

The Changes in the Use of Periphrastic *Do*

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Yoon, So Yeon. 2003. *The Changes in the Use of Periphrastic Do*. *SNU Working Papers in English Language and Linguistics* 2, 94–107. This paper deals with the historical changes in the use of periphrastic *do* with the concept of markedness isomorphism. Battistella (1985) explains that the interrogative, negative, and emphatic sentences are semantically marked, so *do* that is syntactically marked came to be used to keep the agreement of markedness in forms and contents. Bækken (1999) suggests that from the 16th century, *do* came to be used to solve the problems of VO split and the heaviness principle. Following the two views, the proposal of this paper is as follows: as word order was fixed in the 16th century, VO split and the violation of heaviness principles became syntactically extra marked features, and *do* was a useful tool to resolve the new marked features in order to keep the markedness isomorphism in syntax and semantics. Since then until present day, *do* was grammaticalized in interrogatives and negatives, and emphatic *do* appeared to keep the markedness isomorphism. (Seoul National University)

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1. Introduction

In Present Day English (PDE), *do* is used in many contexts. Except for the case where it is used as a main verb, *do* is used with an infinitive verb in interrogative and negative

sentences. When it is used in a declarative sentence, it emphasizes the main verb of the sentence. *Dos* in interrogatives, negatives, and declaratives are meaningless while the infinitive verbs contain the meanings. These uses of *do* are called *periphrastic*.

According to Stien (1991), in the Old English (OE) and the Middle English (ME) period that cover up to 1500, causative and "meaningless" periphrastic *do* appeared. From 1500 to 1600, in the Early Modern English (EME) period, *do* strongly increased quantitatively in all syntactic contexts. Between 1600 and 1700, *do* was grammaticalized in questions and negatives. At the same time, unstressed *do* in declaratives declined while *do* in emphatic use appeared.

The objective of the present paper is to explore why the use of *do* has changed. I will examine the use of *do* in interrogatives, negatives, and declaratives. Battistella (1985)'s view and its problems will be first examined, and an alternative proposal, that is expanded from Bækken's view, will be presented. It is argued that periphrastic *do* has been developed to balance markedness isomorphism of content and form.

2. Battistella (1985)

2.1 Markedness Isomorphism

In order to explain why the nonemphatic use of *do* was lost in affirmative declaratives, and why the *do* forms of the negative and interrogative supplanted the non-*do* forms, Battistella applies the principle of markedness isomorphism of Jakobson(1965) and Shapiro(1983). Following Shapiro, he assumes that markedness relations are the locus of form-content isomorphism. Markedness isomorphism is a

principle regulating the form–content relations in such a way that if syntax of a word or a sentence is marked, its semantics is also marked, and if its syntax is unmarked, the semantics is also unmarked, and vice versa. Shapiro also suggests that the agreement of markedness is likely to be a goal of language change.

According to Battistella, semantically marked values are negative, interrogative, and emphatic meanings, while unmarked values are affirmative, declarative, and nonemphatic meanings. On the other hand, syntactically marked values are *do*, *not*, auxiliary, and inversion, while unmarked ones are \emptyset (without *do* or *not*), main verb, and noninverted word order.

(1) Markedness is semantics and syntax

	semantics	syntax
Marked (M)	negatives, interrogatives, emphasis	<i>do</i> , <i>not</i> , aux, inversion
Unmarked (U)	affirmatives, declaratives, non–emphasis	\emptyset , main verb, noninversion

For the isomorphism of form and content, the markedness of semantics and syntax should agree.

(2) Markedness in unemphatic declaratives

semantics U (unmarked)	unemphatic declaratives
syntax U (unmarked)	\emptyset

First, in unemphatic declaratives, semantics is unmarked, so none of syntactic marked features are used. (3) is the example.

(3) I know thee well. (Shakespeare, *the Tragedy of King Lear*)

In case of emphatic constructions, semantics is marked, so the use of marked form *do* is appropriate. In emphatic sentence, *do* does not have its own meaning, and it functions as a syntactic marker. This emphatic *do*-form is still used in PDE.

(4) Markedness in emphatic declaratives

semantics M (marked)	emphasis
syntax M	<i>do</i>

(5) they do have a lot to offer those seeking a summer seaside escape. (*Morning Calm*, Aug 2003.)

A negative sentence is semantically unmarked, and *not*, that is syntactically marked form is used.

(6) Markedness in negatives

semantics M	negatives
syntax M	<i>not</i>

(7) he ne iaf him al (*Peterborough Chronicle*, 1140)

he ne gave him all

In case of questions, semantics is marked, and syntax is also marked with inverted word order.

(8) Markedness in questions

semantics M	question
syntax M	inversion ¹

(9) Cwyst ðu mæg he eft cuman on his moder innok.

