Abstract

This PhD dissertation is a variational–linguistic study of two aspects of Middle Low German syntax in diplomas from the chancellery of the Hanse city of Lübeck and the Royal Danish chancellery. These are firstly the phenomenon left dislocation and secondly the word order of two–verb complexes in subordinate clauses. The examined diplomas were issued in the period 1400–1449.

The study is comparative and its purpose is to clarify whether diplomas from the chancellery of Lübeck and the Royal Danish chancellery are consistent with regard to the two syntactic features mentioned, and whether it is possible to say that the Royal Danish chancellery was following the so–called Lübeck norm.

Sometimes, the interpretation of the test results is made difficult by too few examples, but nevertheless, the analysis of the two syntactic features shows that there is generally consistency between the chancellery of Lübeck and the Royal Danish chancellery. Thus, it is reasonable to say that the Royal Danish chancellery was following the Lübeck norm. However, the analysis also shows that in some ways there is significant disagreement between the two chancelleries. These discrepancies are primarily interpreted as Late Middle Danish influence on the Middle Low German diplomas from the Royal Danish chancellery.