THE MEANING-SYNTAX INTERFACE OF WRITING VERBS: TEMPLATES, CONSTRUCTIONS AND LINKING RULES WITHIN A LEXICAL GRAMMAR OF OLD ENGLISH VERBAL PREDICATES*

Mª. Auxiliadora Martín Díaz & Francisco J. Cortés Rodríguez
Universidad de La Laguna

ABSTRACT

A salient phenomenon recently observed in many languages is the close interrelation between the semantic structure of lexical units and their syntactic behavior; i.e. lexical units sharing a common semantic space tend also to show very similar complementation and alternation structures. The purpose of this paper is, then, to provide a system of lexical decomposition for Old English writing verbs which enables us to derive their adequate morphosyntactic behavior as well as to connect certain meanings with cognitive and cultural aspects of Old English literacy. An attempt will be also made to explain the set of constructions and diathetic alternations exhibited by this group of lexical units, and how they are derived from the lexical template.

KEY WORDS: Lexical template, logical structure, writing verbs, Old English, linking algorithm.

RESUMEN

Un fenómeno recientemente destacado en el análisis lingüístico es la interrelación que existe entre la estructura semántica de las unidades léxicas y su comportamiento sintáctico; i.e. las unidades léxicas que comparten un espacio semántico común tienden a mostrar estructuras de complementación y alternancia muy similares. El objetivo de este estudio es, por tanto, ofrecer un sistema de descomposición léxica de los verbos de escritura en inglés antiguo, lo que nos permitirá derivar su correspondiente comportamiento morfosintáctico, así como conectar ciertos significados con aspectos cognitivos y culturales del inglés antiguo. Trataremos también de explicar aquí el conjunto de construcciones y alternancias diatéticas que exhibe este grupo de unidades léxicas, y cómo éstas se derivan de una plantilla léxica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: plantilla léxica, estructura lógica, verbos de escritura, inglés antiguo, algoritmo de enlace.

INTRODUCTION

One striking phenomenon that has been observed in many languages is the close interrelation between the semantic structure of lexical units and their syntactic behavior; i.e. lexical units located / sharing the same semantic space tend also to show very similar complementation and alternation structures. The importance of this phenomenon has been reflected in the design of many grammatical models nowadays, such as Functional Grammar (henceforth FG; Dik 1997a, b), Role and Reference Grammar (RRG; Van Valin & LaPolla) or Construction Grammar (CG; Goldberg, Fillmore, Kay), among others. All of them take as a starting point for the explanation of morpho-syntactic structures the information associated to lexical units, which makes the lexical component of all these models a fundamental element for the rest of the grammatical modules.

Even though the aim of this paper is not to discuss the details of all these proposals[1], we intend to comply with the purpose of providing a system of lexical decomposition for a group of Old English (henceforth OE) verbs which enables us to derive their adequate morphological and syntactic behavior. The interest for the analysis of OE verbal predicates stems from the ancillary status of lexical and grammatical descriptions related to this historical language: the great bulk of contributions on the interface between lexis and syntax concentrates on analyses of languages such as English, Spanish, German, or even exotic languages like Lakhota or Sama, but little if nothing has been said from this perspective as regards OE, especially if the interest of the research goes beyond the mere description of certain grammatical phenomena and aims at providing an explanation for them (for instance, why certain clausal constituents should appear marked with a special case, or why it is possible or not for a predicate to participate in certain constructions).

The purpose of this paper is, then, manifold: firstly, an attempt will be made to provide a lexical representation for OE verbs-of-writing which accounts for the semantic content of this subdomain; such representation involves the use of a formalized decompositional system based fundamentally on the *Aktionsart* characterization of the verbs; at the same time this will constitute the starting point for the generation of the syntactic structures where these verbs appear, and also will connect the meaning of these words with certain cognitive and cultural aspects. The second section explains the set of constructions and diathetic alternations exhibited by this group of lexical units, and an explanation on how they derive them

[1] For a detailed description and assessment on the different proposals for lexical representation in grammars see Cortés and Mairal 2001. In the following sections of the paper we will present and justify the system adopted for our research.

from the lexical template will be given. The third section deals with the linking processes between the representation of the constructions and the morphological structure of constituents (case assignment rules, adposition assignment, etc.).

Let us turn now to the first of these issues.

1. LEXICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE SUBDOMAIN
OF OE VERBS-OF-WRITING

1.1. Methodological underpinnings for corpus selection and (re)construction of meaning

In order to undertake the task of providing a semantic representation common to a group of lexical units, it is necessary to resort to the various lexicographical products available for the language under analysis; again, in the case of OE several drawbacks are encountered, mainly due to the alphabetical ordering of almost all the dictionaries (Bosworth-Toller; Hall) for this period; the only exception is the *Thesaurus of Old English* (henceforth T.O.E; Roberts, Kay & Grundy), whose organization is onomasiological, thus rendering an exhaustive classification of lexical units in OE in terms of semantic groupings. However, the approach followed in the design of this thesaurus lacks linguistic grounding: it is based on a loose conception of lexical field, in terms of which words are classified together if they share some bit of meaning (Kay & Chase 305); that is, lexical units appear clustered associatively, instead of being based on the structural notions of opposition and similarity, fundamental for the organization of lexical fields, as Coseriu and Geckeler demonstrated (Coseriu, Geckeler). Despite this, we cannot deny the utility of this dictionary as a starting point for the selection of the units to be analyzed, but other products and tools are to be used. Our approach has been based on the following methodological assumptions:

(1) Given the close interrelation between semantic structure and syntactic behavior, it is feasible to use syntactic information as a clue to establish semantic clusters: words that, in principle, could be candidates to form part of a semantic class, would show similar syntactic conditions as the rest of the members of such class. This assumption is fundamental to overcome the difficulties inherent to the lexical analysis of historical languages.

(2) Given the existence of similarities in terms of semantic organization among languages of a same linguistic branch, we can assume that semantic classes remain constant to a great extent within one language in a diachronic perspective. Therefore, it is possible to use the information on semantic structuring for, say, Present-Day English (henceforth, PDE) as a tool for classifying lexical units in OE.

Considering points (1) and (2), the methodology adopted for the selection of the members of the class of verbs-of-writing in OE has been as follows:

The integration of both, RRG's parameters and the rich lexicological apparatus of the Functional Lexematic Model (henceforth FLM; Martín Mingorance, Faber & Mairal) is faced on this occasion with the restrictions imposed by a historical language like OE for which the scarcity of lexicographical sources is more than evident. The first step in our selection procedure was to turn the information from the T.O.E. into the subdomain for the verbs-of-writing described in Faber and Mairal (Appendix I). As mentioned above, the internal structure of this dictionary implied overcoming: i. the difficulty of gathering verbs originally clustered under various headings; ii. the non-existent syntagmatic component, which overtly lies behind one of the aims of this paper.

