
SUBJECTS OF VERBAL NOUNS IN EARLY MODERN WELSH: EVIDENCE FROM *PERL MEWN ADFYD* (1595)*

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ABSTRACT In the Welsh language, constructions with nonfinite verb forms, traditionally called ‘verbal nouns’, are found frequently at all periods. Subjects of these forms can be marked in various ways. The frequency and distribution of certain subject markers differs drastically between Middle and Modern Welsh. Subject marking in Early Modern texts is highly variable, but has so far been little researched. This article presents a first micro-study analysing the distribution of different subject markers in nonfinite clauses in one text, *Perl mewn Adfyd* (1595), a religious treatise translated from English. Somewhat surprisingly, the data from this text already largely correspond to the Modern Welsh system, especially with regard to nonfinite adverbial and complement clauses. Taking into account examples from other texts, and including auxiliary constructions, formally less expected structures are tentatively related to semantic factors.

1 INTRODUCTION

The present paper concentrates on different ways subjects of nonfinite verbal actions are coded in Early Modern Welsh. Although there are a significant

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number of relevant text examples in the specialized literature (see [Richards \(1938\)](#) and [Morgan \(1938\)](#) in particular), they are given devoid of their wider textual contexts, and a quantitative, and also qualitative, study of the matter is lacking.¹ This article is a first attempt at such a study, based on a restricted amount of data from one specific text.

First of all, I address the category traditionally called ‘verbal noun’, and the most common devices to marking its subjects, and objects, in Middle Welsh (Section 2). It is necessary to outline the counterparts of these constructions in Modern Welsh, in order to establish what can be expected to occur in the intervening period (Section 3). Subsequently, the data from my late-16th century test-case text *Perl mewn Adfyd* are presented and discussed with respect to formal properties and quantitative distributions (Section 4). Finally, I attempt to identify systematic functional factors (Section 5) and potential semantic motivations (Section 6) for the use of different marking devices in the data, something which may have implications for Early Modern Welsh texts in general.

2 VERBAL NOUNS AND THEIR SUBJECTS IN MIDDLE WELSH

The Welsh language has only a single nonfinite verbal form, which is usually called ‘verbal noun’ (VN), or ‘verb-noun’ (*berfenw* in Modern Welsh), since it is considered to have nominal, as well as verbal characteristics (cf. [Borsley, Tallerman & Willis 2007: 68](#)).² In Middle Welsh example (1), we see that a VN, *gossot* ‘to place, to strike’ or ‘to attack’, may be preceded by the article, and that modification by an adjective is possible as well. Thus, the VN is clearly a noun in this case (cf. [Evans 1964: 159](#), [Borsley et al. 2007: 70](#)).³

1 Although there is no such study of Early Modern Welsh texts so far, a thorough text-based investigation of subject markers in medieval Welsh (and Irish) nonfinite constructions was undertaken by [Müller \(1999\)](#). For detailed studies of characteristics and functions of verbal nouns in Old Irish, including subject markers, see [Stüber \(2015, 2017\)](#).

2 Other labels include ‘event noun’, which is used by [Scherschel, Widmer & Poppe \(2018\)](#) in their paper on systematic classifications of different Middle Welsh verbal-noun constructions. For a fairly recent overview of the VN category in the Celtic languages, its properties, and the related discussion, see [Russell \(2015\)](#).

3 The relevant part of this example, *y gossot kijntaf* ‘the first attack’, is also cited by [Evans \(1964: 159\)](#), in his fundamental *Grammar of Middle Welsh*. [Müller \(1999: 9\)](#), i.a., also has this example. Most of the Middle Welsh examples in the present chapter are taken from digital diplomatic editions of Welsh manuscripts from 1300–1425, by [Luft, Thomas & Smith \(2013\)](#). Unless stated otherwise, translations of (Middle and Early Modern) Welsh examples are my own.

- (1) *ac ar y gossot kÿntaf y gŵr a|oed yn*
 and on the attack.VN first the man PRT|be.IMPF.3SG in
lle arawn a|ossodes ar hafgan
 place Arawn PRT|strike.PST.3SG on Hafgan
 ‘and **at the first attack**, the man who was in Arawn’s place struck at Hafgan’ (*Pen4*, 2vc7123–25)

Conversely, in example (2), an adverb, or, more precisely, an adjective combined with the adverbial particle *yn*, modifies the VN *kerdet* ‘to walk’, thus ‘walking (in a) strong (way)’. Here, we also see a VN being part of a periphrastic construction with the verb *bot* ‘to be’, with another particle *yn* marking the progressive aspect of the verbal action, i.e. ‘he was walking’ (cf. [Evans 1964](#): 138, 160 and [Borsley et al. 2007](#): 70). In this context, the VN cannot be seen as a noun.

- (2) *a chÿnn y ulŷyd yd oed yn kerdet yn*
 and before his year PRT be.IMPF.3SG PROG walk.VN PRED
grÿf
 strong
 ‘and before his (first) year, **he was walking solidly**’ (*Pen4*, 9rc3311–2)

The same is true for the VNs [*c*]y*uodi* ‘to rise’ and *dodi* ‘to put’ in the phrases *a chy^uodi y|u^unyd* ‘and rising up’ and *a|dodi y deudroet yn|y got* ‘and putting his feet in the bag’ in (3), which are used instead of finite verbal phrases in matrix clauses (cf. [Evans 1964](#): 161, [Borsley et al. 2007](#): 329, and [Scherschel et al. 2018](#): 36–37, for instance).

- (3) *kÿuodaf yn lla^uen heb ef. a chy^uodi y|u^unyd*
 rise.PRS.1SG PRED glad said 3MSG and rise.VN up(wards)
a|dodi y deudroet yn|y got
 and|put.VN his (two).feet in|the bag
 ‘‘I will gladly get up,’’ he said. **And (he) stood up and placed** his feet in the bag’ (*Pen4*, 6vc241913)

According to [Müller’s](#) (1999: 11) definition of the VN category, ‘‘a verbal noun is a noun [...] that expresses a verbal, i.e. a processual content, but that does not provide the contextual information that is given by a finite verb concerning tense, mood, and aspect’’. Thus, the tense information that the VN actions take place in the past in (3), for instance, is inferred from the narrative context (cf. [Scherschel et al. 2018](#): 37), while the speaker of the preceding

direct speech part is coreferential with the implicit subject of [*c*] *yvuodi* and *dodi*.

Furthermore, verbal nouns in Middle Welsh can take the aspect marker *ry*, which in constructions as in (4) usually triggers a perfective interpretation of the VN action and “serves the purpose of indicating temporal anteriority in the sense of a *consecutio temporum*” (Scherschel et al. 2018: 51) with regard to the superordinate event (cf. Scherschel et al. 2018: 50–51, and Schumacher 2011: 169–170).⁴

- (4) *Mi a gyffessaf ry bechu ohonaf*
 1SG PRT confess.PRS.1SG PERF sin.VN of.1SG
 ‘I confess **that I have sinned**’ (Evans 1964: 168, his translation, glosses added)

Before proceeding to subject, and object, marking in verbal noun actions, it may be convenient to recapitulate with a passage from Borsley et al. (2007):

It seems clear that the element traditionally referred to as a ‘verb-noun’ is not a hybrid category at all, nor a pure noun, but simply a noun in certain clearly defined positions, and a non-finite verb in other, equally clearly defined contexts. There is no overlap in syntactic behaviour, and no uncertainty or fuzziness regarding the syntactic category of any given ‘verb-noun’ (Borsley et al. 2007: 73).

Although they tend to use the terms ‘nonfinite verb’, or ‘infinitive’ for the nonfinite verbal form in Welsh (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 68), the more traditional term ‘verbal noun’, or the abbreviation VN, is preferred in the present paper, especially since, from a syntactic point of view, the verbal noun differs from an infinitive in that direct nominal objects follow in a ‘syntactic genitive construction’, and direct pronominal objects are rendered by using prefixed possessive pronouns (cf. Schumacher 2011: 176).⁵

⁴ Scherschel et al. (2018: 51) also take up this example, as does Russell (2015: 1238).

⁵ Although the term ‘(direct) object’ is usually connected with the accusative case in case-sensitive languages, this label will also be used for the patient of a transitive verbal noun event in Welsh here, for the sake of a straightforward distinction between patients/themes/etc. of transitive verbal nouns, on the one hand, and agents/experiencers/etc. of intransitive verbal nouns, on the other hand, see also Section 2.2 below. Müller (1999) employs the label ‘P2’ (participant 2), for the less agentive participant of a verbal action, while her ‘P1’ (participant 1) is the more agentive one.

2.1 *Objects of verbal nouns and implicit subjects*

Accordingly, while the subject of the verbal noun *dodi* ‘to put, to place’ in example (3) is implied by the context, the direct nominal object *y deudroet* ‘(both) his feet’ immediately follows the VN as an adnominal ‘genitive’ noun phrase (cf. Manning 1995: 173).⁶ A more literal translation could thus be ‘placing of his feet’, or even ‘his feet’s placing’. Two further examples of adverbial clauses showing a VN in coordination with a finite verb illustrate this.⁷

- (5) *Ac gbedy y|gorchuyycco y elynyon. a chymryt*
 and after PRT|OVERCOME.PRS.SBJV.3SG his enemies and take.VN
y|wreic b6ys atta6. yd eisted ef
 his|bride to.3MSG PRT sit.PRS.3SG 3MSG

‘And after he will have overcome his enemies **and taken his bride** [lit. and his bride’s taking] to him, he will sit’ (*LIA*, 56v8–10)

- (6) *Megys y|da6 g6r p6ys [...] yn erbyn y|wreic p6ys.*
 as PRT|COME.PRS.3SG bridegroom against his|bride
A|e d6yn ganta6 gann ganuev a|lle6enyd
 and|her carry.VN with.3MSG with songs and|joy

‘Just as a bridegroom comes [...] towards his bride **and carries her** (off) [lit. and her carrying] with him with songs and joy’ (*LIA*, 45v23–25)

While in example (5) the direct nominal object *y|wreic b6ys* ‘his bride’ is placed after the VN [*c*]ymryt ‘to take’, example (6) has a pronominal object, realized as a third-person singular feminine possessive pronoun *e*, referring back to *y|wreic p6ys* ‘his bride’. In (5), the subject of the finite verb *gorchuyycco* ‘will have overcome’ corresponds to the subject of the subsequent VN, and, likewise, the subject of the act of taking the bride away, in (6), is inferred from the subject *g6r p6ys* ‘bridegroom’ of the finite verb form *da6* (come.PRS.3SG).⁸ It should be noted that in both examples the VN’s tense (and mood) reading is inherited from the preceding finite verb form.

⁶ Müller (1999) also uses the term ‘adnominal genitive’ and explains that “[t]he use of the term in this context is justified by the fact that the genitive or possessive form is used when the participant is marked by a pronoun”, although, “as far as nominal inflection is concerned, there is no productive genitive case form in Welsh, the only indication of a genitive relation being word order” (Müller 1999: 12, fn. 13).

⁷ In his contribution to the present issue of *Journal of Historical Syntax*, Erich Poppe investigates possible patterns of coordination in subordinate clauses in Early Modern Welsh Bible texts, especially those involving verbal nouns, and gives (5) as a Middle Welsh example.

⁸ Richards (1949: 58) states that “the subject of the verb noun is not formally denoted if it be the same as that of the [preceding] finite verb”, and cites (5), i.a., as an example.

2.2 Explicit subject marking

Of course, subjects⁹ of verbal-noun actions can also receive overt marking: with (semantic) subjects of Middle Welsh intransitive VN clauses, we find the same pattern, in general, as with direct objects, i.e. nominal subjects regularly follow as an adnominal genitive NP, as in the independent VN clause *Djuot y portha6r* ‘coming (of) the doorkeeper’ in (7),¹⁰ whereas pronominal ones are indicated by possessives, e.g. in *eu mynet* ‘their going’ in (8),¹¹ where the VN phrase is the grammatical subject of a copular clause *ryued y6* ‘(it) is strange’ (cf. Evans 1964: 161–162). Evans (1964: 161) calls this “the usual construction when the verb is intransitive”.

