Historical roots of Present Day US English [04]

Old English 2

Prof. Dr. Martin Schäfer
Department of English Studies, Universität Leipzig

Strong verbs: classes and recognition symbols Mitchell and Robinson (2007, §37)

Class	Recognition Symbol	Inf	1st Pret	Pl Pret.	Past Ptc.
I	ī+1C	scīnan *shine*	scān	scinon	scinen
II	ēo+1C	crēopan *creep*	crēap	crupon	cropen
	ū+1C	brūcan *enjoy*	brēac	brucon	brocen
III	[...]	breġdan *pull*	brægd	brugdon	brogden
IV	e+1C	beran *bear*	bær	bæron	boren
V	e+1C	tredan *tread*	træd	trædon	treden
VI	a+1C	faran *go*	fōr	fōron	faren
VII	[...]	(a) healdan *hold*	hēold	hēoldon	healden
		(b) hātan *command*	hēt	hēton	hāten

Conjugation with principal parts highlighted

		Present Indicative	Preterite Indicative
Sg	1	singe	**sang**
	2	singest	sunge
	3	singeþ	sang
Pl		singaþ	**sungon**

	Present Subjunctive	Preterite Subjunctive
Sg	singe	sunge
Pl	singen	sungen

Imperative Sg	sing	Pl	singaþ
Inf	**singan**	Infl. Inf	tō singenne
Pres. Ptc.	singende	Past Ptc	(ġe)**sungen**

Strong verbs examplified

(1) a. Cedmon, sing mē hwæthwugu.
b. Hwæt sceal ic singan?
c. þā ārās hē from þæm slæpe, ond eal þā þe hē slæpende song fæste in gemynde hæfde, ond ...
d. Swylce gēac monað geōmran reorde,
singeð sumeres weard, ...

hwæthwugu something; *manian* 2 weak urge; ġēac m cuckoo ; *ġeōmor* adj sad; *reord* f voice

Strong verbs examplified

(2)
a. Cedmon, sing mē hwæthwugu.
b. Hwæt sceal ic singan?
c. þā ārās hē from þæm slæpe, ond eal þā þe hē slæpende song fæste in gemynde hæfde, ond …
'Then he arose from his sleep, and he had firmly in his memory all, that he sang while asleep.'
d. Swylce gēac monað geōmran reorde,
singeð sumeres weard, …
'Likewise the cuckoo urges with a sad voice, the guardian of summer sings …'

Strong verbs examplified

(2)
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Weak verbs

(3) Class 1 (weak) [Inf-1sg.pret.ind.-pl.pret.ind.-pp]

a. fremman *do*-fremede-fremedon-fremed
b. nerian *save*-nerede-neredon-nered
c. hīeran *hear*-hīerde-hīerdon-hīered

(4) Class 2 (weak)
lufian *love*-lufode-lufodon-lufod

(5) Class 3 (weak):
habban *have*, libban *live*, secgan *say*, hycgan *think*

Weak 1: conjugation

		Present Indicative	Preterite Indicative
Sg	1	fremme	fremede
	2	fremest	fremedest
	3	fremeþ	fremede
Pl		fremmaþ	fremedon

	Present Subjunctive	Preterite Subjunctive
Sg	fremme	fremede
Pl	fremmen	fremeden

Imperative Sg	freme	Pl	fremmaþ
Inf	fremman	Infl. Inf	tō fremmenne
Pres. Ptc.	fremmende	Past Ptc	(ġe)fremed

Table: OE weak verbs: conjugation

The subjunctive

(6) When your child is tense, suggest that he **sit** down for a few minutes and take slow, deep breaths.

(7) the fact that he's an associate with Barack Obama demands that he **be** scrutinized and questioned by the American people.

(8) But what's important is that he **be** elected governor and Kirsten be elected Senator.

(9) His right eye was swollen almost completely shut. I asked that he **be** given some medical attention.

Examples from COCA via Hejná and Walkden (2022, p. 82), their (7–10)

Verbs and saints

Please have a look at the Saints-excerpt again. Please quickly decide for each verb-form
(a) what you think it is exactly and (b) whether (and if so, how) it is more specific than its PDE equivalent.
Example: Line 1, **hæfde** vs. **had**

Verbs and saints 1

1 Sum ārþurþe þeġn **hæfde** āne dohter · þā hē **þolde**

Verbs and saints 1

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Verbs and saints 2

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Verbs and saints 3

10 þone cnapan · tō his dēofle · ⁊ se dēofol **befrān** ·

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10 þone cnapan · tō his dēofle · ⁊ se dēofol **befrān** · be-frinan [strong] pret 1/3s

11 þone dþeligendan cnapan · ġif hē **polde** on hine **gelȳfan** ·

Verbs and saints 3

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11 þone dþeligendan cnapan · ġif hē **polde** on hine **gelȳfan** ·

12 ⁊ his hælende **piðsacen** · pið þā þe hē

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13 **ġefremode** his fūlan gālnysse ·

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12 ⁊ his hælende **piðsacen** · pið þā þe hē

13 **ġefremode** his fūlan gālnysse · ge-fremian weak pret. 1/3s

References I

- Hejná, Míša and George Walkden (2022). *A history of English*. Textbooks in Language Sciences 9. Berlin: Language Science Press. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.6560337.
- Mitchell, Bruce and Fred C. Robinson (2007). *A guide to Old English*. 7th. Oxford: Blackwell.