Bilingualism and syntactic change in medieval England

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Abstract. Recessive verb-second and OV phenomena in late Middle English have been noted by previous researchers without being situated in the bilingual context in which English was written at this time (Turville-Petre 1996). It is proposed here that these features of LME, observed by earlier investigators (Haeberli 2002, Foster & van der Wurff 1997), may have been calqued on Anglo-Norman syntax. Two Anglo-Norman texts from the earlier 13th and mid-14th centuries respectively are compared, showing that verb-second with pronoun subjects remains a stable property. Its existence in written form in LME must be set within a background of 'code diglossia' (Kristol 2000) to be properly evaluated. A trend towards discoursally thematic objects in OV, noted for LME, was seen in the mid-14th century Anglo-Norman text. Further aspects of this text indicate that Anglo-Norman syntax was undergoing developmental changes involving demonstratives and atonic subject pronouns paralleling continental French, and should not be considered as fossilised. These findings provide support for a view of bilingualism in late medieval England in which properties of the written code - predominantly Anglo-Norman - remained active in bilingually competent speakers, and able to be transferred to the hitherto predominantly spoken code, English.

1. Introduction

The historical study of syntax is an essential component in a programme of research into the transmission of language that seeks an empirical basis for its conclusions regarding linguistic units larger than word-forms. For this purpose, researchers usually prefer where possible to make use of texts in prose, as verse often brings in extra potential factors such as archaic usage or idiosyncratic manipulation of structure. Current variationist research in syntax (cf. Pintzuk, Tsoulas & Warner 2000) makes very substantial use of surface changes in the realisation of given variables over successive time periods as an empirical basis for theoretical claims. The study of language change (cf. Bailey 1973) has long made use of modelling of data over extended time periods using the concept of an S-curve to model change. Kroch (1989) proposed to account for change over time by a constant rate of change effect which relies on observation of data over a staged sequence of time periods.

In some contexts, the opportunity for using prose over an extensive succession of time periods for such purposes may be compromised: languages such as Old Norse, for example, are instantiated in the earlier part of their history only by verse texts. In this respect, the history of English over a period lasting upwards of a thousand years is relatively well-served among European languages. However, a well-known problem concerns the fact that writing in English, and prose in particular, underwent a period of decline during the later 13th and early 14th centuries, as compared with literary and other uses of Anglo-Norman French. There is a sizable gap in the prose record which causes problems for diachronic syntactic study.

When English prose works reappear in substantial quantities, the problem takes a new form. Much pre-15th century Middle English prose consists of translations from French sources, including Anglo-Norman. The issue that arises is to what extent these translations stand as independent witnesses to developments in English, and to what extent they are influenced by features of the original to a degree where the English text cannot be trusted as a reliable indicator of the current state of the language. The difficulty is particularly troublesome with respect to lexical and syntactic developments, where close reliance on the forms of an original text is generally acknowledged to influence a translation away from more idiomatic forms. Duncan & Connolly (2003:xl-xli) discuss problems this may create for the syntactic evaluation of a Middle English text, referring specifically to negation, tense forms and pronoun usage in a later 14th century translation of the Anglo-Norman *Miroir* of Robert de Gretham.

Underlying this, there is the near-eclipse into which English fell as a written language during the post-Conquest era. As of 1330, English was still only of 'marginal' importance in literary production, according to Turville-Petre (1996), and was not to be used as a language of administrative record for some decades yet. In both areas French was dominant in the early 14th century, and its prestigious social status is attested by frequently cited contemporaneous comments by Higden and Robert of Gloucester. Whether or not these remarks were somewhat overstated, the status of French as a prestige language at this time is hard to gainsay. In any case, we are confronted with a gap in the prose record of English lasting upwards of 100 years.

The consequences of this gap for historical syntax research are considerable. A certain number of syntactic traits are often said to have been lost 'around 1400', such as verb-second, impersonal null subjects, and so on, which were flourishing in early Middle English, but which were

found to be moribund or extinct in LME. But the prose evidence of how and when they went into decline is generally lacking.

When substantial amounts of prose works again become available in the later 14th century, we find a number of syntactic features that are sometimes thought to have been archaic survivors from early Middle/Old English. Relics of Object -Verb order were discussed by e.g. Foster & van der Wurff (1997), Ingham (2002). Foster & van der Wurff (1997) found that in three LME prose works a total of 84% of objects in OV constructions denoted entities evoked in, or inferable from, the context. Two of these works (*Ayenbite* and *Melibee*) were translations from French. The authors do not comment on their status as translations and whether this may have influenced the results. They conclude that in English OV was retained with a particular discourse function. Again, however, a continuous sequence of prose evidence for the process of change, showing that earlier Middle English did not have this function, is not examined, presumably because it is not feasible to do so.

In fact, researchers in the syntax of English have sometimes noted striking discontinuities in syntactic development, as with the case of verb second (V2) order. Haeberli (2002) investigated the disappearance in later ME texts of the very sharp OE/EME distinction between non-pronominal (full NP) subjects, which inverted round finite verb after an initial non-subject constituent, and pronominal subjects, which usually did not. He found that in many LME texts a substantial rate of inversion took place with pronominal subjects (Haeberli 2002:260-2). He considered two factors that may have been responsible for this (translation from Dutch in one text, Reynard the Fox, and northern dialect in another), but little attention was given to the possibility of French influence, even though some of the texts analysed (e.g. Chaucer, The tale of Melibee, and the late Middle English Vices & Virtues) were translations from French.[1] Their authors were presumably fairly typical of educated people in later medieval Britain, so the possibility is that where we see V2 with pronominal subjects in LME, we are seeing influence from French.[2] Kristol (2000:39) adopts the view that later medieval England exhibited

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[1] One could scarcely wish for a better illustration than the case of this particular researcher, that the 'lamentable monolingualism' observed by Trotter (2003) in Middle English studies is surely a property of the field rather than of the researcher contributing to it.

