

Old English verbs of prohibition. Grammatical behaviour and class membership¹

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The aim of this article is to determine if the Old English verbs *bewerian*, *forbēodan*, *foresacan*, *forwiernan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* constitute a unified class of prohibition. The theoretical model is provided by the framework of verb classes and alternations, as well as by Role and Reference Grammar. Class membership requires not only similar meaning components but also shared grammatical behaviour. While *bewerian*, *forbēodan* and *forwyrnan* are found in three syntactic configurations, and in the Nominalisation and Undergoer alternations, *foresacan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* occur in one syntactic configuration only and do not take part in these alternations. The main conclusion of this article is that these verbs do not show a similar grammatical behaviour and, therefore, cannot be said to represent a consistent verbal class.

Keywords: Old English; verb classes; alternations; Role and Reference Grammar

1. Introduction

The aim of this article is to analyse the Old English verbs of prohibition *bewerian*, *forbēodan*, *foresacan*, *forwiernan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* as to class membership. *A Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE, Roberts & Kay 2000) classifies

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these verbs under the label of verb of prohibition because they share meaning components related to prohibiting, hindering or preventing that something is the case. With an alternative approach, the analysis carried out in this article is based on the idea that the class membership of verbs depends not only on meaning components but also on grammatical behaviour. This theoretical position, which has been held by Levin (1993) among others, is adopted in this research together with the descriptive and explanatory concepts of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997), which provides a suitable framework for determining whether or not the verbs at stake share their grammatical behaviour.

The article is organised as follows. Section 2 presents two approaches to verb classes, on the basis of syntactic behaviour and semantic roles. Section 3 reviews previous work on the verbal classes of Old English, with special emphasis on verbs of speech and related meanings. Section 4 describes the method of analysis, including the data sources, the steps of analysis and the application of the theoretical framework. Section 5 deals with the grammatical behaviour of the verbs of prohibition, while keeping an eye on the meaning components that have been identified through comparison with Present-day English. To conclude, Section 6 discusses the results and Section 7 summarises the main findings of the article.

2. Two approaches to verb classes

In this section, two approaches to the building of verb classes are reviewed: verb classes based on syntactic behaviour (Levin's framework of verb classes and alternations) and verb classes formed from semantic criteria expressed as thematic roles (Role and Reference Grammar).

Levin (1993) lays the foundation of a research programme in the semantic motivation of syntax that focuses on verbs. It consists of two descriptive concepts, namely verbal class and alternation, which are explanatory with respect to each other. While the semantics of a given verb determines the range of expressions with which it is found, the syntactic configurations shared by a set of verbs is a defining criterion for class membership. That is to say, from the perspective of argument realisation, the number and form of the compulsory complements of a verb is restricted by the meaning component of the verb in question, whereas from the perspective of class membership "verbs that fall into classes according to shared behavior would be expected to show

shared meaning components” (Levin 1993: 5). Verbal classes and alternations are not explicitly defined. The former are syntactically relevant and semantically coherent, whereas the latter affect the diathesis of verbs (Levin 1993: 22). The characteristic properties of verbal classes include argument-taking properties, participation in diathesis alternations and morphological properties. For instance, *grow* verbs include *develop*, *evolve*, *grow*, *hatch* and *mature* (Levin 1993: 174). The properties of this class include the alternations in (1), which are understood as systematic morpho-syntactic contrasts in the realisation of verbal arguments.

- (1)
- a. Material/Product Alternation (intransitive)
 - That acorn will grow into an oak tree.
 - An oak tree will grow from that acorn.
 - b. Causative/Inchoative alternation
 - The gardener grew that acorn into an oak tree.
 - That acorn will grow into an oak tree.

As Levin (1993: 174) remarks, these verbs show an alternation that can be described as the intransitive counterpart of the material/product alternation in which build verbs participate (as in *Martha carved a toy out of a piece of wood* vs. *Martha carved the piece of wood into a toy*). Alternations, therefore, do not only constitute a defining property of verb classes but also allow us to make generalisations across verb classes. For example, the body-part possessor ascension alternation (as in *Margaret cut Bill’s arm* vs. *Margaret cut Bill on the arm*) distinguishes *cut*, *hit* and *touch*, which participate in the alternation, from *break*, which does not display this alternation.

Differences in verb behaviour can be explained if alternations are sensitive to certain components of the meaning of verbs. For example, *touch* is “a pure verb of contact”, *hit* is “a verb of contact by motion”, *cut* is “a verb of causing a change of state by moving something into contact with the entity that changes state”, and *break* is a “pure verb of change of state” (Levin 1993: 10). In other words, certain meaning elements can be defined for a given alternation, which ultimately determines which verbs can undergo the alternation and belong to a certain verbal class.

Turning to verb classes formed from semantic criteria expressed as thematic roles, RRG (Foley & Van Valin 1984, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, Van Valin 2005) classifies verbs with respect to the semantic properties necessary for the description of semantic roles, in such a way that verb classes

can be derived from the assignment of semantic roles to the arguments of the verb. These questions are addressed in more detail in the remainder of this section, which is based on the overview of RRG available from http://linguistics.buffalo.edu/people/faculty/vanvalin/rrg/RRG_overview.pdf. The tables in this section follow, with few modifications, this overview. This section also draws on this overview for the terminology and the definitions of RRG. Some examples have been changed or modified.

In RRG, the semantic representation of the sentence is based on the *Aktionsart* (internal aspect) class of the verb. The typology of *Aktionsart* consists of four classes: State, Achievement, Accomplishment and Activity. States and activities are basic types. Achievements are punctual and accomplishments are durative. Van Valin & LaPolla (1997) also distinguish the Active Accomplishment (telic uses of activity verbs) and the causative version of all *Aktionsart* classes. Van Valin (2005), additionally, proposes the Semelfactive class, both non-causative and causative, or punctual events. *Aktionsart* types are defined by means of the set of features shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Aktionsart* or internal aspect (Van Valin 2005)

STATE [+static], [-dynamic], [-telic], [-punctual]	<i>Leon is a fool</i>
ACTIVITY [-static], [+dynamic], [-telic], [-punctual]	<i>The children cried</i>
SEMELFACTIVE [-static], [\pm dynamic], [-telic], [+punctual]	<i>The light flashed</i>
ACHIEVEMENT [-static], [-dynamic], [+telic], [+punctual]	<i>The window shattered</i>
ACCOMPLISHMENT [-static], [-dynamic], [+telic], [-punctual]	<i>The snow melted</i>
ACTIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT [-static], [+dynamic], [+telic], [-punctual]	<i>Paul ran to the store</i>

Logical structures relate clausal semantics to clausal syntax and viceversa, thus constituting the main device of semantics-syntax and syntax-semantics linking. Table 2 shows *Aktionsart* types and the corresponding logical structures. The main distinction is drawn between the stative (**predicate'**) and non-stative (**do'**) part of logical structures. The variables x, y and z stand for verbal arguments. The metalinguistic predicates INGR(essive), SEM(e)L(factive), BECOME and CAUSE indicate, respectively, ingressesives, semelfactives, accomplishments and causatives.

