

# Placement of Object Personal Pronouns in the New Testament Greek, Latin and Old English

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## I.

Various attempts have been made to describe the distinctive characteristics of personal pronouns in earlier descendants of Proto-Germanic. Recent studies in this field are mainly concerned with theoretical issues of clitic movement the major premise of which is that Germanic personal pronouns are syntactic clitics. Authors part at whether Germanic pronouns should be into alignment with Modern Romance personal pronouns (see among others Haegeman 1993 and Zwart 1993) or the two of them should be assigned different categories and/or features (see Haverkort 1994, Koopman 1990, Cardinaletti and Starke 1996).

The aim of this paper is to present a philological analysis of the object personal pronouns in Biblical Greek, Latin and Old English(OE), checking their occurrences in the New Testament. Through lack of native informants of older languages, we are not to treat the older personal pronouns in the same manner as we analyse their modern counterparts. For example, clitic pronouns in the modern Romance have to be changed into a strong form when they are emphasized. We could then tell where strong

forms should appear, for example, in OE, if we knew where special emphasis is put. Emphatic positions, however, are not so evident in OE, partly because of its intricate word order. To avoid making a false step we should be cautiously examining dependable data. As full a knowledge of the facts as is possible must be acquired before rules can be erected.

## II .

The basic word order in the New Testament Greek and Latin is distinctly SVO. This is also the case when the object is a pronoun. The following table shows how the [verb(... )object pronoun] order is dominant in both Greek and Latin in the Gospel of St. Mark.

Greek	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	-
Latin	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-
OE	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	-
	104	137	1	3	18	5	9	22

The V-pronoun Order in Greek, Latin and OE

The sign + represents for the V(... )pronoun order in a given language, and the sign -, the pronoun(... )V order. In the table we take no notice of places of the subject, since pronominal subjects are quite regularly omitted in Greek and Latin. The precedence of the verb to the pronoun is remarkable in Greek, Latin, and also in OE. This order occurs here more often than in any other OE text, which suggests that the translation was affected by the Latin text, although it assuredly kept its native word order and never took on what was banned in the OE grammar. See Koopman (1990 : 118). That the V-pronoun sequence was in no way rare is also

shown in the twelve examples in which OE changed Latin pronoun-V into V-pronoun<sup>(1)</sup>.

(1) Gr *ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω* (Mt 4 : 9)

These to you all I will give

Lt haec tibi omnia dabo

OE Ealle *pas* ic sylle pe

All these I will give to you

Since subject personal pronouns are regularly suppressed in Greek and Latin, OE reenact the pronouns in translation, when in most cases the subject pronoun is put before the verb. A different correspondence is seen in the sentence with the clause-initial adverb *et* (*et VO*) translated as “pa VSO” in OE, though “and SVO” is also observed. Even when Greek and Latin have the inverted NP subject and the order is VOS, OE very often has the VSO order. When the object is a full NP, Greek (and Latin) tends to show VSO on the model of Hebrew. What is particularly noteworthy here is : the object pronoun comes closely after the verb in Greek and Latin, which generally ban the subject from intervening between the verb and the pronominal object<sup>(2)</sup>, whereas OE permits it and the VSO order is more often observed than the VOS when the object is a pronoun. The fact indicates that the object pronoun is more like a clitic in Greek and Latin than in OE, because it moves with the verb in the former, if we can assume that it is the verb that moves, not the subject. The object pronoun remains in its base position in OE.

(2) Gr *ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ὁ ἀσθενῶν* (Jn 5 : 7)

