Diachronic Development of the Complements of the Verb *Neglect*:

A Study Based on the *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts* and

the *British National Corpus*

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Kati Luhtajärvi-Nikkanen: Diachronic Development of the Complements of the Verb *Neglect*:
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Tässä sivuainetutkielmassa tarkastellaan englannin *neglect* verbin komplementaatiota ja sen kehitystä 1700-luvulta nykyaikaan. Tutkimuksessa käytetään kahta eri korpusta. *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts* sisältää tekstejä vuosilta 1710-1920 ja *British National Corpus* edustaa nykykieltä. Tarkoituksena on selvittää mitä komplementteja tutkittava verbi hyväksyy ja miten nämä ovat muuttuneet vuosien saatossa.

Alan kirjallisuudesta *neglect* verbille voidaan löytää kolme eri komplementaatiomallia. Nämä ovat substantiivilauseke, *to*-infinitiivi ja *-ing*-lause. Edellä mainitut mallit ovat löydettävissä myös tutkituista korpuksista. Kaikissa käsitellyissä otteissa subjektiivilauseke on ehdottomasti yleisin komplementti verbille *neglect.* Toiseksi yleisimmäksi osoittautuu *to*-infinitiivi. Erot näiden komplementaatiomallien jakaumassa eri aikakausina ovat yllättävän pieniä. Kaikkein yllättävin löydös tutkimuksessa on kuitenkin *-ing*-lauseiden vähäisyys korpusmateriaalissa. Korpukset sisältävät nimittäin yhteensä vain neljä esimerkkiä *-ing*-lauseesta *neglect* verbin komplementtina. Tämän löydöksen merkittävyyttä lisää se, että muissa tutkimuksissa *-ing*-lauseiden on todettu yleistyneen *to*-infinitiivien kustannuksella. Tämän tutkimuksen valossa *neglect* verbi ei kuitenkaan seuraa yleistä trendiä vaan *-ing*-muotojen käyttö on pikemminkin vähentymässä. Nykykielisestä korpusmateriaalista on löydettävissä vain yksi esimerkki *ing*-lauseesta *neglect* verbin komplementtina.

Korpusmateriaalista löytyy lisäksi kaksi komplementaatiomallia, joita ei mainita lainkaan alan kirjallisuudessa *neglect* verbin yhteydessä. Näistä ensimmäinen on *wh*-lause, joka esiintyy harvinaisena ilmiönä sekä vanhemmassa että uudemmassa korpusmateriaalissa. Tämä malli ei kuitenkaan ole kyennyt vakiinnuttamaan asemaansa *neglect* verbin konplementtina vaikka se ei myöskään ole täysin hävinnyt kielestä. Toinen korpusmateriaalista esiin nouseva malli on substantiivilauseke yhdistyneenä prepositiolausekkeeseen prepositiolla *as*. Tämän mallin tekee erityisen mielenkiintoiseksi se, että se esiintyy vain nykykielisessä korpusmateriaalissa ja edustaa näin ollen mahdollisesti uutta kieleen syntyvää rakennetta. Tämä malli eroaa muista komplementaatiomalleista myös siinä, että se ottaa komplementikseen suoran objektin lisäksi myös prepositiolausekkeen. Komplementtien määrä nousee näin ollen yhdestä kahteen.

Asiasanat: korpuslingvistiikka, verbin komplementaatio, transitiivisuus

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1. Introduction

Many English verbs accept several different complementation patterns. In this second subject thesis the diachronic development of the complementation patterns used with the verb *neglect* will be examined in more detail. The study will be carried out with the help of two corpora that represent different periods of time. The corpora used in the thesis are the *British National Corpus* (*BNC*) and the *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts* (*CLMET*).

The aim is to investigate which complementation patterns are used in connection with the verb *neglect* and how these patterns have chanced from the eighteenth century to the present. Perhaps the most intriguing topic of investigation is the division of gerundial and infinitival complements. According to Rohdenburg (2006, 143), the complementation patterns of several verbs have been influenced by a phenomenon called the Great Complement Shift. This means that complementation by an *–ing*-clause is spreading at the expense of complementation by a *to*-infinitive. It will be interesting to see whether the verb *neglect* has been influenced by this phenomenon. In addition to this, all the other patterns of complementation and changes found in the data will, of course, be examined carefully. The research will be done by counting the frequencies of different patterns of complementation in the corpora. In addition to counting frequencies it will be attempted to find possible connections between pattern and meaning in the corpus data.

The thesis begins with a general introduction to corpus linguistics and the corpora used in the study. The section is designated to introduce corpus study as a linguistic sub discipline. The thesis then continues with a section on verb complementation. The phenomena discussed are the number and form of the complements and the differences between complements and adjuncts.

After the general introduction to corpus linguistics and verb complementation the focus is shifted to the treatment of the verb *neglect* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) and in the

distinguished grammars consulted for the study. The aim is to investigate which complements are recognised in the literature and what is said about their frequencies. In addition the senses of the verb *neglect* will be introduced.

In the methodology section the procedures used in analysing the data for the present thesis are explained in more detail. It is, for example, demonstrated how passive clauses and relative clauses are dealt with in the study. It is also explained which types of sentences do not provide useful information for the thesis and are consequently disregarded from the analysis.

In the empirical part of the thesis the results of the corpus analysis are discussed. The results gathered from the *CLMET* and its three subcorpora are presented previous to those from the *BNC*. The patterns recognised in the data will be presented in order of frequency and several examples of the different patterns will be given in the text.

The thesis ends with a discussion on the connection between pattern and meaning. In this section the patterns found in the data will be compared with the different senses given by the *OED* and it will be investigated if all the senses mentioned in the *OED* can be found in the corpus data.

2. Corpus linguistics

A successful corpus study requires a general knowledge of corpus linguistics. As the present thesis is based primarily on corpus data it is reasonable to begin with a general introduction to corpus linguistics. In addition to that, it is, of course, necessary to introduce the two corpora used for gathering the data for the study.

2.1 Corpus linguistics in general

This general discussion on corpus linguistics aims to define its object and method. In addition, a definition to the word *corpus* will be given and some principles of corpus construction will be discussed. A short presentation on different types of corpora available will also be given.

According to Johansson (1995, 19), corpus linguistics is a linguistic sub discipline that uses corpus data to investigate linguistic phenomena. Corpora can be used, for example, to achieve information on grammar or lexis. A corpus is thus not the object of the research but the means to get information on linguistic phenomena.

Leech (2003, 223) points out that possible changes in language can be studied by counting frequencies of certain phenomena in corpora. Linguistic change does not always mean that a particular phenomenon disappears totally or that a new structure arises. It is also possible that certain phenomena become more common while others loose on importance. These kinds of changes can be hard to notice without the help of corpora that facilitate the gathering of statistical information and enable the linguist to see changes in the distribution of structures under investigation.

Mair (2001, 108-109) also emphasises the importance of frequencies when investigating language change. He states, however, that corpus linguistics cannot rely solely on counting but also has to take the theoretical background into consideration. In his opinion the aim should be to find a synthesis of corpus linguistics and theoretical linguistic tradition.

