be observed to function in Early Middle English texts – such as, specifically, in the remarkable approach taken by the late (and sorely missed) David Trotter on *Ancrene Wisse* (Trotter 2003, whence quoted term 'loanblends'); or as part of Philip Durkin's long experience with borrowings in English in general (Durkin 2014).

2°) There has lately been significant research published (most notably, Dance 2003) on the adjacent question of Scandinavian influence in Early Middle English, which also concerns *GE*. Dance's approach offers valuable methodological insights, some of which are relatively transferable to a renewed survey of Anglo-Norman in *GE*.

3°) *GE* remains one of the most arduous verse texts in Early Middle English – hence, proportionately, one of the least studied, across the board of language and literature – on account of the difficulties posed by the readings of its unique known witness (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 444, *s.* XIII 4/4–XIV1). Many of the Romance lexemes, including more specifically several of the Anglo-Norman borrowings, are directly concerned by the general palaeographical and syntactic problems raised in the manuscript. In my earlier approach (essentially an overview) I certainly did not go to the bottom of all such issues. In particular, there is the ambiguous phrase 'quad mester' (l. 536; only 'mester' being of Anglo-Norman origin) I did not tackle, which provides an exemplary case study deserving careful examination on combined fronts (palaeography, morphology, syntax, and source studies). Such a case, together with some other synthetically presented evidence, form the documentary and critical backbone of the proposed paper.

Undoubtedly, my Anglo-Norman research update on *GE* would benefit from reactions by the scholarly community on the history of English convening in Tours this year.

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Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and borrowings from French

This paper examines aspects of the impact of French and Anglo-Norman on the Middle English romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* through the creation of new lexical items and constructions as a result of borrowing – loanwords having already been devoted expert scholarly attention for Old Norse (Dance 2008).

For the *Gawain* poet, as for his contemporary Chaucer (and Gower), one expects the use of very infrequent loanwords (Durkin 2014: 268-269), for metrical (or other, usually stylistic) reasons. We point out a few *hapax legomena* directly borrowed from Anglo-Norman, which have gone unnoticed by previous editors. For his (intended) educated audience, the poet appears to make little difference between the lexis of French and the lexis of English, suggesting (along with the literature on Anglo-Norman) that at the time he composed, a certain amount of bilingualism and, even, code-switching (see, e.g., Schendl's 2018 criteria), was surprisingly still current – though in some cases, this may simply reflect a timelag between attestation and first use, owing to the paucity of extant sources, with the bilingual context for borrowing in decline after 1350 (Ingham 2024: 15).

Building on methodology previously developed (Skaffari 2009), one of the aims of this study is to measure new lexical items borrowed from French and compare them with others from other sources (e.g., those occurring through word-formation processes), to assess the influence of French for this specific work. The use of dictionaries like the MED for first occurrences will be discussed in due course.

Some grammatical features of French had already been adopted into English as a result of language contact: the ethical dative is a case in point (l. 1905 *And woried me þis wyly*; Joly 2018: 302-304). The POSSESSIVE + *corse* construction, partly grammaticalized in French (Buridant 2000: 412), is also used both grammatically and lexically in the double entendre *Ȝe ar welcum to my cors* (l. 1237). In contrast, the indefinite quantifier *nysen* (from the Anglo-Norman reflex of continental French *nesun*) is only found here in Middle English: *for my disert nysen* (l. 1266, uttered by polite Gawain), while this word was already deemed obsolete in French (*DMF*). This strongly suggests that, in the last quarter of the 14th century, writers could still conservatively assume proficiency in French in their audience.

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GETTING ADJ WITH ME?-DIACHRONIC STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MICRO CONSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH USING COHA(1820-2010)

This paper proposes a diachronic study of the verbal construction <get Adjwith N>, associated with the metapragmatic reaction to an act of impoliteness, using the COHA corpus (1820-2010). This two-slotverbal construction constitutes a multiwordunit of interaction, as it fits into a conversational exchange that reflects a reaction to the perception of an act of insolence or impoliteness (Bousfield 2008, Culpeper 2011). The construction <get adj with N> (instantiated by expressions like *get cheeky, get lippy, get fresh*), typical of spoken interaction situations, accepts a variety of adjectives in the predicativeposition. We aim to explore the degree of variation in the structure, as well as the diachronic emergence of new variations, using the large diachronic corpus COHA, or Corpus of Historical American English (1820-2010), which contains a sufficient proportion of spoken interaction situations. In addition, the study of <get Adj with N> replicatesand teststhe methodology used inSmith (2021), Smith (2023), and Smith (in progress) on the mother construction <have the N to> ↔ attitude expressing a metapragmatic reaction to an act of insolence. By parareplicating a corpus driven methodologyfocusing onthe emergence ofexpressions of insolence, the broader aim is to reconstitute the emergence of the constructional architecture of insolence in diachronic English from the bottom up. Distributional analysis (Geeraerts et al., 2023), despite its time-consuming nature, provides the tools needed to study the behaviour of micro-construction families in their fine-grained usage context, and identifytheircontextual and pragmatic specificities.

