Rise and Fall in the Life of *And*

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1. Introduction

Before the standardisation of the language different realisations of the same grammatical features were possible. When the conjunction *and* comes into question one might – quite understandably – think of it as a pure coordinator that connects words/phrases/sentences of equal status. The situation, however, is not so simple since *and* played a role as a subordinator as well in the history of English. There were periods when, besides the regular conditional subordinator *if* (or any of its spelling variant), *and* also introduced conditional clauses.

The general aim of the present paper is to reveal the so far probably not well-discussed areas of the subordinator *and*, playing a considerable role in conditional sentences. So far, mostly references, or rather general observations have been made in the question of *and* meaning 'if': according to Mitchell (1985:§3668.) the first occurrence of *and* in the meaning 'if'can be dated back to 1250. As far as its life is considered, Fischer (1992:348) considers the subordinator *and* as a development from the coordinator *and*; it can be considered as a later (in Middle English) addition to the list of subordinators. Furthermore, Rissanen (1999:281) points out the possible decline of *and* (or *an*) as a conditional subordinator in early Modern English. Curme (1931:318-323) also mentions the use of *and* or its spelling variant *an* meaning 'if' in certain dialects today: "An is still to be heard in our southern mountains and here and there in New England". So it seems, according to the previous studies, that definite "birth" and "death" points of *and* can be more or less determined.

In this paper my more specific target is to examine the life of *and* from its supposed birth until a possible decline came in its use. Thus I start analysing prose texts from the beginning of Middle English till the end of early Modern English, roughly from 1150 to 1710. During this period I wish to find out the exact rate of occurrences of *and* 'if' as well as the "regular" conditional clauses introduced by *if* (and possible spelling variants), and to compare their number of occurrence. It would be also interesting to look at, if possible, besides the diachronic, the diatopic analysis as well. The two corpora forming the basis of my research are the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English (PPCME2)* and the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME)*.

2.Background

The birthdate, or at least the signs of the birth of conditional *and* actually can be assumed to be in the period of Old English: already then there were some signs towards its use as a subordinator, viz. *gelīce and…* meaning 'like as if' (*Dictionary of Old English, online version*). The *Middle English Dictionary*, however, suggests that *and* with all its spelling variants (**ant, an, a,** and **&**) in the <u>conditional</u> meaning existed in the Middle English period (no reference to Old English at all), its occurrence, however, was not so frequent. Another hypothesis is proposed by the *Oxford English Dictionary:* it supposes a Germanic origin for the conditional usage, more precisely it can be derived from the Old Norse *enda*. Klemola and Filppula (1992) discusses two factors where *and* 'if' actually can come from: both rely on language contact. According to one hypothesis it might have a Latin origin, but, as a matter of fact, "Latin models typically lack overt subordinators" (315). According to another assumption the conditional *and* could stem from Celtic languages where subordinate clauses introduced by *and* are rather similar to those clauses in both Middle English and Early Modern English, like. in Old Irish "*do·bertis cech n-olc from os-messe oc taircitul cech maith dóib-som* 'they used to inflict every evil on me, though I was (lit. *and I*) prophesying every good to them'" (315-16). Moreover, those Celtic languages continue using the subordinating *and*-constructions, e.g. in Irish English "*Well, I seen the time you'd buy a farm for … five or sicx hundred … Seen farms selling **and I a young lad**.*" (316).

3. Types of conditionals

We can divide conditionals into "positive" and "negative" types. These types can be interpreted both with *if* and *and* as well.

Positive	Negative
if/and	if/and … not
and if	but if/and (=unless)
what if/and	unless
no conjunction -- inversion	no conjunction -- inversion

Table 1.

