MAGDALENA CHARZYŃSKA-WÓJCIK

ON THE NON-EXISTING TYPE OF CLAUSAL DITRANSITIVES IN OLD ENGLISH

1. INTRODUCTION

The paper is devoted to clausal ditransitive verbs with special focus on the Case of the NP argument. The term 'clausal ditransitive' will be used in the paper as defined in Allen (1995), i.e. to refer to verbs whose internal arguments are expressed by an NP and a clause. This type is to be distinguished from 'ordinary ditransitives', another term introduced by Allen (1995), denoting verbs whose both internal arguments are expressed by means of NPs.¹ Clausal ditransitive verbs in Old English fall into two major types, depending on the Case of the NP object:

(i) NP-ACC + clausal argument(ii) NP-DAT + clausal argument

Type (i) is exemplified in (1) below, where the ACC-NPs, i.e. *bæt* acennende wiif in (1a) and ealle Crecas in (1b) play the role of Recipients, while the italicised clausal objects play the role of Themes.

(1)

a. Ono gif we **beweriad** <u>bæt acennende wiif</u>, *bæt heo ne mot in circan gongan*²... and if we restrain that child-bearing woman-ACC that she not may to church go

Dr. MAGDALENA CHARZYŃSKA-WÓJCIK – Assistant Professor at the Department of English Historical Linguistics, Institute of English Studies of CUL; address for correspondence – e-mail: mcwojcik@kul.pl

¹ In a later part of the paper I will use yet another of Allen's terms, i.e. 'prepositional ditransitives', to refer to the type of ditransitive verbs where one complement is expressed as an NP, while the other is realised as a PP.

 $^{^{2}}$ For ease of exposition we use the following conventions in the examples: the <u>Recipients</u> are underlined, *Themes* are italicised, and the **verbs** are in **bold** type.

'And if we restrain a woman who gave birth to a child from going to church.' $(DOECEF)^3 < s id="T06860033600" n="16.76.17"> B9.6.3; Bede 1^4$

b. ... he gelærde <u>ealle Crecas</u> *bæt hie Alexandre wiðsocen* he instructed all Greeks-ACC that they Alexander strive-against-SUBJ.PL 'He persuaded all the Greeks to strive against Alexander' <s id="T06610016600" n="9.67.26">B9.2.4; Or 3

In type (ii), as illustrated below, Recipient NPs reveal DAT Case, i.e. *Theodore biscope* in (2a) and *him* in (2b), while the Themes are expressed by clauses.

(2)

- a. Forbon se apostolica papa bebead <u>Theodore biscope</u> (...) therefore the apostolic pope commanded Theodor bishop-DAT *bæt he him on his biscopscire gerisne stowe foresege* ... that he him in his diocese fitting place provide 'Therefore the Pope commanded bishop Theodor that he should find an approporiate place in his diocese.'
 <s id="T06900003600" n="1.256.32">B9.6.6; Bede 4
- b. Đa nolde Seon, se cyningc, nateshwon him tiđian then not-wanted Sihon the king by-no-means them-DAT to-grant *bæt Israhel ferde forð ofer his gemæru*, that Israel go-PRET.SUBJ forth over his boundaries
 'Then Sihon did not want to allow Israel to pass across his territory' <s id="T06240017400" n="21.23"> B8.1.4.4; Num

As NP objects of verbs in Old English could bear three Cases, i.e. ACC, DAT and GEN, an obvious question to be posed is whether there exists a third type of clausal ditransitive verbs, i.e.:

(iii) NP-GEN + clausal argument

The rest of the paper will be devoted to answering this question.

³ *Dictionary of Old English Corpus in Electronic Form*, also referred to as the Toronto Corpus. All the remaining examples in this article come from *DOECEF*.

⁴ The examples from *DOECEF* are quoted together with the encoding information given in angle brackets which is given at the beginning of each citation in the corpus. This is followed by the Cameron number and short title of the text.

