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Pronoun Placement and Pronoun Case in Old English[1]

Abstract
It has long been recognised that Old English personal pronouns often turn up in 'special' positions, i.e. positions in which functionally equivalent nominals do not occur. Regardless of the particular syntactic analysis given to these specially placed pronouns, it is generally assumed that their special placement is a freely available option. Focusing on object personal pronouns in a large corpus of Old English prose, this paper finds clear evidence of a correlation between the option of special placement on the one hand and pronoun case on the other. For pronouns governed by a preposition in particular, I show that this correlation holds independently of the particular preposition involved and of the PP's semantics. For pronouns governed by a verb, I find that the effect appears to be mediated by information structure considerations.

1. Introduction

Of the 110,000 or so Prepositional Phrases with a nominal object in the York Toronto Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose ('YCOE', Taylor, Warner, Pintzuk & Beths 2003), 99.9% are head-initial, e.g. (1):[2]

(1)   Heo cwæð þa **to ðam cnihte**, …
        She said then to the   youth

        'She said then to the youth, …'
                                    (coaelive,ÆLS[Ash_Wed]:197.2808)

The placement of object personal pronouns in this corpus, by contrast, is far less predictable. While most appear immediately after the preposition, as in (2), some 28.5% occur somewhere to its left (Alcorn 2009: 436–437): either immediately to its left, as in (3a), or somewhere further removed, e.g. (3b).

(2)   He cwæð þa **to him**, …
        He said   then to him

        'He said then to him, …'
                                      (cowsgosp,Jn_[WSCp]:6.20.6170)

(3) a. Ða   cwæð se portgefera **him to**, …
          Then said   the port-reeve him to

          'Then said the port-reeve to him, …'
                        (cosevensl,LS_34_[SevenSleepers]:617.484)

[2] Unless otherwise stated, references for examples are to the YCOE (Taylor *et al*: 2003).

b. Þæt   wif   **him** cwæð þa   **to,** ...
    The woman him said   then to

'The woman said then to him, ...'

(coaelhom,ÆHom_5:21.690)

Note that the only thing special about the object pronouns in examples such as (3) is their syntax: their form is exactly the same as it is in examples such as (2).

Variation in the placement of object personal pronouns relative to a governing preposition is a well known feature of Old English (e.g. Quirk & Wrenn 1957: §141, Visser 1970: §402, Mitchell 1978). When they occur in some special position, as in (3), they are generally regarded as clitics (e.g. Pintzuk 1991, 1996, Kroch & Taylor 1997) or as weak pronouns (e.g. Hulk & van Kemenade 1997, Kroch 1997: 144–6). Since nothing in this article depends on the difference between these two treatments, I will identify such pronouns simply as 'specially placed': this will allow them to be distinguished from those that appear in the 'default' position, as in (2).

Theoretical treatments of specially-placed object personal pronouns in Old English concur that special placement is a freely available option, although detailed studies have shown that special placement occurs less often in some contexts than in others. Taylor (2008), for example, demonstrates that it happens much less frequently in translations from Latin (especially biblical translations) than it does in non-translated texts, while Alcorn (2009) shows it to be happen less frequently with first and second person pronouns in comparison to third person ones. Several studies of Old English word order have additionally found a strong correlation between frequency of special placement and pronoun case. The earliest of these studies is Wende (1915), which focuses on the syntax of personal pronouns functioning as the object of a preposition (henceforth 'PPOPs') in particular. About one-third of the pronouns in Wende's study were found to be specially placed and, so far as case could be determined, Wende (*ibid*: 77) found almost all the specially-placed ones to be dative. To date little attention has been paid to this rather surprising observation. Indeed Mitchell (1978: §27) dismisses its possible significance altogether, suggesting it 'merely reflects the general truth that the bulk of Old English prepositions prefer the dative in both pre- and post-position'. But more recent studies show quite clearly that dative pronouns are in fact specially placed proportionately more frequently in comparison to accusative ones. Data in Taylor (2008), for example, shows that although dative PPOPs outnumber accusative PPOPs by about 12:1, 41% of dative PPOPs are specially placed compared to 3% of the accusative PPOPs.[3]

The apparent correlation between pronoun case on the one hand and the possibility of special placement on the other has yet to be explored in any detail. This, then, is the goal of this paper. After validating the findings of Wende (1915)

