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## Historical Continuity in the Morphological Marking of Subjectivity? Textual Perspectives on the Origin of English Adverbial *-ly* in Late Old and Early Middle English\*

**Abstract:** Despite the fact that the Present-Day English “adverbial signature” – the suffix *-ly* – is unique to English among the Germanic languages and that its emergence seems to contradict general tendencies of language change in English (the loss of inflectional endings and the fact that English is otherwise happy to allow zero-derivation), neither the early history of *-ly* in Old and Middle English nor the exact date and reasons for its remarkable spread have been fully understood. Recently, both synchronic and diachronic studies have paid considerable attention to the specific semantics of adverbs in *-ly*: This claim for a particular abstract or figurative meaning of adverbs in *-ly*, however, rests almost exclusively on one study, Donner’s lexicographical examination of *MED* material (1991). This article will test the potential of comprehensive textual studies for explaining the origin and later spread of English adverbial *-ly* by investigating the particular abstract/figurative, and generally subjective, semantics in the early use of adverbial *-ly*, focussing on two late Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula* and the early Middle English poem *The Owl and the Nightingale*, one of the earliest idiomatic and colloquial English texts.

**Keywords:** PDE *-ly*; adverb formation; adjective formation; subjective meaning; concrete vs. abstract meaning; figurative meaning; semantic constraint; early Middle English; Old English; Old English translations of the Latin *Theodulfi Capitula*

### 1. Introduction

By the phrases “*awful* stable; *really* changing” quoted in the title of her study of adverbs in Present-Day British English dialects, Tagliamonte directs readers to her most surprising findings. In contrast to other research which has characterized the use of suffixless adverbs in Present-Day English on sociolinguistic grounds as ‘non-standard’, Tagliamonte found complex interrelations between social and system-internal determinants in the uses of suffixless adverbs vs. adverbs suffixed by *-ly*. Among the social determinants, gender, age,

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education and region emerged as important, as is to be expected, since suffixless adverbs are routinely disapproved of by prescriptive grammars (though not so much in the United States as in Britain; cf. Tagliamonte 2018: 118–120).

By differentiating adverbial sub-groups, however, Tagliamonte was able to expose a system-internal determinant in the adverbial sub-group of manner adverbs, namely a specific semantic constraint, showing contrasting profiles for concrete and abstract meanings (2018: 114). Such a difference can be illustrated by the uses of *cheap* / *dear* / *wrong* (concrete) vs. *cheaply* / *dearly* / *wrongly* (abstract, figurative) in (1) (examples taken from one of the first notes on this difference by Jespersen 1949: VII, 48–52, at 48):

- (1) a. sell / buy *cheap* vs. he got off *cheaply*
- b. buy *dear* vs. love *dearly*
- c. cut *deep* vs. *deeply* offended / *deeply* regret
- d. read *wrong* vs. act *wrongly*

In her multi-factorial analysis of her synchronic UK dialect data,<sup>1</sup> Tagliamonte finds that concrete [manner; UL] adverbs have considerably more suffixless forms in all generations. In contrast, abstract adverbs occur rarely with anything but the *-ly* suffix among the older speakers and not at all among the younger speakers (Tagliamonte 2018: 119).

She concludes:

Perhaps the strongest finding in this study is that despite centuries, social stigma, standardization, normative pressure and geographic dispersion, the age-old suffixless adverb [...] operates with an enduring underlying system, an emblem of historical continuity in synchronic data (Tagliamonte 2018: 138).

In the present study, I will focus on Tagliamonte's claim of a "historical continuity" in the specific abstract meanings of adverbs in *-ly* and its consequences for understanding the emergence and spread of adverbial *-ly*. Tagliamonte rests this claim primarily on research by Donner (1991), a study of about 1,500 Middle English manner adverbs retrieved from the *Middle English Dictionary (MED)*. Donner nicely illustrates the contrasting semantic

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the results of an earlier study by Tagliamonte & Ito (2002: 255), which, in statistical modelling, yield this semantic constraint concrete vs. abstract (or figurative) as the most significant factor for this variation of manner adverbs in York.

profiles of both Middle English adjectives and adverbs with and without *-ly*, which he characterizes as a “freely disregarded convention” (Donner 1991: 7), but no fixed rule, by:

*foul* may refer to how pigs root, *foully* to how men sin; [...] *high* to how a sword is raised, *highly* to how ladies are attired; *narrow* to how closely captives are bound, *narrowly* to how severely sinners are judged; *dear* to how something is bought, *dearly* to how someone is kissed (Donner 1991: 4).

For the earlier history of adjectival and adverbial English *-ly*, Donner (1991) is by far the most comprehensive study, in spite of its restriction to manner adverbs and its limitations due to the at the time not yet complete *MED* (*A* to *sheden*). A substantial collection of Old English adjectives and adverbs in *-ly* is found in Uhler (1926), whose results, however, are partly outdated because of Uhler’s limited access to data in the 1920s. Moreover, Uhler essentially set out to investigate the synonymy of adjectives and adverbs with and without OE *-lic(e)* (cf. the term *Bedeutungsgleichheit* ‘equivalence of meaning’ in the title of his book). As far as adjectives in *-lic* are concerned (the basis for the emergence of adverbial *-ly*; see Section 3.1), however, most other (and more recent) studies on the history of Germanic adjectival *-ly* find contrast between endingless and suffixed adjectives rather than synonymy, emphasizing subjective meanings for Germanic adjectives in *-ly* from their earliest attestations, in addition to their other meaning ‘pertaining to’ (Guimier 1985; McIntosh 1991; Schmid 1998; see Section 3.3).<sup>2</sup>

Apart from Uhler (1926) and Donner (1991), we only find occasional notes on such semantic profiles for adjectival and adverbial *-ly* in different periods of English. Donner’s study (1991: 1), for instance, was inspired by a remark by Jespersen that “the suffix [*-ly*] usually serves to impart a figurative sense to whatever literal meaning the word expresses without one” (Jespersen 1949: VII, 48–52, at 48; see examples (1a.)–(d.)). All of these studies (from Uhler 1926 to Tagliamonte 2018) are almost exclusively concerned with adjectives, degree adverbs (intensifiers) or de-adjectival manner adverbs. In a recent study, however, I suggested that the special abstract and figurative, and even more pronounced subjective, meanings of Old and Middle English adjectives in *-lic* and, consequently, of de-adjectival adverbs in *-lic(e)*, were crucial for the remarkable success of English adverbial *-lice/-ly* and its spread to all adverbial subclasses, in particular stance and linking

<sup>2</sup> A distinct pattern is found in adjectives denoting periodic recurrence, such as *daily*, *monthly* or *weekly* (common to all Germanic languages, including English; cf. *OED* s.v. *-ly*, suffix<sup>1</sup>). Cf. Lenker (forthc. b).

adverbials, which have only been attested in greater number (and unambiguous form) from the late Middle English period onwards (Lenker forthc. a).<sup>3</sup> It could be shown that, overall, we see semantic and functional diversification in the category ‘adverb’, gradually becoming more varied in signalling epistemic, evidential and textual speaker attitudes. In Lenker (forthc. a), this diversification is seen to have been supported by the new distinct mark of adverbial status, the adverbial suffix *-ly* and its specific functions of signalling a variety of subjective meanings, i.e. meanings that are “based in the speaker’s subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition”.<sup>4</sup> For the lack of other data, this account by Lenker (forthc. a), however, was also based primarily on Donner (1991).

In order to extend the data basis for both my suggestion of the origin and spread of adverbial *-ly* and Tagliamonte’s claim of “historical continuity”, the present study will investigate the adverbs – in particular those in earlier *-e* (now suffixless; see Sections 3.1 and 3.2) and *-lice/-ly* – in two texts from the late Old English and the early Middle English periods, i.e. from the beginnings of adverbial *-ly* (cf. Section 3.1). The texts – two Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula* (Sauer 1978) and the early Middle English animal debate-poem *The Owl and Nightingale* (ed. Stanley 1960; Sauer 1983; Cartlidge 2001) – were not only selected because they were edited by the late Professor Sauer, in whose memory the symposium “Historical English Word-Formation” was held in 2023,<sup>5</sup> but because they allow a comparison of late Old English and early Middle English within about 150–200 years. More importantly, these investigations illustrate the benefits of

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<sup>3</sup> Lenker (forthc. a) was completed and accepted in 2021 but has not seen print yet.

<sup>4</sup> The concept of ‘subjectivity’, originally very broadly understood as ‘speaker-involvement’ or a ‘speaker imprint’, has become a highly contested notational term, with a variety of – often conflicting – definitions being used by different schools of linguistic thought (for an early summary account, see de Smet & Verstraete 2006). Recently, the conceptualizations of Traugott vs. Langacker (and schools of thought) have provoked protracted discussions about the definitions of the terms and their explanatory value. For the purposes of the present article, I use the term *subjective* in its broadest sense, as signalling ‘speaker involvement’, from the use of an adverb in a figurative sense (involving cognitive processes by a speaker for presenting a particular subjective purpose) to a speaker’s personal expression of his or her own attitudes and beliefs (as most evident in stance adverbials, such as *certainly* etc.; cf. Section 2.2). In this, I generally follow Traugott who sees a process of *subjectification* when “meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker’s subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition” (Traugott & Dasher 2001: 95).

