I know not of any reason why I should use *do*: on the structure of negative statements in modern English correspondence

Del ocaso del adverbio *not* al despertar del auxiliar *do*: la evolución de las estructuras negativas en inglés moderno

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Resumen: *A lo largo de las últimas décadas han sido numerosos los estudios lingüísticos centrados en la historia de la lengua inglesa, cobrando especial importancia los análisis de corpus, ya que estos ofrecen un acceso rápido a datos lingüísticos reales. La idea principal de este estudio es analizar la evolución de las diferentes estructuras gramaticales usadas para formar la negación en Inglés Moderno –que abarca de 1500 hasta 1900 aproximadamente– teniendo como objeto de estudio cartas públicas y privadas escritas entre los siglos XVI y XIX recopiladas en los diferentes corpus aquí incluidos. Los datos extraídos de estos corpus servirán para analizar, por un lado, la tendencia de uso de las dos construcciones de negación analizadas en el estudio –la negación adverbial, mediante el uso del adverbio not, y la negación perifrástica, con el auxiliar do– y, por otro, las posibles causas lingüísticas –sintácticas, semánticas– y sociales detrás de dicha tendencia.*

Palabras clave: *análisis de corpus, inglés moderno, negación*

Abstract: *In the last decades, many research studies in Linguistics have been focused on the history of the English language; in this field, corpora analyses have become increasingly important since they provide easy access to actual linguistic data. The main purpose of this study is to describe the evolution of the different grammatical structures used in negative statements in Modern English –which spans from 1500 to 1900, approximately–, by analysing public and private correspondence written between the 16th and the 19th centuries and included in the corpora selected for this study. The data extracted from these corpora will be used to describe the frequency of use of the two grammatical structures analysed –the do-less structure, which places the adverbial not after the verb, and do-periphrasis, which takes do as an auxiliary verb– and to establish the possible linguistic –syntactic, semantic – and social reasons which could justify such frequency of use.*

Keywords: *corpus analysis, Modern English, negative statements*

1. Introduction

Before the 15th century, the *do*-less structure (e.g. *give not*) was widely accepted as the norm in English to negate a verb. However, the use of *do* as a dummy auxiliary in negative and interrogative statements increased during the Early Modern English period and, by the beginning of the 18th century, *do*-periphrasis had become the norm in such statements[1].

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1 Different terms are used to refer to these two structures. The *do*-less structure is also known as non-periphrastic *do*, whereas *do*-periphrasis is known as *do*-support and periphrastic *do* (Dekeyser, 1992; Nurmi, 1999).

The origins and the rise of auxiliary *do* have been the focus of research of many linguists throughout the 20th century. *Do*-periphrasis has been described theoretically by Dekeyser (1992: 105), who links its increasing use to word order constraints –the adverbial *not* in *do*-less forms disrupted the SVO structure–, whereas others, such as Barber *et al.* (2012: 201), state that causative *do* developed a non-causative use in certain syntactic contexts, which finally grammaticalised in negative and interrogative statements (e.g. *do not give*). Other linguists have carried out corpora analyses describing the development of *do*-periphrasis (Nurmi, 1999).

Despite the rise of *do*-periphrasis, *do*-less forms were still used with some high-frequency verbs (e.g. *know*, *care*) until the 18th century. According to Rissanen (1999: 242): "it seems that combinations of these verbs with *not* were idiomatic and resisted the introduction of the periphrasis (*speak not*, *mistake not*)". A few corpus-based studies have described the behaviour of non-periphrastic *do* in different written texts after the establishment of *do*-periphrasis. Many of them have focused on letter-writing (Brorström, 1989), although some of them have analysed novels (Iyeiri, 2004) or have compared both (Curry, 1992).

Tieken (1987, in Beal, 2004: 72-75), whose research was also based on letter-writing, found that *know* and *doubt* resisted *do*-support more than others, possibly because *know not* and *doubt not* had become fixed expressions. Visser (1963: 1534) came up with a list of 26 verbs which still resist *do*-periphrasis in the 18th century[2]. Beal (*ibíd*.) stated that, in the 20th century, *do*-less forms are "confined to imperative use in idioms such as *forget-me-not*, although *I jest not* and *I kid you not* are still used as humorous archaisms in British English".

Nevertheless, the *do*-less structure is still present in some expressions in the 20th century (e.g. *I think not, I hope not*) –especially in spoken language–, which indicates that, even though the establishment of *do*-periphrasis terminated in the 18th century, non-periphrastic *do* most likely prevailed through the 19th century.

The present study aims at analysing the evolution of periphrastic and non-periphrastic *do* in letter-writing in the Modern English period (1470-1900). A special emphasis is put on the behaviour of these structures during the Late Modern English period (1770-1900), since previous research has only focused on their evolution until the 18th century.

2. Objectives

The present study focuses on the following objectives:

1. To compare the two main structures used in English to negate a verb in negative statements –*do*-less and *do*-periphrasis structures– by analysing their

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2 These verbs are *believe, care, change, deny, derive, desire, die, do, doubt, fear, give, insist, know, leave, mistake, perform, plead, pretend, proceed, prom, stand, stay, suffer, trow, value* and *wot*.

behaviour with certain verbs and their evolution from the beginning of the Early Modern English period (*ca*. 1470) and up to 1900.

