

A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF NON-FINITE (INFINITIVE) COMPLEMENTATION IN CHAUCERIAN ENGLISH

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1. INTRODUCTION

The major aim of this paper is to provide a picture of how the system of non-finite complementation was configured by the end of the 14th century. For this purpose, we will take into account both bare and to-infinitive clauses, this is to say, those structures that Huddleston defines as non-tensed VP (1984: 210), but only when they are fulfilling a nominal function. Ing-clauses and -ed clauses have been consequently excluded from our survey.

These complement clauses will be viewed, mainly, from two perspectives: semantic and syntactic. For the syntactical study we will resort to the descriptive framework of Quirk et al. (1985), without disregarding other authors' points of view (Huddleston, Warner, Visser, Mosse). The semantic analysis, in its turn, is based on Noonan's study (1985), which can be considered one of the most exhaustive ones on the semantics of complementation.

The corpus chosen to carry out this analysis consists of two different passages from the *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer as edited by W.W. Skeat in *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1967). Chaucer was selected because he has been considered as one of the best writers in English and because in the *Tales* we can observe different uses of language in the voice of different characters belonging to several social classes. The pieces selected are "The Prologue", where the purpose of the whole work is explained and no dialogue is included, and "The Nonnes Preestes Tale", where a good amount of direct speech appears and each character has a particular way of using language¹. They total around 12,000 words, all of them written in verse, and though this is only a small part of Chaucer's work, it can certainly give us some hints of how non-finite complementation was by the time he was writing.

2. SYNTAX OF NON-FINITE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

That complement clauses occur in certain positions typical of noun phrases has been long discussed, since some obvious differences exist between noun phrases (NP) and Infinitive Clauses (InfCl), such as those pointed out by Emonds (1972: 21-ff). Nominal to-infinitive clauses may function, according to Quirk et al. (1985: @15.10), as Subject (S), Direct Object (DO), Subject Complement (Cs), Appositive and Complement of an Adjective. What Quirk et al. call “appositive complement clause” is equivalent to the more general term of “noun complementation” and it can appear both in restrictive or non-restrictive apposition. As regards what these same authors denominate DO we have labelled “catenative construction” (in Huddleston’s (1980) broader sense of “catenative”). This catenative construction includes two different patterns: one with an intervening noun phrase [VP NP (to)-InfCl] and another without it [VP (to)-InfCl].

All these syntactic functions fulfilled by Infinitive Complement Clauses have been found in our corpus. The constructions have been classified according to whether the predicate they depend on is verbal, adjectival or nominal. However, no independent InfCl has been taken into consideration and certain other limits have been marked as well in order to avoid dealing with structures which remain in a borderline area. This is the reason why all constructions containing a nuance of comparison have been excluded, both those of the type

- (1) 1.4466 No-thing ne liste him thanne for to crowe.

and those complementizing an adjective preceded by *so*, *too* or followed by *enough*.

- (2) 1.4339 Thilke tale is al to long to telle.

Another difficulty arises when analyzing InfCl since some of them can be considered to convey a shade of finality. Some cases were clearly excluded whereas some others had to be included on the grounds that they could not be introduced by *in order to*, being this a sign of their adverbial character.

One more type of infinitive related to verbs has been excluded, namely, that which depends on modal auxiliaries. The criteria used to decide whether a verbal form should be considered as modal or not are those posed by Palmer (1979), Huddleston (1980) and Quirk et al. (1985). But since these authors deal with the status of modals in Present Day English, we have resorted to Traugott’s work (1972) in order to examine the peculiar situation of modals in the period we are dealing with². Similarly, some other cases fall out of our scope as is that of InfCl functioning as modifiers of nouns. In this respect, our distinction between InfCl as modifier of a noun and InfCl as complement of a noun is based on Huddleston (1984: 305-311).

Ninety two complement constructions were found in the corpus and analyzed. Their distribution according to the predicate in the matrices on which they depend is shown in table 1 below:

Table 1.

InfCl	Cases	%
on a verb	77	83.7
on a noun	5	5.4
on an adjective	10	10.9
total	92	100

The two following sections deal with the syntactic units on which the infinitive clauses in the corpus depend, basically verb and subject.

2.1. COMPLEMENT CLAUSES DEPENDING ON A VERB

Different syntactic patterns can be said to represent InfCl depending on a verb. Such patterns have been arranged in Table 2, where the number of cases and the percentage of the total this represents have been also included. Some variants deserving commentary can be found within the syntactic patterns mentioned, mainly those included under the general patterns VP (to)-Inf and VP NP (to)-Inf. All of them will be dealt with later on.

Table 2. (SCI stands for Subject Clause)

Pattern	Cases	%
SCI V Cs	3	3.9
it V Scl	2	2.6
it V Cs Scl	4	5.2
Cs V Scl	2	1.3
Cs V it Scl	1	1.3
IO V it Scl	1	1.3
DO of Cl V Scl	1	1.3
SCI IO V	1	1.3
DO of Cl Cs Scl	1	1.3
VP NP (to) Inf	28	36.4
VP (to) Inf	33	42.9
TOTAL	77	100

2.1. INFINITIVE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES AS SUBJECT

Infinitive clauses in subject function appear in the corpus with the following predicates: *be acordaunt*, *be signe*, *avaunce*, *bisnesse* (*be one's bisnesse*), *wone* (*be one's wone*), *be fair* (3 cases), *nedeth* (2 cases), *be looth*, *leste*, *confort* (*be confort*), *be longe*, *be worth*, *ioye* (*be a ioye*).

Some preliminary considerations must be made before analyzing every particular instance. In the first place, as Mossé affirms, the use of an infinitive as subject is not very frequent in ME. Kerkhof, in his study about the English of Chaucer, declares the same, but referring to “plain infinitive” only (1966: @82). In the second place, we should bear in mind that in OE the infinitive was always extraposed (Mitchell, 1964: @1537 and Visser, 1970: @898) but that, due to the influence of Latin, some non-extraposed cases begin to appear. However, something else favours this phenomenon: the tendency, common to all western languages, to avoid that a short unity should take place in sentence final position.

As a matter of fact, that most part of the infinitives functioning as subject in this corpus are extraposed (12 extraposed subjects and 4 non-extraposed) could be regarded as a sign of the evolution of English. Though in PE extraposition involves the obligatory insertion of *it* in the position formerly occupied by the subject, this was not necessarily so in earlier stages of the language. Thus, a sentence in which extraposition occurs can be said to contain two subjects: the postponed subject and the anticipatory *it* or “prop *it* subject” in Quirk’s terminology (1985: @10.26). According to Visser (1970: @908), *it* would be the real subject and the (to)-Inf would only be its complement. Later on, he considers the InfCl as the apposition of a “heralding *it*”. Visser also affirms that the *It listeth me* type prevailed due to the use of the anticipatory *it* because it looks more like the normal sentence pattern S V (1970: @57). He does not make explicit whether the infinitive is a subject or a causative object like *neden* and *semen* (1970: @33). The typical extraposed example could be illustrated as follows:

(3) l. 246-7 It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce, / for to delen with no swich poraille.