<sup>5</sup> I purposely decided against text samples collected in the established balanced corpora, because I wanted to investigate all realisations of adverbs in a complete text in order to arrive at a fuller understanding of adverb use. Also, corpora do not allow for a comparison of manuscript variants to the Latin exemplar, such as manuscripts H and C of the Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula*. A wide-scale text- and corpus-based study on early Middle English poetry has been conducted for Lenker (forthc. b).

studying complete texts in their manuscript and transmission contexts. This is particularly crucial for the two independent Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula*, both of which are accompanied by the specific Latin texts serving as exemplars for the respective translations. It emerges that the mechanistically morphological translation of *ThCap2* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 865; see Section 4.1.1) is of little use for our study of the particular figurative or subjective semantic profiles of Old English adjectives in *-lic*, illustrating the importance of the material from *The Owl and the Nightingale*, which can be characterized as one of the most idiomatic early Middle English texts that have come down to us (see Section 4.2.1).

On these texts, I will primarily examine the semantic constraints sketched above, but will also briefly test the more general findings of Lenker (forthc. a) regarding the diversification of adverbs in the history of English, in particular the more recent uses of subjective sentential adverbs such as stance and linking adverbs. For this reason, Section 2 will introduce the formal and functional heterogeneity of adverbs from a diachronic perspective. Section 3 will then summarize the well-understood formal developments in the emergence of the new adverbial suffix *-ly* (by re-analysis from adjectival *-lic* + adverbial *-e*) and will address unresolved questions (date, reasons) for this development, which is unique to English among the Germanic languages. Section 4.1 will then summarize patterns of adverb formation in the two Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula* (and their respective dependence on Latin) and will then provide detailed analyses of adverbs in the early Middle English animal debate-poem *The Owl and the Nightingale* (henceforth: O & N; Section 4.2).

## 2. Adverbs: Formal and Functional Heterogeneity

### 2.1 Forms

Adverbs are the ‘mixed bag’ among the word classes, both formally and functionally. For Present-Day English, for instance, the *Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 2021: 537–540) distinguishes between the adverb forms “simple” (*here, soon, well*), “fixed phrases” (*of course, kind of, at last*), “compound” (*anyway, nowhere, heretofore*), “*-ly* suffix” (*carefully, obviously*) and “other suffix” (*homewards, clockwise*).

When compared to Old English, we notice the loss of the adverbial use of case forms such as the masculine genitive singular {-es} (*dæg-es* ‘daily; by day’, *þanc-es* ‘gladly, voluntarily’), the dative plural {-um} (*hwil-um* ‘at times’) or the – endingless – accusative singular neuter (*eall* ‘completely’, *full* ‘perfectly, very’, *genoh* ‘enough, sufficiently’; cf. Lenker forthc. a: Tab. 11.2).

Adverbs in *-ly* have a share between 33 and 52 per cent of all adverb tokens in today’s written English (33 % FICTION, 38 % NEWS, 52 % ACADEMIC PROSE – cf. 21 % CONVERSATION; adapted from Biber et al. 2021: 537). When we disregard “simple adverbs” with their extremely high token counts (especially in CONVERSATION, FICTION and NEWS) and centre on adverb types, we see that the ending *-ly* has become “the real indication of the adverbial function” (Jespersen 1942: 408), the “adverbial signature” of English.

## 2.2 Functions

In today’s English, adverbs show wide functional diversity. They may function as pre-modifiers in adjective or adverb phrases (‘degree adverbs’, among them the so-called ‘intensifiers’; PDE *very*, *terribly*), ‘circumstance adverbs’<sup>6</sup> with scope over the verb phrase (time, space or manner adverbs; PDE *now*, *here*, [*wept*] *bitterly*) or ‘sentence adverbs’. Sentence adverbs – a relatively recent layer of adverbs – may again be differentiated into so-called ‘stance adverbs’, signalling speaker perspective on the certainty (cf. epistemic *certainly*, *probably*), contents (cf. attitudinal *fortunately*) or style (cf. *frankly*) of the proposition and ‘linking adverbials’, signalling the speaker’s perspective on cohesion of sentences, paragraphs or discourse (cf. PDE *additionally*, *therefore*). Adverbs in *-ly* may be used for all of these functions in Present-Day English.

When taking a diachronic approach, we see that only the functions of modifier (degree adverb/intensifier) and of circumstance adverb have been attested in a rather stable way throughout the history of English (Lenker forthc. a: Section 11.2). Apart from epistemic truth-intensifiers such as OE *soplice* or *witodlice* ‘truly’ which might appear to be stance adverbials but are better classified as discourse markers in episode boundary marking function,

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<sup>6</sup> For the adverbials, I follow the terminology of the *Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 2021: 754–884) and distinguish circumstance adverbials, stance adverbials and linking adverbials; this tri-partite classification basically corresponds to Quirk et al. (1985)’s adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts, respectively.

translating Latin *autem* or *enim* (Lenker 2000; see also below Section 4.1.1), most of the adverbs in stance adverbial function have only been regularly used since Early Modern English (cf. Swan 1988, 1989, 2011; Lenker *forthc.* a). A functional diversification can also be seen in the sub-category of linking adverbials, where Old and Middle English speakers did not employ distinct adverbs, but polyfunctional ‘ambiguous adverbs/conjunctions’ such as OE *for þæm* (*þe*) ‘adv. for this reason; conj. because’ or ME *vor-þat*, *vor-þi*, *vor-þon* ‘adv. for; conj. because’ (cf. Lenker 2010; see also below Section 4.2.2). Following Traugott’s views on subjectification (e.g. Traugott & Dasher 2001; see n. 4 above), these recent layers of sentence adverbs can be characterized as having a subjective meaning in that they signal the speakers’ perspective on the contents or style of the proposition or the speakers’ view on textual cohesion; their formation is generally considered to be a case of word-formation and not contextual inflection (i.e. not triggered by a verb phrase; cf. Section 3.1). This explains the position of adverbs at the interface of inflection and word-formation.<sup>7</sup> Such subjective uses commonly involve a figurative use of an originally concrete adverb (often spatial), as in originally spatial *hence* (from this position here (SPACE) > from this position in the author’s line of reasoning) or *additionally* as in “*Additionally*, the project supports another group of women weavers in Ifkara [...]” (cf. *OED* s.v.).

### 2.3 Previous Research

In both synchronic and diachronic research, however, the significance of these adverbial sub-classes has not been generally recognized (apart from Tagliamonte 2018 and Lenker *forthc.* a and c). Research regularly only distinguishes between modifiers (degree adverbs) and adverbials (which are lumped together in one group); see, for instance, *eWAVE*<sup>8</sup> distinguishing features 220 (“Degree modifier adverbs have the same form as adjectives (*real good!*)”) and 221 (“Other adverbs have the same form as adjectives (*come quick!*)”).

The evident heterogeneity of adverbs and their extremely large number across different registers are most probably the main reasons for the limited synchronic and diachronic

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of this question, see the rather extreme view of Giegerich (2012), who considers adverbs in *-ly* to be inflected adjectives and, consequently, adverbs not containing *-ly* to be “uninflected adjectives” (2012: 341).

<sup>8</sup> <https://ewave-atlas.org/parameters> (accessed 25 January 2024).

research on adverbs. Because of the plethora of formal, functional and social parameters to be taken into consideration and the at times conflicting findings across these parameters, Tagliamonte speaks of the “variegated system of adverbs” (2018: 107). For this reason, most recent research has concentrated on specific linguistic items which are easily retrievable in corpora. Examined from various sociolinguistic approaches, these studies have found strong – and often diverging – effects of register, formality and social factors such as age, class and education (also due to normative influence on the use of *-ly*; see the survey in Tagliamonte 2018: 114–120). A primary study ground are the highly frequent and continuously changing intensifiers, which, as famously put by Bolinger (1972: 18), “are the chief means of emphasis for speakers for whom all means of emphasis quickly grow stale and need to be replaced”.<sup>9</sup>

Most researchers applying a wider perspective on formal and functional aspects of adverb use note that quantitative investigations are seriously impaired by the high frequency and token-predominance of individual adverbs, primarily intensifiers and adverbs used as discourse markers (see Macaulay 1995 on *really*; Nevalainen 1997; Tagliamonte 2018). Consequently, researchers report that their corpus material had to be “delimited” or “pruned” (Nevalainen 1994: 141–142). Most sizeable cross-period quantitative studies have hence restricted their investigation to so-called ‘dual adverbs’, i.e. adverbs used in both a suffixless and a suffixed form, thus dealing only with a very small fraction of adverbs (cf. Nevalainen 1994, 1997; Opdahl 2000; Tagliamonte & Ito 2002).<sup>10</sup> This focus on individual high-frequency items, in turn, means that those de-adjectival adverbs in *-ly* which have low token but high type frequency (i.e. most adverbs except for intensifiers such as *really*) are generally underrepresented in research.<sup>11</sup> These limitations also suggest that the history of English adverbial *-ly* might not have been portrayed in a

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<sup>9</sup> For Present-Day English, see, e.g., Ito & Tagliamonte (2003) and literature; on their history, see Peters (1993), Méndez-Naya (2003), Breban & Davidse (2016); Stratton (2022); for a survey of literature, see Lenker (forthc. a: Section 11.3.2).

<sup>10</sup> These studies delve into the dual adverbs showing a difference in meaning such as *hard/hardly* (*to work hard* vs. *to hardly work*). They commonly also discuss the interface between adjective and (endingless) adverb in different distributional patterns, such as *He cut open the melon* vs. *He cut the melon open*, after copular-like verbs such as *look beautiful*, *behave properly* or as the first element of complex premodifiers such as *fresh(ly) cut sandwiches*. See also Valera Hernández (1996).