Table 2. *Aktionsart* types and logical structures in RRG

<i>Aktionsart</i> type	Logical Structure
STATE	predicate' (x) or (x, y)
ACTIVITY	do' (x, [predicate' (x) or (x, y)])
ACHIEVEMENT	INGR predicate' (x) or (x, y), or INGR do' (x, [predicate' (x) or (x, y)])
SEMELFACTIVE	SEML predicate' (x) or (x, y), or SEML do' (x, [predicate' (x) or (x, y)])
ACCOMPLISHMENT	BECOME predicate' (x) or (x, y), or BECOME do' (x, [predicate' (x) or (x, y)])
ACTIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT	do' (x, [predicate1' (x, (y))]) & BECOME predicate2' (z, x) or (y)
CAUSATIVE	α CAUSE β , where α, β are LSs of any type

The semantic interpretation of verbal arguments in RRG is based on two generalised semantic roles or macroroles called Actor and Undergoer. Macroroles make grammatical generalisations across argumental structures. In a transitive predication, the Actor is the first argument and the Undergoer the second argument of the verb. In an intransitive predication, the only argument can be an Actor or an Undergoer, depending on the semantic properties of the predicate. The number of macroroles that a predicate takes is called *macrorole transitivity*. This definition is semantic and is intended to distinguish the number of macroroles from the number of syntactic arguments, called *syntactic transitivity*. The three possibilities of macrorole transitivity are: transitive (2 macroroles), intransitive (1 macrorole) and atransitive (0 macroroles). There is no third macrorole available for ditransitives. The third argument is called a *non-macrorole direct core argument*.

As regards grammatical relations, subject and object are not universal for RRG. Instead, RRG posits the concept of Privileged Syntactic Argument (PSA). In an active construction, the macrorole Actor is linked to PSA if the verb is dynamic, while the Undergoer becomes the PSA with stative verbs. In passive constructions, the macrorole Undergoer enjoys the status of PSA. The other arguments in a clause are core arguments, either direct (without preposition) or oblique (with preposition, or case-marked genitive or dative in inflectional languages like Old English). Some constraints operate. In some languages only macrorole arguments can be linked to PSA, whereas in others, such as Old English, non-macrorole core arguments can be linked to PSA.

Linking is the correspondence between syntax and semantics, which operates in both ways. The linking between syntax and semantics is governed by the Completeness Constraint, stipulating that all the specified arguments in the semantic representation of a sentence must be realised in the syntax, and conversely that all the expressions in the syntax must be linked to some element in the semantic representation of a sentence, in order to be interpreted. Important elements of linking are verb agreement, case assignment and prepositional government.

The RRG theory of complex sentences is based on two concepts, juncture and nexus, in such a way that the type of unit (juncture) is independent of the type of relation (nexus). Beginning with juncture, it is necessary to make reference to the structure of the clause in RRG. The layered structure of the clause is a hierarchical structure that consists of several semantic layers that are motivated by the scope of operators (grammatical features such as tense, aspect, modality, etc.). The central components of the logical structure of the clause are the Core (a verbal nucleus with its arguments and its argument-adjuncts, as in *drink wine* and *go to the park* respectively), the Clause, which is comprised of the Core and the Periphery (as in *play chess in the park*), and the Sentence, which consists of one or more units of Clause level, as in *I read a novel before going to bed*. These components, in the RRG view, also represent the fundamental constituents of complex sentences. The unmarked pattern for the construction of complex sentences involves the combination of nuclei with nuclei, cores with cores, clauses with clauses, and sentences with sentences. These are called *levels of juncture*. Depending on the degree of complexity of the combining units, the types of juncture are nuclear juncture, core juncture, clausal juncture and sentential juncture. Nuclear junctures, for example, are complex constructions made up of multiple nuclei. For example, in *John forced open the door*, two nuclei, *force* and *open*, can be found in a single core. Core junctures comprise two or more cores in a clause, as in *I ordered Fred to force the door open*. In this type of core juncture, the two cores share a core argument, in this case the participant *Fred*. A clause juncture can be identified in more complex structures of the type *John phoned Mary yesterday and Jim phoned her too*. Further differences between the levels of juncture have to do with complementisers (*to*, *from*, etc.). Nuclear junctures do not include complementisers, whereas core junctures may require them. As a result, the two nuclei can be adjacent in a nuclear juncture, while they cannot be adjacent in a core juncture.

The possible syntactic and semantic relations between the units in a juncture, called *nexus*, include coordination and subordination. Subordination is divided into two subtypes, daughter subordination, when the subordinate clause functions as an argument, as in *That she arrived late shocked everyone*; and peripheral subordination, when the subordinate clause is a periphery, as in *Kim saw Pat after she arrived at the party*. Both subtypes of subordination are possible at the clause, core and nuclear levels. For subordination to take place, it is a requirement that clefting and passivisation are possible. Thus, *Mary regretted John's losing the race* is an instance of subordination because the cleft (*It was John's losing the race that Mary regretted*) and the passive (*For John to lose the race was regretted by Mary*) are possible (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 445). To the traditional nexus types of coordination and subordination, RRG adds a third nexus type, called *cosubordination*, which is dependent coordination. In cosubordination, the dependence is due to the operators, given that the units must share at least one operator at the level of juncture. For example, in *Mary sat playing the guitar* the operator of imperfect aspect has scope over both nuclei, *sat* and *playing*.

3. Review of previous work

The Lexematic-Functional approach to Old English verbal classes distinguishes constructions (recurrent associations of form and meaning) and alternations (recurrent contrast of form and meaning). Both constructions and alternations make reference to the semantics of the verbs in question by identifying the *Aktionsart* (internal aspect) realisations and also refer to the syntax of verbs (including argument realisation, case marking and prepositional government and clausal relations within the complex sentence). For a certain verbal class to be distinguished, as in the framework of verb classes and alternations (Levin 1993), not only the expression of a common meaning but also a certain degree of similar grammatical behaviour are compulsory.

If we concentrate on the specific contributions of the Lexematic-Functional approach to Old English verbal classes, several verb classes have been studied, along with their logical structures (formal representation of *Aktionsart* types), constructions and alternations: verbs of warning (González Orta 2002), verbs of running (Cortés Rodríguez & Torres Medina 2003), verbs of writing (Cortés Rodríguez & Martín Díaz 2003), verbs of smell perception and emission (González Orta 2003), verbs of speech (González Orta 2004),

remember verbs (González Orta 2005), verbs of sound (Cortés Rodríguez & González Orta 2006), verbs of feeling (C. L. García Pacheco 2013), and verbs of existence (L. M. García Pacheco 2013); as well as some specific constructions, like the resultative (González Orta 2006).

