Old ‘truths’, new corpora:

Revisiting the word order of conjunct clauses in Old English¹

KRISTIN BECH

University of Oslo

¹ I would like to thank Laurel Brinton, Kari Haugland, Kristian Rusten, George Walkden, and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments and observations.

In Bech (2001a, 2001b), I took issue with the oft repeated claim that Old English conjunct main clauses are commonly verb-final, and disproved it. However, the myth persists. In the meantime, the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE, Taylor et al. 2003) has been created, so the time has come to revisit this topic and consider it in light of new, extensive, and generally accessible data. Using the YCOE corpus, I confirm and expand on Bech's (2001) empirical findings, showing that 1) OE conjunct clauses are neither typically verb-final nor verb-late, but they are more frequently verb-final and verb-late than non-conjunct clauses are; and 2) verb-final and verb-late clauses are typically conjunct clauses. These two perspectives must be kept apart: in the first, the starting point is the entire body of conjunct clauses, and in the second it is the entire body of verb-final/verb-late clauses. I propose that the failure to distinguish between the two perspectives, i.e. whether it is conjunct clauses or word order that constitutes the point of departure, is the origin of the misconception concerning conjunct clauses and word order. In order to establish whether this distinction has been fuzzy all along, or whether it must be ascribed to distorted referencing in the course of a century of research, I trace the research on this topic back to the end of the nineteenth century. I show that the alleged verb-finality of conjunct clauses may be ascribed to a *whisper-down-the-lane* effect – the retelling of the story has changed the story.

Since the 2001 article, in which I used my own collected data, the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE, Taylor et al. 2003) has come into existence. I therefore found it opportune to revisit the topic at this time, to see whether the results are the same when much more extensive data are considered. In addition, I find it important to examine previous research on this topic in some detail, as it is demonstrable that imprecise referencing is at the core of the misconceptions concerning conjunct clauses and word order in Old English.

This paper is divided into two main parts: First I review previous research on this matter, dating back to the nineteenth century, and then I present the empirical findings from the YCOE, which have been elicited by means of extensive corpus queries.

2 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Before I present and discuss the empirical findings, I would like to devote some space to previous research on conjunct clauses and word order. I find this a worthwhile pursuit, because scholarship tends to be obscured in the mists of time, and references are often repeated uncritically. The academic community is currently drawing attention to the dangers of culling references from other researchers' papers rather than reading the original sources oneself, so in seeking to dispel what I regard as a linguistic myth concerning Old English, I therefore start by dusting off old research on this matter.

2.1 A century of conjunct clauses and word order

Scholars have been commenting on the relation between word order and conjunct clauses for more than a century. The first paper I have been able to locate is a paper by

Todt from 1894, dealing primarily with word order in *Beowulf*, but also with reference to two of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and to *Cura Pastoralis* (Todt 1894: 226).

According to Todt, '[i]n S. C. [AS Chronicles] und C. P. [Cura Pastoralis] findet sich schlussstellung hier und da ... Besonders häufig findet sich aber stellung d) [i.e. end position] in S. C. in mit „und“ coordinierten sätzen in der erzählung rasch sich entwickelnder handlung' (1894: 234–5).² Todt distinguishes between end position of the verb, and a verb position after several sentence elements (1894: 229), and points out that in order to really speak of end position, there has to be an essential element such as an object or an adverbial complement present, which can be used as a diagnostic for end position (1894: 229–30). What is important to note in Todt's work, and to be kept in mind in the following, is that his wording is ambiguous. It can be taken to mean that end position is common in *and*-clauses, but if his comment is seen together with his data, it emerges that what he actually means is that in clauses with the verb in end position, *and* is common. Todt *first* classifies clauses according to word order (1894: 231), and then he looks at what characterizes the clauses in the different word order categories. This is a different matter than first finding all *and*-clauses and then looking at what characterizes those in terms of word order. Note also that the data are very limited. A few years later, **Dahlstedt** refers to Todt, reproducing the opaque wording: 'Lastly, there is from older to later times a tendency to level subordinate and principal clauses ... The end-position of the finite verb in principal clauses is perhaps influenced by Latin; but otherwise it may be due to the analogy with clauses containing a personal

² Translation: 'In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* and *Cura Pastoralis*, end position occurs now and then ... Position d) [i.e. end position] occurs particularly frequently in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* in clauses coordinated by *and* in the telling of rapidly unfolding events'.

pronoun, or with subordinate clauses ... This position is especially to be found after *and* (Cura Past.; Todt, Sweet)³ (1901: 14).

In **Kuhn**'s 1933 habilitation thesis, the idea of end position for verbs in conjunct clauses takes further hold. According to Kuhn, in the West-Germanic languages, conjunct clauses once had the same word order as subordinate clauses (verb in a late or final position), which we know because this type of word order is still found in Old English and in older German (1933: 62). Kuhn is not in possession of data on this topic himself, so he, too, refers to Todt, who 'gibt an, daß endstellung des verbs in hauptsätzen in der Sachsenchronik besonders häufig nach *and* 'und' vorkommt' (1933: 63).⁴ Just as in Dahlstedt (see above), the sentence is unclear: Does Kuhn mean that Todt sees this from the perspective of verb-final order, or does he mean that the perspective is *and*-clauses? The topicality of *endstellung* would indicate the former, but the fact that the chapter is about the word order of conjunct clauses, and Kuhn says 'häufig nach *and*', indicate the latter. As mentioned above, what Todt means is not that end position is common after *and*, but that in his examples of clauses with the verb in end position, there is frequently a conjunction. Hence, the reference is not precise. In the same decade, **Fourquet** (1938) comments that as regards heavy clause elements in the first part of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (until 891), there is a disconcerting liberty with respect to clause position (1938: 42). He ascribes this to two factors, one of which is the nature of the beginning of the clause: In clauses starting with a conjunction, the verb is

³ The reference is to Henry Sweet (1898), *A New English Grammar, Logical and Historical*, part 2, §1821, see <<https://archive.org/stream/newenglishgrammar02sweeuoft#page/14/mode/2up>>.

⁴ Translation: (According to Kuhn), Todt 'states that in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, end position of the verb in main clauses occurs particularly frequently after *and*'.

postponed, both in clauses with an expressed subject and in clauses without an expressed subject (1938: 38–43). **Andrew** (1940) distinguishes between common, conjunctive and demonstrative order. Conjunctive order is the normal verb-final word order in subordinate clauses, and Andrew chooses to call it conjunctive order ‘since it is found also after co-ordinating conjunctions’ (1940: 1).

We make a leap to modern times. In 1964, both **Campbell** and **Mitchell** had something to say about conjunct clauses and word order. In a review of Bacquet (1962), Campbell, with reference to Kuhn (1933), rebukes Bacquet for not being ‘aware that all conjunctions including *ond* and *ac* require subordinate word order, i.e. the subject follows the conjunction, and the verb may be in the third or any later place’ (1964: 191). And according to Mitchell, ‘[l]ater writers also fail to take account of the influence of *ond*, *ac*, and *ne* ... Bacquet similarly overlooks the tendency of *ond* and *ac* to send a verb to the end of the clause ...’ (1964: 118). Campbell (1970), similar to Andrew (1940), operates with three main word orders: common, demonstrative, and subordinate, and once again stresses the subordinate nature of conjunct clauses: ‘In subordinate order, a conjunction begins the clause, *e.g.* *þa he com*, ‘when he came’. In this order, however, the verb is free, i.e. it may be indefinitely delayed. This is the order used after all conjunctions, even *ond*’ (1970: 93).

