

The Use of Periphrastic *Do* with Reference to the *Book of Common Prayer*

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Shin, Sungkyun. (2023). The use of periphrastic *do* with reference to the *Book of Common Prayer*. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 31(4), 181-195. Chomsky's Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995 to 2019a,b,c) claims that language change can be explained as resulting from the resetting of parameters, where the parameters are seen as operating in the lexicon as feature parameters. Likewise, the origin of and changes in English periphrastic *do* or the *do*-support can be accounted for by parameter-resetting modulated by markedness. The dates of the two principal editions of the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), 1552 and 1662, roughly coincide with the periods of the rise and fall of the affirmative declarative *do*, respectively. It is claimed that, based on the data of BCP and others, the English parameter-resetting concerning the periphrastic *do* began, in the mid-16th century, from strong V feature Tense to weak V feature Tense.

Key Words: *the Book of Common Prayer*, the minimalist program, parameter-resetting, markedness, periphrastic-*do*

1. Introduction

In this paper my primary linguistic data are based on two Early Modern English (ENE) editions of the Anglican Liturgy, *the Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). The BCP has been selected for one obvious reason, namely, that the dates of the two principal editions, 1552 and 1662, roughly coincide with the periods of the rise and fall of the affirmative declarative *do*, respectively (cf. Ellegård, 1953, p. 162; Nevalainen, 1991, p. 304; Pérez, 1997). In addition, the diachronic versions of *Gospel of Mark* as in Shin (2010) serve as comparative material.

According to Chomsky's Minimalist Program, language change can be explained as

resulting from resetting of parameters, where the parameters are seen as operating in the lexicon as feature parameters (Chomsky, 1995; 2004; 2005; 2008; 2013; 2015; 2019a,b,c, Chomsky et al., 2019, Got & Ishii, 2018, van Gelderen, 2011; 2017; 2018; 2021a,b,c; 2022, Shin, 1992; 2001; 2006; 2010; 2017; 2019a,b; 2021a,b; 2022). Likewise, the origin of and changes in English periphrastic *do* or *do*-support can be accounted for by parameter-resetting modulated by markedness. In other words, parameter-resetting is a process of passing gradually from one state to another.

2. The Origin of Periphrastic *Do*

In Old English (OE) and Middle English (ME), the origin of the periphrastic *do* can be tracked down to the full verb, the causative, the substitute, and the anticipative *do(n)*. The full verb *do(n)* in early intransitive use meant something like ‘act’ and a typical transitive meaning was something like ‘accomplish, perform, place, or put,’ the usage of which was as shown in the following:

- (1) a. “(995) Anglo-Saxon Bible Lk 15:19
do me swa anne of þinum hyrlingum
make me as one of your hired man
‘make me one of your hired men’”
- b. “(995) Anglo-Saxon Bible Mt. 18:35
Swa deþ min se heofonlica Fæder gif ge of
so does my the heavenly Father if ye from
eowerum heortum eowerum broðrum ne forgiefaþ
your hearts your brothers not forgive
‘(This is how) my heavenly Father will treat each
of you unless you forgive your brother from your
heart’” (Quoted from Shin, 2010, pp. 186-187)
- (2) a. “c1155 Peterb. Chron. 1137.11-13
Ða the suikes undergæton ðat he milde man
when the rebels recognized that he mild man
was and softe and god, and na justise ne dide, þa
was and soft and good and no justice not did then

diden hi alle wunder.

did they all horrible things

‘when the rebels understood that he was a mild,
soft, good man, and executed no justice, they did
all horrible things’”

b. “c1155 Peterb. Chron. 1137.49-51

Wes nævre gæt mare wrecched on land, ne nævre
was never get more wretchedness on land not never

hethen men werse ne diden þan

heathen men worse not did than

hi diden

they did

‘was never done more wretchedness and heathen
men never have done worse than they did’”

(Quoted from Shin, 2010, pp. 187-188)

Many scholars such as Lee (1999, p. 322, 2009) and Kim (2011) assume that the origin of the periphrastic *do* can be directly traced to the OE and ME causative *don* among all the usages of the OE *don*. This causative *do* has some connection with raising *do*, as in the following:

(3) a. “SLeg.(LD)4.118

A noble churche heo dude a-rere

A noble church she did raise

‘She built a noble church’ or ‘She had a noble church built’”

b. Kroch (1989)

“They worshipped the sonne whanne he_i dede [t_i arise].

