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Preposition Stranding in the History of English

(Magisterská práce)

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Historical Account of the Preposition Stranding in English

(Magisterská práce)

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Anotace: Tato práce pojednává o pozici předložek především ve vztažných větách ve střední angličtině a srovnává situaci s tou ve staré a současné angličtině. Jejím hlavním tématem je uvíznutí předložky. Daná konstrukce je představena za použití příkladů ze současné angličtiny. Příklady ze střední angličtiny poukazují na vývoj používání této konstrukce v čase. Stará angličtina je používána především pro srovnání, aby bylo zřejmé, jak omezený tento jev ve staré angličtině je. Druhým cílem práce je srovnání dvou textů pocházejících z období počátků střední angličtiny. Jedná se o báseň *The Owl and the Nightingale* (Sova a slavík) a o překlad latinského textu *The English Conquest of Ireland*.

Klíčová slova: gramatika, Pied-Piping, posponovaná předložka, předložka, předložková fráze, skladné substantivum, stará angličtina, střední angličtina, uvíznutí předložky, věta vztažná

Abstract: This thesis deals with the position of prepositions in Middle English, mainly in relative clauses. It compares the situation found there with that of Old and Present Day English. The main topic of this thesis is Preposition Stranding. The construction is introduced using examples of Present Day English. The Middle English Examples are used to show the development of Preposition Stranding in time. Old English is used mainly to provide a comparison with the aim to demonstrate how limited Preposition Stranding was during Old English. The second aim of this thesis is a comparison of two texts that come from the early Middle English period. Namely the poem *The Owl and the Nightingale* and a translation of a text written originally in Latin *The English Conquest of Ireland*.

Key words: grammar, Middle English, object of preposition, Old English, preposition, Preposition Stranding, Stranding, prepositional phrase, relative clause

Content

1. Introduction

The central issue of this thesis is the historical survey of what is generally called Preposition Stranding throughout the Middle English period and comparing this situation with that of the Old English texts and the constructions found there along with the comparison of some Early Middle English texts with respect to Preposition Stranding.

Preposition Stranding refers to a situation where the prepositions are not directly followed by their objects, but rather the objects have been removed by some movement rule, be it (1) *wh*-movement or (2) NP movement, and the preposition was left in situ, thus appearing to be stranded, hence the name 'Preposition Stranding'.

Transformation rules were divided into the two categories by Noam Chomsky in 'On *Wh*-Movement' (1977, 72). *Wh*-movement is a term that refers to a movement of interrogative words to a topicalised position; that is a position higher in the clause than the subject. NP-movement is a term that refers to the passive transformation in which the internal argument of the verb moves to the position of its subject and the external argument (the subject) is either omitted or present in a by-phrase.

The example (1) is an instance of *wh*-movement, whilst the example (2) represents the NP-movement or passive.

(1)   *Who are you talking to?*
(2)   *The matter has been talked about.*

The first of the two main goals of this thesis will be to show the extent to which so-called Preposition Stranding was at work by the time of the earliest versions of Middle English. For this purpose, I have searched the Middle English Corpora and found relevant examples that will be discussed in the body of this thesis.

I aim to demonstrate that by the time the *wh*-words were introduced into the Middle English syntax in the position of relativisers rather than just as devices to form questions, Preposition Stranding had already been firmly established, and thus they naturally started to occur even in the sentences with the new use of *wh*-words.

The *wh*-words were only used to form questions in Old English, and only when the French speakers of Norman origin started to write in English did the *wh*-words start

being used in relative word positions (see Emonds and Havranová 2014 for more detailed discussion of this extension to Middle English relativisers).

In the second half of the thesis I will look at the poem *The Owl and the Nightingale* and compare its sentence structure with respect to order of the prepositions and their objects to that of the Middle English data presented in this thesis, including the early 13th century translation of Giraldus Cambrensis' Latin work called *The English Conquest of Ireland*.

2. Preposition Stranding

2.1. The Term

The topic of this thesis is Preposition Stranding in Old and Middle English, but before we start to examine the data from those periods in the development of the English language, let us first define the term Preposition Stranding itself, and by using examples from the Present Day English to introduce the environments in which Preposition Stranding could take place.

Preposition Stranding as used by Henk van Riemsdijk is a term that describes the process whereby a preposition whose object undergoes either *wh-* or NP[1] movement is left in situ instead of being moved along with its object (1978, 144). Compare the following examples of *wh*-questions with (3.a) and without (3.b) Preposition Stranding:

(3.a)   *Which shop did you buy these gorgeous shoes in?*
(3.b)   *In which shop did you buy these gorgeous shoes?*

In the example (3.b) the preposition is not left stranded after the *wh*-movement has taken place but rather it is moved alongside its object. Both of the sentences are equally grammatical in the Present Day English.

The *wh*-questions are not the only environment in Present Day English where Preposition Stranding can be encountered. But before examining the other grammatical constructions that allow Preposition Stranding, let us return to the example (3.b).

2.2. Preposition Stranding vs Pied-Piping

Example (3.b) is an instance of the poetically named Piped-Piping construction; the term was introduced by John Ross (1967) and does not concern only the order of prepositions and their objects. In fact, Ross devised the term to suggest a solution to problems connected with the A-over-A principle of Chomsky (1977).
Pied-Piping is a principle that dictates that when a part of a phrase is moved by a transformational rule, the entire phrase that encompasses it moves together with it (Ross 1967, 197). This is precisely what can be observed in (3.b), the object *whom* of the

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[1] Van Riemsdijk (1978) uses the term N''' movement rather than NP movement, which he adopts from Jackendoff (1977).

preposition *to* is moved by the *wh*-movement, and the preposition *to*, because *whom* is part of the prepositional phrase *to whom,* is moved as well.

Alongside Preposition Stranding (3.a), Pied-Piping (3.b) provides one of two grammatical ways to form the English questions. But although both of them are possible in English, the latter situation known as Pied-Piping is actually according to van Riemsdijk and Williams much more common amongst the world's languages, Preposition Stranding being limited only to languages of the Germanic language family (van Riemsdijk and Williams 1986, 147). Most languages will move the preposition along with their NP object following Ross's Pied-Piping convention.

As has been explained Ross observed that a phrase undergoing a movement can affect reordering of some variables that follow or precede it. We can observe this tendency in the following examples of (4) prepositional phrase and (5) noun phrase:

(4.a)   *Mary worked towards the edge of town.*

(4.b)   *Where did Mary work?*

(4.c)   **What did Mary work towards?*

(5.a)   *John read many books.*

(5.b)   *How many books has John read?*

(5.c)   **How many has John read books?*

Both (4.c) and (5.c) are ungrammatical because they break the Pied-Piping convention, whilst in (4.b) and (5.b), both of which observe the Pied-Piping convention, the noun phrase *what* affects its preposition *towards* and both of them are moved by the *wh*-movement rule to the front of the sentence in (4.b) and *how many* by being moved affects also the re-ordering of the noun *books* in (5.b). In (4), not only the noun phrase *the edge of town* but the whole PP has to be moved, in (5), the whole NP rather than just its part has to be moved.

With regards to prepositions, however, as has already been mentioned, English is special and the situation is not as straightforward as it has been presented by the example (4). Even though (4.c) is ungrammatical we can find parallel examples where the native speaker judgements would not oppose the grammaticality of the string '*wh*- T NP V P'. The Pied-Piping convention can be broken without any implications for

grammaticality in certain environments. Consider the example of *wh*-questions in (6.b) and (6.c):

(6.a)   *Alice fell into the rabbit hole.*

(6.b)   *Into what did Alice fall?*

(6.c)   *What hole did Alice fall into?*

Based on the examples (6.a-c) as well as (3.a-b) shown previously, Preposition Stranding appears to be at least to some extent optional in English, unlike most languages including Czech or French, which strictly forbid it. English does not rule out constructions of the type (6.c).

To conclude that Preposition Stranding in English is always optional, however, would be misleading as the example (4.c) shows. Even English restricts the environments in which Preposition Stranding can take place. Only complements (that is lexically selected arguments of the verb) allow Preposition Stranding; prepositional phrases that are generated as adjuncts do not usually exhibit this property. Rather the whole adjunct including the preposition is replaced by the *wh*-word as in (7.c). Consider:

(7.a)   *I observed the stars at midnight.*

(7.b)   **When did you observe the stars at?*

(7.c)   *When did you observe the stars?*

So far, the term Preposition Stranding has been introduced and compared with the Pied-Piping convention. It has been established that English allows Preposition Stranding and that Preposition Stranding in English is optional but only to a certain degree. It has also been noted that Pied-Piping is favoured by most languages. The following section will return to this and discuss some of the implications of the fact that most languages do not allow Preposition Stranding.

2.3. Preposition Stranding as a rare phenomenon

Van Riemsdijk and Williams observe that there is a lack of Preposition Stranding in most languages, which results for example in the impossibility of forming passives of complex verbs known as pseudo-passives (1989, 146). One of the more complex

examples of such a construction can be found in van Riemsdijk (1978, 220): '*Mary was taken advantage of*'. Not all objects of prepositions can be extracted in such a way but unlike many other languages, English allows at least some such forms.

Ken-ichi Takami shows that this property of English is shared by some speakers of Danish[2], in which similarly to the previously mentioned English examples, both *wh-*movement and NP movement can extract an NP from a PP (1992). Consider the examples of Danish Preposition Stranding in pseudo-passives (8-3) adapted from Takami (1992, 281):

(8)   *Vi kan ikke lide at blive tråd på.*
        we can not like to get trodden on
        'We do not like to be stepped upon'

(9)   *Vi skal ikke grines ad.*
        we shall not be.grinned at
        'We will not be laughed at.'

(10)   *Hnornår blev han kaldt på?*
        when got he called on
        'When was he called?'

Danish shares with English the ability to strand prepositions; other languages like Czech do not do this. The following examples (11.a-b) and (12.a-b) are presented here with the aim to demonstrate the difference between languages like Czech and those like English when it comes to Preposition Stranding, because Czech is in this respect representative of a much wider group of languages that prefer Pied-Piping of prepositions to Preposition Stranding in all environments. Preposition Stranding is always ungrammatical in such languages. The group of languages that has Preposition Stranding will be introduced in the following section.

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[2] Some dialectal variants of Danish do not allow prepositional passives but rather use a construction with *der* 'there', such as the following: *Ham blev der leet ad.* 'He got there laughed at.' (Takami 1992, 280)

Example (11) is an instance of an English relative clause with Preposition Stranding (11.a) and with Pied-Piping (11.b) whose translations into Czech are presented in (12.a) and (12.b).

