Chapter 4
Old English: 450 - 1150
18 August 2013

As discussed in Chapter 1, the English language had its start around 449, when Germanic tribes came to England and settled there. Initially, the native Celtic inhabitants and newcomers presumably lived side-by-side and the Germanic speakers adopted some linguistic features from the original inhabitants. During this period, there is Latin influence as well, mainly through missionaries from Rome and Ireland. The existing evidence about the nature of Old English comes from a collection of texts from a variety of regions: some are preserved on stone and wood monuments, others in manuscript form.

The current chapter focusses on the characteristics of Old English. In section 1, we examine some of the written sources in Old English, look at some special spelling symbols, and try to read the runic alphabet that was sometimes used. In section 2, we consider (and listen to) the sounds of Old English. In sections 3, 4, and 5, we discuss some Old English grammar. Its most salient feature is the system of endings on nouns and verbs, i.e. its synthetic nature. Old English vocabulary is very interesting and creative, as section 6 shows. Dialects are discussed briefly in section 7 and the chapter will conclude with several well-known Old English texts to be read and analyzed.

1 Sources and spelling

We can learn a great deal about Old English culture by reading Old English recipes, charms, riddles, descriptions of saints’ lives, and epics such as Beowulf. Most remaining texts in Old English are religious, legal, medical, or literary in nature.

Old English texts are divided along geographic lines into Northumbrian, Mercian, West-Saxon, and Kentish, as we will discuss in section 7; they can also be categorized in terms of whether they were written in early or late Old English and whether they are poetry or prose. Most evidence of older Old English comes from northern poetic texts such as the Northumbrian version of Caedmon’s Hymn (Appendix B). Most evidence of later Old English comes from southern prose texts such as Alfred’s Orosius (Appendix C) or the works of Ælfric. For some manuscripts—Beowulf, for example—a dialect and date of composition cannot be firmly established. These factors make it hard to compare dialect, genre, and age. A partial list of works in Old English is provided in Table 4.1.
\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Beowulf.} Mixed dialect Northumbrian/West Saxon; manuscript from c.1000 but based on earlier version. \\
\textbf{Lindisfarne Gospels.} Northumbrian interlinear gloss; c.950. \\
\textbf{Rushworth Glosses.} Interlinear gloss; c.970. Matthew is Mercian; Mark, Luke and John are Northumbrian. \\
\textbf{The Junius Manuscript.} Written between the 7th and 10th centuries (some argue partly by the Caedmon poet); compiled towards the late 10th; contains \textit{Genesis, Exodus, Christ and Satan}. \\
\textbf{The Exeter Book.} Early poetry; contains \textit{Riddles, Wulf and Eadwacer, The Wanderer}, and the \textit{Seafarer}. \\
\textbf{Gregory's Pastoral Care.} Early West Saxon, late 9th century, ascribed to King Alfred. \\
\textbf{Boethius and Orosius.} Early West-Saxon, ascribed to King Alfred. \\
\textbf{Homilies}, by Aelfric. West Saxon, circa 1000. \\
\textbf{Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.} Many versions, one composed in Peterborough that continues to 1154. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Some works in Old English}
\end{table}

The scribes who copied and illustrated the manuscripts worked mainly in monasteries. The manuscripts are often exquisite works of art.

These works were written on \textit{vellum}, very expensive thin leather. Books were therefore owned by a monastery, a church, or a wealthy person and were typically versions of the Bible, prayer books, school books, manuals of various kinds, and music scores. \textbf{Facsimile editions}, such as the one in Figure 4.1, enable us to see what the text looked like (if we can’t get to museums or libraries where the originals are kept). There is a word-by-word gloss of Figure 4.1 at the end of section 4. Try to read a little! Looking at facsimile editions or originals is important because these works are often modernized by editors when they appear in anthologies and scholarly editions.
Figure 4.1: \textit{Beowulf} facsimile, reprinted with permission

Other Old English texts are available in transliterated form (i.e. not as facsimiles) at \url{www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html}. There are also corpora (with selections of texts) such as the Helsinki Corpus (or HC). The Dictionary of Old English project from the University of Toronto makes available (for a fee; \url{www.doe.utoronto.ca}) the 2,000 or so Old English texts we have left and contains three million Old English words. It is also available electronically at libraries that subscribe to the Dictionary of Old English Corpus.

Most Old English texts, especially manuscripts such as \textit{Beowulf}, use a \textbf{modified Roman alphabet}. This alphabet was introduced by Irish missionaries and the letter shapes are not identical to those of Modern English. For instance, there is an \textit{æ} (called \textit{ash}), a runic letter \textit{þ} (called \textit{thorn}), and a \textit{ð} (called \textit{eth}). The last two are used interchangeably. Originally, a \textit{w} was written as one \textit{u} or
two u symbols (hence the term double u), but it is also written using a runic p (and called wynn or wen). Capital letters are often absent as are most punctuation marks. Abbreviations are frequently used, e.g. 7 stands for and (see Appendix A) as does &, to save space and effort. As you can see in Figure 4.1, not much space is wasted. Try to find some of the special symbols in Figure 4.1 by using the summary in Table 4.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>sound</th>
<th>word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>ash</td>
<td>[æ]</td>
<td>hwæt 'what'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þ</td>
<td>thorn</td>
<td>[θ or ð]</td>
<td>þat 'that'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ð</td>
<td>eth</td>
<td>[θ or ð]</td>
<td>ðat 'that'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʒ</td>
<td>yogh</td>
<td>mostly [j]</td>
<td>maniʒ 'many'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þ</td>
<td>wynn or wen</td>
<td>[w]</td>
<td>þe 'we'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u(u)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>[w]</td>
<td>uuerc 'work'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>[y]</td>
<td>syððan 'since'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or &amp;</td>
<td>--/ampersand</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>'and'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Special symbols in Old English (-- indicates no special name/sound)

Both hwæt and we in the first line of Figure 4.1 contain wynns. An ash occurs in hwæt (line 1), a thorn in peod (line 2), and an eth in ða (line 3). The c symbol in cyninga (line 2) represents the [k] sound, as it still does in certain Modern English words. The ʒ in dazum (line 2) is more complex. It originates from an Irish letter called the yogh and normally represents a [j] but, before back vowels, it represents a voiced velar fricative ([ɣ]), a sound that Modern English lacks. This symbol can also be seen in lines 2 and 3. The y in cyninga (line 2) is a vowel represented in the phonetic alphabet as [y]; it probably sounded like the u in French or the ü in German, an [i] pronounced with rounded lips. Some texts put length markers on the vowels, but we will not do that.

In addition to manuscripts, Old English is preserved in carvings on wood and stone from the 7th century, as shown in Figure 4.2. These inscriptions use the runic alphabet. We will look at an example but will not actually use this alphabet in reading Old English texts. The runic alphabet, or futhorc, was in use through large areas of Europe and is probably an adaptation of the Etruscan or Phoenician alphabet (for an argument in favor of Phoenician, read Vennemann 2011). A key to the runes can be found in Figure 4.3 (see also www.omniglot.com/writing/runic.htm); you can see that the first six letters give you the word futhorc. Try to decipher the letters in Figure 4.2.
Using the alphabet, we can see that the inscription in Figure 4.2 reads as in (1).

(1) \textit{folcæarærdonbecbiddahfoteæpelmun}

The words are not spelled separately, which makes them harder to read. Are there any modern English words you recognize in (1)? We will come back to this sentence in section 3. For now, a word-for-word gloss and free translation are provided in (2).

(2) People reared beacon pray for Aethelmund

'People put up a sign and pray for Aethelmund'.

Next we turn to some linguistic characteristics of Old English—first sounds, then morphology and syntax. From this point on, we will use the modified alphabet, not the runes.
2  Old English Sounds

In this section, we’ll discuss four sound changes that take place in Old English: voicing and palatalization affect consonants; breaking and fronting (or umlaut) affect vowels. Many more processes affect vowels, but it is impossible to examine them all. We will also mention that the effects of the GVS have to be reversed in order to pronounce Old English more accurately. Alliteration, a poetic device that links sentences through the use of words starting with the same sound (probably to remember them better), will also be brought up.

When discussing the first line of Caedmon's Hymn in Chapter 1, repeated here as (3), we noticed that the $v$ of heaven is written as an $f$ in hefaen. How does it sound in the version you have available (at http://www.wwnton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm)?

(3) Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard

It sounds as a [v]. Remnants of this voicing phenomenon ([f] > [v]) can be seen in the spelling and pronunciation of wife [waif], half, knife [najf], wulf, and leaf with an $f$ and [f] in word-final position but with a $v$ and [v] in the plural—wives, halves, knives, wulves, and leaves—when it is in between two vowels. Be careful not to be deceived by the silent-e in the spelling! Final voiced fricatives, as in (to) love [lɔv], to house [hawz], and to bath [bejð], are the result of keeping the voiced sound even after the final vowel was deleted.

Old English only has $v$, $z$ and $ð$ in certain positions, mostly in between two vowels, but not at the beginning or end of a word. We won’t go into the precise environments where voicing appeared but it is important to see the interplay between internal and external change. Old English had a more limited use of $v$, $z$, and $ð$ but because of an influx of French words, the $v$ sounds was introduced in more positions in the word. See Minkova (2011) for an account of what may have really happened.

If we look up the origin of words with an initial $z$ or $v$ in the OED, we see that most are loans. The loans from French or Latin are listed in (4), and the loans from Greek or other languages that start with a [z] in (5).

(4) very, veal, vase, virtue, voice, vote, vehement, village, vacant, vaccine, veil, vacuum, vain, value, vanish, variety, varnish, veer, venture, verb, vex, view, vile, villain, visible, vital, vocal, vulture, vulnerable

(5) zoo, zodiac, zebra, zephyr, zed, zeal, zenith, zinc, zombi, zone, zigzag, zinc
The influx of new words, which begins in the Old English period—with Latin used in the church and before that during the Roman occupation—is given a real boost after 1066, when many new words appear either from French or from Latin via French. Some of these only appear later, e.g. *zigzag* and *zinc* are introduced in 1651 and 1712 respectively.

The influx of new words is due to an external cause—contact with other languages. The loans have a profound influence on the sound system of English: several sounds are added to what we call the phoneme inventory, thus causing an internal change. Internal factors helped stabilize the voiced fricative, e.g. the loss of a word-final vowel. Millward (1996: 147-8) discusses other factors contributing to this, such as the voicing of fricatives in some dialects.

A second sound change in Old English is **palatalization**, which occurs in many other languages as well. We have seen a few examples in chapter 2, Table 2.4. Starting in early Old English, the velars spelled sc, c, and g and pronounced [sk], [k], and [g] are fronted to [ʃ], [tʃ], and [j] respectively, as shown in Table 4.3, in particular before a front vowel (The velar sounds are not fronted before back vowels, as in *cool*).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE spelling</th>
<th>pronunciation</th>
<th>OE pronunciation</th>
<th>ModE spelling</th>
<th>ModE pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sc</td>
<td>[sk]</td>
<td></td>
<td>sh</td>
<td>[ʃ], as in: scip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>[k]</td>
<td></td>
<td>tch</td>
<td>[tʃ], as in: dic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>[g]</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>[j], as in: geolwe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Palatalization

A few more examples involve Old English *skirt* becoming *shirt*, *disc*→*dish*, *shirt*, *skatter*→*shatter*, *kirk*→*church*, and *egg*→*eye*. *Skirt* and *egg* still exist in Modern English because other Germanic languages did not undergo palatalization and, when Scandinavian came into contact with English, English borrowed the non-palatalized versions. Some of these words come to co-exist (*disk* and *dish* and *skirt* and *shirt*) with different meanings, while in other cases one of the two forms 'wins', as we'll see in Chapter 5.

