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ASPECTS OF THE SYNTAX OF FINITE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES AS SUBJECTS IN JOHN LYLY'S *EUPHUES: THE ANATOMY OF WYT*

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The major aim of the following study is to provide an analysis of some aspects of the syntax of finite complement clauses as subjects in Early Modern English. A corpus-based approach has been adopted as the most adequate method for a descriptive study and Lyly's *Euphues*, a corpus of c60,000 words, has been selected. The paper includes a surface description of subject clauses in the corpus and deals with the following topics: (1) Word-order within the superordinate structure. It is argued in this respect that structures of the type *it-V-SBLC* are the unmarked option in this period and that theories such as extraposition are not needed to explain the relationship between this construction and the structure *SBLC-V*. (2) Frequency of the anticipatory elements *it*, *this* and *that*. (3) Subjectless constructions in the corpus.

1. Introduction

The aim of the following analysis is twofold: it is meant to be a contribution both to historical syntax and to the study of John Lyly's *euphuistic* language. It is part of a larger project on complementation in Lyly and it is also a contribution to a more ambitious analysis of complementation in Early Modern English[1] being carried out at the University of Santiago de Compostela.

The structures to be analyzed are finite complement clauses as subjects (SBCLs), with the exclusion of indirect questions. The study of complementizers has also been ruled out for reasons of space.

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[1] The following abbreviations will henceforward be used: OE = Old English; ME = Middle English; EMODE = Early Modern English; PE = Present-day English.

Methodologically, the present study is corpus-based, as this seems to be the most adequate approach for grammatical descriptions. Corpus linguistics has undergone a rapid development since the 1960s, with the advent of the first machine-readable corpora. The importance of this research paradigm as a source of reliable information about the grammar of a language is now beyond question and this method is being applied to different fields of study, from dialectology to historical linguistics.

The choice of Lyly is justified in so far as his work represents a type of style not adequately reflected in available corpora such as the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*. This computerized body of language material comprises about two million words of running text, the Early Modern British English section covering about 550,000 words, and it has been carefully compiled to ensure representativeness.[2] Hence the advantage of also analyzing less representative homogeneous corpora, which provide additional information, in order to achieve an overall picture of the period under study (Rydén 1979, 35; Warner 1982, 7). Prose has been given preference to avoid the distorting effects of verse on syntax.

Euphues: The Anatomy of Wyt was entered in the Stationers' Register on 2 December 1578 and published shortly afterwards without a date.[3] It became such an outstanding and immediate —if temporary— success that "the royal court is reported to have sought to speak in Euphuisms" (Burnley 1992, 212). Lyly's highly elaborated and exquisitely elegant style is characterized by the use of structural devices such as parallelism, rhetorical questions and verbal repetition; sound patterns such as alliteration, assonance and rhyme; and ornamental devices such as allusions to classical mythology, natural history and proverbs. Here is Euphues speaking to his lover:

> For although the worme entereth almost into euery woode, yet he eateth not the *Cedar* tree; Though the stone *Cylindrus* at euery thunder clappe, rowle from the hill, yet the pure sleeke stone mounteth at the noyse, though the rust fret the hardest steele, yet doth it not eate into the Emeraulde, though *Polypus* chaunge his hew, yet y^{e} *Salamander* keepeth his coulour, though *Proteus*

[2] See Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1989) on the compilation of the Early Modern British English subcorpus of the *Helsinki Corpus*.

[3] On Lyly and *Euphues* see Hunter (1962).

> transforme himselfe into euery shape, yet *Pygmalion* retaineth his olde forme, though *Aeneas* were to fickle to *Dido*, yet *Troylus* was to faithfull to *Crœssida*, thoughe others seeme counterfaite in their deedes, yet *Lucilla* perswade your selfe that *Euphues* will bee alwayes curraunt in his dealinges. (219, 4-14)

The source followed is *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, edited in three volumes in 1902 (reprinted 1967, 1973) by R.W. Bond. The corpus includes the text of *Euphues* and also the letter "To my very good friends the Gentlemen Scholers of Oxford" (1902, 1: 179-326).

