

# Mandative constructions in Middle English

*Lilo Moessner, RWTH Aachen*

## ***1 Mandative constructions: Delimiting the object of the study***

Mandative constructions express that a certain action (should) be performed or a certain state be achieved. In terms of illocutionary acts, they are directives. They can be independent or dependent. The verbal syntagm of independent mandative constructions is either in the imperative or in the subjunctive mood (e.g. *close the window, peace be with you*), or it consists of a modal expression (e.g. *papers should be submitted before the end of this year*). The mandative force relies purely on the verb form. Dependent mandative constructions are governed by a suasive verb, and they have the form of *that*-clauses or infinitive constructions. The conjunction *that* can be deleted, and the prototypical realisation of the verbal syntagm is by a modal auxiliary (usually *should*) or a subjunctive form.<sup>1</sup> Since the mandative force is carried by the combination of suasive verb and the dependent clause, the verbal syntagm of the latter can also be realised by an indicative form. The object of this paper are dependent mandative constructions. Their realisation possibilities in Present-Day English (PDE) are illustrated in Quirk *et al.* (1985: 1182f.) by examples (1)–(4):

- (1) They intended the news to be suppressed
- (2) People are demanding that she should leave the company
- (3) People are demanding that she leave the company
- (4) People are demanding that she leaves the company

Additionally, dependent mandative constructions can be governed by verbs with no explicit mandative meaning (cf. Övergaard 1995: 82). The construction is illustrated in example (5):

- (5) As he was being removed, Takuma continued to shout that he be allowed to speak, and several family members in the audience broke into tears. (*The Japan Times Online*, Aug. 29, 2003)

Here the mandative force relies only on the subjunctive of the verbal syntagm in the dependent clause. This type of mandative constructions makes their exhaustive description virtually impossible (cf. Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 999).

So far, mandative constructions have been investigated mainly under the heading mandative subjunctive, and the focus was on PDE. There is agreement that the mandative subjunctive has been gaining popularity especially in American English from the beginning of the 20th century onwards (Haegeman 1986; James 1986; Övergaard 1995; Hundt 1998; Crawford 2009), and that this development was followed with a little time lag in Australian English (Peters 1998) and in British English (Turner 1980; Övergaard 1995; Hundt 1998; Serpollet 2001; Kjellmer 2009). Most of these studies approached the topic via the triggering expressions (Crawford 2009: 258), i.e. the expressions (in particular verbs) in the matrix clause which convey mandative force and govern dependent clauses with finite verbal syntagms. Only Hoffmann (1997: 46–60) also considers nominal and non-finite mandative constructions as alternatives of mandative *that*-clauses. He comes to the conclusion that of the seven verbs of his corpus three take *that*-clauses only rarely (*order*, *request*, *demand*), two show no clear preference for finite or non-finite constructions (*insist*, *suggest*), and two do not accept non-finite constructions at all (*recommend*, *propose*).

Mandative constructions of earlier periods have not attracted so much attention. In Moessner (2007), only finite constructions were studied as alternatives of mandative subjunctives in Middle English (ME). The general claim of a frequency decrease during the ME period was supported, and the verb of the matrix clause, the verb of the dependent clause (*be* vs lexical verb), and the text category were established as factors which influenced the distribution of the realisation possibilities of the verbal syntagm in the dependent clause. López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2006) looked at dependent commands and requests in Old English (OE) and ME. Their paper covers mandative constructions realised as *that*-clauses and as infinitive constructions, but only those depending on the matrix verbs *bēodan* and *biddan*. They find an interesting correlation between the meaning of the matrix verb and the realisation of the verbal syntagm in the dependent clause.

In this paper ME finite and non-finite mandative constructions will be studied which are governed by a matrix verb with potentially mandative force. Several linguistic and extralinguistic factors will be tested with respect to their influence on the distribution of the realisation possibilities of the verbal syntagm in the dependent mandative clause.

