

PRONOUNS AND WORD ORDER
IN OLD ENGLISH

With Particular Reference to the Indefinite
Pronoun *Man*

Linda van Bergen

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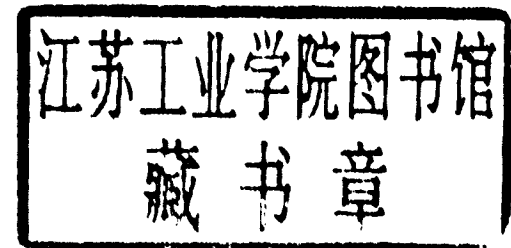
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PRONOUNS AND WORD ORDER IN OLD ENGLISH

Introduction

1.1 Aims and structure of the thesis

It has long been acknowledged that the behaviour of pronouns in Old English may deviate from that of full noun phrases in aspects of word order. This holds for generative work and non-generative work alike. Not everyone agrees on the precise nature or extent of this deviation, however. Some restrict separate treatment to pronouns in a particular syntactic function, while others restrict it to a specific subclass of pronouns. Thus, there are studies that make a distinction between a pronominal and a nominal category when objects are concerned, but do not extend the same treatment to subjects. And in generative work in particular, a strict division is normally made between personal pronouns on the one hand and all other categories on the other; somewhat confusingly, these two categories are normally referred to as 'pronominal' and 'nominal', so that most types of pronouns are classified as 'nominal'. Yet other pronouns have sometimes been grouped together with personal pronouns, particularly in non-generative work. Fourquet (1938) for example explicitly treats the following pronouns as members of a class whose behaviour is distinct from nominals: personal pronouns, the demonstrative pronoun *se* 'that' and *man* 'one'.¹ And the assumption in most generative work that all pronouns other than personal pronouns can be grouped together with full noun

¹ He does not necessarily regard all other types of pronoun as 'heavy'; these are simply the categories of pronouns that occur with some frequency in his data. On the other hand, his remarks in relation to French show that he would not blindly include all pronouns into his class of light elements either (Fourquet 1938: 21–22). In addition, he classifies some light adverbs as 'éléments légers' as well, such as *her* 'here', *þa* 'then', *þær* 'there', *ær* 'previously', *eft* 'again' and *eac* 'also' (Fourquet 1938: 39). Incidentally, his examples make clear that he even includes prepositional phrases consisting of a preposition and a personal or demonstrative pronoun in this category; it seems unlikely to me that this is justified.

phrases for the purposes of dealing with their behaviour relating to word order has not been tested in any systematic way.

In this thesis I aim to settle the issue for one specific pronoun: the indefinite pronoun *man*. The classification of this particular lexical item may seem a fairly minor issue, but it is of importance in data work on for example verb second. Moreover, it will be shown that the behaviour of *man* leads to problems of analysis which have a wider impact. This pronoun frequently occurs in syntactic patterns which appear to show that its behaviour matches that of nominals. Consequently, it has normally been assumed in generative work that *man* should be treated as nominal (in the use of the term mentioned above). Nevertheless, I will demonstrate that other aspects of its distribution firmly point to the opposite classification. In a number of earlier non-generative studies it had already been suggested that the behaviour of *man* is like that of other types of pronoun such as personal pronouns (Roth 1914 and Fourquet 1938, followed to some extent by Bacquet 1962). However, the data in these early studies are insufficient and do not make all relevant distinctions, so that no conclusions can be based on them. The issue does not seem to have been followed up in any subsequent work. Indeed, the potential problem has not been pointed out in later work classifying *man* as nominal. The only treatment I have seen of *man* as 'pronominal' in the generative literature, Haeberli and Haegeman (1995), does not base this assumption on any evidence and they appear to be unaware that such a classification conflicts with other generative work.

This dissertation offers a comprehensive study of the behaviour of *man* focusing on word order, especially those aspects in which the behaviour of personal pronoun subjects deviates from that of nominal subjects. I will show that the resemblance to the nominal pattern of behaviour is superficial only, and that *man* should not be grouped with nominals in any environment. It will be argued that the best way of dealing with the apparent contradiction is found in an analysis of 'pronominals' (including *man*) as clitics. In addition, there are indications that the classification of certain other types of pronoun as 'nominal' is unsafe. This holds specifically for the demonstrative pronoun *se*, and possibly also for the indefinite pronoun *hwa* 'someone'. Moreover, some of the constructions found in the course of the data collection on *man* lead to further insights into the behaviour of pronominal subjects, verb placement and clause structure.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. In the remainder of this chapter I will deal with preliminary issues. I will discuss the ways pronouns have been treated in studies on word order in Old English so far, paying particular attention to non-generative work, in which pronominal subjects have only rarely been distinguished from nominal subjects in any systematic way. (Most of the discussion of the generative literature is postponed to the more theoretically oriented part of the

dissertation.) This is followed by some background information on the corpora and other resources used in this study. Finally, there are two brief sections containing some remarks on the data and the theoretical framework respectively.

The next two chapters discuss the main data work. Chapter 2 is concerned with inversion — or lack of it — in main clauses with a topicalised constituent. A preliminary investigation on the behaviour of *man* in clauses with topicalisation was done using the Brooklyn-Geneva-Amsterdam-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English, *Cura Pastoralis* and the works of Ælfric, to determine whether *man* behaved as a nominal or a pronominal subject in relation to inversion.² When it became clear that at least in this respect the behaviour of *man* was more regular than anticipated — indeed categorical once allowance was made for the special behaviour of negated and subjunctive verb forms — a full investigation of *man* was done with the aid of the Toronto Corpus to confirm these findings and to locate counter-examples. The same investigation of the Toronto Corpus also provided most of the data for chapter 3. In that chapter, I address the apparent contradiction between the findings of chapter 2 and the two constructions in which *man* seems to behave as a nominal. These two constructions involve subordinate clauses and clauses with inversion of all subject types. I show that even in these environments strong indications can be found that *man* essentially behaves in the same way as personal pronoun subjects. Also, I demonstrate that there are differences between the behaviour of *man* and nominal subjects in the two syntactic patterns that superficially appear to show that *man* behaves as a nominal subject. I conclude that *man* can certainly not be treated as nominal, and that there are good reasons for grouping it together with personal pronoun subjects.

