The English Dative Alternation from 1410 - 1680

by

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ABSTRACT

The English dative alternation has received much study; its semantic roles and reasons for driving the choice of structure have been debated by many scholars. Despite the extensive studies carried out, however, no consensus has been reached by scholars as to whether the dative alternation is a completely random choice or if slight semantic differences understood, albeit subconsciously, by L1 English speakers do exist.

Apart from the work of Wolk *et al*. (2013), however, all studies have been conducted into the usage of the different structures in Present Day English only. The examination carried out by Wolk *et al.* looks into the development of the dative and genitive alternations from 1650 to the end of the 20th century. They identified some patterns which showed that certain structures were preferred for themes such as animacy, for example. Taking this study as a starting point, it was decided that the period from when case endings had almost completely been syncretised [c 15th century] up to the beginning of Wolk *et al.'s* work [mid17th century] was an interesting field for further investigation, and the Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence was chosen as a basis for this.

Data collected from 16th century correspondence did show some anomalies when compared with findings from other eras. Whilst the scope of the project did not allow for further investigation into the possibility, the fact that this was the era of the Inkhorn Controversy cannot be ignored.

During the data collection process, some patterns were, tentatively, identified. The most remarkable discovery, however, was that there emerged a strong possibility that social deixis could also have a bearing on use of the dative alternation. Prepositional phrases were shown to be used more often when addressing superiors or opponents, whereas the Double Object construction appeared more often in correspondence with peers and close family and friends.

Whilst this was not the main object of the study, originally, and the need for deeper examination to collaborate or repudiate the findings is necessary, this new area of investigation into the driving choice for dative has been identified.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first time I had ever heard about the dative alternation was at a meeting of the Preston Linguistic Circle, at a presentation given by Daniel Bürkle. I will never forget one of his closing statements: ‘not much work has been done on historical aspects of the dative alternation’ [or words to that effect]. Not only did this pique my interest but I have had the privilege and benefit of having him as my supervisor during this research. His knowledge of the subject, not to mention his skills at creating graphs, charts and other such necessities, have all been invaluable.

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Next, my friends and family who listened to my wailings, coped with my stress-levels and believed in me when I didn’t, all deserve an honourable mention in despatches.

Finally, and most important of all, I would like to praise God who brought me to this place and has been my rock throughout my studies. Without His hand none of this would have been possible. Hallelujah.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS WORK

acc – Accusative

dat – Dative

BNC – British National Corpus

DO – Direct Object

DOC – Double Object construction

EME – Early Modern English

IO – Indirect Object

ME – Middle English

obj – Object

OE – Old English

PCEEC – Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence

PDC – Prepositional dative construction

PDE – Present Day English

sub – Subject

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.

1.1:OVERVIEW

English, along with many other languages, has alternative ways in which dative sentences can be constructed.

To demonstrate how these differences occur in English, Levin gives the following examples of the dative alternation:

1] *Terry gave Sam an apple.*

2] *Terry gave an apple to Sam*.

(Levin 2008:1)

For a discussion of the dative alternation in other languages, including Greek, Russian, Warlpiri, Icelandic and Fongbe, see Levin (2008). This work, however, is only interested in the dative alternation in the English language, which Wolk *et al.* exemplify thus:

3] *SUN., JAN. 23 — M.'s birthday — wrote [M.] [an earnest loving note].*

4] *SUN., JAN. 30 — Much better today. Wrote [a note] [to M.] expressive of my good state of feeling.*

(Wolk *et al.* 2013:383)

Example 3 they call the 'ditransitive dative construction'; example 4 the 'prepositional dative construction'. In this work, the first structure will be referred to as the double

object construction (hereinafter DOC), yet the author will also call the second structure the prepositional dative construction (hereinafter PDC).

1.2: SEMANTIC DIFFERENCES OF THE ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURES.

Many authorities [e.g. Hovav and Levin, 2007] believe that the two main forms of the dative alternation in English are synonymous in their semantics. Clark's Principle of Contrast, however, states that for any word or form to survive in a language, it must make its own, unique, semantic contribution (1987:1). As an example, she gives the synonyms of Mature – Adult, Ripe, Perfect, Due. Although each of these can, in the right environment, be substituted for mature, they all carry their own connotations and semantic limitations. It should follow, therefore, that each of the dative alternations must carry some particular meaning, emphasis or connotation in order for them to have survived in the language.

[In]tangibility was considered an interesting area for investigation. Although a PDE speaker could, grammatically, say 'That has given an idea to me', it is highly unlikely they would choose this construction. 'That has given me an idea' would, instinctively, be the way a sentence with an intangible theme would be expressed. Animacy was selected as the other parameter of interest as preliminary searches returned a high amount of data. Time constraints for this study meant that the investigation of a wide range of other possible parameters was not feasible.

Whether or not people instinctively chose one construct over another in different situations is investigated, in this thesis, under three main areas: [in]tangibility of the theme, [in]animacy of the theme and the social relationship between correspondents. The fact that social deixis could be a possible driver of the choice of syntax only emerged when the data collected was being examined for the first two elements and

a possible pattern suggested itself. Further work was then undertaken to examine this in greater detail.

1.3: CORPORA EXAMINED

This paper examines a corpus of historical English texts. Many corpora were initially investigated, including the Corpus of Early English Books Online and the Archer corpus, but it was decided that the Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence [hereinafter PCEEC] was most likely to give results showing the usage of dative verbs in everyday contexts. For a more detailed discussion of the choice of corpora examined, and verbs selected, see Chapter 2: Literature Review.

The range of dates inspected begins from the period where syncretisation of the inflections was almost complete, c1400 (Smith 2005:96,97), up to 1680, which is the end of the PCEEC This date range also precedes, and slightly overlaps, the work done by Wolk *et al.* whose paper covers the period from 1650 onwards. The aforementioned paper used the Archer corpus of historical English, but for reasons already discussed this work uses the PCEEC.

An attempt is made to trace how the alternative syntactic models arose and discover what, if anything, drove the choice of construction. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the emergence of different syntactic structures [see section 3:6, figure 1], the [in]tangibility of the theme [for example wishes, blessings and other such sentiments, compared with physical objects] and the possibility of social deixis playing a part in driving the usage of the different types of the dative alternation.

The elements which drive choice of syntax may not be consciously understood; English speakers know the order adjectives take before a noun without usually realising it. For example, the Cambridge Dictionary Online gives the following order:

1] Opinion

2] Size

3] Physical Quality

4] Shape

5] Age

6] Colour

7] Origin

8] Material

9] Type

10] Purpose

Following this rule, even without actually knowing such a rule exists, an L1 English speaker would talk about a

Nice, big, round, red, rubber ball

rather than a

* *Round, rubber, big, red, nice ball*.

The native instinct of L1 English speakers, as well as the fact that different writers have their own individual styles, cannot be totally accounted for in any research of this nature. Modes of writing style, which change considerably over the time-span of the corpora examined, are another factor which it is not possible to fully understand or rule out of any findings. The data was, however, examined as scientifically as possible given these factors.

A simple count method of occurrences of each structure when used for [in]animate and [in]tangible objects was taken over all the corpora examined and separated into half-century sectors in order to show general trends as linguistic style and language itself changes. The range of correspondents covered by the selection of the corpora

also covers a range of individual writing styles and should give a good indication of the typical ways the PDC and DOC were being used.

Three individual corpora were used to check for social deixis, each approximately 100 years apart. The writers were all chosen for their own position in society; each was in a situation whereby they would be dealing with people from the highest in the land to more lowly contemporaries. For a full discussion of these corpora see Chapter 4, section 5: Social Deixis

1.4: CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES.

The data collected has been used to create charts and tables demonstrating the findings, and a discussion of possible interpretations is given in Chapter 5: Conclusions. As previously mentioned, no hard and fast results can ever be drawn from a study of a topic such as this; limitations on surviving papers, individual authors' styles and the fact that we cannot ever know what was in the mind of the correspondents must always be acknowledged as limiting factors. Despite this, some strong indications do suggest themselves and the possibility of enhancing these findings by comparing other genres of writing, more corpora of correspondence or taking the work further back to the Old English period could lead to a greater understanding of the dative alternation's development.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: OVERVIEW

Most of the articles which have been written about the English dative alternation concentrate on modern usage; path and [in]animacy being particularly widely discussed. Semantics is an area which is considered by some linguists to be a driving force in the choice of syntax, whereas others hold that both constructions are synonymous. See Hovav & Levin (2007:130) for further discussion of the debate. Oehrle, for example, states that semantics restrict the possibility of both structures being possible (1976:2). He gives the example:

5] *John carried the bucket (over) to Mary.*

(1976:143-144)

The semantics of this sentence, Oehrle argues, imply a locative rather than a dative use of 'to'. We cannot, however, draw this conclusion from the sentence as it stands. The theme may have become the property of the recipient or simply changed location. Without knowing more of the context it is unsafe to make such an assertion.

Carroll also argues for a locative meaning in some usages of 'to' in English and compares them with the German *zu*.

The two forms which encode motion to a goal in German, *in* plus accusative and *zu* plus dative, have one counterpart in English, the preposition *to*. As with *von* and *zu* in German, it co-occurs with the preposition *from* to cover the span from source to goal. (2000:104)

The consideration of tangible and intangible items, for example the giving of a book compared with the giving of an idea, is an area which has been touched on by some

scholars but is still an area inviting further exploration. The diachronic development of the dative alternation is another area where little has been published; in this section the extant literature will be discussed.

During the data collection phase of the research project, it emerged that use of the DOC and PDC structures were possibly linked to politeness and social deixis. This theory will be examined with reference to Nevala's [2004] article which, although it does not consider the dative structure, gives an overview of expressions of politeness in early English correspondence.

2.2: NOTION OF PATH

The simplest way of demonstrating the dative alternation is possibly this example given by Dabrowska (1997:10):

6] *Bill sent a walrus to Joyce.*

7] *Bill sent Joyce a walrus.*

Example 6 gives prominence to the path by including the preposition 'to'. The second example, although describing exactly the same event, only implies the path within the verb 'sent'. Example 7 conceptualises the possession of the walrus by Joyce at the non-specified location. 'The possessive relationship is symbolically represented by the juxtaposition of *Joyce* and *a walrus*' (Dabrowska 1997:10)

Although the verb 'to send' is used in this illustration, it could be replaced by 'to give' without losing any of the implied differences which Dabrowska discusses.

