HLLNSA 09

Historical Language and Literacy in the North Sea Area

ABSTRACTS

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Acknowledgements

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Plenaries

Michael Benskin
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On some supposed evidence for contact between England and Norway during the pre-viking period

The first explicit record of a Norwegian or of any other Scandinavian landfall in England is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's annal for 787. During the last twenty-five years or so, it has become widely believed that this annal, with other texts, shows that by the time of the raid on Lindisfarne (793), Norwegians were already a familiar sight in English ports; the fifth- and sixth-century contacts indicated by the archaeology may never have been altogether broken. For the English, what was new about the first hostilities was not the fact of Norwegian voyages to England, but what Norwegian voyagers to England started to do: 'No longer traders but raiders'. For this account there are three authorising texts: besides the annal for 787 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle are Alcuin's letter to the king of Northumbria after the sack of Lindisfarne, and (oddly) Bede's commentary on the Book of Kings. From the advertised lecture it will appear that in different ways all have been badly misread, and matters of principle will be as much at issue as the particular contents of the texts.

Jan Ragnar Hagland
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On Literacy in Late Medieval Norway

The main theme of the conference being «Historical Language and Literacy in the North Sea Area» I will, in my talk, try to emphasize in particular the second part of this thematic dichotomy, that is to say the historical literacy part of it.

It is a fact that studies and estimates of the level of literacy at large, including lay literacy, in late medieval Western Europe have been highlighted in scholarly work on literacy over the course of the last couple of decades, if not longer. This does not, I think it is fair to say, include Norwegian literacy, which, in most meanings of the term has been, and still is, much of a white spot on any map of literacy in the North Sea area. In order to facilitate comparative discussions on these matters, I will, in my presentation, attempt at making some sketches so as to try to make this spot somewhat less white.

If we think of Norway in geographical rather than political terms, secular administrative literacy at the highest level of society was to a large extent absent in this period, based as it was primarily in Denmark, the historical reasons for which we will not have time to expand on at any length. This is to say that Norwegian literacy in general, at least in the sense of literacy in the Norwegian language, did not have the support or the drive of a central administrative force that can be seen elsewhere. Studies in administrative literacy to a great extent have to deal with ”written records, rather than literate people” as Clanchy (1993, 20) puts it, and may thus lead us to think “that literacy is primarily a technology, of which records are the end-product” to quote him once again. For the study of literate people and local administrative literacy in the period that concerns us here, this “end product”-part – a relatively large corpus of charters – constitutes practically all of the available source material. This implies, in our context, that almost all we know about local administrative literacy has to do with the legal system in one way or the other. Administrative literacy at the highest level of society, secular as well as ecclesiastical, shall be left at that in my presentation. This implies also that literacy involving Latin by and large falls outside the scope of my talk.

I shall in consequence, use my allotted time at the conference to try and shed some light upon the Norwegian source material and explore what answers we may deduce from it. Who were the literate people in Norway apart from a probably quite restricted few trained scribes in administrative positions, we may ask. Or to put it differently: To what extent is it possible to unveil literacy on the basis of the source material we have got? These are, of course, difficult questions to answer, but I will at least make an effort to see how far we can get.

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Carole Hough
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The Northern Isles and their neighbours: place-names and language contact reconsidered

According to the established models of language contact, even the most superficial communication between incoming settlers and an indigenous population leads to the survival of existing place-names. Partly because of their role as labels, which can be used without understanding of semantic content, place-names are easily transferred from one speech community to another. Thus whereas each new group of settlers coins place-names in their own language, some part of the existing toponymicon is retained, resulting in a palimpsest of linguistic strata within the place-name corpus.

The expected survival of place-names notoriously failed to occur in the Northern Isles, where the Scandinavian settlements of c. 800 AD onwards appear to have resulted in the almost total obliteration of the earlier Pictish toponymicon. This situation is considered to be so unusual that it has been investigated in depth on many occasions. However, no widely accepted explanation has yet been found. Competing theories are that the Picts were displaced, enslaved, or murdered, or that they were gradually assimilated into Scandinavian society. It has also been suggested that their place-names have in fact survived but in an unrecognisable form.

The argument of the present paper is two-fold. Firstly, it sets out to demonstrate that the situation in the Northern Isles is less unusual than it has been taken to be. Close parallels may be drawn with southern Britain, where the existing corpus of British place-names appears similarly to have been wiped out as a result of the Anglo-Saxon settlements of c. 450 AD onwards. Here too the linguistic evidence is difficult to reconcile with historical and archaeological data, a problem that has been addressed but not resolved by a growing body of recent scholarship. Again, competing theories are that the Britons were displaced, enslaved, or murdered, or that they were gradually assimilated into Anglo-Saxon society; and it has been suggested their place-names too may have survived but in an unrecognisable form. Further areas where the predicted survival of an existing toponymicon failed to occur include the Western Isles, the Isle of Man and north-east Scotland. Taken together, these provide a context for regarding the situation in the Northern Isles as by no means exceptional.

Where empirical data from a range of dates and geographical areas are inconsistent with an established theoretical model, it may be appropriate to consider the possibility that the model itself may be flawed. The second part of this paper draws on recent work in linguistics and onomastics in an attempt to suggest where such a flaw may lie. It concludes by proposing a revised model that takes account of the changing role of names through time.

Lister M. Matheson
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Language and Literacy in Late Medieval England: The Lambeth 84 Scribe

The dialects of later fifteenth-century Middle English authors and scribes are, as M. L. Samuels (1981) has pointed out, often difficult to localize if data from *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (1986) are used alone. Where available, external, non-linguistic evidence associating the writer with a particular area is often necessary to determine provenance. Complicating factors at work can include the adoption of standardized spellings, forms from so-called ‘Chancery English,’ and blends of forms from different regions (Benskin and Laing’s ‘Mischsprachen’).

Chances of discovering useful non-linguistic evidence are increased in the case of scribes who wrote (or participated in the writing of) multiple manuscripts, such as the Beryn Scribe (Mooney and Matheson 2003) or the Hammond Scribe (Matheson 2006).

The present paper will analyse and discuss the dialect and literary knowledge of a late fifteenth-century scribe who has been identified as the writer/compiler of three substantial manuscripts—Oxford, Trinity College 29; San Marino, Huntington Library HM 144; and London, Lambeth Palace Library 84 (Harris 1998; Doyle 2005)—that contain remarkable collections of secular and religious texts. The compiler’s language can be correlated to what physical and textual evidence of provenance can be gleaned from his books. Thus, for example, a reinforcing strip of parchment in the Huntington MS contains text pertaining to the Augustinian house at Bisham Montague in Berkshire, which might point toward a monastic origin. Further, the compiler had ready access to an extremely wide range of Middle English manuscript and printed texts, including continued use in all three of his manuscripts of Caxton’s edition of John Trevisa’s translation of the *Polychronicon* (published in 1482).

This combination of linguistic and non-linguistic evidence will, I hope, cast considerable light on the identity of the Lambeth 84 Scribe and the circumstances of his working milieu, while his treatment of the orthography of his exemplars adds to our knowledge of scribal attitudes towards the English language at an important period in its development.

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English vernacular universals - grammar with a past?

Present-day English vernaculars share a number of non-standard features such as negative concord and the use of the singular past-tense form *was* with plural subjects. As these features are so widespread, J.K. Chambers (2004) argues that it is difficult to maintain that they have spread from a single ancestor dialect to the rest. A language-internal structural position is offered as an alternative interpretation, with the assumption that these features represent primitive linguistic processes suppressed in the standard language. What interests the historical linguist is the time depth of these features. If they are to count as vernacular primitives historically, they ought to be widespread in the past.

My contribution investigates the social embedding across time of a set of these morpho-syntactic features referred to as English ‘vernacular universals’ or ‘angloversals’. The historical dimension will shed light on claims made about their historicity in current sociolinguistic literature. An intriguing issue is the process as a result of which these features disappear from mainstream, supralocal varieties and come to be shared by a number of regional ones. The studies I have carried out using the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (CEEC, CEECE; 1400-1800; Nevalainen 2006a, b) suggest that these ‘vernacular universals’ have varying time-depths. The empirical evidence I have analysed also warrants the conclusion that they are likely to have varying dialectal backgrounds.

Placing ‘vernacular universals’ within a broader sociolinguistic framework, I will also consider the extent to which we can reconstruct vernaculars on the basis of written evidence. Of particular interest here is dialect levelling, and the subsequent rise of supralocal varieties. Another dimension to consider concerns variation. Chambers bases his ‘vernacular universals’ on primitive linguistic processes, which presuppose levelled vernaculars. This premise can be, and has been, contested.

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Papers

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The Seville Corpus of Northern English Texts (SCONE): editing and tagging Old Northumbrian texts.

