

Exploring the Old French Influence on Middle English Prepositional Constructions: A Phraseological Investigation of *at need* and *in need*

Melanie Borchers

University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
melanie.borchers@uni-due.de

Abstract

As far as the lexical influence of French is concerned Middle English has already been investigated. The present paper claims that the influence that French exerted due to the language contact situation after the Norman Conquest exceeds the impact on the English lexicon and provides evidence for the fact that phraseologisms, i.e. multi-word units, have found their way into the Middle English language, too. According to former research (cf. Nagucka, 2003: 264) prepositional constructions do “not tolerate influence or borrowing”. The present article presents two case studies of prepositional constructions that provide evidence for the contrary; i.e. an influence of Old French prepositional constructions on the Middle English phrasicon.

Keywords

corpus linguistics; comparative linguistics; Middle English; French influence; phraseology; prepositional constructions

1 Introduction

Two areas of study in English historical linguistics are the influence of Old French on the Middle English lexicon and the development of proverbs and other highly idiomatic phraseological units. This paper will combine these two aspects in order to add a new dimension to the treatment of the impact that the Norman Conquest had on the English language. Using a corpus-based approach¹, this paper will focus on the role of prepositional constructions within the field of Middle English phraseology and investigate the superstratal French influence on contemporary English phraseological constructions.

¹ Compare also Duncan (2009) who investigates four categories of Anglo-Norman influence on Middle English syntax via a distinct methodological approach. On the basis of evidence of entirely different kind the conclusions reached are strikingly similar.

This paper will challenge Nagucka's (2003: 264) claim that "the prepositional phrase is a structural and conceptual area which does not tolerate influence or borrowing." In the footsteps of Prins' (1952) investigation of *French Influence in English Phrasing* and in line with Firth's dictum "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (quoted in Mackin, 1978: 149), this paper will prove the influence of Old French prepositional constructions on Middle English.

2 Middle English Prepositional Constructions: A Phraseological Case Study

An analysis of Middle English prepositions requires a short diachronic sketch of their development. When Old English lost its inflections, the decay of the case system required compensation. The structural changes were two-fold. First, word order was fixed and second, as French, English became more periphrastic, i.e. it made greater use of prepositions and increased their functional range. Whereas prepositions were hardly ever borrowed into the English language (cf. e.g. the probability scale for borrowed features in Thomason & Kaufman, 1991: 42ff.), similarities in form facilitated calquing. In the following section, the paper will focus on two such prepositions, i.e. Middle English *at* (< Old French *à*) and Middle English *in* (< Old French *en*).

While, according to Price (1947: 11), dictionary entries suggest a greater influence of Old Norse *at* and Old French *a* than that of Old English *æt*, Latin *ad* might also have influenced Middle English prepositional constructions (cf. also Hornero-Corisco, 1997 and Sykes, 1899). This paper, however, will only take the influence of French into consideration. The sample analyses will answer the question whether this influence reinforced existing Old English constructions or integrated new foreign prepositional constructions into post-Conquest English.

2.1 Data under Investigation

Three corpora are essential in proving a possible Old French origin of a Middle English phraseological low-frequency attestation. First, the prepositional constructions have been retrieved from an amalgamation of electronically available corpora of Middle English², i.e. the *Innsbruck Prose Corpus*

² Please refer for example to Claridge (2008) for details about the restrictions and peculiarities of historical corpora. For the period under investigation particularly the data lacuna for early post-Conquest English is highly problematic.

(*ICAMET Prose*), *Middle English Medical Texts (MEMT)*, and the relevant data from the *Helsinki Corpus (HC)*, the *Corpus of Early English Dialogues Sampler (CEECS)* and the *Innsbruck Corpus of English Letters from 1386 to 1688 (ICAMET Letters)*.³ In all, the data amount to 7,712,528 words across the time span of 1050 to 1500. Second, a comparative corpus of Old French⁴ has been used to prove possible influences on contemporary English. The *Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam (NCA)*, which spans the period from 1150 to 1350, amounts to 3,184,843 words. Third, in order to exclude any native Germanic development, the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus (DOEC)*, a corpus of 3,845,825 words, has also been taken into account.

In addition to the Old and Middle English material under investigation, about nine million words of Early Modern English data provide some supplementary frequency information about the development within the English language. Ideally, to reconstruct the phraseological origin of the two Middle English prepositional constructions, this paper should also examine Latin and Old Norse corpora. However, this paper will focus only on the three aforementioned corpora.