<sup>11</sup> Notable exceptions – apart from Macaulay (1995) and Tagliamonte (2018) – are the studies by Álvarez Gil on Early Modern English adverbs (1998) and the contrastive studies in Pounder (2001).



sufficiently nuanced way. Tagliamonte even finds that many “examinations of adverb variation in the literature are anecdotal rather than exhaustive” (2018: 121), a situation the present contribution aims to remedy through its pilot studies of full texts.

### 3. The History of English -ly

#### 3.1 Reanalysis

The basics of the history of the English adverbial suffix form OE *-lice* by re-analysis have been well understood for quite some time (cf. *OED* s.v. *-ly* suffix<sup>2</sup>). See, for instance, Jespersen (1942: V, 408):

-ly [-li] as an adverbial suffix originates from OE *-lice*, from *-lik* (= adjectival *-ly*) + the adverbial suffix *ō*. Thus it only belonged to advs corresponding to adjs in *-lic* (-ly), and the adverbial element was *-e*, which disappeared in ME. But as early as in OE the suffix was added to other adjs to form advs, *-ly* becoming the real indication of the adverbial function, and later was used to an ever increasing degree.

Old English de-adjectival adverbs were formed by the suffix OE *-e* (originally an ablative form *-ō*). This suffix does not add any specific semantic meaning, but its use is triggered by syntactic requirements: It is thus a case of contextual inflection.

In Old English, these syntactic requirements are met in degree words pre-modifying an adjective or adverb such as the intensifier *swiþ-e* ‘strongly; very’ (< adj. *swiþ* ‘strong’; for ME, cf. example (5)) and in manner adverbs modifying a verb phrase. In (2a.), *heard-e* ‘in a hard way’ (< adj. *heard* ‘hard’) modifies *feoll* ‘fell’; *wid-e* ‘widely’ (< adj. *wid* ‘wide’) in (2b.) modifies *sprang* ‘spread’:

- (2) a. and he *hearde* feoll (*DOEC*; *ÆCHom* II, 10, 90.301)  
       ‘and he fell (down) in a hard manner’
- b. Beowulf wæs breme blæd *wide* sprang (*DOEC*; *Beo* A4.1)  
       ‘Beowulf was famed / renown widely spread’

While final /e/ and levelled /ə/ were generally lost by the beginning of the Middle English period in other inflectional endings, final *schwa* was preserved longer in this adverbial use (Pounder 2001: 307; see also Tab. 4 on the data from *O & N*). While the adverbial suffix *-e* is commonly still present in written Middle English, these adverbs are suffixless in Present-

Day English (i.e. are ‘zero-adverbs’ or ‘flat adverbs’ such as PDE [*to work*] *hard* or [*to run*] *fast*).<sup>12</sup>

Since Old English had a large number of denominal and deadjectival adjectives in *-lic* (cf. PDE *friend-ly*, *clear-ly*), we also find a large number of adverbs in *-lic-e*, formed by adding the adverbial suffix *-e* to adjectives in *-lic*. There are also numerous instances of parallel forms of adjectives, such as *biter* (adj.) and *biterlic* (adj.) ‘bitter’ or *heard* (adj.) and *heardlic* (adj.) ‘tough, hardy, resolute’ (cf. Uhler 1926; McIntosh 1991).

- |     |    |                       |                             |                       |                             |
|-----|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| (3) | a. | adj. <i>biter</i>     | adv. [ <i>biter</i> ]-e     | adj. <i>heard</i>     | adv. [ <i>heard</i> ]-e     |
|     | b. | adj. <i>biter-lic</i> | adv. [ <i>biter-lic</i> ]-e | adj. <i>heard-lic</i> | adv. [ <i>heard-lic</i> ]-e |

In all the instances of (3), the adverb is formed by the suffix *-e*, which is added to simple adjectives in (a.) and complex adjectives in *-lic* in (b.). The complex adjectives in *-lic* are commonly more abstract and figurative and more subjective than their parallel forms without *-lic*: cf. *biter* ‘having a bitter taste’ vs. *biterlic* ‘painful’ or *heard* ‘hard’ vs. *heardlic* ‘tough, hardy; resolute’ (see Section 3.3).

Formally, these parallel adverbial forms most probably served as a model for the re-analysis towards the new adverbial suffix *-lice* /li:tʃə/. Already in Old English, we find adjectives such as *bealdlice* ‘boldly; confidently, impudently’, formed from the simplex adjective *beald* ‘bold’ (an adjective *bealdlic* is not attested; for *boldeliche* in *O & N*, see example (20)); similarly, the adverb *swetlice* ‘pleasantly’ does not have an adjectival basis \**swetlic*, but simple *swet* ‘sweet’. This indicates that the parsing of the adverbs cited in (3b.) must have changed, i.e. re-analysed, from [*biter-lic*]-e and [*heard-lic*]-e to [*biter*]-[*lice*] and [*heard*]-[*lice*], yielding the new adverbial suffix *-lice*, which was in turn added to the adjectives *beald* and *swet*, which do not have adjectival forms ending in *-lic*. While the formal-morphological processes of re-analysis from *-e* /ə/ to the phonetically more salient *-lice* (ME *-lich(e)* /li:tʃə/ and later *-li/ly* /li/) are comparatively straightforward, the reasons behind its emergence and the reasons of the spread of *-ly* itself are often misrepresented.

<sup>12</sup> Another source of suffixless adverbs are the originally endingless case forms (acc. sg. neuter), such as *all* or *full* (see Sections 3.1–2).

## 3.2 Formal Explanations: Ambiguity Adverbs – Manner Adverbs

In the few studies commenting on the reasons for this re-analysis and thus the birth of a new inflectional form in English (which is otherwise characterized by a massive loss of inflectional endings in early Middle English), the establishment of the more salient form *-ly* /li/ is seen to be grounded in the loss of the formal distinctions between adjectives and adverbs, allegedly resulting in “confusion” and thus “a need for avoiding ambiguity” (Mustanoja 1960: 314). This is said to apply especially to adverbs functioning as adverbials, but not for those functioning as modifiers, which are much more frequently suffixless (cf. OE *genoh*; ME *ful*; PDE *very*, *real*), since they are positioned in a fixed, and thus disambiguating, constituent order, before or after (cf. PDE *enough*) the element they modify. The ambiguity in manner adverbs is particular to English since its main reason is not considered to be the levelling and loss of the inflectional ending *-e* in adverbs, but the loss of endings in adjectives in early Middle English.

While Old English had two fully-fledged paradigms of strong and weak adjectives inflected for case, gender and number, early Middle English basically only has two forms of adjectives, a) a suffixless one and b) a form in *-e*<sup>13</sup>, so that both of these forms are formally identical with adverbs, namely a) suffixless adverbs going back to acc. neuter case forms (e.g. *eall*, *full* or *genoh*; cf. Section 3.1–2) and b) manner and degree adverbs in *-e*.

While the Old High German adverbial ending *-e* is also lost, German speakers did not have much need for compensation of this loss, since German adjectives still inflect. We may thus have formal identity and ambiguity in the lexicon form of the German adjective and adverb, but not in actual language use, where the attributive adjective is inflected for case, gender and number (examples adapted from Pounder 2001: 301):

(4)	PDE adj. <i>loud</i>	PDG adj. <i>laut</i>
	a loudØ sigh	ein lauter Seufzer (Nom. Sg. masc.)
	a loudØ street	eine laute Straße (Nom. Sg. fem.)
	PDE adv. <i>loudly</i>	PDG adv. <i>laut</i> Ø
	Susie sighed loudly.	Susi seufzte lautØ.

<sup>13</sup> For the text of our early Middle English case study, O & N, Stanley (1960: 13–14) summarizes: “Adjectives have final **e** except when declined strong in the nom. sg. with nouns of any gender [endingless], or in the acc. sg. with neuter [endingless] or masc. [**ne** or endingless] nouns”.

In German, the inflectional endings mark the adjectives, while in Present-Day English, it is the adverb which is marked. Disambiguation of adjectives and adverbs is said to have become crucial after the loss of inflectional endings in the adjectives in early Middle English, at a time when adjectives may still precede or follow the noun they modify, thus providing a syntactic context for ambiguity between an adjective modifying the noun in post-position (part of the NP) and a manner verb modifying the verb of the clause (cf. Mustanoja 1960: 314; Pounder 2001: 316–319). While the emergence of the adverbial suffix *-ly* at first glance seems to run counter to the loss of inflectional endings in English, it has thus been suggested that it has, by contrast, rather been triggered as a consequence of this loss, compensating for the loss of inflectional endings in the adjectives. Such an understanding does, however, chronologically not correspond to Jespersen’s (and other researchers’) view that *-lice* was “the real indication of the adverbial function” (Jespersen 1942: V, 408) already in Old English (see above Section 2.1 and my data in Section 4.1).

Moreover, my examination of this assumption in the comprehensive textual study of the twelfth-century *O & N* (cf. Section 4.2) evinces that such ambiguities are in fact very rare in actual language use; in *O & N*, there is no case of ambiguity of post-posed adjective vs. adverb which would have yielded semantic or pragmatic misunderstanding, even though the formal parsing would, of course, be different.