- (7) *Djuot y portha6r ac agori y porth.*
 come.VN the doorkeeper and open.VN the gate
 ‘The doorkeeper came [lit. the doorkeeper’s coming] and opened the gate [lit. the gate’s opening]’ (*Pen4*, 88vc487l11–13)
- (8) *ryued y6 eu mynet y vffernn pann vo*
 strange be.PRS.3SG their go.VN to hell when be.PRS.SBJV.3SG
mar6 y corff h6nn6
 dead the body that
 ‘it is strange **that they go** [lit. strange is their going] to hell when that body has died’ (*LIA*, 43r9–10)

Note that the construction of transitive *agori y porth* ‘opening (of) the gate’ (with the implied subject being coreferential with the overt preceding one, i.e. ‘the doorkeeper’) in (7) is parallel to intransitive *Djuot y portha6r* ‘coming (of) the doorkeeper’, namely VN + NP_{gen}, with the genitive NP *y porth* ‘(of) the gate’ marking the object of VN *agori* ‘to open’. Müller (1999: 186) states that the genitive is used to denote the “one necessary participant” both in transitive, and intransitive, processes, and suggests that “[t]he identical marking of P[articipant] 1 in an intransitive process, and P[articipant] 2 in a transitive process, may thus be an indication that the former is conceptual-

⁹ In the present paper, the (semantically) rather indistinct label ‘subject’ is used for the more agentive participant in Welsh verbal noun actions (Müller’s ‘P1’), although the notion of a grammatical subject is commonly linked with the nominative case, and a finite verbal phrase, which does not apply here. Such a subject of a verbal noun action can, of course, have different semantic roles, such as ‘agent’, ‘experiencer’, or ‘recipient’ (see also Meelen 2016: 120).

¹⁰ Richards (1949: 54) also discusses this example and notes that there is no finite verb preceding the VNs, furthermore drawing attention to the fact that, since *agori* ‘to open’ is a transitive verb, *y porth* ‘the gate’ must be the object. This example is cited by Müller (1999: 50) as well.

¹¹ Also cited by Richards (1949: 60).

ized as on the same level of voluntary effort, energy expenditure, and control as the latter – i.e. as affected by the process in question”.

Up to this point, we have addressed the most important device of marking the ‘essential’ participant in a verbal noun action in (Middle) Welsh, namely ‘genitive marking’, see the schematic overview in (9):

- (9) VN + NP_{gen}
 POSS + VN
- (a) VN = intransitive: NP_{gen} / POSS = S(ubject) of VN
 (b) VN = transitive: NP_{gen} / POSS = O(bject) of VN

Since, in transitive verbal noun actions of the type in (9b), the object occupies the ‘genitive slot’, a distinct construction has to be used for marking the subject, which is usually achieved by placing a prepositional phrase headed by *o* ‘from, of’ after the VN, as with [*c*]ymryt [...] *o · hona6* ‘taking [...] of him’ in (10) (cf. Morgan 1938: 196, Evans 1964: 161, and Richards 1949: 51–52).¹²

- (10) *a chymryt y wein o · hona6. a|r c[l]edyf yn y*
 and take.VN the scabbard of.3MSG and|the sword in the
lla6 arall. Djuot o · hona6 vch pen y ka6r
 hand other come.VN of.3MSG above head the giant
malphei y cledyf a dottei yn y wein
 as.if.(it.were) the sword PRT put.IMP.F.SBJV.3SG in the scabbard
 ‘And he took the scabbard [lit. the scabbard’s taking of him], and
 the sword in the other hand. He arrived [lit. coming of him] above
 the giant’s head, as if he would place the sword in the scabbard’
 (Pen4, 88vc488l29–33)

Here, the transitive verbal noun action ‘taking’, together with its complements, may thus be analysed as a construction VN_{transitive} + NP_{gen=O} + PP_{o=S}. As we can see in this example, there are also constructions such as *Djuot o · hona6* ‘coming of him’, where the subject of an intransitive VN action is indicated by use of this ‘*o*-marking’ device (VN_{intransitive} + PP_{o=S}, see also (4)

¹² Müller explains:

[Transitive] processes involve two participants, which cannot be encoded by the same marker. Therefore a hierarchy of effort and control comes to be applied, and the participant with the least degree of effort and control – i.e. P2 – is encoded as the genitive, whereas the participant exhibiting the relatively higher degree of effort and control is encoded as the prepositional phrase (Müller 1999: 187).

above). Note that tense information for the independent ‘narrative’ verbal noun clauses in (10) is, once again, inferred from the context.¹³

It has to be noted that all kinds of subjects of transitive verbal nouns are coded with an *o*-phrase in Middle Welsh, regardless, for instance, of semantic features, such as animacy, so both a [+human] and a [–human] subject are found with *o*-marking, cf. (11 a) and (11 b) respectively. As for intransitive verbal nouns, Manning (1995) observes that, while they regularly have genitive marking with a [–human] subject, atelic activities, such as *marchogaeth* ‘to ride’, *kerdet* ‘to walk’, or *ymlad* ‘to fight’, as well as some agentive telics, such as *pechu* ‘to sin’ (e.g. (4) above) employ *o*-marking if the subject is [+human], cf. *ymlad* with a [–human] subject in (11 c) vs. a [+human] subject in (11 d). Telic intransitive verbs with potential agentive control, such as *kyuodi* ‘to rise’, and also *mynet* ‘to go’, or *dyuot* ‘to come’ are “fluid” (Manning 1995: 183), in that they may display the pattern with *o* or genitive marking, cf. the examples with *dyuot*, (7) vs. (10) above. Subjects of stative intransitives, such as *bot* ‘to be’, or telics which lack control, such as *marw* ‘to die’ (11 e), are only denoted by genitive marking (cf. Manning 1995: 180–186).

- (11) (a) *lad o Dauyd y kawr*
kill.VN of David the giant
‘David killed the giant’ (Manning 1995: 180, his translation, glosses added)
- (b) *llad o lwdyn y llall*
kill.VN of (young).animal the other
‘(An) animal killed the other (one)’ (Manning 1995: 180, his translation, glosses added)
- (c) *achan eu hymlad*
and.with their fight.VN
‘While they [two animals] fought’ (Manning 1995: 181, his translation, glosses added)
- (d) *ymlad ohonafi dros vym baryf*
fight.VN of.1SG.1SG for my beard
‘I fought for my beard’ (Manning 1995: 181, his translation, glosses added)
- (e) *A gwedy marw vyinggwr i*
and after die.VN my.man 1SG

¹³ This example can also be found in Richards (1949: 56), and Müller (1999: 52). According to Müller (1999: 201), “[t]he construction VN+*o*_{P1} occurs with considerable frequency as independent VN clause as a feature of dynamic narrative”, and “[t]he typical agentive VN clause in early Welsh contains a VN that represents new, and a P1 that represents given information”.

'And after my husband died' (Manning 1995: 184, translation adapted, glosses added)

Willis (2009: 152) rather distinguishes between "unaccusative (change-of-state) verbs" and "unergative (action) verbs" and explains:

Which of the two patterns [i.e. *o*-marking or genitive marking] is used can sometimes depend on the degree of agentivity ascribed to the subject: if a subject is viewed as actively carrying out the action of the verb, then the transitive/unergative pattern is used, whereas a non-active subject will be marked using the intransitive pattern (Willis 2009: 152).

There is another pattern, '*i*-marking', which is found specifically in nonfinite subordinate clauses, in which the VN's subject is indicated by a prepositional phrase headed by *y* 'to, for' (Modern Welsh *i*) placed before the verbal noun (cf. Evans 1964: 162), as in the object clause of *credu* 'to believe' in example (12 a) – compare with the use of *o*-marking in (12 b).

- (12) (a) *Credu yr iessu grist h6nn6 rodi medyant*
 believe.VN to.the Jesus Christ that give.VN authority
a gallv yr ebestyl
 and power to.the Apostles
 'To believe **that the aforesaid Jesus Christ gave** [lit. believing to that Jesus Christ giving] authority and power to the Apostles' (LLA, 121v3–4)
- (b) *ac or credawd ef rodi o duw idaw*
 and if believe.PST.3SG 3MSG give.VN of God to.3MSG
bethu dros y irlloned ae gyndared
 things for his wrath and.his anger
 'and if he believed **that God gave him** [lit. and if he believed giving of God to him] things for his wrath and anger' (Richards 1949: 65)

There are other marginal patterns for subject marking in Middle Welsh (see, for instance, Evans 1964: 162–163), which are, however, not relevant for the present purpose.¹⁴ The primary marking devices of participants in Middle Welsh verbal noun actions may thus be summarized as follows:

¹⁴ Still, what all the above devices of subject, and object, marking have in common is that a 'genitive relation' to the verbal noun is established that essentially corresponds to the construction used for genitive attributes in noun phrases, e.g. *mab y brenin* 'the king's son', *ei fab (ef)* 'his son', *aelod o'r eglwys* 'a member of the church', and *mab i'r brenin* 'a son of [lit. to] the king'

and a synopsis of their assumed derivations, before concluding with a comparative summary of subject marking devices in verbal-noun constructions in both Middle and Modern Welsh.

3.1 *The verbal noun bod 'to be' in subordinate constructions*

In Modern Welsh, an affirmative object complement clause to verbs such as 'to hear', or 'to believe', when it expresses an event in the present indicative, the imperfect, the perfect, or the pluperfect, must comprise a verbal-noun construction. This is also true for complement clauses to prepositions such as *am* 'for', *er* 'despite, for (the sake of)', or *cyn* 'before' (cf. Morgan 1938: 204).

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that we find VN *bod* 'to be' in such complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates in Modern Welsh, given that the tenses mentioned in the preceding paragraph are, by the Modern Welsh period, predominantly realized with periphrastic aspect constructions with the progressive marker *yn*, as in the object complement clause in (14 a), and the perfect marker *wedi*, as in the adverbial clause headed by *cyn* 'before' in (14 b) (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 76–77). It should be noted that subordinate clauses, in general, employ synthetic tensed forms of *bod* if they are in the future, preterite, or conditional/habitual, as with *byddai* 'would be' in the coordinate complement clause in (15 a) (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 75, 82).¹⁸

- (14) (a) *Mae Aled yn credu [bod Elen yn darllen y llyfr].*
 be.PRS.3SG Aled PROG believe.VN be.VN Elen PROG read.VN
 the book
 'Aled believes **that Elen is/was reading** the book.' (Borsley et al. 2007: 77, their translation, markup and glosses modified)
- (b) *Es i allan [cyn bod y plant wedi codi].*
 go.PST.1SG 1SG out before be.VN the children PERF
 rise.VN
 'I went out **before the children had got up.**' (Borsley et al. 2007: 77, their translation, markup and glosses modified)

As can be seen in (14 a), VN *bod* can have a present indicative or imperfect reading in a complement clause. Embedded 'bod-clauses' thus have a

¹⁸ The same is true for "embedded questions and clefts, embedded negative clauses and conditional and future clauses" after epistemic and declarative verbs in Middle Welsh (Borsley et al. 2007: 327).

“neutralization of these two tenses” (Borsley et al. 2007: 77). In the temporal *bod*-clause in (14b), the aspect marker *wedi* induces a perfect reading, or rather, a pluperfect reading after the preterite matrix verb.

3.2 Modern Welsh *i*-clauses

In Modern Welsh, there are two common subordinate clause types with *i*-marking, usually called ‘*i*-clauses’ (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 81). The first type is exemplified in (15).

- (15) (a) *Meddyliodd Aled [i Alys fynd adre’] a [byddai*
 think.PST.3SG Aled to Alys go.VN home and be.COND.3SG
Mair yn mynd hefyd].
 Mair PROG go.VN too
 ‘Aled thought **that Alys had gone** home and that Mair would
 be going too.’ (Borsley et al. 2007: 83, their translation, markup
 and glosses modified)
- (b) *Mae Aled yn sicr [i Mair fynd].*
 be.PRS.3SG Aled PRED certain to Mair go.VN
 ‘Aled is certain **that Mair has gone.**’ (Borsley et al. 2007: 83,
 their translation, markup and glosses modified)

In (15), the *i*-clause has anterior meaning in relation to the matrix clause, which is always the case with *i*-marking in nonfinite complement clauses to declarative and epistemic predicates, such as *dweud* ‘to say’, *gw(y)bod* ‘to know’, or *meddwl* ‘to think’, as in (15a) (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 82–83). Such an *i*-clause can also be a complement to diverse (epistemic) nouns and adjectives, e.g. (15b) (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 83, 330). The second type of *i*-clause is shown in (16).

