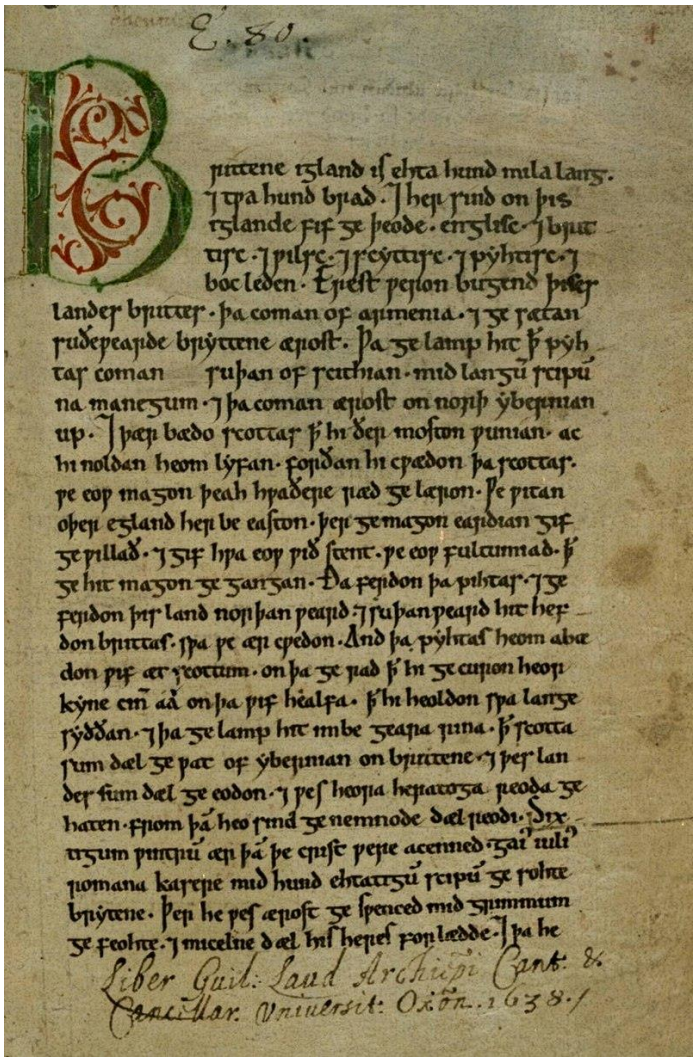
OLD NORSE INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH: A CASE FOR KOINEISATION

Evidence from the *Peterborough Chronicle*



The first page of the Peterborough Chronicle.

Gabriel J. Tydings

Faculty of Arts, Radboud University Nijmegen

BA werkstuk Engelse Taalkunde

Drs. Monique Tangelder

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Signed

Name of student: Gabriel Tydings

Student number: 1009413

Abstract

The many discrepancies between Old English as spoken some 1500 years ago and the English we speak today has given rise to many discussions regarding the nature and development of the language. Some scholars believe this language state can best be analysed along the lines of a creole, while others argue this term is better reserved for more drastically simplified languages. The term creole is itself the topic of a debate as least as extensive as the one surrounding the Middle English Creole Hypothesis. The possibility of Middle English as a koine, a common language shared among speakers of different languages that were to some degree mutually intelligible, has not yet seen a debate of similar extent. An analysis of the degree of deflexion in the *Peterborough Chronicle*, one of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, shows that the state of mutual intelligibility between Old English and Old Norse led to the formation of a koine, which explains the unique linguistic status of Early Modern English.

Keywords: Old English, Old Norse, deflexion, Peterborough Chronicle, koine, creole, Middle English Creole Hypothesis

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Working definitions and abbreviations

Creole: A new language that arises when communities of people who share no common language come in close contact with each other and come up with a new language out of necessity

Pidgin: A language that has been drastically simplified in structure and vocabulary, in order to serve restricted communication needs, often brought about through sudden direct contact such as military invasion or trade contact. When a pidgin is adopted as the first language of a community, it becomes a creole.

Acc = Accusative

Dat = Dative

EME = Early Middle English

Gen = Genitive

ME = Middle English

MECH = Middle English Creolisation Hypothesis

ModE = Modern English

NF = Norman French

Nom = Nominative

OE = Old English

ON = Old Norse

PC = Peterborough Chronicle

Old Norse influence on English: A Case for Koineisation

The raid on Lindisfarne in 793 marks the first of many Viking invasions in the British isles. The following decades were marked by the sacking and pillaging of monasteries. From 865 onwards the invaders no longer see the British Isles as merely a place to raid; sending larger armies to Britain's shores to aid the colonisation and construction of settlements. What follows is a series of battles, notably the Battle of York (867), and the Battle of Edington (878), in which the Viking conquerors attempted to seize more ground. After the Battle of Edington, the Treaty of Wedmore (878) is signed in which Alfred of Wessex and Viking king Guthrum the Old formally establish a boundary between the kingdoms. The establishment of the so-called Danelaw and the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum paved the way for an England in which Danes and Anglo-Saxons live side by side. This led to a state of close language contact between Anglo-Saxon Old English (OE) and Old Norse (ON).

This state of close language contact is interesting for a number of reasons. It lasted for c. 250 years and OE and ON were, at least to some extent, mutually intelligible. It is not until 1066 that another significant change in the development of English occurs, whereby the Norman-French army defeats an English army, rendering Anglo-Norman the 'official' language of England, which would only be changed by Edward III in the *Pleading in English Act 1362*. What is then known as Middle English (ME) is an amalgamation of at least OE, ON, Latin, Central French, and Norman French (NF). The result is a simplified English that has seen drastic reductions to, or even lost, many features of OE. Notably, its inflectional system was simplified and would later completely collapse. The severity of this reduction led some scholars to believe that Early Middle English (EME) can best be analysed along the lines of a creole. The term itself, however, is the subject of a debate as extensive

as the proposal of a Middle English creole. The *Middle English Creole Hypothesis* (MECH) has been adapted by various scholars in an attempt to explain the unique state of English but is met with fierce competition, as well. The term creole has typically been applied to degenerate dialects of parent languages; regarded as inherently inferior to 'real' languages. It is partially this stigmatisation that has led many creoles to become extinct. The possibility of English as a creole has, therefore, been refuted a priori by many.

Cynthia Allen suggests the *Peterborough Chronicle* (PC) as being the only extensive English text from the 12th century and analysed it with regard to creolisation. Specifically, the PC shows signs of *deflexion*, as the inflectional system is significantly reduced from its previous OE form (Allen, 1997). Hope Dawson (2003) suggests that the topic can better be analysed by reference of a *koine*: a common language between mutually intelligible languages. This presents an interesting view on the development of English: can deflexion in the P*eterborough Chronicle* provide evidence for Early Middle English as a koine?

This paper investigates this question by comparing OE and ON, as well as the extended state of contact between its speakers. Subsequently, the framework surrounding creoles, creolisation, and the MECH, along with important adaptations, rebuttals, and elaborations demonstrates the difficulty in categorising English. Finally, an analysis of inflectional case marking within the PC as shown by Shores is helpful in analysing ON influence on OE deflexion.

