
From Middle to Early Modern English Exclusives

Olena Andrushenko
Zhytomyr State University

and.olenka@gmail.com

Exclusive adverbials focus on the words they modify, restricting the applicability of what is said to a focused sentence constituent. While in OE this class of adverbials was represented by three morphologically related items, i.e. *an*, *for an* and *þæt an*, later periods demonstrate that their number quadrupled (Nevalainen 1991). Despite the extensive research on ME and EModE *ane* 'only', functioning as the most typical exclusive adverbial (Brinton 2017), other exclusives emerging in this period require further investigation. Alongside with *ane* 'only' the present paper reports on the study of ME (EModE) *merely*, *simply*, *wholly*, *utterly* and *plainly*, functioning as Focus markers.

Adverbials under analysis infrequently occur in their exclusive meaning in ME texts: e.g. among 3,570 *ane* instances as little as 4.68% render this adverbial meaning and among 1835 sentences with *onli*, 43.7% exemplify its usage as an exclusive. For other elements the data are as follows: *holli* 'wholly' – 304 out of 2,625 tokens (11.58 %); *outreli* 'utterly' – 178 examples among 419 matches (42.48%); *plainli* – 127 with reference to 459 illustrations (27.67%); *simpli* – 108 based on 343 examples (31.49%); *mere(ly)* 12 out of 193 illustrations (6.22%). EModE findings from EEBO show that *only* considerably scales up its exclusive meaning – 79.33% (644,109 matches), whereas the same functioning of other ME adverbials remains identical, viz. *simply* 29.8% (18,346 instances), *plainly* 18.51% (54,942 tokens), *wholly* 11.79% (58,957 examples). The usage of exclusive *merely* tripled (23.08%), whereas *utterly* is used in 2.61% illustrations.

The instances represent declarative clauses tested in terms of two oppositions: Old vs. New information (Haug et al. 2014), Topic vs. Focus, with regard to different Focus types (Krifka 2007). The investigation studies the most typical word orders (WOs) in terms of highlighting discourse and hearer old information. Thus, to stress upon old information in ME, exclusive post-modifying placement is more characteristic, while adverbial antecedence is typical for marking sentence element that represents new information. Either information-structural type demonstrates a characteristic WO pattern, specifically SVO←ADV (old information) and S(v)V ADV→O (new information). Within EModE this tendency is not so vivid, since WO is more rigidly syntactically defined with prevailing adverbial antecedence.

References: • Brinton, Laurel. 2017. *The Evolution of Pragmatic Markers in English: Pathways of Change*. Cambridge: CUP. • Haug, Dag, Eckhoff, Hanne & Welo, Erik. 2014. The theoretical foundations of givenness annotation, In *Information Structure and Syntactic Change in Germanic and Romance Languages*, Kristin Bech & Kristine Gunn Eide (eds), 17-52. Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publ. • Krifka, Manfred. 2007. Basic notions of information structure. *Interdisciplinary Studies on Information Structure* 6: 13-55. • Nevalainen, Terttu. 1991. *BUT, ONLY, JUST: Focusing Adverbial Change in Modern English 1500-1900*. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.