

Information-structural impact on adverbial *only* evolution in the Middle English language

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Abstract. The article, dedicated to adverbial *only* rise and the advancement in Middle English (ME), develops an information-structural hypothesis as the key factor of its evolution. The research focuses on two adverbials *ane* and *only* investigated in various ME historical periods, undergoing significant changes over time. It proves the aforesaid adverbials to be Focus marking components, reanalyzing from numeral *ane* into adverbial *only* in the XIII cen. The data analysis based on Rizzi's formula and Prince's taxonomy allows to elicit adverbial *only* evolutionary pattern, determine ratio of different Focus type marking, as well as, discourse status representation.

Keywords: *adverbial, Focus, information structure, discourse/hearer old/new information.*

The data from ME Corpus indicate the emergence of adverbial *only* in late XIII cen. Its diachronic investigation, presented by a number of scholars [4; 5; 12], identifies the adverbial source as follows [1; 5]:

(1a) Numeral *one* (ME *ane*) > polysemous adj./adv. *only* > exclusive focusing *only* [1: 26].

As regards our data, an insignificant amount (4.68%) of ME examples with numeral *ane* render the adverbial meaning, e.g.

(1b) *Ane mei him na Mon alsa wel demen ne alswa rihte // for nan ne knauð him ase zere; buten ane drihte* (Poema Morale, 109-110)

The paper **aims** at studying what facilitated *ane* to acquire adverbial meaning. In this light, the research suggests a consecutive application of pragmatic and syntactic methods. The clauses are tested in terms of highlighting discourse Old/New information and sentence Topic/Focus [2; 3; 9; 10; 11] as the elements of information-structure (IS) marking. To differentiate discourse old and new information E. Prince considers the taxonomy of inferred familiarity [6]:

(2) evoked > unused > inferable > containing inferable > brand-new anchored > brand-new

The linguist distinguishes four informational types (Tabl.1):

Table 1. Types of Information in the Discourse

Information	Hearer old	Hearer new
Discourse old	Evoked	Not-registered
Discourse new	Unused	Brand new

The present study proposes to confine to dichotomy discourse/hearer old vs. discourse/hearer new information since singling out purely discourse new/hearer old information proves challenging for old texts. Discourse and hearer new information (3) suggests no prior reference towards it. Discourse and hearer old information (4) implies its previous allusion.

(3) *Two thingus onli ne do thou to me; and thanne fro thi face I shal not ben hid.* (The Holy Bible...)

The speaker in (3) emphasizes on his readiness for punishment, pleading about two things that should not be done to him. Adverb *onli* refers to the NP *two thingus*, introducing discourse and hearer new information.

(4) *Except þe fest of Innocentis, þey schul chaunge at þe chapitre of þe sonday or of þe fest or of þe vtas; wherfor þat þe seruise of sonday is lefte, & þey schul make memori of þe fest biforne, but zif it be a dobel fest, þey*

schul make only memori of þe sonday (*The Rewle of Sustris Menouresses enclosid...*)

The NP *memori* makes reference to the previous sentence, thus, adverb *only* marks NP that presents discourse and hearer old information.

As acknowledged in Steube [11], a discourse-old element may nevertheless be focused and somehow reactivated in the mind of the hearer. Therefore, it cannot automatically be attributed to Topic. To eliminate the aforesaid inconsistency, it has been proposed to test sentence constituents within Rizzi's framework [7] where elements are coded by the formula in (5).

(5) [ForceP[TopP[FocP[FinP[TP...]]]]],

ForceP identifies correlation of the sentence and context; TopP is the landing site for preposed topics, FocP hosts preposed foci; FinP is used for encoding features related to clause finiteness. On the basis of (5), graphic representation of sentence (6a) comes as (6b):

(6a) *Onli Mardoche bow|ede not kne**. (The Holy Bible...)