Chapter 1: Old English and Old Norse

Old English and Old Norse are related languages from different branches (West and North) of the Germanic family. The inherent similarities between OE and ON allowed many ON borrowings into OE to go undetected for a long time, until philologists set out to investigate Scandinavian influence on the English language from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards.

Jespersen (1956) places the first evidence of a Scandinavian loanword in English after the events at the battle of Maldon in 993, as told in a war poem. The poem has the verb *kalla* (call) in it, which is an unaltered ON loan. More often, words would undergo semantic changes or acquire new meanings. An example is Modern English (ModE) 'skirt'. The Proto-Germanic consonant cluster 'sk' indicates that this is a loanword, as this cluster developed to 'sh' in OE, and 'sk' in ON. The words *skirt* and *shirt* come from the same Proto-Germanic word *skjurton (short garment); acquiring different meanings alongside each other. The sheer amount of words revealed to be of ON origin – some 400 that are still in regular use, 2,000 when counting rural dialects (Geipel, 1971, p. 69) – led many philologists to believe ON influence to be more widespread than previously assumed.

It is important to consider that the extensive OE inflectional system was lost in ME. The OE system was already, albeit slowly, moving from a declensional approach to a set word order (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988). During this transitional period, subject and object forms were regularly marked both by word order and case ending. The loss of the Old English inflectional system does not directly prove an Old Norse influence, as many Germanic languages such as Dutch and mainland Scandinavian languages see similar inflectional reductions. Various scholars attribute this change to

the period of language contact that took place after the Danelaw was established, while others believe the Norman Conquest is to blame for this change.

1.1 Contact-induced language change

The topic of OE-ON contact is regularly examined in reference to *contact-induced language change*. Thomason defines this phenomenon as "any linguistic change that would have been less likely to occur outside a particular contact situation" (2001, p. 262). The reason for this clarification is that all languages, even isolates, develop over time. This means that differences between OE to EME are not necessarily contact-induced. Further separation can be made between two types of contact-induced language change, namely *interference* (Thomason, 2001, p. 61), and *interlanguage* (Hock & Joseph, 2009, p. 357). The concept of interference within the subject of OE-ON contact is interesting as this covers all instances where one language adopts any word or sound from the other language, due to speakers using more than one language interchangeably (Hellem, 2014, p. 9). This often leads to *imperfect learning*, where speakers adapt elements from one language into their own but copy them incorrectly. This has the potential to account for seemingly irregular or inexplicable changes to a language. The second branch of contact-induced language change, interlanguage, is explained as modifications that happen in second-language learning that do not result from interference. This often transpires when learners of a language subconsciously formulate their own rules and systems to learn a target language. This formulation will be influenced not only by the speaker's native language but also by their assumptions regarding the target language (Hock & Joseph, 2009, p. 357).

Imperfect learning and interlanguage can go a long way in explaining language development, but not all elements of language are as easily subjected to

change as others. The concept of *borrowability* is described by Matras as "the likelihood of a structural category to be affected by contact-induced change of some kind or other" (2007, p. 31). Many attempts have been made to rank categories by their likeliness to be borrowed, but this is a subject of much discussion. One of the difficulties in this cataloguing is the fact that languages are intrinsically different. However, as OE and ON display fundamental similarities, certain assumptions can be made.

Crystal goes as far as to place ON in the role of the superstrate language, stating that "the Danes were the conquerors, and conquerors do not usually have the sort of benevolent mindset which makes them look kindly on the vocabulary of the conquered" (2005, p. 83), seemingly failing to take into account much of the sociohistorical context. While the settlers indeed set out to conquer the Isles, this quest for dominance was halted. The initial stage of conquering is very unlikely to have left any linguistic effect as it mostly consisted of gaining ground. The subsequent position of the Danes as "conquerors" does not compute with the socio-historical situation. The establishment of the Danelaw, after which any significant linguistic effect can be traced, had stabilised the position of the Danes alongside speakers of OE.

1.2 Mutual intelligibility and bilingualism

Townend (2002) explains that OE and ON were closely linked until the Migration Period in the fifth century. During the c. 250 years between the Migration Period and the first Anglo-Saxon invasions the languages had developed separately, but the phonological system remained remarkably similar. Townend goes on to describe two varieties of mutual intelligibility: the scenario in which complex sentences with lexical variety and syntactic fullness can be understood and the

scenario in which simple day-to-day transactions, mostly pertaining to words, can be understood. He elaborates that the second scenario was probably truest to the OE-ON contact situation, expressing that "one can hardly imagine many day-to-day transactions between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians (such as bartering) to have required any great degree of syntactic complexity" (2002, p. 183), categorising this mutual intelligibility as adequate or pragmatic. While he is correct in stating that "a great degree of syntactic complexity" was not required for language contact, the assumption that it was, therefore, not adapted in the c. 250 years of extensive contact seems highly unlikely. It could well have been the case that ON settlers and speakers of OE did not extensively learn each other's languages, but it seems unlikely that their children and subsequent generations retained a simplified (syntactic) system.

Adult language acquisition typically leads to simplification (see McWorther, 2007), which is in line with the notion of a *critical period*, after which native speech can never be attained (Lenneberg, 1967). Trudgill explains the notion of *linguistic complexity* as being the difficulties faced by adults who acquire unfamiliar systems (2017). This often culminates in simplified versions of linguistic systems, which can eventually become the standard or regular form in the acquired language. Warner notes that children who are bilingual from an early age do not have these problems, as they learn the language within the critical period (2017). This can lead to an increasingly complex system, as bilingual children adapt features of both languages into one system (Grosjean, 1992). This is interesting regarding the OE-ON contact situation. On the one hand, OE and ON speakers (imperfectly) learn each other's languages, which might have led to simplification. On the other hand, because of prolonged contact, children possibly grew up with both languages, which in turn might have led to an increase in complexity. A third possibility, only slightly touched

upon by Warner, might prove even more important to this unique situation, as he explains that simplification can also be the result of contact situations in which languages are inherently similar (2017).