This paper describes on-going research carried out within the SCONE Project (Seville Corpus of Northern English) at the University of Seville. The SCONE Project started in 2008 as part of a wider project on the history of the northern varieties of British English, and from a previous project, which collected and analysed a number of texts from the 7th to the 16th centuries. SCONE will make these texts available through the Web to the research community, providing both the editions of the manuscripts and information on the language at different linguistic levels, and allowing users to search for specific features across texts.

At a previous conference (ICOME 6) we explained the criteria followed in editing the texts, the features we have decided to tag, and the process of creating the electronic corpus. This paper focuses on the edition and tagging of the Old Northumbrian texts, which complete the first stage of the project.

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Digital Resources for the Study of the History of Scots and English

This paper will describe digital resources from the University of Glasgow School of English and Scottish Language and Literature (SESLL). I will show examples from the Historical Thesaurus of English (HTE), the Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech (SCOTS) and from the Corpus of Modern Scottish Writing (CMSW).

The SCOTS corpus provides an electronic corpus of both written and spoken texts for the languages of Scotland and covers the period from 1945 to 2007. It has texts in several genres, sound recordings and video recordings. The materials all have extensive sociolinguistic metadata. It has been online since November 2004, and, after regular updates and additions, it reached a total of 4 million words of text in May 2007. It is online at http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/.

The CMSW corpus covers the period 1700 to1945. It will be a freely accessible, online corpus. The resource will provide digital images of texts and searchable transcriptions. Some texts are chosen as 'written records of speech', e.g. minutes of meetings and transcripts of court proceedings. Other genres include personal writing, expository prose, verse/drama, journalism, and writing by commentators on language. The aim is to have a representative sample of text types, broadly comparable to that of the Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots (HCOS). It will be available online later this year at http://www.scottishcorpus.ac.uk/cmsw/.

The HTE is the first historical thesaurus to be created in any language and it is the largest thesaurus that we know of. The database contains around 750,000 word meanings, representing the English vocabulary from Old English (c700 A.D.) to the present, arranged according to their meanings and dates of use. The data are drawn from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, its supplements, and dictionaries of Old English. It will be published in two printed volumes in October 2009 and available online in 2010. A sub-set of the HTE is available online now at http://libra.englang.arts.gla.ac.uk/historicalthesaurus/.

Arne Apelseth
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Topics and genres favoured by 18th century peasant writers

The latter part of the 18th century instigated a change in literate behaviour, reshaping the old textual organization and participation as well as creating new arenas for writing. Peasant writing during the latter half of the 18th century seems to partly reflect a steady increase of textual interest and slow improvement of writing skills, partly a change in the literate topics and textual typologies that were relevant for the unschooled.

Whereas rather few peasants can be positively identified as genre-oriented writers prior to 1750, peasant writing in a number of genres reached almost uncontrollable figures by the turn of the century. It seems obvious that such a transition cannot be given sufficient explanation only by pointing to the primitive schooling programmes of this period. Neither can the assumed general improvement of literate skills among commoners account for the changes alone. Some premises of social or cultural interaction should probably be added, in particular the emerging but (for a long time) subtle concept of the people as literate citizens.

Before the turn of the century, the topics and the genres related to peasant writing had multiplied. However, a general feature of this writing is its orientation towards the practical and its relations to everyday life. This counts even for a large part of the lay religious writing. This is typified through the writings of the Hauge revival movement, notwithstanding its historical legacy as being industrious and spiritualist.

Galina Borshtshanenko
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The form and function of the genitive in late medieval London English across different registers

The genitive was the most complex case in Old English. Its traces can still be seen in Modern English nouns. In the present paper I have examined the form (morphological and syntactic) and function (syntactic and semantic) of the genitive in late medieval London English across different register categories. The evidence from the representative sample corpus reveals that the distinction between different registers is an important factor in the investigation of the genitive, a fact neglected in earlier studies on the Middle English genitive. While verse registers (religious verse and literary verse), behave in a fairly similar way, prose registers (legal prose and religious prose) exhibit considerable differences with respect to almost every factor investigated. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that the genre factor also exerts influence on the distribution of different forms and functions of the genitive.

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The fate of /fn-/

In Old English and Middle English a number of words had word initial /fn-/, descended from Indo-European /pn-/. This /fn-/ sequence had clearly ceased to be in use after c. 1500, for no such forms are recorded beyond that period, the latest being *fnast(yng),* and *fnese*/*fnesyng*, all dated 1500 in *MED*. These Middle English forms consist of *fnæd* n., *fnast* n., *fnasten* v., *fnasting,* ger., *fnattart* n., *fnatted* adj., *fnattednes* n., *fnesen* v., *fnesi* adj., *fnesing* ger., and *fnort*/*fnert/fnirten* v. Recorded in OE, but not in ME, is the noun *fnora.* Very many of these items have close semantic parallels in *sn-* forms, generally designated as either ‘of obscure origin’ or ‘(probably) imitative’ in *OED*. In the one instance – *sneeze* v. – where a relationship

with ME *fnesen* v. is accepted, its development is unconvincingly attributed to misreading or misprinting of *fn-*.

This short paper argues for a regular, unproblematic descent of the /sn-/ forms from /fn/ and considers the phonological and phonaesthetic factors which may have led to the replacement of /fn-/. It will also investigate patterns of survival or loss of /fn-/ in other Germanic languages, where it survives in Dutch and in the North Germanic languages, but has disappeared from modern High German.

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Why does Frisian language exist?

As it is commonly known the Frisians and their language were first mentioned in Pliny's *Belgica* and later on in *Germania* written by Tacitus. From these sources we find out that the Frisians inhabited the area between the Rhine in the west and the Ems in the east. Throughout the years Frisian territories bordered first on the Roman Empire, later on the Carolingian Empire, whose languages and culture were dominant in Europe. Yet, the language of the Frisians managed to survive and grow independently.

The main goal of this presentation is to answer the question why Frisian language managed to survive the constant influence of the surrounding larger languages like Latin, Frankish or other Germanic languages and developed its own lexical, grammatical and orthographical structure. The first reason to be analyzed is the geographic distribution of Frisian. The area of Frisian speaking community was most of the time inaccessible due to the surrounding mud and marshes. Thus, it has rarely been invaded or totally conquered. Due to geographical reason migrations in this area were also rare, which gave Frisian the dominant position as far as communication is concerned.

The second issue to be considered is the cultural and religious status of the Frisian language. Undoubtedly, language survives through its use in cultural and religious ceremonies as well as in writings. The earliest attestations of Frisian come from the inscriptions mainly on the coins and swords. Later on, despite the general dominance of Latin in Europe, there appear legal texts written in Frisian, which has an impact on establishing a standard written language of that time. Codification of the law with the usage of Frisian language must have had an impact on the usage of the language and its future existence and growth. Languages evolve and interact with one another. Frisian language also experienced some changes due to the contact with other languages, yet, it has never been absorbed or dominated.

The third thing to be analysed is the lexical variety of Frisian language and its complexity, which made its survival possible. The presentation is going to expound upon all the mentioned factors and their role in the preservation of Frisian until today.

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Purity or treachery? Foreign Influences on Germanic Derivatives in Early Middle English

Early Middle English features a substantial number of synonymous derivations which share the same base but contain differing suffixes of Germanic origin. The base *fair*, for instance, can attract as many as four derivational suffixes (*-hood*, *-leikr*, *-ness* and *-ship*), yielding abstract nouns with the meaning ‘beauty’. On the basis of data drawn from the *Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English (LAEME)* it can be shown that temporal developments as well as regional factors and text type usage often have a bearing on which suffix is chosen in a particular context.

The aim of this paper is to investigate in what way already existing derivatives are affected by the introduction of linguistic elements of Romance origin into the English language. While the extent of this foreign influence is still somewhat limited in Early Middle English (see Zbierska-Sawala 1993, Dalton-Puffer 1996 and Ciszek 2008), some interesting developments can already be observed in *LAEME*: Both Germanic and

Romance suffixes may be attached to the same base (as in *falsehood, -ness*, *-ship* and *falsity*); Germanic derivatives may be confronted with synonymous loan words which display a corresponding Romance version of the Germanic base (compare *threehood, threeness* and *trinity*); finally, Germanic formations may encounter competition from Romance loan words which do not exhibit the same word structure, yet carry the same meaning (e.g. Old English *cleanness*, Early Middle English *cleanship* as well as the loans *purity* and *chastity* can refer to moral purity or innocence). These constellations will be examined in more detail by observing their developments within Early Middle English and considering which factors, in particular regional usage, text type, context and the general linguistic backdrop of Early Middle English, may have influenced the choice of one formation over the other.

