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CORRELATIVE CAUSAL CLAUSES IN THE *OLD ENGLISH BOETHIUS*¹

The paper focuses on correlative clauses with causal connector *forþam* in the text of the Old English translation of Boethius's treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. The text is rich in *forþam*-clauses but correlative clauses only account for 15 per cent of the overall use of *forþam*.

Keywords. Old English Boethius, translation, correlative clauses, causality.

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Коррелятивные структуры с каузальным значением в древнеанглийском переводе *De Consolatione Philosophiae* Бозция

В статье рассматриваются коррелятивные структуры с каузальным значением, образуемые в древнеанглийском языке при помощи местоименного коннектора *forþam*. Выступая в главном предложении в функции наречия, а в придаточном – в функции подчинительного союза, данный коннектор формирует коррелятивную связь между клаузами. Помимо этого, *forþam* в качестве наречия в главном предложении связывает его с предшествующими аргументами, поддерживая целостность линии рассуждения.

Ключевые слова: древнеанглийский перевод *De Consolatione Philosophiae* Бозция, коррелятивные структуры с каузальным значением.

Correlation in Old English (OE) as well as in other ancient Indo-European languages is widespread, and, according to Mitchell, represents «a natural corollary of the move from parataxis to hypotaxis» (Mitchell 1985, vol. I, § 1894). This paper focuses on just one type of correlation – that between causal clauses in a single text, the *Old English Boethius*, where causal relations play a prominent role. The *Old English Boethius* is a free translation of Boethius's treatise *De Consolatione Philosophiae* and the first and only piece of philosophical writing in OE.

Causal relations are most commonly introduced in OE with the lexical item *forþam* consisting of the preposition *for* and a case-

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marked form of the demonstrative *se*. Two case forms, dative and instrumental, and their spelling variants create certain diversity attested in the text: *forþam*, *forðam*, and *forþæm* for the dative, *forþon*, *forþy*, *forðy*, and *forþi* for the instrumental, to list just most common variants. The process of grammaticalization is not yet complete. The following examples illustrate the use of the preposition plus the demonstrative within one sentence with the use of *forþam* as one lexical item functioning as subordinator:

- (1) **For þam** þingum wæs gio þæt se wisa Catulus hine gebealg and swa ungefræglice forcwæð Nonium þone rican, **forþam** he hine gemette sittan on gerenedum scridwæne (27.14).

‘For those reasons was it long ago that the wise Catulus became angry and insulted Nonius the man of high position in such an unheard-of manner, because he met him sitting on a decorated chariot’².

For decades, it has been discussed in the literature whether definite distinctions between subordinating and coordinating functions of *forþam* can be established. Mitchell (1985) describes *forþam* as «ambiguous adverb/conjunction». Kortmann (1997: 292) characterizes it as «an item of unclear status», which does not meet the criteria for «ideal» adverbial subordinator. Lenker (2007) adopts the term ‘all-purpose causal and resultative pronominal connector’. Whenever *forþam* appears with the particle *þe*, it certainly functions as a subordinator, however, the use of *forþam* vs. *forþam þe* is inconsistent, cf. example (2):

- (2) Hwæt ealle men hæfdon gelicne fruman **forþam** hi ealle coman of anum fæder and of anre meder, and ealle hi beoð git gelice acennede. Nis þæt nan wundor **forþam þe** an God is fæder eallra gesceafta **forþam** he hi ealle gesceop and ealra welt (30.38).

‘Truly, all people had the same origin for they all came from one father and from one mother, and they are all born alike. That is no wonder, for one God is father of all creatures, for he created them all and rules them all’.

All three instances in the example above illustrate subordinative use of *forþam/ forþam þe*. The second and the third subordinator in example (2) are used consecutively but do not correlate. Each of

² Both Old English examples and their Present-Day English translations in this paper are from the edition by Godden & Irvine 2009. The study is based on Text B of the *Old English Boethius*. Reference is given by chapter and line.

them introduces explanation for the idea stated in the previous clause. Adverbial use of *forþam* is exemplified in (3):

- (3) Leorniað **forþam** wisdom (16.33). ‘Learn wisdom therefore’.

As an adverb, *forþam* tends to be located clause-initially, and provides a link in the line of argument.

The correlative structure studied here involves two immediately following *forþam*-clauses, in which one *forþam* is a coordinator, and the other – a subordinator. The linear order of the clauses may vary. Examples (4) and (5) illustrate both possible options:

- (4) **forþam** ne mæg non mon nænne cræft forðbringan buton wisdom, **forþam** þe swa hwæt swa þurh dysige gedon biþ ne mæg hit mon næfre to cræfte gerecan (17.23).

‘for no-one can bring forth any art without wisdom, for whatever is done through folly can never be accounted a skill’;

- (5) and **forþy** þe hi nan gecyndelic god on him selfum nabbað, **forþy** hi losiað swa swa sceadu oððe smec (27.77).

‘and because they have no natural good in themselves, they disappear like a shadow or smoke’.

The *Old English Boethius* contains 32 structures of this type. This roughly corresponds to 15 per cent of all instances of *forþam* in the text. Commonly the main clause precedes the subordinate clause: there are 25 structures of the type exemplified in (4), and 7 structures of the type illustrated in (5). Subordinate *forþam*-clauses generally tend to follow the main clause, also when there is no correlation. However, this linear order in correlative structures seems to have additional function: when the main clause with an adverb in clause-initial position precedes the subordinate clause, this adverb has double reference, cf.:

- (6) swa þætte þæt on oðrum lande betst licað þætte þæt bið hwilum on ðam oðrum tælwyrðlicost and eac micelles wites wyrðe. **Forðam** ne mæg nan mon habban gelic lof on ælcum londe, **forþon** ðe on ælcum lande ne licað þæt on oðrum licað (18.68)

‘so that what pleases best in one country is sometimes most disapproved of in the others and also deserving of great punishment. For no-one can have similar praise in every country, for in each country they don’t like what they like in others’.

Not only does it correlate to the subordinating *forþam* that follows but also refers ‘backwards’, summarizing the ideas presented earlier and thus performing its main linking function.

Though *forþam* is the main causal connector in OE, there are other means as well, such as subordinator *þy* ‘because’. It can form a correlative structure with *forþam*, too. Examples like (7) are rare: there are only two such instances out of 32.

- (7) **forþi** he eac wilnað þæt he habbe þæt he næfð, **þy** he wolde genog habban (26.35).

‘the reason why he also seeks to have what he does not have is that he would like to have enough’.

There does not seem to be a correspondence between the case marking of the ‘pronominal connector’ and its place within the correlative structure. Out of 32 adverbs, 19 are in the dative vs. 13 in the instrumental. Out of 30 subordinators (excluding the two instances of *þy*), there are again 19 in the dative and 11 in the instrumental. Only a preference for the dative forms can be noted, which is normal for non-correlative causal clauses as well.

Despite the high frequency of *forþam*-clauses in the *Old English Boethius*, only a small number of them (around 15 per cent) form correlative structures. In these structures, main clause typically precedes the subordinate clause. Causal adverb of the main clause supports textual coherence by referring to the previous and the following line of argument. Particle *þe* is used inconsistently, and only appears with one third of correlative subordinators. Dative forms of the connector are more frequent than the instrumental ones. Formed (in most cases) with one and the same connector, correlative causal clauses represent an interesting and archaic feature in the text of the *Old English Boethius* and in the language in general.

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