

Null subjects in Middle English

George Walkden

Department of Linguistics and English Language, University of Manchester

george.walkden@manchester.ac.uk · <http://personalpages.manchester.ac.uk/staff/george.walkden/>

Outline of the talk:

1. Introduction and previous research
2. A new quantitative investigation
3. Results
4. Discussion, summary and conclusions

1. Introduction and previous research

The possibility of referential null subjects in Old English (OE) has received a lot of attention in recent years (Rusten 2010, 2013, 2014a,b; Coppess & Pires 2013; van Gelderen 2013; Walkden 2013, 2014, to appear). Empirical findings (see particularly Walkden 2013, Rusten 2014b):

- Referential null subjects are never very frequent; overall frequency varies by text
- RefNSs are sensitive to person: 3rd person subjects are dropped more than 1st and 2nd
- RefNSs are sensitive to clause type: they are rare(r) in embedded clauses

Claim (Walkden 2013): RefNSs are a feature of Anglian (as opposed to West Saxon).

- All texts that display RefNSs productively are either Anglian or Anglian-influenced.
- (Though could this apparent distribution be epiphenomenal? See Rusten's talk today!)

Object of my talk today: to see whether the above patterns hold of Middle English (ME) too. ME is less well studied with regard to RefNSs:

- Visser (1963: 4ff) presents isolated examples (cf. also Ohlander 1981).
- van Gelderen (2000) gives more data:
 - Small quantitative study of early ME using an earlier version of the PPCME2 (Kroch & Taylor 2000)
 - In Layamon's *Brut* and the *History of the Holy Rood Tree*, 'pro-drop is highly exceptional' (2000: 137)
 - In the Katherine Group, it is 'quite frequent'.

- (1) þa he hefde þus idon. sende hire þus to seggen hire wil he hefde iwraht.
when he had thus done sent her thus to say her will he had worked
'When he had done so, **he** sent to her to tell her that he had done what she wanted.'
(Katherine Group, St. Juliana; CMJULIA,97.28; cf. van Gelderen 2000: 143)

- (2) Ah beoð se cleane ouercumen
but are so clean.ADV overcome
'but **they** are so completely overcome'
(Katherine Group, St. Margaret; CMMARGA,80.397; cf. van Gelderen 2000: 143)
- There seems to be a person asymmetry as in OE (van Gelderen 2000: 137)
 - In later ME, from 14th century, RefNSs are very rare (2000: 146)
 - Rusten (2014a): a quantitative study of the whole history of English.
 - Looks at overall frequency of RefNSs in 10 ME texts.
 - For whole sample: 0.8%. Highest single text: 3.4% (St. Katherine).
 - Contests the claim that RefNSs are 'quite frequent'.
 - As yet, no systematic investigation of:
 - person
 - clause type
 - the whole corpus

The availability of the PPCME2 (Kroch & Taylor 2000) now enables exactly such an investigation...¹

2. A new quantitative investigation

- Search of all texts in the PPCME2
- Aim: to find and count:
 - a) overt personal pronoun subjects
 - b) referential null subjects (RefNSs)
- Carried out using CorpusSearch 2 (Randall 2005–2007)

RefNSs are tagged distinctly (*pro*) from cases of CR (*con*) and null expletives (*exp*).

- 397 instances of *pro* in PPCME2, but not all relevant:
 - Some are 'jussive' clauses (imperatives with subjunctive verb form), as in (3).
These are also found in OE: see Walkden (2013: 157).

- (3) Bitwene mel ne gruuesi naut nouðer frut ne oðer hwet
between meal NEG eat NEG neither fruit nor other what
'Between meals, do not eat fruit or anything else.' (CMANCRIW-2,II.314.1114)

¹ I am grateful to Elly van Gelderen and the audience at ICEHL 17 for encouraging me to investigate the ME data. Special thanks go to Laura Percival, whose pilot study of the PPCME2 as part of her undergraduate coursework formed the starting point for this research.