González Orta (2006), in a representative work, proposes a lexical template for the class of verbs of speech. A lexical template is a lexical representation that includes syntactic and semantic information within the same format, based on the logical structures of RRG and semantic decomposition. For example, the resultative construction describes the state achieved as the result of an action (Levin 1993: 101). This construction is instantiated in subconstructions involving verbs of speech. In the case of Old English verbs of speech, each event comprises the subevents in Table 3.

Table 3. Subevents in events of speech (González Orta 2006)

The activities [**do'** (y, z)] and [NOT **do'** (y, z)] regarding *command*, *ask* and *forbid* verbs

The state [**want'** (y, z)] with *persuade* verbs

The accomplishments [BECOME *believe'* (y, z)], [BECOME **think.again.about something (a).be.in.mind.from.before'** (y, z)] and [BECOME *know'* (y, z)] concerning *persuade*, *remind* and *tell* verbs, respectively

In the first subevents of the constructional templates in Table 4, the external variable (x) acts as effector initiating an action (**do'**) by using (**use'**) verbal means (voice/words), in such a way that, focusing on verbs *command* and *ask* verbs, this effector causes (CAUSE) someone to do or not to do something.

Table 4. The resultative construction: constructional templates with verbs of speech (González Orta 2006)

Command verbs

[**do'** (x, [**use'** (x, voice/words)] CAUSE [**do'** (x, [**express.instructions.(a).to.(b).in.language.(c)'** (x, y)]))] CAUSE [**do'** (y, z)], where y = b , z = a.

Ask verbs

[**do'** (x, [**use'** (x, voice/words)] CAUSE [**do'** (x, [**express.requests.(a).to.(b).in.language.(c)'** (x, y)]))] CAUSE [**do'** (y, z)], where y = b , z = a.

As can be seen in these tables, the template motivates a set of construction-based templates corresponding to the related constructions.

4. Method. The semantics and syntax of verbs of prohibition

In this section, the method of research is described, including the data sources, the steps of analysis and the application of the theoretical framework as well as the synthesis presented in the previous sections to the verbs under analysis.

As regards the data sources, the inventory of verbs of prohibition has been retrieved from *A Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE). The verbs beginning with the letters A–H have been consulted on *The Dictionary of Old English* (DOE). All the citations corresponding to the meaning under analysis have been selected. For the verbs beginning with the letters I–Y, the citations in the *Bosworth-Toller Dictionary* have been extracted.

This research takes the following steps of analysis: firstly, it describes the semantics and the grammatical behaviour of verbs of prohibition in Present-day English; in the second place, it analyses the realisation of arguments and the structure of the clause with Old English verbs of prohibition; thirdly, it identifies the alternations found with verbs of prohibition; and, finally, it assesses the consistency of the set of verbs of prohibition as a verbal class in Old English.

With respect to the semantics of prohibition in Present-day English, forbidding is a speech act. It has the illocutionary force of a negative imperative of the form *Don't do X*. Semantically, the first argument is a prototypical agent: a volitional initiator with authority over the addressee. The addressee undergoes a change of state whereby they are no longer allowed to do something. This is typically an activity controlled by the addressee. The change of state may or may not be punctual, from being allowed to not being allowed to do something.

Verbs of prohibition do not presuppose that the forbidden action does not take place. In this respect, verbs of prohibition are substantially different from verbs of prevention, which presuppose that the action was not accomplished (as in *The ministers prevented the president from resigning*). *Prevent* verbs, unlike verbs of prohibition, take the complementiser *from*. For this reason, the logical structure posited for *forbid* verbs by González Orta (2006), a Causative

Active Accomplishment, is not adopted in this research. The Causative Accomplishment is preferred to indicate that a process has taken place whereby someone is no longer allowed to do something. This process may be durative but its logical end is that someone is forbidden to do something. The metapredicate BECOME marks the culmination of the process. The logical structures of verbs of prohibition such as *forbid* and verbs of prevention like *prevent* are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The logical structure of *forbid* and *prevent*

Forbid

The new government has forbidden to sell chewing gum.

CAUSATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT

[do' (x, [predicate' (x, y)])] CAUSE [BECOME (NOT allowed' (y, z))]

Prevent

I cannot prevent you from doing so.

CAUSATIVE ACTIVITY

[do' (x, [predicate' (x, y)])] CAUSE [NOT do' (y, z)]

The lexical representation of *forbid* in Table 5 is a simplified version of the logical structure of *promise*, which states that the speaker expresses an obligation to someone to do the action denoted by the logical structure filling the second argument of **obligated'** (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 551). This lexical representation is consistent with the logical structure posited for transfer of possession (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 583).

Syntactically, verbs of prohibition are found in the Nominalisation alternation, which involves a simplex clause with an argument (typically, the first argument) that usually entails a predication with its participants expressed as modifiers; and a complex sentence in which the linked clause expresses the prohibition with a non-finite verb that takes a direct argument of its own, as in *The consumption of alcohol is forbidden* vs. *It is forbidden to consume alcohol*. The alternation between the *that*-clause and the infinitive, which holds in Old English, is archaic in Present-day English and is found only in expressions like *Heaven forbid that he should go there*.

Verbs of prohibition are also found in the Undergoer alternation, which can be described as a result of raising from Actor in the linked clause to Undergoer in the matrix clause, as in *The king forbad that horses should be sold* vs. *The king forbad to sell horses*. In a clausal subordination juncture like *The king forbad that horses should be sold*, the linked clause *that horses should be sold* is assigned the macrorole Undergoer, whereas in the core coordination juncture *The king forbad to sell horses*, the linked core *to sell horses* does not receive the macrorole Undergoer. The reason is that the clausal subordination juncture can be turned into a passive with the Undergoer as target, thus *Selling horses was forbidden by the king*, while no such passive is possible on the basis of the core coordination juncture. If there is an explicit patient of prohibition, as in *The king forbad that farmers sold horses* vs. *The king forbad farmers to sell horses*, competition arises to get Undergoer status between the patient of prohibition (*farmers*) and the object of prohibition (*to sell horses*). In *The king forbad farmers to sell horses* the patient of prohibition is assigned Undergoer, while in *The king forbad that farmers sold horses* it is the object of prohibition that gets the macrorole Undergoer. As has been remarked above, Undergoer competition is ultimately a matter of raising from Actor in the linked clause to Undergoer in the matrix clause. Morphologically, this involves a shift from nominative to dative case, in such a way that the accusative is related to the Nominalisation alternation and the dative to the Undergoer alternation.

