URBANISATION, SUPRALOCALISATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERIPHRASTIC DO IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND *

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Abstract An increasing body of studies point to supralocalisation processes being an important factor in the emergence and development of written Standard English, which largely took place from the Late Middle English to the Late Modern English period (c. 1400–1700). Given that the south-east area, with its metropolis London, played an important role in this development, it is not surprising that this region has received much attention by English historical linguists and philologists. The current paper shifts the focus to written English in the important regional centres of York (North), Bristol (Southwest), and Coventry (West Midlands) in the same period to explore potential supralocalisation processes, which in turn help to further our understanding of the underlying standardisation processes of written English. Couched within the field of historical (socio)linguistics and based on new manuscript material from these urban centres, this paper combines qualitative and quantitative approaches with the philological method to present new findings on the development of periphrastic DO, paying particular attention to the language-external factors place and text type. The results, in line with previous studies, reveal that periphrastic DO primarily occurs in affirmative declaratives and to a lesser extent in negative sentences in all investigated text types in the different urban centres over the period 1400–1700. However, in contrast to earlier findings, no clear rise-fall pattern emerges, and it is difficult to determine a path of supralocalisation.

1 Introduction

In the history of the English language, the period 1400–1700 is strongly associated with the emergence and development of written Standard English, in which supralocalisation processes played a key role. Multiple studies on the standardisation of written languages in the Early Modern period have previously noted the importance of supralocalisation processes (see for instance Nevalainen 2000 for English; Deumert & Vandenbussche 2003 for various Germanic languages; Hendriks, Ehresmann, Howell & Olson 2018 for Dutch). Nevalainen (2000: 338) describes supralocalisation as "the spread of a linguistic feature from its region to neighbouring areas", whereas Britain (2010: 193), who approaches it from a synchronic perspective, defines supralocalisation as "the process by which, as a result of mobility and dialect contact, linguistic variants with a wider socio-spatial currency become more widespread at the expense of more localised forms". In this paper, we follow the latter in their definition of supralocalisation, while adding that, in historical linguistics, the role of dialect contact as a result of social, geographical, and textual mobility (see Moore 2019) is highly relevant given the focus on written language. The Early Modern period in particular saw an increase in these types of mobility, in part due to the growing literacy levels as well as the increased use of the vernacular in writing. These developments eventually led to a reduction in linguistic variation and the emergence of supralocal forms on various linguistic levels (see Milroy & Milroy 1985).

In English, a supralocal written form did not exist before the end of the fourteenth century; rather, the language was characterised by local and regional dialects as writing systems that had largely disappeared by the beginning of the sixteenth century (Benskin 1992: 71). By 1700, spelling and grammar books had been published aimed at codifying and thus standardising the written English language. The period associated with the standardisation of written English saw the shift from the feudal system to a money-based market system, as well as a rise in urbanisation and the concurrent increase in migration and geographical as well as social mobility across England. This development also had an effect on the social order, namely occupational specialisation and the rise of guilds. Greater towns such as London, York and Bristol attracted ecclesiastical foundations and in addition had at least one school (Kermode 2000: 445). In fact, between c. 1400 and the mid-sixteenth century, a shift can be observed in English towns in the provision of education from ecclesiastical to lay hands. More generally, urban vitality as well as regional significance meant that literacy levels were higher, which in turn led to increased text production. With regard to the standardisation of written English, it is therefore not surprising that the traditional account of the devel-

opment of written Standard English attributes an important role to London in shaping the standard form as the metropolis was the national seat of government and justice (see e.g. Benskin 2004; Wright 2000; Wright 2020 for critical accounts on the so-called single-ancestor theory related to London). However, in order to better understand what role different urban places with relatively high levels of text production played in the spread of a supralocal form of English, and in turn how the written standard developed, a systematic investigation and comparison of data from different important regional centres is needed. The largest ones after London around the start of the period under investigation, i.e. 1400–1700, were, in decreasing order of population size, York, Bristol, Coventry, and Norwich (Dyer 2000: 237). Within this context, it is the aim of the current paper to investigate supralocalisation processes by focusing on language variation and change in the regional centres of York (North), Bristol (Southwest), and Coventry (West Midlands) in the period 1400–1700.

The linguistic study presented here is part of the ongoing project Emerging Standards: Urbanisation and the Development of Standard English, c. 1400–1700 (EMST) that focuses on the role that regional urban centres play in the supralocalisation of national linguistic norms. The approach taken in the project, and in this paper, is to systematically investigate linguistic features in written varieties of regional centres that are associated with high levels of literacy and text production. The investigation and comparison of linguistic features across time, text type and place, which are based on newly compiled corpora of manuscript material from different urban archives, contributes to a better understanding of the supralocalisation processes related to written English that took place during the Late Medieval and Early Modern English periods. As the empirical data used for the study are based on manuscript material, a philological and qualitative approach that also considers the textual history of the data is taken.