- (16) (a) *Hiraethai Wyn am [i Ann ddychwelyd].*
 long.IMPF.3SG Wyn for to Ann return.VN
 ‘Wyn longed for **Ann to return.**’ (Borsley et al. 2007: 93, their
 translation, markup and glosses modified)
- (b) *Byddai ‘n drueni [i ti werthu ‘r car].*
 be.COND.3SG PRED pity to 2SG sell.VN the car
 ‘It would be a pity **for you to sell** the car.’ (Borsley et al.
 2007: 86, their translation, markup and glosses modified)

This type does not entail an anterior meaning, but is understood as an “infinitival clause with future time reference, often with a modal interpretation”

and occurs with specific “predicates of expectation and volition”, such as *dy-muno* ‘to wish’, *disgwyl* ‘to expect’, *ofni* ‘to fear’, or *hiraethu am* ‘to long for’, as in (16 a), and also with some (control) adjectives or nouns, as in (16 b) (Borsley et al. 2007: 85–86), as well as with “various other control verbs” (Borsley et al. 2007: 330).

Beyond the fact that both types of *i*-clause are also found as complements to prepositions (i.e. nonfinite adverbial clauses, cf. (33) and (34) below), the properties of these *i*-clause types can be summarized as follows (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 330–331):

- (17) (a) type I: real anterior event in relation to the superordinate clause, with epistemic and declarative predicates
 (b) type II: “potential, with generic or future time reference” (Borsley et al. 2007: 331), with predicates of expectation, volition, and control

It is probably imperative, at this point, to briefly address possible derivations of the two types of *i*-clauses we have in Modern Welsh since they might explain, to some extent, the tremendous spread of those constructions, particularly with regard to complement clauses.

3.3 A digression on the development of *i*-clauses

Mainly following Lewis (1928), Miller (2004), Morgan (1938), and Richards (1949), Borsley et al. suggest that type I *i*-clauses, e.g. in (15) above, emerged from a reanalysis of the syntax of raising verbs such as *daruot* ‘to finish, to happen’, cf. (18), and *damwein(y)aw* ‘to happen’, while the argument structure of control verbs, such as *erchi* ‘to ask’, or *peri* ‘to cause’, (19 a), and resembling constructions with control adjectives, and nouns, such as *rhaid* ‘necessity’ (Middle Welsh *reit*), as in (19 b), were reanalysed and gave rise to “a second possible complement pattern” (Borsley et al. 2007: 332), which could spread, and result in *i*-clauses of type II shown in (16) above (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 331–333).¹⁹

- (18) *A|gbedy daruot ida6 rodi y|venndith y*
 and|after finish/happen.VN to.3MSG give.VN his|blessing to
ba6p. y|dy6at yr ymadra6d h6nn
 everyone PRT|speak.PST.3SG the utterance this

¹⁹ Müller (1999: 42) notes that “there are numerous examples of *i* occurring after verbs of asking, entreating, causing (somebody to do something) – for example, *erchi* ‘ask’, *peri* ‘cause’ – where *i* denotes the person affected by the process of the main verb, which also happens to be coreferential with P1 of the VN following the preposition”.

'And after **he had finished giving/he had given** [lit. after finishing/happening to him giving] his blessing to everyone, he spoke these words' (*LIA*, 102v21–22)

- (19) (a) *beth yw 'r achos sy yn peri i*
 what be.PRS.3SG the reason be.PRS.REL PROG cause.VN to
ddiüw anfon adref hyd attom
 God send.VN home(wards) up to.1PL
 'what is the reason which is **causing God to send** [lit. causing to God sending] home unto us' (*Perl*: 5)
 'what thing **moveth or causeth God to send** home unto us'
 (*Pearl*: [5])
- (b) *pam mae rhaid i ti ofni 'r tan*
 why be.PRS.3SG necessity to 2SG fear.VN the fire
 'why **must you fear** [lit. why is (there a) necessity to you (of) fearing] the fire' (*Perl*: 57)
 'what **needest thou** to fear the fire' (*Pearl*: [54])

As for type I, [Morgan \(1938\)](#) argues that the underlying model was a non-personal auxiliary construction with *darfod* (= Middle Welsh *daruot*), i.e. *darfod* + $PP_{i=S}$ + VN, like in the Middle Welsh example in (18).²⁰ He constructs two Modern Welsh examples, one with a finite form of *darfod* as a matrix verb (20 a), and the other one with the corresponding VN embedded in an object clause of *clywais* 'I heard' (20 b). Relying on his observations of Early Modern Welsh texts, [Morgan](#) claims that a gradual loss of auxiliary *darfod* in subordinate contexts would have led to a third sentence, *clywais iddo fynd* 'I heard that he went' (20 c) ([Morgan 1938](#): 210–212).²¹

- (20) (a) *darfu iddo fynd*
 happen.PST.3SG to.3MSG go.VN
 'it happened to him to go' > 'he went'
- (b) *clywais ddarfod iddo fynd*
 hear.PST.1SG happen.VN to.3MSG go.VN
 'I heard that it happened to him to go' > 'I heard that he went'

²⁰ In this construction, the verb *daruot/darfod* 'to finish, to happen' requires two complements, namely a grammatical subject, frequently a VN phrase, and an *i*-phrase denoting the experiencer (cf. [Evans 1964](#): 146, §154 n., also citing (20 a) and (20 b), and see [Borsley et al. 2007](#): 331). For an Early Modern Welsh example from *Perl mewn Adfyd*, see (44) below.

²¹ [Richards \(1949](#): 53) takes up the three examples in (20) and offers the translations used here.

- (c) *clywais iddo fynd*
 hear.PST.1SG to.3MSG go.VN

'I heard that he went'

(Morgan 1938: 210, translations by Richards (1949: 53), glosses added)

Then again, in example (19 a), *peri* (cause.vN) has the prepositional phrase *i ddüw* 'to God' as a complement, with the VN *anfon* 'to send' following the *i*-phrase as the object of *peri*, thus the construction is comparable with *i*-clauses of type II, as in (16) above. However, the structure could be seen as ambiguous, since the *i*-phrase in (19 a) could either be part of the superordinate clause, as the usual indirect object of *peri*, which controls the subject of the VN clause, i.e. *peri i ddüw [anfon]* 'causing God [to send]', or merely denote the subject of the VN object clause *anfon*, since *peri* could also take a direct VN object clause, i.e. *peri [i ddüw anfon]* 'bringing it about [that God sends]'. Similarly, the complement clause to *rhaid* 'necessity' in (19 b) could translate both 'why is it necessary for you [to fear the fire]' and 'why is it necessary [that you fear the fire]' (cf. Miller 2004: 339–341, and Willis 2009: 153).²²

The development of the different types of *i*-clause may be summarized as follows:

All accounts are compatible with the suggestion that a reanalysis took place, with one generation of speakers interpreting the *i* – noun phrase sequence as indirect object of a main-clause verb, and the next interpreting it (in some cases) as subject of the embedded clause [...] Once embedded clauses headed by *i* became possible with [verbs such as *erchi* 'to ask'], their appearance generally in contexts where embedded non-finite clauses were possible was a natural consequence (Borsley et al. 2007: 332).

3.4 Patterns of subject marking devices in nonfinite subordinate clauses

As will have become evident from the preceding sections, the distribution of different subject marking devices is, especially from a diachronic perspective, predominantly interesting in the context of subordinate verbal-noun clauses.

Just as in Modern Welsh, declarative and epistemic verbs, such as *credu* 'to believe', *dywedut* 'to say', *gwelet* 'to see', or *clybot* 'to hear', require verbal-noun clauses as object complements in Middle Welsh if an affirmative ante-

²² For some further examples of relevant adjectives and nouns which take an *i*-clause complement, see Evans (1971: 149–151), for instance.

rior event is to be denoted, as in (12) above, which in the vast majority of cases, however, involved genitive subject marking or *o*-marking (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 327–328). Accordingly, in later Middle Welsh, the emergent type I *i*-clauses in complement clauses to epistemic verbs thus gradually “compete” with *o*-marking and genitive marking, and this was the case in adverbial clauses too (Willis 2009: 152).

In the case of *o*-marking in object clauses, Rowland (1876: 232) notes that this construction may not only be used to express an anterior event (giving the English examples *I learnt, have learned, had learnt*, equivalent to the function of type I *i*-clauses) but also the subjunctive (*may, might, would* or *should learn*). Such a subjunctive reading is, according to Rowland (1876: 233), expected after “such sentences as *it is important, it is necessary, it is required*, and after words that imply *commanding, entreating, wishing, praying, &c.*”, thus corresponding to contexts where we find type II *i*-clauses.²³

However, there is a good reason for having *o*-marking in functionally differing contexts, since with this device, according to Richards (1938), who bases his observations on Early Modern examples, “it makes no difference what the tense of the verbal-noun action is” (Richards 1938: 130, “Nid oes wahaniaeth beth yw amser y weithred ferfenwol”, translation as suggested by David Willis). That is, a VN with *o*-marking does not have a specific tense but, by implication, receives its tense interpretation from the individual context, which is in line with the general properties of verbal nouns (see Section 2).

Since the different types of nonfinite subordinate clauses are most relevant for the present purpose, their distribution patterns with the different subject marking devices are summarized in Table 1, before we proceed with the Early Modern Welsh data, with an indication of what can probably be considered a frequent (++) , common (+) , or marginal (–) construction, for the Middle and Modern Welsh periods.²⁴

Considering the divergent distribution patterns in Table 1, one could probably only speculate on what to expect of an Early Modern Welsh text with respect to subject markers in nonfinite subordinate clauses. On this matter, Borsley et al. (2007: 330) postulate a “considerable uncertainty of usage in-

23 Consider the following example from the 1620 Welsh Bible: *Hyn yw ewylllys yr Hwn a’ m hanfonodd i, cael o bob un fywyd tragywyddol* ‘This is the will of Him, That sent Me, that every one may have everlasting life’ (John 6:40, Rowland 1876: 233, his translation). Here, the VN clause *cael o bob un* ‘having/receiving of everyone’ is in apposition to *Hyn* ‘this’, which is the predicative expression in a copular construction. It should be noted, however, that I was not able to find references to a subjunctive reading of *o*-marking apart from Rowland (1876).

24 Although they take into account Richards (1949), Borsley et al. (2007) and Willis (2009), the estimated frequencies in Table 1 should be treated with considerable caution and are supposed to be entirely illustrative.

type of nonfinite subordinate clause	language period and subject marking device						
	Middle Welsh			Modern Welsh			
	gen.	<i>o</i>	<i>i</i>	gen.	gen.	<i>o</i>	<i>i</i>
complement to epistemic and declarative predicates	++	++	-	-	++	-	++
complement to expectation, volition, and control predicates	++	++	-	-	+	-	++
adverbial	++	++	-	-	++	-	++

Table 1 Distribution of subject marking devices in nonfinite subordinate clauses (Middle vs. Modern Welsh)

cluding hypercorrection” before the 17th century, which “suggests a disintegrating system”.