The size of my corpus lies in the region of c60,000 words, approximately identical to Warner's corpus of Wyclifite English (c60,000 words) and relatively similar in size to the corpora used by Fanego (1990): 78,000-85,000 words, and even by McDavid (1964): 100,000 words.

In what follows I shall make a surface description of subject clauses in the corpus and also consider word order within the superordinate structure, anticipatory elements and subjectless clauses.

2. Subject Clauses in the Corpus

Type 1: SBCL-V (No examples).

Type 2: *it*-V-SBCL[4] (81 examples, 83 predicates).

Percentage in corpus: 14.95%.

Fanego's (1990) percentages for subject clauses in her corpus of Shakespearian English are almost identical to mine: 14.72%.[5] McDavid (1964) and Elsness (1981) also have similar percentages (12.25% and 11.49% respectively), although they worked with corpora of contemporary American English. Table 1, below, offers the numerical breakdown of *that*/zero subject clauses, in my corpus, according to matrix type.

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[4] The presence (or absence) of an anticipatory element is represented by *it*.

[5] Fanego excludes exclamatory *that*-clauses from her count. She explains this exclusion as follows: "All percentages are exclusive of exclamatory *that*-clauses (cf. Table 1*a*), this with a view to making our group of complement clauses comparable with those of other analysts, none of whom take that marginal category into consideration" (21, note 4). I have not found in my corpus any examples of this type of construction, which nevertheless seems to be very old and can be found in other Germanic and Indo-European languages (Storms 1966, 260-2).

Table 1	Active Matrix	Passive Matrix	Total
That	61	11	72
Zero	8	1	9
Total	69	12	81

2.1. *Predicates in an Active Matrix (69 Examples)*

2.1.1. With *that*-clauses (61 examples)

BE AN OLDE PROUERBE (267, 17-9);[6] **BE AN OLDE SAYED SAWE** = «be a sententious saying, a proverb, a traditional maxim» [OED *Said* ppl.a.2, *Saw* sb^2.4], (185, 21): "It hath bene an olde sayed sawe, and not of lesse truth then antiquitie, that witte is the better if it bee the deerer bought."; **BE AN OLDE SAYING** (312, 10-1); **BE GOOD REASON** = «be a matter, act, proceeding, etc., agreeable to reason; in phrases *it is reason* or *reason is* (also with *good, great*), *it is no (or not) reason, to think (it) reason*, etc. Frequently c1400-1650; now rare. So Old French *il est raison, c'est (bien) raison, c'est raison et droit*, etc.» [OED *Reason* sb^1.14], (228, 34-6): "But mee thincks it is good reason, that I shoulde be at mine owne brydeall, and not gyuen in the Church, before I know the Bridegrome."; **BE IN EUERYE MANS MOUTH** (307, 21-4); **BE LYKE** = «in accordance with appearances, probable, likely. Now only dialectal.» [OED *Like* a.8], (207, 3-4): "Is it lyke that he wyll match thee in marryage w^t a stranger, with a *Grecian*, with a meane man?"; **BE LYKELY** (222, 12-3); **BE MOST NECESSARIE AND MOST NATURALL** (264, 13-4); **BE NO MERUAILE** (spelt: *meruaile, meruayle*) = «be no wonder (archaic or rhetorical)» [OED *Marvel* sb.5], (3 examples, e.g. 185, 17-9): "then is it no meruaile, y^t the son being left rich by his fathers

[6] In the relation of predicates offered here the following points should be noted: (i) references to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) and illustrating examples are given only if there exists a significant deviance in meaning with respect to present-day usage or to specify the exact meaning of a predicate in a given context; (ii) only one example of each predicate has been found in the corpus unless otherwise stated; (iii) bracketed numbers refer to the page(s) and line(s) where the relevant complement clause (or group of coordinate clauses) is to be found in the text if there is only one instance or, if there are more than one, where one significant example —the one given— can be found; (iv) additional information is included when it serves the purpose of further clarifying aspects of the syntax of the predicates.