The linguistic feature under investigation in this paper is periphrastic DO (see also Fonteyn, Budts and Manjavacas, this volume), which is considered to have been regulated during the period 1500–1800 (see Ellegård 1953; Garrett 1998), after which it settled into its modern "neat distribution" in the nineteenth century (Garrett 1998: 284) and became part of the standard variety (Rissanen 1999: 239). The historical development of periphrastic DO, including its use in different syntactic constructions, has in the past few decades been increasingly considered in light of extra-linguistic factors such as text type, region, mode (i.e. either written or spoken) and social class (see Rissanen 1991; Rissanen 1999; Nurmi 1999; Söderlund 2017). However, very few studies have considered its development in the context of supralocalisa-

tion and standardisation processes to date (a noteworthy exception to this is Nurmi 1999: Ch. 6). More generally, as noted by Wright (1996: 113), in the context of standardisation processes, the role of syntax is not yet understood to the same extent as for example orthography, and despite more research on the role of syntax in this light (e.g. Wright 2000), this remains the case today. Therefore, the urban corpora of the Emerging Standards project serve as the ideal basis for further investigation into the development of periphrastic DO, particularly with regard to different places and text types.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 briefly presents the findings from previous studies on the general development of periphrastic DO until 1700. Section 3 describes the urban vernacular data sets of Bristol, Coventry and York that serve as the basis for the empirical study of periphrastic DO. It furthermore describes the approach taken to investigate the data. Section 4 presents the findings from the respective cities and discusses the results in relation to previous relevant studies and supralocalisation processes. Finally, the concluding remarks in Section 5 will consider the limitations of the study and provide an outlook for future research.

2 Development of periphrastic DO up until 1700

In Present-day English, as well as in Late Modern English, DO-support (or "dummy do", see Wright 1991: 469) can be used as the "(empty) operator" in various verbal constructions that lack one (Denison 1993: 255; also see Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik 1985: 133–134; Nurmi 1999: 15). It is used in finite clauses showing negation (*she did not go* vs. *she went not*), inversion (*does he run?* vs. *runs he?*), post-verbal ellipsis, i.e. as a substitute verb, also known as code (*she wrote a book and he did too* vs. *she wrote a book and he wrote a book too*), and emphasis (*he did say it* vs. *he said it*). These four constructions are often collectively named the NICE qualities (Negation, Inversion, Code and Emphasis), and three of them are periphrastic as DO takes a full lexical verb: negation, inversion, and emphasis. During the Early Modern and Late Modern English periods (c. 1500–1900), periphrastic DO was used in four constructions: affirmative declaratives and imperatives (nowadays mostly connected to emphasis), questions (inversion), and negative sentences (Rissanen 1999: 240–248).

Before DO was used in these constructions, it was used as a full lexical verb (factitive DO), to substitute another lexical verb (Code), or to imply a causal relation between a subject and object (causative DO). An example of the latter is *þe king dede þe mayden arise* ('the king did/made the maiden rise') (Fischer 1992: 271). These three uses of DO were used as early as the Old English period, and continued to be used in the Middle English period, along-

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side the emerging periphrastic construction. This subsequently resulted in cases of what is often called ambiguous periphrastic DO (see Ellegård 1953 and Denison 1985 on ambiguous or equivocal/vague periphrastic DO), as for some time –especially in the Late Middle English period –it was difficult to determine whether DO was used in a periphrastic construction or to convey a causal relation. For example, *he dude writes sende* ('he did/had letters send/t') (Fischer 1992: 271), can be interpreted either way. Cases where no such ambiguity arose are referred to as unambiguous periphrastic DO, which only began to spread over the course of the fifteenth century in affirmative declaratives. The most significant increase seems to have occurred between 1460 and 1500 (Rissanen 1991: 332, based on the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts), with the majority of cases appearing in sermons and mystery plays, though Nurmi (1999: 87) found a slight decrease in use in the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (CEEC) over the course of the fifteenth century. As regards the function of periphrastic DO at this time, Wright (1991: 488) states that "its function is neither textually clear nor grammatically established", and – based on a stylistic analysis of DO in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* –suggests that it appears to have been "cohesive in narrative, highlighting in dialogue". Rissanen (1991: 333) indicates that such a functional difference would support the increase of periphrastic DO in sixteenth-century writing, as well as allow for "a separate and earlier existence of the periphrasis in spoken discourse" (see also Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1988; Nurmi 1999: 16), which might help explain its relatively high frequency in sermons and mystery plays during the Late Middle English period.

The spread of periphrastic DO in written English continued at a higher rate in the sixteenth century, a period during which we also see the increase of periphrastic DO in negative declaratives (although Ellegård 1953 noticed a steep drop in negative declaratives during the last quarter of that century, which Warner 2005: 277-278 tentatively attributes to lexical complexity and age-grading) and inversion/questions, as well as the disappearance of causative (and thus also ambiguous) DO (Nurmi 1999: 23). Rissanen (1985: 165, 177) notes that periphrastic DO seems to have had two main uses at this point in time: a structural function in texts closer to written language and a more emotional one in texts closer to speech. The former could be used to create a sense of textual cohesion, and the latter to emphasise particular actions or strengthen arguments (see Nurmi 1999: 16). The relatively high frequency of periphrastic DO in trials from between 1500 and 1570 seems to further confirm this difference in function (see Table 1). Other text types in which periphrastic DO was increasingly used during the sixteenth century include diaries, educational writing, and scientific works.

Text Type	1500–1570	1570–1640	1640–1710
Trials	8.8	2.3	2.8
Science	3.4	5.3	1.1
Education	3.1	4.6	1.1
Diaries	2.8	4.2	4.2
Sermons	2.5	4.3	1.0
Comedies	2.3	0.8	0.2
Handbooks	1.1	3.0	0.4
Letters, off.	1.1	4.8	2.6
Fiction	1.1	1.0	0.9
Laws	0.8	1.3	1.2
Biographies	0.6	4.6	1.1
The Bible	0.6	1.2	(no sample)
Letters, priv.	0.4	3.3	1.3
Travelogues	0.4	3.7	0.3
History	0.1	1.5	0.3
Philosophy	(no sample)	3.2	(no sample)

Table 1 Frequency of periphrastic DO per 1,000 words in affirmative declaratives between 1500 and 1700, based on the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (modified from DO per 10,000 words from Rissanen 1991: 325).

