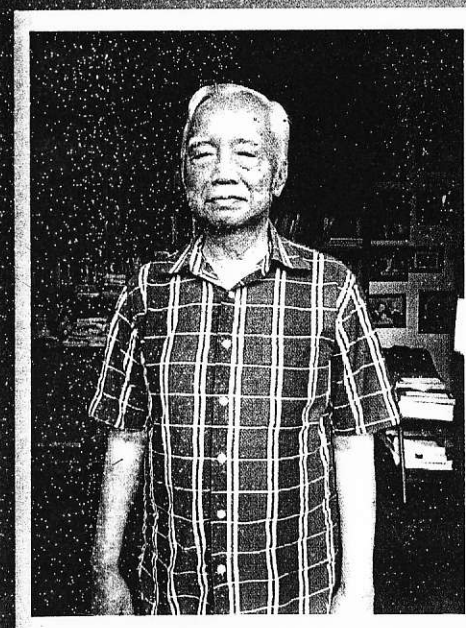Linguistik

PROSIDING
SEMINAR INTERNASIONAL
STUDI BAHASA DARI BERBAGAI PERSPEKTIF
DALAM RANGKA ULANG TAHUN KE-80
Prof. Dr. Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo
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KATA PENGANTAR

Prof. Dr. Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo, M.A. saya kenal pertama kali pada tahun 1979. Ketika itu, Beliau mengajar saya, dan beberapa rekan saya dari Fakultas Sastra dan Kebudayaan, Jurusan Sastra Indonesia beramai-ramai mengambil mata kuliah Sosiolinguistik ke IKIP Sanatha Dharma, tempat Beliau dahulu sampai sekarang mengabdikan diri. Pada waktu itu memang ahli yang berkompeten mengampu mata kuliah sosiolinguistik sangat langka, termasuk UGM sendiri belum memiliki ahli sosiolinguistik. Sebagian besar dari peserta kuliah Beliau sekarang sudah menjadi orang penting di berbagai isntansi maupun perguruan tinggi di Indonesia. Bila Beliau tamat dari Cornell University tahun 1970, berarti kiprah Beliau di cabang ilmu yang ditekuni ini sudah berlangsung jauh-jauh waktu sebelumnya karena kakak-kakak kelas saya, yang beberapa di antaranya sudah guru besar, juga menulis tesis di bawah bimbingan Beliau.

Beliau adalah dosen yang berpikiran jernih, dan tenang, dan di balik ketenangan itulah tercermin kecerdasan yang tersembunyi yang tidak habis bila digali oleh para mahasiswa. Beliau juga merupakan dosen yang mau memahami tingkat kemampuan mahasiswa dengan segala keterbatasannya. Tidak pernah bersikap otoriter terhadap sebuah pendapat, meskipun pendapat itu betul-betul diyakini kebenarannya sehingga mahasiswa selalu diberi ruang dialog untuk mengungkapkan ide-idenya. Pengabdian dan pengorbanan Beliau terhadap Universitas Gadjah Mada terus berlangsung sampai Fakultas Sastra UGM memiliki program S2 Linguistik, bahkan setelah Beliau kembali dari bertugas di Brunei Barussalam pun, Beliau masih bersedia mengajar hingga sekarang usia Beliau sudah menginjak 80-tahun. Sekarang Beliau masih memiliki bimbingan S2 dan S3 yang tidak kurang dari 20 jumlahnya dari berbagai perguruan tinggi di Jawa Tengah dan Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta.

Sehubungan dengan jasa-jasa Beliau itu, sudah selayaknya Prodi S2 Linguistik UGM merayakan ulang tahun Beliau dengan menyelenggarakan seminar kecil mengenai "Penelitian Linguistik dari Berbagai Perspektif" ini. Yang tentu saja, seminar ini sangat kecil artinya dibandingkan dengan jasa-jasa

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PERUBAHAN BAHASA
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COPULA *BE* IN ENGLISH: AN ANALYSIS OF OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH TEXTS (A PRELIMINARY STUDY)