1.3 Genetic relationship

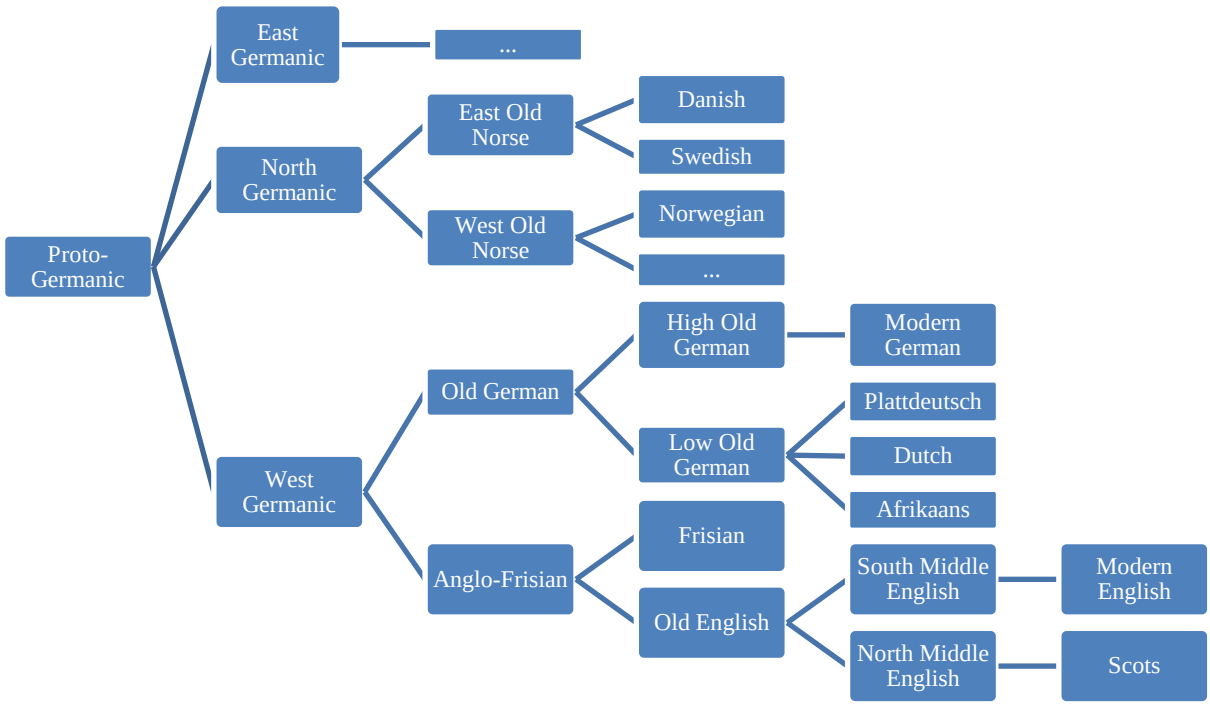
One of the main problems in analysing ON influence on the development of EME is the fact that OE and ON are genetically similar. All Germanic languages share the same ancestor, Proto-Germanic, which in turn stems from Proto-Indo-European. It is, therefore, no surprise that OE and ON show similarities. Fennell analyses the way in which languages evolve and change and explains that speakers of closely related languages, such as OE and ON, will more easily learn related languages than speakers of languages from different families (2001). She suggests that this is because many linguistic features are shared between the languages. In the case of Germanic languages, Rask discovered that the consonant system of all Germanic languages was systematically different from other Indo-European languages (1818). This was soon popularised by Grimm and is known as Grimm's Law (1819). The overlapping consonant inventories between OE and ON is one of the reasons ON influence on EME development is not as visible as NF influence. Developments possibly brought on by ON influence could have been advancements in the OE language, making it difficult to determine which changes can be attributed to language contact and which were merely linguistic innovations.

Genetic relationships between languages are often characterised by the usage of language family trees, depicting languages among their sister- and parental systems. This notion of a linear family tree should be treated with extreme caution, as languages very rarely, if ever, evolve in clear lines of descent. This is especially the case for the development of English. Family trees typically display English as

stemming directly from Anglo-Frisian, failing to take into account the OE-Frisian division; and depict English as a uniform language, without development. The many invasions of the British Isles, along with extensive borrowing of several languages, hardly allow for language development along linear lines. Nonetheless, family trees help determine and narrow down genetic relationship, as well as the possibility or likelihood of borrowing. It is typically assumed that English is a West-Germanic language (for an opposing view positing English as a North-Germanic language, see Emonds & Faarlund, 2004; see Bech & Walkden, 2014, for a rejection of their hypothesis), and Norse is a North-Germanic language (see Figure 1), both stemming from Proto-Germanic.

Figure 1

Germanic language tree showing language development



A language tree along the lines of Figure 1 is perhaps more useful for a discussion regarding English language development. While still omitting dialectical changes, it depicts the OE-Frisian division and more accurately reflects Modern English as a language stemming from a South Middle English dialect, namely the East-Midland dialect.

1.4 Contrasting Old English and Old Norse languages

As OE and ON both stem from the same language, it is no surprise that the languages have some overlap. It is important to note that neither OE nor ON were uniform languages. OE is typically divided into four dialects: Northumbrian, Kentish, West-Saxon, and Mercian, the latter of which became the basis of ModE. Gordon explains that a separation in ON can be made between West and East Norse, but that no great differences can be found between the two up to about 1000 (1957, p. 320), meaning it is arguably of no importance to the development of EME. The similarity (and difference) between OE and ON is vital in understanding and researching ON influence on EME.

1.4.1 Old English and Old Norse noun inflection

OE is a synthetic language, which means that word relations are indicated through inflections. OE noun inflections are marked for number, case, and gender. It has two numbers: singular and plural. In the 1st and 2nd person a dual is found, where *wit* means 'we two' (Mitchell & Robinson, 2007, p. 17). OE has three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Whilst gender sometimes agree with sex, e.g., *se mann* 'the man' is masculine, and *sēo sweostor* 'the sister' is feminine, the gender of nouns typically must be learnt. A noun is marked for gender, case, and number by suffixes, which are determined by their grammatical function in a sentence. OE differentiates between four cases – nominative (nom), genitive (gen), dative (dat), and

accusative (acc) – and has a remnant of a fifth, the instrumental. They are further divided into two groups – weak and strong. Table 1 shows two examples of strong declension and one of weak declension: a masculine *a*-stem *stān* (stone), a feminine ō-stem *giefu* (gift), and a masculine consonant stem *hunta* (hunter) (Hellem, 2014, p. 27).

Table 1

Old English nominal declension

		Masculine a-stem	Feminine ō-stem	Masculine consonant stem
Singular	Nominative	stān	gief-u	hunt-a
	Genitive	stān-es	gief-e	hunt-an
	Dative	stān-e	gief-e	hunt-an
	Accusative	stān	gief-e	hunt-an
Plural	Nominative	stān-as	gief-a	hunt-an
	Genitive	stān-a	gief-a	hunt-ena
	Dative	stān-um	gief-um	hunt-um
	Accusative	stān-as	gief-a	hunt-an

Note. Adapted from *A history of the English language* (5th ed., p. 57) by A.C. Baugh and T. Cable, 2002, Routledge. Copyright 2002 by Routledge.

Many cases share the same suffix; the masculine consonant stem *hunta* displays five out of eight suffixes as -an. In the singular, nouns may have the same nominative and accusative suffix. The distinction depends on the form of any demonstrative or (possessive) adjective, which may qualify the noun (Mitchell & Robinson, 2007, p. 105). This can lead to sentences where context is required to find the subject, as in *Đas seofon hí gecuron* 'They chose these seven' (Mitchell & Robinson, 2007, p. 65).

ON is an inflected language, similar to OE. ON noun inflections are marked for number, case, and gender. It has two numbers, singular and plural. It has three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Grammatical case marking is displayed similarly to the OE system, by using nom, gen, dat, and acc suffixes. Table 2 shows the paradigms of the a-class *hestr* 'horse', the i-class *bæn* 'prayer', and neuter *land* 'land'.