2. To explain the reasons which account for the rise of *do*-periphrasis and the fall of *do*-less forms throughout such period, and demonstrate that some verbs (e.g. *know, care*) resisted *do*-support till the end of the 19th century, well after its use in negative statements had been first prescribed by grammarians.

3. To describe any syntactic and/or semantic difference which may explain why the *do*-less structure was used with certain verbs more frequently than with others.

3. Hypotheses

The hypotheses described here are based on the objectives established above and are as follows:

1. Present-Day English (PDE) presents a number of verbs which may take the *do*-less structure to negate a verb in certain syntactic contexts (e.g. *I hope not*, *I think it not*[3]); therefore, there are reasons to believe that this structure survived in negative statements longer than previously thought, i.e., it did not disappear throughout the 18th century, but was still used at the end of the Late Modern English period, meaning that it would have coexisted with periphrastic *do* for more than four centuries.

2. The reason why the *do*-less structure was maintained well after *do*-periphrasis was established as the norm may lie in some differences in the use of both structures. For instance, certain verbs may have taken either *do*-less or *do*-periphrasis depending on the type of complementation that followed them. These differences, however, may have been only maintained during the first stages of periphrastic *do*; after this structure became the norm, it may have progressively assimilated the uses of non-periphrastic *do*, which would account for the fall of the *do*-less structure.

3. These differences in use could have also been semantic, i.e. depending on the meaning of a verb in a particular sentence, it could have taken either *do*-periphrasis or non-periphrastic *do*. This fact could be the reason why most of the verbs which retained the *do*-less structure longer were mental verbs (e.g. *doubt, hear*)[4].

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3 E.g.: extracted from the *British National Corpus* (BNC):
"A: We're not having too early a lunch are we?
B: I hope not."
4 In fact, the verbs which take the *do*-less structure in certain syntactic contexts in PDE are all mental verbs (e.g. *hope, think*).

4. Methodology

As mentioned in the Introduction, the *do*-less structure was widely used in the formation of negative statements till the mid-eighteenth century; in the meantime, periphrastic *do* had been in use from the 16th century onwards, which means that both structures coexisted for more than four centuries. Thus, the whole Modern English period (*ca*. 1470-1900) was taken into account in the analysis so as to provide a better description that could explain the rise and fall of periphrastic and non-periphrastic *do*, especially during the Late Modern English period, a time in which the development of *do*-less forms has not been studied much.

Eighteenth-century prescriptive grammars may have contributed to the development and pattern of use of these structures; however, the rules they prescribe do not always represent real language use. Therefore, it was considered more appropriate to carry out a corpus-based study to analyse these structures since all the examples found in a corpus are instances of real language use. Besides, little research has been done comparing these structures only in negative statements, especially using corpora, so the results of this study may provide new meaningful data. Also, the analysis was restricted to letters, both public and private, since they provide a better insight into what the real usages of these structures were. As Tieken & Dossena (2008: 7) state: "interaction in writing provides valuable insight into the linguistic choices of people who belonged to different social classes, into their shared beliefs about what was 'appropriate' and into the textual codes that should be followed as a result".

The total number of examples obtained for the whole period is 1359, being 491 of them instances of the *do*-less structure, whereas 868 of them are instances of *do*-support. All the examples were extracted from the Corpus of Early Modern English Correspondence Sampler (CEECS[5]) (Nevalainen *et al.*, 1998), divided into two sub-periods (the CEECS1, 1418-1596, and the CEECS2, 1600-1670[6]), the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts Extended Version (CLMETEV, 1735-1839) (De Smet, 2006) and the Late Modern English Prose Corpus (LModEP, 1860-1891[7]) (Denison *et al.*, 1994). The concordance programme *AntConc* was used to retrieve the examples; thanks to this programme, those examples out of the scope of the analysis were discriminated and the syntactic context of each example was easily analysed. Besides, each corpus had a different number of words, giving a total of 1,238,633 words for the Modern

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5 The acronyms used for the names of these corpora are conventional except for the Late Modern English Prose Corpus, which lacks a conventional acronym and has been made up by the author so that the corpus can be identified more easily.

6 The CEECS1 includes some letters dated before 1470; therefore, some of the examples analysed in the present study may be dated before that date.

7 Three of the examples extracted from this corpus come from Amberley's journal; they have also been analysed since journals and letters do not differ much in style.

English period (*vid. Fig. 1*). In order to obtain significant data and results, all figures were therefore normalised per 100,000 words[8].

CEECS1	CEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	Total
246,055	204,030	708,548	80,000	1,238,633

Fig. 1: Number of words in each corpus

Only the verbs which appeared negated with both *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis at least once in the CEECS were selected for this analysis. The reason for this procedure is that one of the objectives of this study was to analyse the evolution and compare the uses of both structures right from the rise of auxiliary *do* as an operator in negative statements; thus, only those verbs which took *do*-periphrasis at its earliest stages but maintained the use of the *do*-less structure would provide meaningful results. A total number of 49 verbs seem to have taken both structures at the beginning of the Early Modern English period[9]; however, most of them stopped taking *do*-less forms in favour of periphrastic *do* by the beginning of the 18th century, and the use of non-periphrastic *do* survived till the end of the 18th century only in 16 of them. Seven of these verbs were selected for the syntactic and semantic analysis because their figures were more significant and would provide a more detailed account of what may have happened to these structures throughout the Modern English period[10]. As mentioned before, the concordances obtained in *AntConc* were used for the syntactic analysis; however, the semantic analysis was carried out using the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED, online version), in which all the meanings and uses of a word are included, which helps considerably in any diachronic study of a language of these characteristics.