To conclude this section, the criteria for analysing the grammatical behaviour of verbs of prohibition are listed. They are based on the semantics and syntax of these verbs, as presented in this section, as well as on the theoretical model and the previous research reviewed above. The criteria are the following: nexus and juncture type; complementiser; finite vs. non-finite form of the dependent verb; *Aktionsart* type; semantic valence (transitivity of macrorole); syntactic valence (obligatory arguments and argument-adjuncts); omitted arguments (in parallel or coordinated constructions); unspecified arguments (second or third argument); Actor vs. Undergoer PSA; morphological case of arguments; prepositional government in argument-adjuncts. The criterion of voice is not considered because it is redundant with respect to Actor vs. Undergoer PSA. The relative order of arguments may be taken into account if recurrent alignments turn up.

5. The grammatical behaviour of Old English verbs of prohibition

This section analyses the grammatical behaviour of the Old English verbs of prohibition *bewerian*, *forbēodan*, *foresacan*, *forwiernan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþan* in order to determine their class membership. The approach is qualitative and aims at the different argument realisations found in the data. Notice that in the examples in this section fragments are named as in the DOE.

Bewerian, according to the DOE, means ‘to ward off, defend, protect’ and, more to the point, ‘to hinder, restrain’. This verb is found in the two alternants of the Nominalisation alternation, which, as has been said above, comprises a simplex clause with an argument that can entail a predication, and a complex sentence in which the linked clause expresses the prohibition with a non-finite verb. In example (2), *bewerian* turns up in a simplex clause that belongs in a coordinate subject construction, in which a non-macrorole argument in the dative case realises the patient of prohibition (*him* ‘to them’) and a direct macrorole argument (Undergoer) case-marked accusative (*æghwylc yfel* ‘every wicked thing’) expresses the object.

(2) [HomS 47 21]

Se Halga Gast hie æghwylc god lærde, & him æghwylc yfel bewerede.

The Holy Spirit taught them every good thing and prohibited them every wicked thing.

The other alternant can contain either a finite or a non-finite verb in the dependent clause, so that the nexus-juncture types are clausal subordination or core coordination. In (3), the linked clause, introduced by the complementiser *þæt*, is assigned the macrorole Undergoer and is linked to PSA.

(3) [Bede 1 16.70.18]

Swelce is eac bewered þæt mon hine mēge wið his broðorwiife, forðon þurh þa ærran geþeodnesse heo wæs geworden his broðor lichoma.

So also it is forbidden that a man weds his brother’s wife, for by the previous union she became his brother’s body.

Core junctures with coordination nexus that contain *bewerian* can take a complementiser, such as *to* in the inflected infinitive *to etanne* ‘to eat’ in (4a); or no complementiser at all, as is the case with the uninflected infinitive *onwreon* ‘to uncover’ in (4b).

(4)

- a. [Bede 1 16.80.7]
Mid þy seo æ monig þing bewereð to etanne, swa swa unclæne, hwæðre in godspelle Drihten cwæð...
 For while the law prohibits the eating of many things as unclean, in the gospel the Lord said...
- b. [Bede 1 16.70.8]
Seo halige æ bewereð & forbeodeð þa scondlicnesse onwreon mægsibba.
 The holy law prohibits and forbids to uncover the shame of relatives.

Semantically, the object of prohibition does not receive the macrorole Undergoer in simplex clauses, like (2a), and core coordination junctures, like (4a) and (4b), because the patient of prohibition usually gets the Undergoer and the agent of the Causative Accomplishment is the Actor. Then, the Actor argument licenses the nominative case and the Undergoer is case-marked dative. In clausal subordination junctures, the object of prohibition rather than the patient of prohibition is the Undergoer. Given that there is competition for the assignment of this macrorole with *bewerian*, it can be said that this verb is found in the Undergoer alternation.

The PSA can be linked to the Actor or the Undergoer, so that two passives are possible: on the object and on the patient of prohibition. In (5a) the clausal subordination corresponds to the assignment of PSA to the object of prohibition Undergoer, while in (5b) the patient of prohibition Undergoer gets PSA, but is omitted. The argument-adjunct inflected for the dative and governed by the preposition *from* expresses the object of prohibition.

(5)

- a. [Bede 1 16.76.19]
Fulwian þonne þæt cennende wiif oðþe þæt bearn þæt þær acenned bið [...] nænige gemete is bewered.
 So then, to baptise a woman after childbirth or the new-born child [...] is in no way prohibited.
- b. [Bede 1 16.76.2]
Hwelce rehte mæg þonne bewered beon from gife þæs halgan fulwihtes.
 For what reason may then one be prohibited from the gift of Holy Baptism?

Example (5b) reflects the semantics and syntax of *prevent* verbs rather than the configuration of verbs of prohibition. Firstly, it does not realise a predicative object of prohibition and presupposes its non-occurrence, unlike verbs of

prohibition, which do not presuppose that the object of prohibition is not going to be the case. Secondly, it takes the complementiser *from* ‘from’ rather than *to* or *þæt*, as the other examples presented above do.

Finally, with *beverian* there is a tendency for the dative core argument expressing the patient of prohibition to be placed after the nominative and before the core, the clause or the direct argument realising the object of prohibition.

Forbēodan is, from the point of view of meaning definition, a typical verb of prohibition. According to the DOE, it means ‘to forbid, prohibit; to ban, refuse; to restrain, check, hinder, prevent; to resist, deny’. This verb is found in the Nominalisation alternation because the object can be non-verbal and verbal. This verb appears in simplex clauses with an accusative noun phrase that realises the object, such as *ælc wiflac* ‘all cohabitation’ in (6a), and in complex sentences like (6b) and (6c). In core coordination instances like (6b), the object of prohibition constitutes a non-macrorole core, thus *to donne* ‘to do’ and its arguments. In clausal subordination constructions in the active voice like (6c), the object of prohibition (*þæt nan man na ma wifa næbbe buton I* ‘that any man has more than one wife’) receives Undergoer. In (6a), (6b) and (6c) the agent of the Causative Accomplishment is case-marked nominative.

(6)

a. [HomU 40 144]

Hig forbudon æfre ælc wiflac weofodþenum, þæt is bisceopum and mæssepreostum.

They forbade for ever all cohabitation to servers of the altar, that is, bishops and mass-priests.

b. [ThCap 1 10.317.3]

Forþan þe we forbeodað ægðer ge geflytu ge plegan ge unnytta word ge gebuylce unnyttne in þam halgan stowum to donne.

Therefore, we forbid to do any quarrelling, dancing, vain words or any other follies in that holy place.

c. [LawNorthu 61]

And we forbeodað on Godes forbode, þæt nan man na ma wifa næbbe buton I.

And we forbid after God’s prohibition, that any man has more than one wife.

The general tendency is for the core coordination to opt for the inflected infinitive, and for the clausal subordination to select a finite form of the verb conjugated for the subjunctive, as is the case with *leornode* ‘learnt’ in (7).

