

Note:

Prohibitive constructions of Old English *ne ceara* and Old High German *ni curi(t)*

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1. Introduction

The prohibitive construction examined in this study is an imperative construction containing a set of lexical elements used to order someone not to do something. The construction typically consists of (i) a negative particle, (ii) a finite verb (or an auxiliary verb) in the imperative form expressing prohibition, and (iii) an infinitive that refers to the action prohibited. In the prohibitive sentence *Do not sing* (or *Don't sing*) in English, the finite auxiliary *do* is followed by *not* and the infinitive *sing*. In the history of English, the formation of prohibitive expressions varies. In Old English (OE for short, dating about 700–1100), a verb is “most commonly negated by the adverb *ne* immediately preceding it” (Mitchell 1985: §1599). In Middle English (ME, about 1100–1500), according to Mustanoja (1960: 607), there is a rise of *do* for negations, which continues to the negative constructions in Modern English (MnE, 1500 onwards).

There are many glosses in the OE texts extant that are translated from or based on Latin versions. Some Latin prohibitive constructions¹ employ *noli / nolite* (singular / plural imperative form of *nolo* ‘not to wish’) followed by an infinitive. OE has various ways for rendering this Latin phrase. There are, for example, as Ogura (1988) mentions, (i) *nellan* (the contracted form of *ne* ‘not’ and *willan* ‘to wish’; thus ‘do not wish’) followed by the personal pronoun *þu* (singular ‘you’) or *ge* (plural ‘you’) and (ii) *ne* with an imperative form of a verb (and with a personal pronoun). An example which Ogura (1988: 87) presents is *Lk 12.29 (WSCp²): And nelle ge secean hwæt ge eton oððe drincan. 7 ne beo ge up-ahafene* (Latin: *et uos nolite quaerere quid manducetis aut quid bibatis et nolite in sublime tolli*). Another minor prohibitive construction in OE is *ne* with *ceara* (an imperative form of a weak verb *cearian* ‘to care’) with an infinitive. According to Jacob Grimm’s *Deutsche Grammatik* (Scherer (ed.) 1967: 1-829), this construction corresponds to Old High German (OHG, dating about 750–1050) prohibitive *ni curi(t)* with an infinitive: “dem alth. ni-churi vergleicht sich *ne-cëara þu* (noli) und selbst *ne-cëara incit* (nolite) Cäd. [Cädmonis paraphrasis] 49, 23. 59, 1., womit jedesmahl ein inf. construiert wird”.³ OHG *curi(t)* (*curi* for singular; *curit* for plural) is an imperative form of the strong verb *kiosan* ‘to choose’ (cognate to OE *cēosan* > MnE *choose*). As these descriptions suggest, OE *ceara* and OHG *curi(t)* are of different origins (cf. Bammesberger 1986: 676); however, both are used for the same Latin construction (*noli(te)*) with an

¹ For Latin prohibitive expressions, see Elmer (1894a; 1894b) for more details.

² The texts and the short titles of the examples in OE are based on those used in *The Dictionary of Old English, Web Corpus (DOEWC)*. Literal glossing, emphasis, and translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

³ The long *s* in the original edition is written as the typical *s* in this quotation.

infinitive). This paper describes the similarities and differences between these two prohibitive constructions in OE and OHG from more detailed perspectives.

2. Old English *ne ceara* (+ reflexive) + infinitive

OE *cearian* belongs to the second class of weak verb. *BT* (s.v. *cearian*) defines this verb as “[t]o take care, heed, to be anxious or sorry” and the *DOE* (s.v. *carian*) has two definition groups: 1. “to sorrow, be anxious or troubled” and 2. “to take care” (see also *BTS* for more details).⁴ In OE, among 28 occurrences of *cearian* which *DOE* finds, a verse text *Genesis A* (twice) and a gloss text *Psalter Gloss E* (Eadwine’s Canterbury Psalter) (five times) attest to the prohibitive usage ‘*ne* + *ceara* (+ reflexive) + infinitive’, which will be discussed in the following Sections 2.1. and 2.2.