- (5) þe Hule ne abot noȝt swiþ longe / Ah ȝef ondsware *starke and stronge* (*O & N*, 1175)  
 ‘The owl did not pause for very long, but came back with a bold [post-posed adj.] and robust [post-posed adj.] answer’ OR  
 ‘The owl did not pause for very long, but answered in a bold [adv.] and robust [adv.] way’
- (6) Þar *nowe* sedes boþe isowe (*O & N*, 1129)  
 ‘Wherever new [adj. pl.] seeds have been sown’ OR  
 ‘Wherever seeds have recently [adv.] been sown’

This lack of attestations of ambiguity between adjective and adverb, which will be substantiated in a fuller account in the next section (3.3), suggests that the semantic constraint of adverbial *-ly* to figurative and abstract, and more generally subjective meanings described above may have been of more importance than the formal ambiguities between adjective and adverb claimed in the literature.

### 3.3 The Semantics of English Adjectives in *-lic/-ly*

For the background of this semantic constraint, it is necessary to briefly introduce the history of the English adjectival suffix *-lic/-ly*. Old English *-līc* as an adjectival suffix is well attested in all Germanic languages (Old High German *-līk*, Present-Day German *-lich*; Old Norse *-lig-r/-leg-r*, Swedish, Danish *-lig*). These Germanic adjectives in *\*-līko* are compounds containing the noun *\*līkom* ‘appearance, body’ so that the primary meaning of adjectival *-ly* is ‘having the appearance or form of a man’ (*OED* s.v. *ly* suffix<sup>1</sup>; cf. Guimier 1985; Schmid 1998: 97–98). This is extended to subjective meanings ‘having the qualities appropriate to, characteristic of’. Essentially, the derived adjectives often carry “a metaphorical or moral meaning” (Guimier 1985: 157), which can be characterized as figurative and, more generally, subjective in that this meaning is based in the speaker’s subjective belief or attitude toward the proposition (following the definition of subjectivity by Traugott; cf. fn. 4). Adjectives in *-ly* surviving into Present-Day English are thus frequently eulogistic, such as *knightly*, *queenly* or *scholarly* (vs. *manly*, *womanly* adj. to *mannish*, *womanish*; *OED* s.v. *ly* suffix<sup>1</sup>).<sup>14</sup>

## 4. Case Studies

The following case studies will test the suggestion that semantic reasons – specifically the subjective meanings of adverbs in *-liche/-ly* marking the speaker’s individual perspective on the verbal phrase in manner adverbs – are more important for the emergence and spread of adverbial *-ly* than reasons of disambiguation of forms. Overall, the case studies are designed to provide a broader database to primarily test such a semantic constraint on manner adverbs in *-ly*, which Tagliamonte characterizes as “age-old”, “operating with an enduring underlying system, an emblem of historical continuity” (2018: 138; see above Section 1).

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<sup>14</sup> The later history of adjectival *-līc/-ly* is in the centre of Lenker (forthc. b and c). Please again (cf. fn. 2) note that adjectives denoting ‘periodic recurrence’ such as *daily*, *weekly* or *yearly* belong to still another use of the suffix (*OED* s.v. *-ly* suffix<sup>1</sup>).

#### 4.1 Case Study 1: The Old English Translations of the Latin *Theodulfi Capitula*

There have as yet been no extensive investigations of adverbs in complete texts from the Old or Middle English period, so that one may as well start at any text. Since the symposium on “Historical English Word-Formation” in 2023 was held in memory of the late Professor Hans Sauer, I selected a text he had edited for his doctoral thesis in 1978, the Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula*. More importantly, the two surviving Old English versions of the *Theodulfi Capitula*, which differ from each other, allow a minute investigation of Old English texts and their Latin exemplars, illustrating the benefits of such a philological approach.

##### 4.1.1 Texts and Transmission

The *Theodulfi Capitula* are a handbook for parish priests, written in Latin around 800 by Theodulph, bishop of Orleans (c. 750–821), one of the principal theologians of the Carolingian period (acting also an advisor to Charlemagne). They consist of two parts (altogether 45 chapters), containing guidelines for parish priests concerning their personal conduct and their duties and, in the second part, instructions on what to teach their congregations. As one of the first handbooks collecting ordinances, it cannot easily be grouped with a particular genre, since it shows characteristics of the later capitularies (containing neutral pieces of legislation), interspersed with prayers and personal address. Their basic character is instructional (Sauer 1978: 1–11).

Two independent Old English translations of the *Theodulfi Capitula*, which both can be dated to the late tenth century, have survived in two eleventh-century manuscripts.

- *ThCap1*: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 201 (last quarter of the 11th century); fols 179–222: Latin text, fols 231–269: Old English text; incomplete translation (2,872 words)
- *ThCap2*: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 865 (early 11th century); chapters xxv–xlvi only, each Latin chapter being followed by its Old English translation (7,291 words)

Apart from the fact that we have two Old English translations – independent of one another – of one and the same text, these manuscripts are particularly valuable for our investigation since both manuscripts contain both the Latin and the Old English texts; in both cases, the Old English text was translated from the specific Latin text in the same

manuscript. This allows a characterization of *ThCap1* as a comparatively free translation (with additions, paraphrases and commentaries; Sauer 1978: 121–150), while *ThCap2*'s translator follows his Latin exemplar and its structures mechanically, indeed almost slavishly (Sauer 1978: 150–164):

Die ThCapA [= *ThCap1*] sind eine verhältnismäßig freie Übertragung, bei der der Übersetzer hinzugefügt, weggelassen, paraphrasiert und kommentiert hat, wo es ihm nötig schien. [...] Die ThCapB [= *ThCap2*] sind dagegen eine ziemlich wörtliche, oft beinahe mechanische Übersetzung, bei der sich der Übersetzer getreulich an die lateinische Vorlage gehalten hat (Sauer 1978: 119).

'ThCapA [= *ThCap1*] are a relatively free translation in which the translator has added, omitted, paraphrased and commented where he felt it was necessary. [...] ThCapB [= *ThCap2*], by contrast, are a fairly literal, often almost mechanical translation, in which the translator faithfully adhered to the Latin original'.

*ThCap2*, in particular, reveals the major problem of our databases for early English when it comes to investigating system-internal trajectories of change, namely their dependence on Latin. For a first example, compare Tab. 1, listing the modifiers (degree adverbs) and discourse markers (episode boundary markers; cf. Section 2.2) used in *ThCap1* and *ThCap2*, respectively.

**Tab. 1:** Modifiers and Discourse Markers

	<b><i>ThCap1</i> (2,872 words)</b>	<b><i>ThCap2</i> (7,291 words)</b>
degree adverbs	<i>genoh</i> 'enough' (3), <i>swiþe</i> 'very' (25)	<i>forneah</i> 'almost' (3)
discourse markers	<i>witodlice</i> (3)	<i>eornostlice</i> (4), <i>soplice</i> (23), <i>witodlice</i> (18)

Tab. 1 shows that the use of these high-frequency items varies considerably, even though we are investigating contemporaneous texts based on the same Latin text. *ThCap1* uses the common Old English intensifier *swiþe* in 25 instances, while we do not find a single example of this in – much longer – *ThCap2*. Conversely, we have altogether 41 instances of the discourse markers *soplice* and *witodlice* in the mechanistic translation in *ThCap2* (*soplice* translating mostly Latin *autem*; cf. also Lenker 2000), while *ThCap1* has only 4 instances of *witodlice*, and none of *soplice*. Such findings, of course, seriously impair quantitative studies on the semantics of de-adjectival adverbs in -e and -lice in Old English.

4.1.2 De-adjectival Adverbs in *-e* and *-lice*

Tab. 2 lists adverbs in *-e*, the traditional Germanic suffix forming de-adjectival adverbs. While *ThCap2*, most strikingly, does not use a single adverb in the earlier de-adjectival pattern in *-e* inherited from Germanic, *ThCap1* has 15 tokens belonging to 5 types. All of the adverbs in *-e* in the more idiomatic *ThCap1* are concrete manner adverbs; most interestingly, all of these are also attested as adverbs in *-e* in *O & N* (see Tab. 5). The ones that have survived – *fast* and *long* – are also suffixless in Present-Day English.

**Tab. 2:** De-adjectival Adverbs in *-e*

<i>ThCap1</i>	<i>ThCap2</i>
<i>fæste</i> ‘firmly’ (1), <i>georne</i> ‘eagerly’ (6), <i>hrape</i> ‘quickly’ (1), <i>gelome</i> ‘often’ (4), <i>longe</i> ‘long’ (3)	–

Tab. 3 gives an overview of all adverbs in *-lice*; we see in Tab. 3a that only 5 of them are used in both *ThCap1* and *ThCap2*; Tab.s 3b and 3c list adverbs in *-lice* exclusive to *ThCap1* (Tab. 3b) and *ThCap2* (Tab. 3c), respectively. In order to put these findings into context, I also give the numbers of attestation from the *DOE* (based on the whole Old English corpus; *DOEC*), both for the adverbs and, if attested, their bases, i.e. adjectives in *-lic*. This can only be done for adverbs starting from *A–I* (i.e. the letters covered by the still incomplete *DOE*).<sup>15</sup>

**Tab. 3a:** De-adjectival Adverbs in *-lice* Attested in Both *ThCap1* and *ThCap2*

	<i>ThCap1</i>	<i>ThCap2</i>	<i>DOE</i> adv.	<i>DOE</i> adj. in <i>-lic</i>
<i>arleaslice</i> ‘impiously’	1	1	26	–
<i>clænlice</i> ‘purely’	3	2	55	10
<i>gastlice</i> ‘spiritually’	4	3	90	700
<i>geornlice</i> ‘eagerly’	3	2	650	8
<i>healice</i> ‘magnificently, gloriously’	2	1	75	400
<b>not yet covered by the <i>DOE</i>:</b>				
<i>syferlice</i> ‘purely’	3	1		

<sup>15</sup> The frequencies of the lexemes not yet covered by the *DOE* have been tested in *VARIOE* (Cichosz et al. 2021), based on the more restricted corpus material of the *York-Toronto-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose*. This study confirms the results for the full Old English corpus underlying the *DOE*: From the list of adverbs in *-lice* attested only once in *ThCap2*, only *wærlice* ‘safely’ is attested more than once (55 times), while the others are not listed at all. The situation is entirely different for the adverbs in *-lice* exclusive to *ThCap1*: Apart from *genehlice*, all of them are attested 8 or more times (up to 71 times for *lustlice*).



