Abstract

This paper presents a corpus–based study of Old English psychological verbs (e.g. andian ‘to envy’, abelgan ‘to annoy’), examining them based on recent theoretical advances on the syntax of this class of verbs (Landau, 2009) and presenting the occurrence of reflexive psych verbs (e.g. (a(n)/on–)drædan ‘to fear’), a pattern not previously noted in the literature. From this new perspective, the data suggests that there is some evidence supporting the claim that Old English non–nominative Experiencers (accusative and dative) can be clausal subjects i.e. quirky subjects (in parallel with Allen, 1995). The finding impacts on the debate regarding whether topicalisation in Old English was restricted to main clauses or also allowed in subordinate clauses (van Kemenade, 1987, 1997; Pintzuk, 1999). The paper also discusses the difficulties of establishing the unacusativity of certain Old English psych verbs.

1. Introduction

This papers aims to: i) give a description of Old English (OE) psych verbs and provide a syntactic account on the basis of a new theory of the syntax of psych verbs (Landau, 2009); ii) examine data to test predictions made from (i) that OE non–nominative Experiencers may be quirky subjects. In addition, the corpus–data surveyed reveals the existence of reflexive psych verbs in OE which had not been previously noted and is exemplified below.

(1)  and feawa him ondrædað þære sawle deað.  
and few.nom themselves.dat fear the soul.gen death.acc  
‘and few people fear the death of the soul’  
(coaelhom,+AHom6:143.948)

It has been often assumed that OE psych verbs are unaccusative and that has been used to explain the common occurrence of preposed non–nominative Experiencers (van Kemenade, 1997). It will be shown that determining the unaccusativity of non–nominative Experiencer verbs cannot be firmly determined and, more importantly, that OE non–nominative Experiencers may be (quirky) subjects, allowing them to be fronted. The example below demonstrates this, with the dative Experiencer þam gifran as the clausal subject.

(2)  gif þam gifran angemetic spræc ne eglde  
If the greedy.dat eloquent speech.nom not afflicted  
‘if the greedy are not afflicted by loquacity’  
(cocura,CP:43.309.2.2069)

From a typological perspective, this would suggest that OE patterns with Scandinavian languages such as Icelandic with respect to what kinds of quirky subjects are allowed.
A brief discussion of psych verbs is given in 2, together with the main theoretical assumptions of the paper. Following that, section 3 introduces the theory of psych verbs proposed by Landau (2009) that will serve as basis to analyse the OE data presented in section 4. The analysis is presented in section 5 and in section 6, I will present and discuss evidence that OE dative Experiencers may be quirky subjects. Section 7 is the conclusion.

2. Background

Psych verbs are verbs that express (a change in) mental states and a relation between an Experiencer and the subject or cause of such psychological state and have been the focus of much debate in the theoretical syntax literature (Belletti and Rizzi, 1988; Pesetsky, 1995; Anagnostopoulou, 1999; Landau, 2009). A number of studies have revealed that, while verbs with an Experiencer subject have largely uncontroversial syntax, those with an Experiencer in object position behave unpredictably, exhibiting a number of seemingly conflicting phenomena (see Landau, 2009). The sentences below are typical examples of psych verbs.

(3) The Afghan people fear the British army
(4) The terrorist attacks frightened the civilians

With specific reference to OE, the debate on psych verbs has focused mainly on diachronic change and their status as impersonal verbs (Fischer and van der Leek, 1983; Denison, 1993; Allen, 1995; Fischer et al., 2000, amongst others). The term ‘impersonal’ has often been used to refer to psych verbs in the OE literature at least since Jespersen (1984) and van der Gaaf (1904), even though not all psych verbs give rise to subjectless constructions (typically, a clause that lacks a nominative subject).

(5) þæt him on sumne sæl huru gesceamige hyra stuntnyssa
    that him.dat on some occasions even embarasses his foolishness.gen
    ‘that on some occasions he is ashamed of his foolishness’
      (colwstan1,+ALet2[Wulfstan1]:6.9)

(6) þæt he men geswence for heora misdædum
    that he.nom men.dat irritated for their misdeed
    ‘that he irritated men for their misdeed’
      (coaelive,+ALS[Auguries]:177.3607)

Both examples above have been associated with impersonal constructions but while sentence (5) is a true impersonal construction, with no nominative argument, (6) has a nominative subject he and is not impersonal. To avoid confusion, I will use the term psych verbs to refer to these verbs rather than impersonal.