An illustration given by Bresnan does involve the verb 'to give':

8] *Who gave you that wonderful watch?*

9] *Who gave that wonderful watch to you?*

(Bresnan 2007: 75)

Again, the use of the preposition ‘to’ in example 9 gives more prominence to the path of transference from the giver to the recipient. Hovav and Levin agree that in most instances each construction places emphasis on either the path (the prepositional construction) or the caused possession (the double object construction). They challenge this view, however, with certain classes of verbs and consider that:

> […]verbs like *give* and *sell* only have a caused possession meaning, while verbs like *throw* and *send* have both caused motion and caused possession
>
> meanings. We show that the caused possession meaning may be realized by both variants. Concomitantly, we argue that verbs like *give*, even in the *to* variant, lack a conceptual path constituent, and instead have a caused possession meaning which can be understood as the bringing about of a ‘have’ relation.

(Hovav and Levin 2007:129)

For further development and examples of this argument, see examples 10 to 17 in section 2:3.

The notion of path as a driver of choice in the dative alternation is discussed by Gropen *et al.* They argue that ‘[…] an argument of a path-function or place-function

[such as 'to'] would be linked to an oblique object.' while the syntax of a dative construction would be driven by the nature of the object. (Gropen *et al.*1989:240)

Levin sums the difference in the structures thus: caused motion is typically associated with PDC whereas caused possession tends to be expressed by use of the DOC (2008:2). She continues to explain that give-type roots are inherently associated with the caused possession event type and send-type roots are inherently associated with the caused motion event type (2008:4).

2.3: IMPLIED OUTCOME AND CAUSED POSSESSION

Gropen *et al*. continue to discuss the contexts wherein a DOC structure is possible. They discuss how some seemingly similar sentences become ungrammatical when one of the core elements, for instance the verb, is changed. One such example is:

10] *I donated a book to the library. - *I donated the library a book.*

which they compare with:

11] *I gave a book to the library. - I gave the library a book.*

(Gropen *et al.* 1989:204)

The rule they propose is 'X causes Z to have Y' (Gropen *et al.* 1989:241). As the examples quoted above both seemingly fit this rule, however, there must be some underlying reason for the two structures to be permissible with 'give' but not with 'donate'. The Oxford English Dictionary [OED] states that this verb only came into usage in the mid nineteenth century, hence it has not been possible to compare the two verbs' usage in this work due to the time-frame of 1410 to 1680 being the subject of this study.

Implied outcome as a result of structural choice is discussed by Clark (1987:5). She gives the two, grammatical, sentences:

12] *Jan taught Rob French*.

13] *Jan taught French to Rob.*

Clark argues that the first, DOC, structure implies that recipient, Rob, successfully acquired the theme, French. The second sentence, in contrast, does not imply whether the outcome was successful or not. This would appear to contradict Bresnan's (2007:76) statement that the constructions have 'overlapping meanings' and can be used as 'alternative expressions or paraphrases'.

Whether the animacy or otherwise of the theme affects the caused possession implication is discussed by Levin (2008:6). She compares the differences between the sentences:

14] *The teacher sent the children to the principal.*

15] *The teacher sent the principal the children.*

Because the principal does not possess the children which were sent to him, Levin terms the recipient in animate-themed structures as a *spatial goal.*

If another theme, such as *book* or *letter* were substituted for *children*, the possession by the recipient would be implied. The DOC construction, therefore, although not grammatically incorrect, does not feel instinctively right when used with certain animate themes.

As will be discussed in Chapter 4 section 4, although the animate themes were separated into *human* and *animal*, it was decided to consider all mentions of animals

as referring to living creatures; further attempted investigation regarding whether the ‘rabbets’ [see example 27] for instance, were living or dead were not entered into. Furthermore, it was taken that no humans, although in service to the correspondents, could be actually considered the property of another person in the way that animals clearly can be. No specific mention of serfs, serfdom or other bonded relationships was discovered and, thus, it was assumed that all people mentioned were free men and women.

Another example given by Levin to demonstrate the implicit caused possession in the different structures is when the recipient is, itself, inanimate. To send an object to a place, for example:

16] *She sent the parcel to America.*

17] *She sent America the parcel.*

In example 16, the meaning cannot be that the recipient then possessed the theme. 'She sent America the parcel', therefore, is not a structure which an L1 English speaker would use as it has implied possession in its semantics. These two instances demonstrate that the PDC and DOC are not always mutually interchangeable and do have slightly different usages. (Levin 2008:6)

When considering intangible themes, such as *wishes, blessings* and *thanks*, the path becomes of lesser importance than the theme. By this reasoning, Clark’s argument that the DOC structure implies a successful outcome would make it the more likely option for communicating such notions. The different usage of PDC and DOC constructions with tangible and intangible themes will be compared and discussed in Chapter 4, section 3.

2.4: POLITENESS AND SOCIAL DEIXIS

Within this area of investigation many possible social differences were considered; hierarchy, formality and personal relationships [including friendship and/or enmity] all fall into this category. Following Levinson's definition, however, the term *social deixis* has been adopted throughout this work when referring to this area of investigation:

> Social deixis marks "social relationships in linguistic expressions […] with reference to the social status or role of participants in the speech event"
>
> (Levinson. 2004: 119).

The possibility that social status and degrees of familiarity could be encoded in choice of construction emerged during data collection. Usage of the prepositional structure was observed in letters to social superiors or political opponents, whilst the double object was the structure chosen for use with family and friends. No literature on this precise area has been found, but Nevala (2004) has written extensively on the topic of politeness axes in early English correspondence from c1500 to c1700.

She gives two examples of terms of address used in different circumstances. The first one she cites is from a letter sent by Arthur Ingram to Thomas Wentworth[1] which uses the term 'Worthi Sir'. The second letter she compares this with is from Anne Howard to her son Thomas. The opening salutation of this one reads 'My good sonne'. The phraseology in the first greeting, from Ingram to his superior, is clearly deferential whereas the salutation between mother and son in the second one is much more familiar. The usage of PDC from a correspondent to his superior could, therefore, encode the social distance between them. Although 100% certainty can

[1] Arthur Ingram was a merchant and Member of Parliament (Thrush & Ferris 2010)
Thomas Wentworth was the 1st Earl of Strafford, a leading advisor to Charles I (Wedgewood ND)

never be attained about this because the writers cannot be questioned about their intuitions, corpus results strongly suggest that a deixis-related pattern is possible. Given these limitations, the analysation of corpora is the closest a modern-day researcher can come to a definite result.

Although the difference between these greetings is apparently based on the parties' social connections, for a true representation of people's language usage it would be more pertinent to compare letters written by the same author to people of different social standing or familiarity. This will be attempted in this research by comparing the correspondence of Edward Plumpton, Thomas Cromwell and Samuel Pepys. As mentioned in the Introduction, these selections were written at roughly 100-year intervals and so give an idea of changing styles and patterns.

In her study of early English vernacular letters, Williams (2001:183) discusses letters written to various recipients by the governors of the city of Yorke. She notes that 'the governors varied their style according to the status of their addressees.' Here, the different forms of salutation used by the mayor of York to Sir Robert Plumpton and to the king (Edward IV) are being compared. She notes how, in letters written to the king, the language is 'more syntactically complex'. This is in line with other observations made during the data analysis for this work and suggests different usages of the dative alternation in different circumstances. For further discussion of this theory, see Chapter 4, section 5.

2.5: DIACHRONIC STUDIES.

> *'The development of the dative alternation in Early Modern English and Late Modern English is virtually unexplored.'* (Wolk *et al.* 2013:385)

Wolk *et al.* have investigated the genitive and dative alternations from 1650 to 1999 in their 2013 paper. Prior to this era, they state that the prepositional dative was first used in written texts from the Late OE period. The reason for the emergence of the structure, they state, is attributed by 'Conventional Wisdom (e.g., McFadden 2002, Fischer & van der Wurff 2006) ' to the syncretisation of case endings, although they cite Visser (1963) who considers the influence of French could be a possible factor. (2013:385)

Their work shows a correlation between the developments of both genitive and dative variants. They also note that this is particularly evident in the 'loosening of the animacy constraint'.

Although discussing the genitive alternation, this can be shown with their findings that '[…]For example, *people, parliament* and *lord* appear more often than expected with the of-genitive, while *company, enemy* and *China* tend to prefer the s-genitive'

Wolk *et al.* break the animacy theme into five sub-sets; *Animate, Collective, Temporal, Locative* and *Inanimate* (2013:396)' and found that:

> In the genitive model, the s-genitive becomes less strongly disfavored with collective, locative and temporal possessors over time

whereas, when discussing the dative they note

> The dative model suggests that inanimate recipients are coded significantly more often with the double-object dative in the twentieth century than in earlier periods'
>
> (2013:408)

To explain this, they posit a grammatical knowledge with a probabilistic component which 'writers in the Late Modern English period must have had, […] this knowledge has evolved over time'. (2013:384). The claim is backed by the fact that, from their research, they have discovered:

> the likelihood of finding a particular linguistic variant in a particular context in a corpus can be shown to correspond to the intuitions that speakers have about the acceptability of that particular variant, given the same context (Bresnan 2007, also Rosenbach 2003, Hinrichs & Szmrecsanyi 2007)
>
> (2013:383)

Although Wolk *et al.* categorise animacy into five headings, for the purposes of this study, the categories have been limited to *Human, Animal* and *Inanimate* as discussed in Chapter 4, section 4. Further discussion of the categories, and the findings pertaining to them, are presented in Chapter 5, section 4

In order to collect data, Wolk *et al.* used the Archer corpus of Historical English Registers. This corpus will also be used as a source of data in this paper, although the Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence will be the primary source of reference, giving, as it does, the closest approximation of how people spoke in everyday situations.

In contrast to Wolk *et al.'s* statement that the prepositional dative only arose in the late Old English period, deCuypere (2013) has done work claiming to prove that the construction was not rare in OE. He explains that the prepositional dative was not used with verbs which encoded transfer, eg. a*gifan (*give) and *offrian (*offer). Other verbs, however, are listed which have no implicit transfer - *cweðan* (say) and

sprecan (speak, utter) are among these. Amongst this 'non-transfer' group, however, deCuypere includes *sendan* (send), *niman* (take) and *bringan* (bring). Why he does not consider these verbs to have implied transference properties is unclear and must be open to debate. It is difficult to consider that any item which is *brought, sent,* or *taken* by the subject, or donor, to the object, or recipient, can occur without any transference of the theme having taken place. For the purposes of this paper, therefore, the verbs *send* and *give*, which are two of the three verbs investigated, are considered to have implied transference.