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The Northern Subject Rule: evidence from the *Lindisfarne Gospels.*

Research into varieties of modern English reveals that the analogical extension of “default singulars” (Chambers 2004), such as *was*, is subject to a graded subject hierarchy whereby certain subjects types favour the occurrence of the default singular form (Feagin 1979, Eisikovits 1991, Schreier 2002). Likewise, research into the Northern Subject Rule (NSR) in dialects where it still prevails indicates this grammatical phenomenon is also subject to a similar subject hierarchy (Wolfram and Christian 1976, Montgomery 1997).

Whereas most research into the NSR regards the verbal-*s* suffix as a retention of the inherited ME plural suffix (Pietsch 2005), I explore the hypothesis that the development of the NSR follows the pattern of default singular levelling and is subject to the same subject hierarchy constraint. Within the framework of Labov´s premise (1974:825), ‘On the use of the present to explain the past’, this paper, which forms part of a wider project to trace the origin and development of the NSR, presents the results of research into present indicative verbal morphology according to subject type in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.

Despite there being no indication of the NSR in the *Lindisfarne Gospels* (De Haas 2006), a detailed study of how the verbal-*s* spread throughout the present indicative paradigm according to subject type is certain to throw light on the nature of the NSR and the development of this phenomenon.

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Winds of the North – Word order change in Old and Middle English and language contacts

While it is still controversial to regard the contact situation as the main trigger for word order change in English, some credit might be given to the Anglo-Scandinavian linguistic cross-encounters for enhancing the process of inflectional erosion in its early stages. This morphological change, especially the attrition of case inflections on nouns, could further lead to shift in word order, as a language tends to compensate for the loss of its components so that its communicative capability is maintained. (cf. Hock and Joseph 1996: 211).

Previous research has already shown that inflections began to erode first in northern Middle English texts (e.g. Milroy 1992; Fischer 1992). The present study attempts, therefore, to examine whether the growing prevalence of the SVO word order from Old English onwards was similarly conditioned by geographical factors and whether the two changes had, indeed, a common starting point in some geographical area. The results of my own searches through two electronic corpora of Old (YCOE) and Middle English (PPCME2) reveal an interesting correlation between the growing popularity of the SVO order and a decreasing tolerance for sequences of two nouns (but not NPs) following each other immediately. Both changes seem to converge in the North, the dialect area corresponding to the region of Scandinavian settlements at these early periods. The present study focused on the processes of the attrition of case inflections and word order shifts in the same syntactic environment, namely, involving sequences of elements which were (originally) inflected. The fact that the results were similar both at sentence level and at particular clause levels suggests that the extensive contacts between the Anglian and the Scandinavian populations may well have produced something more than mere lexical borrowing.

The output has been filtered through the statistical measure of the coefficient of variation (CV), defined as the ratio of the standard deviation to the arithmetic mean (Frank & Althonen 1994: 58-59). It is a useful statistical tool for comparing degree of variation from one data series to another. The lower the value of CV, the more the overall data approximate to the mean (i.e. the more regular rate of the prevalence of the investigated feature). In the present study, the CV was found to be useful in cases where the mean values were very similar or identical. In those cases, the coefficient was able to point to the data set (i.e. dialect set) with the most regular dispersion of the feature, as opposed to the data samples where the similar mean values were obtained from a highly fluctuating output. In this respect, the CV could also be treated as a significance test tool.

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PPCME2 = *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English* (Kroch & Taylor 2000).

YCOE = *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (Taylor et al. 2003).

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For heaven’s sake: The Scandinavian contribution to a semantic field in Old and Middle English

In the transition between Old and Middle English the semantic field concerning ‘sky’, ‘air’, and ‘cloud’ underwent major changes. Such transformations consisted of semantic shifts of native words as well as of the introduction of loanwords from French, such as ME *air*, *firmament*, and *spēre*, and Norse, such as ME *skīe* / *skeu*, and *loft*. My paper will focus on the latter two words, trying to outline their diachronic development from their Germanic antecedents and cognates to Modern English. Particular attention will be drawn to the contexts of their very first occurrences in Old and Middle English and what these contexts can reveal about the motivation and strategies of the lexical borrowing.

Both *loft* and *sky* represent two intriguing case studies, which pose more than one challenge to received notions concerning Norse-derived vocabulary in English. As far as *loft* is concerned, it can be rated among the earliest Norse loanwords, being attested twice in Ælfric († *c*. 1010), and existing alongside the well-established native cognate OE *lyft*. Against the general background of Norse-derived vocabulary in Old English, *loft* is atypical in at least three respects: firstly, because it is not a technical term; secondly, because it has become established in English, going through a progressive semantic specialisation as it did so; finally, because it is first attested within the corpus of Ælfric, the most admired and rigorous representative of Late West Saxon.

As to *sky*, it appears to have started life as a word belonging to what might be called the shared North-Sea Germanic – Norse lexicon, with no cognates in the other old Germanic languages. Interestingly, the native Anglo-Saxon lexeme *scēo* ‘cloud’, itself a *hapax legomenon* in Old English, would soon die out while its Scandinavian cognate *ský* would eventually emerge as the most widespread term for ‘sky, firmament, the vault of heaven’.

My paper will aim to assess to what extent OE *lyft* / ON *lopt* and OE *scēo* / ON *ský* can be considered to be competing doublets, if at all, as well as to question the assumption that the undisputed success of both these

Scandinavian borrowings alongside or in place of their Anglo-Saxon cognates can be put down to their etymological connections with the latter.

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The Yorkshire Dialect in the Early Nineteenth Century: Its Literary Representation

Since the 1500s until the mid-nineteenth century the literary representation of dialect and dialect literature is one of the means through which regional varieties can nowadays be diachronically studied. The information provided by contemporary scholars, orthoepists, antiquarians or glossarists, is complemented by that selected by playwrights, poets, prosewriters and novelists.

Yorkshire dialect literature started as early as 1673, *A Yorkshire dialogue… between an Aud Wife, a Lass and a Butcher*, to continue in 1683, with George Meriton´s *A Yorkshire Dialogue*, and in *I'll tell o how Gilbert Scott sowd is mere Berry'*. Information about the Yorkshire dialect provided by scholars dates back to 1691, the date of publication of Francis Brokesby's appendix to the second edition of John Ray's *A Collection of Words not Generally used*.

The aim of this paper is a description of the early nineteenth century traits chosen by writers for their representation of morphosyntactical, phonological and lexical features of Yorkshire dialect. Empirical research will be based on *The Salamanca Corpus.*

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Asymmetries in Old/Early Middle English and Modern German Derivation

Derivation is traditionally defined as a morphological process by which new lexemes are formed from already existing ones by means of bound morphemes attached to lexical bases in a rule-governed (and thus predictable) way. A look at empirical data suggests that the extent to which this process is used for the formation of different types of nouns varies greatly among the different conceptual categories that nouns may belong to, such as Agent, Location or Abstract. My empirical analysis of derivational suffixes in Old and early Middle English, for instance, revealed that suffixed nouns denoting abstract concepts (e.g. *frēo-dōm* 'freedom') made up 55-60% of all suffixed nouns found in the underlying corpus, whereas suffixed nouns denoting locations (e.g. *wun-ung* 'dwelling place') made up only 3-5%, to take the most extreme cases. Exactly the same picture arises from Wellmann's data (1975) on Modern German nominal derivation. Obviously, some concepts (e.g. Location) are less likely to be expressed by means of derivational processes than others (e.g. Abstract). This suggests that the increase rate of new lexemes produced by derivation tends to be unbalanced in some languages, with some types of nouns forming a larger cohort of morphologically related words than others.

In my contribution I will briefly present empirical data from Old and early Middle English as well as from Modern German nominal suffixation, and then discuss the problem from an onomasiological perspective. Based on Štekauer's onomasiological approach to word-formation (1998, 2005), I will argue the following: the formation of new naming units depends on preferences of language users in terms of employing different cognitive processes underlying the act of naming, on the one hand, and the different ways of their linguistic representation, on the other. From a methodological point of view it is therefore insufficient to describe morphological productivity only in terms of the productivity of single word-formation types (e.g. 'A + -*ness*' is more productive than 'A + -*dom*'). Rather, one should also include productivity measures of *onomasiological types*, that is, the degree to which word-formation rules or specific morphological types are used in particular semantic domains to express particular types of concepts (e.g. Location). This way, it is possible to document diachronic changes that occurred in the expression type of particular concepts, which I will illustrate for the case of English.

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The Insular Origins of Old Norse Literature

The paper offers a consideration of eddic and skaldic verse, the prose of sagas, and epigraphic inscriptions in the British Isles as an expression in Old Norse of response to the earlier emergence of Insular Latin, Old Welsh, Old Irish,and Old English literatures, and a precursor to the development of Old French literature in Britain.