2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MITCHELL'S DATA

2.1 MITCHELL'S CLASSIFICATION

While I have neither come across such type in the literature on Old English syntax nor in my examination of the Toronto Corpus while looking for examples of type (i) and (ii), Mitchell (1985: § 1090) implies the existence of this type of clausal ditransitives. In order to show all types of clausal ditransitives that Michell recognises, I quote below his classification⁵ of verbs:

 $(3)^{6}$

- a. those which take a direct object in the accusative only;
- b. those with the double accusative *or* an accusative and a noun clause or infinitive;
- c. those with an accusative and a genitive, dative or preposition;
- d. those with a noun clause or infinitive *and* a genitive, dative or preposition;
- e. those which take *either* an accusative or a genitive, dative or preposition;
- f. those with a genitive and/or a dative;
- g. those which can take only a preposition.

Let us concentrate on (3b) and (3d), disregarding the finite/non-finite distinction as irrelevant for our discussion here. (3b) subsumes the following possibilities:

(4)

a. NP-ACC + NP-ACC

b. NP-ACC + clausal argument

(3d), on the other hand, implies the following subtypes:

(5)

- a. clausal argument + NP-DAT
- b. clausal argument + NP-GEN
- c. clausal argument + PP

⁵ Mitchell (1985: § 1090) proposes this classification as a necessary prerequisite for discussing passivisation, where Cases are of particular importance. It does seem to be a classification in its own right, considering the fact that Mitchell (1985: 454) explicitly calls it a 'syntactic classification' and claims it to be better than Visser's (1963-73: § 315) classification of object types.

⁶ Mitchell (1985: § 1090) remarks that "some verbs will straddle even these groups."

Ignoring (4a) and (5c) for obvious reasons, we are left with the following sub-types of clausal ditransitives:

- (i) NP-ACC + clausal argument
- (ii) NP-DAT + clausal argument
- (iii) NP-GEN + clausal argument

This clearly indicates that according to Mitchell (1985), clausal ditransitives with an NP-GEN do exist. The next step then is to search for the relevant examples. As Mitchell's classification is followed by a list of verbal rections which, apart from the well-motivated exclusions presented in § 1091, "aims at completeness", it is reasonable to expect to find the specified verbs there. However, a careful examination of all the entries in Mitchell's § 1092 reveals that the author does not specify verbs for clausal complements: out of 459 entries on the list⁷ a clausal complement is specified only for two of them, namely *hatan* 'command sb-ACC TO DO sth⁸ and *geortreowan* 'not to trust to sb-DAT for sth-CLAUSE'. Note that *hatan* belongs to group (3b) in Mitchell's list has to be interpreted with caution.

First of all, if we were to treat Mitchell's § 1092 literally as (ideally) specifying under each verb all the possibilities, it would mean that there are only two clausal ditransitive verbs in OE, which is clearly not true. Moreover, the verbs mentioned above represent only two of the three types that Mitchell's § 1090 recognises, i.e. Mitchell introduces a type, referred to above as type (iii), which he does not even illustrate with a single verb. This certainly cannot be the author's intention and indicates that § 1092 is to be interpreted as a simplified list with multiple implications rather than a complete catalogue of available constructions. Another argument in favour of this view comes from even a cursory examination of verbs from § 1092. Let us remark that none of the four verbs featuring in (1a-b) and (2a-b),

⁷ What I count as an entry is a verb together with its derivatives, in the way Mitchell lists them. The list contains 468 entries with several verbs having multiple meanings often associated with different Case frames. Seven entries are included for the convenience of the reader to inform them where to look for a certain verb, for example: *lust-fullian*, *ge-lust-fullian*: see under the letter *l*; or *geornian*: see *giernan*. One verb, *andwyrdan* is mentioned twice: under the letter *a* and under the letter *w* and one item is not a verb: *dælnimend* 'a sharer of, sharing in sth-GEN'. All in all, § 1092 contains 459 entries. If we count multiple meanings and Case frames of these entries separately, the number grows to 583.