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Abstract

Change in language will be an inevitable fact. All living languages are in perpetual state of changes, including English. One sort of language changes is related to the grammar of the language. An example of components of grammar in English is predicative construction. The predicative construction consists of at least one verb; be it lexical verb or functional verb. Hence, verb is a prominent category in an English construction; when there is no lexical verb, there will be functional verb, copula *be*, occupying the predicate function. It is evident, then, that copula *be* is prominent in English grammar. Considering its importance, there are oodles number of research on copula *be*, especially the syntactic and semantic analyses. Rather, there have been merely a small number of them focusing on the diachronic aspect. Basically, studying copula *be* diachronically could provide examples of language change as the nature of a living language. Furthermore, it will be able to depict the characteristics of English language. Based on the previous explanation, thus, this paper aims at describing the historical development of copula *be* by analyzing Old and Middle English texts. Even though the texts are limited to particular dialect(s) of English, this study is expected to give clear and comprehensive examples of language change in English and the characteristics of English language over a period of time.

Key words: *copula be, historical development, language change, Old English, Middle English*

1.   INTRODUCTION

Describing language cannot be separated with the change of the language because it is the basic characteristics of any living languages in the world. A language, as long as it is still alive, will undergo change(s) in any aspects: sound, lexical, morphological, syntactic, and semantic aspect. Nothing is in the permanent state; even the conservative one—syntactic construction—is able to change though it takes longer period of time.

One of the central linguistic units in human conception is verb (Chafe, 1970). Verb in English construction is very prominent due to the nature of English language. English language is sensitive to time, thus it has tense to

indicate the action of the verb according to the time of speaking. Tense must occur in the construction in the form of inflection added to the verb (regular or irregular). As the canonic verb, lexical verb will automatically added by the tense inflection due to the appropriate tense to deliver the message. However, if the construction is not related to any action and more about the state of something, there is no action verb (or simply lexical verb) to tell about the action done. Because tense inflection must occur in the construction, the functional type of verb, then, emerges.

Copula as prominent linguistic unit in English sentence, thus, is intriguing to be the focus of studies. A huge number of previous studies have discussed copula from various aspects; be they syntactic or semantic analyses. Nevertheless, there are merely a small number of profound studies on copula considering the diachronic aspect. It might be triggered by lack of knowledge on old manuscripts possessed by linguists or the fact that diachronic study is assumed to be difficult and exhausting. Historical linguists work by using textual evidence and encounter many obstacles. They cannot choose their informants based on geographical setting or social class, and those informants cannot be interrogated for further information. Besides, the scribes of the old manuscripts are long dead. Whereas studies on copula conducted by using diachronic approach could provide various and meaningful data and also comprehensive explanation on language change which is one of the most intriguing topics recently.

Due to language change, there is an assumption that there is historical development of copula from the earlier stage of English to today's English. The copula used in Old English can be different from that of today. Thus, this paper aims at describing the historical development of copula by taking evidences from textual evidences, especially old manuscripts. However, regarding many limitations, this study will focus on the historical development of copula from Old English to Middle English and the development will be compared to the Present-day English copula. Besides, this study as the preliminary one will "ignore" the dialectical influence on various versions of old manuscripts and the chronological order of the version being studied as source of data in this paper.

2. THE NATURE OF ENGLISH COPULA *BE*

As a linguistic unit, copula can be defined into its nature based on its morphosyntactic and syntactic aspect. Morphosyntactically, it is the component or element that is possible for the attachment of inflection. Baker (2004: 46) proposedthat the most obvious difference between verbs and other lexical categories is that in many languages only verbs can be inflected for tenses and related notions, such as aspect and mood. This is clearly true in English, which

has *play, plays, played,* and *playing*but not *cat, catting,catted* or *bigged, bigs, bigging*. This is supposedly why copula is needed in nonverbal predications in English to make the inflection possible if there is no lexical verb. According to Payne (2011:266), if there is no tense inflection—one of verb paradigms—in English construction there will be no clause. It is because inflection holds crucial part as it determines the category of the clause. It is the highest point in syntactic configuration; in other words sentence—borrowing the term from Generative Grammar—is *Inflectional Phrase*(IP).