2.1. *Genesis A*

Genesis A (*GenA*) contains two occurrences of *ne ceara* with the infinitive in lines 2281 and 2733, as defined in the *DOE* (s.v. *carian*, 2.b.ii.). The two examples, given in (1) and (2) below, demonstrate different points of describing. Section 2.1.1. deals with the morphological and semantic aspects of *ne ceara* in line 2281, displaying the conceptual similarity between the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood. The focus of Section 2.1.2. is syntactic, which is on the collocation of *ne ceara* with the reflexive pronoun *incit* in line 2733.

2.1.1. Lines 2281–2282: *Ne ceara* and *ac sece*

The example (1) showcases an example of *ne ceara* followed by the infinitive *dælan* ‘to divide’ and making a parallelism with *sece* ‘to seek’. This context is based on *Genesis* 16.9, where an angel admonishes Hagar, a handmaid of Sarai who has fled from her, to go back to Sarai. The OE verse does not correspond to the Latin original⁵ literally. The poet supplies the context with the prohibitive expression *ne ceara* with *dælan*.

⁴ Its related noun *cearu* likewise means ‘sorrow’ or ‘care’. The definition in *BT* (s.v. *cearu*) reads “CARE, sorrow, grief”. According to the *DOE* (s.v. *caru*), 1. “sorrow, care, anxiety” and 2. “quality or state of taking care” are two large semantic categories mainly focusing on the collocation under each definition that the noun takes (e.g. “*lifes / middangeardes / worulde caru*” for the first group, and “*don care* ‘to take care’” for the second group 2.a.). Ogura (2009: 73) mentions the polysemy of *cearu* and points out that “*DOE* demonstrates this peculiarity with its focus on phrases and collocations”.

⁵ See Doane’s (ed.) (1978: 188) note in Latin: “*dixitque ei angelus Domini / revertere ad dominam tuam et humiliare sub manibus ipsius*”.

(1) *GenA* 2280

Hire	þa	se	engel		andswarode:	
her	then	the	angel		answered	
“ <u>ne</u>	<u>ceara</u> ⁶	þu	feor	heonon	fleame	<u>dælan</u>
not	care	you	far	from-here	flight	divide
somwist	incre,		<u>ac</u>	þu	<u>sece</u>	eft,
cohabitation	your		but	you	seek	again
earna	þe	ara,		eaðmod	ongin	
earn	you	honour		humble	begin	
dreogan	æfter	dugeðum,		wes	drihtenhold.	
strive	according-to	seemliness		be	lord-dear	

“Then the angel answered her: / “Seek not thou in flight far hence to avoid thy concubinage, but return again, earn honor for thyself, begin submissively to cultivate dutifulness, become dear to thy master.” (translation by Mason 1915 [1970: 181])

As defined in the *DOE*, *cearian* means either ‘to sorrow’ or ‘to take care’. Comparing these, the latter meaning is more suitable for the prohibitive context.⁷ *Ne ceara* in 2281 is used as a prohibition by the angel to Hagar by saying, ‘do not be concerned (with dividing, i.e. breaking up⁸ the cohabitation with Sarai)’ (cf. Stiles’ (1996: 564) discussion for the interpretation).

Another point to note in (1) is its morphology and semantics. In (1), *ceara* in 2281 is in the imperative mood and *sece* is in the subjunctive mood.⁹ These two verbs are coordinated with *ne* ‘not’ and *ac* ‘but’¹⁰ and compose a syntactic parallelism. This instance demonstrates that both imperative and subjunctive moods are akin in the light of order or request, as inferred from the following studies.

Holthausen (ed.) (1914: 101) points out the employment of optative (subjunctive) forms used for imperative meaning (“Opt. für Imp.” (‘optative for imperative’)): These forms are exemplified in three lines in *GenA*: *sece* (2282), *wylle* (2675), and *læde* (2851) although the latter two are not examined here. Visser (1966: 799–800) highlights the lines from *ne ceara* to *ac þu sece eft* (2281–2282) and refers to *ceara* and *sece* as examples for the discussion that “[o]ccasionally one finds the forms (b) and (c) used

⁶ Wells (ed.) (1970: 63) spells *ceare* in 2281. Several other editions and studies use *ceara*, which the present investigation follows.