**Tab. 3b:** De-adjectival Adverbs Attested in *ThCap1* only

	<i>ThCap1</i>	<i>DOE</i> adv.	<i>DOE</i> adj. in -lic
<i>arwurðlice</i> ‘honourably; fittingly, properly’	3	100	16
<i>deagollice</i> ‘secretly, privately’	1	200	3
<i>estlice</i> ‘kindly, graciously’	1	16	7
<i>fæstlice</i> ‘fast; vigorously, thoroughly’	2	150	7
<i>færlice</i> ‘suddenly, unexpectedly’	1	200	80
<i>hihtlice</i> ‘pleasantly; joyfully, hopefully’	1	6	14
<i>hlutturlice</i> ‘with a pure heart, sincerely’	1	9	–
<b>not yet covered by the <i>DOE</i>:</b> <i>genehlice</i> ‘sufficiently, abundantly’ (1), <i>gerysenlice</i> ‘becomingly, fitly’ (1), <i>geþyldelice</i> ‘patiently’ (1), <i>gemænlice</i> ‘commonly; in general, without exception’ (1), <i>lichamlice</i> ‘physically’ (3), <i>lustlice</i> ‘gladly, willingly’ (3), <i>stiðlice</i> ‘strongly, strictly’ (1), <i>syngallice</i> ‘perpetually, continually’ (1), <i>ungeteoriendlice</i> ‘indefatigably’ (1)			

**Tab. 3c:** De-adjectival Adverbs Attested in *ThCap2* only

	<i>ThCap2</i>	<i>DOE</i> adv.	<i>DOE</i> adj. in -lic
<i>andiendlice</i> ‘enviously’	1	Hapax	
<i>arfæstlice</i> ‘piously; mercifully’	1	23	4
<i>earfoplice</i> ‘with difficulty’	1	90	26
<i>flæsclice</i> ‘as regards the (human) body, corporeal’	1	8	140
<i>hwonlice</i> ‘to (only) a small extent’	1	55	4
<i>gallice</i> ‘wantonly, lustfully’	1	Hapax	
<i>haliglice</i> ‘in a saintly manner, devoutly’	1	5	
<b>not yet covered by the <i>DOE</i>:</b> <i>wærlice</i> ‘safely’ (1)			
<b>Hapaxes:</b> <i>leahtorfulllice</i> ‘viciously’ (1), <i>(ge)metfæstlice</i> ‘immoderately’ (1), <i>staðolfæstlice</i> ‘steadfastly, constantly, firmly’ (1), <i>strudgendlice</i> ‘rapaciously, greedily’ (1), <i>unendebyrdelice</i> ‘irregularly’ (1), <i>unforwandiendlice</i> ‘without regard to fear or shame’ (1), <i>unmedomlice</i> ‘unmeetly, unworthily’ (1), <i>witeleaslice</i> ‘with impunity’ (1)			

These tables first of all show the large number of types – often with very few tokens – of these adverbs in *-lice*; for many, but not all of them, adjectives in *-lic* are attested, often in much smaller numbers than the adverbs. This illustrates that – as many studies have suggested – “the ending *-ly* has become the real indication of the adverbial function” (Jespersen 1942: 408) already in Old English (thus challenging the claim that his suffix

spread because of ambiguities of form in early Middle English). A closer look at *ThCap2*, which diverges in some of the patterns, corroborates this dating. It will be sufficient to demonstrate this aspect by a passage containing the most striking examples:

- (7) *Witodlice þas ealle eac swylce on him selfum gehwa sceal gastlice don, 7 an oþrum flæsclice gefyllan, for þam þe forneah naht fremiaþ þas ealle ece lif to begytanne, gif he gallice 7 ofermodlice 7 andiendlice 7 strudgendlice his lif drohtnað, 7 gif he leahterfullice 7 unendebyrdelice lyfað, & fram oþrum godum weorcum æmtigað.* [ThCap2 361.5]

*Nam* hec omnia et in se quisque debet spiritualiter agere, et in aliis carnaliter adimplere, quia pene nihil prosunt hec omnia ad uitam eternam capessendam, si luxuriose, si superbe, si inuide, et – ne singula replicem – si uitiose et inordinate uiuat, et a ceteris bonis operis uacet.

‘Truly [discourse marker], each one must likewise act spiritually on himself, and fulfil it carnally in others, because all these things are of almost no use to the obtaining of eternal life, if he lives luxuriously and proudly, if he envies, and if he lives licentiously and disorderly, and away from other good works’.

In the short passage in (7), we find one simple and one suffixless adverb each, the manner adverb *eac* ‘also’ and the degree adverb *forneah* ‘almost’ (translating Latin *pene*; 4 instances in *ThCap2*, but none in *ThCap1*) as well as 9 different adverbs in *-lice*. This large number (compare the 15 tokens of *-liche* in the full text of *O & N* discussed below in Section 4.2) can be explained by the translation strategy of *ThCap2*, where every single Latin adverb in *-e* and *-(i)ter* is translated by an Old English adverb in *-lice* (both Latin *-e* and *-(i)ter* form adverbs from adjectives; cf., e.g., *spiritualis* ‘spiritual’ (adj.), *spiritualiter* ‘spiritually’).<sup>16</sup> Since this morphologically mechanistic translation was most certainly aimed at a better understanding of the morphology of the Latin text, it is evidence that Old English speakers did indeed consider *-lice* to be the adverbial signature of Old English.

Even more crucial for our investigation of the allegedly subjective semantics of adverbial *-lice* is the formation pattern of the adverbs in *-lice* in *ThCap2*. All of them are derived from complex adjectives (i.e. not from inherited simplex adjectives), all of which can further be shown to be calques (loan translations) dependent on Latin (cf. Schmid 1998: 98); this also applies to *soplice* (cf. Latin *ver-o* ‘truly’). Such calques on Latin are unlikely to reveal inherited or evolving semantic profiles specific to Germanic or Old

<sup>16</sup> The only exception here is the translation of Latin *nam* ‘for’, which is regularly translated by Old English *soplice* or *witodlice* in texts highly dependent on Latin (Lenker 2010).

English adjectives/adverbs in *-lice*, but merely attest to the morphological status of *-lice* as a suffix deriving adverbs from adjectives (in a much more salient way than by the suffix *-e* alone, which is highly polyfunctional in Old English as a root element or as an inflectional and derivational morpheme). Another indicator of the predominantly morphological significance of *-lice* as a marker of adverbs in such mechanically translated texts<sup>17</sup> is the large number of hapax legomena in *ThCap2* (checked against the *DOEC*, i.e. all surviving Old English texts), namely *andiendlice*, *gallice*, *leahterfullice*, *strudgendlice* in (7) and, from the rest of the text, *unforwandienlice*, *ungeteoriendlice* and *witeleaslice*.

#### 4.1.3 Evidence for Subjective Semantics of Adverbs in *-lice*

For studying the alleged subjective semantics of adverbs in *-lice* in relation to the subjective semantics of inherited adjectives in *-lic* in Germanic languages (cf. Section 3.3), the adverbs shared by *ThCap1* and *ThCap2* and those exclusive to *ThCap1* are thus a much more appropriate source, even though, of course, also *ThCap1* is not as completely independent of Latin as *O & N*. The figurative and, generally, more subjective meanings of the adverbs in *-lice* used in the more independent material in *ThCap1* are commonly unveiled by their translations. This first impression can be substantiated by a closer look at selected examples of contrastive profiles of adverbs in *-lice* (figurative) vs. those ending in *-e* (concrete); cf. *fæstlice* (8a; abstract: ‘urgently’) vs. *fæste* (8b; concrete: ‘firmly’):

- (8) a. *fæstlice* ‘urgently; strictly’  
forþon hit is swiðe *fæstlice* on canonum forboden (*ThCap1*, 321.1)  
‘because it is very urgently prohibited in the regulations’
- b. *fæste* ‘firmly’  
þonne ætstent þæt hus *fæste*, forþan þe hit wæs getimbrod on þam stane (*DOEC*,  
*ÆHomM* 12 276)  
‘then this house will stand firmly, because it was built on stone’
- c. *fæste* ‘rigorously’  
& ure Drihten swyðe *fæste* on Synai þæm munte þa scylde forbead (*ThCap1*, 343.1)  
‘and the Lord very rigorously prohibited crime on Mount Sinai’

<sup>17</sup> See Kornexl (2001), for a discussion of the morphological character of such calques and whether they are “unnatural words”.