Note that I have deliberately kept technical terminology and discussion of a theoretical nature to a minimum in the main discussion of the data. This was done with the aim of keeping at least these parts of the work accessible to those primarily interested in the philological aspects of the thesis. A complete separation of data and theory has proved impossible, however. Some theory has almost inevitably crept into the two chapters focusing on data, although I have tried to limit it to an occasional footnote, and some issues of data have spilt over into the following two chapters. The result may satisfy neither philologist nor theorist completely, but I hope there will be enough of value for either to compensate for any minor inconvenience.

Chapters 4 and 5, then, deal with issues of analysis. Chapter 4 focuses on what precise status should be assigned to *man*, and whether this is the same as that of personal pronoun subjects and/or objects. In it I argue that the best way of dealing with the data can be found in a clitic analysis of all of these, in spite of the fact that

² The results of this pilot study have been published as van Bergen (2000).

it has proved difficult to define the clitic host.³ It is demonstrated that, to the extent that Old English pronominals meet criteria for clitic status, the evidence is at least as good for *man* as for personal pronouns. I also show that the data on *man* indicate that a weak pronoun analysis (in the use of the term as found in recent generative analyses such as Cardinaletti and Starke 1996, 1999a) is not possible for Old English. This in turn undermines the argument for having this category at all, since it cannot deal with all cases of clitic-like pronominals for which a host is hard to establish. Chapter 5 focuses on the implications of the findings for analyses of Old English clause structure. I show that the data on negated and subjunctive verb forms uncovered in chapter 2 prove that the structural position of the topic must be spec-CP rather than spec-IP. In addition, I argue that topicalisation in subordinate clauses should be allowed for. Finally, it is shown that, given the analysis of Old English clause structure adopted, incidental cases of pronominal inversion in clauses with topicalisation fall into place as well.

1.2 Pronouns and studies on Old English word order

It is more or less taken for granted in most generative work on Old English that personal pronouns form a separate class whose behaviour deviates in significant ways from that of nominals, and that this holds irrespective of function. Van Kemenade (1987) has proved particularly influential in promoting this view.⁴ Yet such a view is by no means universal. Specifically, in a number of studies object pronouns are treated as a special case, whereas subject pronouns are not. This is particularly striking in relation to their placement relative to the (finite) verb in main clauses. Since my main concern is precisely with pronominal subjects, I will go into this a little further before turning to the main issues of the thesis.

Smith (1893: 218–221) treats pronominal objects separately from non-pronominal objects, with nominal objects in main clauses normally following the (finite) verb as in (1a), but pronominal objects tending to precede it, as in the example given in (1b).

³ I should stress that I will largely restrict my discussion of personal pronoun objects to those that occur as high in the clause structure as personal pronoun subjects. Personal pronoun objects may occur elsewhere in the clause and I make no claims about how to analyse their behaviour.

⁴ She also includes so-called 'R-pronouns', specifically *þær* 'there', in this category.

- (1) a. Ohthere sæde *his hlaforde, Ælfrede cyninge*, þæt . . .
 Ohthere said his lord Alfred king that
 'Ohthere said to his Lord, King Alfred, that . . .'
 (Or 1, 1.13.29 [Smith 1893: 218])
- b. drihten *him* andwyrde
 lord him answered
 'the Lord answered him'
 (ÆCHom I, 8, 126.6 [Clemoes 1997: 244.90; Smith 1893: 220])

He ascribes this difference to general properties of pronouns, in particular their reference to nouns mentioned earlier in the text, so that they are according to him relative in nature, "and just as relative pronouns proper follow as closely as possible their antecedents, so personal pronouns, partaking of the relative nature, partake also of the relative sequence" (Smith 1893: 221). Yet in his treatment of inversion, he makes no comparable distinction for subjects. Indeed, having given three examples without inversion after a fronted object, all of which involve personal pronoun subjects, he ascribes the lack of inversion to "the superior distinctness with which these names [i.e. the fronted objects — LvB] are contrasted, not only by their being placed first but equally by their not drawing (though they are direct objects) the verb with them" (Smith 1893: 223). I give one of his examples in (2).

- (2) Maximianus *he* sende on Affricam
 Maximianus he sent on Africa
 'He sent Maximianus to Africa'
 (Or 6, 30.147.6 [Smith 1893: 223])

He goes on to suggest that the lack of inversion facilitates pausing after the fronted object, whereas such a pause according to him would not have been possible had the subject been inverted. He states that "In these cases, therefore, rhetoric has disturbed what must still be called the *usual norm* [emphasis mine — LvB]" (Smith 1893: 223), offering a hypothetical version with inversion ("Max. sende he") to illustrate the difference in effect as he perceives it. In other words, he does not even consider the possibility that the nature of the subject could have had any influence on the order found, in spite of the fact that his explanation for the frequent placement of object pronouns preceding the finite verb could easily be extended to pronominal subjects.