They worshipped the sun when he did arise.

‘They worshipped the sun when it arose’ (Cho, 2003, p. 161)”

Traugott (1972, p. 140) also claims that the structure *do ac* changed to *do x* if the object was an indefinite pronoun as in the following:

(4) I did someone train a horse → I did train a horse

From this construction *do x* comes the affirmative *do*, which leads to periphrastic *do*, as in the following:

(5) I did come; I caused (someone) to come → I say I truly came → I came (=did come)

Ellegård (1953, p. 29) also claims that *do x* changed to periphrastic *do* through a kind of semantic reanalysis, permutation:

(6) "Mannyng Chron.Pt.2(Petyr)97.22

Henry ... þe walles did down felle, þe tours bette he
 Henry ... the walls did down fell, the towers beat he
 down
 down
 'Henry ... felled down the walls, he beat down the
 towers.'" (Quoted from Ellegård (1953, p. 29))

Here *felle* implicates 'to fell' or 'cause (others) to fell'. Then *do* 'cause to ...' proceeds to periphrastic *do*, with *did* 'caused' followed by *felle* 'to fell/be felled' proceeding to *did* 'preterit' followed by *felle* 'cause to fell/be felled' as in the following NE:

(7) I will have/get the assignment finished on time

Here *have/get* means either 'having it done by another' or 'doing something myself.' I also holds with other scholars that PE periphrastic *do* had its origin from this causative *do*. With this periphrastic *do* originating from the causative *do* and parameter-resetting, periphrastic *do* was to become a main construction in English.

2.1. Early Modern English Periphrastic *do* in the *Book of Common Prayer*

The use of *do* so rapidly declined in affirmative declarative sentences during the latter half of the 17th century. The foundations for an English liturgical prose were laid by the two Edwardine Books of Common Prayer of 1549 and 1552. With a few alterations the 1552 Book prevailed as the Anglican Service Book until its overall revision was

undertaken in 1661 and enforced by the Act of Uniformity in 1662.

As Nevalainen (1991, p. 305) points out, most of the alterations were carried out along rather conservative lines. If it is measured against the standard core grammar of its time, the 1662 Book appears on the whole much more archaic than the 1552 Book in its day. This archaic usage set the model for liturgical language for centuries to come, until *The Alternative Service Book* was published in 1980.

Nevalainen's (1991, p. 305) study of the affirmative *do* is based on all the non-biblical matter shared by the two editions that was subject to revision in 1662. A systematic search yielded a total of 116 instances of *do* in affirmative statements in the 1552 edition, and 114 in the 1662 edition. While the great majority of the occurrences in the earlier version were retained, a number of interesting alterations were also made in the revision: eleven instances of *do* were deleted and nine new ones added in 1662. Table 1 shows the frequency of *do* in the Prayer Book data as follows:

Table 1. Frequency of affirmative *do* in the Prayer Book and the comparative Helsinki Corpus material (Nevalainen, 1991, p. 305)

| Prayer Book | N | Bible | N | Sermons | N |
|-------------|-----|---------------|----|------------|----|
| BCP 1552: | 116 | Tyndale 1526: | 13 | 1500-1570: | 27 |
| | | AV 1611: | 25 | 1570-1640: | 45 |
| BCP 1662: | 114 | | | 1640-1700: | 12 |

The above table shows that the use of *do* so rapidly declined in affirmative declarative sentences during the latter half of the 17th century (cf. e.g. Ellegård, 1953, p. 162, Nevalainen, 1991, p. 303).