(6b)

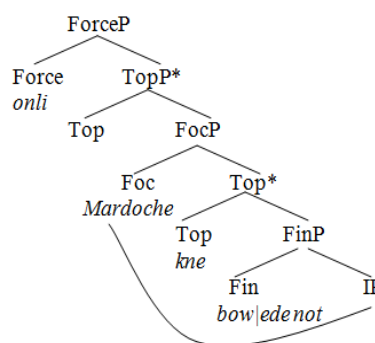


Fig. 1 Sentence derivational IS model

NP *Mardoche* is sentence Focus, whereas the position of *onli* in Foc enables the NP movement from FinP into FocP. Since the data analysis proves that adverbials in all instances mark focused elements it appears relevant to distinguish different Focus types, which can be subdivided into contrastive, informational and presentational [8]. To differentiate them, the linguists apply such terms: **Foc (F(t))** describes an F-structure, in which Foc is the Focus constituent, t and Foc are coindexed, F(t) is an S-structure with t, replacing the Focus constituent. Consequently, the rules for each Focus types are as follows:

Contrastive focus: in Foc₁(F(t)), Foc₁ element is a contrastive focus, iff F(t/Foc₂) (Foc₂≠Foc₁) is c-construable.

C-construable is defined as discourse inferable.

(7) *alle heo weren adame ibuhsume and naut ane under his hond; ac under his fet* (OE Hom, Dominica Sec. Post Pascha, pg. 129)

Informational focus: in Foc₁(F(t)), Foc₁ element is an informational focus iff S considers that H wants S to specify Foc₂ such that F(t/Foc₂). In terms of informational focus the utterance requires Foc₁(F(t)), in which S-structure F(t/Foc₂) ∈ c-construable for a certain Foc₂.

(8) *This bawme groweth in no place but only here* (Mandeville's travels, 1:32)

Presentational focus: in Foc₁(F(t)) Foc element is a presentational focus iff it is not the case that F₂(t/Foc) is c-construable for all F₂. (Not registered in our data).

The study is based on ME manuscripts consisting of about 10 million words selected from *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse* (years 1150-1500). For numeral *ane* (*an, anne, one, onne, oune* etc.) these are XII-XV cen. records irrespective the dialect, with 3,570 instances singled out, among which 167 render adverbial meaning. Table 1 presents the adverbial distribution compared with its other meanings.

Table 1. Adverbial *ane* occurrence in Middle English records

Period	Total <i>ane</i> counts	Adverbial <i>ane</i> counts	Adverbial frequency
ME1	1150-1200	179	55 30.72%
	1200-1250	451	24 5.32%
ME2	1250-1300	361	11 3.05%
	1300-1350	688	31 4.51%
ME3	1350-1400	782	24 3.32%
	1400-1500	1109	22 1.98%

As indicated in Table 1, adverbial *ane* usage declines towards the end ME3 (1.98%). The overall adverbial proportion for ME1 is 30.72% and ca. 4.3% for ME2. The analysis of the adverbial allotment per number of words in works (Tabl.2) also suggests its low frequency.

The data demonstrate a decrease in adverbial *ane* usage: cf., XII cen. – 0,014%, XV cen. – 0,003%.

The analysis of *ane* placement with reference to the

Table 4. Information structural types with adverbial *ane* in ME

Type of information	Discourse and hearer old		Discourse and hearer new	
%	80.24%		19.76%	
Focus type	Contrastive	Informational	Contrastive	Informational
%	5.22%	94.78%	0%	100%
Total	134		33	

Interestingly, *ane*, functioning as a numeral or article, mostly refers to discourse and hearer new information. Therefore, the present research assumes that a specific feature of highlighting old information favored *ane* reanalysis into adverbial *only*. The insignificant amount of illustrations indicates the remnant feature of numeral *one* to mark discourse and hearer new information.

Analysis of adverbial *ane* based on Rizzi's formula testifies to its Focus modification in 100% with informational Focus amounting to 95.8% (9) and contrastive Focus ratio of 4.2% (10).

(9) *Don al þat mon deð wið uten sunne ane* (OE Homilies, Sawles Warde, pg. 275)

(10) *Ne dude hit noht þe king ane. ah we alle clane;* (Layamon's Brut, 4395)

word it modifies, displays 10.8% instances with the adverbial preceding the focused element, whereas 89.2 % demonstrate *ane* postmodifying placement.

