
OLD ENGLISH VERB

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES OF THE VERB

- number (singular, plural)
- Person (1st, 2nd, 3rd distinguished only in the Singular of the Present Tense)
- mood (Imperative, Indicative, Subjunctive)
- tense (Present, Past)

NON-FINITE FORMS

- Infinitive
OE helpan (Nom.) - OE to helpenne (Dat.)
- Participle:
- Participle I – present, active
- Participle II – past, passive (from the transitive verbs), active (from the intransitive verbs)

SUMMARY TABLE

Gram.Categories	Finite Forms	Non-finite forms
Mood	Indicative, Imperative, Subjunctive	-----
Tense Voice Number	Past, Present ----- Singular & Plural	Participle
Person	1,2,3 in the Indicative Mood, Singular	-----
Case	-----	Infinitive & Participle
Gender	-----	Participle

MORPHOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION OF VERBS

- Strong verbs
- Weak verbs
- Preterit – present verbs
- Suppletive verbs
- Anomalous, or irregular verbs

STRONG VERBS

- Four principal forms: Infinitive, Past Singular (for the 1st and 3rd pers.sg.), Past Plural (for the 2nd and plural), Participle II
- Seven classes: five classes due to the ablaut (the gradation of root-vowels);
class 6 – quantitative changes (*a-ō-o-a*);
class 7 – reduplication (the doubling of the root in the Past tense stems)

DIFFERENT ADDED SOUNDS IN THE CLASSES OF VERBS

- 1 – i
- 2 – u
- 3 – sonorant + *h* or another consonant
- 4 – sonorant in the root
- 5 – noise consonant in the root
- 6 – quantitative ablaut: IE *o* - *ō*, Germ. *a* – *ō*
- 7 – reduplication of the first consonant of the root + *ai* > *e* in the Past Tense; the root is a long monophthong or a long diphthong.

CLASSES OF STRONG VERBS

Principal forms					
Classes	Infinitive	Past Singular	Past Plural	Participle II	ModE
¹ i	writan	writ	writon	writen	<i>write</i>
2. u	(a) ceosan (b) bugan	ceas beag	curon bugon	coren bogen	<i>choose</i> <i>bow</i>
3. Son+cons	(a) findan	fand	fundon	funden	<i>find</i>
	(b) helpan	healp	hulpon	holpen	<i>help</i>
	(c) feohtan	feaht	fuhton	fohten	<i>fight</i>
4. Son.	beran	bær	bæron	boren	<i>bear</i>
5. Noise Cons.	(a) cwēpan	cwæp	cwædon	cweden	'say' (obs. <i>quoth</i>)
	(b) sittan	sæt	sæton	seten	<i>sit</i>
6. long	scacan	scōc	scocon	scacen	<i>shake</i>
7. redupl.	(a) hatan	het (heht)	heton (hehton)	haten	'call', 'name'
	(b) growan	greow	greowon	growen	grow

WEAK VERBS (1)

- Three principal forms: Infinitive, Past, Participle II
- Three classes (dental suffix **-d** / **-ed**; no vowel interchange)

WEAK VERBS (2)

- The 1st class (non-productive): derivatives
 - a) of nouns: *dēman* ← *dōm*,
 - b) of adjectives: *fyllan* ← *full*,
 - c) of the Past Sg of strong verbs (with causative meaning):
sittan – *sæt* – *sæton* – *seten* = *sit*,
sæt + *jan* > *settan* = *set*

IRREGULAR WEAK VERBS OF THE 1ST CLASS

- tellan (ea ← breaking before -ld);
- Þencan – þōhte – þoht (think)
(*þankjan – þankde – þankd)

WEAK VERBS (3)

- The 2nd class (productive): stem-suffix **ō**

lufian ← *luf-ō-jan

WEAK VERBS (4)

- The 3rd class (non-productive):
habban (have), *libban* (live), *secgan* (say)

1) *habban* – *hæfde* – *hæfd*

2) *libban* – *lifde* – *lifd*

3) *secgan* – *sægde* – *sægd*

WEAK VERBS IN OLD ENGLISH

Principal forms	Infinitive	Past Tense	Participle II	NE
Classes				
I	<i>-an/ -ian</i>	<i>-de/-ede/-te</i>	<i>-ed/-d/-t</i>	<i>stir</i>
	(a)styrian	styrede	styred	
	(b)temman	temede	temed	<i>tame</i>
	(c)deman (d)cepan	demde cepte	demed ceped	<i>deem</i> <i>keep</i>
II	<i>-ian</i>	<i>-ode</i>	<i>-od</i>	<i>look</i>
	locian	locode	locod	
III	<i>-an</i>	<i>-de</i>	<i>-d</i>	<i>live</i>
	libban	lifde	lifd	

PRETERITE-PRESENT VERBS

- the Present Tense - according to the Past Tense of strong verbs,
- the Past Tense – according to the Past Tense of weak verbs (dental suffix)
- Modern English modal verbs
(OE *cunnan* – ModE *can*)

SUPPLETIVE VERBS (GO, BE)

Infin. – Past – Part.II

- gān – ēode – gān (or ge-gān) = go
- bēon – wæs, wæron – bēn = be

ANOMALOUS VERBS (WILL, DO)

Infin. – Past – Part.II

- willan – wolde - --- = will
- dōn – dyde – dōn (ge-dōn) = do