Incidentally, concerning this “uncertainty of usage”, Morgan (1938: 196–197) takes the view that *o*-marking at some point spread to all intransitive verbal nouns, including uncontrolled telics such as *marw* ‘to die’ (cf. (11 e) above), and even stative *bod* ‘to be’. While he regards constructions such as *dyfod ohono* ‘coming of him’ and *marw ohono* ‘dying of him’ as being a natural development, Morgan deems the same pattern with *bod* in some Early Modern texts, e.g. *bod ohonof* ‘being of me’ instead of *fy mod* ‘my being’ (with genitive marking), to be an “artificial distortion” (Morgan 1938: 197, “ystumiad artifisial”). Consider example (21), from the 1620 Welsh Bible, which has *o*-marking with *bod*.²⁵

²⁵ See also Section 6.1 below. It should be noted that (probably extremely rare) examples of *bod* + *o*-marking are also found in Middle Welsh, where they are not expected at all (cf. Section 2.2). Consider the following passage: *Dared groec yr h6n a|yscrifen6ys istoria g6yr troea a|dywa6t ry|uot ohona6 ef yn|y t|ud hyt pan gahat troea a g6elet ohona6 ef y|tywyssoy6n hyn|y ma pan vei dagned a|chygreir yr6g g6yr troea a g6yr goroc a|ry|uot ohona6 ef weitheu yn|y hynladeu h6y* ‘Dares, (the) Greek, who wrote the history of the men of Troy, said that he had been [lit. *ry*_{PERF} + being of him] in their army until Troy was taken, and that he saw these leaders (as follows) here when there were peace and a truce between the men of Troy and the men of Greece, and that he had been [lit. *ry*_{PERF} + being of him] occasionally in their battles’ (M116, 8r15–19). Here, it might be imaginable that *o*-marking is supposed to indicate the contingent nature of the assertions in the reported speech, so one could possibly read ‘that he had (allegedly/reportedly) been’. However, no more than speculation can be offered here, since an in-depth analysis of this passage and similar unexpected occurrences of *o*-marking in Middle Welsh is beyond the scope of the present paper. It should be noted that Müller (1999: 186) does not have any examples

- (21) *edrychwch ar fod ohonoch yn y gras hwn hefyd yn*
 look.IMP.2PL on be.VN of.2PL in the grace this too PRED
ehelaeth
 abundant
 ‘see to (it) **that you are** in this grace, too, abundantly’ (2 Corinthians 8:7, Richards 1938: 135, glosses added)

4 THE SITUATION IN EARLY MODERN WELSH: DATA FROM *PERL MEWN ADFYD*

In order to gain an impression of a portion of this “disintegrating system”, we will now look at some late 16th-century examples from a text that the research project in Marburg, ‘The Welsh Contribution to the Early Modern Cultures of Translation: Sixteenth-century Strategies of Translating into Welsh’, is working on, in cooperation with PARSHCWL, the Parsed Historical Corpus of the Welsh Language (Meelen & Willis 2021).

Perl mewn Adfyd (*Perl*) ‘A pearl in adversity’ is a religious text published in Oxford in 1595 by Joseph Barnes. It is a translation by churchman Huw Lewys, from the Caernarfon area in northern Wales, of Miles Coverdale’s *A Spiritual and most Precious Pearl*, published in London in 1550, which was itself translated from the 1548 edifying treatise *Ein Kleinot, von Trost und Hilfe in allerley Trübsalen* ‘A Pearl, or treasure, of consolation and help in all kinds of tribulations’, written by the Swiss churchman Otto Werdmüller in Zürich (Kilburn 2013: 433, Morgan 2018: 15–16).

The data from *Perl* presented in this paper include only the first ten (out of thirty-one) chapters, which corresponds to 79 pages, or 12,024 tokens (excluding punctuation and meta information), because this is the part for which part-of-speech tags have so far been supplied.²⁶ Since *Perl* is a close translation of its English source, the corresponding English passages are given along with the examples as well, taken from the 1812 edition (*Pearl*).²⁷

4.1 Data: genitive subject marking

There are 48 instances of genitive subject marking in *Perl*, with only three different VNs occurring in this pattern, namely, *dryllio* ‘to crush, to crack’, *cyfer-*

of bod with a prepositional subject marker in her data.

²⁶ The text of *Perl* was taken from *Corpws Hanesyddol yr Iaith Gymraeg 1500–1850 / Historical Corpus of the Welsh Language 1500–1850* (Willis & Mittendorf 2004). I gratefully owe the text’s pre-processing and automatic part-of-speech tagging to Marieke Meelen. The resulting file, with part-of-speech tags corrected by myself, was used to gather the data for the present paper, by checking all verbal nouns in their respective contexts.

²⁷ The first thirteen chapters (101 pages) of *Perl* may be found side-by-side with the text from *Pearl* in Parina’s (2015) digital edition, which was consulted for the present purpose as well.

golli ‘to lose utterly, to perish’, and *bod* ‘to be’. They occur in 29 complement clauses, 14 adverbial clauses headed by various prepositions, 3 appositional clauses, and 2 clauses of exception with *ond* ‘but’; see Table 2.²⁸

preposition/ conjunction	clause type			
	complement	adverbial	appositional	exception
<i>am</i> ‘for’	–	1 (subst.)	–	–
<i>gan</i> ‘with’	–	2 (1 cop., 1 prog.)	–	–
<i>yn gymeint a(c)</i> ‘inasmuch as’	–	2 (1 cop., 1 prog.)	–	–
<i>er</i> ‘despite’	–	6 (3 cop., 3 prog.)	–	–
<i>rhag</i> ‘lest’	–	2 (both <i>cyfergolli</i>)	–	–
<i>nes</i> ‘until’	–	1 (<i>dryllio</i>)	–	–
<i>ond</i> ‘but’	–	–	–	2 (1 cop., 1 prog.)
–	29 (2 subst., 13 cop., 14 prog.)	–	3 (2 cop., 1 prog.)	–
total (48)	29	14	3	2

Table 2 Nonfinite clauses with genitive subject marking in *Perl*

The VN *dryllio* ‘to crush, to crack’ is found once, in a nonfinite temporal clause headed by the preposition *nes* ‘until’, in which it is followed by an adnominal genitive NP *i escyryn* ‘his bones’:

- (22) *ef a rwym i draed, a 'i ddwylaw, ac*
 3MSG PRT enchain.PRS.3SG his feet and his (two).hands and
a 'i cerydda nes dryllio i escyryn
 PRT him chasten.PRS.3SG until crush.VN his bones
 ‘he enchains his feet and (both) his hands, and chastens him **until**

²⁸ The notes in parentheses should be read as follows: subst. = *bod* as a substantive verb; cop. = *bod* with copula function; prog. = *bod* in a periphrastic progressive construction. This also applies to Tables 8 and 10 below.

his bones crack [lit. until cracking (of) his bones]' (*Pearl*: 34)

'he bindeth his hands and feet, and beateth him **till his bones crack**'
(*Pearl*: [32])

Although *dryllio i escyrn* could still be transitive 'till he cracks his bones' or 'till his bones are crushed', a comparison with the English source invites the intransitive reading. The VN *cyfergolli* 'to lose utterly, perish' can be both intransitive and transitive as well. In the two instances of it, (23) and (24), both in final clauses with the preposition *rhag* 'that not, lest', the English original employs the intransitive verb 'to perish'.

- (23) *ac a 'n helpia i ffrwyno, ac i ddofi y*
and PRT US help.PRS.3SG to bridle.VN and to tame.VN the
cnawd, rhag cyfergolli 'r ardderchawg, a 'r gwyrthfawr
flesh before perish.VN the splendid and the precious
enaid.
soul

'and [he] helps us to bridle and to tame the flesh, **lest** the splendid and precious **soul perish** [lit. before perishing (of) the [...] soul].'
(*Pearl*: 46)

'and helpeth us to bridle and to tame our flesh, **that** the noble and precious **soul perish not.**' (*Pearl*: [43–44])

- (24) *fe ddaw duw attom [...] rhag yn difetha a*
it come.PRS.3SG God to.1PL before our destroy.VN and
'n cyfergolli gidac hwynt.
our perish.VN (together).with them

'God comes to us [...] **lest** we be destroyed **and perish** [lit. before our destroying and our perishing] with them.' (*Pearl*: 47)

'therefore God cometh unto us [...] **that we should not** be destroyed, **and perish** together with them' (*Pearl*: [44–45])

Considering the English parallels from *Pearl* in examples (23) and (24), the Welsh translator probably intended an intransitive reading too, so the genitive NP in (23), and the possessive pronoun in (24), are instances of genitive subject marking, while possessive *yn* 'our' in *yn difetha* 'our destroying' is the object of a transitive verbal noun with unexpressed subject, resulting in an idiomatic passive reading 'we are destroyed' in English.²⁹

²⁹ For a discussion of unexpressed agents and passive readings in VN phrases in Middle Welsh, see Poppe (2017).

All other instances of genitive subject marking co-occur with VN *bod* ‘to be’. In total, there are 45 instances of *bod* ‘to be’, 21 of which have it as a copula, as in the appositional clause to *y fath ffrost* ‘such a boast’ in (25), while another 21 are part of the periphrastic progressive construction with *yn*_{PROG} + VN (cf. Section 3.1), as in the subject complement clause to a copular construction in (26). The remaining 3 examples have *bod* as a substantive verb, as in the possessive construction in the object complement clause in (27).³⁰

- (25) *pobl a ganmolant wr, ac a wnant y fath*
 people PRT laud.PRS.3PL man and PRT make.PRS.3PL the such
ffrost o honaw ef, (sef) i fod ef, yn
 boast of.3MSG 3MSG namely his be.VN 3MSG PRED
ddoethaf, yn gallaf, yn wrolaf, ac yn onestaf
 most.learned PRED wisest PRED bravest and PRED most.honest
gwr mewn gwlad, &c.
 man in country etc.

‘people laud a man and make such a boast of him, namely, **that he is** [lit. his being] **the most learned**, wisest, bravest, and most honest man in a country etc.’ (*Pearl*: 53)

‘people do so extol a man, and make such boast of him, **to be the wisest**, most circumspect, manly, and honest man in a country’ (*Pearl*: [50])

- (26) *yr awrhon gwir yw, fod o naturiaeth 'n aros*
 now true be.PRS.3SG be.VN by nature PROG dwell.VN
yn ein caloneu ormod diofalwch, a difrawch
 in our hearts excessive carelessness and heedlessness

‘now it is true **that by nature an excessive carelessness and heedlessness is dwelling** in our hearts’ (*Pearl*: 65)

‘Now truth it is, **that in our hearts naturally sticketh a rough secureness and retchlessness**’ (*Pearl*: [61–62])

- (27) *Heb law hynn, bwrier fod i wr ddau o*
 besides that imagine.IMP.IMPERS be.VN to man two of
feibion
 sons

‘Apart from that, one shall imagine **that a man has two sons** [lit. being to a man two [of] sons]’ (*Pearl*: 37–38)

‘Furthermore be it, in case **that the father hath two sons**’ (*Pearl*: [35])

³⁰ Example (27) is also given by Evans (1971: 148). Note that the abstract subject *ormod diofalwch, a difrawch* in (26) is placed at the very end of the progressive *bod*-clause, thereby achieving a relatively similar syntax with regard to the corresponding English passage.

4.2 Data: *o*-marking

The first ten chapters of *Perl mewn Adfyd* have, in total, 8 instances of *o*-marking – all of them with a [+human] subject (or a ‘superhuman’ one like God) – 3 with transitive and 5 with intransitive VNs; see Table 3.³¹

preposition/ conjunction	clause type			
	complement	adverbial	appositional	exception
<i>er</i> ‘despite’	–	1 (TR)	–	–
<i>er</i> ‘for’	–	1 (INTR)	–	–
<i>rhag</i> ‘lest’	–	1 (INTR)	–	–
<i>eythr</i> ‘but’	–	–	–	3 (all INTR)
–	1 (TR)	–	1 (TR)	–
total (8)	1	3	1	3

Table 3 Nonfinite clauses with *o*-marking in *Perl*

Two out of three nonfinite adverbial clauses are final, of which one is with *rhag* ‘(in order) that not; lest’ (see (40) below) and the other with *er* ‘for (the sake of)’, (28); the third is a concessive clause with *er* ‘despite; although’ (see (38) below). The VN with *o*-marking in (28) has no specific tense information, but the context with the final preposition *er* ‘for (the sake of)’ suggests a generic/future tense relation to the present progressive construction (*nid yw* [...] *yn ceryddu* ‘is not chastening’) in the superordinate clause. Although *dyscu* ‘to learn’ is intransitive here, it is an atelic activity and as such, especially with a [+human] subject, expected to entail *o*-marking (from a Middle Welsh point of view as defined by Manning (1995), see Section 2.2 above). Note also that there is a subject change from the matrix clause’s *y meist* ‘the master’ to the one he is punishing, and that the coordinate VN clauses *bod yn fwy dilys, a chymeryd mwy gofal* do not require further explicit subject marking, since their subjects are coreferential with the overtly marked one of *dyscu*.