(11.a)   *It is this matter (that) I need to talk about.*
(11.b)   *It is this matter about which I need to talk.*

(12.a)   **Je to záležitost, (kter-á/-é) (já) potřebuji mluvit o.*
                it is matter which-NOM/-LOC I need talk about
(12.b)   *Je to záležitost, o kter-é (já) potřebuji mluvit.*
                it is matter which-NOM/-LOC I need talk about

Notice that both (11.a) and (11.b) are acceptable. English offers a choice between Pied-Piping and Preposition Stranding, whereas Czech does not; only Pied-Piping is possible (12.b) in PPs, and Preposition Stranding is ruled out as ungrammatical (12.a).

It has been noted that Preposition Stranding is not at all a wide-spread phenomenon which result in the impossibility of forming pseudo-passives in most languages; Danish is one of the languages that allow it, but what about others? The following section will discuss how many languages are like English and Danish and which follow the pattern that can be observed in Czech.

2.3.1. World-wide occurrence of Preposition Stranding

To find out which languages allow Preposition Stranding I turned to the literature on the subject of prepositions.

The internet domain called *The World Atlas of Language Structures* (WALS[3]) concentrates on comparing languages of the world according to which constructions are grammatical in which languages. It includes only one chapter written by Dryer (2013) that mentions the term Preposition Stranding. Dryder notes that Preposition Stranding is infrequent among languages and explains that English is quite unusual cross-linguistically in that respect. He does not discuss the phenomenon any further, however. Nor does he give a list of languages that share this property with English. Apart from this brief mentioning of the phenomenon, WALS is completely silent on the topic. All the chapters that are concerned with prepositions deal with their position with respect to

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[3] wals.info

their object in neutral or basic environments, leaving movement rules out of the discussion.

Thankfully, other sources can be found that are less schematic when it comes to prepositions, prepositional phrases, and movement rules. Such sources are giving the impression that, in fact, only the Germanic and possibly some African languages allow Preposition Stranding. Hawkins (1986) observes that apart from Scandinavian languages (including Icelandic), there are some instances of Preposition Stranding to be found in Dutch and in the Kru languages of Africa (which allow Stranding of postpositions). The type of Preposition Stranding that can be found in Dutch will be discussed in section 3.1. where it will be shown that German too allows this type of Preposition Stranding.

If the partial Stranding of Dutch and for that matter German is for the time being included, only the Germanic languages and members of the Kru language family allow Preposition Stranding.

Apart from English, there are two types of languages, those that rule out Preposition Stranding in all environments and those that limit Preposition Stranding to taking place under certain conditions; English is the only one that has Preposition Stranding that is to some extent optional (van Riemsdijk and Williams 1986, 147).

To conclude, it seems that Preposition Stranding is limited to the North Germanic and Kru family of languages and English, and a special type of Preposition Stranding can be found in Dutch and German. English is the only one among all those languages whose Preposition Stranding can be optional.

2.4. The Starting Point of my empirical investigation of the History of English

One question that needs to be answered is how long has English had this property. It seems plausible that Preposition Stranding might have already reached its full development by the end of the Middle English period. To examine this hypothesis, I searched the online Corpus of Medieval English texts of the University of Michigan[4] (form now on referred to as ME Corpus), and I will examine the data found in the ME Corpus in the following sections.

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[4] https://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/

As for the earliest occurrence of Preposition Stranding in English, Denison notes that before the Middle English period Preposition Stranding cannot be found in any of the Old English texts (1993, 125). I will also include some examples of Old English texts from various sources to examine his claim, and see whether his statement is correct.

3. The demarcation of Preposition Stranding

This section will look at the environments in which Preposition Stranding can be found, as well as review some instances of what may misleadingly seem like Preposition Stranding but actually are not. But to do this, let us first consider a special type of Preposition Stranding that can be found not only in English but in German and Dutch as well, that is the Preposition Stranding with locatives.

3.1. Preposition Stranding with Locatives

German, as well as Dutch, is sometimes listed among the languages that allow Preposition Stranding, for example A. Weiberg and N. Hornstein note that German does have a certain form of Preposition Stranding constructions (1981, 55); however it would not be accurate to compare German Preposition Stranding to that of English or Scandinavian languages as to its extent and quality. In fact, there is one crucial difference between what we can observe in German and what can be found in English and Scandinavian languages with respect to the productivity of these constructions. For this reason, I will from now on use the term Restricted Preposition Stranding to refer to this type of construction.

Den Besten and Webelhuth illustrate what they call Preposition Stranding in German with the following example:

(13.a)   *weil Hans da nicht mit gerechnet hat*
           because Hans there not with counted has
           'because Hans had not expected that to happen' (1990, 78)

They also postulate that it is a well-known fact about German that only a limited set of 'r-pronouns'[5] including *da* 'there' allow Preposition Stranding (1990, 78). They do not elaborate on this comment, though. It is T. Vignjevic (2005) who provides a useful description of the r-expressions involved in German Stranding. German r-expressions that can be involved in Preposition Stranding are actually composites. They are formed by fusing referential pronouns *da* 'there', *wo* 'where'and *hier* 'here' with their preposition. These prepositions always follow the pronoun in German, unless

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[5] R-pronoun is a term that van Riemsdijk uses to refer to locative pronouns, including *there*, *here* and *where* (1978, 287).

Preposition Stranding takes place (Vignjevic 2005). This suggests that Preposition Stranding of this type is a non-productive process, since it is so limited.

To test whether German Preposition Stranding is a productive process, *da* can be replaced for example by *etwas* meaning 'something' to retain the same meaning; this results in an ungrammatical example (13.b) instead of the acceptable (13.a).

(13.b)   *weil Hans etwas nicht mit gerechnet hat*

                because Hans something not with counted has

                'because Hans had not expected anything to happen'

The ungrammaticality of example (13.b) shows that whilst the same sentence with *da* as the object of the preposition *mit* is acceptable[6], if *da* is replaced by a noun or a more complex noun phrase, the whole sentence becomes ungrammatical. So Stranding in German appears to be limited to prepositional phrases containing a very particular set of possible objects of the prepositions, namely the three general place adverbs *da*, *hier* and *wo*, all locatives which are allowed left of the preposition position of the object. For the purposes of this thesis this type of Preposition Stranding will not be taken as a subtype of Preposition Stranding but rather as a special construction, since its productivity is very limited.

3.2. What is not Preposition Stranding

Now let us consider some of the traps that have to be avoided when searching for instances of Preposition Stranding in actual texts. The Preposition Stranding with locatives is not the only misleading grammatical construction. There are also phrasal verbs that may look like verbs with stranded prepositions, separable verbal prefixes that share their form with some prepositions and, in the case of old texts, spelling may also prove to be a misleading factor when searching for stranded prepositions.

3.2.1. Phrasal Verbs

Not all isolated prepositions are stranded prepositions; some prepositions (Ps according to diagnostics of current formal syntax) do not require any overt object. Consider the

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[6] It is also important to note that such examples of Preposition Stranding as (13.a) are only found in some dialectal variants of German.

preposition *in* in combination with verbs such as *come* or *walk,* where this preposition fulfils the semantic role of 'location inside' in both of these cases.

(14.a)   *It was Larry that/who came/walked in.*

(14.b)   *Larry came/walked in.*

Notice that *Larry* in the examples (14.a) and (14.b) is not the missing object of the preposition. Rather the preposition *in* forms a unit with the verb *come* whose subject *Larry* is.

Another example of what cannot be considered a case of Preposition Stranding is isolated adverbs that share their form with prepositions but do not require any object. The following examples show a small number of such preposition-adverb pairs. In each of the examples (15-17), (a.) represents the preposition and (b.) the adverb.

(15.a)   *He walked up the road.*

(15.b)   *He walked up.*

(16.a)   *Tom took off his hat.*

(16.b)   *The airplane took off.*

(17.a)   *I walked around the new shop.*

(17.b)   *I walked around.*

In (15.b-17.b), there are no objects required by *up*, *off* and *around* therefore any relative clause that is formed based on (15.b-17.b) should not be treated as exemplifying Preposition Stranding. In fact, these kinds of object-less Ps are called adverbs in traditional grammar, and occur in languages without preposition standing. Consider the difference between (18.a) and (18.b).

(18.a)   *The road he walked up was rocky.*

(18.b)   *The moment he walked up the stairs I recognized him.*

There is a clear difference between (18.a) and (18.b), and that is that whilst *the road* in the example (18.a) is the object of *up* removed by a movement rule, *the moment* in the

example (18.b) is not the object of *up* but rather an adverbial of time . So there is no stranded preposition to be found in (18.b).

3.2.2. Separable Prefixes

Separable prefixes on verbs are a phenomenon that has to be understood before undertaking any analysis of older English texts. Separable verbal prefixes can be found for example in Modern German. What is striking about them is that many of them share their form with common German prepositions. Consider the overlap between the list of German separable prefixes (19.a) and that of German prepositions (19.b). For convenience, I printed the ones whose form is the same in bold print.

(19.a) *ab-, **an-**, **auf-**, **aus-**, **bei-**, ein-, **mit-**, **nach-**, **vor-**, weg-,* and ***zu-***

(19.b) ***an**, **auf**, **aus**, ausser, **bei**, bis, durch, für, gegen, gegenüber, hinter, in,*
        ***mit**, **nach**, neben, ohne, seit, um, unter, über, von, **vor**, **zu**, zwischen*

To exemplify the behavior of separable prefixes, a verb *einsteigen* 'board (something)' whose prefix in not to the same as any German preposition is chosen to avoid any implication that this might be a case of Preposition Stranding. Consider:

(20.a) *Ich werde morgen in d-en Zug ein-steigen.*
        I will tomorrow in the-ACC.M train PREF-board
        'I will board the train tomorrow.'

(20.b) *Ich steige morgen in d-en Zug ein.*
        I board tomorrow in the-ACC.M train PREF
        'I am boarding the train tomorrow.'

(20.c) *I muss in d-en Zug ein-steigen.*
        I must in the-ACC.M train PREF-board
        'I have to board the train.'

(20.d) *Steig ein!*
        Board PREF
        'Board the train!'

Such constructions as presented in (20.a-d) cannot be seen as examples of Preposition Stranding because there is actually no preposition which an object noun phrase involved in any of the examples of the prefixal morphemes.