Johansson (1995, 19) defines a corpus as a body of texts that has been gathered according to certain set principles. This means that any randomly selected collection of texts is not to be regarded as a corpus. It is important that a corpus is constructed analytically to avoid it from becoming biased. A corpus that includes, for example, too many texts from a single author or from a specific genre cannot be used to investigate language in general.

Aston and Burnard (1998, 21-22) give some more specific guidelines for the construction of corpora. They point out that the size of the corpus has an effect on the types of phenomena that can be investigated with the help of that particular corpus. That is that small corpora can be used to investigate relatively frequent phenomena only. In order to be able to examine less frequent linguistic phenomena the corpus has to be very large and heterogeneous. This means that several text types need to be represented in the corpus and each type has to include a high number of texts. In larger corpora it is also important that the data can be easily processed with the help of automatic procedures. Large size will not be of any help if a linguist is not able to use the corpus efficiently due to the lack of proper automatic procedures. The general trend is that the size of corpora is increasing rapidly due to the possibilities offered by computer corpora.

Authenticity is another very important feature of corpora. According to Leech (1968, 88), corpora consist of actual utterances and texts that have occurred in the language. The fact that a linguist has access to large amounts of authentic data means that he does not have to rely solely on introspection. Johansson (1995, 20) argues that the authentic corpus sentences force a linguist to observe features that might otherwise be overlooked. It is thus possible that the results of the corpus analysis provide surprises and do not confirm the original hypothesis.

Aston and Burnard (1998, 10-12) add that the construction of a corpus is also dependent on its intended use. It is, for example, quite obvious that general corpora, which are intended to be as representative as possible, are constructed differently to genre specific corpora, which

deal with a specific area of language use only. Aston and Burnard also list some other types of corpora that have been constructed for English. These include corpora designed for studying different geographical or historical varieties or even child and learner varieties. In addition to that, there are corpora of spoken language and mixed corpora that include examples of both written and spoken language. Multilingual corpora include two or more languages and can be used for comparative analysis. In the case of multilingual corpora reliable comparisons can be attained only if the texts have been selected according to similar criteria in each language.

2.2 The corpora used in the present study

Two corpora representing different periods of time have been used in writing the thesis. In the following sections the corpora will be introduced shortly. The introduction to the *CLMET* is based on an article by de Smet (2005) and the information about the *BNC* has been gathered from their homepage (www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk).

2.2.1 Introduction to the *CLMET*

The *CLMET* is a corpus of around 10 million words representing Late Modern English. It is divided into three subcorpora each of which covers a time period of 70 years. The following table illustrates the make up of the corpus.

Table 1 The make up of the *CLMET*

Subcorpus	Period of time	Number of words
The first subcorpus	1710-1780	2 096 405
The second subcorpus	1780-1850	3 739 657
The third subcorpus	1850-1920	3 982 264
Total	**1710-1920**	**9 818 326**

In the empirical part of the thesis the subcorpora will be dealt with separately in order to gain information on the trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition to that, the results from the separate subcorpora will be gathered together to form an overall picture.

The *CLMET* includes texts from British authors only and can, as a result, be relatively easily compared with present corpora of British English. The amount of text any one author can contribute to the corpus is limited to 200 000 words in order to avoid the problem of one author influencing the data too much. In addition, the intention has been to select texts that represent different genres and that have been written by authors with varying backgrounds. It has also been attempted to include enough texts written by female authors.

Despite all the efforts to the contrary it is noteworthy that the *CLMET* does still remain somewhat biased. That is that, according to de Smet (2005, 71-72), most of the texts in the corpus are literary texts written by male authors with a good social background. This may influence the results because this particular group of writers often has a somewhat reluctant attitude towards change in language. It is thus possible that some ongoing changes cannot be seen in the data. The well established patterns used in that particular time should, however, be represented in the data and the bias should not influence the results of this study too much.

2.2.2 Introduction to the *BNC*

The *BNC* is a corpus of approximately 100 million words representing Present Day English as it is used in the British Isles. It is a general corpus that is not restricted to any specific field and consists of texts from several genres and registers. The *BNC* includes both written and spoken material. The written part covers 90% and the spoken part 10% of the corpus data. In order to make it possible to include a wider range of texts in the corpus the size of the written samples is restricted to 45 000 words per author. Magazines and newspapers and other texts that have several authors are, however, included in full length.

As far as this thesis is concerned it is important to notice that the *BNC* is ten times the size of the *CLMET*. It is, therefore, not possible to compare the actual frequencies gathered from the two corpora. Instead the comparison has to be made with the help of relative frequencies. In addition, the *BNC* includes a much wider range of texts and authors, which reduces the risk of corpus bias considerably. It seems thus possible that ongoing changes are better noticeable in the *BNC* than in the *CLMET*.

3. Verb complementation

When discussing the complement selection of a particular verb it is first sensible to shed some light on verb complementation in general. In the following subsections the number and form of complements will be discussed and the difference between complements and adjuncts will be explained in more detail.

3.1 Number of complements

According to Herbst et al (2004, xxiv), the basic principle of verb complementation is that the matrix verb determines how many other elements are needed in order to form a grammatically acceptable sentence. The elements required by the matrix verb are called complements.

A grammatical phenomenon called transitivity is very closely related to complementation. English verbs can be divided into transitive and intransitive verbs depending on whether they take an object or not. It is, however, possible to divide verbs into smaller subcategories as in the following examples given by Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 53).

[1] She smiled. → intransitive → SV

[2] He washed the car. → monotransitive → SVO

[3] They gave me the key. → ditransitive → SVOO

[4] This seems a good idea. → complex intransitive → SVC

[5] I consider this a good idea. → complex transitive → SVOC

All the examples above include a subject that is obligatory to the sentence. As a consequence, some linguists argue that the subject is also a complement. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 53) point out, however, that the subject is located outside the verb phrase and is to be regarded as an external complement. It is thus not necessary to deal with the subject in connection with the other complements. The object, on the other hand, occurs inside the verb phrase and is to be regarded as an internal complement. Transitive verbs include one or two objects and can

consequently be divided into monotransitive and ditransitive verbs. In the case of ditransitive verbs the sentence in question includes both a direct and an indirect object. Another type of internal complement is a predicative complement that occurs in connection with complex intransitive and complex transitive verbs. Predicative complements differ from objects in that they describe the subject or the object of the sentence instead of denoting a participant in the situation. As a conclusion it is possible to state that English verbs license between zero and two internal complements.

It is also noteworthy that most verbs permit more than one pattern of complementation as the following examples, also from Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 53), illustrate.

[6] She read for a while.

[7] She read the newspaper.

[8] She read us a story.

In example 6 the verb *read* is used intransitively without an object while in examples 7 and 8 it is used transitively. To be more exact, sentence 7 is an example of a monotransitive sentence with a direct object whereas sentence 8 is a ditransitive sentence including both a direct and an indirect object.