Supporting the importance of copula but with different approach, Poedjosoedarmo (2008) stated that tense inflection (tense marker) is still needed in English to fulfill two functions; 1) to give the information of time, and 2) to differentiate the verb from the noun or adjective. The realization of tense inflection in English construction can be met by the presence of verb: lexical verb or copula.

Not only related to morphosyntactic aspect, copula can also be analyzed from the syntactic aspect. Syntactically, copula is a linker as stated by Dikken (2006) that copula appears to establish syntactic and semantic link between subject and predicate due to its asymmetrical and intersective relation. It can be observed that they cannot be joined directly and will result in ungrammatical construction as in the following example.

    (1)   *John happy.

Meanwhile, the inflection being attached directly to the non-verbal predicate makes the sentence ungrammatical because AP *happy* cannot be inflected.

        (1a) *John happys
        (1b) * John happies

However, the presence of copula—in this case is copula *is*—makes the sentence grammatical as in the following sentence.

        (1c) John *is* happy.

As it is seen above, by adding copula *is* to the sentence (1c), the sentence becomes grammatical. Therefore, copula is prominent in constructing an English sentence.

After considering copula based on its morphosyntactic and syntactic aspect, it is prominent to depict copula by observing its function in a predicative construction. Napoli (1989:33) states that copula is a grammatical word and therefore it is not directly involved in the formation of a predicate (predicate remains in the form of non-verbal predicates). It is also in line with the

statement of Pustet (2003:5) that the copula is a linguistic unit that appears with certain lexemes when they serve as the predicates. However, copula has no semantic content on the predicative construction.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COPULA *BE*

Studying language diachronically, apart from the drawbacks, is always important to remind people, laymen and linguists, of the fact that language will inevitably change. The changes can be portrayed by the development of particular linguistic unit over time. Hence, this paper will focus on the illustration of copula change in the history of English language. According to Campbell (1998:6) English is known to have three main stages of its historical development, namely Old English (OE), Middle English (ME), and Modern English (ME). Furthermore, Barber (Aarts and Macmahon, 2006:320) added one more stage: Present-day English (PDE), the most current stage of the English language. Each of the stage will have its own earlier and later stage.

Before going further to the discussion of historical development of copula *be*, it is important to bear several concepts in mind. Since copula *be*is categorized as verb, naturally it also possesses the characteristics of a verb. In early stages of English language, the verb is influenced by many verb paradigms and they are realized through inflections called inflectional category-systems; the inflectional category systems comprise agreement (number, person, gender) mood, tense, and voice (Hough and Corbett, 2007:73).

OE and ME are morphologically richer than ModE and PDE so that reading OE and ME texts without any additional skill will result in confusion. ModE and PDE are the stages of which the inflection use is declining, remaining small number of inflections on tense and agreement on third person singular (verb), number (noun). See the example below.

(2) Ich*eom* mare ÞonneÞesmiddangeard
    'I am more than this middle world'
    (The Exeter Book)

Copula *eom*signifies its subject *Ich* as first person (person), singular (number). Furthermore, that copula also indicates present state (tense) with indicative mood (mood). Besides copula *eom*, determiner *Þes* also agrees with the noun *middangeard* considering the gender and number of the entity as Old English also considers noun paradigm. To limit the discussion, it will not be explained further in this occasion.

Copula *be* is derived from two OE verbs *wesan* and *beon*, although the latter form in standard English is the infinitive 'to be' itself (Hough and Corbett, 2007:81). It is likely that in OE *wesan* and *beon* had slightly different meanings;

the former is referring to the present state while the latter is used to express timeless facts (Hough and Corbett, 2007:82). Basically, copula already emerged in Proto-Indo-European language. According to *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, the proto forms of copula *beare* *es, *bheu, and *wes.

Regarding the characteristic of OE and ME, the illustration of the development of copula *be*—as a verb—cannot be separated the inflectional category-systems. In this paper, the tense will be considered as present and preterite because future tense does not have its own morphological realization on verb; future tense needs the emergence of auxiliary verbs in its realization. Nevertheless, there will be no explanation on what mood is and the like because it is assumed that the readers of this paper already understand the concept, inspite of the fact that this paper focuses on the historical development, not the theoretical explanation of OE and ME characteristics.