Old English also had such separable prefixes as can be found in Present Day German; their position in the sentence depended on the type of clause. Olga Fischer (1992, 386) explains that whilst in main clauses the prefix was separated from the verb, in subordinate-clauses it generally preceded it. What can be observed in examples (20.a-d) is actually slightly different. In (20.a) and (20.d), the prefix is separated since the verb is not in an infinitive form, in (20.b-c), because the verb *einsteigen* is in its infinitival form, the prefix in thus not separated. The same applies to the past form *eingestiegen* which in itself does not carry tense and thus behaves the same way as infinitives. Consider:

(20.e)   *Ich bin in d-en Zug ein-ge-stiegen.*
                I was in the-ACC.M train PREF-PAST-board
                'I boarded the train.'

The same type of construction can also be found in other West Germanic languages, consider the following examples from Dutch:

(21.a)   *Ik ga uit met iemand.*
                I go out with someone
                'I am dating someone.'

(21.b)   *Ik zal met iemand uitgaan.*
                I will with someone out.go
                'I will date someone.'

(21.c)   *Ik met met iemand uitgaaan.*
                I must with someone out.go
                'I have to date someone.'

Examples of separable prefixes of these types should not be considered when Preposition Stranding is the object of interest.

3.2.3. Spelling

Working with older texts brings about another challenge, namely recognizing whether or not a particular word is actually a preposition. This can prove difficult due to spelling variability in these texts. One might come across *too* being spelt as *to*, *before* can be spelt as *for*, *fore* etc. and *one* may actually be represented as *on*.

It is necessary to take into account these potentially misleading factors before making any firm conclusions.

3.3. Environments Allowing Preposition Stranding

Returning now to the topic of the Preposition Stranding, I will give a comprehensive list of environments in which Preposition Stranding can be found in Modern English. Van Riemsdijk (1978, 144) observes that Preposition Stranding in English can be found under three conditions, namely

    1) *wh*-questions,
    2) relative clauses,
    3) infinitive clauses,
    4) comparatives and
    5) pseudo-passives

The first four are instances of constructions derived by either overt or covert *wh*-movement, two of which have already been mentioned (*wh*-questions and relative clauses), there are also some infinitive clauses and comparatives that allow Preposition Stranding. The fifth is an instance of NP-movement (passive). We will return to all of these in more detail shortly.

(22.a)   *Who are you talking to?*
(22.b)   *To whom are you talking?*
(23)   *The man that we looked at seemed pleased.*
(24)   *John was laughed at.*

(22.a) is an example of a *wh*-movement of an object of a preposition in an interrogative where the preposition *to* is left in situ (where it would be in a declarative) even though its object *who* is fronted. Since Preposition Stranding is not obligatory in all contexts in English, both (22.a) and (22.b) are equally grammatical. Example (23) is a relative clause with the preposition *at* stranded after its object *the man* is moved. Example (24) is one of the pseudo-passives.

3.3.1. *Wh-*Movement

Among *wh*-movement constructions I will consider *wh*-questions, relative clauses, comparatives and infinitives following the analysis of Chomsky (1977). He claims that all of these are actually result of the same kind of transformation as has been mentioned.

Chomsky argues that infinite clauses and comparative as well as *wh*-questions and *wh*-relative clauses are created by *wh*-movement. The *wh*-element in the infinite clause is covert rather than overt; the structure of the phrase is the following: *the man (who) to talk to* (see Chomsky 1977). In the comparatives, Chomsky re-classifies *as/so/than* as a kind of *wh-* element (1977).

Chomsky shows that there are striking similarities between these four types of constructions and that the *wh*-movement could explain how the structures were arrived at. Grouping all four under the same rule also satisfies the need for the scientific economy, there is no reason for formulating four rules that have the same content when one is sufficient.

3.3.1.1. Wh-Questions

Questions are the perfect environment to look for Preposition Stranding in Present Day English since they often involve *wh*-movement. Unfortunately, the ME Corpus did not yield as many questions of any sort as might be useful, so this chapter is here more as a reflection of the Present Day situation.

There are some limitations to where Preposition Stranding might take place and where it is not possible even in English, as has already been suggested when example (4) was introduced.

(4.a)	*Mary worked towards the edge of town.*
(4.b)	*Where did Mary work?*
(4.c)	**What did Mary work towards?*

The reason why (4.c) is ungrammatical is hidden within the structure of the verb phrase. In fact, PPs in complement but not necessarily all those in adjunct position allow Preposition Stranding. Similar behavior can be observed in the NP objects, some of which are more complement like and others fulfil functions similar to verbal adjuncts. Consider the following complements and adjuncts in the NPs:

(25.a)   *What did you see a student with? With a nice shawl.

(25.b)   What did you see a student of? Of Classical Greek.

Notice that Preposition Stranding is not possible in (25.a) where the PP fulfils a role akin to adjunct whilst it is possible in (25.b) in which the PP is complement-like. Preposition Stranding can be used as a diagnostic test to disambiguate between adjunct and complement reading. In the following example, where the PP *with my magnifying glass* is an adjunct, Preposition Stranding is not possible as (26.a) shows, the preposition has to be moved with the *wh*-phrase as in (26.b).

(26.a)   *What did you see it with? With my magnifying glass.

(26.b)   With what did you see it? With my magnifying glass.

However, this does not relate to the topic of this thesis except for the fact that when searching for examples of Preposition Stranding, none should be expected to appear in such environment as (25.a). So I will not discuss this topic any further but rather turn my attention to relative clauses.

3.3.1.2. Relative Clauses

English relative clauses can be divided into three groups as Emonds and Havranová (2014) show:

1) *that*-relative clauses,
2) contact relative clauses and
3) *wh*-relative clauses.

The first type, *that*-relative clauses, are introduced by the invariant complementiser *that* as exemplified by (27.a), the second, contact relatives, that are not introduced by any

complementiser but rather directly follow the NP that they modify as in (27.b), and the third, *wh*-relative clauses, are relative clauses introduced by a *wh*-complementiser (27.c) (Emonds and Havranová 2014, 149).

(27.a)   *The girl that loves dancing is called Lisa.*

(27.b)   *The girl you met is called Lisa.*

(27.c)   *The girl whom I admire loves dancing.*

The relative clauses do not modify only subjects, but also other sentence members, such as objects (28), consider the following examples.

(28.a)   *I gave my mother the gift that she always wished for.*

(28.b)   *I gave my mother the gift she always wished for.*

(28.c)   *I gave my mother the gift which I bought yesterday.*

Relative clauses introduced by *that* and contact relatives require Preposition Stranding, see (29) and (30).

(29.a)   *The country that they come from is Spain.*

(29.b)   **The country from that they come is Spain.*

(30.a)   *The girl we looked at is called Lisa.*

(30.b)   **At the girl we looked is called Lisa.*

The examples (29.b) and (30.b) are ungrammatical and show that not Stranding the preposition in contact relative (30) and *that*-relative clauses (29) results in ungrammatical sentences, which proves that Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative and contact relative clauses is indeed not optional but rather mandatory.

Wh-relatives allow both Preposition Stranding and P+*wh* phrase constructions. Consider:

(31.a)   *The country which they come from is Spain.*

(31.b)   *The country from which they come is Spain.*

(32.a) *The girl who we were looking at loves dancing.*

(32.b) *The girl at whom we were looking loves dancing.*

Although (31.b) and (32.b) are parallel to the examples (29.b) and (30.b), they are grammatical. This demonstrates that *wh*-relatives do not, unlike the contact relatives and *that*-relatives, require Preposition Stranding. Preposition Stranding in *wh*-relatives is optional just like in the *wh*-questions. Emonds and Havranová (2014, 153) note that contact relatives such as (30.a) are not wide-spread in the Indo-European languages including Old English and Old Norse, and that in these languages an overt relativiser must be present in order for the sentences to be grammatical. In fact, in Old English, by far the most common type of the relative clause is one introduced by invariant relativiser, *þe* as Sheila Geoghegan (1975, 33) observes. I will come back to this in section 4.3.2.

3.3.1.3. Comparatives and Infinitives

Denison (1993, 125), when presenting a list of environments where Preposition Stranding can be encountered, names also comparative clauses and complement infinitive clauses. We can see this in examples (33) and (34):

(33)   *I never saw anyone as laughed at as John.*

(34)   *a teacher easy to talk to*

The reason why Denison lists them is that he is trying to create a taxonomy of all the different situations when Preposition Stranding can be expected to occur. Following Chomsky's *On Wh-Movement* (1977), though, examples (33) and (34) should be considered a subtype of *wh*-movement rather than a special type of a construction that should be described separately. But as, I have found no comparatives and just a very limited number of infinitives with stranded prepositions in my sample from the ME Corpus, the main reason why the comparative clauses are mentioned here is to demonstrate that even in such environments, Preposition Stranding could be expected to be found.

3.3.2. Pseudo-Passives (NP movement)

As for the pseudo-passives, they are passive constructions whose subject is the moved object of a preposition, as has already been discussed in section 2.3., for more

information see van Riemsdijk (1978, chapter 6). David Denison calls this phenomenon 'prepositional passive.' He uses prepositional passives alongside coordinate conjunction to test whether the structure of a phrase is V-PP or rather V-P NP (1993, 124). What he means by this is that some verb-preposition pairs seem to more closely form a unit than others. The ones that have V-PP structure in his framework do not allow Preposition Stranding due to an indivisible nature of the PP, whilst the V-P NP string allows the NP to be moved out of the PP (Denison 1993).

To see the distinction, consider the following examples:

(35.a)   *This bed was not slept in for years.*

(35.b)   **This bed was not slept next to for years.*

(36.a)   *You cannot stay in and leave the house at the same time.*

(36.b)   **You cannot stay until and leave before Tuesday.*

The grammaticality of such examples as (35.a-b) and (36.a-b) depends on the deep structure of the verb phrase and the prepositional phrase. Denison shows that the pseudo-passive test can be used to diagnose the deep structure of the utterances.

As for the relation of such structures to the history of English, passive constructions of Middle English differ largely from those of Old English. Olga Fischer observes that Old English could form passives only from accusative noun phrases, namely by moving objects to the subject position and changing them into the nominative case. Middle English shows a wider range of passive constructions[7], among them passives of prepositional objects (Fischer 1992, 383). This would not be possible in Old English due to the restrictions on the case of the object of a clause that can undergo passivation.

The reasons for this change in the availability of non-accusative object for the formation of passive clauses have also been investigated by other scholars. Denison (1985, 194)

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[7] Fischer actually gives a list of ME passives, including of both direct and indirect objects and that of prepositional object However, her Modern English examples do not include any passive of the indirect object with prepositions. Her example: *Nicaragua was given opportunity to protest.* corresponds to the active sentence: *They gave Nicaragua opportunity to protest.* rather than *They gave opportunity to protest to Nicaragua.* (see 1992, 383) What she means when she says 'indirect' must then be the object that in Old English carried dative rather than accusative case marking.

argues that one of the factors that influenced the emergence of prepositional object passives is the loss of case inflection assigned by Middle English verbs. The conclusion, therefore, seems to be that once no such thing as accusative noun phrases, as contrasted with dative noun phrases, existed in English, even objects that would not have been in the accusative case in the previous stages of the language's development, could undergo passivation, including those that were inside a PP.