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[3] The figures given here for dative PPOPs conflate Taylor's figures for PPs headed by *to* 'to' (2008: 347, Table 2) with her figures for PPs headed by other prepositions (*ibid*: 351, Table 8).

and Taylor (2008) in section 2, I show in section 3 that the apparent constraint against special placement of non-dative PPOPs cannot be reduced to a lexical effect of the preposition involved nor to the PP's semantics. The net is cast wider in section 4, where I examine the behaviour of personal pronouns functioning as the object of a verb ('PPOVs'). I find they too appear in special positions proportionately more frequently when dative than when accusative, although accusative PPOVs are not at all uncommon, unlike accusative PPOPs. The paper concludes in section 5 with a summary and short discussion of the findings.

2. Data

Unless otherwise stated, all data presented in this paper are taken from the YCOE (Taylor *et al* 2003). This corpus contains approximately 1.5 million words of running prose within 100 text files, each representing a syntactically annotated version of a scholarly edition of a particular Old English version of a particular text.[4] The YCOE is not the largest corpus of Old English available: that title belongs to the Dictionary of Old English corpus (diPaolo Healey 2009), which contains about 2.1 million words of prose plus 0.9 million words from interlinear glosses, poetry, glossaries and inscriptions. The YCOE is, however, the only corpus of its type to be syntactically annotated, making it

   Firstly, an explanatory note about the classification of case-ambiguous Old English pronoun forms is in order. As is evident from the paradigm of object personal pronouns in Table 1, all third person forms are unambiguous for case except fem. sg. *hire*. For this pronoun, I follow the YCOE editors and resolve the ambiguity in favour of dative rather than genitive. Of the few Old English prepositions that occur with genitive objects, only *wið* 'against' does so with any frequency, and *wið* governs *hire* on just one occasion in the YCOE.

Table 1. Old English object personal pronouns

Person	Case	Singular	Dual	Plural
First (n = 1,602)	Acc. Dat. Gen.	*me* *me* *min*	*unc* *unc* *uncer*	*us* *us* *ure*
Second (n = 1,330)	Acc. Dat. Gen.	*þe* *þe* *þin*	*inc* *inc* *incer*	*eow* *eow* *eower*
Third (n = 6,771) (masc., fem., neut.)	Acc. Dat. Gen.	*hine, hi, hit* *him, hire, him* *his, hire, his*	— 	*hi* *him, heom* *hira*

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[4] A full list of the YCOE's text files and their associated editions can be found at http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/YCOE/info/YcoeTextFile.htm.

Table 1 also shows that dative and accusative are not distinct for first and second person (apart from the rare acc. sg. variants *mec* and *þec* and the rare 1 pl. variant *usic*). It is, however, possible to disambiguate a large proportion of these pronouns by reference to the prepositions they occur with. Few Old English prepositions govern one case exclusively, but some very strongly favour one case—usually dative— in particular. At least 95% of the third person PPOPs governed by the following prepositions are dative (ignoring clear genitive pronouns): *æfter* 'after', *æt* 'at', *ætforan* 'before', *be* 'by', *beforan* 'before', *betweonum* ~ *betweonan* 'between', *fram* 'from', *mid* 'with', *of* 'of', *to* 'to' and *togeanes* 'against'. As the same is true for (non-genitive) nominal objects also, we can be reasonably sure that when governed by one of these dative-favouring prepositions, case-ambiguous first and second person pronouns are highly likely to be dative too. Just one preposition, *þurh* 'through', strongly favours accusative. 96% of third person pronoun objects and 95% of nominal objects are accusative under government by *þurh*, and I assume the same holds for first and second person pronouns. By reference to the prepositions they occur with, the proportion of case-ambiguous first and second person pronouns in the YCOE is reducible from 99.7% of some 3,000 tokens (the 0.3% comprising genitive forms plus a handful of acc. sg. *mec* or *usic* tokens) to 32.6%.

