

The Social Stratification of the Voiced Interdental /ð/ in the Battery Dialect

MAIA WILLIAMSON AND WALCIR CARDOSO

1. Introduction

This study investigates the factors that contribute to the social stratification of /ð/ in the small Newfoundland community outside of St. John's, known as the Battery. Speech samples of 12 community members who are native to the Battery have been analyzed via *Goldvarb X* for their use of /ð/ and the commonly substituted [d] variant. In addition, the samples include responses to a questionnaire, which contain items that reflect concepts from *Social Network Theory* (Milroy 1976, 1982) and *Social Identity Theory* (Tajfel 1978) to further analyze the participants on social grounds. *Social Network Theory* and *Social Identity Theory* form the core of this study's theoretical framework; it is believed that the former represents an objective and spatial notion of group affiliation, whereas the latter represents a more subjective and personal notion of affiliation.

In order to understand the dynamic social structure and dialect of the Battery community, the distinctiveness of Newfoundland as a province in the wider Canadian context will also be addressed. Newfoundland drastically differs from the rest of Canada through its historical, economical, geographical and social circumstances. It is no wonder, then, that its dialectal characteristics have enjoyed the same uniqueness based on these contributing factors. The use and stratification of /ð/ is the feature of interest in the current study based on its pervasive nature in Newfoundland speech but, most importantly, on its characterization as a low-status identity marker.

2. Introduction to Newfoundland

2.1. History

In order to gain a greater understanding of the Battery community dialect, it is important to look at the wider social landscape to which it belongs. Newfoundland's distinctiveness from the rest of Canada is evident by looking at its rich historical past dating back over five centuries. The abundant supply of fish was what initially attracted Portuguese, Basque, and Spanish fishermen to the island in the 15th century, first named *Terra Nova do Bacalhao* after the codfish

(Orkin 1971). The island was officially discovered by the English explorer John Cabot in 1497 and from then on, was known as *New Founde Lande* (Young 2006). It was claimed as an English colony in 1583 due to its close proximity to England, which solidified Newfoundland's relationship with the British Isles (Chambers 1997). Beginning in the 17th century, Newfoundland became the site of mass immigration and permanent settlement, with an overwhelming number of immigrants coming from Ireland and England (Clarke 1997). What is most remarkable about the wave of immigration to the province is how well documented the sources of migration are as well as the resulting linguistic consequences that have heavily influenced its present day dialects (Clarke 1985, 1997, 1999, Kirwin & Hollett 1986, OhUrdail 1997, Orkin 1971).

2.2. Geography

In addition to the historical influence on present-day Newfoundland dialects, its geographical isolation has helped constitute it as somewhat of, what Clarke terms "a linguistic relic area" (Clarke 1997: 22). Although mobility has increased in the present day, its harsh climate and distance from mainland Canada has impeded travel to the province which sits in a different time zone from its neighbouring provinces. As a result, immigration to the province has always been sparse, which has allowed the dialect to remain relatively uninfluenced. In 1956, only 2% of the population was born outside Canada (Orkin 1971) and in 2006, Statistics Canada again reported that only 2% of those living in Newfoundland were non-Canadian born.

2.3. Economy

Perhaps the lack of immigration and diversity among those living in Newfoundland has been compounded by the bleak economic situation that has plagued the province. Since Newfoundland's discovery over five centuries ago, the fishing industry has been the main contributing source to its economy. The province has experienced many ups and downs with the fishing industry, and when immigration drastically slowed in the 20th century, it had little choice in joining Canada's Confederation in 1949. However, joining Canada did not guarantee economic prosperity; in the last two decades, the collapse of the fishing industry has had devastating effects on one in four Newfoundlanders who rely on the cod fishery for sustenance (www.cdii/cod/histor10.htm, accessed 08/18/08).

2.4. Linguistic Aspects

Because Newfoundland's geographical isolation and economic instability have fostered a homogenous population, many of its historical linguistic features have been preserved. These features cover the language spectrum and can be found in the lexicon, morphology, syntax and phonology of Newfoundland dialects. Perhaps the most overt dialectal characteristics of Newfoundland English are the distinctive phonological features that have also been investigated at length.

Among those studied and characteristic of Newfoundland speech are: the interdental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ variably pronounced as [t] and [d] respectively (Clarke 1985, Colbourne 1981, Kirwin & Hollett 1986, Paddock 1981, Riach 1969, Reid 1981); the alveolar [ɹ] variant of the standard postvocalic approximant [ɹ], often described as an Irish lilt or drawl (Clarke 1981, 1985, Paddock 1981); deletion of the glottal fricative /h/ in word initial position (Kirwin & Hollett 1986, Riach 1969); low back /ɑ/ pronounced as [æ] where *caught* is pronounced more like *cat* (Chambers 1997, Clarke 1981, 2004, D'Arcy 2005); and /oj/ fronted to [aj] where *toy* is pronounced more like *tie* (Clarke 1997).

2.5. Social Aspects

It is this linguistic distinctiveness coupled with the isolation and low socioeconomic status that have combined to perpetuate the stereotype of the *Newfie* as an unintelligent, dim-witted, jovial fisherman, and help grant it low social status within the Canadian context. King and Clarke (2002: 537-538) posit that the ethnic label of *Newfie* is used widely in mainland Canada to describe Newfoundlanders and “serves as a vehicle of social marginalization [...] associated with laziness and stupidity”. Interestingly, this label divides Newfoundlanders because some view it as a derogatory term that is highly offensive, while others embrace it as a term of endearment that signifies their solidarity and regional pride.

The social issues which have greatly affected the province have had a significant impact on some of the smaller out-port communities, specifically on socioeconomic and sociolinguistic grounds. Uprooting out-port community members has meant exposure to more standardized Canadian English dialects which is why a shift towards the standard dialect is anticipated for these communities in the future (Clarke 1997).

2.6. Introduction to the Battery

Just outside of the downtown core of St. John's is a community that used to closely resemble many an out-port community found across the island. The Battery, an old fishing village on the eastern edge of St. John's, sits on the side of a cliff at the footholds of historic Signal Hill and rests along a channel known as the Narrows which overlooks St. John's Harbor. The plethora of charming coloured houses and exquisite rock façade make the Battery one of the most photographed places in Newfoundland by the Department of Tourism (Downhome Traveller 2005). This enclave community is fast becoming an urbanized extension of the city of St. John's which now has some of the most expensive real estate development in the city. This is a stark contrast from only a few decades ago where all that was sought after about the Battery was its breathtaking views of both the city and the Atlantic Ocean.