Table 2

Old Norse nominal declension

		A-class	I-class	Neuter
Singular	Nominative	hest-r	bæn	land
	Genitive	hest	bæn	land
	Dative	hest-i	bæn	land-i
	Accusative	hest-s	bæn-ar	land-s
Plural	Nominative	hest-ar	bæn-ir	lǫnd
	Genitive	hest-a	bæn-ir	lǫnd
	Dative	hest-um	bæn-um	lǫnd-um
	Accusative	hest-a	bæn-a	land-a

Note. Adapted from *The syntax of old Norse: With a survey of the inflectional morphology and a complete bibliography* (1st ed., p. 24, 29, 30) by J.T. Faarlund, 2004, Oxford University Press, 2004. Copyright 2004 by Jan Terje Faarlund.

In the a-class *hestr*, the genitive and accusative share the same suffix in the plural. Similarly, for the i-class, there is no distinction between the nom, gen, or dat, in the singular, nor between the nom and gen in the plural. For the neuter, no distinction is made between nom and gen singular, nor between nom and gen plural. The OE system shares the dearth in differentiating between inflectional suffixes.

1.4.2 Old English and Old Norse syntax

OE word order is far less rigid than that of EME, and especially ModE. Grammatical functions are distributed through case marking, meaning that OE word positioning had more room for variation than its modern counterpart. The nominative article *se* 'the', therefore, does not have to be in the first position, as is the norm in ModE: *se cyning hæfde micel geþeaht* 'the king held a great council', therefore, has the same meaning as *micel geþeaht hæfde se cyning*, which would with ModE's lack of nominative inflection read 'a great council held the king' (Barber et al., 2009, p.126). Mitchell and Robinson put forward the following common word orders in OE prose:

- S.V., where the verb immediately follows the subject;
- S. … V., where other elements of the sentence come between subject and verb;
- V.S., where the subject follows the verb (2007, p. 63).

It is important to note that analyses of OE poetry or OE glosses do not provide an output indicative of contemporary language use in prose, as word order in poetry was used more freely.

ON word order is, similarly to OE, not definitive in providing grammatical function to words. Faarlund notes that the common word order is head-complement (VO) and a VO construction is found often as well (2004, p. 161). Whether ON can be defined as an SVO or an SOV language is the topic of substantial discord (see Haugan, 2000, for an extensive overview), but it is typically accepted that ON was a verb-second (V2) language. Haugan clarifies that the reason classifying ON as an SVO or SOV language is complicated is because of the scarcity of original texts. Many sagas have been copied several times and do not necessarily reflect original

sentence structures (Haugan, 2000, p. 21). Barnes demonstrates similarity between OE and ON in the usage of word order, stating that *Óláfr sá konu flá ina gfmlu* 'Óláfr saw the old woman' and *Konu flá ina gfmlu sá Óláfr* have the same meaning (2008, p.3). The comparable synthetic structure in OE and ON is crucial to understanding the deflexional developments. The OE inflectional system had ostensibly been deteriorating before the arrival of ON speakers, who spoke a language that had seen a similar increasing reliance on word order. In situations where a speaker is presented with two comparable systems, it is easier to opt for the simpler variant. As both OE and ON were seemingly relying more on word order than inflection at this stage of language development, it would have been easier to adopt a standard word order than learn and use an inflectional system that was already displaying signs of ruination.

1.5 Old Norse in Modern English

It is generally held that the OE-ON contact situation encompassed the widest possible variety of interactions, ranging from the superficial (trade) to the intimate (intermarriage) (cf. Dance, 2003; Hadley, 2006; Pons-Sanz, 2013; Warner, 2017), which can be seen in the extent of ON borrowings in Modern English. The c. 2,000 indisputable ON loan words in ModE may not seem like a substantial number, but it must be recognised that that many words had cognates in both languages. It could well have been the case that OE and ON speakers chose words that were common to both languages as this would have made communication much easier. This is important for an additional reason. Lexical borrowing typically takes place when borrowed words are more advanced or literary, or if they refer to concepts that could not be expressed or were not yet available to a language. Borrowing basic words usually required an intense prolonged period of contact between the two languages, which fits in well with the socio-historical context of the OE-ON contact situation.

Finally, while the number of ON words in ModE might not seem substantial, the words do cover nearly all topics and are invaluable to the English lexicon (see Table 3; for an extensive overview of ON borrowings in ModE, see Friðriksdóttir, 2014). Table 3 shows just a few examples of the various lexical regions in which an ON presence can be felt. For instance, ModE gosling started as ON *gæslingr*, illustrating how in its current form no sense of ON influence is left.

Table 3

Various ON borrowings into English

	Animals	Nature	Body	Common objects
Old Norse	gæslingr	deyja	leggr	knífr
Middle English	gesling	deyen (OE: digan)	leg	knif (OE: cnif)
Modern English	gosling	die	leg	knife

Many ON borrowings are invaluable to daily ModE communication, as displayed by Jespersen, "An Englishman cannot *thrive* or be *ill* or *die* without Scandinavian words; they are to the language what *bread* and *eggs* are to the *daily fare*" (1905, p. 80). Perhaps most notable, the third-person plural pronouns came from Old Norse, the ancestors of 'they', 'them', and 'their'. It is generally held that personal pronouns, along with terms referring to family, are among grammatical items least likely to be borrowed (Durkin, 2009), further suggesting that there must have been extensive contact between speakers of OE and ON. It has even been proposed that this contact situation was so extensive that it led to a state of creolisation.

Chapter 2: Creolisation and the Middle English Creolisation Hypothesis

2.1 Creolisation and why it might apply to Middle English

There are few linguistic situations as unique as the development of the English language. Specifically, the Norse invasions of England and the establishment of the Danelaw offer a rare example of a contact situation in which the respective languages were, to some degree, mutually intelligible. The outcome of this prolonged state of language contact is highly debated in the field of contact linguistics, with some arguing that what resulted is best described along the lines of a *creole*: a new language that arises when communities who share no common language come in close contact with each other and come up with a new language out of necessity. When this new language, during its early stages of development known as a pidgin, becomes the native language of the next generation, it is referred to as a creole. A typical feature of creoles is that the vocabulary is mostly derived from the higher prestige language, while its grammar is a drastically simplified version of the lower prestige language's grammar. This classification might seem to provide a clear overview of what is a creole and what is not, but it is, unfortunately, not that simple. It could be said that a sense of inferiority or incompletion is inherent to its connotation, and DeGraff even contends that the term has been corrupted to such an extent its definition no longer applies (2003, p. 393).

An additional problem with the theory that Middle English might be a creole is that creoles are usually more grammatically reduced and regularised. While extensively simplified, Middle English displays retention of many features not typically seen in creoles, such as its singular-plural distinction, verb inflections for

person, and a great number of strong verbs. Various scholars argue that this is because OE and ON were so similar to begin with that a creole simply might not be the best term, as "a new language that arises when communities of people who share no common language" barely applies to the situation. There are two more potential problems with this definition of a creole with regard to this situation. First, there was, arguably, no necessity to create a new language. OE and ON, both stemming from Proto-Germanic, had very similar roots and were mutually intelligible to some degree. Second, it does not seem to have been the case that one language held more prestige over the other. These caveats led many scholars to argue for either a redefinition of the term creole or against the Middle English Creole Hypothesis (MECH).