The analysis of PPOP placement by pronoun case is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of PPOPs by pronoun case

	Left-of-P	Right-of-P	Total
Dative	2,662 (33.9%)	5,189 (66.1%)	7,851
Accusative	39 (4.5%)	829 (95.5%)	868
Genitive	—	31 (100%)	31
Ambiguous[5]	74 (7.8%)	879 (92.2%)	953
Total	2,775 (28.6%)	6,928 (71.4%)	9,703

These data show the marked difference in frequency of special, i.e. left-of-P(reposition), placement according to pronoun case noted by both Wende (1915: 77) and Taylor (2008), with dative PPOPs appearing to the preposition's left significantly more frequently than accusative PPOPs ($\chi^2 = 316.25$, $p < 0.0001$). There are too few examples to draw any firm conclusions about the invariable right-of-P placement of genitive PPOPs, but the lack of a single left-of-P example is clearly out of step with dative PPOPs (1 in 3 of which are left-of-P) and more in keeping with accusative examples (1 in 22 being left-of-P).

Although the proportion of specially placed accusative PPOPs is already very low at just 4.5%, Alcorn (2011: 139–43) shows that more than half of the 39

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[5] All remaining case-ambiguous pronouns are either first or second person, and each is ambiguous between dative and accusative in particular.

examples are amenable to alternative analyses. In (4), for example, accusative *hi* is parsed as the object of *mid* in the YCOE, giving something like 'and restored to them the same doctrine that he previously taught [together] with them'. But *mid* + acc. is an Anglian feature (Mitchell 1985: §1195) and so is unlikely to be found in this West Saxon text (Ælfric's Homilies II). Perhaps, then, the pronoun is the object of *lærde* and *mid* is a stranded preposition, as the gloss and translation show.

(4)   … and him geedniwode þa ylcan lare   þe he ær   **hi**   mid lærde.
       and   them restored   the same doctrine that he previously them with taught

       '… and restored to them the same doctrine with which he had previously taught them.'

                                            (cocathom2,ÆCHom_II,_18:170.27.3761)

Another potentially ambiguous example is given at (5). The YCOE editors treat the emboldened token of *hit* as the object of *on*, giving '… until it is defiled when unrighteous desires beat upon it and destroy it'. It turns out, however, that *hit* occurs as the object of a preposition very rarely in the YCOE: there are only seven examples in total.[6] Perhaps, then, *on* is the initial element of *oncnyssan* 'oppress', and *hit* is the object of this (presumably separable) prefixed verb.[7]

(5)   … oððæt hit bið gewemmed mid ðæm ðe **hit** cnyssað on   unryhta
        until it   is   defiled   when   it   oppress PREFIX unrighteous

        wilnunga, &   hit toterað.
        desires   and it destroy

        '… until it is defiled when unrighteous desires strike it down and destroy it.'
                                                    (cocura,CP:52.405.3.2769)

These two examples are typical of many of the 39 specially placed accusative PPOPs identified by the YCOE editors for which more than one reading may be possible. The proportion of specially placed accusative PPOPs is therefore possibly somewhat less than the 4.5% shown in Table 2 and possibly much closer to the 0.1% of nominal objects found to occur to the left of a governing preposition (Taylor 2008: 343, fn.1).[8]

Colman (1991) takes such parsing ambiguities very seriously, arguing that they could actually explain why most left-of-P objects are (i) personal pronouns and (ii)

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[6] In Alcorn (2009: 438–441) I argue that the paucity of *hit* examples is because Old English PPOPs very rarely have non-human reference, as is also true of PPOPs in a number of present day West Gmc varieties (see e.g. Zwart 2005: 920).
   [7] Under this alternative parse, the subject NP would presumably be extraposed rather than inverted.
   [8] Alcorn (2011: 139) suggests that the proportion of specially placed accusative PPOPs may be as low as 1.8%.

dative. Working from the principle that many Old English prepositions are identical in form to a verbal prefix and/or adverb, Colman suggests that some (unquantified but presumably significant proportion of) prepositions associated with a specially placed object might actually *be* a prefix or adverb. Example (5) illustrates the type of parsing error Colman has in mind. However, in appealing to this type of error to explain the preponderance of specially placed dative PPOPs, Colman presupposes, without any apparent justification, that such errors are rarely made unless the object in question is a dative personal pronoun.

Colman does, however, offer a second suggestion: that some (again, unquantified but presumably significant proportion of) specially placed dative PPOPs might instead be ethic datives, elements which Colman defines as 'ungoverned circumstantial locatives' (*ibid*: 79). I give two of her examples here. Colman does not supply translations for her 'ethic' readings and I do not find her intended readings obvious. Accordingly, I simply gloss her examples as neutrally as possible and, like Colman, leave the reader to decide on the best translation. For the first example, (6), Colman suggests that *fram* may be regarded as adverbial—or rather a PP with an unspecified object, an analysis for which she provides some independent evidence.