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**The translations at the court of Hákon Hákonarson:
A well planed and highly selective programme**

In the 13th century, the courtly literature of feudal Europe was obviously of interest to the North, and especially in Norway and Iceland, as numerous translations of works from Old French attest. The first one was probably completed in 1226 at the court of Hákon Hákonarson, king of Norway: It was the translation of Thomas' *Tristan*, executed by abbot Robert, on the king's initiative. And several translations followed – also completed at the court of Hákon Hákonarson: Translations of epic poems, of courtly romances and *lais*, of adventure romances and of a *fabliau*. In all cases, we ought to speak of adaptations and not of word-for-word translations. These texts are clearly adapted to the cultural context intended to receive them:

They are in prose and not in verses, they are generally shorter than the originals, they are the results of a deliberate and systematic censure.

Together these literary works form an impressive corpus which, I believe, has been elaborated for didactical purpose and in order to support Hákon Hákonarsons project to build a monarchy *à l'européenne*. For that, some literary works were selected and – in their adaptations - some ethical and social values promoted while some others were not. In the same way, in my opinion, some great literary works were intentionally ignored and remained untranslated as did *Lancelot ou le Chevalier de la charrette* and *Cligès* by Chrétien de Troyes and *Eliduc* by Marie de France.

Hákon Hákonarson's programme of translations - and in particular the values these works promoted and programme's great omissions - is what I intend to discuss in this paper.

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Adjectival Inflection in Early Middle English: Tracing the Last Remnants of a Fully Inflected System in the East Midlands

One of the main patterns of change attributed to the close language contact in the Danelaw is the gradual loss of inflections (e.g. Baugh and Cable 1993: 101), which affected adjectives especially. Starting in the Late Old English period, the rather complex system of Old English adjective inflection was simplified until there was only one opposition left: uninflected vs. -*e*. There is general agreement that the South and South-West Midlands were the most conservative dialects and that adjectival inflection survived much longer in these areas than elsewhere (e.g. Brunner 1963: §43); however, traces of the old system can still be localized in a few manuscripts northeast of Watling Street.

In this paper, I trace the last remnants of the highly inflected Old English adjective system in the East Midlands, analysing data from the *Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English (LAEME)* (Laing and Lass 2007). Special focus is given to case marking and the strong/weak opposition.

Moreover, I discuss possible reasons for the last strongholds of adjectival inflection in these varieties and offer some possible explanations as to why these variants persevered in these locales before the old system disintegrated.

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The odd one out? Middle Dutch rhymed epic literature from a bird's eye-perspective

The corpus of epic literature extant from the medieval Low Countries is fairly large but displays a high degree of versificatory uniformity: a standardized rhyming technique was employed in all subgenres and regions (i.e. rhymed couplets). Until now, very little research has been devoted to rhyme, notwithstanding the fact that rhyme words pop up as an evident field of investigation, if one is looking for a constant textual feature, common to all texts and authors, so that they can be compared. In this paper, I will deal with the stylistic evolution of the genre, focussing on two basic facts:

- The manuscriptal tradition takes off rather late (around 1200 AD), leaving us with no clues as to the versification of Dutch literature in earlier times. It is interesting to address the matter whether we should assume an assonantic tradition (cf. *Romania*), an alliterative one (cf. *Germania*) or a mixture of both (cf. *Britisch Isles*)?

- Rhymed Middle Dutch literature, once emerged, remained popular *throughout* the Middle Ages. Whereas e.g. French literature soon witnessed the appearance of prose forms, Middle Dutch literature held on to its rhyme until extremely late. This particular kind of 'form traditionalism' is unparalleled in European literary history and remains, as yet, extremely difficult to interpret.

These two facts will be brought together from a stylistic point of view. It will be argued that the device of rhyme might have been introduced shortly before the start of the manuscriptal tradition. This would (help) explain why it took this literature so long to 'get bored' of its rhyme.

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The influence of Latin upon runic inscriptions from the third period

We analysed word order configurations in runic inscriptions from all the three periods and noticed that in the third period, unlike we expected, there was a decreasing number of VO word order configurations as compared with the previous runic period II. We claim that this situation was due to Latin influence.

In runic inscriptions from the third period it was generally more usual for pronominal objects to occur after the verb in main clauses rather than before it, as can be illustrated by the Listerby church inscription below:

[1] Touæ giorþæ **mik** ok niklif mik to(u)æ gorþæ **mik** moruþ (Moltke, 1981: 454)

When pronominal objects appeared before the verb in main clauses, like in the Vestra Sallerup font, Skåne:

[2]   + marten : **mik** : giarþe + (Moltke, 1981: 547)

they most likely reflected the Latin pattern found for example in the Fåborg censer Latin inscription, Fyn:

[3]   magistær : iakobus : ruffus : fabær : **me** feciþ   (Moltke, 1981: 524)
+=+S+**do**+V+…

That it was more natural for the third period runic inscriptions to place pronominal objects after the verb can be evidenced by numerous cases where pronominal objects were agglutinated at the end of the verb like in the the Bregninge stone inscription, Tåsinge:

[4]   + suen : sa zærsuæn : ligærhæunde : helge diakææn : ri stæ**mek** :
mæstær : bo : gyorþæ**mk**   (Moltke, 1981: 415)

As regards dependent clauses of the third period runic inscriptions, it was, however, more natural to place pronominal objects according to the Germanic dependent clause pattern, that is, before the verb, as illustrated by the Lyngsjö church inscription:

[5]   Gesus krist ..ni : þan ær **mik** skref   (Moltke, 1981: 432).

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On the origin of the English progressive: an assessment

In this paper I assess some hypotheses concerning the origin of the English progressive, including the *be on hunting*/Celtic-influence hypothesis, what I will refer to as the ‘subjective marker hypothesis’, the adjectival hypothesis, and the agent noun hypothesis. I argue that none of the existing

hypotheses are convincing. My claim is based on a study of the function of the progressive in Old English, which shows that the Old English progressive is functionally far too heterogeneous to justify any single-origin hypothesis. A mixed-origin hypothesis seems much more plausible. My claims are based on a study of the progressive in The York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose. I also use data from the Helsinki Corpus and from a self-compiled corpus of Middle English.

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Taboo as reflected in the figurative sense of CANIDAE **terms in English and Swedish: a diachronic analysis**

Referring to the phenomenon of taboo, Ullman (1951: 76) pointed out that "linguistic superstitions and prohibitions have left their imprint on many sectors of the vocabulary." The category **ANIMALS** was one of the fields significantly affected by taboo restrictions, triggered mostly by totemism, i.e. the system of beliefs ordering the social reality in terms of natural objects (cf. Foley 1997, Freud 1989). In the course of time, primitive superstitions were abandoned; however, they seem to have given birth to certain cultural stereotypes concerning animals. These stereotypes can be traced in a range of expressions in which animal terms are used with reference to people (Kiełtyka 2007). In particular, because of the stereotypes being underlain by taboo associations, animal terms were resorted to as the means of verbal abuse (Leach 1964). Although this appears to be a culture-specific phenomenon, certain regularities concerning the stereotyped features of animals can be observed in the Indo-European cultural zone (cf. Kleparski 2002).

The aim of this study will be to carry out a semantic analysis of the selected **ANIMAL** subcategory – CANIDAE – in English and Swedish. The figurative senses of words denoting two particular members of CANIDAE, i.e. dog and wolf, as applied to humans, will be examined in a historical perspective. The primary objective will be to present the question against the social context and to investigate the possible relation between the taboo phenomenon and the employment of particular animal terms. The study will be thus an attempt to show how taboo, i.e. the unmentionable, can be traced in historical corpora. The material for the analysis will come from the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*, the *Innsbruck Middle English Prose Corpus*, the historical corpora of the *Swedish Language Bank* (*Språkbanken*), as well as from the OED, the MED and *Svenska Akademiens ordbok*.

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Palatalization and distribution of (non-)palatal forms as exemplified by Northern Middle English grammatical words

Velar consonants in the Late Old English dialects underwent the process of palatalization, as reflected in the change of [k], [g], [sk] into [ʧ], [ʤ] and [ʃ] respectively. This modification became symbolised through the replacement of <c>, <ȝ>, <sc> by <c(c)h>, <dg> and <s(c)h>, with the occasional loss of [l] in the vicinity of the affricates (Wełna 2005), in words like OE *micel* > ME *muche* ‘much’, OE *swilc* > ME *swiche* ‘such’, OE *ælc* > ME *æche* ‘each’, OE *æfre-ælc* > ME *everich* ‘every’, OE *hwylc* > ME *hwilch* ‘which’, OE *ic* > ME *ich* ‘I’, OE *sculan* > ME *shulen*/*sholdan* ‘shall/should’, OE *hio/scæ* > ME *she* ‘she’ (OED Online and MED). On no account, however, can palatalization be perceived as homogeneous, especially considering its irregular implementation in the North. The broad range of Middle English non-palatal forms, assumed to have developed due to a direct influence from Scandinavian (Wales 2006: 57 and Hedevind 1967: 200-201), should not serve as a convincing proof of the lack or less effective operation of the process in that area. The earlier examination (Kocel forthcoming) of *much*, *such* and *each* has proved that Northern palatalization was a much more complex phenomenon, resulting in substantial discrepancies among the forms used and thus in the lack of consistency within the dialect itself. This is reflected in the irregular development and distribution of both palatal and non-palatal variants sometimes coexisting side by side in the same region or even in the same text, as exhibited by, for example, Dan Jon Gaytryge’s *Sermon*, *York Plays*, Walter Hilton’s *Angel’s Song* and *The Wakefield Pageants*, all representing the Yorkshire dialect. Interestingly, *much*, *such* and *each* also demonstrated different frequency of palatalization and different preferences for the forms used, as evidenced in many phonological and spelling variants of both palatal and non-palatal items, which raises questions concerning the more widespread effect palatalization had on Northern Middle English function words in general.

