

REVIEW

by **Yana Valentinova Chankova, PhD**

Associate Professor at South-West University “Neofit Rilski”

on a PhD dissertation,

submitted for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor of Philosophy

in higher education field 2. Humanities,

professional field 2.1. Philology,

doctoral program “Germanic Languages: English Language”

Author: Maria Ivanova Anastasova

Title: The Analytic Constructions with the Verbs Be and Have and a Past Participle in Old English and in Old Bulgarian

Research Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Antoaneta Stefanova Dzhelyova, PhD, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

1. General description of the submitted documents

By order № RD-21-1381/ 20.07.2022 of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the Academic Board to conduct the procedure for the defense of the PhD dissertation, entitled *The Analytic Constructions with the Verbs Be and Have and a Past Participle in Old English and in Old Bulgarian* for the award of the educational and scientific degree Doctor of Philosophy in higher education field 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology, doctoral program “Germanic Languages: English Language”. The author of the dissertation is Maria Ivanova Anastasova, a part-time PhD student at the Department of English Philology of the Faculty of Philology, supervised by Assoc. Prof. Antoaneta Stefanova Dzhelyova, PhD.

The list of paper documents, submitted by PhD student Maria Ivanova Anastasova complies with Art. 36(1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv and includes the following:

- an application to the Rector of PU to start the procedure for the defense of the PhD dissertation;

- a Curriculum Vitae in European format;

- the minutes from the Department meeting during which the readiness to start the procedure was reported and the preliminary discussion of the dissertation was held;

- PhD dissertation;

- PhD dissertation abstract;

- a list of scholarly publications on the topic of the dissertation;

- copies of the scholarly publications;

- a declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;

The doctoral student has submitted a PhD dissertation, PhD dissertation abstracts in Bulgarian and English and 3 publications, related to the topic of the dissertation.

2. A brief biographical note

To begin with, I will summarize in brief the professional qualifications and teaching practice expertise of PhD candidate Maria Anastasova. She was awarded a Bachelor's degree in English Philology (2013) by Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv and a Master's degree in English Philology with a specialization in Linguistics and Translation by the same university (2014). Maria Anastasova's professional development began in 2013, when she started work as an English teacher at the "Maximum" school, where she had previously acquired professional competences and improved her teaching skills as a trainee teacher. In the period 2014 - 2016, she worked as a part-time assistant professor in English at the Department of English Philology of the Faculty of Philology at Plovdiv University, and was then appointed to the position of assistant professor in English (2016 - 2021). From 2021 until now, Maria Anastasova has held the position of English language instructor at the English Philology Department of PU. During the period of her doctoral studies, PhD student Anastasova took part in the 25th BETA-IATEFL Annual International Conference, Plovdiv, Bulgaria (2016).

3. Relevance of the subject-matter, and the objectives and tasks, set in the dissertation

The publication of the edited volume *Categories of Being and Possessing in Language* (Yartseva, V.N. (ed.), Moscow: Nauka, 1977) which studies the common typological and the specific features in the development of languages from the Indo-European language family as well as of non-Indo-European languages in terms of the categories of being and possessing, while focussing on their linguistic realization, aroused increasing interest in the study of different types of constructions with the verbs be and/or have, while issues related to the development, the characteristic features and the functions of such constructions continue to sparkle debate among diachronic linguists even today. Hence, a topic aimed at a comparative analysis of *The Analytic Constructions with the Verbs Be and Have and a Past Participle in Old English and in Old Bulgarian* in terms of form and meaning can be considered worth-exploring and provoking scholarly interest. The main objective of the PhD thesis is defined by doctoral student Anastasova on p. 5: "to determine both the common and the specific characteristics of the analytic structures under scrutiny, as well as the grammatical categories

they represent.” In order to fulfill this objective, doctoral candidate Anastasova sets herself 6 research tasks (pp. 7-8), based on the main conceptual tenets of her chosen theoretical framework, presented above (pp. 5-7).

In my opinion, these tasks constitute the necessary algorithm for the implementation of the main objective mentioned above and have been accomplished successfully.

4. Awareness of the issue at hand

Doctoral candidate Anastasova demonstrates good knowledge of the controversial issues related to the origin and development of analytical constructions with the verbs be and have and a past participle in Old English and Old Bulgarian. In her dissertation, she ponders on important theoretical works, which she does not list and summarize, but rather incorporates into her observations, analyses and discussions, while their interpretation is tailored to the research area and shows an ability to add insightful contributions to the existent frameworks.