## 2 Research method and corpus

My starting-point was Vissers list (1972: §869) of 76 verbs for which he provides ME examples of mandative subjunctives. The verbs of this list were checked in the ME part of the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (HC). The occurrences of all forms of these verbs were identified with the WordCruncher search tool. This list contains truly mandative verbs, i.e. verbs which always carry mandative force, e.g. *commande*, *praye*, and others which can be used with mandative or with non-mandative meaning; cf. the verbs *quethe* and *segge* in examples (6)–(10):

- (6) Crist cw+a+d +tt mon sceal to Gode Almihti+g ane biddan (MX/1 IR HOM BOD 10 104) ‘Christ says that man shall pray to God Almighty alone’ (mandative)
- (7) Hieronimus cw+a+d +tt +d+at festen cl+ans+a+d +tone lichame (MX/1 IR HOM Bod 5 46) ‘Jerome says that fasting cleanses the body’ (non-mandative)
- (8) seie +tat heo ne murne (MX/2 NI ROM HORN 44) ‘tell [her] that she (should) not mourn’ (mandative)
- (9) To +te king men seide / +Tat i +te bitraide (MX/2 NI ROM HORN 57) ‘the men said to the king that I betrayed you’ (non-mandative)
- (10) Iesu seyde to hem to maken hem sytte down (M3 IR SERM WSERM43 I,412) ‘Jesus said to them that they [= the disciples] should make them [= the people] sit down’ (mandative)

Each item was checked manually to make sure that a mandative meaning was involved, and only 36 verbs passed the test. It was a time-consuming, but fruitful procedure, because I noticed that one more realisation possibility had to be taken into account, namely direct speech with verbal syntagms in the imperative or subjunctive mood, and modal expressions. These patterns are illustrated in examples (11)–(13):

- (11) therefore bidde I thee / Cherisse thy wyf (M3 NI FICT CTMERC 156.C1) ‘therefore I ask you “Love your wife”’
- (12) thei crie in euery stede: / ‘A vengeaunce take Kyng Herode, for he hath our children sloon!’ (M4 XX MYST DIGBY 108) ‘they shouted everywhere: “Vengeance may take King Herod, because he killed our children!”’

- (13) he seide efter ward. so sulle +to uerste bie last (M2 IR HOM KSERM 221) ‘he said afterwards: “So shall the first be the last”’

Since in ME the indicative vs subjunctive distinction is formally marked only for the second and third person singular present tense, the first and third person singular past of strong verbs, and the second person singular past for weak verbs, an additional category ‘ambiguous’ was established, and all verb forms of the corpus which are not formally marked as either indicative or subjunctive were assigned to this category.<sup>2</sup> Example (14) illustrates this category:

- (14) we wolden that we perischen (M3 XX OLDT WYCOLD XIV, 1N) ‘we wished that we (should) perish’<sup>3</sup>

The mandative force of this construction results from the mandative meaning of the matrix verb alone, since in the verb form *perischen* in the dependent clause the mood contrast is neutralised.

Taken together, these observations yield the following variation pattern for ME dependent mandative constructions:

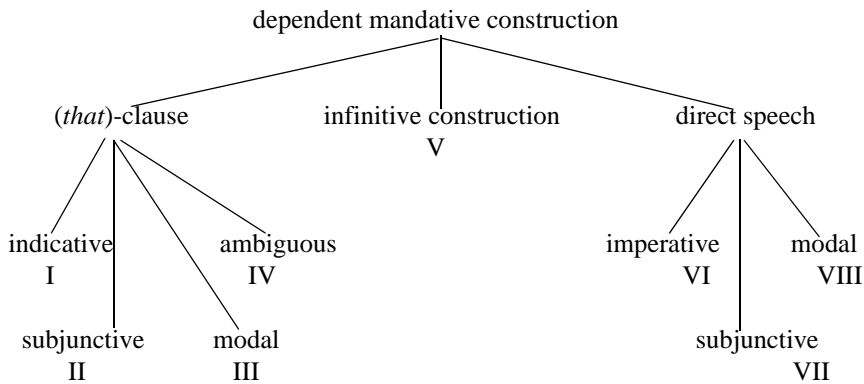


Figure 1: Realisation possibilities of ME dependent mandative constructions

ME examples for the eight realisation possibilities are given as (15)–(22):

Type I:

- (15) I wolde +tat +tou castedest it into depnes of spirite (M3 IR RELT CLOUD 89) ‘I wished that you (should) hide it [= the desire of your heart] in the depth of your mind’

Type II:

- (16) unnc birr+t bidden Godd tatt he / Forr+give hemm here sinne (M1 IR HOM ORM DED.L83) ‘[it] suits us to ask God that he forgive them their sin’