This is not the only difference in the structure of the Old English and the Middle English VP, though. Fischer (1992, 386) adds that whilst Old English had an abundance of prefixed verbs, Middle English used in their stead phrasal verbs with either a preposition or an adverb as a particle.

The forms of verbs and their complementation changed greatly between the Old English and the Middle English then. Whilst Old English had case-assigning verbs with prefixes that could be either separable or inseparable, Middle English lost the case-inflection on their NP objects and the role of the prefixes of Old English verbs was taken over by the post-verbal particles. The objects of Old English verbs could only be passivized if they were accusative, thus the passive that is parallel to the Present Day English *I was given a flower* would not be grammatical in Old English.

4. Late Middle English examples of Preposition Stranding

Having introduced the term Preposition Stranding and discussed the environments in which it occurs, let us now examine the Middle English data. The following sections will concentrate on three particular time periods, starting with some instances of Stranding found in texts whose date of origin is unknown, then proceeding to the Late Middle English examples including the writing of John Wycliffe and the Stonor family archive. After that, I will discuss some of the Early Middle English texts and briefly turn my attention to the question of Preposition Stranding in the Old English writing, before examining in more detail the two Early Middle English texts, *The Owl and the Nightingale* and *The English Conquest of Ireland*.

4.1. Middle English texts with unknown date of publication

Some of the texts that can be found in the ME Corpus unfortunately lack information about the date when they were written, or at least the time period of their possible origin is too wide to be of any use. This is the case with the following example (37) that comes from the annals of the churches of London that were compiled throughout the Middle Ages. The following note that is informing about the payment having been made for the renting of a house is nevertheless of interest since it exemplifies well a *that*-relative clause with Preposition Stranding:

(37)   *Payed to seynct georges churche in botuphe lan efor quytrent*
            paid to Saint George's church in Botolph Lane for quit-rent
            for the house that Ione goodwyn dwellith yn
            for the house that John Goodwyn dwells in
            'The rent was paid to the church of Saint George in Botolph Lane
            for the house John Goodwin dwells in.'
            (<u>Medieval Records of a London City Church</u>)

Ione goodwyn dwellith yn is a relative clause modifying *the house* which is the object of the preposition *yn* that is left stranded.

        The following examples (38) and (39) come also from a source whose date of origin is unknown, but unlike the example (37), there are at least some historical cues as to the period which was the earliest possible date when the text from which both of them come could be written. The text discusses the assassination of King James of

Scotland, who died 1437. Thus the text comes from the late Middle English period. This dating is supported by the fact that the relative pronoun used to introduce the relative clause is in fact *which* rather than *that. Which* would not have been used in any texts older than the 14th century (see section 4.2.1).

(38)   *his horribill deth by murdure; this which is pite that any gentill or gode*
         his horrible death by murder this which is pity that any genteel or good
         man to thynk upon
         man to think upon
         'his horrible death by murder; about which it is sad for any kind or good
         person to be thinking'
         (The Dethe of James Kynge of Scotis p. 14)

The object of the preposition *upon* 'about' is the pronoun *this,* which refers back to the noun phrase *his horribill deth by murdure*.
Similarly, in (39), the object of the preposition *upon* that is stranded is a noun phrase, namely *all his body*.

(39)   *all his body, that was full seke and pitous to look upon*
         all his body that was full sake and piteous to look upon
         'the whole of his body that was completely affected and piteous
         to look at'
         (The Dethe of James Kynge of Scotis p. 26)

The examples above show that Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative clauses and *wh*-relative clauses can be found in some texts from Medieval times but are not very useful when trying to determine to what extent Preposition Stranding was common in a certain period, since their date of origin is unknown. The following section will turn to the most recent dated examples of Middle English and search for some instances of Preposition Stranding in them.

4.2. Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century Middle English

In 14th and 15th century texts, cases of Preposition Stranding are quite frequent, as this section will try to prove.

4.2.1. *That*-Relatives

First, let us consider the numerous examples of *that*-relative clauses that can be found throughout the 14th and 15th century texts. I list here seven such examples and each of them will be provided with a short discussion of the construction.

The following examples (40-41) come from a poem called 'Cursor Mundi'; it was composed in the Northumbrian region and its prologue retells some of the key stories of the *Bible* in English. Its date of origin should be around the late 13th or early 14th century.

(40)   *Nou es it gode to turne to vr style þat we haue gon out of a whyle*
          Now is it good to turn to our style that we have gone out of a while
          'Now it is good to return to the style that we had left for a while'
          (<u>Cursor Mundi</u> p. 493, line 8509-10)

(41)   *þis dauid þat i redd of here, was king and reyned fourti ȝere*
          this David I read of here was king and reigned forty year
          'This David I was talking about here was a king and reigned for forty years'
          (<u>Cursor Mundi</u> p. 493, line 8513-14)

Both the examples (40) and (41) are *that*-relatives. Since in no constructions does the preposition *of* have an adverbial usage, in both (40) and (41) *of* is clearly stranded. In example (40), the noun phrase *vr style* is the moved object and in (41), it is *þis dauid* referring to the biblical king David, who is the central figure of this passage of the poem. The Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative clauses can be found in other texts from the same period too.

One of them is the following example (42) that comes from Wycliffe's 14th century religious essays.

(42)   *feiþ þat we han spokun of*
          faith that we had spoken of
          'the faith that we had spoken of'
          (<u>The English Works of Wiclif</u> p. 350 XXIV.3)

In this example too, it is the preposition *of* that is stranded. The object *feiþ* is moved whilst the preposition *of* stays in situ.

The example (43) comes from a late 14th century text, it a prosaic discussion of Piers the Plowman (a long religious poem) written by William Langland about the Peasant Rebellion of the time. This instance also is taken from a *that*-relative clause.

(43)   *ac þe pounde þat she payed by · poised a quarteroun more*
          but the pound that she paid with weighted a quarter on more
          'But the pound with which she paid was heavier by a quarter.'
          (The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman p. 69,
          5.217)

The passage is a short note concerning fraud money that could often be recognized due to slight difference in weight. From a linguistic point of view the more interesting fact is that Preposition Stranding is used and the object *þe pounde* is moved without its preposition *by,* which is left in situ. This is therefore a perfect example of Preposition Stranding.

The two following examples are slightly newer and come each from one of the cookery books that were written in the early 15th century. Notice the use of the masculine pronoun *him* in the example (44): the pronoun is used persistently throughout the two cookery books to refer to fish such as *tench* that is being prepared in the example (44).

(44)   *And þeñ couche him in a vesseɫ, that he may be y-caried yñ, if þou wilt*
          and then cook it in a vessel that it may be a-carried in if thou want to
          'and cook it in a pot that it can be carried in if you want to'
          (Two Fifteen-Century Cookery-Books p. 102 II)

(45)   *þan take þe water þat þe beef was soþin yn*
          then take the water that the beef was boiling in
          'then take the water that the beef was boiling in'
          (Two Fifteen-Century Cookery-Books p. 7 I)

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The preposition that is stranded in (44) is the preposition *yn̄* whose object *a vessełł* is moved, preposition *yn* is also stranded in (45) whose object *þe water* was moved.

The last example of this section comes also from the late 15th century and is interesting due to the pronoun *it* referring back to *a Tenement in the bowrogh*. The base sentence of (46.a) is presented in (46.b). The pronoun *it* in (46.a) must be referring back to the trace left in place of the object of that preposition that is displaced by the movement rule.

(46.a)   *a Tenement in the bowrogh that Thomas plowman Latte dwellyd yn*
          a tenement in the borough that Thomas plowman Latte dwelled in
          and occupieth it
          and occupied it
          'a tenement in the borough in which Thomas Plowman Latte lived and occupied it.'
          (<u>Lincoln Diocese Documents</u> p. 168)

(46.b)   *Thomas plowman Latte dwellyd yn a Tenement in the bowrogh*
          Thomas plowman Latte dwelled in a tenement in the borough
          and occupieth it
          and occupied it
          'Thomas Plowman Latte lived in a tenement in the borough and occupied it.'

To summarise this section, it has been demonstrated that Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative clauses was wide-spread and well in use in the late Middle English period, since instances of Preposition Stranding have been found in various texts from this period, written by different authors and in different regions of Britain.

4.2.2. *Wh*-Relatives

Instances of Preposition Stranding found in the Late Middle English texts are not limited to *that*-relative clauses, though. In the 14th century, we can also encounter some *wh*-relative clauses similar to the one in following example (47) from the 14th century translation of the *Bible*.

(47) *all thingis, the whiche I haue spokun vpon*

all things the which I have spoken upon

'all the things that I have spoken of'

(The Holy Bible p. 14 I Kings III.12)

The noun phrase *all thingis* is the object of the preposition *vpon* in (47). Notice the presence of the definite article *the* preceding the *wh*-relative, this is evidence of the influence of French. The Middle English *wh*-words in direct and indirect questions could not be preceded by a determiner but the ones in relative clauses copying the usage of French can. Consider the English indirect question:

(48.a) *I do what I want to.*

(48.b) **I do the what I want to.*

Its French translation with a weak demonstrative is the following:

(48.c) *Je fais ce que je veux.*

I do DEM what I want to

Unlike the English example (48.b), the French translation (48.c) allows the interrogative pronoun to be preceded by a determiner.

In fact, French influence is responsible for the use of the *wh*-pronoun outside of the *wh*-question environments. Using *wh*-words to introduce relative clauses became possible only during the Late Middle English period.

The question why *wh*-relative words only start to occur in this position in the 14th century is addressed by Emonds and Havranová (2014, 157); they claim that Grammar Competition is responsible for this change. By Grammar Competition Emonds and Havranová (2014) understand the situation in which two (or more) different grammatical systems co-exist in the speakers' minds and the grammar of one language influences that of the other. According to them, Grammar Competition tends to take place only under certain circumstances, namely when the speakers of one language deliberately choose to learn and start to speak a new language (Emonds and Havranová 2014, 156).

This was the case in the 14th century England; French speakers were adopting English as their new (and favoured) communication tool; it is important to note that English was until then at most their second language if not the third. It was this competition between English and their native French that enabled *wh*-relatives to re-enter English. What is interesting from the point of view of this thesis is that these new *wh*-relative clauses, just like the *that*-relative clauses, allow Preposition Stranding. That is, the use of Preposition Stranding in these new contexts shows that it was already part and parcel of the English system.