2.2 Prepositional Constructions within the Field of Phraseology

Middle English prepositional constructions are found in (at least) three different realisations. First, there are Middle English prepositional constructions that appear in grammatically well-formed prepositional phrases (cf. Iglesias-Rábade, 2003) with a preposition that is followed by a determiner and its noun (cf. (1)). Second, there are constructions that only consist of a preposition and a mere noun that would otherwise be accompanied by a determiner (e.g. singular nouns (cf. (2)) and third, there are constructions that show a possible determiner and/or adjective between preposition and noun (cf. (3)).

- (1) [...] alle that were **at the feste**. (*MEMT*)
- (2) [...] for hunger he took three or four **at once** [...]. (*ICAMET Prose*)
- (3) [...] yit have I doone goode servyce, and nott leffte any **at [hys most] neede** ner Z for feer. (*ICAMET Prose*)

³ To keep the work as free of non-native-speaker intuition as possible, the Middle English prepositional constructions have been retrieved according to exclusively formal criteria. These exclude for example non-prepositional *at*, place and time adverbials, *at* as part of verbal constructions, constructions with a frequency below 3 per million words and constructions that are prevalent within works by one author only.

⁴ I will not take account of the potential specificity of Anglo-Norman as the most plausible immediate source variety for ME in this article (cf. Morin (2007) for the distribution of the *Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam* across Old French dialects).

These three formally distinct prepositional constructions suggest another difference: a difference in meaning. In the following, the phraseological potential of the three constructions will be described mainly on two linguistic levels, i.e. syntax and semantics.

Whereas (1) presents a proper Middle English prepositional phrase, with a preposition followed by a determiner and a noun, (2) is a syntactically incomplete prepositional construction characterised by the lack of any determiner. (3) holds a medial position in that it regularly occurs without its possible determiner and/or adjective. Quotations (4) to (7) show the variability of the Middle English prepositional construction with the preposition *at* and the noun *need* (i.e. *at* [DET] [Adj] *need*).

- (4) He is þe beste man **at nede** Þat eueremar shal ride stede [...]. (*HC*)
 (5) To grynde & drynke **at gret nede**. (*MEMT*)
 (6) [...] also he were his broder, [...], helpen him **at his nede**; [...]. (*HC*)
 (7) Pou hast lore þin cardinals **at þi meste nede**; [...]. (*HC*)

While on the one hand, *at the feste* (cf. (1)) never occurs without a determiner, determiner and adjective are never present in prepositional constructions like (2) – although it should be noted that this construction had not yet been fossilised (i.e. phraseologicalised) during the Middle English period. The preceding case of variability among its constituting elements in (3) is the characteristic feature of Middle English prepositional constructions that can be regarded as being phraseological borderline cases. As these cases are grammatically anomalous (i.e. singular nouns with a possible preceding adjective are not accompanied by a determiner), these anomalies represent proof in favour of idiomatisation (cf. Gläser, 1986: 59).⁵

Second, a semantic aspect is characteristic of phraseological constructions, namely, compositionality. While (1) presents the sum of a compositional meaning and (2) is understood as one lexeme, i.e. ‘instantly’, the intermediary variant in (3) suggests a shift from compositionality to opaqueness, i.e. the interpretation as one lexeme. Middle English prepositional constructions thus represent a continuum that ranges from compositional semantics to lexicalised phraseologisms. We will thus investigate how this process of phraseologicalisation defines the use of elliptical prepositional constructions during

⁵ The author of this paper is aware of the fact that while Old English had no determiner system, determiners were treated as obligatory elements of noun phrases by the end of the Middle English period. To my knowledge, there is a lack of literature available on the transitional period between the two uses. As there are very early attestations of noun phrases that include a determiner, this paper considers the later establishment of a determiner system as the norm.

the Middle English period (cf. Burger & Linke, 1998: 747ff.; Munske, 1993: 504).

