JS Journal of Historical Syntax
Volume 9, Article 1: 1–82, 2025

V2 TO V1 IN WELSH: THE ROLE OF PREVERBAL PARTICLES AND FRONTED ADVERBIALS *

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Abstract A peculiarity of V2 in Middle Welsh is the morphosyntactic marking of fronted constituents in positive declarative main clauses (PDMCs) using preverbal particles: *a* for subjects or direct objects and *y(d)* for adverbial or prepositional phrases. Unlike other medieval V2 languages which subsequently lost V2 and developed SVO, such as English and French, Welsh became VSO. In a formal analysis of the loss of V2 in Welsh, Willis (1998) argues that a widespread loss of both preverbal particles in the 16th century through phonological erosion was a key factor in the change, though does not provide corroborative quantitative data. Based on a corpus study of Early Modern Welsh (c.1550-c.1750), the present article shows that there is no evidence of a widespread loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y(d)* by the end of the 16th century, only a partial and gradual decline in their use over a longer, more than two century period. There does seem, however, to be a link between the change in use and partial omission of *y(d)* after fronted adverbial or prepositional phrases and the increase in use in Early Modern Welsh of a specific V1 construction, Absolute V1, where a finite verb comes in absolute-initial position in a PDMC.

1 introduction: the change from v2 to v1 in Welsh

Besides the medieval Germanic and Romance languages, the medieval Brythonic Celtic languages Middle Welsh (MW), Middle Breton and Middle Cornish have also been described as verb-second (V2) languages, showing asymmetry between V2 in positive declarative main clauses (PDMCs) and predominantly VSO in negative and subordinate clauses (Eska 2020, Meelen 2020,

* I acknowledge the financial support of the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (research core funding n° P6-0265). I am grateful to two anonymous peer reviewers as well as Erich Poppe who provided very detailed and helpful feedback on a draft version of this article, to Joel Wallenburg for helpful discussions on the graphical presentation of quantitative data and to David Willis for extensive discussions of the topic over the years.

Forthcoming, Poppe 2000, Willis 1998, Wolfe 2019)[1]. The medieval Brythonic languages, indeed, formed a contiguous V2 linguistic area with the medieval Germanic and Romance languages. A peculiarity of Brythonic V2 is the morphosyntactic marking of V2 orders using preverbal particles which come between the preverbal or fronted constituent and a finite verb in a positive declarative main clause. In Middle Welsh (c.1100-c.1500 CE), for example, when a subject or direct object precedes the verb, the particle *a* comes between the preverbal constituent and the verb (illustrated in examples 1a-d), and when an adverbial or prepositional phrase is fronted, the particle *y* is used (examples 2a-b)[2]. These particles are identical in form to the relative particles: *a* is the relative particle used in direct relative clauses when the antecedent is a subject or direct object (Evans 1976: 60-64), and *y* is the relative particle used in indirect relative clauses when the antecedent is oblique (Evans 1976: 64-67)[3]. It is thought, relatively uncontroversially, that the Brythonic V2 orders derive historically from cleft focus constructions, probably originally with a clause-initial copula, which came to be generalised and semantically bleached (Eska 2020, Meelen 2020, Padel 2021: 282-283, Willis Forthcoming).

While Breton maintained V2 in PDMCs (Jouitteau & Torres Tamarit Forthcoming) and Cornish seems to have developed predominant SVO (George 1990: 232-233, George 1991: 248-250, Eska & Bruch 2020, Padel 2021), Modern Welsh came to generalise V1. Unlike the loss of V2 in English and French, however, which involved a change from V2 to SVO, that is the generalization of one of the possible V2 orders, the loss of V2 in Welsh involved a change from V2 to VSO, that is the generalisation of a non-V2 order. How we analyse the status of V1 in Middle Welsh (and in V2 languages more generally), therefore, has important implications for how we explain the change from V2 to V1 in Welsh. Willis (1998) proposed a formal (Principles and Parameters, P&P) analysis of the loss of V2 and rise of V1 in Welsh, where unmarked V1

1 Padel (2021), however, argues that it is an "oversimplification" to call Middle Cornish a verb second language because of numerous examples of the multiple fronting of constituents before the verb in positive declarative main clauses as well as a general tendency towards subject-verb order. Instead, Padel (2021: 280) argues that "Middle Cornish can be more simply analysed as preferring (in positive statements) subject-verb syntax, with optional flexibility".

2 In Middle Welsh, the particle takes the form *y* when the following verb begins with a consonant and *yd* or *ydd /ə(ð)/* before a vowel. In Early Modern Welsh (c.1500-c.1800) and Modern Welsh (>1800), the pre-vocalic form is *yr*. Here '*y*' will be used to refer generically to the particle in Middle and Early Modern Welsh.

3 In addition to its uses discussed in this paper, the preverbal particle *y* also functioned as a more general complementizer introducing subordinate clauses. See Evans (1976) for an overview of the functions of the preverbal particle *y*.

was ungrammatical in PDMCs (a strict V2 constraint) but became grammatical after the resetting of the V2 parameter to negative in the 16th century ("the loss of V2"). One of the most important triggers for the resetting of the V2 parameter in Willis' analysis is the loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y,* which Willis (1998: 62, 183) argues functioned as topic or Spec-Head agreement markers and which he claims were lost as a result of 'phonological erosion' in the 16th century (Willis 1998: 204). Evans (1968) was the first to propose a link between the loss of preverbal particles and the development of VSO in PDMCs in Early Modern Welsh (c.1500-c.1800), but, unlike Willis (1998), posited only a specific and direct link between the loss of the particle *y* in Adv-*y*-Verb constructions, rather than a systemic loss of both the particles *a* and *y* as well as of V2 word order. In Evans' theory, 'the disappearance of the unaccented *y*' in Adv-*y*-V constructions freed up the position adverbials could occupy in the sentence, meaning that the verb was not confined to second position and could thus occupy clause-initial position:

> 'With the disappearance of the unaccented *y* the syntactical connection between adverb and predicate, which was an essential element in the sentence order adverb+*y*+verb, which had evolved in M.W., was broken. The adverb would no longer be confined to the position it occupied in the 'abnormal' order.[4] Consequently its position could be changed, and '*Yma* gellir dangos' [here can-3s-PRES/FUT-PASS show-VN — 'here it can be shown' — my tagging] could be rendered 'Gellir dangos *yma*', or 'Gellir *yma* ddangos' without change of meaning.' (Evans 1968: 335)

The present article examines the putative link between the loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* and the development of VSO in positive declarative main clauses in Early Modern Welsh, specifically the increase in use of Absolute V1 (where a synthetic finite verb comes in absolute-initial position in a PDMC, excluding coordinating conjunctions, and is not preceded by a preverbal particle, as in examples 7a-c). Neither Evans (1968) or Willis (1998) provide detailed quantitative evidence of the loss of the particles *a* and *y* or, indeed, of the increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh. Although

4 The term 'abnormal order' has been used in traditional Welsh grammar to describe the non-verb-initial word orders of Middle and later Welsh which were perceived to be abnormal as they deviated from the characteristic VSO order of Modern Welsh. Evans' statement which seems to imply that adverbs were confined to initial position in the 'abnormal order' (i.e. Adv-y-V order) is inaccurate, as adverbs could also, for example, regularly appear postverbally (Poppe 1991a).

Willis (1998) provides a systematic and landmark book-length analysis of the loss of V2 and development of V1 in Welsh, his detailed corpus analysis focuses on the period 1760-1825 (Willis 1998: 206-212) and on other syntactic changes which gave rise to non-Absolute V1 constructions in PDMCs – the grammaticalization of the personal pronoun *mi* (1SG) and the dummy subject *fe* (originally a 3SG.M personal pronoun) as preverbal particles which could appear before all persons of the verb (Willis 1998: 224-241) – rather than on the 16th and 17th centuries when the resetting of the V2 parameter and development of unmarked VSO is posited.

The aim of this article is to present and analyse new empirical data on the retention and loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* in order to re-examine the analysis of the loss of V2 and rise of V1, and to discuss to what extent and how the observed changes in the use of the preverbal particles might be linked to the increase in use of Absolute V1 in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Whether or not there is a link between the loss of the preverbal particles and the rise of V1 in Welsh is not a trivial question for several reasons. First, the loss of preverbal particles need not give rise to any word order change. Second, if there is a word order change, it need not be V2 to V1 but could equally well be V2 to SVO; indeed, as shown in Willis (1998: 251-254) and (Currie 2000, 2013) and as discussed in section 6 below, there was significant variation between SVO and VSO word orders in Early Modern Welsh with some texts showing predominant SVO and others predominant VSO. Third, the extent and chronology of the loss of the particles *a* and *y* is also a matter of debate, as is the question what degree of loss of which particles (both *a* and *y* or only *y*) might have been necessary to lead to an increase in V1.

Willis (1998) argues for a direct typological shift from V2 to V1 in Welsh and offers a unitary explanation for the loss of V2, on the one hand, and the rise of V1, on the other. The loss of V2 is thus understood in Willis' analysis as the resetting of a V2 parameter to negative and the direct consequence of this resetting is the emergence of grammatically unmarked V1 (i.e. Absolute V1) in PDMCs. However, it is a moot point whether there was in fact a direct, discrete and abrupt change of word order type in Welsh from V2 to V1. First, as Willis (1998) indeed shows, there was a gradual decline in the "V2-ness" of Welsh during the Middle and Early Modern periods. This entailed, on the one hand, a decrease in frequency of certain V2 constructions in PDMCs such as the fronting of nominal objects (1c) and verbal noun objects (1d), and, on the other hand, the rise of a non-V2 general complementiser (through the reanalysis of the dummy or expletive subject, cf. section 2.3 below) as well as an increase in the frequency of surface V3 constructions (cf. examples 3c-f). The loss of V2 is defined in Willis (1998) in terms of

the reanalysis of an underlying grammar – the resetting of a V2 parameter – which is an inherently discrete process based on a discrete conception of a grammar, though the parameter resetting itself is triggered by a series of gradual leading changes. It is equally possible, however, to define the loss of V2 in terms of the observable gradual decline in "surface" V2 features, that is a decline in use of V2 constructions and a corresponding increase in use of non-V2 (V1 and V3) constructions, without having recourse to an underlying systemic grammatical reanalysis. Second, as shown in Currie (2000, 2013), the increase in the use of Absolute V1 in 16th, 17th and 18th century Welsh is gradual and is characterised by marked variation between individual writers, to the extent that some 17th-century texts show predominant Absolute V1, while other contemporary or near-contemporary texts show predominant SV order in PDMCs. Thus, defining a discrete point when Welsh becomes V1 as opposed to V2 is no less problematic, especially since V1 is commonly found as variant word order in V2 languages, for example in both Germanic V2 languages such as Old Norse, Old English, Yiddish and Icelandic as well as medieval Romance languages such as Old French, Old Italian and Old Portuguese (Junker 1990: 351, Fontana 1997: 210, Wolfe 2019: 37-38, 50, Wolfe 2020: 350). Fontana (1997), for instance, argues more generally against a strict V2 requirement in formal descriptions of V2:

> [T]he label 'V2' understood as a strict requirement that the tensed verb appear always in absolute second position in a root environment is highly problematic. Exceptions such as the declarative V1 constructions found in, e.g., Old Norse, Old English, Yiddish and Icelandic, or the licensing of a restricted group of adverbials that can appear between the topicalized constituent and the tensed verb in some Scandinavian languages, are well known and have been the object of numerous discussions in the field of Germanic syntax. What is not well known, however, or at least has received much less attention in the literature, is the fact that rigid verb-second configurations which are often cited in support of certain accounts of the V2 constraint are only a very recent innovation in the Germanic family. [···] Thus, independently of how one may choose to reconcile the exceptions to the strict V2 pattern with standard analyses of this phenomenon, it should be apparent that a unified treatment of the phrase structures of all the languages now associated with this label is only possible if 'V2' is considered a descriptive pre-theoretical term. (Fontana 1997: 210)

It should be stressed that the change investigated in this article – the increase in the use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh – is only part of a larger story of how VSO came to be generalised in PDMCs in Modern Welsh. Changes after the period discussed here, in particular the grammaticalization of preverbal personal pronoun subjects as general V1 preverbal particles (Willis 1998: 225-241), led to the generalization of VSO in Modern Welsh. Although Willis characterizes Welsh as a VSO language following the resetting of the V2 parameter, he acknowledges that 17$^{\text{th}}$-century Welsh is less VSO than Modern Welsh, as 'SVO structures appear far more frequently in the Welsh of the seventeenth century than that of the twentieth' (Willis 1998: 205).

The rest of this article is structured as follows. Section 2 presents an overview of Middle Welsh word order focusing on the use of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* and on the status of V1 and V3 in Middle Welsh. Section 3 presents the corpus and method used in the present study as well as the evidence for an increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh based on the corpus. Section 4 then investigates whether there is evidence for a widespread loss of the preverbal particle *a* in the 16$^{\text{th}}$ century due to phonological erosion, as claimed by Willis (1998: 139-141, 204). It is instead argued that there is a more gradual and complex pattern of loss of *a* depending on the phonological and syntactic weight of the fronted constituent over a longer period, with no evidence of a widespread loss of the particle by the end of the 16$^{\text{th}}$ century. Next, Section 5 investigates whether there is evidence for the systematic loss of the preverbal particle *y* after fronted adverbial phrases, which is also posited in (Evans 1968: 335) and (Willis 1998: 188), and whether there is a link between the loss of *y* and the increase in Absolute V1. It is shown that the use of Adv-V constructions (a likely indicator of the loss of *y* after adverbials, i.e. Adv-y-V > Adv-V) is still relatively infrequent in the 16$^{\text{th}}$ century and that *y* continues to be regularly used after adverbials in the 17$^{\text{th}}$ century, especially when the adverbial is an argument of the verb. Moreover, the decline in the use of *y* after fronted adverbial or prepositional phrases did not simply involve the loss of *y*, but also competition between Adv-*y*-V and Adv-XP-V (in particular Adv-S-V and Adv-expletive-V) constructions.

It is further shown that the increase in Adv-XP-V and Adv-V at the expense of Adv-y-V constructions led to a wider reconfiguration of word order in PDMCs. In Middle Welsh prose, there was a formal and functional symmetry between the different fronted constituents (C) in PDMCs, and adverbials followed the same basic word order pattern – C-particle-V-(C) – as other types of fronted constituents. In Early Modern Welsh, however, the word order after fronted adverbials increasingly diverged from that after other types of fronted

constituent and a different pattern of word order symmetry emerged: between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial PDMCs. This new pattern of symmetry is evidenced by a correlation in the frequency of use of Adverb+Personal Pronoun Subject+Verb (Adv-PronS-V) and Personal Pronoun Subject+Verb (PronS-V) orders, between Adverb+Dummy Subject+Verb (Adv-DU-V) and Dummy Subject+Verb (DU-V) orders as well as, crucially, between Adv-V and Absolute V1 orders, suggesting that the gradual loss of *y* may have in turn motivated a gradual increase in the use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh. The following Section – 6 – discusses the possible factors and syntactic mechanisms which may have contributed to the observable increase and variation in the use of Absolute V1 in the 16th and 17th centuries and argues that a perceived functional equivalence to and interchangeability with two other frequent and productive constructions – PronS-V and DU-V – enabled Absolute V1 to expand into the functional range of these constructions and itself become frequently used. Finally, Section 7, the conclusion, summarises the findings and discusses the significance of the data presented.

The present article uses a multifactorial approach in that it examines multiple interacting factors – centring on the preverbal particles *a* and *y* – which have may have contributed to word order change in Early Modern Welsh[5]. The approach is multifactorial in two senses. First, the article critically reexamines key aspects of Willis' (1998) analysis of the change from V2 to V1 in Welsh, which is itself multifactorial. In Willis' formal analysis of this change, the interaction of several factors (or *leading changes* prior to a parameter resetting) reduced the evidence which children needed to acquire a V2 grammar. These factors or leading changes included: the reduction of object topicalization, the development of a general non V2 expletive complementizer, the development of subject clitics and 'in particular the phonological erosion of the preverbal particles' (Willis 1998: 204). Second, the article presents a corpus-based investigation of its own into how the interaction of different factors – changes in the use of the preverbal particle *y* and its partial loss after fronted adverbials, changes in the syntax of fronted adverbials as well as competition between Absolute V1 and other constructions – contributed to an increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh. While much of this article is devoted to

5 This article developed from a paper presented at the workshop *Multifactorial approaches to word order change* convened by Pierre Larrivée and Cecilia Poletto at the 55th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea at the University of Bucharest, 24–27 August 2022 (https://societaslinguistica.eu/sle2022/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/12/WS-9-Multifactorial-approaches-to-word-order-change.pdf). For further discussion of multifactorial approaches to word order change, see the *Micro-cues of language evolution: A Multifactorial model of V2 loss in Central Romance – MICLE* project (https://anr.fr/Project-ANR-20-FRAL-0001).

discussing Willis' (1998) analysis of the loss of V2 in Welsh, which uses a formal, Principles and Parameters (P&P) framework, the theoretical framework adopted here is a non-formal, diachronic Construction Grammar (CxG) one, as in Currie (2013). Willis' 1998 analysis of the loss of V2 and rise of V1 in Welsh is evaluated by checking his claims and predictions against the corpus data presented here, and no formal evaluation of Willis (1998) is attempted. It is also beyond the scope of this article to propose alternative formal analyses of the syntactic changes in Welsh in the light of the significant research on V2 from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives carried out within formal frameworks since Willis (1998), as surveyed, for example, in Woods & Wolfe (2020).

2 Overview of Middle Welsh word order

2.1 V2 and the preverbal particles ***a*** and **y**

V2 is a characteristic feature of positive declarative main clauses (PDMCs) in Middle Welsh prose, where typically one constituent – a nominal or pronominal subject, direct object, verbal noun object or adverbial phrase – precedes the finite verb. The first qualification – the clause type where V2 can occur – is necessary, since negative main clauses and subordinate clauses typically have VSO word order: NEG-V-(S)-(O) and CONJ-V-(S)-(O). The second qualification – prose as opposed to poetry – is also necessary, since V1, in particular Absolute V1, is rare in PDMCs in Middle Welsh prose, but common in poetry. The evidence of 16th and 17th-century slander case records (Suggett 1983, 1992), where we have transcriptions of plaintiffs' and defendants' spoken statements (that is the texts closest to spoken discourse available) and where Absolute V1 is also rare, suggests that Middle Welsh prose word order is likely to have been closer to spoken usage than that of Middle Welsh poetry. The potential diachronic significance of the divergence between Middle Welsh prose and poetic word order is discussed in Currie (2016, 2023) as well as in sections 3.2 and 5.3 below.

When the preverbal constituent in a PDMC is a subject or direct object, the preverbal particle *a* comes between the fronted constituent and the verb, as illustrated in (1) which gives, in turn, examples of four different orders: personal pronoun subject + *a* + verb (1a), nominal subject + *a* + verb (1b), direct nominal object + *a* + verb (1c), and verbal noun object + *a* + *gwneuthur* (AUX.) 'to do' (1d). In Middle Welsh prose, the use of *a* was systematic after all types of fronted subject and object, though the particle could be omitted before verbs beginning with /a/ and was avoided altogether in predicate-copula constructions (Willis 1998: 139).

(1) Fronted subjects or direct objects in Middle Welsh prose

a. Personal pronoun Subject + *a* + verb (PronS-V)

mi	***a***	*wnaf*	*dy*	*gynghor*	*di*
I	**PRT**	do-1SG.FUT	your.2SG	advice	you.2SG

'I will act on your advice' (Thomson 1957: line 402)

b. Nominal Subject + ***a*** + verb (NomS-V)

E	*kennadeu*	***a***	*aethant*	*ar ol*	*Matholwch*
the	messengers	**PRT**	go-3PL.PAST	after	Matholwch

'The messengers went after Matholwch' (Williams 1930: 33)

c. Nominal Object + *a* + verb (Obj-V)

Y	*march*	***a***	*gymerth*
the	horse	**PRT**	take-3SG.PAST

'He took the horse' (Thomson 1957: 217)

d. Verbal noun object + *a* + AUX *gwneuthur* 'to do' (the '*gwneuthur*-inversion', Gwn)

Kynhewi	***a***	*oruc*	*Pwyll*
Fall.silent-VN	**PRT**	do-SG.PAST	Pwyll

'Pwyll fell silent' (Thomson 1957: 323)

When the fronted constituent in PDMC is an adverbial phrase, the particle *y* comes between the fronted constituent and the verb. The fronted adverbial constituent may be an argument of the main verb, as in (2a), or may be an adjunct, functioning for example as scene setting, temporal specification or as a clausal connector, as in (2b). As in Willis (1998), in categorising the orders in examples (1) and (2) as V2, only the major constituents (i.e. S, V, O and adverbial / prepositional phrases) and not the particles *a* and *y* are counted (Song 2009: 1329-1330).

(2) Fronted adverbial phrases with particle *y(d)* in Middle Welsh prose

a. Clause-initial prepositional phrase as argument of verb

Ac	*y'r*	*llys*	***y***	*deuthant*	*yn*
And	to the	court	**PRT**	come-3PL.PAST	ADV
dangneuedus					
peaceful					

'And they came to the court in peace'. (Williams 1930: 34)

b. Clause-initial adverbial connector or adjunct

Yna	***y***	*rodes*		*Arawn*	*y*	*furuf*	*a'y*
Then	**PRT**	give-3SG.PAST		Arawn	his	form	and his
drych	*e*	*hun*	*y*	*Pwyll*			
appearance	his	own	to	Pwyll			

'Then Arawn gave Pwyll his own form and appearance back.' (Thomson 1957: 138)

A series of quantitative studies of the word order of Middle Welsh narrative prose texts by Watkins (1977, 1983, 1993) and Poppe (1989, 1990, 1991a,b, 1993) have shown that the five word order patterns in (1), with the preverbal particle *a*, and (2), with the preverbal particle *y,* account for at least 90% of PDMCs, and further that no single one of these V2 constructions is predominant or can be considered to represent the basic word order. Table 1, reproduced from (Poppe 1991a: 15), shows the relative frequencies of the various constructions in PDMCs in the texts analysed. It should be noted, though, that multiple fronting or surface V3 constructions (e.g. Adv-XP-V), discussed further in 2.2 below, have been subsumed under the five main constructions, by only counting the constituent that governs the preverbal particle, so Adv-PronS-V is, for example, is included under PronS-V.

