On Interpreting a Type of Ambiguity in an Old English Text

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Ambiguity in some historical texts can be interpreted in the framework of the entire text. A case of ambiguous reference in the *Parker Chronicle* is examined and interpreted on the basis of patterns of text segments that are found to be characteristic of the *Chronicle*. Suggestions are given for presuppositions concerning historiographic style.

It is not always easy to understand what is being said, not even in one's mother tongue, nor is it always easy to understand the written word, even when one has received considerable education. Understanding can be seriously aggravated if the listener's or reader's experience does not match that of the speaker or writer. In spoken discourse, the difference in experience is one of space, so to say, in that it has been acquired in different localities (including the internal worlds of the communicating individuals) though largely during the same period of time. In discourse that is written and read, there is not only the spatial difference, but there is also a temporal difference which can be very pronounced, since it is very common to read texts produced at a time that is years or centuries removed from the reader's own time. Generations of students of history or of dead languages and language varieties have faced such problems.

In this paper, I wish to examine some hermeneutic procedures that may have to be followed in order to understand a passage of a medieval text. The text taken here as an example is from the *Parker Chronicle* (832—900), edited by

A.H. Smith, after Corpus Christi College Cambridge, MS 173, fo. 12a—20a (Smith, 1951).

The modern reader is likely to approach the text of the Chronicle with the assumption that it is a historiographic text, composed in a technical register,[1] which is distinguished by the use of language (according to Kenneavy, 1971/39) "to designate or reproduce reality". Since the Chronicle is also a type of written discourse, the degree of style formality[2] can be rather high.

According to a dictionary definiiton (Collins, 1979), a chronicle is "a record or register of events in chronological order", so the modern reader expects a chronological sequence of events as the logical arrangement of the information in the text. Since he may be better acquainted with other types of records such as histories, memoires, diaries etc., he may even be prepared to encounter some new forms in the genre.

It may be taken for granted that the Chronicle intends to be informative, true (or believed to be true by the author), relevant and perspicuous (avoiding obscurity, ambiguity, unnecessary prolixity, and maintaining orderliness).[3] Accordingly, one can exclude mechanisms of perception and cognition such as imagination and emotion from the process of interpretation, and employ only reasoning and reliance on the knowledge of i. the OE (Old English) language system, ii. discourse rules in general, or relating to OE in particular, and iii. history. This knowledge can only be fragmentary, since the data available is fragmentary, with the result that understanding a historical text may require reliance on interpretation.

The "art" of interpretation is of long standing in literary criticism and philology, while in linguistics it has been abandoned for more exact methods. Recently, it has been argued (Hirsch, 1976/32f) that the process of linguistic understanding does not differ from the process of general cognition, which is based on (Piaget's model of) "corrigible schemata".

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[1] In the definition given by Halliday — McIntosh — Strevens (1964/67) register is "the name given to a variety of a language distinguished according to use", which is how we understand the term as well.

[2] Halliday — McIntosh — Strevens (1964/ 87—94) use the term *politeness* for what we have termed *formality*. There is difference in terminology between various authors (e.g. Kinneavy 1971, Lyons 1977, Crystal — Davy 1969 etc.), though they all agree on the basic determinants of discourse variation.

[3] See the "maxims" for "conversational implicaturew", i.e. rules guiding discourse, as proposed by Grice (quoted in Lyons 1977/593 and Kempson 1977/173).

It is a process of trial and error in which the schemata are matched with the world, e.g. linguistic forms are matched with sense. Anttila (1976/219) says that "history is clear hermeneutics, i.e. interpretation". He also argues that "to know or understand history one needs a cognizer ... one's own Sprachgefühl[4] as sharpened through study" (ibid./222).

Kinneavy (1971) treats the "arts of discourse", i.e. the traditional four: speaking, listening, writing and reading, but he also includes thinking, provided that "there are different kinds of thinking relevant to different uses of language, not under the dangerous assumption that one kind of thinking can blanket all modes and aims of discourse" (ibid./31).

We would like to take the position that, for the understanding of a text which is spatially and temporally remote from our experience, we have to employ the art of interpretation, directing our thinking, Sprachgefühl, and the fragmentary knowledge we possess, toward the whole text and the "context of situation" (Firth, 1957/225).