(28) *Yr awr hon, nid yw y meist yn ceryddu ei*
 now NEG be.PRS.3SG the master PROG chasten.VN his
scolaig, neu ei was er meddwl i
 scholar or his servant for.(the.sake.of) think.VN his
friwo ef [...] ond er dyscu o honaw
 injure.VN 3MSG but for.(the.sake.of) learn.VN of.3MSG

³¹ The notes in parentheses, i.e. TR (= transitive) and INTR (= intransitive), indicate the verbal nouns’ valency, also with the examples of *i*-marking in Table 4 below.

*yn well o hynny allan, bod yn fwy dilys, a
 PRED better from that out be.VN PRED more diligent and
 chymeryd mwy gofal.
 take.VN more heed*

'Now, the master is not chastening his scholar, or his servant, with intent to hurt him [...], but **in order that he will/may learn** [lit. for the sake of learning of him] better from then on, is more diligent, and takes more heed.' (*Pearl*: 42–43)

'Now the master doth not correct and punish his scholar or servant for any intent to hurt him [...] but only **that he should learn** better afterward, be more diligent, and take better heed.' (*Pearl*: [41])

Three instances of *o*-marking occur in nonfinite clauses of exception with *eythr* 'but, except', as in (29), which has an intransitive telic verbal noun *troi* 'to turn'. Here, there is once more a subject change from the grammatical subject [*p*]leser 'pleasure' of the possessive construction in the matrix clause to the (generic) sinner, while a generic tense interpretation is implied from the context. A subjunctive reading, which Rowland (1876) observes with *o*-marking in some object complement clauses (see Section 3.4 above), might be imaginable here as well (hence 'should/may turn'); cf. also (28).

(29) *nid oes gennyf bleser ymarwolaeth pechadur eythr
 NEG be.PRS.3SG with.1SG pleasure in.death sinner but
 troi o honaw
 turn.VN of.3MSG*

'I have no pleasure [lit. (there) is not pleasure with me] in the death of a sinner, **except that he should/may turn** [lit. but/except turning of him]' (*Pearl*: 22)

'I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, **but that he turn**' (*Pearl*: [21])

The remaining two examples of *o*-marking are with transitive verbal nouns, again with subject change in both. In (30), *o*-marking occurs in a nonfinite object clause to the epistemic verb *tybia* (suppose.PRS.3SG), thus with an anterior tense relation, while (31) has an appositional clause which is coreferential with the matrix clause's subject. Here, the context also suggests a past reading, which can be considered anterior to the matrix verb 'should be'.³²

32 With transitive verbal nouns, both SO order, i.e. VN + PP_{*o*=S} + NP_{gen=*O*}, as in (30), (31), or (11 a), (11 b) and (12 b) above, and OS order, i.e. VN + NP_{gen=*O*} + PP_{*o*=S}, as in (10), are found, with a clear preponderance of the former (cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 329, and Morgan 1938: 203–204; see also Müller 1999: 37).

- (30) *ac er pelled i tybia pob dyn droi*
 and despite far.EQ PRT suppose.PRS.3SG every person turn.VN
o dduw i wyneb oddiwrthyt
 of God his face from.2SG

‘and despite the extent to which every person supposes **that God has turned** his face [lit. turning of God (of) his face] (away) from you’ (*Perl*: 73)

‘and howsoever any man doth imagine **that God hath withdrawn** his face from thee’ (*Pearl*: [68])

- (31) *Hyn’ a ddyle fod yn ddiddantwch mawr iti*
 this PRT shall.IMPF.3SG be.VN PRED delight great to.2SG
(sef) cael, a mwynhau o honot, berl mor wrthfawr
 namely get.VN and enjoy.VN of.2SG pearl so precious

‘This should be a great delight to you, namely, **that you had and enjoyed** such a precious pearl [lit. having and enjoying of you (of) such a precious pearl]’ (*Perl*: 15)

‘This ought to be a singular comfort unto thee, **that thou hast had and enjoyed** such a precious jewel’ (*Pearl*: [14])

Note that, although syntactically independent ‘narrative’ verbal-noun clauses are a very common construction in Middle Welsh (e.g. (10) above), no such clauses with *o*-marking, or other subject marking devices, occur in the data.³³

4.3 Data: *i*-marking

There are 23 instances of *i*-marking in *Perl*, 20 in adverbial clauses, and the remaining 3 in complement clauses.³⁴ Most of the VNs found with these examples are transitive (17 out of 23, 73.9%), as seen in Table 4. The three complement clauses in question all depend on *gweddio ar* [...] *ar* ‘to pray to [...] for’, as in example (32), where *i*-marking indicates a (desired) generic/future event (corresponding to a type II *i*-clause in Modern Welsh).

³³ This may be attributable to the edifying text genre of *Perl*, which can be expected to contain only few narrative passages. However, the language of *Perl* could also simply be closer to Modern Welsh, which does not have independent verbal-noun constructions (see Section 3).

³⁴ Potentially ambiguous examples from *Perl*, which contain predicates requiring an *i*-phrase complement, as in (19) above, i.e. control verbs such as *peri* ‘to cause’, or adjectives, or nouns such as *rhaid* ‘necessity’, were not included in the data discussed here.

preposition/conjunction	clause type	
	complement	adverbial
<i>am</i> 'for'	–	6 (4 TR, 2 INTR)
<i>gan</i> 'with'	–	2 (both TR)
<i>yn gymeint a(c)</i> 'inasmuch as'	–	4 (2 TR, 2 INTR)
<i>er</i> 'despite'	–	5 (3 TR, 2 INTR)
<i>er</i> 'for'	–	2 (both TR)
<i>nes</i> 'until'	–	1 (TR)
<i>(gweddio) ar</i> '(pray) for'	3 (all TR)	–
total (23)	3	20

Table 4 Nonfinite clauses with *i*-marking in *Perl*

- (32) *gwedi hynny gweddio ar dduw a ffyd' fywiol, ddiyscog*
 after that pray.VN to God with faith living unswerving
ar iddaw ef waredu, a chadw, 'r eglwys
 for to.3MSG 3MSG deliver.VN and keep.VN the church
 'after that, to pray to God, with a living, unswerving faith, **that he will deliver and keep** the church [lit. praying to God [...] for to him delivering and keeping (of) the church]' (*Perl*: 73)
 'after that, that we pray unto God with a constant and a lively faith, **that he will deliver and preserve** the church' (*Pearl*: [69])

Out of 20 verbal noun adverbial clauses with *i*-marking, 12 are causal (6 with *am* 'for', e.g. (33); 2 with *gan* 'with'; 4 with *yn gymeint a(c)* 'inasmuch as'), while 5 are concessive (all of them with *er* 'despite', as in (34)), 2 final (both with *er* 'for (the sake of)') and 1 temporal (with *nes* 'until'). Note that, apart from the abstract subject phrase, 'the same adversity', in (34), all subjects occurring with *i*-marking in the data are [+human] (including 'superhuman' beings such as God or the devil).

- (33) *ni a bechasom am i ni ddoydd yn erbyn yr Arglwyd'*
 1PL PRT sin.PST.1PL for to 1PL speak.VN against the Lord
 'we sinned, **because we spoke** [lit. for to us speaking] against the Lord' (*Perl*: 68)

'We have sinned, **forasmuch as we have spoken** against the Lord'
(*Pearl*: [64])

- (34) *felly, y gwr Cristnogaid'* [...] *yn ol hynny a obeithiff*
 thus the man Christian after that PRT trust.FUT.3SG
dduw 'n dda [...] *er i 'r cyfryw adfyd*
 God PRED good despite to the equal adversity
'rhwnn a fu vnwaith arnaw, ddyfod drachefn:
 the.this PRT be.PST.3SG once on.3MSG come.VN again
 'Likewise, the Christian man [...] after that will trust God
 thoroughly, [...] **although the same adversity** which was once on
 him **may come** [lit. despite to the same adversity [...] coming]
 again.' (*Perl*: 78)
 'even so a Christian man [...] afterward [he] trusteth God, [...] **though the same affliction and adversity come** again unto him that
 he had before.' (*Pearl*: [73])

It is worth noting that *i* as a subject marker in embedded nonfinite clauses should be seen, from a Modern Welsh perspective, as a mere functional element (Borsley et al. 2007: 91–94)³⁵ rather than the preposition it was at earlier stages of the development of the constructions in question (cf. Section 3.3).³⁶

4.4 The distribution of subject marking devices in subordinate clauses

If we recall the Middle Welsh situation with predominant use of *o*-marking and genitive subject marking,³⁷ on the one hand, and very rare occurrences of *i*-marking, on the other hand, the relative distribution in the data from adverbial and complement clauses in *Perl mewn Adfyd* is strikingly different; see Table 5.

35 There are also Early Modern Welsh examples of (formally superfluous) *i*-marking in finite subordinate clauses, which suggests a far-reaching grammaticalization of *i* as a subject marker. One such example, at least, is found in the annotated part of *Perl*: *Eythr hyn i gyd a wnaethwyd er y perwyl hwnn, sef er i ni_{1PL} na obeithom_{PRS.SBJV.1PL} ynom ein hun, eythr ynnuw* (*Perl*: 71–72) 'But this altogether was done for this purpose, i.e., in order that we should not trust in ourselves but in God [lit. for **to us that we shall not trust**]'

36 For this reason, a consistent annotation of *i*-phrases in a parsed historical corpus is probably challenging, since there are structurally ambiguous examples, and reanalyses at some stage in the diachronic progression of the language cause different syntactic interpretations of superficially similar structures.

37 However, Müller (1999: 47) observes that in Middle Welsh narrative texts there is already "a strong preference for [VN clauses with genitive marking] in dependent position with intransitive VNs", with considerably fewer examples of *o*-marking in subordinate VN clauses, which "occurs more often in independent position" instead.

marking device	type of subordinate clause		total
	complement	adverbial	
gen. marking	29	14	43
<i>o</i> -marking	1	3	4
<i>i</i> -marking	3	20	23
total	33	37	70
ratio: gen. marking vs. <i>o</i>	87.9% vs. 3.0%	37.8% vs. 8.1%	61.4% vs. 5.7%
vs. <i>i</i>	vs. 9.1%	vs. 54.1%	vs. 32.9%

Table 5 Distribution of subject marking devices in subordinate nonfinite clauses in *Perl*

Regarding the 37 nonfinite adverbial clauses in *Perl*, 37.8% have genitive marking (with only 3 out of 14 clauses in question having VNs other than *bod* ‘to be’), while *i*-marking occurs with 20 out of 37 instances (54.1%), and *o*-marking makes up only 8.1% (3 out of 37). On the other hand, genitive marking is indisputably predominant in complement clauses (29 out of 33, 87.9%, all of these with VN *bod*), while such a low number of complement clauses with *i*-marking (9.1%) and *o*-marking (3.0%) is somewhat unexpected. Furthermore, the ratios of all subordinate clauses taken together are not really in favour of *o*-marking at all (5.7%, 4 out of 70), while genitive subject marking, almost confined to *bod*-clauses, makes up 61.4% of the 70 examples with overt subject markers in subordinate nonfinite clauses (43 out of 70), *i*-marking occurring in 32.9% of cases (23 out of 70).

Nevertheless, since all subjects marked by an *o*-phrase in *Perl* are [+human], with either transitive or relatively agentive intransitive VNs, there are no formally problematic structures such as [–human] subjects with *o*-marking in intransitive VN clauses in the data.³⁸ Thus, the distributional factors of (inherent) semantic properties observed in Middle Welsh VN constructions (i.e. type of verbal actions and animacy, see Section 2.2) do not seem to apply here. In fact, *Perl*’s portion of the “disintegrating system” of subject marking in Early Modern Welsh appears to be fairly regular so far, and already very close to the Modern Welsh system. Finally, other possible factors for the distribution of different subject marking devices need to be considered, and these will be discussed in the following sections.

³⁸ But see Section 6.1, example (40), for the discussion of one instance of *o*-marking in *Perl* with a barely agentive intransitive VN.