The Battery's rich historical past dates back to the island's discovery and its claim as an English colony in the 16th century. In 1680, it was fortified by the British to protect St. John's from the French and later used as part of the British

defense in both WWI and WWII. The municipal government made it officially apart of St. John's in 1888 (The Telegram, Dyer 29/03/2006), but surprisingly, it was not until 1969 that the *Neighbourhood Improvement Program* (NIP) invested one million dollars of federal money into the community to provide it running water, sewage lines, and garbage collection (Benson unknown). Despite the basic improvements, when housing conditions were assessed in 1971, it was estimated that over 40% of the homes were in need of upgrading and almost 15% were identified as beyond repair (CBCL Report 1978).

The Battery still lagged far behind St. John's in basic facilities and services; therefore, in 1979 and 1980 an even grander NIP project, which doubled the cost of the initial program, was undertaken. This project included the improvement and installation of a water distribution system, sewage services, road and street repair, retaining wall reparation, and community development. By far the most urgent of matters was the existing sewer system which was considered "archaic, unhealthy, and an eye-sore to both residents and visitors alike" (CBCL Report 1978). Perhaps the disparity in amenities, which kept the Battery behind St. John's in many respects, is why the Battery was always looked down upon as a low class, poor community. Because many Battery residents of that time relied on sanitary disposal trucks from the city, known to the locals as the "honey buckets", it has been remarked upon by some Battery natives that their status was directly linked to whether or not they had a toilet.

Ironically, the Battery has historically occupied the same position in St. John's as Newfoundland has in Canada – as an isolated, low status, economically impoverished, tight knit community. However, the Battery's social segregation and low status did not hinder daily life in the community because it was economically sustained by the thriving fishing industry, stores, church, school, wood mill and clubhouse. In addition to the community services and social segregation that encouraged Battery residents to remain in their community, the strong social networks and community bonds strengthened their ties to one another and to the neighbourhood. As the Battery played host to numerous regentrification initiatives, many St. John's residents began to look to this neighbourhood for its low housing costs and ideal location. As a result, this community that used to be socially segregated and home to successive generations of known "Battery" families, was fast becoming home to artists, academics and tourists as the changes in the community prompted a change in resident composition. Although the Battery has been in the process of change for some time now, there are still some remnants of the old Battery that once was. Many of the houses are still colourful and quaint and some of the current residents are still native to the area, although both novelties may soon be distant memories.

3. Social and Linguistic Factors

3.1. The Characteristics of /ð/ and its Variants

In this study, the phonological feature under investigation is the voiced interdental fricative /ð/. The most commonly used non-standard variant for /ð/ in most

English dialects is [d], although [v] has been noted in some English dialects (Dubois & Horvath 2003, Trudgill 1988). With respect to the interdental fricative /ð/, the variant [d] has been well documented as highly characteristic of Newfoundland English and its array of dialects (e.g., Kirwin & Hollett 1986, Orton 1962, Paddock 1977, Paddock 1981, Riach 1969). Occurring most often in low-status dialects, the use of the less prestigious variant carries with it a definite “lack of social clout”, whereby those that use it in high numbers are often stereotyped and relegated to the lower strata of society (Clarke 1997: 19). Accordingly, the /ð/ variable was chosen for this research because one of its variants, [d], is seen as a social identity marker in many low-status Newfoundland English dialects.

3.2. Newfoundland Studies of /ð/

Riach (1969) conducted a study that looked at the dialectal variation of the interdental fricative /ð/ in fifteen small communities across the island as well as in St. John's. As expected, those from St. John's used the [d] variant the least and those from smaller out-port communities used the [d] variant more frequently. What is most significant about this study is that it was one of the first in Newfoundland to relate social factors to language standards and dialect markers.

Reid (1981) conducted a sociolinguistic study in the small out-port community of Bay de Verde, located 150 miles from St. John's. He looked at six phonological variables, one of which was /ð/, and matched them with the social variables of sex, age, religion and style. Results showed that males used the stigmatized [d] variant more than females, and older males used the [d] variant more than any group. The most surprising result was that the younger female group used the [d] variant almost as much as the older male group. Reasons for this finding were attributed to the possible shift towards a more traditional role for this group or, perhaps, the use of [d] itself is becoming less stigmatized.

Colbourne's (1981) sociolinguistic study took place in the small out-port community of Long Island, Notre Dame Bay. Results showed that age was an important factor because the most non-standard speakers were the older males and the most standard were the older females. Style proved to have a significant effect on variant use, with the greatest variation found in the casual speech of the younger generations. His results also showed that because the younger speakers displayed a greater range of speech styles and command of standard variants, a shift towards bidialectalism may have been taking place.

Clarke's (1985) sociolinguistic study focused on St. John's English and the influence from the main ethnic origin that settled on the Avalon Peninsula, the Hiberno English (HE) Irish dialect. Results showed that age and sex emerged as significant because the [d] variant was used more frequently by older male speakers. In addition, [d] was found to be linked to low SES made up largely of unskilled labourers. Surprisingly, the [d] variant did not seem to be on the decline despite the variant's social stigmatization; rather, there seemed to be evidence of a

certain amount of neutralization of the [ð] and [d] contrast in casual speech, which reiterates the [d] variant as an identity marker.

3.3. Social Networks

The theory of social networks was developed by Milroy (1976, 1982) as part of her study on the vernacular spoken in Belfast working-class neighbourhoods. She investigated the notion of language maintenance with respect to low-status stigmatized forms and how they were able to persist in vernacular speech despite pressure from the standard forms. The *Network Strength Scale* was used to calculate the relationships within the community which consisted of family, work, and friendship for their *density* and *multiplexity* (Milroy 1980). A network is characterized as maximally dense when everyone knows everyone else in the neighbourhood and as multiplex when, for example, person A interacts with person B in multiple capacities such as church group members, friends and workmates (Milroy 2002). In the current study, social network will be operationalized according to Milroy's composite definition of density and multiplexity (1980) which is calculated using the following conditions:

- (1) Membership of a high-density territorially based cluster.
- (2) Having substantial ties of kinship in the neighbourhood (more than one household).
- (3) Working at the same place as at least two others from the same area.
- (4) The same place of work with at least two others of the same sex.
- (5) Voluntary association with workmates in leisure time. This applies in practice only when three and four are satisfied.

