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

Meelen, M.

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CHAPTER 4

Word order patterns in Welsh

4.1 Introduction

“The position of words in a sentence depends on the emphasis to be laid on them. In Welsh, as in other languages, the most important word takes precedence. In ordinary discourse, when no particular emphasis is intended to be expressed, or where the verb, as being the main part of the clause, may be regarded as emphatic, the order will stand thus: verb, subject, predicate or object.”

(Rowland, 1876:173)

In his 1876 grammar, Thomas Rowland aimed to give an accurate description of the Welsh language “based on the most approved systems, with copious examples from some of the most correct Welsh writers” (Rowland, 1876:title). As most other nineteenth-century Welsh grammarians, he established VSO as the basic word order in declarative main clauses.

The VSO preference seems to be an innovation of the Insular Celtic languages. Old Irish, the main focus of early research on Celtic by historical linguists, was VSO (cf. Thurneysen (2003 [1946])). According to Vendryes (1912), verb-initial word orders were already a possibility in Indo-European. In Celtic then, this became the only possibility: “L’originalité du celtique est d’avoir généralisé un ordre occasionnel en faisant de cette possibilité une nécessité” (Vendryes, 1912:338). All other branches of Indo-European (e.g. Greek, Indo-Iranian, Balto-Slavic) kept a preferred subject-initial order (SVO or SOV). Syntactic evidence from Continental Celtic languages is scarce, but although verb-initial order was an option, it was certainly not the preferred option in Gaulish (cf. Fife (2010) among others). VSO word order

was therefore one of the main reasons to propose a significant pre-Indo-European substrate in the Insular Celtic branch (cf. Wagner (1959)).

Typologically, preferred verb-initial orders are a minority among the world's languages, though Celtic is far from unique. Other features that are typically found in VSO languages are also found in Celtic languages, e.g. *wh*-words are placed before the verb, they mainly exhibit post-head modification, they are prepositional rather than postpositional, the main verbs follow their auxiliaries, they have sentence-initial particles and, finally, they have SVO as an alternate order (cf. Fife (2010) and Ouhalla (1994)). Concerning this final feature, John Morris-Jones, one of the most famous Oxford Welsh reformers, wrote in his appendix to Rhys & Jones's 1906 *The Welsh People*:

“(...) there appears in Welsh another form of sentence in which the noun comes first. No distinction is made in any of our Welsh grammars between this and the simple form of sentence in which the verb comes first; and the Welsh translators of the Bible constantly misuse it for the simple form; as *Job a atebodd*, instead of *atebodd Job*, for ‘Job answered’.”

(Rhys & Jones, 1902:619)

The 1588 Bible translation had a great influence on Welsh literature for many centuries. From this perspective, as Paul Manning puts it “[i]t was somewhat of a source of chagrin to many to find out that, in effect, biblical figures like Jesus and Job spoke bad Welsh” (Manning, 1997:67). The famous grammarian Rowland notes that “[w]hen the subject of the clause is antithetical, the order of the construction will be subject, verb, predicate or object.” Rowland (1876:174). He adds that many Welsh writers “and especially translators” continually express ordinary discourse in this manner for reasons of elegance and “where the same order of words would render the sentences too monotonous”. Furthermore, “[i]f the subject is a personal pronoun, it is continually, in affirmative sentences, put before the verb, even when the subject is not antithetic” (Rowland, 1876:175). Nineteenth-century Welsh in the eyes of Rowland thus had ‘simple’ sentence (VSO), ‘somewhat emphatic’ sentences (SVO) and ‘rhetorical’ sentences “for the sake of still greater emphasis and vivacity” (Rowland, 1876:175). In these ‘rhetorical’ sentences, any constituent could be placed in front of the verb.

The ‘somewhat emphatic’ sentences listed in Rowland’s grammar (without English translation) all exhibit the order Subject - *a* - Verb. The particle *a*, according to Rowland, was a “mere expletive” particle placed immediately before the verb. He quotes Dr Davies who described *a* in the seventeenth century as “adverbium seu particular verbis preposita *nihil significans*”.¹

In Anwyl’s 1899 Welsh grammar two patterns are discussed: the ‘normal’ and the ‘inverted’ word order. VS + the remainder of the predicate is considered the ‘normal’ order, whereas the inverted order starts with an emphasised constituent

¹It should be noted, however, that although this is quoted by various subsequent grammarians, this sentence is actually not found in Dr Davies’s grammar of the Welsh language from 1621, where the section on syntax simply states: “Nominativae voces verbis praeponuntur interposito affirmandi adverbio *a* (...). Pro illo tamen *a*, Demetae dicunt *y*” (J. Davies, 1621[1809]:181-182).

followed by a particle *a/y(r)* and the verb with default third-person singular ending. The latter was a complex sentence with a cleft formation and a relative clause. Over the centuries the sentence-initial copula *ys* ‘it is’ was omitted and thus these disguised complex sentences with inverted order (called the ‘Mixed’ rather than ‘Abnormal’ order) were interpreted as ‘simple’ normal sentences in the Middle Welsh period.

Discussions on the exact origin of the prevalent ‘inverted’ or ‘Abnormal’ word orders in Middle Welsh and its development into the Modern Welsh period are continued in the following decades by John Morris-Jones (1931), Henry Lewis (1931, 1942), Melville Richards (1938) and J.J. Evans (1946). With the publication of D. Simon Evans’s *Grammar of Middle Welsh* in 1964, the issues are far from solved, but the different word order patterns are now clearly defined:

- (particle)VSO (infrequent in Middle Welsh, but occurs in Old Welsh)
- subject / object / object (or subject) of verbal noun + *a/ry/yr* + verb (‘Abnormal Sentence’)
- adverb + *y(d)/yt/ry/yr* + verb (‘Abnormal Sentence’)
- (copula *ys*) + emphasised constituent + relative clause (‘Mixed Order’)

Formally, the distinctions that were made between the Abnormal and the Mixed orders were based on agreement patterns and negation. The relative verb in the Mixed order usually exhibits default third-person singular endings, but it should be noted that agreement patterns in Welsh vary considerably over time (cf. Koch (1991) and D. S. Evans (1971)). Willis (1998), furthermore notes that the different negative patterns reflect “an entirely unrelated distinction between constituent and clausal negation” (Willis, 1998:6). As soon as the sentence-initial copula *ys* was lost, there was no formal way to distinguish the two patterns. Another crucial question remained: if all these forms were possible which constituent exactly was placed before the verb in which specific contexts? This chapter aims to give a systematic overview of the word order patterns in Welsh. After briefly introducing previous scholarly literature, I list all possible patterns in Welsh and describe their respective word orders in detail with many examples from Old, Middle and Modern Welsh sources.

4.1.1 Functional approaches to word order variation

Proinsias MacCana’s 1973 paper on the Welsh Abnormal Sentence initiated a vast body of literature on the variation of word order patterns in various Middle Welsh texts as well. Most of the following contributions were made by T. Arwyn Watkins (1977/78, 1983/84, 1987, 1988, 1991, 1993 and 1997), Erich Poppe (1988, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1993, 2000, 2009 and 2014), James Fife (1991, 1993 and, with Gareth King, 1991), Manning (1995), Manning (1997) and, in particular, and Manning (2004) and by MacCana himself (1979, 1990, 1991). Once the synchronic description of the abnormal word order pattern was generally accepted, attention shifted to its usage in various contexts. Why were there various ways of expressing

positive main declarative sentences? When were they subject-, object- or adjunct-initial and why then? Or was there random variation and could all patterns be used in any context?

Since comparing frequencies of different patterns in various texts could not sufficiently answer any of these questions (cf. Poppe (1993)), new researchers took a functional or pragmatic approach to this problem. Erich Poppe discovered that “variation in word order and sentence types is remarkably infrequent in sentences expressing the same or, at least, a very similar information content.” (Poppe, 1990:458). Watkins, too, concluded that “we have a small and definable group of exceptions to a near-rigid rule in M[iddle] W[elsh] prose prohibiting the occurrence of the verb as the initial constituent in the positive declarative sentence.” (T. A. Watkins, 1993:123). Poppe (1993) suggested a functional analysis for the ‘fronting’ construction (i.e. the abnormal/verb-second order): “The hypothesis is that frontings can be explained in terms of topic and focus. (...) Topicalization is interpreted to be the basic, unmarked pattern in a positive, main statement in MW prose.” (Poppe, 1993:115).

As pointed out in the previous chapter, however, Information Structural terminology like ‘topic’ and ‘focus’ remained ambiguous for a long time. Poppe’s research initially centered around the idea of “Situationskulisse” or the way in which the sentence can be linked to the situation in the preceding context by placing an adjunct (adverb or prepositional phrases) in initial position. Fife & King (1991) attempt to give clear definitions of various IS categories from a cross-linguistic perspective. But as Poppe notes, there are still instances of functional exceptions and ambiguities (Poppe, 2009:253). According to him, “all attempts to find motivations behind the actual word order patternings of Middle Welsh prose will in the final analysis have to reckon with variation resulting from a text-producer’s considerable, but not unrestricted choice of syntactic options available for a specific context.” (Poppe, 2014:100)

4.1.2 From Old Welsh to Middle and Modern Welsh

While “the thought of the giants of earlier generations... (Morris-Jones, Sir Ifor Williams and Henry Lewis)... continue to loom large” (Koch, 1991:3), research into the origin and use of the Abnormal order developed into two main directions. MacCana (1991), T. A. Watkins (1977) and Fife (1988) considered it as a mere literary phenomenon:

“The literati of Middle Welsh took this pre-existing potential [the Abnormal Sentence - MM] and popularized it (among themselves) to the extent of overstepping the bounds of communicative usefulness. At that point fronting was done for fronting’s sake alone.”