Similarly, the number of words that constitute the construction, i.e. the morphological composition of the prepositional constructions under investigation, distinguishes structures within and without the phraseological boundaries - the third criterion. While the compositional prepositional phrase consists of at least three elements, the Middle English phraseological constructions investigated here are composed of only two words. This does not mean, however, that longer sequences cannot undergo phraseologicalisation (cf. Modern English *at the double* and *at a pinch* in Cowie et al., 1985); this only is to say that - due to the lack of native-speaker competence in Middle English - a formal criterion needs to be decisive. The formation stage, i.e. the transitional phase from literal to figurative language use, is distinguished from the former two constructions at the limits of the continuum by its variable compositions of at least two elements.

This definition of the field of investigation that embraces only particular prepositional constructions has served as the criterion for retrieving the respective phraseological constructions from the aforementioned Middle English corpus. The following findings will be analysed and described according to their quantitative as well as their qualitative properties. Not frequencies but also the sociolinguistic background of the manuscript - as scarce as it may be - will shed some light on the historical data.

2.3 Analyses of Two Exemplary Constructions

In the present section we will investigate one high-frequency Middle English prepositional construction with *at*. In order to prove the extraordinary Old French influence on the phraseological level, a prepositional construction has been chosen for exemplification that presents a case which has not formerly been investigated under the heading of foreign influences.

Haugen (1950: 13ff.) presents a three-fold classification of loan strategies: loan words, loan translations and loan blends. Even if we adapt Haugen's terminology to the phraseological field of investigation, i.e. loan phrases, we still lack one influence that will be described in the following analysis. *at ease* represents an example of a phraseological construction that shows a formal import, i.e. the Old French lexeme *aïse* was integrated into the English language together with its meaning, i.e. a conceptual integration has also taken place. Thus, *at ease* would fit into the category of loan words. The following prepositional construction shows neither a substitution of the native word by the foreign lexeme nor does it present a concept unknown in the

English language. Nevertheless, the corpus data will adduce evidence that speaks for a remarkable French influence on a construction that has a Germanic appearance.

2.3.1 *at need*

The *Oxford English Dictionary* as well as the *Middle English Dictionary* traces Middle English *need* back to Old English *nēd(e)*, a Germanic lexeme that was often combined in emphatic tautologous compounds with *ðearf* (cf. High German *Bedarf*) as in *niedðearf*.

The Old English data attest six occurrences (i.e. 1.6 per million words) of the prepositional construction *at need*, all of which are grammatically well-formed with the preposition followed by the dative case. One of these constructions (cf. (8)) shows close similarity with the Middle English phraseological constructions.

- (8) þonne weorðe ic mid eow, cwæð ure Drihten, æfre æt ðearfe & eow ne forlæte æfre
æt neode. (DOEC)

While there is thus no attestation of a grammatically anomalous prepositional construction before the Conquest (cf. Fig. 1), there are 7.4 occurrences per million words within the data from 1150 to 1250, 3.0 per million words of which present the grammatically anomalous construction *at ADJ need*. After an enormous increase to 104.5 occurrences following their introduction, the frequency of all *at need* constructions drops again to 34.7 occurrences from 1350 to 1420 and to 25.2 during the last Middle English subperiod. In the Early Modern English data we find only 1.1 occurrences per million words.

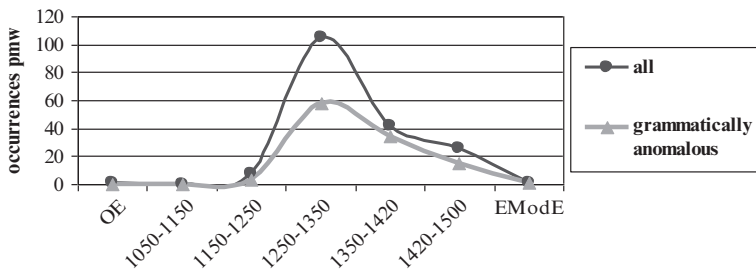


Figure 1: The development of *at [x] need* constructions throughout the Middle and Early Modern English period

The first attestations after the Conquest suggest that the overall development was triggered by Old French influence. The developmental graph points to an introduction of Old French into contemporary English but no strong tendency to survive within its new linguistic context. A possible explanation for the findings will be given in the analysis of *in need*.

A proportional analysis of all *at need* constructions according to their phraseological value (cf. Fig. 2) provides evidence for the beginning of a phraseologicalisation of the prepositional construction during the time from 1150 to 1420. Its decrease from over 80% to less than 60% towards the end of the Middle English period and the slight fall during the Early Modern English data also suggest that this construction failed to establish itself as a purely phraseological construction.