There are two other rules that will be pointed out whenever relevant—breaking and vowel fronting. They are complex and interact with numerous other rules. **Breaking** occurs when the front vowels ae, e and i become diphthongs, i.e. are broken into two sounds, before certain consonants, as in shown in Table 4.4, where the changes in spelling are indicated.

- **i** > io/eo before l or r and a C, as in seolfe ‘self’
- **e** > eo or
Examples of breaking are æld and hælf becoming eald and healf, werc becoming weorc, and Picts becoming Peohtas. This rule applies when the vowel is followed by an /l/ or /r/ and another consonant or when the vowel is followed by an /h/ (Campbell 1959: 56). It is an assimilatory change in that the second half of the diphthong is a back vowel and the change occurs before consonants that are further back. Breaking is supposed to have taken place in Old English around the 7th century, especially in the South (in West Saxon), as you will see in version II of Caedmon's Hymn in Appendix B. Some other words that undergo breaking are bearn 'child', heard 'hard', pealm 'palm', eahta 'eight', and meaht 'might'. As you can see from the Modern English spelling, some of these words are now spelled the way they were before breaking occurred.

The fronting rule, also called i-umlaut, describes what happens when a back or low vowel such as /o/ or /u/ or /a/ precedes an /i/. In Germanic, before English separates from the other Germanic languages, the form for singular mouse is *mus and plural mice is *musi. The fronting of /u/ to /y/ occurs in the plural, before the plural -i, resulting in *mysi.

The i-ending (having caused the fronting) subsequently disappears and the cause of the fronting becomes hidden. The non-fronted and fronted forms thus now form singular and plural pairs in (6a) and intransitive and transitive pairs in (6b).

(6)  a. mouse - mice, louse - lice, goose - geese, foot - feet, tooth - teeth
    b. fall - fell, sit - set

A similar fronting and raising occurs in the pairs man - men, stank - stench, long - length, doom - deem, whole - heal, food - feed. Note that the current pronunciations of the words in (10a) are not established until after the Great Vowel Shift.

When pronouncing Old English, we need to remember that the Great Vowel Shift has not taken place yet. This means that vowels are not pronounced the way they are in Modern English but in a lower position. Thus, name, meet, mine, book, now are pronounced [nəm], [met], [min],
[bok], and [nu], respectively. As mentioned, the g or ʒ needs attention as well. In Old English, it is usually pronounced as [j], e.g. at the end of a word (dæg) and before a front vowel, but as a voiced fricative [ɣ] before back vowels. It is a sound English no longer has. The h in words such as niht, leocht, cniht, ’night, light and knight' respectively, is represented phonetically as [χ], a voiceless velar fricative. The sound is still present in Modern English in the final sound of loch.

Listen now to all of Caedmon's Hymn at http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm. There are a number of versions of this text (see Appendix B); notice if the one in (7) corresponds to the one read.

(7) **Caedmon's Hymn - Northumbrian**

Nu scylun hergan hefanricaes uard
metudes maecti end his modgidanc
uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes 3
eci dryctin or astelidæ
he aerist scop aelda barnum
heben til hrofe haleg scepen 6
tha middunegard moncynnes uard
eci dryctin æfter tiadæ
firum foldu free allmectig 9

Think about some of the issues we have discussed: how are the vowels in hrofe, he, frea, and firum foldu pronounced? Are there words you know: fadur, hrofe, haleg, moncynnes and allmectig? Could barnum be bearnum? What can you say about the spelling of uerc and uundra? Don't worry about the meaning of the entire Hymn yet; it is provided in Appendix B, and we will go over it at the end of the chapter a little. For more on the pronunciation of Old English, see www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/engl401/lessons/pronunc1.htm.

A final point about sounds is alliteration, involving word-initial consonants that are similar. This is mainly relevant to poetic texts. The Old English rules are relatively simple, unlike those of Middle English. In (7), a line such as metudes maecti end his modgidanc is representative. It consists of two halves; the first half can have two alliterating consonants, but the second half line typically only has its first stressed syllable alliterating with the consonants in the first (the [m] is the alliterating sound). A very similar pattern occurs in another line of (7) uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes. What sound alliterates?

The Old English consonants and vowels are provided in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.4 (the four diphthongs are not listed). Note that sounds such as [v, z, ð] only occur in restricted positions. The velar nasal [ŋ] is also the result of assimilation and occurs only before a [k] and [g] in words like singan [singan] ’to sing’. The [χ] and [ɣ] represent voiceless and voiced velar fricatives that Modern English has lost and are spelled in Old English with an h, e.g. seah `saw’ and later as gh, e.g. taught
(and there is even a palatal variant of this fricative in words with front vowels, such as *miht ‘might’).

Compare these sounds with those of Modern English using Table 2.3 and Figure 2.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place:</th>
<th>Manner: stop</th>
<th>fricative</th>
<th>affricate</th>
<th>nasal</th>
<th>liquid</th>
<th>glide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labial</td>
<td>p/b</td>
<td>f/v</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dental</td>
<td>θ/ð</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveolar</td>
<td>t/d</td>
<td>s/z</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>l,r</td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveo-palatal</td>
<td>ʃ ʒ</td>
<td>tʃ/ʒ/ʒ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>velar</td>
<td>k/g</td>
<td>χ/ɣ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>η</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glottal</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Old English consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>i</th>
<th>y</th>
<th>u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vowels</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>æ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>æ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4: Old English vowels (all can be long or short, adapted from Minkova 2005a)

This section discussed four sound changes in Old English: voicing, palatalization, breaking, and fronting. It also provided some information on the pronunciation of Old English and the inventory of sounds.

3 Old English Grammar

Excellent resources on Old English grammar are Campbell (1959), Quirk & Wrenn (1958), and Traugott (1992), and also [http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/resources/IOE/index.html](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/resources/IOE/index.html). The emphasis in this chapter will be on showing that Old English is a synthetic language, using a lot of word endings or inflections to indicate grammatical functions. Section 4 discusses the endings on Old English words—the morphology—and section 5 touches upon a few points on how to build Old English sentences—the syntax. Chapter 2 provided the basic information about the nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative cases and we'll now use that knowledge.

Section 4 provides lists of pronouns, demonstratives, some verbs, some nouns, and adjectives. It is not necessary to memorize these; being able to recognize a few will suffice. For example, the *-as* ending is a plural on some masculine nouns (nominative and accusative) and
becomes the Modern English plural -s. The -e ending is a dative singular, -um the dative plural. Present tense verbs have a second person singular -st ending, and a third person -th ending, the infinitive ends in -an, and the past plural is often -(d)on.

With this knowledge, let's look at a simple sentence, adapted from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (PC) from 874. Which words do you recognize?

(8) he ælfrede cyninge aðas swor & gislas sealde
   'He swore oaths to King Alfred and gave hostages'.

First, notice the -e and -as endings. The -e ending is used for dative case (for which we now use the preposition to) on both ælfrede 'Alfred' and cyninge 'king'. It means something was given to King Alfred. The -as ending shows that aðas 'oaths' and gislas 'hostages' are plural (accusative actually). Sealde 'give' is broader in Old English than in Modern English where sell means 'give in exchange for money'.

Modern English has lost the endings but gained words such as to. To exists in Old English with a very specific locational meaning, but later becomes an indirect object marker, as in I gave it to Marta. This process is called grammaticalization since the lexical meaning gradually disappears and the grammatical meaning prevails. In Old English, the verb is often at the end of the sentence, as in (8), whereas in Modern English it is in the middle, separating the subject and the object.

Equipped with this information, let's examine the runic transcription we discussed earlier, repeated here as (9).

(9) folcæarærdonbecbiddaþfoteæþelmun

A couple of endings that stand out: -don and -aþ, the former being the plural past tense and the latter the plural present tense. If we separate the words, you might find some words you recognize:

(10) folcæ arærdon bec biddaþ fote æþelmun

Folc corresponds to people, as mentioned earlier. Some other words can be guessed: arærdon matches Modern English reared; bec is similar to beacon, and biddaþ is similar to bid. The remaining words, fote and æþelmun, are trickier. Æþelmun is a name and there is probably a 'typo' in fote and it may be fore 'for' instead.

Comparing the endings and number of words between Old and Modern English, we see that the main change between the two stages is that of a language with free word order and many endings but no 'small' words such as the or to becoming a language with strict word order, few
endings and many 'small' words. This change, involving the grammaticalization of prepositions, i.e. the loss of lexical meaning and the increase of grammatical significance, to replace case endings, is formulated in (11).

(11)  **Synthetic** > **Analytic**  
      Case/Inflections > Word Order/Prepositions/Auxiliaries/Articles

We will discuss the actual syntax of Old English in section 5; first, we examine endings in more detail.

4  Old English Morphology

This section will provide some paradigms for Old English. A **paradigm** is a list of forms, e.g. a list of all the cases of a pronoun, which should be familiar from Chapter 2. Use these paradigms as a reference; focus only on the most obvious parts!

The paradigm for **pronouns** is given in Table 4.7. Individual texts vary a great deal in orthography. For instance, *hiene, hine, hyne* are masculine singular accusatives, and *hie, hi*, and *heo* are third person plural nominative and accusative pronouns. The OED lists at least 13 forms of the third person singular masculine pronoun. There is also a rare dual number (used for two people), of which we will only see an example in Appendix E. Since the instrumental case is almost extinct in Old English, that form is left out. Note that *þ* and *ð* can be used interchangeably as the first consonant of second person pronouns (even though only *þ* is used in Table 4.7) as well as of demonstratives (Table 4.8) and verbal endings (Tables 4.13 and 4.14).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>ic</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>min</td>
<td>uncer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>unc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>me/mec</td>
<td>unc(et)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>ge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>þin</td>
<td>ince</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>þe</td>
<td>inc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>þe/þec</td>
<td>inc(it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>he/heo/hit</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(M/F/N)</td>
<td>his/hire/his</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>him/hire/him</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>hine/hi(e)/hit</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Old English pronouns

Instances of some pronouns in *Beowulf* are given in (12) through (15). In (12), *dec* is an accusative because it is the object of *oferswyðan* 'overpower'. Incidentally, notice that the object precedes the verb. Tables 4.13 and 4.14 show that the third person ending on verbs is -(e)ð or --(e)p; this ending in (12) shows that third person *deap* 'death' is the subject, not second person *dec* 'you' (*dec* would also be unlikely since it has accusative case).

(12)  þæt  *dec*  dryhtguma  *deap*  oferswiþ-ep  
      that   2S.ACC mighty.ruler  death  overpower-3S  
      'that death overpowers you, mighty ruler' (*Beowulf* 1768).

In (13), there are three instances of the first person singular nominative *ic*. There is also a plural second person nominative *ge*, which stays around at least until 1600 as *yee* or *ye*.

(13)  *Ic*  eom  *Hroðgar-es*  ar  ond  ombiht  
      I am    Hrothgar-GEN messenger and officer  
      *Ne*  *seah*  *ic*  *elpeodige*  þus  manige  men  midiglicran  
      Never saw I foreign.warriors so many men more.courageous
Also observe the verbs in (13): *eom* is similar to Modern English *am*, and *seah* to *saw*; *sohton* has the plural past ending -*on*, and you can see how it becomes Modern English *sought* by losing this ending and by the *h* becoming silent. Note that Modern English spelling keeps the *h* even though it is no longer pronounced.

The word *ombiht* in the first line of (13) is possibly a loan into Early Germanic from Latin or Celtic, and is later (in the 15th century) reborrowed as *ambassador*. The word *ombudsman* may be a cognate in Swedish, borrowed into Modern English from Swedish in the 20th century. Other words and endings you might recognize are the genitive -*es* on *Hrothgar* and the words for *thus, many, and, that* and *men*. These words stayed in the language and were never replaced by loans. Modern translations of (13) are provided in (14a), (14b), and (14c).