This factor was utilized in the present study because of its important role in determining the vernacular maintenance in previous studies. For example, Edwards (1992) examined the strength of social networks and their connection to the vernacular in his study of inner-city Blacks in Detroit and Lippi-Green (1989) also looked at social network integration in an economically impoverished community, the rural village of Grossdorf, Austria, which closely resembled the Battery in terms social structure and size.

3.4. Social Identity

Tajfel (1978) defines social identity as “that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (63). What came to be known as *Social Identity Theory* includes an individual rather than group focus which is self-conceptualized as opposed to attributed by society

(Joseph 2004). Adapting criteria outlined by Tajfel (1978), we operationalized the notion of social identity by incorporating his concepts of social categorization, (the social stereotyping of the in-group norms and value distinctiveness); social identity, (the knowledge of the group membership and its emotional significance); and social comparison, (links the categorization and identification aspects with reference to outside groups).

3.5. Gender

The Battery community has historically had very traditional and definite gender roles based on the division of labour of the sexes. Men have always been the primary wage earners of the family while women stayed home and raised children. It is not to say that women occupy an inferior position than that of the men in the Battery. It appears to be the opposite scenario because due to the average size of the families (often 10 or more children), limited resources (lack of indoor plumbing) and economic status, women appeared to be strong heads of the household that occupied an equally important position in the family as did their husbands. Milroy (1976, 1982) believed that a group's strength and cohesion may help in determining the gender roles. In the lower class Irish communities she investigated, men achieved a particular status level through their occupation and the solidarity gained by working predominantly with other men from the community. The social structure of the Battery mirrors the setting of the Milroy studies in many respects, especially in the old Battery era. Therefore, variation between the genders' application of /ð/-stopping may in fact represent the social structure of the community as a whole.

3.6. Style

The inclusion of style in variationist studies was first introduced by Labov (1972), who posited that the concept of stylistic variation allows speech to be investigated in both formal and informal uses. The hypothesis is that as the formality increases in speech, so too will the accuracy of the target variable. Ideally, researchers like to collect tokens in a wide range of stylistic levels to model Labov's five-level hierarchical distinction of formality. However, due to the cautious attitude of the Battery community members towards outsiders, it was decided upon that exploring the formality continuum at length by having participants read various text types may have compromised securing the interviews.

3.7. Production Problems with /ð/

Along with its voiceless counterpart /θ/, this phoneme is considered segmentally marked in the world's languages (Maddieson 1984, Wester, Gilbers & Lowie 2007). Maddieson (1984) posits that according to the *UCLA Phonological Segment Inventory Database* (UPSID), /ð/ and /θ/ are rare amongst the class of fricatives and are the least occurring fricative type at just 7%. Interestingly, the most frequently occurring and least marked sounds in the UPSID languages are

the dental and alveolar stops /t/ and /d/, which occur in 99.7% of the 317 documented languages. It comes as no surprise then that substitution for the /ð/ is typically the [d] variant for those languages that contain both the interdental and alveolar phonemes.

The dental fricative /ð/ is infamous for posing problems for L1 and L2 learners with respect to production and perception (Wester *et al.* 2007). The common substitutions are the [d] or [v] variants depending on whether the source of the substitution is influenced by cross-linguistic or developmental factors. The avoidance of /ð/ in favor of /d/ can be accounted for via markedness theory, which predicts that the least marked and more frequently crosslinguistically /d/ will be preferred over the more marked and considerably less frequent /ð/ (e.g., Lombardi 2003). On the other hand, because /v/ and /ð/ share the same manner of articulation [+continuant], it could be assumed that the substitution of /ð/ would result in a /v/ instead of /d/, a phenomenon that is observed in some English dialects. For example, it is well documented in many AAVE dialects that [f] and [v] are substituted for /θ/ and /ð/ respectively (Bailey & Thomas 1998, Rickford 1999). This is often explained by the articulatory similarity with respect to manner between the two sets of sounds. Kjellmer (1995) makes this claim that the interdentals (/θ/ and /ð/) tend to shift to the labiodentals ([f] and [v]) because of the ‘nearness’ of articulation. However, this is not the case for Newfoundland dialects because there appears to be a preference for the unmarked feature, resulting in the use of [d].

3.8. Linguistic Factors: Manner and Place of Articulation, Position within the Word, and Word Status

The Manner of Articulation factor group (MOA) describes the environment preceding the /ð/ in terms of manner of articulation. This factor group consists of nasals, liquids, voiced fricatives, voiceless fricatives, voiced stops, voiceless stops, laterals, vowels and pause (included simply to ensure it was accounted for – see also the POA factor group below). Because /ð/ and vowels carry the feature [+continuant], it is commonly accepted in the literature that the most optimal output for the target [ð] variant is when it occurs in intervocalic position, also known as a *heavy* context (e.g., Trofimovich, Gatbonton & Segalowitz 2007). A *heavy* context is one in which the relevant form is surrounded by [+continuant] segments, or when preceded by another [+continuant] consonant (e.g., a fricative).

The Place of Articulation factor group (POA) describes the preceding environment of where /ð/ occurs in terms of place of articulation. The POA factor group in the present study includes labials, coronals, dorsals, vowels and pause. The inclusion of this group is based on the assumption that the place of articulation of a segment (e.g., that of a given preceding environment) may affect the production of other sounds within the same prosodic domain (a type of assimilation process).

Another linguistic factor group included in this study is the position of /ð/ within a word: whether the /ð/ falls word-initially (e.g., *the, though*) or word-medially (e.g., *mother, other*). Word-final position (e.g. *bathe*) was eliminated as a potential environment due to the relatively limited number of words ending in /ð/. The final linguistic factor group included in this study describes the class of the word containing a /ð/: either a lexical word (nouns and certain pronouns; e.g. *father, other*), or a function word (determiners, pronouns; e.g., *those, they*).

It has been found in other studies (Dubois & Horvath 1999, 2003, Cardoso 1999) that function words typically favour the neutralization or weakening of segments. Also termed lenition, this phenomenon may increasingly occur in function words due to what has been termed the *functional hypothesis* (Kiparsky 1972). This theory posits that because function words merely indicate grammatical function and they lack semantic content, they are more likely to undergo a phonetic process such as substitution as opposed to lexical words. Conversely, the *frequency effect* (Bybee 2001) attributes the production of [d] for /ð/ in function words to the high frequency of these words in our everyday language (such as *the, there, etc.*), which makes them a greater target for the the production of [d].