This study only concentrates now on the positive *and* and *if* types yet excluding, however, those instances where no subordinator introduces the conditional clause. A problem, however, arises when the *but if/and* sequence occurs: there are many instances of this combination but there are cases where *but* is not the first element of the combined subordinator but functions as a coordinating conjunction separating two clauses, one of which is a conditional clause introduced by *and*. In such cases, the instance is obviously counted. Another problem is that not all *if* instances can be counted as a conditional clause: it often happens that *if* introduces a reported question.

4. Research: methods and process

In the following the two corpora will be introduced and analysed. Both the *PPCME2* and the *PPCEME* are based on the relevant parts of the Helsinki Corpus. As the two corpora contain different number of prose texts, and as those texts diverse in length, relative rather than absolute numbers will be taken into consideration. In both parts all the texts containing either of the two conditional-types will be considered, and analyses according to diatopic and diachronic variations will be also carried out. The lack of enough (or equal) number of examples in certain dialects and/or periods might be due to the relative limited number of manuscripts available in the parsed version of the Penn-Helsinki Corpus (as compared to the Helsinki Corpus, for instance).

4.1. Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of *Middle English*

The Middle English section of the Diachronic Part of the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts formed the basis of the text samples in the *PPCME2*. It includes almost 1.2 million words of running text in 55 text samples. Table 1. lists the distribution of word count according to both diatopic and diachronic distribution. In accordance with the Helsinki Corpus there are four subperiods (ME1, ME2, ME3 and ME4), and five dialectal areas in Middle English (Kentish, Northern, Southern, East-Midlands, and West-Midlands).

	ME1 (1150-1250)	ME2 (1250-1350)	ME3 (1350-1420)	ME4 (1420-1500)	Total
Kentish	4316	51.914	-	-	56.230
Northern	-	-	18.470	11.070	29.540
Southern	-	-	104.179	43.834	148.013
East-Midlands	130.804	45.035	207.831	178.972	562.642
West-Midlands	116.802	-	81.092	162.152	360.046
Total	**251.922**	**96.949**	**411.572**	**396.028**	**1.156.471**

Table 2.

The 55 parsed prose texts were put under scrutiny in order to explore the regularity (if possible) of *and*-clauses, and the contrast in the rate of occurrence between the two types of conditional clauses. From this examination it emerged that the Penn-Helsinki Corpus contains 100 instances of *and* used in the sense of 'if'. Those instances appeared in 23 texts in addition to *if*, compared to the other texts where *if* (or a spelling variant) was the only subordinator introducing the conditional clauses. There was one text (CMINNOCE), where, interestingly enough, the only conditional clause was introduced exclusively by *and,* "**And** he breke them he is sharpely correctyd" 'If he breaks them, he will be sharply corrected'. Considering the other types of conditionals there was another text (CMREYNAR) where the combination of the two subordinating conjunctions, *and if*, occurred, "But **and yf** he wolde haue comen hyther he myght haue ben here" 'but if he would have come … , he might have been here'. The other combination, *what and* provides, however, no instance in the period.

In order to obtain a more precise view of ME conditional clauses it seemed to be beneficial to examine all *if-* and *and*-clauses with their possible spelling variants. In case of *if*-clauses the following variants were found besides *if*: *Ʒif* (in the majority of cases), *Ʒef*, *yif*, *yef*, *Ʒife*, *gief*, and *gef* – exclusively based on the online version of the MED. *And* has only one spelling variant in the corpus, namely the ampersand, *&* (there was no instance of either *ant* or *an).* Taking all the spelling variants into account the actual comparison of the two types of conditional clauses began. The following diagram clearly represents their situation: not surprisingly, the clauses introduced by *if* (or any spelling variant), generally speaking, are in the majority throughout the whole period. In ME1 and ME2 only one *and*-instance could be found, respectively; in case of *if*-conditionals a sudden and significant decrease in the number of instances (from 635 to 117) can be observed from ME1 to ME2. This remarkable fall