Will, become retchles by his owne will."; **BE NOT** = «be (not) the case or the fact» [OED *Be* v.3], (2 examples, e.g. 201, 17-8): "But were it not gentlewomen that your lyste standes for lawe, I would borrow so much leaue as to resigne myne office to one of you"; **BE NOT A BYE WORD** = «be (not) a proverb, proverbial saying» [OED *Byword* 1], (210, 13-4): "Is it not a bye word amongst vs, that golde maketh an honest man an ill man?"; **BE NOT COMMON** (193, 25-7); **BE NOT DECENT** (291, 27-8); **BE NOT NECESSARY AND REQUISITE** (for *requisite*, see *be requisite* below) (265, 18-20); **BE NOT ONE'S WILL** (302, 16-7); **BE (NOT) STRAUNGE** (2 examples, e.g. 320-1, 33-01): "Straunge it is that the sounde eye viewinge the sore shoulde not be dimmed, that they that handle pitch should not be defiled, that they that continue in court should not be infected."; **BE ONE'S FAITH** = «be one's belief» [OED *Faith* sb.1], (259, 3-6): "For this is my faith that some one Rose will be blasted in y^{e} bud, some other neuer fall from the stalke, that the Oke wil soone be eaten with the worme, the Walnut tree neuer, that some women will easily be entised to folly, some other neuer allured to vanitie."; **BE REQUISITE** = «be required by circumstances or the nature of things, necessary, indispensable» [OED *Requisite* a.], (2 examples, e.g. 277, 10-2): "It is also requisite that hee bee expert in marciall affayres, in shooting, in darting, that he hawke and hunt, for his honest pastime and recreation."; **BE SHAME** = «be a fact or circumstance which brings disgrace or discredit, a matter for severe reproach or reprobation. Used predicatively (without article). Now poetic.» [OED *Shame* sb.5], (274, 24-8): "What shame is this gentlemen that a place so renowmed for good learning, should be so shamed for ill lyuinge? that where grace doth abounde, sinne shoulde so superabound? y^{t} wher y^{e} greatest profession of knowledge is, ther should also be y^{e} least practising of honestie."; **BE SO** (6 examples, e.g. 225, 11-4): "Well then *Euphues* (sayd shee) so it is that for the hope that I conceiue of thy loyaltie and the happy successe that is lyke to ensue of this our loue, I am content to yeelde thee the place in my heart which thou desirest and deseruest aboue all other."; **BE TRUE** (5 examples, all of them with a structure C_s + *it* + *V* + *SBCL*, e.g. 208, 9-13): "To true it is that as the Sea Crabbe swimmeth alwayes agaynst the streame, so wit alwayes striueth agaynst wisedome: And as the Bee is oftentimes hurte with hir owne honny, so is wit not seldome plagued with his owne conceipte."; **BECOME NOT A BYE WORD**: See *be not a bye word* above. (275, 6-8); **CANNOT BE** (198, 36-7); **COMME** (of an event) = «to come about, happen, turn out; especially quasi-impersonal with subject clause» [OED *Come* v.20], (7 examples, six of

