

中英語不定詞構造の理論的諸問題

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Some Theoretical Problems of the Infinitival Construction in Middle English

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In this paper, I explore the theoretical problems which the infinitival construction in Middle English raises. I assume the framework of Chomsky's core grammar. The reader should refer to Chomsky and Lasnik (1977)¹.

As is noted by many linguists, *for to* originally expressed purpose, but was used extensively in Middle English as a simple equivalent of *to* (Jespersen MEG Vol. 5 p.212). See below from (1) to (11).

- (1) It were my wrecched clothes, nothyng faire,
The whiche to me were hard now for to fynde.
(Chaucer, The Clerk's Tale 850-1)
- (2) make ye yourself for to be lyk a fool !
(Chaucer, B. Mel. 2170-5)
- (3) His berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge;
(Chaucer, The Knight's Tale 2173)
- (4) That it gan al the temple for to light ;
(*ibid.* 2426)
- (5) And heer-agayns no creature on lyve,
Of no degree, availleth for to stryve.
(*ibid.* 2039-40)
- (6) This Nicholas...
And to hire housbonde bad hire for to seye,
(Chaucer, The Miller's Tale 3409-12)
- (7) I holde a mouses herte nat worth a leek
That hath but oon hole for to sterte to,
(Chaucer, The Wife of Bath's Tale 572-3)
- (8) "It nere," quod he, "to thee no greet honour

For to be fals, ne for to be traitour

(Chaucer, The Knight's Tale 1129-30)

(9) that hir housbonde liked for to seye,

(Chaucer, B. Mel. 2250-5)

(10) of sterres fixe it liked me for to take the

(Chaucer, Astr. 139-45)

(11) But, upon payne his heed of for to swappe,

But, upon pain his head off for to strike,

'But on pain of striking off his head,'

(Chaucer, The Clerk's Tale 586)

In presentday English the structure of (12) is ungrammatical. This structure is excluded by the filter (13), which is dialect-specific. This filter does not hold in Middle English, as is shown above.

(12) *We want for to win.

(13) * {for-to} (a filter)

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 442)

The components of the grammar assumed by Chomsky and Lasnik (1977) are shown below.

(14) 1. Base

2. Transformations (movement, adjunction, substitution)

3 a. Deletion 3 b. Construal

4 a. Filters 4 b. Quantifier interpretation, etc.

5 a. Phonology

6 a. Stylistic rules

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 431)

Base rules for complementizers are shown below in (15). These rules generate (16).

(15) a. $\text{COMP} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \pm \text{WH} \\ \text{for} \\ \phi \end{cases}$

b. $-\text{WH}$ is realized as *that*

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 456)

(16) a. [_{COMP} [_{-WH} that]]

b. [_{COMP} {for}]

c. [_{COMP} ϕ]

We may have a structure such as (17) after the rule of *Wh* Movement, which is ungrammatical in presentday English. The filter (18) blocks (17). But see (19) and (20). In Middle English this filter does not hold either.

(17) [_{COMP} [who] [that]]

(18) * [_{COMP} wh-phrase φ] , $\varphi \neq e$ (a filter)

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977-446)

- (19) I am she which that saved hath youre lyf.

(Chaucer, D. WB. 1092)

- (20) She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous

(Chaucer, CT, Prol. 144)

In presentday English, the structure (21) is ungrammatical. The filter (22) is proposed to block (21). In Old English and Middle English this structure appears optionally. See (23) and (24). *That* filter does not operate in Old English and Middle English.

- (21) who do you think [that [[_{NPe}] saw Bill]]

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 450)

- (22) *That* filter: * [_S that [_{NPe}] ...]

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 451)

- (23) for þese þat God woot þat shal be saved, ...

(Wyclifite sermons i. 166. 36)

(A. Warner 1983 : 170)

- (24) For in his male he hadde a pilwe-beer,

Which that he seyde was Oure Lady veyl:

(Chaucer, Cant. Tale Prologue 694- 5)

The structure (25) with *for to* is also ungrammatical in presentday English. But see (26). This structure is possible in Middle English. There are two ways to block (25) in present-day English. One is to use the filter (25), and the other is to extend the filter (22) to include the complementizer *for*.