2.6: SUMMARY

As can be seen from the various books and articles discussed in this section, the topic of the dative alternation is wide-ranging, but little research has been carried out on the historical aspect. Did, as Bresnan (2007) and others suggest, speakers have an instinctive understanding of which construction to use, and were there underlying semantics to the syntactic choice made? This research is carried out from a point of view which concurs with that stated in Clark: for any word or form to survive in a language, it must make its own, unique, semantic contribution (1987:1). Although many scholars, for instance Hovav & Levin (2007), agree that the choice of dative structure is often driven by the verb, deCuypere's grouping of verbs which do and do not encode transfer is open to debate.

It is hoped that this study may shed some light on the historical development of the dative alternation during the centuries when English was changing from the highly inflected Old English language to a form broadly as it is spoken today. By examining the factors of [in]animacy] [in]tangibility and social deixis, some understanding of the reasons which, perhaps only intuitively, lie behind the structures chosen may show why the two forms of the dative alternation have survived to this day.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1: OVERVIEW

As it is not possible to interview L1 speakers of earlier types of English about their intuitions as to usage of the dative alternation, a corpus study was carried out. As will be discussed in section 2 of this methodology chapter, the compilers of the PCEEC considered correspondence to be the closest representation we have of vernacular language of the time, and so this was chosen for in-depth study. The methods employed are discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

3.2: CHALLENGES POSED IN DATA COLLECTION

When investigating language from a chronological distance, the option of questioning L1 speakers as to their intuitions is not possible. As no audio or video recordings exist, the problem of discovering how people used language in everyday contexts poses difficulties. In the modern era, a plethora of social media, television recordings and other such data exists, which can be studied to discover how language is used and also to track its changes over time. As the aim of this research is to seek differences in the way people used the dative alternation historically in everyday language, the closest vernacular records available are the personal correspondence between contemporaries.

Whilst this offers some insight into language use, it is important to remember that only the higher classes were likely to be writing letters to each other. Even if the lower classes did write letters or similar, they have not been preserved in archives or made available to researchers/the public in the same way that those of the higher classes have been. With this consideration in mind, the focus was placed mainly on the Parsed Corpus of Early English Correspondence [PCEEC], which contains

correspondence dating from 1410 to 1680, comprising 4970 letters in 84 collections (PCEEC). The date-range of the PCEEC covers a time from when most case endings had been syncretised (Smith 2005:100), to a period slightly overlapping the work of Wolk *et al.* (2013).

3.3: CORRESPONDENCE IN EARLY ENGLISH

Richardson (2016: pp18-19) discusses how, by the early fifteenth century, middle class people were beginning to write letters using the vernacular language. Previously, correspondence had relied heavily on the use of Latin to prescribed formulae (Carlin and Crouch 2013:1). The PCEEC contains collections of letters selected for their 'social representativeness' (PCEEC: title page) but, as the corpus's contents section explains 'Because of widespread illiteracy, however, only the highest ranks of society are well represented'. The use of this corpus as the primary source of data is, therefore, as close as it is possible to get to the language of all ranks in the societies of the time covered by this study.

The creators of this corpus, Nevalainen and Raumolin-Burnberg, are cited by Williams, in her 2001 study of English vernacular letters, thus:

> We decided to limit our choice to personal letters, because .. the language of even early correspondence often resembles spoken registers more closely than most other types of writing.
>
> (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Burnberg,1996:40 in Williams 2001:15).

The collections in the PCEEC cover a wide range of correspondents, albeit from the upper classes of society. The letters include those of the Haddock family, a naval family from Essex (1883:iii); the correspondence of Thomas Cromwell, and letters

written by royalty, for example Henry V and Charles II. A selection of these collections was chosen and is listed in the Appendix. Individual collections of correspondence were selected for:

i] their coverage of the full time-span under investigation

ii] their individual word counts, giving the best chance of finding examples of the verbs of interest to this study.

Although criteria such as dates of the letters, status of the writers and subject matter were taken into account, no consideration of the writers' gender was included in the results. It could be the case that female and male correspondents used the dative in different ways; this may be something into which further research could be carried out in the future.

3.4: SELECTION OF VERBS STUDIED

Verbs needed to not only take both prepositional and double objects, but also to have been in common usage throughout the era researched.

An initial search in the British National Corpus [BNC] was run using the verbs *offer, give, send* and *show,* to check what results would be returned in a randomised order. Tagging was necessary to differentiate between the verb and noun forms of *show* and *offer.* Phrasal verbs such as *give up* and *offer up* were amongst the results obtained; these were removed from the list manually. At first, search strings were created using BNC tags; for example

_N* g*v* _N* _AT0 _N* returned examples such as *John gives Mary the coin*

It was soon realised, however, that only the simplest results could be found using these strings; language is often much more complex in reality. Williams gives the following example of a salutary greeting to the king (Henry V) in a letter of 1417.:

> 18] *Of Alle erthely Princes Our most dred souereigne liege Lord and noblest Kyng we, youre simple Officers, Mair and Aldermen of youre trewe Citee of London, with exhibicion of alolkhyggfttytle maner subiectif reuerence and seruisable lowenesse that may be hadde in dede, or in Mynde conceyued, recommende vs vnto your most noble hye Magnficence and excellent Power, bisechyng the heuenly kyng of his noble grace and Pitee that he so would illumine and extende vpon the trone of your kyngly mageste the radyouse bemys; of hys bountetious grace, that the begunnen spede, by hys benigne suffraunce and help yn your Chiualiruse persoune fixed and afermed, inowe so be continued forth, and determined so to his plesaunce, your worship, and alle your reurnys proflyt, that we... the sonner myght approche and visuelly perceyue, to singuler confort and special Joye of vs alle ...*
>
> (Williams 2001:68)

After preliminary searches, not many results were returned for the verb ‘offer’. It was, therefore, omitted from the study. The verbs ‘give’, ‘send’ and ‘show’ became the ones which were examined in the full corpus search.

To identify as many examples of the verbs under study as possible, a simple search for variant spellings of each individual word was decided upon. The many different spellings and inflections used by the authors made searching for each one individually far too time-consuming given the limits of this research. For instance, manually searching for *show,* including variants such as *shew, sheweth* and *shews,*

gave more complex examples of its usage and were considered to cover the main spellings as suggested by the OED. The following examples from the Cromwell corpus illustrate this fact:

> 19] *The ernest and true examynation of Leynham* ***sheweth*** *that of a long season he hath bene a madd prophete*
>
> (Cromwell: 10708 – 10713)

> 20] *and he* ***Shewyth*** *me also that ther be ij=o strange Freers of the order of obseruanttes*
>
> (Cromwell: 2221-2223)

> 21] *I am informed by the gyft whereof ye shal* ***shewe*** *vnto me a right acceptable pleasire*
>
> (Cromwell: 2440-2442)

Elements such as subordinate clauses and strings of adjectives could now be found; whereas attempting to build strings which would encompass all these possibilities was not feasible.

3.5: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION.

As discussed in section 1 of this chapter, qualitative data collection cannot be carried out to ascertain the users' native intuitions on what is and is not permissible when using the dative alternation. Quantitative methods, therefore, were mainly used to discover how the language was used, and track any apparent changes. Using a simple Ctrl+F function, the PCEEC was opened in Notebook++ and relevant search terms were entered.

The spelling conventions throughout the 270 years under scrutiny changed considerably. For this reason, the Oxford English Dictionary [OED] was consulted for the possible variations in each verb selected.

The PCEEC was used with the Notepad++ program. The search facility in this allowed for wildcard characters to be introduced, thereby returning most possible spelling varieties in one search command.

To give an example of this method, the search using *sen[dt]** returned the following variants:

sende

send

sent

sendyng

sente

sendys

sending

Other searches were made using *g[ai]v[a-z]** and *sh[eo]w[a-z]** and the corresponding results were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for each half-century of the corpus. As the PCEEC only covers 1410 to 1680, the first and last spreadsheets were amended accordingly; 1410-1449 and 1650-1680.

Once all the entries selected had been placed on their relevant spreadsheets, each one was manually checked for structure, PDC or DOC, then subcategorised by type

[see table 1 below] and marked for physical or intangible transfer, animate or inanimate theme or rejected if any of these elements was unclear. See section 6.1 for a discussion of data which was rejected.

Type No	Role Order*	Example [2]
1	A>T>R	John gave the coffee to Mary
2	A>R>T	John gave Mary the coffee
3	T>A>R	[The] Coffee was given by John to Mary
4	R>A>T	Mary was given, by John, the Coffee
5	T>R>A	Coffee was given to Mary by John
6	R>T>A	Mary was given the coffee by John

Table 1: Six role order types discovered

*** A = Agent, T = Theme, R = Recipient**

3.6: MANUAL CHECKING OF SEARCH RESULTS

As described briefly in section 4, once the corpora had been searched using Notepad++, the results were then manually checked and marked for type as well as [in]animacy and [in]tangibility of themes. Altogether, six different types were identified [see Table 1]. The role order types found in the earlier letters were all of types 1-3, with examples of types 4, 5 and 6 appearing in later correspondence. Figure 1 below shows the emergence of the different styles.