[2] Vestigial uses of V2 in 15th century private correspondence noted by Ingham (2002:318) even showed a relative preference for inversion after a pronoun rather than a full NP subject. The correspondents were in the main well-educated individuals who would have been competent in written French and English.

'code diglossia', in that French – in particular, the variety referred to as Anglo-Norman) - was principally a written code and English principally an oral code. One can go on from this to propose that producers of written English in the 14th century were, one might say, code-crossing, and that at least some of the conventional structures of the written code crossed over with them.

It seems worth enquiring, therefore, whether later Middle English syntactic structures such as verb-second and OV should be seen as simply vestiges of earlier English gently declining into obsolescence, or rather as structures calqued on the other language possessed by most educated speakers, French. We know that in some contexts English usage unquestionably imitated French, in view of the way epistolary conventions in late Middle English were clearly calqued on French. But how general was the phenomenon, in terms of syntactic patterns in a range of styles, rather than the narrowly defined letter-writing context?

In this preliminary study we seek to investigate what must be a logically prior issue, the syntactic characteristics of Anglo-Norman in the period immediately preceding the revival of English as a medium of instruction, administration and literary expression in the later 14th century. Without knowing what these where, it is pointless to speculate on what influence Anglo-Norman might have had. Regrettably, not enough has been published on the syntax of Anglo-Norman to be able to say when English was imitating a French model and when it was taking an independent tack. There has, especially from Pope (1934) onwards, been a fair amount of linguistic analysis of Anglo-Norman phonology and morphology, but syntactic studies have been very rare (Trotter 2003). Wilshire (1993) voiced a 'plea for syntax' in Anglo-Norman research but his call for more syntactic studies of Anglo-Norman has yet, it seems, to receive the response it deserved.[3]

At the same time, we were concerned to establish to what extent Anglo-Norman syntax in its later development displayed evidence of what earlier commentators have sometimes seen as 'disintegration' in the domains of phonological and morphological systems. We need to know how far later Anglo-Norman syntax actually had stable characteristics that were capable of having had a systemic effect on the English usage of bilingual speakers and writers, rather than simply providing a palate of lexical expressions, as was the case with epistolary conventions. As noted,

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[3] Within the confines of a short article Wilshire managed to provide a suggestive indication that later Anglo-Norman may not have been as archaic as has sometimes been thought; he found the syntactic constructions of the early 14th century *Fouke le Fitz Waryn* to be possible in Modern French 90% of the time.

there appears to be very little published work available on the syntax of Anglo-Norman, and none at all that takes into consideration how it developed longitudinally during the roughly 300-year period in which French was a living language in Britain.

To address these issues, we look at a range of syntactic phenomena which we know were undergoing change during the medieval period in continental French, and consider to what extent they persisted or changed during the period of Anglo-Norman sociolinguistic dominance.

2. Variables

Marchello-Nizia (1979, 1995), Buridant (1987), Vance (1997), and Dufresne & Dupuis (1994), among others, have identified a number of dimensions along which French syntax evolved from Old to Middle French. First, the order of principal clause constituents showed a trend towards SVX, in both main and subordinate clauses, in preference to XVS patterns in OFr main and (S)XV in OFr. subordinate clauses. Main clause XSV did not become common until the end of the 14th century. Before then V2 was regularly observed. The extent of main clause OV(S) order in particular declines in Middle French, according to Marchello-Nizia (1995:102-103), becoming restricted to thematising uses of an object, as in her example: *Semblable louenge povons dire de nostre bon roi* (Christine de Pizan, *Le livres des faits et bonnes moeurs de Charles V*, I. p. 68). Here, the preposed object NP *semblable louenge* is thematised since it maintains reference to an already evoked concept.

We look next at OV order. According to Buridant (1987), OV order in subordinate clauses was common in the 13th century but by the 15th century was giving way to VO, except where the clause was introduced by a subject relative pronoun, or lacks an overt subject, as in conjoined clauses. He studied two versions of the *Grandes Chroniques des Rois de France*, translated from a Latin text, one in Old French, dating from the first half of the 13th century, and the other in Middle French in a late 15th century ms. In the earlier ms., OV order was not uncommon, especially in subordinate clauses, e.g.

> (1) Ja ne veuille oire que je France revoie   X,106
>   (Buridant 1987:39)
>   'Never may I wish to hear that I might see France again'

(2) …comment il çaus de Thoreigne et les Poitevins donta. Phil VIII, 1

(Buridant 1987:34)

'… how he overcame those of Touraine and the Poitevins'

In the Middle French version the instances of OV order had disappeared almost entirely, except for subject relative clauses, e.g.:

(3) …qui son lignage forlignoit
       who shamed his lineage

(Source not cited: Buridant 1987:45, fn 36)

Other than in relative clauses, the 15th century Middle French version of systematically changes OV orders to VO, and in general subject pronouns and verbs in subordinate clauses are no longer separable, as they as were in the Old French examples (1) – (2).