Having established the above presuppositions, the reader can approach the particular text, in our example the Chronicle, reading it[5] with an ease dependent on his competence in OE. While doing so he gathers new information and reinforces or modifies his knowledge of not only the historical events described in the text, but also of the text[6] itself. One can compare it with other texts that one is familiar with, and notice similarities and differences between them. By doing so, one becomes acquainted with the vocabulary, the grammar and the style of the text, fitting them into one's scheme of written discourse.

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[4] Anttila understands Sprachgefühl as being based on "imaginative boldness", but I would prefer to consider it based on the innate language matrix in the Chomsky's sense.

[5] We use the technique that has become automatic through our education: the page is scanned by eye without lip movement or voice. It is a facilitating technique, since our knowledge of the actual pronunciation is largely conjectural, and our ability to exactly reproduce it inadequate. On the other hand, this technique may obscure some information that could be gained from hearing the text, since much of the medieval discourse was written to be read aloud. From our own experience we may notice that there are two kinds of written discourse: written to be spoken (e.g. dramatic texts, speeches), and written to be read: a) aloud (lectures, poetry), b) silently (most modern written discourse).

[6] We use the term text both in the pre-theoretic sense "the main body of a printed or written work" (Collins, 1979), and as defined by Halliday — Hasan (1976/1) as "any passage spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole".

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The relatively automatic technique employed so far may become inefficient when a place in the text does not agree with our experience of the world and the language, and therefore appears meaningless or illogical. At this moment we shall have to not only resort to our starting knowledge, but also activate the newly acquired experience gained from reading the text in question.

The first step in this procedure requires elimination of the editor's punctuation marks which represent his subjective interpretation. Since medieval orthographic traditions do not seem to use punctuation for syntanctic and semantic distinction, but rather for rhetorical purposes, i.e. to mark voice inflexion, pause etc., the use of periods and commas, which suggest segmentation into sentences and clauses, is inappropriate.

By careful observation, we shall notice that the text is very clearly segmented into units which are graphically and linguistically marked.[7] The units are introduced by the formula **Ān dcccxxxii, Ān** dcccxxxiii etc., indicating the entries for successive years, and they can be interpreted as the largest sense units linked by the same time frame, following each other in temporal sequence.

Another feature immediately noticeable in each segment is the first word after the initial formula. From **Ān dcccxxxii** to **Ān** dcccxcii, it is followed by the adverbial **her**, substituting for "that year" and referring to the year in the formula. There is no such regularity in the latter part of the Chronicle, but the first statement includes, nevertheless, some reference to the year given in the initial formula, e.g. on þys ჳeare, ond þa sona æfter þæm on þys ჳeare, ða ɥæs on sumera on ðysum ჳere (this year, and then soone afterwards this year, then after it in the summer of this year) etc. This part of the MS is written in a different hand, which is a good reason to expect other differences as well.

The text segments that we propose to examine were written by the first hand and conform to the pattern described above.

There is no unequivocal way to divide the segment further into sentences (from the capital letter to the full stop); it is more feasible to subdivide it into a series of syntactic units that we propose to term clauses. They are

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[7] We cannot analyze the graphic/graphemic side of the text in detail, because our study is based on a printed edition, not on a MS. We can only rely on the editor's information about it.

mostly co-ordinate and introduced by the ampersand (7) alone
or accompanied by an adverbial referring to temporal
sequence (þa, þæs, ymb ii monaþ etc.), locality (þær), or by
an adverbial alone. Occasionally there are also clauses without
any introductory sign which give the impression of parenthe-
tical explanations of the preceding text.[8] The clauses
introduced by the ampersand (meaning **ond, and**) seem to be
more closely linked to each other than the ones beginning
with an adverbial only, since these allow for a short break
in thought and, accordingly, for a pause when read aloud.
This distinction may be very slight, but it is suggested on the
basis of our experience with spoken discourse where the
conjunction **and** demands the constant attention of the hearer,
and on the basis of our experience with the present text
where the ampersand, due to its great frequency, resembles
a comma in modern orthography.

At this point we have to consider two features of the
text i.e. the segment of the text introduced by the formula
$\overline{Ar}$ **xy:** a) its logical structure or coherence (Widdowson,
1978), b) its cohesion,[9] c) its syntactic structure. These three
features are realized by the logical sequence of the clauses,
elements employed to link them to each other, and syntactic
rules respectively.