Type III:

- (17) Also is ordeined +tat vche +ger +ter shul four wardeines be chosen (M3 XX DOC RET 43) ‘[it] is also decreed that each year four wardens (shall) be chosen’

Type IV:

- (18) Jch bidde, frendes, +tat +ge me here! (M2 NI ROM KALEX I,217) ‘I ask you, friends, that you listen to me’

Type V:

- (19) In +tis we praye God to delyvere vs from euyll of peyne (M3/4 IR SERM ROYAL 17)  
‘In this we pray God to deliver us from the evil of pain’

Type VI:

- (20) +tenne seide +te kyng Phelip, “lustne+t nou to me (M2 NN HIST HPOEM3 11) ‘then said King Philip, “listen now to me”’

Type VII:

- (21) “Nov god,” he seide, “us +giue is grace” (M2 NN BIL SLEG 444)  
“now”, he said, “may God give us his grace”

Type VIII:

- (22) Moises seide, In / this +ge shulen wite that the Lord sent / me (M3 XX OLDT WYCOLD XVI,20N) ‘Moses said, By this you shall know that the Lord sent me’

The corpus yielded 1,294 examples which answered to this description. They were entered into a spreadsheet and analysed with SPSS-tools.

### 3 Presentation and discussion of results

#### 3.1 The influence of the factor time

There is general agreement that the frequency of the mandative subjunctive decreased in ME. Earlier studies suggested that it was replaced by modal constructions (Fischer 1992: 262) or by the indicative mood (Mustanoja 1960: 461). Neither of them had looked at alternative construction types like infinitives or direct speech.

In his study on infinitive constructions, Manabe (1989) claims that there was a steady trend for finite subject and object clauses to decrease and a corresponding trend for infinitive constructions to increase during the ME period. His analysis of 50 prose and verse texts yielded the following distribution:

Table 1: The distribution of *that*-clauses and infinitives in ME (adapted from Manabe 1989: 24)

	13th century		14th century		15th century	
<i>That</i> -clause	1,438	40.9%	1,311	37.7%	1,027	27.5%
Infinitive	2,075	59.1%	2,169	62.3%	2,702	72.5%

A comparison with my data is difficult for two reasons. Although the development in subject and in object clauses is described in separate chapters, the figures taken over into Table 1 for the category ‘finite clause’ [= *that*-clause] are the frequencies for subject and object clauses together. Furthermore, Manabe does not distinguish between subjunctive and indicative verb forms.

The latter is also one of the shortcomings pointed out by Los (2005: 17), who posits a close connection between *that*-clauses with a subjunctive verb and infinitive constructions with *to*. She claimed for the OE period that “at some point it [= the *to*-infinitive] seems to have been reanalysed as a non-finite subjunctive”. From the evidence of different manuscripts of *Gregory’s Dialogues*, where earlier *that*-clauses with a verb in the subjunctive were replaced by infin-

itive constructions and from her quantitative analysis of four OE and two early ME corpora she concluded that the decline of *that*-clauses with a verb in the subjunctive was the triggering factor for the rise of the *to*-infinitive in ME. Yet it would be rash to expect that this trend would continue throughout the ME period. Los's figures and her corresponding graph (2005: 186f.) show very clearly that the steep rise of *to*-infinitives between the last sub-period of OE and the first sub-period of ME is followed by a frequency decrease between the first two ME sub-periods.

Against the background of these findings, it seemed appropriate to start with a comparison of the frequency development of *that*-clauses, infinitive constructions, and direct speech across the sub-periods ME1 to ME4. Table 2 below contains the absolute numbers and the corresponding percentage shares:

Table 2: Three mandative construction types in ME1–ME4

	<i>That</i> -clause		Infinitive construction		Direct speech		Total
ME1	81	34.61%	91	38.89%	62	26.50%	234
ME2	55	32.93%	40	23.95%	72	43.11%	167
ME3	164	45.43%	92	25.48%	105	29.09%	361
ME4	245	46.05%	169	31.77%	118	22.18%	532
Total	545	42.12%	392	30.29%	357	27.59%	1,294

The table shows that with the exception of ME1 infinitive constructions must be ruled out as a serious competitor of *that*-clauses in ME mandative constructions. In all other sub-periods *that*-clauses are the most frequent construction type, and they gain prominence especially in ME3 and ME4. My results also support Los's finding that after their steep frequency rise after the OE period infinitive constructions decline between ME1 and ME2. It should, however, be borne in mind that my category 'infinitive construction' comprises *to*-infinitives and bare infinitives.