Dufresne & Dupuis (1994) investigated a change affecting the personal pronoun system in subject function. They found that from about 1350 onwards co-ordination and modification of subject personal pronouns, as in *jo* et *vus, il seuls* respectively, soon fell into disuse, though separation of a subject pronoun from the verb, as in *que tu sainz es* continued to be found quite commonly till the late 15th century.

A further change in Middle French concerned the demonstrative system, which was gradually reorganised, changing from a system in which pronouns and determiners were not formally distinguished, to one in which they were. This process took place, according to Marchello-Nizia (1995), thanks to the expanding use of *ce* and *ces*, which neutralised the semantic opposition of two semantically defined paradigms *cil* (distal, cf. Latin *ecce ille*) and *cist* (proximal, cf. Latin *ecce iste*), which had hitherto occupied the demonstrative domain. Here, the Modern French system draws a grammatical distinction that Old French did not: in Old French *cil* ('that', masc. sing.), for example, was used both in pronominal and noun premodifying functions. Conversely, Old French drew a semantic distinction that Modern French does not: it possessed two series of forms distinguished semantically by degree of proximity to the speaker in the context of use (either or in the physical context discoursally), Corresponding to *cil* OF had *cist* ('this', masc. sing). In addition OF had separate case forms for the masculine subject case ('cas sujet') and non-subject case ('cas régime').

Finally, a change took place to the absolute genitive construction, of the type *li cors Dieu*, which in OFr was productive if the possessor was a

specified individual (and typically where this individual was referred to by name or rank). By the early 14th century period (Marchello-Nizia 1979), it had fallen into almost complete disuse, replaced by postmodification of the entity possessed, using à or de, as in Modern French.

3. Sources

Much published Anglo-Norman material, such as the texts published by the Anglo-Norman Text Society, is in verse, no doubt appropriately reflecting the nature of the literary production of the period. It has only been very recently that certain prose sources have become available via an electronic corpus made available by the Anglo-Norman On-line Hub (www.anglo-norman.net).[4]

   In this paper we sought to compare certain syntactic features of earlier and later AN prose, and for this purpose it was preferred to have texts of roughly comparable character. Earlier and later periods of Anglo-Norman literature were distinguished by Pope (1934:482), who put the demarcation roughly around 1230. To represent the earlier period we chose a text available in a manuscript that probably dates from not later than about the mid-13th century, the *Sermons on Joshua* (Hunt 1998), which we estimated comprises about 42,600 words. It consists of five sermons of unequal length, developing themes arising from Origen's sermons on the biblical book of Joshua. To represent the later period, we chose a text which is dated to 1354, the *Livre de Seyntz Medicines* of Henry of Lancaster (Arnould 1940). This is a confessional work which expatiates on the author's sinful state and constructs elaborate comparisons in terms of physical sickness, which no doubt was a topical approach to the subject at the time of mass mortality in the Black Death that has begun a few years earlier. We analysed part 1 only, pp. 1-130 of the published text, comprising an estimated 42,000 words. Although the two texts differ somewhat in intended audience and rhetorical style, there is considerable overlap in the content, which might be described as the denunciation of sin and the promotion of Christian virtues. We therefore considered that comparisons in syntactic means of expression would be instructive, and not intractably bound up with matters of register and style, as they might well be, for example, if one compared a sermon and a charter.

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[4] We particularly acknowledge the valuable opportunity to make an online search of the text of LSM for relative and demonstrative forms, supplementing our examination of the printed edition.

The general issue addressed in this piece of research was whether, between the earlier and the later Anglo-Norman text, syntactic change was underway with respect to any or all of the variables outlined above. The *Sermons on Joshua* date from well within the heyday of the Old French period, and cannot be expected to exhibit the later changes that befell the language. The LSM however, stands on the cusp of the Old and Middle French periods, so it poses an interesting question as to whether its syntax was archaic by comparison with continental usage, or whether it exhibited any changes that were underway in continental French. Conventional approaches to the study of language variation and change take the view that changes that eventually lead to the disappearance of a construction normally undergo an extensive period of decreasingly frequent use prior to their elimination. Change typically does not take place from one generation to the next. Hence in LSM, changes that eventually led to the elimination of a construction from French may not yet have gone to completion, but we may well see reduced usage, as compared with SJ.

4. Data analyses

4.1 Analysis 1: Verb-second

Main clauses with an overt subject and beginning with a non-subject constituent were analysed in terms of whether the tensed verb stood second. Clauses introduced by *et* were excluded, since on occasion Lancaster was beginning to adopt the Middle French tendency to invert after *et* (Vance 1997, Prévost 2001), e.g.