The following parts will discuss the development of copula be in two stages of English: OE and ME. Furthermore, there will be comprehensive depiction of the development by comparing the development of copula in OE, ME, and PDE, skipping ModE stage, in order to know the retention and innovation forms of copula *be*.

a. Copula in Old English

OE is the earliest stage of English language development. It is a language that is "closely related dialects of the Germanic inhabitants of Britain from the first conquest in the middle of the fifth century till the close of the eleventh" (Quirk and Wrenn, 1955:1). The term English itself derives from the term *Angli*, a minority Germanic people of North Western Europe (Payne, 2011:25). It is, therefore, very similar to Old German, especially the West-Germanic brought by (Anglo-)Saxon tribes.

Due to the fact that language changes, it is rather—not to mention difficult—to read OE which is almost totally a new language for English speakers. To be able to read it, one needs special skill and must be quite long time in this tradition. One of the evidences is the copula used in OE are different from the ones English speakers know today, even though if it is carefully observed it can be found out that the OE copula is the embryo of modern copula.

Quirk and Wrenn (1955:54—55) has listed the copula in OE period as in the following table.

Mood	Number	Person	Pronoun	Present		Preterite
Indicative	sing	1	ic	eom	beo	wæs
		2	Þu	eart	bist	wære
		3	he, heo, hit	is	bið	wæs
	plural	1—3	we, ge, hi	sind(on)	beoð	wæron
subjunctive	sing	1—3	ic, Þu, he	sy	beo	wære
	plural	1—3	we, ge, hi	syu	beon	wæren
imperative	sing	2		wes	beo	
	plural	2		wesað	beoð	

The table exhibits several copulas depending on the number, person, gender (limited) of the argument, the tenses, and mood listed by Quirk. There is an interesting fact as it can be observed from copula *wæron*. According to Atherton (2010:47), *-on* in *waeron* is word-ending or inflection to signify the plural past tense (which is different from singular past tense form in OE). Thus, it is originally from *wære* and *-on*.

To get profound understanding on OE copula, here are the following examples of copula *be* found in OE texts.

(3) Stonas*sind*gesceafta
Stones are   created things
'stones are created'
(Ælfric's Chatolic Homilies: the First Series)

(4) toÞamylcancampdomeÞeheorafæderas on *wæron*
to the same military service which their   fathers in were
'to the same military sevice which their fathers were in'
(Ælfric's Lives of the Saints)

Copula *sind* and *waeron* in sentence (3) and (4) respectively are the example of copula in OE; copula *sind* in the example above has *stonas* (plural) as its subject or argument and copula *wæron* has *heorafæderas* as its subject. Both are plural subjects so that the copulas agree with the plurality of the subjects. Other instances of copulas can be seen in the following sentences.

(2) Ic*eom* mare ÞonneÞesmiddangeard
'I am more than this middle word'
(The Exeter Book)

(5) gif hio ne *bið*hrædliceawegadrifen
if she not is quickly away driven

'if it is not quickly driven away'
(King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care)

(6) Eala, hwy*is*ðisgold adeorcad?
'oh, why is this gold tarnished?'
(King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care)

Copula *eom*, *bið*, and *is* are the examples of copula of singular subject. Copula *eom* agrees with subject *Ic*, copula *bið* is the copula of NP subject *hio*. Meanwhile, sentence (6) is an interrogative sentence and copula *is* has *ðis gold* as the subject.

Even though there are some copulas that are formulated as part of OE stage as listed by Quirk and Wrenn, there are some copulas that cannot be found in the list but they can be found in some texts belong to OE period. Here are the examples.