	CO[6]	Branwen	Man	CLlLl	BM	BR	KAA
Verb-initial	9.6%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	2.2%	3.1%
NomS-V	17.5%	16.9%	6.7%	23.9%	5.2%	10.5%	4.8%
PronS-V	13.1%	16.3%	31.3%	22.4%	15.6%	6.5%	7.2%
Obj-V	13.1%	7.5%	12.0%	4.5%	19.5%	9.3%	5.8%
Gwn[7]	29.2%	13.7%	28.0%	10.4%	7.8%	25.9%	32.1%
Adv-y-V	17.5%	41.2%	22.0%	38.8%	42.8%	44.6%	47.1%

Table 1: Word order frequencies in PDMCs in Middle Welsh prose texts (Poppe 1991a: 15)

Poppe (2000: 42) posits the following abstract schema for Middle Welsh prose word order, where the choice of the preverbal constituent(s) is determined largely by discourse-pragmatic factors, that is a topicalization system:

6 For the abbreviations of text titles see the list of abbreviations at the end of the article.
7 Gwn = *gwneuthur* inversion, cf. Example (1d).

$(C_{4/3/2})$ C_1 P V (S) (O_{nom}) (A) [8]

Willis (1998: 56-57, 77) gives a formal analysis of V2 in Middle Welsh with compulsory verb movement to CP and a topic, which can be any type of constituent, in SpecCP. However, unlike Poppe, Willis (1998) argues for a stricter form of V2, not only analysing core unmarked V1 as ungrammatical in Middle Welsh Willis (1998: 103, 129), but also ruling out 'multiple fronting' or 'multiple topicalization' (Willis 1998: 68), which is permitted in Poppe's schema above. Poppe (Forthcoming), however, revises his proposed word order schema for Middle Welsh PDMCs to one that is closer to Willis' analysis, which he describes as "relaxed V2" and which is without multiple fronting:

(z) – X – (z) – p – V …

In this revised schema, the preverbal field can be filled by any constituent, X, which selects the preverbal particle *p* (i.e. *a* or *y(d)*). Poppe (Forthcoming) specifically notes that "[m]ore than one element can be placed in the pre-verbal field, but only one argument is permitted". Thus, the additional optional preverbal element (z), which can also more rarely come between *X* and *p*, is an adjunct rather than an argument.

2.2 Word order after clause-initial adverbial or prepositional phrases

The constructions in (1) with the preverbal particle *a* and in (2) with the preverbal particle *y* are all prototypical V2 constructions in that only a single constituent precedes the main verb. However, constructions where more than one constituent precedes the main verb in a PDMC are also common in Middle Welsh prose. Such constructions most commonly occur when a preverbal subject, direct object or verbal noun object comes after a clause-initial adverbial phrase as in (3), which gives examples of five different kinds of fronted constituents after the same clause-initial adverbial phrase *ar hynny* 'after that, thereupon' from the same Middle Welsh prose text (*Owein*)[9]. Table 2 provides an indication of the relative frequency of Adv-y-V constructions compared to AdvXP constructions on the basis of a sample of nine Middle Welsh prose texts. According to Table 2, Adv-y-V order is the predominant

8 Key to abbreviations: $C_{1\text{-}4}$ = fronted Constituents; P = preverbal Particle (*a*/*y*); V = finite Verb; S = Subject; O_{nom} = nominal Object; A = adverbial phrase.

9 See Willis (1998: 58-72) for a detailed discussion of adverb placement in Middle Welsh and its implications for a (formal) V2 analysis of Middle Welsh word order. In addition to Adv-XP-V order, certain adverbs can also be interposed between a fronted constituent and the verb, e.g. S-Adv-*a*-V Willis (1998: 60-62).

construction (representing over 50% of the clause-initial adverbial constructions) in six of the nine texts in the sample, that is the earlier texts dating from before the late 14th or the 15th century. Nevertheless, Adv-XP-V constructions (in particular Adv+Gwn, Adv+PronS-V and Adv+NomS-V) remain common in 13th and 14th-century Middle Welsh prose, ranging from 18% to 40% of clause-initial adverbial constructions in PDMCs. In the three later texts from the late 14th and early 15th century (*Ystoryae Sant Greal* – YSG, *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig* – FfBO and *Buchedd Sant Marthin* – BSM), Adv-y-V order represents less than 50% of clause-initial adverbial constructions and SV orders are noticeably commoner, representing between 36% and 44% of adverb-initial constructions.

(3) a. Adverb+***y***+Verb (Adv-y-V)

Ac ar hynny ***y*** *daw kawat o adar y*
and on that **PRT** come-3SG.FUT shower of birds to
discynnu ar y pren
alight-VN on the tree
'And after that a flock of birds will come to alight on the tree'
(Thomson 1968: lines 155-156)

b. Adverb+Adverb+***y***+Verb (Adv-Adv-y-V)

Ac ar hynny diwarnawt ***y*** *clywei*
and on that one.day **PRT** hear-3SG.IMPERF
Owein kynhwryf yn y kastell
Owein commotion in the castle
'And then one day Owein heard a commotion in the castle'
(Thomson 1968: lines 622-623)

c. Adverb+pronominal subject (Adv-PronS-V)

Ac ar hynny ti ***a*** *wely varchawc*
And on that you **PRT** see-2SG.PRES/FUT knight
y ar varch purdu
on horse pure black
'And then you will see a knight on a pure black horse'
(Thomson 1968: lines 159-160)

d. Adverb+nominal subject (Adv-NomS-V)

Ac ar hynny Owein ***a*** *drewis dyrnawt*
And on that Owein **PRT** strike-3SG.PAST blow
ar y marchawc
on the knight

'And thereupon Owein dealt the knight a blow' (Thomson 1968: lines 272-273)

e. Adverb+nominal object (Adv-NomObj-V)

Ac	*ar*	*hynny*	*dyrnawt*	***a***	*rodes*	*y*
and	on	that	blow	**PRT**	give-3SG.PAST	the
marchawc	*y*	*Walchmei*				
knight	to	Gwalchmai				

'And then the knight dealt Gwalchmai a blow' (Thomson 1968: line 531)

f. Adverb+*gwneuthur*-inversion (Adv-Gwn)

Ac	*ar*	*hynny*	*deffroi*	***a***	*oruc*	*Arthur*
and	on	that	wake.up-VN	**PRT**	do-3SG.PAST	Arthur

'And thereupon Arthur awoke' (Thomson 1968: line 226)

Text[10]	Approx.date (MS)	Adv-*y*-V	Adv-Adv-*y*-V	Adv-*Gwn*	Adv-PronS-V	Adv-NomS-V	Other[11]	N° clauses
PerS	c.1275-c.1325	70.0%	2.0%	6.0%	12.0%	2.0%	8.0%	50
MIG	c.1300-c.1350	64.0%	6.0%	12.0%	4.0%	6.0%	8.0%	50
Math	c.1350	64.0%	2.0%	14.0%	2.0%	2.0%	16.0%	50
Owein	c.1350	50.0%	2.0%	24.0%	10.0%	6.0%	8.0%	50
Peredur	c.1350	55.0%	1.7%	8.3%	16.7%	3.3%	15.0%	60
Man	c.1350	52.4%	0.0%	19.0%	2.4%	0.0%	26.2%	42
YSG	c.1375-c.1425	25.8%	0.0%	22.7%	10.6%	33.3%	7.6%	66
FfBO	c.1450-c.1500	42.0%	2.0%	4.0%	14.0%	36.0%	2.0%	50
BSM	1488-1489	46.0%	2.4%	4.0%	22.2%	13.5%	11.9%	126

Table 2: Frequency of different clause-initial adverbial constructions in MW prose texts

Adv-XP-V constructions where the clause-initial adverb is not an argument of the verb, as in examples (3b-f), and where the verb comes in third position, can also be analysed as V2 if the adverbial phrase in initial position is construed as clause-external, that is *Adverb-XP-V* is analysed as *Adverb, XP-V*. Willis (1998: 68) indeed argues that "only one element selected by a verb may precede that verb, and that, in these terms, there is no such thing

10 For the abbreviations of text titles, see the list of abbrevations at the end of the article.

11 'Other' orders after clause-initial adverbial phrases include the non-finite construction Adverb + Verbal noun (the most frequent other construction) and Adverb-dummy subject-V.

as 'multiple fronting' or 'multiple topicalization' in Middle Welsh". However, even if Adv-XP-V constructions are analysed synchronically as compatible with V2, frequent Adv-XP-V constructions (at the expense of Adv-V-XP) can be a diachronic source of instability for V2 word order, as they undermine the formal and functional symmetry between fronted adverbial phrases and other types of fronted constituent which underpins a V2 system.

2.3 The dummy subject construction

The dummy or expletive subject construction, illustrated in example (4), conforms to the V2 word order schema constituent + preverbal particle *a* + verb. However, the status of the initial constituent *ef*, etymologically the 3SG.M personal pronoun, is potentially ambiguous, as it functions both as the constituent preceding the verb in second position and like a V1 preverbal particle, introducing postverbal nominal subjects in presentative constructions as in example (4).

(4) Dummy subject/expletive construction (DU)

ef	*a*	*doeth*	*taraneu*	*a*	*mellt*
DUMMY	PRT	come.PST.3SG	thunder	and	lightning

'There came thunder and lightning.' (Roberts 1975: 107, 1)

From the late 17th century, as shown in Willis (1998: 229-233), we start to see examples of the dummy or expletive subject being used before persons of the verb other than the third person. The use of the dummy subject/expletive before all persons of the verbs in Modern Welsh is indicative of its grammaticalization as a general V1 preverbal particle. The wider analysis and chronology of the grammaticalization of the dummy subject as a general preverbal particle is beyond the scope of this article, and in tagging examples of the dummy subject construction, as in (4), (8a), (14a) and (15a), the gloss 'DUMMY' is used without committing to a particular timing of the reanalysis of the dummy subject as a preverbal particle. Instead, this article focuses on how the expansion of the dummy subject in function and frequency in Middle and Early Modern Welsh contributed both directly and indirectly to the wider change from V2 to V1, specifically to the increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh. First, directly, the expansion of the dummy subject construction led to an expansion of VS (dummy-V-NomS) at the expense of SV word order (NomS-V) word order. Second, indirectly, the increase in the use of the dummy subject/expletive construction is argued, both here and in Willis (1998) though in different ways, to have in turn facilitated the increase

in use of Absolute V1. According to Willis (1998), the increase in use of the expletive construction – 'a non-V2 general complementiser' (Willis 1998: 204) – was one of the leading changes that reduced the evidence in the trigger material for children to acquire V2 and so contributed, along with other changes, to the resetting of the V2 parameter to negative. Here (in section 6.2), as in Currie (2000, 2013), it is argued that there was a more direct relationship between the increase in use of the dummy subject construction and Absolute V1, as they formed a sociolinguistic variable and could be perceived as functionally equivalent and interchangeable, with the result that Absolute V1 could then expand into the same range of uses that the dummy subject had previously expanded into.

2.4 V1 in Middle Welsh prose

Various finite-verb initial constructions (V1) also occur as a minority variant order in PDMCs in Middle Welsh prose, ranging in frequency from 0% to over 9% of PDMCs in Table 1. (Unfortunately, the quantitative analyses of Middle Welsh word order by Poppe and Watkins do not provide a further breakdown of the frequencies of the different types of finite verb-initial constructions). Most commonly, a preverbal particle – the most frequent of which is also *y* – comes before the verb in clause-initial position (5b); less commonly the finite verb itself comes in absolute clause-initial position (Absolute V1, 5c). Examples of different verb-initial constructions are given in (5).

(5) Finite verb-initial constructions in Middle Welsh prose:

a. *Neu(r)*+Verb

Neur	*distrywyt*	*kyfreith*	*Vahumet*
PRT	destroy-3s.PASS.PAST	law	Mohammed

'Mohammed's law has been destroyed' (Williams 1929: 37)

b. *Y*+verb (y-V)

'Yd	*af*	*i*	*yn*	*agel*	*y gyt*	*ac*	*wynt,'*
PRT	go.PRS.1SG	I	PRED	angel	together	with	them
heb y	*Peredur*						
said	Peredur						

'I shall become an angel with them,' said Peredur' (Goetinck 1976: 8)

c. Absolute V1

Gwelsont *hagen* *or* *kaffei* *veddic* *y*
See-3PL.PAST however if find-3SG.COND doctor REL
gyuanhei *y* *ascwrn* *ac* *a* *rwymei*
heal-3SG.COND his bone and REL bind-3sg-COND
y gymaleu *yn* *da* *na* *hanbydei* *waeth*
his joints ADV good NEG be-3sg-COND worse
'They saw, however, that if he found a doctor, who would heal his bone and bind his joints well, that he would not be any the worse.' (Goetinck 1976: 31, Willis 1998: 139)

The construction *neu(r)+verb* in example (5a) was commoner in earlier Middle Welsh but became obsolescent towards the end of the Middle Welsh period. *Y*+Verb (example 5b) was the most productive finite verb-initial construction in Middle Welsh prose, but had become infrequent already at the beginning of the early modern period and was mostly confined to a specific syntactic environment, PDMCs which followed a subordinate clause, as in example (6). V1 following a subordinate clause is, of course, typical in a V2 language like German, so it need not be analysed as an exception to V2, though from a diachronic perspective it is a potential source for Absolute V1 if the particle *y* is lost. Absolute V1 (example 5c), on the other hand, which was rare in Middle Welsh prose, became much more frequent from the 16th century (as shown in section 3.2), and this is the defining change marking the shift from V2 to V1 in Willis (1998), as in his analysis the resetting of the V2 parameter to negative gave rise to grammatical unmarked V1, i.e. Absolute V1.

(6) *Y*+Verb order in PDMC following a subordinate clause

A *phan* *del* *yno,* *y* *kymher*
And when come-3s-PRES-SUBJ there, PRT take-3SG.PRES
vn *o'r* *kylleill* *yn* *y* *law* *ac* *y* *dywait*
one of the knives in his hand and PRT say-3SG.PRES
o'e *lawn* *llef,* *"Yr* *karyat* *ar* *vyn* *duw* *y*
in his full voice out of love for my god PRT
torraf *i* *vyng* *kic."*
cut-1SG.PRES I my meat
'And when he comes there, he takes one of the knives in his hand and says in his full voice "Out of love for my God I cut my meat." ' (Williams 1929: 40)

The status of finite V1 constructions in Middle Welsh is a complex and controversial question, since they represent a minority non-V2 variant order in an overall V2 system. The explanation of the change from V2 to V1 in Willis (1998), moreover, hinges upon his analysis of unmarked V1 as ungrammatical in the V2 system of Middle Welsh, with unmarked V1 being introduced after the resetting of the V2 parameter to negative. Willis (1998) assimilates *Y*+Verb constructions in Middle Welsh to the V2 system by positing a null topic operator:

> [...] Middle Welsh does not have verb-initial clauses in the syntax. Even if we consider only the surface ordering, we must accept that verb-initial ordering is highly marked, occurring only in contexts of narrative continuity. It is thus entirely different from the neutral VSO order of Contemporary Welsh. Once we have posited a null topic operator in the topic position of apparent instances of V1, it is possible to maintain a strict V2-requirement for Middle Welsh. (Willis 1998: 129)

Absolute V1 constructions cannot be analysed as having a null topic operator in the same way, as they (by definition) lack the preverbal particle *y*. However, Absolute V1 is rare in Middle Welsh prose and, moreover, the majority of the examples can be analysed as formulaic idioms and performative speech acts (e.g. *Dygaf y Duw uyg kyffes* 'I confess to God', *Diolchaf y Duw* 'I thank God') or as pragmatically marked and restricted in their use, such as in responses to questions or commands where their use is regular (Willis 1998: 123-124; Meelen 2020: 428-429). Willis' qualification that only unmarked (as opposed to all) V1 was ungrammatical in Middle Welsh is therefore significant, though positing a strict V2 requirement for Middle Welsh where unmarked V1 is ungrammatical is potentially problematic for two reasons. First, there are still some (though not many) examples of Absolute V1 – such as (5c) above – which are not semantically or pragmatically marked, which, as Willis (1998: 124) notes, 'appear to be genuine violations of V2'. Second, from a theoretical perspective, given that V1 frequently occurs as a variant order in V2 languages as noted in section 1 above (Junker 1990: 351; Fontana 1997: 210; Wolfe 2019: 37-38; Wolfe 2020: 350), Middle Welsh would seem to be more of an exception than the rule if unmarked V1 is ungrammatical. Indeed, there does not seem to be an inherent theoretical reason for arguing that V1 is incompatible with V2 phenomena, much less for positing the ungrammaticality of (core or unmarked) V1 as a defining feature of V2 languages.

3 Corpus and methodology

3.1 Composition of corpus and methodology

The following analysis of the loss of the preverbal particles as well as of the increase in use of Absolute V1 is based on a self-compiled corpus, summarised in Table 3. The corpus comprises 94 texts (or collections of texts) by more than 48 individual writers spanning a period of approximately two hundred years from the mid-16th century to the mid-18th century and includes 10,333 PDMCs, that is the syntactic environment where the preverbal particles *a* and *y* as well as Absolute V1 can occur. PDMCs can be found in simple (single-clause) sentences, or in multi-clause clause sentences. In multi-clause sentences which contain a subordinate clause, a PDMC may precede a subordinate clause, as in (7a), or follow one as in (7c). In multi-clause sentences with coordinated main clauses, there may be more than one PDMC, as in example (7b), and coordinating conjunctions such as *a(c)* 'and' and *ond/eithr* 'but' are not counted in determining the constituent order. Absolute V1 is thus defined as a finite verb in absolute clause-initial position (excluding coordinating conjunctions) in a PDMC, though the clause in which it occurs may be preceded by another clause, either subordinate or another main clause in coordination. The PDMCs analysed, as in Willis (1998), further comprise only synthetic verbs, excluding analytic progressive constructions with the present or imperfect tenses of the verb *bod* 'to be', which have a different syntax. The composition of the corpus reflects the texts available in Welsh during this period, which are primarily religious prose texts (both original and translated, mostly from English, but also Latin and French) and written predominantly in a literary register. However, the corpus also contains two text types in a popular register: slander case records and popular (verse) drama[12].

Since the texts included in the corpus have mostly not been digitalised and tagged, the corpus was compiled by manually extracting the PDMCs from the selected texts and tagging them for relevant syntactic data, including the word order or construction used, the syntactic status of fronted adverbials, information relating to the verb (person, number, lexical item, voice) as well as the retention or omission of preverbal particles. The individual texts included

12 Several different analyses of the corpus texts are discussed in this paper – of the word order in PDMCs, the retention/omission of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* and of aspects of the syntax of preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrases – though not all corpus texts appear in all analyses (tables or graphs), in particular if there are insufficient examples for a specific analysis in a given text. Some additional extracts from the books of the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bibles – Acts of the Apostles, Galatians and Revelation – not included the corpus texts in Table 3 were also analysed specifically in respect of the retention/omission of the preverbal particle *a*, and this data is shown in Table 7 below.

Text Type	Time range	N° texts groups of texts	N° writers	N° PDMCs	Description
Expository prose	c.1550-1691	13	13	2,681	Mostly religious texts (original & translated, printed & MS)
Narrative prose (3rd person)	1583-1750	7	7	1,522	Historical, fictional (original & translated, printed & MS)
Narrative prose (1st person)	c.1575-1772	6	6	813	Autobiographical, fictional (original & translated, printed & MS)
Bible translations	1567 & 1588	6 extracts	2	1,399	6 extracts from 4 books by two translators
Manuscript sermons	late C16th-1717	41 sermons by 12 preachers	12	1,734	Autograph MS sermons (mostly original)
Slander case records	1591-1774	Aggregated from 13 courts	n/a	388	Court transcriptions of defamatory statements
Popular drama (all verse)	c.1550-c.1750	8 plays	8	1,796	5 interludes, 2 versions of a morality play, a passion play (original)
Total		94	48	10,333	

Table 3: Composition of corpus

in the corpus, together with the abbreviations used to refer to them in tables and graphs, are listed in Tables 17 and 18 at the end of the article.

3.2 Evidence of an increase in use of Absolute VI in Early Modern Welsh

Whereas Absolute V1 was rare in Middle Welsh prose, we find the construction occurring significantly more frequently in prose texts from the 16th century on. Three examples of Absolute V1 from 16th-century prose texts are given in (7): in a standalone PDMC (a), in a PDMC conjoined to another main clause (b), and in a PDMC following a subordinate clause (c).

