# Progressive Constructions in English and Germanic Languages : A Diachronic Analysis(1)Old English Expanded Form beon/wesan -ende

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# Progressive Constructions in English and Germanic Languages:

## A Diachronic Analysis (1)
### Old English Expanded Form *beon/wesan -ende*

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## 1. Introduction: Development of the English Progressive Form

It is said that English is prominent among Germanic languages in the point that it has a fully grammaticalized Progressive Form 'be -ing.' We can find the following statement (Bertinetto et al. 2000: 517):

> When looking at the progressive aspect in the languages of Europe, one is inclined to take English as a starting point because English seems to be the preeminent language illustrating a fully grammaticalized progressive.

Additionally, Ebert writes as follows (Ebert 2000: 605):

> Progressive markers have never been treated systematically in any grammar of a Germanic language other than English. . . The reason for the neglect may lie in the fact that the progressive is nowhere grammaticalized to the same extent as in English. This is reflected on the one hand in the optionality of the markers, on the other in a variety of alternative forms.

How has the Present Day English Progressive Form come to be grammaticalized, though it is considered that a Simple Form verb expresses both simple and progressive present/preterite in Old English?

In general, it is accepted that both the Old English Expanded Form *beon -ende* and the Old/Middle English Locative Construction 'be on -ing' contributed to grammaticalization of the Present Day English Progressive Form 'be -ing' (See Fig. 1).

Moreover, English has several similar constructions to the progressive markers in other Germanic languages, which are much less grammaticalized than the English Progressive Form: Bodily Posture Verb Constructions, Hold Constructions, and Busy Constructions. I think it possible that the auxiliary 'be' has several competing alternatives such as 'sit,' 'stand,' 'lie,' 'hold,' 'keep,' 'stay,' and so on and the main verb present participle '-ing' has other rival grammatical forms like infinitive, gerund, and so forth. I assume the grammaticalization process to start from the Locative Construction 'be on -ing' based on the 'localist theory of aspect,' making a comparison with the grammaticalization of the Colognese German *am*-progressive.

In any event, the English Progressive Form is grammaticalized as 'be -ing' in Present Day English around the eighteenth century. But this is not the end: after the grammaticalization of the English Progressive Form, the present participle in '-ing' strengthens its verbal character so as to increase the use of 'be -ing' in transitive contexts. Here, we find several related constructions: 'be -ing of + NP' Constructions, 'be a-ing' Constructions, Passival Progressive Constructions, and Passive Progressive Constructions, which are the standard expression of the Progressive Form with passive meaning in Present Day English.
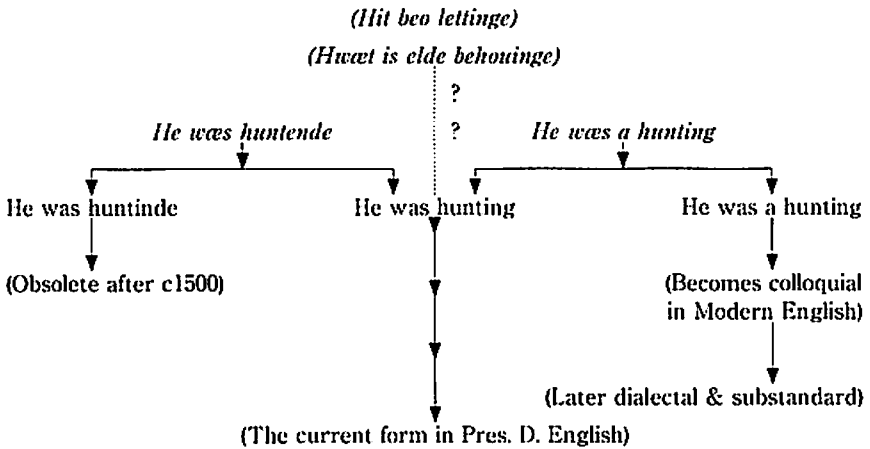
In Present Day English, the frequency of the Progressive Form increased exponentially in the twentieth century, and research concerning a definition of the English Progressive Form and what it expresses comes to have many significant results.

In a traditional grammar, the 'time frame theory of the progressive aspect' is one of these. Jespersen is the first person to advocate this and writes as follows (Jespersen 1961: 180):

[t]he essential thing is that the action or state denoted by the expanded tense is thought of as a temporal frame encompassing something else which as often as not is to be understood from the whole situation. The expanded tenses therefore call the attention more specially to time than the simple tenses, which speak of nothing but the action or state itself.

Leech also writes about a 'temporal frame' effect as follows (Leech 1987: 21-

Fig. 1. A Conjectural Development of the Present Day English Progressive Form

(Visser 1973: 1095)

*(Hit beo lettinge)*

*(Hwæt is elde behouinge)*

*He wæs huntende*          ?          *He wæs a hunting*

He was huntinde          He was hunting          He was a hunting

(Obsolete after c1500)          (Becomes colloquial in Modern English)

(Later dialectal & substandard)

(The current form in Pres. D. English)

22):

> The Progressive Aspect generally has the effect of surrounding a partic-
> ular event or moment by a 'temporal frame' ... The 'temporal frame' effect
> is not an independent feature of the Progressive form's meaning; it fol-
> lows, rather, from the notion of 'limited duration.' Whenever a point of
> time or an event is in a contemporaneous relation with a happening of
> duration, it is natural that the durational happening should overlap the
> durationless event or point in both directions—in short, that a 'temporal
> frame' should be set up.

In a cognitive grammar, Langacker also mentions to a kind of 'temporal
frame' effect of the English Progressive Form, i.e. that 'the function of *be*' is
'to retemporalize the participial predication' and gives figures as follows
(Langacker 1987: 84):

> The progressive construction is semantically quite regular, given inde-
> pendently established values of *be* and *-ing*. The semantic effect of adding
> *-ing* to a verb stem is to convert a process into an atemporal relation ...
> the participle so derived can serve as a noun modifier, but not as the

head of a finite clause. The function of *be* is to retemporalize the participial predication, deriving a higher-order verb (e.g. *be learning*) which is capable of occuring as clausal head. *Be* does so by imposing its own processual profile (including sequential scanning) on the composite expression.

Langacker points out the following properties of '-ing' (Langacker 1987: 84-85):

> From a perfective verb stem ... *-ing* derives an atemporal relation with the properties ... The process designated by the stem constitutes the base and scope of predication for the participle. Within this base, *-ing* imposes a restricted immediate scope of predication, comprising an arbitrary sequence of internal states ... the progressive takes an 'internal perspective' on the action described by the verb stem. . . In addition, *-ing* atemporalizes the base process by suspending sequential scanning.

Further, the property of 'be' is 'to re-institute sequential scanning' (Langacker 1987: 85):

> The semantic contribution of *be* is to re-institute sequential scanning of the profiled relationship, and thus to restore its processual character at a higher level of organization.

Then, the English Progressive Form is, as a whole unit, described as follows (Langacker 1987: 85):

> The composite expression *be V-ing* is therefore processual ... but the process it designates is not precisely the same as that profiled by the verb stem. With respect to the perfective process *V*, the composite expression *be V-ing* defines a higher-order process that is limited to some internal portion of *V*, and construes the profiled states at a level of schematicity which renders them effectively identical. This process is imperfective because the profiled relationship is portrayed as stable through time (within the limits implied by its base).

I think Langacker's view of the English Progressive Form—in which the function of 'be' is 'to retemporalize the participial predication' and 'the composite expression be V-ing' is 'processual ... through time (within the limits

Fig. 2 V-ING and BE V-ING (Langacker 1987: 84)
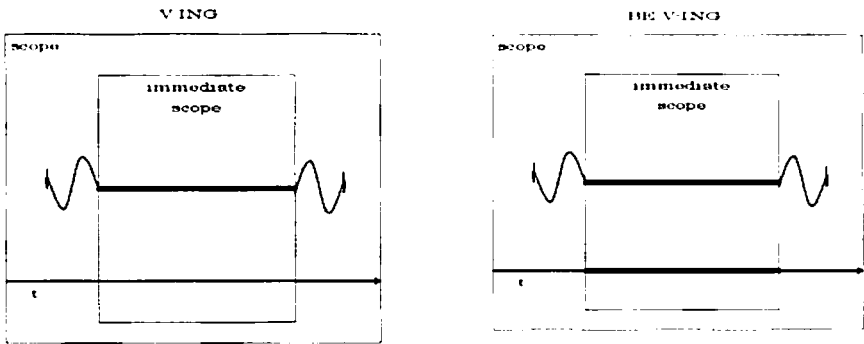


implied by its base) '—has a similar point to the 'time frame' of Jespersen and the 'temporal frame' of Leech, and explains these concepts more presicely.