(6)   se engel **him** gewat   fram
        the angel him departed from
                (cocathom2,ÆCHom_II,_28:221.20.4890 [Colman 1991: 59(8), 89])

For (7) Colman suggests *æfter* as the prefix of *ridan*, offering some independent evidence for æfterridan as an accusative-governing verb (albeit one not recognised by the Dictionary of Old English).

(7)   and **him** æfter rad
        and them after rode
                (cochronC,ChronC_[Rositzke]:879.15.746 [Colman 1991: 63(16), 93])

Two problems with Colman's claim of ungoverned circumstantials are immediately obvious. Firstly, as her aim is to offer an alternative analysis for the disproportionate number of left-of-P objects that are (i) personal pronouns and (ii) dative, pronominality would seem to be a *desideratum* for her concept of ethic datives, yet no part of her definition or analysis actually entails or predicts their pronominality. Secondly, no part of her account predicts that an ethic dative can be realised to the left but not the right of the word that could be mistaken for its prepositional governor. Admittedly, there is a tendency in Old English for light elements such as pronouns to occur early in the clause, but if we allow that (6) involves an adverb and ethic dative rather than a preposition and its object, then we must surely allow the same analysis for examples like (8), which seems to involve a clear-cut example of a head-initial PP.

(8)   &   se engel from him gewat.
       and the angel from him departed

       'and the angel departed from him.'

                                   (corood,LS_5_[InventCrossNap]:183.180)

By exploiting the formal ambiguity of many Old English prepositions, Colman seeks to diminish the number of specially placed dative PPOPs. Her suggestion that some prepositions and their dative objects could be reanalysed, respectively, as verbal prefixes and verbal objects rests on the assumption of a parsing error which, if made consistently, *could* produce an overabundance of specially placed objects of prepositions, but not an overabundance of specially placed dative PPOPs in particular. Her second suggestion, that dative PPOPs could be reinterpreted as ungoverned circumstantials, is no more compelling, not least because it calls into question the status of what seem to be perfectly straightforward PPs.

In summary, the YCOE contains clear evidence of a constraint against specially placed non-dative PPOPs. There are no specially placed genitive PPOPs and the proportion of specially placed accusative PPOPs is 4.5% at most. While it is perfectly possible that some specially placed dative pronouns are amenable to alternative analyses, cases of mistaken identity are unlikely to crop up in sufficient numbers to make any significant impression to the proportions in Table 2.

3. Case-alternating prepositions

Just five prepositions contribute at least ten unambiguously dative and at least ten unambiguously accusative pronouns to the data in Table 2. As is evident from Table 3, data for each of these prepositions tell much the same story: special, i.e. left-of-P, placement of the object occurs frequently when the pronoun is dative but rarely, if at all, when accusative. Note that the data for *on* exclude nine accusative examples that are given an alternative analysis in Alcorn (2011), while data for *mid* is limited to tokens occurring in *Bede* since *mid* + acc. is an Anglian feature (Mitchell 1985: §1195) and so alternates with *mid* + dat. in very few text files. *Bede* alone supplies at least ten examples of each.

Table 3. Distribution of PPOPs by preposition and pronoun case

	Dative		Accusative	
	n	Left-of-P	n	Left-of-P
ongean 'towards, against'	105	101 (96%)	58	0
wið 'against, with'	91	67 (74%)	165	0
ofer 'over'	11	8 (73%)	65	1 (2%)
on 'on, in'	457	186 (41%)	166	7 (4%)
mid 'with' (*Bede*)	50	3 (6%)	32	0

These data show fairly conclusively that the constraint against special placement of accusative pronouns cannot be attributed to a lexical effect of the particular preposition involved.

Many Modern German prepositions vary between dative and accusative government too, and this alternation tends to mark a distinction between a locative reading, as in (9a), and a directional reading, as in (9b).

(9) a. Diana schwamm **im** **See**
Diana swam in-the-DAT lake

'Diana swam in the lake'

(Gehrke 2008: 96, ex. 23a)

b. Diana schwamm **in den** **See**
Diana swam in the-ACC lake

'Diana swam into the lake'

(Gehrke 2008: 96, ex. 24a)

Certain Dutch prepositions show the same semantic alternation as illustrated by (9), except that readings derive from the order of the PP's constituents, cf. (10).