The FLM as developed by Faber and Mairal has provided us with a lexicological model according to which each lexical item should comprise semantic, syntactic and pragmatic information, three levels of description that are undoubtedly interrelated. The *genus* (area of meaning shared by all the integrants of a given (sub)domain) in combination with the *differentiae specificae* (differentiating features that distinguish a lexeme from the rest of participants of the (sub)domain) allow us to integrate lexical units within a paradigmatic axis. Following a bottom-to-top procedure similar to the one used in the FG's Stepwise Lexical Decomposition principle, these units are thus defined in terms of their hiperonimic and hyponimic relations (hierarchical structure).

Even though this approach has proven its validity in the analysis of present-day lexicons, it is almost impossible to make a fully-fledged description of the semantic content of a lexical unit from the vocabulary of previous historical stages of any language. By way of example, it is very difficult to establish the specific semantic differences among the verbs *writan, gewritan* and *awritan*. That is, whereas the information provided by dictionaries enables us to delimit the members of the (sub)domain, little can be said of specific lexical relations, such as hyponymy, superordination or archilexematicity unless use is made of other methodological tools. One partial solution to this problem is to reconsider the interrelation between semantic and syntactic information as presented in the FLM. This model defends the existence of an iconic relation between the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic axes, which is formulated in the so-called *Lexical Iconicity Principle:*

The greater the semantic coverage of a lexeme is the greater its syntactic variation

As described in Cortés and Mairal (20), this principle can be reinterpreted in the following terms:

Lexical Iconicity Principle (Beta Reading)
The greater the syntactic coverage of a lexical unit, the higher its position in the semantic hierarchy within a given subdomain.

In other terms, the use of the information encoded in the syntagmatic axis for a group of lexical units is useful for the ascertainment of their semantic structure and, to a certain extent, of their hierarchical organization. This methodological claim is essential for the case of OE, as the analysis of morphosyntactic patterns

can overcome some of the shortcomings described above. Following this line of analysis, a second methodological step in our selection procedure was to use the *Oxford English Dictionary* and Bosworth-Toller's Dictionary as primary sources and derive from them an important amount of textual evidence for the meanings of our lexical units. Other complementary sources like *The Dictionary of Old English Corpus* and the *Helsinki Corpus* were also employed to help us to refine the appurtenance of our lexemes to more specific (sub)domains and throw in that way more light on the grammatical intricacies of the OE language. The result of this process is the delimitation of the subdomain of OE writing verbs: *Afæstnian, Agrafan, Amearcian, Awritan, Bewritan, Forwritan, Gebrefan, Gedihtan, Gesettan, Getitelian, Gewritan, Miswritan, Writan, Ymbwritan.*

The interpretation of the data provided by both dictionaries and corpora has helped to make a detailed description of the semantic content of this subdomain. Writing, as envisaged by a speaker of PDE, is an activity by which someone uses an instrument (a pen, a pencil, etc.) to put letters, words or numbers on a surface such that, eventually, it may result in the creation of a book, a poem, etc. Furthermore, usually the purpose of writing is the transmission of a certain kind of message, that is, writing is a way of communication in many occasions.

However, when analysing OE verbs of writing, there is much more involved in their meaning: one first clue is the etymology of the verb 'to write.' Old Saxon 'writan' did not mean only 'to write' but also 'to cut.' *Writan* and many other OE verbs of this subdomain still retain in their meaning the conception of the original activity of writing: if we could contemplate the beginning of writing systems there will be probably someone, a scribe, with a sharp instrument (typically a small knife) in his hands making incisions on a hard surface; that is making cuts or carving it. This did not necessarily entail that there would be letters or words on that surface; he could just be incising some figures or images[2]. Many of the OE writing verbs show uses that reflect their meaning as verbs of image impression:

(1) Writ him Cristes mæl on ælcum lime (Lchdm. II. 346, 6)
    Write-to-him-Christ's-sign-on-each-limb
(2) Writ ðysne circul mid ðines cnifes orde on anum stane (Lchdm. I. 395, 3)
    Write-this-circle-with-the-point-of-your-knife-on-a-stone
(3) Ða awrat he Cristes rode tacen on þæs blindes mannes eagum (Gr. D. 77, 26)
    Then-wrote-he-Christ's-symbol-of-the-rood-on-the-eyes-of-the-blind-man

One could ask, in the light of these examples, whether these verbs actually are writing verbs or whether they should be listed otherwise. If we consider the following sentences, it can be seen that they can also convey a meaning very similar to that of PDE writing verbs:

---

[2] Let us remember that the origin of alphabets is the idealization and schematization of pictures, which were stylized representation of objects.

(4) Ðara abbuda stær and spell ðysses mynstres on twam bocum ic awrat (Bd. 5, 23; S. 648, 30; S, 23; S. 649, ɪɪ)
Of-the-abbots-the-story-and-narrative-of-this-monastery-on-two-books-I-wrote

(5) Ðæs halgan fæder and biscopes Sancti Cuþberhtes lif ærest eroico metro and æfter fæce græde worde ic awrat (Bd. S, 23; S. 648, 27)
Of-the-holy-father-and-bishop-St.-Cuthbert-the-life-first-in-heroic-metre-and-after-a-space-in-prose-I-wrote.

(6) Matheus se godspellere awrat on þære godspellican gesetnysse. (ÆCHom ɪ, 26 B1.1.28)
Mathew-the-evangelist-on-the-evangelical-tradition

It can be stated, then, that in OE conveying a message in written form is just a part of the meaning of "writing": only if the image inscribed on, let us say, a tablet is conventionally (part of) a message, writing becomes an act of communication. But a detailed description of the activity of writing presupposes a sequence of subevents: firstly it means making incisions on a hard surface, a process which involves composing or producing an image; only if this figure is a (set of) word(s) there is the expression of a message which may result in the creation of another kind of object, such as a book or a composition.

This complexity in the meaning of OE "writing" verbs is clearly reflected in the variegated array of syntactic constructions and alternations exhibited by the members of the subdomain. There seems to exist some correlations between the subevents described above and certain syntactic constructions, an issue that we will consider in the next section.