Thus. in this thesis. I adopt the definition of the English Progressive Form which advocates a 'temporal frame.' especially by the auxiliary in the grammatical unit. and examine not only each construction itself but also the relation among several constructions connected with the grammaticalization of the English Progressive Form.

## 2. Old English Expanded Form *beon/wesan -ende*

### 2. 1. What Is Old English Expanded Form?

Old English Expanded Form is 'the pattern *beon/wesan* + present participle' and '[e]xamples with *weorþan* appear occasionally'(Mitchell 1985: § 681. 682). The following examples show six usages and there are 'no examples of either the (plu)perfect "has (had) been taking" or of the passive "is (was) being taken" or of combinations involving them' (Mitchell 1985: § 683. underlines and translations are mine):

A. Present indicative and subjunctive with present reference

(1) *and gecum to minum deowan Saulum, se is biddende minre miltsunge mid eornestum mode* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 386. 19)

'and come to my servant said. who is praying my mercy with earnest heart'

B. Present indicative and subjunctive with future reference

(2) *ac heo . . . bið gehealden to ðam ecan deaðe, þær þær heo æfre bið on pinungum wunigende* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 160. 15)

'but she . . . is held fast to the eternal death. where she is ever remaining in torment'

C. Past indicative and subjunctive with past reference

(3) *Efne ðaða se apostol þas lare sprecende wæs, ða bær sum wuduwe hira suna lic to bebyrgenne* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 66. 15)

'Even when the disciple was speaking this doctrine. then a certain widow of them brought the body of the son to be buried'

D. Past subjunctive referring to the future-in-the past

(4) *ac he demde þæt he sceolde beon ascyred fram manna neawiste, gif his hreofla wyrsigende wære* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 124. 25)

'but he thought that he should be removed from the neighbourhood of men. if his leprosy were getting worse'

E. Imperative

(5) *Beoð blowende and welige hwilwendlice, þat ge ecelice wædlion* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 64. 15)

'Be flourishing and abound temporarily. that you eternally be poor'

F. Modal verb + *beon/weorþan*

(6) *to ði þæt hi sceoldon beon byrnende and caue* [sic] *to Godes willan* (Ælfric *Homily* ii. 44. 30)

'so that they should be burning and care for God's will'

The Old English Expanded Form is said to express various meanings: durative. imperfective. habitual/repetitive, and others such as a stylistic device/ variant of a Simple Form expression.

The origin is controversial. Mustanoja has a view attributing it to Latin as follows (Mustanoja 1960: 584-585):

Periphrastic tense forms consisting of *wesan/beon* and the present participle . . . are not infrequently found in OE prose. but only exceptionally

in poetry. As in other Germanic languages, this periphrasis seems to owe its existence to the influence of Latin. It occurs mainly as an imitation of the Latin types *docens erat* (*wæs lærende*) and *locutus est* (*sprecende wæs*). Rare in classical Latin, the type *docens erat* becomes common in the writings of the Church Fathers.

On the other hand. Mitchell translates Nickel's remark[1] originally written in German as follows (Mitchell 1985: § 695):

The influence of glosses and interlinear versions on the origin of the EF has hitherto been greatly exaggerated. Conversely, the possibility that certain tendencies inherent in the OE language are at work in the examples of this construction in the less literal translations, outside the glosses, has been underestimated or in some cases even totally ignored.

In this way, some say it is indigenous to Old English, and others insist it derives from Latin.

Another controversy is whether we can consider it as a grammatical unit or not. This pattern seems to be an ancestor of the Present Day English Progressive Form 'be -ing' in appearance, but it is not certain whether the set of two constituents is a predicative adjunct or a structurally irrefragable unit. Visser says, '[t]he uncertainty is at its highest in Old and Middle English passages, because of our lack of knowledge with regard to the role which suprasegmental features played at the time' (Visser 1973: 1920).

In this way, the Old English Expanded Form has an appearance like a Present Day English Progressive Form, but it is not certain whether we can deal with it as it is.

### 2. 2. Old English Expanded Form as a Grammatical Unit

Modern English has two kinds of 'be -ing' constructions: one is a 'be + present participle' construction denoting progressivity, the Progressive Form, and another is 'be + adjective derived from a present participle verb -ing.'

(7) What are you doing?
    I'm writing a letter.          (Leech 1987: 23, underlines are mine)

186

(8) This book is interesting.

The sentence (7) is a Progressive Form, whereas (8) is not a progressive but a stative expression 'be' + adjective 'interesting,'[2] though this is a derivative of the verb 'interest.' What about the present participle of the Germanic languages including Old English?

## 2. 2. 1. Present Participle of the Germanic Languages

In general, the main function of a present participle is not 'verbal' but 'adjectival' in the Germanic languages, so the Old English present participle is not an exception.

First of all, a present participle in Modern German and Dutch is 'adjectival'[3] as a primary function and it does not necessarily have a 'verbal' function like that of English. The Modern Scandinavian languages are similar[1] in that the form of present participle 'is common to all Scand. Lang. and is always adjectival' (Haugen 1982: 163). Secondly, the present participle in Old High German and Middle High German is not always verbal, but mainly adjectival and sometimes nominal with the present participle ending in '-ont-', and '-and-'. It is similar to Old Norse, the ancestor of the Modern Scandinavian languages (Haugen 1982: 163). Gordon also writes '[t]he participle is here adjectival' (Gordon 1927: 313). Thus, the present participle in the Germanic languages is basically 'adjectival' both in old days and now, and does not have a verbal character like that of Present Day English.

Considering the Old English present participle based on the fact written above, it is notable that the Old English present participle retains the property of the Old Germanic languages more than Present Day English, i.e. it is mainly 'adjectival' similar to that of other Old Germanic languages. Mitchell says as follows (Mitchell 1985: § 681):

> Present participles in -ende, like adjectives, can be declined strong . . .
> or weak. . . A consideration of the functions of the present participle in
> OE inevitably involves adopting a system of classification. . . I stress the
> fact that 'the function of the [present] participle cannot always be ac-
> curately determined'. . . I distinguish the following uses: independent

('noun'). attributive ('adjective'). predicative, and appositional or apposi-
tive. . . The present participle is usually defined as a 'verbal adjective.' It
has more the function of an adjective when used attributively before a
noun . . . or independently without one.

Here, it is notable that Mitchell calls an Old English present participle a 'ver-
bal adjective.'

Thus, we had better consider the Old English present participle as an
adjectival one and it does not have a verbal character seen in that of Present
Day English.

### 2. 2. 2. 'be + Present Participle' Constructions in the Germanic Languages

Then, let's think about a possibility of '*be* + present participle' Construc-
tions in Germanic languages as a grammatical unit.

Firstly, in Modern Scandinavian languages such as Norwegian, Swedish,
and Danish, there is no possibility because the form present participle's 'oc-
currence as part of a VP is a mark of "learned," i.e. foreign-influenced style'
(Haugen 1982: 163). Modern Icelandic also does not use '*be* + present partici-
ple' to express a progressive meaning, but has another grammaticalized Pro-
gressive Form '*vera* (be) + *að* + infinitive,' which has been used since the
Old Norse days. So, there is no '*be* + present participle' construction in Old
Norse as the following sentence shows (Haugen 1982: 163, underlines are
mine):

(9) [Old Norse]

*Faðir minn var lifandi* 'My father was living,' i.e. 'alive'

(*Konungs skuggsjá* ch. 1)

This is not a construction '*vera* (be) + present participle -*andi*'; but the *li-
fand* 'alive,' is an adjectival use. Gordon also shows another example (Gordon
1927: 313):

(10) [Old Norse]

*þetta sverð er ekki beranda, nema* . . .