answered him the ailing

Lt respondit ei languidus

OE *pa* andswarode se seoca him

Then answered the ailing him

- (3) Gr *Τότε παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς*  
 Then takes him the devil into  
*τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν* (Mt 4 : 5)  
 the holy city
- Lt tunc assumpsit eum diabolus in sanctam ciuitatem
- OE *þa gebrohte se deofol hine on þa halgan ceastre*
- (4) Gr *καὶ ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ* (Mk 8 : 4)  
 And answered him the disciples his
- Lt et responderunt ei discipuli sui
- OE *þa andswarodan him his leorning-cnihtas*  
 Then answered him his disciples
- (5) Gr *καὶ ἐπερωτῶσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι*  
 and questioned him the Pharisees  
*καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς* (Mk 7 : 5)  
 and the scribes
- Lt Et interrogant eum pharisaei et scribae
- OE And *þa axodon hine pharisei J þa boceras*
- OE adopts the native order in (2) and (3), and retains the original in (4) and (5) with heavier subjects here.
- In the subordinate clause OE has a tendency to eschew having the verb immediately after the complementizer, though it is structurally possible when the subject is postposed. Inversion<sup>(3)</sup> is retracted in OE in (6).
- (6) Gr *ἐγερθεὶς δὲ [ὁ] Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου ἐποίησεν*  
 Being raised then Joseph from the sleep did  
*ὡς προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου* (Mt 1 : 24)  
 as bade hime the angel of Lord
- Lt exurgens autem ioseph á somno fecit sicut precepit  
ei angelus domini

OE *Ða aras iosep of swefene. J dyde*  
 Then arose Joseph from sleep and did  
 swa drihtnes engel him bebead  
 as Lord's angel him bade

III.

That the pron(... )V order is predominant in OE is represented by 142 examples in which OE changed Latin V(... )O into O(... )V as in (7) below.

(7) Gr *ὁ ζῆλος τοῦ οἴκου σου καταφάγεται μέ* (Jn 2: 17)  
 The zeal of house your will consume me  
 Lt *zelus domus tuae comedit me*  
 OE *þines huses anda me et*  
 your of-house zeal me consume

The object pronoun can be set further forward to follow the conjunction as in the next example.

(8) Gr *καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι διηκόνουν αὐτῷ* (Mk 1: 13)  
 and the angels ministered to him  
 Lt *et angeli ministrabant illi*  
 OE *J him englas enodon*  
 and him angels ministered

One fact requires our notice here. OE object pronouns have a far stronger tendency to come close to the beginning of a clause than their Greek and Latin counterparts. Even when Greek and Latin take an unusual order pronoun-V, the OE pronoun is sometimes put closer to the first place of the clause :

- (9) Gr καὶ οὐδὲ ἀλύσει οὐκέτι οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο  
 and not with a chain no longer no one was able  
αὐτὸν δῆσαι (Mk 5 : 3)  
 him to bind
- Lt neque catenis iam quisquam eum poterat ligare  
 not-and with chains no longer anyone him might bind
- OE J hine nán man mid racenteagum ne mihte gebindan  
 and him no man with chains not might bind
- (10) Gr ὅτι ἐποίησέν μοι μεγάλα ὁ δυνατός (Lk 1 : 49)  
 because did to me great things the Mighty
- Lt quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est  
 for did to me great things who mighty is
- OE forðam þe me micele þing dyde seðe mihtig is  
 for me great thing did who mighty is

Two factors are working in (10) : to avoid V-first in the subordinate clause ; to put the pronoun forward. Sometimes OE restores the unexpressed pronoun in the clause-initial position.

- (11) Gr καὶ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ εἷς ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου (Mk 9 : 17)  
 And answered him one of the crowd
- Lt Et respondens unus de turba  
 And answering one of crowd
- OE Him andswarode án of þære menigu  
 him answered one of the crowd

Hence our prediction should be : when Latin (and Greek) has a clause-initial object pronoun, OE is to retain the order. This is regularly borne out. It is also noteworthy here that the clause-initial object pronoun invariably indicates contrast :

- (12) Gr ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας  
 To you the mystery has been given the kingdom's  
 τοῦ θεοῦ (Mk 4 : 11)  
 of God's  
 ἐκείνοις δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται  
 to those but the outside in parables the all is  
 'To you the secret of the kingdom of God has been given, but  
 for those outside everything is in parables'
- Lt uobis datum est scire misterium regni dei  
 To you given is to know mystery of kingdom of God  
 Illis autem qui foris sunt in parabolis omnia fiunt  
 To those but who outside are in parables all are made
- OE eow is geseald to witanne godes rices gerynu  
 To you is given to know God's kingdom's secret  
 þam þe úte synt ealle þing  
 to those who outside are all thing  
 on bigspellum gewurþað  
 in parables will be
- (13) Gr πάντοτε γὰρ τοὺς πτωχοὺς ἔχετε μεθ' ἑαυτῶν...  
 Always for the poor you have with yourselves  
 ἐμὲ δὲ οὐ πάντοτε ἔχετε (Mk 14 : 7)  
 me but not always you have
- Lt semper enim pauperes habetis uobis-cum...  
me autem no semper habetis
- OE Soðlice symble ge habbað þearfan mid eow...  
me ge symble nabbað