In 1978, **Kohonen** refers to many of the previously mentioned works, and sums them up as follows: ‘The clauses introduced by the and/ac conjunctions had a well-known tendency for verb-final word order, noted both in OE and OHG [Old High German]’ (1978: 36). Kohonen provides statistics, though for Old English only from one text, Ælfric’s first series of *Catholic Homilies* (1978: 75). Distinguishing between three word orders, SV, S.V. (i.e. verb-final clauses, and clauses in which the finite verb

is in a late, but not final, position) and VS, he finds that in *and/ac* clauses, S.V. order occurs in 33% of the cases, versus 10% in other main clauses (1978: 90).

The claim that conjunct clauses are characterized by verb-final/verb-late order has remained unquestioned in large part because of its repetition in Bruce **Mitchell**'s seminal two-volume work *Old English Syntax* (1985). Mitchell begins by saying that '... such OE conjunctions as *ond* and *ac* are frequently followed by the element order S...V, which is basically subordinate. Failure to recognize this this has led many scholars astray ...' (1985 I: 694). Here Mitchell leans on Campbell (1970: 93, quoted in Mitchell 1985 I: 714), who states that '[f]ailure to recognise that even co-ordinating conjunctions are syntactically subordinating has often led scholars to quote clauses which are opened by such conjunctions without the conjunctions, which alone make their word-order possible.' Mitchell further states that 'the influence of *ond* often postpones the verb' (1985 I: 712), and that S...V word order, 'sometimes called "subordinate" – is common in clauses introduced by *ond*, *ac*...and in subordinate clauses' (1985 II: 967). To be sure, Mitchell also acknowledges that conjunct clauses may display other word orders: 'All the basic orders are found after *ond* in both early and late prose' (1985 I: 710), but it is clear from the numerous other quotes that Mitchell regards conjunct clauses as being typically S...V. However, there are no statistics to support Mitchell's use of frequency adverbs such as 'frequently', 'often', and 'common'.

As regards the definition of S...V order, Mitchell regards clauses in which an adverb element or a pronominal object intervenes between the subject and the finite verb as variants of SV order, and thus not as S...V (1985 II: 965), though he expresses some uncertainty about the status of pronominal objects (1985 II: 966). Hence, S...V

clauses are clauses in which the intervening element is a nominal object, a nominal or adjectival complement, a participle or an infinitive. S...V... order, i.e. verb-late order (see example (2)), is regarded as a subtype of S...V order (1985 II: 967). Mitchell's general views on word order are also reflected in Mitchell & Robinson's *A Guide to Old English*, a textbook for beginner students of Old English.

Another prominent mention of word order in conjunct clauses occurs in **Traugott** (1992: 277), who states that 'co-ordinate clauses introduced by *and* are V2 if a locative adverbial phrase or an adverb like *ne* or *þær* is present ... Otherwise, they tend to be verb-final, like subordinate clauses'. **Pintzuk** (1995), with reference to Bacquet (1962),⁵ Campbell (1970), van Kemenade (1987),⁶ Mitchell (1964, 1985), and Traugott (1992), comments that '[i]t has often been suggested, generally without comment or explanation, that conjunct clauses in Old English are more like subordinate clauses than main clauses ... In particular, it is noted that Old English conjunct clauses are more frequently verb-final than main clauses' (1995: 249). This is repeated in Pintzuk & Haberli (2008: 375). Pintzuk's formulation is actually more careful than the

⁵ Bacquet does not refer to word order in relation to *and* or *ac* in his chapter on word order in affirmative declarative clauses (1962: ch. II), nor when he considers verb-final clauses specifically (1962: 617ff). The only thing he mentions is that an example he gives from *Orosius* which shows a clause starting with *and* and with the verb in final position 'ne doit pas faire croire que la phrase à verbe final débute obligatoirement par le sujet ou par une simple conjonction de coordination (*and*, *eac* [sic], etc.)' (1962: 620). Translation: The example from *Orosius* 'should not lead one to believe that verb-final clauses obligatorily start with the subject or with a simple coordinating conjunction'. It is therefore unclear why Pintzuk included this reference.

⁶ Van Kemenade (1987) just says that 'OE ond/ac clauses for some obscure reason tend to behave more like embedded clauses than like main clauses' (1987: 177), but with no references or data.

works she refers to, because she says that conjunct clauses are more frequently verb-final than main clauses are, whereas her references say that conjunct clauses are frequently verb-final. As we shall see, it is in fact the case that conjunct clauses are more frequently verb-final than main clauses are, but that is different from saying that they are frequently verb-final. Pintzuk points to parallelism as a factor for the word order of conjunct clauses; the word order of a conjunct clause depends on the word order of the matrix clause (1995: 249–50).

In **Bech** (2001a, 2001b), I examined the word order of conjunct clauses more closely, since upon reading Old English texts, I had the impression that there was a discrepancy between the empirical facts and what previous scholarship had said on the matter of conjunct clauses and word order. Consequently, I first looked at the distribution of word order in conjunct clauses, and then at the distribution of conjunct clauses in the different word order patterns (2001a: 86–93, 2001b). What I found was that the single most common word order in conjunct clauses is regular SVX order, and that conjunct clauses are rarely verb-final i.e. with the finite verb in absolute final position. The latter is also confirmed by **Cichosz** (2010: 115). In addition, some word orders are what I termed ‘symmetric’, others ‘asymmetric’. For example, the XVS word order is symmetric, in the sense that few conjunct clauses take this word order, and few XVS clauses have an initial conjunction. As regards verb-final order, on the other hand, it is asymmetric, in the sense that few conjunct clauses are verb-final, but a great number of the verb-final clauses have an initial conjunction. In other words, what I did was to keep apart the two perspectives that I believe have been mixed up in previous research and in subsequent references. I then studied this symmetrical and asymmetrical distribution from the point of view of the interplay between clause type and information

structure. In those studies, I also provided data for verb-late clauses, but I focused on the clauses with the finite verb in absolute final position. However, since most of the research that I have referred to previously in this section does not distinguish between finite verb in final position and finite verb in late position, I include both in this study. Furthermore, in my 2001 studies, I included all SXV clauses regardless of X element, i.e. also short adverbs and pronominal objects, which – recall – Mitchell regards as a subtype of SV (see above). In this paper, I will therefore take specific note of clauses in which a full nominal object, a complement, an infinitive or a participle is placed between the subject and the verb, to enable a more precise comparison between the empirical data from the YCOE corpus and Mitchell's claims.

To round off this overview of previous research, I include a quote from a much-used textbook of Old English, i.e. **Baker** (2012). Baker, probably with reference to either Mitchell (1985), or Mitchell & Robinson (2007), says that '[t]he Subject ... Verb word-order is commonly found in subordinate clauses and clauses introduced by *and/ond* and *ac* 'but', though it does sometimes occur in independent clauses. The subject comes at the beginning of the clause and the finite verb is delayed until the end (though it may be followed by an adverbial element such as a prepositional phrase)' (2012: 118). Although this sentence, too, is rather fuzzy – is he talking about the distribution of S...V order in conjunct clauses, or is he talking about the distribution of conjunctions in S...V clauses – instructors and students alike commonly interpret this as saying that conjunct clauses are typically verb-final. In other words, the myth lives on.

2.2 Summary of previous research

The main points emerging from the overview of previous research are the following:

- 1) The studies usually do not make the essential distinction between the two perspectives of a) considering the frequency of different word orders in conjunct clauses, and b) considering the frequency of conjunct clauses in the different word order patterns. Hence, over time, references have become distorted and also less refined.