which have a structure *he(e)r(e)of(f) / heerevppon + it + come + SBCL*; one has a structure *hereoff + come + it + SBCL*, e.g. 204, 29-30): "hereoff it commeth that men accuse women of crueltie, bicause they themselues want ciuilitie."; **DO ONE GOOD** (320, 23-4); **FOLLOW** = «to result (as an effect from a cause, an inference from premisses); to be, or occur as, a consequent. Often impersonal with a clause.» [OED *Follow* v.16], (193, 15-6): "shall it therfore follow of necessitie that all y^{t} are woed of loue, should be wedded to lust"; **GRIEUE (NOT)** (spelt: *grieue, gryue*), (2 examples, e.g. 229-30, 35-01): "But this gryueth mee most, that thou art almost vowed to the vayne order of the vestall virgins, despisinge, or at the least not desiring the sacred bandes of *Iuno* hir bedde."; **HAPPEN** (199-200, 37-01); **MAY(E) BE(E)** (7 examples, all of them with a structure *it + V + SBCL*, e.g. 180, 20-1): "It may be that fine wits wil descant vpon him, that hauing no wit goeth about to make the Anatomy of wit"; **ME(E) THIN(C)K(E)S** = «it seems to me» [OED *Methinks*]. See section 5 below for examples and detailed information about this verb and the construction in which it appears; **PROCEEDE** = «to result, be derived» [OED *Proceed* v.7c], (2 examples, both of them in parallel constructions with *Comme*, e.g. 282, 11-2): "heereof it proceedeth that they haunt the stewes, marry before they be wyse, and dye before they thriue."; **REMAYNE** (248, 23-4); **SEEM** (224, 36-7).

2.1.2. With unintroduced clauses (8 examples)

BE NECESSARY (276, 31-2); **BE NOT LYKELY** (248, 21-2); **BE SO** (199, 17-8); **MAY BE BETTER** (325, 33); **MAY(E) BE(E)** (250, 19); **ME(E) THIN(C)K(E)S** (3 examples).

2.2. *Predicates in a Passive Matrix (12 Examples)*

2.2.1. With *that*-clauses (11 examples, 13 predicates)

BELEEUE See *Report* below; **CAST IN ONE'S TEETH** = *«To cast (any one) in the teeth*: to reproach or upbraid him (*with, that*) obsolete; later construction *to cast (a thing) in one's teeth.*» [OED *Cast* v.65], (314, 21): "when it was cast in *Diogenes* teeth that the *Synoponetes* had banished hym *Pontus*, yea, sayde hee, I them of *Diogenes*."; **FORESEE** See *Look for* below; **LOOK FOR** (268, 8-11): "But that is most principally to be looked for, and

most dilygently to be foreseene, that such tutours bee sought out for y^e^ education of a young childe, whose lyfe hath neuer bene stayned with dishonestie, whose good name hath neuer bene called vnto question, whose manners hath bene irreprehensible before the worlde."; **NOTE** (279, 29-30); **REPORT** (3 examples, e.g. 324, 9-11): "It was reported by some & beleeued of many, that in the education of Ephœbus, where mention was made of Vniuersities, that Oxford was too much either defaced or defamed."; **SAY (NOT)** (Past participle spelt: *saide, sayd, sayde*) (4 examples, e.g. 232, 14-5): "Is it not commonly saide of *Grecians* that crafte commeth to them by kinde, that they learne to deceiue in their cradell?"; **SEE** (185-6, 35-02).

2.2.2. With unintroduced clauses (1 example)

SAY (265, 24-6).

3. Subject Complement Clauses and the Superordinate Structure: Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects

One of the most relevant issues to be taken into account when dealing with subject complement clauses in English is the position they occupy within the superordinate structure.[7] In this connection, two different patterns are available in PE:

1.- *SBCL-V*, of the type:

(1) *That John quit his job* surprised me.[8]

2.- *it-V-SBCL*, of the type:

(2) *It* surprised me *that John quit his job.*

Closely related to this issue is the correspondence that may be established between these two constructions, seemingly synonymous, but which, as will be seen later, differ in certain respects and are thus not necessarily

[7] For an account of the logico-semantic relation between the subject complement clause and the other elements in the superordinate construction, see Halliday (1985, 243-8).

[8] Examples (1) and (2) have been taken from McCawley (1988, 1: 38).

interchangeable. Different theories have been put forward to explain this relation and, of these, the theory of Extraposition is perhaps one of the most widely known and accepted (Postal 1974, 396).

This theory can be traced back to Jespersen, who states that "when for some reason or another it is not convenient to put a content-clause in the ordinary place of the subject, object, etc., the clause is placed at the end in *extraposition* [my italics] and is represented in the body of the sentence itself by *it*" (1909-49, 3: 2.1-3).