Now that the development of the *at need* construction has been sketched for the Middle English period, the question is what might have triggered the construction of *at [DET] [ADJ] need* and especially its phraseological structure without a determiner to surface.

The earliest attestations of the prepositional construction in post-Conquest English argue in favour of French influence although the construction could have formally also descended from Old English, where the combination

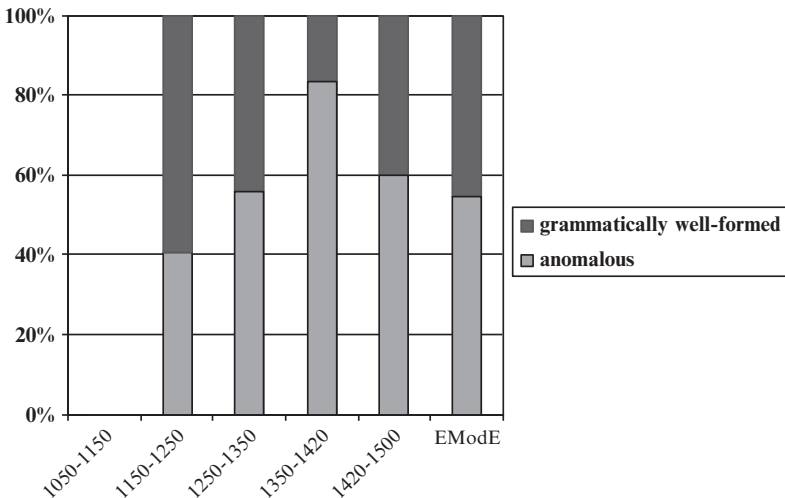


Figure 2: Proportional relation of grammatically well-formed and anomalous *at need* throughout the Middle and Early Modern English period

of the preposition *at* with *need* was already established. Beyond this rather vague assumption, however, the Old French data of comparison provide clear evidence of a phraseological Old French influence on Middle English prepositional constructions.

As the etymology of the lexeme *need* has already shown, it is of Germanic origin. Thus, *need* has not been formally adopted from Old French, where the meaning is conveyed by the noun *le besoing / la besoigne*. But an investigation of Old French prepositional *besoing(e)* constructions presents interesting evidence in favour of a phraseological loan influence. By providing comparative data for the investigated *at need* construction we will be able to propose that a foreign constructional pattern that is realised by native lexemes might have been adopted.

Apart from many verbal constructions with *avoir*, the *Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam* also features other constructions with the preposition *à* and *besoing(e)*.⁶

- (9) [...] je croi tesmoing se ce venoit **a besoing** [...]. (NCA)
- (10) [...] je vieng a vous **a grant besoing** [...]. (NCA)
- (11) [...] et miex le saura conseillier **a son besoin** [...]. (NCA)
- (12) [...] que james **a si grant besoig** ne porront secourre nule terre. (NCA)

These constructions show the same characteristics as the Middle English data (cf. (4) to (7)). While there are also grammatically well-formed constructions that contain at least the preposition, a determiner and a noun (cf. (11) and (12)), the data also show instances of the phraseological construction that is considered grammatically anomalous. (9) and (10) both lack the common determiner in Old French prepositional constructions, and the latter includes an additional adjective.

Second, while the syntactic criterion is met by the corresponding French data, semantics also provides relevant information in favour of a French origin of the Middle English phraseological construction. According to the *MED*, *at need* means ‘necessary’ or ‘as is needed’ and also conveys a temporal aspect (e.g. ‘in time of need’), a meaning that even nowadays is inherent in the prepositional construction. It thus tends to be used as one lexeme only, without a literal and compositional meaning. This is also valid for the Old French data, where (9) and (10) are characterised by their non-compositionality (cf. also Blumenthal & Stein, 2002).

⁶ As the usage of accents had not fully been established yet, the third person singular of the verb *avoir* and the preposition under investigation are at times formally identical.

Third, a collocational analysis of *at need* constructions also substantiates its Old French origin. In the Middle English data, more than 40% of all constructions that include an adjective contain the adjective *great*. In Old French, the equivalent collocation with *grant* is also highly frequent and, interestingly, *grant* also precedes the noun in Old French. Thus, the same syntactic and semantic as well as collocational patterns are displayed in the Old French and Middle English data.

