A Note on the Object DP Movement in
Late Middle English and Early Modern English*

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1. Introduction

The aim of this note is to discuss the object DP movement in the history of English, with special attention to Late Middle English and Early Modern English (henceforth LME and EModE, respectively).[1]   Many investigations have been conducted on this topic from the perspective of generative grammar, but a unified account has not been given about the change and demise of the object DP movement in the history of English.   With respect to the environment where the object DP movement occurs, for instance, some historical linguists say that it occurs relatively free irrespective of whether the environment is prose or verse, the nature of object DP, the clause type, or the verb class; whereas others say that it is restricted to certain contexts.   Obviously, these two positions should be unified, so that the development and demise of the object DP movement may be adequately accounted for. Thus this note reviews the previous studies and examines the basic facts of the object DP movement in LME and EModE.
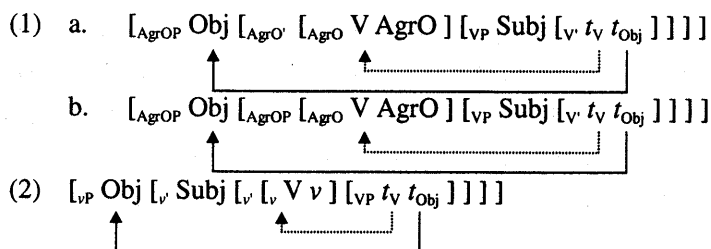
In this note, the mechanism that drives displacement is based on the earlier version of the Minimalist Program (henceforth, MP) developed by Chomsky (1993, 1995).   We will also present an analysis of the object DP movement under the revised version of MP developed by Chomsky (1998, 1999), showing that the revised version faces difficulty in explaining the data of the object DP movement in LME and EModE.

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[1]   As standardly assumed in the literature, LME refers to the period between 1300 and 1500, and EModE refers to the period between 1500 and 1700.   I will adopt this convention in this note.

2. Previous Studies

In MP, an account which is immediately available for the analysis of the object DP movement is to treat it as an instance of movement for feature checking. Under this approach, the functional head AgrO (in Chomsky (1993)) or v (in Chomsky (1995)) bears some formal feature, which is generally assumed to be a D-feature. When this D-feature on AgrO/v is strong, it has to be checked off prior to Spell-Out for some reason.[2] This checking operation before Spell-Out is implemented by attracting the category which bears an identical formal feature (i.e. the object DP in this case), yielding an overt movement. This movement is known as Object Shift, which is schematized as in (1) when the relevant functional head is AgrO or as in (2) when the relevant functional head is v:[3]

(1) a. $[_{AgrOP}$ Obj $[_{AgrO'}$ $[_{AgrO}$ V AgrO $]$ $[_{VP}$ Subj $[_{v'}$ t_V t_{Obj} $]$ $]$ $]$ $]$

  b. $[_{AgrOP}$ Obj $[_{AgrOP}$ $[_{AgrO}$ V AgrO $]$ $[_{VP}$ Subj $[_{v'}$ t_V t_{Obj} $]$ $]$ $]$ $]$

(2) $[_{vP}$ Obj $[_{v'}$ Subj $[_{v}$ $[_{v}$ V v $]$ $[_{VP}$ t_V t_{Obj} $]$ $]$ $]$ $]$

In (1) and (2), the solid lines indicate the movement under consideration while the broken lines indicate the verb movement (see footnote 3 and the discussion below). Thus in this approach, the object DP movement is treated as an instance of Object Shift. This approach is taken by some historical studies such as Roberts (1995, 1997) and Wurff (1997). There are some differences between these two analyses. Let us take a brief look at each analysis.

Roberts (1997), assuming the Linear Correspondence Axiom (LCA) proposed by Kayne (1994), argues that the base verb-object order in Old English (henceforth OE) is VO, and that the OV order frequently attested during this period is derived by scrambling (i.e. Object Shift in our terms). Consider the following example:

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[2]   See Lasnik (1999) for the possible reasons why strong features have to be checked off prior to Spell-Out.

[3]   Note that the verb movement is a prerequisite for Object Shift under the minimalist assumption. Specifically, the verb has to move out of VP for Spec AgrOP and Spec VP to be equi-distant from the object DP. See Chomsky (1993) and Bobaljik & Jonas (1996) for this matter. Note also that the adjoined position in (1b) as well as the specifier position in (1a) counts as a checking domain under the framework of Chomsky (1993). This option is not available in the framework of Chomsky (1995): instead, the multiple specifier analysis is adopted, as in (2).