The label *extraposition* was later resuscitated by early practitioners of generative grammar such as Rosenbaum (1967, §§4.2-3), for whom sentences of the type found in example (2) "are generated simply as a function of the application of the extraposition transformation" to the corresponding underlying structure. But after taking a closer look at his data, he notes that there are certain cases which this theory cannot account for and grants that, perhaps, they "should be taken as an indication that something is wrong with this course of action" (1967, 72).

Writing within a basically structural framework, but heavily indebted in places to generative theory, Huddleston also posits a transformational relation between pairs of sentences like (1) and (2). He takes (1) as basic "since it conforms to the kernel clause structure S-P-PC" (1984, §14.3).

Quirk et al. define extraposition as "postponement which involves the replacement of the postponed element by a substitute form". They consider that once the subject has been moved to end position, the resulting structure has two subjects: the "postponed subject" and *it*, which is called the "anticipatory subject" (1985, §18.33).

According to Noonan, extraposition is "the process of moving a complement to the end of a sentence". But, where Quirk et al. saw two subjects, Noonan sees only one: *it*, presumably because he subscribes to a conception of the notion of *subject* as a purely syntactic construct. Therefore, he states that the extraposed clause "no longer functions as a subject" (1985, §2.5).

Recent generative treatments such as that of McCawley (1988, 1: §4*d*) also use the term *extraposition,* and he describes it as, "Chomsky-adjoining the complement S to the VP", while the term *Chomsky-adjoining* is used "for a step in which an $[_X XY]$ or $[_X YX]$ configuration results from adjunction of an item of category Y to an item of category X" (1988, 1: 108, note 15).

Within the framework of Government and Binding theory, Haegeman (1991, §5.2.1) considers that (2) is a "paraphrase" of (1). In both sentences, one theta role would be assigned to the clause and the other one to *me*, while

the non optional *it* in example (2) "plays no role in the semantic make-up of the sentence".

As observed by most of the above-mentioned authors, the theory of extraposition of subject clauses clearly has important constraints.[9] These are twofold:

1.- As is well known, extraposition is obligatory in some cases and the corresponding unextraposed sentence is thus ungrammatical:

(i) Extraposition is obligatory with such verbs as *appear, seem, chance, happen, remain*, etc.:

(3) *That he left appears.

Huddleston (1984, 452) tries to solve the problem saying that "in such cases we shall need to have the transformation apply to hypothetical clauses." For Mair (1990, 21), on the contrary, "the clausal complements of the *seem*-class of verbs . . . must not be regarded as subject clauses. In the absence of attested non-extraposed variants, extraposition should not be assumed".[10]

(ii) Extraposition is also obligatory when the superordinate construction has subject-auxiliary inversion:[11]

(4) *Did that John showed up please you?

2.- Conversely, extraposition is not possible and "it gives the wrong result with bisentential verbs like *prove, imply*, etc". (Koster 1978, 54):[12]

(5) *It proves that Mary is innocent that John has blood on his hands.

Jackendoff (1981, 96), however, claims that some speakers find examples like (5) acceptable.

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[9] Also Koster (1978, §1). He notes that these anomalies are not exclusive to English: "exactly the same problems arise in Dutch" (53, note 2). For his part, Jackendoff observes that "there are languages (e.g. French and Hungarian) in which a clause can never occupy subject position. There is thus no *syntactic* evidence for generating it there" (1981, 97). All this leads me to think that the shortcomings of this theory may extend beyond the boundaries of the English language and objections to it might have more universal implications.

[10] See also Jespersen (1909-49, 3: 25), Rosenbaum (1967, 72), Williams (1980, 223), Noonan (1985, 83).

[11] Examples (4) and (5) have been taken from Koster (1978, 53-4).

[12] See also Postal (1974, 399, note 18) and Huddleston (1984, 453).

Other theories apart from extraposition have been less widely accepted but are nevertheless worth mentioning. Among them, Emonds's *Intraposition* theory is a specially noteworthy case.