Some examples of *wh*-relative clauses can be found in *The Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy* that was written by the Bishop of Chichester sometime in the first half of the 15 century. Significantly, this text not only includes instances of Preposition Stranding such as the example (49), but instances of pied-piping can also be found there, such as in example (50).

(49)   *other than the cause which the argument spekith of*
         other than the cause which the argument speak-PRES.3sg of
         'apart from the cause that the argument speaks of'
         (The Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy p. 239
         2.XV)

(50)   *as is open ynouȝ to ech diligent reder of the processis in whiche tho*
         as is open enough to each diligent reader of the processes in which the
         textis ben sett.
         texts were set
         'as is clear enough to each careful reader of the processes in which the
         texts were set'
         (The Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy p. 279
         3.I)

The preposition *in* in (49), rather than being left in situ, is moved together with its object *whiche*. Thus Preposition Stranding can be seen to take place in (49). But *wh*-relative clauses in Present Day English, as you will recall, do not obligatorily require Preposition Stranding and in fact Stranding in *wh*-relative clauses is optional. So it is

not surprising that examples such as (50) are quite common in the Late Middle English texts.

(51)   *that mo citees or othere citees than in whiche the preestis and dekenys*

        that more cities or other cities than in which the priests and deacons

        hadde nede to dwelle yn

        had need to dwell in

        'that more cities or other cities than those where there was a need for

        priests and deacons to live in'

        (The Repressor of over much Blaming of the Clergy p. 269

        3.III)

Example (51) demonstrates that apart from (pied-piping) NP P *wh-* … and (Stranding) NP *wh-* … P, a 'doubling'construction, i.e. examples with NP P *wh-* … P can also be found in this particular text. This would be a performance error in today's writing. The optionality of Preposition Stranding in *wh*-relative clauses is known to cause troubles even for Present Day English speakers, and one might come across such erroneous examples occasionally, mainly if the speech or writing is not careful (Denison 1993, 134).

Notice that the preposition *in* preceding the relative *whiche* in (51) is identical with the preposition *yn* that follows the verb *dwelle*; except for the spelling but that is not of the essence. According to Denison (1993, 133), this phenomenon, that is the repetition of preposition combining pied-piping with the Preposition Stranding construction, is not rare in the Late Middle English texts; he calls it 'repeated preposition' and notes that such errors have not disappeared from the use of English till today.

Treating such examples simply as errors would not however bring any enlightenment as to how well-established Preposition Stranding was by the end of the 14th century. The 'repeated prepositions' are actually a piece of crucial evidence that Preposition Stranding must have been a natural thing for an English speaker to do, since even the presence of the preposition in front of the *wh*-phrase does not stop the post-verbal preposition from appearing. The author of the text moreover might have been a native speaker of French, and example (51) might be a result of two competing

grammars; that of Middle English with Preposition Stranding and that of French with the pied-piping convention.

This section has illustrated that even examples of *wh*-relative clauses with Preposition Stranding can be encountered in the Late Middle English texts and points at French influence in the Middle English *wh*-relatives.

4.2.3. Infinitive Complements

As has been mentioned, I have not been able to find as many instances of infinitival clauses with stranded prepositions, but nevertheless, the following examples fall under this heading, and there are some more provided in the following sections.

In example (52), the preposition *of* is stranded.

(52)   *thouȝ it were so that the chirche, bi ignoraunce, and bi such unpower*
         though it were so that the church by ignorance and by such unpower
         as is to[8] *nowe be spokun of*
         as is to now be spoken of
         'though it were so by ignorance and such unpower as is now to be discussed'
         (Reginald Pecock's Book of Faith p. 208 I.XIII)

The object of the preposition is *as* referring back to *ignoraunce and such unpower*. In (53), the object *noo thynge* of the preposition *upon* is moved and the preposition is left in situ.

The next example furnishes another instance of Stranding in an infinitive; it comes from an early 15th century text:

(53)   *we have noo thynge to lyve upon*
         we have no thing to live upon
         'we do not have anything to live on'
         (The Right Plesaunt and Goody Historie of the Foure Sonnes of Aymon p. 99 III)

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[8] Notice that the infinitival verb is separable from the infinitival *to*. This is a characteristic that ME shares with North Germanic (Emonds and Faarlund 2014, chapter 4).

As this short section has shown, infinite clauses also allowed Preposition Stranding in Middle English.

4.2.4. John Wycliffe's Translation of the Bible

The next two sections will list examples of Preposition Stranding found in a translation of the *Bible* and in the Stonor family archive.

Preposition Stranding is not limited to texts written originally in the English language. Even in translations such as John Wycliffe's translation of the *Holy Bible*, some occurrences of Preposition Stranding can be found, showing again how natural and inherent this construction is in Middle English. For instance, we find Stranding in the above cited *I Kings* (47), and also in *Exodus* (54), and *Esther* (55).

(54)   *the place forsothe that thow stond-ist yn is an holi loond.*
        the place truly that thou stand-2sg in is an holy land
        'Truly, the place that you stand on is a holy ground.'
        (The Holy Bible p. 198 Exodus III.5)

(55)   *and if to the king it plese, that he ʒiue to me that I preʒe fore, and fulfille*
        and if to king it please that he give to me that I pray for and fulfil
        myn asking
        my asking
        'and should it please the king to give me what I pray for and fulfil my asking'
        (The Holy Bible p. 649 Esther V.8)

Both (54) and (55) are instances of *that*-relative clauses with stranded prepositions; this differentiates them from the example (47) which exemplifies *wh*-relative clause.

This section has shown that the fact that a text is a translation rather than an English original does not interfere with the application of Preposition Stranding, be it Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative clauses as in (54) and (55) or in *wh*-relative clauses as in (47).

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4.2.5. The Stonor Letters and Papers

A rich source of Middle English texts is the archive of the Stonor family that includes the correspondence of several family members. Unfortunately, the Early Middle English period is not well represented since most of the early letters and papers are written in Latin, but there is an abundance of interesting examples to examine dating from just before 1424 to 1462. For convenience, I list the examples from the oldest to the newest and provide short descriptions of each of the 9 instances of Preposition Stranding represented here. The first example (56) comes from the year 1424 or earlier, the exact year is uncertain. It comes from the first letter in the collection that is actually written in English rather than in Latin.

(56)   *for certeyn þer was never matier þat I þoght so mycull apon*
            for certain there was never matter that I thought so much upon
            'certainly there never was a matter that I was thinking about so much'
            (The Stonor Letters and Papers p.37 I.44)

It is a further example of a *that*-relative clause which is by far the most common of the environments in which Preposition Stranding could take place in texts that I examined.

The next example from the year 1450 illustrates how spelling could stand in the way of proper analysis; the word that is spelt *for* or *fore* might be problematic since it may represent both the preposition 'for' and the adverb 'before'. Consider:

(57)   *y have done þe message þat ye sent to me for*
            I have done the message that you sent to me for
            'I have finished the message that you sent to me for'
            (The Stonor Letters and Papers p.52 I.57)

In cases such as (57), translating the excerpt into Modern English sometimes helps to find evidence for a particular analysis since only one of translations is often plausible. Consider the adverbial reading of *fore*: 'I have finished the message that you sent me before' as compared to 'I have finished the message that you sent to me for', where *for* is a stranded preposition. Unfortunately, in this case, both of the translations seem plausible, though only in the latter is 'the message' the reference of the understood object of the P. The examination of the possible Modern English translations here is not

conclusive; it seems reasonable to assume that in example (57) *for* could actually be an instance of Preposition Stranding, but it might as well be just an example of a sentence with the adverb 'before' in it.

The next example from the year 1461 is less problematic, since it is clearly an instance of Stranding of the preposition *of* in a *that*-relative clause.

(58)　　　*the clayme that ʒe know of*
　　　　　the claim that you know of
　　　　　'the claim that you know of'
　　　　　(The Stonor Letters and Papers p.56 I.62)

There are actually two other instances of Preposition Stranding involving the verb *know* and the preposition *of* in the same letter. Here they are:

(59)　　　*yn hys fadyr tyme, that ʒe know of*
　　　　　in his father time that you know of
　　　　　'in his father's time that you know of'
　　　　　(The Stonor Letters and Papers p.56 I.62)

(60)　　　*the yong dayys of the seyd man that ʒe know of*
　　　　　the young days of the said man that you know of
　　　　　'the young days of the man that you know of'
　　　　　(The Stonor Letters and Papers p.56 I.62)

Know and *of* together seems to be a popular combination of a verb and preposition in the Stranding constructions, alongside the verb *speak* and the preposition *of* or *upon*. The two following examples (61) and (62) that come from letters written in 1461 and 1462 respectively involve the preposition *upon/ apon,* but in combination with the verbs *callyd* and *lyf*. The VP *callyd upon* in (61) creates an idiomatic meaning 'to summon' as in military terminology.

(61)　　　*he then aftyr held xxx yere and more and never was callyd upon*
　　　　　he then after held xxx year and more and never was called upon
　　　　　'from then on he continued for thirty years and more and he was never

summoned'
(The Stonor Letters and Papers p.55 I.62)

From the example (62), *certainty* refers to a sum of money assigned to a person whose lands would be taken away.

(62)   *a certeynte to lyf apon*
            a certainty to live upon
            'a certainty to live upon'
            (The Stonor Letters and Papers p.62 I.68)

The example (62) is an infinitive clause containing Preposition Stranding. An infinitival example can also be found along with a *that*-relative clause example in (63) taken from a 1468 letter.

(63)   *And let them cum with William that I wroote ffor, and they shull have her*
            and let them come with William that I wrote for and they shall have here
            clothe of blak to make hem gounys with.
            cloth of black to make him gowns with
            'And let them come with William who I wrote for, and they shall have black cloth to make gowns of.'
            (The Stonor Letters and Papers p.98 I.91)

Example (63) includes two instances of Preposition Stranding as has been noted; the first one is a *that*-relative, of which a great number has already been discussed. The word *ffor* here is a preposition rather than alternative of 'before', since the author of this letter clearly distinguishes in spelling between the preposition 'for' and the adverb 'before'. Consider example (64) taken from the same letter in which *afore* represents 'before':

(64)   *I-wrytyn at Lundon the Saterday afore seynt Edward is day.*
            a-written at London the Saturday before saint Edward is day
            'Written in London on the Saturday preceding saint Edward's day.'
            (The Stonor Letters and Papers p.98 I.91)

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The second instance of Preposition Stranding in (63) is interesting because it exemplifies, similarly to example (62), Preposition Stranding in an infinitival clause rather than a relative clause.