> (4a) Et est ceo triacle fait et tempré de le plus fort venyme…
>
> LSM 56,7
>
>   'and this treacle is made and tempered with the strongest poison'
> (4b) Et croisent ces trois verges de trois arbres hors, qe croisent haut…
>
> LSM 113,9
>
>   'and these three branches grow out of three trees, which grow high'

We did not exclude clauses introduced by *mais* or *car*, since these are not reported to have triggered V2 in Old or Middle French declaratives. In general, the approach taken was to be fairly restrictive regarding the

criteria adopted, at the cost of reducing the number of data-points. Nevertheless we were able to collect over 200 contexts in SJ and the best part of 200 in LSM. Data were coded as 'V2' if the tensed verb formed the second major constituent, and V>2 otherwise. On this basis the results were as shown in table 1:

Table 1: use of V2 and V>2 in main clauses introduced by a non-subject phrasal constituent, Sermons on Joshua

	V2	V>2	total
SJ			
Sermon I	82 (91.1%)	8 (8.9%)	90
Sermon II	11	3	14
Sermon III	35	5	40
Sermon IV	24	2	26
Sermon V	43	5	48
TOTAL II-V	113 (88.3%)	15 (11.2%)	128
OVERALL TOTAL	195 (89.5%)	23 (10.5%)	218
LSM			
TOTAL	146 (82.5%)	31 (17.5%)	177

We see that the *Sermons on Joshua* observed Verb-second in main clauses about 90% of the time overall. This seems generally in line with other Old French texts, in which observance of verb second was not usually as much as 100% (Roberts 1993). The items with which V>2 occurred more than once – out of the 23 observed instances – were *ensement, dunc aprimes*, and phrases introduced by *selunc*. However other cases showed regular inversion after *ensement* and phrases introduced by *selunc*, so we are not dealing with lexical exceptions not triggering V 2 in OFr, as with *certes* and *neporquan* (Foulet 1930).

In LSM the rate of V2 remains high, though slightly lower than in SJ. It is noticeable that much of the time the exceptions occurred in clauses where the syntax is disrupted by a vocative expression, e.g.:

(5) Ore, tresdouz Sires Jesus Crist, j'ai cy moustre les trois choses…
<div align="right">LSM 94,28</div>

    Now very sweet Lord J-C I have here shown the three things
    'Now sweet Lord Jesus Christ, I have shown here the three things'

(6) Ausi, sir, par ma bouche m'est retournee ceo malveis pecche
<div align="right">LSM 54,1</div>

    also sir by my mouth me is returned this wicked sin
    'Sir, this wicked sin has also come back to me via my mouth'

Indeed, of the 31 V>2 cases, 11 were introduced by *or(e)*, an adverb which normally triggered V2 in Old French prose (Price 1973). Where *or(e)* did trigger V2 in LSM (13 cases), an intervening interjection was found only once. This seems fairly strong evidence that vocative interpolations such as those in (5) – (6) were at least partly responsible for V>2. In fact one such case was found in SJ:

(7) Ore, seigneurs, la gleite des   pecchiez ki…. ,   est destempree
<div align="right">SJ I,17</div>

    now lords   the filth of the sins   which… is mixed
    'Now my lords the filth of the sins which … is mixed'

However, it must be acknowledged that such disruption of clausal syntax is not a necessary condition of V>2 in LSM, e.g.:

(8) Tout dis jeo mette orgoil devant   LSM 71,10
    always   I   put   pride before
    'I always put (my) pride first'

(9) Ore de peresce ai jeo a moustrer…   LSM 79,4
    Now of laziness have I to show
    'Now I have to show about laziness…'

(10) Ore   jeo appelle touz freres   LSM 16,30
    Now I   call   all brothers
    'Now I call (them) all brothers'

These V>2 cases represent what was to become the dominant tendency in later French. It was noted that V>2 is again found with *solonc*, and with *primerement*, corresponding to *aprimes* in SJ.

(11) Solonc   la grace   qe   vous m'avetz   doné, jeo vous
                                                               LSM 23,28

    according-to the grace that you to-me have given I   to-you

    ai descovert…

    have revealed

    'according to the grace that you gave me, I have revealed to

    you…'

(12) Primerement jeo trove…   LSM 46,11

    first   I   find

    'first I find…'

Overall, we tentatively conclude that the slightly greater rate of V>2 cases found in LSM is influenced by the propensity of Lancaster, to a greater extent than with the author of SJ, to introduce parenthetical invocations after the first constituent of the clause. Otherwise, it would seem that the very strong OFr tendency to place the verb in second position had undergone little or no decline between the two Anglo-Norman texts. To the extent that there is a slight increase in LSM, Lancaster's slightly greater tendency than SJ to use V>2 is approximately in line with continental French developments. In samples of two texts dated around 1400, (Froissart, *Chroniques*, and *Les Quinze Joyes de Mariage*), Roberts (1993:148) noted between 12-15% use of V>2.

4.2 Null subjects

Omitted subject pronouns in Old French have long been analysed syntactically as in parallel distribution to postposed pronoun subjects. Both phenomena are observed when an initial non-subject constituent produces a verb-second (V2) context, so that the subject cannot appear preverbally (Thurneysen 1892, Foulet 1930). According to the formal syntactic account offered by Adams (1987), the subject position can be left null only where the verb precedes and governs that position, which is the case in a V2 construction, where the subject position stands third. In later French, the V2 construction was lost and null subjects eventually became impossible.

By the 14th century subject pronoun omission in continental French was becoming much rarer than it had been in 13th century Old French (Ayres-Bennett 1996), although it was certainly still found. If AN showed a similar development, we can expect the same trend to appear in our comparison of SJ and LSM. We saw in Table 1 that in those texts large numbers of subjects appeared postverbally. In LSM, though not in SJ, the

majority of these were personal pronouns. We now wish to establish how common null subjects remained in later AN, as represented by LSM, by comparison with overt pronoun subjects. In table 2 their frequency is compared with frequencies of subject omission where the omitted but understood subject is referential, i.e. is not an impersonal subject which if overt, would be realised as *il* (as in *il semble, il covient* etc.). Cases of impersonal *il* have likewise been subtracted from the 'postverbal overt pronoun subject' column, so as to make the data comparable[5].