Basically, what Emonds (1970) does is to reformulate the extraposition transformation of Rosenbaum (1967) and to propose a quite different analysis: it is (1) that is now derived from (2). This formulation was criticized by, among others, Lakoff (1972, §§2.3-4), Higgins (1973) and also, in a rather harsh style, by Postal who favours extraposition (1974, 404). A few years later (1976), Emonds himself partially rejected his theory, some aspects of which were nevertheless revived by Jackendoff (1981), who dismisses some of the objections raised by different authors.

Another well-known generativist analysis is that by Koster (1978) in which he rejects both extraposition (§1) and intraposition (§§2-3) of subject clauses and proposes his own hypothesis, which he names the *satellite hypothesis*.

And, to finish this brief introduction to possible theoretical frameworks, I shall mention Williams who also rejects both extraposition and intraposition as formulated above. He considers both possibilities to be *anaphoric* and proposes his own *theory of predication* which allows "a nonanaphoric theory of extraposition" (1980, 219).

Turning our attention now to the evidence from the corpus, the most outstanding feature is that no instances of SBCL-V constructions have been found. All my examples of subject complement clauses (81 in all) exhibit the surface structure *it*-V-SBCL. This is not surprising and is in keeping with the findings reported in related studies. Thus, Fanego notes that, in her corpus, extraposition "is the norm when the clause is a subject". She has found only one instance of canonical word order in her EMODE corpus,

(6) Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues / Have humbled to all strokes. *That I am wretched* / Makes thee the happier. (*Lear* 15.63).

and she remarks that "metrical factors have probably influenced the choice of construction" in this case (1990, 9).

López Couso and Méndez Naya (1993, 195) have also found only one example in their Dryden corpus,

(7) *That the marriage had been plotted by him long beforehand* is made evident by what he tells True-Wit in the second act. (DRAM, 115).

However, the fact that the canonical construction is so scarce does not imply that it was completely unavailable. As López Couso and Méndez Naya point out, Barber (1976, 284) gives an instance of a parallel construction with a duplicated subject (1993, 195):

(8) *That I have tane away this old mans Daughter, It* is most true. (*Othello* I, iii, 78).

Similar instances from Shakespeare can be found in Visser (1963-73, §73a).

As for the earlier stages of the language, according to Mitchell (1985, §1950) and Traugott (1992, 234), no subject clauses were probably found in initial position in OE. This absence may perhaps be explained by the tendency for syntactically heavy elements "to be moved to the end of the sentence as much as possible", at least in earlier stages of the language (Dekeyser 1984, 193-4).

According to Dekeyser (1984, 193) and Fischer (1992, 313), the situation in ME was similar to that of OE. Warner (1982, 108), however, states that examples of subject clauses in canonical position can be found in ME, although he can offer no instances from his corpus of Wyclifite sermons.

As for more advanced stages of the language, structures of the type SBCL-V are generally available in PE, though even now they are far less frequent than those with a postposed subject clause in both British and American English (McDavid 1964, 108; Huddleston 1984, 451; Quirk et al. 1985, §18.33).

Turning now to the difference of meaning between examples (1) and (2), they are not exactly synonymous. According to McCawley the principal respect in which the synonymy is not exact is that the complement clause counts as "old information" in (1) but as "new information" in (2). He adds: "More generally, in English and most other languages . . . old information must precede new information unless special devices (such as the destressing of old information in *It surprísed me that John quit his job*) are used to mark an item as new or as old information" (1988, 1: 107, note 13).

Huddleston, commenting on the thematic effect of extraposition, believes that there is no absolute correspondence between given and unextraposed and new and extraposed but affirms that "there does appear to be some measure of correlation between them" and observes that we should notice in this connection "that with the verbs *appear, seem, chance* and

happen ... [which take obligatory extraposition] the content of the extraposed clause will never be fully given" (1984, 453-4).

Fanego seems to half-heartedly agree with this analysis when she comments on her sole example —quoted as (6) in our study— of subject clause in canonical order: "it is tempting to correlate it with the fact that the content of the complement clause is given, and well-known to the audience; by positioning it initially the normal information pattern given + new is attained" (1990, 9).