[2] Although it is theoretically possible that some examples of type 1 could be DOC [John gave the coffee Mary] none of these were found. Thus, all type 1 can be considered PDC, type 2 DOC and so forth

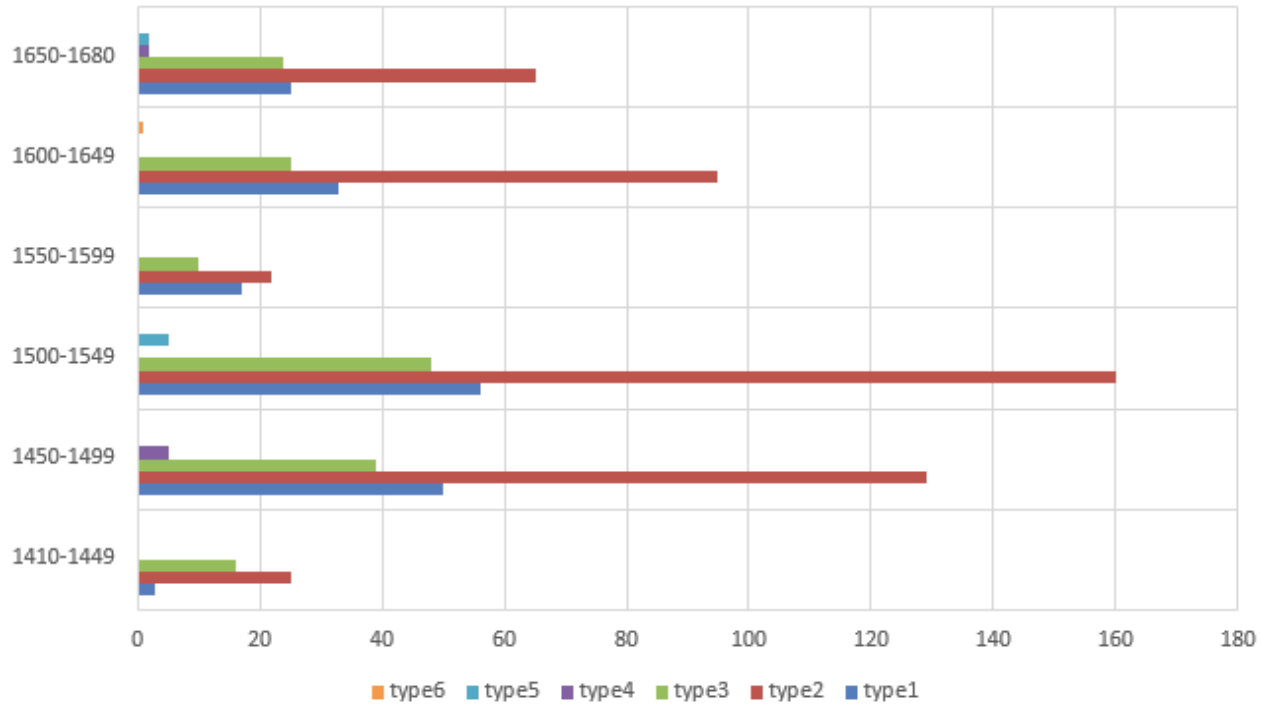

Figure 1: Emergence of the six role order types by half century

During the collating of results, it was observed that the PDC and DOC were used, by Cromwell, differently according to whom he was addressing. The DOC seemed to be used for friends and family, whereas the PDC was prevalent in letters to his social superiors or those who could be considered his opponents. This was checked by creating a table to give a comparison of the data available. This information is shown in Table 3 in Chapter 4, section 5.1.These searches were then run on the Plumpton and Pepys corpora to check and compare with the results from the Cromwell correspondence; [see Table 4 in Chapter 4, section 5.2 and Table 5 in Chapter 4, section 5.3].

3.6.1: Results Which Were Discounted or Unable to be Used

Some results included sentences where both dative constructions could not, reasonably, be expected. Data such as this were, therefore, omitted from further examination.

An example of such a clause with only one possible structure is given below:

22] *I must neds send my servant.*

(Plumpton: 4945)

Other sentences when the verb ‘send’ is used with the implication of sending for news or a message were also discounted:

23] *he* ***sende*** *to Modbury by John Saunder seyng that he hadde recoveryd of Thomas Stonore a C li.*

(Stonor:201-203)

Further reasons for discounting extracts included when the subject was unclear or could not be placed into any of the categories with any real certainty. Two examples of this can be found in the Plumpton Corpus. Mention is made of several people of whom no means exists to ascertain their identities. In line 6541, mention is made of a Ewen Barle:

24] *Sir afore credaunce of Ewene Barle*,

(Plumpton:6541)

This person is not mentioned again anywhere else in the corpus, and a search of academic internet sites such as Google Scholar only gave this one instance of his name. It was, therefore, not possible to ascertain whether this person was of a higher, equal or lower social standing to the writer and, therefore, the extract could not be included in this data. Further on in the correspondence ‘A Gentleman that is of Counsell’ (Plumpton: 6692/3) is referred to. Again, it is not possible to discover

who this ‘gentleman’ was and, therefore, no opinion can be formed as to his social position in regard to Edward Plumpton.

3.7: CONCLUSION

When all usable results from the selected corpora had been checked for social/formal context, [in]animacy and [in]tangibility, the data was entered into tables and charts for easier comparison. Patterns were identified showing changes of usage for the two ditransitive constructions and the possible theories which can be drawn are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, Findings.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1: OVERVIEW

As discussed in Chapter 1, section 3, only trends and suggestions can ever be drawn from a search of historic documents such as the PCEEC contains. Allowing for the limitations mentioned in Chapter 3, section 2, however, some strong patterns of usage did emerge which may support Clarke's Principal of Contrast (1987); that a surviving word, form or structure must offer its own unique semantic meaning. The tendency for writers to use certain structures more often for physical than intangible transfer, to prefer the PDC to the DOC when writing to their social superiors or in more formal contexts and the different choices made to discuss animate and inanimate transfer and possession are all, to a greater or lesser extent, noticeable.

The fact that patterns of usage and literary style are constantly changing and show a wide range of variety among contemporaries is acknowledged by linguistic historians. 'Linguistic variation of the same kind as we encounter today must have existed throughout the history of English.' (Crystal 2004:14) Crystal continues by mentioning ethnic minorities and women as some of the groups whose usage of language has always had its own particular style. These groups, along with the lower strata of society, are not well represented in the extant corpora of the PCEEC and others, so allowances must be made for their absence.

To this end, the patterns which do suggest themselves are prevalently representative of mid – high class male usage, yet they offer an insight into the changing syntactic structures during the time of interest to this study. These usages are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this chapter.

4.2: ROLE ORDERING

As explained in Chapter 3: Methodology, the data was firstly categorised into the six patterns discovered [see Table 1, Chapter 3, section 6]. These results were then used to create Figure 2 below, which shows their occurrence by half-century. Types 1, 2 and 3 are all present, and prevalent, during all the sections shown whereas type 4 occurs rarely [during 1450-1499 and 1650-1680] Types 5 and 6 are both also very uncommon and therefore, these types can perhaps be considered as authors' idiosyncratic linguistic styles rather than typical examples of regular usage. See Appendix B for type 5 and 6 extracts discovered

The results for type 1 are, perhaps, the most obvious from this chart. Whilst it is hardly present at all during 1410 - 1449, it overtakes type 3 in frequency by 1450 – 1499 and remains ahead of it throughout the rest of the periods.

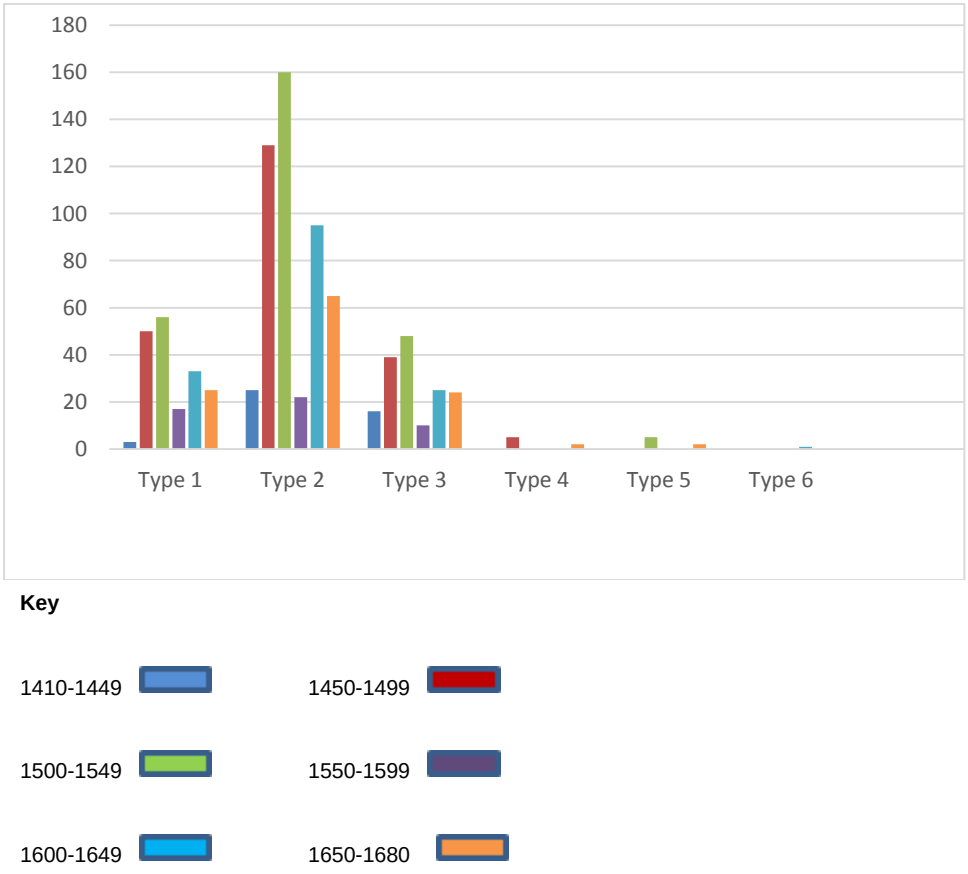

Figure 2: Occurrences of Role Order Types by half century

4.3: TANGIBILITY

Linking path to the object of the clause or sentence is discussed by Gropen *et al.* They argue that the syntax of a dative construction would be driven by the nature of the object, wherein '[…] an argument of a path-function or place-function (such as 'to') would be linked to an oblique object.' (Gropen *et al.* 1989:240) The chart below shows the instances of usage of types 1,2 and 3 broken down into physical and intangible items by half-century periods.

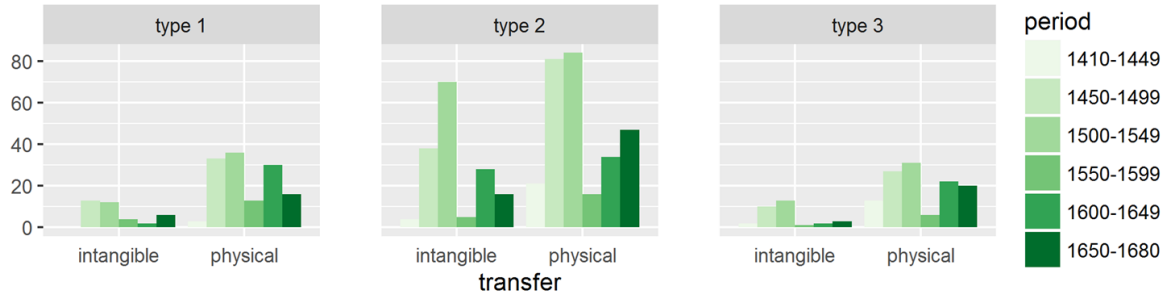

Figure 3: Occurrences of Physical and Intangible Elements by Type*

Type 1 – A>T>R; Type 2 A>R>T; Type 3 T>A>R.