Many analyses have been put forward to account for these facts but I believe they lack a more solid and precise characterisation of their syntax as only recently syntacticians started to understand their properties. Therefore, this paper focuses on giving a synchronic account of OE transitive psych verbs with the framework of Landau (2009) revealing patterns not previously discussed in the literature.
This paper adopts the syntactic framework of the Minimalist Program (Chomsky, 1995) largely based on Adger (2003), where syntactic derivations are the result of the recursive operation Merge which joins two syntactic elements as specified by their selectional requirements. The approach taken here differs from that of Adger to follow more recent formulations where head-movement takes place at PF and phrase movement is driven by the requirement of checking the EPP feature of a head like C or v (Chomsky, 2001). In addition, following Haeberli (2000) I assume that the OE IP (or TP for Adger) is split between the heads AgrS and T, resulting in the core structure below.¹

With respect to Θ–roles, I adopt a weaker version of argument linking principles where arguments are mapped onto the structure according to an ordering hierarchy (Grimshaw, 1990) rather than being associated with specific structural positions (Adger follows Baker’s (1988) UTAH). This difference is required to make the syntax compatible with the theory of psych verbs to be presented in section 3. In addition, arguments can check their case features either in the syntactic structure by a functional head (I checks nominative [nom] and v accusative [acc]) or in parallel with Θ–role assignment, in which case an argument’s case marking is inherent or lexical (as in Chomsky (2000)).²

Here I follow Haeberli (2000) and assume that the verb second phenomenon (V2) in OE main clauses is a result of V–movement to C or to AgrS, depending on the clause–type, and that Spec,TP is the position for non–proninimal subjects (based on van Kemenade (1987, 1997, hereafter VK) Pintzuk (1993, 1995, 1999, hereafter SP)),³ with the EPP feature of T imposing the requirement for subject position always to be filled. Following SP, I also assume that OE VPs may vary between VO (verb–object) and OV (object–verb) ordering due to synchronic phrase structure competition, and that the same variation is true for Infl (AgrS and T).
3. The Locative Syntax of Experiencers

3.1. Experiencers as mental locations

This section introduces Landau’s (2009) recent theory of psych verbs *The Locative Syntax of Experiencers* (henceforth LSE), where he draws on evidence from a variety of languages and sources accumulated over the years and presents an elegant account that will serve as the basis for my analysis of OE psych verbs.

The keystone of the proposal is that Experiencers are (mental) locations. He argues that, on the assumption that language and thought are cognitively related, Experiencers are conceptually encoded as “mental locations – containers or destinations of mental states/effects” (Landau, 2005, 7). What this means is that Experiencers are essentially locatives, in the sense of receivers of experience, and a sentence like (8a) can have the conceptual representation schematically defined as (8b).

\[(8)\]
\[\text{X frightens Y}\]
\[\text{b} \ [\text{CS}^+ ([X]^α, \text{INCH BE ([FEAR ([α]), [AT [Y]])]})]^{d}\]
\[\text{X causes fear of X to come to be in Y}\]

(Jackendoff (1990, 300) in Landau (2005, 7))

In some cases, the locative nature of Experiencers is linguistically transparent as in the English and Hebrew examples below.

\[(9)\] There is in me a great admiration for painters

(Arad (1998, 228) in Landau (2005, 9))

\[(10)\] yeš be-Gil eyva gdola klapay soxney bituax.
there-is in-Gil rancor great toward agents-of insurance
‘Gil has a great rancour toward insurance agents’

(Landau, 2005, 9)

As such, Experiencers should share many of the properties of true locatives and Landau argues that this is manifested through the following syntactic properties:

\[(11)\] All object Experiencers are oblique (or dative)

\[(12)\] Experiencers are LF–subjects

(Landau 2005:5)

Given the locative nature of Experiencers, the first property is justified by the fact that a preposition normally introduces non-subject locatives and, as a consequence of it, Landau assumes that all object Experiencers are complements of a preposition, overt or null, and that non–nominative Experiencers always bear inherent case.
Furthermore, in parallel with the subjecthood of locatives as in locative inversion (see Bresnan, 1994), all Experiencers are subjects, be it overtly or at LF. The proposal is that the head T encodes spatio–temporal features and the locative (i.e. spatial) character of Experiencers requires them to be locally related to T, triggering their movement to Spec,TP. While this is true for subject Experiencers by default (they are always overt nominative subjects), in LSE ‘object’ Experiencers are also subjects, varying cross–linguistically with respect to whether the subjecthood requirement is satisfied before Spell–Out or at LF. This restriction is dependent on the case of the Experiencer and gives rise to three main typological patterns:

(13) Possible Case of Quirky Subjects

a All cases: Icelandic, Faroese, Greek.
b Dative only: Italian, Spanish, Dutch.
c No case: English, French, Hebrew.

(Landau, 2005, 80)

In order to account for the differences between psych verbs, Landau divides them into three types, largely following Belletti and Rizzi’s (1988) classic paper. The classification is presented next, along with their syntactic properties.

3.2. Subject Experiencer verbs: Class I

As mentioned above, the syntax of these verbs is fairly transparent. Verbs falling under this class are those such as love, fear and hate which select an Experiencer and a Theme case marked as below:\n
(14) Bill loves Mary (Experiencer[nom], Theme[acc])

Verbs of this class have the Experiencer argument projected as an external argument which is, consequently, the nominative subject, and [acc] is checked on Theme by v. The LF–subjecthood requirement of Experiencers is always satisfied before Spell–Out and, thus, overt.

3.3. Object Experiencer verbs: Class II

Class II is the most controversial of the three verb classes. According to LSE, the difficulty comes from the fact that most of the verbs that fall under this category are ambiguous between an eventive and a stative reading.

(15) Mr Brown annoyed the voters unintentionally\on purpose (stative\eventive)

The aspectual distinction between the sentences above is a result of their different grammatical structure: in both uses the voters is the Experiencer, but the subject Mr Brown is a Theme in the stative reading (with unintentionally) and a Causer in the eventive one (on purpose).
The dissociation in $\theta$–role assignment also reflects their unaccusativity. Following well-established principles of lexical projection, Causers are merged by $v$, thus, externally; on the other hand, Themes are projected VP–internally. Following (11), Experiencers always bear inherent accusative case and are introduced by a preposition. Given that and the assumption in LSE that arguments bearing inherent case are internal arguments, only Class II–statives are unaccusatives, for they have no external argument. Nominative case in the Theme or Causer argument is checked by [nom] in T. For clarity, their basic structure is demonstrated below.

(16) a. Stative

\[
\text{VP} \quad \text{PP} \quad \text{DP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{Experiencer}[\text{acc}] \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{V'} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{V}^0 \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{DP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{Theme}[\text{nom}] \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{vP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{DP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{Experiencer}[\text{acc}] \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{VP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{v} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{v}^0 \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{DP} \\
\quad \quad \quad \text{Experiencer}[\text{acc}] \\
\]

With regards to the subjecthood requirement, their accusative case means that a quirky Experiencer subject with these verbs is only possible in languages that fall under the typology (13a), as in the Icelandic example below.

(17) Mig dreymdi mmu.
Iacc dreamt grandma.acc
‘I dreamt of grandma’

(Barðal (1999, 4) in Landau (2005, 77))

3.4. Object Experiencer verbs: Class III

Class III verbs have a very similar syntax to Class II–statives differing only in the inherent case of the Experiencer, which is dative. In ModE, the preposition that selects it is overt.

(18) The idea appealed to Bill

(Theme[nom], Experiencer[dat])

According to Landau, preposed dative Experiencers are well attested phenomenon in typologically unrelated languages such as Greek, Dutch, Italian and many others. He notes that in many of these languages it is possible to alternate the ordering of the arguments (the same is true for Class II verbs) and that, according to Mulder (1992), dative first order is unmarked in Dutch.

(19) dat de taalkundige die analyse opviel
that the linguist.dat the analysis.nom occurred-to
4. Old English psych verbs

4.1. Data collection

The investigation reported here is based on Old English data from the *York–Toronto–HelsinkiParsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (Taylor et al., 2003) and focuses on instances where a psych verb occurs with more than one syntactic argument (including reflexive verbs, which have one thematic argument), leaving out uses in the passive.

While the goal was to include as many tokens as possible, a number of verbs are not attested in the corpus, possibly being limited to literary use such as *(a/ge–)clian* ‘to frighten, excite’ or *(on–)egan* ‘to fear’. In addition, some verbs were also eliminated due to time constraints given their spelling is ambiguous with non-psych interpretations: *hatian* ‘to hate’ or ‘to get hot’; *freogan* ‘to free’ or ‘to honour’; *gyrnan/geornan* ‘to desire’ or ‘to require’; *ge-/a-lathian/laethian* ‘to hate’ or ‘to invite’. However, this should not undermine the quality of the data given the high number of verbs analysed and the fact that those verbs at first instance did not appear to behave differently from the ones presented here. In total, 1552 tokens of 42 verbs were analysed.