(Fife & King, 1991:144)

Alternatively, D. S. Evans (1968:336-7) and Koch (1991) considered the abnormal order a true feature of (spoken) Middle Welsh. According to Koch (1991), it was an innovation also seen in other Brythonic languages that only entered the literary

language in a later stage (i.e. later than Old Welsh). Willis (1998) argues that “this view is considerably simpler and involves far less ‘special pleading’, such as references to unverifiable developments and resort to artificial literary languages to explain away contradictory evidence” (Willis, 1998:18). He builds on this account in a generative syntactic framework to explain the subsequent loss of the abnormal order in the Early Modern Welsh period (see Chapter 7 for a detailed diachronic analysis of this construction).

4.2 The question of basic word order

Before moving on to the overview of patterns, we need to address the question of basic word order. Many of the above-mentioned studies of Welsh word order give overviews of the frequency and textual distribution of each pattern. The focus lies on positive declaratives that are main, rather than subordinate clauses. The most frequent pattern is then often called the ‘basic’ word order. Frequencies of certain patterns can, however, differ in every genre, in which case it would be necessary to specify that pattern X is most frequent in narrative native tales (but maybe not in, for example, historical chronicles). This task, be it somewhat laborious, could be done for each genre, register, style etc. In the frequency tables at the end of this chapter, therefore, all Welsh texts are displayed separately. The question remains: to what extent - if at all - does this say anything about the ‘basic’ word order in Middle Welsh on the whole (including the spoken language)?

Take for example the following statement from Oliver Currie (where PDMCs means Positive Declarative Main Clauses): “There does not seem to have been any single statistically predominant, basic word order in PDMCs in Middle Welsh prose; (...) In Modern Welsh, in contrast, verb-initial order has been grammaticalized as the basic word order.” (Currie, 2000:206). In this context, ‘grammaticalized’ apparently means ‘become statistically predominant in the grammar’, which, in turn, means it therefore must be the ‘basic’ word order. This statement is, however, only meaningful if relative frequency is generally accepted as a decisive indicator for the “basicity” of word order of a language as a whole and if this is the case for all genres, registers etc.

From an information-structural perspective, there are various other ways of determining the ‘basic’ or ‘canonical’ word order of a language. Kirk (2012), for example, describes a neutral clause with ‘basic’ word order as “a clause in which no element has a special topic or focus interpretation”² (Kirk, 2012:27) (see also É.Kiss (1998) and Rizzi (1997)). She lists examples of generic and situational sentences, answers to broad focus questions (e.g. ‘What happened?’) and introductions to parables. These criteria are testable in spoken languages, but it is not always easy to find enough (or any) good examples in historical data.

If we compare the New Testament (NT) examples of situational sentences Kirk (2012:38) finds with VSO and SVO in Greek to their Middle and Modern Welsh

²No distinction is made between sentence and discourse topics. ‘Topic’ is to be interpreted as a constituent that is topicalised for example by ways of fronting.

translations, we see a clear verb-second (abnormal) order in Middle Welsh vs. a verb-initial pattern in Modern Welsh:

- (1) New Testament Lk 7:16 ‘Everyone became afraid.’
- a. *élaben* *dè phóbos pántas*
seize.PAST.3S PRT fear everyone
Lit. ‘Fear seized all (people)’ (NT Greek - VS)
 - b. *Ac ofn a ddaeth ar bawb*
and fear PRT come.PAST.3S on all
Lit. ‘And fear came to everyone.’ (Middle Welsh - V2)
 - c. *Cydiodd ofn ym mhawb*
take-hold.PAST.3S fear in all
Lit. ‘Fear rose in everyone.’ (Modern Welsh - VS)
- (2) New Testament Lk 5:26 ‘And everyone became amazed.’
- a. *kai éxtasis élaben hápantas*
and amazement seize.PAST.3S everyone
Lit. ‘And amazement seized everyone.’ (NT Greek - SV)
 - b. *A syndod a ddaeth ar bawb*
and surprise PRT come.PAST.3S on all
Lit. ‘And surprise came to everyone.’ (Middle Welsh - V2)
 - c. *Daeth syndod dros bawb*
come.PAST.3S surprise through all
Lit. ‘Surprise came to everyone.’ (Modern Welsh - VS)
- Answers to broad focus questions like ‘What happened?’ have SV(O) order in NT Greek. Their Middle Welsh translations are consistently verb-second and their Modern Welsh equivalents are either translated with VSO patterns or periphrastic constructions in which the finite verb (the auxiliary) is still clause-initial.
- (3) New Testament Lk 1:34-35 ‘(How will this be, since I haven’t been with a man?)’
- a. *pneûma hágion epeleúsetai epì sé*
spirit holy come.FUT.3S upon you
‘The holy ghost will come upon you.’ (NT Greek - SV)
 - b. *Yr Ysbryd Glân a ddaw arnat ti*
the Ghost Holy PRT come.FUT.3S on.2S you
‘The Holy Ghost will come upon you.’ (Middle Welsh - V2)
 - c. *Daw ’r Ysbryd Glân arnat*
come.FUT.3S the Ghost Holy on.2S
‘The holy ghost will come upon you’ (Modern Welsh - VS)
- (4) New Testament Lk 1:35 ‘(The holy ghost will come upon you)’
- a. *kai dúnamis hupsístou episkiásei soi*
and power highest shadow.FUT.3S you
‘and the power of the highest will overshadow you.’ (NT Greek - SVO)

- b. *a nerth y Goruchaf a 'th gysgoda di*
 and power the Highest PRT 2S overshadow.FUT.3S you
 'and the power of the Highest will overshadow you.' (Middle Welsh - V2)
- c. *a bydd nerth y Goruchaf yn dy gysgodi*
 and be.FUT.3S power the Highest PROGR 2S overshadow.INF
 'and the power of the highest will overshadow you.' (Modern Welsh - AuxSOBJCLV)

The picture is exactly the same in introductions to parables (although only one example here is cited in NT Greek):

- (5) New Testament Lk 14:16 '(And he said to him),'
- a. *ánthro:pós tis epoíei deípnon méga*
 man INDEF make.PAST.3S dinner large
 'A certain man made a large dinner' (NT Greek - SVO)
- b. *Rhyw ŵr a wnaeth swper mawr*
 some man PRT do.PAST.3S dinner big
 'Some man made a big dinner.' (Middle Welsh - V2)
- c. *Yr oedd dyn yn trefnu gwledd fawr.*
 PRT be.PAST.3S man PROGR make.INF dinner big
 'A certain man made a large dinner' (Modern Welsh - AuxSVO)

The overall pattern in Welsh is very clear: Middle Welsh bible translators chose to use the abnormal sentence or verb-second pattern (SaVO) in each of these contexts. According to Kirk's definition, verb-second would thus be considered the 'basic' or 'neutral, unmarked' word order in Middle Welsh. In Modern Welsh, however, these sentences are consistently translated with verb-initial or auxiliary-initial orders. Modern Welsh could thus be described as having a VSO 'basic' word order in this way.

Since these types of sentence without 'topic' or 'focus' are not always easy to find in historical data, it is useful to consider some more clearly defined notions of information structure. In the previous chapter, ways of finding the focus articulation of a sentence have been described in more detail. According to Lambrecht (1994), Levinsohn (2009) and Van der Wal (2009), basic word order can be observed in sentences with predicate focus (i.e. topic-comment articulations). This is especially the case in narrative literature (Komen, 2013). There are furthermore other factors interacting with the focus articulation: the notions of 'Point of Departure' (or frame setting) and 'the Principle of Natural Information Flow'. Sentences with predicate focus that have no additional Point of Departure or marked information flow could be considered to exhibit 'basic' word order from this point of view.

As will become clear in Chapters 5 and 6, from this perspective the subject-initial or adjunct-initial versions of the abnormal sentence would be the 'basic' word order in Middle Welsh.

4.3 Overview of word order patterns

Word order patterns can be described in various ways. The most basic approach only takes the finite verb and its core arguments (the subject and the direct object) into consideration, resulting in six logical possibilities (SOV, SVO, VSO, VOS, OSV, OVS). This approach is useful when comparing languages on a very large scale. On the very opposite end of the spectrum lie various theoretical frameworks describing the underlying structural configurations and modifications of the different patterns in great detail. The latter can help test predictions and thus verify hypotheses about types of word order variation and change. I leave those types of analyses for the next chapters. In this chapter, I focus on the superficial word order patterns that can be observed in Middle Welsh. Apart from the finite verb and its core arguments, I take adjuncts and other functional elements into consideration as well in order to give an exhaustive overview of all possible patterns.

