"SYNTACTICAL CHANGES IN MIDDLE ENGLISH" IN THE STRUCTURE AND STYLE SIMILAR TO THE OLD ENGLISH ARTICLE YOU PROVIDED.

Fayzullayeva Mukammal
Farg'ona Davlat Universiteti
Ingliz tili va adabiyoti fakulteti
4-kurs talabasi

ABSTRACT:*This paper investigates the syntactic evolution of Middle English (approximately 1150–1500 CE), with particular attention to changes in word order, clause organization, and the relationship between diminishing morphological marking and the rise of positional rules. It analyzes the erosion of inflectional endings inherited from Old English, the growing dependence on fixed subject–verb–object patterns, and the development of auxiliary verb constructions. In addition, the study assesses the impact of French and Latin on the structure of subordinate clauses and traces the gradual formation of syntactic features characteristic of Modern English.*

АННОТАЦИЯ:*В данной статье рассматривается синтаксическое развитие среднеанглийского языка (примерно 1150–1500 гг.), с особым вниманием к изменениям порядка слов, структуре предложений и взаимосвязи между утратой морфологических показателей и усилением позиционных ограничений. В исследовании анализируется сокращение флективных окончаний, унаследованных от древнеанглийского языка, возрастающая роль фиксированного порядка «подлежащее–сказуемое–дополнение», а также формирование вспомогательных глагольных конструкций. Кроме того, оценивается влияние французского и латинского языков на модели придаточных предложений и прослеживается постепенное становление синтаксиса современного английского языка.*

ANNOTATSIYA:*Ushbu maqola O'rta ingliz tili (taxminan 1150–1500-yillar) sintaksisining rivojlanishini o'rganadi hamda so'z tartibidagi o'zgarishlar, gap tuzilmasi va morfologik shakllarning asta-sekin kamayishi natijasida pozitsion qoidalarning kuchayishiga alohida e'tibor qaratadi. Tadqiqot qadimgi ingliz tilidan meros bo'lib qolgan flektiv qo'shimchalarning yo'qolib borishi, ega–kesim–to'ldiruvchi tartibining qat'iylashuvi hamda yordamchi fe'lli konstruksiyalarning shakllanishini tahlil qiladi. Shuningdek, fransuz va lotin tillarining ergash gaplar tuzilishiga ko'rsatgan ta'siri va zamonaviy ingliz sintaksisining bosqichma-bosqich vujudga kelishi yoritiladi.*

Key words: *Middle English syntax, syntactic change, word order shift, clause structure, inflectional loss, morphological reduction, subject–verb–object order, positional constraints, auxiliary verb constructions, subordinate clauses, French influence, Latin influence, grammaticalization, language change, Modern English development*

Ключевые слова:*Синтаксис среднеанглийского языка, синтаксические изменения, изменение порядка слов, структура предложения, утрата флексий,*

морфологическая редукция, порядок «подлежащее–сказуемое–дополнение», позиционные ограничения, вспомогательные глагольные конструкции, придаточные предложения, влияние французского языка, влияние латинского языка, грамматикализация, языковая эволюция, формирование современного английского языка.

Kalit so'zlar: *O'rta ingliz tili sintaksisi, sintaktik o'zgarish, so'z tartibining o'zgarishi, gap tuzilmasi, flektiv qo'shimchalarning kamayishi, morfologik qisqarish, ega–kesim–to'ldiruvchi tartibi, pozitsion cheklovlar, yordamchi fe'lli konstruksiyalar, ergash gaplar, fransuz tili ta'siri, lotin tili ta'siri, grammatiklashuv, til taraqqiyoti, zamonaviy ingliz tilining shakllanishi*

INTRODUCTION

Middle English constitutes a transitional phase in the development of the English language following the Norman Conquest of 1066. During this era, English grammar experienced significant structural transformation. In contrast to Old English, which depended largely on inflectional morphology to express grammatical categories such as case, number, tense, and agreement, Middle English witnessed a substantial reduction of these morphological markers, especially within nominal and verbal systems. This process of morphological simplification directly influenced syntactic organization: as inflectional endings lost their distinctiveness, word order increasingly became the principal mechanism for indicating grammatical relationships.

Consequently, Middle English syntax demonstrates a shift from a morphology-based system to one governed by positional principles. Finite verbs progressively occupied more stable positions in relation to subjects and objects, while auxiliary verb constructions developed to convey tense, aspect, and mood with greater clarity. Simultaneously, the impact of French and Latin—mediated through administrative, literary, and religious texts—introduced new patterns of subordination and clause embedding, thereby accelerating the movement toward a more fixed clause structure.