Most clauses are statements, following each other in
temporal sequence. There are also statements referring to
simultaneous events, pointing out either a time or place pre-
viously mentioned (þæs ʒeares, þær). The third type consists
of existential clauses (e.g. **hie ɣærun on tuæm ʒefylcium**).
As already mentioned, the clauses are co-ordinate or
correlative, but there are some subordinate structures, mostly
of the relative clause type. The criteria for deciding on para-
taxis or hypotaxis are rather semantic than structural since
there are no definite markers of subordination (e.g. position
of existentianl clauses (e.g. **hie ɣærun on tuæm ʒefylcium**).
simple clauses as well.
Following Halliday — Hasan (1976/4ff) we understand
cohesion as occurring "where the interpretation of some
element in the discourse is dependent on that of another",

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[8] Such clauses are more frequent in the part of the *Chronicle*
written in the second hand.
[9] Halliday — Hasan (1976/7) use the term *cohesion* as referring
to "certain specifically text-forming relations which cannot be
accounted for in terms of constituent structure; they are properties
of the text as such, and not of any structural unit such as a clause
or sentence".

but we shall not exclude cohesion "as a structural feature" since it is very difficult to distinguish between purely structural (inter clausal) and semantic (super clausal) relations. The clauses, which we have defined as units forming a text segment, are linked by such relations as reference and conjunction, operating upon syntactic units in the same way as across them. I would like to argue that the same process of conjunction and ellipsis occurs when two underlying clauses: **eþered cyning ȝefeaht 7 elfred his broþur ȝefeaht** combine into one **ȝefeaht eþered cyning 7 elfred his broþur,** as when such clauses combine into text segments by the means examined later.

The following are examples of cohesive relations that occur in the Chronicle:

1. reference: 855/14-16[10]   hie þæron cenredes suna (i.e. **inȝild** and **ine** from an earlier clause);

     871/1   **Her** cuom se here to readinȝum on ꭇest seaxe (i e. **A͞n dcclxxi**)

     871/17   7 þæ ꭇearþ sidroc eorl ofslaȝen se alda (i.e. exophoric reference to the battlefield, not explicitly mentioned in the text, or to the battle, also indirectly indicated throught the verb **ȝefeaht**)

2. substition: 853/1-4   Her bed burȝred miercna cyninȝ 7 his ꭇiotan eþelꭇulf cyning þæt he him ȝefultumade = phrase substitution)

Nominal substitution does not occur. Repetition without substitution is common:

     833/4-5   7 hereferþ   ꭇiȝþen tueȝen biscepas **forþferdon** 7 dudda 7 osmod tueȝen aldormen **forþferdon**

3. ellipsis: 853/1-4   Her cuom **se here** (i.e. **se denisce here** as mentioned at the beginning of the Chronicle)

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[10] The numbers refer to "entry for the year 871" and "lines 21—28".

Ellipsis is extremely common whenever clauses share a subject, which is deleted in the second clause:

872/2   Her for se here to lundenbyriʒ from readinʒum 7 þær (se here) ɥintersetl nam

In a chain: 877/9   7 **hie** him þær foreʒislas saldon ... 7 (hie) þa ʒodne friþ heoldon 7 (hie) micle aþas sɥoron

When a word occurs in different functions in two successive clauses, it may be deleted if ellipsis is accompanied by reference:

893/83   7 hæfdon micelne dæl þara **horsa** freten 7 **þa oþre** (horsa) hungre acɥolen

Verbal ellipsis:

875/4   7 se here þæt lond ʒeode 7 oft **herʒeade** on peohtas 7 (herʒeade) on streɔled palas

4. **conjunction:** There seem to be only two types of conjunction (Halliday-Hasan 1976/242f), additive and temporal, **ond** and **þa** being the most frequent connectives. **Ond** (mostly realized by the ampersand) serves to add new information about the events described in the **Chronicle.** Occasionally, however, it may be ambiguous as we shall see later. In addition to the simple **ond**, there is also the expanded connective **7 eac**, and the correlative **ʒe ... ʒe**:

894/75   þa ʒeʒaderode æþered ealldormon .. 7 þa cinʒes þeʒnas þe þa æt ham æt þæ ʒeɥeorcum ɥæron of ælcre byrig be eastan pedredan **ʒe** be ɥestan sealɥuda **ʒe** be eastan **ʒe eac** be norþan temese 7 be ɥestan sefern **ʒe eac** sum dæl þs nor ɥeal cynnes

It can be noticed even from the above examples that conjunction may be combined with ellipsis, which can sometimes extend over several words e.g.