In this section I present all word order patterns found in positive declarative main clauses in Welsh. The description focusses on the surface order of the verb and its core arguments and how the respective word order patterns are treated in scholarly literature. Copular and non-verbal clauses are discussed as well, though only the syntax of identificatory copular clauses will be analysed in greater detail in Chapter 6. The following types of word order patterns exist in Welsh positive declarative main clauses:

- I Verb-initial (VSO)
 - (a) VSO (verb absolute clause-initial)
 - (b) particle VSO

- II Periphrastic constructions with initial auxiliary (AuxSVO)
 - (a) with auxiliary *bod*
 - (b) with auxiliary *gwneud*
 - (c) with auxiliary *ddaru*

- III Verb-second after adjuncts ('Abnormal Sentence')
 - (a) AdjP *y* VSO
 - (b) PredP *y* VSO
 - (c) AspP *y* VSO
 - (d) AdvP *y* VSO
 - (e) PP *y* VSO

- IV Verb-second after arguments and VNs ('Abnormal Sentence')
 - (a) S *a* V_{agree} O
 - (b) O *a* V S
 - (c) patient *a* V_{impersonal}
 - (d) VN *a* DO_{infl} (*gwneuthur*-periphrasis)

V Verb-second after focussed items ('Mixed Sentence')

- (a) (*ys*) focussed noun/pronoun *a* V_{3sg}
- (b) (*ys*) focussed adjunct *y* V_{3sg}

VI Bare verbal nouns

- (a) VN + agent
- (b) VN + *o* + agent
- (c) *a(c)* VN (continuing previous finite clause)

VII Copular clauses

- (a) SCP
- (b) PCS
- (c) CPS
- (d) C S *yn* P
- (e) C S (*ys*)*sydd* P

VIII Identificational Focus construction

- (a) Sef + DP (+ relative)
- (b) Sef + *yw/oed*
- (c) Sef + *a/y*

IX Non-verbal clauses

- (a) *dyma/dyna/llyma/llyna* + S (truncated copular clause)
- (b) S (*yn*) P
- (c) PS
- (d) Absolute: Ac S P(P)

4.3.1 Type I: Verb-initial (VSO)

Absolute verb-initial word order is found in all stages of the language, though it is rare and only used in very specific contexts in Middle Welsh. T. A. Watkins (1987) argues that the verb-initial word order is characteristic of Old Welsh prose, but the evidence for this, once embedded and negative clauses are removed from his data, is meagre. There are certainly not enough Old Welsh sources for us to establish what the basic word order was at that time, whichever of the above-mentioned methods (statistical or information-structural) is used.

- (6) *prinit hinnoid .iiii. aues*
 buy.PRES.3S that four birds
 'That buys four birds' (Old Welsh Ox. 234.33 - Willis (1998:10))

In Middle Welsh there are more examples of absolute verb-initial word order, but they seem to be restricted to specific contexts:

- (a) Impersonal verbs
- (b) Imperatives

- (c) verba dicendi ('said he')
- (d) answers or direct responses to questions or commands
- (e) oaths and other idiomatic sayings

- (7) a. *Gorucpwyd hynny.*
do.PAST.IMPERS that
'That was done.' (Impersonal verbs - CO 519)
- b. *Aet y porthawr allan*
go.PRES-IPV.3S the gatekeeper out
'Let the gatekeeper go out!' (Imperatives - CO 798)
- c. *Amkawd y wrach, Nyd oes plant itaw.*
say.PAST.3S the hag not be.3S children to.3MS
'The hag sad: 'He doesn't have children.'" (Verba Dicendi - CO 38)
- d. *Gwelem arglwyd heb wy mynyd mawr (...)*
see.PAST.1P lord said they mountain big (...)
'We saw, they said, a big mountain (...).' (Answer - Branwen 265)
- e. *Henpych gwell. Arglwyd heb ef*
be.PRES-SUBJ.2S well Lord said he
'Hail Lord, said he' (Idiom - Gereint 32)

In Modern Welsh, VSO order is called *y frawddeg seml* 'the simple sentence' by most grammarians (cf. Richards (1938)). Stephen J. Williams in his 1980 grammar tends to use the term 'normal sentence' alongside 'simple sentence', indicating that this is the most common word order in Modern Welsh. Anwyl (1899) does the same, but Gareth King uses the term 'basic order' (as opposed to what he calls the focussed, i.e. verb-second, order). Examples like (8) are given in most Welsh grammars and also taught in very popular Welsh for Adults courses. Some native speakers, however, seem sceptical about the actual use of these forms. To them, verb-initial orders without either a sentence-initial particle or soft mutation on the initial consonant of the verb like (8) seem highly literary at the very least:

- (8) *Gwelodd y plentyn geffyl.*
see.PAST.3S the child horse
'The child saw a horse.' Williams (1980)

Clauses with sentence-initial particles *fe* (in South Wales) or *mi* (in North Wales) like (9c) are commonly found in Modern Spoken Welsh. In Middle Welsh it was also possible to start a sentence with a preverbal particle, but again, examples of those in absolute sentence-initial position are very limited:

- (9) a. *Y dywawt Diwrnach (...)*
PRT say.PRET.3S Diwrnach (...)
'Diwrnach says (...)' (CO 1038)
- b. *E doeth im heb ef (...)*
PRT come.PAST.3S to.1S said he (...)
'It came to me, said he (...)' (Branwen 148-149)

- c. *Fe gyfyd yr afon yn uwch.*
 PRT rise.PRES.3S the river PRED higher
 ‘The river will rise higher.’ Anwyl (1899)

In contexts of narrative continuity there are many more examples of sentences with preverbal particles in Middle Welsh. According to Willis (1998), however, these examples are only superficially verb-initial. Underlyingly, these sentences exhibit topic-drop and are thus not proper examples of verb-initial order in Middle Welsh. According to Currie (2000), even in the Early Modern Welsh period “we still find several prose texts with either no examples at all of AIV [Absolute Initial Verb - MM] order in the sections analysed.” (Currie, 2000:207). In other texts, however, the frequency of verb-initial patterns in positive main declaratives steadily increases. It is furthermore worth noting that verb-initial orders are consistently found after many conjunctions as in (10a), in finite subordinate clauses as in (10b) and in contexts with clausal negation as in (10c) throughout the history of Welsh:

- (10) a. (...) *fel y lladdwyf ef*
 (...) so that PRT kill.PRES-SBJ.1S him
 ‘so that I could kill him’ (b1588 - 1 Sam. 15.19)
- b. *O gwnaeth hitheu gam, kymeret (...)*
 if do.PAST.3S she wrong take.PRES-IPV.3S (...)
 ‘If she has done wrong, let her take (...)’ (PKM 21.17-18)
- c. *Ny symudawd Peredur y ar y vedwl (...)*
 NEG move.PAST.3S Peredur from 3MS thought (...)
 ‘Peredur did not move from his thoughts (...)’ (Peredur 31.2)

Some grammarians call both types (with or without the sentence-initial particle) ‘simple’ or ‘normal’ sentences (cf. D. S. Evans (2003 [1964]), Williams (1980) and Richards (1938)), others do not make a distinction between the two (cf. Thorne (1993), King (1993), Morris-Jones (1931) and Anwyl (1899)).

4.3.2 Type II: Periphrastics with initial auxiliary (AuxSVO)

There are different types of periphrastic constructions available in Welsh. These are sentences in which the main verb is a verbal noun and the inflection appears on an auxiliary verb. Three of the main auxiliaries used are inflected forms of *bod* ‘to be’, *gwneud* ‘to do’ or *darfod* ‘to happen’. The inflected forms of *bod* in Middle Welsh were followed by the subject + an aspectual marker *yn* or *wedi*, resulting in progressive or perfective aspect respectively.

- (11) a. *Mae uyg kallon yn tirioni vrthyt.*
 be.PRES.3S 1S heart PROGR grow-fond.INF with.2S
 ‘My heart inclines toward you.’ (CO 166)
- b. (...) *y mae y gwyr hynn yn mynnu an llad*
 (...) PRT be.PRES.3S the men these PROGR want.INF 1P kill.INF
 ‘(...) these men want to destroy us’ (PKM 54.25)

There are also examples of periphrastic constructions in Middle Welsh in which the auxiliary is not sentence-initial. They can be found in sentences with the abnormal word order or sentences with contrastively focussed elements in sentence-initial position. The examples in (12) with periphrastic constructions are therefore not taken into account here. They are discussed in the sections of their respective word order pattern (types III and V) below.

- (12) a. *ac yna yd oyd marchawc y llamysten yn dodi yr*
 and then PRT be.PAST.3S knight the sparrow-hawk PROGR place.INF the
ostec
 silence
 ‘and then the knight of the sparrow-hawk was ordering silence’ (Gereint 277)
- b. *mi yd wyt yn y geissaw*
 me PRT be.PRED.2S PROGR 3MS search.INF
 ‘It is me you are looking for’ (Peredur 28.25-26)

In Modern Welsh these constructions have greatly increased in frequency (cf. Borsley et al. (2007:303)) to the extent that they have taken over the function of the present-tense paradigm to denote present time (causing the present-tense paradigm to shift to function as a modal future). They are abundantly used in the spoken language as well (which auxiliary is preferred is dialectally determined, as shown in examples 13a-c). Even stative verbs are possible, as shown in (13d), indicating that the progressive aspect is not necessary:

- (13) a. *Mae Elin wedi/yn prynu torth o fara.*
 be.PRES.3S Elin PERF/PROGR buy.INF loaf of bread
 ‘Elin has bought/is buying a loaf of bread.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:12)
- b. *Gwnaeth Elin brynu torth o fara.*
 do.PAST.3S Elin buy.INF loaf of bread
 ‘Elin bought a loaf of bread.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:12)
- c. *Ddaru Elin brynu torth o fara.*
 PAST Elin buy.INF loaf of bread
 ‘Elin bought a loaf of bread.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:12)
- d. *Dw i'n gwybod yr ateb.*
 be.PRES.1S I PROGR know.INF the answer
 ‘I know the answer.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:12n.5)

4.3.3 Type III: Verb-second after adjuncts (‘Abnormal’)

The third type of word order pattern under investigation is the infamous abnormal sentence discussed abundantly in previous literature as mentioned above. In Welsh grammar, this type of word order is called *y frawddeg annormal* ‘the abnormal sentence’ (cf. among others Richards (1938)). Anwyl (1899) refers to it as the ‘inverted order’ and thus does not distinguish this from the other order in which the verb comes in second position following a focussed constituent (see the section on

the ‘Mixed Sentence’ below). Other names for this construction are ‘cleft-fronted’ (T. A. Watkins, 1993), ‘X1-order’ (Poppe, 2009), ‘verb-medial’ (Currie, 2013) or ‘verb-second’ (Willis, 1998).