 $^{^{8}}$ All the verbs from Mitchell's § 1092 are quoted here with the exact definition the author provides.

namely *bewerian* 'restrain sb/sth-ACC from sth-GEN/PREP[fram]', (ge)læran 'teach sb-ACC/DAT sth-ACC/PREP[to]', (a/be/ge)beodan 'command, announce, offer, give, commit sth-ACC to sb-DAT', and (ge)tiþian 'grant sh-ACC/GEN/DAT to sb-DAT/ACC' is specified by Mitchell as occurring with a clausal complement. Additionally, even a cursory examination of the list will yield a lot of verbs whose meaning accords with a clausal object, i.e. *andwyrdan* 'answer sth-ACC to sb-DAT', ascian 'ask sb-<u>ACC/DAT/</u> <u>PREP[æt]</u> for sth-ACC/GEN/PREP [æfter/be]', (a/be/ge)beodan 'command, announce, offer, give, commit sth-ACC to sb-<u>DAT</u> (ge)myndgian/mynegian, etc. Indeed, all these verbs do appear in a clausal ditransitive construction. Let us have a look at (ge)myngian. Like (almost) all clausal ditransitives it appears in Mitchell's § 1092 without the indication that it can take a clausal argument. It is supplied with the following information:

(6)

- (i) remind sb-ACC of sth-GEN
- (ii) recollect, be mindful of sth-ACC/GEN/PREP[æfter]
- (iii) make mention of sb-ACC/GEN
- (iv) ask payment of sth-GEN

A search in the Toronto Corpus reveals that this verb in addition to the nonclausal usages specified above also has a clausal ditransitive usage, quite well represented both in the active (cf. 7) and in the passive (cf. 8).

(7)

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a. ... we mynegiad eac
                          ælcne getreowfulne man,
      we remind
                     also each faithful
                                               man-ACC
   bæt he gelomlice lufige
                             cumlidnvsse and nanum cuman
                                                                  ne forbeode.
   that he often
                    should-love hospitality
                                                      guest/stranger not should-forbid
                                          and none
   bæt he ne mote on his huse gerestan, ...
   that he not may in his house rest
   'We also remind each faithful man that he should often love hospitality and should
   not forbid anybody to rest in his house.'
   <s id="T04450002100" n="81"> B3.2.16; HomS 16 (Ass 12)
b. us
          ba halgan apostolas mynegodon to weorbianne urne hælend
   us-ACC the holy
                     apostles
                               reminded
                                           to worship/adore our
                                                                lord
   and his ba halgan.
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and his the holy

"The holy apostles reminded us to adore our Lord and his holy." <s id="T04590004500" n="141">B3.2.30; HomS 30 (TristrApp 2) (8)

- a. Da weard he eft on swefne gemynegod. *bæt he to galilea gewende*.
 then was he again in dream reminded that he to Galilee should-return 'He was then again in his dream reminded to return to Galilee.'
 </s><s id="T02090008300" n="88.21">B1.1.6; Æ CHom I, 5
- b. Þa æfter sumum fyrste <u>he</u> wearð on swefne gemynegod, then after some time he was in dream reminded *bæt he sceolde his eþel and his eard geneosian, and fæder and modor,* that he should his land and his home visit and father and mother 'Then after some time he was reminded in a dream that he should visit his land, his home and his father and mother.'
 <s id="T03300003900" n="145">B1.3.30; Æ LS (Martin)

Clearly, the clausal ditransitive usage of (ge)mynian corresponds to (6i) above i.e. 'to remind sb-ACC of sth-GEN'.

In short, Mitchell's § 1092 does not seem to separately list clausal usages, rather, they are to be treated as variants of ordinary ditransitive usages. How can we then find clausal ditransitive verbs of the relevant type?

2.2. MITCHELL'S LIST – THE DATA

First of all, if Mitchell never (with the two exceptions mentioned above) specifies verbs for clausal complements, we need to look at the meaning of each ditransitive verb to see whether it is compatible with a propositional complement. In other words, we need to look for potential candidates among those arguments of verbs which express the idea of SOMETHING rather than SOMEBODY. With this in mind, I classified all verbs from Mitchell's § 1092 into the following six categories, according to the type of entities they take as their complements.⁹

(9)

- (i) sb + sth
- (ii) sb/sth + sth
- (iii) sb + sb/sth
- (iv) sb/sth + sb/sth
- (v) sth + sth
- (vi) sb + sb

⁹ If an option is given it means that it is represented by each verb classified into this group.