3.2 Form of the complements

The governing verb does not only determine the number of complements but also their form. According to Herbst et al. (2004, xxv-xxvi), it is possible to distinguish between nominal and clausal complementation. Nominal complements include noun phrases, adjective phrases and prepositional phrases whereas clausal complements are realised as *to*-infinitives, *-ing*-clauses, *that*-clauses or *wh*-clauses.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 216) introduce the terms core and non-core complements. According to them, core complements are normally realised as noun phrases directly related

to the verb. Non-core complements, on the other hand, are noun phrases that are linked to the verb via a preposition. The preposition usually denotes the semantic role of the noun phrase.

3.3 Distinguishing complements from adjuncts

It is crucial to realise that a sentence may also include elements that are not determined by the matrix verb. These elements are called adjuncts. It is not always easy to see which elements are to be regarded as complements and which are not. Even grammarians do not totally agree on the matter. There are, however, some criteria that help to make the distinction. These will be discussed next. In the limits of the present thesis it is not possible to introduce all the criteria discussed in the literature. An attempt has, therefore, been made to choose the criteria that are most useful for the present study. These include licensing, obligatoriness, category and position.

3.3.1 Licensing

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 219-220) argue that complements have a close relation to the verb whereas adjuncts are relatively independent. This means that the matrix verb licenses its complements and they are dependent on the verb. According to Huddleston and Pullum, the verb *tend,* for instance, licenses a *to*-infinitive but not an *–ing*-clause or a *that*-clause as its complement. The matrix verb sets thus restrictions on the form of the complement occurring in the sentence. The form of the adjunct, on the other hand, is not dependent on the matrix verb.

3.3.2 Obligatoriness

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 221), complements are in many cases obligatory whereas adjuncts are always optional. That is that the omission of a complement may produce

an ungrammatical sentence or change the intended meaning. The omission of an adjunct, on the other hand, cannot have a similar effect. It is thus relatively easy to distinguish obligatory complements from adjuncts with the help of an elimination test.

Distinguishing optional complements from adjuncts may, however, prove more difficult. Bowen (2005, 17) gives the following examples to illustrate the difference between obligatory and optional complements.

[9] He put the book on the shelf.

[10] I received two letters from my cousin.

Bowen states that in example 9 the sentence is incomplete if the prepositional phrase *on the shelf* is left out. The phrase is thus an obligatory complement. In example 10, on the other hand, the prepositional phrase *from my cousin* can be omitted without the sentence becoming ungrammatical or changing its meaning. According to Bowen, the phrase can, however, still be considered an optional complement because of its dependency on the governing verb. It would, for example, be impossible to replace the preposition *from* with any other preposition without the sentence becoming incomprehensible. In addition to that, the amount of verbs that could be used to replace the verb *received* is fairly limited, which also implies that the prepositional phrase should be considered a complement.

3.3.3 Category

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 224-225) argue that noun phrases are normally complements and that their use as adjuncts is fairly restricted. Adverbs and adverbial phrases, on the other hand, are generally adjuncts that are used to modify a verb. The use of adverbial phrases as complements is restricted to a rather small group of verbs. According to Huddleston and Pullum, prepositional phrases are perhaps the hardest to classify because they can easily occur both as complements and as adjuncts. If the connection between the verb and the preposition

is fixed it is, however, easy to define the phrase as a complement. The verb *rely*, for instance, always takes the preposition *on* as its complement. In the case of subordinate clauses Huddleston and Pullum state that finite clauses are usually complements whereas non-finite clauses show more variation. It is, however, important to point out that the guidelines set here are merely generalisations that are not applicable to all sentences.

3.3.4 Position

It has already been established that complements are more closely related to the matrix verb than adjuncts. This has an effect on the position of complements and adjuncts in a sentence. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 225), complements are less mobile than adjuncts. This means that the subject is normally placed before the verb and the internal complements after the verb. In general complements are placed closer to the matrix verb than adjuncts.

Bowen (2005, 22-23) points out that exceptions to the unmarked order may be inspired by information structure. A complement may, for example, be placed at the end of a sentence in order to give it more emphasis. It is thus not to be expected that the order of constituents is completely fixed.

4. The verb *neglect*

In the following sections the presentation of the verb *neglect* in the *OED* and distinguished grammars will be dealt with in more detail. The intention is to see which complementation patterns are mentioned in the literature and what might be said about their frequencies. In addition to that the senses of the verb will also be introduced.

4.1 The verb *neglect* in the OED

The *OED* gives the verb *neglect* five possible senses and also makes some comments on the complements used with the different meanings. The senses are listed below and one example sentence is given for each sense. A cross in front of some of the entries means that the sense is obsolete. The example sentences also include the year in which they were written.

> **1.** *trans*. To disregard; to pay little or no respect or attention to; to slight, leave unnoticed.
> *That noble discourse had been neglected by the generation to which it was addressed.* (1855)
> †**b.** To leave out, omit, discard.
> *In all new buildings these vaultes are altogether neglected.* (1603)
>
> **2.** To fail to bestow proper attention or care upon; to leave unattended or uncared   for.
> *Whilst the mind is on the general scheme of things, some particular parts must be neglected.* (1757)
> **b.** With personal object.
> *God that made you better than them, will not neglect you.* (1658)
>
> **3.** To fail to perform, render, discharge (a duty), or take (a precaution).
> *That… I should have neglected So trivial a precaution.* (1819)
>
> **4.a.** With *inf*. To omit through carelessness, to fail through negligence, to *do* something.
> *They have neglected to preserve it.* (1617)
> **b.** To omit *doing* something.
> *I did not neglect spending a considerable Time in the Crowd.* (1710)
>
> †**5.** To cause (something) to be neglected.
> *His fighting has neglected all our business.* (1620)

The *OED* defines the verb *neglect* as a transitive verb that can take a direct object. The verb is thus to be regarded as a monotransitive verb. In most senses the verb is complemented by a noun phrase. In sense 4.a. the pattern in question is complementation by a *to*-infinitive and in sense 4.b. complementation by an *-ing*-clause. The discussion on the verb *neglect* in the *OED* seems thus to indicate that the verb accepts relatively few complementation patterns. There are, for example, no prepositional phrases that occur as complements of the verb *neglect*.

The other dictionaries consulted for the essay do not provide an equally extensive list of the different senses and complementation patterns. In these dictionaries some senses of the verb *neglect* are grouped together and some are disregarded. It is thus reasonable to stick to the list provided by the *OED*.

4.2 The verb *neglect* in grammar books

Most grammars consulted for this essay recognise two complementation patterns for the verb *neglect*. These are complementation by a *to*-infinitive and by an *ing*-clause. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1228), Jespersen (1961, 194) and Poutsma (1905, 626) treat these patterns as alternatives even though Poutsma and Jespersen state that complementation by a *to*-infinitive seems to be more common with the verb in question than complementation by an *-ing*-clause. Declerck (1992, 469) makes an even stronger argument stating that infinitival and gerundial complementation have no difference in meaning or use. This statement is in contradiction to Bolinger's (1968, 127) view according to which "a difference in syntactic form always spells a difference in meaning" even though it may not always be realised. The views presented by Declerck and Bolinger represent the two extremes. Hunston and Francis (2000, 86) present a medium view according to which the relationship between pattern and meaning is neither random nor mandatory.