All of these show the finite verb is not the first, but the second core constituent of the clause. The initial position in the sentence could first of all be filled by an adjunct. This first constituent could be an aspectual, adjectival, adverbial (including predicational) or prepositional phrase.

- (14) a. *Ac yn ymlad a r pryf hwnnw y colleis i vy llygad*
 and PROGR fight.INF with the animal that PRT lose.PAST.1S I 1S eye
 ‘And fighting with that animal I lost my eye.’ (Peredur 45.8-9)
- b. *Blin a lludedic y th welaf*
 tired and weary PRT 2S see.PRES.1S
 ‘I see you (are) very tired’ (WM 168.27-28)
- c. *Y trydyd dyd yd ymladawd Arthur e hun ac ef*
 the third day PRT fight.PAST.3S Arthur 3MS self with him
 ‘On the third day Arthur himself fought with him.’ (CO 1072)
- d. *Ac yn diannot y doeth tan o r nef*
 and PRED immediate PRT come.PAST.3S fire from the heaven
 ‘And without delay came fire from the sky.’ (Dewi 9.10)
- e. *Yn yr awr honno y dywedodd yr Iesu wrth y dyrfa*
 in the hour that PRT say.PAST.3S the Jesus to the crowd
 ‘In that moment Jesus said to the crowd (...)’ (b1588 - Mat. 26.55)

Verb-second sentences with sentence-initial adjuncts are characterised by the form of the preverbal particle *y(d)* (as opposed to the particle *a* found after subjects or objects as in Type IV discussed below). Examples with subordinate clauses preceding the main clause could be considered to be part of this adjunct-initial word order pattern too, since the same particle *y(d)* is used:

- (15) *Ban agorer y creu beunyd yd a allan.*
 when open.IMPERS the pen each.day PRT go.PRES.3S out
 ‘When the pen is opened every day it goes out.’ (PKM 89.3-4)

Sentences of this type are said to bear no particular emphasis on the first constituent. The sentence-initial adjuncts can, however, function as topics (see Poppe (1989) for a description of those constituents as frame setting topics or ‘Situationskulisse’). Examples like these are still possible in Modern Welsh as is shown in (16a). Without context, however, it is very difficult to determine whether the initial constituent is focussed or not. Focussed adverbs, like *hwyrach* ‘probably’ in (16b), are found with the exact same superficial word order pattern (the preverbal particle *y* can be left out):

- (16) a. *Yma y gwelsom ef*
 here PRT see.PAST.1P him
 ‘Here we saw him’ Williams (1980)

- b. *Hwyrach (y) bydd rhaid i chi aros.*
 probably (PRT) be.FUT.3S necessity to you wait.INF
 ‘You’ll probably have to wait.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:124)

Unlike propositional adverbs like *efallai* ‘maybe’, *braidd* ‘hardly’ and *hwyrach* ‘probably’, temporal adverbs in sentence-initial position in Modern Welsh are followed by the preverbal particle *fe*:

- (17) *Yfory fe fydd rhaid i chi aros.*
 tomorrow PRT be.FUT.3S necessary to you wait.INF
 ‘Tomorrow you will have to wait.’

In Middle Welsh the focussed and topicalised adverbs occupied the same sentence-initial position rendering the same superficial Adjunct-*y(d)*-Verb-Subject. There are, however, also examples with more than one sentence-initial adjunct or with adverbs preceding any of the other word order patterns discussed in this chapter.

4.3.4 Type IV: Verb-second after arguments (‘Abnormal’)

As mentioned above, core arguments can also appear in sentence-initial position. When subjects or direct objects are preceding the finite verb, the preverbal particle is not *y(d)* (as with adjuncts), but *a*. Subjects in sentence-initial position in Middle Welsh usually agree with the finite verb.³ Agreement is thus the main feature distinguishing this word order pattern from the other verb-second pattern with focussed sentence-initial constituents (the ‘Mixed Sentence’) described in the next section (see also chapter 6 for discussion of this issue).

Examples of subject-initial order can already be found in Old Welsh:

- (18) *Gur dicones remedaut elbid a-n-guorit*
 man create.PAST.3S wonder world PRT-1P-redeem.PRES.3S
 ‘The man who created the wonder of the world redeems us.’ (Juv. 5a-b - Willis (1998:10))

In Middle Welsh, this word order pattern can be found with pronouns (as in (19a)), demonstratives (as in (19a)) or full noun phrases in initial position (as in (19c)). Demonstratives and noun phrases in this position could function both as subjects or as direct objects of the finite verb (which can appear in any type of tense, mood or diathesis):

- (19) a. *Vynt a gerdassant racdunt.*
 they PRT walk.PAST.3P against.3P
 ‘They walked towards them.’ (PKM 50.11)
- b. *A hwinnw a doeth yma o iwerdon.*
 and that PRT come.PAST.3S here from Ireland
 ‘And that one came here from Ireland’ (PKM 35.5-6)

³But see D. S. Evans (2003 [1964]) for a detailed discussion and some counter-examples.

- c. *Duw a ch notho.*
 God PRT 2P reward.PRES-SUBJ.3S
 'May God reward you.'
- d. *a honno a elwir kaer yr Enryfedodeu*
 and that PRT call.IMPER castle the wonders
 'and that one is called Castle of Wonders' (Peredur 66.9-10)
- e. *A deu drws a welynt yn agoret*
 and two door PRT see.PAST.3P PRED open
 'and they saw two doors that were open' (PKM 46.22)
- f. *A hynny a dywetpwyd idi.*
 and that PRT say.PAST.IMPERS to.3FS
 'And that was said to her.' (PKM 80.11)

Verbal nouns could also occur in sentence-initial position. If this was the case, they were also followed by the preverbal particle *a* because they function as the direct object of the inflected form of the auxiliary *gwneuthur* 'to do'. Transitive verbal nouns could occur with their internal arguments in genitive apposition (20b). As in other genitive constructions in Welsh, pronominal arguments are cliticised and optionally doubled before and after their verbal nouns (20c). Prepositional phrases and other adverbials can also follow the initial verbal noun (20d). This periphrastic VN_aDO construction can appear with impersonals or passives (20e) as well.

- (20) a. *Kynhewi a oruc Pwyll.*
 fall-silent.INF PRT do.PAST.3S Pwyll
 'Pwyll fell silent.' (PKM 14.12)
- b. *a pharattoi y varch a e arueu a oruc.*
 and prepare.INF 3MS horse and 3MS weapons PRT do.PAST.3S
 'And he prepared his horse and his weapons.' (Owein 231)
- c. *A e aros ynteu a wnaeth Manawydan*
 and 3MS wait.INF him PRT do.PAST.3S Manawydan
 'And Manawydan waited for him' (PKM 56.20)
- d. *a y alw attaw a wnaeth*
 and 3MS call.INF to.3MS PRT do.PAST.3S
 'and he called him to him' (PKM 81.14-15)
- e. *Bedydyaw a wnaethpwyd y mab.*
 baptise.INF PRT do.PAST.IMPERS the son
 'The son was baptised.' (PKM 77.23-24)
- f. *A gwybot a wnaeth Arthur (...)*
 and know.INF PRT do.PAST.3S Arthur (...)
 'And Arthur knew that (...)' (BR 12.16)
- g. *A goresgyn y gaer a oruc a e gyuoeth.*
 and conquer 3MS castle PRT do.PAST.3S and 3MS wealth
 'And he conquered his castle and his wealth' (CO 1241)

Certain verbal nouns like *gwneuthur* 'to do', *bod* 'to be', *geni* 'to be born' or *cael* 'to obtain' never appear in sentence-initial position followed by the inflected form of

gwneuthur ‘to do’ (cf. T. A. Watkins (1993) who lists other verbs like *gwybod* ‘to know’ as well, but examples of these do in fact exist, as shown in (20f)).

Prepositional phrases and adverbs can precede or follow the subject or object. The finite verb in these cases appears to be in third or fourth rather than second position. According to Willis (1998), the verb-second analysis can be maintained, however, because it is only possible to add adjuncts before the verb, there are never two core arguments taking up the sentence-initial position. Even ‘heavy’, i.e. longer and/or more complex adjuncts, can appear before the finite verb, as shown in (21e) and (21f). The first constituent (counting for the V2 structure) is shown in parentheses.