⁷ It is not clear which of these meanings comes first for the verb *cearian*. In the *OED2*, the first example of †1.a. “[t]o sorrow or grieve” dates *a*1000 (*Christ* 277), and that of 2.b. “[t]o feel concern (great or little), be concerned, trouble oneself, feel interest” is from *Beowulf* (1536).

⁸ See Doane’s (ed.) (1978) definition of *dælan*: “divide, break up” (p. 341).

⁹ In addition, the verb *sece* in the subjunctive is followed by three verbs in the imperative (*earna* and *ongin* in 2283, and *wes* in 2284).

¹⁰ For the word order of this combination phrase, see Millward (1971) referring to lines 2281–2282: “in imperative constructions, the favorite word-order of verb + subject tends to be changed to subject + verb after a coordinating *ne* or *ac*” (p. 31).

in the same sentence” (p. 799). Visser’s (b) seems to correspond to the imperative form¹¹ and (c) to the subjunctive form. Indeed, Visser terms these two forms “modally marked” (p. 798), whereas the indicative form of the verbs, which Visser terms (a), is “modally non-marked” (p. 798).¹² Doane’s (ed.) (1978) comment for *ceara* in 2281 is worth mentioning because it explains the association of the subjunctive with the imperative. Doane considers *ceara* in 2281 an imperative (p. 339), whereas its syntactic counterpart *sece* in 2282 is “hortatory subj” (p. 385, italics by Doane). Mitchell (1985: §908) cites only *ac þu sece eft, earna þe ara* (2282–2283) as an example that “[t]he second person subjunctive expressing a wish or exhortation also occurs after *ond, ac, and ne*”.¹³ The reason for achieving this syntactic and semantic parallelism is that the subjunctive mood here has an exhortative force concerning order or request.

2.1.2. Line 2733: *ne ceara* with *incit*

The second case of *ne ceara* in *GenA* is in (2) (2733). In the context below, which is based on *Genesis* 20.15–16,¹⁴ a king Abimelech tells Sarah and Abraham that they may dwell in his land. Abimelech addresses Sarah first, and then his words are directed to both Sarah and Abraham.¹⁵ The poet explicates the dissuasive situation for Sarah and Abraham from leaving Abimelech’s land by using *Ne ceara* [...] *secan*, which does not correspond to the Latin version literally.

(2) *GenA* 2727–2733

Cwæð	þa	<eft>	raðe		oðre	worde
said	then	again	quickly		other	word
to	Sarran		since	brytta:		
to	Sarah		treasure	dispenser		
“Ne	þearf	ðe	on	edwit	Abraham	settan,
not	need	you	in	reproach	Abraham	set

¹¹ Visser (1966) explain that the verb forms in (b) “represent what some grammars call the ‘imperative’” (p. 799).

¹² Visser (1966) does not distinguish the imperative from the subjunctive semantically, only mentioning the formal difference and referring to them as “modally marked”:

“[i]t seems obvious that there must have been a semantic difference between utterances with the forms in (b) and those with the forms in (c), but it is not easy to find out the exact nature of this difference” (p. 799).

¹³ For problems concerning the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood, see Mitchell (1985: §§879–919) for more details.

¹⁴ See Doane’s (ed.) (1978: 210–212) note in Latin: “*et ait / terra coram vobis est / ubicumque tibi placuerit habita*” (*Genesis* 20.15); “*Sarrae autem dixit / (ecce mille) argenteos dedi (fratri) tuo / (hoc erit tibi in velamen oculorum) / [ad omnes qui tecum sunt et quocumque perrexeris mementoque te deprehensam]*” (*Genesis* 20.16).

¹⁵ For a detailed analysis of this context, see Griffith (2013).