2.2 Defining a creole

The problem with this uncertainty of classification is that much of the research done and conclusions drawn regarding the MECH are simply not in line with working definitions in previous research. The question of whether English could classify as a creole seems to, at times, be overshadowed by the question of how the term creole can be applied. The words of Jeff Siegel are useful in describing the creolisation debate, as he points out that "Progress in the study of languages in contact has been hindered by terminology often as unfixed as some of the languages it is used to describe" (1985, p. 357). Interesting is a non-scholarly view on the debate as seen in Richard Watts' *Language myths and the history of English*, in which he mentions a 2006 discussion on WordReference.com/LanguageForums, which saw dozens of language enthusiasts analyse the term creole with regard to English (2011, p. 86). From the discussion, to which intermittently posts have been added, most recently in November 2020, six different definitions of the term creole emerge:

1. A creole is “a pidgin language which has become a mother tongue.”
2. A creole is “a language that forms from extended contact between two languages.”
3. A creole is “the result of a nontrivial mixture of two or more languages, usually with radical morphological changes and a syntax which is not obviously borrowed from either of the parent tongues.”
4. A creole is a language that shows “simplification of the grammar,” which does not necessarily depend on whether it has been in contact “with one or more other languages.”
5. A creole is not “simply a mishmash of languages.” A creole “usually arises when speakers of one language become economically or politically dominant over speakers of another.”
6. A creole is “a mother tongue formed from the contact of a European language with another language, especially an African language.”

It should be noted that this debate is not necessarily embedded in an academic environment. The website is open for registration to everybody and the ideas and proposals are not necessarily put forward by professional linguists. Nevertheless, the aficionados raise some interesting points regarding creoles and why the term creole might or might not apply to EME or ME. The debate, therefore, has two sides, whether ME is a creole and perhaps more importantly, how a creole can be defined.

2.3 The Middle English Creolisation Hypothesis

The first classification of English as a creole was put forward by Bailey and Maroldt in 1977 and was met with some support (Hogg & Denison, 2006). With regard to the term creole, Bailey and Maroldt state that “By creolization the authors

wish to indicate gradient mixture of two or more languages; in a narrow sense, a *creole* is the result of mixing which is substantial enough to result in a new system, a system that is separate from its antecedent parent systems" (1977, p. 21). Under their categorisation, if Middle English were indeed a creole, its linguistic properties should be separate from both parental systems, which is a bold claim. While it is true that EME shows deviation from (parts of) OE and ON linguistic (sub-)systems, it is by no means separate from its antecedent parent systems, but merely a simplified version. Additionally, Görlach notes that Bailey and Maroldt's classification allows nearly any language to be classified as a creole, as they propose that languages are represented like humans, with two parents, instead of one (1986). Bailey and Maroldt's (1977) main argument revolves around the notion of a creole as a separate node on the family tree. Interestingly, they appear adamant in their classification, yet fail to propose the origins of this node, only stating that "It cannot be doubted that [Middle English] is a mixed language or creole. The only question is whether Old French was creolized with Anglo-Saxon…whether Anglo-Saxon was creolized with Old French, or whether the mixture was of so thorough-going a nature that it makes little sense even to pose the question at all" (1977, p. 22-23). Their proposal splits the process up into two stages: French influence up to 1200 and lexical borrowing from Central French in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries – seemingly deeming ON influence futile or insufficient toward the development of a possible creole. While positing an interesting theory, their classification and explanations leave much to be desired. Bailey and Maroldt introduce the concept of a MECH but fail to provide a satisfactory definition of a creole or explain why it might apply to ME. David O'Neil (2019) goes as far as to describe their classification as having an ulterior motive,

> the desire to show creolization as a common, or even universal process of language change that all languages are subject to. In this work the term "creole" seems to have been adopted, not for classificatory precision, but rather to highjack its rhetorical force. (p.116)

It appears that Bailey and Maroldt use the example of an English creolisation process as a way of challenging contemporary notions of creoles. It comes as no surprise that they choose English as their means of doing so – the notion of an English creole would undoubtedly have invigorated this debate.

Watts puts forward an additional concern regarding the debate. He explains that "people do not take too kindly to having their languages associated with pidgins or creoles," (2011, p. 91) which may verily be the cause for rigid debunking of any English creolisation proposals, as creoles are typically associated with incompletion and carry the stigma of inferiority. Watts (2011) explains that the study of pidgin languages has chiefly regarded these as simplified, incomplete versions of their lexifier languages and that it was not until Robert Hall Jr.'s analyses in the early 1960s that the topic of pidgins and creoles was even regarded as an important area of linguistics. Additionally, Watts points out that while not all scholars viewed creoles as inferior, incomplete languages any longer, this belief was not shared by the public. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that Bailey and Maroldt's proposal of an English creole, while met with some success, did not go unchallenged.

Briefly after Bailey and Maroldt's introduction of the MECH, Nicole Domingue (1977) argues against their theory by stating that, apart from an obvious French influence following the Norman Conquest, there is simply no substantial evidence to support a mixed language involving English. Opposing Bailey and Maroldt, Domingue follows the conventional idea that a creole must develop from a

pidgin, but states no such pidgin existed. She concludes that the linguistic features typically associated with creoles simply do not appear in abundance in Middle English, and classifies it as a *hybrid language* (1977, p. 97), avoiding usage of the term creole altogether. O'Neil observes that her resolution of avoiding the term altogether may avoid terminological problems in creole theory, but goes at the cost of ignoring "the question of whether pidginization and creolization really are distinct processes that explain the origins of certain languages" (2019, p. 117). Domingue introduces another term into an already complex debate to steer away from Bailey and Maroldt's call for a reanalysis of the term creole – further complicating the discussion.

Edgar Polomé (1980) refutes the hypothesis as proposed by Bailey and Maroldt, stating that their terminology does not make sense. He explains that their proposal of creolisation in which parental linguistic systems make place for a new one simply does not apply to Middle English. His argument against the creolisation hypothesis is threefold. First, he states that a break in continuity in language development is required; second, the resulting linguistic system must be heavily simplified; and third, socio-economic and politico-cultural conditions of outsiders learning the language, resulting in deculturation, are required (Watts, 2015, p. 92). Polomé's third point is further explored by Patricia Poussa, who defines a pidgin as a "language which has been drastically simplified in structure and vocabulary, in order to serve restricted communication needs. A pidgin is no-one's native language" (1982, p. 69). She goes on to suggest that they tend to emerge through forms of sudden direct contact, such as military invasion or trade. Watts makes one addition to her definition, mentioning that the pidginised language is the non-native language of the non-dominant language group (2015, p. 92). Poussa's classification of a creole

follows convention, stating that a creole is “the first language of a community” that has adopted a pidgin (1982, p.70). Taking Poussa’s definition of a pidgin with Watts’ addition into account, a pidgin is probably best defined as:

> A language that has been drastically simplified in structure and vocabulary, in order to serve restricted communication needs, often brought about through sudden direct contact such as military invasion or trade contact. When a pidgin is adopted as the first language of a community, it becomes a creole.