Example (8c.), also from the more idiomatic *ThCap1*, shows that adverbs in *-e* may also be used in more abstract meanings. This underlines Donner's view that we are not dealing with "fixed rules" (1991: 1) but rather tendencies: While adverbs in *-e* (the inherited Germanic derivation pattern) may be polysemous in having both concrete and abstract meanings, the semantics of adverbs in *-lice* is generally restricted to figurative, and more generally, subjective meanings in that they are based in the speaker's subjective belief or attitude toward the proposition.

Such a semantic profile of adverbs in *-lice* can, for instance, also be seen in the pair *clæne* vs. *clænlice*: While *clæne* may carry the concrete meaning 'clean; with nothing remaining' and extended 'utterly; altogether' (*DOE* s.v. sense 1), *clænlice* is almost exclusively used in the figurative, subjective sense 'with spiritually pure intent, in a manner free from sin' (*DOE* s.v. sense 3). This use is also attested in (9a.) and (9b.), from *ThCap1* and *ThCap2*:

- (9) a. On þas tid sceal beon forhæfednes gehwylcra smeametta & syferlice & *clænlice* <is> to libbenne. (*ThCap1*, 391.1)
- b. To forhæbbane is soplice on þysum haligostum dagum fram gemæccum, & *clænlice* & arfæstlice is to lybbanne (*ThCap2*, 397.1)  
'During this time there must be abstinence of whatever delicacy [*ThCap2* 'sexual intercourse'] and one must live chastely and purely'

For a last pair illustrating the semantic profile of *-lice*, see *healice* vs. *heage* in (10), where again *healice* (10a.) is used figuratively, reflecting the subjective belief of the speaker with respect to honouring Sunday, while *heage* in (10b.) is used in its concrete sense 'high (up into the sky)':

- (10) a. *healice* 'highly; greatly, exceedingly, profoundly'  
Sunnandæg is swiðe *healice* to weorðianne (*ThCap1*, 337.1)  
'Sunday has to be honoured very highly'
- b. *heah* 'high (without ending)'  
seo buruhwaru [...] & gesawon ðone smic swyðe *heage* astigan (*DOEC*, Josh 8.20)  
'The citizens ... and saw the smoke rise very high into the sky'

#### 4.2 Case Study 2: *The Owl and the Nightingale* (c. 1189–1216; Kent)

*The Owl and the Nightingale* is doubtlessly one of the best candidates for a study on the idiomatic use of adverbs of different forms because it can be dated to the particular period

of early Middle English (M1 in the *Helsinki Corpus*) which was identified as the period in which adjectives and de-adjectival adverbs collapse formally, leading to an alleged ambiguity between adjectives and de-adjectival adverbs used as adverbials (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3). More importantly, this text can be characterized as “one of the earliest substantial texts to have been written in English in a style that seems fluently colloquial” (Cartlidge 2001: vii).

#### 4.2.1 Text and Transmission

*O & N* is the earliest Middle English example of the very popular medieval genre of “animal debate poem”.<sup>18</sup> Its 1794 lines (about 10,940 words) are composed in 897 in octosyllabic couplets; within the general framework of the four-stress line, however, it shows some considerable freedom (cf. Stanley 1960: 35–36).

The text has survived in two late-thirteenth-century manuscripts – London, British Library, Cotton Caligula A. ix [C] and Oxford, Jesus College, 29 (II) [J] – from the West Midlands; both are descendants from a lost exemplar, probably also from the West Midlands. For the original composition of the text, the general consensus now is that it should be dated between 1189 and 1216; linguistic evidence suggests an ultimate origin in Kent (Cartlidge 2001: xv).

With respect to their use of adverbs, the two manuscripts only diverge in any relevant way (i.e. beyond orthography) in the sub-group of intensifier:<sup>19</sup> The Cotton manuscript (C) contains a number of words which are absent in manuscript J; these omissions are characterized by Cartlidge as “all of them qualificatory or emphatic in function and inessential to the flow of meaning” (2001: xlii–lxiii). Among them are the intensifiers *suþe* ‘very’ (1 instance ; l. 667) and 12 of the altogether 90 instances of *wel* ‘very’ (l. 153, 170, 356, 376, 419, 546, 615, 1231, 1473, 1546, 1604, 1770), which the scribe of J chose not to copy from his exemplar. This attests to the considerable metrical freedom of the textual versions and, with respect to our case study, the frequently noticed fact that intensifiers behave

<sup>18</sup> This summary on the text has been compiled from information found in the introductions of the editions by Stanley (1960), Sauer (1983) and Cartlidge (2001) and the text profile from *The Parsed Corpus of Middle English Poetry (PCMEP)* [https://pcmep.net/textdetails.php?poem\\_name=OwlNight](https://pcmep.net/textdetails.php?poem_name=OwlNight) (accessed 25 January 2024).

<sup>19</sup> There are a few cases where J has a word not contained in C, among them the adverbs *ayeyn* ‘back’ (l. 818), *eft* ‘again’ (l. 1090) and *nu* (l. 1399) (Cartlidge 2001: xliii, n. 120).

differently from other adverbs, both diachronically and in actual language use by particular speakers (cf. Section 2.3).

#### 4.2.2 Adverbs in *The Owl and the Nightingale* – Functions

The characterization of *O & N* as being composed in “idiomatic” early Middle English is also reflected in its use of adverbs. Most of the adverbs are used as degree adverbs (104 tokens for the only 2 types *suþe* and *wel*) and manner adverbs; we find only two adverbs which are used as stance adverbials (*certes* and *iwis*). Unambiguous linking adverbs are also rare.

Based on his linguistic analysis of this text, Cartlidge characterizes its grammar as “clearly early Middle English” (2001: xlvii). With respect to its lexis, Cartlidge found that the text contains only very few loanwords, 19 out of 1488 items (1.3 per cent) from Latin, 46 (3.1 per cent) from French and 23 (1.6 per cent) from Old Norse (*ibid.*); this shows that we are dealing with a text not impaired by (translation from) Latin and French, unlike most other texts from the earliest Middle English period (M1). Among the adverbs, the only direct loan from French is the singular instance of the stance adverb *certes* (l. 1769), emphasizing the proposition of the main clause ‘that’s true’.

- (11) “*Certes*,” cwaþ þe hule, “þat is soð: þeos riche men wel mucche misdoð, [...] (*O & N*, 1769)  
‘Certainly, said the Owl, that’s true. These wealthy men/people do much wrong ...’

In its use of only two stance adverbs, *O & N* corresponds to the findings of Swan (1988; 1989) and Lenker (2010), namely that stance adverbs only become more frequent at the end of the Middle English or beginning of the Early Modern English period. Both researchers have also found that the only stance adverbs attested earlier are so-called truth-intensifiers, such as *certes* or *iwis* (< OE *gewis*; 5 instances; l. 35, 118, 1189, 1335, 1443).

- (12) An wite, *iwis*, hwuch beo þe gome [...] (*O & N*, 1769)  
‘And know for sure about the sport [...]

At first glance, another candidate of a stance adverbial may be one adverb in *-liche*, namely *sikerliche* (l. 1139); the textual context, however, reveals that it is not a sentence adverb, but a manner adverb modifying *wite* ‘know’:

- (13) Nu þu miȝt wite *sikerliche*  
 þat þine leches boþ grisliche (*O & N*, 1139–1140)  
 ‘Now you may know for sure / that your appearance is grisly’

We thus have only 2 adverbs (5 tokens) in stance adverbial function. This function is commonly not expressed by adverbs, but by prepositional phrases, such as *mid riȝte* ‘properly, justly, rightly’ (12 instances). Note, however, that also these prepositional phrases are mostly truth-intensifiers, since uncertainty is mostly expressed in the verb phrase in early Middle English, either by the subjunctive or by impersonal verb construction with the verb *thinche* ‘it seems / seemed to me / you ...’ (cf., e.g., *O & N*, l. 225, 840, 1787; see also example (18b.) below).

With regard to the other sub-type of sentence adverbial which has been identified as a recent layer, namely linking adverbials, we see that *O & N* does not use any derived adverb for this function but employs so-called ‘ambiguous adverbs/conjunctions’ such as *for*, also in complex forms such as *vor-þat*, *vor-þi*, *vor-þon* ‘conj. because; adv. for’. Others, such as *eft* ‘then’ or *nu* ‘now’ may serve as manner adverbs (time) or linking adverbials. Unambiguous forms are *hure* ‘at least; especially’ (< OE *huru*; l. 11, 481) and *þar-uore* ‘therefore’ as well as other forms of so-called *here/there*-compounds (Österman 1997; Lenker 2010) which can also work on the local level of discourse and hence need not connect sentences or stretches of discourse. These are a new formation pattern in early Middle English texts, replacing the Old English patterns. In these formation patterns, too, *O & N* clearly shows idiomatic patterns of early Middle English.

#### 4.2.3 Adverbs in *The Owl and the Nightingale* – Forms

Among the about 160 adverbial types<sup>20</sup> and the about 900 tokens of adverbs in *O & N*, there are only 13 types (15 tokens; TTR (type-token ratio) 0.86) of de-adjectival adverbs in *-liche* (i.e. less than 2 per cent; compared to 33 per cent adverbs in *-ly* in today’s English FICTION; see Biber et al. 2021: 537). Adverbs in *-e*, i.e. following the earlier morphological pattern inherited from Germanic/Old English, are attested in 31 types and 107 instances (TTR

<sup>20</sup> This calculation rests on the glossaries of the editions by Stanley (1960) and Cartlidge (2001) and my analysis of the text. The type count includes compound forms (this is why I say “about”). I do not give a precise number of the tokens, though, because of the extraordinarily large number of ambiguous adverbs/conjunctions, none of which, however, is formed in *-e* or *-liche* (see Section 4.2.2).