(7) Se   Hælend*wearð*Þagelomliceæetiwed his leornung-cnihtum
the   Lord   was   then frequently shown   his disciples
'The Lord then frequently appeared to his disciples'
(Ælfric's Chatolic Homilies: the First Series)

(8) Þætse *waere*leoda   cyningse ÞeærwæsfolceÞeow
that he was of-people king who before was to-people in-bondage
'that he would be king who had been in bondage to the people'
(The Old English Orosius)

(9) Se feorðatima*ys*genemnedhiemps on Lyden and winter on Englisc.
(The Exeter Book)

Copula *wearð*, *waere*, and *ys* cannot be found in the list made by Quirk. It is possible that copula *waere* and *ys* are mere variants of other existing copulas *wære* and *is* because the authors or scribes of old manuscripts are coming from various backgrounds. Besides, these spelling differences might be triggered by the carelessness of the scribes; or other intentional or unintentional factors that need further space to discuss.

b.   Copula in Middle English

The later stage after OE is ME which is getting closer to PDE. This language was spoken in England between *c.*1100 and *c.*1500 (Horobin and Smith, 2002:1). It is no wonder, then, if the language is more familiar to English speakers. Apart from it, there are still some differences of ME, including in its linguistic unit: copula. The following table is copula *be* listed by Brunner (2002:84—85) covering several copulas that commonly found in ME texts as the mere evidences.

Mood	Number	Person	Pronoun	Present		Preterite
Indicative	singular	1	ic	am	beo, be	was, wes
		2	Þu	art	bist, best, beest, bust, best	were
		3	he, heo, hit	is, es	biÞ, beÞ, beoÞ	wæs
	plural	1—3	we, ge, hi	sind(n) sunde(n)	beoÞ, beÞ,	were,were(n), ware(n)
subjunctive	singular	1—3	ic, Þu, he	sie	beo	were,ware, wore
	plural	1—3	we, ge, hi	seon	beon, be(n)	were(n), ware,wore
imperative	singular	2			be, beo	
	plural	2			beoÞ, beÞ, be(n), bees	

The above list of copula in ME already gives comprehensive illustration on the ME copula. The same as in OE, copula in ME cannot be described without considering mood, number, person, gender (limited), and tense. Furthermore, the following examples provide more comprehensive depiction of the form and use of ME copula.

(10) Adam *ben* king and euequuen of alleðeðinge [ø] in werlde*ben*
Adam are king and Eve queen of all the things   in world are
'Adam and Eve are king and queen of all the things that are in the world'
(The Story of Genesis and Exodus)

(11) ÞatIhc*am* to Criste vend
'That I am to Christ gone'
(Early Middle English Verse and Prose, Bennett and Smithers, 1968)

(12) She *is* my quene, Ich hire chalenge
'she is my queen, I here claim'
(Early Middle English Verse and Prose, Bennett and Smithers, 1968)

Copula *ben, am,* and *is* in sentence (10—12) respectively agree with the subjects *Adam, Ihc,* and *she.* NP subject *Adam* and *she* are basically in the same nature, but the copulas used are different. It might be caused by the different mood or tense of the construction as listed in the table above. Meanwhile, NP subject *Ihc* is written differently from the common first person singular subject *Ich.* As an old manuscript might bring many spelling variations or mistakes or even the style of the author or scribe, therefore, this "abnormal" spelling can be understood as long as it is seen from the whole context (for example from the copula).

The following sentences (13) and (14) are other examples of copula in ME, *was* and *beon.*

(13) He *was*ÞegladuruorÞe rise
'She was the gladder for the branch'
(Early Middle English Verse and Prose, Bennett and Smithers, 1968)

(14) Ac ðaem   maeg*beon*suiðehraðegeholpen from his lareowe
But him-DAT can be very quickly helped by his teacher
'But he can be helped very quickly by his teacher'
(King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care)

Despite several copulas that listed, it can be found several copulas that are unlisted as well. The examples can be observed as following.