Inversion of a personal pronoun subject after a fronted object as in (2) — or after a prepositional phrase for that matter — would in fact have been highly unusual. See for example Allen (1980: 49), who observes that "While inversion is more common after Topicalization than non-inversion if the subject of the sentence

was a full noun, I have found no examples of inversion of a pronominal subject with the verb after a topicalized object or prepositional phrase". I give some sets of examples with inverted nominal subjects and non-inverted personal pronoun subjects in a comparable environment in (3)–(6) to illustrate the difference in behaviour.

- (3) a. *pam mannum sceolan þa deman grimlice styran*
 those men must the judges grimly punish
 'the judges must punish those men severely'
 (HomS 17, 153)
- b. *Pam mannum he sceal don synna forgyfenesse*
 those men he must do of-sins forgiveness
 'He must forgive those men their sins'
 (ÆCHom I, 16, 234.2 [Clemoes 1997: 309.78])
- (4) a. *And ðæne geleafan mot ælc ðæra rihtlice cunnan & anrædlice healdan þe...*
 and that faith must each of-those rightly know and resolutely hold that
 'And each of those who..., must know that faith rightly and keep it resolutely'
 (WHom 7, 22)
- b. *and ðone geleafan we sceolon mid hluttrum mode and eawfæstum ðeawum*
 and that faith we must with pure mind and devout services
*geglengan*⁵
 adorn
 'and we must adorn that faith with a pure mind and devout services'
 (ÆCHom II, 30, 240.145)
- (5) a. *Be ðam ilcan cwæð eac se salmscop on ðam feower & fiftiogoðan psalme*
 about the same said also the psalm-poet on the four and fiftieth psalm
 'The psalmist also spoke about the same thing in the fifty-fourth psalm'
 (CP 55.429.22)
- b. *Be ðam ilcan he cwæð eft ierenga ðurh ðone ilcan witgan*
 about the same he said again angrily through the same prophet
 'He spoke again angrily about the same thing through the same prophet'
 (CP 56.435.10)

⁵ This clause is coordinated, which may affect verb placement, but the placement of the auxiliary *sceolon* indicates that verb fronting has taken place. See Pintzuk (1991: 99–124) for evidence that placement of the finite auxiliary or modal verb before the main verb is a fairly safe diagnostic for verb fronting, regardless of clause type.

- (6) a. *On ðam feorðan dæge gesceop God twa miccle leoht*
 on the fourth day created God two big lights
 'On the fourth day God created two big lights'
 (ÆTemp 1.12)
- b. *On ðam ylcan dæge he geworhte ealle steorran*
 on the same day he made all stars
 'On the same day he made all the stars'
 (ÆTemp 1.13)

The problem in Smith (1893) appears to stem from a lack of a consistent distinction between the different types of fronted constituents. Although Smith (1893: 222) is clearly aware that inversion is much more frequent after some initial constituents (such as *þa* 'then' and *þonne* 'then') than after others, it is easy to miss or underestimate the consistency with which personal pronoun subjects fail to invert in certain contexts unless the different types are consistently kept separate. This, at any rate, is clearly what happens in Bacquet (1962), who is fully aware of the claims made in this respect by both Roth (1914) and Fourquet (1938). Although he agrees with them that pronominal subjects generally speaking are less likely to invert, he does not think a categorical distinction is justified. Therefore he does not separate his examples according to type of subject, nor does he formulate any rules making specific reference to nominal and pronominal subjects respectively. "Si les phrases attestent l'ordre: *verbe – sujet pronominal* sont moins fréquentes que celles où l'on trouve l'ordre: *verbe – sujet nominal*, il n'en reste pas moins vrai qu'elles sont trop fréquentes pour que l'on puisse les considérer comme des faits accidentels" (1962: 659). On the other hand, he regularly distinguishes object pronouns from nominal objects in his rules describing the 'unmarked' word order in Alfredian Old English.

Reszkiewicz (1966) also does not clearly separate nominal subjects from pronominal subjects. While he groups pronominal objects among the 'light' elements and they are always in a different class from stressed and/or phrasal elements, all words in the nominative case are put into the same category regardless of weight. They may be subclassified as for example light and heavy, but the distinction is not fundamental and such subcategorisation is used rarely if at all. And a comparable difference in treatment of pronominal subjects and objects is likewise found in Canale (1978), which is an early generative study of Old English word order. He normally keeps data on nominal and pronominal objects separate and regards the latter as clitics that may intervene between an initial constituent and the finite verb in a verb-second clause, but he collapses the data on nominal and pronominal subjects and fails to notice the similar construction with a subject pronoun occurring in between the first constituent and the verb in 'second' position (Canale 1978: 93).

Such a discrepancy between the treatment of subjects and objects can to a large extent still be found in Mitchell (1985). He not only acknowledges the tendency of object pronouns to precede the verb, but he explicitly argues that $S O_{\text{pronoun}} V$ should be treated as a variant of SV order rather than $S \dots V$, and he stresses the importance of keeping noun objects separate from pronoun objects (Mitchell 1985: §3907). In this respect, his view is not far removed from that found in for example van Kemenade (1987), who regards such clauses as a variant of verb second with a clitic pronoun intervening between the initial constituent and the finite verb in 'second' position. Yet when he discusses inversion in main clauses with a fronted constituent, he freely compares examples of a non-inverted pronominal subject with examples of inversion of a nominal subject (Mitchell 1985: §3928). While I do not dispute his conclusion that verb second is a tendency rather than a strict rule in Old English — compare examples (7a) and (7b) with (4a) and (5a) above — such a lack of distinction between nominal and pronominal subjects in this context is unfortunate. It has made most of his counter-examples to the claim that Old English is essentially a verb-second language unconvincing, since the absence of inversion with pronominal subjects in these examples is predictable and thus constitutes a special case.