(7) a. Absolute V1 in a standalone PDMC

Cadwassom	*gyda*	*ni,*	*er*	*hynny,*	*mewn*	*parch*
keep-1PL.PAST	with	us	despire	that	in	respect

nid yn vnig y petheu a wyddom ei [sic]
not only the things which know-1PL.PRES their
traddodi o'r Apostolion i ni, eithr pethau
hand down-VN by the apostles to us but things
eraill hefyd yr rhai a dybiassom y
other also the ones which suppose-1PL.PAST that
gallem eu dioddef yn ddi-niwed
can-1PL.COND their tolerate-VN ADVZ unharmed
i'r Eglwys
to the Church
'We held in respect, despite that, not only those things which we knew had been handed down to us by the apostles, but also other things which we supposed we could harmlessly tolerate in the Church' Deffyn 1595 (Kyffin & Williams 1908 [1595]: 46)

b. Absolute V1 in a conjoined PDMC

PronS-V

Ac efe a aeth eilchwel i Capernaum wedi
And he PRT went again to Capernaum after
[ychydig] dyddiau,
a few days

Absolute V1

a chlywyd ei fod efe yn tŷ [sic]
and hear-PASS.PAST his be-VN he in house
'And he went again to Capernaum after a few days and it was heard that he was in [the] house.' *Mark* 2:1, M2 1588 (Morgan & National Library of Wales 1987 [1588]: 455)

c. Absolute V1 in a PDMC following a subordinate clause

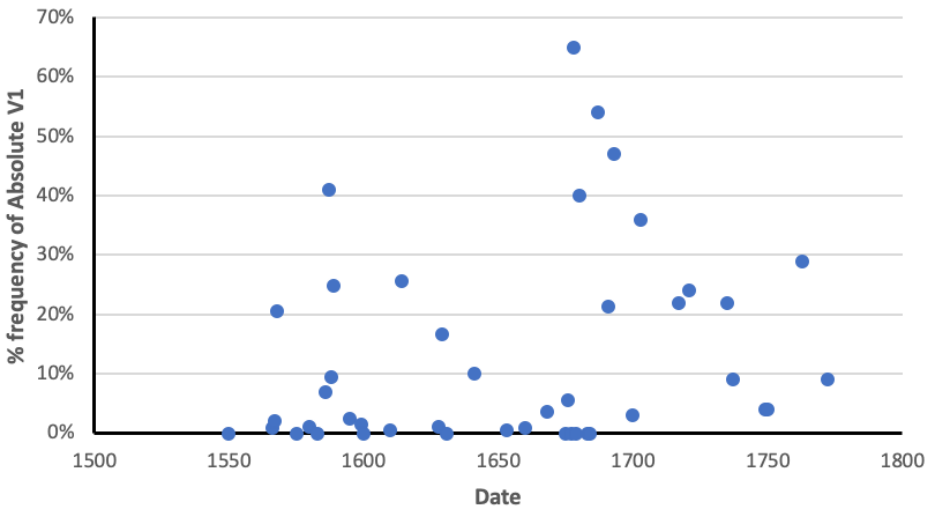
Subordinate clause

os yf dyn o honof o,
if drink-3SG.PRES man of-3SGM it

PDMC with Absolute V1

chwda allan oy enay yn gwicc
vomit-3SG.PRES out of his mouth ADV quick
'If a man drinks it, he quickly vomits it out of his mouth' Gw 1580 (Gwyn & Bowen 1970 [1580]: 20)

Graph 1 plots the percentage frequency of Absolute V1 (calculated as the number of instances of Absolute V1 out of the total number of PDMCs) in prose corpus texts (narrative and expository prose plus manuscript sermons) over time from c.1550-1772. The underlying data for Graph 1, including the frequency of Absolute V1 for individual corpus texts, is given in Table 19 in the appendix to this article. Only prose texts are used to present in Graph 1 an overview of diachronic change in the frequency of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh, as the evidence of the drama is ambiguous in this respect. All the drama is in verse and so the use of Absolute V1, in particular in the early 16th-century corpus texts, could reflect either a poetic linguistic and stylistic feature, since Absolute V1 was frequent in Middle Welsh poetry while rare in Middle Welsh prose, or it could reflect a general increase in the use of the construction in contemporary spoken discourse. The frequencies of Absolute V1 in the popular drama corpus texts are, however, given in Table 20 in the Appendix and similarly those of the slander case records in Table 21. It should be noted that Absolute V1 is rare in the slander case record section of the corpus, with only two instances of the construction out of 388 PDMCs (a 1684 example from the St Davids Ecclesiastical Court and a 1778 example from the Pembrokeshire Court of Sessions).



Graph 1: % frequency of Absolute V1 in prose corpus texts (c.1550-1772)

The two most salient points to be drawn from Graph 1 are, first, that there is a noticeable increase in the frequency of Absolute V1 in prose corpus

texts from the second half of 16th century and, second, that the increase is not uniform, as throughout the corpus period there is marked variation in the frequency of Absolute V1 between individual texts. We find 16th-century texts with a frequency of Absolute V1 significantly higher than in Middle Welsh prose, where there were no or only one or two examples in many texts. Such 16th-century texts include in particular the poetic books of the 1567 and 1588 Bible translations (*1567 Psalms*, S1 1567 – 21%; *1588 Isaiah*, Is 1588 – 25%; *1588 Psalms*, S2 1588 – 41%) and to a lesser extent the prose books of the 1588 Bible (*1588 Mark*, M2 1588– 7%; *1588 Esther*, Es 1588 – 9%). The more frequent use of Absolute V1 in the poetic books of the Bible and the fact that these are the first continuous prose texts in Welsh with a relatively frequent use of the construction is a potentially significant factor in explaining the increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh and is discussed further below in sections 5.3 and 6 as well as in more detail in Currie (2016, 2023). At the same time, however, there are other 16th century prose texts with no examples of Absolute V1 in the corpus extracts – *Y Llyfr y Ffestifal* Ff c.1550 , *Y Marchog Crwydrad* – Cr c1575 and Roland Puleston's *Llefr y Eglyws Christnogedd* Eg 1583 – or with a very low frequency of the construction (e.g. Richard Davies' *Epistol at y Cembru,* Ep 1567 – 0.8%; Evan Morgan's sermons, EM 1610 – 0.6%).

We then see a continuation of the increase in use of Absolute V1 in 17th and 18th-century prose texts in two respects. First, we find more texts with a very frequent use of Absolute V1, including for the first time texts where Absolute order occurs in over 50% of PDMCs such as Charles Edwards' *Y Ffydd Ddi-ffuant* (Ff 1677) with a frequency of 64% and James Owen's *Trugaredd a Barn* (Tb 1687) with 54%. Second, over time we find relatively fewer texts with no or only one or two examples of Absolute V1. In the period 1610-1700, 6 out of 20 texts have a frequency of Absolute V1 of less than 1% compared to 6 out of 15 in the period 1550-1610. In the period 1700-1772, there are zero texts (out of ten) with a frequency of less than 1%, though three texts have a frequency of less than 5%. There is still, however, marked variation between contemporary and near contemporary texts: William Jones' 1676 translation of the first edition of Thomas Gouge's *Principles of the Christian Religion* (Pr 1676), for instance, has no examples of Absolute V1 while Charles Edwards' 1679 translation (Gwydd 1679) of a revised and expanded second edition of Gouge's text has a frequency of 40%.

4 Putative connection between the loss of preverbal particle *a* and loss of V2

4.1 Loss of preverbal particles and resetting of V2 parameter in Willis (1998)

The loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* represent two of the key leading changes which contributed to the resetting of the V2 parameter in Willis' formal analysis of the change from V2 to V1 in Welsh:

> It has been argued that the evidence in the trigger experience for the correct acquisition of the V2-rule was gradually eroded by a number of processes, specifically the gradual evolution of a marked status for object topicalization; the relaxation of the constraints on expletive topics to a point where a non-V2 general complementizer *fe* is introduced into the lexicon; the development of subject clitics; *and in particular the phonological erosion of the preverbal particles*. This reduction of evidence reached such a point in the seventeenth century that verb-second failed to be acquired by children learning Welsh. Instead they reanalysed the language as being VSO with optional raising of subjects to preverbal position and free placement of adverbs in a preverbal adjoined position. (Willis 1998: 204; my emphasis)

The importance of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* in Willis' analysis derives from their function as topic or Spec-Head agreement markers (Willis 1998: 62, 183) which underpin the V2 system of Middle Welsh. The presence of these particles helps the child acquiring Middle Welsh V2 to 'hypothesise a general agreement process between the head of C and an arbitrary XP in SpecCP' which 'is sufficient for the V2-parameter to be set positively' (Willis 1998: 164). In terms of chronology, Willis (1998: 144, 188) argues that the loss of *a* began after unstressed personal pronoun subjects but was general by the late 16th century, positing a general loss of the *a* by the late 16th century, including after stressed (i.e. reduplicated and conjunctive) personal pronoun subjects and full lexical subjects:

> [...] in the late sixteenth century, however, we find omission of the particle [*a*] in all contexts on a wide scale. (Willis 1998: 139-140)
>
> In Contemporary Welsh *a* is not in general use in speech (Morgan 1952: 174), and the evidence of the sixteenth century texts

> suggests that this is the period to which we should relate its disappearance. (Willis 1998: 141)

The dating of the loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* to the 16th century is important for Willis' analysis since we start finding more frequent examples of Absolute V1 in prose texts from the second half of the 16th century, such as the 1567 and 1588 translations of the Psalms plus certain other books of the 1588 Bible, as well as in some texts from the first half of the 17th century. This means that if we are to explain the increase in use of Absolute V1 in terms of a resetting of a V2 parameter, this resetting would have had to have taken place (or at least begun) before these texts, and the leading changes would logically have had to have taken place before the parameter resetting.

4.2 Evidence of the retention/loss of preverbal particle ***a*** *c.1550-c.1750*

Although examples of the omission of preverbal *a* can be found in texts from the 16th century – as illustrated in (8) – the corpus data shows that the degree of retention or omission of preverbal particle *a* varies depending on the syntactic function, discourse markedness and phonological weight of the fronted constituent, as summarised (in simplified form) in Table 4. As we are dealing with a partial loss and retention of the preverbal particle *a*, the term 'omission of *a*' is preferred to refer to the absence/non-use of *a*, as it is more neutral than 'loss', which could imply an underlying *complete* loss of the particle.

(8) a. Omission of ***a*** after a dummy subject

Fo	***ø***	*ddygodd*	*Lewys*	*ap*	*Nicholas*	*fuch*	*yn*
DUMMY	***ø***	took	Lewys	ap	Nicholas	cow	ADV
lledrad							
stealing							

Retention of *a* after a reduplicated personal pronoun subject

ag	*my fy*	***a***	*brof-**a***	*hyny*
and	I	REDUP	**a**-PART	prove-1SG.FUT	that

'Lewis ap Nicholas hath stollen a cowe and I will prove it'
(Slander, Denbigh Sessions 1593, n° 25; Suggett 1983)

b. Omission of ***a*** after a simplex personal pronoun subject

Ti	***ø***	*ddestrywy*	*y*	*rei*	*y*
You-2SG	***ø***	destroy-2SG.PRES	the	ones	who
ddywedant		*gelwydd*			
say-3p-PRES/FUT		lie			

'You destroy those who tell lies' Psalms 5:6, S1 1567 (Richards & Williams 1965 [1567])

Fronted constituent	Phonological Weight	Discourse function	Retention/omission of a
Gwneuthur-inversion	Stressed	Marked, sentence focus	***a*** largely retained in all text types to end of corpus period
Direct object	Stressed	Marked, focus	
Nominal subject	Stressed	Marked: topic shift, focus (Currie 2000: 219-221)	
Conjunctive / reduplicated pers. pron. subject	Stressed	Marked-contrastive, emphatic	
Simplex pers. pron. subject	Unstressed, proclitic	Unmarked	< 50% retention in some texts 2nd half C16th/1st half C17th
Dummy subject	Unstressed, proclitic	Unmarked	0% retention in some texts 2nd half C16th/1st half C17th

Table 4: Variable retention/omission of preverbal particle a c.1550-c.1750

There is only evidence of frequent omission of the preverbal particle *a* in the second half of the 16th century after unaccented and semantically unmarked preverbal constituents, that is primarily the dummy subject and, to a lesser extent, simplex personal pronoun subjects. After accented and more semantically marked preverbal constituents – reduplicated and conjunctive (contrastive) personal pronoun subjects, nominal subjects, direct objects and verbal noun objects (the *gwneuthur*-inversion) – the preverbal particle *a* is generally retained[13]. The degree of retention or omission of preverbal particle

13 In addition to semantically neutral and unstressed *simplex* pronouns (e.g. *mi* 'I', *ti* 'you SG'), Welsh also has two types of emphatic pronouns: *reduplicated* pronouns (*myfi* 'I', *tydi* 'you SG') and *conjunctive*, that is specially contrastive pronouns (e.g. *min-*

a over the corpus period after different types of preverbal constituents is shown in tables 5-10. Table 5 shows the percentage retention of *a* in the (verse) popular drama subsection of the corpus, Table 6 in slander case records, Table 7 in the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bible translations, Table 8 in manuscript sermons, Table 9 in expository and narrative prose texts c.1550-1653 and Table 10 in expository and narrative prose texts 1675-1772. The percentage retention of the preverbal particle *a* is calculated as the number of PDMCs where *a* is used out of the total number of PDMCs with each type of fronted constituent – dummy subject, simplex personal pronoun subject, emphatic (reduplicated or conjunctive) personal pronoun subject, nominal subject and direct object. There were insufficient examples of the *gwneuthur*-inversion to enable a systematic comparison between all corpus texts. All instances of retention and omission of *a* were counted, including where the verb following *a* begins with /a/, where *a* could also be omitted in Middle Welsh. The relatively small number of instances in the corpus where the form <*y*> was used for *a*, as discussed in the following section 4.3, have also been counted as cases of retention of *a*. When used instead of the preverbal particle *a* in such cases, *y* is also followed by lenition in the following verb like *a* but unlike *y(r)* when used after preverbal adverbial phrases. The number of instances of the retention of *a*, of the use of <*y*> for *a* and of the omission of *a* in the texts concerned is shown separately in Table 13.

Tables 5-10 show that there is significant variation in the retention / omission of *a* between individual texts as well as depending on the type of fronted constituent. A key issue we face, then, is interpreting this variation in the textual record. Noting instances of the omission of *a* in 16th-century texts, though without providing supporting quantitative evidence, Willis (1998: 188) assumes a simpler underlying pattern of the systematic loss of *a* in spoken discourse, which in turn presupposes a potentially significant divergence of spoken and written usage, with written texts maintaining to variable degrees a conservative literary norm (Willis 1998: 44). Such an assumption is potentially problematic in two respects. First, as shown in Table 4, given that the particle *a* is used in different environments – after different types of fronted constituents with both different accentual patterns (stressed vs. unstressed) and different discourse-pragmatic functions – there is no *a priori* reason to suppose a uniform pattern of loss of *a*, even if we attribute the loss of *a* to an underlying sound change. Second, the interpretation of the textual evidence is also perhaps too simplistic. On the one hand, written texts are cited as evidence of the loss of *a* in spoken discourse, yet, on the other hand, it is ar-

hau/minheu/minnau/minne 'I', *tithau/tithe* 'you SG'). Conjunctive pronouns are used to convey meanings such as 'I as opposed to you', 'I for my part', 'me too'.

Text - Date	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by constituent type Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Direct object
Dioddef	0%	76%	83%	80%	100%
Mid C16th	2	62	6	10	6
GK I	0%	58%	0%	80%	50%
Mid C16th	10	24	3	5	4
GK II	0%	38%	80%	86%	80%
Late C16th	16	40	10	7	5
Rhyfel	0%	26%	81%	75%	100%
Late C17th	35	194	36	16	5
Brutus	11%	18%	89%	65%	100%
1734/5	27	165	9	31	14
Cyndrig	0%	16%	100%	95%	100%
1737	21	116	5	20	3
Ffrewyll	0%	8%	100%	100%	100%
1745	31	131	11	10	1
Afradlon	7%	8%	73%	89%	86%
1750	30	167	11	19	7
Total tokens	**172**	**899**	**91**	**118**	**45**

Table 5: Retention of preverbal particle *a* in popular drama (c.1550-c.1750)

Slander cases Date range	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by fronted constituent type Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject
1590-1630	40%	85%	96%	67%
	10	41	28	9
1631-1670	47%	72%	96%	100%
	17	68	28	2
1671-1710	0%	51%	100%	100%
	17	41	4	2
1710-1750	13%	58%	82%	100%
	23	50	17	4
Total tokens	**67**	**200**	**77**	**17**

Table 6: Retention of preverbal particle *a* in Slander case records (1590-1750)

gued that written texts are potentially unrepresentative of spoken discourse. Moreover, there is no detailed analysis in Willis (1998) of how and to what extent the written data might have diverged from the putative spoken usage. If, however, we analyse more closely the variation between individual texts, it

may be possible to identify which texts may have been more or less influenced by an emerging literary standard based on the 1620 Bible, which as I have argued elsewhere was in many, though not all respects, more conservative than colloquial usage (Currie 2016, 2022, Forthcoming), and interpret which patterns of use are more likely to have been closer to spoken usage (where there may also have been variation), and thus obtain a more nuanced understanding of the retention/omission of *a* in Early Modern Welsh.

Tables 5 and 6 above show the retention/omission of *a* in the most popular text types in Early Modern Welsh – popular drama (in particular interludes) and slander case records – which one might a priori assume to be closest to colloquial usage. Table 7, on the other hand, shows the retention/omission of *a* in the same passages of the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bible translations: Psalms 1-20, Mark 1-5, Acts 1-4, Galatians, Revelation 1-6 (Salesbury, Davies & Huet 1567, Richards & Williams 1965 [1567], Morgan 1620, Morgan & National Library of Wales 1987 [1588]). Tables 8-10 then show the retention and omission of *a* in prose texts which, arguably, were more likely than interludes or slander case records to have been influenced by a biblical literary standard: manuscript sermons in Table 8 and (predominantly religious) narrative and expository prose texts in tables 9 and 10.

Bible version	% Retention of a and n° tokens by fronted constituent type				
	Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Direct object
1567 NT, Psalms	8%	60%	94%	95%	100%
	25	211	17	162	22
1588 Bible	50%	100%	100%	99%	100%
	6	145	113	190	19
1620 Bible	50%	100%	100%	99%	100%
	2	136	115	191	16
Total tokens	**33**	**492**	**245**	**543**	**57**

Table 7: Retention of preverbal particle *a* in the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bible translations

Both significant similarities and differences in the degree of retention or omission of *a* can be observed between the different text types in tables 5-10. The key similarity is that across all text types, both more literary (narrative and expository prose plus manuscript sermons) and more popular (drama and slander case records), the degree of retention of *a* follows a phonological weight (stress) and semantic/discourse markedness hierarchy. The more accented and the more semantically marked the fronted constituent is, the higher the rate

Text & Date Author	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by fronted constituent type Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Direct object
WG c.1600	0%	86%	100%	90%	100%
William Griffith	29	74	9	20	12
EM 1610	0%	45%	100%	100%	100%
Evan Morgan	44	20	38	29	2
WW 1629	9%	40%	100%	83%	-
William Williams	11	48	3	12	0
JP c1641	42%	100%	100%	100%	100%
John Piers	19	6	24	71	4
C219 1668	50%	100%	100%	100%	-%
John Jones	4	14	14	51	0
NLW3B 1675	60%	84%	100%	98%	100%
Anon.	15	43	6	49	2
B354 1678	67%	76%	80%	100%	100%
Anon.	6	41	5	34	1
B355/62 1680	0%	60%	100%	92%	100%
Anon.	1	30	5	12	2
JG 1683	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%
John Griffith	61	56	24	13	4
C226 >1660	11%	66%	100%	100%	-%
Anon.	36	29	3	20	0
SW >1700	5%	54%	97%	100%	100%
Samuel Williams	40	57	39	53	6
B362,5 1717	0%	34%	100%	90%	-
Anon.	2	32	8	30	0
Total tokens	**268**	**450**	**178**	**394**	**33**

Table 8: Retention of preverbal *a* in manuscript sermons (c.1600-1717)

of retention of *a*. As shown in Table 11, which gives the average retention rate for each text type over the whole corpus period, the average retention rate of *a* is 21% after the dummy subject (ranging from a low of 3% in popular drama to a high of 50% in the 1588 Bible), 52% after simplex personal pronoun subjects (ranging from 22% in popular drama to 100% in the 1588 Bible), 93% after emphatic pronoun subjects (ranging from 81% in popular drama to 100% in the 1588 Bible), 96% after nominal subjects (ranging from 81% in

Text & Date / Author	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by fronted constituent type Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Nominal object
Ff c.1550	95%	94%	75%	91%	100%
Anon.	19	36	8	33	3
Ep 1567	0%	87%	100%	94%	100%
Richard Davies	4	15	4	33	4
Cr c.1575	0%	68%	100%	91%	100%
Anon.	3	41	5	22	3
Gw 1580	0%	36%	50%	90%	100%
Robert Gwyn	30	105	10	21	6
Eg 1583	25%	94%	86%	100%	100%
Roland Puleston	8	52	14	46	3
De 1595	21%	92%	86%	96%	100%
Maurice Kyffin	14	48	14	46	7
Ed 1629	14%	90%	100%	96%	100%
Robert Lloyd	7	29	22	47	1
Ca 1631	13%	100%	100%	92%	100%
Oliver Thomas	8	17	13	26	5
LlTA 1653	25%	27%	89%	90%	100%
Morgan Llwyd	88	200	19	42	2
Total tokens	**181**	**543**	**109**	**316**	**34**

Table 9: Retention of preverbal *a* in expository and narrative prose texts (c.1550-1653)

the popular drama to 99% in the 1588 Bible) and 98% after nominal objects (ranging from 91% in popular drama to 100% in the 1588 Bible, manuscript sermons and narrative and expository prose). Thus, after the accented and semantically marked constituents (direct object, nominal subject, emphatic pronoun), *a* is largely retained to the end of the corpus period in all text types. There are, nevertheless, certain outlier texts with lower retention rates of *a* after emphatic personal pronoun subjects, for example the mid-16th-century morality play *Y Gwr Kadarn* (the Cardiff MS 2.83 version) with a 0% retention rate (GK I in Table 5), the 1580 expository prose text *Gwssanaeth y Gwyr Newydd* with a 50% retention rate (Gw 1580 in Table 9) and the 1703 1st person narrative prose text *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsc* with a 29% retention rate. In each of these three texts, there is a relatively small number

Text & Date / Author	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by fronted constituent type Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Direct object
Ys 1675	4%	65%	100%	98%	100%
Rondl Davies	25	31	22	104	9
Pr 1676	6%	88%	92%	100%	100%
William Jones	36	34	12	23	6
Gwydd 1679	0%	82%	100%	100%	100%
Charles Edwards	2	11	11	43	4
YBM 1691	37%	88%	94%	100%	100%
Thomas Williams	73	48	31	15	4
Be 1693	0%	72%	100%	100%	100%
James Owen	13	25	3	26	3
BC 1703	0%	36%	29%	92%	-
Ellis Wynne	3	45	7	12	0
HBA 1721	0%	74%	100%	100%	100%
Simon Thomas	20	35	7	71	4
Pel 1735	0%	24%	85%	100%	100%
Simon Thomas	20	37	13	50	6
H1 1737	11%	71%	100%	100%	100%
John Einnion	9	55	10	15	5
Pr 1750	21%	89%	94%	97%	100%
Henry Lloyd	19	54	17	29	1
MF 1750	18%	27%	-	93%	-
Robert Arthur	11	41	0	14	0
H2 1763	0%	44%	100%	100%	100%
Rhys Thomas	5	16	6	19	3
Fa 1772	3%	69%	100%	100%	-
D. Risiart	32	58	6	12	0
Total tokens	**268**	**489**	**145**	**433**	**45**

Table 10: Retention of preverbal *a* in expository and narrative prose texts (c.1675-1772)

of examples of fronted emphatic personal pronoun subjects in the samples analysed and the majority of cases of omission are before a verb beginning with /a/, that is an environment where the omission of *a* is attested also in Middle Welsh (Willis 1998: 139). Excluding verbs beginning with /a/, the

retention rate would be 71% (5/7) for *Gwssanaeth y Gwyr Newydd* and 50% (2/4) for *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsc*. Similarly, all three instances of the omission of *a* after nominal subjects in the slander case records (3/17 in Table 6) are before verbs beginning with /a/. Since the pattern of high retention of *a* after accented and marked fronted constituents is consistent throughout the corpus period in all the remaining texts for all text types, including popular drama and slander case records, it seems more plausible that the majority pattern of high retention of *a* after accented and marked fronted constituents is closer to spoken usage than that of the outlier texts.