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on previous literature, the use of [d] for /ð/ is known to be a highly stigmatized social marker in various Newfoundland dialects. The current study, which is semi-exploratory in nature, sought to uncover the relevant social and linguistic factors that are linked to the stratification of /ð/ among Battery community natives. It was assumed that the strength of these factors would be shaped by the changing community structure, which may ultimately have affected their speech. The pertinent research questions included a wide range of factors to be statistically analyzed. For instance, the extralinguistic factors include social network, identity, style, gender, and group status. The linguistic factors include the phonological environment (specifically manner of articulation and place of articulation of the preceding segments), word class and word position of where /ð/ is located. The research questions that were addressed in this study are:

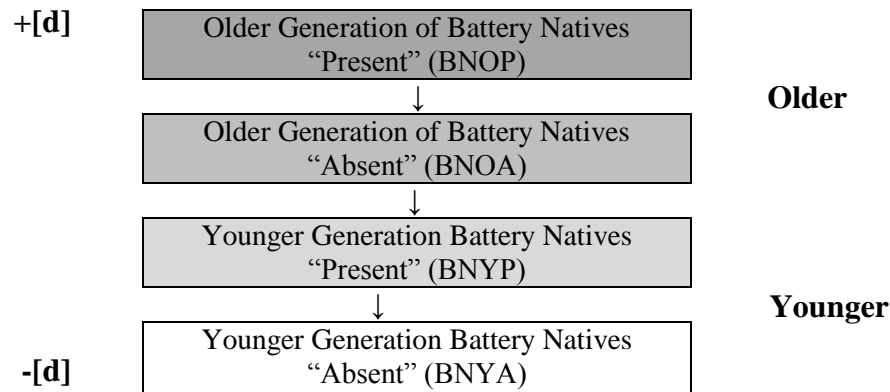
- (1) How does the variable /ð/ behave across the four Battery groups under investigation, namely BNYP, BNYA, BNOP, and BNOA?
- (2) What extralinguistic and linguistic factors trigger the production of /ð/?

The general hypotheses are based on previous research and general theoretical knowledge of phonology and phonetics, as outlined in the previous section. It was also speculated that there would be evidence of an intergenerational dialect shift

from the older to the younger generation. Moreover, it was believed that there would be little to no difference between the older generation’s groups (BNOP and BNOA) because having spent that much time in such a segregated community, there might not be a significant difference in their use of the [d] variant. On the other hand, it was hypothesized that there would be stratification in the younger generation of Battery natives (BNYP, BNYA).

Specifically, the younger generation of Battery natives still residing in the Battery (BNYP) would likely align themselves with traditional social networking and identity, characteristic of the old Battery natives. Moreover, their use of the [d] variant was expected to approximate BNO norms as a result of the closed network and social identity they share, as well as the diminished contact with outside communities. Conversely, the younger generation of Battery natives who have left the Battery to live elsewhere (BNYA) and break from the strong community ties would exhibit less variation in the use of the /ð/, similar to the typical variation of St. John’s natives in other studies (Clarke 1985). The following diagram in Figure 1 details the anticipated continuum of [d] usage by group status and generation.

Figure 1: Anticipated continuum of the decrease in [d] usage by group



4.2. Participant Groups

There were 12 Battery participants included in this study. In this study, it is important to see age from the perspective of the *linguistic life course* as opposed to discrete stages that are often assumed with chronological age (Eckert 1997). For example, one’s life course involves changes in family, social and employment status, social networks, place of residence, and community and institutional participation. As a result, the participants were made up of the older generation of Battery natives (BNO) along with the younger generation of Battery natives (BNY). The BNO participants are all be over the age of 70, which means that in the *old* Battery era, these individuals were all adults with families and established jobs. In addition, they all experienced life in the community when it was still a segregated area with little to no “outside” families residing there. On the contrary, the BNY participants are all between the ages of 35-55. This group were all

children in the *old* Battery era which means they were all raised and schooled in the Battery and also experienced life pre-NIP and, consequently, before the collapse of the fishing industry.

It is important to clarify what is meant by *old* Battery era. Prior to the NIP project in the late 1970s and early 1980s as well as the collapse of the fishing industry in the early 1990s, this neighbourhood was a self-contained unit that, despite its shortcomings, was strong and cohesive. However, as the face of the community changed, the faces in the community changed as well, which has escalated moving into a *new* Battery era.

4.3. Interview Procedure

In order to elicit natural, spontaneous speech from the participants and make them as comfortable as possible, the informal interview was the first elicitation technique used in this study and included an orally administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of four parts with both structured and semi-structured questions as well as statements that require Likert-scaling responses. Part 1 of the questionnaire consisted of pertinent demographic questions such as age, gender, education and employment status. Part 2 was a less structured section that consisted of questions regarding the participants' opinions on life in the Battery, past, present and future (e.g. *How do you think the Battery has changed over the last few decades?; What do you think the Battery will be like in twenty years.*

Part 3 was based on the five pertinent criteria from *Social Network Theory* called the *Network Strength Scale* (Milroy 1982). Questions were in regards to kin, relatives and friends in the community, past and present employment and frequency of interaction with other community members (e.g. *How many of your family members still live in the Battery, within the same household or in different households?; Do you currently work at the same place with any other people from the Battery?*).

Part 4 focused on the criteria outlined by Tajfel (1978) based on *Social Identity Theory*. There were statements regarding the notion of social identity, categorization, and comparison and rely on the perception of the participant (e.g. *I think people from the Battery have different values systems than people from St. John's; People from St. John's negatively stereotype people from the Battery*). It is important to note that the question responses in Part 3 were supplied by the interviewees; however, it was the interviewer who determined, based on those responses, whether or not the participants fulfilled the five conditions based on *Social Network Theory*. In Part 4, the statements were based on the concepts of *Social Identity Theory* and were supplied by the participants who shared their beliefs about each statement on a traditional five-point Likert scale.

4.4. Reading Task

The second elicitation technique used was a reading task of approximately 415 words in length and was adapted from a previous study to measure the use and production of /ð/ (Trofimovich et al. 2007). The reading task was employed in

order to probe the use of /ð/, which utilizes an additional style in the formality hierarchy outlined by Labov (1972). Both tasks were recorded via a *Marantz* PM660 portable solid state recorder. Both the questionnaire and the reading task took an average of thirty minutes to complete; however, some of the interviews went on for over an hour. Although the primary means with which the data was collected was through spontaneous conversation and only one task of higher formality, it is assumed that the nature of the questions and length of each interview provided the necessary amount of data to show some semblance of social and/or dialectal representativeness.