'this sword is not carryable, except by . . .'

This *breanda* means 'carryable' and works as an ajective.

188

Secondly, in Present Day German, as Hawkins says 'German does not have ... any present continuous verb forms with *sein* + present participle ... *'er ist ... sprechend'* (Hawkins 1978: 176). The Simple Form verb expresses the progressive meaning as follows (Miyoshi 1977: 94, underlines are mine):

(11) [German]

*Er sizt nun auf dem Sofa und liest ein Buch.*

'He is now sitting on the sofa and reading a book.'

(12) [German]

*Sie trinkt eben Kaffee.* 'She is just drinking coffee.'

The *'sein/werden* + present participle' construction is not a grammaticalized Progressive Form in German as follows (Chambers and Wilkie 1970: 141, translations are mine):

(13) [German]

*es ist auffallend.* 'it is distinguishing/standing for.'

(14) [German]

*sie ist anziehend.* 'She is dressing.'

But in German, it is a little more complicated than Scandinavian languages in the light of history. We can also see the German *'sein/werden* + present participle' in Old and Middle High German, though its aspectual function is not so certain through the history of German. Concerning Old High German *'sin/wēsan* + present participle *-ont-/-and-.'* Ellis writes '[a]uxiliary verb with present participle is used to translate the corresponding construction, and others, in Latin, and may be regarded as expressing an imperfective aspect (i.e. not marking the action as completed), including the continuous meaning of the corresponding English construction (Ellis 1966: 83).' The Old High German examples are as follows (Takahashi 1994: 154, underlines and English translations are mine):

(15) [Old High German]

*wizagota, thaʒ ther heilant sterbenti was* (*Tatian* 135, 30)

'he prophesied that the saviour was dying/dead'

(16) [Old High German]

*that thia muoder thes mendendia sind* (*Heliant* 5524C)

'that the mother is glad/pleased/delighted at that'

(17) [Old High German]

*ih want' ih scolti noti sin iamer mornenti* (*Otfrid* III. 20, 115)

'I thought I should always be mourning/mournful/sorrowful'

Because it is important for Old High German translators to make a rigid and literal translation from Latin, they translated the Latin '*esse* + present participle' form literally into the vernacular. Here is a possibility that they need 'be + present participle' for translation. In Middle High German, the Simple Form verb continues to be a primary way to express 'durative' meaning, and the '*sîn/werden* + present participle' construction might become a subsidiary one to add a special impression of dignity, or to make a verse for rhyming. I have the following example (Chambers and Wilkie 1970: 141, underlines and translation are mine):

(18) [Middle High German]

*mit klage ir helfende manec vrouwe was*

'many ladies were helpful (for) her to lament'

Though German may have a slight possibility of expressing progressivity by the '*sein* + present participle' construction in its older stages, it is mainly for a special purpose, i.e. a translation method or a rhyming, and it is not certain to be used as a grammatical unit to express 'progressivity.'

In this way, it is more natural that the 'be' + present participle construction is basically only a collocation of 'be' + adjectival present participle derived from the verb both in Old and Modern Germanic languages.


2. 2. 3. Possibility of Old English Expanded Form as One Syntagm

Basically, a Simple Form verb expresses both simple and progressive present/preterite in Old English, because it retains a characteristic of the Old Germanic languages. Mitchell gives the following examples (Mitchell 1964: 108-9, underlines and translations are mine):

(19) *Ðeos woruld nealæcð þam ende.*

'This world is drawing near to its end.'

190

(20) *soðlice þa ða men slepon, þa com his feonda sum.*

'truly, while men <u>were sleeping</u>, one of his enemies came'

(21) *Com þa to Heorote, ðær Hring-Dene geond þæt sæld <u>swæfun</u>.*

(*Beowulf* 1279)

'She came to Heorot, where the Ring-Danes <u>were sleeping</u> throughout the hall.'

(22) *Sona þæt onfunde . . . þæt þær gumena sum ælwihta eard ufan <u>cunnode</u>.* (*Beowulf* 1497)

'Immediately perceived that . . . a man of alien being <u>was exploring</u> there from the above dwelling.'

(23) *Se was mid ele gesmierwed . . . and <u>þær geongra manna plegan on handa</u>.*

(*Apollonius of Tyre* 12)

'Who was smeared with oil . . . <u>was carrying</u> young men's sports equipment in his hand.'

Nevertheless, the Old English '*be* + present participle' construction is said to have a possibility of being a syntagm and to express durativity to a certain extent. About this, there are two points to consider.

The first is the frequency seen in the following Nickel's remark (Nickel 1967: 261):

> Present-day English periphrastic locutions of the type *he is fighting* had a formal equivalent in OE. constructions of the type *he is feohtende*. The neutral term "expanded form" (EF.) will be used for this kind of locution. The term "simple form" (SF.) denotes locutions of the type *he fights*. EFF. occur sporadically in most, if not all Germanic dialects contemporary with OE. In OE, however, the frequency of occurrence is exceptionally high, being in some MSS. even higher than in modern English literature of similar content.

Nickel says, 'in the *Orosius* the frequency ratio E.F.: (E.F. + S.F.) is 3.36%, and in the translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.27%; but in Churchill's *A History of the English-Speaking People* it is only about 1.5%. In Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* it is less than 0.1%!' (Nickel

1967: 261). Contrary to the case of Old and Middle High German in which the usage is limited to be for a translation from Latin into a vernacular or for rhyming, this prominent frequency of the 'be + present participle' has a possibility to be recognized as one of grammatical expressions in Old English.

The second is a subtle difference of the Old English present participle from those of the other Germanic languages: it might have a potential to acquire a 'verbal' character in a later period, though it still has a strong 'adjectival' one. This subtle difference might lead to '*be* + present participle' being used as a syntagm—an Expanded Form *beon/wesan -ende* more frequently, though the development is considered as follows (Traugott 1992: 187):

> Like the PDE progressive be + ing construction, the OE BE + *ende* construction is largely restricted to activity verbs, i.e. verbs of doing rather than verbs of being . . . However, although some OE constructions can be translated by PDE be + ing, not all can, and the constructions are therefore clearly not exactly equivalent

If the Old English Expanded Form is not an ancestor of the Present Day English Progressive Form, what is the syntagm *beon/wesan -ende* grammatically? In the next section, I give a 'Syntactic Blend' theory by G. Nickel.

### 2. 2. 4. Nickel's Syntactic Blend Theory

Nickel gives three possibilities as a function of *-ende*; (a) predicative adjective, (b) appositive participle, and (c) agentive predicate nominal. In this section, I examine the function of *-ende* in these three points.

### 2. 2. 4. 1. BE + Predicative Adjective

In this case, *-ende* is recognized as a predicative adjective at first, but gradually, it is added to a part of a verb paradigm, because there is a shift in recognition of *wæron blissiende* from two independent words 'BE + predicative adjective' to one unit 'BE + present participle.' At first, *hie wæron blissiende* is a similar construction *hie wæron bliþe* 'they were happy,' but later, it is

192

re-analyzed as one unit.

(24) *hie wæron blissiende* 'they were rejoicing' → *hie wæron blissiende* 'be'+predicative adjective *wæron+blissiende*) → a syntagm (*wæron blissiende*)

The adjectival character of *-ende* in the Old English Expanded Form is pointed out by Sweet as follows (Sweet 1931: 96):

> The periphrastic forms corresponding to the Modern English *is writing, was writing* are in frequent use in Old-English, but are only vaguely differentiated from the simple forms. They were no doubt originally formed on the analogy of the combination of the verb 'be' with adjectives, so that such a paraphrase as *hie wæron blissiende* 'they were rejoicing' was felt to be intermediate between *hie blissodon* 'they rejoiced' and *hie wæron bliþe* 'they were glad.'