Table 2. Adverbial *ane* total allotment per work

Century	Approximate sample size (words)	Adverbial <i>ane</i> counts	Frequency
1150-1200	290,479	55	0.014%
1200-1250	230,437	24	0.0136%
1250-1300	392,838	11	0.0069%
1300-1350	667,121	31	0.0046%
1350-1400	3,524,487	24	0.0023%
1400-1500	970,353	22	0.003%

Adverbial *onli* (*ōnlī, onlie, oneli, oenli*, etc.) is encountered in the XIII-XV cen. English manuscripts (Tabl. 3), presenting 802 illustrations (among 1835 sentences registered).

Table 3. Adverbial *only* total assignment per work

Period	Sample size (words)	Adverbial <i>only</i> count	Frequency
ME2	1250-1300	126,589	2 0.00158%
	1300-1350	627,147	23 0.00367%
ME3	1350-1400	3,510,464	760 0.02165%
	1400-1500	482,155	44 0.0091%

The records of early XIV cen. demonstrate a low occurrence of *onli*, with a significant difference in prose and verse. The adverbial frequency per genre would be correspondingly as follows – 0.013% and 0.002%. Late XIV cen. writings show a gradual spread of *onli*, particularly in prose (0.04%), whereas poetry still exemplifies its low performance.

The placement of *onli* regarding the sentence constituents it marks shows that within ME2 and ME3 in ca. 45% of examples the adverbial occurs in postmodification with the reference to the word it modifies.

Adverbial *ane* highlights discourse and hearer old information (overwhelmingly evoked) in 80.24% examples. Discourse and hearer new information is represented in 19.76% instances (Tabl.4).

Another aspect arising from the investigation is to consider sentence elements and their relation to discourse/hearer old vs. new information and types of Focus registered.

Discourse and hearer old information. The study shows that this IS type is frequently registered with objects, expressed by pronouns (59 instances). Objects presented by a noun total 24 out of 41. These nouns commonly refer to divine powers (God, angel, etc.). E.g.

(11) *"Margaret, thinkys þou þis werkys gode? // Beleue onne my lord & be my wyue. // And I wylle no more with þe stryue.* (Altenglische legenden, pg.237-238)

The number of illustration with objects rendering discourse and hearer old information amounts to 106 instances (79.1%). Adverbial *ane* mostly occurs after the

element it modifies (12).

(12) *His godenes es sa mykel, þare we inwardely aske hym ane*, he wil gyf fyfe; so wele payde es he when we wil sett al oure hert to lufe hym. (The Holy Bible...)

Four examples with objects render contrastive Focus (13) amounting to 3.77%.

(13) *Ðe mann ne leued *naht he bread ane, ac leued bi ða wordes ðe gað ut of godes muðe.* (Vices and Virtues, pg. 89)

Subjects marking discourse and hearer old information total 15 (11.2%), of these 5 are premodifying Subject instances (14) and 10 are postmodifying (15). Within this number 10 are represented by pronouns and the rest by nouns referring to divine powers.

(14) *Per he zette his cnihten; alle heore irihten. || elc ane he zef æhte; also he iærned hafde.* (Layamon's Brut, 12053-54)

(15) *he ane is eure an ilche stude wende þer þu wende.* (OE Hom., P. Morale 87).

Among the Focus types two Subject instances render contrastive Focus (15), while the rest introduce informational Focus (16).

(15) *Neauer hwi mon feið þat heo hit al weldeð, þat wullen ha nullen ha, biwinned & biwiteð hit to fe monie oðre, nawt ane to hare freond, ah to hare fulle fan, ne habben ne mahen [leaf 121, col. 2] þrof, þah ha hit hefden sworn, bute hare anes dale* (Hali Meidenhad, pg. 42-43)

(16) *Ac þerefore seith þet godspel þet hedden i-be idel; þo þet hi nedden bi-leued ane god almichti. ne him louie ne him serui.* (An Old English miscellany pg.34)

Adverbial element presenting this information structural type accounts for 13 instances (9.7%), whereas premodifying *ane* is registered with one illustration (17). E.g.

(17) *He micelne wæstm of moncynne aber þurh his anes deað* (Homilies, 74/24)

The verbs are not registered with this IS type. Diagram 1 graphically reflects idem.

Discourse and hearer new information. Amounting to 19.76%, Focus marking elements render exceptionally informational Focus. Indicative of this type is a frequent amount of verbs marked as Focus (21.2 % overall illustrations). E.g. (18)

Nai. for þu þe ane dreddes nawt wið þin anre deore bodi to fihite azaines alle þe ahefulle deueles of helle. þat hwuch of ham swa is lest laðeliche. and grureful. (Old English Hom...., Sawles Warde pg. 271).