(7) [Or 6 31.150.14]

Þa wæs he sona geornfull þæt he wolde diegellice þone cristendom onwendan & forbead openlice þæt mon nane fæste boc ne leornode.

Then he was soon glad that he would secretly avert the Christian faith and he openly forbade that anyone read the fast book.

This verb is also found in the Undergoer alternation, given that there is competition for the assignment of this macrorole. The tendency is for the subject of prohibition to be realised as a dative both in core coordinations, like *us* 'us' in (8a), and in clausal subordinations, as is the case with *him* 'them' in (8b).

(8)

a. [CP 48.369.1]

Eac hie sint to manigenne ðette hie ðurb hiora gedwolan & ðurb hiora ungeðwærnesse ða Godes æ, ðe us forbiet diofulum to offrienne, ðæt hie ða ilcan æ ne gebwierfen to diofulgilde.

They are also to be admonished with their errors and disagreement over the law of God, which forbids us to sacrifice to devil, that they do not turn the law into an offering to the devil.

b. [CP 32.211.22]

Ne sculon we no hi ðreagean suelce hie hit gedoon hæbben, ðeah hit gedon sie, ac we sculon him forbeodan ðæt hie huru sua ne don.

We should not blame them as if they had done it, although it be done, but at least we must forbid them to do so.

However, the patient of prohibition can be realised as an argument of the matrix clause, thus the dative *him* 'him' in (9a), or as an argument of the linked clause, such as the nominative *ne kyning ne nan man* 'no king and no man' in (9b). Example (9a) also illustrates the realisation of the patient of prohibition as an argument of the linked clause.

(9)

a. [CP 32.211.22]

Ne sculon we no hi ðreagean suelce hie hit gedoon hæbben, ðeah hit gedon sie, ac we sculon him forbeodan ðæt hie huru sua ne don, suelce hit ðonne giet gedon ne sie.

We should not blame them as if they had done it, although it be done, but we must forbid them to do so, as if it were not yet done.

- b. [ChronE 656.93]
*ic Uitalianus papa [...] forbede þæt ne kyning ne nan man ne haue nan onsting
buton þon abbod ane.*
I Vitalianus pope [...] forbid, that any king, or any man, have any ingress,
but the abbot alone.

The competition for the macrorole Undergoer is also reflected by the fact that both the patient and the object of the prohibition can be duplicated, which guarantees the assignment of Undergoer to the duplicated role and excludes the other. For instance, in (10a) the dative *þam blindan* ‘to the blind’ in the matrix clause is co-referential with the nominative *he* ‘he’ in the linked clause. In (10b) the accusative *hit* ‘it’ in the matrix clause anticipates the linked clause *þæt hi ne weopon* ‘that they would not weep’.

- (10)
a. [ÆHomM 12 75]
Hi forbudon þam blindan þæt he to þam hælende ne clypode.
They forbade the blind man to talk to the Saviour.
b. [Alex 40.13]
Ac þa forbead hit se bisceop þæt hi ne weopon.
But then the bishop forbade them to weep.

A consequence of the competition for the assignment of Undergoer is the double case marking of the patient of prohibition. It is usually case-marked dative, even in the absence of an accusative noun phrase, as *him* ‘to him’ in (11a), but it can also be inflected for the accusative, as *hine* ‘him’ in (11b).

- (11)
a. Mk (WSCp) 9.38
*Lareow, sumne we gesawon on þinum naman deofolseocnessa ut adrifende se ne
fylligð us, & we him forbudon.*
Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name who does not
follow us and we forbade him.
b. [Lk (WSCp) 9.49]
*Bebeodend, we gesawon sumne on þinum naman deofolseocnessa ut drifende &
we hine forbudon.*
Master, we saw someone casting out devils in your name, and we forbade
him.

With *forbēodan*, the PSA is linked to the Actor more frequently than to the Undergoer. Instances of PSA Undergoer, nevertheless, include realisations in both simplex clauses like (12a) and complex sentences such as (12b).

(12)

a. [Conf 1.1 381]

Nis horses flæsc forboden þeah ðe hi fela mægða þicgean nelle.

Horse meet is not forbidden although many men will not taste it.

b. [HomU 53 112]

Donne is eow micel neadþearf þæt ge gebeton þa þing þe eow fram Gode forbodene wæron.

Because it is a great necessity for you that you make good the things that were forbidden by God to you.

In both (12a) and (12b), passivisation is done on the object of prohibition. When the patient of prohibition is the target of passivisation, the dative case of the corresponding active is preserved in the passive construction. This happens in (13), with the PSA linked to the dative *ðæm sacerde* ‘the priest’.

(13) [CP 18.139.24]

Suiðe ryhte wæs ðæm sacerde forboden ðæt he his heafod sceare, & eac ðæt he his feax lete weaxan.

The priest was with good reason forbidden to shave his head or to let his hair grow.

Finally, the patient of prohibition, usually case-marked dative, tends to follow the auxiliary and to precede the lexical verb of the matrix clause, thus, for instance, *ðæm sacerde* ‘the priest’ in (13). This is the case not only with complex sentences but also with simplex ones, like (11a) and (11b), in which the dative precedes the lexical verb. The existence of counterexamples like (6a) indicates that this represents a tendency rather than a strict rule.

According to the DOE, the verb *forsacan* primarily means ‘to refuse’. It can also be found glossing Latin *prohibere* in sense ‘to refuse, prohibit, forbid (someone from an action)’. In (14), the patient and the object of prohibition are omitted because they can be recovered from the context. By analogy with the verbs discussed so far, the simplex clause configuration can be proposed, with the agent of the Active Accomplishment assigned to the macrorole Actor and realised by a noun phrase case-marked nominative; and the patient of

prohibition assigned to the macrorole Undergoer and realised by a noun phrase inflected for the accusative. The nominative is linked to PSA.

(14) [MtGl (Li) 006300 (3.13)]

Da cuom haelend from in to þæt he were gefulwad from him. soðlice foresoc ƿ forbead hine cueð ic from ðe rehtra is gefulwia & ðu cuom ƿ cymes to me.

Then the Saviour came to be baptised by him. Indeed, John prevented and prohibited him and said: it is more suitable that I am baptised by you and you come to me.

The DOE entry to *forwyrnan* defines the meaning of this verb as ‘to refuse, deny; to hinder, prevent, restrain, forbid, prohibit’. In simplex clauses, the object of prohibition is case-marked genitive, as in (15a), while the patient of prohibition is inflected for the dative, as in (15b). In (15c), both the object of prohibition and the patient of prohibition are realised, in the genitive and the dative, respectively, thus *us* ‘us’ and *þæs* ‘of that’.

(15)

a. [ChrodR 1 6.17]

And gif se eard sy wynes wæstmære, sylle man dæghwamlice ælcum bræðer fif punda gewihtes wines, gif þa unwedru his ne forwyrnað.