Table 2: comparison of null and overt pronoun subjects (omitting impersonal constructions)

	Postverbal overt pronoun subjects		null subjects		TOTAL
	N	%	N	%	N
SJ Sermon I	10	*19.2*	42	*80.8*	52
Sermons II-V	34	*44.7*	42	*55.3*	76
SJ TOTAL	44	*34.4*	84	*65.6*	128
LSM	86	*61.0*	55	*39.0*	141

These figures appear to show a sharp decline in frequency in the omission of pronoun subjects from about 65% overall in SJ to under 40% in LSM, a finding that is broadly in line with expectations on the basis of contemporaneous continental developments in later Old French. Even in LSM, null subjects remain quite common, however, in V2 contexts.

It must be acknowledged that in LSM the great majority of subject pronouns attested were first person singular (*jeo*), which is clearly related to the fact that the work is of a confessional nature. In SJ, by contrast, where the discourse ranges over a much greater variety of rhetorical functions, including Biblical exegesis, the majority of subject pronouns are third person. Whether the rate of omission of subject pronouns in V2 contexts is in any way affected by this difference cannot at present be affirmed.

Vance (1989), Hirschbühler (1990), and Roberts (1993) have argued that in Middle French, when null subjects were no longer licensed under government by a preceding verb, but by number and person agreement with the verb, the choice of number and person became relevant to the omissibility of the subject pronoun. Specifically, 2nd person plural subjects

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[5] As with the analysis of overt subjects in V2 contexts, we have not included contexts in which the clause is introduced by *et*.

were much more likely to be omitted than would be expected on the basis of simple frequency. We therefore compared null and overt subjects in SJ and LSM terms of person and number inflections to see if there were any early signs of this development. The results are shown in tables 3 and 4. Note that, because of relatively small numbers for each cell, SJ 1 and the other four sermons have not been distinguished for this purpose.

Table 3: null vs. overt subjects by person and number inflection, SJ 1-5

	NULL	OVERT	TOTAL
1s	10	3	13
1p	24	12	36
2s	0	1	1
2p	9	4	13
3s	33	24	57
3p	8	0	8
indeterminate number	0	0	0
TOTAL	84	44	128

Table 4: null vs. overt subjects by person and number inflection, LSM

	NULL	OVERT	TOTAL
1s	25	62	87
1p	4	3	7
2s	0	0	0
2p	0	0	0
3s	16	19	35
3p	9	2	11
indeterminate number	1	0	1
TOTAL	55	86	141

The LSM data offered no second person contexts, so the relevance of 2nd plural inflection could not be further pursued. Only the 1st and 3rd persons singular offered any substantial number of data points, and these persons are not criterial for the Middle French null subject developments.

On the basis of the two cells where reasonable frequencies are in evidence, these figures indicate, first, that null subjects greatly declined in

later Anglo-Norman. Secondly, agreement licensing of a null subject seems unlikely to have been a factor in the late AN represented by LSM, since null subjects remained common in the cells where Middle French was later to prohibit them. In addition, we have already mentioned that the 'free inversion' property of Middle French (Vance 1997), which was a result of licensing by agreement rather than under government, is not yet clearly in evidence in LSM. Overall, LSM is more likely to have been simply reflecting a general trend in later Old French to supply a subject pronoun more frequently, regardless of person and number.

However, we recognise that further analysis of other later AN texts offering highly frequent contexts for 2rd person plural subject pronouns as well as others is necessary before a more definitive conclusion can be reached.

Before leaving the topic of null subjects, it may be worth noting that, as shown in table 3, the rate of their use in SJ sermon 1 is much higher than average for the five sermons. These findings would be consistent with different authorship or date for composition for sermon 1, though whether there is any other evidence for its different textual status (other than the much greater length of the sermon) is not known to us. No doubt further stylistic investigation might assist in elucidating this issue.

4.3 Analysis 3: OV order in subordinate clauses

We wished to establish to what extent the two AN texts displayed the progression found in continental French regarding OV discussed above. We first directed our attention to relative clauses where OV order survived quite strongly into Middle French. We counted relative clauses introduced by a subject relative pronoun, which in OFr could be realised as *qi* or *qe*. Because object NPs which are postmodified or conjoined are 'heavy' in processing terms (e.g. Hawkins 1994), and might therefore be expected to influence linear order towards VO rather than OV, they were excluded. This criterion, though perhaps somewhat rough-and-ready, provided an operationalisable way of approaching our objective, which was to identify object NPs that had an equal chance of appearing either to the left or to the right of the tensed verb. On this basis, the results were as shown in table 5. There is a perceptible difference in the incidence of OV in Sermon 1, which we have distinguished from the others as shown:

Table 5: simple relative clauses introduced by a subject pronoun

	VO	OV	TOTAL
Sermon 1	16 (42.1%)	22 (57.9%)	38
Sermon 2	5	3	8
Sermon 3	5	2	7
Sermon 4	5	3	8
Sermon 5	8	7	15
total Sermons 2-5	23 (60.5%)	15 (39.5%)	38
OVERALL TOTAL SJ	39 (51.3%)	37 (48.7%)	76
TOTAL LSM	37 (62.7%)	22 (37.3%)	59

It is interesting to consider the development of OV not just in syntactic terms but also with respect to the semantic/discoursal factors involved in the placement of O before V.

