

**A FUNCTIONAL STUDY OF THE VERB "TO BE" AND GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF VERBS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH****Suyunova Gulzoda**English teacher, 23<sup>rd</sup> secondary school of Bulungur district,  
Samarkand, Uzbekistan[gulzodasuyunova888@gmail.com](mailto:gulzodasuyunova888@gmail.com)

**Abstract.** The development of the English language's grammatical system was significantly influenced by the Early Modern English era. During this time, the language's morphological structure became noticeably simpler, with fewer inflectional endings and a greater emphasis on syntactic methods. The standardization of the English language was additionally significantly helped by an upsurge of the literary language, the introduction of printing presses, and the extensive distribution of scientific and religious writings. This study's primary goal is to analyse the grammatical and functional properties of verbs in Early Modern English, with a focus on the use of the verb "to be" and its function in passive formations. Throughout the study, the employment of verb forms is analysed using examples from religious literature, and the morphological and syntactic characteristics of Early Modern English are investigated using a historical-linguistic method. In this sense, the study aims to clarify how the verb system evolved during English's historical evolution and to ascertain how the Early Modern era contributed to the creation of Modern English.

**Keywords:** Early Modern English, verb morphology, the verb "to be," passive construction, inflectional system, subjunctive mood, syntactic structure, English standardisation, and historical linguistics

**Introduction.** Over its history, the English language has undergone a number of linguistic transformations that have led to significant improvements in its grammatical, lexical, and syntactic systems. In linguistics, the evolution of English is usually divided into three main historical periods: Old English (approximately up until 1100 AD), Middle English (1100–1500), and Modern English (the time after 1500). Some academics divide the development of Modern English into two stages: Early Modern English and Late Modern English. Many people agree that 1700 is the conventional cutoff point between these two stages [Görlach, M. 1991: 34].

Most individuals assume that the conclusion of the Middle English stage marked the beginning of the Early Modern English era. The majority of linguists stress that this phase lasted roughly until the end of the 18th century, after which the next phase is typically understood to be the later evolution of Modern English. However, this historical border cannot be definitely marked by a single internal or external element. Many English grammatical categories are known to have started to develop during the Middle English era. These classifications grew increasingly specific and specialised in terms of function and meaning in Early Modern English. However, there remained a great deal of variety in the structure and use of linguistic units prior to the complete establishment of prescriptive grammatical rules and the rigorous definition of language standards. Because of this, the Early Modern English era is regarded as a crucial phase in the development of the language's grammatical structure. The grammatical and functional characteristics of verbs typical of this era are examined in this study [Harbert, Wayne 2007: 69].

**Literature review.** The English grammatical structures system underwent substantial modifications as Middle English gave way to Early Modern English. Many grammatical markers gradually vanished at this time, and the language's inflectional system saw a significant reduction. Specifically, several plural ends lost their grammatical distinctiveness and were zero-marked. As a result, the context in which verb forms were employed increasingly influenced their meaning rather than morphological indicators. This change increased the significance of syntactic elements in sentence construction and resulted in a more rigid word order in English.

Certain inflectional ends for singular forms were still used in Early Modern English. For example, the second and third person singular forms in the present tense utilise the ends -st and -s / -th, respectively. First and third person singular forms used -d in the past tense, but second person singular forms used -dst. Additionally, while the -th form was more common in written style and formal circumstances, especially in courtly language, the -s ending for the third person singular in the present tense was mostly employed in everyday spoken language [König, E. 1994 : 540].

In general, there is little difference between the morphology of verbs in Early Modern English and modern standard English. Some inflectional ends used for the second person singular, however, gradually vanished over time. Because of this, verb inflection in modern English has become more simpler, mostly used to denote tense and the present tense form in the third person singular. This procedure amply illustrates how English has evolved over time, emphasising the morphological system's simplicity and the growing significance of syntactic devices.

**Methods.** Furthermore, the King James Bible's Genesis 1:3 highlights important aspects of Early Modern English. The verb to be can be used in the past tense to indicate that an event took place as well as in the subjunctive mood to convey a demand or request. This stanza illustrates how 17th-century English grammar and meaning worked as well as how verb forms gradually changed to become what they are today. The King James Version of Genesis 1:3, which was written during the Early Modern English era, says: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Studying the grammatical and semantic characteristics of English from the 17th century can benefit much from this verse. The verb "to be" serves two distinct grammatical purposes in this passage. The verb be is employed in the subjunctive mood in the first section, "Let there be light." This construction semantically communicates the meaning "let there be light" and implies a desire or order for the occurrence to take place. Subjunctive forms were frequently used in written and formal texts in Early Modern English, especially in religious publications Minkova, D. 2001: 86].

The verb appears in the past tense in the second section, "and there was light." This construction demonstrates the outcome and proves that the event took place. Grammatically speaking, the English structure "there was" serves as an existential construction that conveys existence. Additionally, this verse shows how the word "to be" has evolved. While some syntactic constructions retained historical characteristics, the active use of the subjunctive form and the established usage of the past tense show that the verb system in Early contemporary English had already approached its contemporary form [Roger Lass 1997].

**Results and discussions. The Use of the Verb "To Be" in Passive Constructions.** In English, the passive voice is created by combining the past participle of the primary verb with the auxiliary verb "to be." Whether the subject is solitary or plural and the tense both affect its form. When creating the passive voice, the verb "to be" is employed as an auxiliary. It appears in many forms based on the sentence's tense and whether the subject is solitary or plural, and it is always coupled with the main verb's past participle (-ed). For instance, in the present tense with a plural subject, "you are admired by everyone," are serves as the auxiliary verb and the active sentence's object (you) becomes the subject in the passive construction. The present tense is used for a singular subject, as in: The progress achieved is extremely slow [ Ringe, D., Taylor, A. 2014: 56].

The term wer, which is equivalent to were in Modern English, can be found in the past tense of Early Modern English. For example, they were received at Blakheth by my lord of Rutland. Furthermore, the past tense forms were and were are used in modern English. For example, "he was seizd and carry'd before ye Ld Mayre" is a typical be-passive composition with a single subject. They received money from us with a plural topic. In general, the verb "to be" performs an auxiliary role in passive formulations by connecting the subject and the agent and expressing the passive meaning in conjunction with the main verb's past participle. These forms—is, are,

was, and wer—were often employed during the Early Modern English era and were crucial to the formation of the passive voice. Thus, in passive formulations, the verb "to be" enables the agent to be expressed with the preposition by and the subject to be fronted [Terttu Nevalainen 2006:110-111].

**Conclusion.** An important stage in the historical evolution of the English grammatical system is represented by the Early Modern English era. The inflectional system of Middle English was significantly simplified, and numerous morphological indicators progressively vanished. As a result, word order inside sentences became more strict and syntactic structures took on a greater functional prominence. During this time, several historical verb forms continued to exist. Suffixes like -st, -s, and -th were used in the present tense, whereas -d and -dst were used in the past tense. These inflectional indicators gradually vanished, and the third-person singular present form and tense distinctions are now the main features of modern English verb morphology. An examination of Genesis 1:3 shows how the verb "to be" can be used in a variety of grammatical contexts. The Early Modern English verbal system's intricacy and functional variety are highlighted by the simultaneous use of past tense and subjunctive forms. Additionally, "to be" acted as an essential auxiliary in passive formulations, mediating the subject-agent grammatical relationship. All things considered, the Early Modern English Period is a prime example of the shift from a primarily morphological to a syntactic system. The contemporary English grammar was greatly influenced by the structural shifts during this time period.

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