- (7) a. & þone geleafan *god hæfð* mid manegum wundrum getrymmed & gefæstnod
and that faith god has with many wonders strengthened and fastened
'and God has strengthened and secured that faith with many miracles'
(ÆCHom I, 20, 292.10 [Clemoes 1997: 343.247])
- b. Be ðam ilcan *se salmscop cwað*
by the same the psalm-poet said
'The psalmist said about the same thing'
(CP 36.253.4)

However, Mitchell *does* urge in relation to the placement of negated verbs relative to the subject that a distinction between subject pronouns and nominal subjects should be made (Mitchell 1985: §3935).

As indicated above, there are some early studies in which a categorical distinction between pronominal and nominal subjects is made. This is the case in both Roth (1914) and Fourquet (1938). Moreover, Fourquet explicitly states that inversion fails with pronominal subjects after most types of fronted constituents in main clauses, so it is not the case that this particular pattern has simply gone unnoticed until recently; see for example his remark that in the clause (&) *þy ilcan geare hie fuhton wiþ Brettas* 'and in the same year they fought against the Britons' (ChronA 519.1) the order **fuhton hie* would be impossible (Fourquet 1938: 57). Roth (1914) may be a relatively obscure study, but Fourquet (1938) is frequently

cited. The widespread failure to keep pronominal subjects separate from nominal subjects is thus the more surprising, although the comparatively low frequency of the relevant construction is no doubt largely to be blamed. The data presented by Koopman (1996b, 1997b, 1998a) should convince anyone who is still sceptical that there is at least as much reason to keep personal pronoun subjects separate from nominal subjects in work on Old English word order as there is to keep personal pronoun objects separate from nominal objects.

This is not to deny that other properties may influence whether or not inversion takes place. In fact, I would not be surprised if given and/or monosyllabic subjects are indeed less likely to invert than new and/or heavier subjects. But until data collections have been done on the possible influence of such factors which consistently treat pronominal subjects as a separate class, it will be difficult or impossible to demonstrate. The non-inversion of personal pronoun subjects constitutes what Rydén and Brorström (1987) refer to as a 'knock-out' factor. If they are simply included in such investigations on the influence of a specific factor on (non-)inversion, it is bound to skew the results. Moreover, given how frequent personal pronoun subjects are, it is likely that they would outnumber the other subjects with the relevant property, possibly to a considerable extent. That means that inclusion of personal pronouns could greatly obscure the results, and is likely to make the data uninterpretable.

This is not merely a theoretical problem. Kohonen (1978), for example, concludes on the basis of his data that both the type of object (nominal or pronominal) and the length of the object influence the position of the object in the clause. In Table 1 below, I give Kohonen's data on object length and placement for the portion of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* used in his study. These data on the placement of objects include all pronouns, despite the fact that Kohonen is clearly aware of their "manifest tendency" to occur in pre-verbal position (Kohonen 1978: 199).⁶ On the reasonable assumption that object pronouns are one-word objects, it is possible in this particular case to recalculate the likely numbers for one-word objects excluding object pronouns. When this is done, the results yield a rather different picture, as can be seen in the final row of the Table (giving the calculated number of one-word objects less the number of pronoun objects). Although the numbers are too low for any certainty, it looks very much as if in main and

⁶ He even includes relative pronouns (and *þe* 'that') in subordinate clauses with object relativisation. As Kohonen (1978: 107) himself points out, this accounts for the high number of object pronouns in the initial field in subordinate clauses, and consequently the anomaly disappears when object pronouns are excluded. This is another clear case where an apparent phenomenon is actually due to unrelated factors, and inclusion of such a word, which always occurs initially in the clause, obscures the results.

coordinated clauses, the apparent correlation between shortness and preverbal position could be entirely due to the behaviour of pronominal objects. The length of the object may, however, be an independent factor in dependent clauses. This would indeed make sense in an approach such as that of van Kemenade (1987). She regards the preverbal placement of object pronouns in main clauses as due to the special placement of pronouns, whereas leftward movement of the finite verb in main clauses results in a frequent postverbal placement of nominal objects. The frequency of post-verbal placement of nominal objects as a result of such verb movement would not be expected to vary according to the length of the object. Subordinate clauses on the other hand tend to be verb-final, and van Kemenade (1987) ascribes post-verbal placement of the object in subclauses to rightward movement of the nominal object. Such a process *would* be expected to be sensitive to the weight of the object.

Table 1. *Position of the direct object (based on Kohonen 1978: 230)*

	main clause				<i>and/ac</i>				subordinate clause			
	IF ⁷	MF	TF	N	IF	MF	TF	N	IF	MF	TF	N
1 word	19%	44%	37%	59	5%	75%	20%	60	30%	66%	4%	132
2 words	6%	13%	81%	78	3%	54%	43%	70	3%	71%	26%	94
≥ 3 words	3%	7%	90%	71	0%	49%	51%	59	2%	57%	41%	63
pronoun	11	24	12	47	3	44	5	52	39	63	3	105
1 word nom.	0	2	10	12	0	1	7	8	1	24	2	27

Of course, the data in Table 1 are not sufficient to prove any of this. Apart from the problem that the numbers are too low, the data collection would need to be done differently to test such a hypothesis in a reliable way.⁸ Also, the situation is more complex in any case, with coordinated clauses being verb-final more frequently than uncoordinated main clauses and verb movement almost certainly taking place in subordinate clauses as well as in main clauses. But it *does* illustrate that the inclusion of a category that is independently known to prefer pre-verbal placement obscures the results of the data collection on the potential influence of another factor that may influence the placement of the object, such as length/weight. Unless personal pronouns (which are both highly frequent and have most

⁷ IF = initial field, i.e. preceding the subject; MF = medial field, i.e. in between the subject and the verb; TF = terminal field, i.e. following the (main) verb; N = total number.