And if the earth is devoid of wine, one must give daily to each brother five pounds of weighted wine, if the bad weather does not prevent it.

b. [ÆCHom II, 11 103.376]

Ac se halga wer him forwyrnde.

But the holy man restrained him.

c. [ÆCHom II, 40 302.116]

Þonne forwyrnð se mildheorta God us þæs ðe we ungesceadwislice biddað.

Then the mildhearted God restrains us from that which we foolishly beseech.

Even though the object of prohibition in (15a) and (15c) entails a predication, the semantics and syntax of these clauses corresponds to a *prevent* verb rather than to a verb of prohibition. As has been remarked above, *prevent* verbs presuppose that the object of prohibition does not take place, whereas with verbs of prohibition such a presupposition does not hold. Nevertheless, the verb can be found in the Nominalisation alternation, as it takes both noun phrases and verbal clauses that realise the object of prohibition.

In complex sentences, this verb appears in core coordination and clausal subordination junctures. In core coordination junctures, the agent of the

Active Accomplishment is assigned Actor, thus *dæges leoht* ‘daylight’ in (16a), and the patient of prohibition gets Undergoer, as *gebwylcne* ‘anyone’ in (16a). In this example, the object of prohibition is realised as a non-macrorole core, introduced by the complementiser *to* and with the verb in the inflected infinitive, *to gefremmenne þæt þæt seo niht gefafað* ‘to do what the night allows’. Although the patient of prohibition is case-marked accusative in (16a), the tendency is for the patient of prohibition to license the dative case, as it happens in (16b).

(16)

a. [ÆCHom I, 39 522.70]

Swa swa dæges leoht forwyrnð gebwylcne to gefremmenne. þæt þæt seo niht gefafað.

As the light of day prohibits anyone to do what the night allows.

b. [ÆLS (Auguries) 248]

God us ne nyt swa þeah þæt we god don sceolon, ne eac us ne forwyrnð yfel to wyrccenne, forðan þe he us forgeaf agenne cyre.

Neither does he prohibit us to do evil, because he gave us free will.

In clausal subordination junctures, the linked clause is introduced by the complementiser *þæt* and the verb is conjugated for the subjunctive. The linked clause is assigned Undergoer, in the absence of a dative-marked noun phrase that expresses the patient of prohibition in the matrix clause. Instead, the patient of prohibition is realised as the Actor of the linked clause. This can be seen in example (17) with respect to *hit...hit*.

(17) Bo 41.144.26

Nat he hit no forðyþe he wille þæt hit geweorðe, ac forðy þe he wile forwernan þæt hit ne geweorðe.

He does not know it because he wishes that it happens, but because he would like to forbid that it happens.

As in Old English in general, two negations apply simultaneously in example (17). The negation in the matrix clause is lexical and can be attributed to the representation of verbs of prohibition, whose logical structure contains a negation metapredicate, thus **do'** (x, [**predicate'** (x, y)]) CAUSE [BECOME (NOT **allowed'** (y, z))]; the other negation in this example is syntactic, through the negative word *ne* ‘not’.

When the patient of prohibition is expressed, it precedes the linked clause in the linear order of the sentence. Since the linked clause has to perform a function at sentence level (in RRG terms this is the same as receiving Actor or Undergoer), the object of prohibition has preference for the assignment of Undergoer over the patient of prohibition. This happens in (18).

(18) [ChristC 1503]

Ʒearfum forwyrndon Ʒæt hi under eowrum Ʒæce mosten in gebugan.

They prohibited that the needy were allowed to dwell under a roof.

When the object of prohibition is case-marked genitive, the patient of prohibition has priority for Undergoer assignment because no passive can be done on the genitive in Old English. Nevertheless, this verb can be said to participate in the Undergoer alternation. If the patient of prohibition gets Undergoer, the object of prohibition is realised as a non-macrorole core in a core coordination juncture. If the object of prohibition is the Undergoer, the patient of prohibition is not expressed or is marked by the dative case and the position in the order of the sentence, whose juncture is a clausal subordination. Additionally, the patient of prohibition is co-referential with the Actor of the linked clause, thus *Ʒearfum...hi* in (18).

It is also possible for these verbs to turn up in a case-preserving passive construction such as (19). The dative case of the corresponding active, marking the patient of prohibition, is kept in the passive construction.

(19) [ÆCHom I, 19 331.180]

Ʒ̅ deofol us wile ofslean gif he mot. ac him bið forwyrned Ʒurh Godes gescyldnysse.

And the devil would destroy us if he could but he is restrained by God's protection.

This syntactic configuration corresponds to the assignment of the Undergoer to the patient of prohibition, in such a way that the Undergoer then is linked to PSA. The object of prohibition is not realised because it is recoverable from the immediate context and, perhaps, because the competition for Undergoer leaves only a non-macrorole constituent for the realisation of this participant. Finally, the patient of prohibition tends to occupy the pre-verbal position, not only in passives with dative PSA like (19), but also in actives like (18). This also applies to simplex clauses like (15b) and (15c).

According to the Bosworth-Toller entry to *stīeran*, this verb means ‘to steer; to restrain; to reprove; to punish; to prohibit’, so that the meaning of prohibition is not central to this verb. When this verb conveys the meaning ‘to prohibit’, it only appears in simplex clauses. The verb, therefore, cannot be found in the Nominalisation alternation. The patient of prohibition can appear in the genitive, as *his* ‘him’ in (20a) and in the dative, thus *ðe ungewittigum* ‘the foolish’ in (20b). When the object of prohibition and the patient of prohibition are realised, the former is inflected for the genitive and the latter for the dative, as *gielpes* ‘of arrogance’ and *monna cynne* ‘mankind’ in (20c). Example (20d) is reflexive, so that the Actor and the Undergoer are co-referential. Given that the patient of prohibition, which is assigned Undergoer, is case-marked dative, the object of prohibition is necessarily realised as a prepositional phrase introduced by *fram* ‘from’, a preposition frequently found with *prevent* verbs.

(20)

- a. [Swt. 33, 10]
Iacobus his stirde.
Jacob restrained him.
- b. [Homl. Th. ii. 532, 11–15]
Wel deþ se ðe ungewittigum styrþ mid swinglum, gif he mid wordum ne mæg.
Well does he who restrains the foolish with whipping if he cannot do so with words.
- c. [Exon. Th. 299, 20]
He missenlice monna cynne gielpes styreþ.
He in various ways restrains mankind of arrogance.
- d. [Homl. Skt. i. 17, 22]
Gif he him sylfum styrþ fram eallum stuntnyssum.
If he refrains himself from all stupidities.