In contrast, there is evidence of extensive omission of *a* after unaccented fronted constituents in certain texts already in the second half of the 16th and first half of the 17th century. There is zero retention of *a* after the dummy subject in the three drama texts from before the mid-17th century (Dioddef, GK I and GK II in Table 5), in two manuscript sermon collections (WG and EM in Table 8) as well as in two narrative/expository prose texts (Ep 1567 and Gw 1580 in Table 9). After simplex personal pronoun subjects, there is less than a 50% retention of *a* in the late 16th-century morality play GK II (38%) in Table 5 as well as in two sermons from before 1650 (EM 45% and WW 40% in Table 8) and in one expository prose text (Gw 1580 – 36% in Table 9). Interestingly, George's (1990: 230, 233) analysis of the word order of the Middle Breton play *Buhez Santez Nonn* (c.1500) reveals a similar pattern of retention of the cognate Breton particle *a*. Here, *a* is least well retained after personal pronoun subjects (42% – 57/136 instances, excluding cases where there is an infixed object pronoun between the pronominal subject and verb), but is consistently retained after fronted nominal subjects (92% – 11/13 instances, again excluding cases where there is an infixed object pronoun) as well as after fronted direct objects (59/59 instances — 100%). There are no dummy subjects or reduplicated or conjunctive pronouns in Breton which can be compared with Welsh.

There are, on the hand, also two key differences between text types in the retention/omission of *a*: first, literary texts tend to show a higher overall retention of *a* especially after dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects, and, second, the popular texts show a more consistent diachronic pattern of retention/omission of *a* compared to literary texts. Thus, in the popular text types (drama and slander case records), there is a consistent diachronic decline in the retention of *a* after unstressed and unmarked constituents, in particular after simplex personal pronoun subjects. In drama, as shown in Table 5, the retention rate after simplex personal pronoun subjects falls from 76% in the earliest text (*Y Ddioddefaint*, a passion play, c.1550) to 8% in the latest text (the interlude *Y Mab Afradlon,* 'The Prodigal Son', 1750). In

Text type	% Retention of *a* and n° tokens by fronted constituent type				
	Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.	Emphatic pron. subj.	Nominal subject	Direct object
Popular drama	3%	22%	81%	81%	91%
c.1550-1750	172	899	91	118	45
Slander case records	22%	67%	94%	82%	n/a%
c.1550-c-1750	67	200	77	17	0
1588 Bible	50%	100%	100%	99%	100%
	6	145	113	190	19
MS sermons	34%	69%	99%	98%	100%
late C16th-early C18th	268	450	178	394	33
Prose	26%	56%	88%	94%	100%
c1550-1653	181	543	109	316	34
Prose	14%	64%	92%	99%	100%
1675-1679	268	489	145	433	45
Average	**21**%	**52**%	**93**%	**96**%	**98**%
Total tokens	**962**	**2,726**	**713**	**1,468**	**176**

Table 11: Summary of retention of *a* by fronted constituent and text type

the slander case records (Table 6), there is a decline from a retention rate of 85% for the period 1590-1630 to 58% for the period 1711-1750. In the case of the dummy subject, we see a consistently low retention of *a* in the drama throughout the corpus period (ranging between 0% and 11%) and a more gradual decline in the slander case records from 40% in the period 1590-1630 to 13% in the period 1711-1750. In literary prose texts, in contrast, instead of a consistent downward trajectory in the retention of *a* after the dummy subject and simplex personal pronoun subjects, we see a more uneven pattern characterised by marked variation between near contemporary texts of the same type. For example, in the case of manuscript sermons in Table 8, the earliest three collections by William Griffith (WG), Evan Morgan (EM) and William Williams (WW) show a very low retention rate of *a* after the dummy subject (0%-9%), but the next five collections from the mid and second half of the 17th century show a much higher rate of retention, ranging from 42% in John Piers' (JP) sermons to 100% in John Griffith's (JG) sermons. The latest three sermon collections again show a lower rate of retention – 11% for Cardiff MS 2.226 (C226), 5% for Samuel Williams (SW) and 0% for Bangor 352,5. There is a comparable up-and-down diachronic pattern in the retention of *a* after simplex personal pronoun subjects in both manuscript sermons and

narrative/expository prose (tables 8-10). Table 12 highlights some notable examples of variation in the retention of *a* in near contemporary texts of the same type.

Text	Type	Date	% Retention of preverbal particle *a* after Dummy subject	Simplex pron. subj.
Gwssanaeth y Gwyr Newydd (Robert Gwyn)	Expos. prose	1580	0%	36%
Deffyniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr (Maurice Kyffin)	Expos. prose	1595	21%	92%
NLW 73A (William Williams)	Sermon	1629	9%	40%
NLW 12205A (John Piers)	Sermon	c.1640	42%	100%
Bangor 355/362 (anon.)	Sermon	1680	0%	60%
Bangor 95 (John Griffith)	Sermon	1683	100%	96%

Table 12: Contemporary or near contemporary prose texts with differing rates of retention of preverbal particle *a*

The higher retention of *a* after dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects in manuscript sermons and printed prose texts may reflect the linguistic influence of the Welsh Bible. The 1588 Welsh Bible, as revised in 1620, formed the basis of an emerging Welsh literary standard (Currie 2022, Forthcoming). As shown in Table 7, which presents the percentage retention of *a* in the same sample of extracts from selected books of the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bible translations, the earlier 1567 Welsh Testament and Psalms showed a lower retention of *a* than either the 1588 or 1620 Bibles – 8% after dummy subjects and 60% simplex after personal pronoun subjects, comparable indeed to the mid-16th-century passion play *Y Ddioddefaint*. However, William Morgan, the translator of the 1588 Bible, who revised the 1567 translations of the New Testament and Psalms and translated the rest of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, seems to have reacted against the inconsistent and idiosyncratic language and orthography of 1567 translations (Currie 2022). The linguistic changes William Morgan made compared to the 1567 translations included a consistent retention of the preverbal particle *a* after simplex personal pronouns, emphatic personal pronouns and nominal subjects as well as a more frequent retention of *a* after dummy subjects (50% in the sample in Table 5). This more consistent retention of *a* was maintained in the 1620 Bible.

Where individual writers consistently adopt other linguistic features from the 1620 Bible which appear to have diverged from colloquial use and also show a high retention of *a* – for example, John Piers' sermons (JP c1641) in NLW MS 12205A, John Jones' sermons (C219 1668) in Cardiff MS 2.219 and John Griffith's sermons (JG 1683) in MS Bangor 95 (Currie Forthcoming) –

it would seem reasonable to argue that the high retention of *a* is likely to reflect the linguistic influence of the Welsh Bible. John Griffith's unusually high retention of *a* after the dummy subject (60/60 in the corpus sample) may be connected to the fact that he uses the reduplicated form *efe* of the 3SG.M pronoun for the dummy subject, although etymologically simplex forms (e.g. *ef*, *fe*, *fo*) are typically used for the dummy subject. His use of the reduplicated form *efe* may be a hypercorrection influenced by the Bible, as the reduplicated form *efe* of the 3SG.M personal pronoun (though not for the dummy subject) is used particularly frequently in the Bible and may have been perceived as a salient biblical stylistic feature (Currie Forthcoming). Another factor that may have contributed to the variation between individual writers, both in conjunction with the linguistic influence of the Welsh Bible and separate from it, is pattern simplification and generalisation. Aware of variation or perhaps perceived inconsistency in the use of preverbal particle *a*, some writers may have decided to adopt a more consistent and formally simpler pattern of use, such as generalising *a* after full (as opposed to dummy) preverbal subjects.

4.3 The use the form 'y' for the preverbal particle a

In addition to the straight retention or omission of the particle *a*, there is also the question of how we interpret possible 'errors' or instances of 'hypercorrection' in the use of *a*, as observed by Willis (1998: 141-142), notably the occurrence of the form *y* in environments where *a* would be expected, illustrated in example (9), and the use of *a* after fronted predicates where historically no particle at all was used.

(9) Object fronting with < *y* > (+ lenition) used for *a*

Hyn	*gid*	*y*	*ddwad*	*y*	*sant*	*Bendigedic*	*yma*
this	all	PRT	said	the	saint	blessed	here

'The blessed saint said all this' Gw 1580 (Gwyn & Bowen 1970 [1580]: 8)

Willis (1998: 142) offers two possible interpretations of the use of *y* instead of *a* "both of which suggest a development towards the loss of *a*":

> One possibility again is hypercorrection. The writer knows that particles that are omitted in speech must be used in writing, so adds *y* for the *a* that has been lost in his speech. Another is that we are witnessing an intermediate stage in the

> loss of *a*, during which it weakens to schwa, thereby merging with the other preverbal particle *y(r)*. (Willis 1998: 142)

Willis (1998) does not provide quantitative data on the extent of the use of *y* for *a,* though the following patterns can be discerned in the present corpus analysis. First, the use of *y* for *a* is attested in a relatively small number of corpus texts, and those earlier than 1650 are shown in Table 13. These texts include the 1567 Bible translations (of which extracts from five books – *Psalms* chapter 1-21, *Gospel of Mark* 1-5, *Acts of the Apostles* 1-4, *Galatians* and *Revelation* 1-6 – are shown in Table 13), Robert Gwyn's 1580 *Gwssanaeth y Gwyr Newydd* (Gw 1580), William Williams' sermons (WW 1629) and the slander case records from the Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire Courts of Sessions[14]. Second, these are all texts which otherwise show relatively high rates of omission of the preverbal particle *a*, and, despite the infrequency of the use of *y* for *a* in the corpus as whole, in some of these texts the use of *y* for *a* is relatively frequent: the 1567 Book of Revelation translated by Thomas Huet (20 out of 88 possible instances), William Williams' sermons (12/72) and the Pembrokeshire slander case records (6/34).

	Dummy subject			**Simplex PronS**			**Emphatic PronS**			**Nominal Subject**			**Direct/VN object**		
Text	**0**	**y**	**a**	**0**	**y**	**a**	**0**	**y**	**a**	**0**	**y**	**a**	**0**	**y**	**a**
S2 1567	1	0	2	21	1	29	0	0	6	2	6	59	0	3	5
M1 1567	9	0	0	15	4	52	0	0	5	2	3	35	0	0	2
Acts 1567	7	0	0	8	2	11	0	0	1	0	2	24	0	0	0
Galatians 1567	2	0	0	3	1	8	0	0	4	1	0	11	0	0	3
Revelation 1567	4	0	0	36	7	20	0	0	0	3	10	4	0	2	1
Gw 1580	30	0	0	38	0	67	5	0	5	2	3	16	0	3	4
WW 1629	10	1	0	29	2	17	0	0	3	2	9	2	0	0	0
Pemb. 1611-1650	2	1	0	7	2	10	0	3	6	0	0	1	0	0	0
Card. 1637-1650	1	0	0	5	2	5	0	1	7	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**66**	**2**	**2**	**162**	**21**	**219**	**5**	**4**	**37**	**14**	**33**	**152**	**0**	**8**	**15**

Table 13: Number of occurrences of the omission of the preverbal particle *a* ('0'), of the use of *y* for *a* ('y') and of the retention of *a* ('a') in corpus texts earlier than 1650 where the use of *y* for *a* is attested.

Nevertheless, the usage of these texts does not seem to suggest a complete breakdown of the use of the particles *a* and *y* consistent with Willis' first possible interpretation, that is the systematic loss of the particles in speech

14 Robert Gwyn's relatively low retention of *a* (Table 10) as well as his occasional use of *y* for *a* may reflect a broader tendency of his noted by Parina & Poppe (2021) to use more popular language, including for example English loanwords.

and their partial and hypercorrect reinstatement in written texts. First, there does not seem to be an overall confusion of the particle *y* used after fronted adverbials with the particle *a* used after fronted subjects and direct objects, since *y* is only used (sporadically) where *a* would be expected and not the other way around: *a* is not found after fronted adverbial phrases. Second, the correct initial consonant mutation (lenition) is consistently found after both *a* and *y* when it is used for *a* (as illustrated in example 9 where the lenited form *ddwad* 'said' as opposed to unlenited *dwad* is used), and equally there is no mutation after *y* following a fronted adverbial, also as expected. The two particles *a* and *y* thus seem to have been kept syntactically distinct. Third, the texts in Table 13 show a consistent pattern of retention and omission of *a* in line with the corpus as a whole, with more frequent omission of *a* after the unaccented dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects and higher retention of *a* after accented emphatic personal pronoun subjects, nominal subjects and direct objects. Moreover, as shown in Table 13, the use of *y* for *a* occurs more frequently after emphatic personal pronoun subjects, nominal subjects and direct objects (in 45 out of 269 possible instances – 17%) compared to after dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects (23 out of 472 possible instances – 5%). This pattern of usage seems to suggest that *y* is being used here as a less common orthographical variant for *a*, perhaps reflecting the fact that both particles might have been pronounced similarly as an unaccented schwa as in Willis' second possible interpretation, rather than as a hypercorrect reinstatement of *a* where it had been systematically lost in speech. It is to be noted that the texts in Table 13 all have unstandardised orthography. The texts with the highest frequency of *y* for *a* also have a south Wales provenance: Thomas Huet, the translator of 1567 Book of Revelation, was from Pembrokeshire; William Williams' sermons were preached in Breconshire and show southeastern dialectal features (Jones 1980: cliv), and the slander case records with the greatest incidence of this usage are from Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire. There is, therefore, also a possibility that the use of *y* for *a* was in part a southern regional or dialectal feature.

4.4 Significance of the corpus evidence concerning the retention of ***a***

A broader question raised by the variation in the retention or omission of the preverbal particle *a* is whether it is possible to argue that there was an underlying pattern of general loss of *a* in spoken discourse, as suggested by Willis (1998), but which is partly obscured by linguistic conservatism in the textual record or the emergence of a literary standard based on the 1588 and 1620 Bibles. Such systematic register variation is possible: Larrivée (2022), for example, notes the difference between modern literary and colloquial French

where the former uses subject-verb inversion to form questions and the latter does not, and argues that there may have been a comparable *diglossic register variation* in respect of V2 word order in medieval French texts. However, while it would seem plausible to argue that there was a greater retention of *a* in written literary prose compared to spoken discourse, it does not seem plausible to argue that there is evidence in the textual record for the wholesale loss of *a* – in all environments – and certainly not by the late 16th or early 17th century. This is because there is consistent evidence of the regular retention of *a* until the end of the corpus period (mid-18th century) after accented preverbal constituents (emphatic personal pronoun subjects, nominal subjects and direct objects) in all text types, including the most popular text type, drama, which otherwise shows the lowest rate of retention of *a*.

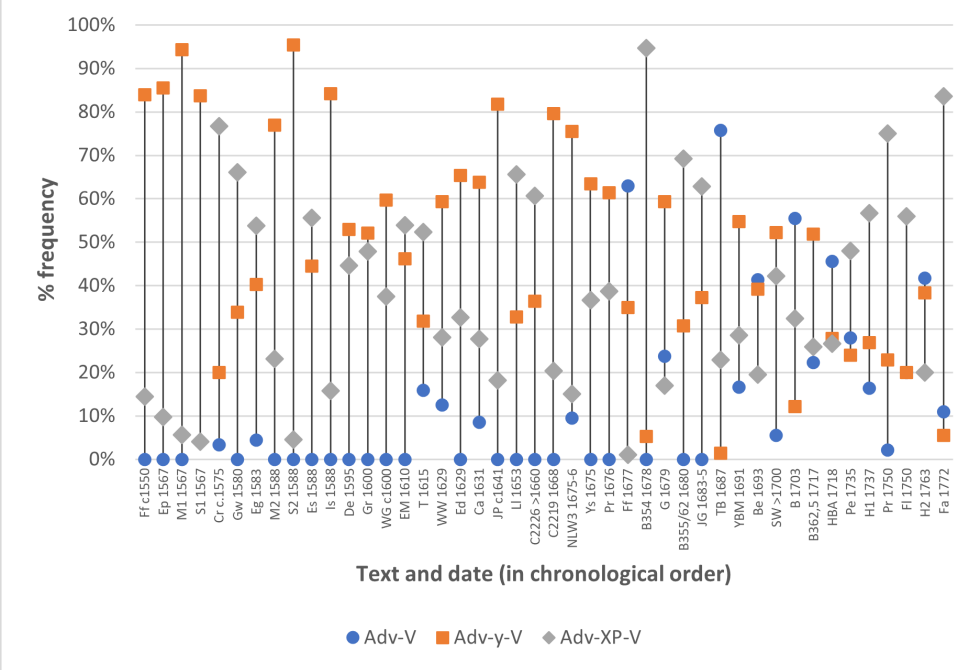
In conclusion, the corpus data suggests that there was not a widespread loss or disappearance of *a* – that is 'omission of the particle in all contexts on a wide scale' (Willis 1998: 40) – by the end of the 16th century. On the basis of the quantitative data presented here, the strongest claim that one can plausibly make is that by the end of the 16th century there was widespread loss of *a* only after dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects, with a comprehensive loss of *a* possibly only after the dummy subject. Therefore, Willis' (1998) claim concerning the disappearance of the preverbal particle *a* would seem to be inaccurate in both its chronology and extent. This would in turn seem to weaken the argument that the loss of *a* was a significant factor in the loss of V2 and increase in the use of V1. Further, the (partial) loss or omission of *a* does not seem to have been a significant factor in the decline of V2 fronting in Welsh either. The decline in object topicalization, as shown by Willis (1998: 185-187), as well in the use of the *gwneuthur*-inversion happened without the loss of *a* (as *a* is retained in both these constructions) and also occurred before the start of the corpus period. We also continue to see frequent fronting of all types of subject – simplex personal pronoun, emphatic personal pronouns and nouns – throughout the 17th century and in the first half of the 18th century at the same time as there is increasing evidence of the (partial) omission of *a*.