should be due to the small number of conditional clauses and parsed texts in the corpus occurring in this period. A definite rise can be noticed in both *and-* and *if-*clauses towards ME3; this rise, however, is most detectable in *if-*conditionals. In ME4 while there is a sharp decline in the number of *if-*clauses again, a significant growth can be detected in the number of *and-*conditionals. It also seems that the two lines are approaching each other; yet they are far from each other but in the next section (EModE) this problem will be solved by analysing the texts further on.
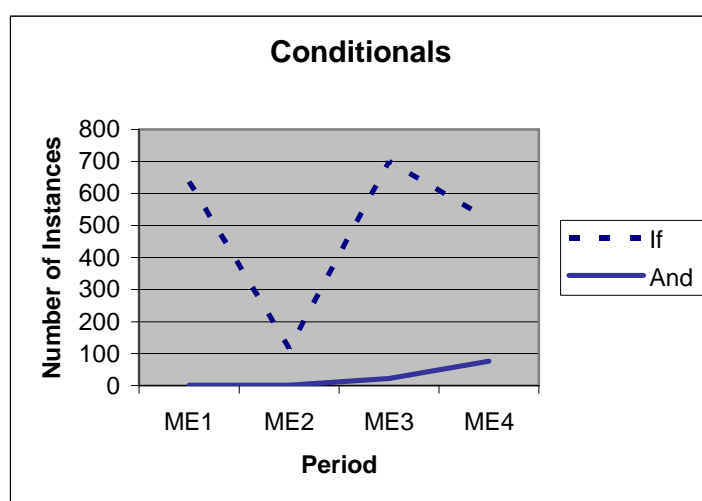

Diagram 1.

In the process of the analysis diatopic criteria were also taken into consideration. From this investigation it turned out that there was one dialectal area, viz. the West Midlands where in ME4 the number of *and-*clauses substantially exceeded that of the *if-*conditionals (60:33 – taking the absolute numbers into consideration). Because of this rather surprising result it would be beneficial to examine texts originating from the same dialectal area in EModE as well. It is regrettable, however, that in the *PPCEME* the diatopic distribution of the manuscripts is no longer available.

When genre-distribution comes into question the following observations can be made: it has turned out that the majority of *and-*conditionals occur in Romance (53%), then in Religious Treatise (14%); the distribution between the text types is, however, rather wide, as Table 3. indicates that.

	ME1	**ME2**	**ME3**	**ME4**
Homilies	1% (1)	1% (1)	--	--
Religious Treatises	--	--	14% (14)	8% (8)
Sermon	**--**	--	1% (1)	10% (10)
Travelougue	--	--	1% (1)	--
History			2% (2)	2% (2)
Handbook – Medicine			2% (2)	--
Fiction				3% (3)
Romance				53% (53)
Rule			2% (2)	--

Table 3.

4.2. Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of *Early Modern English*

The Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English consists of almost 1.8 million words altogether. The corpus itself is divided into three subcorpora:

-the Helsinki part consists of roughly 573,000 words;

-the Penn1 part consists of roughly 615,000 words;

-the Penn2 part consists of roughly 606,000 words.

The two Penn parts are suplements to the Helsinki part; they mostly contain text samples written by the same authors – as it is in the Helsinki part. The Penn2, however, contain more new material than the Penn1. In accordance with the Helsinki Corpus itself all the three directories are divided into subperiods, viz. E1, E2, and E3. Table 4. lists the distribution of word count according to both subcorporal and diacronic distribution.

	Helsinki	Penn 1	Penn 2	**Total**
E1 (1500-1569)	196,754	194,018	185,423	*576,195*
E2 (1570-1639)	196,742	223,064	232,993	*652,799*
E3 (1640-1710)	179,477	197,908	187,631	*565,016*
Total	*572,973*	*614,990*	*606,047*	***1,794,010***

Table 4.