Nickel accepts Sweet's idea and suggests *swiþe* 'very' as a marker of a predicative adjective and regards the relation among 'blissiende' in Sweet's example, *hie wæron blissiende* 'they were rejoicing.' 'blissodon' in *hie blissodon* 'they rejoiced,' and 'bliþe' in *hie wæron bliþe* 'they were glad' as an 'adjectivalisation' (Nickel 1967: 269-270). Then, Nickel goes on to say how *-ende* is integrated into the verbal system as follows (Nickel 1967: 270, translations are mine, similar to others):

> The next step was the integration of these structures into the verbal system, where they are opposed to simple forms such as *blissaþ*. Cf.: *þær hie fuhton* (they fought there), *þær hie feohtende wæron* (they were fighting there). This integration entailed a restructuring of the verbal constituents. Thus *fuhton* as well as *feohtende wæron* now have to be analysed as *feoht* + Aux, where Aux → Past in the first example and *ende + beo* + Past in the second.

Thus, *-ende* is originally a predicative adjective, but it is felt as intermediate between an adjectival function and a verbal one. Then it comes to be thought of as a part of the verb paradigm and linked to *beon/wesan*.

### 2. 2. 4. 2. Appositive Participles

In this case, the *lærende* both in *he wæs on temple lærende his discipulas*

and in *þa he on temple wæs lærende his discipulas* are present participles and have verbal functions. So originally, the verb *wæs* and the participle *lærende* are appositive. Because Old English has more freedom of word order than Present Day English. *wæs* and *lærende* appear to be one unit when they are given in the form *wæs lærende*, i.e. they are next to each other.

> (25) *he wæs on temple lærende his discipulas.*     'be' pres. part. verb
> 'he was in the temple, teaching his disciples'     (appositive participle)

> (26) *þa he on temple wæs(,) lærende his discipulas.*
> 'when he was in the temple(,) teaching his disciples.
>      ↓
> (27) *he wæs lærende his discipulas on temple.*     'be' + pres. part. verb
> 'he was teaching his disciples in the temple.     (predicative participle)

As Mitchell writes '*wæs lærende* need not be divided by a pause (*wæs, lærende*), but can be taken as a verbal periphrasis (*wæs lærende*)' (Mitchell 1985: § 699), this might happen more frequently in the sentence *þa he on temple wæs(,) lærende his discipulas.* Thus, it is reinterpreted as 'when he was teaching his disciples in the temple' and *wæs lærende* is not taken as two independent constituents *wæs* and *lærende* but is taken as a syntagm *wæs lærende,* which makes one verbal construction, the Expanded Form.

Then, Nickel explains the application of the Old English appositive constructions to translating Latin by saying '[i]t would indeed have been quite natural for the translators to render Latin appositive participle in EFF,' and goes on to write about the 'quasi-nominal' construction 'verbs of state or motion + present participle' as follows (Nickel 1967: 272):

> A similar supporting influence can also be ascribed to constructions of the type *he sæt lærende, he cwom ridende,* i.e. first participles with verbs of state or motion. Of course one cannot regard these structures as expanded forms, although the demonstrational power of verbs such as *sittan, cuman* can be so weak as to approach that of *beon.* In that

case *he wæs lærende, he wæs ridende* could be regarded as an analogical paradigmatic extension of a pattern NP + Verb + Participle.

Thus, the reinterpretation 'appositive participle → predicative participle' seems to be one of the causes of the Old English Expanded Form.

### 2. 2. 4. 3. BE + Agentive Predicate Nominal

Old English has many inflectional endings and the complexity sometimes causes confusion and analogy. In this case, '*beon* + the plural agent noun ending *-ende* + genitive adjunct' is mistaken for '*beon* + present participle *-ende* + genitive object,' and, moreover, the latter is reinterpreted as '*beon* + present participle,' i.e. the Expanded Form. So, *hie wæron ehtende cristenra monna* 'they were persecutors of Christian men' is taken as 'they were persecuting Christian men.'

(28) *he wæs ehtend cristenra manna* 'he <u>was</u> <u>a persecutor</u> of Christians'
   ↓
(29) *he wæs ehtende cristenra manna* 'he <u>was persecuting</u> Christians'

Nickel writes about this process as follows (Nickel 1967: 272):

Sentences such as *hie wæron ehtende cristenra monna* are ambiguous since the form *ehtende* could be either a participle or an agent noun, and the verb *ehtan* may govern the genitive case. It may well be that this ambiguity reflects a historical transition be + Agent noun + NP (genitive) → be + Participle + NP (genitive → accusative).

Additionally, Visser also writes about this process as follows (Visser 1973: 357):

It is perhaps possible to account for this remarkable phenomenon by assuming analogical influence of the combination nominal agents in *-end* . . . + attributive adjunct. Since these words in *-end* were real nouns, the adjunct was necessarily in the genitive. . . there was an important difference between *he wæs ehtend cristenra manna* and *he wæs ehtende cristenra manna*, the first sentence meaning 'he was a persecutor of Christians,'

the second 'he was persecuting Christians.' But, since the total meaning of the sentences is practically equivalent, and perhaps also, because with a plural subject the ending *-end* of the nomina agentis appeared as *-ende* and was consequently not formally distinguished from the *-ende* of the present participle, . . . confusion may have set in.

Thus, from these three points, Nickel assumes the origin of the Old English Expanded Form as follows (Nickel 1967: 263):

On the level of manifested constituent features, expanded forms are often difficult to distinguish from structurally similar constructions. It may well be that these ambiguous instances have genetic implications; in other words they may have had a part in the formation of the EF. I would assume that the EF. owes its existence to the joint influence of several structurally similar constructions, that the EF. is in fact the result of a syntactic blending of these constructions.

I give Figure 3 based on Nickel's syntactic blend theory. All three constructions include *-ende* which more or less has a meaning 'in the middle of/in the process of,' though the function in each construction is different. I suppose this common character, a meaning 'in the middle of/in the process of' is a trigger to make a syntagm *beon/wesan -ende*. It might help 'reanalysis' of each construction to produce a new syntactic unit, the Old English Expanded Form *beon -ende*. But it must be noted that the *-ende* is not 'progressive,' which is dynamic, but a meaning 'in the middle of/in the process of,' which is stative, here, because it is less stable as a part of a verb paradigm and many Old English speakers might consider *-ende* as an intermediate between adjective, verb, and noun.

### 2. 2. 4. 4. A Syntactic Blend

Crystal gives a sentence *It's his job is the problem*, 'a combination of the SENTENCES *It's his job* and *His job is the problem*' as an example of 'syntactic blend' (Crystal 1991: 40). Bolinger says, '[s]uch syntactic blends are the gravitational result of a vast submerged bulk of constructions that do not appear physically in utterances but reveal their existence by the changes

they cause' (Bolinger 1961: 243).

In addition to these, Fauconnier and Turner write about 'the existence of a general cognitive process—conceptual blending—that operates over mental spaces as inputs,' as follows (Fauconnier and Turner 1996: 113):

> In blending, structure from two input spaces is projected to a separate space, the "blend." The blend inherits partial structure from the input spaces, and has emergent structure of its own.

And they add the comment, '[m]any phenomena give rise to blends: inventive actions, analogy, dramatic performance, counterfactuals, integrated meanings, grammatical constructions. All of these have partial projection, emergent structure, counterpart mappings, and so on' (Fauconnier and Turner 1996: 116).

Moreover, Barlow says about 'Evidence of Blending' as follows (Barlow 2000: 326):

> while it is difficult to see the result of blending processes in general, we should still be able to find some evidence of blending in syntax. One possible indicator of blending is the occurrence of idiosyncratic combinations of syntactic categories. . . if phrasal chunks are blended, we might expect to find some cases in which the parts don't follow the expected syntactic patterns . . . if phrasal chunks are blended, we might expect to find some cases in which the parts don't follow the expected syntactic patterns . . . this odd combination of syntactic categories may indicate that this now fixed construction originated as a blend.

In the case of the Old English Expanded Form, Nickel explains why he considers syntactic innovation plays a significant role (Nickel 1967: 262-263):

> It is a truism that there is no spontaneous generation in language. This is particularly true for syntactic innovations. A number of conditions must be met in order that a syntactic innovation may come about:
> (a) The formal constituents of the innovation must previously have existed in the language.
> (b) There must have been a motivation for the innovation.
> (c) It must have been supported or induced by constructions already

existent.