(15) ForrIcc*amm*sennd off heffnessærd
'For I am sent from heaven's land'
(Early Middle English Verse and Prose, Bennett and Smithers, 1968)

(16) Þise*byeÞ*gauIereskuade and uoule
these are   usurers evil and foul
'these are foul and evil usurers'
(Dan Michel's Ayenbite of Inwit)

(17) I is as ille a millere as *ar* ye
(The Reeve's Tale, Geoffrey Chaucer)

Copula *amm, byeÞ,* and *ar*in sentence (15—17) had not been listed by Brunner, but can be found in ME texts. However, it can be observed that *amm*is similar phonologically to *eom* in OE and *am* in ME. Thus, it is assumed that this copula is only a spelling variation of the existing ones. Simply, it will be included as unlisted ME copula to be studied in further and deeper research.

c.   The Comparison of the Development
The previous parts separately describe the development of copula *be.* To get a clear depiction on the change(s), it is prominent to compare the development of the stages. Below is the table of the copula in each period of English language.

Old English	Middle English	Present-day English
eom, eart, is, sind, sy, syu, wes, wesað	am, art, es, is sind(n), sunde(n), sie, seon	am, are, is
beo, bist, bið, beoð, beon	be, beo, beest, best, bist, bust, beoÞ, beÞ, biÞ, beon, be(n), bees	be, been
wæs, wære, wæron, wæren	was, wes, were, were(n), ware(n), wore	was, were

Based on the table, it is evident that there are several copulas that still exist among today's English language users, but with some phonological changes as in copula *eom, eart, wæs,* and *wære,* while copula *is* remains the same through several periods of development.It is also clearly seen that copulas in ME are almost similar to those of PDE. It is probably due to the relatively nearer distance between ME and PDE, including ModE before PDE stage. Other copulas such as *am, was, were*are the same forms of PDE's copulas. However, there are some copulas that are no longer used either such as *wesað, beoð,* and etc. The reducing number of copula in PDE causes by some uncovered reasons. One thing to discuss here is related to the richness of verbal morphology in OE and ME. It is clear that, when observing OE and ME, those two have more complex inflectional categories than PDE. PDE still has agreement on number and subject, but it loses its mood category. Nowadays, when speaking English, its speaker doesn't have to concern many aspects to decide the inflectional systems of the verb. Hence, the choice of copula becomes simpler and fewer. PDE no longer needs more than one copula to refer to the same person and number, different from OE and ME which have to concern on other verb paradigms. This reason does not suffice but yet scientific to explain the possibility on why PDE no longer has many copulas as in OE or ME.

4. A BRIEF LOOK AT SYNTACTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH COPULA

a. Function and Category

Discussing a linguistic unit will be incomplete if there is no analysis of its function because language consists of layers of unit and each unit is related to each other based on its function in the construction. Copula *be* which is basically a verb occupies the position of predicate of sentence and crucially determine the following unit of which cannot be an object.

(3) Stonas*sind*gesceafta
(13) She *is* my quene, Ich hire chalenge
(1) John *is* happy.

The words and phrase such as *gesceafta, my quene,* and *happy* are not the objects of the sentence. Following the terms used to describe function of sentence elements, all of them are called as complements. To prove it, a complement cannot be the subject of the passive construction. Sentence (3), (13), and (1) above have no equivalent passive form and, thus, the complements cannot be the subject of the passive constructions.

Concerning the category label of copula, it is rather problematic in diachronic analysis. There is an assumption that the change of linguistic unit is started from lexical category and becoming more economic on semantic feature(s) into functional category (Lohndal in van Gelderen, 2009:216). Nevertheless, there is no exact labeling of the category of copula can be achieved in this study. Considering that diachronic studies need profound analysis, thus, it will be too careless to categorize copula in OE and ME as functional category, although it is possible.

b. Characteristics of Old and Middle English Copula

One of the main constituent of a clause (sentence) is the verb, the finite one. Finite verb is a form that can occur on its own in a main or root clause and permits tense and mood (Crystal, 2008:189—190). As basically a verb, copula *be*possesses the same properties of other lexical verbs: the verb paradigms.

