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## **PECULIARITIES OF WORD ORDER IN MIDDLE ENGLISH**

Middle English, a phase linking Old English to its modern counterpart, presents an important chapter in the evolution of the English language. Among its aspects, syntax or word order emerges as a dynamic feature that both mirrors and diverges from present-day norms [1-4].

Middle English predominantly followed a Subject-Verb-Object word order, akin to Modern English. This structure ensured coherence and clarity in conveying ideas, offering a familiar framework for communication. However, within this framework, Middle English syntax displayed notable deviations and subtleties that distinguished it from both its predecessors and successors. For instance, "Whan he his papir soghte" (when he sought his paper) illustrates how the object ("his papir") precedes the verb ("soghte").

One of the most notable features of Middle English syntax lies in its flexibility. Unlike the comparatively rigid word order of Modern English, Middle English afforded greater freedom in arranging sentence components. Objects and adjuncts, for instance, could go before the predicate. This flexibility empowered speakers and writers to express nuanced meanings with depth and creativity.

The predicate had its own specific features. Auxiliary verbs and main verbs were separated by other sentence components. This fragmentation added complexity to sentence structure, challenging communicators. For example, "His maister shal it in his shoppe abyе" shows how "shall" and "abye" are split by the object and prepositional phrase.

Quotations presented another characteristic feature of Middle English syntax, often requiring using a reversal of word order. In such constructions, the verb preceded the subject, creating a distinct pattern that differentiated direct speech from narrative text. This reversal added depth and authenticity to dialogue,

capturing the nuances of spoken language within written form. As an example we can give an expressions like "quod I" (I said), where the verb ("quod") goes before the subject ("I").

Negation in Middle English differed from its modern version, employing the particle "ne" before the verb and "nat" after the verb. For example, "I ne wol, I wol nat" (I don't wish (to)); "he ne wot, he wot nat" (he didn't know). This construction, alongside the emergence of contracted forms like "nis" (ne + is), fostered the prevalence of double negatives – a feature once commonplace in Middle English but now rare in modern English.

Forming questions in Middle English relied heavily on subject and verb inversion, with the subject often used after the main verb. This inversion distinguished questions from declarative statements, signaling the quest for clarification or response. For example, "eteth he" (does he eat?) illustrates this inverted word order.

To conclude, the study of word order in Middle English demonstrates peculiarities of the evolution of language and communication. By studying specific features of word order in Middle English, we deepen our understanding of the ongoing evolution of language.

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## **WORD PLAY AS A LEADING STYLYSTIC DEVICE IN “ALICE IN WONDERLAND” BY L. CARROLL**

Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) is an English writer known for his children's books, including ‘Alice in Wonderland’, ‘Alice in the Mirror World’, and ‘The Hunt for Snark’. His works feature non-trivial fantasy plots, brilliant humour, sophisticated irony and generous use of creative stylistic devices, which involves the reader into reconstructing the plot here and now.