- Some examples involve non-finite constructions (e.g. small clauses).
- A few examples seem to be mistagged or misparsed.
- All 397 instances of *pro* were therefore investigated by hand. Once irrelevant cases were weeded out, the remaining 289 were coded in a spreadsheet for:
 - *person* (sg, pl; residual duals were treated as plural)
 - *number* (1, 2, 3)
 - *clause type* (conjoined, main, subordinate)
 - *text*
 - *period* (MX1, M1, M2, M23, M24, M3, MX4, M34, M4)
 - *dialect* (East Midlands, West Midlands, Northern, Southern, Kentish)
- All instances of personal pronouns (n = 53254) were automatically extracted and coded for the same variables.
- A step-down logistic regression, incorporating text as a random effect and the other predictors as fixed effects, was carried out using Rbrul (Johnson 2009).

3. Results

Table 1: Pronouns vs. RefNSs in ME finite clauses in PPCME2, by text and clause type

Text	Clause type	Overt	Null	Total
<i>Ancrene Riwe 1</i> (CMANCRIW-1)	Main	579 (98.6%)	8 (1.4%)	587
	Subordinate	1204 (98.3%)	21 (1.7%)	1225
	Conjoined	275 (96.2%)	11 (3.8%)	286
	Total	2058	40	2098
<i>Ancrene Riwe 2</i> (CMANCRIW-2)	Main	235 (98.3%)	4 (1.7%)	239
	Subordinate	370 (98.7%)	5 (1.3%)	375
	Conjoined	75 (94.9%)	4 (5.1%)	79
	Total	680	13	693
<i>Ayenbite of Inwit</i> (CMAYENBI)	Main	419 (98.8%)	5 (1.2%)	424
	Subordinate	1016 (98.6%)	14 (1.4%)	1030
	Conjoined	396 (98.5%)	6 (1.5%)	402
	Total	1831	25	1856
<i>Brut</i> (CMBRUT3)	Main	191 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	191
	Subordinate	941 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	942
	Conjoined	859 (99.3%)	6 (0.7%)	865
	Total	1991	7	1998

<i>The Parson's Tale</i> (CMCTPARS)	Main	238 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	238
	Subordinate	628 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	628
	Conjoined	259 (99.6%)	1 (0.4%)	260
	Total	1125	1	1126
<i>Earliest Prose Psalter</i> (CMEARLPS)	Main	1114 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1114
	Subordinate	363 (99.7%)	1 (0.3%)	364
	Conjoined	899 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	900
	Total	2376	2	2378
<i>Life of St. Edmund</i> (CMEDMUND)	Main	19 (95.0%)	1 (5.0%)	20
	Subordinate	64 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	64
	Conjoined	128 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	128
	Total	211	1	212
<i>Mirror of St. Edmund</i> (<i>Thornton ms.</i>) (CMEDTHOR)	Main	174 (99.4%)	1 (0.6%)	175
	Subordinate	443 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	443
	Conjoined	192 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	192
	Total	809	1	810
<i>Mirror of St. Edmund</i> (<i>Vernon ms.</i>) (CMEDVERN)	Main	213 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	213
	Subordinate	369 (99.5%)	2 (0.5)	371
	Conjoined	104 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	104
	Total	686	2	688
<i>Fitzjames' Sermo die Lune</i> (CMFITZJA)	Main	50 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	50
	Subordinate	78 (98.7%)	1 (1.3%)	79
	Conjoined	26 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	26
	Total	154	1	155
<i>Gregory's Chronicle</i> (CMGREGOR)	Main	73 (98.6%)	1 (1.4%)	74
	Subordinate	274 (99.3%)	2 (0.7%)	276
	Conjoined	541 (99.8%)	1 (0.2%)	542
	Total	888	4	892
<i>Hali Meidhad</i> (CMHALI)	Main	66 (90.4%)	7 (9.6%)	73
	Subordinate	245 (98.4%)	4 (1.6%)	249
	Conjoined	54 (90.0%)	6 (10.0%)	60
	Total	365	17	382
<i>Hilton's Eight Chapters on Perfection</i> (CMHILTON)	Main	16 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16
	Subordinate	143 (99.3%)	1 (0.7%)	144
	Conjoined	50 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	50
	Total	209	1	210