Looking for types which can contain potential candidates for NP-GEN + clausal complement we need to exclude all frames which even optionally allow SOMEBODY, i.e. a human (or at least animate) NP for both complements. This leaves us with types (9i) and (9ii), where one of the complements is compatible with the propositional semantics and type (9v), where both NPs are suitable candidates for a clausal argument. In this way I have singled out all potentially clausal ditransitive verbs. In search of clausal ditransitive verbs of type (iii), i.e. NP-GEN + clausal argument, I examined the Cases that the relevant verbs assign¹⁰ to their complements with the view to finding all combinations of GEN + X, where X corresponds to the argument, which can potentially be expressed by a clause. Below I present the relevant data for each of the three types under investigation, i.e. the Case combinations that appear in Mitchell's § 1092 supplied with the number of entries representing each particular subtype.

SB	STH	NUMBER OF ENTRIES
		total: 141
ACC	sub-total: 64	
	DAT	11
	GEN	39
	GEN/DAT	13
	DAT/GEN/INSTR	1
ACC/DAT ¹¹	SUB-TOTAL: 15	
	ACC	3
	ACC/GEN	2
	ACC/GEN/DAT	1
	DAT	2
	GEN	6
	GEN/DAT	1

TABLE 1: Case f	frames and	figures f	or type (9i)
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¹⁰ We use the term Case 'assignment' in a theory-neutral way to express that a given verb is accompanied by a complement in a particular Case.

¹¹ I coalesced here two originally separate groups here, namely ACC/DAT + X and DAT/ACC + X as there does not seem to be a principled difference between the two groups. Even if there is, however, it does not bear on the topic discussed in this paper.

DAT	sub-total: 60	
	ACC	30
	ACC/DAT/GEN	2
	ACC/GEN	10
	DAT	2
	GEN	14
	GEN/ACC	2
GEN	SUB-TOTAL: 1	
	ACC	1
X ¹²	SUB-TOTAL: 1	
	DAT	1

TABLE 2: Case frames and figures for type (9ii)

SB/STH	STH	NUMBER OF VERBS
		total: 6
ACC	SUB-TOTAL: 2	
	DAT	1
	GEN	1
ACC/DAT	SUB-TOTAL: 2	
	GEN	2
DAT	SUB-TOTAL: 2	
	ACC	1
	GEN	1

¹² This is a verb *bestelan* 'deprive sb of sth-DAT' not specified by Mitchell for the Case of the human object. According to the author, in the ditransitive use it is attested in the passive only. Bosworth and Toller, on the other hand, do not report for this verb any other use than the monotransitive one, also listed by Mitchell, namely 'steal away from sb-DAT' (Mitchell)/'steal away or upon' (Bosworth and Toller). However, we need not concern ourselves with this verb here as it could only be a potential source of the clausal ditransitive type (iii) if the NP-somebody exhibited GEN, which it does not, as testified by Visser's (1963-73: §677), which lists GEN + DAT verbs, *bestelan* not being one of them.

STH	STH	NUMBER OF VERBS
		total: 3
ACC	sub-total: 3	
	DAT	1
	GEN	1
	GEN/DAT/INSTR	1

TABLE 3: Case frames and figures for type (9v)

As can be seen, among the total of 150 entries there is only one item that is a potential candidate for NP-GEN + clausal argument, namely GEN-sb + ACC-sth in type (9i). This combination is represented by (be/ge) frignan 'ask sth-ACC of sb-GEN PREP [æt/fram]'. Types (9ii) and (9v) do not yield a single entry of the relevant type. We will now look at (be/ge) frignan with all its variants in detail to see if they appear in type (iii), i.e. NP-GEN + clausal argument.