- 2) Most of the studies do not offer empirical data themselves; hence claims have been made and repeated on the basis of very little material. The pathway of the conjunct clause myth seems to be as follows: Todt (1894) offers some data from very limited text material, saying that of his examples of verb-final clauses, many have an initial conjunction. It is, crucially, not the other way round. Kuhn (1933) refers to Todt, but the reference is opaque and the perspective becomes fatally distorted. Then Campbell (1964) refers to Kuhn, and reuses this reference in Campbell (1970). Mitchell (1985) sets great store by Campbell (1970), to the extent of quoting him verbatim in his own work, as well as using these ‘findings’ in the various editions of Mitchell & Robinson’s textbook *A Guide to Old English*. Finally this trickles down to a present-day university textbook such as Baker (2012). But at some point in this chain of references, the chain twisted, so that what is referred to now as a well-known fact is not only based on extremely scanty data, but is actually an incorrect rendering of the original data results.

- 3) Though the term ‘verb-final’ is often used, verb-late word order is often included. Also, it varies which elements intervening between the subject and the verb are accepted as diagnostics for verb-final/verb-late order;
- 4) Those who have provided empirical data (Kohonen 1978; Pintzuk 1995; Bech 2001a, 2001b) agree that conjunct clauses, though not the same as subordinate clauses, are different from main clauses and should be kept apart.
- 5) When frequency adverbs such as ‘frequently’, ‘commonly’, ‘often’ are used, it is not clear, or it varies, whether they are used in an absolute sense, or in comparison to something else. For example, Mitchell seems to use ‘frequently’ in an absolute sense, whereas Pintzuk compares conjunct clauses to main clauses.

In sum, then, in the matter of conjunct clauses and word order, there are a number of aspects that should have been kept apart, but which have not been kept apart, with the result that the matter has become rather murky and confused. Section 3, which presents the method and results of the empirical study, aims to dispel the murkiness.

3 EMPIRICAL DATA FROM THE YCOE

This section presents empirical facts elicited from the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Corpus of Parsed English Prose* (YCOE, Taylor et al. 2003). It will be shown that 1) conjunct clauses are by no means typically verb-final/verb-late; 2) but they are more frequently verb-final/verb-late than other main clauses; 3) verb-final/verb-late main clauses are

typically conjunct clauses. In order to throw verb-final/verb-late order into relief, I also take into consideration other word orders, most notably SVX (subject-verb), XVS (archetypal verb-second), and XSV (archetypal non-verb-second).

3.1 Corpus and method

The YCOE corpus consists of 1.5 million words of syntactically annotated Old English texts of different genres, and I queried the entire corpus for the purposes of this study.⁷

First I identified all conjunct clauses in the corpus, i.e. all clauses starting with a coordinating conjunction,⁸ and which contain an overt subject in the form of a common noun (phrase), a proper noun, a pronoun, a determiner (sometimes a single determiner constitutes the subject), a quantifier, or the indefinite pronoun *man* ‘one’, as well as a

⁷ The queries are available at <<http://folk.uio.no/krisbec>>. I started out with relatively simple queries that yielded many unwanted sentences, to ensure that I did not miss relevant data. As I went through parts of the data manually. I refined the queries gradually to minimize noise in the data. Some results were arrived at by means of combined queries, and some manual work was carried out to remove irrelevant data. It is difficult to eliminate every single instance of noise (i.e. irrelevant hits), while at the same ensuring that all the relevant instances are included, but the noise level was judged to be at an acceptable minimum.

⁸ Note that it is not possible to exclude from the data clauses in which *and* or the Tironean nota is a sentence starter rather than a true conjunction, as in the *West-Saxon Gospels*, for example, in which many clauses with an initial conjunction are modelled on Greek *kai* and Latin *et* sentences. Hence they are included here. While it would be possible to make the assumption that conjunctions occurring after a full stop are not true conjunctions, devising queries to eliminate these instances would be far beyond the scope of this paper, and it would also bring up the problematic matter of the function of punctuation in Old English manuscripts and editions.

finite indicative verb.⁹ The total number of such conjunct clauses in YCOE is 25,339.¹⁰

With that as a starting point, the next task is to examine the word order patterns of the conjunct clauses, in particular verb-final and verb-late order.

3.2 Verb-final word order

3.2.1 Conjunct clauses with verb-final order

First we have to find out what the proportion of verb-final clauses is out of all conjunct clauses. In a first query, I searched for all clauses with an initial conjunction, an overt subject, a finite indicative verb in absolute final position, and some element(s) intervening between the subject and the verb, i.e. adverbials (words and phrases), prepositional phrases, complements, objects (nominal and pronominal), participles, or infinitives.¹¹ YCOE returned the number 2,726, which means that 10.8% (2,726/25,339) of all conjunct clauses are verb-final in this sense. Some examples are given in (3) – (8); note that clauses in which one or several elements precede the subject are also included (6) – (8).

(3) and hi ðeah micle fyrd **gegaderedon**

and they nevertheless great army gathered

‘and they nevertheless gathered a great army’

(cochronC,ChronC_[Rositzke]:868.4.616)

⁹ Query 1. Clauses in which the verb is tagged as ambiguous between indicative and subjunctive are included.

¹⁰ Of these instances, 98 have another conjunction than *and* or *ac*, e.g. *oððe* ‘or’.

¹¹ Query 2.

(4) & he sige þa **hæfde**

and he victory then had

‘and he then had victory’

(colsigewZ,+ALet_4_[SigeweardZ]:476.180)

(5) & ic forþam hit nu yldan ne **mæg**

and I therefore it now postpone not may

‘and therefore I cannot postpone it’

(cogregdH,GD_1_[H]:2.21.15.186)

(6) and on þissere nihte ic hine **geseah**

and in this night I him saw

‘and in this night I saw him’

(coeust,LS_8_[Eust]:78.82)

(7) & swylce eac monige oðre ceastre tohrorene **wæron**

and too also many other cities decayed were

‘and many other cities were also in ruins’

(cobede,Bede_1:11.48.14.432)

(8) & him swutulice Drihten his digolnesse **onwrah**

and him clearly God his hiding-place disclosed

‘and God plainly disclosed his hiding place to him’

(cochad,LS_3_[Chad]:76.47)

Recall, however, that Mitchell (1985 II: 965–66) does not regard clauses in which an adverbial or a pronominal object occurs between the subject and the verb as S...V, but rather as variants of SV order. It is, however, not entirely clear exactly what Mitchell means by this. Clauses which contain an (i.e. one) intervening adverb(ial) (element), and which are also possible constructions in Present-day English, e.g. *God then made a man from earth*, are definitely SV in his view. Clauses containing a preverbal adverbial element which would be placed in another position today are also apparently SV, e.g. *They for many years were there*, since Mitchell does not include such constructions under S ...V (1985 II: 967). As concerns clause constructions with a preverbal pronominal object (cf. example 6), he considers those to be SV, but expresses some uncertainty about their status. Furthermore, it is not clear how he regards clauses in which there are several adverbial elements between the subject and the verb, as in (9), or whether he distinguishes between adverbials, such as *færinga* and *eac* (not obligatory) and adverbial complements, such as *on hine* (obligatory).