ðin	freadrihten,	þæt	þu	<fletþaðas>,	
your	lord-master	that	you	floor-paths	
mæg	ælfscieno,	mine	træde,		
woman	elf-beautiful	my	walked-on		
ac	him hygeteonan	hwitan	seolfre		
but	him intended-injury	white	silver		
deope	bete.	<u>Ne</u>	<u>ceara</u>	<u>incit</u>	duguða
deeply	compensate	not	care	you-two	people
of	ðisse eðyltyrf	ellor	<u>secan</u> ,		
from	this homeland	elsewhere	seek		
winas	uncuðe,	<u>ac</u>	<u>wuniað</u>	her?	
friends	unknown	but	dwell	here	

“Then quickly the dispenser of treasure spoke further to Sarra, in other words: / “Nor need Abraham, thy lord and master, set it in reproach against thee that thou hast trodden the ways of my dwelling, O woman goddess-fair: for I have richly repaired thine offence with him, with white silver. Do not trouble yourselves to seek riches and strange friends away from this land, but dwell here.”” (translation by Mason 1915 [1970: 192])

The point to discuss for (2) is to which *ceara* or *secan* the pronoun *incit* belongs. *Incit* is a reflexive pronoun with the dual number meaning ‘you two’ (in accusative case of *git*) referring to Sarah and Abraham. If it belongs to *ceara* (singular imperative, the plural being *cearað*), there is a number discord between *ceara* and *incit*.

Many studies have supported the view that *incit* belongs to *ceara*, with which the present investigation would concur. Bouterwek (ed.) (1850: 35) defines *ceara* in 2733 as “refl. mit folg. Infinitiv. imperat”, and no reference is made to the incongruity of number between *ceara* and *incit*. In Grein (ed.) (1857: 71), *ceara* stands as “*cearað*”, as reflected by Holthausen’s (ed.) (1914: 80) “*cëara[ð]*”. This emendation is presumably due to accommodate the form *incit* and the subsequent verb *wuniað* with respect to the syntactic parallelism coordinated by *Ne* and *ac*. Krapp (ed.) (1931), in the note to line 2733, analyses the context as in the following: “[t]he direct address to Sarah in the preceding passage favors a singular here, changing to the plural *wuniað* in l. 2735 because of *incit*” (p. 195). Doane (ed.) (1978: 317) translates *Ne ceara incit duguða of ðisse eðyltyrf ellor secan, winas uncuðe, ac wuniað her* (2733–2735) as “[d]o not you trouble yourselves to seek service, unknown friends, elsewhere out of this land, but dwell ye here”. This translation gives the impression that *incit* belongs to *ceara* and, as Stiles (1996: 563)

critically notes, the nominative “you” and the reflexive “yourselves” are oblivious to number distinction. Ogura (1989: 81) refers to line 2733, listing *cearian* as taking *incit*. Stiles (1996) opines that “it is more natural to take *incit* as a reflexive pronoun going with the imperative *ceara*” (p. 563) and “*sēcān* is a ‘prolative infinitive’ following *Ne ceara incit* in a prohibitive construction” (p. 564). Van Gelderen (2000: 45) cites only *Ne ceara incit duguða* and glosses *incit duguða* as “you (from your) people”, presenting an idiomatic translation “[c]are not to go from this land”. The motion verb “go” may refer to *secan*. Van Gelderen’s citation, however, does not contain the next lines (from 2734); therefore, it obscures the syntactic association of *incit* with *ceara* or *secan*.

There is a shift in the number of addressees within the lines cited in (2). *Ne þearf ðe* in line 2729 is apparently an address to Sarah alone as confirmed from the preceding phrase *Cwæð [...] to Sarran sinces brytta* (‘the dispenser of treasure said to Sarah’) (2727–2728). The prohibitive address continues up to *Ne ceara* in 2733, with its addressee remaining Sarah only. Then the pronoun *incit* ‘you two’ refers to Sarah with Abraham, and the range of addressees is widened. The remaining further words by Abimelech is directed to Sarah and Abraham; therefore, the final verb *wunian* takes the plural.

This observation casts a question about how ‘tight’ the grammatical coordination between the verb and its accompanying reflexive pronoun should be. In (1), a reflexive pronoun for *ne ceara* is absent. In *Ne ceara* and *incit* in (2), the combination is loose in that *ceara* is a singular form, whereas *incit* is a dual form. In order to explain this inconsistency, the contextual factor should not be ignored in discussing what function the reflexive pronoun has. In the light of this observation, *DOE*’s definition (2.b.ii. “with infinitive”) for (1) and (2) is suggestive in that it does not include the reflexive collocation.