⁸ Note that Pintzuk (1998: 242) demonstrates that weight of the NP object is indeed a factor in placement of the object relative to non-finite main verbs, i.e. those verb forms which cannot have been subject to the type of fronting found with finite verbs, so that post-verbal placement must be ascribed to some other process or processes affecting the object.

convincingly been shown to differ in their behaviour from full noun phrases) are kept separate or are excluded altogether, conclusions on the influence of the factor(s) under investigation are unsafe. We are unlikely to get much further in isolating the factors relevant to subject and object placement until this is done consistently.

1.3 On electronic resources

In my research I have made heavy use of the Toronto Corpus both in searches for examples, and as a basis for some of the database work undertaken.⁹ For this reason it is necessary to spend a little time on the limitations of the corpus, and any problems these may lead to. Among other things, it will explain why I have so often found it necessary to check printed editions (and in some cases even to consult facsimiles or manuscripts). Also, I think it is worth pointing out some of the limitations, in the hope that they may be useful to scholars who are not very familiar with the corpus, but who wish to use it (or the Microfiche Concordance to Old English) for research purposes. See also Koopman (1992b). The caveats which follow are not intended to detract in any way from the value of the corpus — without it, much of the work undertaken here would have been impossible.

The first limitation of the corpus is well-known and deliberate: only one version of each text has been included, unless the differences between variants is significant (although it must be noted that it is not always clear why certain variants have been excluded and others included). From a syntactician's point of view this has advantages and disadvantages. It limits the number of duplicates of essentially the same example, resulting in a fairer picture of relative frequencies. But it must be remembered that there is no apparatus available in the corpus itself to check whether there is significant variation between manuscripts. Unexpected variants are more likely to be excluded from the main text in the process of editing a text, especially in the case of manuscript variation. However, this problem is almost certainly much more acute for morphologists and phonologists, since most editors are more aware of these aspects of the language. In fact, most tend to pay comparatively little attention to syntax (as long as the text is comprehensible). As a consequence, replacement with a variant from a manuscript other than the base

⁹ The version used was made available through the Oxford Text Archive. I indexed the corpus with WordCruncher (Version 4.50), and most searches have been done using this program. The version of the corpus which was indexed turned out to lack a number of the homilies in Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, First Series. Where necessary, I have consulted these homilies separately (normally by means of an earlier version of the Toronto Corpus).

manuscript or editorial emendation will be less frequent in the case of syntax. But this has its own problems: the result of the comparative neglect of syntax is that constructions may appear in the main text of an edition which are simply not justified in view of other evidence. (For a complaint on the unjust neglect of syntax, see Campbell (1952: 166) and Mitchell (1985: lvii).) These, then, will often appear in the Toronto Corpus without any indication that there may be a problem, especially in the absence of notes and apparatus.

This brings us to the next point: the editing process. There is essentially no single editorial policy for the texts contained in the corpus, which under the circumstances is inevitable. Most of the material relies on the best available edition of the text at the time when the corpus was compiled. To a large extent, the user of the corpus is therefore at the mercy of the editor of individual texts. Both editorial policy and the quality of the edition can vary significantly from one text to the next, although it should be added that texts only available in unsatisfactory editions were checked and supplemented or re-edited where necessary (Gneuss 1973: 12–13). The only way to find out what to be aware of for any particular text, is to check the edition concerned (assuming that all relevant information is stated explicitly by the editor, which is not always the case). It is for example not clear from the corpus what the policy on punctuation was or whether emendations were signalled in the main text. The latter incidentally means that editorial emendations are occasionally not indicated in the Toronto Corpus.

The problem of typographical errors in the corpus is likewise inevitable. Proof-reading has of course been done, but given the vast amount of material it will be some time before errors are down to a minimum. Of course, I have been working with an older, frozen version of the corpus, mainly for practical reasons. The version now available on the internet should improve continuously in this respect. Many such errors will be fairly obvious in any case, so they are unlikely to lead to significant problems, but doubtful examples in particular must always be checked. Ideally, of course, all examples should be verified, but where the numbers are very large this is often impracticable.

The electronic corpus is a plain text file with a minimum of coding in the text itself. This has many benefits and it was probably also necessary for practical considerations, but it *does* mean that on occasion important information is lost. There is, for example, no code for material added above the line or for expanded abbreviations. In (8) below, the absence of coding for interlineation may lead to an initial impression that <mon> is the indefinite pronoun in a very odd construction. In fact, another hand has added <mon> (or <man>) above the line after the abbreviated form <cō>. In other words, it is a correction of the singular verb form *com* to the plural verb form *comon*. (This is confirmed by another manuscript, as noted in Bately 1986: 51.)

- (8) & him to com mon þær ongen Sumorsæte alle . . .
and him to came (pl.) there towards Somerset all
'and there all Somerset came to meet him'

(ChronA 878.14)

While the possible problems of not marking expanded abbreviations in studies on spelling will be obvious, there are circumstances in which it would have been useful information from a syntactic point of view, especially when non-standard abbreviations are involved. To give an example, an apparent instance of *man* in sentence-initial position in the Toronto Corpus, occurring in one of the Vercelli homilies (HomU 6, 2 *Man sægð us on þyssum bocum, hu se halga Thomas . . .*), in fact turned out to be a mistaken expansion of an abbreviated form in Förster's (1913) edition, as can be seen by comparing it with the use of the same abbreviation at the beginning of the three following texts in the manuscript (HomS 2, LS 19 (PurifMary), LS 17.2 (MartinPeter)). It has been expanded to *Men þa leofestan* 'dearest men' by Scragg (1992: 253 (XV.1)). This once again illustrates the necessity of checking against printed editions.