But this extraposed pattern can take place in copulative constructions as well, so that a Cs may appear as in the lines below:

(4) l. 376 It is ful fair to been y-clept ma dame.

(5) l. 785 ...it was noght worth to make it wys

There is one case in which the anticipatory subject is not in its habitual front position and appears, instead, right beside the extraposed InfCl. Prosodic requirements may have produced this inversion in the habitual order of the elements of the sentence:

(6) l. 4067 ...such a Ioye was it to here hem singe

Example (7) renders still another example of the use of this anticipatory *it* in a very different way, though included in the same pattern IO V it SCI:

(7) l. 37-9 Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,/ to telle yow al the condicioun/
of ech of hem...

Before proceeding, we need to consider, though briefly, those constructions called “impersonal”. Warner affirms that InfCl were very common and apparently modelled on Latin after verbs of knowing, thinking and declaring. But Visser discusses this and illustrates his explanation with an example from this same corpus (the one we numbered (5)) that is, at the same time, an example of subject infinitive clause. According to this author (1970: @268) the personal pronoun morpheme develops two allomorphs in the ME period: on the one hand, the unstressed, mostly proclitic ones (*I, he, she*), and on the other, the stressed (oblique) ones (*me, him, her*) used when the pronoun stands by itself. The use of oblique cases might be due to a desire to give the subject

more prominence and could also be looked upon as a semantic development of the OE impersonal construction *him lyketh*. Visser affirms that many of these constructions remained in use until the 15th or 16th century. Since the oblique pronouns are occupying a subject position, analogy operates so that they are apprehended as real subjects interchangeable with the allomorphs *I, he, she*. In other cases, as those with an intervening NP, we find oblique cases due to attraction (Visser, 1970: @271). In our present example, and adopting Mossé's point of view, the analysis would result in the following:

(7) *Me (IO) thinketh (V) it acordaunt to resoun to telle yow...(S)*

This analysis is equivalent to PE "It seems to me that..." where *to me* is an IO and where the verb is inflected to agree in number with the SCI. The rest of the sentences with subject complement clauses studied in this corpus do not contain the prop word *it* though they also deserve some comment.

Though it is argued that the subjectivization of complement clauses does not occur in ModE (Traugott, 1972) we can observe that some examples of non-extraposed SCI appear in this late 14th century corpus, of which only two (with pattern SCI V Cs) will be mentioned:

- (8) l. 225-6 Unto a povre ordre for to yive / is signe that a man is wel y-shrive
 (9) l. 319-20 To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse / by good ensample, was his
 bisinisse

Another non-extraposed instance is

- (10) l. 750 Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us leste

where *to drinke* is the subject of the impersonal colligation *us leste*. The fact that the clause preceding the comma has the same referent as the of the infinitive *to drinke* (i.e.: *wyn* is the "logical DO" of the infinitive clause) makes the line look as not having a straightforward word order. Except for this, the sentence is absolutely regular with non-extraposed subject (SCI IO Impersonal Verb).

Finally, some remarks will be made about those structures that, though having an extraposed SCI, still lack an anticipatory subject to be placed in the vacated slot. This phenomenon is traditionally known as "vacuous extraposition" and was quite common in the stage of language to which this corpus belongs. There seems to be a connection between the absence of a heralding pronoun and the occurrence of an adverbial or an oblique pronoun as IO in initial position of the sentence preceding the verb (Warner, 1982: 78-ff). We can illustrate this kind of structure by resorting to the impersonal colligations shown and to the following lines in which the infinitival subject takes end-position and the Cs, front-position:

- (11) l. 773-4 ...confort ne mirthe is noon / to ryde by the weye dounb as a
 stoon

with a variant:

(12) l. 486 Ful looth were him to cursen for his tythes

Besides this structure we have found in the corpus some instances that do not conform to the typical syntactic pattern of sentence with extraposed SCI since one of the clausal constituents has been shifted to front-position. In the two cases found in our analysis, it is the DO of the infinitive clause that is removed from its habitual position. We should take into account that front position is used (if an inversion process has taken place) to enhance or emphasize the fronted element in a similar way to what happens in cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions. Again, rhyme can be another reason for this fronting.

(13) l. 462 *Thereof* nedeth nat to speke as nouthe

(14) l. 784 *Our counseil* was not longe for to seche

The underlined constituents are the DO of *to speke* and *to seche*, respectively. The difference between these two structures is that the former is an impersonal one and the latter contains a copulative verb and a Cs.

2.1.2. Some remarks

Before going any further it seems convenient to make some remarks about certain verbal forms which will appear in some of the following patterns and which have some special characteristics. They deserve commentary since they are forms involved in a process of transformation at this particular stage of language.

Wolde.

Visser affirms that *wolde*, when functioning as a full verb, had the meaning of “intend” or “wish” and we have included in our analysis those cases which could somehow be into this situation.

Letten.

According to Mossé, *let* + inf can have two different orientations, to wit, it can mean “allow” or it can be a hortative mood to form periphrases. We have only considered the cases in which it is equivalent to “allow” and have consequently disregarded the rest.

Maken.

It alternates with *do* as causative verbs. Visser (1970: @1235) applies the label “infinitive-object” to the constructions with *make\ cause\ do* + infinitive. He mentions some cases with intervening NP among his examples and says that they are frequent without *to* and that there are a few cases with *for to*.

Ginnan. Gan.

If we are to follow Visser (1970: @1260, @1269, @1477), *beginnan* first appears instead of *onginnan* and *aginnan* in Ælfric. *Ginnan* is an aphetic form of the

latter which is weakened to *gan* in order to form the ME periphrastic preterite. Since it only occurs in verse (as is our case), its presence should be considered a matter of prosodic exigency because it affords an extra syllable and enables the poet to use an infinitive as a rhyme word.

Kerkhof (1966: @45) believes that “The uses of *gan* range over a wide field, extending from a verb meaning *to begin* to the function of a mere stop-gap, only used for metrical reasons”. It can denote inchoative or ingressive aspect, but *gan* is meaningless when it is merely used to enable the infinitive to take end-position if exacted by the rhyme. However, it is quite reasonable to argue that both for Chaucer and for his readers and listeners the *gan* constructions had certain overtones that escape us as posed by this same author (1966: @47-49)³.

2.1.3. *Catenative constructions*

The term “catenative” will be here used in Huddleston’s sense (1984: 142), as a main verb which takes non-tensed clauses as complements, instead of referring to them as infinitival objects since they do not exactly coincide with this definition. According to this author, the occurrence of a complement of a given kind depends on the presence of a verb of an appropriate subclass, so that complements may be obligatory and their number is limited in a clause.

As said in 2., this type of infinitive complementation can be found directly following the verb in thematrix clause in the pattern VP (to)-Inf or after an intervening noun phrase (VP NP (to)-Inf). In this section we shall deal with each of them separately.

