This book is a guide to the development of English syntax between the Old and Modern periods. Beginning with an overview of the main features of early English syntax, it gives a unified account of the grammatical changes occurring in the language during this period. Written by four leading experts in English historical syntax, the book demonstrates the ways in which syntactic change takes place and how these changes can be explained in terms of grammatical theory and language acquisition. The authors draw upon a wealth of empirical data and through a series of well-selected case studies they cover a wide range of topics including changes in word order, infinitival constructions and grammaticalization processes. This invaluable introduction to the significant changes in early English syntax will appeal to students and researchers in historical linguistics, theoretical linguistics and the history of English.

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Responding to the increasing interest in comparative syntax, the goal of the Cambridge Syntax Guides is to make available to all linguists major findings, both descriptive and theoretical, which have emerged from the study of particular languages. The series is not committed to working in any particular framework, but rather seeks to make language-specific research available to theoreticians and practitioners of all persuasions.

Written by leading figures in the field, these guides will each include an overview of the grammatical structures of the language concerned. For the descriptivist, the books will provide an accessible introduction to the methods and results of the theoretical literature; for the theoretician, they will show how constructions that have achieved theoretical notoriety fit into the structure of the language as a whole; for everyone, they will promote cross-theoretical and cross-linguistic comparison with respect to a well-defined body of data.
The Syntax of Early English

OLGA FISCHER
ANS VAN KEMENADE
WILLEM KOOPMAN
WIM VAN DER WURFF
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Preface

In the course of the 1980s and 1990s, historical syntax in general, and English historical syntax in particular, developed into a thriving field of research. Much of the credit for this renaissance must go to the advent of sophisticated models of language variation and of linguistic theory. It is perhaps in the domain of syntax that modern theoretical work has most clearly sharpened the traditional questions of historical linguistics, leading to a surge of novel and interesting insights. Happily, this interest in theoretical questions has gone hand in hand with a continued interest in philological matters and, perhaps even more importantly, the creation of ever larger and more sophisticated computerized databases. For these reasons, it seems a particularly felicitous moment for a textbook to appear in which questions concerning the historical syntax of English are consistently addressed from the perspective of a model of syntactic theory.

The model of syntactic theory adopted in this book is the one known as the Principles and Parameters framework. This has important consequences for the way in which we view historical change. In the Principles and Parameters framework, the focus of investigation is the grammar internalized by the native speaker rather than the language output. Consequently, we will attempt throughout the book to make a distinction between language change and grammar change. In the first chapter, we outline the view of grammar change that we try to establish in the book, and set out our arguments and methodology for making the distinction between language change and grammar change. Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to descriptive overviews of the most important features of the syntax of Old English and Middle English respectively. The remaining chapters are case studies emerging from our own ongoing research into Old and Middle English syntax. In each of these chapters, we present and discuss the relevant facts, giving a structured and critical appraisal of the results accomplished in work done on each case in the literature, substantially including our own research results cast from the perspective of grammar change. Thus, it is attempted in each chapter to strike a balance between theoretical argument and historical detail.
The choice of topics was dictated by a simple consideration: we have tried to make a combination of those among our research topics that are currently of interest, and that would make a coherent book. The case study chapters contain, first of all, three chapters on closely related word order phenomena. Chapter 4 is on the position of the finite verb. In Old and Middle English, the position of the finite verb was determined by a rather complex version of the Verb-Second constraint that is a characteristic of most Germanic languages. This chapter gives a detailed discussion and analysis of this phenomenon and its loss. Chapter 5 is on another classic of word order: the loss of OV word orders. This is essentially about the position of the non-finite verb. It has often been observed that Old English had many OV orders, which were lost in Middle English: the chapter reviews the evidence and pursues an analysis in current theoretical terms. Chapter 6 is on verb–particle constructions, or the rise of phrasal verbs. For Old English particle + verb combinations, a good case can be made that the position of the particle corresponds rather precisely to that of the non-finite verb (in an OV order), whereas that of the verbal part follows the processes governing finite verb placement. Thus the chapter makes crucial use of the results of both chapters 4 and 5. With the general changes in word order as treated in chapters 4 and 5, the verb–particle combinations came to be reanalysed as fixed lexical constructs. Chapters 7 and 8 are on developments in infinitival constructions. Chapter 7 is on the rise of infinitival constructions with a lexical subject, such as *I believed him to be innocent*. It is argued that an important factor in this development is the loss of OV word order as discussed in chapter 5. Chapter 8 is on the rise of the so-called *easy to please* construction, whose development is also closely interrelated with word order developments. Finally, chapter 9 is on two cases of grammaticalization in the history of English from the perspective of grammar change: the rise of periphrastic have to, as in *I have to do my work*; and the historical development of sentence negation. Contrary to much work on grammaticalization, it is argued in these case studies that our specific and theoretical notion of grammar change yields an interesting perspective for these cases.