5. Results

5.1. *Do*-less *vs.* *do*-periphrasis in negative statements during the Modern English period

Fig. 2 illustrates the use of both structures during the Modern English period. It is clear that at the beginning of the Modern English period most of the verbs analysed in the present study take *do*-less forms in negative statements, whereas *do*-

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8 The data extracted from the CEECS1 and the CEECS2, commented in section 5.2.1., have been normalised by the total number of words of the CEECS so as to provide a more representative analysis of this period. Also, all normalised figures have been rounded off when needed.

9 The verbs analysed in the present study are *agree, appear, believe, bring, care, cease, come, command, conceive, deal, deceive, deny, desire, doubt, end, expect, fail, fear, find, give, go, hear,* help, *import, keep, know, let, like, love, make, marvel, mean, name, omit, please, resolve, say, see, send, serve, sound, stand, take, think, trust, understand, use, write* and *wonder*.

10 These verbs are *care, come, doubt, know, mean, see* and *write*.

periphrasis seems to be used occasionally; nevertheless, by the end of the period *do*-periphrasis has become the norm in negative statements and there are only a few instances in which the *do*-less form is used.

Fig. 2 also shows two turning points in the evolution of these structures. The first one is the mid-seventeenth century, a time in which the *do*-less structure reaches its peak, and also coincides with the incipient rise in the use of *do*-periphrasis; the second point of inflection is the mid-eighteenth century, a moment in which *do*-periphrasis reaches its peak and *do*-less bottoms out. As will be explained in the Discussion, this second point of inflection coincides with the publication of many eighteenth-century prescriptive grammars, which may have had an influence in the evolution of these structures.
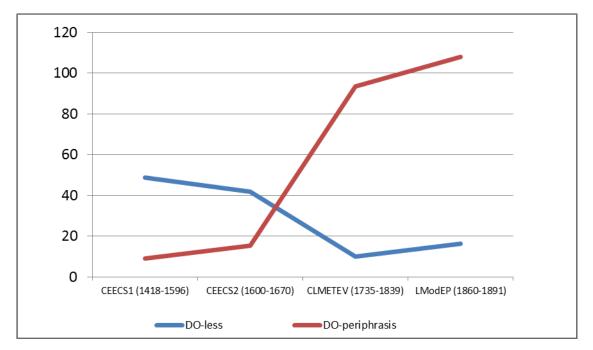

Fig. 2: The evolution of do-less and do-periphrasis during the Modern English period

Figs. 3 and *4* show, in figures, the tendency of each structure throughout the Modern English period: whereas the number of *do*-less examples progressively decreases, the number of examples of *do*-periphrasis gradually increases. Again, as shown in *Fig. 3*, there is a clear difference between the use of both structures in the CEECS1, which favours the *do*-less structure (48.83 *vs.* 9.05), and the LModEP, which favours *do*-support (108 *vs.* 16.25)[11].

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11 Even though the CLMETEV shows a higher number of examples than the LModEP (70 *vs.* 13 in the case of *do*-less and 662 *vs.* 94 in the case of *do*-periphrasis), the normalised figures in the LModEP are higher. This is due to the fact that the LModEP has fewer words than the rest of the corpora, which results in higher normalised figures, which are in turn less representative. Thus, the data provided in *Fig. 4* is, in the case of the LModEP, more representative of the period.

	CEECS1	CEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP
Do-less	48.83	41.69	9.86	16.25
Do-periphrasis	9.05	15.52	93.39	108

Fig. 3: Normalisation of total examples of do-less and do-periphrasis in each corpus

	CEECS1	CEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP
Do-less	220	188	70	13
Do-periphrasis	41	71	662	94

Fig. 4: Number of do-less and do-periphrasis examples in each corpus

Figs. 2, 3 and *4* provide a clear overview of how these two structures evolved during the Modern English period. As will be explained further, in a time span of four centuries, the situation regarding the construction of negative statements radically changed.

5.2. The use of do-less and do-periphrasis forms in the corpora[12]

5.2.1. Data analysis of the CEECS1 and the CEECS2

As mentioned before, the period the CEECS covers (15th-17th centuries) is characterised by the use of the *do*-less structure, which is much more common than the use of *do*-periphrasis. Whereas there are 408 instances of the *do*-less structure in the whole CEECS, *do*-periphrasis only presents 112 instances in such a corpus. Although this tendency is maintained in both the CEECS1 and the CEECS2, a comparison of the data extracted from both corpora will provide a better understanding of the evolution of these structures during the 15th-17th centuries.

In the case of the *do*-less structure, the CEECS2 presents some significant changes with respect to the CEECS1. The results conclude that the use of non-periphrastic *do* decreases with most verbs, including those with a high number of instances such as *care*, *come* or *doubt*; however, some verbs –*know, hear* or *see*– present more instances of this structure in the CEECS2 than in the CEECS1. In contrast, the use of *do*-periphrasis is rather low in both the CEECS1 and the CEECS2, although it increases slightly in the latter –it presents 41 and 7 1instances, respectively–. However, most verbs, either in the CEECS1 or the CEECS2, only take this structure once or

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12 Section 5.2.1. is based on a comparison of the CEECS1 and the CEECS2 – instead of presenting the results of the whole CEECS together, since the results would be less representative –, whereas section 5.2.2. does the same with the CLMETEV and the LModEP; however, both sections include comments on the evolution of both structures throughout the whole Modern English period, which means that all four corpora may be compared at some point.

twice –except for *know*[13], which takes it 10 times in the whole CEECS–, which means that these data are not representative enough, and just show an incipient use of this structure.