(9) Ac se deofol færinga eac on hine **gefor**

but the devil suddenly also in him went

‘but the devil suddenly went into him’

(cogregdH,GD_1_[H]:10.73.1.711)

In order to arrive at data material that emulates Mitchell more closely, I made additional queries for clauses in which one adverbial element (10) or one pronominal object (11) intervenes between the subject and the final verb.¹²

(10) and beorht leoht þær **scean**

and bright light there shone

‘and a bright light shone there’

(coaelive,+ALS_[Julian_and_Basilissa]:53.971)

(11) & æfter þære swinglan hie hine **ofsleað**

and after the scourging they him killed

‘and after the scourging they killed him’

(coblick,HomS_8_[BlHom_2]:15.8.176)

A total of 554 such clauses were found, and if these are subtracted from 2,726, we end up with 2,172 conjunct clauses with verb final order, i.e. 8.6%. So far, then, the occurrence of verb-final order in conjunct clauses cannot be said to be frequent. However, as we have seen, verb-late order is usually included in the category ‘verb-

¹² Queries 3 – 6. It is possible to search in a more detailed way for clauses with one pronominal element plus adverbial elements between the subject and the verb, since Mitchell seems to regard those as SV as well, and not as S...V (1985 II: 966, examples), but note that every refinement we make for the queries means that the frequency of verb-final conjunct clauses is *reduced*, i.e. disproves to an even greater extent Mitchell's claims about the postponing function of conjunctions.

final’, and we will address this topic in section 3.3. But first, let us have a look at verb-final order and conjunct clauses from another perspective.

3.2.2 *Verb-final clauses with an initial conjunction*

In the previous section, the starting point was conjunct clauses; in this section it is verb-final clauses. We want to know how many verb-final clauses (non-conjunct and conjunct) there are in YCOE, so we search for all clauses with an overt subject and a finite indicative verb in absolute final position.¹³ The number is 4,644. We already know that of these, 2,726 are conjunct clauses,¹⁴ so in a first calculation we find that 58.7% of all verb-final clauses are conjunct clauses (2,726/4,644). This is the maximum of the raw data. If we eliminate the clauses with an adverb or a pronoun between the subject and the verb (1,045),¹⁵ as Mitchell does, and subtract those from the total number of verb-final clauses, we get 3,599 clauses. We saw above that the number of verb-final conjunct clauses after removing adverb and pronoun clauses is 2,172, so in this second calculation, the proportion of verb-final clauses with an initial conjunction is 60.4% (2,172/3,599).

In other words, this is what Todt observed in 1894 in his small data sample. He identified verb-final clauses, and then he observed that very many of them are conjunct clauses. The implication is not, however, bidirectional; the fact that verb-final clauses are often conjunct clauses does not mean that conjunct clauses are often verb-final. The mixing up of these two perspectives is the distortion that has happened over time.

¹³ Query 7.

¹⁴ And thus 1,918 are non-conjunct clauses, a number we will return to in section 3.4.

¹⁵ Queries 8 – 11 (plus queries 3 – 6).

3.3 *Verb-late word order*

3.3.1 *Conjunct clauses with verb-late order*

As mentioned, most of the works referred to in section 2.1 also take verb-late clauses into consideration when discussing the word order of conjunct clauses, and group them with verb-final clauses. Since there is no query term for ‘verb-late’ in the YCOE, and ‘verb-late’ can mean different things, verb-late clauses have to be elicited by means of several query steps, and I describe these below, as we proceed. The purpose of this paper is to arrive at data set that is as close to Mitchell’s definition as possible, though, as we shall see, this raises some problematic issues with respect to analysis. To remedy this situation, the data counts will be laid out as transparently as possible and presented from different points of view in the interim summary in section 3.4.

The first step was to find conjunct clauses in which the subject precedes some other element(s) than the finite verb, and the finite verb is not in final position. The subject may follow the conjunction directly (word order: conj+S+X+Vfin+X), or there may be another element before the subject (word order: conj+X+S+X+Vfin+X).¹⁶ Examples are given in (12) – (17).

(12) and hi þær **geswuteloden** rihtne geleafan

and they there declared right faith

‘and there they made known the true faith’

(coinspolX, WPol_2.1.1_[Jost]:155.219)

¹⁶ Queries 12 and 13.

- (13) and hi to þam men **cwædon** þe ðær gehæled wæs, Hit is halig
and they to the man said that there healed was it is holy
restday

restendæg

‘and they said to the man who was healed there: It is the holy Sabbath’

(coaelhom,+AHom_2:42.266)

- (14) & he mid þam leohte his gast **ageaf** þam Drihtne þe hine to his
and he with the light his spiritgave the.DAT Lord.DAT that him to his
rice gelaðode

kingdom summoned

‘and with the light he gave his spirit to the Lord, who summoned him to his
kingdom’

(cocathom1,+ACHom_I,_4:215.271.880)

- (15) & þær se halga wer Benedictus hine **gebæd** lange hwile
and there the holy man Benedict him.REFL prayed long while
‘and there the holy man Benedict prayed for a long time’

(cogregdC,GD_2_[C]:5.112.28.1314)

- (16) ac ðone munuc byfiende & brodettendne hi eft **gelæddon**
but the.ACC monk trembling and quivering.ACC they.NOM then led
to þam mynstre
to the minster

‘but they then led the trembling and quivering monk to the minster’

(cogregdC,GD_2_[C]:25.156.18.1867)

- (17) and syþþan hire agen modor forþgefaren wæs of þisan life,
 and since her own mother departed was from this life,
seo fostormodor hi miccle swyþor **lufode** þonne heo ær dyde
 the fostermother her much more loved than she before did
 ‘and since her own mother had departed from this life, the foster mother loved
 her much more than she did before’

(comargaT,LS_16_[MargaretCot.Tib._A.iii]:3.3.21)

YCOE returned a total of 3,770 hits. However, this query gives us some unwanted hits as well. First, it includes clauses in which a verb of saying is in final position before direct speech, which might be argued to be less relevant in this context. In sentences containing indirect speech, e.g. *She said that she was tired*, the complement relation is integrated in the clause syntax, as it presupposes that what is said takes the form of a proposition that can be expressed in a nominal subclause. Sentences containing direct speech, on the other hand, represent a more ‘external’ syntactic combination, as the direct speech can take different forms, from clauses to single words, e.g. *She said: “Ouch!”*. In other words, if the direct speech forms a clause, that is incidental, whereas indirect speech must have clausal form. It is therefore not obvious that the syntax of constructions containing direct speech has the integrated structure that enables syntactic-typological reasoning; it is closer to a text structure containing a sequence of

two main clauses. Mitchell does not seem to include them either (1985II: 967–9). For the time being, then, I exclude the 65 instances I found of this construction.¹⁷

More importantly, however, this query also yields clauses in which an infinitive or participle *follows* the finite verb, and these have to be excluded, as Mitchell specifies that with periphrastic verb phrases, the finite verb must come after the non-finite form in order for a clause to be regarded as S...V... (1985 II: 967). Following Mitchell, therefore, we want only clauses with the non-finite verb preceding the finite verb, as in (18) – (21), and not clauses with the non-finite verb following the finite verb, as in (22) – (24). This means that not even a clause like (24), in which a full nominal object precedes the verb phrase, would be regarded as verb-late. In fact, it is unclear where in Mitchell's scheme such a sentence would fit it, since it can be neither S...V... nor SV.¹⁸ Within the framework of generative syntactic theory, Pintzuk & Haeberli (2008) and Haeberli & Pintzuk (2012) argue that in a language with head-final structure, the finite auxiliary may come to precede the non-finite verb through verb (projection) raising. In other words, a construction may be head-final even if the finite verb is not in final position, so from this point of view it is not justified to exclude such clauses. In

¹⁷ I searched for the verb forms *cwæþ*, *cwæð*, *cwædon*, *cweð*, *tocwæð*, *andwyrde*, *andswarode*, *andswerode*, *geandwyrde*, *secge*, *sæde*, *clypode*, *befran*, *hrymde*. These clauses may be added to the number of verb-*final* clauses, but only those in which the verb is preceded by relevant diagnostic elements, i.e. other elements than single adverbs or pronouns (47 of the 65). I chose not to include them, since they do not contribute much to the final count. Suffice it to know that they exist, and can be retrieved.