Poussa (1982) rightly criticises Bailey and Maroldt’s (1977) examinations of merely written sources to form the basis of their creole hypothesis. Most language contact happens orally, yet Bailey and Maroldt fail to take this into account. Poussa focuses on a period from which no linguistic evidence remains and offers an unsubstantiated account of what she deems the “normal” situation of Danish settlers. There are not enough clues for OE-ON contact to presume Poussa’s framework (for a thorough analysis and critical commentary, see Watts, 2015, p. 93). Only in 1986 was a framework regarding creolisation put forward by Görlach, which includes three questions that must be answered by any linguist before they can propose a creolisation hypothesis:

1. How are, or can the central terms used in classification be defined?
2. What features are thought to be constitutive for creole languages?
3. What contact situations are recorded in the history of English and its speakers (to see whether the sociolinguistic conditions can be equated with those that gave rise to pidgins, creoles, creoloids, etc.)? (1986, p. 330)

Görlach posits these questions as a response to Bailey and Maroldt’s (1977) “idiosyncratic redefinition” of the term creole, so as to standardise classification and steer the debate back to the actual situation of language contact. He even accuses

them of bending their definition of a creole to fit their arguments best (1986, p. 330). While his response to Poussa is similar, he agrees that on the basis of mere simplification Middle English is not a creole (1986, p. 335).

Cynthia Allen attempts to uncover whether it is in fact "mere simplification" that took place in the development toward ME. Allen notes that the main argument proposed in favour of a MECH is the reduction of case marking (1997, p. 3). This is often attributed to contact-induced simplification and is the reason that languages classified as creoles are analytic, rather than inflectional. Case marking is inessential for communication because word order and prepositions can do the job; therefore, creoles tend to eliminate redundancy (Mufwene, 1993). This leads to a process known as deflexion, where one (or both) of the languages in contact with each other loses (most of) their inflectional system. Most of the research carried out to investigate this claim focuses on verbal deflexion or the relation between regular and irregular verbs; the loss of case-marking morphology is not as extensively attested. Allen observes that discussions of ME case marking fall into two broad categories: overviews in handbooks (e.g., Mossé, 1952; Mustanoja, 1960) and detailed analyses of individual texts (1997, p. 3). She points out that handbooks cannot possibly give detailed overviews of regions and periods, and analyses of individual texts, whilst certainly useful, do not provide an overview of linguistic changes. Allen proposes a new examination of the loss of case-marking categories in English, with which she argues against creolisation on the grounds of deflexion. Allen takes issue with the idea that EME deflexion happened as rapidly as often presumed, stating that "the conservative practices of OE scribes often masked substantial changes which had already taken place before the Norman invasion" (1997, p. 3). Prior to NF or even ON influences the OE inflectional system was already slowly collapsing. This deflexion was not as

visible in writing as it would have been in daily speech, as scribes often maintained a more archaic convention to stick closer to original texts. She notes that the main problem with arguing for an ON influence revolves simply around the lack of pre-Scandinavian settlement texts (before 900) to properly attest for any change. Pre-invasion writing consists of only a few runic inscriptions and five texts, of which the longest, *Leiden Riddle*, is only 14 lines (Allen, 1997, p. 7). Additionally, she mentions that later Northumbrian texts are limited to interlinear glosses of Latin and should be treated with caution. It is possible, even probable, that as a scribe would have literally translated Latin forms into English to stick closer to the original, deeming the text an inaccurate depiction of contemporary language use. Allen is among few scholars not to pre-emptively take a stance on the creolisation debate – perhaps rendering her hypotheses and evaluations more helpful in analysing the possibility of an English creole. The debate appears to get new impetus in 2003 when Hope Dawson proposes that the OE-ON contact situation is better analysed along the lines of a koine, rather than a creole.

2.4 A Middle English Koineisation Hypothesis

Hope Dawson builds on Baugh and Cable's (1993) historical overview, dividing the Norse invasions into three periods. The first period, 787 to c.850 A.D., consisted chiefly of plundering and had no significant effect on language contact. The second period, 850 to 878 A.D., sets the stage for a more intense form of language contact, as the establishment of the Danelaw in 878 means a permanent Norse presence was set up. The third period, 878 to 1042 A.D., is marked by close language contact. Dawson (2003) proposes that it is during this third period that OE-ON contact had a lasting impact on the English language and argues that a term is required that accounts not only for the linguistic aftermath but that also fits the socio-

historical situation accurately (p. 46). She concludes that Siegel's (1985) definition of a koine best fits this unique state of language contact.

Siegel's definition is three-fold: a *koine* is "the stabilized result of mixing of linguistic subsystems such as regional or literary dialects," "usually serves as a lingua franca among speakers of the different contributing varieties," and "is characterized by a mixture of features of these varieties and most often by reduction or simplification in comparison" (1985, p. 363), which seems to closer to the OE-ON contact situation than any definition in terms of creolisation. Dawson (2003) uses Siegel's three-fold definition to analyse whether a koine could apply to the contact situation. Thomason and Kaufman perceive that the languages were similar enough for speakers to, with relative ease, "understand the other language without learning to speak it" (1988, p. 303), meaning that settlers would speak ON to the English tribes, who would have been able to understand it and respond in OE and vice versa, which satisfies the first criterion, pertaining to the stabilisation of mixed linguistic subsystems. Dawson pays little attention to the lingua franca criterion, only stating that while it is difficult to prove English was a lingua franca because of a lack of direct evidence, "The facts that are known about the socio-historical situation, however, support such a scenario" (2003, p. 46), presumably drawing on aforementioned mutual intelligibility. However, Siegel's definition is open to a variety of interpretations, as his usage of the word 'usually' implies the language could just as well not have served as a lingua franca. The third criterion is met with ease, as the reduction and simplification of English is widely attested. Siegel proposes an analysis of OE-ON language contact along the lines of a koine in a set of stages (see Table 4).

Table 4

Developmental continua of pidgins and koines

Process	Stage of Development	
	Pidginization	*Koineization*
Initial contact	Prepidgin (jargon)	Prekoine
Stabilization	Stabilized pidgin	Stabilized koine
Expansion	Expanded pidgin	Expanded koine
Nativization	Creole	Nativized koine

Note. Adapted from "Koines and koineization" by J. Siegel, 1985, *Language in Society*, *14*(3), p. 374. Copyright 1985 by Cambridge University Press.

Siegel calls the first stage the *prekoine* stage, where various forms of the varieties in contact are used concurrently and inconsistently. Next is the result of stabilisation, the development of a *stabilized koine*. Here, a compromise subsystem has emerged from the various lexical, phonological, and morphological norms. Next, the *expanded koine* is characterised by linguistic expansion, morphological complexity, and stylistic options, most of which can be traced back to the original koineized varieties. Finally, when a koine becomes the first language for a group of speakers, it is a *nativized koine*. It is at this stage that further linguistic expansion can take place, occasionally drawing on innovations not seen in the original koineized varieties (Siegel, 1985, p. 374). Not every instance of language contact is necessarily this linear. On many occasions, pidginisation necessitates contact regarding trade and

is abandoned before any linguistic developments can take place. Contact between speakers of OE and ON continued, possibly allowing the stage of an ‘expanded pidgin’ to occur more swiftly, magnified by their believed mutual intelligibility.