The aim of the present study, thus, will be to draw some more general conclusions concerning palatalization in Northern Middle English grammatical words, focusing on the spelling/phonological discrepancies and the distribution of the forms of *each, every, much, such, which, shall, should, I, she* in texts from that region. The data will come from the textual material of *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts, Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, Innsbruck Corpus of Middle English Prose* and *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English.*

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Raiders of the lost archetype: ‘eo’ in the strong verbs of classes IV and V

The standard handbooks show -*e*- vocalism in the infinitive and present plural of the strong verbs of classes IV and V: e.g. *beran/bera†* BEAR, *sprecan/spreca†* SPEAK. This should surprise those familiar with Old English sound changes, since *e* with a back vowel in the following syllable ‘should’ undergo back umlaut, resulting in *beoran*, *beora†*, etc. Spellings in *eo* are in fact attested – but not in the West Saxon that forms the basis of the handbook paradigms.

In the present system of class IV and V strong verbs, forms in -*eo*- are characteristic of West Mercian Old English (e.g. Vespasian Psalter), where they form part of a set of *eo* ~ *e* alternations, which appear in slightly modified form in some early Middle English Southwest Midland spelling systems. These include ‘AB language’, which has traditionally been supposed to have some kind of lineal connection with the language of VP.

In this paper we examine the forms recorded for the relevant categories of class IV and V strong verbs in the *LAEME* corpus of tagged texts to evaluate the possible survival of an ‘archetypal’ tradition of ‘eo’ vs ‘e’ use.

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Complexity in National Legislation of the Early Modern English Period

The study explores complexity in national legislative writing of the Early Modern English period. The interest lies in the diachronic development of the genre of statutes and in the emergence of modern writing conventions. As opposed to earlier research on complexity in historical and contemporary legislation (Hiltunen 1990; Bhatia 1993), the aim is to consider the phenomenon from a broader angle through multiple complexity features on three levels, i.e. the overall structure of the statutes (visual and text type structure), their syntactic complexity (sentence length, subordination, coordination, participles and passives) and lexis (vocabulary and nominalizations) (cf. Biber 1992).

The study is based on the collections of legal texts in the Early English Books Online. Six publications representing the subgenres of Parliamentary acts, Privy Council's orders and sovereign ordinances from the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were edited for a corpus linguistic analysis.

The results suggest that Early Modern English legal texts resemble modern legislative writing more than has been earlier indicated (see Hiltunen 1990; Crystal and Davy 1969). Narratives, for instance, are only occasionally encountered, and during the sixteenth century a cognitive structure that identifies the case, condition, legal actor and action becomes visible. Generally, the texts can be described as complex since they pack information by subordination and coordination as well as by frequent use of participle clauses and technical vocabulary, which are all typical features of modern laws (e.g. Bhatia 1993). Additionally, legislative writing becomes more established during the analyzed time span: the legal documents show consistency in their layout and structure. These developments can be explained by extralinguistic changes such as the invention of print and new conventions in recording Parliamentary sessions.

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Mutual intelligibility among North Sea traders during the early modern period

The background for the proposed paper was the search for details of trade contact in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries across the North Sea between Norway and Scotland, which could have resulted in language borrowing into Scots especially. In one particular Scottish/Norwegian history book (Smout 1999: 57) I came across a cargo inventory for a Danish-owned ship sold in Scotland in 1698, whose timber cargo was deemed Norwegian in origin. What was striking was the similarity of the Scots timber terms to those found in Norwegian economic history material dealing with roughly the same period. Was it possible that the basic similarity of these two Germanic languages, but in particular the fairly close similarity of the timber terms, allowed traders each to use his own language for general purposes (LGP) and especially his own language for specific purposes (LSP), in order to do business together? Had there been problems with intelligibility between these two nationalities of traders and indeed among traders in the North Sea area in general, then surely a North Sea trade pidgin would have developed, as *russe-norsk* did in the north of Norway. But none has so far been found (Jahr 1999: 134). This could therefore indicate that there was sufficient mutual intelligibility in the LSPs in the trade area generally, encouraged by the desire to do business together, and probably also in the LGPs, as trade contact can often include social relations to some extent too. Communication strategies would therefore also have played their part. This paper addresses these questions through an examination of the inventory items mentioned above, along with some of the other timber terms found in the Norwegian history material, and considers the trade context in which they were employed.

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The progressive in Irish English: A corpus-based diachronic study

The progressive has increased dramatically in frequency and range of uses since Early Modern English, especially in the nineteenth century, making the rise of the progressive 'the most spectacular change in English syntax during the later modern period' (Beal 2004:78). Among concrete claims in the literature, progressive aspect is said to be more frequent and more likely with stative verbs in the Celtic Englishes than in non-Celtic varieties (Pitkänen 2003; Filppula 2008; Miller 2008). Its spread in the nineteenth century has also been attributed to Irish immigrants in Britain and North America (Smitterberg 2005), and certainly Irish-born writers in nineteenth-century Australia used it considerably more than those of other backgrounds, approaching present-day rates (Fritz 2007).

This study will use CORIECOR, the *Corpus of Irish English Correspondence*, currently under development, to investigate progressive aspect in Irish English from c. 1731 to 1930. This period covers much of the language shift from Irish to English. The Celticity hypothesis leads us to expect that the increasingly Hiberno-Irish proportion of Ireland's English-speaking population should drive the progressive's advance. As language shift proceeds, the frequency of progressive use ought to increase in the personal letters we study.

The data will be a sample of letters covering the 200-year period, selected to represent both sexes, the major ethnoreligious division between Protestant and Catholic, and the major dialect regions of Ireland. The study is intended as a preliminary exploration of CORIECOR, a test of the coverage of major geographical and social categories, and a first step towards an empirical diachronic study of a neglected but potentially interesting area of Irish English syntax.

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The Neighbours' books of Bryggen

Bryggen in Bergen, Norway, was an area where literacy, even as early as in the late middle ages, was widespread. The reason for this was that the inhabitants were tradesmen, and all apprentices who came to Bryggen, were taught reading and writing skills. The texts produced during the centuries at Bryggen, are probably the closest we come to having texts written by "ordinary" (neither priests nor law men) people in Bergen from early modern times.

The neighbours' books were books belonging to a *gård*, a unit consisting of 4 - 6 *stuer* (trading firms). The books consist of three different text types, called *gartenrecht, gesellenbock* and *mascopbock.* Presumably, all 30 *gårder* at Bryggen had several neighbours' books during the centuries, today, books from nine *gårder* remain, covering a period from the late 16th until the late 19th century. Most of them have not been published, and very little research has been carried out on these unique texts. My own work so far has been on the language shifts the texts display, and on the editing strategies of those editing these books in the late 19th and the early 20th century.

I will present some of the many possibilities for further research that these books offer, both to linguists, text historians and others. Focus will be on the transitions that happened in the area through the period covered, and how these transitions are reflected in the texts:

- The language history of Bryggen from Low German via High German to Danish.
- The organisational history from the hanseatic to the Norwegian *Kontor*.
- The change from Bryggen being a place where people's private and their professional lives were intertwined, and the people of a *gård* lived in what could be called a commune; to Bryggen being simply an area of storage houses and offices.