(10) a. Willemijn zwom **in het meer**
Willemijn swam in the lake

'Willemijn swam in the lake'

(Gehrke 2008: 90, ex. 8b)

b. Willemijn zwom **het meer in**
Willemijn swam the lake in

'Willemijn swam into the lake'

(Gehrke 2008: 91, ex. 11a)

A number of scholars have proposed that such semantic alternations reflect a difference in PP structure, with directional PPs assumed to be structurally more complex than locative PPs (see e.g. any of the papers in Cinque & Rizzi 2010). Perhaps, then, the key to understanding the data trend evident in Tables 2 and 3 is not pronoun case but rather PP semantics.

It is generally agreed that Old English prepositions tend to denote 'motion towards' when they occur with an accusative object and 'location at which' when they occur with a dative one. However, these relationships between meaning and case are not reliably systematic (Mitchell 1968: 294, 1985: §1177(4), Traugott 1992: 202–3). For example, most of the *ofer* + dat. examples quantified in Table 3 do indeed encode a locative relationship, as in (11a), but a locative reading of *ofer* is possible also with an accusative object, e.g. (11b).

(11) a . .... & worhton mid stanum ænne steapne beorh **him ofer**;
    and   made   with stones a   high   mound him over

    '... and made a high mound with stones over him;'

                          (cootest,Josh:7.26.5366)

   b. Ða wæs his ofergewrit **ofer hine** awriten greciscum stafum &   ebreiscum
     then was his inscription over him written Greek   letters and Hebrew

     'Then his inscription was written above him in Greek and Hebrew letters'
                   (cowsgosp,Lk_[WSCp]:23.38.5609)

Moreover, this tendency towards 'accusative of motion, dative of rest' fails to describe the semantics of a large share of the PPs quantified in Table 3. For example both *ongean* and *wið* tend to denote opposition regardless of which case they govern, and about half of the accusative *on*-PPs are complements of *liefan*, giving the non-spatial expression 'to believe in'. In other words, if there is a semantic basis to the constraint against special placement of accusative PPOPs, it is not apparent from an examination of the data summarised in Table 3.

That pronoun case rather than PP semantics is the determining factor for the option of special placement is very clearly illustrated by near-minimal pairs of examples such as those at (12, 13). Each of these pairs is drawn from the same text file and each involves the same combination of verb and preposition. In the (a) examples the PPOP is accusative, in the (b) examples it is dative. Neither of these case alternations correlates with any obvious difference in meaning, but each correlates with a difference in pronoun placement: accusative pronouns occurring to the preposition's right, dative pronouns to its left.

(12) a. ... &   spætton **on hyne**
    and   spat   on him

    '... and spat on him'

               (cowsgosp,Mt_[WSCp]:27.30.2051)

   b. ... &   spætton **him on**
    and   spat   him on

   '... and spat on him'

               (cowsgosp,Mk_[WSCp]:15.19.3460)

(13) a. Martinus ferde   hwilon to Ualentiniane þam casere,   wolde for sumere
     Martin   travelled once   to Valentinian the emperor wished for some

     neode   **wið hine** spræcan
     business with him speak

     'Martin was travelling once to Valentinian the emperor, wishing to speak with him about some business'
               (coaelive,ÆLS_[Martin]:650.6389–90)

b. Maximus,se casere   þe   wæs on Martinus dæge, geladede foroft   þone
Maximus the emperor that was in Martin's day   bid   frequently the

arwurðan wer þa ða he **him wið**   spræc þæt he wære his gemetta
venerable man when he him with spoke that he was   his guest

'Maximus, who was the emperor in Martin's day, frequently bid the vene-
rable man whenever he spoke with him that he be his guest'
(coaelive,ÆLS_[Martin]:610.6365)

Additional examples are provided at Appendix 1.