This book aims at an audience consisting of advanced undergraduates and beginning graduate students. It is suitable as a textbook for a specialized undergraduate course, and lecturers and students alike should find it of help in delineating topics for research essays, and paving the way toward thesis research. Although we have attempted to clarify theoretical issues as they come up in the discussion, some background in the Principles and Parameters framework will make it easier to put the case studies in perspective. For individual use, the book should be of interest to both language historians and
theoreticians, and may be seen as a guided tour through the most relevant literature on the empirical topics under discussion.

We are grateful to Kluwer Academic Publishers and the editors of *Neophilologus* for permission to reprint the appendix on *have to* in chapter 9, and to Mouton de Gruyter for permission to use the appendix on infinitival constructions in chapter 7.

We owe a debt to several people, editors and kindred spirits in our quest for increased knowledge of and insight in the historical development of English. Judith Ayling, formerly of Cambridge University Press, initiated the project with us, and her efforts were later taken over by Kate Brett and Andrew Winnard. David Denison and Anthony Warner wrote encouraging referee reports in the early stages, which advanced the whole project a step. David Lightfoot has given us various rounds of comments which have helped considerably in sharpening the issues and tightening the discussion. Richard Hogg gave positive feedback on the whole manuscript. Finally, Liesbeth Visser provided student feedback on chapters 4 and 5.
Editions used

The editions cited in this book are listed alphabetically under their abbreviated title. Citations of Old English texts are taken from the Dictionary of Old English Corpus (apart from ÆCHom I where Thorpe's text is cited) with the line references and short titles employed by the Dictionary of Old English (Healey and Venezky 1980). Unless otherwise indicated texts are cited by volume/book, chapter, page and line reference where applicable.

The following abbreviations are used:


EETS  Early English Text Society, Original Series

EETS ES  Early English Text Society, Extra Series

EETS SS  Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series

Alex  Alexander’s Letter to Aristotle in S. Rypins (ed.) 1924. Three Old English Prose Texts (EETS 161), pp. 1–50. 2.3


And  Andreas, in ASPR 2. 7.23ii


ÆAdmon 1  Admonitio ad filium spiritualem, in H. W. Norman (ed.) 1848. The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil . . . and the Anglo-Saxon Remains of St. Basil’s Admonitio ad filium spiritualem, London. 7.8a
ÆCHom 1  B. Thorpe (ed.) 1844–46. The Sermones Catholici or Homilies of Ælfric I, London: Ælfric Society. 1.21,a,c, 1.22,b, 2.2, 2.5b, 2.6a, 2.17a,c, 2.26b, 2.28, 2.29a, 2.32, 2.33a, 2.34,a,b, 2.36a, 2.38a, 2.39d,f, 2.40a, 2.47, 2.50a,b, 2.54a,c, 2.61b, 2.68, 2.71c, 2.77, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6a, 4.12, 4.15, 4.19, 4.22, 4.24, 4.33, 4.34, 4.35, 4.36, 4.39, 4.40, 4.50, 4.55a, 4.59, 4.67, 4.71b, 4.73a,b, 5.5, 5.7, 5.16, 5.18, 5.19, 5.20, 5.23, 5.24, 5.26, 5.28, 5.31, 5.40, 5.46, 5.48, 6.2a, 6.5b, 6.14, 6.17b, 6.20b, 6.28b, 6.29b, 6.32, 6.35, 7.1, 7.14a, 7.21iiia, 8.46, 8.53, 9.23a, 9.24
ÆCHom 2(A) P. Clemoes (ed.) 1997. Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: the First Series (EETS SS 17), pp. 535–42. 7.21ia,b
ÆCHom II  M. Godden (ed.) 1979. Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies: the Second Series (EETS SS 5). 2.9b, 2.19b, 2.24, 2.30, 2.38b, 2.39a, 2.48, 2.51, 2.52, 2.54b, 2.61a,c, 2.62b, 2.76a, 2.78a, 2.79b, 3.8, 4.43a, 4.68, 5.15, 5.17, 5.21, 5.27, 5.33, 6.18b, 6.28a, 6.31, 6.39d, 6.43a, 6.45, 7.8c, 8.28, 8.43, 8.81, 9.5b
ÆColl  G. M. Garmonsway (ed.) 1947. Ælfric’s Colloquy, 2nd edn., London: Methuen. 2.5a, 4.9, 7.18b
ÆGram  J. Zupitza (ed.) 1880. Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung. 7.15b, 7.17
ÆHom  J. C. Pope (ed.) 1967–68. Homilies of Ælf ric: a Supplementary Collection (EETS 259, 260). 1.22c, 2.7a,b, 2.12a, 2.25, 2.33b, 2.49, 2.64, 4.44, 4.46, 4.69, 4.70, 5.8, 6.13, 7.21iiia, 9.21, 9.23b
ÆLS  W. W. Skeat (ed.) 1881–1900. Ælfric’s Lives of the Saints (EETS 76, 82, 94, 114) (repr. as 2 vols. 1966). By life and line.1.21b, 2.12c, 2.15b, 2.20b, 2.31, 2.53, 2.67, 2.71b, 3.6b, 4.42, 4.43b, 4.47, 4.55d, 4.71a, 5.12, 5.22, 6.3b, 6.10a, 6.11, 6.20a, 6.36a,b, 6.44, 7.21iiib, 7.22a, 9.26a,b, 9.27a
ÆTemp  H. Henel (ed.) 1942. Ælfric’s De temporibus annu (EETS 213). 7.7a
Barlam  J. C. Hirsh (ed.) 1986. Barlam and Iosaphat (EETS 290). 5.64
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Beo *Beowulf*, in *ASPR* 4.1.27, 2.10a, 2.22a, 2.55, 5.35, 5.36, 9.10a, 9.28, 9.29a,b, 9.note14


Byr *Byrhtferth’s Enchiridion* (EETS SS 15).