Due to the twofold supplementation in the *PPCEME* the number of the analysed texts is almost four times so high as in the Middle English part: altogether 192 texts were put under

scrutiny. Interestingly enough, *PPCEME* also contains 100 instances of *and* used in the sense of 'if' (this already suggests a decline in the number of occurrences). The distribution of those examples is, however, slightly different from that in *PPCME2*: *and*-conditionals can be detected in only two subperiods (E1 and E2, respectively) in EME, as shown by Table 5. Those instances appeared in 25 texts (E1:16; E2:9) in addition to *if*, compared to the other texts where *if* (or a spelling variant) was the only subordinator introducing the conditional clauses.

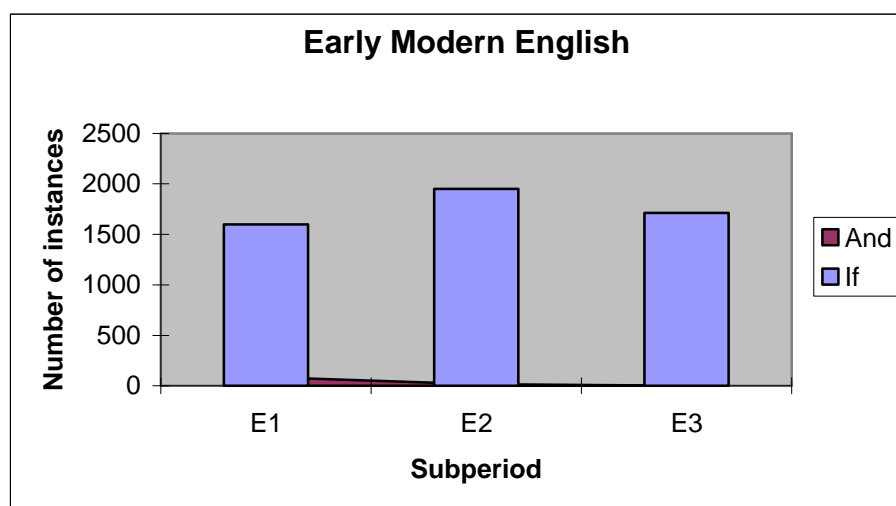|	E1	E2	E3
And	85	15	0
If	1599	1949	1713

Table 5.

Diagram 2.

As far as the distribution in Table 1. is concerned, all types of combination with *and* were found in the corpus; thus the strengthening effect of *if* beside *and* (= *and if*) was represented in *PPCEME* as well, like "for so they get more **and if** they went together" (HARMAN). The *what if...* combination also occurred in the form of *and if...,* as in "**what and** it hadde beene any other man, and not your good dames husbande" (HARMAN), or "**what and** she come not" (UDALL).

The spelling variants were not as manifold as in the Middle English part; *and*, however, also had one spelling variant in the form of ampersand *(&),* while *if* had only two: *yf* and *ef* (and only one instance from the latter). The majority of conditional clauses is, nevertheless, introduced by the regular form of the subordinator (*if*).

As mentioned above, the diatopic analysis is unfortunately not possible in this period since only those texts were put into the corpus which represent the standard British dialect. Still, another form of classification is feasible, namely the analysis according to genre. A considerable number of text types is accessible in the *PPCEME*, from biblical texts to private letters. Table 6. shows the actual genre-distribution of *and*-conditionals in each subperiod.

	E1	E2
Fiction	12% (12)	--
Biography	16% (16)	4% (4)
Drama - Comedy	**38% (38)**	3% (3)
Handbook	3% (3)	1% (1)
Letter – non-private	2 % (2)	2 % (2)
Letter – private	2% (2)	1% (1)
Proceedings, trials	8% (8)	--
Sermon	1% (1)	--
Philosophy	--	1% (1)
Travelogue	--	1% (1)

Table 6.

It has turned out that *and* meaning 'if' occurred in ten types of text; the majority can be found – not surprisingly – in Dramas, in E1. The number of *and*-instances in Biography and in Fiction is also noteworthy. In E2, however, there is a drastic fall in the use of *and*-clauses that ends in the total loss of *and*-subordinators in the last subperiod of EME – at least, in *PPCEME*.