¹⁸ A reviewer rightly points out the inconsistency of treating an element selected by a finite auxiliary (the non-finite verb) differently from an element selected by a finite main verb (the object), and sees no reason why an example like (24) should not be counted among verb-late clauses.

addition, processes such as topicalization, scrambling, and extraposition may obscure the basic order of the constituents, especially in main clauses. I will not enter into a discussion here of movement-based analyses, as agreement has yet to be reached concerning the basic structure of Old English main clauses, and Mitchell, though he is often referred to in works taking a generative perspective, is only concerned with surface order. Since the concept of ‘verb-late’ is problematic whatever the framework, the solution here will be to allow the reader to choose his or her own perspective by providing the data in a transparent fashion. It will, however, become apparent that the result is basically the same no matter how the data are counted.

As a result of the above considerations, additional queries were made which identified sentences like (22) – (24), giving a total of 350.¹⁹ So far, then, we have 3,355 (3,770 – 65 – 350) conjunct clauses with verb-late order, or 13.2% of all conjunct clauses (3,355/25,339).

- (18) and we æt þæm ytmestan dæge eall agyldan **sceolan** þæt he us ær on
and we on the last day all repay shall that he us before on
eorþan sealde
earth gave

‘and on the last day, we shall repay everything that he gave to us on earth’

(coblick,HomS_14_[BlHom_4]:51.226.643)

- (19) and we feohtan ne **dorston** ongear ðone ormætan here
and we fight not dared against the immense army

¹⁹ Queries 14 and 15.

‘and we dared not fight against that immense army’

(coaelive,+ALS[Agnes]:343.1954)

- (20) ac he begyrded **wæs** mid wæpnum þæs gastlican camphades
 but he begirded was with weapons the.GEN spiritual.GEN warfare.GEN
 ‘but he was begirded with the weapons of spiritual warfare’

(cobede,Bede_1:7.36.10.291)

- (21) & eac hit gesæd **is**, þæt he gefægnode on his untrumnesse
 and also hit said is that he rejoiced in his illness
 ‘and it is also said that he rejoiced in his illness’

(cogregdC,GDPref_and_3_[C]:17.218.9.2941)

- (22) ond he mid nængum ðingum **mihte** hire gepoht oncerran
 and he with no things could her mind turn
 ‘and there was nothing he could do to change her mind’

(comart3,Mart_5_[Kotzor]:Ju23,A.8.1039)

- (23) & bæp of swetum ferscum wæterum **sceal** beon geworht
 and bath of sweet fresh waters shall be made
 ‘and a bath shall be made of sweet, fresh water’

(colaece,Lch_II_[2]:16.1.4.2309)

(24) And þu nu þurh þære rode treowe ealle þine blisse **hæfest**
 and you now through the.GEN cross.GEN faith all your bliss have
 forspilled

lost

‘and now, through the faith of the cross, you have lost all your bliss’

(conicodC,Nic_[C]:347.329)

In order to arrive at a data set that is as close to Mitchell’s typology as possible, we continue to remove irrelevant instances. As with verb-final clauses, Mitchell would not regard verb-late clauses in which the verb is preceded by an adverb or a pronominal object as verb-late, but rather as SV. Hence, the same procedure for verb-late clauses was carried out as for verb-final clauses, i.e., all the clauses were identified in which one adverb (element) or one pronominal object intervenes between the subject and the verb, as in (25) – (27),²⁰ cf. also (12), (15) and (16) above.

(25) and se Hælend þa **eode** of þære meniu
 and the Lord then went from the crowd
 ‘and the Lord then went from the crowd’

(coaelhom,+AHom_2:51.272)

(26) & Iosep him **sænde** wænas eal swa Farao him behead
 and Joseph them sent wagons all as Pharaoh him commanded

²⁰ Queries 16 – 19. Again, clauses with a verb of saying followed by direct speech were subtracted manually. There were 16 of these.

‘and Joseph sent them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded’

(cogenesiC,Gen_[Ker]:45.21.439)

(27) & be his onwrigenyse we hit **awritað** on engliscre spræce
and through his revelation we it write in English language
‘and through his revelation we write it in the English language’

(coaelhom,+AHom_1:59.39)

These clauses – 1,543 – were then subtracted from the total, and we end up with a total result of 1,812 verb-late conjunct clauses, which is 7.2% of all conjunct clauses. If we add the verb-final clauses to this, the total proportion is 15.8% (8.6% + 7.2%), i.e. 15.8% of all conjunct clauses are verb-final or verb-late. This can hardly be construed as ‘frequently’ or ‘common’. If we decide to disagree with Mitchell and regard clauses in which an adverb or a pronoun intervenes between the subject and the verb as verb-final/verb-late after all, the frequency of conjunct clauses with verb-final/verb-late order rises to 24.0% (2,726 + 3,355/25,339), whereas a count that includes all the previously excluded clauses would give a frequency of 25.7% (see table 1). None of these frequencies are high enough to claim that coordinating conjunctions are syntactically subordinating (see section 2.1).²¹

3.3.2 Verb-late clauses with an initial conjunction

²¹ Provided we accept that subordinate clauses are usually verb-final, an issue that also merits further study, cf. Heggelund (2009).

As we did with verb-final clauses, we can also consider verb-late clauses from another perspective. We want to find out how many verb-late clauses there are in the corpus in total, and how many of these have an initial conjunction. In this section, therefore, the point of departure is verb-late clauses. Again, this is a fundamentally different perspective than considering the proportion of verb-late word order in conjunct clauses.

First I searched for all *non-conjunct* verb-late clauses with the subject in first or second position.²² The total number was 3,763. From these I subtracted clauses in which a verb of saying is in final position before direct speech, as I did with the conjunct clauses. The number of such clauses was 562,²³ hence the total number of non-conjunct verb-late clauses is now 3,201 (3,763 – 562). Furthermore, clauses with the non-finite verb following the finite verb had to be subtracted as well, as these are not verb-late in Mitchell's scheme.²⁴ The total number was 265, and thus the total number of non-conjunct verb-late clauses is now 2,936 (3,201 – 265).

However, as has been mentioned several times already, Mitchell does not regard clauses in which there is an adverb or a pronoun between the subject and the verb as verb-late. Consequently, we subtract those as well²⁵ – 1,632 instances – which leaves us with a total of 1,304 non-conjunct verb-late clauses. From section 3.3.1 we know that there are 1,812 verb-late conjunct clauses. The total number of verb-late clauses is thus 3,444 (1,812 + 1,632), and we see that 52.6% of all verb-late clauses are conjunct clauses (1,812 out of 3,444). In other words, the same kind of 'asymmetry' is at work

²² Queries 20 and 21.

²³ See note 17. Of the 562 clauses, 115 could have been added to the verb-*final* order.

²⁴ Queries 22 and 23.

²⁵ Queries 24 – 27.

with verb-late clauses that we saw with verb-final clauses: Conjunct clauses are not frequently verb-late (7.2%), but verb-late clauses are frequently conjunct clauses (52.6%).

3.4 Interim summary with tables

The data provided in sections 3.2 and 3.3 are summarized in tables 1 and 2. Here I provide a less restrictive (maximum) and a more restrictive (minimum) count. ‘Less restrictive’ means that clauses with an adverb or a pronoun between the subject and the verb are included, as well as verb-late clauses with direct speech following the verb, and clauses in which the auxiliary precedes the non-finite verb. ‘More restrictive’ follows Mitchell in eliminating these types from the counts of verb-final and verb-late. One could also envisage an ‘intermediate’ count leaving out the clauses with adverb or pronoun, and keeping the others, depending on theoretical framework. The point here is to show that whichever way we choose to count, the trend is very clear: conjunct clauses are not frequently verb-final/verb-late, but verb-final/verb-late clauses are frequently conjunct clauses. These two perspectives have been mixed in previous research.