894/75 ȝe (þa cynȝes þegnas of ælcre
byriȝ) be ȝestan sealȝuda ȝe (þa
cinȝes þeȝna ...) be eastan (seal-
ȝuda) ȝe eac (þa cinȝe þegnas ...)
be norþan temese etc. ȝe eac (þe
cinȝes þegna ...) sum dæl þæs nor
ȝeal cynnes (ȝeȝaderode).

5. **lexical cohesion:** There are several nouns in the text of the
Chronicle with a more general meaning than the word
they usually refer to (see "general nouns" Halliday-Hasan,
1976/274), so they resemble pronouns in their referring
function. They are different because of greater lexical
content. These nouns usually refer to ethnic designations:
English (Wesx Saxon) and Danish (Scandinavian) respecti-
vely: **cristna — heþne men** (Christians — heathens), **fierd,
floc — here** (wicinga) **hloþ** army, troop — army, band of
robbers, **aldormon, þegn — eorl** (alderman, thane — earl).
It could be argued that some of them, e.g. **here** and **fierd**
represent a case of ellipsis of the adjectives English and
Danish (**se denisca here, se ȝest seaxa fierd**).

Repetition of a word is a common means of lexical
cohesion:

865/1 Her sæt **heþen here** on tente 7
ȝenamon **friþ** ȝiþ **cantȝarum** 7
cantȝare him feoh ȝeheton þiþ **þam
friþe** 7 under þam friþe 7 **þam
feohȝehate** se here hiene on niht up
bestel 7 oferherȝeade alle **cent**
eastȝearde

A word can be repeated in the same form, or with different
inflexional endings (depending on its function); **cantȝarum —
cantȝare**, or combined with an element of reference, **friþ —
þam friþe**; the word can be repeated as part of a compound,
feoh — feohȝeheate, or as a related term or synonym, **cantȝare
— cent**, where the geographical name Kent, may be interpre-
ted also as referring to the inhabitants of Kent (**cantȝare**).

The vocabulary of the **Chronicle** as a whole is specific
to the subject it treats, i.e. a succession of events during a
century marked by Viking invasions. Among the basic
vocabulary, including such common words as the nouns
fæder, broþur, corn, hungor,
verbs: **ergan, biddan, ceosan,** and relatively infrequent
adjectives: **ald, ȝeonȝ, god, micel, brad, feor, niwe** noticeable

are terms denoting temporal designations: **ȝear, dæȝ, niht, monaþ,**
geographical designations: **ea, flood, munt, muþa, suþ, ꝗest**
administrative divisions: **lond, middelrice, biscoprice, cynerice**
buildings: **burȝ, ceaster, cirice, moorfæsten**
military equipment: **æsc, bat, ar, langscip** (it is significant
that no weapons are mentioned, unlike the elaborate descript-
ions of them found in epic poetry),
military groups: **here, sciphere, fierd, ȝefylce, hloþ, floc,**
leaders and officers: **cyning, biscep, aldorman, gerefa, cuen,**
ethnic names: **bretta, angelcynn, francan, ꝗealas, mierce,**
place-names: **ꝗintanceastre, temese, hamtunscire ...,**
names: **ælfred, æþered, æþelpulf, dudda, osric, macbeþ,**
verbs of movement: **faran, gan, cuman, beroꝗan,**
verbs connected with warfare: **gefeohtan, fleon, abrecan, adrencan, forbernan, slean** etc.,
very frequent collocations: **feng to rice, siȝe nam, ahton ꝗæl-stoꝗe, ȝeꝗald**

Smith (1951/3) has pointed out several lines that are
"clumsy and ambiguous in style", judging that the meaning
of the lines was not clearly and definitely expressed. One of
them is included in the following segment:

871/21-28   7 þæs ymb ii monaþ ȝefeaht ę̃þered
             cyning 7 elfred his borþur ꝗiþ þone
             here æt meretune 7 **hie** ꝗærun on
             tuæn ȝefylcium 7 hie butu ȝefliem-
             don 7 lonȝe on dæȝ siȝe ahton 7
             þær ꝗearþ micel ꝗelsliht on ȝehꝗe-
             ꝗere hond 7 þa deniscan ahton
             ꝗelstoꝗe ȝeꝗald[11]

It is not clear who is referred to by **hie**, the Danes or the
English (Athered and Alfred). The editor gives a tentative
explanation (ibid./27) which can be better judged if the
difficult place is viewed as an integral part of the whole text.