***Physical Transfer** includes both animate and non-animate subjects.

Intangible transfer covers elements such as blessings, thanks, wishes.

As suggested by the bars on the charts, type 2 is used most often for both tangible and intangible transfer. However, the fact that the bars for physical-type1 and intangible-type 2 go down over the later periods whilst the bars for physical-type 2 go up would seem to show a change over time in association with usage. Type 2 would appear to be becoming increasingly used for physical objects whilst less so for intangible elements. A slight but corresponding decrease for tangible transfer with type 1 would seem to support this finding. Correspondingly, although very slight again, there is a tendency for intangible transfer to increase with types 1 and 3 during the later period where it decreases with type 2.

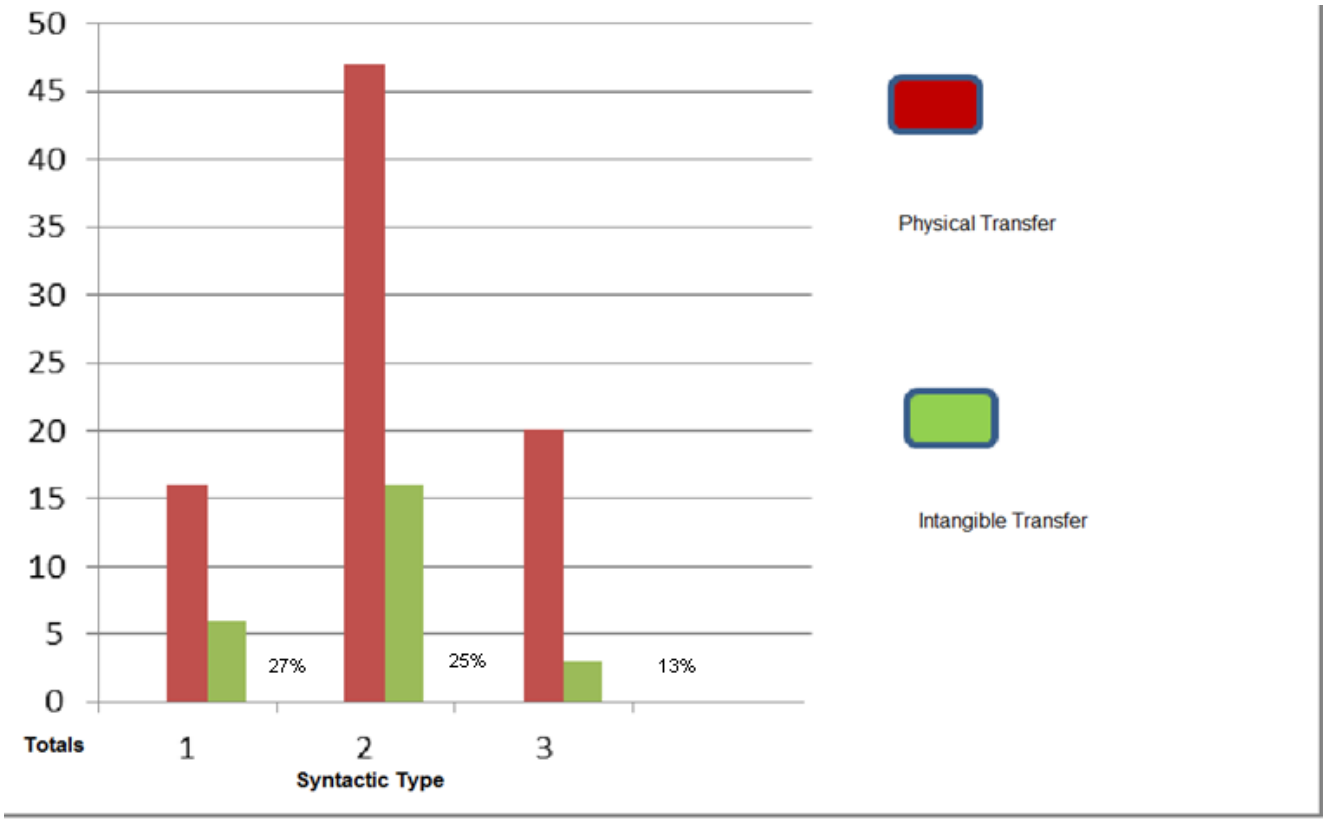

Figure 4: Tangible and Intangible transfer by three main role orders

Figure 4 above shows the main three types separated into physical and intangible transfer over the time period examined. Although the findings are subject to the limitations of the corpora, as already discussed, the different percentages of intangible to tangible themes are noticeable, especially with regard to type 3.

4.4: ANIMACY

Table 2 below shows the occurrences of Animate and Inanimate transfer by half-century, with the Animate themes being further separated into Human and Animal

.

Period	Human PDC	Human DOC	Animal PDC	Animal DOC	Inanimate PDC	Inanimate DOC
1410-1449	3	1	0	0	17	23
1450-1499	18	3	3	4	58	74
1500-1549	25	6	2	3	67	81
1550-1599	2	3	0	0	26	16
1600-1649	15	9	2	0	33	75
1650-1680	2	5	0	0	32	69

Table 2: Human, Animal and Inanimate themes by half century

There are, however, some problems which arise from these figures, making them difficult to use to obtain any worthwhile statistics. These are discussed in the following sections.

4.4.1: References to Animals

For sake of simplicity, it had to be assumed that all animals mentioned in the correspondence were still animate [i.e alive]. In cases such as :

> 25] *plese hit you to witte that I sende you be Joyes your servaunte Thomas Heywardes amblynge horse*
>
> (Cely: 19394-19396)

it would be safe to consider an ‘amblynge horse’ to be a living creature. Other cases, however, are less certain. Thomas Cromwell, for example writes to his wife:

26] *and have sente you by this berer a fatt doo*

(Cromwell:185-186)

and later Smyth writes:

27] *Last yeare you gave mee a Cupple of dooe rabbets*

(Smyth: 1782-1783)

Whether the doe of which Cromwell writes and the doe rabbits mentioned in the Smyth corpus were living or dead is not possible to ascertain from the context. It has, therefore, been decided for the sake of argument to consider all such instances as referring to living creatures.

4.4.2: References to Humans

References to people in the correspondence examined were mainly discussing the sending of somebody to a particular place, for example:

28] *And accordingly I sente my servand Robert Horsley to the courte*

(Clifford: 2355-2356)

In instances such as this, it is highly unlikely, if not grammatically impossible, that the sentence would be phrased without the preposition ‘to’:

**And accordingly I sente the courte my servand Robert Horsley*

The second syntactic construction is not totally impossible but may come into the argument of caused possession [see Chapter 2, section 3, examples 16 and 17]. As a large amount of the Human PDC structures are of a similar nature, it cannot realistically be argued that there is any alternative available, so this must skew the findings in this category accordingly.

4.4.3: References to Inanimate Objects

From the figures in the table under the columns showing the usage of the PDC and DOC for inanimate themes, the instances of DOC outnumber those for the PDC apart from the period 1550-1599 where the position is reversed. This could simply be due to the corpus extracts examined for this period yet it is perhaps possible that the fact that the Inkhorn Controversy was causing people in the 16th century to consider their choice of language (Crystal, 2004:291-292) cannot be ignored as a possible contributory factor. In 1561, Sir John Cheke wrote:

> *I am of this opinion that our own tung shold be written cleane and pure, unmixt and unmangeled with borrowing of other tunges, […] For then doth our tung naturallie and praisablie utter her meaning […] when she […]useth plainlie her own.*
>
> (Cited in Baugh & Cable 2002:217)

Although talking about words being borrowed and coined from other, mostly classical, languages, the sentiment during the 16th century among ‘men who were purists by nature’ (Baugh & Cable 2002:217) was for using English in its plainest way. The fact that Old English had a dative marking which made the prepositional form unnecessary could, arguably, have led to a preference for the DOC during this

time. According to Denison (1993:103) 'Old English used Dative case marking rather than prepositional marking for its Benefactive NP' whereas 'Dative marking was sporadically replaced from early Middle English onwards by the use of the preposition to' (Denison 1993:105). This supposition is merely the author's own attempt to explain the changes noted during this century, which coincide with the era of the Inkhorn controversy. The scope of this work does not allow for any investigation into this possibility but could offer a topic for further study at a later date.

4.5: SOCIAL DEIXIS

The emergence of this possible cause for driving the choice of dative construction used was not, originally, an area of research considered in this study. Earlier writers on the dative alternation had only posited areas such as semantics (for example Oehrle 1976), location (see Carroll 2000), path (Dabrowska 1997) and caused possession (Hovav and Levin 2007). Whilst analysing the data collected for animacy, tangibility and role order [See Chapter 3: Methodology], a pattern began to appear which suggested this further area for analysis.

4.5.1: Cromwell Correspondence

The correspondence of Thomas Cromwell in the mid-16th century was addressed to many different ranks of people, from the king [Henry VIII] to his political opponents [for instance Stephen Gardiner and John Fisher] and his friends, family and allies. When these letters were examined in detail, and categorised accordingly, the pattern suggested itself strongly, as shown in Table 3 below:

RECIPIENT	RELATIONSHIP	INSTANCES OF PDC USED	INSTANCES OF DOC USED.
John Creke[1]	Merchant / Legal Client / Friend	2	
Thomas Wolsey[2]	Cardinal / Employer	5	3
Henry VIII	Monarch	3	
John Fisher[3]	Bishop / Opponent	2	
Lords of the Privy Council	Peers	1	
Stephen Gardiner[4]	Bishop / Opponent	6	1
Elizabeth Cromwell	Wife		2
Thomas Cranmer[5]	Archbishop / Ally		1
Earl of Shrewsbury[6]	Peer of the realm/ Ally		1
Earl of Northumberland[7]	Peer of the realm / Ally		1
Thomas Howard ; Duke of Norfolk[8]	Peer of the realm / Opponent	1	

Table 3: Letters of Thomas Cromwell showing usage of DOC and PDC to various correspondents.