The seventeenth century marks the beginning of the regulation process that would result in the present-day use of periphrastic DO, i.e. in questions and negated sentences (Nurmi 1999: 149), and in affirmative declaratives for emphasis (Rissanen 1999: 243). Its use in unemphasised affirmative declaratives decreased during this time and was eventually considered non-standard (see Klemola 1996; de Both 2019). The point in time when periphrastic DO in unemphasised affirmative declaratives started to decrease differs per text type (similar to its initial spread and subsequent use), and dates ranging between 1570 and 1650 have been suggested by various scholars working with different datasets (e.g. Ellegård 1953; Rissanen 1991; Nurmi 1999; Söderlund 2017). When considering the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts, we can observe a general decrease in use of periphrastic DO in most text types between the periods 1570–1640 and 1640–1710 (see Table 1), although its use in trials, laws and diaries seems to be relatively stable during this period.

3   Historical urban datasets under investigation and research method

3.1   Emerging Standards datasets

As the overall aim of the *Emerging Standards* Project is to investigate supralocalisaton processes, manuscript sources from different urban centres have served as the basis for the investigation. By transcribing new Late Middle English and Early Modern manuscript material from the cities of Bristol, Coventry, and York, as well as coding the transcriptions with a high level of detail, more philologically accurate data would be made available for historical linguistic research. While some relevant sources are available in edited format, they are primarily aimed at historians and details of linguistic relevance have not been retained systematically. The regional centres were different administrative entities with somewhat different roles, and the data available, as well as the dates of production, are therefore not fully comparable. The Coventry Corpus contains mostly civic records in the form of selected texts from the two local Leet Books (1421–1700), a collection of indentures (1499–1600), and a local guild book (1577–1627). while Bristol has civic records and collections of private correspondence. The York data consist of the York Memorandum Books (A/Y; 1377–1491) that contain guild ordinances, accounts of important events and other relevant information related to the conduct of the city, the York Corpus Christi Plays from the second half of the fifteenth century (see Beadle 2009),[1] and merchant letters related to the York Merchant Adventurers (late fifteenth century to mid-seventeenth century). Despite the challenges that come with such text-type and date differences, which are common in historical linguistics, the available data and the comparisons that it allows us to draw help gain new insights into supralocalisation processes – but a careful consideration of the data and their textual history are however necessary.

3.1.1   Bristol dataset

The Bristol data of the present study cover the period 1404–1711. The texts covering the fifteenth century primarily concern civic records in the form of guild ordinances that are held by the Great Red Book of Bristol (henceforth GRB) and the Little Red Book of Bristol (henceforth LRB) and some of the earliest Bristiolian records in English. The sixteenth century texts are all from a volume called the Council Ordinances of Bristol (henceforth COB), which appears to be a continuation of LRB and GRB and thus contains very similar records.

A note of caution is needed when it comes to the precise dating of texts

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1 The York Corpus Christi Plays will not be considered in this paper.

from the COB, as the entries from the first half of the century appear to be later fair copies from an earlier volume that is now missing. Based on notes found in the margins of the copy, it can be surmised, however, that the fair copies were made no earlier than 1506 and no later than 1570 (see Stanford 1990: xviii for a more detailed discussion). Thus, the texts are representative of the sixteenth century at the least, but it is nevertheless important to remember that we cannot exclude the possibility that a later scribe may have modernized some of the text when he copied it. Unfortunately, we know very little about the scribes who penned down the civic records. What we do know is that town clerks and recorders oversaw what was recorded and archived, both were generally well versed in legal matters and written conventions of the law (Bevan 2013: 17).

The data covering the seventeenth century consist of private letters from two major collections: the Southwell papers and the Ashton Court collection. The Southwells were a well-to-do family that had property in Kingsweston, just outside of Bristol (Barnard 2004). It is the first two volumes of the collection that are of interest as they provide late seventeenth-century letters that were written in Bristol. The Ashton Court collection contains some letters from the second half of the sixteenth century, but most letters date back to the first half of the seventeenth century. Most letters were written by and addressed to members of the Smythe family. The Smythes were originally merchants who, in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, acquired wealth and fame through land investments and intermarriage with nobility, the landed gentry and other hight society families. The family became very influential in the Bristol area and even had close ties with the royal court (Bantock 1982; Bettey 1982; Bettey 2004; Vanes 1974).

Interestingly, the largest number of letters from the Ashton Court collection was written by women, none of whom appear to have made use of an amanuensis. The bulk consist of letters written by Elizabeth Smythe to her son Thomas Smythe, as well as a set of letters by Mary Smythe who primarily writes to her brother Thomas Smythe. The letters appear informal, intimate, and much reflective of colloquial language.

