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The West Germanic Heritage of Yorkshire English

Arjen Versloot

1 Introduction: The Abundance of Norse Loanwords in English

In every academic and popular description of the history of English, one can read about the impact of Old Norse on English vocabulary as a heritage of the Viking invasions and subsequent settlements in the ninth and tenth centuries. The estimated numbers of loanwords are often fairly high, in particular for Middle English—although of a different scale in total than the French and Latin lexical impact. For instance, in the introduction to the *Gersum* database, Dance et al. (2019) note that ‘[...] there are about 2,000 Norse-derived terms recorded in medieval English texts.

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Of them, about 700 are still in use in Standard English, although many more can be found in dialects from areas such as the East Midlands, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cheshire'. Kastovsky (2006: 223) mentions 'several thousand' Norse loanwords in Middle English '[...] of which between 400–900 [...] have survived in standard English, a further 600 or more in the dialects'. Viereck et al. (2002: 95) identify 1154 words alone with word initial *sk-* in Joseph Wright's dialect dictionary (1905), all considered to be of Scandinavian origin on the basis of this phonological criterion (see Björkman 1900–1902: 119; *Gersum* database: Key to Phonological and Morphological Markers). The current version of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) contains almost 1000 items with some form of reference to Old Norse (p.c. Philip Durkin). The influx of Old Norse vocabulary is particularly associated not only with the northern part of England (Kolb 1965) but also with Scotland (Corbett et al. 2003: 6); these are regions where Norse speakers were particularly present in the ninth and tenth centuries (Haywood 1995: 79).

The earliest lexical loans from Norse (around hundred) appear already in Old English and are mostly confined to new concepts in specific semantic fields (Dance 2012: 1731–1732). However, non-technical Norse-derived vocabulary is already found in the tenth-century Northumbrian glosses (Pons-Sanz 2013, 2016: 307). It is frequently stressed that the Norse loanwords attested since the Middle English period include 'many everyday words [...]. Especially remarkable is the fact that function words were also borrowed [...]' (Kastovsky 2006: 249). Among these everyday and function words, there are many that seem to have replaced existing English words, such as *both* (cf. OIc *báðr*-, OE *bā*) and *call* (cf. OIc *kalla*) replacing OE *brōpan*.¹ Pyles and Algeo (1982: 299) signal the concept of 'semantic contamination' where words such as *bread*, *bloom* and *earl* acquired their meaning from Old Norse.

¹ In the *Gersum* database, *both* and *call* are assigned to category C, which 'indicates that the root is known in early Old English (or there is an unambiguous form-source in a third language), but some aspect of form, sense or usage suggests Scandinavian influence'. The latest online edition of the OED acknowledges that the origin of the word *call* (v.) is disputable and for *both* it mentions: 'Partly (i) formed within English, by compounding. Partly (ii) a borrowing from early Scandinavian' [all accessed 22 January 2023].

Among these examples, there are words with well-attested West Germanic parallels, which, for that reason, may be inherited words in English after all (see Sect. 2). As a consequence, the fairly generous assignment of English words to Old Norse origin is a practice that has called for revision, as was made explicit by Dance (2012: 1731): '[o]ne sometimes senses that the attribution of a Norse derivation has as much to do with the enthusiasm of the scholar applying the labels as it does anything else [...]' (also Dance 2012: 1728; Dance et al. 2019).²

The word *guest* may serve as an example here. It is identified as an Old Norse loanword in Klein's (1966) etymological dictionary, and so is it interpreted also in Hoad (1986), who summarises the etymologies from the *OED*. The 1989 edition of the *OED* acknowledges that *guest* is 'usually explained as due to the influence of ON *gest-r*', but the current 2000 edition describes the origin of the word as 'Common Germanic' (and thus an inherited word in English), hinting at the Old Norse origin as an option in the etymological literature (*OED*, s.v. *guest*; category A1* 'the strongest case for Old Norse input' in the *Gersum* classification, Dance et al. 2019: s.v. *gest*).³ An instance frequently quoted in the older literature as an Old Norse loan is *bread*, which has been refuted by Pons-Sanz (2017; category CCC3a in the *Gersum* classification, Dance et al. 2019: s.v. *bred*). This adjusted interpretation, namely, as a 'word inherited from Germanic' is also found in the *OED* (s.v. *bread*, n.). The necessity of revision of the set of likely Old Norse loanwords has recently gained momentum with an article of Cole (2018), who posited a native English origin for what may be called the crown-witnesses of intensive English-Norse language contact (see also Cole and Pons-Sanz, this volume): the pronouns of the third-person plural, *they*, *them*, *their* (Dance 2012: 1736; category A1*c in the *Gersum* classification, Dance et al. 2019: s.v. *þay*).

²An example of what can be called an urban legend is the story found in Bragg (2004: 28): 'A young soldier [from South Cumbria] went to Iceland [...]. In Iceland [...] he used words from his home dialect and made himself understood. Within a week or two he was conversant with the Icelanders. Old Norse was that deeply bitten into the Old North'.

³At various places in the text, reference will be made to the classifications of loan word status in the database of the *Gersum* project (Dance et al. 2019). There are four main categories with multiple subtypes, allowing for 230 different code combinations. The explanation of all the labels can be found at https://www.gersum.org/about/explanation_of_summary_categories# [accessed 28 May 2023]. Relevant definitions are quoted in the text.

The aim of the present paper is to re-evaluate a number of words which have commonly been ascribed to the influence of Old Norse and to provide a more adequate estimation of the number of these loanwords in English. The first part of this study (Sect. 2) will discuss four factors that may have been underappreciated in the evaluation of potential Norse loanwords in English and whose application will lead to a reinterpretation of some words currently labelled as Norse loanwords as ‘inherited West Germanic’. These criteria will be applied to a set of presumed Norse loanwords in the Yorkshire dialect, which is commonly recognised as a variety with strong Norse influence (Kolb 1965). This case study analyses a set of 112 words that are identified as (potential) loans from Old Norse in Kellett’s (1994) *Dictionary of Yorkshire Dialect, Tradition and Folklore* (henceforth *YD*). A more detailed description of the material for the case study and its outcomes are presented in the Sects. 3 and 4.

2 The Overestimation of the Norse Component in (Yorkshire) English

There are four major factors that may have contributed to the overestimation of the Norse component in English, including Yorkshire English. They are systematically discussed and illustrated with examples in this section. Unless otherwise stated, the examples are words that are identified as Norse loanwords in Kellett’s dictionary (*YD*) (1994). These insights are consistently applied in the case study of the *YD* in Sect. 4.

2.1 The Relation with Frisian

In the first place, it is important to bear in mind that various English words traditionally labelled as Old Norse loanwords have proper West Germanic cognates which may have escaped the attention of etymologists. Of particular relevance here is the evidence offered by Frisian, the closest kin of English in the Germanic family (see e.g. Siebs 1889; Nielsen

1985). This relationship not only concerns the phonological and morphological developments but is also widely attested in the lexicon (Löfstedt 1963–1969; Århammar 1969: 18–19; Munske 1973). It is quite remarkable that the word ‘Frisian’ returns zero hits when searched for in the first volume of Björkman (1900–1902).⁴ The commonalities in lexicon of northern England and Scotland that result from the historical relations between English and Frisian were very early observed by Minssen, who studied the East Frisian dialect of Saterland in the nineteenth century: ‘Auch die gewöhnliche Volkssprache in Schottland [...] bietet eine Analogie mit der der Saterländer [Friesen] dar, die beweist, wie weit das angelsächsisch-friesische Element im Norden Großbritanniens vorgedrungen und in die Volkssprache übergegangen ist’ (Minssen 1854: 155).⁵

Frisian consists of four main branches, including West, East and two sub-branches of North Frisian. West Frisian is currently spoken by c.400,000 people in the Dutch province Fryslân, while East Frisian is confined to a group of c.1000 speakers in the German municipality of Saterland. Linguistic differences between West and East Frisian are already evident in the thirteenth-century Old Frisian sources. North Frisian has c.4000 speakers in the German ‘Kreis’ Nordfriesland, a region that until 1864 was part of Denmark. Archaeological and linguistic evidence indicates that a first group of Frisian speakers settled down on the North Frisian Islands in the seventh and eighth centuries, whereas a second group migrated to the adjacent coastal areas on the invitation of the Danish king in the eleventh century.

All the branches of Frisian have been relatively high-contact varieties over the centuries. North Frisian has been in close contact with Danish for many centuries, and since the late Middle Ages with Low and later High German as well. East Frisian dialects show the impact of

⁴ See <http://archive.org/details/scandinavianloan00bjuoft> [accessed 28 May 2023].

⁵ ‘The common vernacular in Scotland [...] offers an analogy with that of the Saterland Frisians as well, which shows how far the Anglo-Saxon-Frisian element has penetrated into the north of Great Britain and has passed into the vernacular’ (my translation).

long-standing contact with Low German, whereas West Frisian has been in contact with Dutch already since the fifteenth century. Despite the Viking raids on the Frisian coasts (from the eighth to the eleventh century) and short-term Viking overlordship over parts of the medieval West and East Frisian regions, no substantial Viking settlement in the region has been mentioned in the historical sources or otherwise reconstructed. In contrast to the English Danelaw region, with its massive presence of Old Norse place names, no such patterns can be found in the medieval West and East Frisian coastal regions.

Apart from a handful of older runic inscriptions (Kaiser 2021), the earliest attestations of Frisian date to the twelfth century. Despite this relatively late attestation date, the breadth of linguistic variation present until today allows for a remarkable reconstruction depth, using the historical-comparative method. As a consequence, a surprisingly large part of the pan-Frisian vocabulary—including many words not attested in the Old Frisian attestations consisting nearly only of legal texts—has been preserved, if not in one dialect, then in another (Århammar 1989). Significantly, there are no indications of relevant language contact between northern England and the Frisian speaking area after the early Middle Ages that could have ‘contaminated’ the interpretation of the Frisian material in the context of this study.⁶

A modern dictionary of Old Frisian has only been published in 2008 (Hofmann and Popkema 2008), although the first Old Frisian dictionary from 1840 was remarkably reliable (von Richthofen 1840). Modern Frisian consists of multiple dialects, each with its own often complicated phonological history (Siebs 1889, 1901), differing from each other as strongly as, for example, Dutch and German, due to their largely separate

⁶ See Munske (2001) for a comprehensive coverage of many aspects of linguistic and sociocultural history of Frisian.

and isolated developments. The lexicographical description of many of these dialects has only become available in relatively recent years.⁷

The (non-)existence of cognates in Frisian and other West Germanic languages is one of the important criteria in the identification of a potential Norse origin of English words when phonological or morphological criteria are inconclusive. This applies in particular to the words belonging to category B and C in the *Gersum* database: ‘Type B indicates lexemes formed on Germanic roots which are not attested early enough in Old English’. The absence of an early attestation in English is an argument to consider an external origin. Sub-type B1 comprises words whose ‘[...] root is only otherwise known in North Germanic’, which suggests that the word was not West Germanic in origin and not part of the Old English lexicon. For words belonging to B2, ‘the root is attested in at least one other Germanic language [...]’, but the implicit interpretation seems to be that the lack of attestation in Old English indicates that the word was possibly no longer part of the initial Old English vocabulary at the time of language contact with Scandinavian and hence most likely (re-)introduced into English. However, for many low-frequency words, the absence from the Old English corpus is a less-relevant fact (Dance 2012: 1731). Despite the relatively large size of the attested Old English vocabulary, we have to realise that many more lexemes and their geographical variants are ultimately unknown. Therefore, given the close historical ties

⁷ One can mention the following dictionaries: West Frisian (WFri.): main dialect: van der Veen and de Boer (1984–2011); Hindeloopen: Blom and Dyk (2019); Schiermonnikoog: Spenter (1968) and Visser and Dyk (2002); East Frisian (EFri.): Saterland (Sat.): Fort (2015); Wangerooge (Wang.): Ehrentraut (1849, 1854); North Frisian (NFri.): Föhr and Amrum (FA): Sjölin (2002); Sylt: Möller (1916) and Kellner (2006); Böklingharde: Sjölin et al. (1988); Wiedingharde: Jensen et al. (1994); Halligen and Nordergoesharde: Löfstedt (1928, 1931). Cited examples from varieties of (Old) Frisian that appear as entries in these dictionaries will be quoted without further reference, unless specific remarks have been made or words are found under different entries.

A proper pan-Frisian etymological dictionary does not exist. Spenter (1968) and Löfstedt (1928, 1931) are lexicological studies organised on the basis of historical phonology and ipse facto providing form-etymologies with mostly one-word German translations. Boutkan and Siebinga (2005) offer etymologies of the vocabulary of one Old Frisian manuscript (Oldenburg, Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv, Bestand 24–1, Ab. Nr. 1, a.k.a. First Rüstring MS; Buma 1961), and Buma (1949) offers etymological references in the index on his text edition of the Old Frisian *Brokmerbrief*, or Law of Brokmerland. Wider-ranging etymological studies are presented in Sjölin (2006) and Faltings (2010). Old and Modern West Frisian cognates to Dutch words are systematically included in the Dutch etymological dictionary by Philippa et al. (2003).

between Frisian and English, I interpret the circumstance where a Proto-West Germanic word is attested as an inherited word in Frisian as a strong indication that a similar lexeme existed in the Old English period, even if it is not attested in its three million token corpus.

‘Type C indicates that the root is known in early Old English (or there is an unambiguous form-source in a third language), but some aspect of form, sense or usage suggests Scandinavian influence’ (Dance et al. 2019). The identification of other, hitherto unconsidered West Germanic parallels may provide evidence that the form, sense or usage found in English did exist in other West Germanic languages, which would relativise the unique English-North Germanic parallelism of such aspects. While Frisian is the most likely candidate to find so-far unidentified etymological parallels in West Germanic, other West Germanic languages, such as Dutch and Low German, may also contain hitherto unknown etymological parallels with (Northern) English words. By way of example, such West Germanic cognates seem to have been underappreciated or missed in the interpretation of the origin of Yorkshire English (YE) *durn* ‘doorpost’, *to rive* ‘to tear’ and *to bensel* ‘to beat, trash’. For *durn*, no West Germanic cognate is mentioned in the *OED* (s.v. *durn*), and yet it may be related to EFri. (Wangerooge) *durn* ‘door’. In the case of *rive* ‘to tear’, the *OED* (s.v. *rive*, v.1) mentions the Old Frisian cognate *ūtrīva* ‘to tear out’, but still labels the word as ‘[a] borrowing from early Scandinavian’, possibly because of its distribution in northern English and Scots. A fairly complicated example of a word that eventually seems best explained with a parallel from Low German is YE *bensel* ‘to beat, trash’. The *OED* (s.v. *bensel*, v.) marks it as a dialectal form, with a first attestation in 1673. Its origin is discussed in the *OED*’s entry for *bensel* (n.) with a first attestation in 1522, meaning ‘bending, tension, spring (of mental faculties); strong bent or determination; impetus (of a body in motion)’. The *OED* interprets the noun as ‘[a] borrowing from early Scandinavian. Etymon: Norse *benzla*’, meaning ‘bending, bent, tension’. The Modern Icelandic [...] verb *bensla* means ‘to wrap around sth’. The Modern Icelandic word has been attested only since the sixteenth century and is related to Danish (Dan.) *bændsel* ‘a wrap’, which is a borrowing from Middle Low German *bendsel* (*Ordbog over det danske Sprog*, s.v. *bændsel*). This cannot be the source of YE *bensel* for reasons of semantics. Old Icelandic (OIc) *benzl*

means ‘bent state of a bow’ (Zoëga 1975: s.v. *benzl*), which is semantically close to the meaning of the noun *bensel* in the *OED*: ‘bending, tension’. In this meaning, it seems related to English *to bend*. The *OED* (s.v. *bend*, v. 2.a) considers the meaning ‘to constrain a bow with the string [...]’, to be of Old English origin. The meaning, is however, still quite remote from YE *bensel* ‘to beat, trash’. Eventually, the best semantic fit is found in East Frisian Low German: *bensel* ‘stick, club’ or ‘bunch of twigs’ and a verb *benseln* ‘to hit with a bunch of twigs’ (Böning et al. 1998: s.v. *Bensel*). This word is semantically connected with the earlier mentioned MLG *bendsel*. Saterfrisian *bänselje* ‘to chase away, throw out’ can be connected to YE *bensel* as well. In this myriad of forms and meanings, the best formal and semantic parallel is found in West Germanic, in this case Low German and East Frisian (Sat.). Given the late attestations dates in English, the word may after all also be a much later loan from Low German in the latter meaning.

2.2 Lexical Support and Loanwords

Language contact can strengthen the use and preservation of mutual cognates in either language (see also Sect. 2.5), but such selective preservation should not be taken for lexical borrowing. Lexical loan relations between languages can be found in many expressions, including loan formations and loan translations. All these processes add a new lexical element to a language ‘A’, bearing traces of a lexeme from language ‘B’. Already Björkman (1900–1902: 8–9) points to two more relations between the lexicon of two languages: ‘Many words, common to both languages, but differing somewhat in sense, must have adopted the sense of the other language. And many words which were becoming or had already become obsolete in one language may have been recalled to life by the influence of the other’. The first part of this quotation describes the concept of a semantic calque or semantic borrowing. The second process is even more subtle and can be called *lexical support* (‘lexikalische Stützung’, Århammar 1966): a lexeme is inherited and its meaning may even be constant, but the mere fact that the word has been retained is the result of contact with another language where such an etymon was (even

more) common. The *Gersum* database includes such instances under Type C5. The root of *knife* is attested in all North and West Germanic languages. It has specialised meanings in High German (HG; *Kneif* ‘cobbler’s knife’), Dutch (*knijf* ‘clasp-knife’) and West Frisian (*knjift*, *knjif* ‘clasp-knife’), but it is the generic term in North Frisian, English and the North Germanic languages. The East Frisian dialects preserve the word *sax* / *soaks*, which seems to have been the generic term in Old Frisian. West Frisian opted for *mes*, in line with Du. *mes* ‘knife’. The West Frisian form, only attested in late Old Frisian, can be derived from PGmc **matisahsa-* and is not necessarily a loan from Dutch, given the appearance of the cognate in OE *meteseax* ‘meat-knife, dagger’ (Philippa et al. 2003: s.v. *mes*) and HG *Messer* ‘knife’. Considering the wide variety of words for knives attested in Old Frisian (and probably not only there), with seven different base words and multiple compounds, one may claim that the selection of English *knife* and North Frisian *knif* as the generic term from all these synonyms was a contact-phenomenon (Oic *knifr*, Dan. *kniv*), but it cannot be considered a loanword and hardly a semantic calque.⁸

Another example where lexical support might have played a role is YE *creeked*, Standard English *crooked* ‘curved’. The word can easily be associated with North Germanic cognates such as Oic *krókr* ‘hook, curve’. It is ‘[a]pparently a borrowing from early Scandinavian’ (*OED*, s.v. *crook*, n. and adj.; *Gersum* database type BB1b). The root is not attested in Old Frisian either. Various modern Frisian dialects, however, show that this word stem must have existed in Frisian as well. NFri. (Sylt) *kruk* ‘bowed’ might still be an instance of borrowing from Danish, but the EFri. (Sat.) *krouke* ‘scythe handle’ confirms the existence of a word **krōk* (noun / adj.) ‘curve(d)’ in Old Frisian and thus in North Sea West Germanic. Its survival in English and North Frisian is in my view a candidate for lexical support by Norse, but there is no need for identifying it as a loanword.

⁸ *Knife* is labelled as BB2a in the *Gersum* database, indicating that West Germanic parallels exist, but the word is attested relatively late in English.

2.3 Northern English as a Peripheral Variety

The previously described phenomenon of lexical support still includes some form of language contact. But even that is not always needed as an explanation for the presence of certain words in northern English / Yorkshire. Such common retentions do not need to imply any specific language contact situation. The resulting geographical distribution was in a way also noticed by Björkman (1900–1902: 9):

It is a fact that, after the West-Saxon period, numerous words appear in English, which are not found in Old English, but are of a distinctly English stamp and cannot have been introduced from Scandinavian. It is therefore possible that many of the words, considered as Scandinavian, did actually belong to the vocabulary of the [northern, peripheral] dialects not represented by any literary monuments of an earlier date.

Northern England and Scotland are geographically and demographically peripheral regions on a European scale, and many examples from dialectology show that peripheral regions tend to preserve features and items, including lexemes, that were lost in the geographical centre (Viereck et al. 2002: 95).⁹ Yorkshire and Scotland share this peripheral status within the Germanic language family with regions such as Friesland, Scandinavia and the Alps in contrast to southern England, the rest of the Netherlands and central Germany.¹⁰

Such accidental commonalities among (northern) English, Frisian and the Scandinavian languages should not be too easily taken for expressions of the previously mentioned lexical support (Århammar 1966: 310). Whereas intense language contact with North Germanic is conceivable for North Frisian and (Yorkshire) English, a similar contact situation is not attested for West and East Frisian, although multiple contacts between Scandinavians ('Vikings') and Frisians took place (Ijssennagger

⁹It would be wrong to look at peripheral regions as being only archaic. Dahl (2015a: 185–186) illustrates that such regions are different from the centre, with both common archaisms and innovations.

¹⁰For the European dimension, see Haspelmath (2001); for a combined geographical-chronological comparison of English-Scottish varieties, see McMahon and Maguire (2012: 152–157).

2012). Still, as a result of the peripheral dialect-geographical position and due to the mere geographical vicinity, Frisian and northern English varieties sometimes show lexical similarities with North Germanic. A good example is the word for ‘child’: WFri. *bern*, NFri. (FA) *bjarn* and so on (cf. NGmc *barn*, northern English / Scots *barn*, *bairn* vs. Standard English *child* and Du. / HG *Kind*). Reflexes of PGmc **barna-* are also found in Gothic and Old High German (Kroonen 2013: s.v. **barna-*). As the word was preserved in West and East Frisian without any significant ‘Viking’ contacts, there is no reason to assume any expansion or even lexical support from North Germanic in English.

Another example from the set of Yorkshire English words under consideration in this chapter is *teem* ‘to pour’, according to *OED* (s.v. *teem*, v.2) ‘[a] borrowing from early Scandinavian’. North Germanic parallels are at hand here, such as the Modern Icelandic verb *tæma* ‘to empty, vacate’ or the Danish adjective *tom* ‘empty’. The stem is not found in modern West Germanic languages, except for some North Frisian dialects; the dialect of Sylt attests to *tem* ‘to pour’, labelled as a borrowing from Danish in Möller (1916: s.v. *tem*). The West Germanic languages, however, show a wider spread of the root, including OFri. *tēma* ‘to let (water) flow’ and Old Saxon (OS) *tōmian* ‘to release’. Its presence in several West Germanic languages indicates that we might be dealing with a peripheral relic.

2.4 The ‘Velar’ Argument

The occurrence of /g/ and /k/ in palatalisation environments has been considered a very important criterion for the identification of Norse loanwords in English (e.g. Dance 2012: 1729). The lack of palatalisation of **g*, **(s)k* is mentioned in 132 items (14%) in the *Gersum* database as an argument in favour of their status as an Old Norse loanword. Nonetheless, in his recent publication, Laker (2021) has relativised this important phonological criterion, showing that this phenomenon is at most phonologically influenced by contact with speakers of Norse, but cannot be used to identify words as Norse loanwords on the individual lexical level solely by this criterion.

The traditionally postulated contrast between palatalising and assibiling English and non-palatalising North Germanic is, in my view, problematic. A superficial comparison of, for example, *church* versus Ic *kirkeja*, Dan. *kirke*, suggesting such a contrast, can be misleading. The phonetic reality of North Germanic languages is more complex, with each language showing a different palatalised variant of /k/: Icelandic [kʲ], Faroese [tʃ], Norwegian and Swedish [ç]; various forms of palatalisation, [kʲ], [tʲ] and [ç], can also be found in traditional Danish dialects in words such as ‘church’.¹¹ The comparative method results in a reconstruction of an allophonic contrast between palatal and non-palatal realisations in Old Norse on the basis of the widespread expressions of velar palatalisation in the modern varieties.

Palatalisation is not always mentioned in the phonological descriptions in the handbooks, for example Heusler (1967: 53), Haugen (1984: 197) and Schulte (2018: 41–43). For Old Norse (from c.1050), Haugen assumes a common tendency towards palatalisation of velar plosives before front vowels, which finds written expression from the thirteenth century. The use of <k> instead of <c> before front vowels indicates that this palatalisation had not led to assibilation or affrication at this early stage (Haugen 1984: 228, 247–248, 265). Bandle (2012: 80–81) considers the tendency towards palatalisation to be a pan-North Germanic phenomenon, incidentally spelled out already in the earliest manuscripts. The Icelandic pattern with palatal allophones [kʲ] and [gʲ] is considered to represent the most archaic stage.

The eleventh century mentioned by Haugen does not entirely reach back to the ninth and tenth centuries, but an earlier date for the palatalisation in North Germanic seems plausible for such a pan-North Germanic phenomenon, stretching from Sweden to Iceland (Haugen 1984: 339–342), the latter inhabited since the late ninth century. As an areal feature, palatalisation was equally present in the geographically adjacent English, Frisian and Saxon (Old Saxon) languages. The loss of palatalisation can therefore be considered a typically northern English and Scots phenomenon rather than a characteristic of Old Norse.

¹¹ See <https://dialekt.ku.dk/dialektkort/#map=10> [accessed 28 May 2023].

An important addition made by Laker (2021: 107–110) is the interpretation that words with [tʃ] in northern dialects can be ascribed to later lexical expansion from the south. Accordingly, in the north, words with /k/ may represent the inherited forms and words with /tʃ/ are possibly due to lexical expansion from southern varieties. This is the exact opposite of the earlier interpretations, where words with /tʃ/, also in northern varieties of English, are taken as inherited and words with /k/ as (Norse) loanwords. More research is needed to establish the exact conditioning of the lexical distribution of /k/ and /tʃ/, but it seems a reasonable assumption that palatalisation was genuine in every Old English dialect, whereas assibilation to [tʃ] was only realised in combination with strong palatal triggers in the north, being rather a default in the south. The northern realisation [kʲ] was subsequently reinterpreted as /k/ in many words at a later stage, and this reinterpretation was applied to both inherited English words as well as Norse loanwords with [kʲ].

An example illustrating the problematic interpretation of the origin of words containing a velar is English *gate*. In the meaning ‘road’, the word is commonly interpreted as a Norse loanword (*OED*, s.v. *gate*, n.2: ‘A borrowing from early Scandinavian’). The *Gersum* database (Dance et al. 2019: s.v. *gate*) labels the word with the code B2abc and mentions the absence of palatalisation of */g/ as a potential diagnostic, even if not entirely reliable. However, the etymon of *gate* has to be separated from the one underlying OE *geat* ‘gate, door’, OFri. *jet* ‘hole, opening’. English *gate* (Oic *gata*, HG *Gasse*) goes back to PGmc **gatwōn*- f. ‘road, alley’, whereas OE *geat* comes from PGmc **gata*- n. ‘hole’ (Kroonen 2013). Palatalisation of the *g*- in *gate* is not expected as the (semi-)vowels in the second syllable, *-wō-, blocked fronting of the **a* in all forms, possibly with the exception of the nom.sg.¹² The stem vowel of a nom.sg. form **gatwe*¹³ was probably levelled out by the /a/ from the other paradigm

¹² It is commonly considered to be the result of fronting and subsequent retraction (Ringe and Taylor 2014: 203).

¹³ Compare Early Old English (Épinal Glossary, Pfeifer 1974) with *-we* in such words like *quiquae* ‘quitch grass’, *sualuuae* ‘swallow’, *gearuuae* ‘yarn’.

forms (cf. Hogg and Fulk 2011: 129; Ringe and Taylor 2014: 191–192).¹⁴ The modern English word *gate* continues the phonology of **gatwōn-*, but the semantics of **gata-*. The *YD* mentions the word *yat* ‘gate’, which is the formal continuation of OE *geat* < **gata-*.

Both the *OED* and *Gersum* database refer to the High German cognate *Gasse* ‘street’, but this is apparently too remote to be considered of any relevance for the interpretation of the English attestation. On a closer inspection, the word appears also in North Frisian dialects: *jaat* in the dialect of Föhr and Amrum, where it actually shows a palatalised consonant (Sjölin 2002, s.v. *jaat*), but *gaat* in the neighbouring dialect of Sylt (Möller 1916: s.v. *gaat*); in both dialects, it refers to a countryside road. Norse influence could have played a role here, but such an influence is unlikely for Middle Low German (Schiller and Lübben 1875: s.v. *gate*).

The interpretation of *gate* offered in this chapter serves as an illustration for all four arguments against Scandinavian origin of loanwords, mentioned in Sects. 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4:

- (a) The lack of palatalisation is not necessarily decisive for words from northern English and Scots as a criterion for Norse origin (Sect. 2.4) and is actually not relevant for the word *gate*;
- (b) Even if the lexeme were attested only in High German and northern English / Scots, it would not necessarily exclude the possibility that these are relics from a wider West Germanic distribution (Sect. 2.3);
- (c) ...which is in this case confirmed by the identification of the word in North Frisian and Middle Low German (Sect. 2.1);
- (d) The retention of *gate* in the meaning ‘road, street’ in northern English and Scots may have been facilitated by bilingual English-Norse speakers, who knew the cognate *gata* in the Norse language (Sect. 2.2).

¹⁴It is unclear whether /g/ was palatalised before /æ/ that developed from fronted PGmc **/a/* in Anglian dialects, as illustrated by a parallel example with /k/ in the northern dialect form *caff* ‘chaff’ (see Laker 2021: 108 for *caff* and 89–90 for a discussion of /æ/). Laker considers the lack of palatalisation in *caff* as part of a broader trend, rather than a specific development of **/k/* before /æ/. Lack of fronting before /æ/ would also leave northern *yat* ‘gate’ unexplained.

2.5 The Acquisition of a Bilingual Lexicon

Sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 have presented four reasons why some (Yorkshire) English words, often considered to be of Scandinavian origin, may in fact be native / inherited. In the first place, the lesser-studied West Germanic varieties, in particular Frisian, may, in my opinion, provide additional evidence for the words' attestation in West Germanic. Without conclusive formal criteria—the case for non-palatalised velars being weakened—these words should rather be considered inherited English words, whose northern English distribution may be the result of reinforcement (i.e. lexical support) by their use in Old Norse spoken in the Danelaw, or the mere manifestation of a coincidental retention in peripheral Germanic vernaculars, such as northern English, Frisian and various Scandinavian languages.

In the thought-provoking approach taken by Emonds and Faarlund, the Middle English lexicon is considered from the perspective of an individual Norse speaker, where every Norse-English cognate could be felt as 'Norse'. This allows the identification of two-thirds of the lexicon as 'Norse' (Emonds and Faarlund 2014: 54–55) from the perspective of the Norse speaker, leaving aside the question of the matrix or intended target language of the speaker as well as the actual etymological origins of the words (for a critical discussion, see Pons-Sanz 2015; Bech and Walkden 2016: 68–71; cf. Dahl 2015b). A schematised overview over the various etymological interpretations is given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Evaluation of lexical items in English with respect to the question of a potential Old Norse origin

Etymological status?	E & F	<i>Gersum</i>	This chapter
1. Non-cognates	E		E
2. Cognates + ON-phono- / morphological issues I	N	A,C1,2,4	N
3. Cognates + ON-phonological issues II, e.g. <i>velars</i>	N	C2	E (Sect. 2.4)
4. Full cognates + ON-semantics	N	C3,5	E / N (Sect. 2.2)
5. Full cognates + diachronic or geographical issues	N	B	E / (N) (Sects. 2.1, 2.3)
6. Full cognates (no issues)	N		E (Sect. 2.5)

E & F = Emonds and Faarlund, E = English, N = Norse

The *Gersum* classification applies a series of categories with decreasing likelihood of borrowing, with high for A and D for low likelihoods (with further nuances). This chapter is more critical of some of the phonological criteria (Sect. 2.4) and assigns more weight to other West Germanic parallels (Sect. 2.1), irrespective of diachronic or geographical issues of distribution in Old and Middle English, adding the lexical support (Sect. 2.2) as a major factor. For words with semantic issues, I prefer to separate borrowing of lexical material from contact-induced semantic shifts.

While my approach maximises the inherited English component and reduces the Norse component in the etymologies, I agree with Emonds and Faarlund (2014) that, from the perspective of the Norse speaker learning English, all groups in Table 5.1 but (1) could be perceived as Norse or be adjusted to the Norse L1 (4). In addition, even without any borrowing or substantial semantic shift, two related languages spoken by bilingual speakers can converge. There is a tendency among bilingual speakers to opt for shared lexical items (cognate forms) and contents (shared meanings) in a situation where they are confronted with multiple variants. This can be observed in the word choice of present-day bilingual Frisian-Dutch children in the Dutch province of Fryslân, where (West) Frisian is spoken as the first language by approximately half the population (Klinkenberg et al. 2018). Children with L1-Frisian use more Frisian-Dutch cognates in their active production than could be anticipated on the basis of the proportion of such cognates in their receptive Frisian vocabulary (based on data from Dijkstra 2013: 85–88). This attitude leads to convergence of the lexicon of the two languages, without borrowing in the strict sense. We could imagine a similar convergence of the lexicon in a bilingual Old English-Old Norse situation. Bosma et al. (2019) provide experimental psycholinguistic evidence for the ability of children to identify regular sound correspondences between two related languages. All word pairs in the two languages that comply with such simple conversion rules will be part of the preferred overlapping lexicon in the aforementioned sense of preference for cognates among bilingual

language learners.¹⁵ As a result, bilingual speakers have a large set of lexical items at their disposal in a myriad of formal and semantic relations, with eventually loose relations with the words' diachronic etymological identities (compare Townend 2002: 182–183).

3 Data and Methodology of the Yorkshire Case Study

In the second part of this chapter, I consider a set of just over hundred words that are described as (potential) loans from Old Norse in Kellett's (1994) *Yorkshire Dictionary of Dialect, Tradition and Folklore* (*YD*). The traditional dialects of Yorkshire belong to the Northern English dialects. Yorkshire is part of the historical Danelaw, the region that was under Danish control from 866–954, with York as its main city (Haywood 1995: 70). This region is known for its large number of Norse loanwords (Kolb 1965; Viereck et al. 2002: 94, Map C).

The *YD* is an *idioticon*, based on an extensive list of sources, including Wright's (1905) *English Dialect Dictionary* and the *OED*. The introduction suggests that '[m]ost of the etymology is supported by the authority of the books in the bibliography' (Kellett 1994: xiv), but no detailed references are provided. This chapter takes the perception of Norse influence on the English language as represented in the *YD* as a starting point of the case study. The words marked with 'ON' and '? ON' in this book are considered to be of Scandinavian origin by a wider tradition of—partly gradually outdated—scholarly work. It was not possible to trace the individual sources used for the identification of individual etymologies. Moreover, the etymology of other words in *YD* (approx. 4700 in

¹⁵ One such correspondence rule in the Frisian-Dutch context is WFri. *ân* [ɔ:n] = Du. *and* [ant], such as in WFri. *lân, sân, brân* = Du. *land, zand, brand* 'land, sand, fire'. As a consequence, the Frisian form of the Dutch verb *branden* 'to burn' will be *brâne*. This is indeed the preferred form among most present-day speakers of Frisian (Goeman et al.: s.v. *branden*). However, the historical form of the verb showed metathesis of /t/: PGmc **brannjan* > OFri. *barna*, hence WFri. *baarne*. The earliest instances of *brâne* appear in the early eighteenth century, while *baarne* is still in use in the late twentieth century, in particular in the peripheral northern region.

total), which may or may not be ascribed to the influence of Old Norse, was not further traced / analysed.

The etymologies of claimed Norse loanwords in the Yorkshire English dialect (YE) will be scrutinised and re-evaluated in light of the issues raised in Sect. 2, with special attention to potential parallels in Frisian, Dutch and other West Germanic varieties. A systematic comparison is made with the etymologies provided in the current online version of the *OED* (2000–), which is more restrictive in the assignment of words to the category of Old Norse borrowings than earlier versions. The evidence presented in Sect. 4 allows us to conclude that the Norse character of the English language is still overestimated, for the reasons discussed in Sect. 2.

Words were labelled as being of North Germanic (NGmc) or West Germanic (WGmc) origin, sometimes with some level of doubt (NGmc? 3x, WGmc? 3x). In the counting for Sect. 4, these six items were counted with the unambiguous instances. Five words were either entirely ambiguous or were fully acceptable as West Germanic in their formal origin but showed a clear North Germanic semantic profile. Such words have been labelled WGmc-NGmc (cf. *Gersum* classification C3) and in the analysis counted as ‘NGmc’. Three words could not be interpreted. Among the words with West Germanic origin both in form and general meaning, there are seven for which the geographical distribution in combination with details of their semantics points towards lexical support as a likely source for their preservation in Yorkshire English, but such an interpretation can only be conjectural (cf. *Gersum* classification C5).

4 Comparison of *YD*, *OED* and This Study

The labelling of 112 entries in the *YD* as Norse loanwords was the starting point of this case study. All words have also been checked in the current online version of the *OED* (2000–).¹⁶ For twelve words, no satisfactory etymology was found, either in the *OED* or in this study. Figure 5.1 shows the interpretations for the remaining overlapping

¹⁶I would like to thank research – MA – student Merel Luberti (University of Amsterdam) for her assistance in the analysis of the *OED* references to the items in this study.

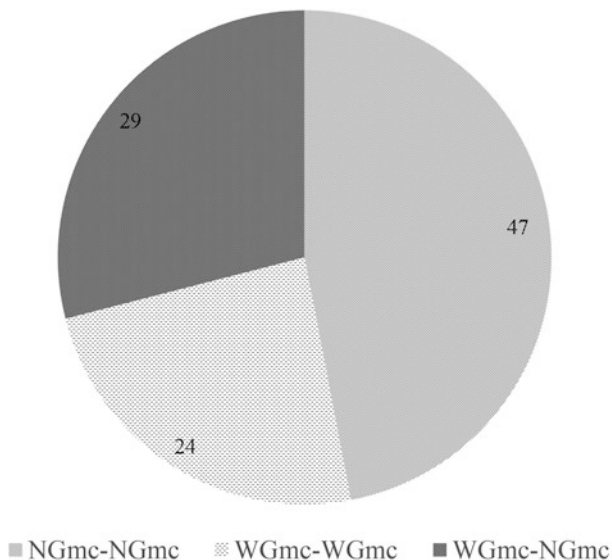


Fig. 5.1 Etymological classification of the words identified as Norse loanwords in the *YD*. (The abbreviations should be read as follows: NGmc-NGmc = both this study and *OED* consider the word to be a Norse loanword; WGmc-WGmc = both this study and *OED* consider the word to be an inherited, West Germanic word; WGmc-NGmc = this study considers the word to be an inherited, West Germanic word, whereas it is labelled as a Norse loanword in the *OED*)

hundred etymologically interpretable words. Detailed etymological information and interpretations can be found in Appendices 1–3.

Figure 5.1 shows consensus between the *OED* and this study in seventy-one instances: forty-seven words are considered to be of Old Norse origin, while twenty-four are understood to be words of West Germanic / Old English origin. In the remaining twenty-nine cases, this study prefers a West Germanic etymology for the words, considering the issues described in Sect. 2. If the interpretations in the *YD* are representative of the generous interpretations as Norse loanwords found in earlier scholarship and handbooks, this study suggests that about half of them deserve a critical review. When we consider only those words that are

presented as Norse loanwords in the current online version of the *OED*, almost 40% of them may come out as being inherited, West Germanic words after all.

A critical revision of presumably Old Norse loanwords in English could thus lead to a substantial reduction of positively identified loanwords. For seven out of the twenty-nine instances of 'new' West Germanic words, lexical support of Norse is not unlikely. However, one needs more data about the spread of cognates in earlier stages of English and a comparison with, for example, the North Frisian situation in order to make more conclusive statements about the likelihood of such an interaction between English and Norse. The label *lexical support* can never be a categorical interpretation, only a probability.

As an additional step of the analysis, the list of words from the *YD* study was compared with corresponding lemmas in the *Gersum* database. Thirty-two words could be identified in the database. Eight of these words are considered to be of West Germanic origin in the *OED*, assigned to the C or D-categories in the *Gersum* database, six labelled with CC or CCC, where repetition of the consonant marks a decreasing likelihood of an Old Norse origin. For the remaining twenty-four words identified in the *Gersum* database, there is little agreement between the interpretations suggested in the present analysis and the *Gersum* classification: there is no significant correlation between the *Gersum* main classifications (A, B, C, D) and the interpretations West versus North Germanic in this analysis.

5 Conclusion

A careful analysis of West Germanic languages, in particular but not only Frisian, provides evidence for a likely Old English / West Germanic origin of many words commonly considered to be of Norse origin, not only in older scholarship but also in the current version of the *OED*. An extension of the data underlying the etymological interpretation of English lexemes is therefore a fruitful enterprise. The number of Norse loanwords in Present-Day English, including dialects such as the ones in Yorkshire,

seems to have been overestimated in older scholarship but, even with the more conservative estimations nowadays, further scrutiny of all candidates seems desirable. At the end of the day, even after closer scrutiny, a stock of English words will remain that are positively of Old Norse origin. Together with the instances of lexical support, semantic adjustments and through the selection of shared cognates by bilingual speakers (Sect. 2.5), they bear witness to Norse-English language contact in the Danelaw during the Middle Ages.

Appendices

Key to Appendices 1, 2, 3:

Yorkshire:	words from <i>YD</i> (Kellett 1994)
English:	Standard English translation or description
POS:	part of speech: V = verb; N = noun; A = adjective / adverb
APV:	etymological interpretation by this author
<i>Gersum</i> :	classification in the <i>Gersum</i> database (Dance et al. 2019)
<i>OED</i> entry:	corresponding entry in the <i>OED</i> (2000–)
<i>OED</i> :	etymological interpretation by the <i>OED</i> (2000–)

Etymological labels used:

NGmc:	word of North Germanic (Old Norse) origin and thus borrowed
WGmc:	word of West Germanic origin and thus inherited
?:	some level of doubt
NGmc / WGmc:	decisive North Germanic input, often in the semantics, but inherited language material or word formation processes may play a role as well

Appendix 1: APV and OED: North Germanic Words

Yorkshire	English	POS	APV	<i>Gersum</i>	OED entry	OED
<i>addle</i>	to earn	V	NGmc	C3c	<i>addle</i>	NGmc
<i>arval bread</i>	funeral cake	N	NGmc		<i>arval</i>	NGmc
<i>axle-tooth</i>	molar	N	NGmc		<i>axle-tooth</i>	NGmc
<i>brandrith, -ree</i>	moveable iron frame	N	NGmc?		<i>brandreth</i>	NGmc
<i>carr</i>	marsh(y woodland)	N	NGmc	A1bc	<i>carr</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>cleg</i>	horsefly	N	NGmc		<i>cleg</i>	NGmc
<i>cletch</i>	family of young (e.g. children, chickens)	N	NGmc		<i>cletch</i>	NGmc
<i>deg</i>	to sprinkle	V	NGmc		<i>deg</i>	NGmc
<i>dill</i>	to soothe, dull (pain)	V	NGmc	CCC5c	<i>dill</i> , v.2	NGmc
<i>dolop</i>	lump of something soft	N	NGmc		<i>dollop</i> , n.	NGmc
<i>ettle</i>	to intend, aim, attempt	V	NGmc	A1*c	<i>ettle</i>	NGmc
<i>flags</i>	paving or floorstones	N	NGmc		<i>flag</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>flit</i>	to move house	V	NGmc	C1	<i>flit</i> , v.	NGmc
<i>garth</i>	small, grassed enclosure adjoining a house...	N	NGmc?		<i>garth</i>	NGmc
<i>ghyll, gill</i>	deep and wooded ravine	N	NGmc	A1bc	<i>gill</i> , n.4	NGmc
<i>gimmer</i>	young female sheep	N	NGmc		<i>gimmer</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>gloppened, glottened</i>	astonished	A	NGmc / WGmc		<i>gloppen</i> , v.	NGmc
<i>gowk</i>	cuckoo	N	NGmc		<i>gowk</i>	NGmc
<i>grain</i>	prong of a fork, branch of a tree	N	NGmc	A1b	<i>grain</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>hagg</i>	division of a wood; ...to be felled	N	NGmc		<i>hag</i> , n.3	NGmc
<i>happen</i>	to have something happen to one	V	NGmc / WGmc	CC1c / CC3	<i>happen</i> , v.	NGmc

(continued)

(continued)

Yorkshire	English	POS	APV	<i>Gersum</i>	OED entry	OED
<i>keld, kell</i>	well	N	NGmc		<i>keld</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>kilp</i>	pot-hook	N	NGmc		<i>kilp</i>	NGmc
<i>kittlin</i>	kittin	N	NGmc		<i>kitling</i>	NGmc
<i>laik</i>	to play	V	NGmc	A1*bc	<i>lake</i> , v.1	NGmc
<i>laihthe</i>	barn	N	NGmc		<i>lathe</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>lam</i>	to strike hard	V	NGmc / WGmc		<i>lam</i>	NGmc
<i>lop</i>	flea	N	NGmc?		<i>lop</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>lug</i>	something (such as a handle) that projects like an ear	N	NGmc		<i>lug</i> , n.1	NGmc
<i>mense</i>	decency, neatness	N	NGmc	C2 / CC1	<i>mense</i> , n.1	NGmc
<i>mig, muck</i>	muck, manure	N	NGmc	B1	<i>muck</i> , n.1	NGmc
<i>nieve</i>	fist	N	NGmc	B2c	<i>nieve</i>	NGmc
<i>poke</i>	sack, bag	N	NGmc		<i>poke</i> , n.1	NGmc?
<i>seeaves</i>	rushes	N	NGmc		<i>seave</i>	NGmc
<i>seg</i>	small metal stud... in a shoe	N	NGmc		<i>seg</i> , n.3	NGmc
<i>skrike</i>	to shriek	V	NGmc	BB2a	<i>skrike</i>	NGmc
<i>slack</i>	depression in the ground	N	NGmc		<i>slack</i> , n.1	NGmc
<i>snod</i>	smooth, sleek, short	A	NGmc		<i>snod</i>	NGmc
<i>stee</i>	ladder	N	NGmc / WGmc	CC1c / CC3c	<i>sty</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>steg</i>	gander	N	NGmc		<i>steg</i>	NGmc
<i>stithy</i>	anvil (aambeeld)	N	NGmc		<i>stithy</i>	NGmc
<i>stour, stower</i>	rung of a ladder	N	NGmc		<i>stower</i> , n.1	NGmc
<i>swarf, swarth</i>	grit worn from grindstones	N	NGmc / WGmc		<i>swarf</i> , n.2	NGmc?
<i>tyke</i>	dog	N	NGmc		<i>tyke</i>	NGmc
<i>wapentake</i>	division of a shire	N	NGmc		<i>wapentake</i>	NGmc
<i>whinny</i>	gorze, furze [plant]	N	NGmc		<i>whinny</i> , n.2	NGmc
<i>yawd</i>	horse of inferior breeding	N	NGmc		<i>yaud</i>	NGmc

Appendix 2: APV and OED: West Germanic Words

Yorkshire	English	POS	APV	<i>Gersum</i>	OED entry	OED
<i>arse</i>	posterior	N	WGmc		<i>arse</i>	WGmc
<i>band</i>	string, rope	N	WGmc		<i>band</i> , n.1	WGmc
<i>barf</i>	hill, esp. long and low	N	WGmc	CCC5a	<i>barrow</i> , n.1	WGmc
<i>barn, bairn</i>	child	N	WGmc	DD2	<i>bairn</i>	WGmc
<i>bleck</i>	thick and dirty greas	N	WGmc		<i>bleck</i> n.	WGmc
<i>boose</i>	division in cowshed	N	WGmc	CCC1	<i>boose</i>	WGmc
<i>brig</i>	bridge	N	WGmc		<i>brig</i> , n.1 / <i>bridge</i>	WGmc
<i>clap</i>	to apply quickly, esp. the hand, slap	V	WGmc		<i>clap</i> , n.1	WGmc
<i>dee</i>	to die	V	WGmc	C1a	<i>die</i> , v.1	WGmc
<i>groop</i>	drain in a cowshed	N	WGmc		<i>groop</i>	WGmc
<i>handsel</i>	money given to strike a bargain,...	N	WGmc	CC4	<i>handsel</i>	WGmc
<i>hoss</i>	horse	N	WGmc		<i>hoss</i>	WGmc
<i>ice shoggles</i>	icicles	N	WGmc		<i>icicle</i>	WGmc
<i>kittle</i>	to tickle	V	WGmc		<i>kittle</i> , v.1	WGmc?
<i>laverock</i>	skylark	N	WGmc		<i>lark</i> / <i>laverock</i>	WGmc
<i>lig(g)</i>	to lie, to lay	V	WGmc	CC2	<i>ligllie</i> , v.1	WGmc
<i>ling</i>	long, slender sea fish	N	WGmc		<i>ling</i> , n.1	WGmc
<i>mickle</i>	much, greater	A	WGmc	CC2c	<i>mickle</i>	WGmc
<i> nang-nail, anger-nail</i>	in growing toenail	N	WGmc		<i>agnail</i>	WGmc
<i>reckon</i>	to pretend, think, consider	V	WGmc		<i>reckon</i>	WGmc
<i>scuttle</i>	basket for holding meal, etc.	N	WGmc		<i>scuttle</i> , n.1	WGmc
<i>strang</i>	strong	A	WGmc		<i>strong</i>	WGmc
<i>yacker</i>	acre	N	WGmc		<i>acre</i>	WGmc
<i>yule</i>	Christmas	N	WGmc	CC2c	<i>yule</i>	WGmc

Appendix 3: APV: West Germanic vs. *OED*: North Germanic

For sources, see the main text, particular fn. 6. Additional etymological sources are as follows:

- EB* = online version of Philippa et al. (2003)
GTB = portal to diachronic Dutch dictionaries, Old, Middle and (early) Modern Dutch: <https://gtb.ivdnt.org/search/> [accessed 28 May 2023]
IOB = Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (1989)
LAE = Orton et al. (1978)

Linguistic labels (exhaustive):

- | | |
|-------|---|
| Dial. | dialectal |
| EFri. | East Frisian |
| HG | High German |
| ME | Middle English |
| NFri. | North Frisian |
| OE | Old English |
| OFri. | Old Frisian |
| ON | Old Norse |
| PWGmc | Proto-West Germanic |
| Sat. | East Frisian from the Saterland region |
| Sy. | North Frisian from the island Sylt |
| Wang. | East Frisian from the island Wangerooge (extinct) |
| WFri. | West Frisian |
| WGmc | West Germanic |
| YE | Yorkshire English |

Yorkshire	English	POS	<i>Gersum</i>	<i>OED</i> entry	Class APV
<i>beck</i>	stream	N		<i>beck</i>	WGmc?; OE <i>bece</i> , <i>bec</i> , <i>bæc</i> 'brook'; the variant with single /k/ is dominant in West Germanic, but double-spelled consonants, indicating a closed syllable, are also found in ODu. (<i>GTB</i> , s.v. <i>beki</i>) and in many modern North German place names in <i>-beck</i> (<i>Haverbeck</i> , etc.)
<i>bensel</i>	to beat, thrash	V		<i>bensel</i> , n.	WGmc; both meaning ('to beat') and form are found in Oldenburg Low German (Böning et al. 1998: s.v. <i>bensel</i>).
<i>blaeberry</i>	bilberry	N		<i>blaeberry</i>	WGmc: YE <blae> (/ble:/) can possibly be derived from OE <i>blǣ</i> , rather than Norse (Olc <i>blá</i>); <i>berry</i> is WGmc anyway, cf. HG <i>Beere</i> .
<i>cam</i>	bank, slope, ridge	N		<i>cam</i> , n.2	WGmc; both Du. <i>kam</i> and Scots <i>came</i> have both meanings of 'comb' and 'ridge'. Cf. for the phonological development YE <i>lam</i> 'lamb' (cf. <i>kuəm</i> 'comb') (Wright 1892: § 281).
<i>crake</i>	crow	N		<i>crake</i> , n.	WGmc; NFri. (Sy.) <i>kreek</i> < OFri. * <i>krek</i> < *PVGmc * <i>krak-</i> , also various German dialects: <i>krack</i> , <i>krak(e)</i> . http://woerterbuchnetz.de
<i>creeked</i>	crooked	A	BB1b	<i>crook</i> , n. and adj.	WGmc; EFri. (Sat.) <i>krouke</i> 'scythe handle'; NFri. (Sy.) <i>kruk</i> 'bowed'
<i>durn</i>	doorpost, gatepost	N		<i>durn</i>	WGmc: EFri. (Wang.) <i>durn</i> 'door'.
<i>eldin</i>	kindling, firewood	N		<i>elding</i> , n.1	WGmc; NFri. (Sy.) <i>jöl'ing</i> 'kindling'; <i>jöl</i> 'fire' = OS <i>eld</i> (Tiefenbach 2010: s.v. <i>eld</i>); a morphological parallel with the 'fire'-lexeme is found in EFri. (Sat.) <i>fjürenge</i> , HG <i>Feuerung</i> . Both the formation and the lexeme <i>eld-</i> can be found in West Germanic. Lexical support from Norse (Olc <i>elding</i>) may have played a role here.

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Yorkshire	English	POS	<i>Gersum</i>	OED entry	Class APV
<i>flaik</i> , <i>fleeak</i>	hurdle, railings	N		<i>flake</i> , n.1	WGmc; The original root vowel is *a in open syllable (<i>IOB</i> , s.v. <i>fleki</i>), cf. Du. <i>vlaak</i> 'hurdle'. <i>YD flaik</i> [e:] and <i>fleeak</i> [iə] can be derived from OE *a in open syllable (<i>LAE</i> , map Ph60). <i>YE fleik</i> (Wright 1892: § 87) rather points towards *fleke.
<i>gain</i>	quick (way), near	A	A1c	<i>gain</i> , adj.	WGmc; PGmc * <i>gagin</i> (<i>EB</i>) developed into OE <i>gæġn</i> > ME <i>gein</i> > <i>YE geæn</i> (Wright 1892: § 84). The lack of palatalisation before *æ is not conclusive.
<i>gat</i>	got (past tense)	V	A1*c	<i>get</i> , v.	WGmc; the strong verb PGmc * <i>getana-</i> is amply attested in all Germanic languages (see <i>OED</i>), e.g. OS <i>bigetan</i> 'to seize' (Tiefenbach 2010). The past tense vowel <i>a</i> is the regular quality in the strong class 5 (OE æ, Northern English <i>a</i>). Apparently, <i>YE</i> generalised the vowel from the singular here.
<i>gate</i>	street, way	N	B2abc	<i>gate</i> , n.2	WGmc; see the chapter text, end of Sect. 2.4.
<i>gilt</i>	young sow	N		<i>gilt</i> , n.1	WGmc; cf. Du. (dial.) <i>gelte</i> 'young sow'. The lack of palatalisation before <i>i</i> is not conclusive (for parallel contexts, see Laker 2021: 109).
<i>ing</i>	meadow	N		<i>ing</i> , n.	WGmc; the word is very frequent in Dutch and Low German as a field name (Berkel and Samplonius 2018: s.v. <i>eng</i>), where it mostly refers to cultivated acres. The semantic shift to 'meadow' may have been inspired by Norse, but could just as well be a reaction to a different physical environment.

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Yorkshire	English	POS	<i>Gersum</i>	<i>OED</i> entry	Class APV
<i>kist</i>	large box, chest	N		<i>kist</i> , n.1	WGmc; loanword from L <i>cista</i> , widely attested in West Germanic (<i>EB</i> , s.v. <i>kist</i>). For the initial <i>k</i> - compare <i>gilt</i> .
<i>lisk</i>	groin	N		<i>lisk</i>	WGmc; cf, WFri. <i>ljisk</i> . The YE form shows shortening of the vowel, which is also not found in Scandinavian (Olc <i>ljóski</i>) (<i>EB</i> , s.v. <i>lies</i>). Word final <i>-sk</i> can be retained in YE (Wright 1892: § 312.6).
<i>mawk</i>	maggot	N		<i>mawk</i> , n.1	WGmc: the <i>OED</i> is undecided between Olc <i>maðkr</i> and a local diminutive form from PGmc <i>*maþōn-</i> . Similar diminutives are also attested in Frisian: WFri. <i>maits</i> , <i>maik</i> ; EFri. (Wang.) <i>maðuuk</i> . The YE /ɔ:/ < <i>*au</i> suggests syncope of /ð/ in the sequence <i>-aðu-</i> rather than vocalisation in <i>-aðk-</i> , cf. the Wang. form.
<i>nay</i>	no	A	A1*	<i>nay</i> , adv.	WGmc; English <i>no</i> is the regular (southern) continuation of OE <i>nā</i> , with <i>ā</i> < PGmc <i>*ai</i> . YE <ay> is the normal continuation of ME <i>ai</i> , <i>ei</i> and could very well represent the Norse adverb (Olc <i>nei</i> ; Wright 1892: § 84). However, a special development in final position, joining the development of lengthened short <i>a</i> would give YE /eə/ (spelling Wright). A similar development is assumed for <i>they</i> (Cole 2018: 191–200). Lexical support is not unlikely here.

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Yorkshire	English	POS	<i>Gersum</i>	<i>OED</i> entry	Class APV
<i>rive</i>	to tear	V	B2a	<i>rive</i> , v.1	WGmc; with OFri. <i>ūtrīva</i> , there is a cognate in a closely related WGmc language, so there is no reason not to consider it a North / North Sea Germanic word, with a peripheral distribution in YE.
<i>sca(u)r</i>	cliff or rocky outcrop	N	A1abc	<i>scar</i> , n.1	WGmc; the word is derived from a root PGmc * <i>sker-</i> 'to cut'. WFri. <i>skar</i> , Du. <i>schaar</i> designate plots of land in the sense of <i>share</i> . The meaning is probably influenced by Norse (cf. <i>ing</i>).
<i>seeat</i>	seat	N	A1*	<i>seat</i>	WGmc; the word has West Germanic parallels (see <i>OED</i>), to which OFri. <i>sēte</i> 'farmstead' can be added.
<i>skep, skip</i>	basket, coal bucket	N		<i>skep</i>	WGmc; WFri. <i>skeppe</i> , Du. <i>schep</i> 'spade, shovel' (cf. <i>EB</i>). <i>IOB</i> considers a Low German origin of the Icelandic word.
<i>skitters</i>	diarrhoea	N		<i>skitte</i> , n.1	WGmc; the <i>OED</i> explicitly mentions West Germanic cognates as potential sources. Given the pan-Germanic attestations, a local origin seems obvious, when the 'velar' argument is considered not conclusive.
<i>skive</i>	to split, pare, leather or hide	V		<i>skive</i> , v.1	WGmc; OFri. attests to <i>skived</i> 'divided'. <i>IOB</i> considers the verb to be derived from the noun <i>skífa</i> , which it says to be a loanword from Low German.

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Yorkshire	English	POS	Gersum	OED entry	Class APV
<i>stang</i>	pole, shaft, stake	N	CC1abc	<i>stang</i> , n.1	WGmc; the <i>OED</i> mentions various West Germanic cognates, to which one may add WFri. <i>stange</i> 'pole'. YE preserves pan-Germanic lexicon here.
<i>storken</i>	to set, to stiffen as it cools	V		<i>storken</i>	WGmc; the verb has a pan-Germanic spread (<i>IOB</i> , s.v. <i>storkna</i>). The suffix <i>-en</i> was productive in English itself, cf. <i>lighten</i> that does not have a cognate in Scandinavian (<i>OED</i> , s.v. <i>-en</i> , suffix5).
<i>stoup</i>	post, gatepost	N		<i>stoop</i> , n.1	WGmc; archaic Du. <i>stolp(e)</i> 'pole, post' (<i>GTB</i> , s.v. <i>stolp</i>), also Middle Low German (<i>IOB</i> , s.v. <i>stólpi</i>).
<i>tang</i>	projecting part of knife	N		<i>tang</i> , n.1	WGmc; pan-Germanic word, e.g. Du. <i>tang</i> , HG <i>Zange</i> 'pliers, tongs'. The meaning 'protruding tip of land', nowadays common in Icelandic (<i>IOB</i>), is also found in Old Dutch (<i>GTB</i> , s.v. <i>tanga</i>). Some semantic interference or reinforcement from Norse is not unlikely.
<i>teem</i>	to pour	V		<i>teem</i> , v.2	WGmc; compare OFri. <i>tēma</i> 'to let (water) flow'; see the discussion in the text at the end of Sect. 2.3.

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