Wende (1915: 77–81), who supplies yet more examples like those at (12, 13),
appears struck by the fact that dative pronouns sometimes occur to the preposition's
left 'wo die syntaktische Gestaltung des Satzes die Wahl des Akkusativs eigentlich
begünstigen sollte' ('where the syntactic formation of the sentence should actually
favour the choice of the accusative' *ibid*: 81). His statement seems to imply, perhaps
unintentionally, that the scribes in question may have produced a dative pronoun
instead of an accusative one because the pronoun is specially placed. What Wende
fails to mention, however, is that while some left-of-P pronouns are unexpectedly
dative, so too are some right-of-P pronouns. The examples in (14), both from
Catholic Homilies I, involve a frequently occurring verb + preposition combination
that usually takes accusative.

(14) a. Se ðe **on hine**   gelyfð he gesyhð hine nu   mid his geleafan:
he that in him-ACC believes he sees   him now with his faith

'He who believes in him, he sees him now with his faith:'
(cocathom1,ÆCHom_I,_9:253.136.1684)

b. His nama wæs Hiesus. þæt is hælend. for ðan þe he gehælð ealle ða.   þe
his name was Jesus   that is saviour because he saves   all   those that

on him   rihtlice gelyfað.
in him-DAT rightly believe

'His name was Jesus, that is 'saviour', because he saves all those who rightly
believe in him'
(cocathom1,ÆCHom_I,_13:285.113.2455)

The examples at (15) involve the same construction as (14) but are taken from
West Saxon Gospels (*John*), a translation from Latin. The *on*-PP in each example
corresponds to Latin *in eum* 'in him-ACC', making the dative pronoun in (15b) all
the more surprising.

(15) a. Manega of ðære menigeo gelyfdon **on hine**
　　　　many from the multitude believed in him-ACC

　　　'Many among the multitude believed in him'
(cowsgosp,Jn_[WSCp]:7.31.6320)

　　b. Ða he ðas ðing spræc manega gelyfdon **on him**.
　　　　as he these things said many believed in him-DAT

　　　'As he said these things, many believed in him.'
(cowsgosp,Jn_[WSCp]:8.30.6429)

So Wende's statement is factually correct but as it describes unsystematic variability in Old English case assignment only as found among specially placed PPOPs, it is potentially misleading.

4. Pronominal objects of verbs

Pronominal objects of verbs ('PPOVs') also often turn up in positions in which functionally equivalent nominal counterparts do not occur. In this section I look for evidence that special placement of these pronouns is also sensitive to case.

　　Whereas specially placed PPOPs are easily recognised from their position relative to their governor, the same is not true for PPOVs. Nominal as well as pronominal objects may be found on either side of a governing verb depending on whether the verb is in second or final position, and whether the VP is head-final or head-initial (Pintzuk 2002, 2005, Koopman 2005, Pintzuk & Taylor 2006). As neither verb movement nor the internal structure of VP can be detected without reference to the position of other clausal constituents, and as these other constituents may themselves be ambiguously positioned if not altogether absent, it is not always possible to determine whether a particular PPOV is specially placed or not. Descriptively, however, it is generally agreed that object personal pronouns are specially placed when they appear: between topic and second-position finite verb, as in (16a); between finite verb and subject after certain clause-initial adverbs, particularly *þa* and *þonne* (both 'then'), as in (16b);[9] or immediately after a complementiser, as in (16c).

(16) a. God ðe sylð þæs edlean.
　　　　God you pay the recompense

　　　'God will pay you compensation.'
(coaelhom,ÆHom_25:10.3897)

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[9] These adverbs, as well as *wh*-words (such as *hwā* 'who', *hwæt* 'what') and the verbal negator *ne*, are often referred to as 'operators'. As the first element of a main clause, operators very typically trigger inversion of finite verb and subject, regardless of whether the subject is nominal or pronominal.

b. þonne forgifeþ **us** Drihten ure synna forgifnesse
  then   grants us Saviour our sins   forgiveness

'then the Saviour will grant us forgiveness of our sins'
                                    (coblick,HomU_19_[BlHom_8]:97.26.1262)

c. ... þæt **him** God miltsian   nelle
  that him God show-mercy not-will

'... that God will not show him mercy'
                                    (coverhom,HomS_34_[ScraggVerc_19]:85.2476)

There is already some evidence that PPOV placement is sensitive to pronoun case. In her study of variation in the position of objects of verbs in the YCOE, Morgan (2004: 122–138) provides data on PPOV placement in subordinate clauses. Her data, summarised in Table 4, show proportions that appear between the complementiser and the subject rather than somewhere *after* the subject.[10]