5. Diachronic variation from ME1 to E3

From the research it has become evident that in the two analysed corpora both the birth and death date of the subordinator *and* can be determined. These data, however, are in a slight contradiction with Mitchell (cf. Introduction) since the first *and*-instance was found in The *Lambeth Homilies*, already in ME1 (so before 1250). Rissanen, on the other hand, gives only a vague idea of the supposed death of *and*-conditional. From the analysis of *PPCEME* it turned out that the end of E2 meant the end of the life of *and* 'if' as well. What happened between ME1 and E2? This question will be answered with the help of relative numbers. (The importance of having a look at the relative numbers lies on the deficiency of the number of available texts in the two corpora as well as on the diverse word count.) Table 7. shows the relative frequencies per 10.000 words. In case of *and*-conditionals the relative frequency does not reach 1/10.000 from ME1 to ME3; in ME4, however, it exceeds that number, and the

relative frequency is almost 2/10.000. Only a modest fall comes in E1, in E2, however, a drastic decline can be observed; this leads to the complete disappearance of *and*-conditionals in E3.

The case is different with *if*-conditionals: from the ME1 25/10.000 words to the relative frequency of ME2 a drastic fall can be seen. A slight increase comes in ME3 where the relative frequency is approximately 17/10.000 words, then towards ME4 a decline comes again. The EME period can be characterised with a constant rise. The most salient change is, however, from ME4 to E1 where the relative frequency changes from approximately 13/10.000 to approximately 28/10.000 words. Diagram 3. helps in the comparison between the two subordinators in the seven subperiods. Diagram 4. represents the life of *and* 'if' exclusively from its birth to its death with the help of relative numbers.

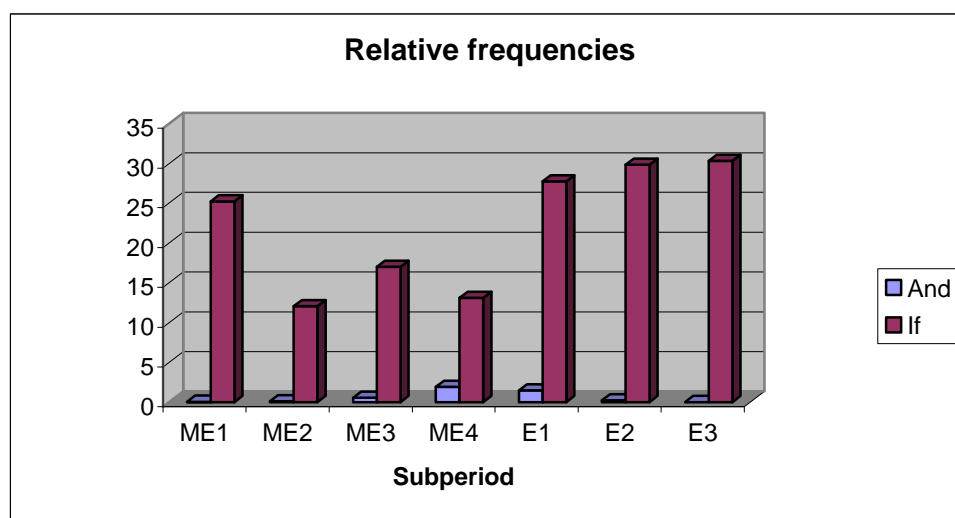|	ME1	ME2	ME3	ME4	E1	E2	E3
And	0,039	0,103	0,534	1,919	1,475	0,229	n.a.
If	25,206	12,068	17,008	13,105	27,751	29,856	30,317