3.1.2 Coventry dataset

The Coventry dataset for this paper consists of four sources, all of which can be grouped under the label 'civic records': (i) the Coventry Leet Book (1421–1555), (ii) a collection of 36 indentures (1499–1600), (iii) the Cordwainers Company Roll Book and Register (1577–1627), and (iv) the second Coventry Leet Book (1588–1700). The first Leet Book comprises a variety of documents created for Coventry's local leet council during the fifteenth and six-

teenth centuries, and predominantly contains copies of administrative texts pertaining to the city council, with mayoral elections and court sittings forming the majority of its contents. It furthermore includes copies of official letters, reports, by-laws and other legal documents relating to council matters (see Harris 1907-1913). The collection of indentures includes a variety of different texts that concern legally binding agreements (e.g. leases, grants, sales). The local town clerk and recorder were likely involved in the creation of these documents given their legal expertise, and the handwriting indicates that an anonymous group of scribes (likely working for/with the town clerk) wrote down the majority of the texts. As regards the Cordwainers Company Roll Book and Register, nothing is currently known about its compilers and scribes, other than the fact that they were members of the local Cordwainers guild. The book is a collection of ordinances and rules for the guild written mostly in 1577, with some additional material being written between 1569 and 1596, as well as in the early seventeenth century. Lastly, the second Coventry Leet Book was written over the period 1588–1834, and, similar to the first Leet Book, concerns a collection of mayoral elections and court sittings, as well as orders and rules regarding life in the city as they were proclaimed by the local leet council. As the *Emerging Standards* project investigates the vernacular in different urban centres up until 1700, only texts up until then are considered. Furthermore, since a transcription of the entire volume for the period 1588–1700 was beyond the scope of the project, a selection of entries was made based on (i) the amount of usable data, and (ii) the chronological distribution of the different entries.

3.1.3   York dataset

The York dataset used in this paper consists of two sources, namely the A/Y York Memorandum Book (1377–1491) and merchant correspondence from the late fifteenth century to 1647. The A/Y York Memorandum Book contains a range of different text types pertaining to the daily affairs in the city of York such as guild ordinances, accounts of important events and general information on conduct in the city (see Sellers 1912; Stevens & Dorrell 1974: 45). The A/Y manuscript, which was used as a working book and was corrected by several generations of civic officials, does not necessarily list its entries in chronological order. Even though the entries are in several different hands, it has been argued that the common clerk Roger Burton (1415–1435) was involved in the compilation (for a detailed study of York's civic records, see O'Brian 1999). The total number of words from the A/Y manuscript under investigation here amount to c. 33,000 words.

The merchant correspondence is related to the York Merchant Adventur-

ers Guild, which was one of the most influential guilds in overseas trade since the later Middle Ages. The company was founded in 1357 in the form of its precursor Fraternity and Guild of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, into which the Mistery of Mercers was incorporated by Henry VI in 1430. As Smith (1990: vii) argues, "the continuity of the Company with an unbroken history [...] has obviously assisted the survival of its documentary sources", including the Early Modern English trade correspondence. The greatest part of the data, i.e. 78 of 104 letters, dates from the sixteenth century and concerns "the trading activities of the Company and its relations with other trading companies, towns, and organisations" (Smith 1990: 17). Accordingly, the trade correspondence under investigation is here divided into locations based on the respective merchant organisations (Table 2).

Collection and dates	Letters	Words
Easterlings (3 late 15th c.; 1578)	4	1,250
Norwich (1509/10)	1	544
Antwerp (1549–1580)	46	14,000
London (1560–1581)	23	7,835
Hamburg (1568–1579)	8	2,680
Danzig (1646–1647) - Hutchinson	22	7,038
Total	104	33,347

Table 2   Trade Correspondence from the York Merchant Adventurers' Guild.

While all of the data are closely linked to the dealings of the York Merchant Adventurers' Guild, it has not been possible so far to identify the majority of the merchant letter writers' place of origin. One letter writer could, however, clearly be identified and linked to York. More specifically, the York merchant adventurer and freeman James Hutchinson junior (life dates unknown) wrote his letters during a stay in Danzig in 1646–1647 and addressed them to Joseph Oley in Königsberg. Hutchinson's letters, which are composed in a note style and therefore often lack pronouns (which would be *I* or *we* in most cases), provide information concerning the arrival and departure of ships with cloth from England and discuss the contemporary market situation (see Bisset 1991). Except for the findings related to Hutchinson, we refrain from making strong claims related to York with regard to the merchant correspondence data. Despite this unsure variable, the results allow us to shed new light on the development of periphrastic DO.

3.2 Method

To scrutinise the use of periphrastic DO, we considered all possible variants of DO in periphrastic constructions, of which the following occur in the corpus: *do, doo, doe, doth, dooth, doeth, dose, dothe, doithe, did, dide, didden, dyd, dyde, dud* and *dudde*. Regarding the use of periphrastic DO in the *Emerging Standards* Corpus, it is almost exclusively used in two constructions: affirmative declaratives and negated statements. Only two examples of inversion occur (see Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.3 below). As such, the focus of this paper is on periphrastic DO in affirmative and negated declaratives between 1400 and 1700. Furthermore, any complications that may arise when scrutinising verbal forms such as ambiguity regarding subject-verb agreement, number and mood do not apply for this analysis. We considered all instances of periphrastic DO regardless of number, mood or tense. Lastly, we present our findings on periphrastic DO relative to the total number of words in each respective source (see also Nurmi 1999: Ch. 6).