Some grammars recognise only one pattern of complementation for the verb *neglect*. Quirk et al. (1985, 1187) mention the verb only under the pattern with a *to*-infinitive and Biber et al. (1999, 743) only under the pattern with an -*ing*-clause. A rather surprising observation is that Herbst et al. (2004) do not discuss the verb in question at all even though they are especially interested in patterns of complementation.

It is an interesting observation that complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object is not mentioned with the verb *neglect* in any of the grammars. The reason for this can probably be explained by the fact that due to the large amount of verbs belonging to this category it is not possible to give an exhaustive list (see Quirk et al. 1985, 1168-1169).

The treatment of the verb *neglect* in the grammars is fairly similar to its treatment in the *OED*. That is that all the sources consulted for the thesis suggest that the verb *neglect* accepts very few patterns of complementation. All the grammars and dictionaries treat the verb as a monotransitive verb and no other possibilities are given. Possible realisations for the direct object are a noun phrase, a *to*-infinitive or an –*ing*-clause.

5. Methodology

It is not always easy to decide how certain complements should be classified. In the following section some problematic cases will be dealt with in order to show how the data for this thesis has been processed. The first subsection is dedicated to the subject complement whereas the second focuses on passives. In the third subsection relative clauses are dealt with in more detail. The fourth subsection discusses examples that are disregarded from the analysis.

5.1 Subject complement

It has already been established that the subject is to be regarded as an external complement that occurs outside the verb phrase. In this thesis the subject is therefore not included in the analysis. It may, however, be stated that in the data the verb *neglect* normally occurs with an animate or possibly an institutional subject whereas the choice of object is more varying.

5.2 Passives

The verb *neglect* has been defined as a transitive verb that can take a noun phrase as a direct object. The verb also allows passive formation. In the corpus data there are many examples of passive sentences with the verb *neglect*. These are illustrated in the following.

[11] Why … have ants been relatively **neglected** by other biologists?
(ABF 3181)

[12] A proper care of your person is by no means to be **neglected**…
(*CLMET* first subcorpus – Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

[13] … her morals had been greatly **neglected** in her youth…
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Galt – Annals of the Parish)

In passive sentences the object of the active clause becomes the subject of the passive clause. As far as complementation is concerned it is, however, reasonable to treat passive sentences similarly to corresponding active sentences. Passive expressions such as above are thus to be

considered complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object and are included in the overall figure for this pattern.

5.3 Relative clauses

All the corpus samples include several examples in which the verb *neglect* occurs in a relative clause. The following examples illustrate these sentences.

[14] It is additional information that should not be **neglected**…
(HRH 879)

[15] … he asked for his godson, whom he had so long **neglected**.
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Marryat – Masterman Ready*)*

[16] … they have interests which are misconceived or **neglected**…
(*CLMET* third subcorpus – Bagehott – The English Constitution)

Rohdenburg (2006, 151-152) points out that in cases such as above a post verbal element has been extracted out of a complement clause. In the examples this means that the object of the verb *neglect* has been moved to the left leaving a trace behind. The unmarked word order has thus been chanced to marked. In the study these sentences are nevertheless listed under the pattern complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object. The fact that the complement precedes the verb *neglect* instead of following it does not influence its classification.

In addition to full relative clauses the data also includes several reduced relative clauses such as the following.

[17] … the atomic theory, somewhat **neglected** after its flowering in the early nineteenth century… (JOP 1243)

[18] A solitary child, **neglected** by his friends, is left there still.
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Dickens – A Christmas Carol in Prose)

[19] … a severe cough persistently **neglected**…
(*CLMET* third subcorpus – Bennett – The Old Wives' Tale)

These clauses could easily be extended to full relatives and it is thus reasonable to treat these similarly to them.

5.4 Disregarded examples

The samples from the *CLMET* and the *BNC* include a number of sentences that do not provide useful information for the thesis and are consequently disregarded from the analysis. In the following the types of sentences that are not suitable for the purposes of this study will be discussed in short in order to shed light on the procedures used in analysing the corpus data.

The data collected for the thesis includes several examples in which the word *neglect* is not a verb but a noun or a participial adjective. These sentences are obviously not useful for a study on the verb *neglect.* The following examples demonstrate these types of sentences.

[20] As part of the Society's work to protect children from abuse and **neglect** a national NSPCC Child Protection Help Line is being launched in the spring of 1991. (A7G 1266)

[21] … your story is an apology for any **neglect**… (*CLMET* first subcorpus – Fielding – Tom Jones)

[22] It is an old but still **neglected** adage that doubt is not the opposite of faith but of certainty. (AMT 432)

[23] … to be pitied as a **neglected** wife… (*CLMET* second subcorpus – Brontë – The Tenant of Wildfell Hall)

[24] Joan had not visited Brian's grave in five years and had expected to find it **neglected** and overgrown. (K32 2266)

[25] But to see them so **neglected**… (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Galsworthy – The Man of Property)

Examples 20 and 21, in which the word *neglect* is a noun, are fairly straightforward and will not be discussed further in the present thesis. In examples 22 and 23 the participial adjective *neglected* is used attributively to premodify a noun. This usage is also easily recognised and will not need further discussion. Examples 24 and 25, in which the word *neglected* comes up as a participial adjective in predicative position, are more complex and need to be discussed in more detail in order to clarify the distinction between participial adjectives and passive verb forms and to show how the data collected for the thesis has been analysed.

According to Quirk et al. (1985, 414-415) there are certain indicators that help distinguish between participial adjectives and passive verb forms. That is that the presence of an animate *by*-agent normally indicates a verbal and the presence of an intensifier *very* an adjectival use. In addition to this, the passive is always formed with the auxiliary *be* and all the constructions in which the word *neglected* occurs with another verb are adjectival. This does not, of course, include present perfect and past perfect forms with the verb *have*. The indicators discussed so far are fairly straightforward. There are, however, also indeterminate sentences in which no clear indicator is present. In this essay all the sentences that are open to both interpretations are considered verbal and only the clearly adjectival uses are disregarded from the analysis.

6. Complements of the verb *neglect* in the *CLMET*

In this chapter the complementation patterns of the verb *neglect* found in the three subcorpora of the *CLMET* will be discussed in more detail. Due to the relatively small size of the corpora it is possible to analyse all the sentences with the verb *neglect*. As the *CLMET* offers no possibility of a lemma query separate searches have been conduced for the forms *neglect, neglects, neglected* and *neglecting*. The fact that there is no lemma query available also means that the samples involve a high number of examples in which the word *neglect* is not a verb. The chapter begins with the results of the separate subcorpora and ends with the presentation of the overall results.

6.1 The subcorpora of the *CLMET*

In the following sections the subcorpora of the *CLMET* will be dealt with in chronological order. The complementation patterns will be dealt with in order of frequency and the results for each subcorpus will be presented in a table.