1.2. Syntactic constructions of oe writing verbs vis-à-vis meaning subevents

One of the most enticing issues in the study of the lexicon nowadays is to arrive at a system of lexical representation that not only captures the semantic aspects of (a group of) lexical unit(s), but constitutes the starting point for the projection of the grammatical features associated to the(se) lexical unit(s) as well. The model adopted in this paper endorses fully to this view by trying to provide a formal representation —termed a 'lexical template'— for the members of a lexical class. Templates are integrated in a grammatical model of the language under study, and are designed in accordance with the system of lexical decomposition proposed in RRG (Van Valin & LaPolla; Van Valin)[3]. According to this model, a predicate's

Mª.A. MARTÍN DÍAZ & F.J. CORTÉS RODRÍGUEZ

18

---

[3] As stated in Mairal & Van Valin 2001, templates could also be integrated as part of other functional grammars, such as Dik's 1997a,b Functional Grammar, provided some minor adjustments were made.

lexical description is based on its *Aktionsart* or 'mode of action'; following Vendler's and Dowty's proposal, RRG establishes a classification of verbal classes in terms of three parameters (dynamism, punctuality and telicity), which are universally relevant both in semantic and syntactic terms. Thus, verbal predicates will fit one of the following general types: states [+static, -telic, -punctual], activities [–static, –telic, –punctual], achievements [–static, +telic, +punctual], accomplishments [–static, +telic, –punctual], active accomplishments (telic variant of activities) and semelfactives (non-resultative variants of achievements) and their corresponding causatives (Van Valin & LaPolla 109; Van Valin ch. 2). Each of these classes is represented in terms of the following Logical structures:

Verb class	Logical structure
State	**predicate**' (x) or (x,y)
Activity	**do**' (x, [**predicate**' (x) or (x,y)])
Achievement	INGR **predicate**' (x) or (x,y), *or*
	INGR **do**' (x, [**predicate**' (x) or (x,y)])
Accomplishment	BECOME **predicate**' (x) or (x,y), *or*
	BECOME **do**' (x, [**predicate**' (x) or (x,y)])
Active accomplishment	**do**' (x, [**predicate**$_1$' (x (y))]) & INGR **predicate**$_2$' (z, x) or (y)
Semelfactive	SEML **predicate**' (x) or (x,y), *or*
	SEML **do**' (x, [**predicate**' (x) or (x,y)])
Causative	α CAUSE β, where α, β are LSs of any type

States and activities are the basic logical structures, being achievements and accomplishments verbs composed of a state or activity predicate plus a BECOME or an INGR operator, which encode durative or instantaneous changes of state or activity, respectively. The operator CAUSE encodes induced states of affairs.

That is, even though the features encoded in Logical Structures are fundamental for a description of lexical classes, it is necessary to further develop them so as to include other meaning components which are fundamental for a fully fledged semantic description of lexical units. Semantic parameters in Lexical templates are represented as semantic constants (expressed in bold face in the formulae) which may be associated to some of RRG's internal variables; Van Valin and LaPolla (116-118) make a distinction between external (represented with Roman letters) and internal variables (represented with Greek letters): whereas external variables are always syntactically relevant, internal variables are bound to a semantic parameter but are not necessarily expressed syntactically.

Let us consider then the format of the Lexical Template for OE 'writing verbs':

(7) [[**do**' (w, [**use.instrument**' (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on**' (y, x)])]] *CAUSE* [[**do**' (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)' (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do**' (w, [**express.**(β)**.about.**(γ)**. to.**(δ)**.in.language.**(ε)' (w, z)])] & INGR **exist**' (z)]

This representation includes an effector (w) that uses an instrument (x) such that this instrument gets in contact with a surface (expressed with the subevent

BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)) and produces a certain effect (z) —typically some figure or image—; this activity in turn causes the expression on the part of the effector of a certain message such that the message eventually comes into existence.

Note that bracketing in the representation is not accidental: the first part of the template (from the beginning until the operator *CAUSE*) encodes a complex event in terms of which the entity (w) firstly performs an activity which brings about the production of a certain image or figure; that is, OE writing verbs encode features typical of the so-called 'verbs of creation and transformation," and specifically of the 'image creation verbs' in PDE (cf. Levin 1993: 169-175). The most relevant feature of 'image creation verbs' both in PDE and in OE is their feasibility to participate in the image-impression alternation, as exemplified in (8) (Levin 1993, 66-67):

(8) a. The jeweller inscribed the name on the ring
   b. The jeweller inscribed the ring with the name

One interesting feature of OE writing verbs if compared with their PDE equivalents is that, according to the data provided by Levin (66-67), the members of this class that are verbs of writing show only one of the two possible structures of this alternation. Thus, 'scribble' verbs allow only the locative preposition construction (8.a.), and 'illustrate' verbs —where predicates like *autograph* or *letter* are included— appear only in the *with*-construction (8.b.); the verbs that show this alternation in PDE seem to belong to a different class, labelled 'image creation," which includes predicates such as *appliqué, emboss, embroider, engrave, incise, inscribe, mark, paint, set, stamp, tattoo*. The only verb that seems to mean specifically a writing activity is *sign*. However, in OE verbs of 'writing' do appear in both constructions[4]:

(9) Ða awrat he Cristes rode tacen on þæs blindes mannes eagum (Gr. D. 77, 26)
      Then-wrote-he-Christ's-sign-of-the-rood-on-the-blind-man's-eyes
(10) Wæs se beam bocstafan awriten (Elen. Kmbl. 152; El. 91)
      Was-the-beam-with-letters-inscribed
(11) Hi bæron anlicnysse Hælendes on brede afægde and awritene (Bd. I, 25; S.487,4)
      They-bore-the-likeness-of-the-Saviour-on-a-board-figured-and-drawn
(12) Þas race on anum leadenum tabulan mid stafon hi agrofon (Hml. 5. 23. 343)
      This-narrative-account-on-a-leaden-writing-tablet-with-letters-they-inscribed

This can be interpreted as a sign of the difference in meaning between the verbs of these two periods: in OE the connection between inscribing or engraving and our modern conception of writing is still much alive and both activities are

---

[4] Even though some examples will appear repeated alongside the paper, in every occasion they will receive a different number. This is done in order to avoid confusing cross-references in our exposition.

semantically less differentiated than nowadays. For this reason, we believe that OE 'writing' verbs insofar as they express an activity of producing some figure or symbol on some surface can be considered as a subset of the general class of 'image creation' verbs in this period.

The basic activity encoded in this first subevent typically involves the encoding of an effected object, which accounts for the high transitivity of these verbs. Intransitive uses are scarce as it is uncommon not to express the product of the process of creation. In fact, the only examples found in our corpus are:

(13) He wrat mid his finger on ðære eorþan (Jn. Skt. 8, 6, 8)
    He-wrote-with-his-finger-on-the-earth
(14) Wearð gesewen swilce anes mannes hand writende on ðære healle wage (Homl. Th. Ii. 434, 33)
    Was-seen-also-a-man's-hand-writing-on-the-walls-of-the-temple
(15) He sceal warnian ða scep wið ða toweardan costnunga swa swa salomon se wisa awrat on his bec (ÆCHom I, 17(App) B1.1.19.4)
    He-must-warn-the-sheep-against-the-approaching-temptation-just-as-Salomon-the-wise-wrote-on-his-book
(16) heafdes sare genim fifleafan ða wyrt, bewrit þriwa mid þam læstan fingre & mid þam ðuman, ahefe þonne upp of ðære eorðan & gegnid swyþe smale & bind on þæt heafod (Lch I (Herb) B21.1.1.2)
    for-a-headache-take-the-herb-fiveleaf,write-down-three-times-with-the-least-finger-and-with-the-thumb, lift-it-up-from-the-earth-and-grind-it-very-small-and-bind-it-on-the-head
(17) Hi mearcodon mid ðæs lambes blode on heora gedyrum (Tau, Hml. Th. Ii. 266, 7)
    They-marked-with-the-lamb's-blood-on-their-doors