2.1.3.1. Pattern VP (to)-Inf

This construction will be considered first since it is much more simple than the other one we will be studying in some detail. The predicates that occur in matrices with this type of complementation are: *longen*, *willen* (4 cases), *bigynnan* (5 cases), *liste*, *wiste*, *acorden*, *lette* (2 cases), *love*, *thenken* (*I am bithoght*), *lyken*, *vouche-sauf*, *gan* (8 cases), *desyren*, *bidden* and *deynen*. A total of thirty-three complement clauses corresponding to this pattern have been found in the corpus. Though it has been labelled in a different way it could be compared to the traditionally known “monotransitive complementation” (for verbs which use a single complement in a particular case though in other occasions they may take more than one).

We will examine some different approaches to this point and will subsequently adopt one to enable us to fulfill our analysis. The authors who will merit our attention are mainly Quirk et al., Huddleston and Warner, though some others will be referred to as well.

When dealing with the types of verb complementation, Quirk et al. (1985: @16.20-ff) defend the existence of four such types: copular (when a copulative verb is involved), monotransitive (the one we have just mentioned), complex transitive (which involves the existence of an Object Complement) and ditransitive (both a direct and an indirect object exist). Inside the general type of complementation known as monotransitive, complementation by a non-finite clause is a subtype (cf. Quirk, 1985: @16.28 and 16.36). What we have called VP (to)-Inf pattern, Quirk labels “Subjectless infinitive clause as direct object”. In this case, he points out, the “understood” subject of the infinitive clause is always the same as the subject of the superordinate clause. This type of complementation does not include what Quirk calls “catenative verbs” (in a much more restricted way than the one we adopt here) which link the subject

with the non-finite complement in a copular-like relationship, rather.

This concept of infinitive clauses as (subjectless) DO is very similar to the idea posited by Kerkhof (1966: @92) that there is a DO function of the infinitive after verbs like *bigynnen*, *preien* and *desyren*. The same can be affirmed of Visser, who establishes that the pattern VP (to)-Inf is a direct consecution whereas *that* with an intervening NP is an indirect or interrupted consecution (1970: @1174).

Contrarily, Huddleston adopts a different approach. Though he also makes a distinction between ditransitive and complex-transitive verbs, (1984: 194-ff) complementation ranges between verbs followed by one single constituent as in (15) and two different constituents as in (16):

- (15) Ed considered Liz a great asset
 (16) Ed made *Liz angry*

When dealing with infinitive complement clauses without an intervening NP, Huddleston considers that the subject of this subordinate clause can be recovered as “understood subject” in two different ways:

1) by considering it as a semantic concept, we can recover it as in the example with the verb *expect*

- (17) Ed expects | to amuse Kim

with a passive version with non-equivalent meaning

- (17a) Kim expects to be amused by Ed

2) by considering it as a syntactic concept, we can recover the subject as in the following example with the verb *seem*

- (18) Ed seems | to amuse | Kim

with a passive version whose propositional meaning is the same

- (18a) Kim seems to be amused by Ed⁴

Whereas in the first case we find a direct semantic relation between the subject and the catenative *expects* so that *Ed* is both the notional and grammatical subject, in the second case the relation is not established between the verb *seems* and *Ed*, but between *seems* and *Ed to amuse Kim*. This idea was first proposed by Jespersen (1909-1949: @19.3.6) and later followed by Transformational Grammar.

Transformational Grammar introduced the concepts of “raising” and “equi-deletion” widely used nowadays. Both “raising” and “equi” are terms applied to particular processes taking place inside the sentence and which are here used to refer to predicates. These processes help us find out whether the subject in the superordinate clause

is also the subject of the subordinate clause or not. Transformational Grammar proposed that constructions derive from underlying structures different from what we have in the surface which, having undergone some of these processes, became what they are. Following this line, Huddleston establishes two classes of verbs: those which have undergone raising (like *expect*) and those which have undergone equi-deletion (like *persuade*). This classification seems to be more accurate than the one proposed by Quirk in that there are less fluctuations in the assignment of verbs to one or other class. This will become clearer when dealing with the pattern VP NP (to)-Inf.

Inside the pattern we are analyzing now, with a total of 33 cases, we have distinguished some subtypes which are represented in Table 3.:

Table 3.

Pattern	Cases
S V Inf	7
S V Inf DO/PrepO	15
S V DO /PrepO Inf	4
V S Inf	3
Inf S V	1
S DO V Inf	2
PrepO S V Inf	1
TOTAL	33

In what follows, some relevant cases will be separately commented on.

The criteria we have used to decide whether a verb should be classified as raising or equi are those posited by Huddleston (1984: 213-ff). Nonetheless, it must be taken into account that there is no certainty about the real syntactic behavior of these verbs in the period we are dealing with and that the validity of some of the tests applied is restricted to PE since no equivalent has been found for Chaucerian English (for instance, finite counterparts). Under these circumstances, no raising verb has been found in this pattern². Equi predicates are: *longen* (2 cases), *willen* (4 cases), *bigynnen* (6 cases), *listen*, *wisten*, *acorden*, *leven*, *love*, *thinken*, *lyken* (2 cases), *vouche-sauf*, *ginnan* (8 cases), *desyren*, *bidden*, *letten* and *deynen*.

It must be observed that, although the different complementation patterns in which a catenative is involved occur mainly after the catenative itself, this is not always so. In fact, we have found two instances, both with aspectual (ingressive) catenatives which place the infinitive in front-position:

- (5) l. 758 Pleyen he bigan
 (19) l. 842 Anon to drawen every wight bigan

This situation is, in both cases, exacted by rhyme and, curiously enough, the rhyme-word is *man* in the two instances. But there are other examples in which the “normal” word-order is not preserved, if we consider that norm, in this case, is exemplified in S V (to) Inf (appearing in 22 instances in our corpus either followed by DO or not). In

- (20) l. 4193 This felawe gan up-on him calle

the aspectual catenative is not immediately followed by the infinitive. Instead, we have an intervening Prepositional Phrase *Up-on him* which is not directly complementing the catenative, but the infinitive⁶.

Other variants include prepositional complements, adverbials or both, breaking the S V O word-order which was beginning to be standard in IME:

- (21) l. 4523 (Chauntecleer) gan to crowe loude for the nones-->S V Inf Adv
 PrepCompl
 (22) l. 4217 After his felawe hi bigan to calle-->PrepCompl S V Inf
 (23) l. 4512 This Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete-->S DO V Inf

There also exist some cases of inversion of the order of elements in the sentence due to the front-position of some adverb or to the author's intention to emphasize a certain item in the communication as in (12):

- (24) l. 12 *Than* longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
 (25) l. 63-4 *Wel* loved he (...) / for to drinken strong wyn

When analyzing the InfCl in subject function, we enhanced the idea that some clausal elements appear divided, split so that a part of them is shifted to a matrix clause element position (cf. example (14). A different phenomenon takes place again here, but in this case it is not that the DO is split, but that there are two coordinated DO, being one made up of NPs and the other of an Infinitive Complement Clause (carrying its own DO):

- (26) l. 634 *Wel* loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes / and for to drinken strong wyn

Generally speaking, this syntactic pattern in the stage of language we are analyzing is not very different from what it is in PE, as far as we have been able to observe.

