

**Abstract:**

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to explore the regional linguistic landscape during the early Middle English period by focusing on variations in the plural form of weak verbs. The evolution of the distinctive plural endings in Old English are compared to the inflectional endings in the early Middle English period. As the term 'middle' indicates, the Middle English period and language is a kind of transition period between the previously heavily synthetic Old English and the primarily analytic Modern English. Middle English is characterised by a rise in the number of texts written in regional dialects of English, as well as a widespread shift towards inflectional loss, which affects the language in many ways.

The theoretical part discusses the sociopolitical events which led to the development of Middle English and the linguistic backgrounds of both Old English and Middle English. It also briefly summarises the dialectal circumstances of both periods. The practical part consists of the compilation of the inflectional endings of 20 weak verbs and the further analysis of the plural forms of the present tense and the preterite in the north, the west midlands, the east midlands, the south-west, and the south-east. In the discussion, the results are then more closely compared based on the dialectal areas.

**Key words:** Middle English, regional variation, weak verbs, plural form, inflectional suffix, morphology, dialectology