One important consideration is the nature of the object produced: even though in all cases it is primarily some kind of drawn image, this can be of a conventionalized type: letters, words, etc. In these cases, the activity of "writing," as encoded in the first subevent in our template, becomes part of a causal chain in terms of which a message is conveyed. That is, verbs of writing can also show as part of their meaning the typical features of verbs of communication. Writing verbs would differ from other communication verbs in the way the message is transferred; in other words, the first subevent specifies how the message is produced[5]

_____

[5] The manner component is also relevant to establish distinctions among some verbs of writing; for example, OE *gebrefan* is translated as 'to write down shortly or briefly.' These specifications are encoded in the templates for individual predicates as instantiations of the primitive **produce.in.a.manner** (α)' (w, z). Thus, the lexical entry for *gebrefan* would be as follows:

(the location and subsequent incision of marks on a surface by means of an instrument) and at the same time it is the causing activity for the transmission of such a message. Note that the development of the first subevent as it is expressed in the Template marks the difference between the verbs of writing and other classes of verbs of communication such as the verbs of saying (cf. the template for these verbs in Van Valin and La Polla 116-118).

Again, a striking difference emerges in comparison to PDE verbs of writing: whereas nowadays the default assumption is that writing involves communicating, in OE things were not that straightforward, as the following examples illustrate:

(18) Writ ðysne circul mid ðines cnifes orde on anum stane (Lchdm. I. 395, 3)
       Write-the-circle-with-the-point-of-your-knife-on-a-stone
(19) He sealde Moise twa stænene wexbreda mid Godes handa agrafene (Ex. 31, 18)
       He-gave-Moses-two-writing-tablets-of-stone-with-God's-hands-inscribed

The next example seems more indeterminate with regard to whether the action involved is primarily that of 'inscribing' or rather that of 'communicating':

(20) Genim hæslenne sticcan, writ ðinne naman on, ... gefylle mid ðy blode ðone naman (Lchdm. Ii. 104, 7)
       Bring-the-hazel-stick, write-this-name-on, ... fill-with-the-blood-the-name

However, examples (21) and (22) show a closer relation with the meaning of 'writing' as 'expressing a message':

(21) Hroðgar hylt sceawode, on ðæm wæs or written fyrngewinnes (Beo. Th. 3381)
       Hroðgar-the-handle-of-the-sword-showed, on-it-was-the-beginning-written-of-the-primeval-struggle
(22) On ðe wrat wuldres God geryno (Andr. Kmbl. 3018) (An. 1512)
       On-it-wrote-of-glory-God-the-mystery

Once the activity of 'writing' becomes 'saying' the image impression constructions also suffer some variation: the verbs don't seem to occur in the *with* construction, and the object of the locative construction can be either the content

---

[[**do'** (w, [**use.instrument**' (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in. a.brief.manner.**(α)' (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (w, [**express.**(β).**about.**(γ). **to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)' (w, z)])] & INGR **exist'** (z)]

Gif hwylcum cnihte lyste ma þinga and deopra gesetnyssa be him witan þonne we here habba gebreued, þonne... (ByrM 1 (Baker / Lapidge) B20.20.1)
If-any-knight-wishes-more-things-and-deeper-composition-about-him-to-know-than-we-here-have-written-briefly, then...

of the message or the topic about which the message is conveyed. This difference is encoded in the syntax: the content of the message will appear as a direct argument (in accusative), and the topic will be expressed in a prepositional phrase[6]:

(23) Tyn beboda awrat se ælmihtiga on ðam twam tabelum (ÆCHom II, 12.1 B1.2.13)
    Ten-commandments-wrote-the-Almighty-on-these-two-writing-tablets

(24) Marcus leornode of Petres bodunge hu he ða boc gesette ... Lucas ða gospel awrat (Hml. S. 15, 148, 155)
    Mark-learnt-from-Peter's-preaching-how-he-the-book-composed ... Lucas-the-gospel-wrote

(25) Ðara abbuda stær and spell ðysses mynstres on twam bocum ic awrat (Bd. 5, 23; S. 648, 30; S, 23; S. 649, II)
    Of-the-abbots-the-history-and-the-narrative-of-this-monastery-on-two-books-I-wrote

(26) Hi on heora sinoþe ðus writon be him (Bd. S. 5, 19; S. 639, 39)
    They-in-their-synod-thus-wrote-about-him

(27) Matheus se godspellere awrat on þære godspellican gesetnysse. (ÆCHom I, 26 B1.1.28)
    Mathew-the-evangelist-wrote-about-the evangelical-tradition

(28) Ða writeras and ða ðe hi ymbe writon (Bt. 18, 3) (Fox 66, I)
    The-scribes-and-those-that-they-about-wrote

One particular feature of the verbs of communication is the necessity to encode several internal variables (in Greek letters) due to the different possibilities of interpretation of the second argument of the primitive **express'** (x, y). It can either refer to the content of the message (in which case the internal variable β is bound to the external variable corresponding to the second argument):

(29) mycel yfel deð se ðe leas writ (Homl. Th. Ii. 2, 23)
    Much-evil-does-who-falsehood-writes

Or it can make reference to the recipient of the message (**to.** (δ)'), which usually appears as an oblique argument:

(30) Me geþuhte writan ðe, ðu se selusta Theophilus (Lk. Skt. I, 3)
    I-liked-to-write to-you, you-the-honourable-Theophilus

---

[6] In Van Valin and LaPolla's (116-118) description of verbs of saying there is no reference in the template to the topic of the message; however, in her analysis of OE verbs of speech González Orta (2002) —following Wierzbicka (1987)— expresses the necessity to include such meaning component, especially because of its recurrent presence in the syntax of these verbs. This semantic parameter appears encoded as an internal variable in the template: **about.** (γ)'

And even the language used for the transmission of the message (**in.language. (ε)'**) can be overtly expressed, also obliquely:

(31) & þa heht on Englisc gewritan (Bede 2 B9.6.4)
      And-then-ordered-in-English-to-write

It is interesting to note that some of the OE verbs under study show another subsidiary meaning of "bestow, decree," as in:

(32) We him writaþ ðone hagan (Cod. Dip. Kmbl. III. 52, 5-37)
      We-to-him-bestowed-the-enclosure
(33) We writaþ him ðone croft (Cod. Dip. Kmbl. III. 258, 27)
      We-bestowed-him-the-small-field
(34) Nu gewrite ic hire ðæt ðreðra hida lond (C.D: II.100, 12)
      Now-bestowed-I-to-her-the-third-part-of-the-hide-of-land