Since the characteristics of the languages are different from PDE, the characteristic of OE can be portrayed differently either. In OE, there is SOV word order as the canonic word order, with SVO order as its noncanonic one. This is triggered by the fact that all finite verbs—with its rich inflections—may undergo inversion as well (Fischer et al, 2004:49). According to Poedjosoedarmo (2008), the movement can be carried out due to the compactness of the verb. Compact verb will be easily moved because its rich verbal morphology supports it to happen. Therefore, main clause is usually an SVO clause; the verb is being inverted into head-initial position. This is called as *Verb-Second constraint.* Verb-Second refers to the characteristics in which the finite verb of a main clause follows the initial constituent, regardless of the position of the non-finite verb if there is any (Fischer et al, 2004:105). Germanic languages are verb-second languages, including OE as the daughter language of Proto-Germanic as can be observed below.

(18) We *habbað*Þabysne on halgumbocum
'We have the examples in holy books'
(Ælfric'sChatolic Homilies: the First Series)
(19) Ne sceal he nahtunaliefdesdon
Not shall he nothing unlawful do
'He shall not do anything unlawful'
(King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care)

The finite verb *habbað*(*habban*) occupies the second position after the subject in (18). The same thing happens in sentence (19); the finite verb *sceal* (the auxiliary that embodies inflection) occupies the second position though the first constituent is a negation marker, while the non-finite verb *don*is in the final position of the clause.

Verb-second constraint of finite verb, including copula *be*, can be observed from its syntactic characteristic within various types of clause.

(20) Se Hæland*wearð*Þagelomliceætiwed his leornung-cnihtum

(6) ...., hwy*is*ðis gold adeorcad?

(21) Ne *bið*na se leorningcnihtfurðorÞonne his lareow

Sentence (20) shows that the copula *wearð* following the NP subject *Se Hæland*; it occupies the second position in the construction as commonly found in canonic constructions. The same thing can be seen in various types of constructions such as interrogative and negative construction. In interrogative sentence (6), the copula *is*occupies the second position after the question word *hwy*. An interesting fact can be found in sentence (21) in which copula *bið*following the initial constituent which is a negative marker *ne*. Thus, though the first element of a sentence is a subject or other elements such as negative marker or question word, the verb has to follow it.

However, if the copula is in an embedded or subordinate clause, it does not have to occupy the second position and is relatively free as can be observed in sentence (22) below.

(22) to ÞamylcancampdomeÞeheorafæderas on wæron

to the same military service which their fathers in were

'to the same military service which their fathers were in'

Copula *wæron* is positioned in the final position because it is the copula of an embedded or subordinate clause. There is only one finite verb needed and if the requirement has been fulfilled, another verb will be infinite and will have no constraint.

Although Verb-Second is one of OE characteristics, In ME, verb-second constraint was gradually lost due to the loss of inflection, especially in the late period of ME. In OE, the inflection also covers case, the word-ending that marks the function of the unit, despite its position. However, this sort of inflection is declining in ME, so that position of a linguistic unit becomes more important to determine the grammatical relation.

Verb-Second constraint can be found until now in German construction as in the following example.

(23) Gestern*hat*erihngesehen.

Yesterday hashehim seen

'Yesterday he has seen him'

The finite verb *hat*in Modern German is still in the position after the initial element *gestern*which serves as adverb. This syntactic characteristic no longer exists in PDE. There is historical reason to explain this phenomenon: language

contact. English language is exposed to external influences from many other languages because the speakers made contact with speakers of other languages. There are influences from Celtic, Latin, Skandinavian, and Norman (Baugh and Cable, 2002) because of the invasion to British Isles. The complicated inflection began to decline since it will make the users difficult to communicate with non-native speakers (2011:29). The grammatical relation of the clause started to be indicated by order. Meanwhile, German language is more conservative because it did not experience language contact the same as English did. It is clear why PDE is unlike any other Germanic (or even Indo-European) languages.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous explanation, it is obvious that copula is the characteristic of Indo-European languages. There are several copulas and the use of them must be based on the properties of the subject (number, person, and gender) and external agreement with the construction (mood, tense). Different mood will result in different choice of copula *be*. Therefore, there are more copulas in OE and ME than that in PDE. Besides, it also has discrete characteristic because of the Verb-Second constraint which obliges the finite verb (copula) following the initial constituent. Due to many limitations, this paper is far from perfect and needed to be improved and developed by conducting further in-depth study involving wide coverage of old manuscripts.

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