Table 1. *Frequency of verb-final and verb-late word order in conjunct clauses, maximum and minimum count*

	Maximum		Minimum	
	no. of clauses	%	no. of clauses	%
verb-final	2,726	10.8	2,172	8.6
verb-late	3,770	14.9	1,812	7.2
total number of conjunct clauses: 25,339				

Table 2. *Frequency of conjunct clauses in verb-final and verb-late word order patterns*

	Maximum			Minimum		
	no. of clauses	no. of conj. clauses	% of conj. clauses	no. of clauses	no. of conj. clauses	% of conj. clauses
verb-final	4,644	2,726	58.7	3,599	2,172	60.4
verb-late	7,533	3,770	50.0	3,444	1,812	52.6

As previous research has pointed out (Kohonen 1978; Pintzuk 1995; Bech 2001a, 2001b), conjunct clauses are somewhat more likely to be verb-final or verb-late than non-conjunct clauses are, and this is confirmed in table 3. From the data given in previous sections, we know the number of non-conjunct verb-final and verb-late clauses. An additional query was made to identify all non-conjunct clauses in the corpus, and the number is 47,580.²⁶ Table 3 shows the distribution of verb-final and verb-late word order in non-conjunct clauses, and may be compared to table 1.

Table 3. *Frequency of verb-final and verb-late word order in non-conjunct clauses*

	Maximum		Minimum	
	no. of clauses	%	no. of clauses	%
verb-final	1,918	4.0	1,427	3.0
verb-late	3,763	7.9	1,304	2.7
total number of non-conjunct clauses: 47,580				

3.5 *Distributional differences between and-clauses and ac-clauses*

This paper has been concerned with establishing the empirical facts concerning verb-final and verb-late clauses, and not with discussing the reasons for the distribution, which, for reasons of space, will have to be the topic of another paper (but see section 3.6.4 for some suggestions). Here I will briefly consider an issue which has not been

²⁶ Query 28.

investigated so far, namely possible distributional differences between *and*-clauses and *ac*-clauses.

First I took the output file for conjunct clauses and separated out *and*-clauses and *ac*-clauses.²⁷ *And*-clauses are by far the most frequent ones, with 21,236 clauses against 4,005 *ac*-clauses. The next step was to find out whether there is any difference in distribution, and I focus on verb-final clauses here, since they are the least controversial. We want to determine whether *and*-clauses are more frequently verb-final than *ac*-clauses are, or vice versa. Consequently, I took the output files for *and*- and *ac*-clauses, and carried out the same queries for verb-final order as I did in section 3.2.1. The results are shown in table 4; here as well, I provide a less restrictive and a more restrictive count.

Table 4. *Frequency of verb-final word order in and-clauses and ac-clauses*

	Maximum		Minimum	
	no. of clauses	%	no. of clauses	%
<i>and</i> -clauses	2.417	11.4	1.930	9.1
<i>ac</i> -clauses	290	7.2	225	5.6
total number of <i>and</i> -clauses: 21,236				
total number of <i>ac</i> -clauses: 4,005				

As table 4 shows, there is a difference between *and*-clauses and *ac*-clauses, with a lower frequency of verb-final order in *ac*-clauses. A chi-square test gives a p-value of <0.00001, which means that the difference is highly significant. In other words, we can reject the null hypothesis that the distribution is due to chance. However, since the data set is very large, chi-square alone is not sufficient, since anything can become statistically significant if the data set is large enough. We also need to calculate the

²⁷ Queries 29 and 30.

effect size, which shows the strength of the association between the data. In this case, the effect size is trivial at 0.05 (see Cohen 1988). This means that although there is a statistically significant difference in the distribution, the magnitude of the difference is too small to be meaningful. With respect to verb-final order then, the statistical results show that *and*-clauses and *ac*-clauses can be conflated. It may be that there would be different results for other word orders; for example, the fact that Old English allows initial objects, which may be contrastive, might be mirrored in the distribution of *and*-clauses vs. *ac*-clauses in relation to XSV word order. For the purposes of this paper, however, the two conjunct clause types can be conflated.

3.6 Conjunct clauses and other word orders

In order to throw the verb-late and verb-final orders into relief, this section briefly considers other types of word orders in relation to conjunct clauses, more specifically SV, the ‘unmarked’ order; XV, the prototypical verb-second order, and XSV, the prototypical verb-third order. In particular, it will be shown that the single most common word order for conjunct clauses is in fact regular SV order. For these word orders, the queries are not as detailed as for verb-final and verb-late; the aim is rather to get a general impression of the distribution.

3.6.1 SV order

I searched for all conjunct clauses with the order conj + S + Vfin,²⁸ as exemplified in (28).

²⁸ Query 31.

- (28) And þæt leoht **scean** on ðeostrum
 and the light shone in darkness
 ‘And the light shone in the darkness’

(coaelhom,+AHom_1:35.19)

YCOE returned 9,570 hits. This means that 37.8% of all conjunct clauses have the order SV (9,570/25,339). It is this order, and not verb-final/verb-late order, that is the single most common word order for conjunct clauses. Turning it around, we first find that there are 14,078 SV non-conjunct clauses,²⁹ which means that there are 23,648 SV clauses in total (9,570 + 14,078). Of these, 40.5% are conjunct clauses (9,570/23,648). Hence, with this word order there is ‘symmetry’: Conjunct clauses are frequently SV, and SV clauses are frequently conjunct clauses. Recall that with verb-final/verb-late order, it was different: Conjunct clauses are not frequently verb-final/verb-late, but verb-final/verb-late clauses are frequently conjunct clauses.

Note that a clause like (29), which belongs with the SV pattern, is not captured by the simple query for SV, because the word order is conj + S + Vocative + V; i.e., YCOE has tagged this as two elements preceding the verb, and the query I used above specifies that the verb must be the second element. SV clauses with a left-dislocated element + resumptive subject + verb (30) are thus not captured either, and there may be other patterns that more detailed queries would find and include. This means that the frequency of SV order in conjunct clauses in reality is even higher than the figures given above, but the point, that conjunct clauses frequently have SV order, is clearly demonstrated by the data given above.

²⁹ Query 32.

(29) & þu Drihten **eart** ure Scyldend

and you Lord are our protector

‘and you, Lord, are our protector’

(coblick,LS_20_[AssumptMor[BiHom_13]]:141.59.1717)

(30) and þam ðe me his heafod to gebringð, ic **gife** him c punda

and that-one that me his head to brings, I give him 100 pounds.GEN

goldes

gold.GEN

‘and the one that brings me his head, I will give him 100 pounds of gold’

(coapollo,ApT:7.23.113)

3.6.2 XV order

I searched for all conjunct clauses with the word order conj + X + V and an overt subject in some position following the verb. The initial element was defined as any kind of adjective or adverb, a prepositional phrase, a predicative, or a nominal element in accusative, genitive or dative case.³⁰ Examples are provided in (31) – (36).

(31) and þar **restað** haligra manna saula oð domesdæg

and there rest holy.GEN men.GEN souls until doomsday

‘and there the souls of holy men rest until the day of judgement’

(coadrian,Ad:6.2.20)

³⁰ Query 33.