As mentioned above, the use of *do*-less in the CEECS is, overall, higher than that of *do*-periphrasis; in fact, there are 13 verbs in the CEECS1 which only take *do*-less forms (1a-c), whereas only 5 do so with *do*-periphrasis (1d-e). This situation changes in the CEECS2, in which 9 verbs take only the *do*-less structure (1f) and 9 others only take periphrastic-*do* (1g). Besides, the use of *do*-periphrasis increases in the CEECS2 from 9.05 to 15.52, whereas the use of *do*-less decreases from 48.83 to 41.69. It is clear that, by the end of the 17th century, the *do*-less structure is still the norm, but the use of *do*-periphrasis has risen and the structure begins to be favoured.

(1) (a) he ys sensles that *conceaveth not* that yf the king of Spain…

(b) If I *deserue not* your amitie persecute me as your foe.

(c) his words she *understood not*.

(d) I *doe not beleave* it.

(e) I *dyd not name* any summe unto them.

(f) I *cease not* here to pray.

(g) I *did not* absolutely *denie* it.

5.2.2. Data analysis of the CLMETEV and the LModEP

The data extracted from the CLMETEV and the LModEP, which comprehend the 18th and 19th centuries, show a progressive decline in the use of *do*-less forms during this period, whereas the use of *do*-periphrasis clearly rises. In fact, there are only 93 examples of the *do*-less structure in these corpora, which is a rather low figure, especially when compared to the 756 instances of *do*-periphrasis found in the same corpora.

As mentioned at the end of Section 5.2.1., by the end of the 17th century the use of *do*-less considerably declined in favour of *do*-periphrasis. This idea is reinforced thanks to the data extracted from the CLMETEV, which covers the 18th century and part of the 19th century. At this time, most verbs rarely take the *do*-less structure, which had been progressively assimilated by *do*-periphrasis in negative statements. Indeed, 38 out of 49 verbs included in this study appear in the CLMETEV, all of them presenting at least one instance of *do*-periphrasis (2a); in contrast, 16 verbs in the CLMETEV take non-periphrastic *do* (2b), and only 5 present more than one example (2c). Moreover, none of these 16 verbs take *do*-less forms exclusively, whereas 22 verbs only take *do*-periphrasis (2d).

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13 *Know* is the most frequent verb in the corpora. Section 5.2.3. provides a more detailed analysis of *know* in the corpora, and the possible reasons for its use are included in the Discussion.

(2) (a) I went this morning to visit my lord, but *did not find* him.

(b) She *took not* the smallest notice of them!

(c) She *says not* a word of what service she wishes for Hannah.

(d) I believe he *did not expect* to keep at Rome this year, 1742.

The fact that periphrastic *do* seems to have taken the lead in the construction of negative statements is even more evident in the LModEP. By the end of the 19th century, the 20 verbs appearing in the LModEP take *do*-periphrasis in negative statements (2e); only 5 of those verbs resist *do*-periphrasis, although they rarely take *do*-less forms, having a stronger *do*-periphrasis counterpart (2f-g).

(e) he has applied it constantly because he knows I *do not like* it.

(f) But how to manage it I *see not*.

(g) of which I *don't see* the meaning very clearly.

	Know	**Love**	**Mean**	**See**	**Write**
CLMETEV	42	1	1	0	0
LModEP	9	1	1	1	1

Fig. 5: Number of examples of the most resistant verbs to do-periphrasis in the CLMETEV and the LModEP

Fig. 5 shows that *know* is again the verb which appears the most with both structures in the CLMETEV and the LModEP. It is also striking that many verbs which still resist *do*-periphrasis in the CLMETEV are either action verbs (e.g. *come*, *take*, *write*) or mental verbs (e.g. *care*, *doubt* or *mean*)[14], whereas those which resist this structure in the LModEP are all mental verbs, except for *write*[15].

In short, it can be said that the use of non-periphrastic *do* in the construction of negative statements is the norm up to the 17th century; however, the use of *do*-support starts to rise by the end of that century and radically increases during the 18th and 19th centuries, when its use in such statements becomes the norm –except for *know*, the rise of *do*-periphrasis and the fall of *do*-less is a constant in all verbs–. Nevertheless, after four centuries of coexistence, there may have been a time during the Modern English period in which there were some differences in the use of these structures that could explain why the *do*-less structure was maintained till the end of the 19th, and even after.

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14 *Fig. 5* only illustrates the five verbs which resists *do*-periphrasis the most in the LModEP and compares the instances of such verbs in both the CLMETEV and the LModEP.

15 These ideas will be developed further in Section 5.3.8. and the Discussion.

5.3. Verbs which take *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis forms: a syntactic and semantic analysis

Sections 5.2.1. and 5.2.2. have dealt with the rise and fall of *do*-periphrasis and *do*-less forms in the corpora; this section, however, will provide a syntactic and semantic analysis of some verbs, which may help determine whether there was a time in which *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis had different uses or, in contrast, these structures were always used interchangeably. The verbs selected for this analysis are those whose figures are more significant and may give a deeper insight into what may have happened to these structures. These verbs are *care*, *come*, *doubt*, *know*, *mean*, *see* and *write*[16]. Even though all these verbs tend to take *do*-periphrasis more than *do*-less forms, they still resist periphrastic *do* more than others, which might be due to a possible difference in the use of these two structures, because of syntactic or semantic reasons, or both.