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Reconstructing the sociolinguistic diffusion of Scandinavian loanwords in English: negotiation processes and the market-place as sources of interpretation

Following recent trends in historical sociolinguistics, research into the linguistic effects of Anglo-Scandinavian contacts in the Danelaw tends to focus on the question of diffusion (see, for instance, Dance 2003). A useful construct, in this respect, is the social network hypothesis, which, assuming that diffusion occurs in face-to-face interaction, posits that loose-knit networks and weak ties between speakers would favour the spread of innovations (including borrowings), while strong ties in close-knit structures would prevent it (Milroy 2002). Notwithstanding the difficulty of recovering the actual contexts where interaction could have taken place in the past, scholars dealing with Old Norse influence on Middle English have described some of the situations, mainly drawn from written sources, where contact between speakers of both languages could have been favoured (see, among others, Hansen 1984; Burnley 1992; Moskowich 1995; Townend 2002; Pons Sanz 2007). In this paper, we intend to go one step beyond in the micro-sociolinguistic analysis of borrowings, by focusing on the nature of negotiation processes within the particular context of the medieval market-place. Contemporary sociology approaches markets as social structures where both economic and non-economic sociality manifests itself (see: Swedberg 1994; Watson and Studdert 2006) and, accordingly, as the potential sites for social interaction, the formation of social ties (basically weak in nature), social mixing across groups and social inclusion. Additionally, business studies, applying social network theory, tend to see the market, in many parts of the world and involving different communities, as a neutral cultural medium, where a cooperative atmosphere between buyers and sellers is created, fostering processes of mutual adaptation (see Montgomery 1991; Wilson 1995; Yeager 1998; Flores 2003; Ryoo 2005). If this were the case in medieval England, markets and negotiation processes would have provided the ideal sociolinguistic context for borrowings to be picked by either community in contact. Moreover, reconstructing, with the help of archaelogy, the artifacts exchanged, the main characteristics of the setting, the participants involved and the discourse enacted may help, we believe, to establish feasible hypotheses on (i) how particular borrowings were diffused and (ii) which members of the community participated in the process (as adopters or diffusers). As a sample of this analysis, we will deal with some common artifacts and the Middle English borrowings related to them.

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A Cross-Linguistic View of Modal Verbs in Old English and (Old) Icelandic

This paper offers to comparatively look through modal verbs and modality in Old English and in (Old) Icelandic. That is to say, did modality appear at the same period in both languages, and more precisely when did epistemic modality appear (i.e. when did modal verbs change from lexical to grammatical items)?

In parallel with modality, we shall highlight the process of grammaticalization in Old English and (Old) Icelandic, so as to know if grammaticalization followed the same syntactic and semantic path for those languages, and if we could draw a parallel with other syntactic phenomena to explain the process that led to the appearance of epistemicity. We shall bear in mind the specificities as well as the differences for both languages, trying to focus on the common facts concerning modality.

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Orthographic developments in the 16th- and 17th-century editions of *The Schoole of vertue*

In my paper I am going to discuss results of my research on the orthography in sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century editions of *The Schoole of vertue*, a book co-authored by Francis Segar and Robert Crowley. The analysed editions comprise those printed by H. Denham (1582), Richard Iones (1593), G. E. (1621), M. Flesher (1626, 1630, 1660), and E. Crowch (1670). I have worked with a self-compiled electronic database of transcriptions of the editions based on the facsimiles

available at *Early English Books Online* (at http://wwwlib.umi.com/eebo/), a project carried out by the Universities of Michigan and Oxford.

The main focus of the paper is the analysis of the realisation and development of selected variables in all the editions under consideration. The set of variables includes: the establishment of etymological spelling, orthographic distinctions between homophones, morphological spelling (a consistent orthographic representation of the same morphemes), indication of vowel length (either by doubling letters representing vowels or by adding a final <e>), and the distribution and functional load of the graphemes <v>, <u>; <i>, <j>, <y>.

The main aim of this discussion and comparison is to present the degrees of consistency, orthographic standardisation and variation in the selected early English printed texts. The study discussed in this paper is part of a larger project that aims at analysing the orthographic systems of the early printers of books in English.

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Scandinavian legal traditions and oral composition

In this paper, I will focus on the textlinguistic evidence for oral composition in legal texts. The Forsa rune ring, the Dala Law and other Old Scandinavian sources are at the forefront of this study. The deployment of oral formulae, viz. alliterative word pairs in Old Germanic legal texts, poetry, and other genres is addressed. Also, alliterative listing techniques which are said to stress the mnemonic requirements of oral delivery and memory storage shall be discussed (on the Eddic lays, see Jackson 1995).

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The perseverance of a dialect through 400 years: An example from Southern Norway

From the end of the fourteenth century Norway was part of a political union with Denmark. This led to the replacement of Norwegian written language by written Danish. From 1550 Danish was the only *written* language employed in Norway from this time until the second half of the nineteenth century.

In *speech*, Norwegian dialects were used. The ordinary tradesman and worker in the cities spoke a local urban dialect, the peasant-farmer a local rural dialect. But in the cities, a Danish-based upper- class spoken formal variety gradually arose, especially for formal use.

In this period from 1600 to 1850 (when Danish was official written Language in Norway), we find some texts written in dialect. Before 1800 dialect materials were usually collected as curiosities and used for amusement, in the hands of speakers or writers who were marking their superiority to the lower classes.

In my paper I will focus on the more “serious” collection of dialect materials. I will take a look at an old handwritten text from the beginning of the 17th century. The text is one of the oldest existing documents dealing with the Norwegian dialects. The author of the text is also trying to copy the dialect forms in his contemporary speaking community.

1. The language in the text (the dialects form) must be characterize as a “modern type”.
2. The dialect demonstrated in the text shows us many dialect forms that still are salient features in the rural spoken language in this southern region of Norway.

To explain how so many characteristic dialect forms has survived in the area for 400 years, we have to go into the Norwegian society and then discover the general positive attitude among the population towards linguistic diversity as being something "natural" and valuable. There is a long tradition in this country for using the local dialects in all situations. In this linguistic climate lies in my view the explanation why the dialect could survive through nearly 400 years.

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The complexities of obsolescence: dialect use in present-day Lerwick, Shetland

Sociolinguistic research on varieties of English in the British Isles indicates widespread loss of traditional dialect forms, resulting in dialect ‘attrition’ across many speech communities. Even one of the most remote communities in the UK, the Shetland Islands in Northern Scotland may not be immune to these changes. Contact with Scandinavian languages, coupled with its relative cultural and geographic isolation, has resulted in a markedly different variety to those found in mainland Scotland. However, recent socio-economic and demographic changes are said to have led to ‘an unprecedented levelling of the local varieties in recent years’ (van Leyden 2004:18). This is said to be particularly true of the main town of Lerwick where ‘the change which is taking place is not a gradual blending of one form of speech into another: it is the abrupt replacement of one language…by another’ (Tait 2007). In this paper we explore these claims by conducting a quantitative, sociolinguistic analysis of a number of variable forms across three generations of speakers in Lerwick. We target a number of traditional morphosyntactic features in competition with their standard counterparts, as in (1) and (2):

(1) a. I***’m*** no ***been*** in Imelda’s in a start.
b. I’***ve had*** a varied life.
(2) a. You ken ***yon*** kind of thing that they bake.
b. What was the name of ***that*** book now?

Analysis across the three generations of speakers reveals a complex process of attrition, involving rapid obsolescence with some variables and much more gradual change with others. Further examination of the younger speakers only - the locus of change - reveals a polarisation of use: some members of this group don't use the traditional forms at all, while others use them even more than the older speakers. These findings provide a snapshot of change in progress, and highlight the multifaceted sociolinguistic processes involved in dialect attrition in a traditionally relic area.

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An investigation into the development of OE ȳ and lengthened *y* in Middle English

The proposed paper deals with dialectal variation and change regarding (early) Middle English long vowels. It springs out of doctoral work in progress, which seeks to localise and date the so-called 'Great Vowel Shift' changes as well as another set of early long-vowel changes assumed to be unrelated to the 'GVS'. More specifically, this paper treats the development of the reflexes of OE ȳ and lengthened OE *y*, which traditionally is not regarded as part of the 'GVS'.

According to standard textbooks, OE ȳ and lengthened *y* were unrounded to [i:] in late OE or early ME in the North, in parts of the East Midlands, and in parts of the South-West. They became [e:] in Kent, and in parts of Middlesex, Sussex, Essex, and Suffolk; in some of these dialect, the *ē* from ȳ remained, this [e:] being raised like etymological [e:] to [i:]

later on, e.g. ME *mēs* [me:s] > *mīs* [mi:s] 'mice' (cf. Wright 1928, §57). In the remaining parts of the country, the ȳ remained until the late 14th century, when it was unrounded to [i:] (cf. Jordan 1974, §39; Luick 1914-40, §§287-8).

Thus, the changes to the reflexes of OE ȳ and lengthened *y* are believed to span a period of at least 300 years. My doctoral work uses dialect material (spellings) extracted from *LALME*, Kristensson's *Survey*, and the unfinished *Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English*, with a view to finding out whether the traditional dating of these ME long-vowel changes is correct; it concludes that there is a lengthy temporal overlap between the two sets of changes, and that they consequently cannot be treated separately. This paper also treats recent claims about the phonetic nature of the reflex of OE *y/* ȳ in the ME dialects of the West Midlands (Lass & Laing 2005).