6.1.1 The first subcorpus

The first subcorpus of the *CLMET* covers the years between 1710 and 1780 and includes 296 tokens with the word *neglect*. The sample includes as many as 105 examples in which the word *neglect* is not a verb. These are disregarded in the analysis and the size of the sample is reduced to 191. The results of the analysis are discussed in this section and can be seen in the following table.

Table 2 Complements of the verb *neglect* in the first subcorpus of the *CLMET*

Complementation pattern	Number of tokens	Percentage
Noun phrase as a direct object	161	84.0
To-infinitive	26	13.5
Wh-clause	2	1.0
Ing-clause	2	1.0
Total	191	100

The analysis of the sample shows that in the first subcorpus of the *CLMET* there are four different complementation patterns to be found. These are complementation by a noun phrase, a *to*-infinitive, a *wh*-clause and an *-ing*-clause. The analysis also shows that in the early phase of Late Modern English complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object is by far the most common pattern with the verb *neglect*. This pattern is observed in 84% of the sentences. The following examples illustrate the sentences with this particular pattern.

[26] … it is my wish and advice that you should not **neglect** them.
(Reynolds – Seven Discourses on Art)

[27] … their remonstrances were **neglected**…
(Johnson – Parliamentary Debates)

[28] … the consequences of **neglecting** the mouth are serious…
(Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

Another pattern easily identified from the corpus data is infinitival complementation that is found in 13.5% of the sentences. In these sentences the infinitive clause functions as a direct object and the subject of the infinitive clause is congruent with the subject of the main clause. The following examples illustrate this pattern.

[29] … a punishment inflected upon those who **neglect** or refuse to receive the encouragement offered … (Johnson – Parliamentary Debates)

[30] A person who **neglects** to balance his account twice in the year…
(Smith – Wealth of Nations)

[31] … he **neglected** to secure the means of victory.
(Gibbon – Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire)

The two other patterns found in the data are complementation by a *wh*-clause and by an *-ing*-clause as a direct object. The former is illustrated in examples 32 and 33 and the latter in examples 34 and 35.

[32] … an honest man can **neglect** what a wise rogue would purchase so dear?
(Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

[33] … you will **neglect** and despise what is light and useless…
(Fielding – The Governess)

[34] … their parents are often so too, or at least **neglect** doing it…
(Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

[35] … who, either from their own engagements and hurry of business, or from indolence, or from conceit and vanity, have **neglected** looking out of themselves…
(Reynolds – Seven Discourses on Art)

These patterns occur only twice each in the corpus data. It seems thus reasonable to argue that the patterns are used only very rarely and cannot be considered standard with the verb *neglect* in this particular period of time.

6.1.2 The second subcorpus

The second subcorpus covers the time span between the years 1780 and 1850 and includes 319 tokens with the word *neglect*. There are in total 148 examples in which the word *neglect* is a noun. These are disregarded in the analysis and the analysis is thus based on a sample of 171 tokens. The results are discussed below and can also be seen in the following table.

Table 3 Complements of the verb *neglect* in the second subcorpus of the *CLMET*

Complementation pattern	Number of tokens	Percentage
Noun phrase as a direct object	149	87.0
To-infinitive	20	11.5
Wh-clause	1	0.5
Ing-clause	1	0.5
Total	171	100

A closer examination of the second subcorpus shows that the complementation patterns of the verb *neglect* have not changed much in relation to the first subcorpus. The same patterns appear in the same order in both corpora. The percentual differences are also relatively small except for the slight increase in complementation by a noun phrase. In the first subcorpus the verb *neglect* occurs with a noun phrase as a direct object in 84% of the sentences. In the second subcorpus the corresponding figure is 87%. The following examples demonstrate this pattern.

[36] … she either **neglects** her children, or spoils them by improper indulgence.
(Wollstonecraft – Vindication of the Rights of Woman)

[37] I have **neglected** nothing. (Hazlitt – Table Talk)

[38] … I was wrong in **neglecting** his advice… (Brontë – Agnes Grey)

The second most common pattern with the verb *neglect* is infinitival complementation that occurs in 11.5% of the sentences. In relation to the first subcorpus there seems thus to be a subtle decrease in frequency. Some examples of this pattern can be seen below.

[39] The Spaniards were not deficient on their side, nor did they **neglect** to court our friendship… (Johnson – Parliamentary Debates)

[40] … his father had **neglected** to correct his temper when he was a child…
(Edgeworth – The Parent's Assistant)

[41] ... the reasons she had given for **neglecting** to return their calls...
(Brontë – The Tenant of Wildfell Hall)

As regards infinitival complementation there are also three examples to be found in which two *to*-infinitives are placed consecutively. Mair (2002, 125) regards these constructions as violations of the horror aequi principle, according to which there is a tendency to avoid the repetition of similar elements close to each other. The presence of one infinitive would thus be likely to inspire the use of an *–ing*-clause instead of a *to*-infinitive as a complement. The three violations of the principle can be seen below.

[42] … too remarkable for me to **neglect** to put on record…
(Galt – Annals of the Parish)

[43] … which they ought not to **neglect** to seize.
(Wollstonecraft – Letters on Sweden, Norway and Denmark)

[44] … to **neglect** to discharge the indispensable duty of a mother…
(Wollstonecraft – Vindication of the Rights of Woman)

It is also possible to find an example of a phenomenon Rohdenburg (2006, 148) refers to as structural discontinuity. This means that an adjunct has been placed between the matrix verb and the complement. This phenomenon is illustrated in the following.

[45] … my heart reproaches me severely with ingratitude in **neglecting** so long to
answer it. (Burns – Letters 1780-1796)

The second subcorpus also includes one example of complementation by a *wh*-clause and one of complementation by an *-ing*-clause. The former is illustrated in example 46 and the latter in example 47.

[46] … the impotent consciousness of **neglecting** what he ought to do…
(Burns – Letters 1780-1796)

[47] I **neglected** procuring any provision for my unwelcome guests…
(Beckford – Dreams, Waking Thoughts, and Incidents)

As far as complementation by a *wh*-clause or by an *–ing*-clause is concerned it is possible to say that they seem not to have established their position with the verb *neglect*. In the first subcorpus these phenomena occur twice each and in the second subcorpus there is only one example of each to be found. It is thus reasonable to say that the complementation by a *wh*-question and by an *ing*-clause remain infrequent phenomena with the verb *neglect*.

6.1.3 The third subcorpus

The third subcorpus of the *CLMET* covers the years between 1850 and 1920 and includes in total 212 tokens with the word *neglect*. In this case there are altogether 90 sentences that will be disregarded in the analysis. The size of the sample is thus 122 tokens. The results will be discussed in this section and can be seen in the following table.