Table 6. Information structural types with adverbial *only* in ME

Type of information	Discourse and hearer old		Discourse and hearer new	
Amount (%)	81.2%		19.8%	
Focus type	Contrastive	Informational	Contrastive	Informational
Amount (%)	36.25%	63.75%	23.18%	76.82%
Total	650		151	

Table 6 shows that the general proportion of informational and contrastive Foci is 63.75% to 36.25% respectively. When marking informational Focus, adverbial *only* in all instances renders the meaning of exclusiveness (21).

(21) *And þei seyn wel þat the creatures þat worschipen hem ne ben no goddes, but þei worschipen hem for the vertue þat is in hem þat may not be but only be the grace of god* (Mandeville's, 1:202)

Discourse and hearer old information. While modify-

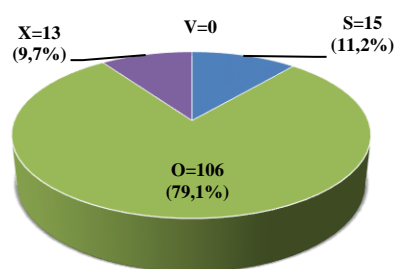


Diagram 1. Sentence component marking by adverbial *ane* (discourse/hearer old)

Subjects marked by *ane* as Focus amount to 2 instances (6.1%), Objects – 18 (54.5%), Adverbials – 6 (18.2%) respectively. E.g.

(19) *I schal biteche yow þo two þat tayt arn and quoynt, || And laykez wyth hem as yow lyst, and letez my gestes one.* (Purity 872, pg. 34)

(20) *'Nay, for fyfty,' quod þe Fader, 'and þy fayre speche, || And þay be founden in þat folk of her fylþe clene || I schal forgyve alle þe gylt þurȝ my grace one.* (Purity, pg. 29)

Interestingly, subjects and objects are represented solely by nouns. Diagram 2 exemplifies a graphic representation of the highlighted figures.

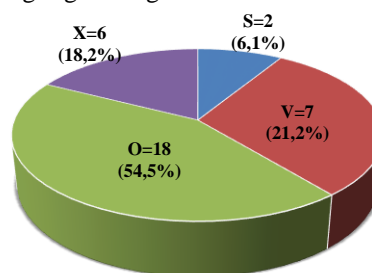


Diagram 2. Sentence component marking by adverbial *ane* (discourse/hearer new)

Adverbial *only* modifies discourse and hearer old information, mostly evoked in 81.2% instances. The other IS type is presented by 19.8% illustrations. Analysis based on Rizzi's formula testifies to Focus modification by *only* in 100% instances with two Focus types registered: informational (73.4%) and contrastive (26.6%). Table 2 reflects the overall data evaluation for adverbial *only*.

ing the element pertaining to this type, adverbial *only* oftentimes marks sentence object, i.e. 378 instances amounting to 58.15% (22). The distribution for other sentence constituents is as follows: S (23) – 136 (20.93%), V (24) – 48 (7.38%), X (25) – 88 (13.54%). Diagram 3 graphical presents the highlighted figures.

(22) *Nor the lesse be that reason pondage and tonnage mey not be rekenned as parcell off the revenues wich the kynge hath ffor the mayntenance off his estate, bi cause it*

ought to be applied only to þe kepynge off the see. (The governance of England, pg. 123).

(23) *Noght aneli oure tyme is schorte: bot alswa oure elde flees as þe wiseman sais* (Rolle, pg. 136).

(24) *And also the kyng hath geven parte off this livelod to his moste worshipfull brotherryn, wich not only haue serued hym in the maner ffor said, but bith also so nygh in blode to his highnes, that it be satte not is magnificence to haue done in oper wyse.* (The governance of England, pg. 126).

(25) *þe .ii: þat þou think noght it is in þi might / slike deuociouns & steryngs til haue / ai when þou wil; bot aneli thorough goddis grace / when he wil þaim send.* (The Rewle of Sustris, pg. 153).