4.5. Data Analysis

The ethnolinguistic data were collected via the questionnaires in the recorded interviews. Each participant answered the questions verbally which were recorded and analyzed by the interviewer at a later date. For part 3, which represented the *Network Strength Scale* (Milroy 1976, 1982), there were 18 questions that covered the five indicators. Part 4 of the questionnaire dealt with the *Social Identity* variable (Tajfel 1978). With four primary concepts outlined in the theory, the statements were designed to capture the participants' social identity on a 5-point Likert scale. The linguistic data were analyzed using the *Goldvarb X* statistical program (Sankoff, Tagliamonte, & Smith 2005). All tokens extracted from the interviews were entered into the *Goldvarb* program and investigated in reference to all previously mentioned social and linguistic variables.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Results of Goldvarb Runs

In the corpus under investigation, all words containing an underlying /ð/ in either word initial or word-medial position were coded and analyzed. There were 3,795 tokens that were coded as either [ð] or [d]. Of the total number of tokens utilized in the statistical analysis, 1,219 (32%) were realized as [ð] and 2,063 (54%) as [d] (cases of progressive assimilation such as *and then* produced as [æn.nen] were discarded from the analysis because this is not a feature characteristic of the Battery). The first Goldvarb run contained all eleven original factor groups and their specific factors. Because of the need to address the persistence of interaction between certain factor groups, various Goldvarb runs were performed. The final significant Goldvarb results ($p > .05$) after the various runs performed are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: /ð/-stopping in the Battery Dialect: Final Results

Groups	Factor	Weight	%	N
MOA	Nasals	.23	31	249/792
	Voiceless fricat.	.45	47	110/234
	Voiced stops	.64	61	137/225
	Pause	.49	53	305/575
	Voiceless stops	.68	75	440/589
	Vowels	.67	63	468/741
	Liquids	.67	71	270/381
	Voiced fricat.	.27	33	84/258
POA	Labials	.59	56	97/172
	Dorsals	.53	57	96/170
	Coronals	.45	51	1097/2137
	Vowels	.67	63	468/741
	Pause	.44	53	305/575
Word Position	Word Initial	.52	55	1903/3465
	Word Medial	.35	49	160/330
Word Class	Lexical	.23	46	120/263
	Function	.52	55	1943/3532
Group Status	BNOA	.69	68	266/393
	BNOP	.60	65	615/942
	BNYA	.48	52	432/1013
	BNYP	.36	43	450/1447
Gender	Male	.57	60	1304/2163
	Female	.41	47	759/1632
Formality	Informal	.57	60	1892/3179
	Formal	.21	28	171/616

Table 1 shows that, of the *MOA* factors, the voiced and voiceless stops as well as vowels and liquids preceding /ð/ garner the highest incidences of [d] substitution. In addition, the final results for *POA* show that vowels, labials and dorsals favour the application of /ð/-stopping. Regarding the factor group *Word Position*, word-initial environments prompted the use of [d] as did function words for the factor group *Word Class*. For the factor group *Formality*, the use of [d] was favoured in informal speech significantly more than in formal speech. The social grouping of *Gender* illustrates that men significantly use [d] more frequently than women.

5.2. Discussion of Linguistic Factors

From a phonological perspective, the results obtained for the *POA* and *MOA* factor groups were inconclusive as there were no observable patterns based on natural phonological classes or phonetic phenomena. Let us start with a discussion of the results involving *POA* which, in the spirit of sociolinguistic research, was included in order to comprehensively investigate the application of /ð/-stopping,

and not because we believed it would have an effect on the phenomenon, since the two /ð/ variables share the exact same articulator: the coronal node. As described earlier, this factor group included preceding labials ([p, b, m, etc.]), coronals ([t, d, n, l]), and dorsals ([k, g, ŋ, vowels]) as well as pause. It remains unclear why vowels (.67), labials (.59), and dorsals (.53) favoured the [d] variant in this study, while coronals had the opposite effect with a factor weight of (.45). In sum, whatever *POA* analysis is proposed for the *coronal* [d] variant can also be extended for the other *coronal* [ð].

With regards to *MOA*, there were also no discernable patterns based on the final results. For instance, it was initially hypothesized that forms that share the continuancy feature with /ð/, that is liquids, fricatives and vowels, would facilitate the production of the more standard [ð] because they share the [+continuant] feature. Conversely, we also predicted that the *MOA* factors characterized by a [-continuant] feature such as stops and nasals would disfavor the production of the [ð] variant, as there would be instability in continuancy between the [-continuant] stop or nasal and the following [+continuant] [ð]. This hypothesis based on continuancy can be explained from an ease of articulation perspective: preserving manner (i.e., the continuancy feature – e.g., “spi[l] [ð]e”) is assumed to be comparatively easier than producing two consecutive sounds that differ in continuancy (e.g., ha[d] [ð]e). In this study, the *MOA* factors that favoured [d] production were stops (both voiced (.64) and voiceless (.68), vowels (.67) and liquids (.67), which do not all conform to the predicted pattern.

For the factor group *Word Class*, function words favoured [d] usage (.52; 55%) over lexical words (.23; 46%). Interestingly, Dubois & Horvath (1999) also found similar results in their study on /ð/-stopping in the speech of Creole African American vernacular English (CAAVE), namely that function words favoured a higher usage of [d] (87%) as opposed to lexical words (33%). The likelihood that function words promote greater use of the [d] variant over [ð] can be explained by looking at the *functional hypothesis* (Kiparsky 1972). The *functional hypothesis* predicts that forms that carry semantic meaning (i.e., content words) are more likely to be preserved than those that do not (e.g., function words such as the definite article “the”). In the case of the function word “the”, for instance, it is likely that the form would undergo /ð/-stopping simply because it does not carry any function in the language besides that of a definite marker. Bybee’s *frequency approach* (2001) has a similar prediction with regards to “the”. In her approach, it is assumed that forms that are highly frequent (and therefore highly predictable) in the language are more likely to undergo changes such as /ð/-stopping: their change (deletion or stopping in this case) does not lead to a communicative breakdown, so speakers simply substitute /ð/ because they know that the loss of /ð/ will not cause a lack of understanding.