2.1.3.2. Pattern VP NP (to)-Inf

This type of structure implies a different treatment and also a more careful study. The fact that an NP occurs between the matrix clause and what traditional grammar would call the object in a "ditransitive complementation" model changes the structure in such a way as to require a specific consideration. As a general rule, we can say that the verbs occurring in this pattern govern an NP in addition to the clause which functions as their complement. The so-called "understood subject" of the subordinate clause is usually identical with the NP. It is at this point that authors diverge in their theories and consideration of the status of that NP inside the structure of the matrix. In the corpus selected for our study, no intervening NP is preceded by *for*. This is so probably due to the fact that this kind of structure with *for*-phrases, according to Jespersen (1909-1949: 308-ff) developed from the 16th century onwards, not by the time Chaucer was writing.

Contrary to the traditional perspective, Noonan (1985: @57) posits that infinitives are verb-like entities which do not bear any syntactic relation to their notional subject. The notional subject can be either equi-deleted or raised, but he considers

these processes to be semantic phenomena. For Noonan, both equi-deletion and raising are means by which the arguments are separated or eliminated from their predications giving rise to non-sentence-like complementations, i.e., sentences which are not independent and which do not bear a marker. Raising causes the use of an accusative instead of a nominative case as in

(27) I believe *her* to be nice.

Some verbs such as *want* have obligatory subject-to-object raising in PE:

(28) I want the man to steal the car.

In the traditional trend, Visser pays little attention to this type of structure. He only mentions it under the pattern V O S where the NP can be both O or S, but does not specify which (1970: @2036). Other authors reach different conclusions, as is the case of Warner (1982: @3.1.), who argues that when a non-finite clause shows a surface object, it must be interpreted as showing oblique case in a way that ME (Wyclifite English, to be more precise) has a real “accusative + infinitive construction”, just like Latin. Warner interprets VP NP (to)Inf in three possible ways: a) non-finite clause in Subject position; b) non-finite clause as Object in a monotransitive structure; or c) non-finite clause as Object in a ditransitive structure.

In cases a) and b) the NP is the subject of the infinitive marked as oblique case and in c) the NP is the object of the VP, having an empty PRO, a non-lexical subject. According to Warner there is no good reason to distinguish in ME between two types of infinitive complements (those corresponding to PE unintroduced clause and the one introduced by *for*). What Warner posits is that in ME, NP + Inf was a single constituent and that raising was very restricted. The NP was the subject of the infinitive. In opposition to this affirmation, the existence of the coordination of conjunctions (as in *to go and to forget*) supports the analysis of NP as an element independent from the infinitive as is shown in the case of the verb *make* (Warner, 1985: @3.2.2). A test to prove whether an NP + Inf functions as a single constituent or whether the NP belongs to the matrix is extraposition. Other tests mentioned by this author are conversion to passive, left-dislocation, checking if elements are in positions where raising is not possible as well as the re-ordering of elements inside the subordinate clause. If an adverb can take place between the verb and its object it also shows that the NP + Inf is not a unity.

This apparent contradiction is solved by Warner by saying that, though the NP can undergo matrix processes, this does not imply that NP + Inf ceases to be a derived constituent. He suggests (1982: @3.2.3.) that ME may have had an oblique complementizer until 15th c. and that, when anominative + infinitive is found, it should be interpreted either as a subjunctive or as an elliptical structure rather than as an InfCl.

Another opinion is Kerkhof's (1966: @93). He supplies a list of verbs of perception and verbs denoting permission, will or cause, which usually follow accusative + infinitive (*heren, sen, felen, maken, bidden, bisechen, don, letten, suffren*). He also mentions these verbs followed by *for to* + Inf and some others that take an oblique form before the finite equivalent in Chaucer (op.cit.: @112 and 286).

In his turn, Quirk et al. establish a three-way distinction (op.cit.: @16.66-ff) by ascribing the verbs entering into this pattern to different classes:

- 1.- monotransitive class for verbs that have an InfCl as O.
- 2.- complex-transitive complementation for verbs which take an O and its complement.
- 3.- ditransitive complementation for verbs that have both a direct and an indirect complement.

Since Quirk's notion of Object Complement is not completely clear and it seems to coincide with our idea of IO, we should point out that the frontier between ditransitive and complex-transitive complementation is rather blurred. Consequently we will not adopt this approach.

But let us still consider Huddleston's criteria. This author affirms that the so-called intervening NP is the object of the matrix verb because the sequence NP+Infinitive does not occur elsewhere as a single constituent. Besides, he argues that the NP can become the subject of a passive version as in:

- (29) Ed intended Liz to repair it.
 (29a) Liz was intended to repair it.

However, we have some evidence that this is not always so. This is the reason why we have classified the predicates in the matrices either as raising or equi. However, we have also found many instances where this clear-cut classification is not allowed. It is the case of manipulative predicates (verbs) as well as those denoting permission. The predicates found in this pattern are the following: *leten* (3 cases), *maken* (5 cases), *suffren* (2 cases), *techen*, *preyen* (3 cases), *shapen*, *bidden* (2 cases), *herden* (3 cases), *causen* (2 cases), *streyneth*, *syen*, and *do*. All these 25 predicates appear in a total of 28 different infinitive clauses. The lack of coincidence between figures can be accounted for by the fact that some complement clause share the same matrix predicate. Of them, a total of 14 have been excluded from both equi and raising classes: they are verbs of permission (3 cases of *let* and 2 cases of *suffren*) and manipulative verbs (*do*, *streyneth*, 2 cases of *causen* and 5 cases of *maken*, the most usual). They have been considered to stand in the fuzzy area because they do not fulfill all the conditions to be classified as equi or as raising and authors are still discussing this item without having found any definite solution⁷.

Only two raising predicates (appearing in four different instances) have been recorded. They belong to the Immediate Perception Predicates class. These predicates take two arguments, one of which is always the experiencer subject. The remaining one is formed by the NP and the InfCl and can be considered to be the "object" of the main verb. There is an operation of subject-to-object raising, then, for the subject of the infinitive becomes the object of the matrix verb. In the example below *him*, in the accusative case, is the object of *herde* though it was formerly the subject of the infinitive. In fact, some authors account for the use of the accusative in these intervening pronouns saying that it is due to their object function⁸.

- (30) 1.4078 Whan that Pertelote thus herde him rore

The rest of the predicates have three arguments, i.e., they are equi verbs. In any event, some instances need being further explained since they present some especial feature. First of all, let us look at the following lines:

- (31) 1.772 Ye shapen *yow* to talen and to pleye
 (32) 1.4306 (His norice) bad him for to kepe *him* wel

In both sentences, the underlined terms are personal pronouns inflected for the accusative case. In fact, they can be considered to be the DO of the verb preceding them (*shapen* and *kepen*, respectively). ME did not have a true reflexive pronoun, identifiable by morphology. As in OE the personal pronoun served this function, though the use of the re-inforcing form *self* as an adjective after these personal pronouns became more and more frequent. PE uses a reflexive form in *self* as one of the arguments of such equi verbs as those shown above. Let us bear in mind that one of the tests posited by some authors to distinguish equi from raising predicates involves reflexivity.

Another case deserving separate commentary involves a peculiar word order:

- (33) 1.4536 Why woldestow suffre him on that day to dye?