<i>Treatise on Horses</i> (CMHORSES)	Main	28 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	28
	Subordinate	146 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	146
	Conjoined	73 (97.3%)	2 (2.7%)	75
	Total	247	2	249
<i>St. Juliana</i> (CMJULIA)	Main	112 (94.9%)	6 (5.1%)	118
	Subordinate	218 (99.1%)	2 (0.9%)	220
	Conjoined	87 (94.6%)	5 (5.4%)	92
	Total	417	13	430
<i>St. Katherine</i> (CMKATHE)	Main	87 (91.6%)	8 (8.4%)	95
	Subordinate	273 (99.3%)	2 (0.7%)	275
	Conjoined	81 (94.2%)	5 (5.8%)	86
	Total	441	15	456
<i>The Book of Margery Kempe</i> (CMKEMPE)	Main	1076 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	1077
	Subordinate	2217 (100.0%)	1 (0.0%)	2218
	Conjoined	1213 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	1214
	Total	4506	3	4509
<i>Kentish Homilies</i> (CMKENTHO)	Main	65 (98.5%)	1 (1.5%)	66
	Subordinate	108 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	108
	Conjoined	57 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	57
	Total	230	1	231
<i>Kentish Sermons</i> (CMKENTSE)	Main	41 (95.3%)	2 (4.7%)	43
	Subordinate	99 (96.1%)	4 (3.9%)	103
	Conjoined	24 (92.3%)	2 (7.7%)	26
	Total	164	8	172
<i>Lambeth Homilies vii–viii and xiv–xvii</i> (CMLAMB1)	Main	67 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	67
	Subordinate	135 (99.3%)	1 (0.7%)	136
	Conjoined	38 (90.5%)	4 (9.5%)	42
	Total	240	5	245
<i>Lambeth Homilies i–v and ix– xii</i> (CMLAMBX1)	Main	297 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	297
	Subordinate	571 (99.1%)	5 (0.9%)	576
	Conjoined	188 (98.4%)	3 (1.6%)	191
	Total	1056	8	1064
<i>Malory's Morte Darthur</i> (CMMALORY)	Main	912 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	912
	Subordinate	1280 (99.8%)	2 (0.2%)	1282
	Conjoined	1370 (99.9%)	2 (0.1%)	1372
	Total	3562	4	3566

<i>Mandeville's Travels</i> (CMMANDEV)	Main	94 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	94
	Subordinate	899 (99.7%)	3 (0.3%)	902
	Conjoined	1086 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1086
	Total	2079	3	2082
<i>St. Margaret</i> (CMMARGA)	Main	118 (97.5%)	3 (2.5%)	121
	Subordinate	223 (99.1%)	2 (0.9%)	225
	Conjoined	83 (90.2%)	9 (9.8%)	92
	Total	424	14	438
<i>Mirk's Festial</i> (CMMIRK)	Main	668 (99.7%)	2 (0.3%)	670
	Subordinate	1466 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)	1467
	Conjoined	697 (99.0%)	7 (1.0%)	704
	Total	2831	10	2841
<i>Peterborough Chronicle</i> (CMPETERB)	Main	70 (98.6%)	1 (1.4%)	71
	Subordinate	126 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	126
	Conjoined	81 (96.4%)	3 (3.6%)	84
	Total	277	4	281
<i>John of Trevisa's</i> <i>Polychronicon</i> (CMPOLYCH)	Main	500 (99.6%)	2 (0.4%)	502
	Subordinate	614 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	614
	Conjoined	388 (98.7%)	5 (1.3%)	393
	Total	1502	7	1509
<i>Richard Rolle's Prose Treatises</i> (CMROLLEP)	Main	169 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	169
	Subordinate	622 (99.7%)	2 (0.3%)	624
	Conjoined	207 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	207
	Total	998	2	1000
<i>Sawles Ward</i> (CMSAWLES)	Main	54 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	54
	Subordinate	113 (98.3%)	2 (1.7%)	115
	Conjoined	37 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	37
	Total	204	2	206
<i>Liber de Diversis Medicinis</i> (CMTHORN)	Main	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)	8
	Subordinate	65 (98.5%)	1 (1.5%)	66
	Conjoined	39 (97.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40
	Total	111	3	114