2.3. GEN + CLAUSAL ARGUMENT?

The search for (*be/ge*)*frignan* in the Toronto Corpus yields only one example of type (iii) of clausal ditransitives:

(10)

Gif hie donne giet dær tueonad, gongen donne to dæm halgan gewritum, they then still there doubt should-go then holv if to the Scriptures hwæt hie don odde læran scylen. frine đara those-GEN what they do or teach should ask 'If they still doubt there, let them go to the holy Scriptures and ask of them what they should do or teach.' <s id="T06560044300" n="16.103.9"> B9.1.3; CP

The example is self-explanatory and there can be no doubt that it does indeed represent the relevant clausal ditransitive subtype. It is worth noting, however, that this is a single example of (be/ge)frignan in this type, while it is very well represented in a construction with the opposite set of Cases, namely ACC for the person and GEN/PREP for the thing. Mitchell notes the existence of this type with (be/ge)frignan, as under the entry of this verb¹³

¹³ I use the term 'verb' here as a simplification for the whole set of derivatives.

there are two sets of Cases: one shown above, the other one being: 'ask sb-ACC about sth-GEN/PREP [æfter/be/fram/of/ymb]' and the Toronto Corpus abounds with examples of this type. I found well over 70 examples with this verb in the NP-ACC + CP frame, to say nothing of NP-sb-ACC + NP-sth-GEN/PREP. Below I quote examples of (be/ge)frignan in the clausal ditansitive use of type (i) (cf. 11), ordinary ditransitive use (cf. 12) and prepositional ditransitive use (cf. 13).

- (11)
- a. Se halga heap befran crist the holy host-of-patriarchs asked Christ-ACC hwæher he wolde on þam timan þisne middaneard geendian; whether he wanted in that time the world bring-to-an-end 'The holy host of patriarchs asked Christ whether he wanted to bring the world to an end.'
 <s id="T02300003100" n="298.10">B1.1.23; Æ CHom I, 21;
- b. Đa eode se biscop into þære oþere cyrcan þær se martyr inne læig: then went the bishop into the other church where the martyr in lay and befran <u>bone cyrcweard</u> hwær þæs halgan wæpnu wæron and asked the sacristan-ACC where the saint's weapons were
 'Then went the bishop into the other church where the martyrs body lay and asked the sacristan where the saint's weapons were.'
 <s id="T02390009400" n="452.1">B1.1.29; Æ CHom I, 27
- c. Đa fregn he mec, hwæðer ic wiste hwa đæt wære se de to mec spræcende wæs then asked he me-ACC whether I knew who that was he that to me speaking was 'Then he asked me whether I knew who it was that was speaking to me.' <s id="T06910011900" n="6.402.13">B9.6.7; Bede 5
- (12)
- a. Iudas da befran <u>his geferan</u> rædes, Judas then asked his companion-ACC advice-GEN
 'Then Judas asked his companion for advice.'
 <s id="T03250010500" n="397">B1.3.24; ÆLS (Abdon & Sennes);
- b. donne orn he eft innto dæm temple, & frægn dæs <u>Dryhten</u> beforan dære earce then ran he again into the temple and asked that-GEN Lord-ACC before the arc 'Then he ran again into the temple and asked God about it before the ark.'
 <s id="T06560044000" n="16.103.3">B9.1.3; CP

c. Đa đæs <u>Euan</u> frægn ælmihtig god then that-GEN Eve-ACC asked almighty god 'Then Almighty God asked Eve about this.' <s id="T00010030400" n="887"> A1.1; GenA,B

(13)

gif deos cwen <u>usic</u> **frigned** *ymb dæt treo*, if this queen us-ACC asks about the truth 'If this queen asks us about the truth.' <s id="T00100015300" n="531"> A2. 6; El

As can be seen, (be/ge) frignan is well represented in constructions with the ACC rather than GEN of person, with the GEN (or occasionally PP) being reserved for the thing.

3. CONCLUSION

Among the 583 different Case frames listed by Mitchell for 459 entries I have found only one entry which meets all requirements for a potential clausal ditransitive verb of type (iii). Having searched the Toronto Corpus for clausal ditransitive examples of this verb I have found well over 70 examples with only one of them representing type (iii), while the remaining clauses all represented type (i)¹⁴. Moreover, this verb is very well represented in the ordinary ditransitive frame with the ACC of person and GEN of thing,¹⁵ while the other frame does not seem attested. In view of these facts it seems that we have to conclude that clausal ditransitive verbs of type (iii) do not exist in OE. The big question of course now is: why does this type not exist in OE? While we will not venture to answer this question now, it certainly brings us back to Mitchell's classification of verbs given in § 1090, quoted above under (3), with another question to be asked, namely, is NP-GEN + clausal argument really a type that was meant by Mitchell or is it rather an instance of merging verb types which results in a non-existent Case frame? Let me remark that this is not the only instance where nonexistent Case combinations emerge from § 1092. Below I briefly discuss some of them.

