THE EXTINCTION OF INFLECTION IN OLD ENGLISH

Fomenko Larisa Nikolayevna

candidate of philological science
Academy of Marketing and Social Informational Technology (IMSIT)
Krasnodar

Abstract. This article shows the process of extinction of inflections in the flexion Old English, which accelerated due to related languages of the invaders and the Anglo-Saxon, contributed to the confusion of these languages. As a result, such grammatical consequences in the field of morphology.

Key words: prepositions, system of declensions and conjugations, inflections, morphology.
Although Old English was not so strongly inflected languages like Sanskrit, Greek or Latin, it had a complex system of declensions and conjugations. Because nouns persisted case endings, many relationships can be expressed without any prepositions, in contrast to the modern English. For example, a simple dative could be used in Old English to refer to the comparison (in modern English: *better than me*), joint actions (com. *with a troop of friends*) the instrument of action (com. *he slew the dragon with a sword*), as well as a simple recipient of action (com. *the book you gave (to) me*).

In the nominal declension there were at least 25 plural forms with the mutation of which have survived only seven: *feet, geese, teeth, men, women, mice*. It has been common so-called «weak declination» (basis of the plural by -n), like the modern English words the *brothers, children* and *oxen*. Even more widespread is the weak plural received in the southern dialect of Middle English, which were quite common forms of type *treen* instead of 'trees' and even *housen* instead of 'home'. If the basis of standard English has become the dialect, not east-central (i.e London), the forms in the -en could be today, regular plurals.

However, in reality the most common forms of Old English strong declension masculine in -s such as *stan – stanas* 'stone – a stone' (see present-day English stone – ... Stones) were prevailed. While the noun inclined on the «weak» or «strong» pattern depending on the type of the primordial base adjective would appear in both forms – strong and weak – depending on their function and position in the sentence (as in modern German language); weak form, very frequently used even by Chaucer, after 15 in., with a few exceptions, have not been preserved. Since that time, the adjectives have lost all their inflections, except demonstrative pronouns *this for these* and *that, those*, as well as the endings -er, -est indicating the average and the highest degree of comparison, as, for example, is *greater in the greatest* [1, p. 145]. In addition, the inflections have only nouns, pronouns and verbs. In this regard, i.e
on the way from a synthetic to an analytical system, the English language has
gone further than any other Indo-European language.

From this it follows that there is no one in which it would be equally diffi-
cult to identify on the external form arbitrarily chosen his words syntactic func-
tion among related English. For example, a word *like* can now be used as an
adjective (*as like as two peas* 'similar as two drops of water [lit. .: as two
peas]'), a verb (*I like this* «I like it»), adverb (*as like as not* 'is not excluded [lit.
.: as likely as not]') and the preposition (*to swim like a duck* 'swim like a
duck'), a noun (*We shall not see his like again* «a man like him, we can't see
any longer») [2, p. 85]. It should, however, remember that the predecessors
of this general form in Old English were different words, namely adjectives,
verbs, adverbs, prepositions and nouns.

The Golden Age of Northumbrian culture ended prematurely as a result
of the invasion of the Vikings, who in 793 sacked the island of Lindisfarne,
and in 870 destroyed the last monastic schools in the north of the country.
The Vikings were Norwegians or Danes, being so both in origin and language
are related to England, yutam, Saxons and Frisians, before he moved to Brit-
ain. Soon the Vikings conquered the whole of England to the north and east
of Watling Street – ancient, dating back to Roman road that ran from London
to Roksetera; but the central part of their possessions – Danelaw – lying be-
tween the rivers Tisza and Welland, covering the territory of the Kingdom of
York and five cities-borough – Derby, Nottingham, Lincoln, Leicester and
Stamford. The first Viking invaders were among the Danes, but later they
were joined by the Norwegians from Ireland, from the Isle of Man and the
Hebrides, who settled in Cumberland and Westmoreland, in the west of York-
shire and Lancashire and Cheshire [3, p. 204].

Scandinavian origin can be traced in many tokens of modern English
language is undoubtedly the effect of Norwegian and Danish dialects and to
simplify the structure of the formative language. Scandinavian origins have
prepositions *till* and *until* and pronominal adjectives *both* and *same*. The
same applies to the pronouns for *they*, *their* (possessive case), *them* (indirect. case), which gradually replaced its equivalents of Ancient English *heora* and *him*.

In the flexion Old English accelerated the process of extinction of inflections, which spread from the north to the south, is explained by the proximity to the dictionary against the invaders and the Anglo-Saxon language, which could contribute to the confusion of language with its usual consequences in the field of morphology.

**Список использованных источников**