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ON DOUBLE BASE HYPOTHESIS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO OV WORD ORDER

Pintzuk (1999, 2002) argues that in early English, speakers had both VO and OV as base orders, with the distribution of light elements indicating a VO base order and that of non-quantified objects indicating an OV base order. In this presentation, I will provide new evidence for the OV base order in Old English (OE). Specifically, I will argue that the existence of examples like (1), where resumptive pronominal objects referring to left-dislocated DPs (LFDs) appear immediately to the left of the lexical verb, provides evidence for the OV base order. This will support Pintzuk's (1999) double base hypothesis.

(1)   **Þa cirican**$_i$ hwæðre nales   he Agustinus, ac   Laurentius biscop his

The church$_{-ACC}$ whether   not all he Agustinus, but   Laurentius biscop his

æfterfylgend **heo**$_i$ gehalgode.

follower   her$_{-ACC}$ hallowed.

'The church, however, not at all he Agustinus, but his follower Laurentius

bishop hallowed her.'   (cobede,Bede_1:17.90.24.830)

We will focus on left dislocation exhibiting Case connectivity between an LFD and a resumptive pronoun (RSP). When an RSP is adjacent to the left of the lexical verb, as in (1), it will be termed OV-adjacent LFD. The data are from *The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE).

I follow Rizzi's (2015: 334) Criterial Freezing for object movement, according to which "if in a language the object moves out of vP to a dedicated position with criterial properties, we would predict its unavailability to further movement." Based on this assumption, let us consider the derivation of the LFD and RSP in (1). If *Þa cirican* with a Top feature were base-generated in a VO order, it would move from the complement position to the specifier of TopP in the vP left periphery, where it satisfies the Top criterion and then freezes, making further movement impossible. In such a case, we would not obtain (1).   Therefore, we must consider alternative options. I claim that *Þa cirican* with a Top feature merges immediately to the left of the verb *gehalgode* in the vP domain and then moves to the specifier of TopP in the CP left periphery, where it satisfies the Top criterion and thus freezes. At the same time, a copy of *Þa cirican* is realized as an RSP **heo** referring back to the *Þa cirican*. as shown in (2).

(2)   [$_{TopP}$ **Þa cirican**$_i$ [$_{Top'}$ Top]] [$_{TP}$ Subject DP [$_{T'}$ T [$_{vP}$ **heo**$_i$ gehalgode]]].

For the above reason, I claim that OV-adjacent LFDs serve as evidence for the OV base order.

This claim is reinforced by the findings of a survey of the distribution of OV-adjacent LFDs in OE. I obtained 12 instances of OV-adjacent LFD from my corpus survey using YCOE. The results of the survey are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Number of Occurrences and Frequency per 100,000 of OV-Adjacent LFDs in OE

EOE (O1, O2)	LOE (O3, O4)
9 (9.6)	3 (0.9)

(O1: -850, O2: 850-950, O3: 950-1050, O4: 1050-1150)

The presence of a certain number of OV-adjacent LFDs in OE strengthens my argument that OV-adjacent LFDs provide evidence for the OV base order."

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PATTERNS OF CLAUSAL COMPLEMENTATION WITH *REMEMBER, FORGET,* AND *EXPECT* IN 17TH-19TH CENTURY ENGLISH: A COMPARISON OF INDIVIDUAL AND POPULATION LEVEL VARIATION

Long-term variation is often viewed on the population level, with the role of individuals considered 'reduced below the level of linguistic significance' (Labov 2012:265). Such views narrow the scope of research by tightly focusing on social identity, minimizing the influence of individual differences. By studying individuals, we may uncover how they accommodate change in their understanding/use of language over their lifetime, and how individual differences in cognitive processing impact the spread of variants (Petré and Anthonissen 2020; Blas Arroyo 2023).

This paper provides a study of 44 writers across three 100-year periods of late Modern English (from c. 1650, 1700, 1800, respectively). It investigates changes in their use of competing variants of finite vs. nonfinite complement clauses (CCs) with the complement-taking predicates (CTPs) *remember*, *forget*, and *expect*. In this variation, the finite CCs (*that*-clauses and zerocomplementation clauses; the older forms) compete with the nonfinite CCs (the *to*-infinitive, the newer form, although first attested late 14th century: see Los 2005: 254-55) and the *ing*-form (emergent). A preference for a certain form could be due to processing considerations, a (personal) determination of a semantic/pragmatic difference, or even a (conscious) social association (as suggested by Cheshire, Kerswill and Williams 2005; and contrary to Labov 2001:28). While the nature of their competition appears to change, all patterns continue to coexist.

