

## **Abstract**

This paper seeks to illustrate the influence of Old Norse on the English lexicon. The theoretical part deals mainly with the socio-historical background and with the invasions of the Old Norse speakers, which brought about the changes in the English language. Furthermore, it discusses the idea of mutual intelligibility of the two languages concerned and it describes the characteristics of the language contact situation, which lasted for about 200 years, during which speakers of Old Norse invaded the British Isles. The aim then is to relate these events and factors to the linguistic changes in historical English caused by the influence of Old Norse. The changes shall be illustrated on the competition of concrete linguistic expressions of Old Norse origin and Old English origin. The research itself focuses on the examination of the competition during the periods of Late Old English and Middle English, and it is carried out in the Old English and Middle English corpora (YCOE, PPCME2). The analysis comprises four words of Old Norse origin and their four Old English equivalents.

**Key words:** historical linguistics, borrowing, language contact, corpus linguistics, Old English, Middle English, Old Norse