Proportions of PPOVs placed immediately after a complementiser

	Dative PPOVs	Accusative PPOVs
Subject = full NP	67% (541/804)	38% (325/848)
Subject = *man*	77% (91/118)	86% (312/362)
Total	69% (632/922)	53% (637/1,210)

Morgan's data show dative PPOVs occur immediately after the complementiser significantly more frequently in comparison to accusative PPOVs when the subject is a full NP ($\chi^2 = 138.81$, $p < 0.0001$). When the subject is the indefinite pronoun *man*, however, the opposite is true: accusative PPOVs occur immediately after the complementiser more frequently than dative PPOVs ($\chi^2 = 5.43$, $p = 0.02$). She does not examine clauses with a personal pronoun subject. A surface string constraint on adjacent personal pronouns independently precludes an object personal pronoun from preceding a subject personal pronoun (Pintzuk 1991: 284) so we would expect to find few (if any) such examples.[11]

The preference for special placement regardless of pronoun case when the subject is *man* doubtlessly reflects information structure considerations, which are said to prefer placement of indefinite or generic subjects after highly discourse-

[10] Data in row one of Table 4 is from Morgan (2004: 123, Table 4.5) and (*ibid*: 126, Table 4.7). Data in row two is from (*ibid*: 137, Table 4.12). Full NP subjects include subject demonstrative pronouns.
[11] Van Bergen (2003: 186–7) shows that an object personal pronoun *can* in fact precede a subject personal pronoun but only when the object personal pronoun is in topic position.

sensitive elements such as personal pronouns (e.g. Hulk & van Kemenade 1997: 191). In contrast to *man*, nominal subjects show greater positional variability since their degree of discourse-sensitivity is likewise highly variable (e.g. van Kemenade & Los 2006, van Kemenade, Milicev & Baayen 2008). What we may take from Table 4, then, is that in subclauses dative PPOVs are more frequently specially placed than accusative PPOVs, but this is partly dependent on the subject's degree of discourse-sensitivity.

Table 5 provides comparative data from main clauses. It shows frequency of PPOV placement between the finite verb and inverted subject in operator-initial clauses in particular. These data, which I have extracted from the YCOE, are for third person PPOVs in clauses with *þa* or *þonne* or else a (possibly negated) finite verb in first position.[12]

Proportions of PPOVs placed between finite verb and inverted subject in operator-initial main clauses

	Dative PPOVs	Accusative PPOVs
Subject = full NP	55% (127/229)	33% (89/266)
Subject = *man*	78% (14/18)	79% (31/39)
Total	57% (141/247)	39% (120/305)

These data are broadly in line with those in Table 4. They show that in operator-initial clauses, dative PPOVs occur between finite verb and inverted subject significantly more frequently in comparison to accusative PPOVs when the subject is a full NP ($\chi^2 = 24.22$, $p < 0.0001$). When the subject is *man*, however, accusative and dative PPOVs occur between finite verb and inverted subject with the same frequency. Note that Morgan (2004) provides no data on genitive PPOVs and I found only three among my operator-initial data (one being specially placed).

Reading across Tables 4 and 5, it appears that special placement of PPOVs is indeed sensitive to pronoun case although this appears to be partly dependent on the subject's degree of discourse-sensitivity. However, whereas special placement of PPOPs is rare *unless* the pronoun is dative, the same is evidently not true for PPOVs: even in contexts where the case effect is apparent, specially placed accusative PPOVs are still more commonplace than specially placed accusative PPOPs.

[12] On the operator status of these elements, see e.g. van Kemenade (1987: 111), Pintzuk (1991: 143).

5. Discussion

This paper has shown that the possibility of special placement of object personal pronouns in Old English prose is sensitive to pronoun case. The evidence is most compelling for those governed by a preposition, with 4.5% of accusative examples at most appearing in some special, i.e. left-of-P, position compared to 33.9% of dative examples. There are no specially-placed genitive PPOPs in the corpus, although there are very few genitive examples in total. Information structure considerations aside, personal pronouns governed by a verb exhibit what appears to be a similar effect of case, although accusative PPOVs appear in special positions more frequently than accusative PPOPs.