Taking all this into account, I conclude that the structure *it-V-SBCL* is the normal, unmarked option for subject complement clauses in EMODE, as it has always been throughout the history of English.

The structure *SBCL-V* was probably unavailable in OE, very rare in ME, rare in EMODE and is relatively scarce in PE. In my opinion it is a derivation of the unmarked option to achieve different thematic effects and theories such as *extraposition* are not needed for the explanation of subject complement clauses.

4. Anticipatory Elements

As we have already seen, the most common construction for subject complement clauses in English has a structure *it-V-SBCL*, the first slot being filled by an anticipatory element. The choice of filler is very limited in *PE*: the only *NP* available is *it* (Haegeman 1991, 53):

(9) **This* surprised Jeeves that the pig had been stolen.

Though dummy *it* is obligatory in PE (Allen 1986, 465),

(10) *Annoys me that he left this undone.

that was not certainly the case in older stages of the language. In OE we can find *hit*, *þæt* and *þis* as anticipatory elements (Visser 1963-73, §60). However, constructions without any such element are also common (Mitchell 1985, §1487),

(11) Forðæm wæs ðurh ðone witgan gecueden: Dooð eow clæne. (*CP* 77.1).

The apparent optionality of this heralding pronoun in OE has been accounted for in various ways by different scholars. For Haiman (1974) it was not optional, but served to ensure that the verb was placed in second

position. This is usually called the verb-second —V/2— constraint (Elmer 1981). Allen proves that this was not the case and concludes that "dummy *hit* was obligatory, or very nearly so, when nothing else protected the verb from being sentence-initial in a declarative sentence, and highly favored, but not completely obligatory, in other situations, regardless of the position of the verb" (1986, 468).

In ME we still find the same anticipatory pronouns, but *it* has become more common and the possibility of deleting the heralding element more remote (Warner 1982, 78):

(12) It is grett meruaile þat God . . . distroyeþ not all þis cursed peple. *Wyclif, Wks. 265.* (Visser 1963-73: I, §60).

In my EMODE corpus I find that, in *that* / zero subject clauses, the presence of *it* is by far the most common possibility, although I have also found a few instances of *this* and *that* as anticipatory elements:

Table 2	It	This	That	Ø	Total
That	65	4	1	2	72
Zero	6	0	0	3	9
Total	71	4	1	5	81

For examples or reference see the quotations under **BE ONE'S FAITH, BE SHAME, GRIEUE, LOOK FOR** and **REMAYNE** above.

It is usually considered that *this* and *that* are more referential than *it* (Allen 1986, 466, note 2), but some other factors might intervene as well in some cases (Fanego 1990, 9). It also deserves notice that in my corpus the occurrence of demonstrative pronouns is always correlated with the presence of the complementizer in the complement clause.

Fanego obtained similar results in her Shakespearian corpus and she states that "the frequency with which extraposed subject clauses require in the corpus such anticipatory subjects is no doubt commensurate with the trend towards obligatory subjectivalization that had already started in medieval times and that was widespread by the EMODE period" (1990, 9).

Anticipatory *it* has been given many different names but there seems to be general consensus regarding the lack of semantic content of this element. It is only needed for structural reasons, as a place-holder for the subject.

5. Subjectless Constructions

Finally, to finish this analysis, I will briefly examine subjectless constructions in the corpus. In this connection, it should be noted that although the pattern *it-V-SBCL* represents the most usual construction for subject complement clauses, we do find a few instances in which the anticipatory element is missing. This happens in two cases (see Warner 1982, 78 for a similar situation in his ME corpus):

1.- When an adverbial element precedes the verb. I have only one example:

(13) wherby was noted that the tongue should be rayned with the strongest bridle (279, 29-30).

2.- When an oblique personal pronoun precedes an impersonal expression. I have found four examples in my corpus, three with unintroduced clauses:

(14) Mee thinkes *Euphues* chaungeing so your couloure vpon the sodaine, you will soone chaunge your coppie (224, 30-1).