- (21) a. *a [hwynnw] gwedy hynny a uu escob*
 and that after that PRT be.PAST.3S bishop
 ‘and afterwards he was bishop’ (Dewi 2.14)
- b. *Hir bylgeint [Guydyon] a gyuodes.*
 early.morning Gwydion PRT get.up.PAST.3S
 ‘Early next morning, Gwydion got up.’ (PKM 82.5-6)
- c. *Ac ar hynny [arouun y longeu] a wnaeth ef.*
 and on that make-for.INF 3P ships PRT do.PAST.3S he
 ‘And thereupon he made for their ships.’ (Branwen 85)
- d. *Mi hagen a uydaf gyuarwyd ywch*
 I however PRT be.FUT.1S guide to.2P
 ‘But I will be guiding you’ (CO 869)
- e. *A [chyuarch gwell eissoes y Owein] a oruc ef*
 but greet well still to Owein PRT do.PAST.3S he
 ‘But he still welcomed Owein’ (BR 14.13-14)
- f. *A [gouyn pwy oet] a oruc.*
 and ask.INF who be.PAST.3S PRT do.PAST.3S
 ‘And he asked who he was.’ (CO 165-166)

According to Fife, “The versions of fronting where the full array of adjuncts is fronted along with the VN seem more natural or unmarked than those where the adjuncts are split up. [...] The reason is that verbs form tighter units with their adjuncts than they do with their subjects.” (Fife, 1986:141). Willis (1998) claims that there are four types of adverbs and three possible preverbal positions, before the topic (i.e. fronted constituent), as the topic (word order Type III above) or following the topic. Topic adverbials (*gwedy hynny* ‘after that’) can obviously be in topic position, but they can also precede the topic. Prepositional arguments of verbal nouns (*(trigaw) ar hynny* ‘(decide) on that’) can only appear in topic position. Both constituent adverbials (*hagen* ‘however’, *heuyt* ‘also’) and non-topic adverbials (*eiss(y)oes* ‘nevertheless’) follow the topic, although the latter are also found in pretopical position.

4.3.5 Type V: Verb-second after focussed items ('Mixed')

Superficially, this type of word order pattern is very similar to that of the previous types of the abnormal sentence discussed above. It is also a verb-second pattern, but most Welsh grammarians have kept this type apart because the sentence-initial constituent of the mixed sentence is focussed and the finite verb exhibits default third-person singular inflection most of the time. According to T. A. Watkins (1993), "This sentence reveals an earlier syntactic stage of the cleft sentence, with the copula preceding the fronted constituent." (T. A. Watkins, 1993:126). This fronted constituent is then followed by a relative clause, which would explain the lack of agreement, since agreement is hardly ever found in relative clauses in Welsh.

- (22) a. *bydhawt ragot ti gyntafyd agorawr y porth*
 be.FUT.3S to.2S you first PRT open.IMPER the gate
 'for you shall the gate be opened first' (WM 456.34)
- b. *Oed maelgun a uelun in imuan*
 be.PAST.3S Maelgwn PRT see.PAST.1S PROGR fight.INF
 'It was Maelgwn that I could see fighting' (YMTh 57.5)
- c. *Ys mi a e heirch*
 be.PRES.3S I PRT 3FS seek.PRES.3S
 'It is I who seek her. (White Book WM 479.29)

Once the copula was lost (through phonological erosion in the Early Middle Welsh period, see Chapter 7), superficially, it was difficult to distinguish these mixed sentences with third-person subjects from their unfocussed abnormal counterparts. There are indeed examples of lack of agreement between verbs and their subjects that should be interpreted as contrastively focussed (e.g. the examples in (23)). But, as shown in example (24), there were also examples in late Middle Welsh at least of contrastively focussed subjects that *do* show agreement.

- (23) a. *Mi a e heirch*
 I PRT 3FS seek.PRES.3S
 'It is I who seek her.' (Red Book CO 566)
- b. *neu vinheu a orffei arnaw*
 or I PRT overcome.PAST-SUBJ.3S on.3MS
 '(he would overcome me) or I would overcome him' (Owein 96)
- c. *Miui, heb yr Scuthyn, a uyd gwassanaethwr hediw.*
 I.strong said Scuthyn PRT be.FUT.3S minister today
 'I, said Scuthyn, will be minister today.' (Dewi 12.2)
- d. *ac euo a welei bawp*
 and he.strong PRT see.PAST.3S all
 '(no one would see him), but he would see everyone' (BR 11.21-22)
- (24) *ti a i ddywedaist*
 you PRT 3MS say.PAST.2S
 '(Are you king of the Jews? Jesus said to him:) It's you who's saying that.'
 (b1588 - Mat. 11.27)

In Welsh, this type of sentence is called *y frawddeg gymysg* ‘the mixed sentence’. It still exists in Modern Welsh and is often referred to as the ‘focussed sentence’ (King, 1993).

- (25) a. *Y plentyn a redodd adref.*
 the child PRT run.PAST.3S home
 ‘The child ran home.’ (Williams, 1980:223)
- b. *Dim ond hyn gollais i.*
 only that lose.PAST.1S I
 ‘I lost only that.’ (Borsley et al., 2007:123)

Further syntactic differences between the abnormal and the mixed word orders are described by, amongst others, Fife and King (1991) and Tallerman (1996) (see chapter 6 for further discussion of this issue).

4.3.6 Type VI: Bare verbal nouns

In Middle Welsh verbal nouns could also be used in declarative main clauses instead of a finite verb. These constructions are called ‘historical infinitives’ by Tallerman and Wallenberg (2012). The word order in these clauses is Verbal Noun - Subject (or Agent, from a semantic point of view, though other thematic roles are possible as well). It occurs in root and independent clauses in various contexts, some of which are optional, others seem obligatory (Tallerman & Wallenberg, 2012:1). The interpretation is always past tense and the subject can be null as in (26a) or overtly expressed in two ways: in apposition to the verbal noun (26b) or following the verbal noun and a preposition *o* ‘of’ (26c) or *y* ‘to’ (26d).

- (26) a. *Kymryt gwrogaeth y gwyr a dechreu guereskynn y wlat.*
 accept.INF homage the men and begin.INF subdue.INF the land
 ‘He received the homage of the men and began to subdue the land.’ (PKM 6.12)
- b. *Dyuot Caswallawn am eu penn a llad y chwegwyr*
 come.INF Caswallawn about 3P head and kill.INF the six.men
 ‘Caswallon fell upon them and killed the six men.’ (PKM 46.2)
- c. *A chaffael mab ohonu trwy weti y wlad.*
 and get.INF son from.3P through pray.INF the country
 ‘And through the country’s prayers they got a son.’ (CO 4)
- d. *Canu englyn idaw ynteu yna*
 sing.INF englyn to.3MS him then
 ‘He sang an englyn then’ (PKM 90.9)

Example (26a) furthermore shows that this construction can occur in co-ordinated main clauses as well. Usually, however, the first clause is formally finite and all the following clauses contain just the verbal noun: the subject/agent is very often the same and thus omitted. The abnormal order with a verbal noun + periphrastic form of *gwneuthur* ‘to do’ frequently occur in the first main clause as in (27), but other types of word order patterns can occur as well as shown in (28).

- (27) a. (...) *kyuodi a oruc a dyuot y Lynn Cuch*
 (...) rise.INF PRT do.PAST.3S and come.INF to Llyn Cwch
 'he got up and came to Llyn Cwch' (PKM 1.8)
- b. *Ac yn gyflym diskynnu a oruc Gereint a llidiaw a*
 and PRED quick dismount.INF PRT do.PAST.3S Gereint and get-angry.INF and
thynnu cledyf a y gyrchu (...)
 draw.INF sword and 3MS wield.INF (...)
 'And quickly Gereint dismounted and he got angry and drew a sword and
 wielded it (...).' (Gereint 309-310)
- (28) a. *Y kyudes y marchawc enteu a thynnu cledyf arall yn erbyn*
 PRT rise.PAST.3S the knight however and draw.INF sword other against
Gereint.
 Gereint
 'The knight rose and drew another sword against Gereint.' (Gereint
 310-311)
- b. *A r llythyr a rwymwyt am uon eskyll yr ederyn a y*
 and the letter PRT bind.PAST.IMPERS on quill the bird and 3MS
anuon parth a chymry.
 send.INF towards Wales
 'And the letter was bound to the quill of the bird and sent to Wales.' (PKM
 38.11-12)

Bare verbal nouns only exist in co-ordinated and subordinate clauses in present-day Welsh. The two tenseless patterns with expressed agents no longer occur on their own.

4.3.7 Type VII: Copular clauses

Copular clauses exhibit various word order patterns in Welsh. In Old Welsh, there is not enough data to be able to establish the context and thus information-structural status of all examples, but it is clear that the copula was always sentence-initial. A cleft construction with *(ys)sydd*, the relative form of the verb *bod* 'to be', could be used to focus the subject.

In Middle Welsh, both copula (C) - predicate complement (P) - subject (S), CPS, and PCS orders existed, though the copula-initial order was on its way out, since *is/ys* phonologically eroded in Early Middle Welsh. It was replaced by other forms of the verb *bod*, like *mae* in initial position. In medial position, the copula took the form *yw/ynt* (present singular/plural) or *oed/oedynt* (past singular/plural).

