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## Why Jesus and Job spoke bad Welsh : the origin and distribution of V2 orders in Middle Welsh

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## Why Jesus and Job spoke bad Welsh

The origin and distribution of V2 orders in Middle Welsh

This thesis covers a wide range of topics from historical to computational and corpus linguistics as well as synchronic and diachronic syntax and information structure. The latest insights in each of these sub-fields of linguistics are necessary to address what has been a vexed problem in the study of Middle Welsh for a long time. Middle Welsh word order is particularly puzzling, because there is a wide range of verb-second patterns and the distribution of those is not at all clear. Secondly, these so-called 'Abnormal Orders' are only found in the Middle Welsh period; Old and Modern Welsh mainly exhibit verb-initial patterns.

Verb-second orders are shown to have developed from earlier patterns with hanging topics and focussed cleft constructions by carefully reconstructing their syntactic history in Old Welsh and related Celtic languages. A detailed analysis of a syntactically and pragmatically annotated corpus, built especially for this thesis, reveals that a combination of these features explains which word-order pattern appears in which particular context. From a diachronic syntactic point of view, Middle Welsh shares some crucial developments in the rise of V2 with Early Romance, but it differs in others.

By consistently examining both syntactic and information-structural features of various verb-second patterns, this thesis not only provides a sound methodology to investigate the interaction between information structure and syntax in historical data, it also paves the way for future comparative studies in diachronic syntax by providing detailed analyses of a large amount of data from one of the lesser-studied verb-second languages.



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