5 Putative connection between the loss of preverbal particle *y* and and the emergence of V1

5.1 When and to what extent was **y** *lost after fronted adverbials?*

Willis (1998: 188) considers that 'the loss of the preverbal particle *y(r)* is the single most important development precipitating the breakdown of verb-second' and states that the '[o]mission of *y(r)* after adverbs was certainly

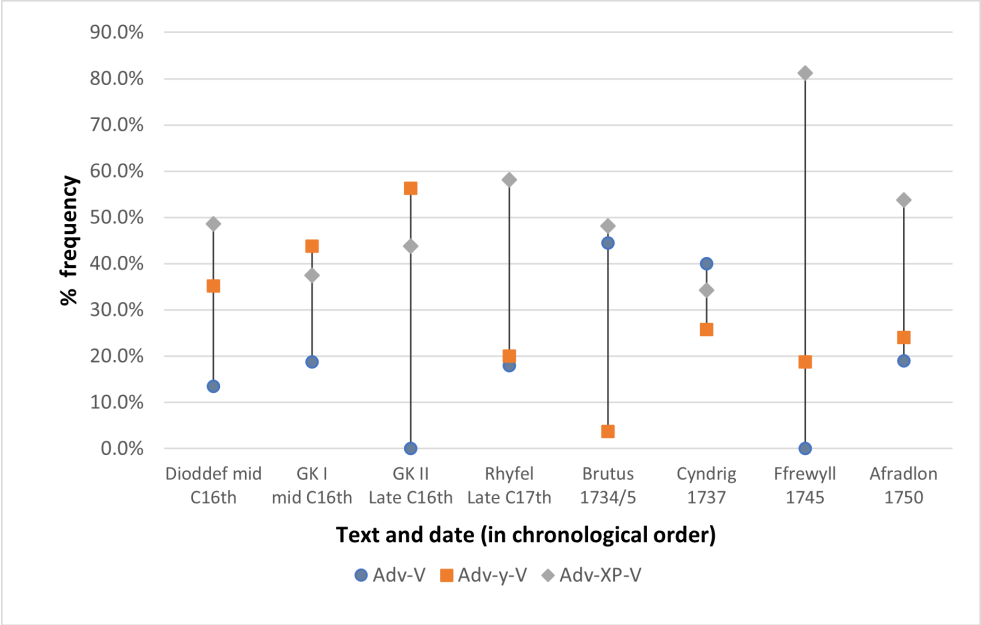
widespread by the second half of the sixteenth century'. However, as with the putative loss of the preverbal particle *a*, Willis (1998: 188-189) gives examples of the omission of *y* from 16th-century texts but does not provide systematic quantitative evidence to demonstrate its chronology or actual extent. This section investigates the chronology and extent of the loss (or retention) of *y* and also discusses whether the increase in use of Absolute V1 is associated with the loss of *y*. The use of Adv-V order instead of Adv-*y*-Verb order can be taken as a possible proxy for the omission of *y* after adverbials. The frequency of all the different constructions following fronted adverbials in PDMCs was calculated for all corpus texts as the number of instances of a given construction divided by the total number of preverbal adverbial constructions in PDMCs and then expressed as a percentage.



Graph 2: % frequency of Adv-y-V, Adv-V and Adv-XP-V out of total adverbial-initial PDMCs in prose corpus texts c.1550-1772

Graphs 2 and 3 show the relative (percentage) frequency out of all preverbal adverbial constructions in PDMCs of Adv-y-V, Adv-V and Adv-XP-V constructions in prose corpus texts from c.1550 to 1772 and in drama corpus texts from c.1550 to 1750 respectively. The Adv-XP-V percentage in the graph represents the total frequency of the three commonest constructions where another constituent comes between a fronted adverbial phrase and the verb: the

dummy subject (Adv-DU-V), personal pronoun subjects (of all types – Adv-PronS-V) and nominal subjects (Adv-NomS-V). Other constituents such as a direct object or a verbal noun object of the auxiliary verb *gwneuthur* "to do" can also occur after fronted adverbs, but are much rarer; on average, Adv-y-V, Adv-V and Adv-XP-V (i.e. Adv-DU-V, Adv-PronS-V and Adv-NomS-V) constructions together accounted for 99% of preverbal adverbial constructions in the corpus texts in Graph 2. Graphs 2 and 3 use a High-Low format to plot on a vertical line for each text in chronological order the percentage frequency of Adv-y-V constructions (plotted as orange squares), Adv-XP constructions (plotted as grey diamonds) and Adv-V constructions (plotted as blue circles).



Graph 3: % frequency of Adv-y-V, Adv-V and Adv-XP-V out of total adverbial-initial PDMCs in drama corpus texts c.1550-1750

The key observations from Graphs 2 and 3 are:

a) First, there is a gradual overall decline in the relative frequency of Adv-y-V in prose texts over the corpus period, though the zig-zag pattern of the trajectory in Graph 2 indicates that it is not a smooth, linear decline, as there is significant synchronic as well as diachronic variation in the frequency of use of Adv-y-V.

b) Second, Adv-y-V continued to be used frequently – in over 50% of adverbial-initial PDMCs – in some prose texts in the late 17th and

first half of the 18th century, especially in manuscript sermons (e.g. C229 1668 – 80%, NLW3B 1675-6 – 75%, Pr 1676 – 61%, Gwydd 1679 – 59%, YBM 1691 – 55%, SW >1700 – 52%, B362,5 1717 – 52%). In the more popular drama texts, the frequency of Adv-y-V is lower, but four of the five later drama texts from the second half of 17th-century and first half of 18th-century show a frequency ranging between 19% and 25%. (The evidence of the drama subcorpus cannot, however, present a continuous picture of the diachronic development of adverbial-initial constructions, because of the discontinuous nature of the textual record, with only one text in the 17th-century and concentrations of texts in the 16th and 18th centuries). It would, therefore, be inaccurate to speak of an across-the-board loss or disappearance of *y* after adverbials.

c) Third, there is only a partial correlation between the decline in frequency of Adv-y-V and the increase in frequency of Adv-V order in prose texts. Overall, the increase in frequency of Adv-V is less strong and steep than the decline in frequency of Adv-y-V, and where there are significant decreases in the frequency of Adv-y-V in Graph 2, there is not always a corresponding increase in the frequency of Adv-V. Further, Adv-V is attested particularly frequently in prose texts (in over 50% of adverb-initial PDMCs) only from the second half of the 17th century. The reason for the only partial negative correlation between the frequencies of Adv-y-V and Adv-V is because there is, as graphs 2 and 3 show, three-way competition between Adv-y-V, Adv-V and Adv-XP-V constructions and there, in fact, seems to be a stronger negative correlation between the frequency of Adv-y-V and that of Adv-XP-V. Thus, already in the second half of the 16th and first half of the 17th century, we see strong dips in the frequency of Adv-y-V and strong increases in the frequency of Adv-XP-V for certain prose texts (e.g. Cr 1575, Gw 1580, Eg 1583, Es 1588, EM 1610, WW 1629).

It seems, therefore, that while the partial omission or loss of *y* (potentially as a result of phonological erosion) and competition with Adv-V contributed to the decline in frequency of Adv-y-V, the main factor driving the decline in Adv-y-V order, especially before the second half of the 17th century, seems to have been competition with Adv-XP-V constructions. It is also to be noted that the frequency of Adv-XP-V is greater than 50% in all the popular drama texts (as shown in Graph 3). Moreover, as was shown in section 2 above and specifically in Table 2, Adv-XP-V constructions were already frequent in some 14th and 15th century Middle Welsh prose texts.

5.2 Variation in frequency of Adv-y-V order depending on the syntactic status of fronted adverbials

It was suggested in section 2.2 that Adv-XP-V constructions seem to have used in Middle Welsh prose in particular – or necessarily according to Willis (1998: 68) and Poppe (Forthcoming) – when the clause-initial adverbial or prepositional phrase was an adjunct as opposed to an argument of the verb. The hypothesis that there may have been a more marked diachronic decline in the frequency of Adv-y-V when a preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrase was not an argument of the verb was investigated by calculating and comparing the frequency of Adv-y-V after adverbials which are arguments of the verb, on the one hand, and those which are not arguments, on the other. Illustrative examples of preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrases which are arguments of the verb are given in (10), and examples of non-argument preverbal adverbial and prepositional phrases are given in (11). Examples (10a) and (11a) show the same clause-initial prepositional phrase *am hynny* from the same corpus text (Charles Edwards' 1677 *Y Ffydd Ddi-ffvant* – Ff 1677): in (10a) *am hynny* is an argument of the verb, but in (11a) it is not. In the first instance, *am hynny*, literally 'for that' is a prepositional object of the verb *gweddïo* 'to pray' (i.e. to pray for something); in the second instance, *am hynny* is used idiomatically as a sentence connector with the meaning 'for that reason, so'. Similarly, (10b) and (11b) show two contrasting examples of the preverbal adverb *felly* 'in this way, thus, so' from the same text (Morgan Llwyd's 1653 *Llyfr y Tri Aderyn* – LlTA 1653): again in the first of the two examples, (10b), *felly* is an argument of the verb meaning 'so, in the same way', i.e. 'so did Barak and Gideon and Habakkuk', whereas in the second, (11b), *felly* is not argument of the verb but functions as a clausal connector meaning 'so, therefore', i.e. 'so, I advise you'.

There are also formal differences between the argument constructions in (10a) and (10b) and the non-argument constructions in (11a) and (11b), since (10a) and (10b) are both Adv-y-V constructions, whereas (11a) is an Adv-V construction and (11b) an Adv-PronS-V construction (i.e. Adv-XP-V for the purposes of Graphs 2 and 3). However, Adv-y-V constructions could be used when the preverbal adverbial was either an argument of the verb or not, and similarly Adv-V and Adv-XP constructions are also found in both contexts. Thus, whether a clause-initial adverbial or prepositional phrase is an argument of the verb or not can often only be determined on the basis of the meaning and discourse context as well as of the syntax of the clause in question. Example (10c) illustrates a further type of preverbal adverbial construction which is an argument of the verb: where an adjective (here *doeth* 'wise') is used without the adverbialiser particle *yn* to express a focused adverb

of manner, i.e. 'wisely you spoke'. While adverbials may be prototypically be considered to be adjuncts (Crystal 2008: 12), examples (10b) and (10c) show that fronted adverbials – especially adverbs of manner – can also be arguments of the verb like prepositional phrases (Hwang 2012: 3-5).

(10) Clause-initial adverbial/prepositional phrases which are *arguments* of the verb

a. **Adv-y-V** *Y rhai a ddychmygant anwiredd ar eu gwelâu, pan oleuo y boreu gwnant ef, am ei fod eu dwylo. Pob un sydd yn hela ei frawd â rhwyd; gofynnant am wobr i wneuthur drygioni â'r ddwy ddwylo yn egniol. [Mic. 2. 1. ac pen 7. 2,3].*

Am hynny y gweddiodd Dafydd
For that PRT pray-3SG.PAST David
'For that David prayed'

Na ddeued troed balchder im herbyn; na syfled llaw'r annuwiol fi. [Psal. 36. 11]

' "Those who mouth evil with their lips, commit it when the morning is light, because it is in the power of their hands. Each one hunts his brother with a net; they ask for a reward for earnestly committing evil with their own hands". [Micah 2:1 and 7:2-3]. For this David prayed: "Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked drive me away [Psalms 36:11]" '. Ff 1677 (Edwards & Williams 1936 [1677]: 267)

b. **Adv-y-V**

Y Tâd Abraham a obeithiodd yn erbyn
The father Abraham PRT hope-3SG.PAST against
rheswm dan obaith, felly y gwnaeth Barac
reason under hope thus PRT do-3SG.PAST Barak
a Gideon a Habbacuc a llawer eraill yn
and Gideon and Habakkuk and many others ADVZ
ddiweddar
lately
'The father Abraham hoped against reason and against hope, and so did Barak and Gideon and Habakkuk and many others lately…' LlTA 1653 (Ellis 1899: 228)

c. **Adv-y-V**

Doeth *y* *dywedaist*
Wise PRT speak-2SG.PAST
'Wisely you spoke' LlTA 1653 (Ellis 1899: 228)

(11) Clause-initial adverbial/prepositional phrases which are *not* arguments of the verb

a. **Adv-V**

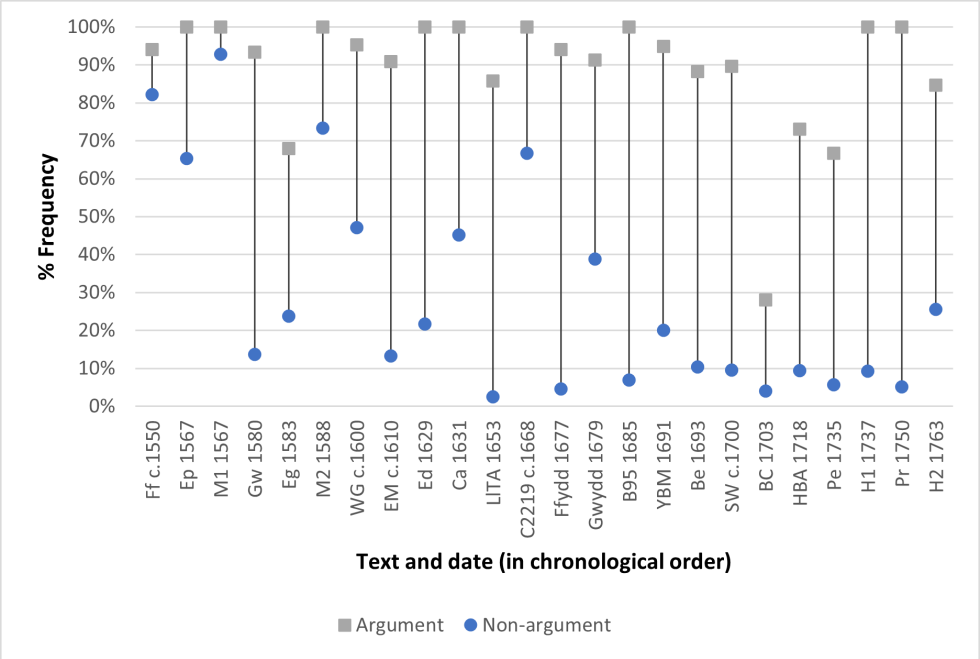
Y *Cyfryw* *y* *mae* *'r* *Tâd* *yn* *eu* *ceisio*
The such PRT is the Father PROG their seek-VN
iw *addoli* *[Joan* *4.23]* *Am* *hynny*
to-his worship-VN [John 4.23] For that
gwnaeth *Adda* *ac* *Efa* *mewn* *cyflwr* *hyfryd*
make-3SG.PAST Adam and Eve in state lovely
pûr
pure
'Such the Father seeks to worship him [John 4:23]. So, he created Adam and Eve in a lovely, pure state.' Ff 1677 (Edwards & Williams 1936 [1677]: 11)

b. **Adv-PronS-V (Adv-XP-V)**
Ond o ddechreuad y bŷd hyd y diluw yr oedd mil a chwechant ac vn mlynedd ar pymtheg a deugain

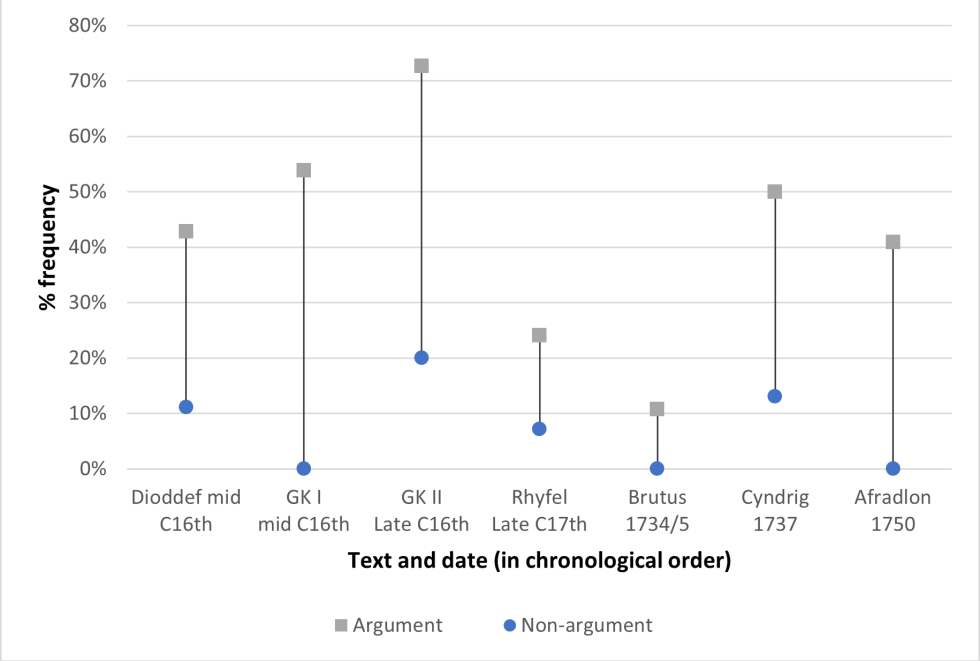
felly *mi* *a'th* *cynghoraf* *(O* *Eryr)* *i*
So I PRT-you advise-1SG.PRES (O Eagle) to
ddisgwil *canys* *mae* *fo* *yn* *agos*
expect VN since is it PRED near
'From the beginning of the world until the flood there were 1,656 years, so I advise you (O Eagle) to expect it since it is nigh.' LlTA 1653 (Ellis 1899: 198)

Graphs 4 and 5 show how the frequency of Adv-y-V constructions changed over time depending on whether the preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrases were arguments of the verb or not. Graph 4 plots for prose corpus texts (a) the percentage frequency of Adv-*y*-verb constructions out of all preverbal adverbial or prepositional constructions which are arguments of the verb (shown as grey squares on the High-Low graph), and (b) the percentage frequency of Adv-*y*-verb constructions out of all non-argument preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrases (shown as blue circles on the High-Low

graph). Graph 5 does the same for the drama section of the corpus. The underlying data for Graphs 4 and 5 is given in tables 22 and 23 in the appendix. Graph 5 shows that in some prose texts, in particular the Bible translations, Adv-*y*-verb order was still frequently used (i.e. in 50% or more of cases) in the second half of the 16th century after preverbal adverbial or prepositional phrases which were not arguments of the verb, however this use declines steadily throughout the corpus period to the point where it is used in 10% or less of non-argument contexts in the 18th century. In argument contexts, on the other hand, Adv-*y*-V has a frequency of at least 70% throughout the corpus period, with the exception of three texts (Eg 1583 – 68%, BC 1703 – 28% and Pe 1735 – 67%). For drama texts, Graph 5 shows that Adv-y-V was already infrequent in non-argument contexts as early as the 16th century, and the maximum frequency throughout the corpus period is only 20%; the frequency of Adv-y-V is higher when the adverbial is an argument of the verb but is still significantly lower than in the prose texts.



Graph 4: % frequency of Adv-y-V in clauses where fronted adverbial is argument vs. non-argument of verb in corpus prose texts



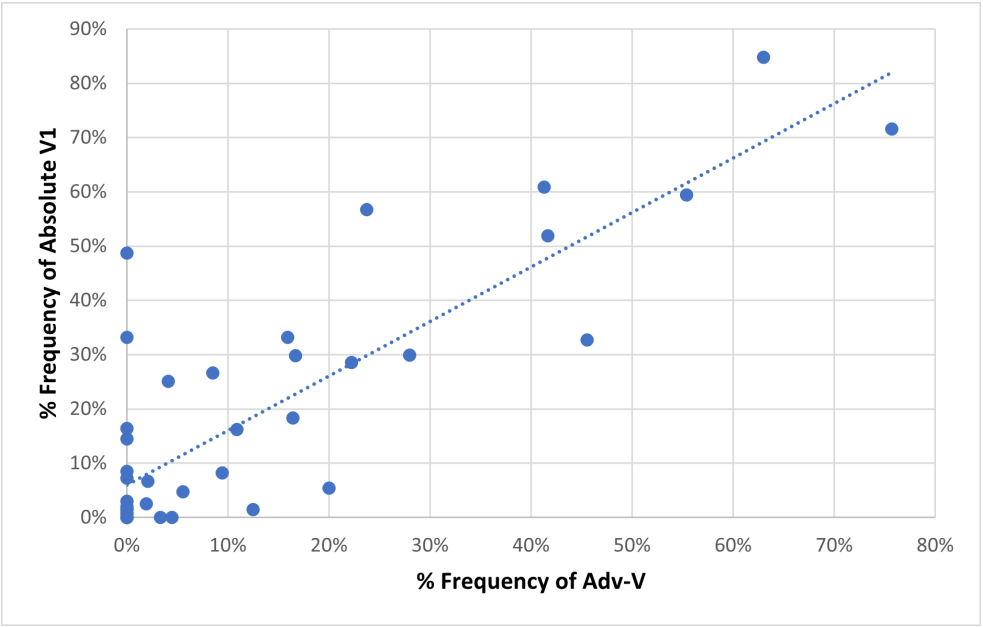
Graph 5: % frequency of Adv-y-V where fronted adverbial is argument vs. non-argument of the verb in drama corpus texts

In conclusion, the frequency of Adv-y-V seems to decline more markedly when the fronted adverbial is not an argument to as opposed to an argument of the verb, and the result of this decline is that by the end of the corpus period, Adv-y-V had tended to acquire a more specialised function as a marker of fronted adverbials that were an argument of the verb (as well as in focus constructions) in contrast to Middle Welsh where *y* was used with fronted adverbials more generally.