2.2. *Psalter Gloss E*

Among the various versions of the *Psalter Glosses* in OE,¹⁶ the *E* version employs *ne ceara* sometimes followed by a reflexive pronoun and an infinitive for Latin *noli(te)* with an infinitive (see Wildhagen 1905: 19, Stiles 1996: 564–565, Ogura 2005: 14–15 and Yamamoto 2010: 96). The examples from *PsGIE* and *PsCaE* are (3)–(7), although (3) takes a present participle instead of an infinitive.

¹⁶ For the textual study of Old English in this *Psalter*, see Pickwood (1992: 18–21) and O’Neill (1992) for more details.

(3) *PsGIE* (Harsley) 102.2¹⁷

[Benedic anima mea dominum et noli oblivisci omnes retributiones eius]

Gebletsæ sæwlæ mine drihten & ne ceæræ þe ofergitende
bless soul my Lord and not care you forgetting
eælle edleænunge his
all benefits his

[*AV*(1611): 103.2 Blesse the LORD, O my soule: & forget not all his benefits]

(4) *PsGIE* (Harsley) 145.2

[nolite confidere in principibus]

ne cearo ðe getrywan on ealdormannum
not care you trust in princes

[*AV*(1611): 146.3 Put not your trust in Princes]

The *DOE* (s.v. *carian*, 2.b.ii.a., citing (4) with (6)–(7) below) has a particular entry for this construction: “*ne cara* with infinitive and reflexive glossing *nolite* ‘do not (do something)’ (PsalterE)”. In (3) and (4), there is number agreement (singular) between the verb and the reflexive pronoun. Not all the examples below, however, take a reflexive or show number congruity between *ceara* and its pronoun. This is illustrated in the following examples (5)–(7).

First, there is no reflexive in (5) (*me* is in the first person object of *gescyndaen* ‘to put to shame’).

(5) *PsGIE* (Harsley) 118.31

[Adhesi testimoniis tuis domine noli me confundere]

Etfylhþ kyþnessæ drihten þine ne ceæro me gescyndaen
adhere testimonies Lord your not care me put-to-shame

[*AV*(1611): 119.31 I haue stuccke vnto thy Testimonies: O LORD put me not to shame]

With respect to the absence of the reflexive, this example is similar to (1) (*ne ceara* with *dælan* in *GenA* 2281).

Second, examples (6) (twice) and (7) exhibit number inconsistency in that the singular *ne ceæro* is followed by the plural *eow*, as Stiles (1996: 565) notes for *Ne ceara incit* in *GenA* (2733, see (2)). There seems to be the case that a multitude of addressee is assumed when *ne ceæro* is singular.

¹⁷ For examples (3)–(9), the corresponding passage from the *Authorised Version* (*AV* for short) is quoted to the aid of understanding the context.

(6) *PsGIE* (Harsley) 104.15

[Nolite tangere christos meos et in prophetis meis nolite malignari]

Ne ceæro eow hrinon cristes min & on witgæn mine
not care you touch anointed-ones my and on prophets my
ne ceæro eow þæm minnæn¹⁸
not care you the evil

[*AV*(1611): 105.15 Touch not mine anointed; and doe my Prophets no harme]

(7) *PsCaE* (Liles) 4(3).3

[Nolite multiplicare loqui sublimia glorificantes recedant vetera de ore vestro quia deus scientiarum dominus est et ipsi preparantes cogitationes]

Ne ceæro eow monigfealdigæn sprece under wundriende gewitæþ
not care you multiply speech under boasting go
ealdæn of muðe owrum forðæn god wisdomæ
old from mouth your for God knowledge
drihten is & he gearwigende geðohtæs
Lord is and he preparing thoughts

[*Cf. AV*(1611): *1 Samuel* 2.3 Talke no more so exceeding proudly, let not arrogancie come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed]

Although there are stylistic differences between (1)–(2) (poetry) and (3)–(7) (gloss for Latin), they can be analysed with regard to the absence and presence of the reflexive pronoun. This investigation presents the question about what function the reflexive pronoun accompanying the finite verb in the texts has.