In SJ there seem to have been no preferential tendencies: a preverbal object could easily be indefinite, as in:

(13) … e ki des busines entunerent   SJ 4,20
      'and who sound trumpets'
(14) … ki felons dechace   SJ 5,31
      'who pursues criminals'

Conversely an object in a VO construction could easily be definite, e.g:

(15) … ki turmente les felons   SJ 1,7
      '… who torture criminels'
(16) … ki depece le bas eschalun   SJ 5,34
      '… who destroys the bottom step'

The choice of VO or OV does not seem to have been clearly motivated by discourse factors, in terms of whether the referent had already been evoked in the prior discourse and thus thematised. In LSM, by contrast, a clear trend was taking place towards restricting OV to objects that enjoyed a thematic status, marked either by the definite article or by an anaphoric demonstrative.

Table 6: Semantic/discoursal factors with OV order

	SJ	LSM
Type of Object NP		
Indefinite	15	1
Definite	9	6
Demonstrative	4	7
Quantified	2	7
Other	7	1
Total	37	22

The tendency of O in OV in this text to become restricted, especially to thematic O (demonstrative and definite objects), to the exclusion of non-thematic O (especially indefinite objects) is clear, though the available data need to be greatly extended before we can say whether this was typical of later AN.

We turn next to OV order in subordinate clauses with overt subjects. Here, the first sermon in particular showed not infrequent use of SOV order, e.g.:

(17) … pur ki il tantes de merveilles fist   SJ 1,13
        'for whom he made so many miracles'
(18) … u si il par aventure la parole unt   SJ 1,27
        'or if they by chance have speech

In LSM however, such structures were almost never encountered. We find instead structures where even a thematised object is postverbal, e.g.:

(19) … a quoi j'ai trop sovent abandonné cel male bouche SJ 54,7
        '…to which I have to often given up this wicked mouth'

Trotter (2003) and Rothwell (2000) have argued against the concept of Anglo-Norman as an 'isolated' variety. It would appear that when we examine syntactic aspects such as the loss of SOV subordinate clauses the case can be made that later Anglo-Norman did not stagnate in moribund isolation, but began to undergo the processes of linguistic change that were in progress on the European mainland.

4.4 Analysis 4: Demonstrative forms

We move now to developments within the system of demonstrative expressions, in which as mentioned above a distinction emerged during the course of Middle French between pronoun forms (e.g. *celui, ceux*) and determiner forms (e.g. *ce, ces*). In SJ, the *cil* series was very well exemplified, the *cist* series less so. However this relative imbalance in the frequency of use seems to have been generally typical of Old French (Marchello-Nizia 1995). The attested forms were distributed as shown in Table 7:

Table 7: demonstrative pronoun and determiner forms, *cil* and *cist* series ('CS' = subject case, 'CR' = object case)

Pronoun Sing.			Determiner Sing.		
Masc. CS	Cil	-	Masc. CS	cil, cel	cist, cest
Masc. CR	Cel(u)i	cestui	Masc. CR	cel	cest
Fem. CS & CR	cele	ceste	Fem. CS & CR	cele	ceste
Plur.			Plur.		
Masc. CS	Cil, ceals, cels	ces	Masc. CS	ceals	ces
Masc. CR	ceals, (i-)cels	ces	Masc. CR	-	ces
Fem. CS & CR	Celes	cestes	Fem. CS & CR	(i-)celes	-

These strongly resemble the patterns of continental Old French (e.g. Foulet 1930:168, Pope 1934:325, Meyer-Lübke 1895:132-4), in which there are already certain early signs of the eventual separation of pronouns and determiners. *Celui* and *cel* are differentiated by function in the masculine singular CR, and *cist* is restricted to determiner function, corresponding to the observations made for OFr by Foulet (1973).

SJ upholds the point that in AN the CS *cil* forms, singular and plural, were early on replaced by CR cel, cels. *Ce(o)* is not used as a determiner form. *Celui* is already emerging as a CR pronoun form apparently driving out *cel*. In the feminine forms *cestes* is not found as a determiner, where *ces* is used instead.

When we turn to LSM, the *cel/cest* contrast is still very much in evidence, although here, as elsewhere in the grammar, the CS/CR distinction has not surprisingly all but disappeared.

Table 8: demonstrative pronoun and determiner forms, *cil* and *cist* series, *Livre de seyntz medicines* ('CS' = subject case, 'CR' = object case)

Pronoun			Determiner		
Sing.			Sing.		
Masc.	Cel(u)i	-	Masc.	cel, celui, ceo	cest
Fem.	cele	ceste	Fem.	cele	ceste
Plur.			Plur.		
Masc.	ceaux	ces	Masc.	ceaux	ces
Fem.	-	ces	Fem.	celles	cestes

Comparing table 7 with table 8, we note that the two series in determiner contexts have remained as in SJ except that the masc sing CS forms *cil* and *cist* are no longer extant. In pronoun contexts there is again considerable similarity, though once again the CS form *cil* (masc. sing. and plural) has dropped out[6]. But the pronominal context has suffered some erosion of forms. *Cestui* (masc. sing.) is not found, nor are the feminine forms *celles* and *cestes*. There is a newcomer in the paradigm, the form *ceo*: in addition to its use, as in earlier OFr, as a neuter pronoun, it was now being employed as a masculine determiner, though not as a masculine pronoun, where *celui* continued unchallenged. The use of masculine *ce(o)* only as a determiner was a significant development, as has long been noted by various researchers. By being specified as a masculine singular determiner form, *ce(o)* introduced into the demonstrative paradigms an element that embodied a pronoun vs. determiner opposition which the system had hitherto not observed.