The elements whose “normal” order has been altered are, first of all, those usually involved in the process of asking a question, namely, the subject and the verb (the auxiliary *woldest* in this particular case). The sentence has undergone what Quirk calls subject-operator inversion and both elements have been joined in a single word (*woldestow*) by making the subject a clitic form. But there is still another alteration in the straightforward word order that cannot be accounted for by the interrogative form and it is the insertion of an adverbial between the NP and the (to)-Infinitive. The only explanation found for this unique instance is rhyme. The resulting syntactic pattern is Interrog Aux+S V NP Adv (to)-Inf.

The use of the distinction between equi and raising has helped us decide whether an NP belongs to the complement clause or is independent. As we have seen, some cases could not be solved as those where a manipulative or a verb of permission occurred and they remain a topic for discussion.

2.1.4. Infinitive complement clauses as Cs

Only one instance of complement clause in Cs function has been found in the corpus. This function is labelled “predicative complement” by Huddleston (1984: 181-ff). Our instance (the last pattern we will include in our consideration of verb complementation) is the following:

- (34) l. 4479-80 (...) the cause of my cominge / was only for to herkne how that ye singe.

Quirk et al. (1985: @16.21-ff) refer to it as copular complementation. In these cases, the verb does not express itself a semantic predicate, but serves to carry the tense inflection and links the rest of the predicate to the subject (Huddleston, 1984:

183-ff). Although the verb *be* is the most common among copulae, some other exist and are widely employed. *Be* is, at the same time, the most neutral of copulative verbs in the sense that it is semantically empty.

In our example the copula is precisely *be* and this is not surprising, for it is the only one that can take a non-finite clause as Cs. Let us remember that this subject complement function is typical of adjective phrase in the same way that subject function is typical of noun phrases, though they can both be fulfilled by clauses. Huddleston considers that *be* is the real copula whereas some other verbs like *become*, *seem*, etc. are called copulative verbs rather. This use of *be* when denoting identity of reference between the subject and the predicate is known as “equative” or “identifying”.

2.2. INFINITIVE COMPLEMENT CLAUSE DEPENDING ON AN ADJECTIVE

In what follows we will be concerned with a different type of complementation, adjective complementation, in some respects similar to the complementation of verbs. The non-finite complement of an adjective is a member of the adjective phrase where it is a post-modifying element of the head of that phrase. It is, therefore, an optional constituent.

Kerkhof (1966: @103) takes into account Kenyon’s classification of infinitives qualifying adjectives into some different categories in the sense that the infinitive depending on an adjective denotes the purpose, direction or application, of the quality of the adjective. But Kerkhof criticizes this approach because the relation between infinitive and adjective is often of a very vague and complicated character. In many cases, according to this author, it is the adjective that modifies the function of the infinitive as with *possible*, *likely*, etc.

Visser’s approach is quite different. He comments on one of our instances:

(35) I. 223 He was an esy man to yeve penaunce.

and argues that the infinitive is not modifying the adjective in the first place, but the union of adjective and noun *esy man* (op.cit.: @941). Somewhere else, (op.cit.: @926) he does not admit the existence of infinitives which have an active form and a passive meaning as could be interpreted for this same case. What Kerkhof says about this is that verbs such as *blame* and *preyse* are used with a passive-like meaning because they can be interpreted as corresponding to the sense of “blameworthy” and “praiseworthy”, respectively (1970: @110).

Quirk et al. consider that the categories of complementation in adjective phrases are similar in variety to those of verb complementation as we said before. These authors distinguish seven kinds of construction in which an adjective is followed by a (to)-Infinitive clause and the criteria they apply are related to those criteria they used to assign clauses in verb complementation also to different types of complementation types (monotransitive, ditransitive or complex-transitive). The distinction is established on the grounds of whether the subject of the main clause is also the subject of the infinitive clause or else if the subject of the infinitive is unspecified (so that it is possible, in PE, to insert a subject preceded by *for*) (Quirk et al, 1985: @16.75).

The following predicates appear with infinitive complement clauses depending on adjectives: *redy* (*lay redy*), *forward* (*make forward*), *esy* (*be esy*), *shaply* (*be shaply*),

wys (*be wys*), *newe* (*be newe*), *worthy* (*be worthy*), *able* (*make able*), *obedient* (*be obedient*), and *wont* (*be wont*). Each of these predicates occurs only once in the corpus, in a total of ten instances found. Not all of them take place in the habitual S V C's syntactic pattern. This pattern involves an experiencer subject and a copulative verb *be* precedes a subject complement realized by an adjective phrase with two immediate constituents: a head (adjective) and a post-modifier of that head (complement clause). Some instances are represented by the lines quoted below:

- (36) l. 223 He was an esy man to yeve penaunce
 (37) l. 405 Hardy he was, and wys to undertake
 (38) l. 851-2 As he that wys was and obedient / to kepe his forward by his free assent...

Instances that merit attention are those which do not agree with this structural pattern, as is the case in:

- (39) l. 20-21 (...) As I lay / redy to wenden on my pilgrimage

where the adjective has some characteristics similar to those of the adjective *hard* in PE *He works hard*, this is to say, it has an adverbial shade⁹. Nonetheless, the infinitive depends directly on the adjective. But the adjective can be found to be a part of a phrasal verb, a tightly linked unit from the semantic point of view, since semantic and syntactic predicate do not always coincide. This case is illustrated in:

- (40) l. 33-4 I made forward erly for to ryse / to take our wey...

In the above example, only the first infinitive is a complement; the second one conveys a clear final meaning.

A last variety of adjective complementation by a non-finite clause is the one we can find in:

- (41) l. 584 (in order to make him) able for to helpen al a shire

The bracketed words take place 3 lines before in the text because there are some intervening elements. But, at any rate, what we have here is an adjective phrase (whose head is *able*) in Co function (Quirk, 1985: @16.68) or, as Huddleston calls it, "objective predicative complement" (1984: 194-ff).

No participles in adjectival function have been found in the corpus, and therefore there is no need to establish any criteria to differentiate between them and adjectives themselves.

2.3. INFINITIVE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES DEPENDING ON A NOUN

The type of construction we will consider next is that of appositive clauses, found in examples of matrix clauses containing nominal predicates followed by clausal complements. Some cases have been excluded from our study when considered to convey

any adverbial or comparative shade. This is the reason why *be time* has been analyzed only when *time* had the meaning of “occasion”. The head nouns of the nominal predicates found in the corpus appear only once each and are: *propretee*, *tyme*, *counseil*, and *lore*.

While Warner affirms that there is no sharp boundary between infinitives with appositional function and those with others (1982: @4.4.2.), Quirk et al. (1985: @17.65-93) believe that, since apposition is a relation between NPs, non-finite clauses in this function are equivalent to NPs and must be treated as such. This is the concept we shall use. Let us consider the following lines:

- (42) l. 4141-3 And in our yerd tho herbes shal I finde, / the whiche han of hir
propretee, by kinde, / to purgen yow binethe, and eek above.
(43) l. 4413 Wayting his *tyme* on Chauntecleer to falle
(44) l. 4443-4 (He) took his *counseil* of his wyf, with sorwe, / to walken in the
yerd upon that morwe.
(45) l. 4540-1 Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy *lore* / the Friday for to
chide...?