This second shade of meaning makes some of the verbs of 'writing' be cross-listed in (an)other lexical class(es), and their analysis would fall beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, it is helpful to mention the polysemic nature of these verbs to describe briefly one of the characteristics of our system of lexical decomposition: lexical templates are not only formalized semantic descriptions, but also they constitute cognitive structures susceptible of activation or transfer from one lexical domain to another. One possible explanation of the polysemy of these verbs lies in the fact of their lexical template's being taken as a metonymic extension from the subclass of verbs of transfer of possession: *writan* or *gewritan* mean to 'bestow' if some property is transferred by means of a written document. That is, the complex semantic structure of verbs of giving involves a catenation of events such that one action executed on the part of an agent causes an entity to come to have something. In verbs like *giefan* or *gesellan* the causing action is unspecified, whereas in a verb like *gewritan* (in the sense of 'bestowing') it is the specificity of the type of causing action ('to write') that makes it cognitively salient in opposition to the other verbs of giving. This conceptual salience probably led to a metonymic motivation for a semantic transfer: the causing subevent of writing stands for the whole event of 'transferring by means of written document.' That is, the template in (7) becomes the first part of a causative structure whose second part would be [[*Template of 'writing' verbs*; see (7)] CAUSE [HAVE (x, y)]]. This second structure is the hallmark for the mentioned class of transfer of possession verbs.

2. FROM LEXICAL STRUCTURE TO SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES: THE LEXICAL TEMPLATE MODELING PROCCESS (LTMP)

In the section above, an attempt has been made to unfold the intricacies of the meaning of the OE verbs of writing; as stated also in section 1.1, part of the method adopted for this is based upon the close interrelation between meaning and

syntactic behavior. In this section we advance further in this line of research by accounting for the mechanisms that link the semantic representation as encoded in the Lexical template for this class of verbs and the semantic structures associated to the different constructions where the predicates appear. Such linking mechanism is regulated in the FLM by a general principle (cf. Mairal and Faber 87) and Mairal (56-58):

> *Lexical Template Modeling Process*
> Lexical templates can be modeled by accommodating external variables, instantiating internal variables and operators (*e.g.* CAUSE), or else, by introducing elements resulting from the fusion with other templates iff there is a compatibility between the features in the lexical template and the syntactic construction under scrutiny.

This general principle states that there must be some conditions that must be met to relate the semantic structure expressed in the Lexical template of a verbal class and the semantic configurations of the constructions where the members of such a class participate. Such conditions take the form of lexical rules, among which we can find the following ones which are relevant for the verbs of writing:

> Lexical Mapping Rule 1 'Full Matching': There must be a copying / identification of variables, subevents and operators, between both the canonical Lexical template and the Constructional Template.

A case in point is the transitive construction, as in the example:

(35) Þas race on anum leadenum tabulan mid stafon hi agrofon (Hml. 5. 23. 343)
This-narrative-account-on-a-leaden-writing-tablet-with-letters-they-inscribed

The template corresponding to this sentence is:

(36) [[**do'** (hi, [**use.instrument**' (hi, stæf) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (leaden tabule, stæf)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (stæf, [**produce.in.a.manner**. (α)' (hi, racu)])]]] CAUSE [[**do'** (hi, [**express.**(β).**about.**(γ).**to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)' (hi, racu)])] & INGR **exist'** (racu)]

In this case all external variables —but the one referring to the language used— are lexically expressed and both subevents appear encoded in the sentence, as it is made clear by its meaning. One instance is the following:

(37) Se engel agrof mid his fingere rodetacn on ðam stanum (Hml. Th.1.466, 13)
The-angel-inscribed-with-his-finger-the-sign-of-the-cross-on-the-stone

The fact that 'writing' in OE involves the creation of an image (that may become a message) is reflected in the fact that the members of this class do not frequently appear in intransitive constructions; as mentioned above, from the examples in our corpus only the sentences in (13-17) are intransitive.

The difference between both types of constructions justifies the inclusion of the structure "& INGR **exist'** (z)" as a last component in the Template for the lexical class; this expresses the fact that 'writing' would involve both an activity and a result state, and since the result state is a function of the activity it seems logical to represent it this way. According to Van Valin & LaPolla (111-113) and Van Valin (ch. 2) this structure is typical of certain classes of activity verbs that show accomplishment or telic uses; among these classes, verbs of creation and transformation are included. The crucial difference between both uses lies in the transitivity of the structures: when the predicates appear in transitive constructions with a referential object, we would have an active accomplishment reading, whereas activity uses are typically expressed in intransitive constructions or constructions with a non-referential object[7]. One difference between our proposal and this one consists in considering that the telic structure is more prototypical than the intransitive one, which is in consonance both with the scarce number of intransitive sentences found and with Martín Arista and Caballero's (2003) consideration of writing verbs as prototypically transitive in opposition to, for instance, motion verbs (cf. Cortés and Torres).

The structure corresponding to the activity uses of OE 'writing' verbs is as follows:

(38) [[**do'** (w, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)]) *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, $\emptyset$)])]] CAUSE [**do'** (w, [**express.**(β)**.about.**(γ)**.to.**(δ)**.in.language.**(ε)**'** (w, $\emptyset$)])]]

Example:

(39) He sceal warnian ða scep wið ða toweardan costnunga swa swa salomon se wisa awrat on his bec (ÆCHom I, 17(App) B1.1.19.4)
He-must-warn-the-sheep-against-the-approaching-temptation-just-as-Salomon-the-wise-wrote-on-his-book

According to the LTMP this structure is arrived at by applying both Lexical Mapping Rules 6 and 2 (see below).

---

[7] Non-referential or inherent objects express "an intrinsic facet of the meaning of the verb and [do] not refer specifically to any participants in the event denoted by the verb; [they serve] to characterize the nature of the action rather than to refer to any of the participants" (Van Valin & LaPolla 123). Van Valin & LaPolla (665) state that languages with accusative case-systems like German, Icelandic or Russian case-mark verbs which enter into the activity-active accomplishment alternation as if they are always active accomplishments; this seems to be the case of OE as well, at least as far as 'writing' verbs are concerned, probably because of their being highly transitive:
(a) Sum biþ list-hendig to awritanne word-gerynu (Exon. 79b; Th. 299, 2; Cra. 96)
One-is-cunning-to-write-down-word-mysteries
(b) Ne wene ænig ðæt ic lygewordum leoð somnige, write woþcræfte (Exon. Th. 234, 30); (Ph. 548)
Do-not-anybody-think-that-I-compose-my-lay-of-lying-words, I-write-poetry

Lexical Mapping Rule 2 'Suppression of variables': the variables in the canonical LT must accommodate to the number of variables of the constructional template. Canonical LT variables can be suppressed iff the basic interpretation of the canonical LT is not violated. For example, as can be seen in the template (39) above, the activity use of these verbs involves the non-realization of the second argument. One further case is the instrument subject construction. It involves the implement effector use of instruments and the non-specification of the agent argument; this is captured by means of a **use'** predicate: an activity is performed by an effector who uses an instrument to write the effected object; if the agent is left unexpressed the instrument becomes the next higher ranking argument for actorhood, thus becoming a potential subject of the clause (see next section).