4 PERIPHRASTIC DO IN THE *EMERGING STANDARDS* CORPUS

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Periphrastic DO in the urban vernacular of Bristol

Table 3 presents an overview of periphrastic DO in affirmative and negative declarative sentences as found in the Bristol data over the period 1404–1711. It reveals that unambiguous periphrastic DO in both affirmatives and negatives were very rare in fifteenth-century Bristolian civic records. This seems to further corroborate earlier findings that, at the time, periphrastic DO was predominantly used in text types closer to spoken registers such as sermons and mystery plays (see Section 2).

It is interesting to note here that there were 6 cases of either causative or ambiguous DO, most of which occurred in the second half of the fifteenth century. Example (1) can be interpreted as a causative since the lexical verb *brynge* occurs in a simple verb construction and then repeated in a DO+infinitive construction:

(1)   item it is ordeyned and aſſented þat no ſtranger of þe ſeide Crafte **brynge** nor **do brynge** no barell nor veſſel of þe ſeide Crafte into þis franchiſe of briſtowe

       'In the same manner, it is ordained and assented that no stranger of the said craft **brings** nor **do bring** a barrel, nor a vessel of the said craft into this franchise of Bristol'   (LRB, 1439)

Source	Subperiod	Words	Per. DO (aff.)	Per. DO (neg.)
Great and Little	1404–1450	16,538	3 (0.18)	1 (0.06)
Red Books	1451–1500	16,975	0	3 (0.18)
Council	1506–1550	4,964	16 (3.2)	2 (0.4)
Ordinances	1551–1598	23,651	49 (2.07)	9 (0.38)
	1548–1579	3,209	9 (2.8)	0
Correspondence	1600–1650	19,988	25 (1.25)	7 (0.35)
	1651–1711	6,057	12 (1.98)	1 (0.17)
Total	1404–1711	57,869	111	19

Table 3   Periphrastic DO in the Bristol Corpus (1404–1711) (frequency/1000 words in brackets).

This construction, i.e. [VERB + and/(n)or + DO + VERB] occurs more often in a jussive/mandative context, and appears to reflect the "doubling up of terms [...] in order to make provision for all possible cases" (Stein 1990: 26), something that holds particularly true for civic records and legislative texts.

As concerns the sixteenth-century civic records, Table 3 shows that negative declarative DO is much rarer than affirmative DO. In contrast to the fifteenth century, there was not a single case of ambiguous or causative DO, which is in line with previous research (see Section 2). In the second half of the sixteenth century, there appears to be a slight decline in the use of periphrastic DO in the Bristol data, but as mentioned in Section 3.1.1, some caution is needed, as the data from the first half may actually concern fair copies that could have been created as late as 1570. What is more, the word count of the first half is considerably lower, which might skew the normalized frequencies somewhat.

It is noteworthy that all fifteenth-century cases of periphrastic DO and about 62 percent of the sixteenth-century periphrastic DO cases occur in a jussive/mandative context, which supports earlier observed tendencies to use periphrastic DO in this context (see Stein 1990: Ch. 2):

(2)   Item it is ordeyned and commaunded that no owner of
ſhippe, maiſter nor maryner **do** fromhenſforthe **take** any pilate to
bringin or owte thir ſhipps

'In the same manner it is ordained and commanded that no ship
owner, master, nor mariner **do** from henceforth **take** any pilate to

       bring in or out their ships'   (COB, 1551)

(3)   yf the Somme or vallue of ſuche Orphans porcion **doe amounte** aboue the Somme of fyve hundred poundes then the ſaid Clarke ſhall take for his fees [⋯]

     'If the sum or value of such orphans ʼ portion **do amount** above the sum of five hundred pounds then the said clerk shall take for his fees [⋯]'   (COB, 1557)

As can be gathered from Table 3, a small portion of the letter collection dates back to the latter half of the sixteenth century, which allows for a comparison with patterns as found in the civic records from that time period. Though it is difficult to say anything conclusive based on the small number of words for the letter corpus in this time period, it is interesting to note that seven of the nine instances occur with emotive or evidential verbs (see also Ellegård 1953: 172 and Nurmi 1999: 93). This is in contrast to the preferred usage in the more formal legal language of the council ordinances and seems supportive of previously found evidence for two distinctive uses of periphrastic DO (see Section 2). It is also in this period that we find the first and only example of inversion in the Bristol corpus, which is most likely to be interpreted as an imperative construction with an overtly expressed imperative subject:

(4)   Or mr Kelwey **do** you open the letter and then cawſe som expert attorney to enrowle the ſeyd fyne

     'Or mr Kelwey **do** [you] open the letter and then cause some expert attorney to enrol the said fine'   (1548, John Smythe)

With regard to the seventeenth century letters, the decrease of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives is more or less in line with Rissanen's (1991: 325) observation for private letters in the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts of that same period. When it comes to negative DO, however, there does not appear to be a tendency toward regulation yet, as we observe a decrease in its use in the second half of the seventeenth-century. Further research might shed light on whether the type of verb plays a role as well, since previous studies have found that typically emotive or evidential verbs like *know, doubt, care, mistake* and *speak* long resisted periphrastic DO in negative declaratives (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1985: 135).

4.1.2 Periphrastic DO in the urban vernacular of Coventry

The use of periphrastic DO in the four above-mentioned sources from Coventry in the period 1400–1700 is presented in Table 4. As regards the word distribution per source, for the first Leet Book most of the data (c. 80 percent) concerns the period 1421–1500. Similarly, roughly 80 percent of the collection of indentures are from the period 1550–1600, leaving c. 10,700 words for the period 1499–1554. With regard to the third major source, the second Leet Book, the data is more evenly spread out, with c. 8,400 words per subperiod of 37 years on average.