In each of the examples the underlined word is the nominal predicate, head of a noun phrase, that needs being explained or developed by the following complement clause functioning as apposition to the underlined term. The distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive apposition cannot be shown in these sentences because they are all instances of the restrictive use of this construction. Somehow basing our classification upon Matthews' theories (1977: 231-232), we can affirm that they are all restrictive because the valency of the head nouns require the presence of what is following for the meaning to be completed. Besides, and though punctuation is not reliable in early stages of the language, we can take into account the fact that there appears to be no intonational pause between the head and the complement clause.

In the four instances found, the complement clause functions as apposition to the DO of the verb in the matrix. The basic syntactic pattern with straightforward word order can be found in the three first quotations, and they can be represented in the following way: S V DO where DO is formed by N + ComplCl.

We could as well consider that the complement clause is functioning as a Co for it is completing the object meaning. The DO function, properly speaking, would be realized by the head of the NP (*propretee*, *tyme* and *counseil*) that is the necessary complement of the transitive verbs *han*, *wayt* and *take*, respectively.

As was mentioned before the straightforward word order is not kept in our last example

- (46) l.4540-1 Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy *lore* / the Friday for to
chide...?

but that the word order V S Adv DO is found here can be accounted for by the fact that we are not dealing with an statement but with a question. We will further discuss this aspect in the section devoted to word order.

2.4. SOME CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT INFINITIVE MARKERS

The terms “particle” and “complementizer” also appear in some authors when referring to this aspect of non-finite complementation. Crystal (1985: 222) speaks of “particle” because “...despite its surface similarity to a preposition, it really has nothing in common with that or any other word-class”. Moreover, it is an invariable item. Huddleston (1971: 180) mentions the term “complementizer”¹⁰ rather and makes no difference between it and complementizers in finite complement clauses. “Zero-complementizer” takes place when *to* is deleted after such matrix verbs as *make* and *let* with the subject of the clause raised to matrix object. But there is another author who uses this term. It is Noonan (1985: 44-ff) who justifies that the use of *to* is contextually determined. For instance, when infinitives are in other than object position (what we have called catenative constructions), the distribution of *to* is governed, rather arbitrarily, by the Complement Taking Predicate (CTP), so that it is obligatory with *force*, *want* and *allow* and it is ungrammatical with *make* and *let*.

But this is all referred to PE. In OE (Visser, 1970: @896-897) *to* was a preposition indicating direction towards. In ME *at*, *til* and *unto* functioned in a similar way and, though there is some alternance between bare and to-infinitive, the to-infinitive form is preferred. The infinitive as subject is usually preceded by *to*. In fact, Visser affirms that if it cannot be preceded by this marker, it is not an infinitive, but a mere base form of the verb. *For to* is used instead of *to* as a metrical device because it implies the addition of an extra syllable to the verse and no semantic demonstrable difference (op.cit.: @909). However, it goes out of fashion by the time of Queen Elizabeth.

In his study of Chaucerian English, Kerkhof argues that zero marker (plain or bare infinitive) is rare in adjuncts of cause, as a subject, nominal predicate (Cs) or as a DO (1966: @82). He also says that plain infinitive after *gon*, *comen* can convey the idea of actual motion in varying degree (op.cit.: @85) and these cases we have excluded from our consideration. Plain infinitive is also frequently found after *listen* in Chaucer.

Warner, in his turn, (1982: @5.3.) defends the idea of a predominance of *for to* over *to* in Chaucer when the matrix verb and the infinitive are separated due to fronting of some element belonging to the complement clause as in

(47) 1.784 our conseil was nat longe for to seche

Contrary to Visser, he insists on the idea that *for to* is a stronger infinitive marker than *to* and that it is not found in extraposition. It is usually selected by *desyre*, *letten*, and *ordeyne* and usually avoided by *male* (op.cit.: @5.2)¹¹. Mossé affirms that there is no semantic difference between *to* and *for to* though the latter had, initially, a clear final meaning. This idea is also defended by FransPlank (1984: 313), who affirms that the transformation of *to* from preposition into *to* as semantically empty marker took a long time from OE to 16th century. At this stage (Chaucerian English) there is still an alternation of to- and bare infinitives in cases which are completely regulated nowadays.

Ninety infinitive clauses have been studied and classified according to the type of infinitive marker introducing them. The distribution of markers in the corpus is shown in the tables below:

Table 4.

to marker	46 cases
for to marker	25 cases
zero marker	21 cases

Table 5.

	SUBJ	VPVP	VPNPVP	Cs	ADJ	NOUN
TO	10	15	11		7	3
FOR TO	3	9	8	1	3	1
ZERO	3	9	9			

It is obvious that the more frequent marker is *to*. This may be due to the evolution of English mentioned before that implies the practically complete disappearance of *for to* by Shakespeare's time (Fanego: 1994). Besides this, we can also see that there are few cases with no marker at all. Zero markers take place in catenative constructions either with or without intervening NP. They appear mainly after aspectuals or verbs of perception and *maken, letten, listen*, etc.

- (48) l.26-7 Pilgrims were they alle / That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde
 (49) l.4076 Chauntecleer gan groningen
 (50) l.128 She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle

Despite this, we have found several cases where this general rule is not kept. In one instance we found *maken* followed by *for to*:

- (51) l.427 For ech of hem made other for to winne

here used as a metrical device. Other cases that merit attention are those containing verbs which, though they are synonymous with other verbs followed by bare infinitive (*make, let*), take some marker introducing the infinitive complement clause as is the case of *suffre* (with the meaning of *allow*), *cause*, etc:

- (52) l.649-650 He wolde suffre (...) / a good felawe to have his concubyn
 (53) l.4119-20 ...causeth folk to drede in here dremes / of arwes...

But the general rule is not always kept so that we can find a few instances of *let* or *make* not followed by bare infinitive almost always due to metrical exigencies.

In all instances where an extraposed SCl appears, the marker used is *to*. We have only found one case of bare infinitive, (54) below, and two introduced by *for to* corresponding to examples (3) and (14):

- (54) l. 4172 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument

It is not usual that infinitive clauses functioning as Cs, or depending on a noun or adjective are un-introduced. In fact, in the corpus we are studying none of them has a

zero marker. Nevertheless, most outstanding is that there is a clear predominance of *to* over *for to* and that the uses of markers, though still fluctuating, are becoming more and more regular.

3. SEMANTICS OF INFINITIVE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

Our aim in this section is to provide a careful account of the different types of predicates occurring in the matrices of the clauses analyzed, since the relation established between a predicate and its complement is fundamental for the study of complementation. The theoretical approach and terminology used for this semantic study are based on Noonan's, but some predicates which did not fit in any of the groups he proposed have been considered under the label *others*.