Among the several versions of OE *Psalter Glosses*, the ‘*ne ceara* (+ reflexive) + infinitive’ construction occurs only in the *E* version (see Yamamoto 2010: 99).¹⁹ This means that this wording might be an idiolect of Eadwine. As this remark suggests, this way of rendering by *ne ceara* with an infinitive and a reflexive should be regarded as a limited case; therefore, the reasons underlying the limited construction in the *E* version should further be examined.

¹⁸ The Latin *malignari* is glossed by *þæm minnæn*; however, its meaning is difficult to decide (see Meritt 1944 for more details).

¹⁹ Taking (4) for example, the corresponding passages in the other *Psalter Glosses* in OE are: *Nyllað getreowan in aldermonnum* (*PsGIA*), *nellað ge getrywan on ealdormannum* (*PsGIC*), *nellen ge getrywan on ealdrum* (*PsGID*), *nylle ge getrywan on ealdormannum* (*PsGIF*), *nelle ge treowan on ealdormonnum* (*PsGIG*), *nylle ge truwian on ealdrum* (*PsGII*), *nellan ge getriwan on ealdre* (*PsGLJ*), and *nelle ge hihtan on ealdermen* (*PsGIK*). See also *ÆCHom* I, 28 415.147: *Nelle ge truwian on ealdormannum* ‘Do not trust in princes’ (see Cook 1898: 116).

3. Old High German *ni curi(t)* + infinitive

In OHG *Tatian*, Latin *noli(te)* with an infinitive is usually rendered by *ni curi(t)* followed by an infinitive.²⁰ *Curi(t)* is derived from a strong verb (second class) *kiosan* ‘to choose’. *Kiosan* is cognate to OE *cēosan* (*BT*: “to CHOOSE, select, elect”) and the Gothic *kiusan* ‘to test’. Their reconstructed form in Proto-Germanic (PGmc) is, according to Kroonen (ed.) (2013: 286), **keusan-* “to trial, select” (cf. Proto-Indo-European (PIE) **ǵeus-* “kosten” (“to taste, try”) (*LIV2*, pp. 166–167); see also Seebold (ed.) 1970: 293–294, Bech 1970, Bammesberger 1986, and Pokorny (ed.) 2005: 399–400). Below are some examples of the construction *ni curi(t)* with an infinitive from *Tatian* (Sievers (ed.) 1892), which attests to the many cases of Latin *noli(te)* with an infinitive.

(8) *Tatian* 19.9

[noli timere, ex hoc iam homines eris capiens]

ni curi thír forhten fon hinan giu fahistu man
not wish you fear from henceforth now catch-you men

[*AV* (1611): *Lk* 5.10 Feare not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men]

Many cases of *ni curi(t)* collocates with *forhten* ‘to fear’ (New High German (NHG) *fürchten*). The reflexive pronoun *thír* (dative singular²¹) in (8) belongs to the infinitive *forhten*, but not to *curi*. In fact, OHG *ni curi(t)* may take another infinitive. In (9), for example, the verb *tuon* ‘to do’ takes no reflexive (*ir* being nominative).

²⁰ Some exceptional cases are *tuon* ‘to do’ with infinitive in *Tatian* 33.2 (*Mt* 6.2): *ni tuo trumbun singan fora thir* for Latin *noli tuba canere ante te* (*AV* 1611: *doe not sound a trumpet before thee*). Note also that the Latin *ne velitis dicere* ‘do not wish to say’ (*velitis* being the second person plural subjunctive present form of *volo*) in *Tatian* 13.14 (*Mt* 3.9) is rendered by *ni curet quedan* (*AV* 1611: *thinke not to say*).

²¹ NHG *fürchten* also takes the reflexive, which is, however, accusative. The objective of the fear is expressed by the prepositional *vor*-phrase (e.g. *Ich fürchte mich vor Hunden* ‘I am afraid of dogs’).

(9) *Tatian* 141.1

[omnia ergo quaecumque dixerint vobis servate et facite, secundum opera vero eorum nolite facere: dicunt enim et non faciunt]

alliu thiu sie iu queden haltet inti tuot, after iro uuercon
all those they you said observe and do after their workes
ni curit ir tuon: sie quedent inti ni tuont
not wish you do they say and not do

[*AV*(1611): *Mt* 23.3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you obserue, that obserue and doe, but doe not ye after their workes: for they say, and doe not]

Another OHG text *Benediktinerregel* (Daab (ed.) 1959) has some passages using *ni curit* for *nolite*. According to Venarde's (ed.) (2011: 2, 34) edition of the Latin version,²² the passage (10) is based on *Psalm* 94/95.8, and (11) is based on *Mt* 23.3.