As can be seen in these examples (taken from Bosworth-Toller, like (21)), there is no competition for the assignment of Undergoer between the patient of prohibition and the object of prohibition, the reason being that if the object of prohibition is realised, it is case-marked genitive or appears as a prepositional phrase, neither of which can be linked to PSA or, in standard terminology, become the subject of the corresponding passive in Old English. This is possible on the dative, which, as has been shown above, is preserved in the passivisation of some verbs of prohibition. Furthermore, the impossibility

of linking a non-macrorole core or a subordinate clause avoids this kind of competition for the assignment of Undergoer.

Still another difference between this verb and the others discussed above has to do with the expression of the instrument. This role does not seem relevant to verbs of prohibition, which tend to code the agent of the Active Accomplishment, the patient of prohibition and the object of prohibition. Example (20b) realises the instrument (*mid swinglum* ‘with whipping’), as is the case with (21), which contains the instrument *mid ðære tælinge* ‘with his rebuke’.

(21) [Swt. 53, 16]

Se micla cræftiga hiertende toscyff and egesiende stierþ ofermetta mid ðære tælinge his hieremonnum.

The great craftsman, who incites encouraging and terrifies, restrains his disciples from prides with his rebuke.

The Bosworth-Toller entry to *tō-cweþan* defines the meaning of this verb as ‘to forbid, prohibit’. It is found in simplex clauses only, in which the object of prohibition (case-marked accusative) is assigned Undergoer, while the agent of the Causative Accomplishment receives Actor and is linked to PSA, as *þa wisan lareowas* ‘the wise teachers’ in (22a); or in which the object of prohibition is case-marked nominative, like *ordal & aðas* ‘ordeals and oaths’, because, being the Undergoer, it has been linked to PSA in a passive such as (22b).

(22)

a. [Æ HomM 8 (Ass 3) 000200 (5)]

Ac we nellað secgan be þære gesetnysse of ðam gedwylde, þe gedwolmen setton be hyre acennednysse, forðan þe hyt tocwædon þa wisan lareowas...

But will not speak about the origin of the heresy, which heretics set about her birth, because the wise teachers forbid it...

b. [LawVAttr 003400 (18)]

Ordal & aðas syndan tocwæden freolsdagum...

Ordeals and oaths are forbidden on feast days...

The patient of prohibition is not realised, either in (22a) or (22b). As for the object of prohibition, it is case-marked accusative in (22a) and, having been linked to PSA, nominative in (22b). These configurations are not compatible with the Nominalisation alternation and with the Undergoer alternation

because the former requires the complex sentence alternant and the latter depends on the realisation of the patient of prohibition and the object of prohibition.

6. Discussion

The analysis presented in the previous section raises two descriptive questions related to the omission of clausal constituents. In the first place, if a subordinate clause and a core are linked to the same matrix clause, it is not possible to determine the type of nexus and juncture of the complex sentence, since the subordinate clause gives rise to clausal subordination with respect to the matrix clause and the non-macrorole core belongs to core coordination. It would, of course, be possible to assume that the matrix clause is omitted before the linked core to *gehælgenne ferunga* ‘to consecrate immediately afterwards’ in (23a), in such a way that two different complex sentences were distinguished, one involving clausal subordination and the other core coordination. This is not advisable, however, because when it comes to supplying omitted constituents to verbs that may take a clause or a core as complement, there is no principled way to do so. This is the case, for instance with (23b).

(23)

a. [MtMarg (Li) 10.14]

Biscope is forboden hǣt he onfoe niwecumenum preostum &̄ to gehælgenne ferunga.

The bishop is forbidden to undertake a rite with new priests and to consecrate them immediately afterwards.

b. [Mk (WSCp) 9.38]

Lareow, sumne we gesawon on þinum naman deofolseocnessa ut adrifende se ne fyligð us, &̄ we him forbudon.

Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name who does not follow us and we forbade him.

The second question is also illustrated by (23a). Similar examples have been analysed in the previous section as conveying a case-preserving passive. This has been preferred over supplying a formal subject *hit*, which is often omitted in Old English, so that the translation into Present-day English would be *It is forbidden that the bishop undertakes... / It is forbidden for the bishop to undertake...*

This said, the verbs *bewerian*, *forbēodan*, *foresacan*, *forwiernan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* share some meaning components, as well as certain aspects of their grammatical behaviour. These are verbs with macrorole transitivity 2 with preference for the active voice. They can take a maximum of two direct core arguments (nominative and accusative) and two oblique core arguments (genitive, dative, argument-adjunct), although the maximal number of syntactic arguments is three. However, most of them take two arguments, one in the nominative and the other usually inflected for an oblique case (genitive or dative). In the constituent order of the sentence, these verbs show a clear tendency to insert the dative realising the patient of prohibition in pre-verbal position or between the auxiliary and the lexical verb.

Bewerian, *forbēodan* and *forwyrnan* are found in the Nominalisation alternation and the Undergoer alternation. They turn up in simplex clause configuration (Figure 1) as well as in complex sentence configurations, involving either a core coordination with the inflected infinitive (Figure 2) or a dependent clause with the verb in the subjunctive (Figure 3).

Bewerian, *forbēodan* and *forwyrnan* can realise the agent of the Active Accomplishment (in the nominative), the object of prohibition (in the simplex clause or as a core in coordination, or as a clause in subordination), and the patient of prohibition (a dative in the matrix clause or a nominative in the linked clause). Some differences arise with respect to these verbs, though. The PSA of *bewerian*, *forbēodan* and *forwyrnan* can be linked to the agent of the Active Accomplishment. On the other hand, while the object of prohibition and the patient of prohibition of *forbēodan* can achieve PSA status, the patient of prohibition of *bewerian* cannot be linked to PSA because this verb does not preserve dative in passivisation, and the object of prohibition of *forwyrnan* cannot get PSA because passives cannot be formed on the genitive. The patient of prohibition is, as a result, the noun phrase around which the complexity of the construction revolves, in terms of co-reference, the assignment of Undergoer, the linking to PSA, the preservation of dative case, and the raising from the linked clause to the matrix clause. In RRG, this kind of PSA is called the *pivot* of the construction.