- (32) & þa **geseah** he mycelne dæl þæs leohtes
 and then saw he great.ACC part the.GEN light.GEN
 ‘and then he saw a great part of the light’
 (cogregdC,GD_2_[C]:35.171.31.2105)

- (33) & butan þam Worde **nis** geworht nan þing
 and without the Word not-is made no thing
 ‘and nothing can be made without the Word’
 (coaelhom,+AHom_1:31.16)

- (34) & of þære adle **cymð** ful oft wæter bolla
 and from the disease comes full often water cup [dropsy]
 ‘and that disease often results in dropsy’
 (colaece,Lch_II_[2]:19.1.6.2398)

- (35) & hine **þegeð** þurst
 and him consumes thirst
 ‘and he is consumed by thirst’
 (colacnu,Med_3_[Grattan-Singer]:185.1.845)

- (36) Ond Honorius **wæs** haten se ðe for hine to biscope gecoren wæs
 and Honorius was called he who for him to bishop chosen was
 ‘and he who was chosen to be bishop after him was called Honorius’

(cobede,Bede_2:15.146.13.1405)

YCOE found 1,792 such clauses, which means that 7.1% of all conjunct clauses have this word order (1,792/25,339). The low frequency is not surprising, since this type of clause is often narrative-advancing, i.e. it is often an episode-marker introduced by the adverb *þa* ‘then’ (Enkvist and Wårvik 1987; Pintzuk 1995: 242; Wårvik 2011; Bech 2012). The total number of XV non-conjunct clauses is 10,888,³¹ hence there are 12,680 XV clauses in total (10,888 + 1,792). This means that 14.1% of all XV clauses are conjunct clauses (1,792/12,680). In other words, conjunct clauses are not likely to have this kind of verb-second order, and clauses with this word order are not very likely to be conjunct clauses.

In this count, clauses with the word order XXV, as in (37), would not be captured; such clauses should probably be included in a more detailed search.

- (37) & þa sona **gefeoll** he beforan his fotum
 and then suddenly fell he before his feet
 ‘and then he suddenly fell before his feet’

(cogregdC,GDPref_and_3_[C]:26.229.14.3180)

3.6.3 XSV order

Finally I searched for all conjunct clauses with the word order conj + X + S + V. The initial element was defined as any kind of adjective or adverb, a prepositional phrase, a

³¹ Query 34.

predicative, or a nominal element in accusative, genitive or dative,³² see examples (38) – (41).

(38) & on his stal Brihtwold ærcebiscop **gehalgode** Aldulf to biscope
 and on his stead Brihtwold archbishop consecrated Aldulf to bishop
 ‘and in his stead archbishop Brihtwold consecrated Aldulf bishop’
 (cochronE,ChronE_[Plummer]:727.1.686)

(39) and þa þe hine forseoð he **besencð** on hellegrund
 and those that him renounced he plunged in hell
 ‘and he plunged those that renounced him into hell’
 (coaelhom,+AHom_2:167.332)

(40) and hyne man **toberð**
 and him one carried-off
 ‘and they carried him off’
 (coaelhom,+AHom_3:64.444)

(41) & eft he **het** ofslean ealle þa wisestan witan
 and afterwards he commanded kill.INF all the wisest wisemen
 Romana
 Romans.GEN

³² Query 35.

‘and afterwards he commanded all the wisest of the Roman wise men to be killed’

(coboeth,Bo:16.39.21.718)

YCOE returned 2,027 hits, and thus 8.0% of all conjunct clauses have this word order (2,027/25,339). As with the other patterns, I then turned it around. I searched for all XSV non-conjunct clauses, of which the number is 5,030.³³ The total number of XSV clauses is thus 7,057 (2,027 + 5,030). Consequently, out of all XSV clauses 28.7% are conjunct clauses (2,027/7,057). For this word order, then, there is ‘asymmetry’; conjunct clauses are not likely to have this word order, but clauses with this word order are quite commonly conjunct clauses.

Note that this query as well is too simple to catch all possible word orders within this pattern. So clauses like (42), in which there are two initial elements, an object and an adverbial, or (43), containing two initial adverbials, are not captured here. A more detailed account of XSV word order would probably also want to include these. The query also includes clauses in which the first constituent is a sentence adverbial such as *witodlice* ‘verily’ or *soðlice* ‘truly’, as in (44), and they would have to be excluded in a more detailed overview.

(42) and him eac God fylste
and him also God helped
‘and God helped him too’

(coaelive,+ALS_[Maccabees]:243.4979)

³³ Query 36.

(43) & þa hræðe se Iudeisca man **aras**, þe þis eall geseah

and then forthwith the Jewish man arose, that this all saw

‘and the Jewish man who saw all this immediately arose’

(cogregdC,GDPref_and_3_[C]:7.190.5.2399)

(44) & witodlice ge **habbað** nu unrotnysse

and verily you have now sorrow

‘and verily, you now experience sorrow’

(cowsgosp,Jn_[WSCp]:16.22.7097)

3.6.4 Interim summary with tables

Tables 5 and 6 give a summary of the data presented in sections 3.6.1 – 3.6.3.

Table 5. *Frequency of SV, XV and XSV word order in conjunct clauses*

	number of clauses	%
SV	9,570	37.8
XV	1,792	7.1
XSV	2,027	8.0
total number of conjunct clauses: 25,339		

Table 6. *Frequency of conjunct clauses in the SV, XV, and XSV word order patterns*

	number of clauses	number of conjunct clauses	% of conjunct clauses
SV	23,648	9,570	40.5
XV	12,680	1,792	14.1
XSV	7,057	2,027	28.7

As mentioned and exemplified above, the word orders I have discussed here do not account for all word orders or all constellations within the different word order patterns, since the main focus of this paper was the relation between coordination and verb-final/verb-late word order. A secondary aim was to show that the word orders occur with different frequencies within the conjunct clause type, and the data presented demonstrate this.

Although this paper has been concerned with establishing the empirical facts, a few suggestions concerning some possible reasons for the distribution are in order, if only to indicate a path for further research. I have previously suggested (2001a, 2001b) that the distribution has to do with the intersection between the discourse function of clause types (conjunct vs. non-conjunct) and the discourse function of different word orders in a language that permits word order variation.

As we saw in table 4, most conjunct clauses are *and*-clauses, signalling continuation or addition of some kind, and table 5 shows that the most frequent word order in conjunct clauses is regular SV order. When the word order is SV, the subject is usually topical and given, and the verb is unmarked; hence, the new information is likely to be found in the objects, adverbials, or predicatives. In other words, when an action, or a series of events, or a description is depicted as continuing or additive, the new piece of information is likely to be the patient or beneficiary, or the time and location, or a quality, while the subject and the verb are backgrounded. It therefore makes sense that SV order should be the single most common word order in conjunct clauses. XV order, on the other hand, is rare in conjunct clauses, since this order typically marks episode boundaries by means of initial *pa* ‘then’ (see section 3.6.2), or a new and/or heavy subject, and hence would not naturally combine with coordination.

What, then, of the word orders with ‘asymmetrical’ distribution, i.e. verb-final/verb-late, and XSV order? Conjunct clauses can have verb-final or verb-late order, but, as we have seen, not by any means as frequently as has traditionally been claimed. In verb-final and verb-late clauses, there is stronger focus on the verb; it is dynamic and heavy (Bech 2012: 74–75) and hence prone to be placed in final position in a language which allows variation and is sensitive to information structure. In coordinated clauses, whose function is to signal continuation and addition, and in some cases contrast, it is certainly possible to focus on the verb, but is not the most common focus domain. If we change perspective and look at the distribution within the group of verb-final/verb-late clauses, we see that more than half have an initial conjunction (table 2). In other words, coordination does not correlate with verb-final/verb-late order to any great extent, but verb-final/verb-late order correlates with coordination. I suggest that the reason for this distribution is that in verb-final/verb-late sentences, in which the verb is in focus, the non-verbal elements are less prominent and likely to convey given information, and as such are linked with the previous context. Consequently, coordination frequently occurs within this word order type.