Source	Subperiod	Words	Per. DO (aff.)	Per. DO (neg.)
Leet Book I	1421–1500	21,257	1 (0.05)	0
	1501–1554	5,401	1 (0.19)	0
Collection of indentures	1499–1550	5,321	7 (1.32)	2 (0.38)
	1551–1572	11,870	7 (0.59)	1 (0.08)
	1573–1600	11,326	42 (3.71)	1 (0.08)
Cordwainers Company Book	1577	3,831	5 (1.31)	0
	1603–1627	932	2 (2.15)	0
Leet Book II	1588–1625	8,129	25 (3.08)	4 (0.49)
	1626–1660	8,395	12 (1.43)	2 (0.24)
	1661–1700	8,559	66 (7.71)	4 (0.47)
Total	1421–1700	58,363	166	14

Table 4 Periphrastic DO in the Coventry Corpus (1421–1700) (frequency/1000 words in brackets).

First, this overview reveals that periphrastic DO in Early Modern Coventry seems to have been used chiefly in affirmative declaratives, with only a handful of instances occurring in negated constructions. Second, by the end of the Middle English period, unambiguous periphrastic DO was practically never used in civic records from Coventry: only one example has been found in the first Leet Book, in an entry dated 1458. Furthermore, in contrast to the findings from Bristol, only one example of causative DO and one example of ambiguous DO have been found in Coventry, both in a 1421 entry in the Leet Book. Example 5 concerns the ambiguous case, in which DO can be interpreted both as semantically empty and part of a periphrastic construction, but also as a causative, i.e. that no man causes a hedge to be made (by someone else).

(5)   And yat no man **do make** ony hegge be viij foote [h]yghe

> 'And that no man **do make** any hedge be 8 foot [h]igh'   (Leet Book, 1421)

From 1500 until 1572 then, there was a relatively low frequency of periphrastic DO in civic texts from Coventry, with the feature occurring only 0.19 and 0.81 times per 1000 words in the first Leet Book and the indentures respectively. Compared to many text types from the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts for the period 1500–1570, this average from Coventry is much lower, although for the indentures it is very much in line with the text type 'laws' (i.e. the Statutes of the Realm) from that period (0.8 times per 1000 words; see Rissanen 1991: 325). This discrepancy between the Leet Book and the indentures could indicate that there was little overlap between the people involved in their creation, although the two sources also differ in terms of text type: the Leet Book contains more writings of a 'reporting' nature, as opposed to the indentures, which all concern legally binding agreements containing many fixed phrases that were added to "make provision for all possible cases" (Stein 1990: 26).

After 1572 there is a general increase in use of periphrastic DO in Coventry, although the frequency varies depending on which texts and which periods are considered. One major factor contributing to the general increase of periphrastic DO in the collection of indentures concerns formulaic language use and fixed phrases (see also Nurmi 1999: 92–93), many of which include coordinating verb constructions such as DO *covenant and grant*, DO *demise, grant, set and let farm*, and DO *appear*, for example:

(6)   Towardes wich buylding and reparacions the ſaid Churche wardens **do Covenant and grant** by theſe presentes for them and their ſucceſſors wardens of the ſaid Churche, to and with the ſaid walter Pyle his executors and aſſignes to provide and fynd ſufficient great tymber ſo ofte as neede ſhall requier during the ſaid terme

'Towards which building and reparations the said church wardens **do covenant and grant** by those present before them and their successors wardens of the said church, to and with the said Walter Pyle his executors and assigns to provide and find sufficient great timber so often as need shall require during the said term' (Indenture 98, 1582–3, p. 1)

It seems likely that the scribes involved in the creation of these documents changed their preference in how to account for all possible (legal) scenarios that often needed to be addressed in legislative texts, be it because the

local town clerk instructed them to, or as a result of new scribes introducing new practices. Denison (1985: 57) also notes that "a number of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century examples of periphrastic DO are also followed by coordinated verbs", and points out that, even though periphrastic constructions comprise more words, there would be fewer inflections. Similar to the findings from Bristol, there appears to be a connection between the use of periphrastic DO and a jussive/mandative context.

Lastly, it is interesting to notice that, with regard to periphrastic DO in Early Modern Coventry, due to a significant increase in use in the last section of the second Leet Book (1661–1700), instead of a decline in unemphasised affirmative declaratives similar to that observed in other text types (see Section 2), there is an increase.

4.1.3 Periphrastic DO in the urban vernacular of York

The data under investigation in this section concerns the A/Y York memorandum book from the later Middle English period and trade correspondence from the Early Modern English period. As previously pointed out, the merchant letters from Danzig, dated to the middle of the seventeenth century, could clearly be determined as having been written by a merchant from York, while the results from the other letters need to be viewed with caution due to the unknown origins of the writers.

Source	Subperiod	Words	Per. DO (aff.)	Per. DO (neg.)
A/Y York M. B.	1377–1491	33,000	2 (0.06)	0
Easterl. (3 let.)	late 15th C.	983	0	0
Norwich (1 let.)	1509/10	544	2 (3.68)	0
Antwerp (46 let.)	1549–1580	14,000	23 (1.64)	6 (0.43)
London (23 let.)	1560–1581	7.835	16 (2.04)	1 (0.13)
Hamburg (8 let.)	1568–1579	2.680	7 (2.61)	0
Easterl. (1 let.)	1578	267	1 (3.75)	0
Danzig (22 let.)	1646–1647	7,038	3 (0.43)	4 (0.57)
Total (104 let.)	1377–1647	66,347	54	11

Table 5 Periphrastic DO in the York Corpus (1377–1647) (frequency/1000 words in brackets).