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[6] The complete absence of *cil* in the text studied (LSM part 1) might seem curious in that, according to Marchello-Nizia (1995:160), *cil* remained common in subject function in continental OFr, until about 1450. It should be said that two forms of *cil* turned up in part 2 of the LSM. But in any case, Anglo-Norman had early on showed a tendency to drop both *cist* and *cil* (Meyer-Luebke 1895). Lancaster was thus following the AN tendency rather than showing precocious observance of a continental French tendency.

It is useful to set these findings against a continental French paradigm of early Middle French. Recall that the broad trend in continental French restricted the survivors of the *cil* series (*celui, celle, ceux*) to pronominal function, whereas the survivors of the *cist* series (*ceste, cez/ces*), became restricted to determiner function (Marchello-Nizia 1995:138).

Christine de Pizan's use of demonstratives in her *Epistre Othéa*, dating from roughly 1400, has been studied by Parussa (1999), who shows that her usage was tending in the direction of the pronoun/determiner demarcation that became categorical in later French. First, Christine used masculine *ce(o)* only as a determiner, as in LSM. Secondly, she did not use *ceulz* as a determiner, but only as a pronoun. Thirdly, she used *ces* only as a pronoun, not as a determiner. As we see from table 4, this systematic distinction in the *Epistre Othéa* is not observed in LSM, where *ceaux* and *ces* each have both functions. That said, Christine de Pizan was still some way from completely distinguishing demonstrative forms, using *cellui* and *celle* with both functions as in LSM.

Overall, then, it can be said that LSM had barely begun the process of demarcating pronoun and determiner classes of demonstrative, and in most respects (other than the loss of CS forms) extended the earlier OFr system of SJ.

4.5 Analysis 5: the syntax of subject pronouns

In MF a tendency developed whereby atonic subject pronouns continued to be separable from their verb in subordinate clauses, but lost the ability to be modified or to conjoin. In SJ all three patterns are still in evidence, as they are in LSM. Atonic subject pronouns can be postmodified, as in:

> (20) Et jeo meschaunt ai d'autre part fait tout.   LSM 6,32
>   'And I, wicked, have otherwise done everything'
> (21) Et il meismes moi fist la nief   LSM 94,8
>   'And he himself made me the goblet'

They can also be conjoined, as in:

> (22) Jeo et mes pecchés   LSM 97,22
>   'I and my sins'
> (23) Jeo et autres en saverons bien parler   LSM 100, 23
>   'I and others will know well to speak of them'

We also find frequent separation of a subject pronoun and the finite verb in subordinate clauses, a trait which in any case continued long into Middle French:

(24) …qe jeo en nule forsenerie ose tant mesfaire   LSM 74,9
        '… that I in no madness dare to do such evil'

As regards the status of subject pronouns, then, the Old French patterns are still in place. In continental French until roughly 1350, subject pronouns retained the syntactic behaviour of full NPs (Dufresne & Dupuis 1994) as regards the criteria we have examined. The fact that LSM does so as well indicates that in this respect Anglo-Norman was at least not in advance of developments on the European mainland.

4.6 Analysis 6: absolute genitives

SJ makes frequent use of the absolute genitive pattern, i.e. with no preposition to link the possessor to the possessed entity, as in:

(25) Tu es Pasteur e veiz les oeilles tun seignur   SJ 4,22
        'You are a shepherd and watch over the lambs of your lord'
(26) Li pueples Israel eschapa del servage Pharon   SJ 1,24
        'The people of Israel escaped from the slavery of Pharaoh'

Examples of the modern prepositional pattern are nevertheless encountered, e.g.:

(27) Il cuintement des enginz al deable se gardent   SJ 5,19
        'They prudently keep themselves from the snares of the devil'

In LSM, the position appears reversed: occasional uses of the absolute genitive are found, e.g.:

(28) C'est vous, douz sire Jesus Crist le filz Marie   LSM 67,7
        'It is you, sweet lord J-C son of Mary'

Most often, however, we find the modern pattern, as in:

(29) La vertue de la seynt Trinité nous en garde   LSM 89,31
        'May the power of the holy Spirit keep us from it'

(30) …qe ne poet soeffrir bonement la volenté de Dieux

LSM 114,27

'… that cannot happily suffer God's will'

According to Marchello-Nizia (1979), the decline of the absolute genitive was one of the first syntactic changes seen in the passage from Old to Middle French. It is therefore noteworthy that Anglo-Norman appears to be undergoing parallel change at this period, on the evidence of the same texts. This again appears to count against the concept of Anglo-Norman French as an 'isolated' variety.

5. *Conclusions*

In this study we have considered six aspects of the syntax of Old French which in the 14th century began to shift towards later French usage, and examined how they were instantiated in Anglo-Norman. We derive two sets of conclusions from the analysis of these features. First, the syntactic development of Anglo-Norman as instantiated in these two texts shows an interesting mix of stability and development. The persistence of verb-second in LSM is a stable characteristic, though a few signs of more frequent relaxation of the rule, which was to become common in continental Middle French, are in evidence. The sharp drop in null subjects in LSM reflects the developing continental tendency towards realising pronoun subjects overtly. The persistence of OV in subject relative clauses in LSM at the same rate as sermons 2-5 of SJ, which is in line with what we expected on the basis of Buridant (1987), also corresponds to continental practice, as does the almost complete loss of OV in subordinate clauses with a personal pronoun subject.