5 TENSE RELATIONS AS A DISTRIBUTIONAL FACTOR

Since nonfinite complement clauses and adverbial clauses are found with all three subject-marking devices in *Perl*, the discussion in this section will essentially be confined to the two (subordinate) contexts of verbal-noun constructions, beginning with complement clauses.

5.1 Nonfinite complement clauses

One would expect to find competition to a certain degree between *i*-marking (corresponding to Modern Welsh type I *i*-clauses) and *o*-marking with epistemic and declarative superordinate predicates (see Section 3.4) and arguably also with volitional and expectational predicates. Notwithstanding this expectation, nonfinite complement clauses in *Perl* do not have such an intersection at all; see Table 6. Instead, the vast majority of complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates (96.4%, 27 out of 28) occur with genitive marking in *bod*-clauses, with only a single example of *o*-marking (3.6%), in an object complement clause to epistemic *tybied* ‘to think, to suppose’ (example (30)). The three complement clauses to volitional *gweddio ar* [...] *ar* ‘to pray to [...] for’ have *i*-marking (as in (32)), which would be expected in such a context in Modern Welsh (type II *i*-clauses), while two of the *bod*-clauses are subject complement clauses in a copular construction (as in (26)).

marking device	type of superordinate predicates		
	epistemic/ declarative	volitional	copula
<i>bod</i> -clause (gen.) (29)	27	–	2
<i>o</i> -marking (1)	1	–	–
<i>i</i> -marking (3)	–	3	–
total (33)	28	3	2

Table 6 Types of superordinate predicates to nonfinite complement clauses in *Perl*

As for tense readings, the three examples of *i*-marking indicate generic or future reference (type II *i*-clause), while tense information in the two *bod*-clauses in copular constructions is apparently inherited from the superordinate finite verb, or rather VN *bod* has a present tense interpretation in the two examples (although an imperfect reading would generally be possible as well, considering such *bod*-clauses from a Modern Welsh point of view; see Section

3.1, cf. Richards 1938: 133). While the single instance of *o*-marking (in (30)) denotes anterior meaning in a complement clause to an epistemic verb, tense readings are more complex with *bod*-clauses after the epistemic/declarative class of superordinate predicates.

Specifically, an object complement clause with VN *bod* receives a present tense reading in 85.2% of these examples (23 out of 27; see Table 7 below), whereas 14.8% (4 out of 27) have an imperfect interpretation. There is a simultaneous tense relation in 2 out of 4 examples with an imperfect reading, since we find a preterite finite verb in the superordinate clause, as in (35), while the other two denote anterior events. Most of the 23 *bod*-clauses with present-tense readings, namely 16, take place simultaneously in relation to a superordinate present-tense verb, as in (36).

(35) *pann ddehallod', fod adfyd yn arswydus gennym*
 when perceive.PST.3SG be.VN adversity PRED horrifying with.1PL
 'when he perceived **that adversity was** [lit. being (of) adversity]
horrifying to us' (*Pearl*: 27)

'after he perceiveth **the affliction did fear** us' (*Pearl*: [26])

(36) *lle i dowaid ef, fod yr oll rai ni*
 where PRT say.PRS.3SG 3SG be.VN the all ones NEG
cheryddir yn fastardieit ac nid plant cyfraithlon?
 chasten.PRS.IMPERS PRED bastards and NEG children lawful

'where he says **that all those** who are not chastened **are** bastards and not lawful children?' (*Pearl*: 40)

'whereas he saith, **those are** bastards, and not right and lawful children, which are not punished.' (*Pearl*: [38])

Nevertheless, there are also 4 instances of present-tense interpretations with an imperative (e.g. (27)), 2 with a conditional, and 1 with a habitual-past superordinate finite verb, entailing generic present statements in these remaining 7 *bod*-clauses. Thus, as far as the time relationship between subordinate and superordinate event (*consecutio temporum*) is concerned, *bod*-clauses in *Pearl* have multiple interpretations, depending on the individual context; see Table 7. Consequently, it is little surprise that the other marking devices are rather underrepresented in nonfinite complement clauses in *Pearl*. Table 8 provides an overview of tense relations, comprising all relevant examples.

Time relations also play a major role with nonfinite adverbial clauses in *Pearl*, as will be seen now.

tense reading of <i>bod</i>	tense relation in object complement clause with <i>bod</i>		
	anterior	simultaneous	generic/future
present (23)	–	16	7
imperfect (4)	2	2	–
total (27)	2	18	7

Table 7 Tense relations with *bod*-clause complements to epistemic and declarative predicates in *Perl*

marking device	tense relation in nonfinite complement clause		
	anterior	simultaneous	generic/future
<i>bod</i> -clause (29)	2 (2 prog.)	20 (1 subst., 9 cop., 10 prog.)	7 (1 subst., 4 cop., 2 prog.)
<i>o</i> -marking (1)	1	–	–
<i>i</i> -marking (3)	–	–	3
total (33)	3	20	10

Table 8 Tense relations in nonfinite complement clauses in *Perl*

5.2 Nonfinite adverbial clauses

Overall, there are 37 examples of nonfinite adverbial clauses in the data, the major part being causal (17 with the prepositions *am*, *gan*, and *yn gymeint a(c)*), followed by concessive clauses with *er* (12), final clauses (*er* and *rhag*, 6), and finally, temporal clauses with *nes* (2). Out of 37 adverbial clauses, 20 (54.1%) are with *i*-marking, 14 (37.8%) with genitive marking, and the three remaining clauses have *o*-marking (8.1%); see Table 9.

Since concessive clauses with *er* ‘despite’ are found with all three marking devices, it will be instructive to give three of these as examples and discuss their respective tense readings:

- (37) *etto er bod hynn yn erbyn natur, ac yn beth*
yet despite be.VN that against nature and PRED thing
anioddefus, ef a ddyg i fab allan
intolerable 3MSG PRT carry.PST.3SG his son out
‘still, **although that was** [lit. despite being (of) that] against nature
and an intolerable thing, he carried his son onwards’ (*Perl*: 57)

preposition/ conjunction	subject-marking device			total	
	gen.	<i>o</i>	<i>i</i>		
<i>am</i> 'for'	1	–	6	7	} (17 causal)
<i>gan</i> 'with'	2	–	2	4	
<i>yn gymeint a(c)</i> 'inasmuch as'	2	–	4	6	
<i>er</i> 'despite'	6	1	5	12	} (12 concessive)
<i>er</i> 'for'	–	1	2	3	} (6 final)
<i>rhag</i> 'lest'	2	1	–	3	
<i>nes</i> 'until'	1	–	1	2	} (2 temporal)
total	14	3	20	37	

Table 9 Nonfinite adverbial clauses and their subject markers in *Pearl*

'But yet, **though it were** against nature, and an intolerable thing, yet carried his son forth' (*Pearl*: [54])

- (38) *Hefyd, y neb a gafes bob amser bethau da,*
 also the one PRT get.PST.3SG every time things good
llwyddiannus, ni ddyl ef ryfeddu, er
 prosperous NEG shall.PRS.3SG 3SG wonder.VN despite
derbyn o honaw weithiau, anffawd, ac adfyd:
 receive.VN of.3MSG sometimes misfortune and adversity
 'Moreover, the one who received good, prosperous things every time, he should not wonder, **although he will/may** sometimes **receive** [lit. despite receiving of him] misfortune and adversity.'
 (*Pearl*: 14)

'Item, he that hath received alway good and prosperous things, ought not to marvel and wonder, **if** sometimes **he receive** also some misfortune and adversity.' (*Pearl*: [13])

- (39) *er i nineu yn trwsiadu, a 'n gosod ein hunain*
 despite to 1PL.CONJ our adorn.VN and our set.VN ourselves
allan [...] mae ynom galoneu budron
 out be.PRS.3SG in.1PL hearts filthy.PL
 '**although we adorn and set out** ourselves [lit. despite to us our adorning] [...] there are in us filthy hearts' (*Pearl*: 9)
 '**if we adorn, garnish, and set forth** ourselves [...] we have filthy [...] hearts' (*Pearl*: [8–9])

The *bod*-clause in (37) has a past (imperfect) interpretation, which is on the same time level as ‘carried’ in the matrix clause. In (39), in turn, the superordinate verb is in the present tense, while the *i*-clause (type II here) denotes the generic and potential nature of the event, ‘although we (may) adorn ourselves (at an unspecified time)’. For an example of an adverbial *i*-clause with anterior reading (type I) from *Perl*, see (33).

In the rare instance of *o*-marking in (38), a generic tense reading for the VN *derbyn* ‘to receive’ is implied from the context. Also, Rowland’s (1876) subjunctive reading associated with *o*-marking could play a role here (as with the other two examples of *o*-marking in nonfinite adverbial clauses, (28) and (40)). Since a type II *i*-clause (**er iddaw dderbyn*) would seem to render the same meaning, ‘although he will/may receive’, it is somewhat surprising (from a Modern Welsh point of view) to still find *o*-marking here. For this reason, some possible factors for the use of different subject markers in Early Modern Welsh, apart from tense relations, are explored in Section 6 below.

Unlike *i*-marking, *o*-marking does not entail a specific tense information, so tense readings depend on the individual context (see Sections 2 and 3.4). The same would apply to genitive marking (with verbal nouns other than *bod* ‘to be’), see examples (22), (23) and (24) above. After an examination of tense interpretations in the nonfinite adverbial clauses in *Perl*, the distribution in Table 10 emerges.

marking device	tense relation in nonfinite adverbial clause		
	anterior	simultaneous	generic/future
gen. marking (3)	–	1	2
<i>bod</i> -clause (11)	–	8 (1 subst., 5 cop., 2 prog.)	3 (all prog.)
<i>o</i> -marking (3)	–	–	3
<i>i</i> -marking (20)	7	–	13
total (37)	7	9	21

Table 10 Tense relations in nonfinite adverbial clauses in *Perl*

Evidently, the distribution patterns of all subject marking devices overlap in nonfinite adverbial clauses with a generic/future tense reading, whereas anterior tense interpretation is only found with *i*-marking in the data. Furthermore, a simultaneous tense relation only occurs with *bod*-clauses, apart from a single temporal clause with genitive marking, (22). The remaining two adverbial clauses with genitive marking, (23) and (24), have a generic reading, which is hardly surprising since they are headed by the final preposition *rhag* ‘lest, that not’. As with the 11 *bod*-clauses, 72.7% of them (8 out of 11) show a simultaneous tense relation to their superordinate clauses, whereas a

smaller number (3 out of 11 = 27.3%) has a generic interpretation. With the 3 instances of *o*-marking, in turn, the concessive clause in (38) has a generic reading, as have the final clauses (28) and (40). Finally, 7 *i*-clauses (out of 20 = 35.0%) induce an anterior interpretation (type I), as with (33), while 13 (= 65.0%) have a generic/future reading (type II), e.g. (34) or (39).

5.3 Interim summary: a systematic distribution in *Perl*?

From the observations made in the previous sections, we can deduce that the distribution of subject marking devices in nonfinite clauses in *Perl mewn Adfyd* is already very close to the system we find in the modern language. That is to say, *o*-marking is rather infrequent, whereas *i*-marking is found with anterior or generic/future interpretation, essentially equivalent to the two types of *i*-clauses presented in Section 3.2. The genitive subject-marking device is almost exclusively found with *bod*-constructions, which do not really seem to be different from present-day *bod*-clauses, with either present (indicative) or imperfect readings (see Section 3.1).

In the examples of complement clauses from *Perl*, *i*-marking does not displace *o*-marking, or the other way round, since there are no *i*-clause complements to epistemic and declarative predicates, and no instances of *o*-marking with superordinate expectation, volition, or control predicates. In fact, *bod*-clauses are prevalent as complements to epistemic and declarative matrix predicates, conveying various tense relations.

All subject marking devices co-occur in the context of nonfinite adverbial clauses. However, they have a relatively regular distribution: *i*-marking is the only device found with an anterior interpretation, while it also occurs with most clauses which have a generic/future reference. Adverbial *bod*-clauses, in turn, have a generic/future reading in some examples, but they are mostly found with a simultaneous tense relation. The few examples of nonfinite adverbial clauses with *o*-marking and genitive marking (excluding *bod*-clauses here, of course) have a generic/future relation to the superordinate event, apart from a single simultaneous interpretation with genitive marking.