<i>Trinity Homilies</i> (CMTRINIT)	Main	322 (96.7%)	11 (3.3%)	333
	Subordinate	886 (96.7%)	30 (3.3%)	916
	Conjoined	249 (92.6%)	20 (7.4%)	269
	Total	1457	61	1518
<i>Vices & Virtues 1</i> (CMVICES1)	Main	527 (99.6%)	2 (0.4%)	529
	Subordinate	895 (99.8%)	2 (0.2%)	897
	Conjoined	157 (98.7%)	2 (1.3%)	159
	Total	1579	6	1585
<i>Vices & Virtues 4</i> (CMVICES4)	Main	82 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	82
	Subordinate	215 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	215
	Conjoined	91 (98.9%)	1 (1.1%)	92
	Total	388	1	389

Cells which show a frequency of RefNSs of greater than 2% are highlighted. Not shown in table due to total absence of RefNSs: CMAELR3, CMAELR4, CMASTRO, CMBOETH, CMCAPCHR, CMCAPSER, CMCLOUD, CMCTMELI, CMEQUATO, CMGAYTRY, CMINNOCE, CMJULNOR, CMNTEST, CMORM, CMOTEST, CMPURVEY, CMREYNAR, CMREYNES, CMROLLTR, CMROYAL, CMSIEGE, CMWYCSE. Data available on request.

3.1 Differences between texts

- Eyeballing the table above: as for OE, most texts show a frequency of overt pronouns of 98–100% in all clause types, or only one or two examples.
 - RefNSs were (probably) ungrammatical by the grammars underlying them.
- A number of texts exhibit null subjects to a greater extent: in particular, the Katherine Group (*Hali Meidhad*, *St. Juliana*, *St. Katherine*, *St. Margaret*) minus *Sawles Ward*, and the *Trinity Homilies*. *Ancrene Riwe* and *Kentish Sermons* also seem to have something going on.
- All these texts are 13th century or earlier (MX1, M1 or M2).
- All these texts are (East or West) Midlands texts or Kentish – though this is unsurprising, because there are no Southern texts in the corpus before M3, and no Northern texts before M2.

3.2 Differences between clause types

- As in OE, in some of the texts that robustly exhibit RefNSs, null variants are more common in main clauses than in subordinate clauses.
 - Similar to results found by Axel (2007) for Old High German, by Håkansson (2008) for Old Swedish, and by Walkden (2014) for Old Saxon.

- However (as in the other three languages) RefNSs in subordinate clauses do exist:

(4) greiðe al þt const grimliche bi-þenchen

prepare all that can.2SG cruelly think of

‘Prepare all that you can cruelly think of.’

(Katherine Group, St. Juliana; CMJULIA,121.445; cf. van Gelderen 2000: 143)

- Difference between clause types (main vs. subordinate) is significant only for four of the Katherine Group texts:
 - *Ancrene Riwle 1*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.6911$
 - *Ancrene Riwle 2*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.7413$
 - *Hali Meidhad*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.0036$
 - *St. Juliana*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.0236$
 - *St. Katherine*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.0004$
 - *Kentish Sermons*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=1.0000$
 - *St. Margaret*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=0.3478$
 - *Trinity Homilies*: Fisher’s exact test: $p=1.0000$

3.3 Differences between persons

Table 2: Pronouns vs. RefNSs in various texts, by person & number.