4.2. Nominative Experiencer verbs

The English diachronic syntax literature has included these verbs under the term ‘impersonal’, even though they are in fact ‘personal’ constructions, with a nominative Experiencer subject and exhibiting subject–verb agreement. The verbs that fall under this category are in Table 1.

While the Experiencer is always nominative, the second argument, Theme, may vary in case/category. The possible configurations are listed and exemplified below.

4.2.1. Experiencer–NOM and Theme–GEN

(21) *he besargode swiðor his gedwylde*

he.nom saddened greatly his error.gen

‘his error saddened him immensely’

(coaelive,+ALS [Martin]:159.6066)

4.2.2. Experiencer–NOM and Theme–PP

(22) *þa yrsode se casere for his ingange*

then angered the emperor.nom for his entrance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>No. of tokens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ge\a–)belgan</td>
<td>to feel anger</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æfestian</td>
<td>to envy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)andian</td>
<td>to envy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)cweman</td>
<td>to feel pleasure, delight</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a\an\on–)drædan</td>
<td>to fear, dread</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)fægnian</td>
<td>to rejoice, be glad</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a–)forhtian</td>
<td>to be afraid, tremble</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agrisan</td>
<td>to dread, fear</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hreowan</td>
<td>to rue, make sorry</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(be–)hreowsian</td>
<td>to be sorry, repent, lament</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irsian</td>
<td>to be angry</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lician</td>
<td>to feel pleasure</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lustfullian</td>
<td>to rejoice, be glad</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lystan</td>
<td>to feel pleasure</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(be–)sargian</td>
<td>to be sad, lament, be sorry for</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(for–)seamian</td>
<td>to feel shame, be ashamed</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge–swencan</td>
<td>to feel/be disturbed, troubled</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(an\on–)bracian</td>
<td>to be afraid, fear</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tintregan</td>
<td>to feel tomented at/with</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)twoogan</td>
<td>to hesitate, feel doubt</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wynsumian</td>
<td>to exult, be joyful</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Nominative Experiencer verbs

‘then the emperor got angry for his entrance’

(coaelive,+ALS [Martin]:671.6403)

4.2.3. Experiencer–NOM and Theme–ACC

(23) *pæt we sculon ure synna behreowsian*

that we.nom should our sins.acc lament

‘that we should regret our sins’

(coaelive,+ALS[AshWed]:37.2719)

This is a fairly common pattern and appears with verbs such as andian, hreowsian and sargian. Such constructions are rarely mentioned in the literature, with the exception of Elmer (1981), given that the focus has normally been on impersonals and these examples have survived into ModE.
4.2.4. Experiencer–NOM and Theme–Clause

I include here those instances where the clausal argument may be a finite clause as in (24) or non–finite.

(24) þa fægnode Datianus þæt he funde swylnce dry
then rejoiced Datianus.nom that he found such wizard
‘then Datianus rejoiced at finding such a wizard’
(coaelive,+ALS [George]:59.3096)

4.2.5. Experiencer–NOM and Theme–DAT

There is only one instance of this construction in the corpus, pointing to a very idiosyncratic use.

(25) þa ongon he lustfullian þæs biscopes wordum
then began he.nom enjoy the bishop’s words.dat
‘then he begun to enjoy the bishop’s words’
(cobede,Bede 2:8.122.32.1168)

4.3. Oblique Experiencer verbs

As in ModE, OE Experiencers may also be non–nominative, appearing marked as either dative or accusative. I will use the term ‘oblique’ rather than ‘object’ to remain neutral with regards to their potential subjecthood as it will be discussed in section 6.

Similarly to verbs with nominative Experiencer, the non–Experiencer argument of these verbs may vary in its constituent category and case. The attested combinations are listed below. I will address the issue of what the thematic role assigned to the second argument is in section 5.

4.3.1. Experiencer–DAT/ACC + NOM

(26) niwe wite abregeð symble þæs mannes mod
new punishment.nom alarm continually the man’s spirit.acc
‘the new punishment continually alarms the spirit of the man’
(cogregdC, GD 2 [C]:16.135.16.1633)

4.3.2. Experiencer–DAT/ACC + GEN

(27) him wlatode þære gewilnunge
him.dat loathe the desire.gen
‘he loathed the desire’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Case of Experiencer</th>
<th>No. of tokens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ge/a–)belgan</td>
<td>to anger, annoy</td>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a/ge–)bregn</td>
<td>to frighten, terrify</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge/mis–)cweman</td>
<td>to (dis)please</td>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)gesian</td>
<td>to frighten, terrify</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)eglian</td>
<td>to trouble</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aforhtian</td>
<td>to frighten</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gegreamian</td>
<td>to provoke, irritate</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)hreowan</td>
<td>to cause/feel regret</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hreowsian</td>
<td>to pity</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)jirian</td>
<td>to anger</td>
<td>Ambiguous DAT/ACC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge/mis/of–)lician</td>
<td>to (dis)please</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lustfullian</td>
<td>to please</td>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lystan</td>
<td>to cause pleasure</td>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oflyncan</td>
<td>to regret</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retan</td>
<td>to comfort</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(for–)sceamian</td>
<td>to cause shame</td>
<td>DAT/ACC</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swencan</td>
<td>to trouble</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alpreotan</td>
<td>to displease</td>
<td>Ambiguous DAT/ACC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)tintregan</td>
<td>to torment</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)tweogan</td>
<td>to cause doubt</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wlatian</td>
<td>to cause loathe</td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>653</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Oblique Experiencer verbs

4.3.3. Experiencer–DAT/ACC + Clause

Similarly to verbs with nominative Experiencer, the clausal argument may be a finite or an infinitival clause.

(28) Ne sceamige nanum menn þæt he anum lareowe his gyltas cyðe
    not shame no man.dat that he one master his guilts said
    ‘no man should be ashamed of telling his guilts to a master’

4.3.4. Experiencer–DAT/ACC + PP

(29) and swa-ðeah him twynode be his æriste;
    and nevertheless they.dat doubt by his resurrection
‘and nevertheless there is doubt in them about his resurrection’

(cocathom2,+ACHomII,16:162.47.3592)

4.3.5. Experiencer–DAT + ACC

Instances of these constructions are typical cases of impersonal verbs, with the verb selecting a dative Experiencer and an accusative Theme, so the clause has no nominative argument. I found one unambiguous example of it in the corpus, shown below, and three others where it cannot be demonstrated with certainty that the Theme is accusative, with them possibly being nominative. These are one instance of sceamian and two cases of hreowan,

(30) hiₜm  gelicade  hire  theawas
    him.dat  pleasure  their  virtues
‘to him there was pleasure because of their virtues’

(cochronD,ChronD[Classen-Harm]:1067.35.2283)

4.4. Variation

As well as the case marking variation in verbs with Experiencer object (accusative/dative), many verbs alternate between nominative Experiencer and object Experiencer uses as the reader may have noted. The variation probably reflects the motivations for the change they have undergone over the course of history. Here is a list of the verbs that occur in both types, Nominative and Oblique Experiencer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Tokens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ge/a–)belgan</td>
<td>to cause/feel annoyance</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge/mis–)cweman</td>
<td>to cause/feel (dis)pleasure</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a–)forhtian</td>
<td>to cause/feel fear</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)hreowan</td>
<td>to cause/feel regret</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(be–)hreowsian</td>
<td>to cause/feel pity</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)irsian</td>
<td>to cause/feel anger</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge/mis/of–)lician</td>
<td>to cause/feel pleasure</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lustfullian</td>
<td>to cause/feel joy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)lystan</td>
<td>to cause/feel pleasure</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(for–)sceamian</td>
<td>to cause/feel shame</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)swencan</td>
<td>to cause/feel trouble</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge–)tweogan</td>
<td>to cause/feel doubt</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>781</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Verb alternations
4.5. Reflexives

The occurrence of reflexive psych verbs in OE has not been previously noted in the literature surveyed (mentioned in section 2. Their occurrence is restricted to verbs with nominative Experiencer (or those that alternate between nominative Experiencer and object Experiencer uses), varying between a reflexive and a non–reflexive use as in (31) and (32) respectively. They may also occur with a non–Experiencer argument as in (33). No exclusively reflexive verbs were found.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nominative Exp</th>
<th>Oblique Experiencer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With theme</td>
<td>No theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a(n)/on–)drædan 'to fear'</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge/a–)belgan 'to annoy'</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forhtian 'to be afraid'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lystan 'to like'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Reflexive verbs

(31) he ða gebealh hine
     he.nom then angered himself.acc
     ‘he was then angry’
     (cocathom1,+ACHomI,26:395.189.5122)

(32) ge belgaþ wið me
     you.nom anger with me
     ‘you are angry with me’
     (cowsgosp,Jn [WSCp]:7.23.6298)

(33) hie for þæm hie gebulgon
     they.nom at it themselves.acc angered
     ‘they were angry at it’
     (coorosiu,Or 2:8.51.32.990)

Other verbs such as swencan and sceanian were also found with a reflexive pronoun but these do not seem to be reflexive verbs and were rather simple cases of subject/object co-reference or instances where a reflexive pronoun is used emphatically, as it is the case with the sentence below.