5.3.1. Care

Fig. 6 shows the evolution of *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis during the Modern English period. The first example of *care* taking *do*-support dates 1440. However, it does not conform to the norm and starts taking *do*-periphrasis more frequently until the 18th century (CLMETEV); although there are no examples of *care* with *do*-less in the LModEP, this verb resisted *do*-support till the mid-nineteenth century: the last instance of *do*-less recorded dates from 1839 (3c).

	CEECS1	CEEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	TOTAL[17]
Do-less	6/1.33	5/1.11	7/0.99	0	18/1.45
Do-periphrasis	1/0.22	1/0.22	24/3.39	6/7.5	32/2.58

Fig. 6. Care with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period[18]

The complementation of *care* is quite varied. The first examples found with the *do*-less structure are followed by finite clauses, some of them being either indirect *wh*-exclamatives (3a) or nominal *wh*-clauses[19] (3c), which seem to function as Direct Objects (DO); however, the most common complementation is the use of a Prepositional Object (Prep.O) introduced by *for* and *about* (3b). All these complements are

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16 Although love takes *do*-less in the LModEP, this verb is not included in the analysis because its figures are not representative enough; besides, the structure of the example mentioned above ('We could not love each other so well, *loved* we *not* our work and duty more', found in Webb's letters, LModEP) is more related to emphasis and therefore beyond the scope of this analysis.

17 These data have been normalised by the total number of words of the corpora (1,238,633 words).

18 Figures show the number of examples/normalisation.

19 Following Downing and Locke's terminology (2006:46).

afterwards maintained with *do*-less and assimilated by *do*-periphrasis, which ends up taking all of them, as well as conditional sentences and non-finite clauses (3d).

> (3) (a) And I *care not* how sone I be deliuered of this burthen.
>
> (b) I *care not* for him.
>
> (c) I *care not* what truth there may be in her complaints.
>
> (d) They *do not care* to give…

5.3.2. Come

Fig. 7 illustrates the number of instances of *come* with both *do*-less and *do*-support forms. Again, the norm for this verb is to take *do*-less in the CEECS, but *do*-periphrasis in the CLMETEV and the LModEP. However, what makes *come* special is the fact that *a priori*, unlike other action verbs (e.g. *give*), it seems to resist *do*-periphrasis longer. In fact, *come* does not take *do*-periphrasis till 1641, and the adverbial does not even negate the verb; besides, the last instance of *come* taking the *do*-less structure dates from 1788 (CLMETEV, (4c) below).

	CEECS1	CEEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	TOTAL
Do-less	16/3.55	16/3.55	1/0.14	0	33/2.66
Do-periphrasis	0	1/0.22	15/2.12	3/3.75	19/1.53

Fig. 7. Come with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

However, when analysing the complementation of *come*, it can be observed that most examples with *do*-less are ambiguous, i.e. both the verb and the complement may be within the scope of negation. In fact, in most of the examples included in the CEECS1 and the CEECS2, the construction *come not* is already ambiguous, especially if *not* is followed by an adverb.

Examples (4a) and (4b) illustrate this dichotomy: whereas (4b) clearly negates *come*, it can be argued that the adverbial in example (4a) may refer either to the verb or to the adverb *there*, implying that 'Justice came not *there*, but to another place'. The same happens in (4c), in which *too dear* seems to be the focus within the scope of negation[20]. This may also happen with *do*-periphrasis, although it is rare (4d).

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20 According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 790): "the scope of negation is the part of the meaning that is negated. The focus is the part of the scope that is the most prominently or explicitly negated". Also, compare (4a) and (4c) to other verbs, e.g. *think* ('he *thoughte* it *nat* necessary to be beleved'), in which *not* clearly negates the Object Complement, and not the verb, or *hear*, whose last example with *do*-less dates from 1742 and is also ambiguous ('we *hear not* a syllable').

(4) (a) And the Justise *came not* there that day.

(b) Yf you *come not*, I will not take it in evill part…

(c) When they *come not* too dear.

(d) He *dous not* yet *come* abroode.

Regarding the syntactic context, *come* appears many times as the main verb of the *if*-clause in conditional sentences (4g). As for its complementation, *come* can be followed by finite and non-finite sentences, prepositions and adverbs indicating direction, regardless of whether it takes *do*-less or *do*-periphrasis (4e-f). In fact, apart from ambiguity, which rarely arises when *come* takes *do*-periphrasis, there seems to be no difference in the use of both structures.

(e) Ned is much discontended that you *come not* downe.

(f) Third and fourth *don't come* amiss.

(g) If you *do not come* I shall be forced to go back.

5.3.3. Doubt

Doubt is one of the verbs which take non-periphrastic *do* the most. Although there are not many examples of *doubt* with *do*-less in the CLMETEV and none in the LModEP, its presence in this analysis is due to the high number of instances of *doubt not* recorded in the CEECS. Besides, even though this verb quickly changes to *do*-periphrasis in the 18th century, its use with *do*-less does not disappear until 1811 (5c) (*vid. Fig. 8*).