Based on these. Nickel gives his basic view about the Old English Expanded Form as follows (Nickel 1967: 263):

> The formal constituents of the EF., i.e. the copula "be" and the first participle. were inherited from Indo-European. The copula "be" occurs frequently in copulative constructions of the type "be"+Predicative. which played an important role in the process of development of the EF . . . The primary motivation for the development of the EF. may have been the tendency to re-establish the system of aspectual relations. which had broken down in primitive OE. This tendency may also have been favoured by the general trend in OE. to build up a so called analytic form system us-ing free instead of bound forms. a trend which had already led to the formation of periphrastic perfect forms such as *he is cumen. hie hæfdon hine gecorene.*

And he concludes 'the EF. in OE. does not owe its existence to any single one of the constructions discussed. i.e. predicative adjectives, appositive par-ticiples, the type *he sæl larende*, and agent nouns, but rather to a blending of all of them' (Nickel 1967: 263).
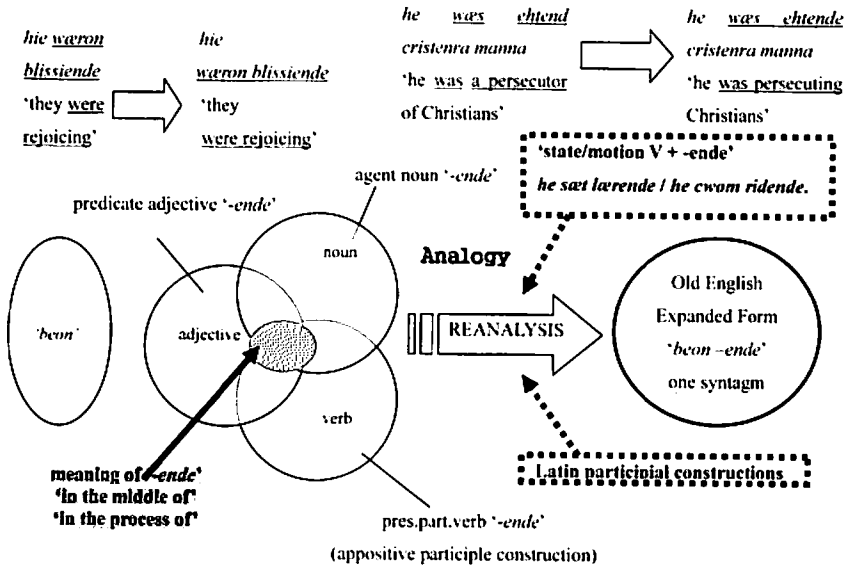
In this way, the Old English Expanded Form is viewed as a product of a syntactic blend of several constructions.

### 2. 2. 4. 5. A Shift from Stative to Dynamic Cognition

What is the motivation to produce the Old English Expanded Form? I suppose it is more plausible to think there happens to rise a tendency to give stronger focus on the dynamicity of event among Old English speaking people in the following three points concerning the function of *-ende.*

Firstly, about a change of *-ende* as a predicative adjective to a verbal present participle. there could be a change of focus on a dynamic activity of an event in a stative scene. As Nickel says, 'the copula "be" occurs frequent-ly in copulative constructions of the type "be" + Predicative' (Nickel 1967: 263). it is natural to think the starting point as 'be' + predicative adjective *-ende.* This is also compatible with the origin of the Old English present par-

198

Fig. 3. A Syntactic Blend—the Origin of the Old English Expanded Form (⇨ reanalysis)



ticiple in a form that in Germanic is basically adjectival. I think the scene expressed by the Expanded Form is like a photograph, which shows a shot of one continuing event and expresses one shot statively. While looking at the shot of the event, the viewer begins to imagine someone in it is on the way of doing something and the focus is shifted to the activity itself described by the present participle *-ende*. This shift from seeing a whole shot as a stative scene to focusing on the dynamic activity expressed by the present participle *-ende* can cause the viewer's cognition to change, and *-ende*, which is originally a predicative adjective, comes to be interpreted as a part of the verbal paradigm.

Secondly, in a change of *-ende* from an appositive participle to a verbal

present participle, there would also be a shift of focus from a stative exis-
tence to a dynamic activity performed by the existence. In the scene expressed
by the sentence *he wæs on temple lærende his discipulas* 'he was in the tem-
ple, teaching his disciples,' the viewer notices that 'he' exists at the first
glance. Though *wæs* and *lærende* are appositive in this sentence, there is
more focus on *wæs* 'be' to describe the person's existence than the present
participle of the verb *læran*. It can be said that in this situation, *wæs* is a
'Figure' and *lærende* is a 'Ground', and the former is a main verb and the lat-
ter is an appositive participle to the main verb. When we see this sentence
as a participial construction, *lærende his discipulas* is a subordinating phrase
with a participle, which means 'while he was teaching disciples.' Gradually,
while continuing to view the scene, the viewer's attention changes from the
person's existence to his on-going activity itself, and then a Figure-Ground
reversal happens; a Figure is his on-going activity, what he is doing, i.e.
*lærende*, and *wæs* to show the person's existence becomes a Ground. This
time, it is possible to construe that the sentence *he wæs on temple lærende
his discipulas* is not an appositive construction but a simple sentence which
has a single predicate *wæs lærende*, and then, *wæs* comes to be interpreted
as an auxiliary and *lærende* as a main verb.

Finally, more focus on the dynamic activity is seen in the shift of con-
strual of -*ende* from as an agentive predicate nominal to a verbal present
participle. In this case, the viewer's attention moves from an interest in 'what
the person is' in the shot expressed by the Expanded Form to 'what the per-
son does.' When we see a person for the first time, we pay attention to what
the person is, and then, our interest moves from what the person's role/posi-
tion is to such matters as how the person does the job, or how the person
plays the role. There is also a shift of cognition from the person himself as
an object expressed by the agentive nominal *ehtend* to the dynamic activity,
what he does expressed by the 'be' + 'verbal present participle', *wæs eht-
ende*, 'was persecuting.'

Then, what makes the blending in Nickel's theory? What enables three
kinds of -*ende* form, a predicate adjective, an appositive present participle,

200

Table 1. Possibility of a Syntagm Composed of 'be + present participle' in Germanic Languages

| Old English | Middle English | Modern English |
|---|---|---|
| ○△ *beon -ende* | (*be on/a -ung/-ing*) | ◎ *be -ing* |
| 〈Expanded Form〉 | | 〈Progressive Form〉 |
| Old High German | Middle High German | Modern German |
| △ *sîn/wësan -ont-/-and-* | △ *sîn/werden -ont-/-and-* | * *sein -end* |
| 〈translating method〉 | 〈translating method〉 | |
| Latin → OHG | 〈rhyming method〉 | |
| | Middle Dutch | Modern Dutch |
| | △ *sijn/wesen/bliven -de* | * *zijn -and(e)* |
| Old Norse | | Modern Icelandic |
| *vera -andi* | | * *vera -andi* |
| | | Modern Danish |
| | | * *være -ende* |
| | | Modern Swedish |
| | | * *vara -ende/-ande* |

and an agent noun, to integrate? There is a common connotation among these three kinds of *-ende*, i.e. a basic meaning of durativity 'in the middle/process of.' In a newly-produced syntagm *beon/wesan -ende, -ende* might be used as 'something which expresses a certain durativity,' because its grammatical status is not so certain in Old English.

As a summary of this section, I give Table 1.

### 2.3. What Old English Expanded Form Expresses

Even though Old English Expanded Form *beon/wesan -ende* is not a grammaticalized Progressive Form but an instable syntactic blend, it might be used, in Traugott's words, 'to indicate that an action is ongoing, or to provide the frame of reference for some other activity' (Traugott 1992: 187). Because the present participle itself possesses 'durative' meaning, Old English Expanded Form has a possibility to express durativity. It relates to the

following points: a basic 'durative' meaning, an imperfective meaning, and another possibility of usage. In this section, I think about a semantic role of Old English Expanded Form.

### 2. 3. 1. Basic Meaning—Durativity 'in the Middle/Process of'

As a present participle, the Old English present participle *-ende* has a basic meaning of a durativity, 'in the middle of V' or 'in the process of V.'