Regarding the factor group *Word Position*, word-initial environments favoured the production of [d] (.52; 55%), whereas word-medial /ð/ did not (.35; 49%). Due to the high interaction between the factor groups *Word Position* and

Word Class, it was expected that the results of these two variables would be relatively equivalent because there were no significant changes over the course of the analyses when one was not included. In addition, they were also comparatively similar in both their percentages and factor weights. In the current study, there was an overwhelming number of function words as opposed to lexical words (3532 versus 263 respectively) as well as word-initial against word-medial /ð/ words (3465 versus 330 respectively). This highlights the sheer number of function words as opposed to lexical words in everyday conversation as well as the high likelihood of /ð/-stopping in function words in the speech community under investigation.

5.3. Discussion of Social Factors

Based on prior sociolinguistic research, it was speculated that in terms of gender, women would be more conservative in their use of the /ð/ variable, thus favouring the more prestigious [d] variant (e.g., Wodak & Benke 1997). In the results obtained, there was a clear indication that males did use the [d] variant overwhelmingly more than females, with a factor weight of .57 (60%) versus that of females at .41 (47%). Similar patterns have been confirmed in other sociolinguistic studies (Labov 1966, Lippi-Green 1989, Milroy 1980, Trudgill 1972) and specifically in those conducted in a variety of communities across Newfoundland (e.g., Clarke 1985, Colbourne 1981, Reid 1981).

Why this phenomenon occurs in a population such as the Battery can be explained by examining the gender roles of this community. It is likely that women tend to be more conservative with their use of the vernacular because of the different occupational roles of the genders. Until the past few decades, men have typically always worked in the fishing industry in various capacities and women have traditionally been the primary caregivers in the home looking after their children. This is definitely the case for the older Battery natives in this study, where all three of the older female Battery natives never worked outside of the home. In addition, the two older male Battery natives worked in the fishing industry and come from families where fishing goes back generations. On that note, because the men all worked together, there may have been more pressure for men to display their solidarity through vernacular forms (e.g., Eckert 1989, Trudgill 1972). For instance, it could be the case that because the Battery was socially segregated from the rest of St. John's and its residents were often stereotyped negatively, the men may have felt the need to exert their unity by an increase in vernacular speech, specifically a high percentage of /ð/-stopping.

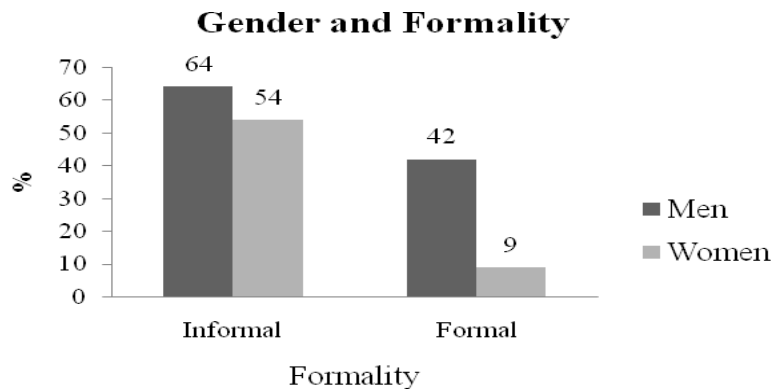
Even though the younger generation of Battery natives does not abide by the same conventional gender roles as the older generation did, they were all raised in such households. However, there is still some semblance of the traditional gender roles found with the younger generation of community members. It was found that the younger generation of Battery women did make the choice to stay home for a number of years to raise their children, and the younger generation of Battery men in this study has similar occupational roles as the previous generation, as general labourers. A number of the men still do work

together, as one Battery native explained to me that there are about half a dozen current natives that work together at a shop in St. John's.

It has been widely accepted in standard sociolinguistic research that, with regards to formality, less prestigious forms are more likely to occur more frequently in informal stylistic environments. As discussed in the previous section, this is exactly what happens with the variable phenomenon of /ð/-stopping, in which [d] usage increases in less formal speech (in this study characterized by free conversation). Moreover, there were only two types of style from the style continuum explored because it was speculated that some of the older natives might not be able to read and that some participants may be unwilling to complete tasks of this nature. Although this was the case because half of the participants did not take part in the reading task for various reasons, results confirmed that the non-standard variant [d] is heavily favoured in informal rather than formal speech (with factor weights of .57 versus .21 respectively). This finding corresponds to the results of other sociolinguistic studies that looked at speech style (e.g., Eckert 1989, Trudgill 1983).

It was evident that there were noteworthy interactions between the factor groups *Formality* and *Gender*. Figure 2 shows that in informal speech, men and women had high (and relatively comparable) percentages for their use of [d] at 64% and 54% respectively. However, there was a substantial difference in formal speech, with men using the [d] in 42% of the words and women using the [d] variant at only 9%. It is important to note that of the twelve participants, three females and two males did not do the more formal reading task, leaving only three females and four males having participated in that portion of the study. Accordingly, the results of *Formality* are possibly less reliable based on the unbalanced number of participants who took part in the reading task.

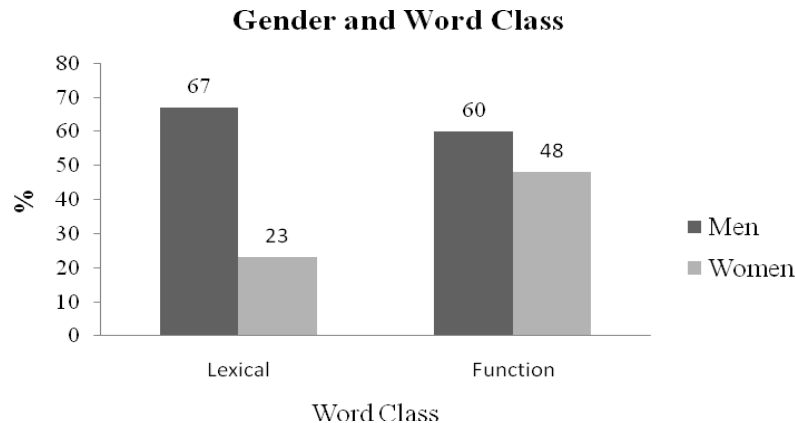
Figure 2: /ð/-stopping by Gender and Formality



In addition, there appeared to be an interesting relationship between *Gender* and *Word Class*. Males and females patterned relatively similarly in their percentage of [d] usage in function words (60% versus 48% respectively). However, there was an overwhelming difference between males and females with respect to the use of [d] in lexical words, with 67% of males' lexical words using the localized

form compared to that of only 23% of the females' lexical words. This stark difference illustrated in Figure 3 shows that women of both generations, may potentially make more of an effort to pronounce lexical words with greater caution or concern with mirroring the standard /ð/.