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Wiltu Icke dricke, da schall ieg dræbe digh **(If you don't drink, I will kill you): Colloquial expressions in court books from Rogaland in the 17th century – a discourse analysis**

The word discourse is a commonly used term that can mean everything from an actual conversation or discussion to more abstract language use patterns, depending on the topic and the situation. In this paper I will use the definition "text in context", and may further specify that to an institutional and historical based thought, speech, action and behaviour. A discourse analysis in this particular case will then be the analysis of how a text is adapted to a particular context. The most important questions here are in what way we use language and how we live our lives linguistically. I will present some samples of how farmers were talking to each other. The texts primarily reproduce word exchanges in more acute situations, but there are also examples of general conversations. In the court books congealed and formal phrases are frequent, and in contrast to those, citations give the books a local character. I will show examples of the switching between oral and written style, between acrolect and vulgar language, and between primary and secondary discourses, in texts from Rogaland in the 17th century.

If we want to find out how people talked in past stages of history, we must listen to, or perhaps, look at, the written word. In order to say anything about the pronunciation of words, we may look at the language research workers' attempt from the 17th century to create a more consistent spelling. But if we want to know how people, and farmers in particularly, put words together to create everyday speech in past stages of history, we need to consult other sources. Drama is one obvious source, but as dramas normally are constructed, the speech acts are generally not authentic. Therefore, if we want to listen to these voices from the past, we must search for texts that are produced with other purposes in mind, and here the court books have turned out to be a gold mine.

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The primary interjection' a/ah' in Late Medieval English Drama

This paper is a preliminary study for my PhD thesis concerning interjections in Late Middle English Drama. It will examine the use of *a* and *ah* in mystery plays, morality plays, and interludes. The material shows variation between <a> and <ah> spellings. The aim is to try and find out whether there is a consistency in the usage of either form. The texts date from the mid-15th to the early 17th century. Some of them are localised in *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English* (LALME) in Yorkshire, Chestershire, East Anglia and the greater London area.

The York, Towneley, N-town and Chester mystery plays are included, as well as the Digby *Mary*-plays, *The Convertion of Saul*, *The killing of the Children*, and one miracle play, the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament.* The morality plays *Everyman, Wisdom, Mankind,* and *The Castle of Perseverance,* form part of the material, together with interludes, such as Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres*, and Skelton's *Magnyfycence*.

The data is collected manually with its linguistic and dramatic/textual context. Such factors as genre, speaker, context, syntax, spelling, scribe, date and provenance are considered. A first goal is to try and establish whether or not the spelling with or without <h> is meaningful and can be explained by scribal, dialectal, diachronic or other factors. The interjection *a/ah* is one of the most frequent in the material, but also one of the most difficult to define. It borders on another common type, *o/oh*, and will be compared to this in the paper. Both types are used in a variety of surroundings, and sometimes they seem to overlap. An attempt at describing their distribution will be made, relating to e.g. where interjections typically occur in utterances, whether they seem restricted to a certain kind of character or genre, and which interjections are the most frequent in which texts.

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Is there a localized pronunciation norm for Scottish Standard English in Shetland? Results from a phonological survey

The Shetland Islands have been a site for contact between several languages spoken around the North Sea area. Viking settlers brought Old Norse, which came into contact with, and was replaced by, Lowland Scots, as the islands were handed over to Scotland in 1469. Moreover, Hanseatic trade and fishing colonies triggered contact with German and Dutch. The present language situation is often characterised as a bipolar continuum, with Shetland dialect at one end and Scottish Standard English (SSE), at the other. Shetland dialect is typically classified as a variety of (Insular) Scots, which nonetheless displays various traces of earlier language contact. Previous research in Shetland has not dealt explicitly with SSE, which has often simply been disregarded as 'modified dialect'. In this paper, we present results from a phonological survey on SSE, with the aim of assessing whether a localized pronunciation norm may be said to exist.

The data was obtained from a judgment sample of 12 middle-class, middle-aged speakers who were born and have lived virtually all of their lives in the main town of Lerwick. The paper begins with a treatment of the vowel system. The phoneme inventory is compared with accounts of Shetland dialect and SSE in the Scottish mainland. The phenomenon of Shetland Vowel Mutation is discussed in detail. It may be concluded that it differs from reports for Shetland dialect (Tait 2000; Johnston 1997) and has implications for morphology and phonemic contrast. Results are also presented for the Scottish Vowel Length Rule/Aitken's Law. Overall, its application is in agreement with relatively recent accounts of mainland Scotland (cf. e.g. Scobbie *et al.* 1999), as opposed to classic formulations, although the contextual restrictions are somewhat different in Shetland. Furthermore, the paper also discusses the consonant system, which appears

to display more signs of standardization and modification of local Shetland features. Finally, we summarize what Scandinavian features may still be found in this variety. The results of the survey, we suggest, support the view that a localized accent of Scottish Standard English may validly be identified for Lerwick speakers.

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UP and DOWN in the history of Norwegian and English

The present paper will investigate some spatial metaphors in the history of two Germanic languages, viz. English and Norwegian, mainly metaphors belonging to the UP/DOWN schema. I will adopt a cognitive perspective on metaphors, assuming that metaphors are not superficial ornaments, and indeed that they are an integrated part of human language and part and parcel of how we think. I also assume that meaning change may happen via extensions from a core or prototypical meaning (cf. Geeraerts 1997, Taylor 1995, Traugott and Dasher 2000).

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Ancient toponyms in Rogaland – sources of old European language.

A number of old uncompounded names of islands and fjords are found along the Norwegian coast. Some of them presently denote a farm, e.g. *Halsne* (ON **Halsna* f.), or an administrative unit (parish or municipality), e.g. *Fister* (ON *Fístr*), while the island or fjord has got a new name, containing the word *øy* f. 'island' or *fjord* m.: *Halsnøy(na)*, *Fisterfjorden*. In some cases the uncompounded name is no longer used, but it is found in sources from mediaeval times, e.g. ON *Sjǫrn* f. in *Sjernarøy* (ON *Sjarnarøy*). In other cases the uncompounded form is not found in mediaeval sources, but can be reconstructed, e.g. ON **Rennir* m. in *Rennesøy* (ON *Rennisøy*). In Rogaland (Southwest-Norway) quite a few of the names still have indefinite form, e.g. *Fister*, *Halsne*, *Bokn*, *Rott*, *Heng*, *Sira* and *Ombo*, reflecting ON *Fístr*, **Halsna*, *Bókn*, *Hrótt*, **Hengð*, *Síri* and *Umbar*. The names are made with suffixes that were used in the Germanic period or earlier, e.g. *t* in *Karmøy* (ON *Kǫrmt*), *n* in *Bokn* (ON *Bókn*), *r* in *Sira* (ON *Síri*), *ð* in *Heng* (ON **Hengð*), *s* in *Idse* (ON *Eiðsa*), *(s)tr* in *Fister* (ON *Fístr*) and *und* in *Eigerøy* (ON *Eikund*). These names are unique and the origin of many of them is uncertain. Some of them seem to have paralels in other European countries and languages and they were probably made in the period with a common Germanic or Indo-European language.

In the northern part of Jæren (Mid-Rogaland) there is a consentration of very old and unique settlement names, e.g. *Sola* (ON *Sóli*), *Soma* (ON *Sómi*), *Tjora* (ON *Þjórar*) and *Orre* (ON *Alra*). Some compounded settlement names have an old uncompounded name as the first element, e.g. *Obrestad* (ON *Ǫprustaðir*), which probably contains an old river name ON **Apra* f. (genitive **Ǫpru*). These names do not contain words that are known in the Scandinavian languages, and the etymology and the semantics of several names is uncertain. Most of them seem to describe topographical features – a river, lake, fjord, shore or hill. They are made in the same way as old topographical names, with suffixes that were productive in the Germanic or Indo-European period. Names of this type are associated with the largest, oldest and most central agrarian settlements in the area. Archaeological material indicate that there has been continuous farming in Jæren since the younger Stone Age and the Bronze Age. The oldest settlement names might date back to these periods.

The grammatical form, etymology and semantic content of some of these names will be discussed in the paper, and possible European paralels will be mentioned.

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Literacy and media of communication in Early Modern English medical writing

Dissemination of medical knowledge underwent changes in Europe in the period 1500-1700. Printing provided a new medium of communication and changed the patterns of dissemination of knowledge by making multiple copies available to a larger public at a cheaper price, while manuscript copying also continued. Some scholars state that printing revolutionized the whole scene, while others emphasize a more balanced scene with earlier modes continuing alongside with printing, which had the potential of reaching much larger readerships. Besides the public mode, oral communication and private correspondence within smaller discourse communities was important.

In the transition period in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, English printed books on medicine were scanty, but after 1550 the numbers of all kinds of publications increase. Printed books in the period are found in different formats from folio size display objects with fine illustrations to small pocket-size manuals to be carried with and consulted at the bedside. Pamphlets were new in the period. The almanac gained the widest possible distribution, and various types were issued with medical concerns, astrological prognostications and useful advice, sold in millions of copies. Dissemination of medical doctrines in commonplaces is discussed on the scale from academic to more popular is related to the medium of communication as well as multilingual and metatextual practices as evidenced in the electronic corpus of *Early Modern English Medical Texts 1500-1700* (forthcoming).

