Analysing Older English

Is historical linguistics different in principle from other linguistic research? This book addresses problems encountered in gathering and analysing data from early English, including the incomplete nature of the evidence and the dangers of misinterpretation or over-interpretation. Even so, gaps in the data can sometimes be filled. The volume brings together a team of leading English historical linguists who have encountered such issues first-hand, to discuss and suggest solutions to a range of problems in the phonology, syntax, dialectology and onomastics of older English. The topics extend widely over the history of English, chronologically and linguistically, and include Anglo-Saxon naming practices, the phonology of the alliterative line, computational measurement of dialect similarity, dialect levelling and enregisterment in late Modern English, stress-timing in English phonology and the syntax of Old and early Modern English. The book will be of particular interest to researchers and students in English historical linguistics.

David Denison is Smith Professor of English Language and Medieval Literature in the School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures at the University of Manchester.

Ricardo Bermúdez-Otero is Senior Lecturer in Linguistics and English Language in the School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures at the University of Manchester.

Chris McCully is Managing Director of the Graduate School for the Humanities at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.

Emma Moore is Senior Lecturer in Sociolinguistics in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics at the University of Sheffield.
The aim of this series is to provide a framework for original studies of English, both present-day and past. All books are based securely on empirical research, and represent theoretical and descriptive contributions to our knowledge of national and international varieties of English, both written and spoken. The series covers a broad range of topics and approaches, including syntax, phonology, grammar, vocabulary, discourse, pragmatics and sociolinguistics, and is aimed at an international readership.

Already published in this series:
Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta (eds.): Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English
Elizabeth Gordon, Lyle Campbell, Jennifer Hay, Margaret Maclagan, Andrea Sudbury and Peter Trudgill: New Zealand English: Its Origins and Evolution
Raymond Hickey (ed.): Legacies of Colonial English: Studies in Transported Dialects
Merja Kyto, Mats Rydén and Erik Smitterberg (eds.): Nineteenth-Century English: Stability and Change
John Algeo: British or American English? A Handbook of Word and Grammar Patterns
Christian Mair: Twentieth-Century English: History, Variation and Standardization
Evelien Keizer: The English Noun Phrase: The Nature of Linguistic Categorization
Raymond Hickey: Irish English: History and Present-Day Forms
Günter Rohdenburg and Julia Schlüter (eds.): One Language, Two Grammars?: Differences between British and American English
Laurel J. Brinton: The Comment Clause in English: Syntactic Origins and Pragmatic Development
Geoffrey Leech, Marianne Hundt, Christian Mair and Nicholas Smith: Change in Contemporary English: A Grammatical Study
Jonathan Calpeper and Merja Kyto: Early Modern English Dialogues: Spoken Interaction as Writing
Daniel Schreier, Peter Trudgill, Edgar W. Schneider and Jeffrey P. Williams (eds.): The Lesser-Known Varieties of English: An Introduction
Hilde Hasselgård: Adjunct Adverbials in English
Raymond Hickey (ed.): Eighteenth-Century English: Ideology and Change
Charles Boberg: The English Language in Canada: Status, History and Comparative Analysis
Thomas Hoffmann: Preposition Placement in English: A Usage-based Approach
Claudia Claridge: Hyperbole in English: A Corpus-based Study of Exaggeration
Päivi Pahta and Andreas H. Jucker (eds.): Communicating Early English Manuscripts
Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta (eds.): Medical Writing in Early Modern English

Earlier titles not listed are also available
Analysing Older English

Edited by

DAVID DENISON
RICARDO BERMÚDEZ-OTERO
CHRIS MCCULLY
EMMA MOORE

with the assistance of Ayumi Miura
## Contents

*List of figures and maps*  
*List of tables*  
*List of contributors*  

**General introduction**  
*The Editors, with Donka Minkova*  

### Part I  
**Metrics and onomastics in older English**  

1. *Introduction to Part I*  
   *Chris McCully and David Denison*  

2. *What explanatory metrics has to say about the history of English function words*  
   *Geoffrey Russom*  