A comparison of the realisation possibilities of the verbal syntagm in *that*-clauses provides quantitative support for Fischer's claim that modal constructions gradually replaced mandative subjunctives. The figures are given in Tables 3a and 3b:

Table 3a: Mood distribution in *that*-clauses in ME1–ME4 (absolute numbers)

<i>That</i> -clause					
	Indicative	Subjunctive	Modal	Ambiguous	Total
ME1	2	49	18	12	81
ME2	2	33	14	6	55
ME3	4	74	70	16	164
ME4	7	90	118	30	245
Total	15	246	220	64	545

Table 3b: Mood distribution in *that*-clauses in ME1–ME4 (percentage figures)

<i>That</i> -clause					
	Indicative	Subjunctive	Modal	Ambiguous	Total
ME1	2.47	60.50	22.22	14.81	100.00
ME2	3.63	60.00	24.45	10.91	98.99
ME3	2.44	45.12	42.68	9.76	100.00
ME4	2.86	36.73	48.16	12.24	99.99
Total	2.75	45.14	40.37	11.74	100.00

Indicative frequency is virtually negligible, and the relative frequency of ambiguous examples is more or less stable with a low percentage share. Noticeable changes take place in subjunctive and modal frequency with a 15 per cent drop in the former and an even higher rise in the latter. They start after sub-period ME2.

A different development took place in dependent mandative clauses expressed as direct speech. In this type the prevailing mood is the imperative in all four sub-periods. In the first three sub-periods, subjunctive frequency is above that of modal constructions, but the dramatic drop of subjunctive frequency between ME3 and ME4 is not compensated by a similar frequency rise of modal constructions. Instead, modal constructions decrease as well, and the winner is the imperative mood; cf. Table 4:



Table 4: Mood distribution in direct speech in ME1–ME4

Direct speech							
	Imperative		Subjunctive		Modal		Total
ME1	46	74.19%	12	19.35%	4	6.45%	62
ME2	47	65.28%	13	18.06%	12	16.67%	72
ME3	68	64.76%	21	20.00%	16	15.24%	105
ME4	93	78.81%	11	9.32%	14	11.86%	118
Total	265	74.23%	57	15.97%	46	12.89%	357

### 3.2 *The influence of the factor text category*

For the analysis of the influence of the factor text category on the distribution of the mandative construction types, I took over the prototypical text categories established by the compilers of the HC. Their labels are ‘statutory’ (STA), ‘instruction secular’ (IS), ‘instruction religious’ (IR), ‘expository’ (EX), ‘narration non-imaginative’ (NN), ‘narration imaginative’ (NI). The additional unlabelled category (XX) of the HC contains documents, philosophical texts, mystery plays, passages from the Old and the New Testament as well as official and private letters. Since it was to be expected that the heterogeneity of this last category would not allow a straightforward interpretation of the results, I split it up into the sub-categories COR (public and private correspondence), BIBLE (texts from the Old and the New Testament), DOC (documents), MYST (mystery plays), and OTHER (the rest). Then I correlated the eight construction types and the eleven text categories. The distribution of construction types I–VIII across the text categories is shown in Tables 5a (absolute numbers) and 5b (percentage shares):

Table 5a: Distribution of construction types I–VIII across eleven text categories (absolute numbers)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
	Indic.	Subj.	Mod.	Amb.	Infin. constr.	Imp.	Subj.	Mod.	
	That-clause					Direct speech			
STA	0	18	17	2	3	0	0	0	40
IS	1	24	1	0	10	9	0	2	47
IR	5	109	55	25	101	63	8	14	380
EX	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
NN	1	24	34	6	105	32	11	4	217
NI	3	30	25	11	63	53	17	13	215
COR	3	13	38	6	44	35	1	1	141
BIBLE	0	1	3	1	2	46	17	11	81
DOC	0	9	29	3	20	0	1	1	63
MYST	0	14	5	5	20	16	2	0	62
OTHER	2	4	12	5	24	0	0	0	47
Total	15	246	220	64	392	254	57	46	1,294