	Unmarked	Marked	
		Focus predicate	Focus subject
Old Welsh	CPS(?)	CPS(?)	C S (ys)sydd P
Middle Welsh	CPS & (y) mae S yn P	CPS & PCS	(C) S (ys)sydd P
Modern Welsh	(y) mae S yn P	PCS	S (ys)sydd P

Table 4.1: Copular word orders: C = copula *is/ys*, P = Predicate complement, S = Subject

Not mentioned in the above table are copular sentences with presentational orthetic focus articulation. They can for example be found in Middle Welsh to introduce a narrative tale. Both the subject and the predicate complement represent new information in these cases and the word order is Subject - (a) Copula - (yn) Predicate complement.

- (29) a. *Pwyll Pendeuic Dyuet a oed yn arglwyd ar seith cantref Dyuet.*
 Pwyll Pendeuic Dyuet PRT be.PAST.3S PRED lord on seven cantref Dyuet
 ‘Pwyll PD. was lord of the seven cantrefs of Dyfed.’ (PKM 1.1)
- b. *Bendigeiduran uab Llyr a oed urenhin coronawc ar yr ynys hon*
 Bendigeidfran son Llyr PRT be.PAST.3S king crowned on the island this
 ‘Bendigeidfran son of Llyr was crowned king of this island.’ (PKM 29.1)
- c. *Math uab Mathonwy oed arglwyd ar Wynedd*
 Math son Mathonwy be.PAST.3S lord on Gwynedd
 ‘Math son of Mathonwy was lord of Gwynedd.’ (PKM 87.7-8)

Unmarked copular clauses in Old and Middle Welsh have topic-comment or ‘Predicate focus’ articulation. They mainly exhibit CPS word order, but in Middle Welsh, constructions with sentence-initial *mae*, the other inflected form of *bod*, are also found. The subject is in these cases followed by a predicative marker *yn*, as shown in (31b).

- (30) a. *is moi hinnoid*
 be.PRES.3S more DEM
 ‘this is more’ (CPS: Old Welsh M&P 23r - Zimmer 1999)
- b. *Ys gohilion hwnn*
 be.PRES.3S remainder DEM.MS
 ‘He is what remains’ (CPS: Middle Welsh CO 472)
- (31) a. *Ys dyhed a beth gadu dan wynt (...) y kyfryw dyn*
 be.PRES.3S bad of thing leave.INF under wind (...) the such man
 ‘Tis a deplorable thing to leave such a man out in the wind (...)’ (CPS: Middle Welsh CO 133-134)
- b. *ac y maent yn barawt*
 and PRT be.PRES.3P PRED ready
 ‘and they are ready’ (*mae S yn P* - PKM 87.20-21)

Word order patterns that were considered ‘marked’ by Welsh grammarians are

employed in clauses with constituent focus articulation. The situation in Old and Early Middle Welsh is not exactly clear due to a lack of evidence. CPS, as shown in (32), could be one of the options in Old Welsh. If the predicate complement was focussed, this appeared in sentence-initial position, as in (33). If the subject was focussed, a cleft construction with a relative form of the verb *bod* 'to be' was used, as in (34a).

- (32) *Oed gwynnach y chnawd no distrych y donn*
 be.PAST.3S whiter 3FS skin than foam the wave
 'Her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave.' (CPS: (Early) MW CO 491)
- (33) a. *A recdouyd ynt y gwraged weithon.*
 and chief-giver.P be.PRES.3P the woman.P these.days
 'Women are dispensers of gifts these days.' (PCS: Middle Welsh CO 17-18)
- b. *mab y dynnyon mwyn yw*
 son the men gentle be.PRES.3S
 'He is the son of gentle folk' (PCS: Middle Welsh PKM 23.9-10)

Marked order (Constituent focus subject and (reduced) cleft):

- (34) a. *Is aries isid in arcimeir E*
 be.PRES.3S Aries be.REL.3S in opposite E
 'It's Aries which is opposite E.' (CSisidP Old Welsh - Comp. 13/4)
- b. *Arthur yssyd geuynderw yt*
 Arthur be.PRES.3S cousin to.2S
 'Arthur is a cousin of yours.' (SysyddP Middle Welsh CO 57)

In Modern Welsh, predicative copular constructions exhibit the order copula - subject - *yn* predicate. If the Predicate is focussed, it can be fronted, in which case the medial form of the copula *yw/ydy* appears, as in (35d). The subject can also be focussed, resulting in the relative form of the copula *sy(dd)*, as in (35e):

- (35) a. *Mae Gwyn yn ddiog.*
 be.PRES.3S Gwyn PRED lazy
 'Gwyn is lazy.'
- b. *Mae Gwyn yn feddyg*
 be.PRES.3S Gwyn PRED doctor
 'Gwyn is a doctor.' (Borsley et al., 2007:43)
- c. *Mae Caerdydd yn ddinas hardd.*
 be.PRES.3S Cardiff PRED city beautiful
 'Cardiff is a beautiful city.'
- d. *Dinas hardd yw Caerdydd.*
 city beautiful be.PRES.3S Cardiff
 'Cardiff is a beautiful city.' (Borsley et al., 2007:130)
- e. *Caerdydd sy 'n ddinas hardd.*
 Cardiff be.PRES.REL PRED city beautiful
 'It's Cardiff that is a beautiful city. / Cardiff is a beautiful city.' (Borsley et al., 2007:131)

Identity copular constructions are called *brawddeg enwol amhur* ‘impure nominal sentence’ in Modern Welsh. Presentational interpretations are impossible when the referent of the subject is a member of the set designated by the predicate. The lexical semantics of the subject and predicate are such that the latter cannot be understood as a property predicated of the former. Therefore, example (36a) is infelicitous, but the construction with the medial copular form *yw/yy* in (36b) with identificational meaning is grammatical:

- (36) a. #*Mae 'r ateb yn rhaff.*
 is the answer PRED rope
 'The answer's a rope.'
 b. *Rhaff ydy 'r ateb.*
 rope is the answer
 'The answer's a rope.' (Zaring, 1996:123)

In the examples in (37), “[t]he more natural interpretation is with *Caerdydd* as topic and *prifddinas Cymru* as new information” (Borsley et al., 2007:130) answering the question in (38a) with a falling intonation on *Cymru* followed by an intonational break. If *Caerdydd* has falling intonation it can be interpreted as new information answering question (38b).

- (37) a. *Prifddinas Cymru yw Caerdydd.*
 capital Wales be.PRES.3S Cardiff
 'Cardiff is the capital of Wales.'
 b. *Caerdydd yw prifddinas Cymru.*
 Cardiff be.PRES.3S capital Wales
 'The capital of Wales is Cardiff.' (Borsley et al., 2007:130)
- (38) a. *Beth yw Caerdydd?*
 what be.PRES.3S Cardiff
 'What is Cardiff?'
 b. *Pa ddinas yw prifddinas Cymru?*
 which city be.PRES.3S capital Wales
 'Which city is the capital of Wales?' (Borsley et al., 2007:130)

Similarly with a predicative meaning, example (37b) repeated below as (39) is ungrammatical, but it is perfectly fine with an identificational meaning:

- (39) #*Caerdydd yw prifddinas Cymru.*
 Cardiff be.PRES.3S capital Wales
 ('The capital of Wales is Cardiff.') (Borsley et al., 2007:131)

The development of copular constructions is discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

4.3.8 Type VIII: Identificational focus with *sef*

Old and Middle Welsh employed a special construction to focus identity predicates. The definite predicate noun phrase of an identificatory copular clause could be focussed by means of the copula + pronominal anticipatory predicate preceding the subject and focussed predicate. This combination of copula *ys* + pronominal became the petrified (*ys*)*sef* 'it is it' once the copula was phonologically eroded and the agreement was lost. This subsequently gave rise to further grammaticalisation and the development of different types of '*sef*-constructions' in Middle Welsh (cf. Borsley et al. (2007:318), E. Evans (1958) and T. A. Watkins (1997)).

Old Welsh:

- (40) a. *is em hi chet tri uceint torth*
 be.PRES.3S it 3FS tribute three twenty loaf
 ‘this is its tribute, sixty loaves’ (LL, xlv - Watkins 1997:579)
- b. *iss em i anu Genius*
 be.PRES.3S it 3MS name Genius
 ‘that’s his name, Genius’ (gl. *Genius* in Martianus Capella - Watkins 1997:579)

Middle Welsh:

- (41) a. *Ys hwy yr rei hynny, Nynhiaw a Pheibyaw*
 be.PRES.3S they the ones DEM.P Nynhiaw and Peibyaw
 ‘Those are Nynhiaw and Peibyaw’ (CO 598 - Borsley et al. 2007:318)
- b. *Sef seithwyr a dienghis Pryderi Manawydan (...)*
 sef seven.men PRT escape.PAST.3S Pryderi Manawydan (...)
 ‘These were the seven men who escaped, Pryderi, Manawydan (...).’ (WM 56.34 - Watkins 1997:582)
- c. *Sef lle y doethont ygyt y bresseleu*
 sef place PRT come.PAST.3P together in Preseleu
 ‘That was the place where they got together, in Preseleu.’ (WM 27.28)
- d. *Sef kyuryv wr oed Ueuryc guas mavr tec*
 sef sort man be.PAST.3P Meurig youth big handsome
 ‘That’s the sort of man Meurig was, a big handsome youth.’ (BD 72.23)

In Middle Welsh this construction grammaticalised further. The number of clauses with headless relative subjects (see (42)) was increasing giving rise to idiomatic constructions that were no longer focussed, but used in contexts of narrative continuity as well, as shown in (43).

- (42) a. *Sef __ a doeth dy nyeint*
 sef PRT come.PAST.3S 2S nephews
 ‘That’s who came, your nephews.’ (WM 89.35)
- b. *Sef __ a wystlwys gwrgi*
 sef PRT give-as-hostage.PAST.3S Gwrgi
 ‘That’s whom he gave as hostage, Gwrgi.’ (WM 88.5)
- c. *Sef __ y cudyawd y mywn llaw gist*
 sef PRT hide.PAST.3S in hand chest
 ‘That’s where he hid it, in a small chest.’ (WM 93.30)
- (43) a. *Sef a gausant yn eu kynghor duunaw ar eu llad*
 sef PRT get.PAST.3P in 3P council agree.INF on 3P kil.INF
 ‘This is what they got in their council, they agreed to kill them.’ (WM 68.8)
- b. *Sef a wnaeth y gwaged kyscu*
 sef PRT do.PAST.3S the women sleep.INF
 ‘This is what the women did, they slept.’ (WM 28.15)

Finally, *sef* grammaticalised further until it was reinterpreted as an element functioning as an adverbial, causing the preverbal particle *a* to change into *y(d)* (which usually followed sentence-initial adjuncts as shown in the description of word order Type III above).

- (44) a. *Sef y clywei arueu am ben hwnnw*
 sef PRT hear.PAST.3S arms on head that.one
 'He could feel armour on that one's head.' (WM 54.28)
- b. *Sef y kynhelleis inheu y gyuoeth*
 sef PRT withhold.PAST.3S I his dominions
 'I withheld his dominions.' (WM 394.42)
- c. *Sef y kawssant yn eu kyghor gossot (...)*
 sef PRT get.PAST.3P in 3P council release.INF (...)
 'They decided to release (...)' (RM 144.17)

Alongside these patterns, the loss of tense (when the copula phonologically eroded) led to the insertion of a medial copula *yw/oed*.

- (45) a. *Sef yw honno gwreic doget urenhin*
 sef be.PRES.3S DEM.FS wife Doged king
 'That's who she is, king Doged's wife.' (WM 453.17)
- b. *Sef oed y rei hynny Gog a Magog (...)*
 sef be.PAST.3S the ones DEM.P Gog and Magog
 'That's what those were, Gog and Magog (...)' (DB 29.11.12)

In late Middle Welsh *sef* was reanalysed as an NP appositive 'that is':

- (46) (...) *llyfr y cofiadur, sef y cronicl*
 (...) book the cofiadur, sef the chronicle
 'the book of the *cofiadur*, that's to say the chronicle' (b1588 - Esther 6.3)

The development of the *sef*-construction in Welsh is discussed in chapter 6.

4.3.9 Type IX Non-verbal clauses

Sentences with verbal nouns instead of finite verbs were already discussed under type VI above. In co-ordinated sentences, it was also possible to leave out the verb completely. In these elliptical patterns, the finite verb of the previous clause is understood again as the matrix verb. There are also copular sentences in which the copula itself is left out, as in (47a). They usually exhibit the word order Subject - (*yn*) Predicate, though adverbs could interfere as well as shown in (47b).

- (47) a. *Gwae uinheu uyn dyuot ar anuab*
 woe me 1S come.INF on childless
 'Woe me for coming to an childless (man)' (CO 39)
- b. *ac angel yn wastat yn getymdeith idaw*
 and angel PRED always PRED friend to.3MS
 'and an angel will always accompany him' (Dewi 14.1)

These constructions can also appear with prepositional predicates, as in (48):

- (48) a. *(Gleif) ennillec yn y law.*
 (sword) battle-axe in 3MS hand
 'In his hand was a battle-axe' (*gleif* is a gloss on *ennillec* CO 63)
- b. *A gwisg ymdan y gwr o pali coch gwedy ry wniaw a sidann*
 and garment on the man of satin red after PERF sew.INF with silk
melyn a godreon y llen yn velyn.
 yellow and borders 3MS scarf PRED yellow
 'And upon the man was a dress of red satin sewn with yellow silk, and
 yellow were the borders of his scarf.' (BR 5.22-24)
- c. *guae ui o m ganedigaeth*
 woe mi from 1S birth
 'Woe me for my birth/being born' (Branwen 407)

Some of those non-verbal sentences with the order A(c) S P(P), functioned as background or had circumstantial readings. Sentences of this type also appear in other languages, for example Biblical Hebrew, where they are called Absolutive Sentences.

- (49) a. *ac ynteu yn allmarw y r llawr*
 and he PRED stone-dead to the floor
 'and he was stone-dead on the floor' (Peredur 14.25)
- b. *a thitheu a th lu yn y parth arall*
 and you and 2S host yn the part other
 'and (meanwhile) you and your host are in the other part' (Branwen 319)

Finally, Welsh employs certain lexical items *dyma/dyna/llyma/llyna/nachaf/wele* 'this is, that is, lo' (cf. French *voici, voilà*) in truncated copular constructions. These clauses still exist with *dyma/dyna* in Modern Welsh.

- (50) a. *Llyna Dillus Uarruawc*
 behold Dillus Barruawc
 'Behold Dillus Barfog/There is Dillus Barfog' (CO 962-963)
- b. *Nachaf yr esgidyeu yn ormod.*
 lo the shoes PRED plenty
 'Behold, the shoes were plenty' (PKM 80.4-5)
- c. *ac wele hwynt yn athrist*
 and lo they PRED sad
 'and behold they were sad' (b1588 - Gen. 40.6)
- (51) a. *Dyma gasgliad o feirdd gorau 'r genedl.*
 dyma collection of bards best the nation
 'Here's a collection of the best bards of the nation' (BBC Cymru -
www.bbc.co.uk/cymru/urdd02/cysylltiadau.shtml)
- b. *Dyna fo!*
 dyna he
 'There he is!' (Kate Roberts - Te yn y grug)

Another non-verbal clause pattern that is still used in Modern Welsh is illustrated by a sentence like (52a). The inflected form of *bod* can be left out in the present tense. If some other tense is used, the appropriate form of *bod* reappears in sentence-initial position, cf. (52b) and (52c).

- (52) a. *Rhaid i mi adael.*
 necessity to me leave.INF
 'I must leave.' (Lit. 'It is necessary for me to leave')
- b. *Bydd rhaid i mi adael.*
 be.FUT.3S necessity to me leave.INF
 'I will have to leave.'
- c. *Roedd rhaid i mi adael.*
 be.IMPF.3S necessity to me leave.INF
 'I had to leave.'
- Borsley et al. (2007:66)

In Modern Welsh proverbs it is also possible to leave out the copula, though these sentences really are 'a hallmark of formal rather than casual style' (Borsley et al., 2007:364).

- (53) a. *Nid aur popeth melyn.*
 NEG gold everything yellow
 'All that glitters is not gold.'
- b. *Hir pob aros.*
 long every wait
 'A watched pot never boils.'
- Borsley et al. (2007:364)

4.4 Frequency of different Types

In this final section, I present an overview of the frequency (both raw counts and percentages per text) of each of the above-mentioned Types in all Middle Welsh texts under investigation. The frequency of verb-second orders of the so-called 'Mixed Sentence' is here only based on 'unambiguous' cases, i.e. cases with plural or pronominal subjects that do not agree with the verb. Verb-initial orders (Type I) include both absolute verb-initial sentences and sentences in which the verb directly follows a conjunction or sentence-initial particle. The total number of main clauses differs from text to text. The Arthurian Romances (*Peredur*, *Owein* and *Gereint*) are much longer than most of the *Four Branches* or *Llud & Llefelys*. The two manuscript versions of the latter only show small differences in distribution of word order types. The texts presented in the tables below are in rough chronological order starting with the Laws from the beginning of the Middle Welsh period, then *Culhwch* and the *Four Branches*, followed by the Romances and the two Dreams (*Macsen* and *Rhonabwy*). Finally, the two versions of the native tale *Llud* and the Life of St David mark the end of the Middle Welsh period. From 1500 onwards, the language is referred to as (Early) Modern Welsh, exemplified here by the 1588 Bible translation (although the language of this translation is actually not like late Middle or Modern

Welsh as discussed in Chapter 7). Samples of some of the texts were also analysed by Poppe (1989, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1993) and Watkins (1977-8, 1983-4, 1988) (and summarised by Willis (1998:54)).

	Laws	CO	Pwyll	Branwen	Manaw.	Math
I Verb-initial	4	74	10	9	9	22
II AuxSVO	0	2	0	1	3	5
III AdjyVS	66	157	101	88	41	113
IV SaVagr.	112	140	141	78	75	150
IV OaVS	31	36	29	14	23	18
IV VNaDO	3	133	64	22	41	58
V V2 focus	0	3	1	4	0	0
VI VNs	17	142	65	91	73	66
VII Copula	138	171	72	47	30	60
VIII Sef	3	19	22	20	11	37
IX Non-verb.	73	50	36	37	29	29
Total	447	927	541	411	335	558

Table 4.2: Distribution of word order types in positive main declaratives

	Laws	CO	Pwyll	Branwen	Manaw.	Math
I Verb-initial	0.89%	7.98%	1.85%	2.19%	2.69%	3.94%
II AuxSVO	0%	0.22%	0%	0.24%	0.90%	0.90%
III AdjyVS	14.77%	16.94%	18.67%	21.41%	12.24%	20.25%
IV SaVagr.	25.06%	15.10%	26.06%	18.98%	22.39%	26.88%
IV OaVS	6.94%	3.88%	5.36%	3.41%	6.87%	3.23%
IV VNaDO	0.67%	14.35%	11.83%	5.35%	12.24%	10.39%
V V2 focus	0%	0.32%	0.18%	0.97%	0%	0%
VI VNs	3.80%	15.32%	12.01%	22.14%	21.79%	11.83%
VII Copula	30.87%	18.45%	13.31%	11.44%	8.96%	10.75%
VIII Sef	0.67%	2.05%	4.07%	4.87%	3.28%	6.63%
IX Non-verb.	16.33%	5.39%	6.65%	9.00%	8.66%	5.20%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4.3: Percentages of word order types in positive main declaratives

Text	Adv	Sbj ^{Nom}	Sbj ^{Pro}	Obj	VN	V1
<i>Branwen</i>	41	17	16	8	14	4
<i>Macsen</i>	43	5	16	20	8	9
<i>Rhonabwy</i>	45	12	6	9	26	2
<i>Culhwch</i>	25	16	12	12	26	9
<i>Llud</i>	39	24	22	4	10	0
<i>Manawydan</i>	24	6	31	12	27	0
<i>Pwyll</i>	38	11	22	10	17	3

Table 4.4: Percentages of word order types from Willis (1998:54) based on Poppe and Watkins

First of all, Poppe and Watkins separate nominal and pronominal subjects.⁴ I have analysed this difference systematically in Chapter 5, but I have lumped both together in the tables here. For *Culhwch*, *Pwyll*, *Branwen* and *Manawydan* there are some small differences in the frequencies shown here and those presented in the overview by Willis (1998:54) (based on Poppe's and Watkins's earlier papers). The difference in frequencies of subject- and object-initial orders are partly due to a difference in interpretation. For the present corpus, I analysed fronted topics of impersonal verbs as subject-initial. Semantically, they are indeed often interpreted as patients (of passive verbs), but from a syntactic perspective, they could always be argued to function as subjects. To remain consistent throughout the corpus, I therefore chose the subject-initial analysis, so the numbers for subject-initial sentences are slightly higher. In *Breudwyt Rhonabwy*, the number of object-initial sentences indicated below is again much lower than the number indicated by Poppe (1990) and the same can be observed for *Breudwyt Macsen*. Poppe and Watkins furthermore did not distinguish between auxiliary-initial sentences and verb-initial sentences. This results in some slight differences in frequencies for this category as well. In the present corpus, I furthermore counted sentences with subject or object topic drop for their respective types SaVO and OaVS. These topic drop sentences are not calculated at all in the overviews by Poppe and Watkins. In Type IVd with sentence-initial verbal nouns, Poppe and Watkins sometimes not only include the *gwneuthur*-periphrastics, but also other auxiliaries. Here too, slight differences appear in the counted frequencies. Finally, Poppe and Watkins do not systematically present the frequencies of other sentence types (although in some papers, *sef*-sentences and copula-sentences are mentioned). Non-verbal clauses and sentences starting with verbal nouns without any auxiliaries are also not listed. Since they can express positive declarative statements and they function as main clauses as well, I did include them in these overviews.

⁴The percentages in the table are taken from the overview by Willis (1998:54). Note that some of them make up more than 100% per text, most likely due to slight rounding errors. In Willis's overview, one further text was included (*Amllyn ac Amic*) that was not part of the annotated database on which the present corpus study is based. It was therefore not included in the above table. Finally, only the WB version of the tale *Llud* was included.

	Peredur	Owein	Gereint	Rhonabwy	Macsen
I Verb-initial	23	12	36	8	3
II AuxSVO	4	0	2	0	1
III V2 adj.	224	115	204	69	93
IV S a Vagree	420	130	244	39	39
IV O a VS	68	15	60	6	28
IV VN a DO	162	194	196	36	12
V V2 focus	0	4	3	0	0
VI Verbal nouns	134	132	175	36	8
VII Copular	137	96	106	23	12
VIII Sef	19	18	39	18	5
IX Non-verbal	132	88	109	126	32
Total	1323	804	1174	361	233

Table 4.5: Distribution of word order types in positive main declaratives

	Peredur	Owein	Gereint	Rhonabwy	Macsen
I Verb-initial	1.74%	1.49%	3.07%	2.22%	1.29%
II AuxSVO	0.30%	0%	0.17%	0%	0.43%
III V2 adj.	16.93%	14.30%	17.38%	19.11%	39.91%
IV S a Vagree	31.75%	16.17%	20.70%	10.80%	16.74%
IV O a VS	5.14%	1.87%	5.20%	1.66%	12.02%
IV VN a DO	12.24%	24.13%	16.70%	9.97%	5.15%
V V2 focus	0%	0.50%	0.26%	0%	0%
VI Verbal nouns	10.13%	16.42%	14.91%	9.97%	3.43%
VII Copular	10.36%	11.94%	9.03%	6.37%	5.15%
VIII Sef	1.44%	2.24%	3.32%	4.99%	2.15%
IX Non-verbal	9.98%	10.95%	9.28%	34.90%	13.73%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4.6: Percentages of word order types in positive main declaratives

	Llud Mab	Llud Chro	Dewi	b1588
I Verb-initial	0	1	5	87
II AuxSVO	0	0	1	30
III V2 adj.	22	18	88	278
IV S a Vagree	40	50	93	745
IV O a V S	1	2	11	15
IV VN a DO	7	5	21	2
V V2 focus	0	0	0	0
VI Verbal nouns	13	19	56	21
VII Copular	21	20	40	152
VIII Sef	2	1	24	10
IX Non-verbal	3	9	26	67
Total	109	125	365	1407

Table 4.7: Distribution of word order types in positive main declaratives

	Llud Mab	Llud Chro	Dewi	b1588
I Verb-initial	0%	0.80%	1.37%	6.18%
II AuxSVO	0%	0%	0.27%	2.13%
III V2 adjunct	20.18%	14.40%	24.11%	19.76%
IV S a Vagree	36.70%	40.00%	25.48%	52.81%
IV O a V S	0.92%	1.60%	3.01%	1.21%
IV VN a DO	6.42%	4.00%	5.75%	0.14%
V V2 focus	0%	0%	0%	0%
VI Verbal nouns	11.93%	15.20%	15.34%	1.49%
VII Copular	19.27%	16.00%	10.96%	10.80%
VIII Sef	1.83%	0.80%	6.58%	0.71%
IX Non-verbal	2.75%	7.20%	7.12%	4.76%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 4.8: Percentage of word order types in positive main declaratives

4.5 Conclusion

We can categorise the large amount of observed word order patterns in positive declarative main clauses in Welsh in nine main Types. First of all, there are verb-initial patterns (Type I). Sentences of this type are rare in Middle Welsh, although variants with sentence-initial conjunctions or declarative particles like *neu(r)* directly followed by the verb are found somewhat more frequently. The second type I described consists of a periphrastic construction with the auxiliary form of the verb *bod* 'to be', rendering the word order AuxSVO. This type is also rarely found, although its frequency increases towards the end of the Middle Welsh period. Word order types I and II (VSO and AuxSVO) are the predominant patterns found in Modern Welsh.

Middle Welsh texts, on the other hand, mainly exhibit the verb-second pattern (the 'Abnormal Sentence') in one of its various forms (Types III, IV or even the focussed Type V, the 'Mixed Sentence'). The adjunct-initial order can appear in many forms: the initial constituent can be an Adverbial Phrase, a Prepositional Phrase or a combination of multiple phrases, as long as the 'topicalised' one functions as an adjunct. The other type of 'Abnormal Sentence', Type IV, on the other hand places a core argument (Subject or Direct Object) in sentence-initial position or a verbal noun followed by the pre-verbal particle *a* and the auxiliary *gwneuthur* 'to do'. In subject-initial sentences, the verb usually agrees with the pre-verbal subject. This is what formally distinguishes the 'Abnormal Sentence' from the 'Mixed Sentence' in which the verb shows default third-person singular inflection (Type V).

Sentences with verbal nouns instead of finite verbs (Type VI) were mainly possible in (Early) Middle Welsh. In early Middle Welsh texts, the verbal noun could appear in non-finite main clauses on their own followed by the subject. These 'verbal noun + agent' almost disappear in independent main clauses. Only sentence-initial verbal nouns in co-ordinated sentences depending on preceding finite clauses continued to exist much longer.

Types VII and VIII are only concerned with copular verbs. There were various ways to express copular predicates in Middle Welsh, with or without overt forms of the verb *bod* 'to be'. These non-verbal sentences were finally labelled as Type IX.

It is clear from the counts in the final table that the language is already changing at the end of the Middle Welsh period. The preferred word order is still the verb-second 'Abnormal' order, but an overwhelming amount of sentences are subject-initial. Verb-initial orders (Type I) and in particular auxiliary-initial periphrastic orders (Type II) are on the rise. In total, over 9000 main clauses were analysed for the present corpus study. In the next chapter, I discuss the potential factors that could influence preferred types of word order and thus explain the distribution found in the Middle Welsh corpus.