This may only be a coincidence of a prepositional construction that develops at the same time in two different languages. It may, therefore, be helpful to examine the lexeme *need* in a different prepositional construction, Middle English *in need*.

2.3.2 *in need*

Just as in Old French, the Middle English data also present another possible prepositional construction with *need* that actually also conveys the aforementioned meaning of *at need*: *in need*.

Like *at need*, the construction with the preposition *in* is not attested in the period from 1050 to 1150 (cf. Fig. 3). And even though the preposition *in* already existed in Old English, there is only one single attestation of the prepositional construction in the Old English data (i.e. 0.3 per million words). Whereas there is an enormous increase in frequency of *at need* constructions, *in need* develops gradually by an increase rate of 20 attestations per million words per subperiod until, towards the end of the Middle English period, the construction decreases again and seems to vanish during the Early Modern English period. Present-day English data, however, show that *in need* has not only survived but it is also far more frequent than its variant *at need*.

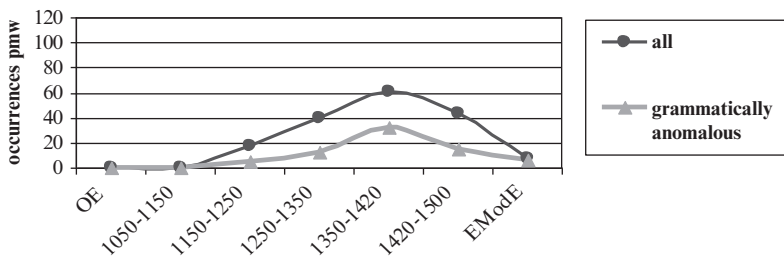


Figure 3: The development of *in [x] need* constructions throughout the Middle and Early Modern English period

Again, since the phraseological construction was recorded during the time span from 1050 to 1150, the prepositional construction might also have been influenced by Old French after the Conquest. And again, the development suggests that there was no permanent adoption of this prepositional construction into the phraseological inventory of the English language.

First evidence is provided by a proportional analysis of all *in need* constructions. Although the structure, in contrast to its variant construction with *at*, does not prove itself to be overly frequent during the Middle English period, the proportional relation of grammatically well-formed and rather phraseological constructions is interesting. Whereas the proportion of anomalous constructions is rather low in contrast to their proper Middle English prepositional phrases, the Early Modern English state of affairs suggests that its phraseologicalisation occurred later (cf. Fig. 4).

In the following section, we will analyse the phraseological origins of *in need* to support the claim that the prepositional construction *at need* represents by no means the capricious nature of a single phraseological unit. It rather shows regularity of Old French influence on Middle English phraseology following the Conquest. As we have seen, the combination of *in* with *need* was already

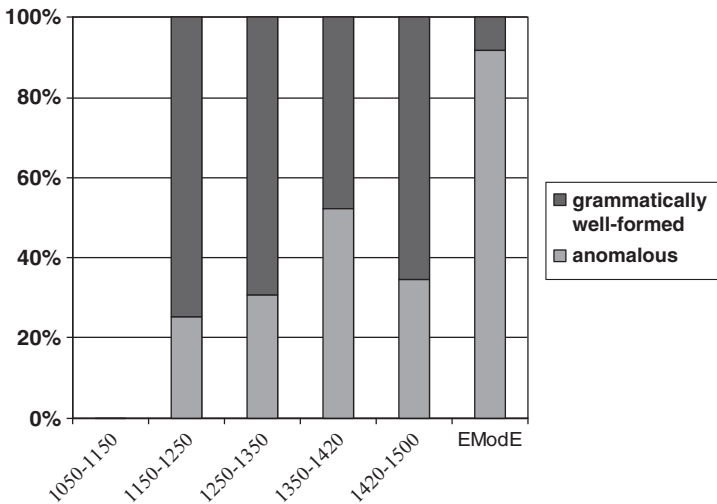


Figure 4: Proportional relation of grammatically well-formed and anomalous *in need* throughout the Middle and Early Modern English period

possible in Old English. As there is only one attestation, however, the dating of the next attestations is thus an argument in favour of a possible French influence. Still, this has to be substantiated by further proof. The following syntactic comparison of Middle English *in need* constructions with their Old French counterparts provides the next parameter.