Say you can he again com in his mother's womb. (Anglo Saxon Gospels, c.1000)

In PDE, however, there are the syntactic markedness (*do* and inversion) in question. Why does the *do* pattern that emerged in EME remain stable in PDE when isomorphism is satisfied with only inversion? Battistella argues that doubly marked forms (inversion M + *do* M) win over one marked form (inversion M).

(10) Markedness in PDE question

semantics M	question
syntax M	inversion
	<i>do</i>

Therefore, *do* patterns supplanted non-*do* patterns in PDE.

Negatives can be explained in the same way. Doubly marked forms (*do* M + *not* M) win over one marked form (*not* M).

(11) Markedness in PDE negatives

semantics M	negatives
syntax M	<i>not</i>
	<i>do</i>

¹ 'Inversion,' Battistella specially refers to is the inversion of a subject (S) and verb (V), that is, the inversion from SV to VS. He seems to include not only complete inversion but also partial inversion. The term 'partial' and 'complete' inversion as used here correspond to 'subject-operator (such as auxiliary)' and 'subject-verb' inversion respectively. (Quirk et al 1985:1379)

In contrast, since nonemphatic affirmative declaratives are semantically unmarked, syntactically marked *do* is lost in PDE according to markedness isomorphism.

(12) Markedness in declaratives

semantics U	nonemphatic
syntax M	<i>do</i>



semantics U	nonemphatic
syntax U	∅

In conclusion, English has changed to keep the markedness isomorphism, which means the markedness of syntax and semantics agree. Therefore, *dos* in non-emphatic declaratives disappeared, while *dos* in emphatic declaratives remained since EME. In questions and negatives, two syntactic markednesses wins over one syntactic markedness. This is how PDE is formed according to Battistella.

2.2 Problems

Battistella successfully explains why *do* in nonemphatic affirmative declaratives in EME was lost in PDE in forms of markedness isomorphism. However, he does not explain why *do*-forms came to be frequently used in negatives, interrogatives and nonemphatic declaratives in EME.

In OE, question was expressed without *do*, because only inversion was enough for interrogatives as Battistella mentioned in (8). In the same way, only *not* was enough for negatives. Then, *do* did not have to be used in EME. Nevertheless the

use of *do* increased in EME.

His explanation about the loss of *do* after EME is also dubious. If English were to change to keep the agreement of markedness isomorphism between syntax and semantics, a sentence with one marked feature in semantics and marked feature in syntax would be right. However, as in (10) and (11), in questions and negatives of PDE are not the case: one markedness in semantics and two markedness in syntax. Therefore, his assertion that double markedness wins is not persuasive enough to explain the reason why *do*-forms of interrogatives and negatives remain in PDE as in (10) and (11). It is hard to measure that two syntactic markedness wins because markedness in syntax and semantics is unbalanced.

When the possibility that double markedness wins over one markedness is excluded, the use of *do* seems to be syntactically extra, so the agreement of markedness isomorphism is violated. With this extra syntactic markedness considered, adding one more corresponding semantic markedness or eliminating the extra marked *do* would be an appropriate solution for the disagreement of markedness isomorphism.

In order to show why *do* came to be used in EME and how to treat the unbalanced markedness of *do*-forms in interrogatives, negatives, and declaratives, I propose an alternative view.

3. New Proposal

3.1 Bækken (1999)

Bækken examined the use of periphrastic *do* of declarative sentences in EME dividing EME into three periods: I (1480–1530), II (1580–1630), and III (1680–1730). He

examined 15,402 examples, and treated sentences of XSV and XVS.² Periphrastic *do* often appears in the sentence that starts with an adverbial phrase (Engblom 1938:88). *Do* was usually used in an inverted structure, and the number of sentences with *do* increased in the period II.

(13) proportion of *do* periphrasis in affirmative declarative clauses (%)

	I (1480–1530)	II (1580–1630)	III (1680–1730)
XSV	1.5	1.9	1.0
XVS	2.4	12.2	4.1

As shown above, *do* appears more frequently in the inverted structures. Most of the inversions were partial inversions, that is, "*do* S V (O)." He found that *do* plays a significant role for partial inversion. Then, what is the function of periphrastic *do* in partially inverted sentences?

First, periphrastic *do* prevents splitting the verb and its object in transitive sentences.³ Note that (14) shows this role of *do* in transitive affirmative declaratives.

(14) And likewise *do* we *borrow likenesses* of allegories of the scripture, (William Tyndale, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*; from Bækken 1999)

The function of *do* to bind V and O becomes more obvious

² These structures signify main clauses with one or more initial elements (X such as adverbs) other than the subject (S). XSV is a construction of noninverted word order, while XVS is that of inverted word order.