(14)  

a. 'I am Hrothgar's herald and officer. I have never seen so impressive or large an assembly of strangers. [...] must have brought you to Hrothgar'. (Heaney 2000)  
b. 'I am Hrothgar's counselor and friend. How far have you traveled crossed the wave-rolls to come to this door? My wits tell me you are welcome callers'. (Rebsamen 1991)  
c. 'I am Hrothgar's herald and officer. I have not seen strangers - so many men - more bold. I think that it is for [...] that you have sought Hrothgar'. (Donaldson 1966)

You can see a great deal of variation between the different translations. Not only are *herald and officer* in (14a) and (14c) rendered as *counselor and friend* in (14b), (13) as a whole is almost unrecognizable in (14b). However, (14b) has poetic terms such as *waverolls* and alliterating sounds such as *wits* and *welcome* that the other two versions lack.

The nominative feminine pronoun *hio* 'she' is present in (15). *Hio* is an (early) variant of *heo* (but again the OED lists many spelling variants). This sentence also shows that *Beowulf* has an -*e* ending, i.e. dative case, indicating that *Beowulf* is the one to whom the meadcup was brought.

(15)  

*pet hio Beowulf-e ...| ... medoful ætbær*

that she Beowulf-DAT ... meadcup at.bore

'that she brought Beowulf the meadcup.' (*Beowulf* 623-4)

Like Modern English, Old English third person pronouns show masculine, feminine, and neuter gender. Unlike Modern English, Old English also marks grammatical gender on demonstratives,
adjectives, and nouns. The grammatical gender of the noun determines the gender of the
demonstrative and the adjective. Thus, the masculine forms of the demonstrative and adjective are
used before masculine nouns such as cyning 'king'; the feminine forms are used before feminine
nouns such as lufu 'love'; and the neuter forms are used before neuter nouns such as godspel 'gospel'.
The grammatical gender need not correspond to the natural gender of a noun: wif 'woman' and cild
'child' are neuter.

**Reflexive pronouns**, such as myself and himself, do not occur in Old English, except in later
texts. Instead, the regular pronoun is used, such as me in (16).

(16) *Ic on earde bad | ... ne me swor fela*
    I on earth bided ... not me swore wrong
    'I was around on earth ... I never perjured myself' (*Beowulf* 2736-8)

In Old English, the adjective *self* is typically used as an emphatic, as in (17), not as a reflexive.

(17) *æþele cempa self mid gesið-um*
    noble fighter self with follower-DAT.P
    'The noble fighter himself with his followers' (*Beowulf* 1312-3)

*Self*-marked reflexives first occur with the third person in later Old English. There is much
variation, as the two versions of the same text, (18a) and (18b), show; (18a) is from the *Lindisfarne
Gospels* and (18b) from the *Rushworth Gospels*. In (18a), the regular pronoun *him* is used, while in
(18b), the pronoun and adjective *self* are used.

(18) a. **Lindisfarne Gospels** - **Northumbrian**
    hælend wiste smeawunga hiora cueð him eghuelc
    healer knew thoughts their said them each
    ric todæled bið wið him forleten bið l gewoested bið
    kingdom divided be against it left is and destroyed is
    l tosliten bið 7 eghuelc burug l hus todæled l tosliten
    and destroyed is and every city and house divided and cut.up
    wið him ne stondas
    against it not stands
    'And Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them every kingdom divided against
    itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not
    stand.' (*Matthew* 12.25)
b. **Rushworth Glosses** - **Mercian**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Old English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the healer</td>
<td>se helend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>then knowing</td>
<td>þa witende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoughts</td>
<td>þohtas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their said</td>
<td>heora cweþ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to them</td>
<td>to heom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>each kingdom</td>
<td>æghwilc rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divided against it</td>
<td>gedæled wið him seolfum awoested bið</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it self destroyed will-be</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and each castle or house divided against it self not stands.</td>
<td>7 æghwilc cæstre oppa hus gedæled wið him seolfum ne stondeþ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(from Skeat's 1881-7 edition)

With second and first person, reflexives do not appear until Middle English.

These sentences illustrate other interesting differences: a demonstrative *se* is used before the noun *helend* in (18b) but not in (18a) and the preposition *to* is used before the indirect object *him* in (18b) but not in (18a). These differences indicate that (18b) is a later text, more analytic, as was also likely from the presence of reflexive pronouns. There are also dialect differences between these versions, as we will see in Section 7.

The paradigm for **demonstratives** is presented in Table 4.8. Demonstratives in Old English are often translated by using the Modern English article *the* even though they are quite different. In word-by-word glosses, I typically keep the demonstrative but I use the article in the free version. Unlike Modern English articles, demonstratives are not generally required, as (15), (17, and (18a) show, and carry more information (e.g. location) and can be used on their own to refer to persons. The indefinite article *a(n)* is not used, but sometimes the numeral *an* 'one' or the adjective *sum* 'some' are. Again, be aware that the *þ* and *ð* are both used as the first consonant of the demonstrative, as well as the *s* in the nominative masculine and feminine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Neuter</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nom</td>
<td>se</td>
<td>seo</td>
<td>þæt</td>
<td>þa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen</td>
<td>þæs</td>
<td>þære</td>
<td>þæs</td>
<td>þara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat</td>
<td>þæm</td>
<td>þære</td>
<td>þæm</td>
<td>þæm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>þone</td>
<td>þa</td>
<td>þæt</td>
<td>þa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8: Demonstratives in Old English

An example of the demonstrative *ða* is shown in (19). It agrees with the plural nominative *æþelingas*. Notice also the *-as* plural nominative ending on the noun and the *-don* past ending on the verb.
In Old English, demonstratives are often used where Modern English uses relatives, as in (20). **Relative pronouns** connect one sentence to another. In (20), *þone* is an accusative 'that'; in Modern English it would be *that* or *who(m)*.

(20) **geong in geardum þone God sende folce to frofre**

young in yards that.ACC God sent people to consolation

'A young one in the yards who God sent to the people.' (*Beowulf* 13-4)

Notice also Old English words such as *folc* and *frofer*, later replaced by French loans, and the *g* in *geong* and *geardum*, which later becomes a palatalized [j]. The -e and -um endings should be familiar by now. Both (19) and (20) are taken from Figure 4.1. Try to find these lines in the facsimile. Other relatives involve a demonstrative and an optional *þe* or just *þe*, as in (21).

(21) **Unferþ maþelode Ecglafes bearn þe æt fotum sæt**

Unferth spoke Eglaf’s child who at feet sat

'Unferth spoke, the child of Eglaf, who sat at the feet.' (*Beowulf*, 499-500)

Are there other endings you recognize in (21)?

**Nouns** have endings for number, case, and gender. We already commented on the plural -as, as in (19), the dative singular -e, *folce* in (20), and the dative plural -um, in (20) and (21). Endings such as those on the noun *stan* 'stone' are the **most common noun endings** since most nouns belong to that class. This class is called the *a*-stem and *stan* is a masculine noun of that class. There are other genders and noun classes: *word* is neuter (and belongs to the same *a*-noun class), *lufu* 'love' is feminine (*o*-noun class), and *sunu* 'son' is masculine (*u*-noun class). In Indo European, the noun actually ends in *a*, *o*, or *u* (or some other ending), but this is no longer visible in Old English. The paradigms, showing a few of the different noun classes, are provided in Table 4.9.
### Table 4.9: Some Old English strong noun endings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>stan (M) 'stone'</th>
<th>word (N) 'word'</th>
<th>lufu (F) 'love'</th>
<th>sunu (M) 'son'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>stan</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufu</td>
<td>sunu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>stanes</td>
<td>wordes</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>stane</td>
<td>worde</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>stan</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufe</td>
<td>sunu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>stanas</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufa</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>stana</td>
<td>worda</td>
<td>luf(en)a</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>stanum</td>
<td>wordum</td>
<td>lufum</td>
<td>sunum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>stanas</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>lufa</td>
<td>suna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The endings of this class of nouns, called the vowel stems or strong nouns, differ from another class that also comes to English from Indo-European, namely the consonantal stems or weak nouns. Weak nouns can be masculine, feminine, and (less often) neuter. I have provided the masculine and feminine forms in Table 4.10; their characteristic -an ending is shared, but note the -um for the dative plural.

### Table 4.10: Some Old English weak noun endings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>guma (M) 'man'</th>
<th>folde (F) 'earth'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>guma</td>
<td>folde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>guman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>guman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>guman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>guman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>gumena</td>
<td>foldena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>gumum</td>
<td>foldum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>guman</td>
<td>foldan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Try to create a few paradigms, using the words in Table 4.11. For instance, take folc and notice that its endings will be like those of word. The singular will therefore be folc, folces, folce,
folc and the plural folc, folca, folcum, folc. You could even add the demonstrative taken from Table 4.8. They are not sensitive to word classes, just to gender, case, and number.

Like stan: ap 'oath', coss 'kiss', cyning 'king', dom 'judgement', hlaf 'loaf', hund 'dog', þeof 'thief', weall 'wall', weg 'way', and wer 'man'
Like word: bearn 'child', deor 'animal', folc 'people', gear 'year', land 'land', sceap 'sheep', sweord 'sword', weorc 'work', and wif 'woman'
Like lufu: faru 'journey', giefu 'gift', racu 'narrative', sceadu 'shade', and scolu 'troop'
Like sunu: lagu 'lake', medu 'mead', and wudu 'wood'
Like guma: eafora 'son', mona 'moon', naca 'boat', nama 'name', and wita 'prophet'
Like folde: hruse 'earth', sunne 'sun', and hacele 'cloak'.

Table 4.11: Old English noun classes

The plural ending of stanasar later becomes the general English plural -(e)s, and the Old English genitive -es becomes the possessive in the dog's bone. Word has the same endings as stan, except in the nominative and accusative plural. We can still see the result of this lack of an ending in the plural of deer and sheep—deer and sheep. Note that even though lufu 'love' is feminine and sunu 'son' is masculine (and of a different class), they are very similar in endings.

Remember that the natural gender need not correspond to the grammatical gender or noun class. Thus, wif 'woman' is neuter in grammatical but not natural gender. To see other noun classes, consult an Old English Grammar (e.g. by Quirk & Wrenn 1958); look up the gender of the noun in a dictionary, such as the one by Clark-Hall or the more extensive Bosworth & Toller (on the web at: beowulf.engl.uky.edu/~kiernan/BT/Bosworth-Toller.htm).

The ending of the adjective is very intricate in Old English. As in other Germanic languages, such as German, Dutch, and Swedish, its form depends on whether a demonstrative is present. This is different in the other Indo-European languages. If no demonstrative precedes the adjective in Germanic, the adjective gets a more distinctive (strong) ending to 'make up' for this lack; if the adjective is preceded by a demonstrative, it gets a less varied (weak) ending. The strong and weak endings are also referred to as indefinite and definite in some Old English grammars. Both strong and weak endings are listed in Table 4.12. Notice the similarities in the plural endings, even in the strong ones.
Table 4.12: The forms of the adjective `good' in Old English

Thus, þæm godan cyninge and godum cyninge, meaning 'to the good king', can both be used as datives. (Cyning gets the same endings as stan).

Adjectives are used in comparative and superlative constructions. In Old English, the pattern for hard and narrow is heard, heardra, heardost and nearu, nearora, nearwost respectively. These are inflected forms, typical of a synthetic language. The analytic forms with more and most are rare in Old English. Some adjectives use suppletive forms, like in Modern English: good and yfel 'evil' have god, betra, betst and yfel, wyrsa, wyrst (bad appears only in Middle English).