This section has presented some of the examples of Preposition Stranding to be found in the Stonor family archive and has shown that in *that*-relative and *wh*-relative clauses, as well as infinitival clauses, Preposition Stranding could be used in many contexts and with a wide range of verbs and propositions.

5. Early Middle English Texts

The following section will introduce examples of texts older than 14th century with the aim to search for the oldest texts that include instances of Stranding.

5.1. Locating the start of Stranding

Before discussing further examples of Preposition Stranding in English, though, let us briefly look at the transition between Old and Middle English to ensure that each of the texts in the following chapters can clearly be recognized as belonging to either Old or Middle English.

5.1.1 The cut-off Point between Old and Middle English

The transition from Old to Middle English as a written standard started in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest 1066-1090 (Emonds and Faarlund 2004, 25). This does not mean though that political changes connected with the change of administrative caused an instantaneous change in the grammar and pronunciation of English overnight. Although it may seem so from some of the accounts of the changes leading to adoption of Middle English rather than Old English, there was no sharp boundary between using Old and Middle English. It is a widespread belief that Middle English shows more similarities to Modern English than to Old English, for which Norman Blake (1992, 1) is trying to find a reason, and he claims that people are finding Middle English more similar to Modern than to Old English because of the familiarity of the population with the work of Geoffrey Chaucer. This does not seem an accurate account of the situation. Not because culture should be altogether excluded from consideration but rather because its role should be viewed from a different angle.

The year 1066 was significant because it started cultural changes that lead to the adoption of Middle English as a written language. What these cultural changes were is described by Emonds and Faarlund. They argue that the arrival of the new French ruling class gave the speakers of Old English and those of Old Norse an incentive to start to communicate with each other having found a common enemy (2004). Old English continued being used until the early 12th century.

The last few entries of the Peterborough Chronicle, the latest of which comes from the year 1155, are still considered to be instances of Old English[9]. So is the English translation of a French versified poem into an alliterative poem, Laȝamon's

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[9] Though it is generally acknowledged that the final entries are 'corrupted' Old English.

Brut, from the first half of the 13th century (see Blake 1992, 6). The poem comes from the south-west Midlands and according to James Milroy (1992, 180), it is written in an even purer form of Old English than the above mentioned entries from the Peterborough Chronicle, which is sometimes seen as the last truly Old English text (Freeborn 1998, 84). Milroy claims that this entry of the Chronicle is actually one of the first Middle English texts because of the lack of varied inflectional morphology and its vocabulary (1992, 177).

The problem with Milroy's claim is that although arguably not as rich in inflectional morphology as other Old English texts, the last entry in the Peterborough Chronicle, unlike the Middle English texts shows signs of being verb final. Consider:

(65)   *thu neure finden man in tune sittende, ne land tiled*
        you never find man in farm sit nor land tiled
        'you would not find anyone remaining on a farm, or the land tiled'
        (<u>Peterborough Chronicle</u> in Clark 1970, 56)

(66)   *oc namen al þe. god ðat þarinne was*
        but took all the goods that therein was
        'but they took all the goods that were inside'
        (<u>Peterborough Chronicle</u> in Clark 1970, 56)

Apart from the word order in verb phrases, there is more evidence that the text in (65) and (66) is Old English rather than Middle English, for example the negation *ne* standing alone as it does in (65) is an Old English not a Middle English negative and the participle in *–ende* is strictly Old English. As for the vocabulary, the verb *namen* in (66) is an Old English verb, Middle English uses the Scandinavian root *taka*.

Coming back to the word order, Emonds and Faarlund (204, 61) argue, citing sources, that Middle English was not a verb-final language, whilst Old English had predominantly verb-final word order like what can be found in for instance Modern German as a dominant underlying word order in verb phrases. I thus concluded that Milroy's examples are still Old English, though its case inflections seem to be being lost.

This discussion of word order in verb phrases leads me to the consideration of the Old English word order in general, especially with respect to the prepositions and their objects since prepositional phrases are the scope of this thesis.

5.1.2. Prepositions and their Objects before and after the cut-off point

5.1.2.1. Objects to the Left of the Preposition Position

In Modern English, the prepositional object is always placed right of its preposition unless it is removed by Preposition Standing. This was not always the case. Alcorn shows that the placement of the prepositional object to the left of the preposition was not at all uncommon in Old English texts (2010-11, 23). This order can be seen in the following example:

(67) *madma mænigo, þa him mid scoldon …*
      of-treasures many that him with must
      'many treasures, which were to go with him'
      (Beowulf line 41 in Alcorn 2010-11, 23)

There are three questions connected with this type of construction in Old English;

- whether *him mid* is indeed a PP,
- if so, what causes the N P order of the PP and
- whether this could be seen as an instance of Preposition Stranding.

Let us first consider whether or not the word *mid* is actually a preposition. Alcorn explains that an adverbial *mid* meaning 'together' existed in Old English alongside the preposition *mid* meaning 'with' (see 2010-11, 20). This is not the case with the example (67), since the meaning of the excerpt does not support the reading in which *mid* stands for 'together', and thus the only plausible reading of the excerpt is 'he would take the many treasures with him'. The example (67) is then an example of a preposition preceded by its object.

Now, let us turn to the reason behind the fact that the object of the preposition is to the left of it. Alcorn presents some speculations of other Old English scholars who believe that the position of the personal pronoun in examples such as (67) is determined by the desired stress pattern of the Old English poetry, but Alcorn is not convinced that

this could be the sole explanation (2010-11, 23). Placement of personal pronoun to the left of its preposition is not unique to Old English. Alcorn gives examples from Old Frisian (which just like Old English is a language from the West Germanic family) including (68), to illustrate that this word order can be found not only in poetry as in the example (67) above that comes from the poem *Beowulf*, but also in prose, the example (68) was taken from a legal document (2010-11, 25).

(68)   *Ik sprek iu to fon tha liudum end fon tha frana.*
          I speak you.DAT.SG to of the people and of the *frana*
          'I accuse you on behalf of the people and of the *frana*[10]'
          (<u>De eerste en de tweede Hunsinger Codex</u> XX.1 in Alcorn 2011-12, 25)

This rules out the explanation that rhythm is the only decisive factor in the forming of these constructions. If Alcorn is right and the position of the object of the preposition is not determined by the fact that it is used in a poetic text, could Preposition Stranding be an alternative explanation for the inverted order of the preposition and its object?

Preposition Stranding, as has been explained, is always motivated. It is an instance of a movement out of a prepositional phrase, not for the purpose of maintaining a stress pattern but as a grammatical process whereby an object of a preposition is moved to the left of the preposition to fulfil a certain role in a grammatical construction; for example:

- to become a subject in a passive construction (so-called NP Movement),
- to introduce a relative clause, or
- to fill the pre-subject position in *wh*-questions.

None of these, nor any similar role is played by *him* in (67). Example (67) thus cannot be considered an instance of Preposition Stranding. I will use the term 'Inverted Pronouns' to refer to such constructions. The purpose of this thesis is not to study Inverveted Pronouns, but it is necessary to demonstrate that such constructions existed, in order to avoid mistaking Inverted Pronouns for genuine examples of Preposition Stranding.

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[10] This noun refers to 'a kind of legal official' (Alcorn 2011-12, 25)

Some examples of such Inverted Pronouns can be found in *Kentish Sermons* written as late as in 13th century:

(69)   *Þo seyde pilates him to. hwat is soþnesse.*

            that said Pilate him to what is truth

            'Pilate asked him what is the truth?'

            (<u>Kentish Sermons</u> p.48 line 465)

(69) is clearly not an example of Preposition Stranding. The object of the preposition *to* is inverted by an Old English movement rule that accounts for such construction as (69). The objects left of the preposition are not related to Preposition Stranding; all the three examples of this phenomenon shown here (67-69) are found outside the environment where Preposition Stranding could take place.

The following example that comes from *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies* written between 990-992 is also not found in such environment and thus Preposition Stranding is not a likely explanation for the position of the object of the preposition is such texts.

(70)   *and hi ne dorston hime fore gebiddan*

            and they NEG dared him for pray

            'and they did not dare to pray for him'

            (<u>Ælfric's Catholic Homilies</u> 20.225 in Hogg and Denison 2006, 196)

Notice that none of the examples (67-70) has a more complex NP as the object of the preposition; in fact all of them are pronominal objects, hence my label 'Inverted Pronouns'. This is because the position of an object left of a preposition is only available to pronouns; nouns and more complex NPs are excluded (see van Kemenade 1987, chapter 4). In fact, none such constructions as the following (71) can be found.

(71)   **and hi ne dorston þæm cyninge fore gebiddan*

            and they NEG dared this king for pray

            'and they did not dare to pray for this king'

To sum up, Old English allowed constructions in which prepositions followed rather than preceded their objects, but such constructions were limited to short pronominal

object, unlike Preposition Stranding constructions in which even more complex NPs typically precede their prepositions.

5.1.3. Restricted Preposition Stranding (with Locatives) in Old English

Apart from pronominal objects to the left of their prepositions, we can also find in the Old English texts the Restricted Preposition Stranding constructions previously discussed with locatives (3.1.). Consider the following examples:

(72.a)   *þu þær nane myrhþe on næfdest*

           you there none joy in NEG-had

           'you did not take any joy in that'

           (King Alfred's Version of Boethius' De consolatione philosophiae

           7.15.11 in Concha Castillo 2005, 2)

(72.b)   *ne bið þær eþe þin spor on to findanne*

           not is there easy your footstep on to find

           'your footstep is not easy to find on it'

           (The Paris Psalter 76.16 in Concha Castillo 2005, 2)

Both (72.a) and (72.b) are examples of a movement rule applying to the locative *þær* 'there' that has been discussed in section 3.1. Notice that both (72.a) and (72.b) are verb final constructions; as is typical in Old English, the prepositional phrase precedes the verb.

Such examples as (72.a-b) are the only type of Preposition Stranding that can be found in Old English texts.

This section has demonstrated that just like Present Day German, Old English allows Restricted Preposition Stranding if the object of the preposition is one of a limited set of locative adverbs.

5.1.4. Apparent Reasons for Lack of other than Restricted Preposition Stranding in Old English

With the above-described accounts of apparent exceptions, Preposition Stranding is not found in Old English. The reason why it is so may be explained by the government-based approach as summarized by Castillo (2005). According to her, this approach analyses the apparent ban of Stranding as having to do with the violation of Chomsky's

(1981) Empty Category Principle and case assignment (Castillo 2005, 3). Old English prepositions have a case-assigning role, which leads to the indivisibility of PPs. In this analysis, the preposition in Old English is seen as a grammatical rather than a lexical head of the PP. Whilst verbs are able to lexically govern their object phrase, prepositions cannot do that. A trace (empty category) left by a movement rule in place of the moved element can only be governed lexically. Therefore, it must be governed by the verb (Castillo 2005, 4).