This study seeks to analyze these syntactic developments through an examination of a variety of Middle English prose and poetic texts, framing the results within a diachronic perspective that links the grammatical flexibility of Old English to the establishment of Modern English syntactic conventions.

METHODS: This study employs a qualitative historical–comparative methodology to examine the syntactic characteristics of Middle English. The primary data are drawn from representative corpora such as The Ormulum, Ancrene Wisse, Layamon's Brut, as well as early administrative and legal texts, including the Peterborough Chronicle. These sources encompass a wide range of genres and registers, enabling the analysis of syntactic patterns across both literary and institutional contexts.

The analysis is structured around three principal dimensions. First, clause-level verb positioning is investigated, with particular attention to developments in subject–verb–object

order, the retention or decline of verb-second (V2) constructions, and the emergence of verb-medial as opposed to verb-final configurations. Second, the interaction between morphology and syntax is explored by examining the impact of inflectional erosion on agreement marking and the permissibility of non-canonical word orders. Third, the role of language contact and structural borrowing is assessed through an analysis of French and Latin influence on subordination, relative clause formation, and discourse-level embedding.

Methodologically, the study integrates close textual analysis, syntactic annotation, and systematic comparison with Old English syntactic patterns. In addition, the research draws on established secondary literature in the field of Middle English grammar and historical syntax, including works by Hogg (1992), Kroch and Taylor (2000), and Pintzuk (1999).

RESULTS: The findings demonstrate that Middle English syntax experienced a progressive yet systematic restructuring. As nominal case endings and verbal inflections declined, word order assumed a central role in marking grammatical relationships. The subject–verb–object pattern gradually became dominant in main clauses, although residual verb-second (V2) features continued to surface, particularly in poetic and narrative prose, where sentence-initial adverbials occasionally prompted verb-medial positioning.

Subordinate clauses showed an increasing reliance on explicit subordinators such as that, if, and whether, indicating a movement away from morphologically governed subordination toward a more position-based system. Contact with French and Latin further facilitated the growth of complex subordination and relative clause embedding, introducing more hierarchical clause structures that had previously been relatively uncommon in English.

Clear distinctions across genres were also evident. Poetic texts preserved a degree of syntactic flexibility, allowing inversion for metrical and stylistic purposes, while legal and administrative documents increasingly favored stable SVO order to ensure precision and transparency. Additionally, auxiliary verbs including have, be, and shall progressively replaced synthetic preterite forms, reinforcing the broader shift away from morphological marking.

DISCUSSION: The results reinforce the view that Middle English occupies a pivotal transitional position in the development of English syntax, linking the structural flexibility of Old English with the positional rigidity characteristic of Modern English. The erosion of morphological markers generated a need for greater consistency in word order, while sustained language contact and evolving textual practices fostered the expansion of subordinate clauses and the use of hierarchical embedding.

The convergence of inherited Germanic syntactic patterns with Romance-influenced models gave rise to a mixed system in which residual verb-second (V2) constructions coexist with increasingly fixed subject–verb–object ordering and more complex layers of subordination. Differences across registers further demonstrate that syntactic change was

shaped by discourse function, with poetic and legal genres following distinct developmental paths.

In sum, Middle English syntax illustrates how grammar systems grounded in morphology can gradually shift toward position-based organization under the combined effects of internal simplification and external linguistic influence. Examining these processes offers valuable insight into the syntactic structure of Present-Day English and clarifies its historical evolution from earlier Germanic frameworks.

REFERENCES

1.Hogg, R. M. (1992). The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume I: The Beginnings to 1066. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2.Hogg, R. M., & Denison, D. (Eds.). (2006). A History of the English Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

3.Kroch, A., & Taylor, A. (2000). Verb-object order in early Middle English. In S. Pintzuk, G. Tsoulas, & A. Warner (Eds.), Diachronic Syntax: Models and Mechanisms (pp. 132–163). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

4.Pintzuk, S. (1999). Phrase Structures in Competition: Variation and Change in Old English Word Order. New York: Garland Publishing.

5.Fischer, O., van Kemenade, A., Koopman, W., & van der Wurff, W. (2000). The Syntax of Early English. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

6.Mustanoja, T. F. (1960). A Middle English Syntax. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.

7.Denison, D. (1993). English Historical Syntax: Verbal Constructions. London: Longman.

8.Burrow, J. A., & Turville-Petre, T. (2013). A Book of Middle English (3rd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

9.Warner, A. (2007). Parameters of variation between Old and Middle English. In A. van Kemenade & B. Los (Eds.), The Handbook of the History of English (pp. 443–467). Oxford: Blackwell.

10.Traugott, E. C., & Dasher, R. B. (2002). Regularity in Semantic Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.