(10) *Benediktinerregel* 9.192–10.193

[Hodie si vocem eius audieritis, nolite obdurare corda vestra!]

hiutu ibu stimma sina horreet, ir nichuriit furihertan herza iuueriu
today if voice his you-hear you not-wish harden hearts your

[Venarde: "If you hear his voice today, do not harden your hearts"]

(11) *Benediktinerregel* 4.23.205

[Quae dicunt, facite, quae autem faciunt, facere nolite!]

dei qhuuedant, tuat, dei keuuisso tuant, tuan nichurit!
what they-say do what but they-do do not-wish

[Venarde: "Do what they say, not what they do"]

Comparing both passages (10) and (11) with several versions of OE *Benedictine Rule*, *nellan* and some other lexemes are used for the same context, and *ne ceara* appears nowhere.²³

²² The Latin texts in (10) and (11) are from Daab (ed.) (1959: 9–10, 23). Venarde's text is "a transcription of a manuscript of the early ninth century – number 914 of the ancient library of the monastery of St. Gall, in what is now eastern Switzerland – created as part of contemporary cultural and religious programs" (p. vii).

²³ For the reference to the biblical quotations in OE versions, see Cook (1903: 94, 99). For (10), *nellan* is used for *BenRGl* (2.9) (*nolite obdurare* glossed as *nelle ge ahyrdon*), *BenR* (2.7) (*nellen ge* [...] *ahyrdan*), and *BenRW* 3.24 (*nelle ge* [...] *aheardian*). For (11), *BenRGl* (4.21.16) uses *don nelle* (literally 'do-not-wish') for Latin *facere nolite*. *BenR* (4.18.15) uses *ne don* ('not-do'). *BenRW* (4.25.13) uses *ne wilnian* with *to -enne*: *ne wilnige ge to donne* ('not-wish-you-to-do').

There are three points to make for the OHG *ni curi(t)* with an infinitive. First, for the semantic change of *kiosan*, some volitional interpretation of the subject seems to be at work. Based on the etymological meaning mentioned above, the semantic pathway that *kiosan* or *curi(t)* has trodden can be described briefly as (i) ‘to taste, try’ (PIE **ǵeus-*; PGmc **keusan-*) > (ii) ‘to choose, select’ (PGmc **keusan-*; OHG *kiosan*) > (iii) ‘to wish’ (OHG (*ni*) *curi(t)*). In my impression, comparing (i) with (ii) (cf. Sweetser 1990: 36), (ii) is more volitional in that the act of ‘choosing’ rather than ‘tasting’ is to take something with the subject’s own will and not to take another alternative. The change from (ii) to (iii) appears to denote profiling volitional emphasis, where (iii) is quite close to the meaning of OHG *wellen* (cognate to OE *willan*). The pathway from (ii) to (iii) seems to be parallel to the semantic change of the Gothic *wili* ‘will’ noted in *LIV2* (p. 677) as derived from PIE **uelh₁-* “(aus)wählen” (‘to select’). If this speculative path from (i) to (iii) is correct, the third stage for (*ni*) *curi(t)* can be qualified for rendering Latin *noli(te)* meaning ‘(not) to wish’.

Second, the conjugation of *curi(t)* pertains to the semantic affinity between the imperative form and the subjunctive form. According to Braune/Ebbinghaus (1977: 54), *curi(t)* is originally a subjunctive preterite form (“erstartete Konj. Praet.” (‘solidified subjunctive preterite’)) of *kiosan*.²⁴ The crucial factor associating the imperative form with subjunctive form can be such semantic notion as order or request. Both forms refer to some action to be conducted in the future, which at the same time is desired to be carried out by the person to whom the sentence is directed. Although further discussions are mandatory, the formal and semantic origin of OHG *curi(t)* is reminiscent of the similarity between the imperative and subjunctive forms as seen in Section 2.1.1.