Adverbs tell us about the place, time, reason, and manner of an action; they modify the verb. They can also be used to modify the sentence. Adverbs in Modern English are mostly formed by adding an -ly ending to an adjective. This is not the case in Old English where they are formed by several different endings: -e as in (22) and -lice (which later becomes -ly).

(22) heofodwoþe hlud-e cirme
    voice loud-ADV cry.out
    'I cry out loudly with my voice.' (from Riddle 8, line 3, see Appendix D)

The endings on verbs depend on the tense (past and present), the person and number (of the subject), and the mood (imperative and subjunctive). They are divided into strong and weak, but these terms are used differently than when describing adjectives. Strong verbs change their stem
vowels in the past tense and the past participle. There are still quite a number of strong verbs in Modern English: *sing, sang, sung; drive, drove, driven;* etc. Weak verbs get a regular *-ed* inflection: *talk, talked, talked* and *plant, planted, planted.* The strong verbs are listed in Table 4.13. Focus on the present and past tense, not on the subjunctive and imperative moods, used for wishes and commands, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
<td>ic drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>drifest</td>
<td>þu drife</td>
<td>þu drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>drif(e)ð</td>
<td>he/o drife</td>
<td>he/o drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>drifað</td>
<td>we/ge/hi drifen</td>
<td>drifað</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>ic draf</td>
<td>ic draf</td>
<td>ic draf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>drife</td>
<td>þu drife</td>
<td>þu drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>draf</td>
<td>he/o drife</td>
<td>he/o drife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hi</td>
<td>drifon</td>
<td>we/ge/hi drifen</td>
<td>drifon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13: An Old English strong verb

The stem vowels in the present are long, but short in most of the past forms. This is not indicated in the paradigms. However, we can see the evidence for this in the contemporary pronunciation of *drive* [draiv] and *driven* [drɪvən] since the long [ij] shifted to [aj] in *drive* during the Great Vowel Shift but the short [i] remained [ɪ] in *driven.*

The present and past paradigms for two weak verbs are provided in Table 4.14 (for the indicative mood). The future was typically expressed by the present. The subjunctive and imperative moods are only provided for *fremman* 'do'; those of *herian* 'praise' are very similar. Notice the *-d-* in the past tense, a precursor to Modern English *-ed.*
Table 4.14: Old English weak verbs

Examples of verbal endings were given in (10), (12), and (19), repeated here as (23), (24), and (25), respectively. Notice that the third person present tense endings can have either (e)ð or (e)þ.

(23) folcæ arær don bec biddap fote æpelmun
(24) þæt ðec dryhtguma deaþ oferswipþep
(25) hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon

The -don endings in (23) and (25) represent past plural, -ap in (23) present plural, and -ep in (24) present singular third person. As you can see, the weak and strong verbs only differ in the past and subjunctive.

Since the subjunctive ending is no longer common in Modern English, it might be good to look at an example in Old English.

(26) Ic wille ... þæt þu forgyt-e þæt ic þe nu secge
I want that 2S forget-SUBJ that I 2S now say
'I want you to forget what I am telling you now.' (Byrhtferth's Manual 154.14, from Visser 841)

Verbs such as willan 'to want' in (26) express a wish, an unreal situation, and therefore need to be followed by a verb in the subjunctive. The verb forgitan 'forget' in (26) would have had an -st ending in the indicative since its subject is second person singular þu. Because it is subjunctive, however, it has a simpler ending. In Middle English, the subjunctive is generally replaced by modal auxiliaries, such as should, or by an infinitival form (e.g. I want you to go). Like modal auxiliaries,
Infinitives express unrealized action and are analytic ways of expressing what the subjunctive does in a synthetic manner.

There are also some **irregular verbs** that survive into Modern English such as *to be*, for which the Old English paradigm is given in Table 4.15 (see also Quirk & Wrenn 1958: 54-5; Campbell 1959: 350 for the distinction between *eom* and *beo* in the present tense).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicative</th>
<th>Subjunctive</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present ic</td>
<td>eom/beo</td>
<td>Present ic</td>
<td>sie/beo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>eart/bist</td>
<td>þu</td>
<td>sie/beo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>is/biþ</td>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>sie/beo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hí</td>
<td>sind(on)/beoþ</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>sien/beon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past ic</td>
<td>wes</td>
<td>Past S</td>
<td>være</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>wære</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>wæs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hí</td>
<td>wæron</td>
<td>Past P</td>
<td>væren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future ic</td>
<td>beo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>þu</td>
<td>bist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/o</td>
<td>biþ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/ge/hí</td>
<td>beoþ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participles</td>
<td>wesende/beonde/gebeon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.15: The forms of the verb *beon* ‘to be’

Verbs like *to be* show **suppletion**; their forms are unrelated to each other in sound and are hence irregular. Even in Modern English, there are completely different forms in the paradigm: *be, is, am,* and *was*. Gamkrelidze & Ivanov (1994), among other Indo-Europeanists, relate this to paradigm mixing at an early stage in Indo-European. There are many other cases. For instance, you might wonder how *go* and *went* are related. They are not, but somehow *went*, meaning ‘go and return’, crept into the *go*-paradigm and is now the past (suppletive) form.

**Auxiliaries** are not frequent in Old English. Modern English modal auxiliaries such as *can, could, will,* and *would* are regular verbs in Old English; see *wille* ‘want’ in (26). The same is true of *have* and *be*; they mostly function as main verbs in Old English. Between Old and Modern English, these verbs grammaticalize, i.e. they lose their meaning but gain grammatical function. Infinitives in Old English have an ending and an optional *to*, very closely connected to the infinitival verb. Hence, split infinitives (much maligned in Modern English) never occur. They start occurring when the infinitival *to* becomes an analytic marker of non-finiteness, in the late 14th century.
We have already examined many sentences from *Beowulf*. Let's now look at the first page more carefully (see also Figure 4.1). In (27), a word-for-word and a somewhat literal translation are provided. Line breaks—indicated by |—are placed where they are usually assumed to have been in Old English. Try to identify as many endings (a few are given in the gloss) and as many words as you can. A few endings are indicated in bold.

(27)  

\[
\begin{align*}
&\textit{Beowulf} \\
&\textit{hwæt} & \textit{we} & \textit{garden-a} & \text{in} & \textit{geardag-um} & \mid \textit{þeodcyning-a} & \textit{brym} & \textit{gefrun-on} \\
&\text{indeed} & \text{we} & \text{spear.danes-GEN} & \text{in} & \text{yore.days-DAT} & \textit{kings-GEN} & \textit{glory} & \textit{hear-PST} \\
&\textit{hu} & \textit{ða} & \textit{æþeling-as} & \textit{ellen} & \textit{freme-don} \\
&\text{how} & \text{those} & \text{nobles-NOM} & \text{courage} & \text{do-PST} \\
&\text{indeed, we have heard of the courageous deeds of the Danes (and) their kings in earlier times, how the noble ones accomplished courageous deeds'}. \\
\text{Oft} & \textit{Scyld} & \textit{Scefing} & \textit{sceaþ-enah} & \textit{þreat-um} & \mid \textit{moneg-um} & \textit{maegh-um} & \textit{meodosetla} & \text{of teah} \\
\text{often} & \text{Scyld} & \text{Scfing} & \text{shadows-GEN crowd-DAT many-DAT family-DAT} & \textit{mead.benches away took} \\
\text{egsode} & \textit{eorlas} & \textit{sydhan} & \textit{arest} & \textit{wearð} & \mid \textit{feasceaft funden} \\
\text{scared} & \text{brave.men} & \text{since} & \text{early} & \text{became} & \text{poor} & \text{found} \\
&\text{‘Often Scyld Scefing took away mead-benches from the crowd of warriors, from many people, after he had once been discovered poor’.} \\
&\textit{he} & \textit{þæs} & \textit{frofre} & \textit{gebad} & \mid \textit{woex} & \textit{under} & \textit{wolcn-um} & \textit{weordmynd-um} & \textit{þah} \\
\text{He} & \text{that.GEN} & \text{consolation.GEN} & \text{waited} & \text{grew} & \textit{under} & \textit{clouds-DAT} & \textit{honor-DAT} & \text{accepted/grew} \\
\text{oðþæt} & \textit{him} & \textit{æghwylc} & \textit{para} & \textit{ymsbittend-ra} & \mid \textit{ofer} & \textit{hronrade hyran} & \textit{scolde} & \textit{gomban gyldan} \\
\text{until} & \text{him} & \text{every} & \text{that.GEN sitting.around.GEN} & \text{across sea} & \text{obey} & \text{should} & \text{tribute pay} \\
\textit{þæt} & \textit{was} & \textit{god cyning} & \text{that} & \textit{was} & \textit{good king} \\
&\text{‘He was consoled for that; grew up; his honor grew until everyone of the neighboring people on the other side of the sea had to obey him; had to pay tribute. That was a good king’}. \\
\textit{ðæm} & \textit{eafera} & \textit{was} & \textit{after} & \textit{cenned} & \mid \textit{geong} & \textit{in} & \textit{geard-um} & \textit{þone} & \textit{god sende} \\
\text{that.DAT} & \text{son} & \text{was} & \text{later} & \text{young} & \textit{in} & \textit{yards-DAT} & \textit{that.ACC} & \textit{god} & \textit{sent} \\
\textit{folc} & \textit{to frofre} & \textit{fyrenbearef} & \textit{ongeat} & \mid \textit{pe} & \textit{hie} & \textit{ar} & \textit{dragon} & \textit{aldorlease} & \mid \\
\text{people} & \text{to consolation} & \text{fire.need} & \text{saw} & \text{that} & \text{before} & \text{carried} & \text{leaderless} & \mid \\
\textit{lange} & \textit{hwile} & \text{long} & \text{while}. \\
&\text{‘Later, a son was born to him, sent by God for the consolation of the people. He saw the burning need that they had endured for a long time being without a leader’.} \\
\textit{Him} & \textit{þæs} & \textit{liffrea} & \textit{lif} & \textit{wuldr-es} & \textit{wealdend} & \textit{woroldare} & \textit{forgeaf} \\
\text{Him} & \text{that.GEN} & \textit{life-lord} & \textit{world-GEN} & \textit{lord} & \text{world.honor} & \text{gave.} \\
\textit{Beowulf} & \textit{was} & \textit{breme} & \textit{blad} & \textit{wide} & \textit{sprang} & \mid \textit{Scyld-es} & \textit{eafra} & \textit{Scedeland-um} & \textit{in} \\
\textit{Beowulf} & \textit{was} & \textit{famous} & \textit{glory} & \textit{wide} & \textit{jumped} & \mid \textit{Scyld-GEN} & \textit{son} & \textit{Scedeland-DAT} & \textit{in} \\
&\text{‘The lord of life, the ruler of the world, gave him worldly honor for that. Beowulf, son of the Scyls, was famous; his glory spread wide in the land of the Danes’.} \\
\textit{Swa} & \textit{sceal} & \textit{geong} & \textit{guma} & \textit{gode} & \textit{gewyrcean} & \mid \textit{from-um feohgiff-um} & \textit{on} & \textit{fader} & \textit{bearn-e} \\
\textit{So} & \textit{shall} & \textit{young} & \textit{man} & \textit{good} & \textit{perform} & \mid \textit{vigoroust-DAT} & \textit{bounty.giving-DAT} & \textit{on} & \textit{father} & \textit{possession-DAT} \\
\textit{þæt} & \textit{hine} & \textit{on} & \textit{ylde} & \textit{eft} & \textit{gewamigen} & \mid \textit{wilgesipas þonne} & \textit{wig} & \textit{come} & \mid \\
\text{that} & \text{him.ACC} & \text{in} & \text{old.age} & \text{again} & \text{stand.by familiar.companions} & \text{then} & \text{war} & \text{comes} \end{align*}
\]
You probably recognize quite a few endings and we will discuss the ones in bold. The -um on dagum 'days' indicates a plural; it is dative due to being the object of in. The -as ending on æþelingas shows that it is a nominative (plural) subject. The -on endings on gefunon 'heard' and fremedon 'did' show past tense. Sceapena præatum 'the crowd of shadows' and monegum mægþum 'many families' go together because they are the people from whom the mead-benches are taken. They are all in the dative plural, except the genitive sceapena since it modifies þreatum. In Modern English, we use prepositions in all of these cases, from for the dative and of for the genitive. The last ending that is in bold is the genitive plural -a on gardena and beodcyninga. This is the usual genitive plural; special is the -ena on sceadena. Check table 4.9 for this ending. There are glossaries of Beowulf, e.g. www.heorot.dk/beo-intro-rede.html.