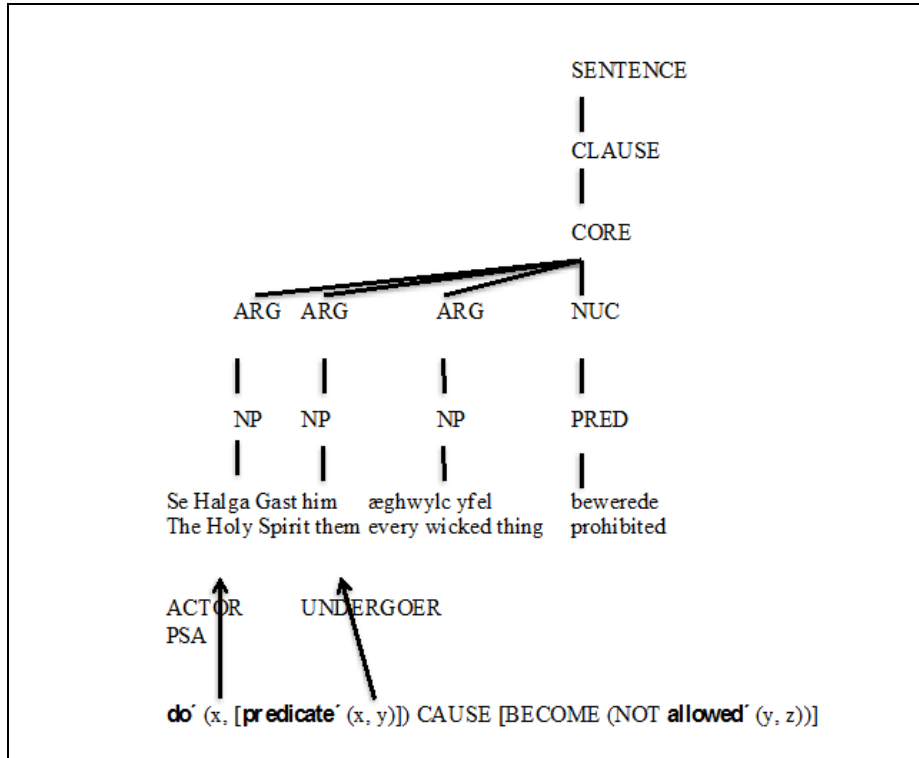


Figure 1. The simplex clause

Foresacan, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* are found neither in the Nominalisation alternation nor in the Undergoer alternation. They appear in simplex clause configurations, in which the agent of the Active Accomplishment is a nominative and, as a general rule, the PSA. The object of prohibition is case-marked accusative (*foresacan* and *tōcweþān*) or genitive (*stīeran*), whereas the patient of prohibition is an accusative (*forsacan*) or a dative (*stīeran*).

Therefore, if the requisites for class membership are both meaning components and grammatical behaviour, verbs of prohibition as listed by the TOE can not be said to constitute a verbal class in Old English.

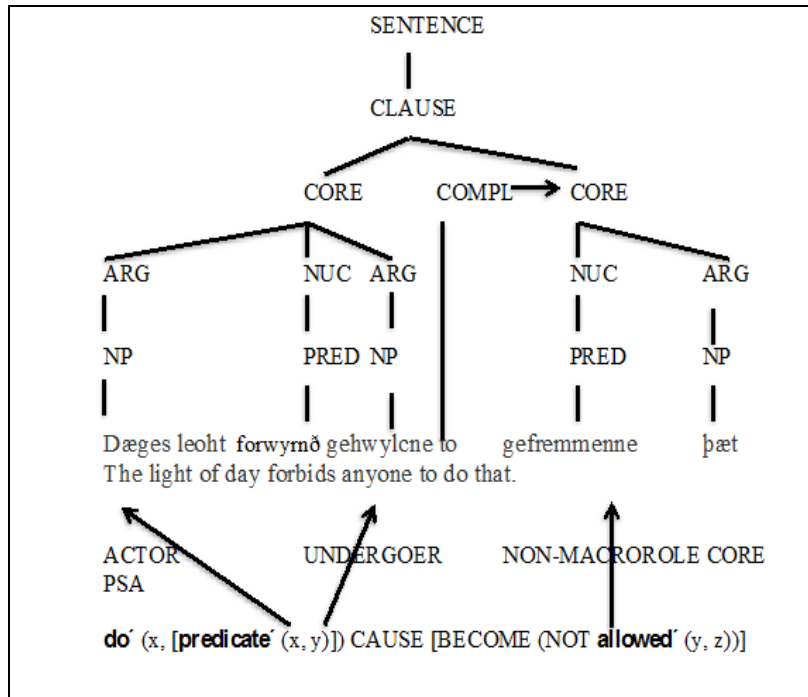


Figure 2. The linked core in coordination

7. Concluding remarks

The main conclusion of this article is that the class of verbs of prohibition as gathered by *A Thesaurus of Old English* is not consistent from a grammatical point of view. Although they share components of meaning, remarkable differences in the grammatical behaviour of these verbs arise related to syntactic configurations and participation in alternations. *Bewerian*, *forbēodan* and *forwyrnan*, which realise the patient of prohibition on a fairly regular basis and whose grammatical complexity revolves around this participant, give rise to a consistent verbal class, not only on the grounds of meaning, but also from the point of view of grammatical behaviour. On the other hand, *foresacan*, *stīeran* and *tōcweþān* are neither found in the three syntactic configurations nor in the two alternations and, furthermore, present divergent meanings. For these reasons, these verbs should be excluded from the class of verbs of prohibition.

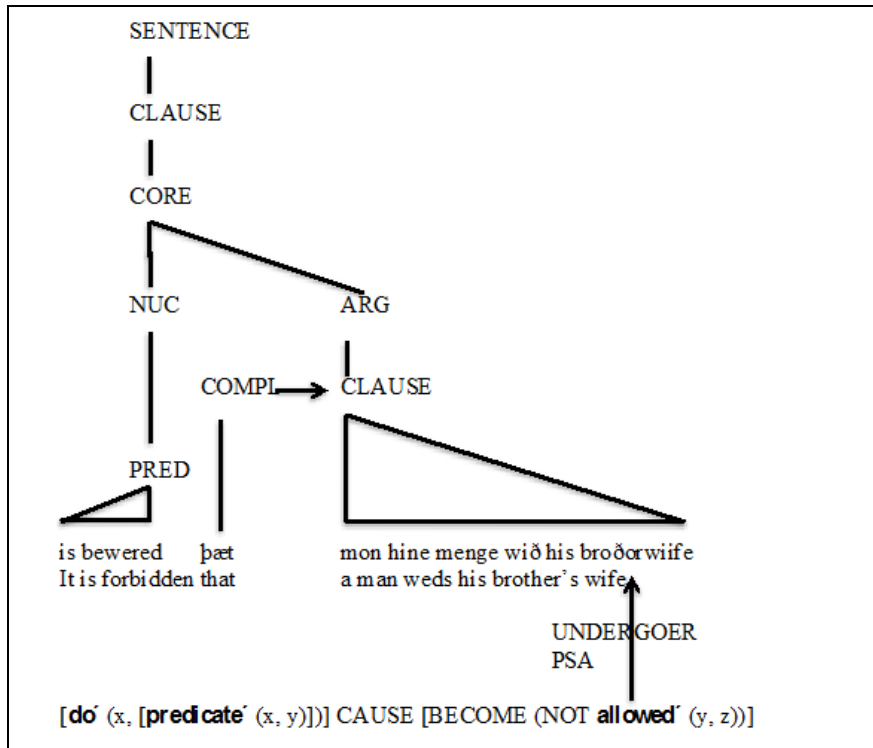


Figure 3. The linked clause in subordination

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