Accordingly, distribution patterns of different subject-marking devices as found in nonfinite complement and adverbial clauses in *Perl*, with regard to tense relations between subordinate and superordinate events, yield the schematic framework in Table 11.³⁹

³⁹ The abbreviations used in Table 11 should be read as follows: $O_{e/d}$ = object clause to epistemic and declarative predicates; $O_{e/v/c}$ = complement clause to predicates of expectation, volition, and control; S_{clause} = subject complement clause; A_{clause} = adverbial clause; ant. = anterior reading; sim. = simultaneous reading; and ge./fut. = generic/future reading. Finally, a slash in square brackets, [/], indicates that no examples from *Perl* were found in the context in ques-

marking device	tense readings in nonfinite subordinate clauses			
	$O_{e/d}$	$O_{e/v/c}$	S_{clause}	A_{clause}
gen. marking	[/]	[/]	[/]	sim., ge./fut.
<i>bod</i> -clause	ant., sim., ge./fut.	[/]	sim.	sim., ge./fut.
<i>o</i> -marking	ant.	[/]	[/]	ge./fut.
<i>i</i> -marking	[/]	ge./fut.	[/]	ant., ge./fut.

Table 11 Tense readings in nonfinite subordinate clauses in *Perl*

All in all, VN constructions with *bod* are predominant in nonfinite complement clauses, albeit being confined to either present (indicative) or imperfect interpretations, while *i*-marking occurs with most of the nonfinite adverbial clauses. In the examples from *Perl*, embedded VN *bod* ‘to be’ has both its inherent functions as copula and substantive verb, but also occurs quite frequently in periphrastic progressive constructions, which combine with all kinds of verbal nouns and subjects. The multifunctionality of *bod*-clauses may account, in general, for the absence of *i*-clause complements to epistemic/declarative predicates in the data, and particularly for the few instances of *o*-marking and genitive marking (with VNs other than *bod*).

6 POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS FOR DIFFERENT MARKING DEVICES IN FORMALLY SIMILAR CONTEXTS

Since periphrastic *bod*-clauses and *i*-clauses could easily have replaced the few instances of subordinate nonfinite clauses with *o*-marking, it is somewhat surprising to still find them. One might speculate that stylistic variation might be the reason for this, but it could be promising to also consider semantic features associated with *o* and *i* as subject markers, especially in view of future research in other Early Modern Welsh texts.

6.1 Semantic features of subject markers *o* and *i*

First of all, it might be useful to reflect on the reasons why the prepositions *o* and *i* were probably deemed suitable as markers for participants of verbal noun events. To begin with, the semantics of preposition *o* tie in quite well with a subject marking function:

tion.

In a local sense, the preposition *o* denotes the point of origin, either as the point of departure of movement [...] or as the locality from which the referendium originates [...] The agentive use of *o* can be linked with the sense ‘point of departure’ such that the [agent] is seen as the point of origin, and (from an even more locally oriented point of view) the point of departure along which the energy expended in an action, directed at P2, travels. [...] If there is a patient, in our terms P2, the energy is transferred from the agent to the patient. If we assume that P1 as marked by *o* is conceptualized as the ‘point of origin of energy expended’, which is either transferred to P2 (as with transitive verbs), or undirected (as with intransitive verbs), the tendency of *o* to occur preferably with VNs requiring an [agent] as P1 is not surprising (Müller 1999: 187–188).

For the medieval period, Borsley et al. (2007: 328) state that “if the subject is conceived of as being agentive, marking with *o* is more likely” and it seems to be used in some cases “in order to highlight the conscious and deliberate nature” of an (intransitive) action.⁴⁰ Concerning the semantic properties of the preposition *i* (Middle Welsh *y*), Müller explains:

In its spatial sense [...] the preposition *i* marks the endpoint of a path [...]. Its use to describe the receiver with, for example, *rodi* ‘give’ can be regarded as an extension of this spatial sense [...]. With this, compare the use of *i* with *erchi* ‘request’ and *gorchymyn* ‘order, command’, where the complement of the preposition is not only the receiver (of a request or an order), or in other words the endpoint of an abstract path, but is also affected by the entity travelling along that path, in that a reaction (i.e. compliance with a request, or obeying an order)

⁴⁰ They give an example with the verbal noun *mynet* ‘to go’ with *o*-marking seemingly “used in order to highlight the conscious and deliberate nature of going [...] [while genitive marking] would merely state the change of location” (Borsley et al. 2007: 328). See also Section 2.2 above, and cf. Willis (2009: 152). Similarly, Müller observes:

In the [medieval] Welsh material, the large majority of intransitive VNs occurring in the construction $VN+PP_{P1}$ are VNs requiring an [agent] as P1 – i.e. a P1 exercising voluntary control and effort, such as VNs of motion (such as *dyuot* ‘come’, *kyuodi* ‘rise’), or action without a specified P2 (such as *bwyta* ‘eat’), or VNs where the direction of the action is specified by a prepositional phrase (such as *galw ar* ‘call on s.b.’, as opposed to *galw* ‘call s.b.’). All these involve a conscious effort and exercise of control by an [agent] (Müller 1999: 186).

is expected [...] the attributes of direction and effect, seen in conjunction with different types of processes, would seem to make the preposition *i* as a P1 marker most compatible with VNs expressing experiences, since P1 here is an absorber of energy, rather than its source. (Müller 1999: 193–194).

If we compare these two quotations on semantic features of the two prepositions, there appear to be some differences between them. The typical subject marked by *o* is ‘markedly’ agentive (and therefore [+human] in most cases) and, as the source of an action, does something out of its own initiative and effort, out of an internal motivation, thus consciously and possibly also intentionally, and/or voluntarily. On the other hand, *i*, as a preposition, does not mark the source (of an action) but rather the “affected entity” (Müller 1999: 193). Therefore, it is conceivable that a subject marked by *i* is more likely to do, or experience, something due to external motivation, possibly by accident, unconsciously, unintentionally, and/or involuntarily.

For instance, in (40) there is, from a standard (Middle Welsh) perspective, unexpected *o*-marking with the hardly agentive intransitive telic VN *digwyddo* ‘to fall’. Although we would probably expect genitive marking here, as in (notional) (41), the occurrence of *o*-marking with this verb could still be tentatively explained using the observation that the subject is kept from ‘consciously’ falling, especially if we consider that *rhag digwyddo o honom* corresponds to the more active action *that we run not* in the English parallel passage. This presumed semantic factor (internal motivation) might be the reason that we do not have a type II *i*-clause here, which would cause a generic/future interpretation, probably without an ‘actively involved’ subject, e.g. **rhag i ni ddigwyddo* ‘lest we will/may (accidentally) fall (at an unspecified time)’.

- (40) *ac felly ef a 'n ceidw rhag pechu drachefn,*
and thus 3MSG PRT US keep.PRS.3SG from sin.VN again
rhag digwyddo o honom i enbydrwyd' poenau tragwyddol.
before fall.VN of.1PL to danger pains eternal
‘and so he will keep us from sinning again, **lest we may/will**
(consciously) **fall** [lit. before falling of us] (in)to (the) danger of
eternal pains.’ (Perl: 37)

‘and [he will] so preserve us from sin afterward, **that we run not**
into the danger of eternal pain.’ (Pearl: [35])

- (41) **rhag ein digwyddo, i enbydrwyd' poenau tragwyddol.*
before our fall.VN to danger pains eternal
‘**lest we may/will fall** [lit. before our falling] (in)to the danger of
eternal pains.’

In any case, the nonfinite adverbial clause in (40) seems to have a generic or future time relation, possibly with a modal nuance (which could be related to Rowland's (1876) notion of a subjunctive mood associated with *o*-marking). Now reconsider the example of *o*-marking with *bod* 'to be' given in Section 3.4, (21), repeated here for convenience:

- (42) *edrychwch ar fod ohonoch yn y gras hwn hefyd yn*
 look.IMP.2PL ON be.VN of.2PL in the grace this too PRED
ehelaeth
 abundant
 'see to (it) **that you are** in this grace, too, abundantly' (2 Corinthians 8:7, Richards 1938: 135, glosses added)

The rather unusual *o*-marking in (42) might indicate that the verbal noun *bod* 'to be' is not supposed to express an actual state 'observe that you are (already) in this grace', but that a conscious effort, an internal motivation, of the subject is required, effectively 'look to it that you (will consciously) be in this grace'. A notional type II *i*-clause (**edrychwch ar i chi fod*) might here, once again, lose the presumed semantic nuance of the subject's internal motivation.

If we consider the contextual use of the *o*-marking device in the above examples, it may well be the case that a 'conscious' involvement of the subject in the VN event, or other internally motivated semantic criteria might have some validity (potentially connected, or even concomitant, with a subjunctive/modal interpretation). Unfortunately (or rather fortunately?), there are no problematic examples, such as *o*-marking with stative VNs, or with [–human] subjects of intransitive VNs, in the data from *Perl*.

- (43) *ac ni byddem anobeithiol, o drigared', a daioni*
 and NEG be.COND.1PL hopeless of mercy and goodness
duw, er ini ymlad' mewn bateloed' enbydus, a
 God despite to.1PL fight.VN in battles dangerous and
mwyaf dialeddus:
 most grievous
 'and we would not be hopeless of God's mercy and goodness,
although we might/should fight [lit. despite to us fighting] in
 dangerous and most grievous battles' (*Perl*: 29)
 '[and we should not] despair of the mercy and goodness of God,
although we should labour in never so dangerous and grievous
 battle' (*Pearl*: [27])

In example (43) with intransitive atelic activity *ymlad* 'to fight' (cf. Manning 1995: 185, and examples (11 c), and (11 d) above), *i*-marking induces

a potential generic reading. Here, notional *o*-marking **er ymlad' ohonom* 'although we would (actively) fight' would not seem to be out of place either. Nevertheless, one could imagine that the event of fighting affects the subject (in a negative manner, e.g. obligation), 'although we (might have to) fight (involuntarily)', and therefore *i*-marking might be preferred over *o*-marking, which, in turn, usually denotes an agentive subject more likely doing something by choice, or consciously, at least. Moreover, an active involvement of the subject might account also for the preference of *o* over *i* in other examples from *Perl*, e.g. the clause of exception in (29), or the appositional clause in (31).

Of course, the hypothesis that semantic criteria such as external, or internal, motivation of the subject's ((un)conscious, (un)intentional, and/or (in)voluntary, etc.) involvement in the action might influence use of different subject markers in VN constructions demands further consideration and research.⁴¹ However, since a more 'active' involvement of the subject marked with *o* has been observed in some examples from the medieval period, by Müller (1999), Borsley et al. (2007) and Willis (2009), it may well be that some Early Modern texts have similar constructions, which presumably lost such (rather slight) semantic nuances over time. Before concluding this paper, we turn to some final observations regarding special auxiliary constructions.

6.2 A further perspective: subject marking in auxiliary constructions

In *Perl mewn Adfyd*, there are two instances of *i*-marking with the auxiliary *darfod* 'to finish, to happen', mentioned in Section 3.3 above, thus a construction of the type AUX + PP_{*i=S*} + VN, as in (44). The English original text from *Pearl* also indicates that the Welsh translator probably used *darfu* '(it) happened' as a real auxiliary without any residual semantic content here. Interestingly, there are also 8 examples of the type *bod* 'to be' + PP_{*i=S*} + VN as in (45) and (46).

⁴¹ In this regard, an anonymous reviewer correctly points out that other factors that could determine the use of different marking devices should be kept in mind, such as tense relations, and that the crucial question is whether subject involvement can play a decisive part. However, despite the very small amount of data, I argue that subject involvement may be identified as a possible factor in the examples given in Sections 6.1 and 6.2, since tense readings associated with different marking devices could be deemed either to only barely alter the meaning (for the examples in Section 6.1) or to have no impact at all (for the auxiliary constructions with *bod* in Section 6.2). In any case, it will be very interesting to test this hypothesis on more data.