³ In general the object of a transitive clause is syntactically and semantically more tightly bound to the verb than is the subject of a transitive clause (Tomlin 1986:73). In fact, it is natural for a verb and its object to constitute a verb phrase when they are adjacent.

when we see (15).

(15) Proportion of periphrastic *do* in affirmative declarative clauses with transitive verbs (%)

	I	II	III
XSV (S <i>do</i> V O)	2.3	2.7	1.3
XVS (<i>do</i> S V O)	5.0	28.0	26.3

Considering that majority of the structures with *do* are inverted structures, we can infer that *do* was used not only for preventing splitting of VO, but as an alternative method between complete inversion of the previous period of EME and noninverted form of the following period of EME.

Second, in intransitive sentences, *do* increases the weight of verb phrases.

(16) Proportion of periphrastic *do* in affirmative declarative clauses with intransitive verbs (%)

	I	II	III
XSV (S <i>do</i> V)	0.6	1.6	0.9
XVS (<i>do</i> S V)	1.0	8.3	2.4

As you see in (16), *do* was also used more in partially inverted structures. But in noninverted intransitive sentences, *do* was used when the subject appears as a full noun phrase. If the subject is located in front of a sentence, and it is longer than the verb part in tail, the heaviness principle is violated. In English, there is a tendency that the structure where the subject is long and heavy while the verb phrase is short and light is avoided. I call this tendency as "heaviness principle."

Quirk *et al* (1985:1401) also mentions this tendency. Therefore, *do* is inserted to increase weight on VP as in (17) and (18).

(17) At the same time, and an age after or more, the inhabitants of the great Atlantis *did flourish*. (Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis; from Bækken, 1999*)

(18) So with force of smiting, his axe, that was great and long, *did break*. (*The history of Oliver Castile; from Bækken 1999*)

This role of *do* became more important as suffixes of the verb were lost in EME. Rissanen(1985)'s view strengthens the role of *do* that increases the weight of verb phrase. According to Rissanen, the unstressed vowel of a verbal ending in ME and EME is deleted, and a large number of monosyllabic verb is produced. Naturally, it is required that the weight of the verb phrase be increased. From the corpus of Bækken(1985), 66% of monosyllabic intransitive verbs in declaratives were used with *do*. On the other hand, 37.3% of monosyllabic transitive verbs were used with *do*.

Usually, main verbs without *do* less frequently appear in the sentence final position in transitive sentences than in intransitive sentences. The different frequency can be explained by the weight of the verb phrase. In case of transitive verbs, an object follows the main verb, and this increases the weight of verb phrase. Therefore, it is unnecessary to increase weight on the verb phrase.

On the other hand, intransitive verbs requires more weight on the short verb part when the subject is a full noun phrase. When inversion occurs in the sentence with a full NP subject,

the inversion is more likely to be complete rather than partial. This is because partial inversion by *do* would be stylistically awkward. Thus (19a) is preferred to (19b).

(19a) And in the hous *lyeth* all the goodes and tresoure that I
haue stolen from you and other men, (*Robert the Deuyll*:
from Bækken 1999)

* (19b) And in the hous *do* all the goodes and tresoure that I
haue stolen from you and other men *lye*. (Bækken
1999)

In addition, 60% of subjects in '*do* S V' structures were pronouns, which do not require more weight on VP.

Nevalainen (1991) compared two EME editions (those of 1552 and 1662) of the Anglican Liturgy, *The book of Common Prayer*, and he found out that a clause-final *do* + verb structure occurs in one quarter of the cases shared by the two editions. This fact supports that *do* increases weight on VP.

Therefore, *do* came to be used to conform to the heaviness principle in EME as in (15) and (16) above.

In conclusion, the role of *do* in affirmative declaratives is resolving syntactic problems such as the VO split and the violation of heaviness principle.

3.2 DO as a Resolving Tool for Markedness Isomorphism

Drawing upon Bækken's view that *do* in EME was used to keep the verb and its object connected in partially inverted sentence, and to keep the heaviness principle, I apply the same function of *do* to interrogatives and negatives. In other words, *do* prevents the splitting of the verb and its object in

interrogatives and negatives. This is different from Battistella's view that *do* is just a syntactic markedness.

The word order in OE was free, and markedness was not caused by the word order.⁴ The word order, however, became fixed in EME, and this made certain structures syntactically marked such as the separation of a verb and its object, and heaviness of subject. Therefore, periphrastic *do* began to emerge as an effective tool to eliminate these extra markedness.

In OE, inversion for interrogative was syntactically and semantically marked, and an extra markedness due to the split of VO did not exist since word order was free. On the other hand, in EME this split became marked, so *do* was inserted to keep VO connection. This role of *do* is preserved until present day. (20) shows this process.