Table 5b: Distribution of construction types I–VIII across eleven text categories (percentage figures)

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	Total
	Indi.	Subj.	Mod.	Amb.	Infin. constr.	Imp.	Subj.	Mod.	
	That-clause					Direct speech			
STA	0	45	42.5	5	7.5	0	0	0	100.00
IS	2.13	51.06	2.13	0	21.28	19.15	0	4.26	100.01
IR	1.32	28.68	14.47	6.58	26.58	16.58	2.11	3.68	100.00
EX	0	0	100.00	0	0	0	0	0	100.00
NN	0.46	11.06	15.67	2.76	48.39	14.75	5.07	1.84	100.00
NI	1.40	13.95	11.63	5.12	29.30	24.65	7.91	6.05	100.01
COR	2.13	9.22	26.95	4.26	31.21	24.82	0.71	0.71	100.01
BIBLE	0	1.23	3.70	1.23	2.47	56.79	20.99	13.58	99.99
DOC	0	14.29	46.03	4.76	31.75	0	1.59	1.59	100.01
MYST	0	22.58	8.06	8.06	32.26	25.81	3.23	0	100.00
OTHER	4.26	8.51	25.53	10.64	51.06	0	0	0	100.00

The category EX is represented by one example only; therefore it will be left out of consideration. Among the remaining five original text categories, the first three (STA, IS, IR) show a preference for construction type II (*that*-clause with a verb in the subjunctive). The prominence of type II is clearest in the category IS, in STA it is closely followed by type III (*that*-clause with modal), in IR by type V (infinitive construction). The narrative text categories NN and NI show a preference for type V. This preference is more pronounced in NN than in NI. The linguistic profiles of the newly established text categories give additional support to the hypothesis that the realisation of mandative constructions depends on the text category. The construction type preferences of the four labelled categories are very different. In BIBLE texts, type VI (direct speech with a verb in the imperative) occurs much more often than any other type. A similarly clear picture emerges for the texts of category DOC, where type III (*that*-clause with modal) takes the lead. The categories COR and MYST prefer type V (infinitive construction), but in these categories the construction preference is less pronounced. Type V is also the preferred construction type in the mixed category OTHER. Table 6 summarizes the construction preferences of the individual text categories:

*Table 6:* Preferred construction types of the different text categories

Text category	Preferred construction type
STA	II
IS	II
IR	II
DOC	III
BIBLE	VI
NN	V
NI	V
COR	V
MYST	V

In construction types II, III, and VI, the mandative force is expressed by the verb of the matrix clause and by the form of the verbal syntagm in the dependent clause: subjunctive in type II, modal expression in type III, and imperative in type VI. These construction types are preferred in texts of the categories STA, IS, IR, DOC, and BIBLE.

Their frequent occurrence in texts of the text categories IS and IR is perfectly in line with the communicative purpose of the corresponding texts. The authors of didactic texts try to impose certain behavioural patterns on their addressees, and to this end they use impositive linguistic strategies, here mandative constructions with strong mandative force. The same argument holds for statutory texts. The Acts of Parliament, which make up the category STA, confer rights and duties on the citizens, and they specify the consequences of trespasses. Therefore it is only natural that they contain many sentences like the following:

- (23) be it ordeyned and enacted by the seid auctorite, that the same ordynauce acte and lawe extend and be obs~ved and kept in ev~y Cite (M4 STA LAW STAT2 II, 528)

The category DOC mainly contains royal proclamations, petitions and judgements, testaments and wills. Constructions with strong mandative force reflect their authoritative character. Mandative force is most strongly expressed by a combination of a mandative verb in the matrix clause together with an imperative verb form in the dependent clause. The frequency of this construction type in the passages of the Wyclif Bible in the HC expresses the attitude of its translators that they were writing guidelines for Christian behaviour.

The remaining labelled text categories prefer construction type V, i.e. infinitive constructions. Here the mandative force is much weaker; it relies on the mandative verb in the matrix clause alone. Two of the text categories which prefer infinitive constructions are narrative. The authors of narrative texts have no didactic aims. Consequently, they use linguistic patterns with a weaker mandative force. The other two text categories are situated near the oral end of the written – oral continuum. Mystery plays stage oral language, and the production circumstances of letters, in particular private letters, are similar to face-to-face conversation. The preference of these categories for a construction type with weaker mandative force is in line with Trosborg's finding (1995: 49) that directive speech acts are preferably expressed by indirect strategies in everyday conversational English.