(34) þonne heo hi sylfe geswnceð in tearum for ðam luste þæs
     when she.nom her self.acc afflicts in tears for the desire the
     heofonlican rices
     heavenly power
     ‘when she brings herself to tears for the desires of the heavenly empire’
     (cogregdC,GDPref and 3 [C]:34.246.10.3483)
5. Analysis

With a description in place, it is now possible to present an account of the syntax of these verbs on the basis of LSE.

Verbs with nominative Experiencer fall straightforwardly into Class I and behave in the same way as they do in ModE. The Experiencer receives nominative case and is the subject, meeting the Experiencer subjecthood requirement of (12). Themes may have their case features checked by [acc] on v, or get their case assigned lexically by V if genitive or dative.

In order to account for instances of PP Themes, the c–selectional features of these verbs must allow for a PP or a DP object, as it is the case in ModE.

(35) John worried about the new project

With regards to reflexives, these constructions are similar to those in Romance languages such as Spanish (where Theme is often optional), and can be accounted in the same way (see Reinhart, 1997; McGinnis, 1999).

(36) Juan se enfadó (con María)
Juan himself angered (with Maria)
‘Juan got angry (with Maria)’

As for verbs with Experiencer object, recall that LSE proposes that they should differ depending on the case of the Experiencer. Accordingly, OE accusative Experiencer verbs would fall under Class II, and dative Experiencer ones under Class III.

There has been some discussion in the literature relating to what thematic role of the second argument in these constructions is: while authors such as Visser (1963-73) and Fischer and van der Leek (1983) claim these verbs have a causative interpretation and, therefore, select a Causer, others like Denison (1993) and Allen (1995) have either remained neutral or claimed they are ambiguous between Causer and Theme.\(^7\). Framing OE psych verbs within LSE should allow for a settling of this issue but it seems that a precise characterisation of which Θ–role is projected may not always be possible in OE.

LSE proposes that Class II may be used statively or eventively, with this aspectual distinction reflecting the thematic role assigned by the verb (Theme or Causer). However, this ambiguity cannot be easily resolved for OE given that the agentivity tests that could detect the existence of a Causer cannot be performed due to the nature of the data available - exactly the same problem that had to be faced in previous research that lead to the disagreement mentioned in the previous paragraph.

(37) & deofles bearn swa swiðlice motan cristene bregéan
And devil son.nom so/very strongly may christians.acc terrify
‘and the devil’s son may terrify christians so strongly’\(^8\)

\(^8\) (cowulf,WHom 5:53.206)

Sentence (37) may be interpreted eventively, where the devil’s son terrifies the christians on purpose, say by (appearing in their dreams and) threatening to torture them (if one believes in
demonic spirits and took dreams seriously), or statively, if something else caused these people to be scared of the devil’s son (a story they heard, for example). However, given that in LSE this ambiguity is restricted to Class II verbs (i.e. those with accusative Experiencers), it should follow that the ambiguity is restricted to verbs with accusative Experiencer but similar problems emerge for verbs with dative Experiencer. Resolving these issues and testing such predictions fall outside the scope of this paper, and it is questionable whether it could be achieved, especially since it has been attempted by notable scholars without coming to a definite answer.

The situation is clearer when the non–Experiencer argument is genitive. If genitive case assignment is inherent and inherent case can only be assigned to internal arguments, genitive DPs are Themes because Causers are selected by v and, thus, are external arguments.

According to LSE, OE dative Experiencers verbs should fall into Class III and select a second argument Theme, and would, thus, be unaccusatives. However, it is not clear if all the non–Experiencer arguments of these verbs are unambiguously Themes. It seems perfectly possible that mon ‘one, man’ in (38) be either a Causer or a Theme.

(38) ure yfelynys him oft abelge
    your evilness.nom him.dat frequently annoyed
    ‘your evilness annoyed him frequently’

As with OE accusative Experiencers (OE Class II), resolving this potential ambiguity in OE is problematic. If an eventive, causative interpretation for these constructions is indeed possible, the Class II/Class III distinction in OE would be blurred or inexistent, and the only difference between these verbs would be the [acc] or [dat] of the Experiencer. This could be directly related to the subsequent loss of the accusative–dative case distinction, the change undergone by OE psych verbs or a combination of the two. As with Class II verbs, there are serious difficulties in determining whether these verbs have an external argument or not and given this, I will maintain the division proposed in LSE for ease of exposition and classify OE dative Experiencer verbs as OE Class III verbs, leaving open the possibility of Class III–eventives.