(15) But mee thincks it is good reason, that I shoulde be at mine owne brydeall (228, 34-6).

(16) you goe about contrarye to the customes of schooles, which mee thinckes you shoulde dilygentlye obserue beeinge a professed Philosopher (296, 23).[13]

and one in which the complementizer is present:

(17) me thinckes that you smile at some pleasaunt shift (226, 24).

[13] *mee thinckes* may also be considered a parenthetical clause in this example. Cf. Ando (1976, 34) for a parenthetical example in Marlowe.

Methinks, which is always spelt as two words in the corpus, represents the only example I have found of an impersonal verb followed by a finite complement clause.

Most impersonal verbs with this pattern die out in late Middle English but *methinks* seems to be an exception and it is common to find examples in EMODE (Ando 1976, 34; Fanego 1990, 8) and sometimes even in PE as a poetic archaism (Visser 1963-73, §32). Most authors agree, however, on the fossilized nature of the expression already in EMODE. In this period the pattern under study would no longer be really productive.

It deserves notice that the only forms of this paradigm which survive in the EMODE period are *methinks* and *methought*. Forms like **him thinks* or **them thought* are not available (Barber 1976, 286). That is the reason why the syntax of *methinks* became opaque and underwent alterations as speakers tried to make the two surviving forms conform to established patterns of the language. In the sixteenth century we find forms such as *my thinks*, *my thought* or *my thoughts* (Barber 1976, 286), where the second element was probably apprehended as a noun. In Shakespeare we also find the forms *me think'st* and *me thoughts* (Fanego 1990, 8):

(18) As I stood here below, me thoughts his eyes / Were two full moons. (*Lear* 20.69).

This latter form —extant up to the first half of the 18th century— being probably due to analogy either with the present tense or with adverbial forms ending in <-s> (as in *needs* "necessarily") (Barber 1976, 286).

This pattern was productive in OE and continued being so in the early Middle English period (Moessner 1989, 137-47): in some cases, personal verbs borrowed from Old French and Old Norse —such as *remembren* and *deynen*— were transferred into the impersonal frame. If they were so common and the pattern so productive, what is the reason then for their final obsolescence by the end of the fifteenth-mid-sixteenth century?

Lightfoot (1979, 230) considers that these constructions became obsolete in three ways:

(i) Several verbs disappeared from the language during the ME period.
(ii) Many of them developed a construction with the anticipatory element *it*.
(iii) The preverbal oblique pronoun became reanalyzed as a subject, taking on nominative form.

In his opinion, their final demise was due to two concurring factors which were under way during the late Middle English period: the progressive rigidification of SVO word order and the loss of nominal and many verbal inflections.[14]

Von Seefranz-Montag, however, challenges the prevailing hypotheses and states that the loss of impersonal constructions "is a consequence primarily of changes in the morphosyntactic coding properties and the syntactic behavioural properties of subjects, which encode specific semantic and pragmatic information, in a language on its way towards SVX" (1984, 530).

6. Conclusions

The major conclusions reached in the preceding pages can be summarized as follows:

Extraposition is the norm, without exceptions, for subject clauses in the corpus: all my examples exhibit the surface structure *it-V-SBCL*. I have argued that the structure with canonical word order —unavailable or very scarce in the earlier stages of English, though generally available in PE— seems to be a derivation of the unmarked, extraposed option to achieve different thematic effects.

The choice of anticipatory elements for SBCLs in EMODE was less limited than in PE: *it*, *that* and *this* —besides Ø— were available. *It* (71 examples out of 81) is the most frequent anticipator.

A few instances of subjectless constructions found in the corpus have been briefly examined in the preceding pages. I have considered inconclusive the traditional explanation —basically adopted by Lightfoot— for the reanalysis of impersonal constructions in English.

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[14] Van der Gaaf gave a similar explanation for the change in question in his pioneering 1904 study.

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