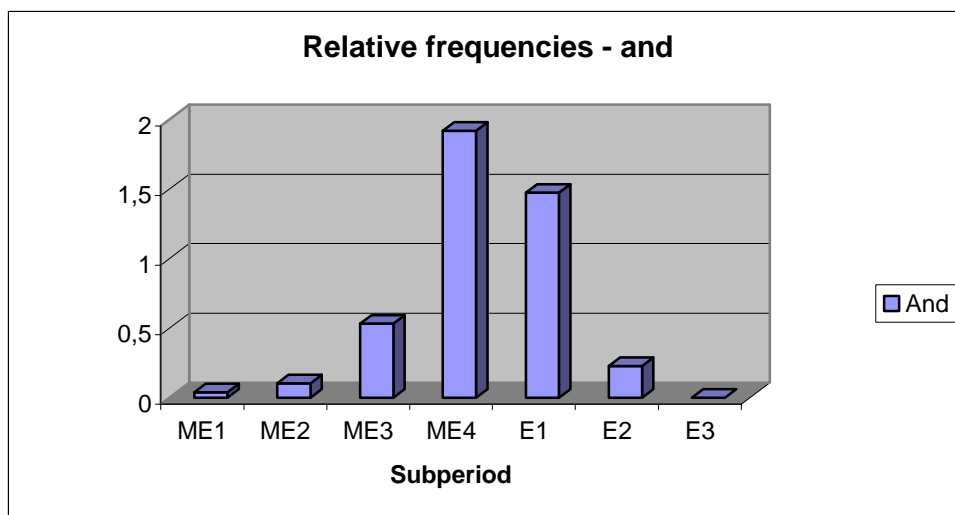*Table 7.*

Diagram 3.

Diagram 4.

6. Why the rise? Why the fall?

It is interesting why *and* 'if' was the dominant subordinating conjunction in one subperiod and in one genre, and why was not so in others? Or, at least, why the rise at all?

The birth (and the spread) of the conjunction must be due to the (language) contact with the Celtic languages, as mentioned above, in 2. If the structure already existed in any of the Celtic languages and that came into contact with any English dialect, then it should have influenced that dialect. As far as the spread of the conditional *and* is concerned, the increase in the number of instances might not show the situation *de facto*. Laing (2000) mentions the possible role of some scribes: during the copying procedure it might have happened that the scribe arbitrarily converted the texts, or evern translated those into his/her own dialect. Thus it can happen that the distribution of the *and*-conditionals was more uniform in each dialect than as the present results show that.

When the fall of *and*-clauses comes into question the hypothesis of Culpeper and Kytö (2000) should be mentioned. They are of the opinion that the occurrence of *and*-conditionals first minimalised then disappeared in the Early Modern English period. The reason for this might be that the use of the conjunction *and* became restricted: thus "other conjunctions might have been used instead of *and* for particular functions" (309). So after the period of Middle English the usage of both subordinating and coordinating conjunctions became more and more specified: *and* occurred less in the role of a subordinator until it became almost completely extinct.

7. Conclusion

This paper aimed at examining the use of *and* as a conditional subordinator in Middle English and in Early Modern English. It also intended to prove that the life of the and meaning 'if' also played an important role in conditional clauses and thus it should not be overlooked at all when analysing such subordinate clauses. In the process of analysis it turned out that the use of *and* instead of *if* introducing conditional clauses was constantly increasing, especially towards the end of the ME period, while a continuous decrease characterised the EME period. With this overall examination of the two corpora the complete life of the conditional *and* could be presented. In order to get a more precise and more reliable result, however, it would be advisable to look at other corpora from both periods as well.

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The Dictionary of Old English. Fascicle F and Fascicles A-English (with revisions). CD ROM Version 1.0

The Middle English Dictionary: http://www.ets.umdl.umich.edu/m/med/

PPCME2: http://www.ling.upenn.edu/hist-corpora/PPCME2-RELEASE-2/index.htm

PPCEME: http://www.ling.upenn.edu/hist-corpora/PPCEME-RELEASE-1/index.htm