An asymmetrical distribution is also found with XSV order. Conjunct clauses are rarely XSV (table 5), but XSV clauses are relatively frequently conjoined (table 6). Like XV clauses, XSV clauses can be episode markers, but unlike XV clauses, XSV clauses normally have a given subject. The initial X element is often an adverbial element that marks a shift in time or place, or an adverbial of reason, and since the function of conjunct clauses is to signal continuation, addition, and contrast, XSV order is not likely to be used very frequently for this purpose. But if we look at the function of the XSV order itself, it becomes clear that the X position is also a position for elements

with anaphoric reference to the previous context, either adverbials or contrastive and non-contrastive objects; hence many of the XSV clauses are conjoined. It could also be mentioned that of the XSV clauses that start with a conjunction, many have an initial object (see Bech 2001: 121–24), which provides a direct link to the previous clause, either through a cohesive or a contrastive relation. In other words, when a writer wants to continue the story by means of coordination, XSV word order is one of several word order possibilities, but it is not one that is frequently used, because other word orders, notably SV, would normally be better suited to organizing the information associated with coordination. To the extent that XSV order is used, however, it is quite frequently used with coordination, since the initial X element is one that often conveys some kind of anaphoric reference.

The brush strokes with which this section has been painted are broad, and do not quite do justice to what I believe is a fine-grained system in which discourse function and word order interact in producing very precise information patterns. What this discussion shows, however, is that it might be fruitful to consider clause structure in Old English both from the perspective of the function of clause types and from the perspective of word order function. Since Old English had word order variation, it is likely that the word orders were used for different communicative purposes.

4 CONCLUSION

On the basis of extensive data from the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE), this paper has provided evidence that the oft-repeated claim that Old English conjunct clauses are like subordinate clauses in being typically verb-final or verb-late does not hold. However, if the perspective is turned around, and the word

orders themselves are taken as point of departure, it becomes clear that a large proportion of the verb-final and verb-late clauses starts with a conjunction. In other words, conjunct clauses are not typically verb-final/verb-late, but verb-final/verb-late clauses are typically conjunct clauses. These two perspectives have been mixed up in the course of a century of research. Another main aim of the present paper was to trace the research on this topic back in time, to establish how this misconception concerning conjunct clauses could have arisen. It was found that misunderstandings, failure to consider the data material properly, and imprecise referencing have caused this error.

The empirical findings give rise to issues that may be considered in future research. For example, while it is clear that conjunct clauses are not typically verb-final/verb-late, they nevertheless show these word orders somewhat more frequently than non-conjunct clauses do. Furthermore, the ‘asymmetry’ or ‘symmetry’ of the word orders in relation to clause type is interesting: For example, conjunct clauses are rarely verb-final, but verb-final clauses are very frequently conjunct clauses. XV clauses, on the other hand, show symmetry: conjunct clauses are rarely XV, and XV clauses are rarely conjunct clauses. Other word orders show a different distribution again. I suggest that the distribution has to do with the interplay between the function of word order and the function of clause types, but more work is needed to shed light on the underlying mechanisms. Now that the record concerning the empirical data has hopefully been set straight, the groundwork for further investigations into the matter has been laid.

REFERENCES

Andrew, S.O. 1940 [reissued 1966]. *Syntax and style in Old English*. New York:

Russell Russell

- Bacquet, Paul. 1962. *La structure de la phrase verbale à l'époque Alfredienne*.
Publications de la Faculté des lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg.
- Baker, Peter S. 2012. *Introduction to Old English*, 3rd edn. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bech, Kristin. 2012. Word order, information structure, and discourse relations: A study of Old and Middle English verb-final clauses. In Anneli Meurman-Solin, María José López-Couso & Bettelou Los (eds.), *Information structure and syntactic change in the history of English*, 66–86. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bech, Kristin. 2001a. *Word order patterns in Old and Middle English: A syntactic and pragmatic study*. PhD dissertation, University of Bergen.
<<https://bora.uib.no/handle/1956/3850>>
- Bech, Kristin. 2001b. Are Old English conjunct clauses really verb-final? In Laurel J. Brinton (ed.), *Historical Linguistics 1999: Selected papers from the 14th International Conference on Historical Linguistics, Vancouver, 9-13 August 1999*, 49–62. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Campbell, Alistair. 1964. Review of *La structure de la phrase verbale à l'époque Alfrédienne* by Paul Bacquet. *The Review of English Studies* 15(58), 190–3.
- Campbell, Alistair. 1970. Verse influences in Old English prose. In James L. Rosier (ed.), *Philological essays: Studies in Old and Middle English language and literature in honour of Herbert Dean Meritt*, 93–8. The Hague: Mouton.
- Cichosz, Anna. 2010. *The influence of text type on word order of Old Germanic languages. A corpus-based contrastive study of Old English and Old High German*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- Cohen, Jacob. 1988. *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dahlstedt, August. 1901. *Rhythm and word-order in Anglo-Saxon and Semi-Saxon*.

Lund: Malmström.

Enkvist, Nils Erik & Brita Wårvik. 1987. Old English *þa*, temporal chains, and narrative structure. In Anna Giacalone Ramat, Onofrio Carruba & Giuliano Bernini (eds.), *Papers from the 7th International Conference on Historical Linguistics*, 221–37. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Fourquet, Jean. 1938. *L'ordre des éléments de la phrase en germanique ancien*.

Publications de la Faculté des lettres de de l'Université de Strasbourg.

Haeberli, Eric & Susan Pintzuk. 2012. Revisiting verb (projection) raising in Old English. In Diane Johan, John Whitman & Andrew Garrett (eds.), *Grammatical change: origin, nature, outcomes*, 219–38. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heggelund, Øystein Imerslund. 2009. *Word order in Old English and Middle English subordinate clauses*. PhD dissertation, University of Bergen.

< <https://bora.uib.no/handle/1956/4002> >

van Kemenade, Ans. 1987. *Syntactic case and morphological case in the history of English*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Kohonen, Viljo. 1978. *On the development of English word order in religious prose around 1000 and 1200 A.D. A quantitative study of word order in context*. Åbo: Åbo Akademi Foundation.

Kuhn, Hans. 1933. *Zur Wortstellung und -betonung im Altgermanischen*. Halle/Saale: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Mitchell, Bruce. 1964. Syntax and word order in The Peterborough Chronicle 1122–1154. *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 65, 113–44.

- Mitchell, Bruce. 1985. *Old English syntax*, vols. I and II. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mitchell, Bruce & Fred C. Robinson. 2007. *A guide to Old English*, 7th edn. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Pintzuk, Susan. 1995. Variation and change in Old English clause structure. *Language Variation and Change* 7, 229–60.
- Pintzuk, Susan & Eric Haeberli. 2008. Structural variation in Old English root clauses. *Language Variation and Change* 20, 367–407.
- Taylor, Ann, Anthony Warner, Susan Pintzuk & Frank Beths. 2003. *The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE). Department of Linguistics, University of York. Oxford Text Archive, first edition.
<<http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/YcoeHome1.htm>>
- Todt, August. 1894. Die wortstellung im Beowulf. *Anglia* 16 (N.F. 4), 226–60.
- Traugott, Elizabeth Closs. 1992. Syntax. In R.M. Hogg (ed.), *The Cambridge history of the English language*, vol. I, 168–289. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wårvik, Brita. 2011. Connective or ‘disconnective’ discourse marker? Old English *þa*, multifunctionality and narrative structuring. In Anneli Meurman-Solin & Ursula Lenker (eds.), *Connectives in synchrony and Diachrony in European languages*. VARIENG open access e-series.
<<http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/journal/volumes/08/warvik/>>