## IV

Complications arise with the following variants in the Gospels describing just the same setting. In (14) the Greek example puts both objects before the verb. Latin, on the other hand, keeps the first uos after the verb and the second one before the verb. OE in its turn does not reflect this contrivance in Latin. It takes the most common order for OE. When we turn to Mark in (15), the situation is quite different. Greek and Latin take their base, SVO order, for the both second person pronouns. OE shifts one of them. In Luke we find Greek and Latin in the same arrangement: the first *ὐμᾶς* / *uos* after the verb, the second, before the verb. Again OE does not reflect it; it keeps both objects before the verb.

(14) Gr Ἐγὼ μὲν ὐμᾶς βαπτίζω ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν...

I indeed you baptize in water to repentance

*αὐτὸς ὐμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*

he you will baptize in Spirit Holy

*καὶ πυρὶ*

(Mt 3: 11)

and fire

Lt Ego quidem baptizo uos in aqua in paenitentiam...

ipse uos baptizabit in spiritu sancto et igni

OE Witodlice ic eow fullige on wætere to dæd-bote; ...

Indeed I you baptize in water to repentance

He eow fullað on halgum gaste *J* on fyre

He you baptize in Holy Spirit and on fire

‘I baptize you with water for repentance, but...

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.’



- (15) Gr *ἐγὼ ἐβάπτισα ὑμᾶς ὕδατι,*  
 I will baptize you in water  
*αὐτὸς δὲ βαπτίσει ὑμᾶς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ* (Mk 1 : 8)  
 he you will baptize in Spirit Holy
- Lt Ego baptizau*i* uos aqua  
 ille uero baptizabit uos spiritu sancto
- OE ic fullige eow on wætere,  
 he eow fullað on halgum gaste  
 he you baptize in Holy Spirit
- (16) Gr *ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς . . .*  
 I indeed in water baptize you  
*αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*  
 he you will baptize in Spirit Holy  
*καὶ πυρί* (Lk 3 : 16)  
 and fire
- Lt Ego quidem aqua baptizo uos . . .  
 ipse uos baptizabit in spiritu sancto et igni
- OE Witodlice ic eow on wætere fullige ; . . .  
 Indeed I you in water baptize  
 He eow fullað on halgum gaste *J* on fyre  
 He you baptize in Holy Spirit and on fire

What determines the positions of object pronouns? These examples show minor differences in, for example, the positions of adverbials, but they are certainly not the determining factor because a heap of examples can be observed in which the pronoun is in a different position in relation to the verb, though the adverbial is fixed. Pronoun-V / V-pronoun alternation does not seem to represent contrast here, because the contrast is between *I* and *He*, which is denoted by the subject personal pronouns usually sup-

pressed in Greek and Latin ; not between the former *you* and the latter *you*. It is also a doubtful conclusion at least in OE to assert that what is at work here is simply emphasis. Even if we are to assume that it is not the pronoun itself but the whole predicate that is emphasized, OE in (15) is by no means certain about whether one of the two clauses is emphatic. If either one of them is emphatic, the context tells us the latter one should be. It is, however, in the most common OE order, which should produce no emphatic effect. When we turn to (17), OE seems to emphasize the last predicate correctly with the less-common, V-pronoun order. But this is not always the case.

(17) Gr *καὶ ἐμπαΐξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐμπύσουσιν* (Mk 10 : 34)

and they will mock him and will spit at

*αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγῶσουσιν αὐτόν καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν*

him and will scourge him and will kill

Lt Et inludent ei et conspuent eum et

flagellabunt eum interficient eum

OE *J* he hine bysmriað *J* hi hine on spætað *J*

and they him mock and they him on spit and

hine swingað *J* of-sleað hine

him scourge and kill him

Greek has so-called enclitic personal pronouns : *μου* for the first person genitive strong pronoun *ἐμου* ; *μοι* for the dative *ἐμοι* ; *με* for the accusative *ἐμέ* ; the second person also has *σου* , *σοι* and *σε* . The other persons and cases lack their weak forms. It should be noted how the strong forms which have weak correspondents appear regularly before the verb as in (17) and (18).