Hope Dawson’s (2003) proposal of analysing the English contact situation along the lines of a koine could provide an interesting take on a MECH. It may well be that previous proposals are right that the OE-ON contact situation led to some sort of merger but that this cannot be analysed in terms of creolisation and could be reanalysed along the lines of koineisation. She claims that the creolisation hypothesis as previously proposed is problematic and fails to take into account many of the sociohistorical nuances (p. 54), instead opting for the term koine. Unfortunately, her analysis of the impact on the English language spans a mere two pages and requires additional research. Among the most extensive works on the impact of ON on the English language are those carried out by Cynthia Allen, regarding deflexion in the *Peterborough Chronicle*. An analysis of the PC along the lines of koineisation provides clues as to the linguistic aftermath of the unique situation.

Chapter 3: Peterborough Chronicle

3.1 The Peterborough Chronicle scribal division and classification

The *Peterborough Chronicle*, also known as E manuscript or the Laud manuscript, is a component of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles, divided into three parts. Clark points out that these parts are the result of palaeographical analyses (1957, p. xi). The first part of the PC consists of copied material from 1070 to 1121 and is written in a homogeneous hand and ink. The second part comprises the years 1122-31 and is better known as the First Continuation. There are changes in the ink and writing, but none of these variations point to a different hand. It is typically assumed the First Continuation was written in six blocks: 1122; 1123; 1124; 1125-1126/1; 1126/2-1127; 1128-1131. The third part, best known as the Final Continuation, is made up of the years 1132-1154 and is written in a hand different from the preceding one, presumably in 1155. This hand is much narrower and more pointed and does not have insular *a*, *f*, *r*, and *s*, making it extremely unlikely to have been written by the same scribe as the first two parts. Clark explains that it was common practice for the abbey to entrust a chronicle to a single person, rather than an ever-changing succession of scribes (1957, p. 18). This means that possible linguistic observations should be treated with caution. A scribe who has been writing for several decades is unlikely to display changes in language at the rate it would have taken place orally. The first scribe appears to have been a very faithful copyist. Comparisons between the copied annals and the language found in another copy of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle show that morphological inaccuracies in the PC were not introduced by the scribe but existed in the other manuscript, known as D, too. Nonetheless, the annals display some changes from other 11th century texts. Allen attributes this to many scribes' conservative writing in copying texts (1997, p. 20).

The First Continuation no longer consists of mere copying and is, therefore, possibly more indicative of contemporary language use. The annals between 1121 and 1155 were not only written but also composed at Peterborough (Clark, 1957, p. xxx). The manuscript can, therefore, be dated and placed accurately. Additionally, Knowles points out that it was common practice in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries for abbeys to recruit monks locally and this was probably the case for the earlier twelfth century, as well (1941, p. 424). This means that the 1121-1155 annals are potentially written in the East Midlands dialect as spoken in Peterborough. Allen observes that dative-accusative distinction is retained in the pronouns in the copied annals, but is nearly completely lost in the First Continuation. Where *hi* (feminine accusative singular/accusative plural) and *hine* (masculine accusative singular) are regular occurrences in the annals, *hire* (old dative/genitive) has replaced *hi* completely as an object form, and *heom* (old dative) is the only form found for any plural object in the First and Final Continuations (Allen 1997, p. 21). Allen and Clark attribute these discrepancies to the scribe's possible hypercorrection in the older annals as a result of considering the older language superior to his own (Allen, 1997, p. 22; Clark 1957, p. lxi). It could also be the case that the original work retained a more morphologically complex system which the scribe copied accurately to stick close to the original text, even in cases where his own language would have deviated from copied forms. In the First Continuation, the scribe no longer employs these archaic styles and displays his own voice. This is important as this possibly makes it the earliest example of the East Midland language, the dialect typically considered to be the ancestor of standard Modern English (Whitelock, 1954).

David Shores attempts to uncover whether the PC can be classified as OE or ME (1970, p. 21). While his research is embedded in a different academic debate, it is

most invaluable to discussions regarding EME deflexion. He points out that the main argument for Middle English is the "modern" syntax of the Continuations (1970, p. 23). Mitchell and Robinson describe this change to SVO as one of the most important syntactical developments in English (2007, p. 65). During its change from a synthetic to analytic language, objects were often marked twice. Mitchell and Robinson (2007) explain that this stage of double-marking is necessary before either of the two devices could disappear. In *he ofsloh ge þone cyning ge* ð*a cwene* 'he slew both the king and the queen' both word order and case ending distinguish subject and object. Ultimately, the increasing reliance on word order and prepositions caused the disappearance of noun inflections apart from the genitive -s and the singular/plural distinction (Mitchell & Robinson, 2007, p. 133). The apparent rapidity of the loss of case marking distinction is often cited as evidence that ME might be a creole.

3.2 Inflection in the Peterborough Chronicle

The inflectional paradigm in the First Continuation still shows retention of case marking, albeit reduced from the full OE system. There are exceptions throughout the First Continuation, as the inflectional system was at this point in a state of deterioration, but Table 5 is representative for most of the language in the text.

Table 5

Nominal declension in the First Continuation of the Peterborough Chronicle

Singular	Nominative	
	Genitive	-es
	Dative	-e
	Accusative	
Plural	Nominative	
	Genitive	-e
	Dative	-es
	Accusative	

Note. Adapted from *Syntactic Features: Parametric Variation in the History of English* (p. 289) by J.S. Lumsden, 1987, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The distinction between nominative and accusative marking is by now completely lost in the plural as well. The dative plural is reduced from -um to -es; similarly, the genitive plural is changed from -a to -es. Compared to regular OE nominal declension (see Table 1), a distinction can now only be made between ∅, meaning no suffixal ending; -es in the genitive singular and dative plural; and -e in the dative singular and genitive plural. By contrast, Table 1 illustrates six different endings, namely ∅; -es; -e; -as; -a; and -um.

Table 6

Inflectional distinctiveness in fillers of subject slots

	First Continuation		Final Continuation		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nom. Pron	112	28	96	36	218	31
Noun w/Nom. Att.	120	28	7	3	127	18
Noun w/Acc. Att.	1	-1	0	0	1	-1
Pron. (Ambiguous)	94	22	73	27	167	24
Nouns (Ambiguous)	86	20	88	33	174	25
Pron. Adj. (Ambiguous)	7	2	4	1	11	2
	430		286		698	

Note. Adapted from "The Peterborough Chronicle: Continuity and Change in the English Language" by D. Shores, 1970, *South Atlantic Modern Language Association, 35*(4), p. 24.

Table 6 reveals that in the First Continuation fillers are distinctively marked nominative in 56 per cent of occurrences. This number drops to 39 per cent in the Final Continuation, perhaps indicating that word order was by now more prevalent than inflectional endings. A possible explanation for the retention of 39 per cent is that, while word order was becoming increasingly more important, the scribe retained much of his 'own' linguistic system. It is very unlikely that the scribe made a

conscious effort to no longer display suffixes, as he would conceivably have been using these for several decades. The occurrences of distinctive nominative case marking could, therefore, be attributed to the scribe's habitual usage of the suffixing system. This could mean that the inflectional system was still partly in place, but perhaps no longer functional. Arguably even more remarkable is the complete dropping of inflectional marking for the direct object position in the Final Continuation, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Inflectional distinctiveness in fillers of direct object slots

	First Continuation		Final Continuation		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Nom. Pron	18	9	0	0	18	4
Noun w/Nom. Att.	33	17	0	0	33	9
Noun w/Acc. Att.	20	10	37	23	57	17
Pron. (Ambiguous)	29	15	13	8	42	11
Nouns (Ambiguous)	83	42	85	52	168	47
Pron. Adj. (Ambiguous)	14	7	29	17	43	12
	197		164		361	

Note. Adapted from "The Peterborough Chronicle: Continuity and Change in the English Language" by D. Shores, 1970, *South Atlantic Modern Language Association, 35(4),* p. 25.