Third, how far *ni curi(t)* is preferable to Latin text requires further thorough research. At least in the passages corresponding to (3)–(6) in Notker’s *Psalms* (Tax (ed.) 1983), the ‘*ni curi(t)* + infinitive’ construction is not used. For instance, Latin *noli obliuisci* (102.2) is rendered by *habe unergezzen* (literally ‘have-unforgotten’), and *Nolite tangere* (104.15) by *Ne-ruôrent* (‘not-touch’). As in the case of OE *ne ceara*, the presence or absence of *ni curi(t)* in a given text may depend on its individual textual characteristic, even though the text is based on Latin with *noli(te)*.

²⁴ Similarly, Gothic *ōgs* (infinitive: *ōgan* ‘to fear’) in a prohibitive phrase *ni ōgs þus* ‘do not fear’ (e.g. *Lk* 5.10; cf. (8) of OHG) is used as the second person imperative, but is originally an optative form (see Krause 1968: 218–219, 227, 250). For OHG *ni curi(t)* and/or Gothic *ni ōgs þus* in detail, see otherwise Jacobsohn (1913: 342–343), Bech (1970), Bammesberger (1986), Birkmann (1987: 115–116), Kortlandt (1994: 1, 4), and Ringe (2006: 261–262).

4. Summary and further research problems

The similarities and differences between OE *ne ceara* and OHG *ni curi(t)* can be described according to several linguistic levels. At the lexical level, they are of different origins. OE *ceara* is a weak verb, whereas OHG *curi(t)* originates from the strong verb *kiosan* ‘to choose, select’.

Semantically, *ne ceara* and *ni curi(t)* express negative volition ‘do not wish (to do something)’; thus, both are used for a prohibitive notion. The meaning of *ceara* in this construction can be based on ‘to take care’ rather than ‘to sorrow’. It remains to be seen which meaning derives the other. The meaning of *ni curi(t)* may have undergone a semantic change which goes back to ‘to taste, try’ through ‘to choose, select’. This cursory sketch of the semantic shift awaits further examination.

The morphological description of *ne ceara* and *ni curi(t)* exhibits a close notional relation between the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood. The imperative *ne ceara* can be combined with another verb in the subjunctive mood or in the imperative mood by a correlative set of *ne* ‘not’ and *ac* ‘but’. *Ni curi(t)* is an imperative form originally derived from a subjunctive form. Further studies will need to include the relation between the imperative mood and the subjunctive mood.

At the syntactic level, both *ne ceara* and *ni curi(t)* take an infinitive to denote an action prohibited. *Ne ceara* may be used with a reflexive pronoun either in singular (*þe*) or in dual (*incit*) / plural (*eow*) to whom the prohibitive request is directed. When the reflexive used is in dual or plural when *ceara* is in singular, the focal shift of the addressee needs to be reckoned, thus shedding light on the function of the reflexive.

Stylistically, *ne ceara* and *ni curi(t)* are not exclusively used for Latin *noli(te)*. *Ne ceara* in OE *PsGIE* (and *PsCaE*) and *ni curi(t)* in OHG *Tatian* and *Benediktinerregel* render Latin *noli(te)*. The two attestations of *ne ceara* in *GenA* do not have the exact correspondence to the Latin *Genesis*, and Notker’s *Psalms* (at least discussed in this study) does not use *ni curi(t)*. These observations make it questionable if the constructions with *ne ceara* or *ni curi(t)* are influenced by Latin usage. Why *ne ceara* and *ni curi(t)* appear in the restricted corpora is open to further investigation.

This paper aimed to demonstrate that OE ‘*ne ceara* + infinitive’ is comparable to OHG ‘*ni curi(t)* + infinitive’ in a more concrete fashion than Grimm has briefly described. The constructions in both languages are rather limited in their occurrences; however, examining such minor usages from a comparative viewpoint will contribute to procuring a deeper insight into the Germanic language.

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Old High German is an inflected language, and as such its nouns, pronouns, and adjectives must be declined in order to serve a grammatical function. A set of declined forms of the same word pattern is called a declension. There are five grammatical cases in Old High German. A complete declension consists of five grammatical cases. The nominative case, which is used to express the subject of a statement. It is also used with copulative verbs.