Table 4 Complements of the verb *neglect* in the third subcorpus of the *CLMET*

Complementation pattern	Number of tokens	Percentage
Noun phrase as a direct object	113	92.5
To-infinitive	9	7.5
Total	122	100

The third subcorpus contains surprisingly few possible patterns for the verb *neglect*. That is that in the entire corpus there are only two patterns to be found. These are complementation by a noun phrase and by a *to*-infinitive. It is very interesting that the previously infrequent phenomena of complementation by a *wh*-clause and by an *–ing*-clause are now nonexistent. It seems possible that these two patterns might be disappearing. It is, however, difficult to make any far-reaching conclusions on the possible disappearance of the patterns because even the first and the second subcorpus include very few examples of them. It is difficult to know if the absence of these patterns in the third subcorpus is merely an accident. The matter would be clearer had the other subcorpora included a more substantial number of examples of these patterns.

The absence of *-ing*-clauses in the third subcorpus is perhaps more surprising than the absence of *wh*-clauses. Based on the fact that Jespersen (1961, 194) and Poutsma (1904, 626), who have written their grammars in the early twentieth century, recognise complementation by an *-ing*-clause as a possible pattern with the verb *neglect* one would have expected to find more examples of it in this particular part of the corpus.

In the third subcorpus complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object still remains by far the most common pattern with the verb *neglect*. This pattern is found in as much as 92.5% of the sentences. In the second subcorpus an increase in the use of this particular pattern was already noticeable. The same trend continues in the third subcorpus. The following sentences demonstrate this pattern.

[48] If he **neglects** the invitation his life will be in danger.
      (Hope – The Prisoner of Zenda)

[49] The fraction is so small that in practice it may and must be **neglected**...
      (Butler – Notebooks)

[50] … they might get into trouble for **neglecting** the lines.
      (Kipling – Captains Courageous)

The increased use of noun phrase complements with the verb *neglect* means that other complements lose some of their significance. This is the case with *to*-infinitives. In the first subcorpus infinitival complementation was found in 13.5% of the sentences. In the third subcorpus only 7.5% of the sentences fall into this pattern. The following sentences illustrate this pattern.

[51] … when a timepiece **neglects** to strike the hour…
      (Meredith – The Amazing Marriage)

[52] He had **neglected** to report himself…
      (Booth – In Darkest England and the Way Out)

[53] ... she had hardly a definite reason in her mind for **neglecting** to do it.
      (Hardy – A Pair of Blue Eyes)

Even though there are only nine examples of complementation by a *to*-infinitive in the third subcorpus there are two examples to be found in which the horror aequi principle is violated. These read as follows.

[53] … having been mad enough to **neglect** to take his overcoat with him…
      (Grossmith – The Diary of a Nobody)

[54] … she even went so far as to **neglect** to send for the rector when one of the
      children lay dying. (Rutherford – Clara Hopgood)

The horror aequi violations found in the second and the third subcorpus might indicate that in Late Modern English the use of two very similar structures close to each other was not so much frowned upon.

6.2 Overall results

The information gathered from the three subcorpora of the *CLMET* shows that there have been some slight changes in the patterns of complementation used with the verb *neglect* in Late Modern English. The most noticeable chance is the increased use of noun phases as complements. The most surprising finding is, however, the very low number of *-ing*-clauses found as complements of the verb *neglect*. In the following table the overall results gathered from the *CLMET* will be presented in order to make the comparison with the *BNC* easier.

Table 5 Complements of the verb *neglec*t in the entire *CLMET*

Complementation pattern	**Number of tokens**	**Percentage**
Noun phrase as a direct object	423	87.0
To-infinitive	55	11.5
Wh-clause	3	0.5
Ing-clause	3	0.5
Total	**484**	**100**

In the following sections the results gathered from the *BNC* will be compared primarily to the overall figures presented in this table. In addition to that, it will be investigated whether the trends that became evident in the comparison of the three subcorpora can also be seen in Present Day English.

7. Complements of the verb *neglect* in the *BNC*

The analysis of the complementation patterns of the verb *neglect* used in Present Day English is carried out with the help of web based query systems called BNCweb and Sketch Engine. The lemma query that is performed in order to find the occurrences of the verb *neglect* in the *BNC* produces in total 1357 matches. This study will be carried out with the help of a random sample of 700 tokens. Despite the possibility of a lemma query the search produces a high number of sentences in which the word *neglect* is not a verb. These sentences are disregarded in the analysis and the size of the sample is reduced to 616. The results of the analysis will be dealt with in this chapter and can also be seen in the following table.

Table 6 Complements of the verb *neglect* in the *BNC*

Complementation pattern	Number of tokens	Percentage
Noun phrase as a direct object	545	88.5
To-infinitive	63	10.0
Noun phrase + preposition *as*	5	1.0
Wh-clause	3	0.5
Total	616	100

The table shows that the figures gathered from the *BNC* are fairly similar to those gathered from the *CLMET*. This means that the main patterns used with the verb *neglect* have changed little over the years. In Present Day English the most common pattern is still complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object. This pattern is found in altogether 88.5% of the sentences. In the *CLMET* the overall figure for this pattern is 87%. It is thus reasonable to argue that as far as complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object in concerned the change is very small. The results from the third subcorpus of the *CLMET* suggested that complementation by a noun phrase was gaining ground at the expense of the other patterns. This trend does not seem to have continued. The following examples illustrate the sentences with this pattern in the *BNC*.

[56]… it is a serious error to **neglect** this aspect of Marx's theory. (CMN 364)

[57] What do you think of a man who **neglects** his wife? (FRS 2928)

[58] Both sources have been **neglected** by researchers… (HJ0 346)

Another well established pattern in the corpus sample is infinitival complementation that is followed by 10% of the sentences. In the *CLMET* the overall figure for this pattern is 11.5%. There seems thus to be no major chance in the use of this particular pattern. The following sentences illustrate the pattern. In the *BNC* no violations of the horror aequi principle could be found but the last example represents a case of structural discontinuity.

[59] Never **neglect** to thank a coblynau for indicating the whereabouts of ore
deposits… (CAC 522)

[60] She entirely **neglected** to inform me that Robbie was a girl… (HHA 246)

[61] …we did not **neglect**, from time to time, to tell the fat and utterly
uncomprehending Zurich philistines that we regarded them as pigs… (ANF 861)

The generalisation that the *to*-infinitive is losing ground while complementation by an –*ing*-clause is spreading seems thus to be incorrect as far as the verb *neglect* is concerned. In fact, the random sample from the *BNC* includes no examples of gerundial complementation. The vast majority of grammars consulted for this study do, however, mention this pattern with the verb *neglect* and Biber et al. (1999, 743) do not mention the verb under any other pattern. In addition, the pattern is also recognised by the *OED*. This makes the finding very surprising and contradictory to expectation. It seems that the question needs to be examined further. A more specific search shows that the verb *neglect* is followed by an *-ing*-form only six times in the entire corpus. The search string reads as follows.