In some cases the coincidence between the number of predicates in the matrix and the number of complement clauses is not complete due to the fact that a single predicate may have more than one complement. In fact, we have found instances of coordinated complements depending on a single CTP among which we can mention example (4):

(4) 1.376-8 It is ful fair *to been* y-clept ma dame / and *goon* to vigilyes al bifore, / and *have* a mantel

3.1. DISTRIBUTION OF THE PREDICATES FOUND IN THE CORPUS

The different semantic types of CTP are a factor determining the choice of the complement type as well as of the infinitive marker (cf. 2.3. above). The distribution of the predicates found in the corpus is shown in table 6.:

Table 6.

Type of CTP	Cases
Utterance	7
Propositional Attitude	11
Knowledge/Acquisition of knowledge	2
Commentative	4
Desiderative	13
Manipulative	15
Modal	4
Achievement	4
Aspectual	15
Immediate perception	5
Others	11

The predicates that Noonan calls of PRETENCE and FEARING are not present in the corpus. But a full account of all those recorded in the corpus follows:

* *Manipulative predicates*

They express a relation between an agent (element of causation), an affectee (which must be always a participant in the resulting situation) and the resulting situation

itself. This type of predicate is the most numerous in the corpus, maybe due to the characteristics of the plot of "The Nonnes Preestes Tale" and to the very particular relationship established between its two main characters. The predicates appearing are: *letten* (3), *maken* (5), *suffre* (2), *cause* (2), *streyne*, *do* (2).

* *Aspectual predicates*

These predicates are also called phasal because they show the progression or phases of the action expressed in the complement. In this corpus we have found many aspectuals since the evolution of tense periphrases to aspect periphrases was already quite developed by this period. However, not all the predicates with a same morphological constitution have the same aspectual meaning and those cases which could be considered to convey a tense idea have been excluded from our consideration as said before (cf. 2.1.2.). The aspectual predicates and their number of occurrences are: *bigan* (6), *lafte*, and *gan* (8).

* *Desiderative predicates*

Predicates belonging to this class generally express a desire that what is expressed by the complement will take place and they take experiencer subjects. Though Noonan establishes three more classes inside this type, we have not followed such a detailed classification and have considered desideratives as a whole. The predicates appearing are very numerous too: *longen* (2), *wolden* (4), *listen*, *lyken* (2), *vouche-sauf*, *desyren*, *be redy* (with a nuance of intention), and *make forward*.

* *Propositional attitude predicates*

The different CTP included in this particular class imply an attitude regarding the truth of what is expressed by their complement. The subject must be an experiencer, not an agent. The list below corresponds to the propositional attitude predicates found in the corpus: *be acordaunt*, *be fair* (3), *be looth*, *be worth* (2), *acorden*, *loven*, *be bithoght*, and *be newe*.

* *Utterance predicates*

They are predicates that describe a transfer of information on the side of an agentive subject. The complement clause expresses precisely the transferred information. Though there is abundance of dialogue in the corpus, they are not as numerous as manipulatives or aspectuals since they usually appear with a finite complement. When some verbs of saying are followed by an infinitive, they can be considered as manipulatives rather and this is the reason for their relative small number: *bidden* (2), *techen*, *preyden* (4).

* *Immediate perception predicates*

The predicate names the sensory mode by which the subject directly perceives what is expressed in the complement clause. Only a few examples represented by two lexical items have been found in our corpus from Chaucer, namely, *herden* (4) and *syen*.

* *Modal predicates*

Modal predicates express a moral obligation and moral necessity or ability. They do not usually appear with finite complementation and, in fact, in this corpus they always appear followed by infinitive clauses, as is the case of *nedeth* (2), *letten* (with the meaning of "spare"), *deyned*, and *make (someone) able*.

* *Achievement predicates*

This type of CTP expresses the manner or reason of the realization (or not) of the proposition in its turn expressed in the complement. They usually take infinitives so that finite complementation of achievement predicates is an exception. The predi-

cates in the corpus are *avaunce*, *lesten* (in the sense of “endure”), and *shapen* (in the sense of “endeavor”) (2 cases).

* *Commentative predicates*

They are also known as factives. They provide a comment on the complement clause, which can be an emotional reaction, evaluation or judgement of it. The subjects for this kind of CTP are usually experiencers. The following commentative predicates have been found: *be confort*, *be long*, *be a loye*, *be esy*, *be shaply*, *be wys*, *be obedient*, and *be wont*.

* *Predicates of knowledge and acquisition of knowledge*

These are predicates that assert the manner of acquisition of knowledge as well as the content of it. They take experiencer subjects and can include perception predicates when these do not mean immediate perception. Only two instances have been found with infinitive complement: *wisten* and *take counseil*.

* *Other predicates*

As was said above, some of the predicates found in our survey do not fit in any of the classes mentioned by Noonan. These remaining predicates are very different from one another. We include here predicates which are neither verbs nor adjectives, but mainly constructions with a noun, since it is the whole construction that carries the semantic force: *be signe*, *be someone's bisnesse*, *be someone's wone*, *be the cause of someone's cominge*, *han the propretee*, *be the tyme*, and *han the lore*.

Though some other authors make classifications of predicates including some which are not taken into account by Noonan, we cannot classify the instances just mentioned. However, in some cases, there is a slight possibility to do so when the noun has a closely related verbal form (this is the case of *be the cause* and *to cause*).

Finally, and in order to have an idea of how semantics and syntax are interwoven, let us consider briefly the following aspects of this analysis. In the first place, clauses functioning as subjects take, mainly, prepositional attitude predicates, commentatives, modals, achievement predicates and some of those which we have labelled *others*. No utterance predicates appear with SCIs and the same can be said of desideratives, manipulatives, aspectuals, KAK predicates and immediate perception predicates. To understand the reasons for this behaviour, we only have to look at these predicates' definition. In the second place, little variety could be observed in clauses functioning as complements of adjectives and in appositive clauses. The former depended, basically, on commentative predicates whereas the latter depended on nouns which did not fit into any on Noonan's classes, being thus also included under the heading *others*.

The pattern VP NP (to)-Inf appears to be semantically restricted to certain predicates, too. Fourteen of the twenty five predicates found in this structural pattern were manipulatives (mainly *maken* and *let*) and six were utterance predicates like *preyen*. The rest of them could be considered to be rare since they seldom appear elsewhere in the corpus within this syntactic context. Some classes, like aspectuals and commentatives, have been found to be completely impossible with intervening NP, as in (55)

(55) PE *He began *us* to send.

and the rest, though possible, have not been recorded.

A final consideration regards the syntactic structure that, apparently, has less semantic restrictions, namely, that called VP (to)-Inf. Six of the nine classes of predicates postulated by Noonan have been found here. In a similar way, the class most frequently found in our survey is that of aspectuals (15 cases of a total of 30 predicates). This is so because, as we have seen, periphrases are often used by Chaucer in this text. On the contrary, no commentative, manipulative or achievement predicates have been recorded.

4. WORD ORDER

The widely known fact that ME did not have a strictly fixed word order makes it become an important stylistic device. This same variety may account for the fact that grammarians do not always coincide in their classification of the usual ME word-order patterns. Elizabeth Traugott (1972: 120-ff) affirms that this was a period of extensive transitivity, and that this provoked changes in the semantic and syntactic structures as well as in the order of elements in the sentence. She defends the existence of three basic patterns:

- 1.- S (Aux) V (O) used for statements
- 2.- (x) V S O and its variant (x) Aux S V (O) both used in interrogatives
- 3.- S (O) V (Aux) already disappearing by this period.