- (13) Baptesme is the fyrst sacrament & euery persone **in nede** may baptise and cristene [...] (*ICAMET Prose*)
 (14) And whan he was **in grete nede** [...]. (*ICAMET Prose*)
 (15) [...] for to helpe hym and socoure hym **in hys need** [...] (*ICAMET Prose*)
 (16) But atte laste of þi lyf **in þi meste neode**, [...]. (*ICAMET Prose*)

These constructions show how Middle English *in need* is similar in structure to Middle English *at need*. Again, there are examples of grammatically well-formed prepositional constructions (cf. (15) and also (16)) and those that reflect an anomaly due to a missing determiner (cf. (13) and (14)). The analogous Old French data show exactly the same phenomenon. Though less frequent, the construction *en besoign(e)* is just as possible as *a besoign(e)* (cf. (17) to (20)).

- (17) [...] ne woil ie ma uolonte uandre **en besoing** en chaitiuetey (*NCA*)
 (18) [...] que ge vos ai trevez hardiz et loiax **en meinte grant besoigne** [...]. (*NCA*)
 (19) [...] quant vit tant riche roi et tant hardi vassal venir **en sa besogne** [...] (*NCA*)
 (20) [...] chescuns **en sa propre besoigne** doit estre argus [...]. (*NCA*)

Second, and again a result of syntactic variability, a change in structure also conveys a change in meaning. In our previous analysis of *at need*, the grammatical anomaly of (17) and (18) provides semantic information in favour of a French influence for this phraseological construction. Neither the *OED* nor the *MED* distinguish between the two constructions on the semantic level and Blumenthal & Stein (2002) provide exactly the same definitions for the two coexisting Old French constructions. Following the argumentation above, *in need* is thus also used in a rather lexicalised function. It also displays non-compositionality, which provides proof for its phraseological value.

Third, while the Old French data – though less frequent than for *at need* – display a tendency towards similar collocations (e.g. *grant* as in (18)), Middle English *in need* shows the same collocation features that *at need* presented. Due to their identical collocational surroundings, the two Middle English prepositional constructions prove to be as interchangeable as their Old French counterparts were.

3 Conclusion

This paper has investigated the development and the possible French origin of two Middle English prepositional constructions. Both constructions, *at need* as well as *in need*, were first recorded - though extremely infrequent - in the Old English data. At first sight, we could argue that from their appearance the two prepositional constructions look as if they were of native Germanic origin (cf. Modern German *in Not*). It is the data from 1150 onwards, however, that challenges this first assumption considerably. The rise in frequency during the Middle English period triggers the suspicion that Old French might also have exerted some influence on seemingly native constructions. This is to say that although a construction is of native Germanic origin, it does not necessarily exclude a later French influence.

The comparison with the data from the *Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam* shows not only that the two Middle English constructions are mutually exchangeable but the French constructions also convey the same meanings and are thus also used synonymously. This is also supported by their collocations. The constructions have identical collocations in the respective languages. However, the French impact seems to wear off by the end of the Middle English period. This development, which is in line with the chronology put forward by Sykes (1899: 53), strongly reflects the influence that French exercised on the English lexicon (cf. Prins, 1952: 33). There is also a distinct rise towards the year 1250 and a decrease by the year 1400, which in turn might be explained by the fact that English from 1300 onwards regained some of its previous functions in public life (cf. Winford, 2003: 35).

In sum, *at need* and *in need* represent examples of an unacknowledged category⁷ of the vast Old French influence on Middle English. Whereas in some cases Old French prepositional constructions have passed into Middle English without any change (e.g. *à part* > *apart*), there are also phrases with *at* that were previously unknown in English.

The present *at need* and *in need* constructions still differ in Middle English. Both represent native lexemes that convey an already established concept in English, a fact that is also substantiated by the use of the Old English adjectival synonym *ðearfendlic*.⁸ Nevertheless, Old French exercised an influence on

⁷ Future investigations of this category (e.g. *at speed*, *in anger*, *in haste*, *in spirit*, etc) might deliver potentially interesting parallels.

⁸ The preposition *at* also represents a purely native lexeme in this construction. If it were by any means a translation of French *à*, there would most likely also be attestations of *on* in the Middle English prepositional construction.

the formation of the first grammatically anomalous construction without a determiner. We could thus argue that no foreign phraseologism was naturalised during the Middle English period, it only lent its formal construction to the English language.