Data consist of >500,000 words per individual, annotated for CCs with *remember*, *forget*, and *expect*, and coded on seven variables. Multifactorial classification models (cf. Fonteyn and Nini 2020) are employed to determine which language-internal factors condition individuals' variation, and how these constraints vary between individuals, between periods, and during the lifespan of an individual. Preliminary results from >5,000 instances show individuals tend to organise their own behaviour using partly idiosyncratic systems; we argue this accounts for the persistence of long-term variation. A drop in the degree of idiosyncrasy between the earlier and later periods shows potential standardisation at play. In addition, lifespan analysis reveals (almost) all authors increase their use of *that*-clauses (previously regarded as an older form) across their lifespan. We propose this tendency relates to all of them being professional writers who are increasingly placing more emphasis on the clarity of their prose.

Generally, the results suggest that individuals may have different cognitive representations of certain constructions, and that population-level change is simply a change in the **average** semantic-pragmatic or social understanding of the different forms, and/or the relative processing advantages.

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LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTIONS : CONSTRUCTIONAL CHANGES AND CONSTRUCTIONALIZATION

This paper will examine light verb constructions (LVCs) such as *have a try, give a yell, take a shower, or make a claim* with a diachronic perspective. Could the constructional changes (Hilpert 2013; Hopper & Traugott 2003: XV) LVCs have experienced in their historical development qualify as a case of constructionalization (i.e. the process through which a new cognitively entrenched form-meaning pair emerges in the language of a community of speakers - Rostila 2004; Traugott & Trousdale 2013)?

LVCs have received relatively little comment in the context of Construction Grammars (see Boas 2014b, Wittenberg et al., 2014), although their specific formal and semantic characteristics support their analysis as constructions under the CG frame (i.e. a complex linguistic form that combines form and meaning - see Goldberg 1995). Their recurrence, historical development and productivity are further arguments in favour of identifying them as constructions stored in the speakers' mental contruct-i-con. Besides, LVCs convey a constructional meaning: the synergy of the constituents creates meaning (and not just the deverbal noun), and the schema of the construction itself invites a telic reading of the event.

This paper will thus focus on classifying LVCs according to different level of schematicity (macro-, meso-, micro-constructions and constructs – Traugott 2008:236) and account for the historical constructional changes LVCs have gone through.

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CONTACT-INDUCED PRAGMATICISATION? THE CASE OF HONORIFIC PRONOUNS IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

It is commonly maintained and less commonly documented with linguistic data that V forms in Middle English (second-person plural forms with singular referent) are of French origin (Finkenstaedt 1963, Helmbrecht 2004). This paper aims to understand what role was played by Anglo-Norman in the reanalysis of plural *ye* as honorific *ye* and in the expansion of its functional load from *ye* addressing royal persons to *ye* addressing the equal and socially inferior. The interactional status of speaker and addressee (Jucker 2020) as well as speech acts are also taken into account. The analysis is based on a sample corpus of Anglo-Norman drama and lays containing interactive passages (e.g. *Chanson de Roland*, *Lai d'Haveloc*, *Jeu d'Adam*). This paper establishes a lead in Anglo-Norman developments – the distribution of Anglo-Norman T/V forms in around 1150 is mirrored in Middle English only by the time of Chaucer. Anglo-Norman trends are also compared to Continental French as described by standard grammars in the field, Buridant (2000).

The starting point for the analysis in this paper is the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) entries on honorific pronouns which not only provide definitions but also detailed analyses of the pronouns *ye* and *you* with singular referents and remark on who can be addressed by the polite forms and what the sociopragmatic implications of these pronouns are (MED s.vv. *yē* pron.; *yŏu* pron.). The entries on *ye/you* list up to ten pragmatic functions of the honorific pronouns. The majority of these ten senses/pragmatic functions surfaces around 1300, and the remainder is attested by the end of the fourteenth century. The central question of the paper is then how the multifunctionality of *ye* came about. If, as the literature claims, the extension of plural forms to the singular happens due to French influence, can the same or a similar multifunctionality of *vus* be observed in Anglo-Norman and at what stage of its development? And, from the language-contact perspective, are multifunctional pragmatic units akin to polysemous words, i.e. can several functions/senses be borrowed at about the same time? To answer these questions a diachronic corpus study of a selection of Middle English and Anglo-Norman texts will be undertaken, and a chronology of the pragmaticisation of V forms in both languages suggested, tentatively, along two levels of pragmatic analysis – addressee and speech act: 1) royal addressee > superior addressee > equal addressee > inferior addressee; 2) speech act of Request > other speech acts.

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