I myself checked the frequency of periphrastic *do* in addition to the frequency of the use of *do* in affirmative declarative sentences in the BCP (1559) and observed the following:

Table 2. Frequency of periphrastic *do* in the BCP (1559)

| Finite Verb | Periphrastic Do | |
|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| Declarative Negative | 14 | 6 |
| Imperative Negative | 24 | 1 |
| Interrogative | 5 | 9 |

Table 2 shows that periphrastic *do* was at that time still a marked and uncommon form: i.e., *hate not* and *hate you?* tended to be used rather than the periphrastic *do not hate*

and *do you hate*, respectively.

2.2. Parameter–Resetting Concerning Periphrastic *Do*

Periphrastic *do* first took place around the thirteenth century in the southwest dialect as poems, and in prose in the fifteenth century.

- (8) c1300 (?c1225) Horn 1057
 His sclauyn he dude dun legge.
 his pilgrim’s cloak he did down lay
 ‘He laid down his pilgrim’s cloak’ (Shin 2010, p. 190, 25)

The Bible provides good data of research for the periphrastic *do* or the *do*-support as pointed out by (Shin, 2010; 2021b; 2022), since the Bible introduced different versions in each period (Bosworth, 1907) showing changes from OE to PE, as illustrated in the following:

- (9) a. PE (New King James Version 1982)
 Did you come to destroy us?
 b. ENE Tyndale (1526)
 Arte thou come to destroie vs?
 c. ME Wycliffe (1389)
 Haste thou cumen before the tyme for to destroie vs?
 d. OE Anglo-Saxon (995)
 Com ðu us to forspillanne?
 Came thou us to destroy Mark 1:24 (quoted from Shin, 2010, pp. 190-191)

Table 3. Numbers of instances of periphrastic *do*

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| PE (Gospel of Mark, New King James Version) | | | |
| Question 31 | Negation 58 | Emphasis 1 | Scarcely 2 |
| ENE (Gospel of Mark, Tyndale 1526) | | | |
| Question 8 | Negation 0 | Emphasis 1 | Scarcely 2 |
| ME None | | | |
| OE None (quoted from Shin, 2010, p. 191) | | | |

The examination of the Bible versions (Shin, 2010, p. 194) shows that no example of the periphrastic *do* (the *do*-support) appears in OE and ME. An example first appears in ENE as shown in the above inspection of the versions of the Gospel of Mark, and also based on Barber (1976, p. 265) and Ellegård (1953), the regulating process began in the middle of the 16th century, and was almost complete by 1700. When ENE started, the frequency of *do*-support was rather low, but was already rising precipitously in interrogative and negative sentences: it continued to rise fairly steadily through the relevant period. The percentage of periphrastic *do* has always been highest in negative questions, followed by affirmative questions, and then by negative declarative sentences. In the early part of the ENE period, the percentage also increased in affirmative declarative sentences, but in the mid-16th century the curve began to fall; it continued to fall for the rest of the period. At no time, however, was periphrastic *do* found in more than 10 percent of affirmative declarative sentences as shown by Nevalainen (1987; 1991; 2020), Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1989; 1994) and by myself. By 1700, the affirmative declarative curve was approaching zero, while the other three curves were all positioned above 75 percent and rising steeply. In terms of the Minimalist Program, the Head-strength Parameter of Tense was going through a change from the Strong V feature to Weak V feature beginning in the mid-16th century; this process was very nearly complete by 1700.¹) Before completion of this shift by 1700, variation was observed between the following forms:

- (10) a. You listen not
 b. You don't listen

Before the parameter-resetting, according to Radford (2004; 2009; 2016) and Shin (1992; 2010; 2022), T contains an affix with a strong V-feature in ENE. If the head movement is driven by “the affixal feature properties of the heads,” and if both T and NEG contain an affix with a strong V-feature which can cause movement of a main verb, then the verb *listen* will first move from V to NEG in order to attach to a null negative affix, and “the resulting complex NEG head (comprising a null negative affix with a verb attached to it)” will in turn move from NEG to T in order to attach to a strong tense affix in T. Positing that *not* in ENE is “the specifier of a NEGP headed by a null NEG constituent” opens up

1) See Radford (2004, pp. 163-64, 2009, 2016).

the possibility that V moves through NEG into T.²⁾ In ENE, the parameter-resetting results with T containing an affix with a weak V-feature.