There is also ambiguous ellipsis in **7 lonȝe on dæȝ siȝe
ahton**, i.e. either Athered and Alfred **siȝe ahton**, or the Danish

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[11] The literal rather than idiomatic, translation is as follows: and
after about two months fought Athered the king and Alfred his brother
with the army at Meretune and they were in two divisions and they
were both put to flight and long had the upper hand that day and
there occurred a great slaughter on both sides and the Danes had
control over the battlefield.

army. Moreover, the conjunction may be regarded as ambiguous, since **ond** (7) can be interpreted either as addition (and, also, next) or "contrary to expectation" (but, however), with a possibility of disambiguation through intonation and stress in reading aloud: (the English) had the upper hand for a long time that

> day but there occurred great slaughter on both sides after which the Danes were victorious.

Ambiguity has often been discussed in literary interpretation (e.g. Empson, 1956) and in linguistics (particularly in the generative transformational approach[12]). Let us here note only three definitions:

i. ambiguity = "vagueness or uncertainty of meaning" (Collins, 1979)

ii. "When a sentence can represent either of two conceptual structures, we recognize it as being ambiguous, as having alternate semantic interpretations" (Langacker, 1967/115).

iii. "many of the acceptable utterances of English and other languages are ambiguous: they can be interpreted in two or more different ways" (Lyons, 1977/396).

The reader has to decide on one of the possible interpretations and accept it as the meaning most likely to have been intended by the author. In literary texts, all possible meanings may have been intended at the same time (Empson, 1956), but since we are dealing with a factual report, we can assume that only one meaning is appropriate.

We shall also assume (see Lyons above) that the ambiguity is one of utterance, not of sentence, the latter being no unit of our text. Disambiguation will be sought from the entire text, the procedure serving the same purpose as asking for repetition or paraphrase in spoken discourse.

It will soon be noticed that the text is structured in parallel patterns, a feature typical of oral epic poetry.[13] This feature may be taken as a lead in the interpretation of the ambiguous pronoun **hie**, and the ambiguous connective **7.**

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[12] For an extensive account see R. Đorđević, 1979.
[13] Best know are the theses by Lord and Parry (Lord, 1960) that have been further elaborated and developed by students of various oral and written popular literatures.

Earlier in segment 871, there is a parallel text, expanded by a clause explicating the pronoun:

871/9-14 7 þæs ymb iii niht ʒefeaht eþered cyninʒ 7 ę̃lfred his broþur ɥiþ alne þone here on ęscesdune 7 **hie ɥarun on tɥæm ʒefylcum on oþrum ɥæs bachsecʒ 7 halfdene þa heþnan cyninʒas 7 on oþrum ɥæron þa eorlas**

Here it is made clear that the Danes were in two divisions (**on tɥæm ʒefylcum**), since one division was headed by the "heathen" kings Bachsecg and Halfdene and the other one by the earls. It is to be expected that in the ambiguous passage it is again the Danes who were divided, since that seems to have been part of their military strategy.

The second **hie** in 871/21-28 is also ambiguous, and so is **butu** (both, accusative). They may refer a) **hie** to the Danes, **butu** to Athered and Alfred, b) vice versa.

If b) is correct, then the text says that the English (**hie**) put the Danes (**butu**) to flight (**ʒefliemdon**) and had the upper hand (**siʒe ahton**) for a long time that day (**lonʒe on dæʒ**) "and there occured great slaughter on both sides and the Danes were victorious".

If a) is correct, then the Danes (**hie**) put Athered and Alfred (**butu**) to flight and had the upper hand for a long time that day, "and there occured great slaughter on both sides and the Danes were victorious", which is logical enough, except that it is unusual that the **hie** in the second clause was not deleted when it is coreferent with the subject in the preceding clause: **7 hie ɥærun on tuæm ʒefylcium 7 hie (∅) butu ʒefliemdon** (and they were in two divisions and they put both to flight). This could, however, also be ambiguous, (they were in two divisions and put both to flight) while, with the pronoun repeated after a breath pause in reading, the clause can be understood as a new sequence. In this case the comma of the present edition, i.e. before **7 hie ɥærun on tuæm ʒefylcium** instead of after it, is inappropriate.