While the above-mentioned decisions to exclude certain information can be defended by appealing to the balance between potential advantages to be gained and time and resources needed to incorporate the additional information, there is one case where I have to disagree with what seems to be a policy adopted by the compilers of the corpus. This is the practice of putting parts of sentences into a single segment (unit of citation) when there is material missing — usually because of damage to the manuscript — without giving any indication that something has been lost. Often it will be clear that something odd is going on, but this is not necessarily the case, especially in instances where one or two words are missing. One of the worst texts in this respect is the *Life of Machutus* (LS 13 (Machutus)). This text contains many sentences of which only parts are legible because the only extant manuscript containing the text has been badly damaged by fire. An example is given in (9a); I give the version given in Yerkes (1984) for comparison in (9b) (< > indicates missing or illegible text).¹⁰

¹⁰ To further confuse matters, there are many differences between the printed edition and the text in the Toronto Corpus, even though Yerkes (1984) is cited as the edition used. Any example from this text *must* be checked against the printed edition.

- (9) a. He þa his <corr>lareow</corr> & ealle þa <corr>a eorþlican ma hiwcupum
leorning de þæt.</corr>
(LS 13 (Machutus) 30v.17)
- b. He þa his lareo[w] . 7 ealle þa
<pe.....>heor>a e[or]þlican ma-
<gas.....>h[iw]cupum leorning-
<cnihum.....>gelærde wæron . þæt
<.....>
(Yerkes 1984: 33)

In some cases, the decision to put the two parts into a single segment at all is misleading. The most striking case I have seen of this is given in (10). It is given as a single sentence, but in fact an entire leaf is missing in the manuscript between *ðæt* and *micelne*.

- (10) Ðæt is ðonne Godes æ ðæt mon hæbbe lufe & geðyld, ðæt micelne beam
that is then God's law that one have love and patience that great beam
on ðinum agnan.
in your own
'That is then God's law, that one should have love and patience, so that . . . ' . . .
a big beam in your own (eye).'
- (CP 33.219.13)

Where such omissions go unnoticed by the scholar using the corpus, not only may they have repercussions for syntactic research, they could lead to errors in the *Dictionary* itself.

Having said all of this, I will again stress that the Toronto Corpus is an extremely valuable and to my mind still under-used resource. It simply needs to be remembered that it does not replace printed editions, and that it will frequently be necessary to consult these. I have aimed to do so where necessary. All examples given have been checked against a printed edition if it was possible to do so. Although I would have liked to check all material included in the various data collections, this was not practicable. So when large numbers of the same construction were concerned, I have only checked in case of doubt. As a result, some exceptional variants mentioned in notes or apparatus may have been overlooked. It is also possible that some instances have been mistakenly included, excluded or misclassified in cases of unmarked emendations, omitted words or simple errors. But when the general conclusion appeared to be well-founded, it was judged that a full check of every instance was so unlikely to lead to any significant changes to the conclusions, that the vast amount of additional time needed was not justified.

In addition to the Toronto Corpus, I have also used a preliminary version of the tagged Old English prose part of the Helsinki Corpus (the Brooklyn-Geneva-Amsterdam-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English).¹¹ By now, the corpus has been both morphologically tagged and syntactically parsed, but the version used here had morphological coding only. Such coding obviously makes it much easier to look for syntactic constructions (easier still now that the syntactic parsing has been added).¹² Even though the corpus is small, its existence will be a great help in research on constructions which cannot easily be found on the basis of particular lexical items. Many of the warnings which apply to the Toronto Corpus likewise hold for this corpus, of course.¹³ Note that scholars at the University of York are currently in the process of extending the corpus significantly. Together with the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English (occasionally used here in its first edition), these will become a major resource in syntactic research on the history of English.

Other electronic resources I have made use of are aids in locating an approximation of the corresponding Latin for translations, especially in the case of constructions whose existence in Old English is disputed. The *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* database has proved very valuable in this respect.¹⁴ It is incomplete at present, but it already contains entries for a sizeable number of texts. Two searchable collections of Latin texts (the *Cetedoc* and *Patrologia Latina* databases) have also been very helpful in locating the corresponding Latin, with the added advantages of using electronic text rather than hard copy. I have not been able to do such checks consistently, but in time, the combination of such resources will make it comparatively easy to do so as a matter of routine when unusual constructions are concerned (although it must of course be borne in mind that in most cases it is not possible to be certain of the exact version of the source used by the translator).

¹¹ I am grateful to Ans van Kemenade and Frank Beths for making this available. Note that it looks as if this particular version had a few small parts missing, but this will have made very little difference in practice.

¹² Given the temporary nature of this state of the corpus, no searching software had yet been developed for it. I am grateful to Bill Corner for writing a Perl script for me which made it possible to use the corpus reasonably efficiently.

¹³ In addition, there are some aspects of the tagging system that must be kept in mind. Most importantly, the coding does not allow for ambiguity.

¹⁴ This database is available on-line at <http://fontes.english.ox.ac.uk/>.

1.4 Some notes on the data and examples

Since the indefinite pronoun *man* is central to this thesis, a few preliminary remarks about this pronoun are in order. In his study on *man*, Fröhlich (1951) distinguishes five different types of *man* according to the sense in which it is being used, with further subdivisions of two of these types. See also Mitchell (1985: §§363 ff.) for a summary, and Mitchell (1982) for some problems with Fröhlich's distinctions. I have made no attempt to distinguish instances of *man* according to these types in the data collections. It would have been too time-consuming, and in any case it would have been impossible to make such distinctions consistently given the frequent ambiguity. Reasonably clear instances of the noun *mann*, as for example in (11), have been excluded. Many of these are modified, for example by a demonstrative. (All other phrases with *man*, such as *nan man* 'no one' and *ænig man* 'anyone', have also been excluded.) Doubtful instances of unmodified *man* have been left in the database with a note on their potential ambiguity.