In Table 5, the results on periphrastic DO are presented according to place-related collection as well as subperiod. The earliest source, i.e. the A/Y York

Memorandum Book (1377–1491) contains two examples of periphrastic DO, both with the lexical verb *make*, in affirmative declaratives. Similar to Example 1 from Bristol, one of the instances can be interpreted as causative since the lexical verb *take* occurs as a simple verb construction before being repeated in a DO + infinitive construction, i.e. *make or do make*. The other *do make* occurrence, which is illustrated in Example 7, can be interpreted as an ambiguous construction where both a causative as well as a semantically empty interpretation is possible (see also Example 5 from Coventry).

(7) Therfore we in eſchewyng and puttyng downe of all ſuche miſruled perſones wol and ſtreitly charge you that immediatly after þe ſight of these oure lettres ye **do make** open proclamacions on oure behalfe

'Therefore we, in eschewing and putting down of all such misruled persons, will and straightly charge you that immediately after the sight of our letters you **do make** open proclamations on our behalf' (A/Y Memorandum Book, f. 298r).

In comparison to the Late Middle English York data, unambiguous periphrastic DO can be found in the trade correspondence from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Similar to the Bristol and Coventry data sets, the linguistic feature occurs predominantly in affirmative declarative constructions in the sixteenth century, e.g. *he doethe shippe*, *we doe finde*. The data do not suggest a preference for a certain verb type or formulaic construction. Given the low number of tokens and the fact that we are dealing with different kinds of collections, i.e. letters from multiple writers in the Antwerp, London and Hamburg collections versus one letter writer in the Danzig collection, it is difficult to make strong claims about the development of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives, apart from the fact that the feature's regular occurrence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be taken as evidence that it has manifested itself in this particular context. The majority of these affirmative declaratives are in the present tense and either occur with the first person plural *we* or the second person singular or plural *you*, which is not surprising given the text type under investigation (see Nurmi 1999 and Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2017 for a discussion and findings related to CEEC). If we consider periphrastic DO in negative constructions, i.e. [DO + not + lexical verb], which occurs eleven times in the data investigated, we can observe that DO is found in the Antwerp, London and Danzig letters. What is striking here is the use of DO by the York merchant Hutchinson in the mid-seventeenth-century data: His letters contain seven periphrastic DO examples in total, of which four occur in negative sentences. It appears that periphrastic DO in negative sentences had become more established in writ-

ing by the seventeenth century, which is in line with the existing account of periphrastic DO in negated statements (see Section 2). Lastly, the York Merchant Adventurers' data contain one case of inversion: *Doe you know or vnderstand of any brother or bretheren of this Company [...]* ('Do you know or understand of any brother or brothers of this company [...]') from a mid-sixteenth century letter. All in all, the findings support previous studies concerning the development of syntactic constructions, i.e. the majority of occurrences are in affirmative declaratives, but negative constructions and one question can also be found.

4.2 Discussion

The data from the *Emerging Standards* corpora cover, broadly speaking, two text types: (i) civic records and (ii) ego-documents. As previous research in historical linguistics has revealed that text type is a significant factor when interpreting language variation and change (also in relation to the use of periphrastic DO, see for instance Nurmi 1999; Rissanen 1999), we pay special attention to this factor in the comparative discussion of the findings.
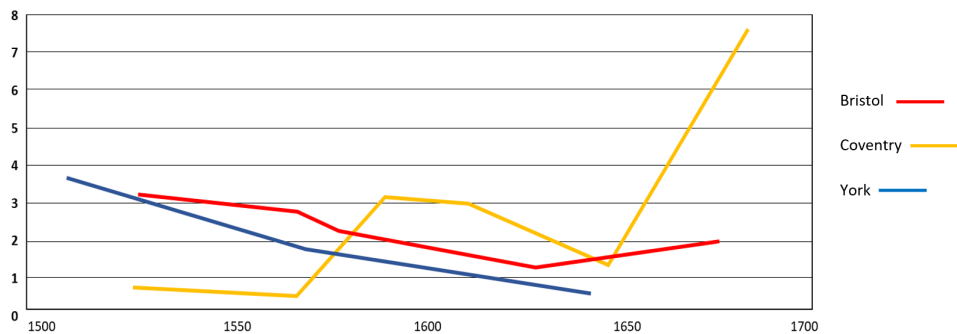
Figure 1   Overview of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives in York (blue), Bristol (red) and Coventry (yellow) per 1000 words between c.1400 and 1700.

Figure 1 visualises the findings on periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives, i.e. the majority of cases, between 1500 and 1700. Before this period, the feature is relatively rare in the investigated fifteenth-century urban sources (see Section 4.1), which almost completely comprise administrative and legislative texts. This is in line with previous research on periphrastic DO, as during this time it is chiefly found in text types generally considered closer to speech such

as sermons and mystery plays (see Section 2). In the following centuries, the linguistic feature was predominantly found in affirmative declaratives across the three urban datasets, although Figure 1 does not reveal a clear rise-fall pattern for any of the datasets such as found in the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (see Table 1) and CEEC. Instead, the patterns vary from urban dataset to urban dataset, tentatively indicating a slow fall pattern in York, a fall-rise pattern in Bristol, and an overall rise pattern in Coventry.