(3) þæt ic **þas boc** of Ledenum gereorde to Engliscre spræce *awende*
     that I this book from Latin language to English tongue translate
     'that I translate this book from the Latin language to the English tongue'
                    (AHTh, I, pref, 6/ Kemenade (1987: 16) cited in Roberts (1997: 400))

According to Roberts, the object DP (i.e. þas boc) is moved from its base-generated (or merged) position (i.e. the right side of the verb *awende*) to Spec AgrOP for a morphological reason.   As mentioned above, the factor driving this movement is the strength of the D-feature; the D-feature on AgrO is strong in OE.   Roberts goes on to argue that the VO order is established in Early Middle English (henceforth EME) by the loss of the strong D-feature on AgrO, thereby causing the object DP to cease to move to Spec AgrOP.   This analysis is much the same as the standard approach to Object Shift mentioned above.

Wurff (1997) shares much with Roberts (1997) with respect to the object DP movement in OE.   He observes, however, that the OV order is also possible in LME, as in (4):

(4) a. ʒif þei **þise degrees** *kowyn*
         if they these degrees know
         'if they know about the degree'   (Jacob's Well 21.17/ Wurff (1997: 486))

     b. And fayn I wolde **my sowle** *saue*
         and gladly I would my soul save
         'and I am eager to save my soul'   (Castle of Perseverance 378/ op.cit.: 488)

Noting that the OV order is less frequent in LME, Wurff attributes the driving force for the object DP movement in LME to some factor other than the strong D-feature on functional heads.   In particular, he proposes that the optionality of the object DP movement in LME is attributed both to the availability of verb movement and to the economy principle proposed by Kitahara (1995).   In a nutshell, what Kitahara proposes is that economy takes account of movement, of applications of non-branching projection, and of deletion at PF of the copy left by a moved element.   Under this view, for instance, when the verb moves overtly, the number of operations for the overt object DP movement (i.e. Object Shift) is same as that for the covert object DP movement (i.e. a case of the object DP in situ in overt syntax).   If the number of operations is the same for both overt and covert application of movement, this movement is allowed to take place at any point of the derivation, thereby yielding the OV and VO orders freely.   Thus, even though AgrO bears a weak D-feature, the object DP can move to Spec AgrOP overtly if the number of operations is the same for both overt and covert application of this movement.   In this respect, the analysis of Wurff (1997) diverges from that of Roberts (1997).

Thus far, we have seen the object DP movement by using as a diagnosis the position of the object DP vis-à-vis that of the (lexical) verb, namely the OV order. There is another diagnosis, however. We can also make use of the position of the object DP with respect to that of the negative marker or VP-adjoined adverbs; when the object DP precedes the negative marker or VP-adjoined adverbs, the relative positions provide evidence for the object DP movement. Using this diagnosis, Wurff (1997) observes that pronominal DPs can precede the negative marker in LME while full DPs cannot, thereby showing that pronominal DPs in LME can move up higher than full DPs. Compare (5a) with (5b):

(5) a. þerfore I *do* **it** <u>nouȝt</u>
       therefore I do it not
       'therefore I don't do it'   (Cloud of Unknowing 125.20/ Wurff (1997: 488))

    b. & ȝit he ȝeui <u>not</u> **þis grace**
       and yet he gives not this grace
       'and yet he does not give this grace'

                                     (Cloud of Unknowing 69.12/ op.cit.: 489)

Note that although (5a) has surface VO order, both the verb and the pronominal DP have moved out of VP since they precede the negative marker. This is not the case in (5b): the full DP remains in VP, irrespective of whether the verb movement applies. Thus full DPs always follow the negative marker in LME. Similarly, Roberts (1995) observes that pronominal DPs can precede the negative marker in EModE, noticing that full DPs always follow the negative marker:

(6) a. if you *knew* **them** <u>not</u>   (1580 John Lyly/ Roberts (1995: 274))

    b. they *tell* **vs** <u>not</u> the worde of God   (1565 Thomas Stapleton/ op.cit.)

To sum up, the object DP movement in the latter half of LME and the former half of EModE was already restricted to some class of DPs, namely pronominal DPs. This view is, in fact, adopted by Wurff (1999) and Ingham (2000), to which we will turn shortly.
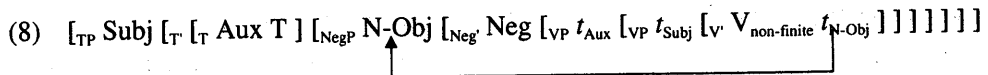
We have thus far seen the view that the object DP movement is driven by feature checking. Ingham (2000), however, holds another view: investigating *The Paston Letters* written in the 15th century, he observes that the object DP which undergoes movement is restricted to negated DPs:

(7) a. for I may **no leysour** *haue*
       for I may no leisure have   (PL 182.48/ Ingham (2000: 21))

b. she had neuer **non** *avayle* ther-of

she had never none avail thereof　　　(PL 782.72/ op.cit.: 31)