3. *to þære fulan flóde, of þære fulan flode: on becoming a name in Easton and Winchester, Hampshire*  
   *Richard Coates*  

4. *Notes on some interfaces between place-name material and linguistic theory*  
   *Peter Kitson*  

### Part II  
**Writing practices in older English**  

5. *Introduction to Part II*  
   *Chris McCully*  

6. *Anglian features in late West Saxon prose*  
   *R. D. Fulk*
vi Contents

7 ‘ea’ in early Middle English: from diphthong to digraph
ROGER LASS AND MARGARET LAING 75

Part III
Dialects in older English 119
8 Introduction to Part III: on the impossibility of historical sociolinguistics
EMMA MOORE 121
9 Levelling and enregisterment in northern dialects of late Modern English
JOAN BEAL 126
10 Quantitative historical dialectology
APRIL McM AHON AND WARREN MAGUIRE 140
11 Reconstructing syntactic continuity and change in early Modern English regional dialects: the case of who
TERTTU NEVALAINEN 159

Part IV
Sound change in older English 185
12 Introduction to Part IV: when a knowledge of history is a dangerous thing
RICARDO BERMÚDEZ-OTERO 187
13 Syllable weight and the weak-verb paradigms in Old English
DONKA MIN KOVA 194
14 How to weaken one’s consonants, strengthen one’s vowels and remain English at the same time
NIKOLAUS RITT 213
15 Degemination in English, with special reference to the Middle English period
DEREK BRITTON 232

Part V
Syntax in older English 245
16 Introduction to Part V
DAVID DENISON 247
Contents vii

17 The status of the postposed ‘and-adjective’ construction in Old English: attributive or predicative?
   OLGA FISCHER 251

18 DO with weak verbs in early Modern English
   ANTHONY WARNER 285

References 306
Index 331
Figures and maps

Figures
10.1 Common ancestral form as node, allowing slot-matching  page 148
10.2 Modern ‘Typical’ varieties of British English; major split showing rhoticity  150
10.3 Scottish and Northumbrian varieties  151
10.4 NeighborNet, historical and ‘Traditional’ modern varieties  154
10.5 Comparison of Northern Middle English with Edinburgh Traditional versus Devon Traditional  156
11.1a Subject relative markers with human and deity reference, 1460–99 (based on Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2002: 115)  166
11.1b Subject relative markers with human reference, 1460–99 (based on Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2002: 115)  167
11.2a Subject relative markers with human and deity reference, 1560–99 (based on Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2002: 118)  167
11.2b Subject relative markers with human reference, 1560–99 (based on Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2002: 118)  168
11.3 Relative frequencies (%) of the relative adverbs there and where in Middle English (based on Österman 2001: 252)  170
11.4 Subject relative strategies with human reference in the CEEC in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (WH = who and which)  172
11.5 Subject relatives with human reference in restrictive relative clauses in correspondence (CEEC 1998 and the CEEC Extension)  173
List of figures and maps  ix

11.6  Subject relatives with human reference in restrictive relative clauses in three genres (combined figures, based on Ball 1996: 246, 249)  174
11.7a Subject relativisation strategies with human reference in Norfolk (based on Poussa 2006: 329, 331)  175
11.7b Subject relativisers with human reference in Norfolk (based on Poussa 2006: 329, 331)  176
11.8 Subject relativisation strategies with human reference in correspondence (CEEC 1998 and CEEC Extension)  178
13.1 Weak preterite formation in OE and PDE (Traditional)  195
13.2 Syncopation patterns in OE weak dental preterites  197
13.3 Weak preterite formation in OE and PDE (Revised)  202