	CEECS1	CEEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	TOTAL
Do-less	49/10.88	24/5.33	3/0.42	0	76/6.13
Do-periphrasis	2/0.44	3/0.67	13/1.83	5/6.25	23/1.86

Fig. 8. Doubt with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

Even though there are not many differences in the complementation of *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis with *doubt* –rather, *do*-periphrasis takes the complements non-periphrastic *do* took before–, its complementation is interesting. The majority of the examples are followed by *but*, which introduces a finite clause –normally functioning as a DO–, which in turn includes an auxiliary verb expressing uncertainty (*shall* and *will*), as in (5a and 5d). Besides, *doubt* may be found inside relative clauses (5d) and as a stance adjunct (5b and 5d), and its complement may be extraposed, as in (5c).

(5) (a) I *doubte nat* but ye shal have the oon at the leste…

(b) And readiest ruinar of wicked actes, wyl, I *doute not*, coule ther heat.

(c) That thou art vastly happy, I *doubt not*[21].

(d) Introduce him to all my friends, who, I *don't doubt*, will…

5.3.4. Know

The rise and fall of periphrastic and non-periphrastic *do* can also be observed in the behaviour of *know* throughout the Modern English period. As *Fig. 9* shows, this verb takes *do*-less more often in the CEECS, whereas *do*-periphrasis becomes the norm in the CLMETEV and the LModEP. There is an important difference in the use of *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis in the CEECS (119 *vs.* 10) and in the CLMETEV (42 *vs.* 220); however, both structures are almost equally used in the LModEP[22].

As above-mentioned, *know* is the most frequently used verb with a total of 422 instances in the whole corpora. There are examples recorded with both structures in all periods, including *do*-less, whose last instance is dated from 1890 (LModEP, (6f) below).

	CEECS1	**CEEECS2**	**CLMETEV**	**LModEP**	**TOTAL**
Do-less	57/12.66	62/13.77	42/5.93	9/11.25[23]	170/13.72
Do-periphrasis	2/0.44	8/1.78	220/31.05	22/27.5	252/20.35

Fig. 9. Know with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

The complementation of *know* is quite complex. First, although it goes beyond the scope of this analysis, it can be observed that the subject of most of the instances of *know*, as well as of many other verbs, is the first person singular pronoun *I*[24]. In the CEECS, *know not* is normally the main verb of a clause, followed by a DO realised by a finite or non-finite clause –especially *wh* nominal clauses, as in (6a)–, or simply a noun phrase (6b); in many cases, the DO is extraposed, especially with the *wh*-words *what* and *how* (6c). *Know not* may be also followed by the preposition *of* (6f). In the CLMETEV, the complementation of *know* does not vary depending on the structure it takes, but rather *do*-support simply assimilates such complements (6d-e). Finally, the nine examples of *know not* extracted from the LModEP negate the verb and show that *do*-less is still used in a wide number of contexts (6f) and has not been reduced to specific syntactic contexts, e.g. idioms.

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21 This example is especially relevant because of its style. See Discussion.

22 However, its figures are not representative enough because this corpus is smaller than the others and there are fewer variations.

23 Due to the number of words of the LModEP.

24 See Discussion.

(6) (a) I *know not* what yt meanes.

(b) I *know not* the causes.

(c) What howre I *know not.*

(d) But *did not know* of the printing of it till the publication.

(e) He *did not know* why he should resign it.

(f) I *know not* of the rag.

5.3.5. Mean

Although there are not many instances of *mean* in the corpora, the last one with *do*-less dates from 1891 (LModEP, (7e) below), which makes this verb one of the most relevant in the analysis. However, in terms of frequency, it does not differ from the rest of the verbs, and starts taking *do*-periphrasis in the 18th century (*vid. Fig. 10*).

	CEECS1	**CEEECS2**	**CLMETEV**	**LModEP**	**TOTAL**
Do-less	4/0.89	2/0.44	1/0.14	1/1.25	8/0.64
Do-periphrasis	1/0.22	1/0.22	46/6.49	2/2.5	50/4.04

Fig. 10. Mean with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

Regarding its complementation, *mean* is mostly followed by DOs, which in turn are normally realised by a *that*-clause (7d) or a non-finite clause (7c). Although taking *do*-less or *do*-periphrasis does not depend on the complement which follows, some ambiguity arises with the use of *do*-less, as with *come* or *think*. Example (7a) shows that *not* may either negate *mean* or be part of the non-finite clause complementing the verb. In contrast, in some examples the writer disambiguates by placing a comma after *not*, as in (7b); however, in most cases, the scope of negation of *do*-less forms seems to be within the complement, e.g. in the last instance of *mean not* recorded in the LModEP (7e).

(7) (a) I *meane not* to trowble hir majesty.

(b) I *meane not*, presently to be a nun.

(c) He *did not mean* to charge the Admiralty.

(d) I *do not mean* that you should have a profound.

(e) I always *meant not* to let it spoil my life.

5.3.6. See

Fig. 11 illustrates the evolution of *see* with these two structures; even though the CEECS2 has four more instances of *do*-less than the CEECS1, the shift to *do*-periphrasis in the 18th is clear. *See* also presents one instance of *do*-less in the LModEP, which dates from 1861 (8d).