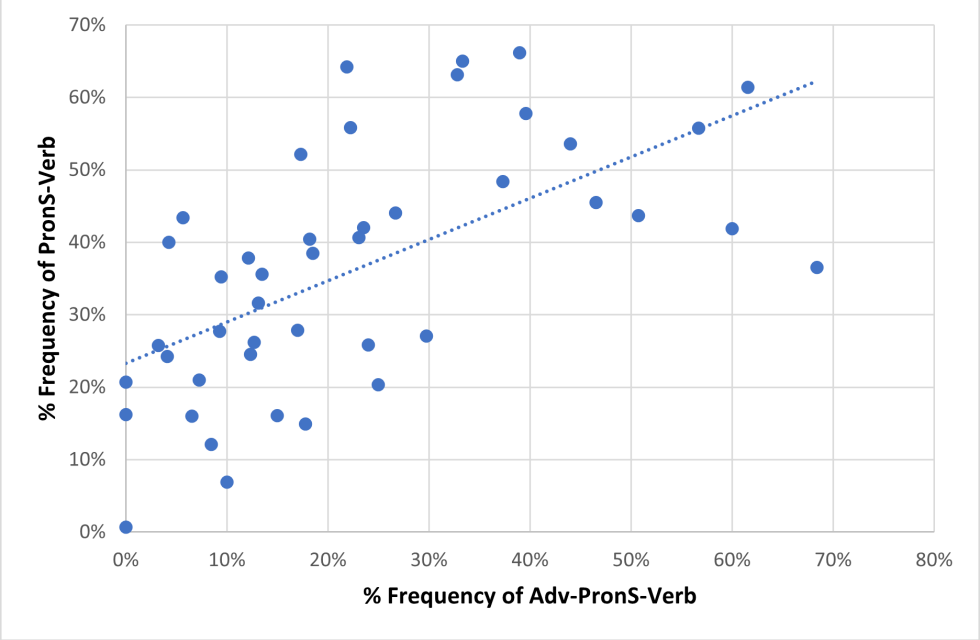
5.3 Link between loss of ***y*** *after adverbials and increase in Absolute V1*

Both Evans (1968) and Willis (1998) posit a link between the loss of *y* after adverbials and the rise of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh, but do not adduce any quantitative data to demonstrate such a link. Two possible connections between the loss of *y* and the increase in use of Absolute V1 are investigated empirically here using corpus data: (1) the chronology, that is whether the increase in use of Absolute V1 in prose texts happens at the same time or (shortly) after the increase in use of Adv-V (as a proxy for the 'loss of *y*'), and (2) a possible correlation in frequency of use, that is whether Absolute V1 co-occurs with a similar frequency to Adv-V in the same texts

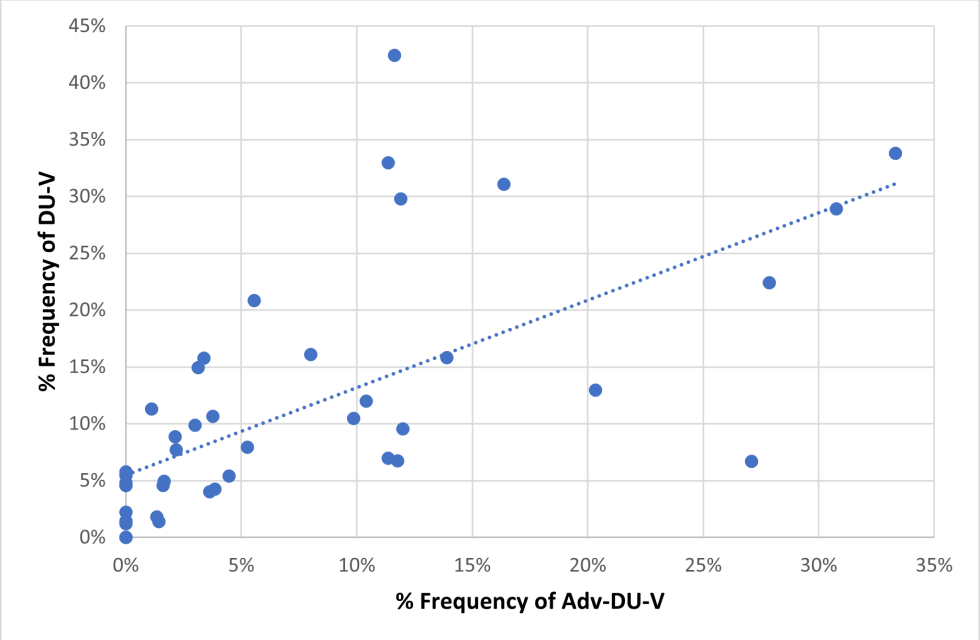
and writers. To investigate a possible correlation between Absolute V1 and Adv-V, the percentage frequency of Adv-V order (calculated as the number of instances of Adv-V out of the total number of adverbial-initial PDMCs) was compared to the percentage frequency of Absolute V1 (calculated as the number of instances of Absolute V1 out of the total number of non-adverb-initial PDMCs). Graph 6 plots these two frequencies for prose texts in a scatter graph for the prose corpus texts, with the frequency of Absolute V1 on the y-axis and the frequency of Adv-V on the x-axis. Similarly, the frequency of the two main constructions which competed with Absolute V1 – PronS-V and the dummy subject – was also compared with that of their corresponding adverb-initial constructions, Adv-PronS-V and Adv-DU-V, and is presented in Graphs 7 and 8. No such graphs have been given for the drama texts, as the drama subcorpus is much smaller (only eight texts) and more disparate (split between two main genres with a large gap in-between). The underlying data for graphs 6-8 is given in tables 24-26 in the appendix, and the equivalent data for drama texts in tables 27-29.



Graph 6: % frequency of Absolute V1 vs. Adv-V in prose texts (c.1550-1772)



Graph 7: % frequency of PronS-V vs. Adv-PronS-V in prose (c.1550-1772)



Graph 8: % frequency of DU-V vs. Adv-DU-V in prose (c.1550-1772)

Graph 6 shows a strong positive linear correlation between the use of Adv-V order and Absolute V1, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.842. In most prose texts where Adv-V is used, Absolute V1 is also used and generally with a comparable frequency, though there are three exceptions: the 1588 Bible translations and the mid-17th-century sermons of John Piers (JP c.1641) and John Jones in Cardiff MS 2.219 (C219 1668), where Absolute V1 is used, in some cases frequently, but where Adv-V is absent. These exceptions to the correlation are summarised in Table 14. Just like with the preverbal particle *a*, the 1588 Bible translator William Morgan scrupulously maintained the use of the preverbal particle *y* and avoided Adv-V order, in contrast to the 1567 Bible translations which occasionally used Adv-V order. The 1620 revised version of the Bible also maintained the use of *y*. John Piers' and John Jones' use of Absolute V1, which is relatively uncommon in the other manuscript sermon texts in the corpus, while avoiding Adv-V is likely to reflect the linguistic influence of the (1620) Welsh Bible. Similarly, as noted in section 4.2, both preachers also show higher retention rates of the preverbal particle *a* after dummy and simplex personal pronoun subjects, which is also consistent with the usage of the 1620 Bible. In general, John Jones and in particular John Piers seem to have used the Bible as a linguistic model, and to a greater extent than other 17th-century preachers in the manuscript sermon subcorpus (Currie Forthcoming).

	% adv-initial PDMCs		% non-adv-initial PDMCs
Text	Adv-y-V	Adv-V	Absolute V1
Mark (M1 1567)	94%	0%	2%
Psalms (S1 1567)	84%	4%	21%
Psalms 1588 (S2 1588)	96%	0%	48%
Mark 1588 (M2 1588)	76%	0%	9%
Esther 1588 (Es 1588)	44%	0%	16%
Isaiah 1588 (Is 1588)	84%	0%	33%
John Piers' sermons (JP c.1640)	82%	0%	15%
John Jones' sermons (C219 1668)	80%	0%	7%

Table 14: Exceptions to the correlation between the Adv-V and Absolute V1

The more frequent use of Absolute V1 in the 1567 and 1588 Bible translations (especially in the poetic books such as the Psalms, Song of Songs and Isaiah as noted in 3.2 above), compared to other 16th-century prose corpus texts, may reflect both a syntactic change in progress – an increase in use of Absolute V1 in contemporary spoken discourse – and a phenomenon specific

to the Bible translations themselves, that is the linguistic and stylistic influence of contemporary and earlier (Middle Welsh) poetry, where Absolute V1 was frequent, in contrast to contemporary and earlier prose where Absolute V1 was rare. The Bible translators William Salesbury and William Morgan may thus have perceived Absolute V1 to be a poetic feature, which they then adopted in their prose translations of Biblical Hebrew poetry to give them a poetic quality (Currie 2016, 2023). This additional stylistic motivation for the use of Absolute V1 in the Bible translations may have further contributed to the lack of a correlation between the use of Adv-V and Absolute V1 in the 1588 Bible translations. If we exclude the six prose corpus texts from the 1567 and 1588 Bible translations (Mark 1567, Psalms 1567, Mark 1588, Psalms 1588, Esther 1588 and Isaiah 1588), there is an even stronger positive correlation between the frequency of Absolute V1 and Adv-V: a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.919 without the Bible translations compared to a 0.842 Pearson correlation coefficient including the Bible translations (Table 15).

Word orders compared	Pearson correlation coefficient		
	Prose (all texts)	Prose (excl. Bible)	Prose (>1650)
Adv-V vs. Absolute V1	0.842	0.919	0.926
Adv-PronS-V vs. PronS-V	0.608	0.604	0.678
Adv-DU-V vs. DU-V	0.655	0.615	0.607

Table 15: Correlation between frequency of occurrence of adverb-initial orders with corresponding non-adverb-initial orders

The correlation between the use of Absolute V1 and Adv-V is, in fact, part of a wider emerging pattern of symmetry between the word order of adverb-initial PDMCs, on the one hand, and non-adverb-initial PDMCs on the other. Table 15 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients for the frequency of the adverb-initial compared to the non-adverb-initial variants of the three construction types: Adv-V vs. Absolute V1, Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V and Adv-DU and DU-V. In prose texts as a whole, there is also a positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.608, between the frequency of Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V constructions (cf. Graph 7). There is a similar positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.654, between the frequency of Adv-DU-V and DU-V constructions (cf. Graph 8). In both cases, the correlation is less strong than that between Adv-V and Absolute V1, which has a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.842. Excluding the Bible translations has a lesser effect on the correlation coefficients for Adv-PronS-V

vs. PronS-V (0.604 vs. 0.608) and Adv-DU-V vs. DU-V (0.615 vs. 0.655) constructions than it does in the case of Adv-V vs. Absolute V1 constructions and, in contrast, causes the correlation coefficient to fall slightly. No correlation coefficients were calculated for the drama texts, as the sample size is too small (only 8 texts), though the data for individual texts is given in tables 27-29 in the appendix.

	% adv-initial PDMCs		% non-adv-initial initial PDMCs
Text	Adv-y-V	Adv-PronS-V	PronS-V
Llyfr y Ffestifal (Ff c.1500)	84%	4%	40%
Epistol at y Cembru (Ep 1567)	86%	3%	26%
Psalms 1567 (S1 1567)	84%	4%	26%
Mark 1567 (M1 1567)	94%	6%	43%
Mark 1588 (M2 1588)	77%	17%	52%
Psalms 1588 (S2 1588)	96%	0%	14%
Isaiah 1588 (Es 1588)	84%	0%	21%
William Griffith (WG c.1600)	60%	22%	56%
William Williams (WW 1629)	59%	22%	64%
Cardiff 2.226 (C226 >1660)	36%	12%	38%
NLW 3B (NLW3B 1675-6)	75%	9%	35%

Table 16: Partial exceptions to the correlation between the *Adv-PronS-V* and *PronS-V* orders

The reasons why the correlation seems to be less strong in the case of Adv-PronS-V vs. PronS-V and Adv-DU-V vs. DU-V compared to Adv-V vs. Absolute V1, seem to be as follows. With the exception of the Bible translations and John Jones' and John Piers' sermons (together representing 8 corpus texts), Absolute V1 tends to be rare outside texts where Adv-V is also used, which means that we either find texts, on the one hand, with no or very few examples of Adv-V and no or only very few examples of Absolute V1 (18 such texts) or, on the other hand, texts with more frequent instances of both Adv-V and Absolute V1 and where both constructions tend to be used with a similar relative frequency (17 such texts). Both categories of texts contribute to a positive correlation between the frequency use of Adv-V and the frequency of use of Absolute V1. In contrast, PronS-V is a common construction in nearly all corpus texts, occurring with a frequency of over 15% (of PDMCs without preverbal adverbial phrases) in 40 out of 44 prose corpus texts and with a frequency of over 30% in 26 out of 44 prose corpus texts. However, Adv-PronS-V does not occur as consistently frequently, since it is

also competing with Adv-y-V order, which is particularly frequent in earlier (pre-1650) texts as well as in sermons, including in texts where PronS-V is frequent. Table 16 presents some exceptions to the correlation between Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V, where PronS-V is relatively frequently used but Adv-PronS-V much less so. Such exceptions occur mostly in the earlier corpus period, when Adv-y-V order is much more frequent, as well as in certain manuscript sermon collections. Indeed, the Pearson correlation coefficient for Adv-PronS-V vs. PronS is higher if we include only texts after 1650 (0.678 vs. 0.608), as indicated in Table 15, though still below that for Adv-V vs. Absolute V1.

Although dummy subject constructions are less frequent than (Adv-)PronS-V constructions (occurring with a frequency of 7% in adverb-initial PDMCs compared to 20% for Adv-PronS-V and in 11% of non-adverb-initial PDMCs compared to 33% for PronS-V), a similar dynamic – competition with Adv-y-V especially in earlier corpus texts – may explain the lower correlation coefficient for Adv-DU-V vs. DU-V compared to that for Adv-V vs. Absolute V1. Unlike for Adv-PronS-V vs. PronS constructions, though, the Pearson correlation coefficient is lower for Adv-DU-V vs. DU-V for prose corpus texts after 1650 than for the prose corpus as a whole (0.607 vs. 0.654).

5.4 Summary: putative link between loss of ***y*** *and increase in Absolute V1*

The key findings from the corpus investigation concerning the putative connection between the loss of the preverbal particle *y* and the increase in Absolute V1 are as follows:

a) There is no evidence of a widespread omission of *y* in the 16th century, as posited by Willis (1998). The use of Adv-V order (as a proxy for the omission of *y*) is attested in 16th-century corpus texts but does not become particularly frequent (i.e. >20% of adverb-initial PDMCs) until the second half of the 17th century.

b) There is a gradual decline in the frequency of use of Adv-y-V from the second half of the 16th to the mid-18th-century, in particular when the fronted adverbial is not an argument of the verb. In contrast to Middle Welsh prose, where the preverbal *y* was used to mark fronted adverbials more generally, in 17th and 18th century Welsh it seems increasingly to be acquiring a more specialised function of marking fronted adverbials which are arguments of the verb or are focused.

c) The decline in use of Adv-y-V is, however, only partly attributable to competition with Adv-V: competition with Adv-XP-V (especially

Adv-PronS-V, Adv-DU-V and Adv-NomS-V) constructions seems to have been a more significant factor.

d) There is, nevertheless, clear evidence of a link between the loss of *y* after adverbials and the increase in Absolute V1, as we find a correlation between the use of Adv-V and Absolute V1 throughout the corpus period. This means that (with the notable exception of the 1588 and 1620 Bible translations and certain writers who modelled their language closely on that of the Bible translations), writers who used Adv-V also used Absolute V1 and with a similar relative frequency.

e) The positive correlation between the frequency of use of Adv-V, on the one hand, and Absolute V1, on the other, is part of a wider structural symmetry in word order between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial PDMCs. There are similar correlations, though less strong, between the use of Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V orders as well as between Adv-DU-V and DU-V orders.

f) In the Middle Welsh V2 system, there was a structural symmetry between different types of fronted constituents (C) in PDMCs in that all types of fronting, including adverbials, followed a similar schema: C-particle-V. Although a different preverbal particle was used for the fronting of adverbials (*y* instead of *a*), a fronted adverbial was in terms of the general word order schema similar to other fronted constituents such as subjects or direct objects. In Early Modern Welsh, this symmetry between different types of fronted constituents is increasingly replaced by a different word order symmetry between adverb-initial clauses, on the one hand, and non-adverb-initial clauses, on the other.

6 Discussion: a multifactorial approach to explaining the increase and variation in use of absolute V1

The question remains why the (partial and gradual) omission of *y* should be associated with a diachronic increase in Absolute V1. The reason for this seems to lie in the interaction of the change in use and partial omission of *y* with other factors: first, as discussed in 6.1, changes in the syntax of fronted adverbial and prepositional phrases and second, as discussed in 6.2, competition between Adv-V and Absolute V1, on the one hand, and Adv-XP and XP-V constructions, on the other.

6.1 Proposed mechanism of change and explanation of variation

The evidence of word order symmetry between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial clauses seems to suggest that the use of a given construction type in adverb-initial clauses motivated its use in non-adverb-initial clauses and vice versa. Thus, #Adv-PronS-V constructions (where '#' denotes the beginning of a clause) motivated #PronS-V and #PronS-V motivated #Adv-Pron-S, and similarly #Adv-V motivated Absolute V1 (#V-) and Absolute V1 (#V-) in turn motivated #Adv-V. *Motivation* is understood here both in the technical Construction Grammar sense of a shared or inherited structural similarity between constructions (Goldberg 1995: 70; Lewandowski 2021: 39-42) and in the non-technical sense that the use of a given construction may also motivate the use of a structurally similar construction. The existence of such a *use* motivation is evidenced by the positive correlation in the frequency of use of structurally similar pairs of constructions in adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial clauses, as shown in section 5.3 above.

The emergence of Adv-V constructions – presumably resulting from the omission of *y* – would thus have created a motivation for the use of Absolute V1 which previously did not exist in Middle Welsh (prose). The symmetry in word order between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial PDMCs may have been underpinned by a structural analysis of non-argument fronted adverbials as outside the verbal phrase and functioning like clausal connectors or scene setters, such that Adv-V-S could be analysed as [Adv] [VS] rather than [AdvVS]. The connection between the omission of *y* after adverbials proposed here is different from that proposed by Willis (1998) in that it is *direct* (the use of Adv-V directly gives rise to and motivates the use of Absolute V1 and vice-versa) and *continuous* (it applies continuously over at least the whole two-century corpus period). On the other hand, the connection proposed by Willis (1998) is *indirect* (the loss of *y* along with other changes triggers a resetting of the V2 parameter, which in turn caused unmarked V1 to become grammatical) and *discrete* (the resetting of the V2 parameter and change in grammaticality of unmarked V1 were discrete events).

The omission of *y* after adverbials was not the only possible source of the increase in Absolute V1. The loss of *y* in y-V constructions (in non-adverb-initial clauses as in examples 5b and 6) could have given rise directly to Absolute V1, however y-V order was uncommon in corpus texts already from the second half of the 16th century and was largely confined to a single syntactic environment, that is PDMCs which followed a subordinate clause (cf. example 6), though even in this environment its use was sporadic, well attested in some texts but rare or absent in more. Nevertheless, in some 17th-century corpus texts the frequency of Absolute V1 in PDMCs following a

subordinate clause is higher than in standalone PDMCs, which may indicate a possible partial association between Absolute V1 and PDMCs following a subordinate clause, arising from the omission of *y* in this specific environment. Another possible source of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh prose was poetry, where the construction was frequent. As noted in 3.2 and 4.3 and as argued in more detail in Currie (2016, 2023), the particularly frequent use of Absolute V1 in the poetic books of the 1567 and 1588 Bible translations may reflect poetic linguistic and stylistic influence.

6.2 Explaining the variation in the frequency of Absolute V1 and Adv-V

The question also remains why we do not see a more regular diachronic pattern of increase in frequency of use of Absolute V1 (or Adv-V), but instead find such marked variation between individual writers and texts over the whole two-century corpus period, as shown in Graphs 1 and 2. Two factors seem to have underpinned this variation. First, Absolute V1 appears to have been perceived as functionally equivalent to and interchangeable with two other competing constructions, PronS-V and the dummy subject (DU-V). Second, in Construction Grammar terms, Absolute V1 is a schematic, lexically open construction (Fillmore, Kay & O'Connor 1988: 505, Croft 2001: 17) with a very general function (as an unmarked word order), and which could be used in a wide range of syntactic environments. However, while Absolute V1 could be used in a wider range of syntactic environments than PronS-V, NomS-V or the dummy subject, as it could be used with pronominal subjects, nominal subjects as well as in impersonal constructions, it was also possible to avoid Absolute V1 altogether.

The clearest evidence of the functional equivalence and interchangeability of Absolute V1, on the one hand, and PronS-V and the DU-V, on the other, comes from different versions of the same text in the corpus where there is significant variation between Absolute V1 and PronS-V as well as between Absolute V1 and DU-V, as shown in Currie (2013). Here, we find instances where PronS-V or DU-V has been replaced by Absolute V1 in the later text and vice versa. In (12a), we have Absolute V1 in the mid-16$^{\text{th}}$ century version of the morality play *Y Gwr Cadarn* in Cardiff MS 2.83 and in (12b) we have PronS-V in the corresponding line of the late 16$^{\text{th}}$ century version of the same play in NLW MS Peniarth 65. In (13a), we have PronS-V in the 1737 Welsh translation of John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* by John Einnion, but in (13b) we find Absolute V1 in the corresponding sentence of the 1767 Welsh translation of the same English text by Rhys Thomas. The interchangeability between PronS-V and Absolute V1 is possible because Welsh is optionally pro-prop and can also have post-verbal subject clitics, so Absolute V1 can be

used either without any expressed pronominal subject as in (13b), or with a post-verbal one as in (12a).

(12) a. Absolute V1 (*Y Gwr Cadarn*)

gadawa *fi* *hi* *yn* *sykutor* *om* *holl*
leave-1SG.FUT I her PRED executor of my whole
goweth
wealth
I shall leave her as executor of all my wealth […]' Cardiff MS 2.83, 71 (GK I c.1550)

b. PronS-V order (*Y Gwr Cadarn*)

Myfi *ai* *gadawa* *hi* *yn* *secktor* *Ar*
I PRT-her leave-1SG.FUT her PRED executor on
fy *holl* *olyd*
my whole wealth
'I shall leave her as executor of all my wealth […]' NLW MS Peniarth 65, 56 (GK II c.1600)

(13) a. PronS-V (*Helaethrwydd o Ras*, 1737)

mi *a* *ddichwelais* *yn* *ffromwyllt* *at* *fy*
I PRT return-1SG.PAST ADVZ brazen to my
chwariaeth *drachefn*
play back
'I returned brazenly to my play' H1 1737 (Bunyan & Einnion 1737: 18)

b. Absolute V1 (*Helaethrwydd o Ras*, 1763)

dychwelais *at* *fy* *Ynfydrwydd* *drachefn*
return-1SG.PAST to my folly back
'I returned to my folly' H2 1763 (Bunyan & Thomas 1763: 18)

Similarly, examples (14) and (15) illustrate the interchangeability of Absolute V1 and the dummy subject construction. In (14a), we have the dummy subject in the 1567 translation of Mark 1:40 and in (14b) Absolute V1 in the 1588 translation of the same chapter and verse. In (15a), we have the dummy subject in the 1737 Welsh translation of *Grace Abounding* and in (15b) Absolute V1 in the 1767 translation of the corresponding sentence. Examples (14) and (15) both illustrate different uses of the dummy subject: (14) is a presentative construction with a post-verbal nominal subject and (15) an impersonal construction.