Quite why special placement of object personal pronouns should be sensitive to case I cannot say. I have found nothing in the wider literature to which the findings of the present paper can be directly compared; that is to say I found nothing on variation in the variable placement of PPOPs other than for Old English, while work on the variable placement of PPOVs seems mainly to centre on their position relative to other PPOVs in double object constructions: e.g. see cross-linguistic work on the Person-Case Constraint, an apparently universal well-formedness condition that precludes the combination of a first or second person accusative pronoun with a third person dative pronoun (Bonet 1991, Cardinaletti 1999: 64–5). For PPOPs in particular, I have at least demonstrated that the correlation between special placement and case holds independently of the particular preposition involved and of the PP's semantics, but its 'true' underlying basis remains a mystery.

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APPENDIX I

Pairs of examples varying by pronoun case and pronoun position

(1.1) a. ... and se   casere   eode **ongen hine** and cyste hine
    and   the emperor went towards him   and kissed him

    '... and the emperor went towards him and kissed him'
                (coeust,LS_8_[Eust]:287.306–7)

    b. þa   eode se casere   **him ongean** swa hit þeaw   is mid Romanum
       then went the emperor him towards as   it   custom is with Romans

    'then the emperor went towards him, as it is custom with the Romans
                (coeust,LS_8_[Eust]:394.422)

(1.2) a. ... and his scypu wendon ut abutan Legceaster and sceoldan cuman
    and   his ships went   out about Chester   and should   come

    ongean hine ac hi   ne meahton
    to wards him   but they not could

    '... and his ships went out around Chester and should have come towards
    him, but they could not'
                (cochronC,ChronC_[Rositzke]:1000.1.1311–12)

    b. þa   com **him** swilc wind **ongean** swilc nan man ær   ne gemunde
       then came them such wind towards as   no   man before not remembered

    'then came towards them such a wind as no man remembered before'
                (cochronC,ChronC_[Rositzke]:1009.15.1438)

(1.3) a. ...& he raðe þæs   **wið   hie**   gefeaht mid sciphere,
    and he soon afterwards against them fought with fleet

    &   ofslagen wearð
    and killed   was

    '... and soon afterwards he fought against them with a fleet and was killed'
                (coorosiu,Or_4:6.92.28.1881-2)

    b. ... & þa nihstan landleode on ægþere healfe him on fultum geteah, oþ
    and the nearest natives   on either half   him in support drew   until

    Somnite **him**   gefuhton **wið**,   &   þone cyning ofslogon
    Samnites them   fought   against and the   king   killed

    '... and drew the nearest natives on either side to him in support, until the
    Samnites fought against them and killed the king'
                (coorosiu,Or_3:7.60.27.1166)

(1.4) a. ... for þon þe he eac wolde **on hine** winnan
because   he also wished on him   make-war

'... because he wished to make war on him'
(coorosiu,Or_6:15.142.10.2983)

b. ... for þon þe Dorus Thracea cyning **him** eac **an** wann
because   Dorus Thrace's king   him also on   made-war

'... because Dorus, king of Thrace, also made war on him'
(coorosiu,Or_3:11.82.6.1638)

(1.5) a. Ac seo sunne scynð þeah **on hi**
but the sun   shines still on them

'But the sun still shines on them'
(cosolilo,Solil_1:31.20.415)

b. þonne seo sunne **hym on** scynð, hi   lyhtað ongean
when the sun   them on shines they shine back

'when the sun shines on them, they shine back'
(cosolilo,Solil_1:31.17.413)

(1.6) a. Ac se deofol færinga eac   **on hine** gefor
but the devil suddenly nevertheless in him went

'But nevertheless the devil suddenly entered into him'
(cogregdH,GD_1_[H]:10.73.1.711)

b. ... se deofol, þe **hyre** ær   **on** gefor
the   devil that her   previously in went

'... the devil, who had previously entered into her'
(cogregdH,GD_1_[H]:10.73.22.718)

(1.7) a. Þa   ongunnan ða geongan biddan þone bisscop, þa   ðe **mid hiene** wæron
then began   the youths ask   the bishop who that with him   were

'Then the youths, who were with him, began to ask the bishop'
(cobede,Bede_5:6.398.30.3999)

b. ... & from þæm he fulwihtes geryno   onfeng mid his þegnum,
and from whom he baptism's sacrament received with his servants

þe **him mid** wæron
that him with were

'... and from whom he received the sacrament of baptism with his
servants, who were with him'
(cobede,Bede_3:2.158.6.1250)

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