Text	Person	N	Overt	Null	Total
<i>Ancrene Riwle 1</i>	1	sg	261 (99.2%)	2 (0.8%)	263
		pl	92 (98.9%)	1 (1.1%)	93
	2	sg	220 (99.5%)	1 (0.5%)	221
		pl	211 (99.5%)	1 (0.5%)	212
	3	sg	901 (96.8%)	30 (3.2%)	931
		pl	373 (98.7%)	5 (1.3%)	378
	Totals			2058	40
<i>Ancrene Riwle 2</i>	1	sg	109 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	109
		pl	34 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	34
	2	sg	69 (94.5%)	4 (5.5%)	73
		pl	90 (98.9%)	1 (1.1%)	91
	3	sg	260 (97.4%)	7 (2.6%)	267
		pl	118 (99.2%)	1 (0.8%)	119
	Totals			680	13

<i>Hali Meidhad</i>	1	sg	22 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	22
		pl	9 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9
	2	sg	92 (92.9%)	7 (7.1%)	99
		pl	2 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2
	3	sg	118 (94.4%)	7 (5.6%)	125
		pl	122 (97.6%)	3 (2.4%)	125
	Totals			365	17
<i>St. Juliana</i>	1	sg	104 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	104
		pl	22 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	22
	2	sg	94 (98.9%)	1 (1.1%)	95
		pl	18 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	18
	3	sg	114 (90.5%)	12 (9.5%)	126
		pl	65 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	65
	Totals			417	13
<i>St Katherine</i>	1	sg	72 (98.6%)	1 (1.4%)	73
		pl	26 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	26
	2	sg	99 (97.1%)	3 (2.9%)	102
		pl	28 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	28
	3	sg	106 (92.2%)	9 (7.8%)	115
		pl	110 (98.2%)	2 (1.8%)	112
	Totals			441	15
<i>Kentish Sermons</i>	1	sg	12 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12
		pl	24 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	24
	2	sg	9 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	9
		pl	20 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	20
	3	sg	45 (88.2%)	6 (11.8%)	51
		pl	54 (96.4%)	2 (3.6%)	56
	Totals			164	8
<i>St. Margaret</i>	1	sg	130 (98.5%)	2 (1.5%)	132
		pl	16 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16
	2	sg	100 (99.0%)	1 (1.0%)	101
		pl	6 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6
	3	sg	81 (90.0%)	9 (10.0%)	90
		pl	91 (97.8%)	2 (2.2%)	93
	Totals			424	14

<i>Trinity Homilies</i>	1	sg	127 (99.2%)	1 (0.8%)	128	
		pl	235 (97.5%)	6 (2.5%)	241	
	2	sg	68 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)	70	
		pl	23 (95.8%)	1 (4.3%)	24	
	3	sg	781 (94.7%)	44 (5.3%)	825	
		pl	223 (97.0%)	7 (3.0%)	230	
	Totals			1457	61	253

- In five of the eight texts, effect of 3rd vs. non-3rd person is statistically significant.
 - *Ancrene Riwe 1*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0007$
 - *Ancrene Riwe 2*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.7822$
 - *Hali Meidhad*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.6053$
 - *St. Juliana*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0004$
 - *St. Katherine*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0711$
 - *Kentish Sermons*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0252$
 - *St. Margaret*: Fisher's exact test: $p < 0.0001$
 - *Trinity Homilies*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0152$
- The effect of number in the third person is statistically significant in only two of the eight.
 - *Ancrene Riwe 1*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0587$
 - *Ancrene Riwe 2*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.4437$
 - *Hali Meidhad*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.3337$
 - *St. Juliana*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0091$
 - *St. Katherine*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0593$
 - *Kentish Sermons*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.1476$
 - *St. Margaret*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.0308$
 - *Trinity Homilies*: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0.1681$
- This is – broadly – what we'd expect based on OE, though not as clear cut: third person favours subject omission, while number has no consistent effect.