Figure 3: /ð/-stopping by Gender and Word Class



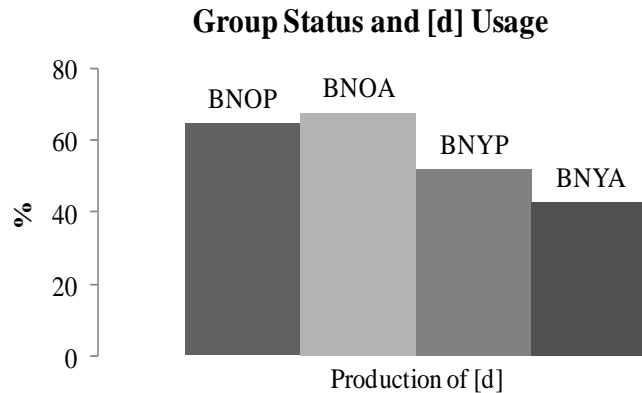
Turning now to the *Group Status* factor group, it was hypothesized in this study that the use of the less prestigious [d] would vary depending on one's *Group Status*. The use of [d] would decrease from the older Battery natives to the younger Battery natives, demonstrating an intergenerational shift. In addition, it was expected that the decrease in their use of [d] would also be evident in groups living outside of the community as opposed to those that have remained in the community so that the use of [d] decreases from BNOP to BNOA to BNYP to BNYA (see the continuum illustrated in Figure 1). This hypothesis was motivated by the *weak tie model* (Milroy 2002), which posits that the most mobile individuals have weak ties, and “as a consequence of their mobility occupy a position marginal to any given cohesive group, [and] are in a favourable position to diffuse innovation” (219). Thus, we anticipated that each participant's questionnaire responses would determine their *Social Network* and *Social Identity* and, accordingly, there would be a move towards a more standard speech of the weak members, those with a periphery status.

The factor group *Group Status*, however, posed a number of problems in the analyses and proved to be an unreliable independent variable. The BNOA group only contained one individual, a male, which may explain that his tendency to use [d] more frequently than the BNOP group (which contained three women and one man), was possibly based on gender and not his group status. Accordingly, the group status classification itself is questionable because even though the BNOA participant has lived outside of the Battery for almost 30 years and raised his family in St. John's, he still frequents the area on a daily basis to “escape the city life of St. John's”. Based on my conversation with the BNOA participant, it was obvious that this participant is as connected to this community

as anyone else in the area, which was also evident by his classification as having a closed social network and a community-based identity.

In general, *Gender* proved to be a more reliable social factor group than *Group Status*. For instance, one's gender was presumably not subjectively decided upon as was *Group Status*: each participant was categorized as male or female without question. In addition, gender was evenly distributed in this study such that there were six males and six females as opposed to *Group Status* which had four groups and an uneven distribution of participants in each of the respective groups. The classifications of absent versus present might have been unfruitful based on the imbalance of gender as well as the subjectively derived concepts of group affiliation and contact. However, the intergenerational differences found in /ð/-stopping were still quite evident based on the factor weights of [d] usage in the second Goldvarb recode, as is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: /ð/-stopping by Group Status



The elimination of the factor groups *Social Network* and *Social Identity* warrants further explanation due to their theoretical significance in this study yet lack of significance in the Goldvarb analyses. At the conception of this study, one of the goals was to take a comprehensive look at the Battery community and investigate the community networks, social identities and dialect of this once socially isolated community. The assumption that the breakdown of the *old* Battery community and relocation of some of the natives would potentially affect the network strength and individual identities were disproven based on the questionnaire responses. Of the twelve participants, only two (one BNOP and one BNYA) were categorized as having neutral social networks and social identity. The other ten participants were categorized as having closed social networks and community-based identities. None of the participants were categorized as having open social networks or individually-based identities.

The BNOP individual with the two classifications in question was not born in the Battery and spent the early part of her formative years in a small town outside of St. John's. Although she married a Battery native, raised her four children in the community and still lives there after more than 40 years,

interestingly, she considers herself less “native” than many of the other older community members. Moreover, the BNYA male with the same two classifications revealed he had a somewhat tumultuous childhood which may have potentially caused his social network and identity to be compromised and become less stable as those of the other participants. While the factor groups *Social Network* and *Social Identity* were proven less useful when looking at them in terms of the stratification of /ð/, they were seen as ideal in terms of analyzing this community and its members as being part of a cohesive unit, regardless of residence. In the same way, *Social Network* and *Social Identity* were not linked to residence and consequently one’s *Group Status*, nor did the two factor groups determine the amount of /ð/-stopping.

With a plethora of factors and factor groups to work with, there were noticeably a number of Goldvarb runs and a host of methodical issues to address during the analysis. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that there are presumably a host of additional intervening variables not investigated here that play a part in the speech of the Battery natives. However, the results obtained here clearly show a number of significant factors that have emerged as contributing to the variable phenomenon of /ð/-stopping, both extralinguistic and linguistic in nature.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Concluding Remarks

The change in the social structure of Newfoundland as a whole has been somewhat mirrored on a micro level in the Battery community. Because of the complexity of this changing community, one of the aims of this study was to investigate whether the Battery natives would pattern like enclave community members in low-status communities or like those living in heterogeneous areas where there is much greater exposure to Standard dialects. The focus of this study was to look at this changing community and uncover what defines the *new* Battery era with respect to community structure, identity and dialect.

While it was a general goal to discover what extralinguistic and linguistic factors would trigger the production of the two variants of /ð/, it was a specific goal to see how this behaved across the four Battery groups under investigation, namely BNYP, BNYA, BNOP, and BNOA. Although some of the findings were less than ideal in terms of reliability, there were numerous results that were quite interesting. The most unexpected results were the significant factor weights and percentage differences in the use of [d] in terms of gender and how the two genders patterned with respect to formality (specifically in formal speech) and word class (specifically in lexical words). The stark differences in formal speech and specifically with lexical words highlights just how different the genders are in terms of [d] production, or perhaps more importantly, *lack* of [ð] production. While men use the [d] variant less in their formal speech, exhibiting that it is common to be more standard in formal speech, women exhibit *much more* careful speech in a formal reading task.