- (25) *who do you want [for [[_{NPe}] to see Bill]]

- (26) a perel in þe Chirche, þat þoul tauȝte

a peril in the Church, that Paul taught

for to come, is þat Anticrist hiȝe him

for to come, is, that Antichrist calls himself

above Crist, ...

above Christ, ...

(a peril in the Church, that Paul taught (for)_____to come, is that Antichrist calls himself above Christ, ...)

(Wyclifite sermons i. 303, 23)

(A. Warner 1982 : 136)

The filter (27) blocks the structures from (28) to (32) in presentday English. But see the sentences from (33) to (42) below. All of them are grammatical in Middle English.

- (27) To Filter: * [_αNP to VP] , unless α is adjacent to and in the domain of $[-N]$ ² or $\alpha = NP$, where the feature $[-N]$ holds of verbs and prepositions.

(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 464)

- (28) *(For) John to take the job would be preferred.

- (29) *(For) John to be successful would be unlikely.

- (30) *It is certain John to take part.
(Chomsky and Lasnik 1977 : 448)
- (31) It bothers me *(for) Bill to win.
- (32) John is certain *(for) to take part.
- (33) A man to soweyn kokyl betoknith euelis and stryf
(Dream bk. 80)
(Visser II, p. 956)
- (34) Men to seye of wommen wel, it is best, And nor for to despise hem ne deprae.
(Occleve, Letter of Cupid 188)
(Visser II, p. 956)
- (35) I to mak me blith or glad ... þat nu (= na) mai be.
(Cursor M. 10459)
(Visser II, p. 956)
- (36) A kyng to kepe hise lygise in justice,
Withouten doute that is his offise.
(Chaucer, L. G. W., Prol. Version A366)
(Visser II, p. 956)
- (37) That it were impossible me to wryte.
(Chaucer, Franklin's Tale 1549)
- (38) as possible is me to deye to-day For wo, as he that hath ben languysshynge Thise
twenty winter.
(Chaucer, Parlt. Foules 471)
(Visser II, p. 956)
- (39) it is vncuth and vnwon þe fader to be-cum þe sun.
(Curs. M. 10139)
(Visser II, p. 963)
- (40) It es ful semeli, als me think, A brok omang men for to stynk.
(Ywain & Gawain 98)
(Visser II, p. 963)
- (41) Ne i herd neuer ... in land Men sua hard at to vnderstand.
(Curs. M. 9326)
(Visser II, p. 1032)
- (42) For the lond and the contree is not worthi houndes to duell jnne.
(Mandeville 83, 10)
(Visser II, p. 996)

In Middle English prepositions can take an infinitival complement as well as a *that* clause. See the sentences from (43) to (46).

- (43) After for to speke of Ierusalen ... ȝee schull vnderstonde þat it stont full faire
betwene hilles.
(Mandeville 48, 6)

(Visser II, p. 1032)

- (44) His brest was hool, withoute for to sene,
His breast was whole, without for to sain,
'His breast was whole, without crossing himself,'
(Chaucer, The Franklin's Tale 1111)

- (45) Now have I thee declared al-out, Of that thou were in drede and dout;
(Chaucer, The Romaunt of the Rose 2935-6)

- (46) 'Wherof, lat see?'
'Of that he seyde I shulde be glad ...'
(Chaucer, The Romaunt of the Rose 4660-3)

I have demonstrated so far that the filters (13), (18), (22), and (27), which are valid in presentday English, do not hold in Middle English. It is not of much importance merely to point out counterexamples. In fact, Chomsky and Lasnik themselves say that the filters (13) and (18) are dialect-specific. But the study of different dialects or languages often provides crucial evidence to alternative analyses.

Notes:

1

As for the further development of his theory, see Chomsky (1980) and Chomsky (1981).

2

Chomsky and Lasnik (1977 : 430) assumes the basic features of categories as follows:

+N	-N
+V Adjective	Verb
-V Noun	Preposition

References

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