This section has reviewed some of the paradigms of Old English and when the different forms are used. Next, we will examine word order and other related matters.

5 Old English Syntax

The most significant change between Old and Modern English is given in (11)—the shift from many to a few endings and the introduction of grammatical words such as prepositions, auxiliaries, and articles. As mentioned, Old English can be described as synthetic, whereas Modern English is analytic. The Old English endings were discussed in the previous section. We also mentioned some syntax, such as the lack of prepositions in (8), that are characteristic of synthetic languages. In this section, we will examine other characteristics of synthetic languages, such as free word order and the lack of auxiliaries. We also look at other characteristics not necessarily connected with the synthetic character of Old English, such as the frequent use of coordinate structures, the use of adverbs as discourse markers, and the placement of the negation ne or n- before the verb.

We will start with the relatively free word order. So far, most sentences have had the subject first, except for (28), which was part of (27). Here, the indirect object him starts the sentence followed by the subject þæs liffrea wuldres wealdend and then the direct object woroldare and the verb forgeaf.

(28) Him þæs liffrea wuldres wealdend woroldare forgeaf
Him that lord world lord world.honor gave
'The lord of life, the ruler of the world, gave him worldly honor for that.'

The word order is never totally free and adheres to some rules. Usually pronouns occur near the beginning of the sentence, as in (28) and (12), repeated as (29), for instance.

(29) þæt þec dryhtguma deaþ oferswiþeþ.

The verb often occurs at the end, as in (28) and (29), especially in subordinate or embedded sentences. The verb can also occur in second position, as in (30). This occurs mostly in main clauses.

(30) þy ilcan geare for se here ofer sæ
and that same year went that army over sea
'And in the same year the army went over the sea' (Chronicle A, for the year 880)

The way to calculate what is called verb-second is to ignore the initial 'and', and not to count actual words but the constituents or phrases. In (30), þy ilcan geare 'in the same year' forms a unit and is therefore counted as one position. Once one takes that into account, the verb for is in second position. Old English is, in this respect very similar to German and Dutch.

There are two kinds of questions: yes/no and wh-questions. Respective examples are given in (31) with the verb first and in (32) with the verb following the question-word hwæt.

(31) gehyrest þu eadwacer
hear you Eadwacer
'Do you hear, Eadwacer?' (from Wulf and Eadwacer)

(32) hwæt gehyrest þu
what hear you
'What do you hear?' (made up example)

Subject pronouns are somewhat more optional in Old than in Modern English. Examples of subject-less sentence are provided in (33) and (34), and in the first line of Caedmon's Hymn in (7) above.

(33) þeah ðe hord-welan heolde lange
though that treasure held long
'though he held the treasure long.' (Beowulf 2344)

(34) þæt syðþan na ymb brotne ford brimliðende lade ne letton
so.that since.then never broad waterway seafarers passage not let
'that they after that never kept people from passing that water.' (Beowulf 567-9)

Pleonastic (or dummy or grammatical) subjects, such as there and it, are frequent in Modern English but do not occur in Old English. There is also a construction that is called impersonal since there need not be a nominative subject. This is shown in (35).

(35) Hu lomp eow on lade, leofa Biowulf
how happened you on trip, dear Beowulf
'How was your trip, dear Beowulf?' (Beowulf 1987)

As you can see from (31) and (32), the auxiliary verb do is not used in questions (or with negation). The auxiliaries be and have occur but are infrequent. (36) provides an example where Modern English would have and auxiliary have (note also the lack of the preposition of).

(36) we ... þrym gefrunon
we ... glory heard
'We have heard of the glory.' (Beowulf 1-3)

Past action is indicated through affixes, such as the -on suffix for the past plural, and also through the (aspectual) prefix ge-, as in (36). This ge- prefix still occurs in languages such as Dutch and German, but disappears gradually throughout the Middle English period (going from ge- to i/y to nothing).

So far, we have looked at characteristics of Old English that are typical of synthetic languages, namely the relatively free word order and the absence of certain pronouns and auxiliaries. Now, we’ll examine a few other features.

Sentences can be connected in a number of ways. Old English often uses no connection or coordination with and, indicated in the manuscript by the symbol 7, as in (37). Modern English might use subordination in such sentences instead: ‘when he was killed, B took the throne’.

(37) Anglo Saxon Chronicle (A-version), anno 755

7 þy ilcan geare mon ofslög Æþelbald Miercna cyning
and that same year man killed Æþelbald Mercian king
on Seccandune 7 his lic lip on Hreapadune
at Seckington and his body lies in Repton
7 Beornræd feng to rice 7 ...
and Beornræd ascended to throne and ...
'And the same year when Æþelbald, the Mercian king, was killed at Seckington, with his body buried in Repton, Beornræd took the throne; and ...' (from Thorpe's 1861 edition)

If you read the entry of the Chronicle provided in Appendix A, you will notice the frequent use of and. Another way to connect sentences is through relative clauses, as in (20), or as in the rather complex (38).

(38) Alfred Pastoral Care - West Saxon
Hwa is nu ðære ðe gesceadwis sie
Who is now there that wise is
& to ðæm gleaw sie ðæt he swelces hwæt tocnawan cunne
and to that wise is that he such what distinguish can
ðætte nyte ðætte on gimma gecynde
that not. know that in gems family
carbunculus bið dio[r]ra ðonne iacinctus?
carbuncular is more-costly than iacinctus?
'For who is there, who is wise and experienced enough to distinguish such things, who does not know that in the class of gems the carbuncle is more precious than the jacinth.' (Pastoral Care 411.25-8, from Sweet's 1871 edition)

Adverbs in Old English, as in present-day English, can be used to express the mood of the speaker and are then considered discourse markers. Examples of such discourse markers, also known as mood particles, are provided in (39).

(39) Swa eac nu mæg ealc mon deofel ofercumen
so also now may every man devil overcome
'This way everyone can overcome the devil.' (Bodley Homilies, p. 98)

These are often hard to translate into Modern English since some are replaced by forms such as well, however, and fortunately placed at the beginning or the end of the sentence (and receive 'comma intonation').

A last point about Old English grammar is that the negative adverb often immediately precedes the verb, as in (40), and is sometimes weakened to a prefix. As a result of the weakening,
multiple negatives start to occur, as in (41), from King Alfred's *Pastoral Care*. Note that the renewing words *nan wuht* mean 'no creature/thing' and grammaticalize to *not* in later periods.

(40)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\textbf{hleorp} & \quad \textbf{ne} & \quad \textbf{mipe} \\
\text{sound} & \quad \text{not} & \quad \text{conceal}
\end{align*}
\]
'I don't conceal sound.' (Riddle 8, line 4, see Appendix D)

(41)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\textbf{forþæmpe} & \quad \textbf{hie} & \quad \textbf{hiora} & \quad \textbf{nan} & \quad \textbf{wuht} & \quad \textbf{ongietan} & \quad \textbf{ne} & \quad \textbf{meahton} \\
\text{because} & \quad \text{they} & \quad \text{their} & \quad \text{no} & \quad \text{thing} & \quad \text{understand} & \quad \text{not} & \quad \text{could}
\end{align*}
\]
'because they couldn't understand anything of them.' (Pastoral Care, 4/12 Cotton)

Modern varieties abound with such multiple negatives, as we’ll see in a later chapter.

Let's look at another text keeping the morphology and syntax in mind. In the exercises to Chapter 2, we looked at the beginning of this text, Alfred's version of *Orosius*. This beginning is repeated as (42) where only the word-by-word gloss is provided but no information on the endings.

(42)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\textit{Alfred} & \quad - & \quad \textit{Orosius} & \quad - & \quad \textit{West Saxon} \\
\textit{Ohtere sæde} & \quad \textit{his} & \quad \textit{hlaforde} & \quad \textit{Ælfrede} & \quad \textit{cyninge} & \quad \textit{þæt} & \quad \textit{he} \\
\text{Ohtere said} & \quad \text{his} & \quad \text{lord} & \quad \text{Alfred} & \quad \text{king} & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{he} \\
\textit{ealra} & \quad \textit{Norðmonna} & \quad \textit{norþmest} & \quad \textit{bude}. & \quad \textit{He} & \quad \textit{cwæð} & \quad \textit{þæt} & \quad \textit{he} & \quad \textit{bude} & \quad 2 \\
\text{all} & \quad \text{northmen} & \quad \text{northmost} & \quad \text{lived} & \quad \text{he} & \quad \text{said} & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{he} & \quad \text{lived} \\
\textit{on} & \quad \textit{þæm} & \quad \textit{lande} & \quad \textit{norþweardum} & \quad \textit{wip} & \quad \textit{þa} & \quad \textit{Westsæ} & \quad \textit{He sæde} \\
in & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{land} & \quad \text{northward} & \quad \text{along} & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{Westsea} & \quad \text{he said} \\
\textit{þeah} & \quad \textit{þæt} & \quad \textit{land} & \quad \textit{sie} & \quad \textit{swipe} & \quad \textit{lang} & \quad \textit{norþ} & \quad \textit{ponan} & \quad \textit{ac} & \quad \textit{hit} & \quad \textit{is} & \quad 4 \\
\text{though that} & \quad \text{land} & \quad \text{is} & \quad \text{so} & \quad \text{long} & \quad \text{north} & \quad \text{thence} & \quad \text{but} & \quad \text{it} & \quad \text{is} \\
\textit{eal} & \quad \textit{weste} & \quad \textit{buton} & \quad \textit{on} & \quad \textit{feawum} & \quad \textit{stowum} & \quad \textit{styccemælum} & \quad \textit{wiciað} \\
\text{all} & \quad \text{waste} & \quad \text{except on} & \quad \text{few} & \quad \text{places} & \quad \text{here-and-there} & \quad \text{live} \\
\textit{Finnas} & \quad \textit{on} & \quad \textit{huntoðe} & \quad \textit{on} & \quad \textit{wintra} & \quad \textit{and} & \quad \textit{on} & \quad \textit{sumera} & \quad 6 \\
\text{Finns (Sami)} & \quad \text{on} & \quad \text{hunting} & \quad \text{in} & \quad \text{winter} & \quad \text{and} & \quad \text{in} & \quad \text{summer} \\
\textit{on} & \quad \textit{fiscæpe} & \quad \textit{be} & \quad \textit{þære} & \quad \textit{se}. \\
on & \quad \text{fishing} & \quad \text{by} & \quad \text{that} & \quad \text{sea} & \quad \text{(from Bately's 1980 edition)}
\end{align*}
\]

As for the morphology, you may remember the *-e* ending on *hlaforde* (and on *Ælfrede cyninge*) as a dative. In Modern English, we would use the preposition *to* instead. There are a few other
recognizable datives, e.g. þæm lande and feawum stowum styccemælum. The -as on Finnas in line 4 is a nominative plural. As to verbal endings, there are a few past tense verbs such as sæde and a present tense plural wiciad. There are also some subjunctive forms, e.g. sie in line 3 (see Table 4.15).