Other scholars, however, consider more elements to be central to the sentence structure so that the patterning they give is wider. This is the case of Mossé (1952: 122-ff) or Fernández (1982). Our consideration of the different word-order patterns in ME is based on both authors. Thus, we have come to classify structures according to six basic models:

- 1.- S V O/C: mostly used in statements such as example (8) already mentioned above:

(8) 1.225-6 Unto a povre ordre for to yive / is signe that a man is wel y-shrive

- 2.- S O/C V
- 3.- V S O/C: found in interrogatives and comparatives

(33) 1.4536 Why woldestow suffre him on that day to dye?

- 4.- V O/C S

(4) 1.376 It is ful fair to been y-clept "ma dame"

- 5.- O/C V S: for emphasis in pompous style

(12) 1.486 Ful looth were him to cursen for his thythes

- 6.- O/C S V: inverse order found when an adverbial is in front-position.

(56) 1.842 Anon to drawn every wight bigan

All the patterns above refer to matrices not taking into account whether each function is fulfilled by a subordinate clause or not¹². Most authors refer to a tendency in ME word-order to fix the pattern S (Aux) A O/C which can be found as S (Aux) O V whenever the O is a demonstrative or substantive and the subject does not need to be overtly expressed.

To the six word order patterns of the previous list we should add some instances that do not fit in any of the afore mentioned as is the case of impersonal constructions with *ther* followed by an impersonal verb:

(3) 1.246-7 It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce / for to delen with no swich poraille...

(57) 1.4172 Ther nedeth make of this noon argument

Existential *ther* functioning as an anticipatory subject makes the verb precede the real subject, and this is beginning to be a rare phenomenon by the time *The Canterbury Tales* are written. This is the reason why this particular cases deserve being mentioned separately. Some other lines should be closely considered. The distribution of word order patterns is the following according to the number of cases in the corpus:

S V O/C	69
S O/C V	0
V S O/C	4
V O/C S	1
O/C V S	5
O/C S V	4
other	5

Since we are here considering matrix clauses only, the total number of patterns does not coincide with that of clauses. This is because there are cases in which a single matrix has more than a complement. Inside the general pattern numbered 1.-, the following examples have particular characteristics. That numbered (58) is an impersonal construction with a “dative subject”, (59) represents constructions with aspectual verbs that are difficult to assign a particular word order pattern since the verbal phrase begins to have a meaning as a whole by this time. Finally, example (60) shows that what in the pattern is considered O/C is here split since the clausal object is placed before the matrix verb. Some other cases like these appear in Chaucerian texts.

(58) 1.102 ... for him liste ryde so.

(59) 1.4277 (His felawe) gan for to laughe.

(60) 1.4512 This Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete

It should also be mentioned that although the pattern numbered 3.- is supposed to be used for interrogatives, only two interrogative sentences fitting into it appear in the

corpus. The two other instances of it are (24) and (26) where the typical word order for inversion is not kept.

Finally, the usual word order for inversion after an adverbial appears also in an instance where a complement belonging to the clause takes front-position and precedes the subject of the matrix as in our example (22). Despite the existence of these few cases, we can infer that by this stage of development of English the common, almost fixed word order for statements was that in which the S precedes the verb and where any other elements such as objects, complements or adverbials must follow it. In this respect, IME word order was very similar to the one we apply to PE.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Taking everything into consideration, I would suggest by way of conclusion that though Kerkhof affirms that some verbs have preserved an inflected dative in *-e*, mainly *don, sen, seyn*, (1966: @99) no such cases appear in our corpus. At the same time, there seems to be a regularization in the use of *to* as infinitive marker during this period that will culminate in eModE (Fanego, 1994: 202), though this does not certainly exclude other types of markers. In this sense, *for to* is practically equivalent to *to* since its original final meaning is quite blurred and weakened. Notwithstanding this, the use of *to* is still contextually determined, in the sense that it depends on the governing ctp, and sometimes syntactically as well (for instance, any infinitive clause functioning as subject of the matrix must always be preceded by *to*). Another aspect that differentiates IME from later stages of the language, is the shortage of passive constructions found. Only some instances appeared with a passive meaning but an active form (cf. 2.2.).

Among the similarities with PE non-finite (infinitive) complementation some factors deserve mention. In the first place, the increasing tendency for infinitive complement clauses to be mainly found in catenative constructions directly following the matrix verb. Similarly, extraposition with anticipatory elements (*it, ther*) was becoming more and more frequent, as one important difference between OE and ME.

There is also a tendency to use analytical verbal forms shown in the increasing appearance of periphrases indicating aspect (with *gan, bigan*, etc.) which are nowadays absolutely common in English. Finally, the fixing of word order inside the sentence in Chaucer's time supposes a definitive step towards the linguistic change taking us to Present Day English.

Notas

1. Both the syntax of the narrator of The Prologue and that of Chauntecleer are much more complex according to their level of embedding than that of Pertelote, for instance. This corroborates the idea that Chaucer interrupted the tradition of "high subject, high style" as is evident.
2. If we are to consider Kerkhof's viewpoint (1966: @117), the following verbs were functioning as auxiliaries in Chaucer's time: *ben, haven, don, leten, ought, usen, can, mowen, mot, shal, willen, neden, dar*.

3. Most authors argue that one of the main uses of this *gan* form was that of serving as a tense-marker. This use is illustrated in l. 4222: "This man gan fallen in suspicioun".
4. Warner poses that in cases such as "Men failen to serve God" the subject in the matrix or superordinate clause is also the subject of the infinitive clause in such a way that there is a PRO as surface object.
5. It should be pointed out that, according to Quirk et al. (1985), few raising verbs are found in monotransitive complementation. Thus, following Quirk we have also included aspectual verbs within the group of Equi predicates.
6. In a similar way we can find some "false" intervening NPs in the sense that they do not conform to the VP NP (to)Inf pattern that we will be dealing with later on. On the contrary, these NPs are constituents of the subordinate clause which are not placed in the habitual word-order due to different factors. One such case is:
 1. 4364 With a chuck he gan hem for to calle
where *hem* is the DO of *calle*.
7. A very eclectic approach is offered by Visser who, as was pointed in 2.1.2. calls constructions with *maken* and synonymous verbs "infinitive-object construction".
8. Kerkhof mentions a list of verbs and verbal phrases that take oblique form before a finite verb as well in Chaucer. Some of them are *deignen, gamen, gaynen, lakken, liken, listen, metten, mot, neden, oghte, rekken, rewen, shamen, smerten, thynken* (1970: @ 286).
9. It has the same approximate meaning as *As I lay in readiness to wenden...*, so that it can be substituted for by a prepositional phrase in adverbial function.
10. In another work (1984: 128) Huddleston changes this label by that of "infinitival particle".
11. Plank (1984: 313) says, roughly, the same.
12. The symbol "C" is equivalent to Traugott's "x" and it refers to any complement required by the verb that needs not be an object noun phrase. It corresponds to what Quirk calls an adjunct.

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