Castillo actually does not completely agree with such an analysis and proposes her own. She notices that verbs as well as prepositions assign case in Old English and yet the ability of their object to be moved by transformational rules is not inhibited (2005, 6). This leads her to assume that the difference between the object of the preposition and that of the verb is in the manner of case assignment; she suggests that unlike a verbal object's case, the case of the object of a preposition is covert rather than overt and that the assignment takes place only after Spell-Out rather than before it, as with verbs (Castillo 2005, 6-7).

Whether her or the government-based analysis is used to explain why Old English blocks Preposition Stranding[11], the reason behind PPs of Old English not allowing Preposition Stranding seems to be connected with the ability of prepositions to assign case to their objects. The scope of the preposition is very limited in comparison to the verb, and thus the removed object would not be assigned a case by the preposition, which would cause ungrammaticality of the clause.

5.2 Simultaneous texts in Early Middle English and Late Old English

This section and the following (5.3.) will return to presentation of data and the comparison of two texts written in the Early Middle English period.

5.2.1 Early Middle English: 'The English Conquest of Ireland'

The earliest instances of what seems to be Preposition Stranding that I have found come from one of these texts, namely *The English Conquest of Ireland* written in Latin between the years 1166 and 1185 and translated into English in the late 12th or the early 13th century. Its author Giraldus Cambrensis (1146?-1223?) came from Wales and he

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[11] That is free Preposition Stranding, Restricted Stranding has been shown to be possible even in Old English.

was of Norman origin. He studied in France and was appointed Bishop of St. David's[12].
The translator is unknown, but there are some Southern features found in his writing,
for instance the position of the prepositional phrase *in the land* in example (75) which
places him in the Southern region of Britain. However as Emonds and Faarland (2004)
note, by the middle of the 12th century, the whole of Britain may already have been
speaking the Northern variant of English that unlike its Southern counterpart allowed
Preposition Stranding. The above-mentioned Southern feature could have been
transfered by the translator from his original dialect.

(73)   *a pleyne place be-sette aboute with monttanys and woddis,*

a plain place beset about with mountains and woods

watris and moris*. [paludibus.][13]*, on euery Syde il to come to.*

waters and moors [swamps] on every side ill to come to

'A plain place surrounded by mountains and woods, waters

and moors, difficult to access from each side.'

(The English Conquest of Ireland p. 22, IV)

Example (73) is not actually a result of movement but rather of deletion. It is an
example of Preposition Stranding in infinitival clauses. The object of the preposition *to*
is identical with the subject of the preceding sentence *a pleyne place [...].*
The following examples (74) and (75) also come from *The English Conquest of Ireland*,
and they are both instances of Preposition Stranding in *that*-relative clauses.

(74)   *Reymond hadd with hym a clerke that he trust wel to.*

Reymond had with him a clerk that he trusted well to.

'Reymond had with him a clerk whom he relied on.'

(The English Conquest of Ireland p. 110, XLIV)

The combination *trust to* meaning 'to rely on' in (74) is not followed by its object *a
clerke*, because the latter has been relativized in a complement position in the matrix
clause, and the preposition is left in situ.

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[12] The source is the site https://www.britannica.com/biography/Giraldus-Cambrensis
[13] The asterisk and the word in brakets that is in Latin are part of the Frederick James,
1825-1910 edition of the textwith notes.

(75)   *many defautes were in the land found, and mych felth or orribil synnys*

        many faults were in the land found, and much filth or horrible sins

        that y ne oght not to Speke of

        that I NEG ought not to speak of

        'Many faults were found in the land and much filth and horrible sins

        that cannot be spoken of.'

        (<u>The English Conquest of Ireland</u> p. 69, XXVIII)

The word *defaultes* in (75), which comes from the French 'défaut' that is 'a mistake/ fault/ flaw', points to the fact that the translator must have been familiar with the French language, perhaps even a native speaker. However, the verb *speke* is followed by the preposition *of*, rather that that preposition being moved together with its complement *mych felth or orrible synnys,* as it would be in French, where Preposition Stranding would result in an ungrammatical expression, as exemplified by the Modern French (76).

(76.a)   *Les péchés horribles dont je parle.*

        the sins horrible ofwhich I speak

        'The horrible sins I speak of.'

(76.b)   **Les péchés horribles que je parle de.*

        the sins horrible which I speak of

        'The horrible sins I speak of.'

The last example in this section also comes from *The English Conquest of Ireland*. Notice that once again it is an example of Preposition Stranding in a *that*-relative clause.

(77)   *thay had non̄ otherˑ thynge that þay myghten take to*

        they had non other thing that they could take to

        'they had nothing else that they could take to'

        (<u>The English Conquest of Ireland</u> p. 41, XVI)

5.2.2. Late Old English: *The Owl and the Nightingale*

As has been mentioned, the examples of Preposition Stranding (73-75) and (77) come from a text as old as the late 12th or early 13th century. This coincides with, according to the editors of *The Owl and the Nightingale* (1935, xix), the time around the possible date for the composition of this poem; they speculate that it might have been composed during the reign of Henry II or later, but not much after 1250. What seems curious is the remarkable difference in the language of *The English Conquest of Ireland* and that of *The Owl and the Nightingale*. Whilst the first is easily understood even by a non-native speaker of English and recognized as English, the latter is not easily read without extensive notes and glosses.

No instances of Preposition Stranding such as in (73-75) and (77) can be found in *The Owl and the Nightingale*. The only apparent Stranding constructions that I have found in this text are examples such as (78) with the adverbial pronoun *þar*. Example (78) presents an environment where Stranding could take place but does not. Notice that the object of the preposition *for* in (79) is not *þar* as in (78) but rather *whan* 'what'.

(78)   *No hwat ſcholdich a mong heom do. þar neuer bliſſ ne com to.*
         now what should.I a mong them do there never bliss NEG come to
         'Now, what should I do among those to whom bliss never came?'
         (<u>The Owl and the Nightingale</u> p. 31 line 998)

(79)   *Hwenne is ido for hwan ich com.*
         when it a.do for what I come
         'When what I came for is done.'
         (<u>The Owl and the Nightingale</u> p. 15 line 453)

The object of the preposition *to* in (78) is the pronoun *þar*; it is an instance of the Restricted Preposition Stranding known from Present Day German, as has been shown in section 3.1. As has been explained earlier, this construction was actually also found in Old English, as suggested by Fischer (1992, 389), who shows numerous examples in which relative clauses introduced by *þer* trigger Restricted Preposition Stranding in Old English. Some of them are listed below:

(80)   *Ðonne is oðer stow elreordge men beoð on*

there is other place barbarous men are in

'There is another place where barbarous people live'

(60 <u>Wonders of the East</u> 18.1 in Fischer 1992, 389)

(81)   *Eanflaed seo cwen ... bæd Osweo þone cyning ðaet he þaer forgefe stowe*

Eanflaed the queen bade Osweo the king that he there gave place

mynster on to timbrenne þaem foresprecenan Godes þeowe Trumhere

minster on to build to the afore-mentioned God's servant Trumhere

'Queen Eanflsed bade king Osweo to give the afore-mentioned

Trumhere, God's servant, a place for building an abbey'

(<u>Bede</u> 318.238.21 in Fischer 1992, 389)

In example (80), *Ðonne* 'there', a pronominal locative adverb, is the object of the preposition *on* 'in'.

      In her dissertation (1977, 53), Allen admits that examples of Preposition Stranding with full noun phrases are extremely rare. In fact she gives examples of stranded prepositions only with pronominal objects. She also observes that OE pronouns often invert with their prepositions, the process described earlier as Inverted Pronouns. Based on her observations, Allen postulates two rules: that of P-shift and PP split, to account for the fact that pronominal objects of the prepositions can be topicalised out of their PP (1977, 54-60).

      P-shift accounts for the inverted order of the preposition and its pronominal object, and PP split effects a break of the bond between the preposition and the pronoun that keeps them adjacent to each other. She proposes a similar treatment for locative adverbs that can also be separated from their prepositions in OE (Allen 1977, 60-61).

      Similar observations can be found in Fischer, who also notes that Old English locative and personal pronouns can undergo a shift to the left of their preposition and thus open an opportunity for the locative or personal pronoun to be topicalised leaving the preposition behind (1992, 389). Not surprisingly then, in *The Owl and the Nightingale* instances of these P-shift constructions may be also found. Consider for example examples (82) and (83):

(82)   *þar myd þu clech-eſt among*

there with thou clap-2sg around

> 'with that you make clapping noises'
>
> (The Owl and the Nightingale p. 3 line 81)

(83)   *þar to ich helpe*

there to I help

'that I help with'

(The Owl and the Nightingale p. 27 line 867)

In both (82) and (83), *þar* is to the left of its preposition but not stranded, it seems that even locative adverbs can undergo the rule alluded to earlier that result in Inverted Pronouns.

Given that there are some attested instances (78-79) of only Restricted and never free Preposition Stranding, the question arises as to whether *The Owl and the Nightingale* might in fact be a late instance of Old English rather than an Early Middle English text.

5.3 Linguistically situating *The Owl and the Nightingale*

The Owl and the Nightingale is often considered one of the first examples of Middle English poetry. The reasons for this are, however, not of a linguistic sort but rather based on the date of writing and/ or the poetic style. Kiyoachi Kikuchi (2012), for example, notes that the Old English alliterative style of *Beowulf* is no longer used (it is dropped in favour of rhymed verse couplets) and also that the theme of the poem is influenced by the continental poetry of the Middle Ages. He accepts this as evidence that *The Owl and the Nightingale* is an instance of Middle English. His criteria to grant the status of an Old English poem seem then to be the following:

- alliterative rather than rhymed verse,
- lack of continental influence and
- early rather than late date of composition.

Let us examine some examples of Old and Middle English poetry to see whether these criteria are sufficient.

It is true that Old English poetry strongly preferred alliterative verse. Susanne Kries (2003) explains that there is, in fact, only one undoubtedly Old English poem that

is written in rhyming couplets throughout, and that is 'The Riming Poem' that survived in the *Exeter Book* and comes from the 10th century. It is the language in which 'The Riming Poem' is written along with its early date of composition that ensures its place among Old English poems.

