

Re: why the -s in English verbs?

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2008-02/msg00848.html>

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 - *Date:* Thu, 28 Feb 2008 08:12:17 +0800
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"Christian" == Christian
Weisgerber
<naddy@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
writes:

>> (b) English may have fewer markers than other
>> languages. (Reminds me of the book titled "Eats, Shoots and
>> Leaves.") Parsing verbs from nouns would be difficult
>> (statistically speaking) without the -s ending for 3Sg. (3Pl is
>> less a problem because subject nouns are already marked with
>> -s.)

Christian> That doesn't hold water. -s only appears in the
Christian> present tense. Most notably it is absent from the past
Christian> tense, and the past tense is used extensively in
Christian> English. No parsing problems there. The present tense
Christian> -s is also dropped colloquially/dialectally.

Yeah! The past tense forms should be considered the "most basic"
forms. :)

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