As to the syntax, in the first sentence, the verb sæde is in second position, and bude is in final position. This fits with sæde being the verb of the main clause and bude the verb in the embedded clause. Look where the verbs are in the other sentences! It is interesting that so many pronouns are present and demonstratives such as þæt.

We will continue with the next part of the same text.

(43) Alfred continued

He sæde þæt he æt sumum cirre wolde fandian
he said that he at some turn wanted explore
hu lange þæt land norpryhte læge ofpe hwæðer ænig 2
how long that land north lay or whether any
mon be norðan þæm westenne bude. pa for he
man to north that waste lived then went he
norpryhte be þæm lande let him ealne weg þæt 4
north by that land [he] kept himself all way that
weste land on ðæt steorbord ond þæ widsæ on ðæt
waste land on that starboard and that wide-sea on that
bæcbord þrie dagas.
port three days.

In (43), there is a possible subject left out in the third line: let him ealne... `he kept himself all ..'. The word order has most main clause verbs in second position, sæde `said' and for `went', but wolde, læge, and bude appear at the end of the clause since these clauses are subordinate.

The third part of the excerpt is given in (44).

(44) Alfred continued

þæt was he swa feor norþ swa þæ hwælhuntan firrest
Then was he as far north as those whale-hunters most-far
Then travelled he then-yet north as far as he could in those next three days sail.

In (44), there is some interesting and by now familiar morphology, e.g. *firrest*, the superlative form of the adjective, and *farap*, the third person present ending, and *nysse*, a contraction of *ne* and *wisse*. As to the syntax, the lines show a lot of demonstratives and pronouns. The last line has an indefinite article missing, compared to Modern English. The sentences are not very embedded, *pa* is used frequently, and the finite verb mostly appears in second position, e.g. *was*, *for*, *meahte*, *nysse*, and *wisse*.

Table 4.16 provides a summary of the morphological and syntactic features of Old English. Except for (k) and (l), all the features characterize a synthetic language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Morphology:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. An elaborate pronominal system as a result of case, see Table 4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. No real articles, only demonstratives, see Table 4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Nouns have endings depending on whether they are subjects or objects, see Table 4.10, and they can be masculine, feminine, or neuter in gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Adjectives agree with the nouns they modify in case, number, and gender, and are either weak or strong, see Table 4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Verbs are marked for person and number of the subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Verbs are weak or strong, see Tables 4.13 and 4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Adverbs with -e or -lic endings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Syntax:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. Relatively free word order but often OV and V2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Omission of subject pronoun, prepositions, and articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Limited use of auxiliaries: <em>He ær com</em> 'He had come before'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Frequent use of coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Negation before the verb: <em>Ic ne dyde</em> 'I did not'; or multiple words, as in (42)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.16: Characteristics of Old English
The Old English Lexicon

The most striking characteristic of Old English vocabulary is how Germanic it is. *Folc* in (23) translates as *people* (a French loan); of course, *folks* is still used in Modern English with a slightly different meaning. It is sometimes said that of the 30,000 words in Old English, 3% are non-Germanic (see Minkova 2005a). Since Old English, 80% of the original vocabulary may have been lost. The *Thesaurus of Old English* (edited by Roberts & Kay) and Baugh & Cable (2002) provide many examples of a very different vocabulary. (Incidentally, the word *vocabulary* is a French/Latin word replacing the Germanic *wordhoard*). For instance, for mental faculties, there are Modern English nouns, as in (45).

(45) a. spirit, consideration, expectation, attention, reflection, deliberation,
    b. soul, heart, mood, mind, (ghost), thought

The words in (45a) are loans from French and Latin, the ones in (45b) derive from Old English. You will notice that the loans are often longer, more precise, and limited in meaning. Old English often forms new words through **compounding** (more so than Modern English). To get a sense for this, consider some words for mental functions: nouns as in (46), verbs as in (47), and adjectives as in (48). *Mod* is central in this and means 'heart' or 'mind', very different from the narrower Modern English *mood*. Many of these words are compounds, also known as **kennings**, and others have prefixes.

(46) modhord 'secret thoughts', (ge)þanc 'thought', foreþanc 'deliberation', ingeþanc 'conscience', ærbeþoht 'premeditated', swefn 'vision', (ge)scead 'understanding', ræd 'intelligence', wita 'wise man', slæcnes 'mental inertia', cuþnes 'knowledge', modcaru 'sorrow', modlufu 'affection'
(47) onlyhtan 'to illumine', oncñawan 'understand'

To a Modern English speaker, many of these words sound colorful. What words would *cuþ, ær, caru* be related to? Try to guess which Modern English equivalents in (46) to (48) are loans. Names
can be compounds as well: *Hrothgar* 'angry spear', *Unferth* 'no spirit', and *Æthelstan* 'noble stone'. Construct one yourself. There are Modern English to Old English dictionaries such as Stephen Pollington's *Wordcraft*.

Some words connected to speech and grammar (from the Old English Thesaurus where so many more are listed) are given in Table 4.17. One of the riddles in Appendix D uses a few of these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>OE</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stefn</td>
<td>'voice, sound'</td>
<td>wop</td>
<td>'sound'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hleopør</td>
<td>'noise, song'</td>
<td>cwiss</td>
<td>'speech'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gemæþel</td>
<td>'speech'</td>
<td>(ge)reord</td>
<td>'voice'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ge)spræc</td>
<td>'speech'</td>
<td>mæþelere</td>
<td>'speaker'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordlof</td>
<td>'praise'</td>
<td>word</td>
<td>'word, message, order'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hream</td>
<td>'scream'</td>
<td>spell</td>
<td>'observation'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cwide</td>
<td>'words'</td>
<td>wise</td>
<td>'idiom'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordsnoter</td>
<td>'eloquent'</td>
<td>felaspær/öferspræc</td>
<td>'loquacity'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wordful</td>
<td>'loquacious'</td>
<td>wordfæst</td>
<td>'truth'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bealcæn</td>
<td>'utter'</td>
<td>dolspræc</td>
<td>'silly chatter'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twispræe</td>
<td>'bilingual'</td>
<td>læden</td>
<td>'foreign language'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stæfriðter</td>
<td>'grammarian'</td>
<td>lædenlar</td>
<td>'knowledge of Latin'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cræftspræc</td>
<td>'technical words'</td>
<td>wordcræft</td>
<td>'eloquence'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clipiende stæf</td>
<td>'vowel'</td>
<td>selfswægend</td>
<td>'vowel'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>healfclypigende</td>
<td>'glide'</td>
<td>biword</td>
<td>'adverb'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nama</td>
<td>'noun'</td>
<td>stefn</td>
<td>'relative'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geendung</td>
<td>'case'</td>
<td>wregendlic</td>
<td>'accusative'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manigfæld</td>
<td>'plural'</td>
<td>wif</td>
<td>'feminine'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deadlic</td>
<td>'active voice'</td>
<td>brówendlíc</td>
<td>'passive voice'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fullfremed</td>
<td>'perfect aspect'</td>
<td>miscwæden</td>
<td>'ungrammatical'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ellenspræc</td>
<td>'powerful speech'</td>
<td>scopgereord</td>
<td>'poetic language'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferse</td>
<td>'verse'</td>
<td>bocsamnung</td>
<td>'library'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lif</td>
<td>'biography'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17: Words relating to speech and grammar

There is an online thesaurus you might want to try: [http://libra.englang.arts.gla.ac.uk/othesaurus](http://libra.englang.arts.gla.ac.uk/othesaurus).

As you can see, some Old English words also use prefixes such as *ge-* and *ofer-*, suffixes such as *-ung*, and compounds with *-lic*. Many of these still occur in Modern English but some have a broader meaning in Old English: *wiþceosan* means 'reject', literally 'choose against', and *wiþcweþan* means 'deny', literally 'speak against'. In Modern English, *withstand, withdraw* and *withhold* still occur, but most of the time we use phrasal verbs instead: *look up* rather than *uplook*.

Words change in meaning (semantics) in many ways. They can generalize or widen but they can also specialize or narrow. Examples of narrowing are *mood* (discussed above), *deer* (older
meaning is 'animal'), *hound* (older meaning is 'dog'), and *meat* (older meaning is 'food'). Examples of widening are *barn* (older meaning is 'place to store barley') and *tail* (older meaning is 'hairy part on the back side of a horse'). There is also metaphorical extension: *crane* is a bird but becomes used for a mechanical device that looks like the bird.

Some linguists also speak of ameliorization if the meaning becomes 'better' and pejorization if it becomes 'worse'. These two terms are difficult to use. For instance, is the meaning 'happy' better than 'silly'? The meaning of the word *silly* did indeed change from 'blessed' to 'silly'. However, a word does not really change for the better or worse. Instead, we might say a word has shifted in meaning. Other examples are *toilet* (older meaning is 'cloth'), *clown* 'rural person', *to botch* (older meaning is 'to repair'), *knight* (older meaning is 'servant'), *lewd* (older meaning is 'non religious order'), and *default* (older meaning is 'failure to pay'). Williams (1975) and Stockwell & Minkova (2001: 149-162) provide many more examples. The speakers’ need to create euphemisms for matters they do not enjoy discussing often results in a shift of meaning. The four semantic changes are summarized in Table 4.18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OE</th>
<th>ModE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>narrowing</td>
<td>deer 'animal'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widening</td>
<td>aunt 'father's sister'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metaphorical extension</td>
<td>grasp 'motion'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shift</td>
<td>to botch 'to repair'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.18: Semantic change involving lexical items

Sometimes, the way words look changes for reasons of meaning. When a word's spelling is adapted to fit its meaning, we speak of **folk etymology**. Instances are *female* (from French *femelle* 'little women', not related to *male*), *coldslaw* (from Dutch *koolsla* 'cabbage salad', not related to *cold*), *hangnail* (from *angnail* 'painful nail', not related to *hanging*), and *wormwood* (from *wermod* 'man-courage'). If you have access to the *OED*, try *lewd* and *haggard*!

The meaning change discussed so far involves words. We have seen that one of the changes connected to grammaticalization is a loss of lexical meaning (and an increase of grammatical function). Some examples of that are the verb *willan* that means 'want' or 'wish' in Old English and loses the volitional sense as it is reanalyzed as the future auxiliary. Other changes involve affixes that lose their meaning, e.g. the –*er* in *(n)either, after, and rather* is no longer a comparative but it once was.
There is no agreement on how many Old English dialects can be distinguished. Often, four dialects are distinguished: Northumbrian, Mercian, West-Saxon, and Kentish, as shown in Figure 4.5.

Some scholars distinguish three main dialect regions: Northumbria (roughly above the Humber River), Mercia (below the Humber and above the Thames), and Wessex (below the Thames). Some argue that there are seven varieties of Old English since there were seven kingdoms at one point: Northumberland, Mercia, East Anglia, Essex (above London), Sussex (below London), Wessex (further west than Sussex), and Kent. However, relatively temporary political divisions need not equal linguistic boundaries.

When we get to Middle English, we will see clear differences between dialects, but in Old English there is not much evidence of dialect distinctions. Breaking of front vowels into diphthongs occurs more often in West Saxon than in Mercian, so healf 'half' and bearn 'child' would be the southern forms, half and barn the northern. In the two versions of Caedmon's Hymn in Appendix B, this difference is very obvious. Another difference is that the short a in man, land, and hand, i.e. before a nasal, corresponds to a short o in the north: mon, lond and hond. This is not borne out in the versions of Caedmon's Hymn since mon occurs in both.