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Open University

Literacy Practices of English Merchants in the Early Modern Period

This paper considers the literacy practices of English international traders during the Early Modern period. The term ‘literary practices’ can be broadly defined as being ‘the ways in which people use and interact with texts in particular contexts, and the meanings that these hold for them’

(Papen and Tusting 2006: 312). In this paper, various types of writing required by those working in overseas trade will be discussed, including the managing of the accounts, creating of bills and composition of business letters. The period after 1550 sees a rise in the production of handbooks for merchants involved in international trade; some are aimed at novice factors and some are for more expert traders. One popular guide was *The Marchants Avizo* (1598), and this work will be discussed in detail along with other guides. Such manuals aimed to provide useful information for traders (e.g. information regarding foreign currency, weights and measurements used in various countries, sample letters, etc), but they are also an invaluable resource for studying the history of the book and the history of literacy. They demonstrate ideas behind contemporary literacy practices for merchants; *The Marchants Avizo* instructs the servants: '…be earnest in noting and marking euery thing that you may, but bee your selfe as secret and silent as is possible'. The handbooks explain the moral virtues associated with the tasks of keeping accounts and records as well as their methods. These ideas behind the working practices will be outlined from both from Tudor handbooks and examined against extant contemporary records including the ledger of Thomas Howell, a prosperous draper of the Tudor period.

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An electronic corpus of Middle English scribal copies of a single text

Work sponsored by the Polish Ministry of Education is in progress at Adam Mickiewicz University towards preparing the fifty-six scribal copies and four early printed editions of Chaucer's Man of Law's Tale for electronic publication. Our main objective in preparing a corpus that thus includes all the known late-medieval copies of a single text is to permit scholars to trace the flow of linguistic variants through around a century of its manuscript tradition. To further the appreciation of the variants in relation to their material support, we provide both images of the original manuscript pages and transcripts that are more strictly diplomatic than is typical of modern editions in terms of layout as well as orthography, although without us seeking to capture allographic differences. This basic content in the format known from the Canterbury Tales Project CD-ROMs is projected to be supplemented by querying facilities enhanced, of course, by lemmatisation. The levels of language we plan to lemmatise include not only such 'usual suspects' as phonology, syntax, and morphology but also graphotactics as a novelty. In this talk, I outline the project's aims and procedures and suggest ways to exploit the eventual corpus. The electronic medium specifically offers a potential for the application of quantitative methods. Although a range of such methods are customary in, for example, stylistics and authorship attribution, scholars tend to be reluctant to apply them to non-textual Middle English data. This is probably because the language of this period varies considerably in terms of orthography, including within the output of a single individual, and because the greater bulk of the surviving texts are scribal copies and as such often contain mixed usage. However, the orthographic variation itself can be studied quantitatively, and at a length of +1,000 decasyllabic lines the Man of Law's Tale provides sufficient material for such study to yield meaningful results.

Stefan Thim

Language contact and the explanation of language change: some vexed questions in English historical linguistics and the Scandinavian settlement in Anglo-Saxon England

As is well-known, linguistic contact between Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse in large areas of England led to a considerable influx of Scandinavian loanwords. The bulk of these loans does not show up until Middle English, predominantly in the dialects of the former Danelaw (but see Dance 2003). But the Scandinavian interference is not restricted to the lexicon. There are some phonological properties of Old Norse which enter English via the loanwords, and so do some grammatical items, some of which successively come to replace the native forms in many dialects (including, of course, the Standard), while other influences are more questionable, e.g. the development of the English 'phrasal verbs', which is often seen in connection to language contact (see e.g. Horobin & Smith 2002 and the critical discussion in Thim 2008) or more generally the acceleration of 'analytic drift' in English.

But what we actually know about the linguistic contact between speakers of Anglo- Saxon and speakers of Old Norse is less than the discussions in the standard histories of the English language sometimes seem to imply. Although there is a good deal of historical information, in some important respects that historical information is rather patchy and arguments as to the extent of the language contact are inherently prone to show a certain degree of circularity (see Fischer 2001 and Townend 2002).

In my paper, I will propose a hierarchy of plausibility for contact-induced changes and try to reassess the claims made in favour of various possible influences of Old Norse on English. I will argue that the contact situation itself does not lend itself easily to drawing farreaching conclusions about the extent of interference (cf. Thomason & Kaufman 1988), while in some cases there may be serious methodological objections to assuming interference phenomena (cf. Lass 1988), especially if comparative evidence from other Germanic languages is taken into account.

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Where did the "English" come from? The colonization of England by Germanic tribes on the basis of place names

After the Romans had left the Province of Brittania, Germanic tribes were able to conquer the land and settle. Where did they come from? Historians believe Bede's (the Venerable Bede, c. 673-735) version in his "Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum (The Ecclesiastical History of the English

People) where he names the Angles, Saxons and Jutes as the colonizers of his homeland. Consequently, Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland are considered as the origin of the Germanic tribes. In this context, place names have rarely been used to determine the movements of the Germanic tribes despite the fact that it is unmistakable that emigrants frequently take the names of their hometowns with them: how else did *London, Berkeley, Brunswick* get to the United States or *Heidelberg* to South Africa? Emigrants also take their language with them and use it to name towns, meadows and territories in their new habitat. By using the names that were formed in this manner, the emigrants' place of origin can be determined more safely than by applying historical or archeological sources.

Using the example of selected place names such as *Harwich, Greenwich, Fencote, Harburg, Horton, Geismar, Weimar, Alkmaar, Marton, Chelsea, Hythe, Audincthun* and *Hannover*, this speech will try to show from which areas on the European continent the emigrants came from. Most recent research has shown that also the name of the town of *Magdeburg* plays an important role in this connection. Maps showing the spreading of place names will emphasize the previous research results. The development of the English language towards a world language is also related to the extinction of the Roman legions during the Battle of the Teutoburg Forrest (Kalkriese). If the Romans had won and brought the Germanic mainland under subjection, history would have run another path.

The significance of place names for the history of settlement has already been emphasized by G.W. Leibniz. In his opinion, river names together with ancient place names are the most important sources of language. Leibniz added that "they are the oldest monuments of peoples and show clearly the origin of their relations and the migration of the peoples". The speech tries to trace the occupation and settlement of England using the example of place names.

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Studying the act of copying now and then – new possibilities?

Historical linguistics makes inferences about linguistic systems and diversity on the basis of written texts. Due to distance in time historical linguistics therefore has not as many sources as today's research on child language and written development, where the writers are present and both their written production and spoken language development can be studied simultaneously. Level of expertise, experience with the written code and its diversity, demands of correctness during writing are issues with few clear answers in todays research on the relation between writers texts and their spoken linguistic system (Hagland and Lorentzen, 1997; Grabowski, 2008). The past decade there a major advance has taken place in writing research through the development of technology for logging the writing and reading process as it unveils in real time. It is possible to log hand-writing, keyboard-writing in combination with the writers visual attention, for instance while copying a text. The present paper aims at a) investigating the idea that historical linguistics and modern psycholinguistics share similar limitations in making inferences b) proposing how a study of the act of copying can be relevant to historical linguistics in combining eye-tracking and logging of handwriting c) discussing how historical linguistics can shed light on modern psycholinguistics.

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The freedom of medieval scribes

Literary and linguistic scholars of texts written in Middle Dutch still do not have enough knowledge about the exact influence scribes had on the texts they copied. Historical linguists have sufficiently shown how spelling differences between manuscripts could reflect the geographical area of origin of the scribe or the area in which he or she was working. Literary scholars, to get insight into the development of a text, have tried to draw up stemmata, family trees, of the surviving manuscripts. A big problem, however, is the scarceness of surviving manuscripts. This makes drawing up a stemma a hazardous business. Furthermore, a stemma does not show the researcher how much actually changed between the different nodes in the tree. I would like to suggest another, more empirical approach for getting more insight into (the scribes of) the remaining manuscripts of the same text. My goal is a statistically repeatable overview of the amount in which all surviving copies of the same text differ from each other, taking the complete set as the mean with which to compare each of the copies. I am interested in differences relating to the style and content of the texts. For this reason I will focus on words (lemmas) and on parts of speech. For my comparison I have lemmatized and tagged for parts of speech parallel samples of copies of Jacob van Maerlant’s *Rijmbijbel* (1271), a Middle Dutch adaptation of Peter Comestor's Latin *Historia scholastica* (ca. 1170). An overview of the word frequencies, of the usage of unique words in each of the copies and of the usage of the different parts of speech gives rise to interesting observations about the ranges of freedom Middle Dutch scribes of this text allowed themselves.