- (11) a. Hwa is wyrhte þære synne? *Mann* is wyrhte þære synne, & deofol tyhtere.
 who is worker-of-the sin *man* is worker-of-the sin and devil inciter
 'Who is the performer of sin? Man is the performer of sin, and the devil the instigator.'

(Eluc 1, 8)

- b. *Mann* wæs fram gode asend. þæs nama wæs iohannes.
 man was from God sent whose name was John
 'A man was sent by God, whose name was John'

(Jn (WSCp) 1.6 [Liuzza 1994])

All (probable) instances of the pronoun *man* were simply included, without any particular attention to its precise use. I judged that if there were differences in syntactic placement of *man* according to type, this would become clear in the course of the data work, and such distinctions as were necessary could then be made at a later stage. As it turned out, there were no grounds for any such distinctions. This supports Bacquet's view that there is no difference in behaviour between *man* in its generic indefinite sense and *man* in the sense of 'someone' in terms of the structure of the language: "Pour ce qui est de la phrase à sujet *man*, il convient de noter que la langue ne fait pas de différence, quant à la structure, entre la phrase dans laquelle *man* est un indéfini vague et celle où il est sujet individuel correspondant au latin *quis*" (Bacquet 1962: p. 695, n. 2). (See Rissanen 1997 for a somewhat different conclusion on *man/me* in Middle English.)

Another point that needs to be made at this stage is that the use of *man* in the sense of (potentially) an indefinite pronoun in object function is very infrequent,

so that nothing much can be said about its syntactic behaviour in any function other than subject. See (12) below for possible examples of *man* in object function. Moreover, the rare occurrences that exist are often open to an interpretation as 'a person, a human being'. Rissanen (1997: 514) states categorically that the use of indefinite *man* in Old English is restricted to subject function, similarly to for example present-day German *man*. Mitchell (1985: §363) likewise states it is only used in the nominative singular. In other words, it is conceivable that a fully-fledged indefinite pronoun *man* was not really used in the other syntactic functions; if it was, its use was extremely limited. All potential instances have been excluded, and I will be concerned solely with *man* functioning as a subject.

- (12) a. and Alfwold cyning sænde *man* æfter pallium to Rome
 and Alfwold king sent *man*/someone after pallium to Rome
 'and King Alfwold sent someone to Rome for a pallium'
 (ChronD 780.4; also ChronE 780.4)
- b. Gif wede hund *man* toslite
 if mad hound *man*/someone wound
 'If a mad dog wounds someone'
 (Lch I (Herb) 2.21)
- c. Wiþ þam before þe þy feorþan dæge on *man* becymeþ.
 against the fever that the fourth day on *man*/someone comes
 'Against the fever which befalls someone on the fourth day.'
 (Lch I (HerbHead) 3625)

The main sets of data have been entered into a database, which allowed the data to be searched and organised in various ways.¹⁵ (In addition, it made it possible to add further information relatively easily.) But maybe I should defend the decision not to use software capable of more advanced statistics. For much of the data work, it was deemed unnecessary for the simple reason that there turned out to be little or no variation within a specific context. The variation found was normally determined by the syntactic context. This meant that in such cases relative frequency or statistical significance of any differences in frequency was of comparatively little interest, while the issue of counter-examples to the generalisations made accordingly took on a much more prominent role.

Furthermore, tests for statistical significance can only safely be used if it is possible to set up the data collection in such a way that the results of such tests would be reliable. This would entail, among other things, excluding multiple examples of the same construction occurring so near each other that they are likely to have influenced each other, which I decided against — in many cases the data

¹⁵ The program used is FileMaker Pro 2.1.

were limited even without doing so. Also, I was not convinced that it would solve all problems, since variation between texts can only be controlled for if the target structures occur often enough to pick up significant differences between texts. If examples are usually limited to just a few (if that) in a text and/or if only one of the categories is represented in such texts (as for example happens with the data on *gif* ... *ponne* in section 3.2), a test done on the totals found may well indicate that the differences between the categories are significant. But since there is a risk that we may be comparing data that should not be compared in this way, doing such a test and finding that the result is 'significant' could lead to a false sense of security without actually adding much to our knowledge. In such cases, I think we are probably better off without such tests, if for no other reason than to avoid accidentally misleading others into thinking the results are more secure than they really are. Statistical testing can be extremely valuable, but only if the data work done lends itself for the purpose, which in my opinion was not generally the case here.

At this point I should perhaps also apologise for the large number of examples used. While I appreciate that this will not always make for easy reading, I felt it was necessary in many cases to give more than one or two examples, given that much of the time I am dealing with low-frequency phenomena whose acceptability may be doubted by some. The amount of philological detail given in certain cases may likewise be a bit tedious to some, but I judged it to be necessary for the same reasons. More of it could perhaps have been moved into appendices, but I was not convinced that this would have improved readability enough to justify the complication in organisation, especially since it would have made things more difficult for those who wish to know about such details. So I have decided to integrate these matters as well as I could into the main text whenever they are of direct relevance, or else deal with them in footnotes.