If b) is the intended meaning, then two conjunctions (7) have to be differently interpreted, since if we understand **ond** as additive, it appears illogical that the English had the upper hand and the Danes were victorious. We propose that **ond** could mean **so** and **but** respectively: the Danes were in two divisions **so** the English put both to flight and had the

upper hand for a long time that day, **but** there occured a great slaughter on both sides and (eventually) the Danes were victorious.

This interpretation could be supported by another parallel text pattern further in the segment 871/34-37:

> 7 þæs ymb anne monaþ ʒefeaht ęlfred cyninʒ ɥiþ
> alne þone here lytle ɥerede æt ɥiltune 7 **hine** lonʒe
> on dæʒ ʒefliemde **7** þa deniscan ahton ɥęlstoɥe ʒeɥald

The pronoun (3rd ps. masc. acc. sing.) is ambiguous since it can refer both to Alfred and to **here** (noun masc., agreeing with sing. and pl. of verb). The subject of the second clause is deleted, but it could be understood as Alfred who put the Danes to flight, in which case **7** again means **nevertheless, but.** If the subject is the Danes, then it is a rather rare case of cataphoric ellipsis, demanding a pause in reading before the last two clauses, which would have to be read in one breath. If this is the case, the editor's comma between the last two clauses is wrongly placed.

However, another close parallel can be found at the beginning of the Chronicle in segment 837/4-7:

> 7 þy ilcan ʒeare ʒefeaht ęþelhelm dux ɥiþ **deniscne
> here** on port mid dornsætum 7 ʒode ɥhile **þone here**
> ʒefliemde **7** þa deniscan ahton ɥelstoɥe ʒeɥald 7 þone
> aldormon ofsloʒon

The passage makes it explicit who is being put to flight, i.e. the Danes. The subject — agent, Athelhelm, is deleted in the second clause, after it has been stated in the first. The connective again means **but, nevertheless** (the Danes were victorious and killed the alderman). The editor remarks, however, that in other MSS (British Museum, Cotton MS Tiberius B IV and Bodleian MS, Laud 636), there is a different arrangement:

> 7 þy ilcan ʒeare ʒefeaht ęþelhelm dux ɥiþ deniscne
> here on port mid dornsætum **7 se aldorman ɥærð
> ofslæʒen** 7 þa deniscan ahton ɥęlstoɥe ʒeɥald

The temporal sequence of the alderman having been killed first and his troop defeated next is also a logical one, because the death of their leader could bring about the defeat of the English. The Corpus Christi College MS is also coherent if the conectives are interpreted as suggested above. The scribes of the MSS, probably copies of earlier versions (Smith, ibid./4f), must have understood the text in the same way, but used a slightly different arrangement. It is not only the first **and** that is to be interpreted as **but**; the second **and** possibly means

something like **while, when, after: but** the Danes were victorious **when** the alderman was killed.[14]

From scrutiny of passages with the same patterning, it seems that we might now draw some conclusions about the interpretation nearest to the intended meaning:

a) the Danes have a military strategy of dividing into two troops for battle; ambiguous references may be considered in this light;

b) it is usual for a clause to be linked to the preceeding one by means of ellipsis, not to the clause that follows;

c) **7** need not be interpreted only as an additive conjunction, but also as aversative, and possibly containing other meanings as well (e.g. in 837).

We have tried to suggest that most of the ambiguities would be less noticeable if the text were read aloud with an appropriate paralinguistic apparatus. The other point to be made is that the audience of the author of the **Chronicle** may have been used to a particular style habitual to him, his shool or the period, and would always expect a certain set of patterns. On the other hand, we are in the position to get acquainted with the style of the Chronicle by trying to find the pattern recurring throughout the text.

Besides correcting our habit of looking for clarification only in the immediate context of an ambiguous word, we can also correct our presuppositions about the style of referential historiographic texts, which in the medieval period could include features common to some literary texts (e.g. repetition of formal patterns), Moreover, our notion of written language will also have to be modified by recognizing the possibility that some features, usually associated with spoken registers (e.g. a multitude of ellipses and anaphoric pronomina, co--ordination with **and,** sequencing of utterances rather than sentences, presence of paralinguistic markers), are unexceptional, unmarked features of the Old English Chronicles.

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[14] A similar construction is found in Irish English: "Is it me to go near him, *and* (while, when, because) he (is) the wickedest and worst with me?" (Synge *Playboy of the Western World,* quoted by Schlauch, 1959/174).

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O TUMAČENJU TIPA DVOSMISLENOSTI U JEDNOM STAROENGLESKOM TEKSTU

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