- (44) *Cans felly y darfu i Ioseph i hun*
 for.(it.is) thus PRT happen.PST.3SG to Joseph himself
ddeongl hynny.
 interpret.VN that
 ‘For so **Joseph** himself **interpreted** that [lit. For it is so that happened/finished to Joseph himself interpreting (of) that].’
 (*Pearl*: 23–24)
 ‘for so **did Joseph** himself **interpret** it.’ (*Pearl*: [22])
- (45) *pa bryd bynac gann hynny, y byd’ i dowyd’*
 which time soever with that PRT be.FUT.3SG to weather
stormus, niweidio ne lad’ yd
 stormy damage.VN or kill.VN corn
 ‘Whensoever, therefore, **stormy weather will damage or cut down**
 corn [lit. (there) will be to stormy weather damaging or cutting
 down (of) corn].’ (*Pearl*: 4)
 ‘Wherefore, whensoever **unseasonable weather shall hurt and**
perish the corn.’ (*Pearl*: [4])
- (46) *fal i byddo i bob peth syd’ ynthaw,*
 as PRT be.PRS.SBJV.3SG to every thing be.PRS.REL in.3MSG
(rhwn nid yw aur) losci ymaith gann y tan,
 the.this NEG be.PRS.3SG gold burn.VN away with the fire
a myned yn lludw:
 and go.VN PRED ash(es)
 ‘so that **everything** which is in it, which is not gold, **shall burn** away
 by the fire, **and turn** to ashes. [lit. (there) shall be to everything [...] burning away [...] and becoming ashes].’ (*Pearl*: 50)
 ‘that **all** that hangeth about it, and is no gold, **should be burnt** away
 with the fire, **and consumed** unto ashes.’ (*Pearl*: [48])

Morgan (1938: 212–213) considers this kind of periphrastic construction (consisting of a form of *bod* ‘to be’, the subject marked by a prepositional phrase, and a verbal noun, thus *bod* + PP_S + VN) to be “some sort of peculiar ‘ecclesiastical’ style” (Morgan 1938: 212, “rhyw fath o arddull ‘eglwysig’ arbennig”), originating from the Welsh Bible, and used extensively in Early Modern Welsh. The *GPC Online*, the standard dictionary of the Welsh language (s.v. *i*², 16.), confirms his view by giving many similar examples from that period, describing the occurrence of *i* in examples such as (45) and (46), as “a periphrastic construction which sometimes denotes obligation or possi-

bility" (*GPC Online*, s.v. *i*², 16. b).⁴²

Among his examples from the 1620 Welsh Bible, *Morgan* (1938: 212) not only gives an instance of *bu* (be.PST.3SG) + VN with *i*-marking (47), but also a very similar example with *o*-marking (48).⁴³ *Evans* (1971: 154) observes that "the verb 'to be' appears to function merely as an auxiliary" in many of the examples in question, and suggests "that one of the sources of its [i.e. this construction's] development was the influence of the construction of *darfod*".⁴⁴

- (47) A *bu*, *gwedi ei fod ef yno ddyddiau lawer, i*
 and be.PST.3SG after his be.VN 3MSG there days many to
Abimelech [...] *edrych trwy 'r ffenestr*
 Abimelech look.VN through the window
 'And, after he [i.e. Isaac] had been there for many days [lit. after his being there], **Abimelech** [...] **looked** through the window [lit. And (there) was [...] to Abimelech [...] looking through the window].'
 (Genesis 26:8, *Morgan* 1938: 212, glosses added)

- (48) A *bu*, *pan ddarfu i 'r camelod yfed,*
 and be.PST.3SG when happen.PST.3SG to the camels drink.VN
gymmeryd o 'r gŵr glustdlws aur
 take.VN of the man earring gold(en)
 'And, after the camels had drunk/finished drinking [lit. when finished/happened to the camels drinking], **the man took** a golden earring [lit. And (there) was [...] taking of the man (of) a golden earring].'
 (Genesis 24:22, *Morgan* 1938: 212, glosses added)

While in both (47) and (48) there is a temporal clause (involving a VN construction) between auxiliary and grammatical subject nonfinite clause, with subjects which differ from the respective logical subjects of the VN clauses (i.e. 'he (i.e. Isaac)' vs. 'Abimelech', and 'the camels' vs. 'the man'), it may in some way be plausible to suppose that *i*-marking in (47) could

⁴² *Evans* (1971: 151–152) also gives similar examples and notes that, in some of them, "possibility rather than obligation is denoted" (*Evans* 1971: 151, fn. 2).

⁴³ *Richards* (1938: 138) gives some further examples involving *bu* + VN with *i*-marking, *o*-marking and genitive marking, noting that this construction is still used occasionally in Modern Welsh. Regarding this construction, *Richards* (1938: 137–138) furthermore draws a comparison with the English expression *it came to pass that*. However, *Thomas* (1988: 217) presumes a possible influence of the Hebrew source text on this construction and does not deem English *it came to pass that* or Latin *et fuit ut* to be closely related, but refers to the syntax of Middle Welsh *daruot* used as an auxiliary. I owe the reference to *Thomas* (1988) to Erich Poppe.

⁴⁴ See also *Evans* (1971: 151–158) for further examples of this type, including some with auxiliary *darfod*.

be due to the absence of an internal motivation of the subject involved in the intransitive event, thus ‘Abimelech (unconsciously, coincidentally etc.) looked through the window’, vs. internally motivated transitive ‘the man (consciously, intentionally etc.) took a golden earring’ with *o*-marking in (48). Interrelatedly, a distinction of semantic role might have been made between experiencer with *i*-marking, vs. agent with *o*-marking. Certainly, further research is required in order to determine possible factors which could affect the competing distribution of different subject markers, as it were, with this particular auxiliary construction.⁴⁵

It must be noted that, unlike the Bible passage in (47), none of the 8 examples of the auxiliary construction *bod* ‘to be’ + PP_{*i*=S} + VN from *Perl* has preterite *bu* (be.PST.3SG) in a main-clause context. Although there is 1 example of VN *bod* in an appositional clause, arguably denoting obligation,⁴⁶ in the remaining 7 examples we find finite subordinate clauses, 2 of them with present subjunctive *byddo*, as in (46), another 2 with future forms, as in (45), 2 with conditional, and 1 with imperfect subjunctive. Remembering that verbal noun *bod* in subordinate *bod*-clauses can only be used with present indicative or imperfect indicative reading (see Section 3.1), the Welsh translator apparently makes use of this device to have (non-aspectual) VN constructions in contexts that do not allow embedded nonfinite clauses, thereby achieving a complementary distribution, as it were, of *bod*-clauses and auxiliary constructions with *bod* + VN with *i*-marking.⁴⁷

7 CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that the main device of subject marking in subordinate nonfinite clauses in the Early Modern Welsh text *Perl mewn Adfyd* is genitive marking, for the most part confined to clauses with the verbal noun *bod* ‘to be’, just as in Modern Welsh. In the data from *Perl*, these *bod*-clauses include all instances of complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates, apart from a single example with *o*-marking. In adverbial clauses, however, *i*-marking is prevalent and commonly denotes anteriority, or a generic/future reference.

⁴⁵ In this respect, it would be promising, with translated texts, to also take parallel passages of the respective sources into consideration, if possible.

⁴⁶ The passage in question reads, *Yn 'r vn mod', mewn oll angenion cyffredinol, hynn yw 'r iawn arfer o ffyd', a sancteiddiaf wasnaethu duw, sef, bod i ni 'n gyntaf feddwl ac ystyriaw yn ddilys* ‘In the same manner, within all common necessities, this is the right practice of faith and most holy worshipping of God, namely, **that we** (should) first **consider and reflect** [lit. being to us first considering and reflecting] diligently’ (*Perl*: 73).

⁴⁷ Of course, *Perl* also has instances of the regular finite construction, without *i*-marking + VN, e.g. *Ac yn ddiau cyd byddo gwreiddin ffyd' yn aros ynom* ‘And, certainly, **as long as** the root of faith **remains** in us’ (*Perl*: 49).

Although dominant in Middle Welsh, instances of *o*-marking and genitive marking with verbal nouns other than *bod* are very infrequent in the data. Their small numbers are probably due to the fact that *bod*-clauses may meet multiple requirements in subordinate contexts, especially with periphrastic aspect constructions. All in all, the data from *Perl* show a relatively consistent system which is already close to the one we find in Modern Welsh.

In general, Early Modern Welsh texts sometimes exhibit less transparent distributions of subject markers with verbal nouns, including in (formally) problematic constructions (Morgan 1938, Borsley et al. 2007). Nevertheless, the following distributions of subject-marking devices in subordinate nonfinite clauses found in *Perl* could presumably be expected for other texts from the Early Modern period. Square brackets indicate contexts for which no examples were found in the data.⁴⁸

- genitive marking (tense is inferred from the context, with intransitive VNs only):
 - [in object complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates, anteriority is denoted]
 - [in object complement clauses to predicates of volition, expectation, and control, generic/future is denoted]
 - [in subject complement clauses, anteriority, simultaneity, or generic/future is denoted]
 - in adverbial clauses, [anteriority,] simultaneity, or generic/future is denoted
- *bod*-clauses (present (indicative) or imperfect interpretation, frequently with periphrastic aspect constructions):
 - in object complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates, anteriority, simultaneity, or generic/future is denoted
 - [in object complement clauses to predicates of volition, expectation, and control, generic/future is denoted]
 - in subject complement clauses, [anteriority,] simultaneity[, or generic/future] is denoted
 - in adverbial clauses, anteriority, simultaneity, or generic/future is denoted

⁴⁸ Concerning distributions in complement clauses, this schematic overview is mainly based on Borsley et al. (2007), Richards (1938), and Rowland (1876). As for the distribution patterns with other clause types, the generalizations are based on the examples from *Perl*.

- *o*-marking (tense is inferred from the context, mainly with transitive VNs and agentive subjects with intransitive VNs):
 - in object complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates, anteriority is denoted
 - [in object complement clauses to predicates of volition, expectation, and control, (subjunctive) generic/future is denoted]
 - [in subject complement clauses, anteriority, simultaneity, or (subjunctive) generic/future is denoted]
 - in adverbial clauses, [anteriority, simultaneity, or] (subjunctive) generic/future is denoted
- *i*-marking (or rather *i*-clauses already):
 - [in object complement clauses to epistemic and declarative predicates, anteriority is denoted]
 - in object complement clauses to predicates of volition, expectation, and control, generic/future is denoted
 - [in subject complement clauses, anteriority or generic/future is denoted]
 - in adverbial clauses, anteriority, or generic/future is denoted

Possible semantic factors, such as a conscious/intentional/voluntary/etc. involvement of the subject in the VN action, might account for formally unexpected instances of *o*-marking, e.g. with barely agentive, or even stative, intransitive verbal nouns with [+human] subjects, or [–human] subjects with intransitives in general. In some cases, a preference for *i*-marking may also have semantic motivations. Furthermore, the possibility of a modal/subjunctive interpretation associated with *o*-marking, which has not received much scholarly attention so far, might also play a role, including for (presumably extremely rare) problematic examples from Middle Welsh texts. However, my late 16th-century test-case text *Perl mewn Adfyd* does not seem to have really ‘problematic’ examples, so research on these subjects remains a desideratum.

As for auxiliary constructions with verbal nouns, the examples from *Perl* have *i*-marking (almost) exclusively,⁴⁹ mainly in embedded clauses which require a tensed synthetic verb form. Since other contemporary texts have

⁴⁹ There is also an instance of *bod* with genitive marking in an auxiliary construction quite similar to the ones in Section 6.2, which, interestingly, has a progressive *bod*-clause as its grammatical subject: *oni bae i fod ef 'n dy gadw ac yn dy ymddyffyn oddiwrthynt* ‘if he were not keeping [lit. if (it) were not his being keeping you] and protecting you from them’ (*Perl*: 61).

such constructions in main-clause contexts, also with *o*-marking, it would be very interesting to investigate whether possible semantic motivations for the preference for one device over the other could be identified in such parallel constructions.

Accordingly, it is necessary to gather and analyse more Early Modern Welsh data in order to be able to shed some further light on these issues. Therefore, I am looking forward to having more and more texts, at least in parts, digitized and annotated, so we can search and compare them more easily, and add to the growth of a Parsed Historical Corpus of the Welsh language.

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