Table 7 shows that only 51 out of 361 occurrences of the direct object slot are marked accusative, all of which occur in the First Continuation. Accusative direct object marking is completely abandoned in the Final Continuation. This coincides with a rise of the dative form *him*, the usage of which rises from 17% in the First Continuation to 37% in the Final Continuation. As the dative was only one of two cases to display inflectional suffixing in the First Continuation (see Table 5), it is

possible that the scribe had grown accustomed to suffix reduction, as nom-acc distinction in OE was very scarce (see Table 1). This would leave merely the genitive case, the rise of which is well-documented (see Allen, 2003; Fischer, 1992; Jespersen, 1894; Mustanoja, 1960, among many others).

3.3 Peterborough creolisation

Allen (1997) concludes that it only seems attractive to classify EME along the lines of creolisation in a very broad sense. She points to the notion of rapid, drastic changes in the inflectional system as the main argument for creolisation, but describes that these "drastic changes" simply appear to have happened quickly because of scribal practice (1997, p. 30). She suggests that the picture of deflexion in the PC is one of gradual and systematic change, attributing any inflectional confusion in the First and Final Continuation to scribal hypercorrection. Allen's analysis does not take into consideration the possibility that retention of the inflectional system in the First Continuation could be attributed to ON influence. It is possible that the similar OE and ON inflectional systems did not merely hasten OE deflexion, but made any suffixal usage completely redundant. The c. 24 years between the final annals in the First Continuation and the Final Continuation could have rendered any suffixal usage not only superfluous but plainly atypical. Additionally, the Final Continuation scribe would, presumably, have been less conservative in his writing, and more easily welcoming of change. It is possible his writings in the Final Continuation more accurately reflect contemporary language use.

With regard to Bailey and Maroldt's challenge of the term creolisation, Allen states that "We cannot call ME a creole on the basis of its case-marking syncretism unless we are willing to call the mainland Scandinavian languages creoles also" (1997, p. 31), but does not offer an alternative for ON influence. She suggests that the

role of the contact situation was to "hasten the acceptance and spread of naturally arising variants rather than to introduce new variants through faulty language learning" (1997, p. 32). Surprisingly, she closes with the statement that "it is possible that incomplete language learning also introduced new variants" (1997, p. 32), but does not offer any insights into what this might mean for EME development. It seems unlikely that ON speakers had trouble understanding OE with regard to their presumed mutual intelligibility, but it is possible that, in many situations, speakers opted for the simpler of the two systems. This could account for differences in inflectional marking between the First and Final Continuation in the PC. The first scribe wrote when ON influence was on the rise but not yet heavily felt and retained some forms of the OE inflectional system in his writing. The second scribe wrote when ON influence was arguably more prominent, during a time when some linguistic subsystems of OE and ON had been reduced by speakers and had made their way into writing by the subsequent generation. Retention of case distinction was possibly no longer visible except in habitual writing. Allen is right in suggesting that it is hard to argue for an EME creole on account of these theories. It does not, however, seem implausible to propose that ON influence on OE deflexion had more effect than mere hastening of a collapsing system. Siegel's proposal of a koine as "the stabilized result of mixing of linguistic subsystems (…), which serves as a lingua franca (…) and is characterized by a mixture of features (…) and most often by reduction or simplification (…) (1985, p. 363)" seems to best fit the socio-historical, as well as the linguistic OE-ON contact situation, and appears to explain the status of the inflectional system in the PC.

The OE-ON contact situation has been the topic of much debate, with various scholars arguing for a more extensive ON influence than previously assumed. It is generally accepted that OE and ON were, at least to some agree, mutually intelligible. The establishment of the Danelaw led to a state of close language contact for c. 250 years, during which speakers of OE and ON lived closely alongside each other. This is reflected in ON influence on the ME and ModE lexicon, but is not as distinctly ascertainable in other linguistic subsystems of ME, as both languages were similar to begin with. OE and ON share a similar inflectional system and syntax, as well as many cognates; leading many ON borrowings to go undetected for a long time. Because of this, various scholars believe ON influence was perhaps more impactful, but not as discernible, than formerly understood. This culminated in Bailey and Maroldt's (1977) proposal of the Middle English Creolisation Hypothesis, suggesting that ON influence on OE was substantial enough to argue for a state of creolisation. The MECH as proposed by Bailey and Maroldt appears to have had an ulterior motive: they aimed to challenge contemporary notions of creoles and creolisation, attempting to remove the stigma surrounding the term. Their proposal, therefore, led to a linguistic juncture: what creolisation entails and whether or not it applies to English.

While refuted by many, the MECH raises questions regarding the extent of ON influence on EME development. Cynthia Allen proposes this possible creolisation can best be analysed in the *Peterborough Chronicle*; the only extensive 12th-century text written in OE. David Shores' analysis of inflectional case marking in the *Peterborough Chronicle* shows that the rate of deflexion between the First and Final Continuation, set apart only c. 25 years, was substantial, which can only be attributed to a different scribe. It seems highly unlikely that the OE inflectional system, albeit in

a state of rumination, virtually disappeared within 25 years. Clark and Allen attribute many discrepancies between the Continuations to hypercorrection, an attempt made by the scribe to retain an original text's structure. Following Clark and Allen's assumption, it seems feasible that texts written by the Final Continuation scribe were more indicative of contemporary language use, perhaps suggesting that the inflectional system was nearly completely lost by 1155. Hope Dawson's proposal of English koineisation was introduced when the creolisation hypothesis had been refuted by many and her suggestion did not evoke a debate similar to the one surrounding the MECH. Her description of the OE-ON contact situation built on Jeff Siegel's framework surrounding koineisation best explains the degree of deflexion in the *Peterborough Chronicle*.

In broad outline, it seems attractive to compare the deteriorating English inflectional system to the creation of a creole. The rate of deflexion in the *Peterborough Chronicle,* however, does not provide any evidence supporting such terminology. The process of koineisation more accurately reflects the development from English as a synthetic to an analytic language. What falls short is an extensive analysis of signs of koineisation in the *Peterborough Chronicle,* regarding which no substantial research has yet been carried out. To better understand the implications of English as a koine, future studies could address comparisons to language development, deflexion in particular, in various pidgins, koines, and creoles, in order to better understand the linguistic development in the *Peterborough Chronicle*, as well as its possible classification as a creole. More research is needed regarding the development of koines as an interlanguage between mutually intelligible languages, which might show similar deflexional processes. It comes as no surprise that the unique properties of the English language have led to many substantial debates and

discoveries. Although a full dissection of the English language might never be reached, creolisation simply does not fit in to any of its parts. Perhaps it is more useful for certain debates to channel time, energy, and resources into examinations of the English language – rather than continuously intensifying disputes regarding terminology.

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