Maps
10.1 Localities surveyed in the British Isles, surveyed for the Sound Comparisons project  147
11.1 Regional distribution of the data in the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (© Terttu Nevalainen and the CEEC Team)  163
### Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Linguistic variation in Old English <em>herepað</em> ‘main road’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td><em>Herepað</em> features by type or absence of qualifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical short nuclei in the Corpus <em>Ancrene Wisse</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical long nuclei in the Corpus <em>Ancrene Wisse</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical short nuclei in the Lambeth Homilies, language 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical long nuclei in the Lambeth Homilies, language 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical short nuclei in the Trinity Homilies, hand B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical long nuclei in the Trinity Homilies, hand B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical short nuclei in <em>Vices and Virtues</em>, hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>‘ea’ variation for historical long nuclei in <em>Vices and Virtues</em>, hand A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>English versus Scots in the Swadesh 100-word list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>‘The Sound Comparisons’ 110-word list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>Social distribution of the writers represented in the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (c. 1400–1681; CEEC 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>Class 1 typical endings (from Lass 1994: 176)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>A new taxonomy of the Old English weak verbs: preterite formation stem + d-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>Type -C (–C₁): <em>grēt-an-grette</em> ‘greeted’ (1sg. and 3sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>Type -C (–C₁C₁): <em>hreddan-hredde</em> ‘saved’ (1sg. and 3sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>Other consonantal stems -C₁C₁: <em>bytlan–bytlede</em> ‘built’ (1sg. and 3sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>Type -V stems: <em>herian–herede</em> ‘praised’ (1sg. and 3sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>Type -V stems: <em>endian–endode</em> ‘ended’ (1sg. and 3sg.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of tables

13.8 Present tense paradigm 210
17.1 Parameters in the expression of rheme/theme in NPs linked to APs in Old English 254
17.2 Different types of *and*-constructions in the Old English Corpus 265
17.3 Factors at work in *and*-constructions (number of times each factor occurs in a construction) 267
17.4 (Combination of) factors at work in *and*-constructions counted per construction 270
18.1 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of the third person singular of regular weak verbs in negative declaratives 1465–1710 287
18.2 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of the third person singular of regular weak verbs in negative declaratives 1465–1710 divided at 1570 287
18.3 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of the third person singular of irregular verbs in negative declaratives 1501–1710 288
18.4 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of third person singular regular weak verbs in inverted questions 1465–1710 288
18.5 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of third person singular regular weak verbs in inverted questions 1465–1710 divided at 1600 288
18.6 Percentages of *do* in the past and present of third person singular irregular verbs in inverted questions 1465–1710 289
18.7 Regular weak verbs in questions 1600–1710: incidence of particular items in the third person singular 292
18.8 Irregular verbs in questions 1600–1710: incidence of particular items in the third person singular 294
18.9 Incidence of *do* across text types in regular verbs 1570–1710, third person singular in negative declaratives 297
18.10 Incidence of *do* across text types in irregular verbs 1570–1710, third person singular in negative declaratives 297
18.11 Tokens produced by a hypothetical early Modern English speaker with 50% *do* 299
18.12 Tokens perceived by a hypothetical early Modern English hearer who misperceives 10% of inflected pasts as presents 299
Contributors

JOAN BEAL (School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, University of Sheffield)

RICARDO BERMÚDEZ-OTERO (Linguistics and English Language, University of Manchester)

DEREK BRITTON (Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh)

RICHARD COATES (Bristol Centre for Linguistics, University of the West of England, Bristol)

DAVID DENISON (Linguistics and English Language, University of Manchester)

OLGA FISCHER (Department of English Language and Literature, University of Amsterdam)

R. D. FULK (Department of English, Indiana University)

PETER KITSON (formerly Department of English, University of Birmingham)

MARGARET LAING (Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh)

ROGER LASS (English Language & Literature, University of Cape Town; Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh)

WARREN MAGUIRE (Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh)

CHRIS MCCULLY (Graduate School for the Humanities at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)

APRIL McMHAON (Vice-Chancellor, Aberystwyth University)
List of contributors  xiii

DONKA MINKOVA (Department of English, University of California, Los Angeles)

EMMA MOORE (School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics, University of Sheffield)

TERTTU NEVALAINEN (Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki)

NIKOLAUS RITT (Department of English, University of Vienna)

GEOFFREY RUSSOM (Department of English, Brown University)

ANTHONY WARNER (Department of Language and Linguistic Science, University of York)