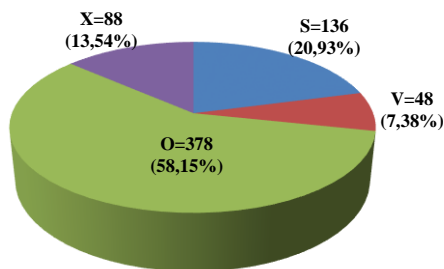


Diagram 3. Sentence component marking by adverbial *only* (discourse/hearer old information)

When marking the verb, it is notable that as few as five examples with *only*+V represent contrastive Focus; therefore, the major part of the verbs in the constructions renders informational Focus. Within overall ratio of informational to contrastive Focus the figures are 89.58 % to 10.12%. Verbs presenting informational Focus in this study refer to information inferable from the previous discourse, while the verbs relating to contrastive Focus render information evoked previously.

Discourse and hearer new information. Indicative for this type is a frequent marking of VO(X) part (81.5%). Moreover, one may observe a rapid rise in verb marking, comparing to other information-structural types (33.8%). The distribution for other sentence constituents is as follows: S – 7 (4,6%) – (26); O – 69 (45,7%) – (27); V – 51 (33,8%) – (28); X – 24 (15,9%) – (29). Diagram 4 reveals the schematic figures for the highlighted type.

(26) *for ech man longiþ after good, and þe last good and best in which oonly man shulde reste is blisse* (Select English works of John Wyclif, pg. 4)

(27) *Samarytans also the fyue* bokis of Moyses wryten*

in as feele lettris, oonli in figuris and printis dyuersynge; (The Holy Bible, CAP XIX, 668).

(28) *The apostlis oonli forsoken the boot and the nettis; the widwe putte two mytis*. [minutis I.] into the tresorye of God, and it is put bifore the richessis of Cressi.* (The Holy Bible, CAP. VIII. (75)

(29) *And zit thei knowe not the vertue þereof but þei coueyten it & louen it only for the beautee.* (Mandeville's travels, 1:130)

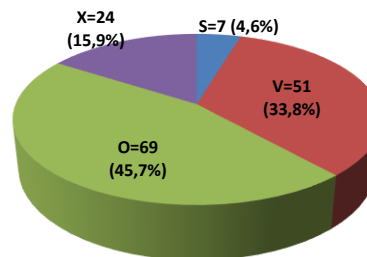


Diagram 4. Sentence component marking by adverbial *only* (discourse/hearer new)

Therefore, adverbial *only* renders Focus in all instances, principally marking discourse and hearer old information.

Concluding remarks.

✓ The study shows infrequent adverbial *ane* usage in XII-XV cen. works with total ratio of 4.68%, compared to overall *ane* application. Still, the XII cen. manuscripts present predominant *ane* employment (30.72%).

✓ The investigation proposes XII cen. as a starting point for *ane* reanalysis into *only* in further centuries, which are characterized by successive adverbial *ane* decay and *only* rise throughout ME period.

✓ To clarify the aforesaid peculiarity we advance a hypothesis of IS facilitating this process.

✓ Application of pragmatic and syntactic sentence analysis detected:

- *ane* and *only* in 100% instances highlights a sentence Focus.

- discourse and hearer old information ratio for *ane* and *only* is 80.24% and 81.2% respectively.

✓ Considering this, the research suggests the following reanalysis scheme: num. *one*>polysemous num./adv./art. *one*>focusing *only*

✓ Within the XIII-XV cen. adverbial *only* expands its information-structural load.

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Информационно-структурное влияние на эволюцию адверба *only* в среднеанглийском
Андрушенко Е. Ю.

Аннотация. Статья, посвященная становлению и развитию адверба *only* в среднеанглийском, выдвигает информационно-структурную гипотезу как ключевой фактор эволюции данного адверба. В статье рассматриваются два адверба *ane* и *only* изучаемые в разные периоды развития среднеанглийского языка. Доказывается, что данные адвербы, являясь маркерами фокуса, реанализируются в XIII в. Исследование материала на основе формулы Л. Рицци и таксономии Э. Принс позволяет отследить эволюционную модель адверба *only*, определить соотношение разных видов фокуса, а также репрезентацию статуса элементов дискурсе.

Ключевые слова: адверб, фокус, информационная структура, старая/новая информация для дискурса.