I should mention that I have not identified for individual examples whether they have been taken from the Helsinki Corpus, the Toronto Corpus or my own reading. In some cases the context will make the source clear, but I found that the distinction between the different sources was often not easy to make. This holds particularly for the Toronto Corpus. Since it is untagged, it is difficult to look for particular types of construction in any systematic way, and examples were found partly through guesswork. Moreover, many I came across by accident while looking for something else or simply browsing through the corpus. I decided that there was little point in trying to keep track of how any particular example was found in the case of the data from Old English. I simply acknowledge the heavy use I have made of these corpora in various ways, most particularly the Toronto Corpus. Of course, I cite the source of an example when it has been taken from another study, and I normally also refer to any relevant work including a particular example even if seen after I had come across the example. For the few examples

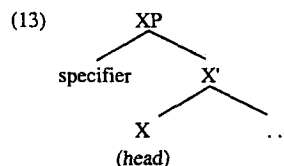
from later periods of the language, a wider range of corpora has been used, and I identify the source for individual examples after the text reference.

The system of reference used for the Old English examples has been made consistent to that used in the Toronto Corpus and the Microfiche Concordance to Old English regardless of which source it was originally taken from. Details may be found in Healey and Venezky (1980 [1985]). If the example has been checked against a more recent edition than that used in the Toronto Corpus, I will give the location of the example in the more recent edition between square brackets.

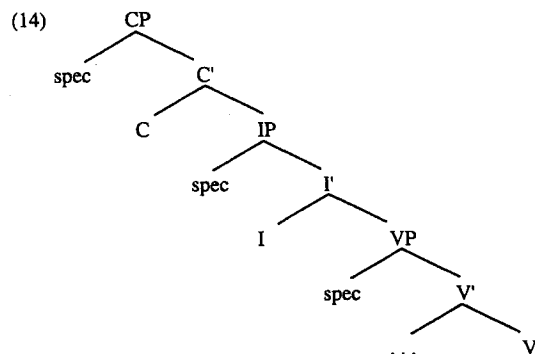
Italics in examples are mine unless stated otherwise. Some editors italicise expanded abbreviations, e.g. <þær> for <þ>, but this is not done by all editors. I have ignored such italics when it makes no difference to the argument whether the word was abbreviated or not in the manuscript, and have retained a normal font. Editorial emendations are enclosed between square brackets, and ^...^ indicates an interlineation.

1.5 Preliminaries on theory

While much of the material in this thesis will hopefully be of interest and use to those who are not primarily interested in problems affecting generative analyses of Old English word order, it will be clear that this work has been heavily influenced by issues raised within such analyses, particularly those in a Government and Binding framework. It is not practicable to provide a detailed discussion here of Government and Binding Theory or its more recent descendants (Chomsky 1981 and subsequent work), nor do I think that it is necessary for my purposes. For those who are interested in the more theoretical aspects, a knowledge of the basics should suffice to follow the discussion (see for example Haegeman (1994) for an introduction). Essentially, a grasp of the basic form of a projection, as in (13), of clause structure and of the notion of 'movement' should be sufficient. Throughout, I will attempt to avoid issues of theory which do not bear directly on the analysis of Old English.



The basic structure of a clause that most would agree upon is as in (14) — with CP being the highest projection, dominating IP and VP, even if some assume a more elaborate structure by adding functional projections (or splitting up the existing ones into two or more). The position of the head of the various projections may also differ (head-initial/head-final) from one analysis of Old English to another (e.g. Roberts 1997, who argues in favour of verb–complement order), or even within a single analysis in the sense of arguing for co-existing, competing structures within Old English (e.g. Pintzuk 1991, Kroch and Taylor 1997).



The heads of the two functional projections CP and IP are positions that a finite verb can move to. In the case of C (or COMP), such movement can only take place if it is not already occupied by a subordinator, which is the other type of element that may occur in C. The specifiers of these two projections are available for moved phrases. Analyses differ on where in the structure particular elements occur, under what circumstances they move there, and whether such movement is optional or obligatory. Details of particular analyses will be given in chapters 4 and 5 as they become relevant to the discussion.

The adopted framework is deliberately conservative, with a minimum of functional projections (although other proposed projections will be mentioned in the discussion of particular analyses). In adopting this course, I follow most published work on Old English sentence structure to date, even if it is at the cost of using a perhaps outdated form of the theory. The aim of this thesis is not to present a thoroughly revised analysis of Old English sentence structure incorporating the latest developments of the theory, but to identify problems relating to the behaviour of pronouns in particular and where possible to find answers to the questions raised. I aim to present these, and their consequences for the analysis of Old English, in such a way as to promote accessibility of both data and analysis.

I hope to have achieved this by keeping the discussion of the general issues and the data as free of technical terminology as possible and by using an analytical framework that follows on directly from existing accounts. The results should translate fairly straightforwardly into more elaborate structures employing a similar syntactic framework.

Topicalisation and (non-)inversion

2.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a salient characteristic of personal pronoun subjects is the fact that they normally do not invert with the finite verb in main clauses with a fronted constituent other than a *wh*-word, *ne*, or a member of a limited set of adverbs, particularly *þa* and *þonne* (e.g. van Kemenade 1987, Pintzuk 1991).¹ Although inversion is not found consistently with nominal subjects (see especially Koopman 1996b, 1997b, 1998a), there is nevertheless a clear difference between pronominal subjects and nominal subjects in this context since inversion of pronominal subjects is virtually absent. I repeat an example of a clause with topicalisation and inversion of a nominal subject in (1), and one with non-inversion of a personal pronoun subject in (2).

- (1) þam mannum *sceolan þa deman* grimlice styran
 those men must the judges grimly punish
 'the judges must punish those men severely'

(HomS 17, 153)

- (2) þam mannum *he sceal* don synna forgyfenyss
 those men he must do of-sins forgiveness
 'He must forgive those men their sins'

(ÆCHom I, 16, 234.2 [Clemoes 1997: 309.78])

¹ I have included *ne* here since some analyses do so. However, it never occurs separated from the finite verb in Old English, and it should almost certainly be analysed as procliticised onto the finite verb. Clauses of this type are therefore probably better regarded as verb-initial.