In sixteenth-century Bristol, the use of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives seemingly had already started to decrease in civic records in the second half of that century, which is partially in line with previous accounts (see Section 2), but in Coventry we witness an increase in similar texts from the same period. This increase continues well into the early seventeenth century, before seemingly decreasing again and subsequently increasing significantly, which differs from existing accounts for all text types. Of course, the datasets are small, and the observed differences between the subperiods are heavily dependent on local scribal practices and preferences, making it impossible to draw any definitive conclusions regarding these patterns. Additionally, as mentioned in Section 3.1.1, the Bristol data from the first half of the sixteenth century may concern copies created as late as 1570, and the word count from this period is significantly lower.

Concerning trade and private correspondence, the seemingly slow but steady decrease in use of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives in York cannot be considered indicative of any pattern, since the early sixteenth-century and seventeenth-century data consist of only one letter and 22 letters by a single individual respectively, and the majority of the data was written between 1549 and 1581. What does however become clear regarding the findings from this majority of the data from York is that they are similar to Nurmi's (1999: 102, 166) general findings from CEEC for the period 1540–1579, which contains data mostly from the London area and East Anglia, and reveal even slightly higher frequencies when compared to the northern area from CEEC (Nurmi 1999: 176). In Bristol the findings from private correspondence seem to indicate a fall-rise pattern from 1548–1579 into the first half of the seventeenth century, and then to the period 1651–1711. This partially corresponds to Nurmi's (1999: 166) general findings from CEEC, where a decrease in use can be observed going from the sixteenth century into the first half of the seventeenth century.

As regards the use of periphrastic DO in negated sentences, in civic records from Bristol and Coventry a slight increase over time can be observed (within the sixteenth century and from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century respectively), but due to the relatively low frequencies no clear pattern be-

comes apparent. This may also be due to the individual preferences of the author/scribe working on the different texts, resulting in fluctuating frequencies per subperiod. As Rissanen (1999: 245) points out, even in the eighteenth century, non-periphrastic negation was not uncommon, and it appears that neither Bristol, Coventry, nor York were leading the use of periphrastic DO in that construction. Concerning inversion/questions, it is interesting to note that, throughout the entire EMST corpus, only two examples were found, one in Bristol (imperative construction) and one in York.

Generally, the findings do not indicate that one urban centre was 'leading the change' with regard to the development of periphrastic DO, i.e. the feature occurs in affirmative declaratives and negated sentences in all urban centres, but without a clear overarching discernible pattern. In contrast, the findings on the third person singular indicative present tense inflections from the same urban datasets reveal that place (as well as text type) was an important underlying factor, and a supralocalisation pattern starting at York can be convincingly argued for, especially for correspondence (Gordon, Oudesluijs & Auer 2020). Other linguistic changes during the Early Modern English period where a supralocalisation pattern can be (tentatively) suggested include the diffusion of the subject form *you*, the spread of the noun subject of the gerund, and the decline of multiple negation (Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2017: 171–175). All of these changes can be argued to have been 'led' by London and/or the court, and so too the use of periphrastic DO in affirmative statements, where it seems that, at least in correspondence, other areas (i.e. the north and East Anglia) followed London and the court over the course of the seventeenth century by decreasing the use of periphrastic DO in this context (Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2017: 175). Interestingly, when considering the results from this paper in light of previous findings from the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts and CEEC (in which London and the South-east are over-represented), none of the urban centres seem to either follow or be behind the general rise-fall pattern. In fact, the only urban centre that hints at a decrease in use over time (i.e. York) is actually ahead in this development, as it seems to start as early as the sixteenth century. Of course, periphrastic DO was, generally speaking, not used as much in the north as it was in the south (Nurmi 2000: 387-391), which may explain why York appears to be 'leading' the change here. To reiterate, due to the limited amount of data and their distribution discussed in this paper, these findings should be viewed as indications at this point and are to be substantiated based on additional sources in the future.

5 Concluding remarks

It was the aim of this paper to investigate the use and development of periphrastic DO during the period 1400–1700 in a newly created corpus of different urban manuscripts in order to shed light on the occurrence of this feature in different constructions, text types and places of text production. This allows for a contribution to the ongoing discussion on supralocalisation processes of written English during the Late Middle English and Early Modern English periods. In line with previous studies, this comparative study has shown that only a few examples of periphrastic DO occur in the Late Middle English data, most of which are ambiguous in their meaning. Thereafter, periphrastic DO primarily occurs in affirmative declaratives and to a lesser extent in negative sentences in all investigated text types over the period 1500–1700. In contrast to studies on other linguistic features working with the same dataset (see Gordon et al. 2020), this study did not reveal any obvious supralocalisation patterns that could explain the occurrence and spread of periphrastic DO in different constructions, at least with regard to text type and region. The philological approach taken in this study suggests that certain intra-linguistic patterns related to the use of periphrastic DO, e.g. use of different pronouns, tense, choice of lexical verb and construction, could be text-type-, topic- or scribe-specific. While the findings do not present a neat supralocalisation story regarding the development of periphrastic DO, a more detailed and comparative analysis of language-internal factors may allow us to better explain some of the observed patterns in the data in the future. As regards further research concerning supralocalisation processes, a comparative study of other syntactic and morphological constructions will allow us to make more general claims about the development, speed and involvement of internal and external factors on different linguistic levels.

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