[62] … he'd rather been **neglecting** building up a really good working relationship with
N Y T E C. (H5E 195)

[63] … this internal flux may be **neglected** giving the often quoted formula for the
inductance per unit length of a two-wire transmission line … (FEF 1172)

[64 and 65] A farmer is facing charges of cruelty and **neglect** involving hundreds of
animals after an investigation by the RSPCA. (K1T 3558 and K1T 3614)

[66]…the Keynesian model has often been accused of **… neglecting** optimizing behaviour in the labour market. (J0U 39)

[67] No book which offers an overarching educational theory of higher education can afford to **neglect** teaching and learning… (G0R 1156)

The analysis of the examples shows that only example 62 is relevant for the present study. In all the other cases the *-ing*-form following the word *neglect* is not to be regarded as gerundial complementation. In example 63 the sentence is in passive and from the point of view of the verb *neglect* it is to be classified as complementation by a noun phrase. Examples 64 and 65 are identical and represent sentences in which the word *neglect* is not a verb but a noun. In example 66 the word *optimizing* is used as an adjective to premodify a noun that functions as a direct object of the verb *neglect*. In example 67 on the other hand the verb *neglect* is simply followed by a noun ending with *–ing*. It is thus possible to conclude that most of the items in the search string are caused by a tagging error in the *BNC*.

It is very interesting that the entire corpus includes only one example of complementation by an *–ing*-clause. Based on this study it is possible to argue that this particular pattern is used only very rarely in Present Day English and that the verb *neglect* seems to have remained uninfluenced by the Great Complement Shift. Instead of increasing the use of *-ing*-clauses as complements of the verb *neglect* seems to have decreased. The grammars consulted for the study do not therefore give an entirely accurate account of the complementation patterns used with the verb in question. In this case it seems possible either to leave the pattern out entirely or to add that complementation by an *-ing*-clause is extremely rare with the verb *neglect*. If one wants to recognise the pattern it seems important that the difference in frequency between complementation by an *ing*-clause and by a *to*-infinitive is emphasised more. One example in the entire *BNC* should certainly not be enough to entitle gerundial complementation to be treated equal to infinitival complementation. In the *OED* a cross might be added in front of the entry to mark the pattern as obsolete.

The *BNC* includes one complementation pattern that is not found in the *CLMET*. This is complementation by a noun phrase followed by a prepositional phrase with the preposition *as*. In the sample there are five examples of this pattern which accounts for 1% of the sentences. The following examples demonstrate this usage.

[68] … this type of crime has also been **neglected** as an area of study. (B17 687)

[69]...our education and training, instead of being **neglected** as almost the worst in Europe... (KRT 3041)

[70] … these signs have been **neglected** or disparaged as trivial items. (FBD 1250)

As far as the verb *neglect* is concerned this pattern of complementation is not recognized by any of the grammars or dictionaries used in writing the thesis. Even a more specific search for similar structures in the *BNC* gives only five additional examples. It seems thus reasonable to argue that at present this pattern cannot be considered standard with the verb *neglect.* The fact that the pattern does not appear at all in the *CLMET* raises, however, the question whether the pattern in question has only recently emerged and started to spread. It seems possible that in future corpora this pattern might be better represented.

Despite its infrequent status the pattern with the preposition *as* is extremely interesting. In all the other patterns the verb *neglect* is a monotransitive verb that takes a direct object. In this particular pattern the verb *neglect* is, however, a complex transitive verb that contains both a direct object and a prepositional complement. *Collins Cobuild English Grammar* (1990, 183-184) states that the preposition *as* and the following noun phrase are used to describe the role of the direct object and recognises the following 33 verbs that fall into this pattern: *brand, cast, categorize, certify, characterize, choose, class, condemn, consider, define, denounce, depict, describe, diagnose, elect, establish, give, hail, identify, intend, interpret, label, name, perceive, recognize, regard, scorn, see, suggest, take, treat, use* and *view.* It is thus obvious that the pattern with the preposition *as* exists and in the future the verb *neglect* might be added to it.

In the first and the second subcorpus of the *CLMET* complementation by a *wh*-clause appears as a rare phenomenon. In the third subcorpus this pattern is missing – indicating that the pattern might be disappearing altogether. In the *BNC* complementation by a *wh*-clause regains, however, its infrequent status. The sample includes the following three examples of sentences in which the verb *neglect* is followed by a *wh*-clause as a direct object.

[71] They **neglect** how texts construct meanings as opposed to what they supposedly mean. (FAY 521)

[72] The government are **neglecting** what should be a great jewel in the British crown. (HHV 16047)

[73] You see our most recent budget was largely constructed even **neglecting** what was happening in other industrial countries. (KRG 872)

A more sophisticated search shows that there are very few occurrences of this pattern in the entire corpus. It is thus possible to conclude that this usage has remained rather rare over the years and that it has not been able to establish its position with the verb *neglect*. The fact that the grammars and dictionaries consulted for this study do not mention this pattern seems thus reasonable. Even though the pattern has not entirely disappeared it has not been able to gain enough ground to be considered standard with the verb in question. It will be interesting to see how the use of this particular pattern develops in the future. In the light of this study both extinction and expansion seem like possible developmental trends in this case.

8. Connection between pattern and meaning

The *OED* lists five senses for the verb *neglect* and recognises three complementation patterns used with the verb in question. The senses and patterns were discussed in chapter four. In this chapter the corpus data will be compared with the different senses given by the *OED*.

The first thing to consider is that the senses marked as obsolete in the *OED* could not be found in the corpora used for this thesis. This is not surprising as all the examples of these senses in the *OED* date back to the sixteenth or the seventeenth century whereas the analysis in this thesis begins from the eighteenth century. As a consequence, the obsolete senses will not be dealt with in more detail in this chapter.

In the *OED* the three first senses require a noun phrase as a direct object. All these senses could also be found in the corpus data. In the following the three senses of the verb *neglect* will be repeated and they will be followed by four examples each from the corpus data. Three examples are always from the different subcorpora of the *CLMET* and one is from the *BNC*. This proves that all the different senses could be found in all the samples. The examples are in chronological order.

1. To disregard; to pay little or no respect or attention to; to slight, leave unnoticed

[74] ... how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, **neglects** the truths that lie open before her. (*CLMET* first subcorpus – Johnson – Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia)

[75]... the true stickler for Reform **neglects** no opportunity of introducing the subject wherever he is. (*CLMET* second subcorpus – Hazlitt – Table Talk)

[76] But, difficult as the task may be, it is not one which we can **neglect**. (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Booth – In Darkest England and the Way Out)

[77] ... Lacanian psychoanalysis has been **neglected** by psychologists. (CMR 1795)

2. To fail to bestow proper attention or care upon; to leave unattended or uncared for

[78] Do not **neglect** your style, whatever language you speak in, or whoever you talk to... (*CLMET* first subcorpus – Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

[79] ... this road having been **neglected** during a long series of years, the branches of the trees and underwood had so much encroached upon it...
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Ainsworth – Windsor Castle)

[80] ... in your absence she **neglected** her health and died. (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Foster – Howards End)

[81] If he **neglected** his physical body, there was no one here to reprimand him, for the whole community was woefully neglected. (CBN 106)

b. With personal object.