	CEECS1	CEEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	TOTAL
Do-less	3/0.67	7/1.56	0	1/1.25	11/0.89
Do-periphrasis	3/0.67	3/0.67	16/2.26	6/7.5	28/2.26

Fig. 11. See with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

Once again, the complementation of periphrastic and non-periphrastic *do* does not vary much. Regardless of the structure it takes, *see* is normally part of a subordinate clause introduced by *but* or *though*, and followed by a noun phrase (8c) or a *wh* nominal clause (8a) functioning as a DO. As happened with other verbs, the DO may be extraposed, as in the example (8b). This is also the case of the last instance of *see not*, in which the adverb clearly negates the verb (8d).

(8) (a) I *doe not see* howe the same…

(b) But him selfe I *saw not*.

(c) I *don't see* the least alteration in him.

(d) But how to manage it I *see not*.

5.3.7. Write

Write is the last verb analysed, and it also conforms to the norm: it mostly takes *do*-less in negative statements in the CEECS and changes to *do*-periphrasis in the 18th century (*vid. Fig. 12*). However, it resists *do*-support till 1890 (LModEP, (9d) below). In the case of *write*, this last example is even more significant than those found with *see* or *know*; as explained in 5.3.8, *write* is an action verb, and these verbs do not resist *do*-periphrasis the same way mental verbs such as *see* or *know* do.

	CEECS1	CEEECS2	CLMETEV	LModEP	TOTAL
Do-less	9/2	4/0.89	0	1/1.25	14/1.13
Do-periphrasis	1/0.22	4/0.89	10/1.41	1/1.25	16/1.29

Fig. 12. Write with periphrastic and non-periphrastic do during the Modern English period

The complementation of *write* in negative statements does not depend on the negative structüre taken; instead, these structures take similar complements. *Write* is present sometimes in monotransitive (9b) and ditransitive clauses (9c). Ambiguity arises in some *do*-less instances, e.g. (9a); however, the adverb *not* in example (9d), which is the last instance of *do*-less, clearly negates the verb.

(9) (a) Though I *wryte not* so often with myne owne hand…

  (b) And therefore I *doo not rwit* to him.

  (c) I *don't write* you a very long letter.

  (d) I assume you had no plans yesterday as you *wrote not*.

5.3.8. Semantic analysis

The analysis so far has proved that these structures do not differ much in syntactic terms; therefore, a semantic analysis was required as it might help find a reason for such resistance.

It can be observed that the seven verbs analysed can be semantically grouped in two: mental verbs (*care*, *doubt*, *know*, *mean* and *see*) and action verbs (*come* and *write*). Of these, *know*, *mean*, *see* and *write* resist *do*-periphrasis till the end of the 19th century, that is, three are mental verbs. This fact implies that there might be a semantic reason why some verbs retained *do*-less longer than others once *do*-periphrasis had become the norm. The analysis of *know* is therefore particularly important since this verb presents the highest figures in the use of non-periphrastic *do*, even in the LModEP. However, *know* is a special verb. As stated in the OED, *know* is thought to be etymologically related to the modal verb *can*. These two verbs came from the same Indo-European base and overlapped in meaning for a while –*can* originally meant 'to know'–, meaning that *know* and *can* could be used interchangeably in certain contexts (OED). If *know* was originally a modal verb, it might have taken *do*-less longer by analogy (compare to *I may not go*).

There is also one instance of *do*-less with the action verb *write* in the LModEP. Although this example has a different sense, one of the meanings of *write* in the OED involves some cognitive process, "to describe or designate (a person, oneself) by writing to be something" (e.g. 'Nature had writ him villain on his face'). In fact, some interesting findings can be drawn from the OED. According to the OED, other action verbs collected for this study may also imply a mental process. For instance, *come*, which also retains *do*-less longer than other verbs, may mean "of sensuous or mental impression" (e.g. the expression *come to my mind*) (OED). The same happens with *take*, meaning "to proceed to deal with mentally" and *find*, meaning "to discover or perceive on inspection or consideration, to consider" (OED).

According to the OED, the 49 verbs analysed in this study have at least one meaning related to a mental process[25], and the results conclude that the *do*-less structure seems to be favoured when the verb expresses a cognitive process. Nevertheless, as far as this study is concerned, there is no evidence that mental verbs exclusively took non-periphrastic *do* when referring to a mental process. For instance, *find* and *take* are found in the corpora with both *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis when referring to some mental experiences (compare 10a-b, 10c-d).

(10) (a) We *find not* al persons inclyned.

(b) I *do not find* that God has made you a poet.

(c) No man haue rule ther that *taketh not* to hart the quiet of botherealmes.

(d) They *do not take* it to be of so great importaunce.

6. Discussion

The results presented in this study support the theory that the use of the *do*-less structure disappeared towards the mid-eighteenth century in favour of *do*-periphrasis. Nevertheless, non-periphrastic *do* seems to have been used until the end of the Modern English period with more verbs and in more contexts than previously thought, and it has not completely disappeared in PDE (e.g. *I suppose not*). These findings contradict Ellegård's diagram (in Dekeyser, 1992), according to which the *do*-less structure would have disappeared from the language in the mid-eighteenth century.

