



FIG. 10. *Beowulf*, ll. 2341b-44.

Variation, Coordination, and Ellipsis (II)

Variation within the sentence pictured in Fig. 10 is limited to a pair of NP_{gen} constructions **læn-daga** and **worulde lifes**; both are dependents of **ende**, which in turn is the complement (object) of **sceolde .. gebīdan** ‘was to experience the end of transitory-days, (end of) this world’s life.’

Coordination is clearly marked by **and .. samod** ‘and .. together with,’ or simply ‘and .. also.’ Because the only overt coordinate construction is **se wyrm** ‘the serpent,’ it could be taken as a subject coordinate with **æpeling ær-gōd** ‘the prince good-from-times-past’; these adversaries will soon in fact kill each other. However, the following clause (**þēah þe ..**) is related to **se wyrm** alone, as is clear from the deletion of the subject: deletion of the subject would not occur unless the referent was unchanged from the one immediately preceding, in this case in its superordinate clause. Besides, the singular verb **hēolde** ‘held’ precludes the clause having had a coordinate (hence plural) subject deleted. From the context—even from general knowledge of the world—we know, too, that it was the dragon only that long had held the treasure: ‘although Δ long had held that treasure.’

So the coordination is best taken at the level of the principal (and initial) sentences. In the first of these the predication is full, with a two-part verb, a direct object (NP_{acc}), and variant dependents on that object. In the second the same full predicate is apposite and its omission artful, for the extended recursion it calls for: ‘and the serpent also [had to experience ...].’

Try to imagine the concessive clause preceding the second principal clause (following conjunction *and*). It would require an overt grammatical subject (since the topical subject has changed), and the second principal clause would need a pro-verb of some sort, and maybe an ‘additive’ adverb such as *ēac*. The concession would change from leaving an ‘although’ reminder to explaining ‘somehow it still happened.’

2341	sceolde ? ()ΔΔ / ()þend*1læn-3-daga ⁵
2342	æpeling ³ ær-3-gōd ³ ende ? ge- / -bīdan ⁴
2343	worulde ⁴ lifes ⁴ 7 ¹ se ² wyrm ³ so ⁹ mod ³
2344	þēah ¹ ðe ³ hord-4-welan ⁵ hēolde ³ lange /