ChristB *Christ*, in *ASPR* 3. 6.note2

ChronA The Parker Chronicle. MS A, in C. Plummer (ed.) 1892–99. *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, Oxford: Clarendon. 2.9a, 2.19a,c, 2.21bc, 2.27, 2.41, 4.10, 4.16, 4.53, 5.1


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<td>19(BHom8) Blickling Homily 8, in R. Morris 1874–80, pp. 97–105.</td>
<td>2.35a, 4.13, 4.51</td>
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<td><strong>Hom U</strong></td>
<td>20(BHom10) Blickling Homily 10, in R. Morris 1874–80, pp. 107–15.</td>
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HomoU 46(Nap 57) Homily 57, in Napier 1883, pp. 291–9. 5.14
Jud Judith, in ASPR 4. 7.18d
Jul Juliana, in ASPR 3. 7.18f
King Horn J. Hall (ed.) 1901. King Horn: a Middle English Romance, Oxford: Clarendon. 3.28, 3.29
Lanc. of the Laik W. W. Skeat (ed.) 1865. The Romans of Lancelot of the Laik (EETS 6). 3.64
Layamon Brut G. L. Brook and R. F. Leslie (eds.) 1963–78. Layamon’s Brut (EETS 250, 277). 3.49, 7.25a, 7.26a,b, 7.29a, 9.13
Lch II Bald’s Leechbook, in Cockayne 1864–66. 7.23i
Editions used

LS20 (AssumptMor) Assumption of Mary the Virgin, in R. Morris (ed.) 1874–80, pp 137–59. 6.17a
LS29 (Nicholas) Saint Nicholas. Dictionary of Old English Transcript. 7.18c
MAngl Mappula Angliae, C. Horstmann (ed.) 1887. ‘Mappula Angliae’, ESl 10, 6–34. 8.56
Manning HS F. J. Furnivall (ed.) 1901–03. Robert of Brunne’s ‘Handlyng Synne’ (EETS 119, 123). 3.87, 8.84
Mart 5(Kotzor) G. Kotzor (ed.) 1981. Das altenglische Martyrologium, Abhandlungen der Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Neue Folge, Heft 88/1–2, München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. 7.23ivb, 8.27, 9.9b
Met The Meters of Boethius, in ASPR 5. 4.26a, 4.37, 4.63
Mk(WSCP) Mark (Cambridge Corpus Christ College MS 140), in W. W. Skeat (ed.) 1871–87. The Four Gospels in Anglo-Saxon, Northumbrian, and Old Mercian Versions, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 4.41
MKempe S. B. Meech (ed.) 1940. The Book of Margery Kempe (EETS 212). 3.38, 6.42e,f
Or J. Bately (ed.) 1980. The Old English Orosius (EETS SS 6). 1.22a, 1.23a,
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Orm  R. Holt (ed.) 1878. The Ormulum: with the Notes and Glossary of Dr. R. M. White, 2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon. 3.22

Paston Letters  N. Davis (ed.) 1971–76. Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, Oxford: Clarendon. By letter and line. 3.18, 3.84, 5.65, 5.76, 7.19b, 7.29b, 7.31b,c, 7.33a, 9.16B1


Phoen  The Phoenix, in ASPR 3.2.10b


PPs  The Paris Psalter, in ASPR 5.8.29


Rid  Riddles, in ASPR 3.7.18e, 7.21a,b


Sat  Christ and Satan, in ASPR 1.6.38


SSecr  R. Steele and T. Henderson 1898. Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum (EETS ES 74). 3.5
Editions used  xvii

Stanzaic Life of Chr.  F. A. Foster (ed.) 1926. A Stanzaic Life of Christ (EETS 166). 7.9c


Vices&V  F. Holthausen (ed.) 1888–1921. Vices and Virtues (EETS 89, 159). 3.13a, 4.75b, 4.76c, 4.77, 6.41a,b, 9.35c

WBible  The Earlier Version, in J. Forshall and F. Madden (eds.) 1850. The Holy Bible . . . made from the Latin Vulgate by John Wycliffe and his Followers, 4 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press. 3.10, 7.20b


WHom  D. Bethurum (ed.) 1957. The Homilies of Wulfstan, Oxford: Clarendon. By homily and line. 2.8a, 2.21a, 2.39c,e, 5.29
Editions used

Wooing Lord  R. Morris (ed.) 1868. *Old English Homilies* (EETS 34) pp. 269–87. 3.69, 8.55