5. Research methodology

The present dissertation lies in the area of Historical Linguistics studies with a focus on the comparative synchronic analysis of the researched syntactic constructions, as well as on their morphological and semantic characteristics at the stage of Old English and Old Bulgarian. The chosen approach allows doctoral student Anastasova to analyze and systematize in detail the linguistic facts related to the lexical and grammatical uses of the verbs be and have in the Old English and the Old Bulgarian language, and to the formation and use of the past participles in the two unrelated languages, and on this basis to discuss the similarities and differences in the meanings and uses of the verbs be and have on the one hand, and the similarities in the meanings and functions of the past participle in Old English and its equivalents in Old Bulgarian. At the next stage of research, PhD student Anastasova consistently analyzes the constructions with be + past participle rendering perfect, pluperfect and passive meanings in Old English, the constructions with be + past passive participle / past active II participle in Old Bulgarian, the constructions with have + past participle in Old English and the constructions with have + past passive participle in Old Bulgarian, while the approach used in the interpretation of the mentioned constructions can be defined as holistic, whereby each newly-constructed entity reflects the specific features of its components but the value of the construction itself is not equal to, but rather exceeds the sum of its components.

In my view, the chosen methodology guarantees the implementation of the main objective set in the Introduction of the PhD thesis and the feasibility of the conclusions related to the research tasks, the subject-matter and the object of study.

6. Description and evaluation of the dissertation

The structure of this doctoral dissertation is traditional and meets the requirements for the genre, specifically, it comprises Introduction, 3 Content Chapters, Conclusion and Bibliography within a volume of 222 pages. The Bibliography includes a total of 198 publications by English, Russian, German, French, Bulgarian, etc. authors.

In the Introduction, PhD student Anastasova gives the motivation for her choice of topic, specifies the subject-matter and the object of research, names the textual sources in the two languages under investigation, defines the objective, tasks and research questions, briefly presents the main conceptual tenets that serve as a theoretical basis of her study and mentions the methods used in interpreting the data extracted from the excerpted linguistic material.

Chapter 1 presents the verbs be and have in Old English and Old Bulgarian with a focus on their lexical meanings and grammatical functions, while the chosen approach is traditional and descriptive, supported by illustrative material based on identical examples from the two Gospels excerpted, and if necessary on examples from other texts provided by specialists in the field. In the following comparative analysis, the author aims - based on parallel observations - to outline the similarities between the studied verbs from the viewpoint of their origin and lexical characteristics, as well as to trace the similarities in their uses in the studied languages with an emphasis on the relation between be and have.

Chapter 2 focuses on the description of the characteristics of the past participle in Old English and its equivalents in Old Bulgarian - the past active II participle and the past passive participle. Parallel examples are presented (when possible) to serve as a basis for the subsequent comparative analysis under which the similarities in the origin, the formation, the meanings and the uses of the past participles in the two languages are highlighted.

Along the lines of the chosen synergetic approach, in Chapter 3 the constructions with be + past participle and have + past participle in Old English and Old Bulgarian are studied with a twofold aim in view: to outline the similarities between the states of the analytical constructions with be and have and a past participle in Old English and in Old Bulgarian, as well as to describe their individual properties and to discuss the relation between the categories of perfect aspect and passive voice which these constructions primarily render. The author contributes to the survey of theoretical accounts regarding the constructions with be + past participle and have + past participle in Old English and Old Bulgarian by providing her own comments and interpretations based on the analysis of the empirical material.

The Conclusion summarizes the results and findings achieved by PhD student Anastasova based on the analysis of the excerpted material and the theoretical studies dealing with common typological and individual-specific features in the use of Old English and Old Bulgarian constructions with the verbs be and/or have and a past participle.

7. Contributions and significance of the dissertation from the theoretical and practical point of view

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the proposed dissertation are mainly aimed at:

validating new aspects of existing scientific theories and hypotheses by means of innovative tools - the Old English and Old Bulgarian constructions with verbs be and have and a past participle are discussed in view of their interactions with phenomena of different time of origin and scope belonging to the main contentive and formal language types,

whereby both the universal and unique for each of the studied languages phenomena and processes are accounted for in detail;

obtaining confirmatory facts - up-to-date proposals are presented in support of some known conceptual claims and assumptions concerning the typology of the perfect and its invariant meaning, as well as providing and proving new facts - the studied Old English and Old Bulgarian constructions are considered as holistic entities consisting of permanent and variable components, whereby new relations between the existing grammatical phenomena and their interpretations are attested.

The applied contributions of the dissertation are related to the possibility of using the achieved theoretical findings in teaching practices, e.g. in the explanation of various synthetic, analytical or transitional phenomena.

8. Evaluation of the publications on the topic of the dissertation

3 single-authored publications related to the dissertation research topic are submitted for review. Notably, all 3 publications are full papers and meet the requirements in terms of number and content. To be quite precise, 1 of the English papers was published in the volume, devoted to Languages and Literature of The Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv Research Papers, and the other paper in English was published in the Research Papers of The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria - Plovdiv. The remaining paper is in Bulgarian and was published in the journal of the Faculty of Philology at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv "Slavic Dialogues".

The presented evidence shows that PhD candidate Anastasova has met the minimum national requirements for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy" according to the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

9. Original contribution of the doctoral student

In the dissertation by PhD student Anastasova, all citations and references are correctly presented. The results from the verification with StrikePlagiarism.com reveal that the overall uniqueness of the text is 85.72% (Similarity Coefficient (SC1+SC2) = 11.91%; Quotation Coefficient = 2.37%).