The case checking possibilities proceed as follows. The Experiencer is assigned accusative or dative lexically by V as previously mentioned. Non–Experiencer arguments in the nominative have their case features checked structurally by T and, if genitive, they receive lexical case by V, with some mechanism satisfying [nom] on T (e.g. a null expletive). The checking of accusative on non–Experiencers mentioned in section 4.3.5 may be either structural or inherent.

LSE predicts that all object Experiencers are PPs (see section 3) but the corpus did not contain any examples of it. This is a consequence of the productive case morphology of OE which opts to mark the ‘locativeness’ of Experiencers with case rather than using an overt preposition.

6. Quirky Experiencers in Old English

The theory of psych verbs presented in section 3 proposed a typological division for quirky Experiencers. In this section, potential evidence for the subjecthood of oblique Experiencers is discussed, although it is limited to a restricted subset of psych verbs, specifically those where: i) an oblique Experiencer is used in conjunction with a nominative argument (Theme or Causer); ii) none of the arguments is pronominal given they behave as clitics (see Koopman, 2002).
In order to detect potential cases of quirky subjects, I have collected OE V2 main clauses with non–argumental topics (i.e. adjuncts) where the third clausal constituent is an oblique Experiencer and precedes a nominative DP, and vice–versa. As for subordinate clauses, the only condition was that the Experiencer preceded a nominative DP and vice–versa.

(39) ṣurh andan bepæhtæ se deofol þone frumsceapenan mann
through malice deceived the devil.nom the first-created man.acc
‘the devil deceived the first created man through enmity’
(cocathom1,+ACHom I,39:523.90.7877)

(40) ða gelicode Gode þeos ben.
then pleased God.dat this prayer.nom
‘then this prayer pleased God’
(cocathom2,+ACHom II,45:336.30.7538)

(41) ðætte hiera Dryhten licige ðæm folce
that their lord.nom pleased the people.dat
‘that their lord pleased the people’
(cocura,CP:19.147.5.994)

(42) gif þam gifran angemetic spræc ne eglde
If the greedy.dat eloquent speech.nom not afflicted
‘if the greedy are not afflicted by loquacity’
(cocura,CP:43.309.2.2069)

While there were examples where an accusative Experiencers appeared after the nominative DP, no accusatives preceded the nominative argument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix</th>
<th>Subordinate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM before ACC/DAT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT before NOM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Word order in clauses with an oblique Experiencer and a nominative DP

Although the numbers are small, the frequency of Experiencers preceding the nominative DP in these constructions is striking, occurring just as often as ‘canonical’ nominative first constructions. If they are subjects, this seems to be in parallel with Mulder’s (1992) point that such word order can be the default case (see section 3.4).

But could these preposed Experiencers be subjects? All three main clause tokens found have an initial þa, which have been shown to be unambiguous cases where the finite verb (Vf) moves to C (see SP). The question that must be asked now is whether these dative DPs are in fact in subject position or are VP–internal, with Spec,TP filled by a null expletive.

If we adopt Williams’s (2000) proposal that an empty expletive in declarative clauses is only licensed if c–commanded by Vf, the examples in question could be analysed as containing
a null expletive as Vf is in C, where it c–commands Spec,TP. Thus, the dative Experiencer subject would be ruled out.

However, Williams (2000) also argues that constructions with locative inversion in OE (and Middle English) do not have a silent expletive which would leave Spec,TP empty. As it is well known, subject position cannot normally be left unoccupied given the EPP requirement. Under this perspective, what could satisfy it? If we recall that in LSE Experiencers are mental locations and as such they must be locally related to T (the LF-subjecthood requirement; see section 3, it may be the case that the dative Experiencer is what satisfies the EPP, as a result of locative inversion, or “Experiencer–inversion”, which raises the DP to Spec,TP. Although this cannot be demonstrated, this analysis would suggest that these dative Experiencers are quirky subjects.