0.28); if we exclude the forms of *suþe* (with spelling variants *swiþe*, *sviþe*, *swiþ*, *swuþe*, *suiþe*) used as intensifiers, we arrive at 31 types and 94 instances (TTR 0.32; *suiþe* is attested once in its full lexical meaning ‘quickly’, l. 376).

#### 4.2.4 De-adjectival Adverbs in *-e*

Tab. 4 and 5 list all of the de-adjectival adverbs in *O & N*. As noted above, adverbs in *-e* (Tab. 4) are much more frequent than those in *-liche* (Tab. 5) in this idiomatic early Middle English text. They also have a much higher token number, even if we exclude the intensifier *suþe* (see Section 4.2.3). The only ‘dual adverb’ in this text is *derne* – *dernliche* ‘secretly’.

Tab. 4 furthermore allows a comparison of the attestations of adverbs to the adjectives they are derived from; in order to test the suggestion by earlier research (see Section 3.2) that the emergence of the more salient adverbial suffix *-liche* is grounded in ambiguities with forms of adjectives, the right-hand column lists both the adjective lemma and, more importantly, the attestations of homonymic forms of adverb and inflected adjective (i.e. cases where both adverb and inflected adjective end in *-e*). All in all, the only ambiguous cases are the adverb/adjective forms cited as examples (5) and (6) above (*starke*, *stronge* and *nowe*), but none of these give rise to any potential for semantic or pragmatic mis-understanding.

This shows that the forms in *-liche* are not used to disambiguate any of the items attested in identical form in the highly idiomatic *O & N*. A purely formal reason for the emergence of adverbial *-liche* (see Section 3.2) is thus not evinced by this study of adverbs in *O & N*.

**Tab. 4:** *O & N*: Adverbs in *-e*<sup>21</sup>

Adverb	Adjective
<i>brihte</i> ‘clearly’ (1245, 1656)	<i>briȝt</i> (form <i>briȝte</i> 240, 250, 1681)
<i>coue</i> ‘swiftly’ (379)	
<i>derne</i> ‘in the dark’ (1357)	
<i>faire</i> ‘well, agreeable’ (924, 1556)	<i>fair</i> (form <i>faire</i> 1046, 1338)
<i>faste</i> ‘tight, firmly’ (656, 796)	
<i>ȝeorne</i> ‘eagerly’ (538, 661, 1352, 1581)	

<sup>21</sup> ME *iliche* (< OE *gelice*) ‘immutably, continually’ (l. 618, 718) is excluded because of its different formation pattern. No line numbers are given for the adjectives *heh* and *rad/rade* because they are phonetically (or rather: orthographically) so different from the adverb forms that there is no reason for alleging ambiguity.



Adverb	Adjective
<i>ʒomere</i> ‘mournfully, dolefully’ (415)	
<i>heʒe</i> ‘high, loud’ (989, 1646)	<i>heh</i>
<i>ihende</i> ‘near, close’ (1131)	
<i>ilome</i> ‘often, repeatedly’ (49, 290, 1211 etc.; 6 instances)	
<i>lome</i> (1545)	
<i>loʒe</i> ‘low’ (1052, 1456)	
<i>longe</i> ‘long’ (41, 81, 253 etc.; 16 instances)	<i>long</i> (form <i>longe</i> : 45, 140, 331, 334, 523, 790, 857, 1591)
<i>lude</i> ‘loud’ (112, 141, 982, 1255)	<i>lud</i> (form <i>lude</i> 314)
<i>narewe</i> ‘closely’ (68)	<i>narewe</i> (377)
<i>nowe</i> ‘newly’ (1129 – or adj.)	
<i>raþe</i> ‘soon, quickly’ (1086, 1147, 1700)	<i>rad/rade</i>
<i>scharpe</i> ‘shrilly’ (141)	<i>scharp</i> (form <i>scharpe</i> 153, 1676)
<i>schille</i> ‘piercingly’ (1656)	<i>schille</i> (142, 558, 1721)
<i>sore</i> ‘sorely, bitterly’ (885, 1150, 1352 etc.; 8 instances)	<i>sore</i> (540, 689, 690 etc.; 6 instances)
<i>starke</i> (1176 or adj.)	<i>starc</i> (form <i>starke</i> 524, 1176 or adv.)
<i>sterne</i> ‘sternly’ (112)	
<i>stille</i> ‘still’ (282, 655, 1019, 1255)	<i>stille</i> (261, 546, 979)
<i>stronge</i> ‘strong’ (254, 972) – or adj. (12)	<i>strong</i> (form <i>stronge</i> 155, 269, 524, 1082, 1176, 1684)
<i>suþe</i> ‘extremely, very, strongly’ (2, 12, 155 etc.; 22 instances)	
<i>suiþe</i> ‘quickly’ (376)	
<i>þicke</i> ‘thick’ (430)	<i>þicke</i> (17, 587, 580, 616, noun ‘undergrowth’ 1626)
<i>þunne</i> ‘thinly’ (1529)	
<i>unneaþe</i> ‘nearly, with difficulty’ (1605)	<i>unneaþe</i> (1618)
<i>unwreste</i> ‘badly’ (342)	<i>unwreste</i> (178, 1170)
<i>uuuele</i> ‘badly, wickedly’ (63, 1206)	<i>uuel</i> (form <i>vuele</i> 247, 1171, 1172, 1376)
<i>wide</i> ‘far and wide’ (288, 300, 430, 710)	
<i>wroþe</i> ‘angrily, wickedly, cruelly’ (63, 415, 972, 1360, 1529)	<i>wroþ</i> (form <i>wroþe</i> 1145)
<b>Compounds</b>	
<i>ouer-longe</i> ‘for too long’ (450)	
<i>ouer-swipe</i> ‘excessively’ (1518)	

The comparison of adverbs in *-e* and their formally identical adjectives in *-e* in Tab. 4 does not support the alleged formal reasons of disambiguation suggested for the emergence of adverbial *-liche*. For none of the potentially ambiguous adverbs (i.e. those showing formal identity between inflected adjectives in *-e* and adverbs in *-e*) do we find an adverb in *-liche*,

which would have been more salient in its adverbial form. The only case of a dual adverb – *derne* and *dernliche* – are not attested in homonymic form in the text. Again, this suggests that semantic (rather than formal) constraints may have been a key factor in the emergence (and subsequent spread) of the English adverbial signature *-ly*.

We will start with a discussion of the adverbs in *-e*. Apart from the intensifier *suþe* ‘very’, *O & N*’s adverbs in *-e* are circumstance adverbs used in their concrete, non-figurative sense. This can be seen in the many examples of *longe* ‘a long time’ (14), an adverb which shows historical continuity in being ‘flat’, i.e. does not have any ending in Present-Day English (cf. PDE *It won’t last long*; Pullum & Huddleston 2017: 568–569).

- |      |  |                          |
|------|--|--------------------------|
| (14) | And warp a word þarafter <i>longe</i> (45)       | (Rhyme: <i>songe</i> )   |
|      | Þarmid þu clackes oft and <i>longe</i> (81)      | (Rhyme: <i>songe</i> )   |
|      | Þos Hule luste <i>suþe longe</i> (253)           | (Rhyme: <i>stronge</i> ) |
|      | Eurich murȝþe mai so <i>longe</i> ileste (341)   |                          |
|      | Þat <i>longe</i> abid þar him nod nis (466) etc. |                          |

This semantic profile also fits *fast* ‘firmly’ (15), also a flat adverb in Present-Day English, showing historical continuity from Old English onwards in its concrete meaning (cf. OE *fæste* ‘firmly’ in (8) contrasting with *fæstlice* ‘strictly; urgently’).

- (15) 3if tueie men goþ to wraslinge  
 An eiþer oþer *faste* þringe (*O & N*, 795–796)  
 ‘If two men go to a wrestling match / and each of them throws the other firmly down’

The semantic profile of adverbs in *-ly* had to be verified especially for the potentially abstract/figurative and thus subjective ones such as *suiþe* (circumstance adverb ‘quickly’ in (16)), which is more often used as the intensifier ‘very’, and *ȝorne* ‘eagerly’ ((17); cf. German subjective *gerne* ‘with pleasure’, signalling the speaker’s attitude towards a directive):

- (16) He gengþ wel *suiþe* awaiwart (*O & N*, 376)  
 ‘He goes quickly away’
- (17) An secheþ *ȝorne* to þe warme. (*O & N*, 538)  
 ‘And seek eagerly for a warm place’  
 An *ȝeorne* fondeþ hu heo muhe (*O & N*, 1581)  
 ‘And eagerly strives ...’

4.2.5 De-adjectival Adverbs in *-liche*

In order to substantiate the claim in the focus of this study, we will now have a closer look at the instances of adverbial *-liche* in order to establish their semantics and test the specific subjective meaning of manner adverbs in *-liche*.