First of all, there are the following examples (Mitchell and Robinson 1982: 110, letters in square brackets, underlines, and translations are mine, similar to others):

(30) [durative] *ond hie þa . . . feohtende wæron.*

'and then they were fighting (=in the middle of fight, in the process of fight)'

(31) [durative] *ða ða se apostol þas lare sprecende wæs.*

'while the apostle was uttering (=in the middle of utter, in the process of utter) this doctorine'

Concerning the sentence (30) (31), as Mitchell and Robinson write 'it comes close to the modern use' (Mitchell and Robinson 1982: 110), they seem to have a meaning of progressivity in the eyes of Present Day English. These are typical examples of the Old English Expanded Form as a would-be ancestor of the Present Day English Progressive Form.

But it is not certain whether *wæron* in (30) and *wæs* in (31) set a time frame similar to the Present Day English Progressive Form. In the Figure 2 BE V-ING, Langacker shows how BE V-ING works in a scope. We find a bold line part in the t (time) which functions to set a time frame to put V-ING into the t. However, *wæron* in (30) and *wæs* in (31) has a possibility of the line in Figure 2 V-ING, i.e. a continuing time from past through present into future. Leech also describes '[t]he UNRESTRICTIVE use of the Simple Present is found with verbs expressing states. . . it places no limitation on the extension of the state into past and future time' (Leech 1987: 5).

Secondly, this durativity sometimes extends the meaning to a habitual

202

state of ongoing action or a recurring state in the middle of/in the process of V.

In this way, if neither *wæron* in (30) nor *wæs* in (31) set time frame, they are not Progressive Forms, but only sets of 'be + adjective derived from a present participle verb.' The following examples show the habitual connotation and every -*ende* is seen as an adjectival one (original OE sentences are Mitchell 1985: § 687, underlines and translations are mine):

(32) [durative ⇒ habitual] *and he Malchus ealle þa word gehyrde and æfre <u>wæs</u> his uneaðnys <u>wexende</u>.* (*Life of Saints* 34.620)

'and he Malchus heard all the words and his trouble <u>was</u> always <u>increasing</u> (=<u>in the middle of increase, in the process of increase</u>)'

(33) [durative ⇒ habitual] *and he hi gehælde and <u>wæs</u> <u>lærende</u> þæt folc dæghwomlice binnan ðam temple.* (Ælfric *Homily* i. 406.26)

'and he kept them and <u>was</u> <u>teaching</u> (=<u>in the middle of teach, in the process of teach</u>) the people daily in the temple'

There are *æfre* 'always' in (32) and *dæghwomlice* 'daily, every day' in (33). These adverbs give the context a 'habitual,' i.e. 'everyday habit' meaning.

Moreover, a meaning of 'recurring state of ongoing action' is seen in the following examples 'without an adverbial element into which it is possible to read the idea of habitual and recurrent action' (Mitchell 1985: § 688):

(34) [durative ⇒ recurring] *Þæs on Eastron worhte Ælfred cyning lytle werede geweorc æt Æþelinga eigge,& of þam geweorce <u>was</u> <u>winnende</u> wiþ þone here.* (*Chronicle* A 76.2 (878))

'After that at Easter King Ælfred with a small troop made a fortification at Æthelney, and from that fortification <u>was</u> <u>fighting</u> (= [repeatedly] <u>in the middle of fight, </u> [repeatedly] <u>in the process of fight</u>) against the enemy army.'

(35) [durative ⇒ recurring] *Ge beoð mine frynd, gif ge <u>wyrcende</u> <u>beoð</u> ða ðincg ðe ic bebeode eow to gehealdenne.* (Ælfric *Homily* ii.316.19)

'You are my friends, if you <u>are</u> <u>working</u> (= [repeatedly] <u>in the middle of work, </u> [repeatedly] <u>in the process of work</u>) the things which I bade you to maintain.'

Fig. 4. 'be + predicate' Combined 'BE₁' and 'ING-V" (Langacker 1991: 206, 209)
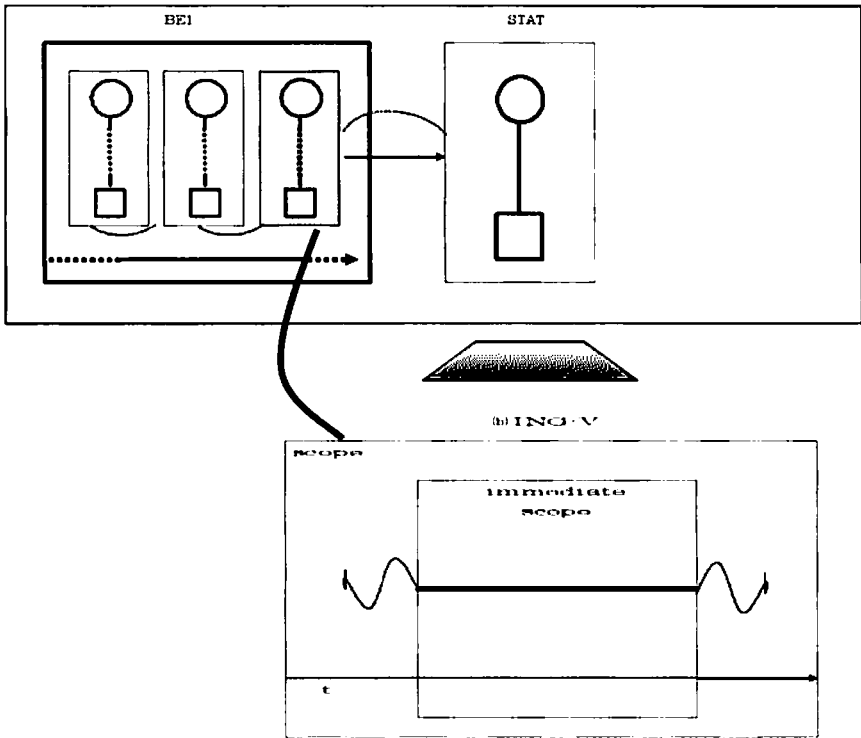


We can see that 'Ælfred had a state in the middle of fight again and again' from context in the sentence (34), while *gehealdenne* 'maintain' shows everyday repetition in (35). In both examples, some action is repeated, i.e. there happen the same actions several times.

In Present Day English, the Progressive Form can express a 'REPETI-TION OF EVENT OF LIMITED DURATION' in Leech's words as follows (Leech 1987: 32, sentence number is mine, similar to others):

(36) Whenever I visit him he *is mowing* his lawn.

Here the notion of limited duration is applied not to the habit as a whole,

but to the individual events of which the habit is composed.

However, a 'habitual' use is basically a role of the Simple Present as follows

204

(Leech 1987: 9):

> The habitual present represents a series of individual events which as a whole make up a state stretching back into the past and forward into the future.
>
> (37) She walks to work.

Concerning this, Mitchell says, 'OE periphrases sometimes express limited or perpetual duration . . . duration can also be expressed by simple verb form, either alone or with an adverb,' and explains about the habitual / repetitive meaning of the Expanded Form as follows (Mitchell 1985: § 687):

> these distinctions are not grammatical; they depend on context and/or adverbs or adverb expressions.

Here, it is also not sure whether the Old English Expanded Form has a possibility to be an expression of progressivity like the Present Day English Progressive Form, because it is basically a stative expression 'be + adjective derived from a present participle verb.'

### 2. 3. 2. More Adjectival Meaning—Imperfectivity 'In the State of'

In the Old English Expanded Form, there is another difference from the Present Day English Progressive Form. The pattern 'beon/wesan -ende' is applied to verbs which are not used in the Progressive Form (Mitchell 1985: § 683, 687, underlines and translations are mine):

> (2') *ac heo . . . biô gehealden to ôam ecan deaôe, þær þær heo æfre biô on pinungum wunigende*　　　　　　　(Ælfric *Homily* i. 160. 15)
> 'but she . . . is held fast to the eternal death, where she is ever remaining (=in the state of remain) in torment'
>
> (38) [durative/habitual] *and hi siôôan buta ôrittig geara wæron wunigende butan hæmede*　　　　　　　(Ælfric, *Life of Saints* 20.125)
> 'and they after about thirty years were dwelling (=in the state of dwell) without cohabitation'

In these, we see *wunigende* a present participle of a verb *wunian* 'live, dwell, stay,' though it is not an action verb but a stative verb.