2.3. Markedness and Parameter-Resetting

The state of markedness is transient,³⁾ not permanent, as the language changes with respect to a particular form or construction (Shin, 1992; 2010; 2022):

Table 4. The Change of Markedness

| T with Strong V Periphrastic <i>Do</i> | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pre-OE | + Marked |
| OE & ME | + Marked |
| ENE | From + to - From Marked to Unmarked |
| PE | (- Marked) Unmarked (Shin 2010:194) |

The relative weakness or strength of a tense affix in a language, as mentioned above and discussed in Shin (2010), is consistent “with the relative richness of the system of subject-agreement inflections which it encodes,” in the sense that a tense affix is strong in languages in which “finite auxiliaries and verbs carry rich subject-agreement inflections (i.e. in which they carry a wide range of different agreement affixes) and weak in languages in which finite auxiliaries and verbs carry impoverished subject-agreement inflections.”⁴⁾

As the relative richness of subject-agreement inflections which it encoded in ME showed a decreasing trend because of the leveling of the unstressed vowels beginning from OE, the markedness of the strong V feature also changed. *Love you the Savior?* rather than *Do you love the Savior?* was unmarked in OE and ME, but became marked in ENE. Parameter resetting took place gradually as the degree of markedness changed.

At this point, we might expect Affix Hopping to apply so as to lower the Tense affix

2) I adapt this idea of change of feature and head movement from Radford (2004, pp. 172-174, 2009, 2016; Shin, 2010).

3) As indicated in Shin (1992, p. 39, 2001, 2006, 2017, 2019 a,b, 2021a,b, 2022), *markedness* is used in Backquet’s (1962) sense, where *markedness* is correlated to language-specific constructions. Backquet (1962) made a distinction between “ordre de base” (basic, common, and neutral order) and “ordre marque” (marked or uncommon order) in his study on OE word order.

4) See Radford (2004, p. 164, 2009, 2016).

in T onto the verb, either lowering the affix directly from T onto V or lowering the affix first onto null NEG head and then onto V.⁵⁾

However, either movement would violate the Head Movement Constraint⁶⁾ since it involves lowering the head T of TP onto the head V of VP, or the Strict Cyclicity Principle⁷⁾, and, therefore, the *do*-support should be applied (Radford, 2004; 2009; 2016, Shin, 2010).⁸⁾

As for the periphrastic *do* concerning parameter-resetting, first, periphrastic *do* was optional. Around 1600, more questions with periphrastic *do* than without it appeared; proceeding further, around 1700, periphrastic *do* had become obligatory as a result of parameter-resetting. Periphrastic *do* in negative declarative sentences was established around the 15th-16th century, and its use increased in the 17th century; it became obligatory around the beginning of the 18th century. I assert that parameter-resetting of T to the Weak V-feature from the Strong V-feature had the effect of introducing periphrastic *do*, the loss of V2, and the reanalysis of modals.⁹⁾

In agreement with my position, Roberts (1993, 2007) assumes that the introduction of *do*-support results from the loss of the movement V-to-AGR. Diachronic reanalysis of modal and periphrastic auxiliaries brings in noticeable changes. Lightfoot (1999, p. 167; cf. 1991, 2002a,b), arguing against this, claims that the introduction of *do*-support resulting from the loss of V-to-I(T) movement does not explain the concurrence of the two constructions. Although the phenomenon of V-to-I(T) continued until the 18th century, *do*-support had become extensively utilized in the 15th-16th century period. My markedness theory readily explains this fact without difficulty, because parameter-resetting with markedness implies that two constructions exist side by side due to gradual markedness change.