Ingham goes on to argue that the object DP movement in the 15th century is driven to satisfy the Neg-criterion proposed by Haegeman (1995). This movement can be illustrated as follows:

(8) $[_{TP}$ Subj $[_{T'}$ $[_T$ Aux T] $[_{NegP}$ N-Obj $[_{Neg'}$ Neg $[_{VP}$ t_{Aux} $[_{VP}$ t_{Subj} $[_{V'}$ V$_{non\text{-}finite}$ $t_{N\text{-}Obj}$]]]]]]]

Under this view, the verb movement is irrelevant to the object DP movement, since the negated DP does (or may) not move to Spec AgrOP, but to Spec NegP. Hence the equi-distance for movement does not hold in this case.

A similar view is shared by Wurff (1999) for the 15th century English. He also holds the view that the object DP movement is possible with negated DPs in the 15th century. He observes, however, that there are three other contexts where the object DP movement is allowed: in clauses with quantified DPs, in relative clauses which have a subject gap, and in coordinated clauses where the second conjunct has a subject gap. The relevant examples are given below:

(9) a. Þou hast **noþynge** *spared* of þi goodys for to bey þat feelde

'you have saved nothing of your property in order to buy that field'

(Barlam 6268/ Wurff (1999: 241))

b. Item, whethyr ye haue **eny thyng** *spoken* of my going to Caleys

'another point: have you said anything about my going to Calais?'

(Paston 355.28/ op.cit.)

c. al them [that **this litel werke** shal *see, here or rede* to have me excused]

'all those that will see, hear or read this little work to forgive me'

(Barlam 197/ op.cit.: 242)

d. þat here kynge dede such reuerence and worschyp vnto þe poore men, [and **such shame** *dede* vnto his dygnyte]

'that their king showed such reverence and respect to the poor people and caused such shame to his own dignity'　　　(Barlam 757/ op.cit.)

Wurff treats the negated DP (i.e. (9a)) in much the same way as Ingham (2000): he also argues that the negated DP moves to Spec NegP to satisfy the Neg-criterion. For the quantified DP (i.e. (9b)), he argues that it is an instance of Quantifier Raising, and that the

object DP is adjoined to VP. For the relative and coordinated clauses with a subject gap (i.e. (9c) and (9d)), he assumes that they are instances of topicalization, and that the object DP moves to the specifier position of Topic Phrase (TopP), thereby yielding the pima facie OV order. Thus, aside from the last two contexts where the object DP movement is allowed (i.e. a case of topicalization), we can conclude that the (clause-internal) movement of object DPs in the 15th century was restricted to negated and quantified DPs. It should be noted here that although the object DP movement in the 15th century is possible with the negated and quantified DPs, it is possible only when the context in question contains an auxiliary or modal verb in addition to the (non-finite) lexical verb. This might be due to the movement of the lexical verb in the absence of the auxiliary or modal verb, which leads to the apparent VO order (see (8)).

To sum up, we have seen in this section that there are two views with respect to the nature of object DPs that undergo movement: one is that any DP can move freely, irrespective of their type; the other is that the (clause-internal) movement of object DPs is restricted to certain types. In the following section, we will chronologically arrange the data presented in this section, depending on the type of object DPs that undergo movement, the context of movement and the landing site of the moved DP.

3. Data

Partially adopting the ideas of Wurff (1997) for the object DP movement in the 14th century and those of Wurff (1999) for the object DP movement in the 15th century, Fischer et al. (2000) state that in the 14th century any type of DPs can undergo (clause-internal) movement while in the 15th century this movement is restricted to certain types of DPs and certain contexts: (i) in clauses with negated DPs, (ii) in clauses with quantified DPs, (iii) in relative clauses with a subject gap, and (iv) in coordinated clauses with a subject gap. The first two types of the object DP movement (i.e. (i) and (ii)) are possible only in the context which contains an auxiliary or modal verb in addition to the (non-finite) lexical verb. The object DP movement in the 14th century can be analyzed as a movement to Spec AgrOP, whereas the first and second types of object DP movement in the 15th century (i.e. (i) and (ii)) can be analyzed as a movement to Spec NegP and adjunction to VP, respectively. However, the argument of Fischer et al. is based on only one diagnosis, the position of the object DP vis-à-vis that of the (lexical) verb. They do not make use of the other diagnosis, namely the position of the object DP vis-à-vis that of the negative marker and VP-adjoined adverbs. Using the latter diagnosis and judging from the observation made by Roberts (1995) and Wurff (1997), it is possible to say that pronominal DPs can also move in the 15th and 16th centuries. Thus we can chronologically arrange the data attested, depending on the

type of DPs, the context of movement, and the landing site of the moved DP, as in (10) below:

(10) THE OBJECT DP MOVEMENT IN THE 14TH, 15TH & 16TH CENTURIES

	TYPE OF DPs	CONTEXT	LANDING SITE
14TH CENTURY	any	anywhere	Spec AgrOP/vP
15TH CENTURY	negated / quantified	contexts with Aux/Modal	Spec NegP / adjunct of VP
	any	relative / coordinated	Spec TopP
	pronominal	anywhere	Spec AgrOP/vP or higher
16TH CENTURY	pronominal	anywhere	Spec AgrOP/vP or higher

Researches on the development and the demise of the object DP movement in the history of English should give a unified account to the paradigm summarized in the table (10) above. Some comments are in order with respect to the following issues raised by the table (10). First, as the historical development of the object DP movement is not studied thoroughly nor coherently, we have to provide an empirical justification for the paradigm in (10), presumably by surveying various kinds of corpuses and computer-based dictionaries. Second, since the types of DPs that undergo movement come to be restricted in the later century, we have to explain why this change takes place. This issue may be related to the change in the landing site of object DP movement or, more specifically, the change in the nature of relevant functional heads to whose specifier position the object DP moves. This line of argument is indeed suggested by Fischer et al. (2000). Third, we have to re-examine whether any DP can undergo movement in any context in the 14th century. If this is the case, it can be handled within the earlier version of MP (Chomsky (1993, 1995)). Under the revised version (Chomsky (1998, 1999)), however, the type of DPs that can be shifted is limited to definite DPs, since the movement always entails a semantic consequence. That is, the moved element receives its interpretation that is contingent on the position where it is moved. If so, the attested data of the object DP movement in the 14th century do not correctly capture the fact, and this issue comes to be related to the first issue. Conversely, if the data of the 14th century is empirically adequate, this amounts to claiming that Chomsky's recent idea is not on the right track.

4. Discussion: Chomsky (1999)

Building on the work of Holmberg (1999), Chomsky (1999) makes a proposal to derive Holmberg's generalization: Object Shift is permitted only if the verb moves out of VP. As first approximation, Chomsky makes the following assumptions:

(11) a. $v*$ is assigned an EPP-feature only if that has an (semantic) effect on outcome.
  b. The EPP position (i.e. phonological edge) of $v*$P is assigned INT.[4]
  c. At the phonological border of $v*$P, XP is assigned INT'.[5]

(Chomsky (1999: 28))

He goes on to propose that (11a) and (11b) are invariant UG principles while (11c) is a parameter that distinguishes languages which permit Object Shift from those which do not. Thus (11c) is applicable to the 14th century English since it allows Object Shift. Let us consider Chomsky's proposal more concretely. When the verb does not move out of $v*$P, its object is not at the phonological border, and hence any type of DPs can remain in $v*$P. When the verb moves out of $v*$P, on the other hand, its object is at the phonological border and it is assigned INT'. If the object is such that comports with INT', say an indefinite DP, then it remains in $v*$P. If the object is such that resists INT', say a definite DP, it has to undergo Object Shift to avoid a deviant outcome, raising to the (outer) specifier position of $v*$P, thereby yielding a semantic consequence. Thus Homberg's generalization is derivable in the framework of Chomsky (1998, 1999).

This approach, however, poses a problem to the 14th century English. Since any type of DPs can be moved in the 14th century, it is speculated that the movement of quantified DPs attested in the 15th century is also possible in the 14th century, and that its landing site is also Spec $v*$P. Thus under the framework of Chomsky (1998, 1999), it is predicted that although quantified DPs are perfectly compatible with INT', they can also undergo Object Shift when the verb vacates $v*$P. If so, Chomsky's proposal turns out to be untenable, and it needs further consideration.

Alternatively, if Chomsky's proposal is on the right track, then the data in the 14th century English attested so far do not correctly capture the facts concerning the object DP movement, and the further empirical investigation is required.

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[4] INT is an interpretive complex which consists of specificity/definiteness, new information, focus, and so on. This is the semantic interpretation that the shifted object receives (Chomsky (1999: 26)).
[5] The phonological border of a phrase (or phase) is a position not c-commanded by phonological material within that phrase (or phase) (Chomsky (1999: 27)).

5. Summary

We have seen in this note that there are two views with respect to the nature of object DPs that undergo movement in the history of English. One is that any DP can move freely, irrespective of the type of DPs; the other is that the (clause-internal) movement of object DPs is restricted to certain types. But these views differ in the period or environment where object DP movement takes place. The consequence which follows from the unification of these two views implies that the type of DPs that undergo movement comes to be restricted as time went by as illustrated in (10). We have also considered whether the attested data of the object DP movement in LME and EModE can be adequately explained by Chomsky's (1998, 1999) proposal.

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