Table 2. Classification of the Verbs Which Take the Old English Expanded Form

| Old English verb | classification | | MnE meaning |
|---|---|---|---|
| *wunian* | verbs of state | | live, inhabit, dwell, exist |
| *faran* | " | movement | set forth, go, travel |
| *cwepan* | " | speaking | say, speak, name, call, declare |
| *feohtan* | " | physical action | fight, combat, strive |
| *libban* | " | state | live, experience, be, exist |
| *growan* | " | change of state | grow, increase |
| *sorgian* | " | mood | sorrow, care, grieve, be sorry for |

Declerck says about the Present Day English Progressive Form as fol-lows (Declerck 1991: 167-169):

[t]he progressive can normally only be used in sentences that express a dynamic situation, i.e. an action, event or process. . . [v]erbs that are used statively are not normally used in the progressive.

In the explanation of the 'conditions for the use of the progressive,' he distin-guishes three classes of stative verbs: a.verbs of inert perception, b.verbs of inert cognition, and c.relational verbs or verbs of state (Declerck 1991: 167-169).

About this, Mitchell points out the verbs in an Old English Expanded Form 'tend to belong to certain semantic groups' (Mitchell 1985: § 691). Ta-ble 2 is made based on Mitchell's explanation. It is interesting that the Old English Expanded Form has a tendency to take verbs which are not used in the Present Day English Progressive Form, i.e. verbs of rest, verbs of change of state, and verbs of mood. The Expanded Form exists for verbs, *wunian* and *libban* which can be one of the 'verbs of state' and additionally 'live' which has only a restrictive usage in the Present Day English Progres-sive Form as follows (Leech 1987: 20):

(39) I live in Wimbledon (permanent residence).

(40) I *am living* in Wimbledon (temporary residence).

Here, the meaning of the Progressive Form with 'live' is restricted, because it belongs to a stative verb. Nevertheless, it is not certain whether the mean-

206

ing of *wunigende* in (2) and (38) is restricted or not, so these sentences have a strong possibility not to be a Progressive Form, but a stative expression 'be + adjective derived from a present participle verb.'

Then, what are these sentences (2) and (38)? I think the Old English Expanded Form has an 'imperfective' meaning to show an 'incompletion' of a state. In (2), *bið wunigende* means 'be in the state of remain,' and *wæron wunigende* expresses 'be in the state of dwell' in (38). If they are so, 'be' is considered as a Simple Form verb and *-ende* is an adjective. I see an adjectival character of the present participle *-ende* here, and there is less possibility to have a verbal function.

### 2.3.3. Another Possibility

Nickel suggests an interesting point, an intransitivity of what is expressed by the Old English Expanded Form, saying 'they tend to be intransitive' (Mitchell 1985: § 691). Lehmann also says 'the semantic locus of the progressive aspect is in intransitive verbs. Progressivity and intransitivity have a natural affinity' (Lehmann 1991: 514). To think about a possibility of the Old English Expanded Form whether to be an expression of progressivity or not, I think about this point.

About 'Transitivity' i.e. an exact reverse to 'Intransivity,' Hopper and Thompson write a relation between transitivity and aspect as follows (Hopper and Thompson 1980: 251-252):

> [a]n action viewed from its endpoint, i.e. a telic action, is more effectively transferred to a patient than one not provided with such an endpoint. In the telic sentence *I ate it up*, the activity is viewed as completed, and the transferral is carried out in its entirety; but in the atelic *I am eating it*, the transferral is only partially carried out.

This shows a background of the natural affinity of progressivity and intransitivity.

Table 3 is made of the Old English Expanded Form examples in this thesis. Here, I give 'T (TRANSITIVE)' to a predicate with an 'Object' (basically the case is 'accusative,' sometimes 'dative' in a verb used with dative

object) and 'I (INTRANSITIVE)' to that without an 'Object.' Here, 'IN-TRANSITIVE' is easier to find than 'TRANSITIVE.' This tendency seems basically to be compatible with Nickel's view and Lehmann's one. but we can also see this kind of 'INTRANSITIVE' example as a contingent unit 'be' + predicative adjectival *-ende* and the things which is expressed has a possibility to be 'imperfective.'

Moreover. there is still another problem to regard these examples as progressive expressions like the Present Day English Progressive Form. As written in the previous section. there are verbs which are difficult to be applied to the Progressive Form now. I give 'A' to 'ACTIVITY VERBS' and 'P' to 'PROCESS VERBS' as 'two classes of verb typically accompanying the Progressive form' (Leech 1987: 23-24) contrary to 'S' to 'STATIVE VERBS' in Table 3. There are both 'ACTIVITY/PROCESS VERBS' and 'STATIVE VERBS' and I cannot determine which has more tendency to make an Old English Expanded Form. If the number of examples of 'ACTIVITY/PRO-CESS VERBS' were prominently more than those of 'STATIVE VERBS,' the pattern *beon/wesan -ende* would be a grammatical unit and the Old English Expanded Form might be an ancestor of the Progressive Form. but the circumstance is not like that as expected.

What is supposed concerning this result? First of all, thinking about Object after *-ende*, most examples have an 'accusative' object but a 'dative' object follows to a verb used with another case such as 'dative' in a transitive context. and there is no Object in a intransitive context. I think it reflects a usage of every verb in *-ende* form. Secondly, a kind of verb has no relation to applying to *-ende*, because *beon/wesan -ende* is not considered as a grammatically fixed unit but as a customary used one. Old English speaking people applied this unit to a predicate instead of a Simple Form with a special purpose—to give a descriptive force.

In this way. it is difficult to find a definite tendency in these two points —about the former sometimes transitive and others intransitive. and about the latter we can see both kinds of verbs are applied to the Old English Expanded Form.

208

Table 3. Kind of Verb and Transitivity of the Expanded Form Examples

| No. | Expanded Form *beon/wesan -ende* | kind of Verb | Object | case | T/I |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *is biddende* 'is praying' | ACTION | *minre miltsunge* 'my mercy' | dative | T |
| 2 | *bið wunigende* 'is remaining' | STATE | ... | ... | I |
| 3 | *wæs sprecende* 'was speaking' | A | *þas lare* 'this doctorine' | accusative | T |
| 4 | *wære wyrsigende* 'were getting' | S | ... | ... | I |
| 5 | *beod blowende* 'be flourishing' | S | ... | ... | I |
| 6 | *beon byrnende* 'be burning' | S | ... | ... | I |
| 30 | *wæron feohtende* 'were fighting' | A | ... | ... | I |
| 31 | *wæs sprecende* 'was uttering' | A | *þas lare* 'this doctorine' | accusative | T |
| 32 | *wæs wexende* 'was increasing' | PROCESS | ... | ... | I |
| 33 | *wæs lærende* 'was teaching' | A | *þæt folc* 'the people' | accusative | T |
| 34 | *was winnende* 'was fighting' | A | ... | ... | I |
| 35 | *beod wyrcende* 'are working' | A | *ða ðincg* 'the things' | accusative | T |
| 38 | *wæron wunigende* 'were dwelling' | S | ... | ... | I |
| 41 | *bið weaxende* 'is waxing' | P | ... | ... | I |
| | *bið wanigende* 'is waning' | P | ... | ... | I |
| 42 | *wæron sprengende* 'were scattering' | A | *fyrene spearcan* 'fiery spark' | accusative | T |
| 43 | *sy myltsiende* 'be pitying' | S | *mynre sawle* 'my soul' | dative | T |
| | *(sy) forgifende* '(be) forgiving' | S | *mine synna and mine giltas* 'my sins and my guilts' | accusative | T |
| | *(sy) adiligende* '(be) destroying' | A | | accusative | T |
| 44 | *is irnende* 'is running' | S | ... | ... | I |

Concerning a 'descriptive force' of the Old English Expanded Form, Mustanoja writes 'the periphrasis, it seems, being preferred to the simple verb form because it has a greater descriptive force, i.e. it makes the narrative more graphic . . . or simply because it is more emphatic' and gives examples (Mustanoja 1960: 584, letters in square brackets, underlines, and translations are mine):

(41) [descriptive force] *se mona deþ ægþer, ge wycxþ ge wanaþ: healfum monþe he biþ weaxende, healfum he biþ wanigende* (Ælfric *Homily* I 154)

'The moon does both waxe and wane: half of a month it is waxing, and half of a month it is waning'

(42) [descriptive force] *his eagan wæron fyrene spearcan sprengende* (Ælfric *Homily* I 466)

'His eyes were scattering fiery spark'

(43) [descriptive force] *þu hælend Crist, sy myltsiende mynre sawle and forgifende and adiligende mine synna and mine giltas*

(*Manuscript Corpus Christi College*, Cambridge 201, fol. 116)

'You, Savior Christ, be pitying my soul and forgiving and destroying my sins and my guilts'

The *beon/wesan -ende* in the first and second examples are used to make 'the narrative more graphic,' and that in the last example makes the prayer 'emphatic.'