As Ellegård (1953, p. 209) observes, the periphrastic *do* in prose took place around 1400 and spread throughout the full range of prose around the end of the fifteenth

5) Refer to Radford (2004, 2009, 2016) and Shin (2010).

6) Head Movement Constraint: Movement from one head position to another is only possible between a given head and the closest head which asymmetrically c-commands it (i.e. between a given head and the next highest head in the structure containing it).

7) Strict Cyclicity Principle: At a stage of derivation where a given projection HP is being cycled/processed, only operations affecting the head H of HP and some other constituent of HP can apply (Radford, 2004, p. 173).

8) Refer to Shin (2010, pp. 33-34).

9) that is, the change of modals from main verbs to auxiliaries like periphrastic *do*. See Shin (2006).

century. The percentages of the following competing constructions show change as markedness changes:

- (11) a. Arrived Ezekiel this afternoon?
 b. Did Ezekiel arrive this afternoon?

Ellegård (1953), Jespersen (1909-1949), Los (2015) and Visser (1963-73) show that the (11a) type sentence decreased in comparison to sentence type (11b) from 27% (1625-1650) to 26% (1650-1700), and then to 13% (in the 18th century) according to Tieken (1988).

- (12) a. He visited not Chuncheon.
 b. He did not visit Chuncheon.

Ellegård also shows that the (12a) type sentence decreased from 68% (1625-1650) to 54% (1650-1700), and then to 20% (in the 18th century). Then, we can illustrate the change of the parameter-resetting of Tense regarding the periphrastic *do* as in the following table:

Table 5. Head-strength Parameter (Tense)

| |
|---------------------------------------------------|
| OE Strong V feature |
| ME Strong V feature |
| ENE Strong V feature to Weak V feature |
| PE Weak V feature (quoted from Shin, 2010, p.198) |

As demonstrated by English history, I assert that, due to the parameter-resetting of the head-strength T to weak V feature from the strong feature around 1700, the system based on the periphrastic *do* was established with the loss of the verb-second system and the reanalysis of the modal auxiliary. Nevalainen's data and my own concerning the BCP also support my proposal.

3. Conclusion

Language change results from resetting of parameters according to the Minimalist Program, where the parameters are seen as operating in the lexicon as feature parameters.

Likewise, the origin of and changes in English periphrastic *do* can be accounted for by parameter-resetting mediated by markedness. It is claimed that in the middle of the sixteenth century, the parameter-resetting began from T with strong V feature or a strong T affix carried by a finite T, which could attract a verb to move from V to T, to T with weak V feature, which could not attract a verb (Radford, 2004, 2009, p. 157, 2016), regarding the origin of periphrastic *do*. Then, the so-called periphrastic *do* or *do*-support took place, and resetting was nearly complete by 1700. The resetting from T with strong V feature to T with weak V feature made it possible to adopt periphrastic *do*.

As shown in the two ENE editions of the BCP, the diachronic versions of Gospel of Mark (Shin, 2010) and Ellegård's (1953, p. 62) table of percentages of *do*-forms in various types of sentences, when ENE started, the frequency of periphrastic *do* was rather low, but was already rising very steeply in negative and interrogative sentences; it continued to rise progressively throughout the period. The percentage of occurrence of periphrastic *do* was always highest in negative questions, followed by affirmative questions, and then by negative declarative sentences (Shin, 2010). By 1700, the affirmative declarative curve was approaching zero (Barber, 1976, Nevalainen, 1991), while the other three curves were all positioned above 75 percent and rising precipitously, indicating parameter-resetting to Tense with weak V feature from T with strong V feature resulting. Between the start of parameter-resetting and its completion, markedness also played a role in that at the start the periphrastic *do* forms were rather marked (uncommon) and later they grew less marked, and more unmarked, resulting in parameter-resetting. Nevalainen's data and my own concerning the BCP also support my contentions on the progress of periphrastic *do*.

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