

Two types of headless free relatives in Old English: a corpus-based study

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Allen (1980) analyses free relatives illustrated in (1) and (2) as headless because the case of the underlined pronoun is assigned by the embedded verb rather than by the verb from the matrix clause. Additionally, headless free relatives always contain a resumptive pronoun. A simplified analysis of these constructions is given in (3).

- (1) And ðone ðe ðu nu hæfst, nis se ðin wer
and him-acc. that you now hast not-is he-nom. your husband
'And him who you now have, he is not your husband' (Alc.P.V.37)
- (2) And swa hwæs swa hie rihtlice biddað for ðinum naman [...] hig hyt onfoð.
and so what-gen. as they rightly ask for thy name [...] they it receive
'And whatever they ask rightly, for your name and your merit, they receive it.'
(30E p.74.4)
- (3) $_{NP}[_{NP}[e] \text{ } _{CP}[_{NP}[_{p}one] \text{ } \delta e] \text{ } _{TP}[\delta u \text{ } nu \text{ } h\ae st]]]$ headless free relative

Another possible analysis of headless free relatives, which we will employ in this paper, involves correlativization, as illustrated in (4) (cf. Liptak 2009, Truswell 2008):

- (4) [_{correlative clause}... relative phrase...] [_{main clause}... correlate...]

Correlativization is a non-local relativization strategy typical of Modern Indo-Aryan languages like Hindi (Srivastav 1991, Bhatt 2003) and ancient Indo-European languages like Latin, Sanskrit or Greek, in which a restrictive relative clause appears to the left of a(n) (non)-adjacent nominal expression linked to it. Old English structures shown above seem to meet all the criteria established for correlatives: a relative clause appears in the left periphery, the correlate has to contain a demonstrative (or pronominal) item, the syntactic relation between the two constituents is rather loose though they form one semantic unit and both the constituents involve some sort of movement of a relative and/or demonstrative/pronominal element to their surface positions (cf. Liptak 2009, Truswell 2008).

A corpus-based study shows that free headless relatives illustrated in (1) and (2) exhibit different syntactic properties and two types should be distinguished:

- (5) Type 1: 'demonstrative' correlatives (*pone þe*)
Type 2: 'whoever' correlatives (starting with *swa*..)

Both types feature two patterns, identical and non-identical, in which the cases of the correlative elements are the same or different. This is exemplified below:

(6) identical pattern type 1

þam þe ge nellað forgifan, þam ne beoð forgifene.
Those-dat that you refuse forgive those-dat not will-be forgiven
'to those you refuse to forgive, it will not be forgiven to them'

(coaelhom, ÆHom_7:53.1090)

(7) **non-identical pattern type 1**

And ðone ðe ðu nu hæfst, nis se ðin wer
and him-acc that you now hast not-is he-nom your husband
'And him who you now have, he is not your husband' (Alc.P.V.37)

(8) **identical pattern type 2**

& eal swa hwæt swa ic þe gehet eal ic hit gesette.
And all whatever-acc I you promise all I it-acc perform
'And all whatever I promise you I perform it all'
(coblick,LS_20_[AssumptMor[BiHom_13]]:147.155.1807)

(9) **non-identical pattern type 2**

mid swa hwam swa ic hit mid fynde, beo he min þeow,
with whomever-dat I it with find be he-nom my servant
'he with whom it is found shall be my servant' (cootest,Gen:44.10.1883)

There are a number of differences that those patterns exhibit. First, in identical patterns of type 1 the dative case is the most common (accusative only possible), while in identical patterns of type 2 the accusative is practically the only available option. Second, non-identical patterns are more common in type 2. Additionally, more case combinations are available in type 2. This means that relativizers can carry any non-nominative case (accusative, dative, genitive) and their correlates in the main clause can also be assigned any case (nominative, accusative, dative, and genitive). The case combinations in non-identical patterns of type 1 are much more limited. Third, both types do not have the same case assignment mechanism. While in type 2 cases are independently assigned within the clauses by verbs, which allows many case combinations, in structures of type 1 this is not always possible. Consider (10):

(10) þone þe hæme wið nyten, ne læt ðu hine libban.
Him-acc who should-live with beast not let you him-acc live
'Whosoever lies with a beast shall surely be put to death'
(cootest,Exod:22.19.3279)

If the case were assigned independently within the clauses, the relative pronoun in (10) should be assigned the nominative case. The accusative case in the relative clause seems to be assigned under the influence of the main clause. In the literature this mechanism is called case attraction, a type of case conflict in which a nominal element receives the case associated with a related nominal expression rather than the case that results from its function in the clause. We will argue that structures of type 1 can be accounted for by case attraction, whereas cases in constructions of type 2 are assigned independently within the clauses without resorting to case attraction.

All the differences outlined above have theoretical consequences as well. We will argue that OE correlatives should be accounted for by the adjunction analysis (Srivastav 1991, Truswell 2008) rather than movement (Bhatt 2003). The differences between identical and non-identical patterns and case assignment mechanisms will be explained by the different sites that relative clauses are adjoined to in the syntactic tree: TP (Tense Phrase) and CP (Complementizer Phrase).

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