¹⁴ Interestingly, I have also come across examples of this verb in clausal ditransitive use of type (ii).

¹⁵ Or even in the very rare type, i.e. ACC+ ACC.

Old English ditransitive verbs can appear in five basic frames as far as Case combinations are concerned. After Allen (1995: 29), these are:

DAT	ACC
DAT	GEN
ACC	GEN
ACC	ACC
ACC	DAT

TABLE 4: Case-marking frames of OE ditransitive verbs

As can be seen, the DAT + DAT combination is not recognised for OE, while Mitchell's list implies it in five instances (cf. *stepan/stipan*, *benæman*, *sprecan*, *(ge)tilian*, *(ge)tiþian*) and explicitly states it for two other entries (don, healdan). Moreover, the optionality included in Mitchell's entries sometimes implies Case combinations which, although generally recognised, are not found with the verbs for which they are specified. Take for instance (ge)hreowan 'affect sb-ACC/DAT with sorrow, pity at sth-ACC/GEN'. The Cases Mitchell specifies imply the existence of the ACC + ACC combination here, which (although generally recognised in OE for a handful of verbs) is not attested with (ge)hreowan. Likewise the DAT + ACC combination, although found in OE, does not appear with (ge)hreowan and generally with Experiencer verbs (cf. ALLEN 1995) but the entry for this verb explicitly lists this possibility.

All this clearly shows that OE verbs exhibited a lot of variability in the choice of complements. The variability concerned not only the choice of Case but also the optionality of the complement in general. While this is still a preliminary hypothesis it is certainly worth pursuing in view of the facts shown above.

4. FURTHER IMPLICATIONS

What transpires from my analyses of Mitchell's §§ 1090-92 is that clausal ditransitives are variants of ordinary ditransitives.¹⁶ This claim finds further support in the following independent analyses:

¹⁶ This raises the question of monotransitive verbs with clausal complements. First of all, if clausal ditransitives are variants of ordinary ditransitives, does that mean that we should see

- (i) synchronic studies of passivisation of clausal ditransitives in OE (cf. CHARZYŃSKA-WÓJCIK 2008);
- (ii) the behaviour of anticipators of clausal Themes in active and passive clausal ditransitives (cf. CHARZYŃSKA-WÓJCIK 2008);
- (iii) diachronic developments that affected clausal ditransitive passivess in the course of Middle English (cf. CHARZYŃSKA-WÓJCIK 2008);
- (iv) co-occurrence of OE Experiencer verbs in clausal ditransitive constructions with ordinary ditransitive constructions (cf. CHARZYŃSKA--WÓJCIK 2002).

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O NIEISTNIEJĄCYM TYPIE CZASOWNIKÓW Z DWOMA DOPEŁNIENIAMI W JĘZYKU STAROANGIELSKIM

Streszczenie

Artykuł poświęcony jest odpowiedzi na pytanie, czy w języku staroangielskim istnieje typ czasowników, którym towarzyszą dwa dopełnienia – jedno w postaci frazy rzeczownikowej w dopełniaczu, drugie w postaci zdaniowej. O ile istnienie czasowników z dopełnieniem zdaniowym i frazą rzeczownikową w celowniku lub bierniku jest bezsporne, o tyle wspomniany wyżej

clausal monotransitives as variants of ordinary monotrasitives? While we have no ready answer to this question at the moment, note that as such clausal monotransitives are not recognised by Mitchell at all: they are mentioned neither in § 1090 nor in § 1092.

typ z dopełniaczem nigdy nie był w literaturze omawiany, choć na jego istnienie wyraźnie wskazuje klasyfikacja czasowników, jaką podaje Mitchell (1985: § 1090). Artykuł przedstawia dane dotyczące rekcji czasowników staroangielskich, wskazujące wyraźnie, że typ taki w języku nie występował.

Streściła Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik

Słowa kluczowe: czasowniki z dwoma dopełnieniami, język staroangielski. **Key words:** clausal ditransitives, Old English.