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CATEGORIES OF ASPECT AND MOOD IN OLD ENGLISH

Abstract: the article discusses the categories of aspect and mood in the Old English language. The category of aspect's formation, which performed the primary grammatical function in Old English, must be considered together with temporal oppositions' development, since Old English forms simultaneously transmitted aspectual information. As for the Old English mood, the optative one with the verbs sculan/willan is of particular interest, because its development went along several directions with the transformation into modern constructions shall/will + infinitive, should/would + infinitive.

Keywords: Old English, category of aspect, category of mood, meaning, sculan/willan.

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КАТЕГОРИИ ВИДА И НАКЛОНЕНИЯ
В ДРЕВНЕАНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

Аннотация: в статье рассматриваются категории вида и наклонения в древнеанглийском языке. Формирование категории вида, который выполнял первичную грамматическую функцию в древнеанглийском языке, необходимо рассматривать вместе с развитием временных оппозиций, поскольку древнеанглийские формы одновременно передавали видовременную информацию. Что касается древнеанглийского наклонения, то особый интерес представляет

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«желательное» с глаголами *sculan/willan*, развитие которого пошло по нескольким направлениям с преобразованием в современные конструкции *shall/will + infinitive, should/would + infinitive*.

Ключевые слова: древнеанглийский, категория вида, категория наклонения, значение, sculan/willan.

To begin with, the development of aspectual relations in Old English must be considered along with the development of temporal oppositions, since Old English forms were characterized by the ability to simultaneously convey aspectual and temporal information, and besides, «the primary grammatical function for the most important elements was the aspectual one» [4, p. 13].

In Old English, the preterit form could have perfect meanings, at the same time, the meaning of the perfect action became obvious from the context, or it could be indicated by some lexical markers, for example, the word «before».

Example 1. Old English: «Ne mētte hē ǣr nān ʒebūn land» – «He had not seen such a land before» (where past action is understood due to ǣr – before) [3, p. 25].

Despite the fact that the meaning of the perfect is widely covered in modern linguistic literature, the opinions of the authors are often quite opposite. So, for example, I.B. Khlebnikova believes that the combination of the verb *«habban»* with participle II was an analytical formation that expressed a productive action preceding the one, which was a temporary background for it [5, p. 108].

In contrast to previous opinion, Yartseva, V.N. emphasizes that the combination of the verb of *being* with participle II was by no means a perfect in Old English, but at the same time, it was a compound predicate, while its specific character was determined only by the content of the participle itself. As for the continuous forms, they did not exist in Old English, but it was possible to express the duration of an action. In order to do it, there was used a verb-linking phrase *bēon + participle I*. As a rule, the participle was formed from verbs with durative semantics, for example, Old English verbs *libban* (live), *wyrcan* (work), *thencan* (think) [6, p. 134–142].

Some linguists believe, that the Old English construction *bēon + participle I* had the meaning of irrelevant duration, representing the process beyond development and beyond correlation with the situational moment, which distinguishes the construction from the modern Continuous form [3, p. 97].

According to K. Brunner, in Old English there were some sentences where perfect forms were used in order to express an action committed in the past, but which, from the point of view of another action, is the future, the so-called *Futurum Exactum:*

Example 2. Old English: «Wit eft cumað, siððan wit ǣrende uncer twēʒa gāst cyninge āʒifen habbað» -»We will return as we have conveyed the message to our Lord» [1, p. 290].

Table 1

«Aspect constructions in Old English» describes the meaning of these constructions

Old English constructions	Meaning
Habban + participle I	Outcome of actions
	An action has been done, but it has futurity for another action (Futurum Exactum)
Bēon + participle II	Duration of actions
	Non-actual duration

As for the category of mood in the Old English period, it was represented by the following moods: indicative, imperative and optative. According to K. Brunner, the optative mood expressed not only desire, opportunity or prescription, but it also assumed the functions of the Indo-European subjunctive mood, expressing the subjective attitude of the speaker, expectation or reflection. In the meaning of the prescription, the desirable mood was close in meaning to the imperative one.

Example 3. Old English: «understande se ðy wille» – «understand, who wants it» [1, p. 205].

However, a special function of the optative mood was to express possibility or unreality in conditional sentences. In the same sense of the optative mood, combinations with verbs *sculan/willan* were also used in the Old English period.

Example 4. Old English: «Se þe slēa his fæder oððe his mōdor, se sceal dēaðe sweltan» – «If one slaughtered his father or his mother, he should also be sent to death» [ibid, p. 300].

The further development of the Old English verb *sculan* thus took place in three directions: the transformation into *shall + infinitive* with the weakening (or removal) of the modal connotation of the meaning used along the timeline, and the transformation into the form *should/would + infinitive*, which, on the one hand, is a form of the subjunctive mood, which means unreality and expresses modality; and, on the other hand, is used in the formation of the Future in the Past temporary form.

According to Ilyish, B.A., the subjunctive mood, the scope of which in Old English was the most extensive, had a subjective character. In the main clause, the subjunctive was used to express desire, and was also used in the main clause of some unreal conditional period. In subordinate sentences, the subjunctive mood was used more often than in the main clause. It was utilized in conditional sentences, additional clauses with command verbs; in concessive sentences and in temporary sentences with a hint of suggestion. In addition, the Old English subjunctive was also used in indirect speech and in indirect questions [2, p. 132–133].

Having considered the formation of aspect and mood categories in Old English, we can draw several conclusions. Firstly, the development of aspect relations must be considered together with the development of temporal oppositions. Secondly, aspectual relations carried out the primary grammatical function. Thirdly, aspectual (perfect) relations were expressed in the majority of cases lexically, as opposed to grammatically, in most cases with the help of lexical markers. As for the category of mood, the Old English subjunctive (optative) mood with the verbs sculan/willan went on several developmental paths, which can be observed during the analysis of such modern constructions as shall/will + infinitive, should/would + infinitive.

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