Nagucka's (2003: 264) claim that "the prepositional phrase is a structural and conceptual area which does not tolerate influence or borrowing" has, thus, turned out to be not entirely true. In line with Sykes (1899: 54), this paper has demonstrated the - at least contributory - phraseological influence of Old French on English: "Hence it must be concluded that this development of meaning of AT and the extension of its phrasal power are the direct result of French influence upon the native language."

References

Data Basis

- The Corpus of Early English Correspondence. Sampler*. 1999. (The ICAME corpus collection on CD-ROM, 2nd edition).
- Dictionary of Old English Corpus*. 2004. Toronto: University Toronto.
- The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts. Diachronic Part*. 1999. (The ICAME corpus collection on CD-ROM, 2nd edition).
- Innsbruck Computer-archive of Machine-readable English Texts Corpus of English Letters from 1386 to 1688*. 1999. (The ICAME corpus collection on CD-ROM, 2nd edition).
- Innsbruck Computer-archive of Machine-readable English Texts Corpus of Middle English Prose*. 1999. (The ICAME corpus collection on CD-ROM, 2nd edition).
- Kunstmann, Pierre & Stein, Achim (eds). 2006. *Le Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam*. Available at <URL: <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/lingrom/stein/corpus>>.
- Taavitsainen, Irma (ed). 2005. *Middle English Medical Texts*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Literature

- Blumenthal, Peter and Stein, Achim (eds.). 2002. *Tobler-Lommatzsch: Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Burger, Harald & Linke, Angelika. 1998. Historische Phraseologie. In Werner Bensch et al. (eds.), *Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Erforschung*, 743-755. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Claridge, Claudia. 2008. Historical Corpora. In Anke Lüdeling and Merjy Kytö (eds.), *Corpus Linguistics: An International Handbook*, 242-259. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Cowie, A.P. et al. 1985. *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English. Volume 2: Phrase, Clause and Sentence Idioms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Duncan, Thomas Gibson. 2009. Lords and Brothels: Aspects of Bilingualism in the Middle English *Mirror*. In Denis Renevey and Christine Whitehead (eds.), *The Medieval Translator. Traduire au Moyen Age. Lost in Translation?*, 109-120. Turnhout: Brepols.
- Gläser, Rosemarie. 1986. *Phraseologie der englischen Sprache*. Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie.

- Haugen, Einar. 1950. The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing. *Language* 26: 210-231.
- Hornero-Corisco, Ana M^A. 1997. French Influence on English Prepositions: A Study of Ancrene Wisse. *Studia Anglica Posnoniensia* 32: 33-45.
- Iglesias-Rábade, Luis. 2003. *Handbook of Middle English: Grammar and Texts*. München: Licom.
- Mackin, Roland. 1978. On Collocations: 'words shall be known by the company they keep'. In Peter Strevens (ed.), *In Honour of A.S. Hornby*, 145-165. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Middle English Dictionary & Middle English Compendium*. 2001. Michigan: University of Michigan Press. Available at <URL: <http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/m/med>>.
- Morin, Yves Charles. 2007. Histoire du Corpus d'Amsterdam: le traitement des données dialectales. In Pierre Kunstmann and Achim Stein (eds.), *Le Nouveau Corpus d'Amsterdam. Actes de l'atelier de Lauterbad, 23-26 février 2006*, 29-50. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Munske, Horst Haider. 1993. Wie entstehen Phraseologismen? In Klaus Mattheier (ed.), *Vielfalt des Deutschen: Festschrift für Werner Besch*, 481-515. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Nagucka, Ruta. 2003. Latin Prepositional Phrases and Their Old English Equivalents. In Dieter Kastovsky and Arthur Mettinger (eds.), *Language Contact in the History of English*, 251-265. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Oxford English Dictionary*. [online]. 2002-. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at <URL: <http://oed.com>>.
- Price, H.T. 1947. *Foreign Influences on Middle English*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Prins, Anton A. 1952. *French Influence in English Phrasing*. Leiden: Leiden Universitaire Pers.
- Sykes, Frederick Henry. 1899. *French Elements in Middle English: Chapters Illustrative of the Origin and Growth of Romance Influence on the Phrasal Power of Standard English in Its Formative Period*. Oxford: Horace Hart.
- Thomason, Sarah Grey and Terrence Kaufman. 1991. *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Winford, Donald. 2003. *An Introduction to Contact Linguistics*. Malden: Blackwell.