3.4 Results of logistic regression

The step-down logistic regression indicated that all variables were relevant. In Tables 3 and 4, the log odds values, if negative, indicate a disfavouring effect on null subjects, and if positive indicate a favouring effect on null subjects with respect to the mean.

- 3rd person favours RefNSs; 1st person disfavors them.
- Singular favours RefNSs; plural disfavors them.
- Conjoined clauses favour RefNSs; subordinate clauses disfavour them.

Table 3: Linguistic predictors of RefNSs

Variable	Factor	Log odds
Person	1 st	-0.953
	2 nd	0.148
	3 rd	0.805
Number	Singular	0.296
	Plural	-0.296
Clause type	Main	-0.072
	Subordinate	-0.487
	Conjoined	0.558

Table 4: Extralinguistic predictors of RefNSs

Variable	Factor	Log odds
Period	MX1	3.418
	M1	3.066
	M2	2.525
	M23	-12.952
	M24	0.101
	M3	0.269
	MX4	3.066
	M34	0.755
	M4	0.0086
Dialect	West Midlands	0.490
	Kentish	0.348
	Southern	0.277
	Northern	-0.069
	East Midlands	-1.047

Text was also included as a random intercept.

- These results are difficult to interpret – likely because of the small number of texts in each category, and the lack of balance for dialect in the PPCME2.
- The dispreference for RefNSs in East Midlands texts is surprising given that texts like the *Trinity Homilies* are in this variety – but there is a large number of large (later) texts that do not display RefNSs.

4. Discussion, summary and conclusions

4.1 Summary

- As in OE, RefNSs are never very frequent in ME.
- Where found, the linguistic factors conditioning subject omission in ME are, broadly, the same as those in OE:
 - RefNSs are rare in subordinate clauses.
 - RefNSs are rarer in the 1st and 2nd persons than in the 3rd person.
- The texts that display RefNSs robustly are all early ones:
 - Katherine Group: ms. c1225; written 1200–1250 (M1)
 - *Ancrene Riwe*: ms. c1230; written 1215–1222 (M1)
 - *Trinity Homilies*: ms. a1225; date of composition unknown (MX1)
 - *Kentish Sermons*: ms. c1275; written pre-1250 (M2)
- But some early texts hardly display RefNSs at all:
 - Nothing in the *Ormulum*.
 - Not much in *Kentish Homilies*, *Peterborough Chronicle*, *Vices and Virtues*, and *Lambeth Homilies*.

4.2 The role of dialect

- As noted, no Northern or Southern texts robustly display RefNSs, but this is unsurprising given the dates. As a result, it's impossible to decide on the basis of this data whether the claim of Walkden (2013) – that RefNSs are an Anglian feature – really works for ME.
- The *Kentish Sermons* are interesting, as they have a decent proportion of RefNSs, unlike earlier Kentish texts (the *Kentish Homilies* and Kentish OE).
 - If these data are reliable, then a better cut might be West Saxon vs. non-West-Saxon, rather than non-Anglian vs. Anglian.
 - But: only one text (a literal translation from French; Hall 1963: 669), and only 8 tokens of RefNSs. Can't be sure.
- Next step: look at texts from LAEME (Laing & Lass 2008). Candidates:
 - Northern texts (corresponding to Northumbrian OE):
 - *Prophecy of the Scottish Wars* (Durham)
 - *Athelstan's Charter to Beverley* (East Yorkshire)
 - *Cursor Mundi* manuscripts (Yorkshire, various)

- Southern texts (corresponding to West Saxon OE):
 - *Vision of Edwin* (Winchester)
 - *Liber Albus* documents (Wells, Somerset)
 - *Royal 2.F.viii* (Wiltshire)
 - *Layamon B* (Wiltshire)

4.3 Conclusion

- ME to some extent continues the rare, but systematic, use of RefNSs found in OE.
- But this can be found in only a very few texts in the PPCME2.
- Were RefNSs dialectally bound in early ME? More research needed.

References

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