What about subordinate clauses? In all 9 clauses the dative Experiencer precedes Vf and could potentially be subjects. However, an analysis of their position runs into the problem of whether they are subjects or topics. There is no consensus as to whether topicalisation in OE was possible in both main and subordinate clauses (symmetrical V2) as SP argues, or it was restricted to main clauses (asymmetrical V2) as claimed by VK.11 Topicalisation in main clauses allows clear identification of what is its subject and what is its topic but the unclear status of topicalisation in embedded clauses means that there is no way to distinguish whether a clause-initial Experiencer DP takes such position to satisfy the topic requirement or as a result of EPP–triggered movement to subject position. In (42) for example, the dative Experiencer could be either a subject or a topic, with a head final Infl (AgrS and T). As a result of this, there is also uncertainty with respect to what is the position for embedded subjects – Spec,vP for SP and Spec,TP for VK.

Consequently, it is impossible to evaluate van Kemenade’s (1997) claim that preposed Experiencers in embedded clauses are not topics and appear because ‘impersonal verbs’ are unaccusative. In addition, the discussion in section 5 showed that an analysis on the basis of unaccusativity cannot be tested as it is not clear when a verb with Experiencer object is unaccusative, so predictions cannot be made. However, from the perspective of LSE and the argument presented here, it is the ‘locativeness’ of Experiencers and their quirkiness that leads to their fronting, rather than the lack of an external argument leaving subject position unoccupied and available to non–nominatives.

As an analysis of OE quirky Experiencers in embedded clauses cannot be developed whilst remaining neutral with regards to embedded V2, I will consider it under the assumption that topicalisation is restricted to main clauses and Spec,TP is the position for subjects as proposed by VK, given it predicts that fronted datives are not topics.

From this perspective, the 9 embedded DAT–first clauses should be analysed as having a quirky Experiencer. The null expletive licensing condition mentioned above rules out the existence of a silent expletive in these clauses as Vf does not c–command Spec,TP: in embedded clauses, Vf moves to T but not to C, as it is already occupied by a complementiser, so Vf remains in T. This is true for at least 7 of the 9 clauses found, given that two are complements of a bridge verb which involve CP–recursion, where Vf may be in C (see Iatridou and Kroch, 1993). A null expletive analysis would also be ruled out if one adopted the same locative/experiencer–inversion argument based on Williams (2000) mentioned above. If these clauses do not have a silent expletive, the initial position of these dative Experiencers would be a result of movement to Spec,TP to satisfy the EPP–feature of T, making them quirky subjects. This would answer the question raised in van Kemenade (1997, 334) where she leaves open the possibility of these dative DPs being in subject position or inside the VP.
Although the evidence is not conclusive, the data discussed here gives further support to Allen’s (1995) claim for the subjecthood of OE non–nominative Experiencers. She argues that OE accusative and dative Experiencers can be subjects since they appear to control deletion of the subject of a coordinated clause as demonstrated in the example below.

(43) ac gode ne licode na heora geleafleast ac asende him to fyr but god.dat not liked not their faithlessness.nom but sent them to fire of heofonum of heaven ‘but their faithlessness did not please God, but (he) sent them fire from heaven’

Relating this to LSE’s typology in (13), OE would pattern with Icelandic, a Scandinavian language, in that it allows both accusative and dative quirky subjects, rather than a Continental Germanic language like Dutch which allows only dative subjects.

7. Conclusion

This paper presented the range of constructions that appear with OE psych verbs and how they fit into a general syntactic account of these verbs, explaining their syntactic properties (case marking, word category, $\theta$–marking). It was shown that verbs with an oblique Experiencer are aspectually ambiguous and given the difficulties in resolving it due to the nature of the data it is not possible to give a precise characterisation of whether they are unaccusatives and what non–Experiencer $\theta$–role they assign. In the last section, some evidence was presented suggesting that OE dative Experiencers may be quirky subjects which, combined with Allen (1995), would place OE alongside Scandinavian languages in a typology of quirky subjects.

Notes

1. The argument presented here is also consistent with a more articulate left periphery and/or an AgrO projection.
3. There is no consensus with regards to the subject position in embedded clauses (Spec,TP in VK; Spec,VP in SP).
4. ’CS’ indicates that the bracketed string refers to a conceptual structure and ’INCH’ is the abbreviation of inchoative.
5. LSE follows Pesetsky (1995) in dividing Belletti and Rizzi’s (1988) characterisation of Themes into Causer, Target of Emotion and Subject Matter. For simplicity, I will use Theme to refer to Target of Emotion and Subject Matter, given the distinction is irrelevant here.
6. Square brackets are used to refer to (un)interpretable features.
7. Although Allen (1995) argues for the Causer–Theme distinction in at least some verbs
10. Two tokens of this configuration were excluded given the nominative argument was the clitic–like man ‘one, man’.
11. More recently, it has also been suggested that OE was not a V2 but a V3 language (Kroch, 2009).

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