The turning point which meant the decline of this structure coincides with the publication of one of the most influential English grammars of the 18th century, Robert Lowth's *A Short Introduction to English Grammar*, published in 1762. In his grammar, Lowth states that "they [*do* and *did*] are also of frequent and almost necessary use in interrogative and negative sentences" (1762: 61). In 1805 Murray published his *English Grammar*, in which *do* is said to be "of great use in negative sentences" (1805: 97), whereas in Adam's *Elements of the English Language* (1858: 170) "in Modern English *do* is employed as an auxiliary in negations". From a theoretical point of view, there seems to be a progression in the use of *do*-periphrasis in negative statements, which is exactly the same pattern observed in the results. Therefore, it can be concluded that grammars had an influence on the increase in usage of this structure.

However, grammars were not the only cause of the decline of the *do*-less structure. The results conclude that there are certain contexts, especially in written language, in which the scope of negation is not clear and ambiguity arises. In con-

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25 These 49 verbs can be classified according to the division mentioned above: 29 are mental verbs, whereas 20 verbs (in which action verbs are included because of their mental connotations) have been called 'semi-mental' verbs by the author.

trast, the use of periphrastic *do* disambiguates, since the adverbial clearly negates the verb, which may have favoured the rise of this structure. This may have been different in spoken language, in which *do*-less could have been retained longer thanks to the role emphasis and prosodic features play in language[26]. Besides, even though the complementation of periphrastic and non-periphrastic *do* does not vary in the present study, there is evidence that *do*-less resisted longer in certain constructions, e.g. finite clauses without complements or adjuncts, e.g. *I think not* (Visser, 1963), whereas *do*-periphrasis was favoured in conditional clauses introduced by *if* (Iyeiri, 2004).

Once *do*-periphrasis was established as the norm, *do*-less may have been retained depending on the preference of the author[27]. For instance, in example 14 above, Byron shows an archaic style. Furthermore, Dowson also favours the use of *do*-less, since two of the last examples of the structure recorded were found in his letters. On the contrary, authors such as Amberley, whose letters are also included in the LModEP, do not favour *do*-less at all.

The use of such a high number of mental verbs, especially *know*, is also connected to different factors. In her study on personal correspondence, Pallander-Collin (2009: 115) suggests that the use of self-referential mental verbs, related to the inner experience of the writer (e.g. *know*, *think*, *doubt*), increased during the Early Modern period. Even though Pallander-Collin's study does not deal with negative statements, this fact would serve as an explanation for the great number of mental verbs included in this analysis, as well as why the subject of these verbs tends to be the first person pronoun *I*, referring to the experiencer. However, Sairio (2005, in Tieken, 2009: 125) pointed out that "as letters concern both a writer and an addressee, they are typically characterised by the use of 'involvement strategies' ". This would also account for the frequent use of the first person pronoun ('ego involvement'), as well as second person pronouns ('interpersonal involvement') (*ibíd*.).

It has been argued that there were no syntactic differences in the complementation of *do*-less and *do*-periphrasis. The only reason which accounts for the use of *do*-less well after *do*-periphrasis became the norm is semantic, since mental verbs retained non-periphrastic *do* longer. *Know* is the only verb which has thrown some light on this hypothesis. If it was at first connected to modal verbs, *know* could have retained *do*-less longer by a process of analogy. However, these results are not conclusive and cannot therefore account for the use of *do*-less with other mental verbs. Besides, the number of instances of *do*-less in the LModEP is fairly low, and both structures seem to be used interchangeably regardless of the meaning of the verb.

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26 E.g. (4a) above: 'And the Justise *came not* there that day'. In this case, ambiguity arises only in written language; in spoken language, special emphasis given to *not* or *there* would normally clarify.
27 Some studies have established some differences in the use of these structures depending on the gender and social status of the author (McColl-Millar, 2012).

7. Conclusion

As thus far discussed, so far *do*-periphrasis has been generally accepted as the norm in the construction of negative statements after the mid-eighteenth century; however, this study demonstrates that *do*-less forms were still used during the 19th century. By that time, mental verbs tend to take this structure more often than action verbs, which favour *do*-periphrasis. Syntactically, the complementation of these structures is quite similar: *do*-less does not maintain any syntactic structure of its own, but rather *do*-periphrasis progressively assimilates the complementation of *do*-less. Nevertheless, more in-depth analysis is needed, especially regarding the syntax of the whole clause, which might help determine more differences between these structures.

It is essential to stress the importance of corpora, since the data extracted can be analysed from many different perspectives. For instance, there may be some sociolinguistic factors that account for these results. A comparison between private and public letters would help determine whether self-referential verbs are used in private letters or, in contrast, they are more frequently used in personal correspondence. A comparison with other types of texts, e.g. novels, would determine whether *do*-less was maintained longer in a particular written genre (Curry, 1992). Besides, it would be interesting to analyse whether the choice of one structure or the other varies depending on gender (McColl-Millar, 2012), age, social status or idiolects, especially after the publication of the first prescriptive grammars, which established *do*-support as the norm. Dialectal differences (e.g. British *vs.* American English) may also provide significant results.

To conclude, research concerning the construction of negative statements is far from over. In fact, there may be many reasons that account for the resistance of the *do*-less structure, whose use after the establishment of *do*-periphrasis challenges the rules prescribed by eighteenth-century grammarians. However, linguistic choices are, after all, a matter of personal preference, especially in private letter-writing, which is a rather personal writing style in itself. Therefore, the title of this study, 'I know not of any reason why I should use *do*', though radical, perfectly sums up this idea, and leaves the question open for future research in a period disregarded by many as is the Late Modern English period.

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