The Owl and the Nightingale was written in the period when traditional scholarship insist that any Germanic language used throughout Britain is to be called a 'dialect of Middle English' (if we accept the later rather than the earlier date proposed for its composition). So also was Laȝamon's *Brut* which exhibits continental influence, in fact, it is actually a translation of a French verse poem (as you will recall), but unlike *The Owl and the Nightingale*, *Brut* is written in alliterative verse. Some scholars (including Blake 1992, 6) list *Brut* among Old English poems, but others (Fischer 1992, 257) count it together with *The Owl and the Nightingale* among the examples of early Middle English poetry.

Given that being written in the alliterative style does not ensure the poem's position within the Old English, it seems that the strongest of considerations is the time period. This could have far-reaching implications though. If poems should be divided into Old and Middle English only based on the date of composition, there is no linguistic criterion for distinguishing between Old and Middle English and no way of recognising which period the poems are representative of. A more reliable set of criteria has to be found. Based on the discussion of the clear differences between unambiguously Old English and Middle English texts in terms of the Preposition Stranding, relative position of prepositions and their object noun phrases and word order in VPs, it seems that grammar should definitely be one of the criteria. The second could be vocabulary.

It has now been shown that it would be hasty to claim that just because of the historical period and the rhymed style, *The Owl and the Nightingale* should be considered Middle English. In the following sections, I will concentrate on certain aspects of its grammar to determine whether it is justified to claim that the poem is one of the first Middle English poems.

5.4. The Grammar of *The Owl and the Nightingale*

As has already been discussed, *The Owl and the Nightingale* was written in the late 12th or early 13th century. *The English Conquests of Ireland* was thus written during the

same period as *The Owl and the Nightingale*, its date of origin being also sometime during the late 12th or early 13ᵗʰ century.

This thesis has arrived at the conclusion that whilst *The Owl and the Nightingale* is lacking in what has been defined and exemplified as Preposition Standing in chapter 4.; in contrast, *The English Conquest of Ireland* uses this grammatical device freely to create grammatical sentences.

Moreover, *The Owl and the Nightingale* shows other linguistic properties that suggest that, although its period of origin is after the beginnings of Middle English, its grammar seems not to be. Are there reasons that suggest that this early poem is actually instead a late Old English poem?

5.4.1. Word Order

The word order of Old English allowed verb-final constructions. Some such can be found in *The Owl and the Nightingale* as in the following example (84). The object *one frogge* of the verb is to the left of the verb *iswolwe* rather than following it, unlike in most Middle English and in its Modern English translation.

(84)   *heo hedde one frogge iswolwe*

            she had one frog a-swallowed.

            'she had swallowed a frog'

            (The Owl and the Nightingale p. 1 line 5)

Let us continue by reexamining example (78). I reproduce it here for convenience.

(78)   *No hwat ſcholdich a mong heom do. þar neuer bliſſ ne com to.*

            now what should.I a mong them do there never bliss NEG come to

            'Now, what should I do among those to whom bliss never came?'

The string *bliſſ ne com to* is a possible word order in Old English in verb-final languages in subordinate clauses. West Germanic today allows a PP after a final verb. Thus, the final order in VP, namely [... V PP]. may well be a source of this sentence, as was pointed out to me by J. Emonds.

With respect to the position of the verb, *The Owl and the Nightingale* seems to favour the verb-final constructions typical of West Germanic languages such as Old English.

On the other hand, Middle English texts such as *The English Conquest of Ireland*, follow the verb-second pattern of North Germanic languages, found in Middle rather than Old English, and so OV word order should not be expected.

In this vein, consider the following:

(85)   *he had I-gadered̓ fywe hundred̓ men̓*
         he had a-gathered few hundred men
         'He had gathered a few hundred men.'
         (The English Conquest of Ireland p. 11, III)

In example (85), the object *fywe hundred̓ men̓* follows the verb *I-gadered̓*. The frequency of construction such as (84) decrease rapidly throughout the Middle English period (Pinzuk and Taylor 2006). Although some can be found even in *The English Conquest of Ireland*, recall the example (75):

(75)   *many defautes were in the land found, and mych felth or orribil synnys*
         many faults were in the land found, and much filth or horrible sins
         that y ne oght not to Speke of
         that I NEG ought not to speak of
         'Many faults were found in the land and much filth and horrible sins
         that cannot be spoken of.'

The PP *in the land* is to the left rather than to the right of the verb *found*; the same pattern as in *The Owl and the Nightingale*. But unlike the latter, *The English Conquest of Ireland* shows a general tendency against this pattern.

Emonds and Faarlund (2004, Chapter 3) suggest that a possible source for the verb-initial word order in the VPs of Present Day English is the VP structure of Old Norse. They point out that the West Germanic language Dutch has never changed its word order (2004, 64). A similar tendency can be observed in *The Owl and the Nightingale*. Although it exhibits lack of inflectional morphology (in this sense being

like today's Dutch), in comparison to that of standard Old English texts, its word order seems more like that of Old rather than Middle English.

The Owl and the Nightingale has both the very limited inflectional morphology and a verb-final structure of the VP. This combination is not the case when it comes to The English Conquest of Ireland, which, although from the same historical period, does not place verbs in the final position of a verb phrase but rather immediately following the auxiliary and preceding its complementation, as can be seen in (85).

5.4.2. Vocabulary

The vocabulary used in the The Owl and the Nightingale is described by Kiyoachi Kikuchi. His conclusion is that the author does not draw on either Scandinavian or Norman vocabulary (2012, 84). He describes the words used by the author of The Owl and the Nightingale as part of everyday lexicon of the times (Kikuchi 2012, 84).

In comparison, The English Conquest of Ireland includes various examples of vocabulary of Scandinavian origin, such as the word il 'bad' in example (73). The third person plural pronoun is the Old English hie (spelt hi) in The Owl and the Nightingale and they (mostly spelt thay) in The English Conquest of Ireland.

5.5. Late West-Saxon and Middle English

During the Old English period, Britain was divided into four dialectal areas, from which only one produced a reasonable number of written documents that have survived, and this was the dialect of the West-Saxon region united under Alfred the Great in the 9th century (see Barber 2000, 104). By that time, the three of the remaining regions were inhabited by Viking settlers whose language was not dissimilar to Old English , but was nonetheless grammatically different; they spoke Old Norse (see Barber 2000, 128). Curiously, Middle English developed from the dialects spoken in East Midlands rather than from the West Saxon. There are phonetic cues that lead to this conclusion, Barber gives some examples (2000, 106). Consider the West Saxon verb hieran 'hear' and its Anglian counterpart heran. Whilst hieran would during the Great Vowel Shift change regularly into either [haɪə] or [hjuə], heran would produce the Present Day English pronunciation [hɪə]. There are other words which have diphthongs in West Saxon that could not possibly develop into the pronunciation that the words now have in English, and monophthongs in Anglian could be the origins of the Present Day pronunciation.

Old English is a member of the West Germanic branch of the Germanic language family. The Middle and Present Day English is therefore generally assumed to

be also a part of this language family. Emonds and Faarlund (2004) argue that this might not be the case, and if their analysis is correct, Middle English is a descendant of the Old Norse that was being spoken in the East Midlands and the North of England at the time of transition from the Old to Middle English.

Emonds and Faarlund (2004) argue that the Old English, rather than developing into the Middle English, died out and was replaced
 in Britain by 'Anglicised Norse'; they list several aspects of Middle English grammar that do not occur in Old English, among them: VO order in verb phrases and Preposition Stranding discussed through this dissertation. Anglicised Norse is a term that describes the language that was created by the fusion of Old Norse Grammar with a large part of West Savon and Old English vocabulary (Emonds and Faarlund 2004, 30).

It is possible that *The Owl and the Nightingale* is in fact a poem written in a descendant of Old English, while *The English Conquest of Ireland* was written in the fast spreading descendant of Old Norse, both at about the same time. That could explain why the former lacks the grammatical structures expected in a Middle English poem and preserves some of the grammatical constructions that are found in Old English texts, but rarely in Middle English.

6. Conclusions

This thesis used examples of historical texts from Middle and Old English periods to investigate the development of Preposition Stranding. It came to a conclusion that whilst Middle English texts freely allowed Preposition Stranding, in Old English texts, no instances of productive Preposition Stranding could be found. In fact, only Restricted Preposition Stranding could take place in Old English. With regards to the order of preposition and its object, Old English had been shown to allow Inverted Pronouns. Unlike Preposition Stranding, Inverted Pronouns concern only short pronominal objects of prepositions, any more complex noun phrase is excluded.

Preposition Stranding was compared to Pied-Piping convention. Present Day English, together with North Germanic and Kru languages was listed among those that allow Preposition Stranding. Dutch and German were shown to allow Restricted Preposition Stranding. The rest of the known languages favour Pied-Piping. In this respect, Old English could be listed together with German and Dutch, whilst Middle English would join Present Day English and North Germanic languages.

As to the range of constructions in which Preposition Stranding could be found in Middle English, instances of Stranding in *that*-relative and *wh*-relative clauses were found as well as those in infinite clauses. Unfortunately, I have not been able to provide any examples of *wh*-questions with or without Preposition Stranding due to a limited frequency of questions in general in my sample of Middle English documents. Nor was I able to find any comparatives, contact relatives and pseudo-passives.

I tried to answer the question how long has English had Preposition Stranding. Based on my examples it seems that Preposition Stranding became an option for the English speakers by the time when Middle English started to be used as a written standard but it was not available to the speakers of Old English.

The other question that has been answered deals with the extent to which preposition stranding was a natural part of English grammar by the end of the Middle English period. Considering the fact that Preposition Stranding was not limited to texts written originally in English but also occurred in translated text and the fact that after the introduction of *wh*-relative pronouns, Preposition Stranding became available even in *wh*-relative clauses; Preposition Stranding seems to have been fully developed and a natural part of English grammar by the time of the late Middle English period.

The second aim of this thesis was the comparison of *The Owl and the Nightingale* and *The English Conquest of Ireland*. The conclusion was arrived at that whilst *The Owl and the Nightingale* is lacking in instances Preposition Standing, *The English Conquest of Ireland* allow such constructions.

The writer of *The Owl and the Nightingale* just like Old English and the other West-Germanic languages used Restricted but not free Preposition Standing which leads me to consideration of other aspects of the grammar of *The Owl and the Nightingale.* The poem exhibits some further features found mainly in Old English texts, such as verb final word order in VPs. This is not true of *The English Conquest of Ireland*, whose verb phrases and not generally verb-final but rather they are following verb-second pattern. Unlike Old English, *The Owl and the Nightingale* has a very limited inflectional morphology, though.

It was concluded that *The Owl and the Nightingale* might have been written in a descendant of Old English and *The English Conquest of Ireland* was written in the descendant of Old Norse.

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