### ***3.3 The influence of the verb in the dependent clause***

Since the indicative vs subjunctive contrast is better preserved in the verb *be* than in lexical verbs, it could be expected that in construction types II and VII, i.e. those which require a verb in the subjunctive, the share of examples with *be* in the dependent clause would be bigger than in the other construction types.

Table 7 provides the absolute numbers and the percentage shares of occurrences of lexical verbs and of *be* in the eight construction types:

Table 7: Lexical verbs and forms of *be* in construction types I–VIII

	Lexical verb		<i>be</i>	
I	10	0.90%	5	2.82%
II	191	17.10%	55	31.07%
III	190	17.00%	30	16.95%
IV	52	4.66%	12	6.78%
V	370	33.12%	22	12.43%
VI	239	21.40%	15	8.47%
VII	33	2.95%	24	13.56%
VIII	32	2.86%	14	7.91%
Total	1,117	99.99%	177	99.99%

The absolute numbers of lexical verbs are bigger in all construction types than forms of *be*. Consequently, a comparison of the percentage share of one or the other realisation would reveal a predominance of lexical verbs for all construction types. It makes more sense to look at the distribution of either realisation across the eight construction types. Table 7 shows that lexical verbs cluster in construction type V (infinitive construction), whereas forms of *be* have the highest relative frequency in type II (*that*-clause with a verb in the subjunctive). This last result fulfills the first part of our initial expectations, all the more so as in type II the relation between the relative frequencies of lexical verbs and forms of *be* is almost 1 : 2. The share of *be* in type VII holds only rank three in the relative frequency scale with 13.56 per cent, but the relation between the relative frequency of lexical verbs and *be* is more than 1 : 4. So the second part of our expectations is also fulfilled. The high share of lexical verbs in construction type V suggests that lexical verbs paved the way for the introduction of infinitives into mandative constructions, but this point needs further study. The ratio lexical verb vs *be* in mandative constructions with a verb in the subjunctive started to change in favour of *be* after ME2, and this trend continued throughout the rest of the ME period, cf. Table 8:

Table 8: Subjunctives of lexical verbs and of *be* in ME1–ME4

	Lexical verb		<i>be</i>		Total	
ME1	46	75.41%	15	24.59%	61	100.00%
ME2	39	84.78%	7	15.22%	46	100.00%
ME3	70	73.68%	25	26.32%	95	100.00%
ME4	69	68.32%	32	31.68%	101	100.00%

These figures represent roughly the ratios: 3 : 1, 5.5 : 1, 3 : 1, 2 : 1. The share of *be* subjunctives dropped from ME1 to ME2 and then rose steadily until the last ME sub-period.

### 3.4 The influence of the matrix verb

Constructional preferences are most obvious in high-frequency items. Therefore I checked the five most frequent verbs of my corpus (*bede*, *loke*, *pray*, *segge*, *wille*) to find out if the choice of a particular mandative matrix verb would influence the choice of the type of dependent clause. The results of this test are given in Table 9:

Table 9: Distribution of construction types of the five most frequent verbs

	<i>That</i> -clause		Infinitive construction		Direct speech		Total	
<i>Bede</i>	74	50.00%	69	46.62%	5	3.78%	148	100.00%
<i>Loke</i>	65	97.01%	2	2.99%	0		67	100.00%
<i>Pray</i>	63	37.28%	62	36.69%	44	26.04%	169	100.01%
<i>Segge</i>	33	11.91%	3	1.08%	241	87.00%	277	99.99%
<i>Wille</i>	89	90.82%	9	9.18%	0		98	100.00%
Total	325	42.76%	145	19.08%	290	38.16%	760	100.00%

For the verbs *loke* and *wille* only the construction types *that*-clause and infinitive construction are attested, and both verbs show a clear preference for *that*-clauses.

By contrast, the verb *segge* is most often combined with direct speech, a property which follows from its meaning. In Manabe's corpus *segge* proved to be one of the few verbs with a higher frequency of finite clauses than with infinitives. Leaving direct speech aside, which he did not consider at all, my results for *segge* are in line with his.