(40) [[**do'** (Ø, [**use.instrument'** (Ø, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])]] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (Ø, [**express.**(β).**about.**(γ).**to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)**'** (Ø, z)])]] & INGR **exist'** (z)]

Examples:

(41) Ðæt gyddendon hæleð, hwæt seo hand write (Cd. Th. 261, 15-21) (Dan. 727-9)
That-recited-men, what-the-hand-writes

(42) Wearð gesewen swilce anes mannes hand writende on ðære healle wage (Homl. Th. Ii. 434, 33)
Was-seen-also-a-man's-hand-writing-on-the-walls- of-the-temple

Lexical Mapping Rule 3 'Event Identification Condition': The semantics of the construction must allow it to be a proper subevent of the canonical lexical template (be this an adjectival, adverbial or prepositional phrase); *e.g.* the locative construction of the image impression alternation is identified with the subevent BECOME **be-on'** (y, x) in the template.

(43) [**do'** (w, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) ∧ <u>BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)</u>])]] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, z)])]]

Example:

(44) Writ ðysne circul mid ðines cnifes orde on anum stane (Lchdm. I. 395, 3).
Write-the-circle-with-the-point-of-the-knife-on-a-stone

Note that there is the possibility of finding the locative construction (and any other of the ones mentioned in this section) in instances in which the verbs convey the meaning of "communication," as in the following sentence where there is also an instrument argument expressed[8]:

---

[8] In these cases, the constructional templates also would include the second subevent of the maximal template: [...] CAUSE [[**do'** (w, [express.(β).**about.**(γ).**to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)**'** (w, z)])]] & INGR **exist'** (z)]

(45) Þas race on anum leadenum tabulan mid stafon hi agrofon (Hml. 5. 23. 343)
      This-narrative-account-on-a-leaden-writing-tablet-with-letters-they-in-
      scribed

Lexical Mapping Rule 4 'Internal Variable fusion': the internal variables en-coded in the canonical LT must be compatible with the semantic content of the constructional template. This rule accounts for the semantic compatibility of the verbs of 'writing' as verbs of communication, and allows for the fusion of the internal variables of the second subevent as arguments in the corresponding sentences, given their semantic compatibility as all of them can refer to the participants of a process of communication: the content of a message, the topic about which the message is given, the recipient of the message and the language used. See examples 30 above (with recipient); 26, 27 and 28 (with topic expressed); and 31 (with language)

(46) [[**do'** (w) [**use.instrument**' (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on**' (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner**.(α)' (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (w, [**express.**(β).**about.**(γ). **to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ϵ)' (w, z)])] & INGR **exist**' (z)]

Lexical Maping Rule 6 'Partial Matching': The semantics of the construc-tional template must be compatible with at least one of the components of the canonical LT. This rule is especially important in the case of OE 'writing' verbs as it allows for the basic reading of 'writing' as producing images on surfaces, which corresponds then to the first component of the LT:

(47) [[**do'** (w) [**use.instrument**' (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on**' (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** (x, [**produce. in.a.manner**. (α)' (x, z)])]
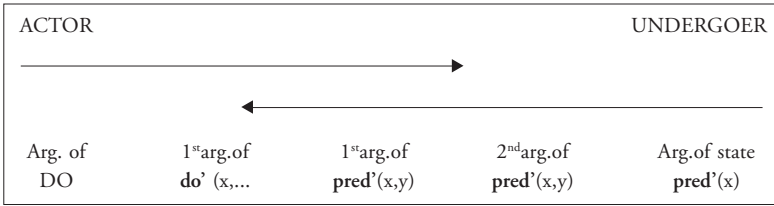
Example:

(48) He wrat mid his finger on ðære eorþan (Jn. Skt. 8, 6, 8)
      He-wrote-with-his-finger-on-the-earth

3. FROM CONSTRUCTIONS TO MORPHOSYNTACTIC CODING

Once the LTMP has been applied and the corresponding constructions have been obtained, there is a second phase of linking whose task is to bind the template of a construction to the actual morphosyntactic configurations of the sentences by means of which the construction is expressed. In this second phase the FLM makes use of the linking algorithm as devised in RRG (Van Valin & LaPolla ch. 7 and 9). This linking mechanism relies primarily on the assignment of Macrorole functions to the arguments in a given template. Macroroles are "generalizations across the argument-types found in particular verbs which have significant gram-matical consequences" (Van Valin & LaPolla 139). Two Macroroles are distinguished: Actor —or generalized agent-like participant— and Undergoer —or generalized

patient-like participant— and their assignment to some of the arguments in a template is predicted by means of the following scale (Van Valin & LaPolla 146):

ACTOR				UNDERGOER
Arg. of DO	1st arg.of **do'** (x,...	1st arg.of **pred'**(x,y)	2nd arg.of **pred'**(x,y)	Arg.of state **pred'**(x)

[' ⟶ ' = increasing markedness of realization of argument as macrorole]

The assignment of both Actor and Undergoer is in most cases quite straightforward: in the default situation for all the constructional templates described in the section above the first arguments in the structure become Actors since they are arguments of an activity predicate in the logical structure (**do'** (w)...). With regard to Undergoer assignment the argument expressed with the external variable (z) tends consistently to receive such macrorole status, since it is usually the last argument of the constructional structures. The following cases illustrate the unmarked situation for Macroroles assignment with OE verbs of 'writing':

(49) [[**do'** (w_{ACTOR}, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (w, [**express.**(β). **about.**(γ).**to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)**'** (w, z)])] & INGR **exist'** $(z)_{UNDERGOER}$]

(50) [[**do'** (w_{ACTOR}, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, $z_{UNDERGOER}$)])]]

The sentences corresponding to these structures are respectively:

(51) Þas race on anum leadenum tabulan mid stafon hi agrofon (Hml. 5. 23. 343)
This-narrative-account-on-a-leaden-writing-tablet-with-letters-they-inscribed
[[**do'** (hi_{ACTOR}, [**use.instrument'** (hi, stæf) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (leaden tabule, stæf)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (stæf, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (stæf, racu)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (hi, [**express.**(β).**about.**(γ).**to.**(δ).**in.language.**(ε)**'** (hi, racu)])] & INGR **exist'** ($racu_{UNDERGOER}$)]

(52) Ða awrat he Cristes rode tacen on þæs blindes mannes eagum (Gr. D. 77, 26)
Then-wrote-he-Christ's-sign-of-the-rood-on-the-blind-man's-eyes
[[**do'** (he_{ACTOR}, [**use.instrument'** (he, Ø) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (blindes mannes eagum, Ø)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** (Ø, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (Ø, Cristes rode $tacen_{UNDERGOER}$)])]]

There are, however, some cases which are worth commenting as far as Macrorole assignment is concerned:

The first interesting situation is given in the so-called Instrument Subject Construction, which reflects the implement use of the instrumental argument. Let us reproduce the template for this construction:

(40) [[**do'** (Ø, [**use.instrument'** (Ø, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (Ø, [**express.**(β)**.about.**(γ)**. to.**(δ)**.in.language.**(ε)**'** (Ø, z)])] & INGR **exist'** (z)]

If we compare the template in (40) with the template for the whole verbal class:

(7) [[**do'** (w, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) ∧ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [[**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)**'** (x, z)])]] CAUSE [[**do'** (w, [**express.**(β)**.about.**(γ)**. to.**(δ)**.in.language.**(ε)**'** (w, z)])] & INGR **exist'** (z)]

we can appreciate that the basic difference between both templates is the non-realization of the first argument (w) of the initial activity predicate in the case of (40). That is, in (7) there are two possible effectors in the template, the one corresponding to the agent argument and the (x) participant that makes reference to an instrument; note that the template involves that (w) uses (x) to act on (y) and that a causal chain is involved (expressed by the variable CAUSE in italics) as it is (x) —insofar as it is used by (w)— that causes some effect (z). It is the potentiality for being an effector that allows the instrument argument to become an implement when the agent is left unspecified. In terms of the Scale of Macrorole Assignment if (w) is not expressed the next candidate for Actorhood is the instrument, thus becoming an Actor-implement. Such macrorole status is reflected in the morphology of the argument, which will appear in nominative case, as in:

(53) Ðæt gyddendon hæleð, hwæt seo hand write (Cd. Th. 261, 15-21) (Dan. 727-9)
That-recited-men, what-the-hand-writes

If the agent argument is expressed the instrument will appear either in dative or with the instrumental preposition *mid*, as a sign of its non-Macrorole status, as in the following case:

(54) heafdes sare genim fifleafan ða wyrt, [þu_ACTOR] bewrit þriwa mid þam læstan fingre & mid þam ðuman_INSTRUMENT-NON MACROROLE, ahefe þonne upp of ðære eorðan & gegnid swyþe smale & bind on þæt heafod (Lch I (Herb) B21.1.1.2)
for-a-headache-take-the-herb-fiveleaf, [you] write-down-three-times-with-the-least-finger-and-with-the-thumb, lift-it-up-from-the-earth-and-grind-it-very-small-and-bind-it-on-the-head

A second interesting case appears in the non-locative variant of the image-impression alternation, as in the example (10), reproduced again here:

(55) Wæs se beam bocstafan awriten (Elen. Kmbl. 152; El. 91)
       Was-the-beam-with-letters-inscribed

       Let us also reproduce the corresponding template:

(43) $[[$**do'** (w, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) $\wedge$ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)'** (x, z)])]

       According to the Scale of Macrorole Assignment the default choice for Undergoer is the theme-effected (z) argument, which is the case, as the following examples show:

(56) Se engel agrof mid his fingere rodetacn on ðam stanum (Hml. Th.1.466, 13)
       The-angel-inscribed-with-his-finger-the-sign-of-the-cross-on-the-stone
(57) Ða awrat he Cristes rode tacen on þæs blindes mannes eagum (Gr. D. 77, 26)
       Then-wrote-he-Christ's-sign-of-the-rood-on-the-blind-man's-eyes

       Notice that the typical feature of Undergoer arguments is their accusative marking in active voice, or nominative in passive constructions. However, in a passive sentence like No. 10, repeated as 55, the argument in nominative is the locative participant (y). How is this possible? Whereas Actor assignment does not seem to allow for any variation from the default description expressed in the Macrorole Scale, according to Van Valin & LaPolla 146) the behaviour of Undergoers is somewhat different: there is the possibility of a marked Undergoer assignment between Theme and Recipients / Locations arguments. That is, in the case of (55) and (56) the Theme argument receives macrorole status, as predicted by the Scale in Van Valin & La-Polla (146). However, it is possible to regard as primarily affected the entity occupying the first position in structures like BECOME / INGR (NOT) **have / be-LOC.'** If we consider the structure in (43), macrorole assignment then would be as follows for sentence (10): the first argument in the logical structure (w) receives Actor status, since it is the first effector in the template. If the Location argument (y) is perceived as primarily affected it will receive Undergoer status, thus leaving the Theme participant (z) as a non-macrorole argument. Given the potentiality but non-realization of (z) for Undergoerhood, the rule in (54) is triggered again so that (z) is marked with *mid* + dative. Note that there is one co-occurrence restriction in these cases: the instrument argument (x) must be left unspecified, yielding it unavailable for Undergoer status either. Thus the structure for the locative variant of the image impression alternation is as follows:

(58) $[[$**do'** (w$_{ACTOR}$, [**use.instrument'** (w, x) $\wedge$ BECOME **be-on'** (y, x)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** (x, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)'** (x, z$_{UNDERGOER}$)])]

and the structure for its non-locative variant is:

(59) $[[$**do'** (w$_{ACTOR}$, [**use.instrument'** (w, $\varnothing$) $\wedge$ BECOME **be-on'** (y$_{UNDERGOER}$, $\varnothing$)])] *CAUSE* [**do'** ($\varnothing$, [**produce.in.a.manner.**(α)'** ($\varnothing$, z)])]

Thus, it seems that there is a consistent behaviour / function of the instrumental marking (either by means of a dative case or by means of the preposition *mid*) in OE: it serves the purpose of signalling an argument that is a potential but non-realized Macrorole argument, in much the same vein as the preposition *with* functions in PDE English. Therefore, it is possible to formulate a rule that accounts for the use of dative (in the so-called instrumental meaning) and *mid* in OE in similar terms to the one proposed for *with* in Van Valin & LaPolla (381):

Rule for assigning dative ('instrumental') / mid *in Old English*:

Given two arguments, x and y, in a logical structure, with x lower than or equal to y on the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy, and a specific grammatical status (macrorole, head of NP), assign dative ('instrumental') / *mid* to the y argument iff it is not selected for that status.

Once established the status of the arguments as far as the Macrorole Scale is concerned, there is in our model a second phase of linking whose task is to map the constructional templates into their corresponding syntactic representation. This task is fulfilled by the following linking rules (Van Valin and LaPolla 326; see also Cortés & Torres)[9]:

Linking algorithm semantics-syntax (simplified version)
1. Determine the Actor-Undergoer assignment, following the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy.
2. Assign specific morphosyntactic status to [-WH] arguments in logical structure: default subject selection (accusative languages) → Actor.
3. Assign the arguments the appropriate case markers / adpositions and assign the predicate the appropriate agreement marking (language-specific).

Given its language-specific character, rule 3 in the algorithm needs further elaboration into a set of case assignment rules for Old English:

Case assignment rules for Old English
a. Assign nominative case to the highest-ranking macrorole argument (i.e. Actor)
b. Assign accusative case to the other macrorole argument
c. Assign dative case to non-macrorole arguments (default: may be overridden by specific lexical units or constructions).