1 Merriman (1902:312)

2 Beckinsale (1978:76)

3 Merriman (1902:118)

4 Merriman (1902:83)

5 Merriman (1902:295)

6 http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/talbot4shrewsbury.htm

7 Merriman (1902:350)

8 Encyclopaedia Britannica

It can be observed from the above table that, when writing to the King, correspondents used the PDC in each result studied. The fact that there were only

three instances in the selection examined cannot be taken as evidence that this was always the case, but it does suggest a hierarchical formality. By means of comparison, in the instances where Cromwell is writing to his wife, Elizabeth, and other friends or allies [Cranmer, the Earl of Northumberland and the Earl of Shrewsbury] the DOC is always used.

Although John Creke is described as a friend of Cromwell's, he was also a legal client, and the letter we have to this correspondent is an account of a session of parliament in 1523. It is described as:

> *A letter of friendship, containing an account of the proceedings of the Parliament of 1523, in which Cromwell sat. News concerning Creke's friends in England.* (Merriman 1902:312)

The formal nature of the content, therefore, could explain why the PDC was used; matters such as this can only ever be open to subjective interpretation. Only having one such extant letter is another reason why examples of usage in this letter cannot be taken as evidence; other letters between the two men on matters of a more domestic nature may have shown usage of the DOC but this is merely the author's conjecture.

His correspondence pertaining to Stephen Gardiner and Thomas Howard, who were known to be opponents of Cromwell's does, apart from one instance, always use the PDC. Of particular interest is the correspondence with Stephen Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester. The relationship between Cromwell and Gardiner would seem to have been markedly hostile; in Merriman (1902:83) it is described thus:

> But when the Cardinal's fate was settled he *[Gardiner]* certainly expected that his old master's favour with the King would be transferred to himself, and when he was disappointed in this by Cromwell's stepping in, he developed a hatred for him which he never abandoned.

Usage of the apparently more formal PDC in letters to such an opponent would be expected if the DOC is, indeed, an informal mode of language, and these examples could be considered as strongly reinforcing this theory.

This can, therefore, by comparing and contrasting it to the correspondence with his family and friends, be taken as further evidence that choice of the two structures was driven by the relationship between the people involved. We cannot know if this pattern carried on in daily spoken language, but, as already discussed in Chapter 3, section 3, correspondence such as this is the closest we can come to knowing how language was used vernacularly.

Cromwell's usage of the dative with regard to Cardinal Wolsey shows both PDC and DOC. This can, perhaps, be explained by their concomitant careers and the fact that, as Cromwell rose in power and influence, Wolsey fell. Beckinsale (1978) explains something of the change in their mutual beliefs and fortunes in his book:

> While in Wolsey's service, he showed his sympathies with his master's Erasmian attitudes.[…]His complaints about Wolsey's treatment of lay servants and about the Cardinal's idle chaplains revealed that he shared in the grudge against the clergy […] By the time of Wolsey's fall he was deeply critical of the Church.
>
> (Beckinsale 1978:76)

To check if this pattern of usage of the dative alternation was, perhaps, simply idiosyncratic of Cromwell's personal style or even a typical linguistic style of the era, further checks were done on corpora dating from approximately 100 years before and after this particular correspondence.

4.5.2: Plumpton Correspondence

For the 15th Century, the Plumpton corpus was selected. The family had its own coat of arms which dated back to a Sir Robert Plumpton who died in 1421 (Kirby 1989:19) and, at the time to which these letters pertain there was another Sir Robert Plumpton who is referred to in the National Archives as 'Knight of Plumpton, Yorkshire'. It can be taken, therefore, that the family was of a standing to correspond with people of both higher and lower ranks on matters both domestic and formal, thus placing them in a similar position to Thomas Cromwell socially.

In table 4 below, the samples taken from the corpus are analysed for usage of the PDC and DOC. All the letters in this collection are from Edward Plumpton to Robert Plumpton; the subjects mentioned are those whom Edward was writing about to Robert. Where Robert Plumpton is, himself, the subject, this indicates correspondence of a direct nature. For example:

> 29] *send me word what increse and approment ye wyll give*
>
> (Plumpton:4644-4646)

The letters contain many references to people of whom no other record has been found by the author of this work. As no inference can be safely drawn as to their status or relationship with Edward Plumpton they have not been included in this

table.

Subject of reference	PDC	DOC	Comments
Robert Plumpton	9	5	Kinsman
Robert Lenthorpe [1]		1	a.k.a Robert Leventhorpe, son or descendant of John Leventhorpe, M.P. for Hertfordshire in early C15
My Lady of Syon [2]	1		Apparently a lady in the King's retinue
Master Tunstall [3]	1		Sir Richard Tunstall (Kirby 1989:lxvii) A person of whom Plumpton was wary? 'but thereto is no great trust'
My Lord of Derby [4]	1		The Seneschal of the Duchy of Lancaster
William Plomton and David [5]	1		William Plomton [Plumpton] – a kinsman David – seemingly David Griffith, Edward Plumpton's brother-in-law
My Lord Abbot of St Mary [6]	1		William Siver/Siveyer Bishop of Carlisle
Percyvall Lambeton [7]	1		Percival Lambton of Belsis 'an apparently insignificant member of Lincoln's Inn'
God	1	1	
Wife	1	1	

Table 4: Letters of Edward Plumpton showing usage of PDC and DOC with various themes.

Table 4: Letters of Edward Plumpton showing usage of PDC and DOC with various themes.

References

[1] http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/leventhorpe-john-1435

[2] Kirby 1989:263

[3] Kirby 1989:59

[4] Kirby, 1989:51

[5] Kirby 1989:99

[6] Kirby 1989:113

[7] Kirby, 1996:113

This 15th Century correspondence is the earliest examined for hierarchical usage of the dative alternation and, as can be seen, the PDC is used in most instances. It is, perhaps, interesting to note that references to both God and Plumpton's wife record

one instance each of the PDC and DOC. Although this could suggest that the DOC was only beginning to be used for close familial relationships [and God, as a father, may, arguably, be considered in this category] the lack of further similar evidence means no conclusions can be drawn.

Usage of the DOC five times when writing to Robert Plumpton could again be because of their close personal relationship. The absence of the DOC in almost all other instances, whether writing about family or high ranking members of society, is in contrast to the patterns suggested in the letters of Cromwell and Pepys. However, the dating of this particular correspondence may simply show how the DOC was not yet as widely used as it became in later centuries. For the figures showing the emergence of the different types by century, see Figure 1 in Chapter 3, section 6.

4.5.3: Pepys' Correspondence

The third corpus chosen for examination would, again, preferably be that of someone whose social position would involve their writing to, or about, matters of state or legal affairs as well as their personal domestic correspondence. To this end, the collection of letters by Samuel Pepys were selected.

Pepys was an officer in the Admiralty and, later, a Member of Parliament so had cause to write about matters of state to persons of both higher and lower rank than himself.

> But, […] Pepys rose to be one of the most important men of his day, becoming England's earliest secretary of the Admiralty and serving in his time as member of Parliament, president of the Royal Society […] master of Trinity House […] and a baron of the Cinque Ports. He was the trusted confidant

both of Charles II, […] and of James II, whose will he witnessed before the royal flight in 1688. Encyclopaedia Britannica (2017)

RECIPIENT	RELATIONSHIP	INSTANCES OF PDC USED	INSTANCES OF DOC USED
Balthasar St.Michel	Brother-in-Law	7*	126
John Pepys Jr	Brother		1
John Pepys Sr	Father		7
Paulina Jackson	Sister	1	1
John Turner	Cousin		4
James Southerne	Clerk [?]		1
John Evelyn	Friend		1
Capt. Thomas Elliot	Ship's Captain – Navy		2
The Brooke House Commissioners			2
Sir Richard Browne	Coal Merchant / MP		1
Anthony Deane	Mentee	1	2
Lord Henry Howard	Patron		1
Henry Savile	MP / Groom of the bedchamber to the king	1	
Col Thomas Middleton	Navy Commissioner	1	1

*See notes below.

Table 5: Letters of Samuel Pepys showing usage of PDC and DOC to various correspondents

As can be seen, the DOC is the structure used in the vast majority of the instances examined. As the largest part of the corpus consists of letters written to his brother-

in-law, Balthasar, these have been particularly examined for their content. Of the seven instances examined where Pepys uses the PDC in this correspondence, the themes being referred to are:

The King	(Pepys 6803-6805)
The Prince of Conde	(Pepys 5465-5466)
The French Court	(Pepys 4530-4533)
The Marquis de Seignelay	(Pepys 5264-5267)
Monsieur Trenchepain	(Pepys 5204-5206, 10182-10184)
Mr Pelletier.	(Pepys 5204-5206)

The first three are, clearly, pertaining to royalty and thus of higher social status than Pepys himself. The Marquis de Seignelay was a leading French Naval officer and diplomat (Encyclopaedia Britannica) and was also probably of higher social standing than Pepys. As to Monsieur Trenchepain and Mr Pelletier, the author has not successfully established the identities of these two personages so their social standing is not known.

The overall tone of the correspondence with his Brother-in-Law would seem to suggest a relaxed, friendly relationship between them. He addresses Balthasar, in one example as ‘Brother Balty’ (Pepys 6799) and so the prevalent usage of the DOC between them would appear to support the previous findings regarding [in]formality.

The letters written to other people are, sadly, much fewer in number so it is not easy to draw any useful conclusions. The fact that one instance of each structure were found in letters to his sister, Paulina, and Colonel Middleton, a Navy Commissioner

are open to interpretation regarding their personal relationships or simply the fact that Pepys choice of phraseology may have been subject to variation.

The letter to Sir Henry Savile, however, does use the PDC. As a Groom of the Bedchamber, Sir Henry would have held a very high position at court so there could be an element of social deference suggested by its usage. If there were more letters between Pepys and Sir Henry it would be possible to examine this in greater detail but, unfortunately, the fact that this is the only one means no real conclusions can be drawn from the choice of role order made.

4.6: SUMMARY

When studying a subject such as the dative alternation from corpus findings, there can never be any definite conclusions drawn. Indeed, were different corpora to have been selected, the results could have been very different. From the writing which has been chosen for this study, however, and the results obtained, certain patterns have emerged which suggest the dative alternation could well have semantic or other reasons which drive choice, albeit unwittingly. Usage of types 1 and 3, for example, decreased for tangible themes whilst a slight increase was shown with type 2 [See Figure 4]. In the case on Human, animal and inanimate themes, many difficulties arose, as discussed in section 4. Because of the arbitrary decisions which had to be made regarding the animal and inanimate categories [see section 4.1], and the paucity of themes regarding animals, the main point of interest was the difference in pattern during the period 1550-1599. Overall, however, this particular line of enquiry did not prove very fruitful. The Question of social deixis, although unexpected, eventually suggested grounds for further study of this topic. Strong patterns which emerged from the Cromwell corpus were also hinted at when the Pepys and

Plumpton corpora were checked; this possibility, along with the rest of the findings, is discussed in Chapter 5: Conclusions.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1: OVERVIEW

When beginning this study into driving forces behind the choice of dative construction, it was not known whether any patterns related to semantics or themes would emerge. For example, might the DOC be selected for inanimate objects predominantly, or the PDC be used for physical transfer? The extant literature argued both for and against different semantic implications for each structure, and the work done on this topic from a historical point of view was very sparse. Given that Wolk *et al.* (2013) had investigated the dative and genitive alternations in later English [from the 17th century onwards] it seemed reasonable to attempt a study of the period before their work. As the PCEEC covers the years from 1410 to 1680, this was chosen as a suitable corpus for data collection.

After reviewing the literature concerning PDE, some predominant areas of interest suggested themselves: notion of path, [in]tangibility; [in]animacy and caused possession. The verbs selected for examination [give, send and show] all, arguably, contain semantic notions of movement and possession [although with show the item being shown is, perhaps, only possessed intellectually and the movement could be active or passive i.e. a person being brought to the item rather than the item being taken to the object of the clause].

During the data collection process, it became clear that another, unexpected, cause driving the dative alternation was suggesting itself – that of social deixis. As far as the author is aware, no other work has been done around this possibility so the findings herein are open to further scrutiny and closer examination in the future. The

main themes of the study, role order, [in]tangibility, [in]animacy and deixis, are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

5.2: EMERGENCE OF ROLE ORDERS

During the process of data collection from the PCEEC, six different patterns of role order were identified. [See Table 1, Chapter 3, section 5]. Whereas types 1, 2 and 3 were identified as being in general usage throughout the time-frame of this study, types 4, 5 and 6 were quite uncommon and could, perhaps, be considered to be correspondents' idiosyncratic styles. Although the results are dependent on which texts have survived from each half century, a clear dominance of type 3 over type 1 in the period 1410-1449 markedly changes from 1450 – 1499 onwards, and type 1 remains the more commonly found structure for the remaining period. Type 2, however, is clearly the most commonly identified structure overall, although the differentials show great divergence over the course of time. The figures from Figure 1, Chapter 3, section 6 are reproduced below as a linear graph which illustrates this fact.

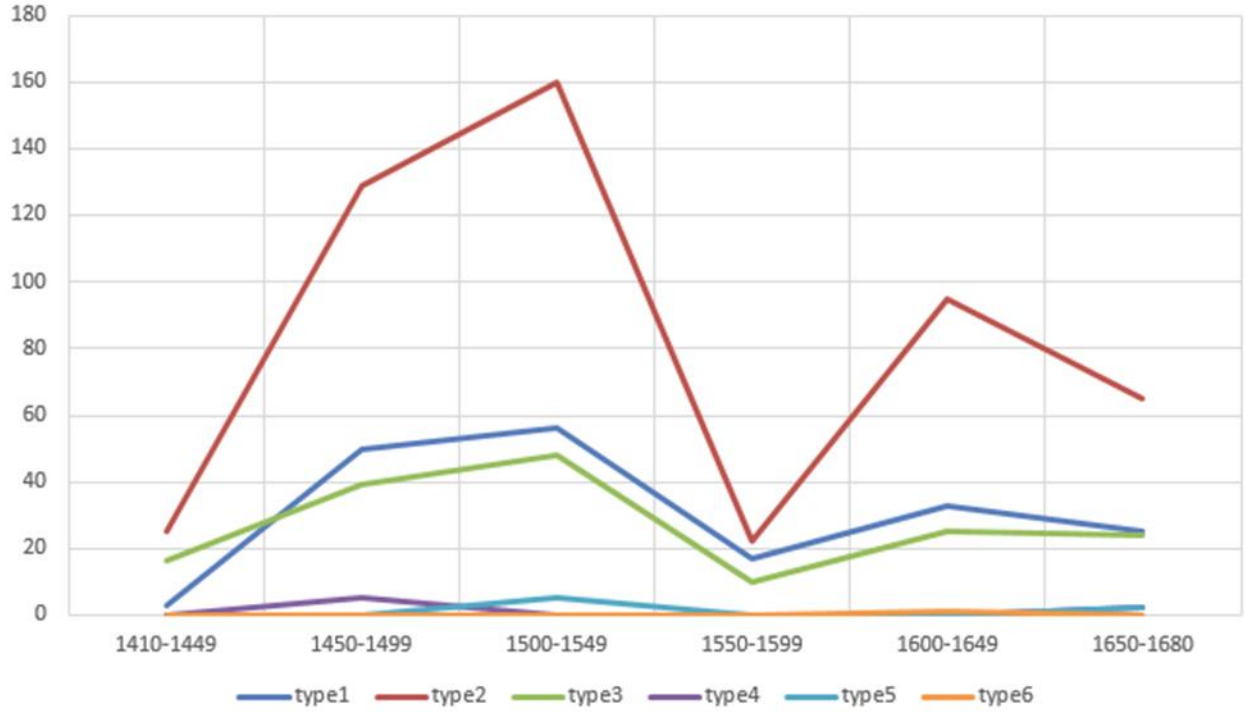

Figure 5: Linear Graph showing variations in usage of the six types over the time-span of the PCEEC.

As types 1 and 3 are PDC structures, [John gave the coffee to Mary. The coffee was given by John to Mary] and their frequency increases slightly during the first decades of this study, this could show that the prepositional dative had not fully come into general usage during the earliest years covered by the PCEEC, as exemplified by the quotes from Denison: 1993 in Chapter 4, section 4. From the very beginning of the corpora examined, it can be seen that type 2 is the most dominant structure, which could be said to add weight to this hypothesis.

It is noticeable from Figure 5, above, however, that usage of type 2 drops considerably during the period 1550 – 1599 and, although this cannot be proven, a link with the Inkhorn Controversy may be suggested. The feeling among some scholars of the 16th century, that English needed to be preserved in its plainest way, (Baugh & Cable 2002:217) may have led to a preference for the DOC, albeit

subconsciously. With no possibility of discovering the correspondents' native instincts regarding this, it must, for the time being, remain purely the author's supposition.

5.3: TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE THEMES

The data presented in Figure 3 in Chapter 4, section 3 do not show any great difference in usage over the main three patterns identified. There is, however, an L1 intuition which means that a sentence such as:

John gave me the idea (Type 2)

is acceptable, whereas

John gave the idea to me (Type 1)

is not a usual form of phraseology, despite it being grammatically correct.

The idea was given by John to me (Type 3)

does, arguably, sound the least acceptable form of the three, yet examples of each of these was found during the data collection.

Type 1:

30] *Please yt your mastership to give credence unto this berer*

(Plumpton: 7280-7281)

Type 3:

31] *such credense as he would shewe unto me on your behalf*

(Original 1:1144-1145)

Figure 5 does, indeed, show that type 2 is the pattern most often used for intangible themes, and this by a large margin. Types 1 and 3 are both clearly used much more often for physical transfer, which is to be expected if PDE usage is to be an indicator. The fact that there are instances of types 1 and 3 for this category may show individual styles of correspondents, or may show that the intuitions of L1 PDE speakers are somewhat different from those of earlier times. That both the examples given above have the theme credence/credense is purely coincidental; other themes which are used in types 1 and 3 include affection (Stuart: 363-365), speed (Plumpton: 1719-1720) power (Stonor: 4718-20) and blissynge (Stonor: 5500-5501)

5.4: HUMAN, ANIMAL AND INANIMATE THEMES

Table 2 in Chapter 4, section 4 presents the results when the themes of each extract examined were separated into human, animal and inanimate by PDC and DOC. Throughout all the extracts investigated, there were no instances where the DOC was used in relation to an inanimate recipient [i.e. I sent London my servant]. Therefore, although the lack of any such instances does not prove conclusively that they were never used, this had not been considered as a possibility for the sake of this work. Furthermore, no examples of an inanimate subject were discovered [i.e. London sent me a gift]. For this reason, only themes were considered with regard to animacy.

The decision to consider all animals as living is discussed in Chapter 2, section 3; the fact that only a very small proportion of the extracts discussed animals [14 out of a total of 677] means that it is hard to say whether this had any bearings on the

findings in this category. Little difference was found between the usage of PDC and DOC for these particular cases, so no real conclusions can be drawn.

The figures for human themes, however, do show a strong overall preference for the PDC. This may, nevertheless, be misleading. The majority of the correspondence regarding human themes was of the format wherein a person [usually a servant or messenger] is sent by the author to the recipient or a place. A typical example can be found in the Original 1 corpus, lines 5241-5242:

32] *he purposyth to send hym to the Kings Grace*.

As previously discussed in the previous section on [In]tangibility, any other organisation of the information, i.e. a DOC arrangement, would not sound correct to an L1 English speaker:

** he purposyth to send the Kings Grace hym*

For this reason, although the figures show a marked preference for the PDC, this is in line with PDE intuitions and merely indicates that speakers from this earlier stage of English had very similar intuitions.

Examples found of a DOC structure in the human category are, as expected, few. From the examples given below, even these extracts could be argued not to be, strictly, a DOC structure at all:

33] *I pray your Ladyship to send him back with ane answere*

(Stuart:10273/4)

This extract actually has no real recipient marked; and the phrase ‘to me’ could be taken to be implied in the overall meaning. It was classed as DOC due to its lack of

any prepositional phrase but its classification for the purposes of this study is open to debate.

34] *I will send somm to complaine of them selves*

(Stuart: 940/1)

Here again, no recipient is actually mentioned; the place or person where somm are being sent is not specified and so a prepositional phrase could be taken to be implied.

35] *In the meane tyme God send my Gossipp an easy partinge with her fruite when 'tis ripe.*

(Smyth 4148/50)

This extract, *wishing an easy birth in due course*, is clearly DOC. In this case, however, although the theme is the partinge with her fruite, which is innately human, the theme could be said to actually be the intangible partinge. For reasons such as these which have been outlined, although the animal and human categories have been examined, it would not be safe to draw any hard and fast conclusions from the data extracted.