Atonic subject pronouns in both SJ and LSM displayed a noteworthy continuity of use, permitting separation from the verb in subordinate clauses, modification and conjunction at a date when these traits were still found in continental French.

Very much the same point can be made about the demonstrative system in the two texts. LSM showed a slight move towards the later pronoun/determiner split adopting *ceo* as a masculine determiner, but other functional distinctions had yet to appear.

On the other hand, the elimination of the absolute genitive and the categorical use in LSM of *à* and *de* mirrors continental developments at this time.

On the basis of these syntactic points, later Anglo-Norman syntax, then, looks rather orthodox, in terms of late Old or early Middle French, and offers little reason to be described disparagingly as the 'faus français d'angleterre' sometimes used by continental French writers of the time (Rothwell 1993).

The other set of conclusions involves a comparison of the first two of these features with the equivalent structures in later Middle English. Verb-second in AN after initial non-subjects, clearly the norm in SJ at around 90% observance, was still regular in LSM; exceptions tended to arise most often where the syntax was interrupted by vocative expressions. Now since the great majority of sentence subjects in LSM were personal pronouns, it can be said that the early Anglo-Norman pattern showed no sign of retreating in favour of the early Middle English pronoun/full NP distinction. In addition, it should be noted that referential null subjects were still quite plentiful in LSM, whereas in Old and Middle English only impersonal null subjects were possible.

Objects in OV constructions in SJ followed no apparent semantic or discourse rationale, whereas in LSM OV order in relative clauses becomes restricted along discourse lines, even though scarcely less frequent. The nature of this restriction mirrors patterns found in certain later Middle English texts by Foster & van der Wurff (1997). We believe, therefore, that the function of OV in later Middle English claimed by these authors was probably already in evidence in Anglo-Norman. Instead of thinking of the loss of OV in English as an organic process lasting several centuries, we may consider that the earlier work of Canale (1978), putting the loss of OV around 1200, was in general correct, but that texts which we conventionally refer to as 'later Middle English', with some pronominal subject verb-second and numerous vestiges of OV, are witness not to the development of English syntax so much as to the dominance of French constructions in written English.

It may, in short, be reasonably questioned whether the syntactic phenomena in AN and English were independent. With late C14 English we may not be looking at the product of an organic development of English from EME onwards, but rather at the reflex of Anglo-Norman linguistic practices on which bilingual writers were calquing their English syntax. This is particularly plausible in the domain of subordinate clause OV order, since here we are considering a domain where choice applied, not a domain where strict grammatical rules determine the structure. We might therefore expect to see considerable variation between LME texts as regards OV, and indeed Foster & van der Wurff (1997) report that this is the case.

It remains to express due caution as to generalisability of these findings, based as they are on only two texts. In particular, it is not the case that all AN texts at this period demonstrated such a fluent and expressive command of the language as the LSM. Much of the time the purposes to which Anglo-Norman French would have been put in later Medieval England were unquestionably more routine in nature.[7] However, the variables that we have examined in this study are not confined to literary uses but concern core properties of Old and Middle French syntax, which as such would have formed part of the linguistic competence of bilingual speakers and writers of the period. It is these individuals who for the most part were involved in the revival of the widespread use of written English later in the 14th century. This study has attempted to identify certain characteristics that their competence would have possessed, and suggests that in some cases, such as V2 with pronoun subjects, and OV with thematic objects, these characteristics were common to both their languages. Within a model of code diglossia, as put forward by Kristol (2000), it is plausible, then, to suggest that in such cases the direction of influence would have been from Anglo-Norman French to late Middle English. Firmer conclusions, however, must await the results of further analytic work on comparisons of late Middle English and later Anglo-Norman texts that we are currently planning.

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[7] Furthermore, not all Anglo-Norman speakers would have had as much opportunity for travel on the European continent as was enjoyed by Henry of Lancaster, who was frequently engaged in diplomatic missions and other contacts which would have kept him in touch with French speakers outside the insular context. To what extent this casts doubts on his position as a representative of Anglo-Norman is not an issue on which we would wish to make a judgment.

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Another group uses historical linguistics as a method in the wider cultural study of medieval England, examining syntactic change, dialect, translation and semantics to give us access to politeness, demography, and cultural constructions of colour, thought and time. The volume will be of particular interest to scholars of Anglo-Saxon culture and Middle English language.Contributors are Olga Timofeeva, Alaric Hall, Seppo Heikkinen, Jesse Keskiaho, John Blair, Kathryn A. Lowe, Antonette DiPaolo Healey, Lilla KopÃ¡r, C. P. Biggam, Ãgnes Kiricsi, Alexandra Fodor and Mari Pakkala-WeckstrÃ¶m.Â Alaric Hall, Ph.D. (2004) in English Language, University of Glasgow, is a lecturer in medieval English literature at the University of Leeds. Outside linguistics, bilingualism is also intimately tied with immigrant and marginalized groups and their educational and economic problems. A case in point is the bilingualism and intelligence debate during the first half of the 20th century (see under Effects and Education). The pioneering phase of bilingualism research in linguistics began with the works of Weinreich 1953, Haugen 1953, Mackey 1967 (all cited under General Overviews) and Jakobson, et al. 1953 (cited under Issues and Conceptualization) in the latter half of the 20th century (see also Description and Typology). Since then, re