**Tab. 5:** *O & N:* Adverbs in *-liche*

<i>boldeliche</i> ‘boldly, courageously’ (401, 1707)
<i>dernliche</i> ‘secretly’ (1423)
<i>fuliche</i> ‘completely, quite’ (1687)
<i>gideliche</i> ‘foolishly, madly’ (1282)
<i>grimliche</i> ‘fiercely’ (1332)
<i>hardeliche</i> ‘bravely’ (402)
<i>hwatliche</i> ‘actively, quickly’ (1708)
<i>ikundeliche</i> ‘naturally, by natural instinct’ (1424)
<i>liztliche</i> ‘easily’ (854); ‘casually, negligently’ (1774)
<i>misliche</i> ‘irregularly’ (1773)
<i>opeliche</i> ‘openly’ (853)
<i>readliche</i> ‘readily’ (1281)
<i>sikerliche</i> ‘for certain’ (1139)

Just as the Old English adverbs in *-lice*, these adverbs in ME *-liche* have a low token number. Most of the translations in Tab. 5 indicate the particularly subjective meanings of these adverbs in *-liche*. As noted above, the only dual adverb attested in both forms in *O & N* is *derne* – *dernliche* ‘secretly’. The passages featuring *derne* – *dernliche* are, for that matter, the least obvious ones as concerns a semantic distinction.<sup>22</sup> We might relate this to Donner’s finding that the semantic constraint is a “freely disregarded convention” rather than a fixed rule (Donner 1991: 7). A closer look at the instances in context, however, shows that the meaning of *dernliche* (18a.) implies a particularly subjective stance by the speaker; the girl is qualified not only as loving ‘secretly’, but in – so the belief or attitude of the narrator – in a prohibited or even ‘sly’ way (*MED* s.v. *derne* 3c ‘stealthily, slyly’). In (18b.), the subjective stance is not expressed by the adverb, but by the verb *þenche* ‘it may seem to her’ (see Sections 3.3. and 4.1.3 on verbal markings of subjectivity in Middle English).

<sup>22</sup> The other adverb not fitting the figurative/subjective semantic profile of adverbs in *-liche* is *icundliche* ‘by nature’ (*O & N*, l. 1424). This was clearly formed as a calque on Latin *naturaliter* in Old English (cf. *DOE* s.v. *gecyndelice*); on such calques, see Section 4.1.1.

- (18) a. 3ef maide luueþ *dernliche*,  
 heo stumpeþ & falþ *icundeliche*:  
 for þah heo sum hwile pleie,  
 heo nis nout feor ut of þe weie; (*O & N*, 1423–1426)  
 ‘If a girl loves secretly, / she will trip and fall because of her nature/naturally; / for  
 although she plays round for a while, / she is not far off course’.
- b. 3ef wimmon þencheþ luuie *derne*,  
 [ne] mai ich mine songes werne. (*O & N*, 1357–1358)  
 ‘If women think / it seems to women they can love secretly, / I can[not] withhold my  
 song’.

In our examination of the Old English texts (*ThCap1* and *ThCap2*), we have also seen that the forms in *-e* (such as *clæne* ‘purely’ and *fæste* ‘vigorously’; see Section 4.1.3 ) can acquire figurative meanings in addition to their concrete ones, so that we are not dealing with a fixed rule in these cases. Adverbs on *-liche*, by contrast, are generally more subjective in that their employment is based in the speaker’s subjective belief or attitude toward the proposition.

In order to provide some more support for the specific semantic profile of adverbs in *-liche*, we will compare some of *O & N*’s adverbs in *-liche* to their counterparts in *-e* (if attested at all in the *MED*),<sup>23</sup> as was done above for the Old English examples from the more independent Old English version of the *Theodulfi Capitula*, *ThCap1* (examples (8)–(10)).

- (19) *opeliche* ‘obviously’ – *lihtliche* ‘easily’  
 Ac hit is alre wnder mest  
 Ðat þu darst liȝe so *opeliche*.  
 Wenest þu hi bringe so *lihtliche*  
 To Godes riche al singinge? (*O & N*, 852–855)  
 ‘But it’s really astonishing / that you dare to tell such an obvious lie. / Do you expect to  
 bring them [= humankind] so easily / to God’s kingdom, all singing?’
- a. adverb *open*:  
 He strak þe Duk in þe schelde, Wyde *opyn* in þe felde (*MED*; c1440 Degrev. (Thrn) 1310)  
 ‘He stroke the duke [...] wide open in the field’
- b. adverb *liht(e)*:  
 [...] and liȝt armed (*MED*; a1450(1408) \*Vegetius(1) (Dc 291) 76b)  
 ‘[...] and lightly armed’

<sup>23</sup> *Sikerliche* is discussed above as example (13).

In comparison with *open* and *lizt*, the subjective meanings of *opeliche* and *liztliche* are evident: It is the speaker's (= the Owl's) belief that makes her accuse the interlocutor of lying, since this lie is evident to her; this subjectivity also applies for qualifying the Nightingale's attempts to bring humankind to God's kingdom by *liztliche* 'easily'.

Such a subjective meaning is also obvious in *hardeliche* 'bravely' in (20), and perhaps also in *boldeliche* (also 20), which is interpreted as 'courageously' (i.e. a speaker perspective reflecting the attitude of the speaker towards the proposition) in the glossaries and translations.

- (20) Ac nopeles he spac *boldeliche*;  
 Vor he is wis þat *hardeliche*  
 Wiþ is uo berþ grete ilete  
 Þat he uor areþe hit ne forlete: (O & N, 401–404)  
 'But nevertheless she spoke out courageously; / because it is wise to put on a brave show /  
 in front of one's enemy rather than giving up out of cowardice'.

The negative speaker attitude on the proposition is evident in *misliche* 'unfairly' and – again – *lihtliche* in (21). Here, the subjective quality of the semantics of the adverbs is further highlighted by the intensifier *wel*, which premodifies both adverbs.

- (21) “Certes,” cwaþ þe Hule, “þat is soð,  
 Þeos riche men wel mucche misdoð  
 Þat letēþ þane gode mon,  
 Þat of so feole þinge con,  
 An ȝiueþ rente wel *misliche*,  
 An of him letēþ wel *lihtliche*; (O & N, 1769–1774)  
 “‘To be sure,’ said the owl, “that’s true; [1770] / these powerful men act very wrongly /  
 when they neglect that good man / who knows about so many things, / and distribute  
 income very *unfairly*, / and don't take him *seriously*”.

It will not have escaped the reader that all the instances of *-liche*, are found in the end rhymes, either with an inflected adjective (*grisliche* in (12)) or another adverb in *-liche*. While this may impair the individual analysis, it should not be overrated, since – as has been noted above in Section 4.2.1 – there is much freedom in O & N as concerns stress patterns. Also, the examples collected in (14), of which there would have been many more,

show the preference of the author of *O & N* for rhyming pairs of adverbs (or adverb and inflected adjective).<sup>24</sup>

## 5. Conclusions

The detailed textual analysis of adjectives and adverbs ending in *-e* and *-liche* (later *-ly*) in late Old English and early Middle English texts aimed to shed light on one of the open morphological questions in the history of English, namely the fact that neither the early Old and Middle English history of what is now the English ‘adverbial signature’ *-ly* nor the exact date and reasons for its remarkable spread are fully understood, even though the suffix *-ly* is unique to English among the Germanic languages and even though its emergence seems to contradict general trends of language change in English, the loss of inflectional endings and the fact that English is otherwise happy to allow zero-derivation. My examination of the forms could show that the alleged reason for the emergence and spread of adverbial *-liche* (cf. Mustanoja 1960: 314; Pounder 2001: 316–319), namely an ‘ambiguity of forms’ between inflected adjectives ending in *-e* and adverbs ending in *-e* in early Middle English, can be ruled out: In the early Middle English texts, there are only very few cases of ambiguity and none of them has any potential for misunderstanding.

The present study thus adopted another perspective related to recent synchronic and diachronic research (Tagliamonte 2018; Lenker *forthc. a*), which has focussed on the contrasting semantic profiles of manner adverbs marked by *-e* (suffixless in Present-Day English; concrete meaning) and those marked by OE *-lice* / ME *-liche* / PDE *-ly* (figurative, subjective meanings). These contrasting semantic profiles have their origin in the fact that Germanic complex adjectives in *-lic* (the basis for later re-analysed adverbial *-ly*) are commonly more abstract or figurative and more subjective than their parallel forms without *-lic* (cf. *biter* ‘having a bitter taste’ vs. *biterlic* ‘painful’ or *heard* ‘hard’ vs. *heardlic* ‘tough, hardy; resolute’) (see Section 3.2). From the comprehensive contextual studies of two eleventh-century Old English translations of the Latin *Theodulfi Capitula* and the early

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<sup>24</sup> The analyses of other early Middle English poetry in Lenker (*forthc. b*) – among them *Havelok the Dane*, *King Horn* and *Floris and Blancheflour* – have confirmed the contrasting profiles for adverbs in *-e* vs. those in *-liche*. The predominance of adverbs in *-liche* in rhyme-end position is much less frequent in the other poems, however, and thus peculiar to *O & N*.

Middle English poem *The Owl and the Nightingale*, it emerges that the suffix *-lice* had become – morphologically – “the real indication of the adverbial function” (Jespersen 1948: 408) already in Old English (when adjectives and adverbs show negligible ambiguity), but primarily in mechanistic translations in calques marking the morphology of Latin de-adjectival adverbs (*ThCap2*). *ThCap1* and, in particular, *The Owl in the Nightingale*, definitely support the claim for a “historical continuity” in a semantic constraint in manner adverbs from Old English to Present-Day English dialects (Tagliamonte 2018). In texts independent of Latin or French models, such as the *O & N*, adverbs in *-ly* are generally characterized by their figurative and, generally, subjective meaning, which – ultimately – also reinforced their widespread and diversified uses of English adverbs in *-ly* as linking, and in particular, stance adverbials.

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