Scribal differences include the use of u(u) and d in the North for w and þ/ð in the South. This is obvious in Caedmon's Hymn: compare uerc with weorc and modgidanc with modeþonc in Appendix B. It can also be observed in (18). The Northumbrian sentence in (18a) has eghuelc 'every', whereas the Mercian version of the same sentence in (18b) has æghwilc. There are other dialect differences in (18) that will become obvious after Chapter 6, e.g. stondas versus stondeþ 'stands'.

One issue related to the discussion of Old English dialects is that there are only a few texts from the different areas that can be compared. Even the different versions of Caedmon's Hymn are from different time periods. The texts are also different in style: we have a lot of interlinear translations from the North and much prose from the South. There are also texts that are not clearly from one area, such as Beowulf. Some of the divisions are marked in Table 4.1.
This chapter has provided an overview of the grammar of Old English. Old English is a synthetic language, with elaborate case and agreement paradigms. Its vocabulary is Germanic. As we will see in the next chapter, this vocabulary changes considerably during and after the Old English period.

**Keywords:** synthetic and analytic; paradigm; case and agreement (see also Chapter 2); runes; facsimiles; sound changes (voicing, palatalization, fronting, and breaking); alliteration; compounds; widening, narrowing, and shift.

The texts (or parts of texts) appended to this chapter include well-known pieces of Old English prose and poetry. They have been chosen because there are audio versions available on the web or facsimiles on the internet and in paper copies. Various glosses and glossing styles are included depending on the difficulty of the text, a gloss for the entire text (Appendix A and B), no gloss (Appendix C), a word-for-word gloss (Appendix D and E) and an interlinear gloss (Appendix F). Different readers prefer different styles.

**Exercises**

1. Which of the following Old English words do you think are related to Modern English words. Use lines to show the relationship (sawol corresponds to soul).

   - OE heafod sawolhus segl seoce halgode gecuron tigul
   - ModE body blessed sick chosen head tile sail

2. a. What type of phonological change happens when:
   - OE forst becomes ModE frost?
   - OE handwyrst becomes ModE wrist?
   b. How might make/match, bake/batch, wake/watch, and speak/speech be related through sound change?

3. How would you translate (a) to (f)? *Sinc* means 'treasure' in (e):
   a. þa æþelingas ferdon ofer sæ into Normandig. (made up)
   b. wæs Romaburh abrocen fram Gotum. (from Bede I, 42)
   c. se cyning gehyrde þæt se ealdorbis ceop wolde mid his freondum & mid his wytum gesprec & gepeaht habben. (adapted from Bede I, 134)
   d. Eadwine wæs on þam gefeohte ofslegen. (adapted from Bede I, 152)
e. Nu se wyrm ligeð since bereafod. (Beowulf 2745)
f. [He] hiene selfne ofslog. (Alfred's Orosius 166.23)

Try to add word-by-word glosses for (3a) as has been done for most sentences in the text. Indicate as many of the endings you recognize.

4. Consider Tables 4.9 to 4.11:
   a. If *fisc* and *hund* 'dog' are in the same class as *stan*, i.e. get the same endings, how would you say 'of the (one) fish', 'to the (one) fish', 'the dogs' (subject), and 'for the dogs' in Old English?
   b. How would you say 'the sheep' (plural subject)?
   c. Are there any weak nouns in the passage from *Beowulf* in (27)?

5. Look at the changes in meaning in the list below and describe these changes using widening, narrowing, and shift. The older meanings are taken from the OED and you might look there to see how some of these drastic changes come about:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>older meaning</th>
<th>change:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accident</td>
<td>occurrence, incident</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doom</td>
<td>judge</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scent</td>
<td>faculty of smell (e.g. in dogs)</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>divest</td>
<td>remove one's clothes</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>starve</td>
<td>die</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admonish</td>
<td>to give warning advice</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aunt</td>
<td>father's sister</td>
<td>..........</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all of these words occur in Old English, can you make a guess as to which ones are later borrowings?

6. Read the first two sentences of the Old English text in Appendix A aloud. What words do you recognize in this text? List or circle them. See if you can find them in the facsimile.

7. Appendix B provides the two versions of *Caedmon's Hymn* mentioned a number of times. Identify some of the differences in orthography, sound, morphology, choice of vocabulary, and syntax in a systematic way (even if they have been noted in the chapter).
8. Try to get a sense of the story in Appendix C by skimming it. Underline some of the words you do not know and look up some in an Old English dictionary (e.g. on www.ling.upenn.edu/~kurisuto/germanic/oe_bright_glossary.html).

9. In Appendix D, can you guess what words *hlude, mongum,* and *æfen* in Riddle 8 correspond to in Modern English? What processes of sound change do they undergo?

   Look up what German *schweigen* or Dutch *zijgen* mean and relate them to *swigað* in line 1 of Riddle 7. Do you recognize *mec* in line 5? Why is *öfer* in line 6 spelled the way it is?

10. Comment on the word order of the texts in Appendices E and F.

11. *Garlic,* *marshal,* *nostril* and *Mildred* are originally compounds. Try to find the original meanings, preferably in the OED. Hints: *garlic* is related to *leek,* *marshall* to *horse,* *nostril* to *nose,* and *Mildred* to *mild.*

12. Download an Old English text from http://www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/library/oe/oe.html and save it as a .txt file. Then, open it in your word processing program and try to find some of the endings from Tables 4.9 and 4.12. Since your program will find e.g. *-as* in any word, you will need to weed it out.

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**Appendix A**

*Anglo Saxon Chronicle - Peterborough Version*

The Old English text, a translation, and facsimile of part of the *Peterborough Chronicle* (abbreviated PC) are given for the year 1066, the year of the Battle of Hastings. This version is written at Peterborough, an area influenced by Old Norse, and its last part extends into Middle English. (There is a translation of the entire chronicle at: http://http://omacl.org/Anglo/). Notice that the medieval year was organized differently from the present day one. The entry starts quietly enough:

Old English:

An. M.LXVI. On þyssum geare man halgode þet mynster æt Westmynstre on Cyldamaesse dæg 7 se cyng Eadward forðferde on Twelfts mæsse æfen 7 hine mann bebyrgede on Twelftan mæssedæg innan þære niwa halgodre circean on Westmynstre 7 Harold eorl feng to Englalandes cynerice swa swa se cyng hit him geuðe 7 eac men hine þærito gecuron 7 wæs gebletsod to cyne on Twelftan mæssedæg 7 þa ylcan geare þe he cyng wæs he für ut mid scipher togeanes Willelme ... 7 þa hwile com Willelm eorl upp æt Hastigingan on Sce Michaels mæssedæg 7 Harold com norðan 7 him wið gefeaht ear þan þe his here com eall 7 þær he feoll 7 his twægen gebroðra Gyrð
7 Leofwine and Willelm þis land geeode 7 com to Westmynstre 7 Ealdred arceb hine to cyng gehalgode 7 menn guldon him gyld 7 gislas sealdon 7 syððan heora land bohtan.

Modern English:
1066 In this year the monastery at Westminster was hallowed on Childermas day (28 December). And king Eadward died on Twelfth-mass eve (5 January) and he was buried on Twelfth-mass day, in the newly hallowed church at Westminster. And earl Harold succeeded to the Kingdom of England, as the king had granted it to him and men had also chosen him thereto and he was blessed as king on Twelfth-mass day. And in the same year that he was king he went out with a naval force against William ... And the while count William landed at Hastings, on St. Michael's mass-day and Harold came from the north and fought against him before his army had all come and there he fell and his two brothers Gyth and Leofwine and William subdued this land, and came to Westminster and archbishop Ealdred hallowed him king and men paid him tribute and gave him hostages and afterwards bought their land (from Thorpe 1861).

Appendix B
Two versions of Caedmon's Hymn
Version I is the Northumbrian version, probably from the 8th century, and Version II is the West-Saxon one, from c1000. Version III is a word-by-word translation. The story of Cædmon is told by Bede (731) but the date of composition is probably 665 (from Bede IV, 24, edition by Miller 1890). Both Bede and Cædmon are from Northumbria. Cædmon is a 'simple' herdsman who has a dream in which a man asks him to sing, resulting in the Hymn. After this event, the abbess of Streoneshealh (Whitby) asks him to join the (co-ed) monastery. The text just before the Hymn is available from http://faculty.virginia.edu/OldEnglish/anthology/caedmon.html. As mentioned above, there is also an audio version at http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm.

I

Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard
metudaes maecti end his modgidanc
uerc uuldurfadur sue he uundra gehuaes 3
eci dryctin or astelide
he aerist scop aelda barnum
heben til hrofe haleg scepen 6
tha middungeard moncyynes uard
eci dryctin efter tiade
firum foldu frea allmectig

II

Nu we sculan herian heofonrices weard
Metodes mihte and his modelpone
weorc wuldorfaeder swa he wunda gehwæs 3
eece dryhten ord onstealde
He ærest gesceop eorðan bearnum
heofon to hrofe halig scyppend
ða middangeard moncynnes weard
ecce dryhten æfter teode
firum foldan frea ælmihtig

III Now (we) shall praise heaven-kingdom's guardian
Lord's might and his thought
work wonderfather as he wonder's things
eternal lord beginning established
he first created men's/earth's children-DAT
heaven as roof holy creator
then middle-earth mankind's guardian
eternal lord after created
men-DAT earth god almighty

There is a faint copy in the Moore manuscript at Cambridge University, reproduced as in Figure 4.7.

Appendix C

Orosius

Orosius wrote a history of 'world' events in Latin in the 5th century and this was translated and 'improved' upon possibly by King Alfred. The version of the part on the Amazons given below is based on Bately (1980: 28-31).

Ær þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wære iiii hunde wintrum 7 hundeahtatigum, Uesoges, Egypta cyning, wæs winnende of suððæle Asiam, oð him se mæsta dæl wærð underþieded. 7 he Uesoges, Egypta cyning, wæs siþþan mid firde farende on Scipþie on ða norððælas, 7 his ærendracan beforan asende to þære ðeode, 7 him untweogendlice seegan het þæt hie [oðer] sceolden, oþþe ðæt lond æt him alesan, oþþe he hie wolde mid gefeohte fordon 7 forherigan. Hie him þa gesceadwislice ondyrdon, 7 cwædon þæt hit gemalic wære 7 unryhtlic þæt swa oferwlenced cyning sceolde winnan on swa earm folc swa hie wæron. Heton him þæt ðæt ondyrdon secgan, þæt him leofre were wið hiene to feohtanne þonne geþæfted þæt hie him giefol to gieldanne. Hie þæt gelestan swa, 7 sona þone cyning geþæfted mid his folc, 7 him æfterfolgende wæron, 7 ealle ægypte awestan buton þæm fenlondum anum. 7 þa hie hamweard wendon be westan þære ie Eufrate, ealle Asiam hie geþæfted þæt hie him giefol guldan, 7 þæt wæron fiftene gear þæt lond herigende 7 westende, oð heora wið him sendon ærendracan æfter, 7 him sædon þæt hie oðer dyden, oþþe ham comen oððe hie him woldon oðerra wera ceosan. Hi þa þæt lond forleton, 7 him hamweard ferdon.
On þære ilcan tide wurdon æþelingas afliemde of Scìþian, Plenius 7 Scolopetius wæron hatene, 7 geforan þæt lond, 7 gebudon þæt lond, 7 geforan þær æþelingas afliemde of Scìþian, Plenius 7 Scolopetius wæron hatene, 7 geforan þæt lond, 7 gebudon betuh Capadotiam 7 Pontum neah þære læssan Asian, 7 þær winnende wæron, oð hie him þær eard genamon. 7 hie ðær æfter þære ilcan tide from þære ilcan tide geworaþan fulum heres þære læsas, þæt wurdon hiora wæpon swa sarige on hiora mode, 7 swa wiðlice gedrefed, ægþær ge þara æþelinga wif ge þara ofþær monna þe mid him ofþælægen wæron, þætte hie wapna naman, to þon þæt hie heora wæras wrecan þoþton. 7 hi þa þære æþelingas æfter þære ofþlogan ealle þa wæpnedmen þe þæ t neawste geworaþan. For þon hie dydon swa þe hie woldon þætte þa wæphant wæf wif waren emsærige him, þætte hie siþþan on him fulum hæfdæn, ðæt hie ma mehten heora wæras wrecan. Hi þa þa wif ealle togededere gecirðon, 7 on þet folc winnende wæron, 7 þa wæpnedmen sleændæ, oð hie þæs londes hæfdæn micel on hiora onwalde. þætte þær gewinne hie genamon friþ wið þa wæpnedmen. Siþþan was hiera þæaw þæt hie ælce geare ymbæ twelf monað tosomne ferdon, 7 þær þonne beanra striendon. Ëft þonne þæt hie wif heora wænas wrecan, 7 þonne feðdon hie þæt ændæn, 7 slogon þa hyseceld. 7 þæm mænceldum hie fortendun þæt wæpane breost foran þæt hit weaxan ne sceolde, þæt hie hæfden þy strengan scyte. For þon hie mon hæt on Crecisc [Amazanas], þæt is on Englice fortende.