(14) a. Dummy subject (DU-V) (Mark 1:40, 1567)

Ac e ddaeth ataw ddyn clavrllyt
And DUMMY come-3SG.PAST to-him man leprous
'And a leper came up to him' M1 1567 (Salesbury et al. 1567)

b. Absolute V1 (Mark 1: 40, 1588)

A daeth atto ef [vn] gwahan-glwyfus
And come-3s-PAST to-him he [one] leprous
'And a leper came up to him' M2 1588 (Morgan & National Library of Wales 1987 [1588])

(15) a. Dummy subject (*Helaethrwydd o Ras*, 1737)

fe ryngodd bodd i Dduw i osod yn eu
DUMMY please-3SG.PAST to God to set-VN in their
Calonnau nhwy im dodi i mewn Yscol i
hearts them to-my put-VN into school to
ddysgu darllen a Scrifennu
learn-VN read-VN and write-VN
'It pleased God to set it in their hearts to put me in school to learn to read and write' H1 1737 (Bunyan & Einnion 1737: 8)

b. Absolute V1 (*Helaethrwydd o Ras*, 1763)

rhyngodd bodd i'r ARGLWYDD i roi yn
please-3SG.PAST to the Lord to put-VN in
eu Calonnau i'm dodi mewn Yscol i ddyscu
their hearts to-my put-VN in school to learn-VN
darllen a 'scrifennu
read-VN and write-VN
'It pleased God to set it in their hearts to put me in school to learn to read and write' H2 1763 (Bunyan & Thomas 1763: 8)

If we suppose that the loss of *y* after adverbials and to a lesser extent after subordinate clauses increased the incidence of Absolute V1 in discourse, contemporary language users would have been exposed to a new(ish) construction but without any pre-existing model for how and how frequently to use it. It seems that different writers in the corpus adopted very divergent usages of Absolute V1, in some cases rationalising different patterns (Currie 2000, 2013). At one extreme, some writers used Absolute V1 very frequently, to the point where it becomes the predominant construction in PDMCs, for example Charles Edwards in *Y Ffydd Ddi-ffvant* (Ffydd 1677 – 64%) and

James Owen in *Trugaredd a Barn* (1715[1687] – 54%). At the other extreme, writers such as Rondl Davies (Ys 1975), William Jones (Pr 1676) and John Griffith (JG 1683) seem to have avoided Absolute V1 altogether. In between these two extremes, there are writers such as Thomas Williams (YBA 1691) and Simon Thomas (HBA 1718, Pel 1735) who show an intermediate pattern of use of Absolute V1 (in approximately 20% of PDMCs), using, for example, Absolute V1 and the dummy subject interchangeably in some environments, but in other cases preferring Absolute V1 with some verbs or idioms and the dummy subject with others. Other writers still, notably the Bible translators William Salesbury and William Morgan, style-shift using Absolute V1, with the construction appearing more frequently in the poetic books of the Bible compared to the prose books (Currie 2023).

Although the variation between Absolute V1, on the one hand, and PronS-V and DU-V, on the other, seems to be broadly sociolinguistic in nature (Currie 2000, 2023), it does not correlate with any macrosocial (e.g. social class, education, gender) or textual parameters, since there is significant variation between writers of a similar social and educational background (male, mostly practising clergy and in many cases educated at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge) and in all continuous text types (printed and manuscript, original and translated, narrative and expository) as well as in both literary and popular registers. The primary factor influencing the variation seems to have been individual style. Now, it could be argued that there was a simpler pattern of general use of Absolute V1 in spoken discourse – which would be more compatible with a model of systemic parametric change from V2 to V1 – underlying the complex pattern of individual variation in the textual record. If this was the case, we could characterise the variation in the textual record as a kind of diglossic register variation (Larrivée 2022) between innovative (V1) and conservative (V2 or SV) usages or grammars. However, such an argument would seem to be implausible here because we find similar patterns of individual inter-writer variation in both popular and literary registers as well as in all text types.

Further, the most innovative texts – those with particularly frequent Absolute V1 as opposed to simply the presence of Absolute V1 – are in fact literary prose texts rather than popular drama. The pattern of variation observed here in texts from the 17th and first half of the eighteenth century, with the highest frequency of use of Absolute V1 in certain literary prose texts (e.g. by Charles Edwards and James Owen) and less frequent Absolute V1 in popular texts such as interludes and slander case records, is also consistent with Willis' empirical corpus analysis for the period 1760-1825 (Willis 1998: 251-254). Willis (1998: 253-254) observes that there appear to be two competing

norms in later eighteenth-century Welsh, an SVO one, on the one hand, and a VSO characterised by frequent Absolute V1, on the other, further noting that the texts with the highest levels of VSO were either 'politically radical' or 'late in the period'. Willis suggests a possible association between SVO and 'traditional values', on the one hand, and VSO and radicalism, on the other:

> 'A tempting conclusion is that in the last years of the eighteenth century, a VSO norm was competing with an SVO norm upheld by biblical usage. Writers who rejected traditional values were more likely to use the VSO norm. By the early years of the nineteenth century, the VSO norm had established itself for general use.' (Willis 1998: 254)

Although the frequent use of Absolute V1 by writers a century earlier – in particular Charles Edwards (Ffydd 1677 – 63%, Gwydd 1679 – 40%) and James Owen (TB 1687 – 54%, Be 1693 – 47%) – was linguistically and stylistically innovative, it does not seem possible to establish any association between their frequent use of Absolute V1 and political or religious radicalism, partly because the political and religious situation in the second half of the 17th century is not fully comparable to that of a century or more later and partly because it is not possible to make reliable categorical distinctions between different corpus writers in political and religious terms, especially given the limited number of extant texts as well as the limited biographical information available for most authors. More significantly, though, as argued in Currie (2016), the association of the Welsh Bible with SVO and linguistic conservatism more generally needs to be qualified. While the word order of the 1567, 1588 and 1620 Bibles is conservative compared to Modern Welsh, at the time they were published, parts at least of the 16th and 17th-century Bible translations were innovative in their frequent use of Absolute V1. The poetic books of the 16th and 17th-century Bible translations (e.g. Psalms, Song of Songs, Isaiah) were, in fact, the first continuous prose texts in Welsh to show a frequent use of Absolute V1: 21% in the 1567 Psalms in the corpus sample, 41% in the 1588 Psalms (Currie 2016, 2023). Since the word order of the Bible translations was mixed, with frequent Absolute V1 in the poetic books but less frequent Absolute V1 in the prose books, the Bible translations could provide a model for both SVO and VSO in later writers. While the prose books were more numerous, the *Psalms* were arguably amongst the most frequently encountered books of the Bible, as psalms were regularly read and sung in both public and family worship. Over time, as Absolute V1 came to be used more frequently by more prose writers, the word order of the Bible as a whole was more likely to be perceived as conservative.

To conclude, while it has been argued here, as in Evans (1968) and Willis (1998: 188), that the partial loss of the preverbal particle *y* after adverbials was central to the increase (and variation) in Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh, this word order change cannot be attributed to changes in the use of the particle *y* on its own. Rather it seems to be the result of an interaction of changes in the use and partial omission of *y* with other factors, in particular changes in the syntax of fronted adverbials and competition between Absolute V1 and the dummy subject and personal pronoun subject constructions.

7 Conclusion

Given that the preverbal particles *a* and *y* underpin the Middle Welsh V2 system, it would seem logical a priori to link the loss of V2 and subsequent emergence of V1 word order to the particles' loss, as proposed in different ways by Evans (1968) and Willis (1998). Willis' formal analysis of the loss of V2 in Welsh presupposes a widespread loss of both particles in the 16th century as key leading changes for the resetting of the V2 parameter to negative, which in turn enabled the emergence of unmarked V1, entailing a systemic change from V2 to V1. However, Willis (1998) does not provide quantitative corpus data for the key period when the parametric change is posited to substantiate his analysis. The aim of the present article has been to investigate empirically using corpus data for the period c.1550-c.1750 whether there was in fact such a loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y* as claimed and whether the word order change from V2 to V1 in Welsh, evidenced by an increase in use of Absolute V1, can be linked to a loss of the preverbal particles. The approach adopted in the present article has been multifactorial, since it has examined the interaction of multiple factors in word order change, in particular changes in the use and partial loss of the preverbal particle *y*, changes in the syntax of fronted adverbials and competition between different constructions.

The corpus data presented here shows that there is in fact no evidence of a widespread loss of the preverbal particles *a* and *y*: only a partial loss by the late 16th and early 17th century and an ongoing gradual decline in frequency of use of the particles until the mid-18th century (the end of the period investigated). Further, the pattern of increase in use of Absolute V1, which is the key trailing change of the resetting of the V2 parameter, is also more complex than appears to be predicted by the parametric model of the change. First, in terms of chronology, there is evidence of an increase in use of Absolute V1 in the second half of the 16th century before there is evidence of the completion of the putative leading changes. Second, there is marked and protracted variation in the frequency of use of Absolute V1 throughout the two-century corpus period such that we find in the late 17th century, some eighty to a hundred years after

the date posited for the parameter resetting, texts with no examples of V1 and with a predominant SVO order in positive declarative main clauses side by side texts with predominant Absolute V1 (i.e. VSO) (Currie 2000). Even in the mid-18th century, we still find comparable variation between prose texts with frequent Absolute V1 and near-contemporary texts where it is relatively rare. If Welsh had become a VSO language following the resetting of the V2 parameter, one might expect a more generalised use of VSO.

These issues with the chronology and extent of the leading and trailing changes do not necessarily invalidate the parametric model of the change from V2 to V1 in Welsh, as it is possible to argue that the parametric model is still compatible with the corpus data presented. In the case of the leading changes, it could be argued, for instance, that the evidence in the trigger material had been sufficiently weakened even by a partial loss of the preverbal particles (as well as by the other leading changes) to enable a parameter resetting to take place. In the case of the key trailing change, although parameter resetting can only explain discrete, binary changes in the grammaticality of a construction (here Absolute V1), and so cannot *directly* model variation in frequency of use, a parametric model of change can still be argued to be compatible with a wide range of different patterns of variation. Thus, the emergence of grammatical unmarked V1 following a parameter resetting does not necessarily mean that all writers would use it, let alone with comparable frequency, especially as there were well-established competing constructions available. Nevertheless, the fact that it is more difficult to map the claims and predictions of the parametric model of change directly onto the data both in relation to the omission/retention of the preverbal particles and in relation to variation in the use of Absolute VI would seem to weaken the case for such a model of change and diminish its explanatory power.

Instead of a general loss of both particles *a* and *y* leading indirectly, via a parameter resetting, to a systemic word order change from V2 to V1, as argued by Willis (1998), it is possible to posit a direct and more specific link between the (partial) omission of the preverbal particle *y* after fronted adverbials and the increase in use of Absolute V1. First, it was shown that there was a gradual decline over the corpus period in the frequency of Adv-y-V constructions, caused in part by the omission of *y* (as evidenced by the use of Adv-V constructions, i.e. Adv-y-V > Adv-V), but primarily by the use of Adv-XP-V constructions such as Adv-PronS-V, Adv-NomS-V and Adv-DU-V instead of Adv-y-V. The decline in the use of Adv-y-V and increase in use of Adv-V and Adv-XP-V constructions seems to have happened primarily after preverbal adverbial and prepositional phrases which were not arguments of the verb. Second, it was shown that there was a correlation in the frequency

of use of Adv-V constructions, on the one hand, and Absolute V1, on the other. Further, this correlation was part of an emerging broader symmetry in word order between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial PDMCs, as we find similar correlations in the frequency of use of Adv-XP-V and XP-V constructions. Thus, word order in adverb-initial clauses increasingly mirrored that of non-adverb-initial clauses, in contrast to the V2 system of Middle Welsh prose, where there was a structural symmetry between the different types of fronted constituents (C) in PDMCs, which all, including adverbials, tended to follow a similar schema: C-particle-V-(C). Diachronically, therefore, the introduction of Adv-V constructions following the omission of *y* would have directly motivated the use of Absolute V1. Indeed, if fronted adverbial adjuncts were analysed by language users as being outside the verbal phrase (i.e. [Adv] [V-S-O]), Adv-V constructions could be also perceived as instances of Absolute V1.

After the reintroduction of Absolute V1 as a result of the (partial) omission of *y* after adverbials, the subsequent increase and variation in its use seems to have been driven by its perceived functional equivalence to and interchangeability with two other very common constructions: personal pronoun subject + verb (PronS-V) and the dummy subject + verb (DU-V). In this way, Absolute V1 could expand into the functional range of these constructions and be used very frequently, or, on the other hand, as these competing constructions were productive and well-established, need not be used at all. The variation in the frequency of use of Absolute V1 is, therefore, integral to understanding the mechanism for its increase in use. The increase in use of Absolute V1 in Early Modern Welsh, it is argued here, is thus the result of the interaction of several factors: the decline in use and partial omission of the preverbal particle *y* after fronted adverbials, changes in the syntax of fronted adverbials such that the structural V2 symmetry between fronted adverbials and other types of fronted constituent in Middle Welsh is replaced by a structural symmetry between adverb-initial clauses and non-adverb-initial clauses as well as by competition between the new(ish) construction, Absolute V1, and the existing well-established constructions, PronS-V and DU-V.

This article has focused on two aspects of V2 peculiar to Welsh: the use of preverbal particles to mark the fronting of constituents in V2 constructions in PDMCs (which are not found in other V2 languages except Welsh's Brythonic sister languages) and the fact that the loss of V2 in Welsh entailed a shift to V1 as opposed to SVO as in other languages which lost V2, such as English and French. However, the discussion of the Welsh data has also touched upon a point of more general application to the diachrony of V2. This concerns the role of preverbal adverbial and prepositional phrases in the

loss of V2, especially when they are adjuncts as opposed to arguments of the verb. Although surface V3 constructions involving the fronting of another constituent after a clause-initial non-argument adverbial (e.g. Adv-S-V, Adv-Obj-V) can be analysed as compatible with V2, such constructions can be a potential source of diachronic instability in V2 languages, as they undermine the formal and functional symmetry between fronted adverbial phrases and other types of fronted constituent which underpins a V2 system, where characteristically there is no single dominant type of fronted constituent. If this symmetry is replaced by a symmetry in word order between adverb-initial and non-adverb-initial clauses, as happened in Early Modern Welsh, it can facilitate the expansion of a single type of fronted constituent, such as the subject of the verb, leading to SVO word order, which we in fact see in some Early Modern Welsh texts, or it could lead to the expansion of V1, as happened in other Early Modern Welsh texts.

ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR TAGGING EXAMPLES

ADVZ	Adverbialiser
DUMMY	Dummy subject
PRED	Predicative particle
PRT	Particle (i.e. preverbal particles a and y)
REDUP	Reduplicated (pronoun)
VN	Verbal noun

ABBREVIATIONS - MIDDLE WELSH TEXTS

BR	*Breudwyt Ronabwy*. Richards (1948)
Branwen	*Branwen Uerch Lyr*. Thomson (1976)
BSM	*Buchedd Sant Marthin*. Jones (1945)
CLlLl	*Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*. Roberts (1975)
CO	*Kulhwch ac Olwen*. Bromwich & Evans (1988)
FfBO	*Fford y brawd Odrig*. Williams (1929)
KAA	*Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic*. Williams (1982)
Man	*Manawydan Uab Lyr*. Williams (1930: 49-65)
Math	*Math Uab Mathonwy*. Williams (1930: 69-92)
MIG	*Mabinogi Iesu Grist*. Williams (1912)
Peredur	*Historia Peredur vab Efrawc*. Goetinck (1976)
Pwyll	*Pwyll Pendeuic Dyuet*. Thomson (1957)
YSG	*Ystoryeau Seint Greal*. Jones (1992)

EARLY MODERN WELSH CORPUS

Abbreviation	Text
Afradlon 1750	*Y Mab Afradlon*, MS., Gwenogvryn Evans 5. Copied 1750 by Robert Davies and attributed to Huw Morys. Edited in Jenkins (1948: 491-519).
B354 1678	MS., Bangor 354. 1 sermon on Rom 6:21. Preached by author at Llantrisaint 1678 and Llanfair (?) 1688.
B355/62 1680	Robert Wynne, vicar of Llanddeniolen, Llanbeblick, Llechkenfarwy. MSS., Bangor 355 & Bangor 362, 1. Sermon on Psalms 51:10 (Bangor 355) preached at Llanddeniolen 1695, 1700, Llanbeblick 1700. Sermon on 1 Cor 11:31 (Bangor 362, 1) preached by the author at Llanddeniolen 1680, Llechkenfarwy 1683 and Llangwstennyn 1685.
B362,5 1717	Authorship uncertain. MS., Bangor 362, 5. Sermon on Matthew 11:21-22. Preached at Llanddeniolen 1717.
BC 1703	Wynne, Ellis. 1703. *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsc*. Llundain: E. Powell. Edited in Wynne & Lewis (1976 [1703]: 5-49).
Be 1693	Owen, James. 1693. *Bedydd Plant o'r Nefoedd*. 1-126. Llundain.
Brutus 1734/5	*Enterliwt Ynghylch Cronicl y Cymry er Amser Brutus hyd at Sior y 3ydd*, MS, Cwrtmawr 211A, 1-57. Copied 1734/5. Attributed to Mathew Owen.
C219 1668	John Jones, vicar of Llanwddyn, 1665-1676. MS., Cardiff 2.219, 39a-76a. 2 sermons on 1 Cor. 3:13 & Acts 2:17. Preached in Llanwothyn [=Llanwddyn] 1668 & 1673, Wrexham 1682 and Caerwys 1683.
C226 >1660	MS., Cardiff 2.226. 3 sermons on Luke 14:17, John 15:14 & Mark 9:43-48. Preached 1660 or after.
Ca 1631	[Thomas, Oliver.] 1631. *Carwr y Cymry*. Edited in Thomas & Ballinger (1930 [1631]: 7-115).
Cr c1575	*Y Marchog Crwydrad*. Edited in Parry-Williams (1988: 96-105).

Table 17: Early Modern Welsh Corpus

Abbreviation	Text
Cyndrig 1737	Parry, Richard. 1737. *Enterlute neu chwaryddiaeth Ar Destun Odiaethol yn dangos pa Drigolion a fu'n Preswulo yn y Deyrnas hon cyn dyfod Cymru na Saeson erioed iw Meddiannu o wnaethuriad R. P.* M.S., NLW 833B, 5-69.
De 1595	Kyffin, Maurice. 1595. *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr.* Edited in Kyffin & Williams (1908 [1595]: vi-xix, 1-105).
Dioddef c.1550	*Y Dioddefaint*, MS., BM Add. 14986, 10b-33b.
Ed 1629	Lloyd, Robert. 1629. *Pregeth dduwiol yn traethu am iawn ddull, ac agwedd gwir edifeirwch.* Llundain: Printiedig gan Nicholas Derwen. [Translation of Dent, Arthur (1613) *A Sermon of repentance. A Very godly and profitable sermon preached at Lee in Essex.* London: for John Harrison.]
Eg 1583	Puleston, Roland. 1583. *Llefr o'r Eglwys Crhistnogedd.* MS., NLW 716B, 1a-25a, 149a-153b, 161a-168a.
EM 1610	Evan Morgan, vicar of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant 1588, Llanasaph 1601. MS, NLW 8498B: 1-35, 54-63. 4 sermons: 3 untitled and 1 on Rom 4:25. Dated 1610. Edited in Morgan (1969: 578-647).
Ep 1567	Davies, Richard. 1976 [1567]. *Epistol Episcop Menew at y Cembru.* Edited in Hughes (1951: 17-43).
Es 1588	Morgan, William. 1588. *Llyfr Esther.* In Morgan & National Library of Wales (1987 [1588]: 202a-205a).
Fa 1772	Risiart, D. 1772. *Hanes Bywyd a Marwolaeth y Parchedig Mr. Fafasor Powel.* 6-21. Caerfyrddin. [Translation of Powell, Valvasor. 1671. *The Life and Death of Mr Vavasor Powell.* London. Sometimes attributed to Edward Bagshaw.]
Ff c.1550	*Darn o'r Ffestifal (Liber Festialis): allan o lawysgrif Havod 22.* Edited in Lewis (1925: 18-34).
Ffrewyll 1745	Roberts, William. 1745. *Ffrewyll y Methodistiaid neu Buttein-glwm Siencyn ac Ynfydog.* [No imprint.]

Table 17: Early Modern Welsh Corpus

Abbreviation	Text
Ffydd 1677	Edwards, Charles. 1677. *Y Ffydd Ddi-ffvant sef, Hanes y Ffydd Gristianogol, a'i Rhinwedd*, 3rd ed. Facsimile reprint and edited in Edwards & Williams (1936 [1677]: 1-21, 150-162, 259-280).
GK I c.1550	*Y Gwr Kadarn.* MS., Cardiff 2.83, 59-78. Copied c. 1550
GK II c.1600	*Y Gwr Kadarn/ Yr ymddiddan afy Ryng yr effeiriad ar gwr bonheddig.* MS., Peniarth 65, 40-72. Copied end C16th.
Go 1615	Smyth, Rhosier. 1615. *Theater du Mond (Gorsedd y Byd).* In Smyth & Parry (1930 [1615]: 1-110).
GR c.1600	*Gesta Romanorum*, story 42, 'Mab y Fforestwr' in Parry-Williams (1988: 122-130).
Gw 1580	Gwyn, Robert. 1580. *Gwssanaeth y Gwyr Newydd.* Edited in Gwyn & Bowen (1970 [1580]: 4-39).
Gwydd 1679	Edwards, Charles. 1679. *Gwyddorion y Grefydd Gristianogol Wedi eu hegluro i ddealltwriaeth y gwaelaf ….* 1-53. Llundain: Printiedig gan Tho. Dawkes. [Translation of Gouge, Thomas. 1679. *The Principles of the Christian Religion explained to the Capacity of the Meanest ….* London.]
HBA 1718	Thomas, Simon. 1718. *Hanes y Byd a'r Amseroedd.* 1-48, 59-67, 91-103, 140-9. Y Mwythig: Argraphwyd gan John Rhydderch.
Hel I	Einnion, John. 1737. *Helaethrwydd o Ras i'r Gwaelaf o Bechaduriaid….* 3-30. Caerfyrddin. [Translation of Bunyan, John. 1692. *Grace Abounding to the chief of sinners.* 7th ed. London: Printed for Robert Ponder.]
Hel II	Thomas, Rhys. 1763. *Helaethrwydd o ras i'r pennaf o bechaduriaid….* 1-17. Caerfyrddin. [Translation of Bunyan, John. 1692. *Grace Abounding to the chief of sinners.* 7th ed. London: Printed for Robert Ponder.]
Is 1588	*Llyfr Prophvvydoliaeth Esay*, chapters 1-9. In Morgan & National Library of Wales (1987 [1588]: 261a-264a).

Table 17: Early Modern Welsh Corpus

Abbreviation	Text
JG 1683	John Griffith, rector of Llanelian 1683-1689, vicar of Llangernyw 1689. MS., Bangor 95. 9 sermons on 1 John 5:4, Eph. 5:3, Luke 17:10, 1 John 4:7, Philip 4:4, James 5:12, Col. 3:16 (twice) & Luke 24:6. Preached in Llanelian 1683-1685.
JP c1641	John Piers, vicar choral of Caerwys 1637-8, vicar 1640-3, rector of Llandderfel 1663-1675. MS., NLW 12205A. 5 sermons on Gen 2:17-24, Mark 16:14, Luke 14:7-11, Luke 2:21 & John 1:1. c. mid C17th (English sermon in same collection annotated as preached in 1641).
LlTA 1653	Llwyd, Morgan. 1899 [1653]. *Llyfr y Tri Aderyn*. Edited in Ellis (1899: 157-266).
M1 67	Salesbury, William. 1567. *Llyma Cyssecrsanct Euangel Iesu Christ yn ol Marc*, chapters 1-5. Edited in Parry (1967: 1-12).
M2 88	Morgan, William. 1588. *Efengyl Iesu Grist yn ôl S. Marc*, chapters 1-5. Edited in Morgan & National Library of Wales (1987 [1588]: 454b-457a).
MF 1750	Arthur, Robert. 1750. *Hanes y ffortyn ar anffortyn, a fu i Mal Flanders*. Y Mwythig: Argraphwyd gan T. D. [Thomas Durston] dros W. J. [William Jones]. [Abridged translation of Defoe, Daniel. 1722. *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the famous Moll Flanders*.]
NLW3B 1675-6	MS., NLW 3B, 23-97. 6 sermons on: Acts 11:27-28, Rom. 7:19, Matt. 6:31-34, 1 Cor. 2:2, Eph. 5:15 & Eph. 6:12. Preached 1675-1676.
Pe 1735	Thomas, Simon. 1735. *Histori yr Heretic Pelagius*. 13-73, 137-141. [Hereford: Nicholas Thomas?]
Pr 1676	Jones, William. 1676. *Principlau neu Bennau y Grefydd Ghristianogol, A agorir fel y gallo y gwannaf eu deall*. Llundain: A. Maxwell. [Translation of Gouge, Thomas. 1673. *The Principles of the Christian Religion Explained to the Capacity of the Meanest*. London: Printed by A. M.]

Table 17: Early Modern Welsh Corpus

Abbreviation	Text
Profiad	Lloyd, Henry. 1750. *Profiad Tufewnol o Nefoedd ag Uffern.* Bristol.
Rhyfel late C17th	*Y Rhyfel Cartrefol*, MS., Cwrtmawr 42. Copied C18th and attributed to Huw Morys.
S1 1567	Salesbury, William. 1567. *Psalmae Dauid*, 1-21. In Richards & Williams (1965 [1567]: ii-xii).
S2 1588	Morgan, William. 1588. *Psalmau Dafydd*, 1-21. In Morgan & National Library of Wales (1987 [1588]: 218a-221a).
Slander	Suggett, Richard. 1983. *Early Modern Welsh Defamation Suits.* SSRC Final Report (HR 6979). Facsimile in National Library of Wales.
SW >1700	Samuel Williams. MS., Cwrtmawr 253B, 121-152. 4 sermons translated from English on Psalms 110:7, Rev. 1:7, Luke 17:32 & Isaiah 53:4.
TB 1687	Owen, James. 1715 [1687]. *Trugaredd a Barn....* 2nd ed., 1st edition in 1687. 1-30. Llundain.
WG c1600	William Griffith. MS, NLW 5264B: 95-111, 249-264, 295-303. 3 sermons on Rev 3:20, Rom 5:1 & 1 Cor 11: 27-29. Late C16th/early C17th. Edited in Morgan (1969: 70-92, 144-153, 314-331).
WW 1629	William Williams, vicar of Llanavan. MS, NLW 73A, 47-71, 113-151. 2 sermons on John 4:46 & John 14:18. Preached 1629, 1633 at Llanavan and Llanfihangel. Edited in Jones (1980: 28-52, 53-91).
YBM 1691	Williams, Thomas. 1691. *Ymadroddion Buchedol Ynghylch Marvvolaeth.* 1-84, 200-359. Rhydychen: Thomas Jones. [Translation of William Sherlock. 1689. *A Practical Discourse concerning Death.* London.]
Ys 1675	Davies, Rondl. 1675. *Profiad yr Ysprydion neu Ddatcuddiad Gau Athrawon.* Rhydychen: Printiedig gan H. HALL.

Table 17: Early Modern Welsh Corpus

Text type	List of texts included (abbreviations)
Expository prose	Be 1693, Ca 1631, De 1595, Ed 1629, Ep 1567, Ff c.1550, Go 1615, Gw 1580, Gwydd 1679, LlTA 1653, Pr 1676, YBM 1691, Ys 1675
Narrative prose (3rd person)	Eg 1583, Ffydd 1677, GR c.1600, HBA 1718, MF 1750, Pe 1735, TB 1687
Narrative prose (1st person)	Cr c1575, Fa 1772, BC 1703, H1 1737, Hel 1763, Pr 1750
Bible translations	Es 1588, Is 1588, M1 67, M2 88, S1 1567, S2 1588
Manuscript sermons	B354 1678, B355/62 1680, B362,5 1717, C219 1668, C226 >1660, EM 1610, JG 1683, JP c1641, NLW3B 1675, SW >1700, WG c1600, WW 1629
Slander case records	Slander: Montgomery Sessions 1591-1699, Flintshire Court of Sessions 1593-1733, Denbighshire Court of Sessions 1593-1753, Pembrokeshire Court of Sessions 1604-1778, Cardiganshire Court of Sessions 1611-1657, Anglesey Court of Sessions 1622-1748, Carmarthenshire Court of Sessions 1650, St Davids Ecclesiastical Court 1681-1727, Brecon Ecclesiastical Court 1682-1771, Court of Arches 1684-1728, Glamorgan Court of Sessions 1706-1742, Caernarfonshire Court of Sessions 1709-1774, Llandaff Ecclesiastical Court 1714-1724 (Suggett 1983).
Popular drama (all verse)	Afradlon 1750, Brutus 1734/5, Cyndrig 1737, Dioddef c.1550, Ffrewyll 1745, GK I c.1550, GK II c.1600, Rhyfel late C17th

Table 18: Early Modern Welsh Corpus by Text Type

Appendix – Additional Data

Text	PDMCs n°	Absolute V1 n°	% Absolute V1
Ff c.1550	213	0	0%
Ep 1567	128	1	1%
M1 1567	219	5	2%
S1 1567	268	55	21%
Cr c1575	82	0	0%
Gw 1580	198	2	1%
Eg 1583	160	0	0%
M2 1588	217	14	6%
S2 1588	278	114	41%
Es 1588	191	18	9%
Is 1588	226	56	25%
De 1595	170	3	2%
GR c.1600	148	2	1%
WG c1600	192	2	1%
EM 1610	154	1	1%
T 1615	216	57	26%
WW 1629	99	1	1%
Ed 1629	170	0	0%
Ca 1631	126	21	17%
JP c1641	179	18	10%
LlTA 1653	378	2	1%
C226 >1660	107	1	1%
C219 1668	137	6	4%
NLW3 1675-6	176	10	6%
Ys 1675	243	0	0%
Pr 1676	138	0	0%
Ffydd 1677	390	246	63%
B354 1678	82	0	0%
Gwydd 1679	200	80	40%
B355/62 1680	57	0	0%
JG 1683-5	175	0	0%
TB 1687	288	156	54%
YBM 1691	299	64	21%
Be 1693	202	95	47%
SW >1700	258	8	3%
BC 1703	185	66	36%
B362,5 1717	118	26	22%
HBA 1718	258	55	21%
Pel 1735	197	44	22%
H1 1737	138	13	9%
Pr 1750	138	6	4%
MF 1750	81	3	4%
H2 1763	141	42	30%
Fa 1772	129	12	9%

Table 19: Frequency of Absolute V1 in prose corpus texts (data for Graph 1)

Text	PDMCs n°	Absolute V1	% Absolute V1
Dioddef c.1550	126	17	13%
GK I c.1550	86	33	38%
GK II c.1600	117	30	26%
Rhyfel late C17th	318	12	4%
Brutus 1734/5	356	67	19%
Cyndrig 1737	275	69	25%
Ffrewyll 1745	183	8	4%
Afradlon 1750	335	72	21%
Total/average	1,796	308	17%

Table 20: Frequency of Absolute V1 in popular drama corpus texts

Court	Date range	PDMCs n°	Absolute V1 n°	% Absolute V1
Montgomery Sessions	1591-1699	32	0	0%
Flintshire Court of Sessions	1593-1733	102	0	0%
Denbighshire Court of Sessions	1593-1753	62	0	0%
Pembrokeshire Court of Sessions	1604-1778	38	1	3%
Cardiganshire Court of Sessions	1611-1657	24	0	0%
Anglesey Court of Sessions	1622-1748	23	0	0%
Carmarthenshire Court of Sessions	1650	1	0	0%
St Davids Ecclesiastical Court	1681-1727	24	1	4%
Brecon Ecclesiastical Court	1682-1771	44	0	0%
Court of Arches	1684-1728	3	0	0%
Glamorgan Court of Sessions	1706-1742	10	0	0%
Caernarfonshire Court of Sessions	1709-1774	12	0	0%
Llandaff Ecclesiastical Court	1714-1724	13	0	0%
Total/average		**388**	**2**	**1%**

Table 21: Frequency of Absolute V1 in slander case records

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Argument Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Argument Adv-initial PDMCs with Adv-y-V %	Non-argument Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Non-argument Adv-initial PDMCs with Adv-y-V %
Ff c.1550	118	17	94%	101	82%
Ep 1567	62	36	100%	26	65%
M1 1567	53	11	100%	42	93%
Gw 1580	59	15	93%	44	14%
Eg 1583	67	25	68%	42	24%
M2 1588	52	7	100%	45	73%
WG c.1600	72	21	95%	51	47%
EM c.1610	26	11	91%	15	13%
Ed 1629	52	29	100%	23	22%
Ca 1631	47	16	100%	31	45%
LlTA 1653	60	21	86%	40	3%
C2219 c.1668	54	21	100%	33	67%
Ffydd 1677	100	34	94%	66	5%
Gwydd 1679	59	23	91%	36	39%
B95 1685	43	14	100%	29	7%
YBM 1691	84	39	95%	45	20%
Be 1693	46	17	88%	29	10%
SW c.1700	90	48	90%	42	10%
BC 1703	74	25	28%	49	4%
HBA 1718	90	26	73%	64	9%
Pe 1735	50	15	67%	35	6%
H1 1737	67	13	100%	54	9%
Pr 1750	48	9	100%	39	5%
H2 1763	60	13	85%	47	26%

Table 22: Frequency of Adv-y-V where fronted adverbial is argument vs. non-argument of the verb in corpus prose texts (data for Graph 4)

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Argument Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Argument Adv-initial PDMCs with Adv-y-V %	Non-argument Adv-initial PDMCs n°	Non-argument Adv-initial PDMCs with Adv-y-V %
Dioddef mid C16th	37	28	43%	9	11%
GK I mid C16th	16	13	54%	3	0%
GK II late C16th	16	11	73%	5	20%
Rhyfel late C17th	43	29	24%	14	7%
Brutus 1734/5	81	28	11%	53	0%
Cyndrig 1737	35	12	50%	23	13%
Afradlon 1750	37	22	41%	15	0%

Table 23: Frequency of Adv-y-V where fronted adverbial is argument vs. non-argument of the verb in corpus drama texts (data for Graph 5)

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Absolute V1
Ff c1550	118	84%	0%	95	0%
Ep 1567	62	85%	0%	66	2%
M1 1567	53	94%	0%	166	3%
S1 1567	49	84%	4%	219	25%
Cr c.1575	30	20%	3%	52	0%
Gw 1580	59	34%	0%	139	1%
Eg 1583	67	40%	4%	93	0%
M2 1588	52	77%	0%	165	8%
S2 1588	44	95%	0%	234	49%
Es 1588	81	44%	0%	110	16%
Is 1588	57	84%	0%	169	33%
De 1595	52	52%	2%	118	3%
Gr 1600	48	52%	0%	100	2%
WG c1600	72	60%	0%	120	2%
EM 1610	26	46%	0%	128	1%
T 1615	44	32%	16%	172	33%
WW 1629	32	59%	13%	67	1%
Ed 1629	52	65%	0%	118	0%
Ca 1631	47	64%	9%	79	27%
JP c1641	55	82%	0%	124	15%
Ll 1653	61	33%	0%	317	1%
C226 >1660	33	36%	0%	74	1%
C219 1668	54	80%	0%	83	7%
NLW3 1675-6	53	75%	9%	122	8%
Ys 1675	71	63%	0%	172	0%
Pr 1676	44	61%	0%	94	0%
Ff 1677	100	35%	63%	290	85%
B354 1678	19	5%	0%	63	0%
G 1679	59	59%	24%	141	57%
B355/62 1680	13	31%	0%	44	0%
JG 1683-5	43	37%	0%	132	0%
TB 1687	70	1%	76%	218	72%
YBM 1691	84	55%	17%	215	30%
Be 1693	46	39%	41%	156	61%
SW >1700	90	52%	6%	168	5%
BC 1703	74	12%	55%	111	59%
B362,5 1717	27	52%	22%	91	29%
HBA 1718	90	28%	46%	168	33%
Pe 1735	50	24%	28%	147	30%
H1 1737	67	27%	16%	71	18%
Pr 1750	48	23%	2%	90	7%
Fl 1750	25	20%	20%	56	5%
H2 1763	60	38%	42%	81	52%
Fa 1772	55	5%	11%	74	16%

Table 24: Comparison of frequency of Adv-V and Absolute V1 orders in prose corpus texts (data for Graph 6)

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-PronS-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% PronS-V
Ff c1550	118	84%	4%	95	40%
Ep 1567	62	85%	3%	66	26%
M1 1567	53	94%	6%	166	43%
S1 1567	49	84%	4%	219	24%
Cr c.1575	30	20%	57%	52	56%
Gw 1580	59	34%	39%	139	66%
Eg 1583	67	40%	37%	93	48%
M2 1588	52	77%	17%	165	52%
S2 1588	44	95%	0%	234	16%
Es 1588	81	44%	12%	110	25%
Is 1588	57	84%	0%	169	21%
De 1595	52	52%	23%	119	42%
Gr 1600	48	52%	33%	100	65%
WG c1600	72	60%	22%	120	56%
EM 1610	26	46%	23%	128	41%
T 1615	44	32%	25%	172	20%
WW 1629	32	59%	22%	67	64%
Ed 1629	52	65%	13%	118	36%
Ca 1631	47	64%	17%	79	28%
JP c1641	55	82%	7%	124	21%
Ll 1653	61	33%	33%	317	63%
C226 >1660	33	36%	12%	74	38%
C219 1668	54	80%	9%	83	28%
NLW3 1675-6	53	75%	9%	122	35%
Ys 1675	71	63%	13%	172	26%
Pr 1676	44	61%	18%	94	40%
Ff 1677	100	35%	0%	290	1%
B354 1678	19	5%	68%	63	37%
G 1679	59	59%	8%	141	12%
B355/62 1680	13	31%	62%	44	61%
JG 1683-5	43	37%	47%	132	45%
TB 1687	70	1%	10%	218	7%
YBM 1691	84	55%	13%	215	32%
Be 1693	46	39%	7%	156	16%
SW >1700	90	52%	27%	168	44%
BC 1703	74	12%	30%	111	27%
B362,5 1717	27	52%	19%	91	38%
HBA 1718	90	28%	18%	168	15%
Pe 1735	50	24%	24%	147	26%
H1 1737	67	27%	51%	71	44%
Pr 1750	48	23%	40%	90	58%
Fl 1750	25	20%	44%	56	54%
H2 1763	60	38%	15%	81	16%
Fa 1772	55	5%	60%	74	42%

Table 25: Comparison of frequency of Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V orders in prose corpus texts (data for Graph 7)

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-DU-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% DU-V
Ff c1550	118	84%	3%	95	16%
Ep 1567	62	85%	2%	66	5%
M1 1567	53	94%	0%	166	5%
S1 1567	49	84%	0%	219	1%
Cr c.1575	30	20%	0%	52	6%
Gw 1580	59	34%	20%	139	13%
Eg 1583	67	40%	4%	93	5%
M2 1588	52	77%	0%	165	1%
S2 1588	44	95%	0%	234	0%
Es 1588	81	44%	0%	110	5%
Is 1588	57	84%	0%	169	0%
De 1595	52	52%	12%	118	7%
Gr 1600	48	52%	10%	100	12%
WG c1600	72	60%	14%	120	16%
EM 1610	26	46%	31%	128	29%
T 1615	44	32%	11%	172	7%
WW 1629	32	59%	3%	67	15%
Ed 1629	52	65%	4%	118	4%
Ca 1631	47	64%	2%	79	9%
JP c1641	55	82%	4%	124	4%
Ll 1653	61	33%	28%	317	22%
C226 >1660	33	36%	33%	74	34%
C219 1668	54	80%	0%	83	5%
NLW3 1675-6	53	75%	4%	122	11%
Ys 1675	71	63%	10%	172	10%
Pr 1676	44	61%	11%	94	33%
Ff 1677	100	35%	0%	290	0%
B354 1678	19	5%	5%	63	8%
G 1679	59	59%	0%	141	1%
B355/62 1680	13	31%	0%	44	5%
JG 1683-5	43	37%	12%	132	42%
TB 1687	70	1%	1%	218	1%
YBM 1691	84	55%	12%	215	30%
Be 1693	46	39%	2%	156	8%
SW >1700	90	52%	6%	168	21%
BC 1703	74	12%	1%	111	2%
B362,5 1717	27	52%	0%	91	2%
HBA 1718	90	28%	1%	168	11%
Pe 1735	50	24%	12%	147	10%
H1 1737	67	27%	3%	71	10%
Pr 1750	48	23%	27%	90	7%
Fl 1750	25	20%	8%	56	16%
H2 1763	60	38%	2%	81	5%
Fa 1772	55	5%	16%	74	31%

Table 26: Comparison of frequency of Adv-DU-V and DU-V orders in prose corpus texts (data for Graph 8)

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Absolute V1
Dioddef c.1550	37	35%	14%	89	19%
GK I c.1550	16	44%	19%	70	47%
GK II c.1600	16	56%	0%	101	30%
Rhyfel late C17th	43	19%	19%	275	4%
Brutus 1734/5	81	4%	44%	275	24%
Cyndrig 1737	35	26%	40%	240	29%
Ffrewyll 1745	16	19%	0%	167	5%
Afradlon 1750	37	24%	19%	299	24%

Table 27: Comparison of frequency of Adv- V and Absolute V1 orders in drama corpus texts

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-PronS-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% PronS-V
Dioddef c.1550	37	35%	46%	89	52%
GK I c.1550	16	44%	31%	70	30%
GK II c.1600	16	56%	31%	101	45%
Rhyfel late C17th	43	19%	51%	275	75%
Brutus 1734/5	81	4%	37%	275	52%
Cyndrig 1737	35	26%	23%	240	52%
Ffrewyll 1745	16	19%	38%	167	74%
Afradlon 1750	37	24%	46%	299	55%

Table 28: Comparison of frequency of Adv-PronS-V and PronS-V orders in drama corpus texts

Text	Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% Adv-y-V	% Adv-DU-V	Non-Adv-initial PDMCs n°	% DU-V
Dioddef c.1550	37	35%	3%	89	1%
GK I c.1550	16	44%	6%	70	13%
GK II c.1600	16	56%	13%	101	14%
Rhyfel late C17th	43	19%	7%	275	12%
Brutus 1734/5	81	4%	5%	275	8%
Cyndrig 1737	35	26%	6%	240	8%
Ffrewyll 1745	16	19%	25%	167	16%
Afradlon 1750	37	24%	5%	299	9%

Table 29: Comparison of frequency of Adv-DU-V and DU-V orders in drama corpus texts

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