The following sentences with some of the verbs under study show the effect of the linking algorithm and the case assignment rules:

Mª A. MARTÍN DÍAZ & F.J. CORTÉS RODRÍGUEZ

---

[9] Because of the space restrictions and the desire to simplify explanations, we offer a much-reduced version of the actual linking algorithm. The rules affecting the syntactic position and behaviour of [+WH] constituents and adjuncts have been omitted and the notion of "privileged syntactic argument" has been substituted for that of "subject" although they are not necessarily identical.

(60) Beda$_{ACTOR \rightarrow NOM}$ ðe ðas boc gedihte (Swt A. S. Rdr. 102, 224)
 Bede-who-composed-this-book

(61) Genim hæslenne sticcan, writ ðinne naman$_{UNDERGOER \rightarrow ACC}$ on, [...] gefylle mid
 ðy blode ðone naman (Lchdm. Ii. 104, 7)
 Bring-the-stick-of-hazel, write-the-name-on, [...] fill-with-the-blood-the-
 name

(62) Þat awrat se ælmihtiga god him$_{NON\ MR \rightarrow DT}$ twa stænene wexbredu mid his
 agenum finger (ÆCHom II, 12.1 B1.2.13)
 Then-wrote-the-almighty-god-to-him-two-writing-tablets-of-stone-with-
 his-own-finger

4. CONCLUSIONS

One of the challenges in the study of the vocabulary of historical languages
is the difficulty to ascertain the meaning intricacies of a given (group of) word(s).
In addition to this problem, one challenging enterprise of modern grammatical
theories is to provide a coherent description of the interrelation between the se-
mantic representation of lexical units and their morphological and syntactic coding
in actual expressions. Our aim in this paper has been to illustrate how both tasks
can be, at least, partially, undertaken in the study of the Old English lexicon. The
assumption that there is a close connection between semantics and syntax has been
approached from the perspective that the syntactic behavior of predicates has much
to say about their meaning. It is through a close inspection of the syntactic con-
structions where OE verbs of writing appear that it has been possible to (re)construct
their meaning. As explained in section 2, these verbs had a semantic structure richer
than that of their PDE equivalents. The semantic analysis of this verbal class has
also been encoded in a formalized structure —the Lexical Template— whose make-
up follows closely the system of lexical representation in Role and Reference Gram-
mar and the recent contributions within the Functional Lexematic Model. The
design of this Template has also enabled us to account for the semantics of the
constructions where the members of this class of predicates participate; such con-
structions are also described with their corresponding templates, and the relation
between the Template for 'writing' verbs and those of the constructions is explained
by means of a set of linking rules following the "Lexical Template Modeling Proc-
ess." Finally, in section 3 an account has been provided of the interface between the
constructional templates and the morphosyntactic structures where they appear
expressed.

It is our contention that the methodology exposed in this paper can be a
useful tool for the construction of coherent lexicological descriptions of the vo-
cabulary of languages and also for the elaboration of grammatical descriptions based
on a solid theoretical apparatus.

WORKS CITED

Bosworth, Joseph & T. Northcote Toller. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. 1898. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1973.

Cortés Rodríguez, Francisco J. & Ricardo Mairal Usón. "A Preliminary Design for a Syntactic Dictionary of Old English on Semantic Principles." *A Changing World of Words (Studies in English Historical Lexicography, Lexicology and Semantics)*. Ed. Javier E. Díaz Vera. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2002. 3-46.

Cortés Rodríguez, Francisco J. & Dolores Torres Medina. "Old English Verbs-of-Running: Linking Semantic Representation and Morphosyntactic Structure." *Folia Linguistica Historica* XXIV (2003). Forthcoming.

Coseriu, Eugenio. *Principios de semántica estructural*. 1977. Trans. Marcos Martínez Hernández. Madrid: Gredos, 1981.

Díaz Vera, Javier E., ed. *A Changing World of Words (Studies in English Historical Lexicography, Lexicology and Semantics)*. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2002.

Dik, Simon C. *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part I: The Structure of the Clause*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997a.

—— *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part II: Complex and Derived Constructions*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997b.

Dowty, David. *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar*. Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979.

Faber, Pamela & Ricardo Mairal. *Constructing a Lexicon of English Verbs*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1999.

Fillmore, Charles J. "The Mechanisms of 'Construction Grammar.'" *BLS* 14 (1988): 35-55.

Geckeler, Horst. *Semántica estructural y teoría del campo léxico*. Trans. Marcos Martínez Hernández. Madrid: Gredos, 1976.

Goldberg, Adele E. *A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure*. Chicago & London: The U of Chicago P, 1995.

González Orta, Marta M. *Diccionario sintáctico del léxico verbal del inglés antiguo: verbos de habla*. Diss. U de La Laguna, 2002.

Hall, J.R. Clark. *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996 (1960).

Kay, Christian H. & Thomas Chase. "Semantic Approaches to an Historical Thesaurus." *Meaning and Lexicography*. Ed. Jerzy Tomaszczyk & Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1990. 303-313.

Kay, Paul. *Words and the Grammar of Context*. Stanford: CSLI, 1997.

LEVIN, Beth. *English Verb Classes and Alternations: A Preliminary Investigation*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993.

MAIRAL USÓN, Ricardo & Pamela FABER. "Lexical Templates and Functional Grammar." *New Perspectives on Predicate Argument Structure in Functional Grammar*. Ed. R. Mairal & M.J. Pérez. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002. 39-94.

—— "Lexical Templates and Syntactic Structures: The Design of a Lexical Grammar Model". Unpublished manuscript, 2002.

MARTÍN ARISTA, Javier & Laura CABALLERO GONZÁLEZ. "Arguments or Macroroles? Two Functional Approaches to Old English Quirky Case." *Journal of English Studies* 3 (2003).

MARTÍN MINGORANCE, Leocadio. *El modelo lexemático-funcional: el legado lingüístico de Leocadio Martín Mingorance*. Ed. Amalia Marín Rubiales. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1998.

MITCHELL, Bruce. *Old English Syntax*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1985.

MURRAY, J.A.H., et al., eds. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1971.

ROBERTS, Jane, Christian Kay, & Lynne GRUNDY. *A Thesaurus of Old English*. 2 vols. London: King's College Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 1995.

TOLLER, T. Northcote & Alistair CAMPBELL. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary: Supplement*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1972.

VAN VALIN, Robert D. Jr. *The Syntax-Semantics-Pragmatics Interface: An Introduction to Role and Reference Grammar*. Cambridge UP. Forthcoming.

VAN VALIN, Robert D. Jr. & Randy LAPOLLA. *Syntax: Structure, Meaning and Function*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.

VENDLER, Zeno. *Linguistics in Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1967.

WIERZBICKA, Anna. *English Speech Act Verbs: A Semantic Dictionary.* Sydney: NSW, 1987.