Heora twa wæron heora cwena, Marsepia 7 Lampida wæron hatene. Hie heora here on tu todældon; oþer æt ham beon heora lond to healldæn, oðer æt ham beon heora lond to healldæn, oðer æt ham beon heora lond to healldæn. Sæt þæt he hie ælce geare ymbæ twelf monað tosomne ferdon, 7 þær þonne beanra striendon. Ëft þonne þæt hie wif heora wænas wrecan, 7 þonne feðdon hie þæt ændæn, 7 slogon þa hyseceld. 7 þæm mænceldum hie fortendun þæt wæpane breost foran þæt hit weaxan ne sceolde, þæt hie hæfden þy strengan scyte. For þon hie mon hæt on Crecisc [Amazanas], þæt is on Englice fortende.

On þære ilcan tide wurdon æþelingas afliemde of Scìþian, Plenius 7 Scolopetius wæron hatene, 7 geforan þæt lond, 7 gebudon betuh Capadotiam 7 Pontum neah þære læssan Asian, 7 þær winnende wæron, oð hie him þær eard genamon. 7 hie ðær æfter þære ilcan tide from þære ilcan tide geworaþan fulum heres þære læsas, þæt wurdon hiora wæpon swa sarige on hiora mode, 7 swa wiðlice gedrefed, ægþær ge þara æþelinga wif ge þara ofþær monna þe mid him ofþælægen wæron, þætte hie wapna naman, to þon þæt hie heora wæras wrecan þoþton. 7 hi þa þære æþelingas æfter þære ofþlogan ealle þa wæpnedmen þe þæ t neawste geworaþan. For þon hie dydon swa þe hie woldon þætte þa wæphant wæf wif waren emsærige him, þætte hie siþþan on him fulum hæfdæn, ðæt hie ma mehten heora wæras wrecan. Hi þa þa wif ealle togededere gecirðon, 7 on þet folc winnende wæron, 7 þa wæpnedmen sleændæ, oð hie þæs londes hæfdæn micel on hiora onwalde. þætte þær gewinne hie genamon friþ wið þa wæpnedmen. Siþþan was hiera þæaw þæt hie ælce geare ymbæ twelf monað tosomne ferdon, 7 þær þonne beanra striendon. Ëft þonne þæt hie wif heora wænas wrecan, 7 þonne feðdon hie þæt ændæn, 7 slogon þa hyseceld. 7 þæm mænceldum hie fortendun þæt wæpane breost foran þæt hit weaxan ne sceolde, þæt hie hæfden þy strengan scyte. For þon hie mon hæt on Crecisc [Amazanas], þæt is on Englice fortende.

The Exeter Book contains several riddles, poems such as The Seafarer, Wulf and Eadwacer (see Appendix E), Deor, The Wanderer (see Appendix F), and religious poems. The language of Riddle 8 is not difficult and some of the endings are provided in the gloss. Review section 6 above before tackling it. Riddle 7 is more difficult Old English, but fun. Try to guess the answers (given in Appendix D Riddles...
Appendix I, question 10). First, a facsimile of the manuscript is given and then the transcription, and translations:

ADD from the earlier version p. 84; was Figure 4.7 there
Figure 4.8: A facsimile of Riddles 7 and 8, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Riddle eight</th>
<th>Word-for-word translation:</th>
<th>Mackie's (1934) translation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ic þurh m sprece mongum reordum</td>
<td>I through mouth speak many-DAT-P voice-DAT-P melody-DAT-P sing-1S changing often head-sound loud cry-out-1S hold my way sound not conceal old evening-poet men-DAT bring-1S bliss in city-DAT-P then I cry-out-1S voice stormy still in dwelling-DAT-P sit-3P bending-down say what I am-called who like bright jesting-song loud imitate-1S men-DAT announce-1S my welcome many voice-DAT my</td>
<td>I speak from my mouth with many voices sing with modulated notes, often change my speech, call out loudly keep to my custom, do not refrain from sound. An old evening poet, I bring to men bliss in the cities. When I cry out in a voice of varying pitch, they sit quiet in their dwellings listening. Say what I am called, who, like a woman jester, loudly mimic the habits of a buffoon, and announce with my voice many welcome things to men.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wrencum singe wrixle geneahhe heofodwoþe hlude cirme wrencum singe wrixle geneahhe heofodwoþe hlude cirme</td>
<td>melody-DAT-P sing-1S changing often head-sound loud cry-out-1S hold my way sound not conceal old evening-poet men-DAT bring-1S bliss in city-DAT-P then I cry-out-1S voice stormy still in dwelling-DAT-P sit-3P bending-down say what I am-called who like bright jesting-song loud imitate-1S men-DAT announce-1S my welcome many voice-DAT my</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riddle seven</td>
<td>Word-for-word translation</td>
<td>Mackie's (1934) translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hrægl min swigað þonne ic hrusan trede oþþe þa wic buge oþþe wado drefe hwilum mec ahebbað ofer hæleþa byht hyrst mine ond þeos hea lyft and mee þonne wide wolca strengu ofer folc byreð frætwe mine swogað hlude ond swinsiað torhte singað þonne ic getenge ne beam flode ond foldan ferende gæst</td>
<td>clothes my are-silent then I earth tread or then dwelling occupy or sea float sometimes me raises over men's dwellings ornament mine and this high air and me then wide cloud strong over people bears treasures my sound loud and sing clear sing then I resting not am water and earth going creature</td>
<td>My clothing is silent, when I tread on the ground, or live in the dwellings, or swim on the waters. Sometimes my trappings and this high air raise me above the abodes of men, and the strong wind then bears me far over the people. My garments loudly sound and make melody, sing clearly, when, a wandering living creature I do not touch water or land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leodum is minum swylce him mon lac gifæ Leodum is minum swylce him mon lac gifæ</td>
<td>Leodum is minum swylce him mon lac gifæ</td>
<td>Leodum is minum swylce him mon lac gifæ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>willað hy hine aþecgan gif he on þreat cymeð</td>
<td>willað hy hine aþecgan gif he on þreat cymeð</td>
<td>willað hy hine aþecgan gif he on þreat cymeð</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix E

Wulf and Eadwacer
This poem is also from the Exeter Book, is very difficult. This has resulted in many very different translations, one of which will be given together with the beginning of another. The Old English version is followed by a word-for-word one (where some indicate endings). An audio is available at www.public.asu.edu/~gelderen/AUDIO.htm, and a glossary and background to the poem is available at www.wmich.edu/medieval/research/rawl/wulf. Figure 4.9 is a facsimile.
ungelic is us
wulf is on iège ic on oþerre
fæst is þæt eglond fenne biworpen
sindon wælreowe weras þær on ige
willað hy hine aþegcan gif he on þreat cymeð
ungelic is us
wulfes ic mines widlastum wenum dogode
þonne hit wæs renig weder ond ic reotugu sæt
þonne mec se beaducafa bogum bilegde
wæs me wyn to þon wæs me hwæþre eac lað
wulf min wulf wena me þine
seoce gedydon þine seldeymas
murnende mod nalles meteliste
gehyrest þu eadwacer uncerne ear[g]ne hwelp
bireð wulf to wuda
þæt mon eaþe tosliteþ þætte næfre gesomnad wæs
uncer giedd geador (from Mackie 1934)

people-DAT is my-DAT such him man warning/gift give-SUBJ
will-3P they him receive if he in danger come-3S
different is us-DAT
wulf is on island I on other
closely is that island fen(=swamp) surrounded
are fierce men there on island
will-3P they receive him if he in danger come-3S
different is us
wulf-GEN I my-GEN far-wandering hopes suffered
then it was rainy weather and I red-eyed sat
then me the warrior-bold arms-DAT laid-on
was my joy to that was me however also loath
wulf my wulf hopes me your
sick made your seldom-appearing
mourning heart not food-wanting
hear-2S you Eadwacer our.DUAL-ACC wretched-ACC whelp
bear-3S wulf to wood
that man easily tear-apart-3S that never together was
our song together

Mackie (1934) has the following rendition:

It is to my people as if one were to make them gifts
They will destroy him if he comes to their troop.
Our lots are different.
Wulf is on an island, I on another
That island is a fastness surrounded by a fen.
Savage men are there on the island.
They will destroy him if he comes to their troop.
Our lots are different.
I suffered from far-wandering hopes of my Wulf.
It was rainy weather and I sat weeping
when the man brave in battle gave me shelter.
I was so far glad but it was also hateful to me.
Wulf, my Wulf, it was my hopes of thee,
thy constant absence and my mourning heart,
that made me sick - not from lack of food.
Dost thou hear Eadwacer? Our wretched cub
Wulf will bear to the forest.
What never was united is easily torn asunder-
our song together.

Alexander (1966) starts as follows:

The men of my tribe would treat him as game
if he comes to the camp they will kill him outright
Our fate is forked.

ADD from the earlier version p. 88; was Figure 4.8
Figure 4.9: A facsimile of *Wulf and Eadwacer*, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter

Appendix F
The Wanderer
This poem is also from the *Exeter Book*. A nice online edition is available at www.aimsdata.com/tim/anhaga/WandererMain.htm. It has been transcribed as it appears in the manuscript, but the entire poem is not given. The audio is available at http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/noa/audio.htm and a facsimile is provided in Figure 4.10.

*Oft him anhaga are gebideð metudes miltse þeahþe*
often him-DAT solitary kindness comes God's mildness though

*he mod cearig geond lagu lade longe sceolde hreran*
he heart troubled through sea ways long should stirr

*mid hondum hrim cealde sæ wadan wrec lastas wyrd*
with hands frost cold sea travel exile tracks fate

*bið ful ared . Swa cwæð eard stapa earfeþa gemyndig*
is fully determined so says earth walker hardship-GEN mindful

*wræþa wel sleahta wine mæga hryre . Oft ic sceolde*
hostile foreigner slaughters loyal kinsmen fall Often I should
A translation from Hogg (1992: 22-23):

Often the solitary dweller waits for favour. 
the mercy of the creator, although he, troubles in heart, 
has for a long time, across the sea-ways, had 
to stir with his hands the ice-cold sea, 
travel the paths of an exile; fate is fully determined.
Thus spoke the wanderer, mindful of troubles, 
of cruel battles, of the fall of kinsmen. 
Often, alone at each dawn, I have had 
to lament my sorrow; now there is noone alive 
to whom I dare openly reveal my thoughts

ADD from p. 90 of the earlier version ; was Figure 4.9
Figure 4.10: Facsimile of the Wanderer, reprinted with kind permission of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter