

## Preposition Use in Late Modern English Pauper Letters

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Preposition stranding has been present in English grammar since the Late Middle English period (Bergh & Seppänen 2000) and is often used as an example for a linguistic feature prescribed in Late Modern English grammar books (see Yáñez-Bouza 2008; Beal 2009). Several studies have investigated the use of preposition stranding in Late Modern English prose (Yáñez-Bouza 2015) as well as in the personal correspondence of the grammarian Lowth (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2006). However, not much research has been done on the use of prepositions by members of the lower social orders. The so-called LALP Corpus that has been created as part of the SNSF-funded research project “The Language of the Labouring Poor in Late Modern English” (2020-2025) contains letters that were mainly written by the labouring poor and could provide a different perspective on preposition use during the Late Modern English period.

In this presentation, I will first present a brief overview of the prepositions contained within the LALP corpus and discuss how the basic sentence structures typical for the pauper letters in the corpus prevents the authors from frequently being confronted with the choice between preposition stranding and preposition piping. I will then show whether the labouring poor tend to follow the prescribed grammar norms on preposition stranding or not in the situations where they can opt for either a stranded or a piped preposition.

### *References*

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