(20) the changes of *DO* in interrogatives

⁴ In OE, inversion also should have been marked if the word order had been absolutely free. Battistella regards inversion as marked regardless of periods, so he takes inversion in OE as also marked. It should be studied further whether inversion in OE was marked or unmarked.

The Changes in the Use of Periphrastic *Do* 13

OE	question (semantically M) : inversion (syntactically M)
	VO split (U)
	ex) <i>Love you</i> him?
EME	question (semantically M) : inversion (syntactically M)
	VO split (extra M) → resolved by <i>do</i> → VO adjacency (U)
	ex) <i>Do you love</i> him?
PDE	EME pattern is preserved

Note that the verb and its object are separate in OE because of inversion. Then *do* is used, and they are connected again in EME and PDE. Therefore, *do* eliminates the extra markedness and preserves the balance of markedness isomorphism.

Negative sentences undergo the same procedure as shown in (21).

(21) the changes of *DO* in negatives

OE	negatives (semantically M) : <i>not</i> (syntactically M)
	VO split (U)
	ex) I <i>love not</i> him.
EME	negatives (semantically M) : <i>not</i> (syntactically M)
	VO split (extra M) → resolved by <i>do</i> → VO adjacency (U)
	ex) I <i>do not love</i> him
PDE	EME pattern is preserved

In nonemphatic affirmative declaratives in EME. The heavy subject part became marked as word order changed. Then, *do* was used to obey the heaviness principle in EME as Bækken asserts.

I assert that this pattern is preserved in emphatic *do* in PDE. According to Rissanen (1991:338), periphrastic expression is always long and emphatic, and consequently, more emphatic than the simple one. It can be said that this emphatic role was added to *do* since EME period. If a sentence has emphatic meaning (semantically M), it can have *do* (syntactically M). For this reason, *do* is used in emphatic affirmative declarative sentences in PDE.

In comparison, when the sentence is unemphatic (semantically U), *do* becomes lost and becomes syntactically unmarked in PDE. In fact, emphatic *do* appeared during 1600s. During this period, *do* in negatives and interrogatives was already grammaticalized. After 1700, nonemphatic *do* began to decline (Stein 1991:356). From this fact, it can be inferred that the function of *do* is switched around 1600s and 1700s from the role of keeping the heaviness principle to the role of emphasis.

(22) the changes of *DO* in affirmative declaratives

OE	nonemphatic (semantically U) : \emptyset (syntactically U)
EM E	nonemphatic (semantically U) : non-inverted, without <i>not</i> (syntactically U)
	the violation of the heaviness principle (syntactically extra M) \rightarrow resolved by <i>do</i> \rightarrow more weight on VP (U)
PDE M	a) emphatic emphatic (semantically M): <i>do</i> (syntactically M)
	b) nonemphatic nonemphatic (semantically U) : <i>do</i> (syntactically M) \rightarrow <i>do</i> is lost \rightarrow nonemphatic (semantically U) : \emptyset (syntactically U)

With the approach that *do* is used to keep the balance of markedness isomorphism, whole procedure of the use of periphrastic *do* is described consistently in the aspect of isomorphism of form and content.

4. Conclusion

Although Battistella attempts to explain the changes in the use of Periphrastic *do* by markedness isomorphism, he fails to display whole procedure of changes in the use of *do* from OE to PDE. In addition, Battistella regarded *do* as only a syntactic markedness and explains the reason why *do* forms supplanted non-*do* forms in PDE by asserting that double markedness wins out one markedness. Moreover, the markedness of *do* seems to be extra because there is no corresponding semantic markedness. In conclusion, markedness isomorphism is violated.

What I propose is that *do* plays a role to balance the markedness isomorphism.

In the light of markedness isomorphism of form and content, in OE, inversion was enough to represent interrogatives, and *not* insertion was enough for negatives, because word order was free enough to allow the split of VO and violation the heaviness principle. As word order becomes fixed in EME, however, these features became marked, and an extra syntactic markedness was generated. Thus *do* came to be in use to resolve this markedness. Since then *do* patterns of questions and negatives remain stable in PDE. In declaratives, *do* that was used to increase weight on VP in EME came to be used in emphasis to follow markedness isomorphism in PDE.

In conclusion, the explanation "the use of *do* as a solution for extra markedness" describes the reason for the whole historical changes of periphrastic *do* from OE to PDE in light of markedness isomorphism of form and content. Moreover, from this point of view, the changes of *do* is relevant with word order change, so it can be included in the procedure of language paradigm change from syntactic to analytic.

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The Changes in the Use of Periphrastic *Do* 17

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