When the Inanimate category is examined, however, an anomaly appears during the 16th century in the pattern which otherwise suggests itself. During the period from 1410 through to 1549, the DOC is used more for inanimate themes. For the half century 1550-1599, however, the PDC was found to be the dominant structure. Then, the DOC once again becomes more widely used than the PDC from 1600 – 1680. Again, although this is only a supposition, the fact that this is another variation in the data during the era of the Inkhorn Controversy cannot be totally ignored.

5.5: SOCIAL DEIXIS

The suggestion that social deference and familiarity may have been a driving factor behind the choice of PDC or DOC is, as with all other areas studied, dependent on the letters which have survived from earlier centuries, and the corpora selected for closer examination. Individual literary styles, conventions of address in historical correspondence and other such variables mean it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions as to this possibility. The letters of Edward Plumpton, from the 15th century, show an overall preference for the PDC when writing to, and about, various subjects. The fact that the DOC was discovered five times in his correspondence with his kinsman, Robert, may actually suggest that this informal usage was only just beginning to enter the language at this early stage.

The writings of Thomas Cromwell are much more marked by their division between DOC and PDC and, as has been previously explained, the possibility of a pattern emerged from a study of this corpus. His sole usage of the PDC with the king [despite there only being 3 examples in the letters selected] and his almost exclusive employment of the DOC with his friends and wife are strongly indicative of the different reasons behind the choice of construction used. Again, however, his own personal intuitions as to linguistic style are something which cannot ever be known and so, although the pattern is quite strong, it cannot be taken as indicative of other people's usage.

The examination of the Pepys corpus, dating from around 200 years after the Plumpton correspondence, would appear to almost completely reverse the findings from the earlier letters. The DOC is almost always used in these texts. The usage of the PDC seven times during Pepys' writings to his brother-in-law, Balthasar, however, is perhaps indicative of a particular decision or intuition that this was

necessary in these contexts. [See Chapter 4, section 5.3 for a discussion of the individual themes where the PDC is used]. Although none of these corpora could be claimed to show any patterns in themselves; taken together there is a suggestion of grounds for further study. The following section discusses this in more detail.

5.6: AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Originally, the areas of interest in this work were expected to be [In]tangibility, [in]animacy, notion of path and caused possession. Although the aim of this study was to give an overall picture of the development of the dative alternation in Late Middle to Early Modern English, each of these topics could, separately, be the grounds for a more in-depth study of historical texts. Decisions as to what constituted Animal, Human, Intangible and Tangible had to be taken in order to keep the scope of the work within a reasonable boundary, and if just one of these topics were to be selected it would, conceivably, be possible to investigate the texts more deeply for their semantics and be more precise as to the original correspondents' meanings.

The overall time-span of the corpora examined is 270 years; thus only selections could be taken as representative of each period. A study of just the 16th century, where some anomalies were observed in the data may shed light on whether or not syntax was also affected by the Inkhorn Controversy or if this is merely coincidence. Taking any one century, or even half century, from the PCEEC and examining all texts contained therein which were written during this time could show different patterns of usage by decade thereby giving an even more detailed picture of how English was changing.

As to the topic of social deixis, it was only possible to examine three writers' letters in depth due to the constraints of the overall study. No attempt was made to check

usage differences between the correspondence of men and women [albeit the majority of the extant letters are written by men] which could shed light on linguistic gender differences. Also, letters written by royalty and other people of the very highest ranks of society were discounted, yet they could also show interesting patterns of usage. Would a monarch consider themselves as socially distant from all other people and, therefore, always use the PDC, or, conversely, use the DOC as a way of indicating their superiority?

Selection of just one of these topics would mean it was possible to examine a greater selection of texts for their content, thus allowing a much more detailed picture to emerge. It could well be that the findings of this work are substantiated by further research or they could simply prove to be idiosyncratic due to the corpora selected. It is believed, however, that the findings of this study do offer areas for further research into the development of the dative alternation during earlier periods of the English language.

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APPENDIX A – CORPORA SELECTED [Information taken from PCEEC]

Corpus Name: Signet

Collection	Signet
Filename	signet
Date range	1410?-1422
Number of letters	93
Word count	15,029

Edition: The Signet Letters of Henry V. In: An Anthology of Chancery English. Ed. by John H. Fisher, Malcolm Richardson and Jane L. Fisher. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 1984.

Corpus Name: Original 1

Collection	Original 1
Filename	origin1
Date range	1418?-1529?
Number of letters	43
Word count	23,176

Edition: Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, and One or Two Other Collections. Vol. I. Ed. by Henry Ellis. 2nd edition. London: Harding, Triphook, and Lepard. 1825.

Corpus Name: Stonor

Collection	Stonor
Filename	stonor
Date range	1420?-1483?
Number of letters	129
Word count	38,006

Edition: The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483. Vols. I-II. Ed. by Charles Lethbridge Kingsford. Camden Third Series, 29 and 30. London: Camden Society. 1919. AND Supplementary Stonor Letters and Papers (1314-1482). Ed. by Charles Lethbridge Kingsford. In Camden Miscellany 13. Camden Third Series, 34. London: Camden Society. 1923.

Corpus Name: Paston

Collection	Paston
Filename	paston
Date range	1425-1519?
Number of letters	519
Word count	234,098

Edition: Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century. Parts I-II. Ed. by Norman Davis. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1971 and 1976.

Corpus Name: Plumpton

Collection	Plumpton
Filename	plumpto
Date range	1461-1549?
Number of letters	118
Word count	36,531

Edition: Plumpton Correspondence. A Series of Letters, Chiefly Domestick, Written in the Reigns of Edward IV. Richard III. Henry VII. and Henry VIII. Ed. by Thomas Stapleton. Camden Original Series, 4. New York: AMS Press. 1839/1968.

Corpus Name: Cely

Collection	Cely
Filename	cely
Date range	1474-1488
Number of letters	149
Word count	51,478

Edition: The Cely Letters 1472-1488. Ed. by Alison Hanham. Early English Text Society, 273. London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press. 1975.

Corpus Name: Clifford

Collection	Clifford
Filename	cliffo
Date range	1490S-1568
Number of letters	75
Word count	24,432

Edition: Letters of the Cliffords, Lords Clifford and Earls of Cumberland, c. 1500-c. 1565. Ed. by R. W. Hoyle. In Camden Miscellany 31. Camden Fourth Series, 44. London: Royal Historical Society. 1992.

Note that the PCEEC does not contain the full set of Clifford letters contained in the CEEC.

Corpus Name: Cromwell

Collection	Cromwell
Filename	cromwel
Date range	1523-1540
Number of letters	93
Word count	44,386

Edition: Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell. Vols. I-II. Ed. by Roger Bigelow Merriman. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1902.

Corpus Name: Stuart

Collection	Stuart
Filename	stuart
Date range	1588-1611?
Number of letters	71
Word count	31,578

Edition: The Letters of Lady Arbella Stuart. Ed. by Sara Jayne Steen. Women Writers in English 1350-1850. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1994.

Corpus Name: Smyth

Collection	Smyth
Filename	smyth
Date range	1580?-1641
Number of letters	33
Word count	*10,346*

Edition: Calendar of the Correspondence of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court 1548-1642. Ed. by J. H. Bettey. Publications of the Bristol Record Society, 35. Gloucester: Bristol Record Society. 1982.

Corpus Name: Parkhurst

Collection	Parkhurst
Filename	parkhur
Date range	1569-1575
Number of letters	92
Word count	34,797

Edition: The Letter Book of John Parkhurst Bishop of Norwich Compiled during the Years 1571-5. Ed. by R. A. Houlbrooke. Norfolk Record Society, 43. Norwich: Norfolk Record Society. 1974 and 1975.

Corpus Name: Arundel

Collection	Arundel
Filename	arundel
Date range	1589-1680
Number of letters	78
Word count	19,202

Edition: The Life, Correspondence & Collections of Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, "Father of Vertu in England". Ed. by Mary F. S. Hervey. Cambridge: The University Press. 1921.

Corpus Name: Barrington

Collection	Barrington
Filename	barring
Date range	1628-1632
Number of letters	191
Word count	63,934

Edition: Barrington Family Letters, 1628-1632. Ed. by Arthur Searle.Camden Fourth Series, 28. London: Royal Historical Society. 1983

Corpus Name: Chamberlain

Collection	Chamberlain
Filename	chamber
Date range	1597-1625
Number of letters	71
Word count	69,349

Edition: The Letters of John Chamberlain. Ed. by Norman Egbert McClure. American Philosophical Society, Memoirs, 12, Parts I-II. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society. 1939.

Corpus Name: Conway

Collection	Conway
Filename	conway
Date range	1640-1680
Number of letters	98
Word count	57,946

Edition: The Conway Letters. The Correspondence of Anne, Viscountess Conway, Henry More, and their Friends. 1642-1684. Ed. by Marjorie Hope Nicolson. Revised ed. by Sarah Hutton. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1992.

Corpus Name: Tixall

Collection	Tixall
Filename	tixall
Date range	1650?-1680?
Number of letters	40
Word count	11,544

Edition: Tixall Letters; Or the Correspondence of the Aston Family, and Their Friends, during the Seventeenth Century. Vol. II. Ed. by Arthur Clifford. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown. 1815.

Corpus Name: Pepys

Collection	Pepys
Filename	pepys
Date range	1663-1680
Number of letters	80
Word count	42,476

Edition: The Letters of Samuel Pepys and His Family Circle. Ed. by Helen Truesdell Heath. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1955.

APPENDIX B – TYPE 5 AND 6 EXTRACTS

Type 5 Extracts

which wee know also otherwise by a servant sent hither unto us from him

(Clifford:1490-1492)

humbly thanking your lordeship for your honourable rewarde sent unto me by my felowe Robert Wharton

(Clifford:7868-7870)

whereof mencion is made in the letteres sent vnto you by Reede

(Cromwell: 6737-6739)

I have Joyned them herewith Vpon the letteres sent vnto me by your highness

(Cromwell: 10661-10663)

the Character given to Scot by Mr Chavo the Prince of Conde 's Secretary

(Pepys:5464-5466)

I must pray you to remember that the things of that kind which Scot mention's to have been Sent to him from the Marquis De Seignelay were not for him

(Pepys:5264-5267)

Type 6 Extract

soe y=e Mother may receave all y=e= satisfaction it lyeth in our powers to give her (Arundel: 7572-7574)