(18) Gr *ὅς ἂν ἔν τῶν τοιούτων παιδίων δέξηται ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι*

whoever one of such children receives on the name

μου, ἐμὲ δέχεται. καὶ ὅς ἂν ἐμὲ δέχηται οὐχ ἐμὲ  
of me me receives and whoever me receives not me  
δέχεται ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με.  
receives but the having sent me (Mk 9 : 37)  
‘Whoever receives one of such children in my name receives  
me ; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the one  
who sent me.’

Lt quisquis unum ex huismodi pueris receperit in nominæ meo  
me recipit Et quicumque me susciperit non me suscipit sed  
eum qui me misit.

OE Swa hwylc swa anne of þus geradum cnapum on minum  
Whoever one of such children on my  
naman on fehð. se on fehþ me ; And se þe me on fehð  
name receives he revceives me And the one me receives  
he ne onfehð me. ac þone þe me sende ;  
he not receives me but him who me sent

(19) Gr Ὁ ἀκούων ὑμῶν ἐμοῦ ἀκούει, καὶ ὁ ἀθετῶν  
The hearing you me hears and the rejecting  
ὑμᾶς ἐμὲ ἀθετεῖ  
you me rejects  
‘He who hears you hears me and he who rejects you rejects  
me’ (Lk 10 : 16)

They do not exclude weak forms from this position.

(20) Gr ἵνα γινώσκη ὁ κόσμος ὅτι σύ με ἀπέστειλās καὶ  
that may know the world that you me sent and  
ἠγάπησας αὐτούς καθὼς ἐμὲ ἠγάπησας. (Jo 17 : 23)  
loved them as me you loved  
‘that the world may know that you did send me and did love

them as you did love me'

(21) Gr *εἰ οὖν με ἔχεις κοινωνόν* (Phm 17)

If therefore me you have a partner

'So if you consider me your partner. . .'

However, the strong forms which have weak counterparts do not appear after the verb. The pre-V position can therefore be assumed to be for emphatic object pronouns in Greek, and very probably in Latin, which basically follows Greek in its word order. OE does not always translate emphasis. In (21) the Latin example clearly marks the emphatic object pronoun, but OE takes on the pron-V order, not less common V-pron or Comp-pron.

(22) Gr *ἀλλὰ ὅστις σε ραπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα*

but who you hit on the right cheek

[σου] (Mt 5 : 39)

your

Lt *Sed si quis tē percusserit in dextera maxilla*

but if anyone you should hit in right cheek

OE *ac gyf hwa þe slea on þin swyþre wenge*

## V

The sort of problems which await solution can be illustrated by the fact that as yet I have recorded no example of [S. . . V Aux pronoun]. To show the lack of it is not accidental will indicate that the pattern V-pronoun is not a simple postposition as assumed in Koopman (1990).

## Notes

- (1) Imperative environments are counted out, since personal pronouns are put

- immediately after the finite verb with no exception.
- (2)  $\delta\hat{\epsilon}$  or  $o\hat{\upsilon}\nu$  sometimes intrudes into the V-O sequence.
  - (3) This is not precise enough because V-first itself was prevailing in Biblical Greek. On the whole NT is closer not only to the subsequent tendency of Modern Greek SVO, but towards the Hebraic order VSO.
  - (4) This is not true of the pattern where the pronoun appears immediately after the conjunction or the complementizer in Latin (and Greek).

Gr ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἄψωνται ὅσοι εἶχον μάστιγας (Mk 3 : 10)

that him might touch as many as had plagues

‘so that all who had diseases might touch him’

Lt ut illum tangerent quotquot autem habebant plagas

so that him touched as many as and had plagues

OE Swa þ he æt-hrinon his J swa fela swa untrumnessa

So that they touched him and as many as illness

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