The verbs *bede* and *pray* combine more often with *that*-clauses and infinitive constructions than with direct speech, but the relative shares of the preferred construction types do not differ much. Compared to the distribution of finite clauses and infinitives in Manabe's corpus, my results are surprising. In his semantic classification both verbs belong to the Command-Desire type, which "shows the second greatest predominance of infinitives over finite clauses" (Manabe 1989: 157). The verbs *bede* and *pray* are explicitly mentioned as typical representatives of this property. The different syntactic behaviour of these verbs in the two corpora may stem from the different structure of the corpora themselves; Manabe's corpus contains e.g. no legal or medical texts (categories STA and IS of HC) and only a small number of letters.

For the verb *bede* the small frequency difference between *that*-clauses and infinitive constructions could be explained by the fact that I did not take into account the different meanings of this verb. It can denote a request ('pray', 'beg') or an order ('command', 'enjoin'). López-Couso and Méndez-Naya found that "while in requests subjunctive complements remain the most frequent choice in the two periods under analysis, commands show a clear changeover from subjunctive to infinitival complements in the transition from OE to ME" (López-Couso and Méndez-Naya 2006: 51). Although I cannot yet offer an explanation for the verb *pray*, I assume that a more detailed analysis of this verb can shed some more light on its syntactic behaviour.

#### 4 Summary

It was the object of this paper to analyse the realisation possibilities of dependent mandative constructions in ME. The data were extracted from the ME part of the HC. Eight construction types were established as sub-classes of the three realisation types *that*-clause, infinitive construction, and direct speech. The influence of the factors time, text category, verb type in the dependent clause, and mandative matrix verb was tested.

The main results of the analysis are:

The mandative subjunctive in *that*-clauses was replaced by modal constructions; in mandative direct speech, it was replaced by the imperative mood. The replacement in *that*-clauses set in earlier than that in direct speech.

For the correlation of text categories and mandative construction types the heterogeneous category XX of the HC was sub-divided into COR (public and private correspondence), BIBLE (texts from the Old and the New Testament), DOC (documents), MYST (mystery plays), and OTHER (the rest). With respect

to their preferred construction types, the text categories formed two classes. One class, comprising the categories STA, IS, IR, DOC, and BIBLE, prefers mandative constructions with a strong mandative force, which relies on the verb in the matrix clause and the form of the verbal syntagm in the dependent clause, namely subjunctive, imperative, or modal expression. It turned out that the text categories with these preferences have a didactic or authoritative character. The writers of these texts intend to impose special behavioural patterns on their addressees. The other class, comprising the categories NN, NI, COR, and MYST prefers infinitive constructions. Infinitive constructions have only weak mandative force, because only the verb of the matrix clause conveys mandative meaning. The text categories with this preference are either written narratives or are situated near the oral end of the written – oral continuum. Both characterizations are in line with weak mandative meanings. Writers of narrative texts have no intention of imposing special behavioural patterns on their addressees, and in conversation directives are preferably expressed by indirect strategies.

The hypothesis that the indicative vs subjunctive distinction was better preserved in the verb *be* than in lexical verbs could be supported. It proved particularly conspicuous in *that*-clauses, which showed the biggest share of *be* subjunctives of all construction types. Additional support came from the *be* subjunctives in direct speech, where their relative share was four times that of lexical verbs.

The choice of the matrix verb largely determines the choice of the mandative construction type. The verbs *loke* and *wille* show a clear preference for *that*-clauses, the verb *segge* for direct speech. Although the verbs *bede* and *pray* combine most often with *that*-clauses, the frequency of infinitive constructions does not lag behind much. This result is in contrast to Manabe's finding that infinitives were the preferred construction type of these verbs. The conflicting results may be a consequence of the different structure of the corpora from which the data were extracted. The indeterminacy of *bede* and *pray* in the HC may be a consequence of the fact that polysemy was not taken into consideration in this paper. Further studies will probably shed more light on the syntactic properties of these verbs.

### Notes

1. The mandative subjunctive can also be governed by a set of nouns and adjectives; they will not be considered here.
2. In the irregular verb *be*, the subjunctive is also formally marked for the first person singular present tense.



3. All forms of plural present were analysed as 'ambiguous', thus neglecting dialectal variation (cf. Lass 1992: 137).

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