The percentage of similarities is within the permissible range, all the more so as quotations and terms are highlighted as well as established phrases and constructions that can be found in any academic publication.

10. Dissertation abstract

The abstract complies with the requirements for a thorough and authentic description of the content, objectives and tasks, the main theoretical assumptions, the methods used, the findings and the results of the analyses, which are contained in the dissertation.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

Before the PhD dissertation is published, I recommend that the following inaccurate or ambiguous statements, or controversial issues be amended.

1. “The Old English and the Old Bulgarian linguistic data have been excerpted from the Wessex Gospels and from the Codex Marianus, respectively. The texts are mainly those from the Gospel of Matthew” (p. 4). Here, I would recommend that PhD student Anastasova motivate the choice of the Gospel of Matthew as her main source and provide information on the quantitative characteristics of the excerpted corpora and the data extracted from them. Moreover, the application of quantitative methods to the analysis of the empirical material used in the dissertation would contribute to enhancing the reliability of the conclusions obtained through the qualitative analysis of the studied constructions.

2. “The combination of *be* and inflected infinitive could also be translated by means of forms with future temporal reference (e.g. in the following line): [...]

hi agunnon betwux him smeagan hwyle of him ðæt to donne wære. Lk 22.23” (p. 25). I would recommend to the PhD candidate to use a more transparent example in illustrating the mentioned future temporal orientation, i.e. one devoid of additional connotations, cf. the connotations conveyed by the past tense subjunctive form *wære* in the above example.

3. “The verb *habban* can combine with inflected (Jh 17.13) or uninflected (Lk 13.6; Lk 19.20) participles: [...]

Sum man hæfde ān fīctrēow geplantod on his wīngearde Lk 13.6 [...]

hlāford, hēr ys þīn pund þe ic hæfde on swātlīn ālēd Lk 19.20 [...]” (p. 46).

As well as: “In the case of constructions with *have*, the participles often agree with the direct object:

Sum man hæfde ān fīctrēow geplantod on his wīngearde; Lk 13.6 [...]

hēr ys þīn pund þe ic hæfde on swātlīn ālēd: Lk 19.20 [...]” (pp. 65-66). The nouns *fīctrēow* and *pund* are neuter and in Old English they do not receive overt endings for agreement in the nom. and acc. sg., and the participles *geplantod* and *ālēd* also receive zero endings in the nom. and acc. sg. when declined according to the strong declension, which is why it is difficult to give an unequivocal answer to the question of agreement. Hence, I would advise the PhD student to select unambiguous examples from her corpora, wherein agreement with overt markers is expected but is not attested, and examples with overt agreement respectively.

4. “Strong verbs have 4 stems, as in the past tense there are 2 stems - one for the 1st and 3rd pers. sg. indic. mood and another for the remaining past forms (Rastorgueva 2003: 114)” (pp. 65-66). Here, I would suggest that doctoral student Anastasova explain the Ablaut of strong verbs based on Hogg (2002: 54-60), especially since she is obviously familiar with his work.

5. “...þær manna lic lagon þe wæran ær acwealde on ðam cwearterne gefyrn

‘there lay the bodies of the men who were slain in that distant prison’” (p. 105). In this case, *gefyrn* should be translated as “formerly, long ago, of old, of yore”.

6. “The verb ‘forwyrnan’ may mean ‘deny’ or ‘stop’ and take an object in the acc., but also ‘prohibit, prevent, hinder’, and in the latter case it is followed by either a dat. + gen. or a dat. + a subordinate clause [...]:

gif heo inne wyrð feondum befangen frofre bedæled welena forwyrned” (p. 119). In cases like the above, it would be more appropriate to mark the cases in the OE example for the sake of clarity.

7. “*þā bead he þam þæt hī hit nānum men ne sǣdon þæt þār gedōn wæs*. Lk 8.56

then ordered he them already they it not-one men not said that there done was” (p. 197). In the interlinear gloss of this OE example, the former occurrence of *þæt* should be translated as “that”.

CONCLUSION

The PhD dissertation comprises scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to scholarly research and meet all the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the ADASRB and the corresponding Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The dissertation testifies to the fact that doctoral student Maria Ivanova Anastasova possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty “Germanic Languages: English Language” as well as competencies and skills for carrying out original scholarly research.

In view of the above, I give my positive assessment of the conducted research, presented in the dissertation, the abstract, the achieved results and the contributions reviewed above, and recommend to the esteemed members of the Academic Board to award Maria Ivanova Anastasova the educational and scientific degree “Doctor of Philosophy” in higher education field 2. Humanities, professional field 2.1. Philology, doctoral program “Germanic Languages: English Language”.

6 September 2022

Reviewer:

Assoc Prof. Yana Chankova, PhD