Mitchell also points out that 'a periphrasis and a simple verb appear in parallel clauses or sentences, in some of which at any rate a modern translator could not possibly use the periphrasis . . . the two forms were sometimes at any rate mere stylistic variants' and gives the following example (Mitchell 1985: § 686, underlines and translation are mine):

(44) [stylistic variant]

*Europe hio ongind, swa ic ær cwæþ, of Danai þære ie, seo is irnende of norþdæle, of Riffeng þæm beorgum, þa sindon neh þæm garsecge þe mon hated Sarmondisc; seo ea Danai irnð þonan suðryhte on westhealfe Alexandres herga* (*Orosius* 8.14)

210

'Europe begins, so I said before, from the river Danai, which is running from the north part, from the mountains of Riffeng, which are near the ocean which is called Sarmondisc; the river Danai runs from there exactly south to the west side of Alexander's temple'

Here, we can find two grammatical forms of *'iernan'*: the Expanded Form *'is irnende'* and the Simple Form *'irnð.'* Because both of them refer to the similar state, the Expanded Form is supposed to be a 'stylistic variant' of the Simple Form.

In short, there is not a definite answer to what is expressed by the Old English Expanded Form, but I think there is a possibility for Old English users to have a cognition to see it as a customary used unit and apply it to a predicate in order to give a descriptive force.

## 3. Conclusion

What is the Old English Expanded Form for? I would like to make sure the following three points:

1. There is a possibility to regard *beon/wesan -ende* as a unit.
2. Basically, they are considered as a customary unit *'be* + present participle,' not a grammaticalized Progressive Form.
3. It is applied to a predicate in order to produce a 'descriptive force' such as vividness, an emphatic effect, and an emotional color.

As Nickel points out, the Old English Expanded Form has more frequency than 'be + present participle' in other Germanic languages. This shows a value of the Old English Expanded Form as a customary unit based on a 'conventionality' of a language. Cruse describes it as follows (Cruise 2011: 11-12):

Many of the signs used by humans in communication are natural in the sense that they are part of genetically inherited biological make-up and do not have to be learned, although a maturational period may be necessary before they appear in an individual, and they may be moulded in various ways to fit particular cultural styles... signs have conventionally

assigned meanings; they have to be specifically learned, and are likely to differ in different communities. Linguistic signs are the prototypical conventional signs.

In the case of the Old English Expanded Form, people use the pattern frequently and the conventionality of language produced a consensus that the pattern is a customary unit to have a special value.

Here, I think the value is a usage as a stylistic variant instead of a Simple Form verb, because the Old English Expanded Form has a descriptive force. The pattern *beon/wesan -ende* is not used as a grammaticalized Progressive Form, but as a device to give a kind of vividness or emotional color to an applied expression.

In this way, the appearance seems to be an expression of progressivity, but the Old English Expanded Form remains as a customary collocation of 'be' + adjectival present participle derived from a verb and it is semantically difficult to see it as an ancestor of the Present Day English Progressive Form.

### Note

1  Nickel, G. (1966) *Die Expanded Form im Altenglischen: Vorkommen, Funktion und Herkunft der Umschreibung beon/wesan und Partizip praesens*: 274ff.

2  In *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymology of the word 'interesting, *ppl., a.*'is 'IN-TEREST *v.* + -ING²'. '-ing²' is a 'suffix of the present participle. and of *adjs.* thence derived, or so formed; an alternation of the original OE. . . The process of sound change from *-ende* to *-ing*, this change is said to be 'the confusion . . . in its origin, entirely phonetic.' is described as follows:

> Already, in later OE., the *ppl. -ende* was often weakened to *-inde*, and this became the regular Southern form of the ending in Early ME. From the end of the 12th c. there was a growing tendency to confuse *-inde*, phonetically or scribally, with *-inge*; this confusion is specially noticeable in MSS. written by Anglo-Norman scribes in the 13th c. The final result was the predominance of the form *-inge*, and its general substitution for *-inde* in the 14th c., although in some works, as the Kentish Ayenbite of 1340, the *pple.* still regularly has *-inde*. In Midland English *-ende* is frequent in Gower, and occasional in Midland writers for some time later; but the southern *-inge, -ynge, -ing*, favoured by Chaucer, Hoccleve, and Lydgate, soon spread over the Midland area, and became the Standard

212

English form. The Northern dialect, on the other hand, in England and Scotland, retained the earlier in the form *-ande*, *-and*, strongly contrasted with the verbal n. in *-yng*, *-ing* (*-yne*, *-ene*). At the present day the two are completely distinct in Northumberland and the Southern Counties of Scotland, although the general mutescence of final d, and the change of (*-IN*) to (*-In*), make the difference in most cases only a vowel one[.]

3    Wilson writes in 'THE VERB AS AN ADJECTIVE, The Present Participle' of Modern German as follows (Wilson 1968: 81-83):

The German Participle, *das Partizip* (or *Partizipium*) *Präsens*, is made by adding *-end* to the verbal stem: *lobend*, praising: *singend*, singing: but *seiend*, being: *tuend*, doing. Its use as a pure adjective is common in German: *der fliegende Holländer*, the flying Dutchman: *eine überraschende Behauptung*, a surprising assertion: *das laufende Jahr*, the current (running) year: *eine reizende Frau*, a charming woman. Of course verbs in *-er* and *-el* make the Present Participle in *-nd*: *klerternd*; *vereitelnd*.

The present participle in Modern Dutch is explained as follows (Koolhoven 1952: 133):

The ... present participle ... is formed by adding d or de to the infinitive, *betalend(e)*, 'paying,' lopend(e), 'walking,' and ... the participial construction to replace a dependent clause, though grammatically correct, is best avoided in natural speech ... However, the present participle is quite common before a noun, in which case it is declined like any other adjective.

*Betalende gasten* 'Paying guests'     *Een hollend paar* 'A runaway horse'
*Een schreiend kind* 'A weeping child'
                                        *De stromende regen* 'The pouring rain'
*De Lachende Edelman van Frans Hals*     'Frans Hals' Laughing Cavalier'

4    The Norwegian present participle is described as follows (Marm and Sommerfelt 1967:136):

The Norwegian Present Participle in *-ende* can be used:
(1) As an adjective: *en dansende pike* 'a dancing girl.'
(2) As an adverb:
*Han snakket engelsk helt glimrende.* 'He spoke English quite excellently.'
*Han har en påfallende pen kone.*     'He has a strikingly pretty wife.'
(3) After the verbs *bli* (=*for'bli*=remain, stay), *komme*, *finne*.

The Swedish present participle is described as follows (McClean 1954: 121):

The Present Participle ends in *-ande*, except in the Third Conjugation, where it ends in *-ende*. When used as an adjective it is indeclinable ... *En Väntande bil* 'A waiting car.' *Ett spännande ögonblick* 'An exciting moment.' *Den flyende soldaten* 'The fleeing soldier.' *Den fallande snön* 'The falling snow.'

About the Danish present participle, the following is said (Koefoed 1958: 187):

The present participle has the ending *-ende* added to the stem of the

verb: *lebende, sidende. . .* The main function of the present participle is adjectival: *Stigende temperatur. Hun sad grædende ved bordet. Det lyder tillokkende. På lignende måde.* in a similar way.

Similarly. the present participle of Modern Icelandic is described as follows (Einarsson 1967: 95):

> Present participles ending in *-andi* (*-ndi*) are indeclinable when used as adjectives (weak declension. third class): when used as nouns they go like *nemandi* (weak masculine. second class).

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214

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