[82] ... I began to think he **neglected** me...
(*CLMET* first subcorpus – Smollet – The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle)

[83]... the mother will not **neglect** her children to practice the arts of coquetry.
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Wollstonecraft – Vindication of the Rights of Woman)

[84] Now how I have been **neglecting** you! (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Blackmore – Lorna Doone)

[85] No one could have accused her of **neglecting** Emily recently. (H97 2765)

3. To fail to perform, render, discharge (a duty) or take (a precaution)

[86] But, though I was very industrious in the discharge of my occupation, I did not, however, **neglect** my studies... (*CLMET* first subcorpus – Fielding – Amelia)

[87] ... women will govern them by the most direct means, **neglecting** their dull domestic duties... (*CLMET* second subcorpus – Wollstonecraft – Vindication of the Rights of Woman)

[88] Abu Anga **neglected** no precaution. (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Churchill – The River War)

[89] He has **neglected** his duties writing that damned family history and leaving Tim Skerritt to manage the estate. (B1X 399)

When investigating the senses it becomes evident that the three first senses are very close to each other. In the corpus data there are several examples that are open to two different interpretations. It is especially hard to distinguish between senses one and two. If someone, for example, neglects his children it could mean that he does not give them enough attention or that he does not take care of them. For that reason it is difficult to give any exact figures for

the distribution of the senses. In this thesis no figures will be presented due to ambiguities and possible misinterpretations.

In the *OED* sense 4.a. is linked to infinitival complementation. This connection can also be seen in the data investigated for the thesis. The following examples include one sentence from each corpus sample. It is to be noticed that the verb *neglect* could in most cases be replaced by the verb *fail* with a fairly similar meaning.

4.a. With *inf*. To omit through carelessness, to fail through negligence, to *do* something.

[90] ... I would not **neglect** to let you know how it is with me...
(*CLMET* first subcorpus – Smollet – The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker)

[91] ... the reasons she had given for **neglecting** to return their calls...
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Brontë – The Tenant of Wildfell Hall)

[92] ... it is very rare to find a Nobleman of that position in society, who has **neglected** to place his first-born in the Circular Neo-Therapeutic Gymnasium before he has attained the age of a month. (*CLMET* third subcorpus – Abbott – Flatland)

[93] The buyer has wrongfully refused or **neglected** to pay according to the terms of the contract. (H7U 823)

The third pattern recognised by the *OED* is gerundial complementation. The corpus data includes very few examples of this particular pattern. The few sentences found in the data are, however, related to sense 4.b as the *OED* suggests. The following examples are from the first and the second subcorpus of the *CLMET*.

4.b. To omit *doing* something.

[94] … who, either from their own engagements and hurry of business, or from indolence, or from conceit and vanity, have **neglected** looking out of themselves…
(*CLMET* first subcorpus – Reynolds – Seven Discourses on Art)

[95] I **neglected** procuring any provision for my unwelcome guests...
(*CLMET* second subcorpus – Beckford – Dreams, Waking Thoughts, and Incidents)

The corpus data also includes some cases in which the verb *neglect* takes a *wh*-clause as a complement. Even though this pattern of complementation is not recognised by the *OED* it is

still possible to see a connection between the pattern in question and sense one in the *OED*. The following examples demonstrate this connection.

1. To disregard; to pay little or no respect or attention to; to slight, leave unnoticed

[96] Is it possible, then, that an honest man can **neglect** what a wise rogue would purchase so dear? (*CLMET* first subcorpus – Chesterfield – Letters to his Son)

[97] … the impotent consciousness of **neglecting** what he ought to do… (*CLMET* second subcorpus – Burns – Letters 1780-1796)

[98] The government are **neglecting** what should be a great jewel in the British crown. (HHV 16047)

Another pattern not mentioned in the *OED* is complementation by a noun phrase and a prepositional phrase with the preposition *as*. This pattern is not so closely connected to any one sense in the *OED*. It is, however, possible to see a connection between this pattern and two different senses in the *OED*. That is that this use of the verb *neglect* includes the aspect of leaving something unnoticed. The pattern seems, however, also to include the aspect of failing to recognise the value or importance of something. It is thus possible to argue that this pattern is connected to senses 1 and 4 in the *OED*. The following examples illustrate the use of this pattern.

[99] The early British sites were **neglected** as relics of unimagined savagery… (B7A 421)

[100] Women have been **neglected** as a source of scientific talent... (AJT 132)

In the end it can be said that the *OED* gives a fairly accurate description of the senses of the verb *neglect*. It does not mention all the complementation patterns found in the data but even the missing patterns can be linked to the senses given in the *OED*. It also needs to be emphasised that the absence of some complementation patterns is justifiable as they have not been able to establish their position in language.

9. Conclusion

In all the corpus samples analysed for this study complementation by a noun phrase as a direct object is by far the most common pattern with the verb *neglect*. Considering the fact that noun phrases are generally the most common type of complement this finding is not surprising. In the *OED* four out of five possible senses for the verb in question involve complementation by a noun phrase.

The second most common pattern with the verb *neglect* is infinitival complementation. The fact that the *to*-infinitive has managed to maintain its position from eighteenth century to the present is somewhat surprising. The generalisation that the use of *to*-infinitives is becoming less common as gerundial complementation spreads seems thus to be incorrect as far as the verb *neglect* is concerned.

The most unexpected result of the study is that complementation by an *-ing*-clause seems to be very rare with the verb *neglect*. That is that the entire *CLMET* includes three and the entire *BNC* only one example of this particular pattern. This finding is totally contradictory to all expectations and shows that the verb has not been influenced by the Great Complement Shift. The fact that almost all the grammars consulted for the thesis mention this pattern in connection with the verb *neglect* makes the finding even more surprising. It seems somewhat extraordinary that a pattern with so few occurrences in the corpus data is so well presented in the literature and in some cases even considered interchangeable with the *to*-infinitive.

The analysis of the corpus data also produces examples of complementation patterns that are not mentioned in the literature. Complementation by a *wh*-clause as a direct object occurs in the first and the second subcorpus of the *CLMET* and in the *BNC*. The pattern is, however, used only very rarely and has not established its position with the verb in question. It is thus reasonable that the grammars and dictionaries do not deal with this pattern. In the future it is, of course, possible that the pattern starts to spread or that it disappears totally.

One pattern that occurs only in the *BNC* is complementation by a noun phrase followed by a prepositional phrase with the preposition *as*. This pattern is particularly interesting because it represents a case in which the verb *neglect* comes up as a complex transitive verb instead of a monotransitive verb. There are, however, not many occurrences of this pattern in the corpus and at present it seems to be used relatively infrequently.

As a conclusion it can be stated that the analysis of the corpus data and the consultation of different grammars and dictionaries provide somewhat diverse results. That means that there are patterns that are found in the corpus data but not discussed in the literature and that some patterns recognised by the grammars are used very rarely in the corpora. In the future it would be especially interesting to examine the distribution of *to*-infinitives and *-ing*-clauses further. It might, for example, be studied how native speakers of English react to utterances with these patterns of complementation. It might also prove interesting to compare British and American speakers.

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CLMET   Corpus of Late Modern English Texts

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