There were some intriguing findings with *Group Status* although this factor group was somewhat capricious. It was believed that due to the change in social structure and mobility of the younger Battery generations, stratification would most likely occur within the two groups of younger natives (BNYP and BNYA over BNOP and BNOA). It was further speculated that not only would the younger groups display less /ð/-stopping, but those participants who have remained in the community would have a stronger link to the core community network. It was shown that the younger generations (BNYP and BNYA) did in fact use the [d] social marker less than the older groups (BNOP, BNOA). However, it was a pleasant surprise that the latter theory was not proven correct. The majority of participants still identified strongly with the Battery community and Battery identity, regardless of where they lived. It appears that weak ties in the physical sense had no bearing on the emotional ties that these community natives shared, despite what they might have thought at a younger age when they left. Although there were some problematic aspects to *Group Status*, further study with a greater number of participants for each group may resolve some of the challenging issues and lend more credibility to the factor overall.

The linguistic results of this study were less than ideal, mainly in terms of confirming my initial hypotheses regarding the *MOA* and *POA* factor groups: there were no observable patterns that fit with pre-existing theories proposed for the analyses of phonological phenomena. For example, the expected results for *MOA* were not confirmed because there was no observable pattern based on continuancy, as we hypothesized. The picture was more promising for the remaining linguistic factors included in this study, namely *Word Position* and *Word Class*. Results for both confirmed typical outcomes from other sociolinguistic studies, whereby the word-initial /ð/ segment undergoes [d] substitution more frequently when it appears word-internally. In addition, *Word Class* followed a similar predictable pattern showing that function words are more likely to undergo /ð/-stopping as opposed to lexical words, a phenomenon that may be explained via the *functional hypothesis* or the *frequency effect*. Despite some of the inconclusive conclusions, the results, indeed, confirmed that the application of /ð/-stopping is motivated by a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors. Accordingly, the phenomena of /ð/-stopping proves to be present in the unique Battery community as it has been in other areas of Newfoundland. Since the future of the Battery is in question due to the changes in both the social and physical structure over the past few decades it remains, for the time being, an ideal enclave for dialectal research.

6.2. Limitations

By far, the greatest limitation of this study is the small number of participants. Although twelve is an adequate number to study certain linguistic phenomena under special conditions (e.g. small speech communities), the fact that there were four groups under investigation meant that each group was only made up of a few individuals. It would have been ideal to have more participants overall, but

specifically for each group observed. This would have allowed for the results to be more reliable, thus making them more generalizable to the community as a whole, as well as other comparable communities across Newfoundland.

Another limitation of this study is that not all of the participants completed the formal reading task. Two BNY and three BNO did not participate in the formal reading task, leaving only five BNY and two BNO to be measured by this factor. Reasons for not completing the task ranged from an inability to read, not having reading glasses on hand and, in one case, simply refusing to do it for unknown, unstated reasons. This issue was anticipated in the conceptualization of the study, which was partly why we chose to have the questionnaire read aloud and have the participants answer orally. A more general limitation commonly found with linguistic studies is the possibility of there being a number of intervening variables that could potentially affect the speech patterns of some or all of the participants.

6.3. Future Research

For further study in this area, it would be interesting to study the next generation of Battery natives. Although this younger generation would presumably not have grown up in the 'old' Battery era, it would be appealing to see how they pattern in terms of network affiliation, social identity and use of the social marker [d]. For example, in another well known study looking at changing communities and the strength of social networks, Dubois & Horvath (1999) looked at a third generation of their community of interest. What they found was a distinct V-shaped pattern, whereby the third generation identified with the older generation, possibly to showcase their pride in their heritage despite not living in the area when it was a socially isolated and marginalized community.

Additionally, it would be ideal to include, in a future study, participants from the Battery who live outside of the community and do not share any community bonds nor have any good feelings about being from the community. Of all the participants interviewed, there was only one who confirmed that they had a family member who had negative feelings about being from the Battery and did not even like to visit the community. Of course, the most important reason for future research in the Battery is that the spate of gentrification and urbanization affecting this community is becoming increasingly evident as time goes on. It is imperative that more community members are interviewed, especially those older Battery natives that will likely be gone in the decades to come.

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Written Cantonese in Hong Kong Advertisements*¹

ANTHONY C. LISTER

1. Introduction²

It is common knowledge that while China has a large number of dialects, many not mutually understandable, they all share a common written form. Thus, a Chinese newspaper can be easily read by all Chinese speakers, regardless of their dialect and regardless of whether they can speak the national language. This is due to the fact that written Chinese uses ideograms which are read differently according to the dialect of the reader. If the Chinese were to adopt a phonetic script, as the Vietnamese have, to replace the characters, it would be necessary to create separate scripts as well for all of the various dialects, and the new written forms would be as mutually incomprehensible as the spoken forms. It should be added that the dialects are often so far divergent that they would be considered separate languages if it were not for the fact that China is a unified political entity, and for the unique fact also that they share the same written form. Indeed, the Chinese characters were used in the past to represent non Chinese languages such as Vietnamese and Korean, and they are still used in Japan to some extent. The closest analogy in European languages to a common script for different dialects or languages is the numeral system, where the numbers are written in the same way across Europe, but pronounced differently in the various languages.

The modern written script is based on Mandarin, and the spoken and written forms of that particular variety of Chinese are closely related. In other words, spoken Mandarin and written Mandarin are very similar, and since Mandarin is the official language of China and is the variety taught in schools, all Chinese can read it. However, there is a much wider difference between the spoken forms and the written forms based on Mandarin in other dialects. While the grammar and vocabulary are remarkably similar across the dialects, much more so than is the case with closely related European languages, such as Portuguese and Spanish, Dutch and German, there are still differences. It would be hard to imagine Dutch speakers reading a German script and pronouncing it as Dutch. This is however the case in China, where speakers of dialects read Mandarin texts in their own dialect. It sounds stilted but is quite understandable.

¹*I wish to thank the following for patiently answering my many questions concerning the Cantonese texts: Henry Chong, Shirley Leung, Li Xuliang, Brian Loh, and So Wai-Sang.

² Most of the introduction, apart from the first two paragraphs, is summarized from John Snow's ground breaking work *Cantonese as Written Language* (See References).

Of all the regional dialects, only one, Cantonese, has a written form of its own which is still in use. Written forms existed for some other dialects in the past as well but have largely died out. Don Snow (2004:33) writes (citing Allard and Landry 1994: 117), 'In regions where other dialects of Chinese were spoken, the vernacular often appeared to a greater or lesser extent in the printed forms of local operas, folk songs, and even some kinds of popular fiction. For example, elements of local vernacular can be found in the traditional folk literature of Guangdong's Hakka and Chaozhou dialect regions. However, before the twentieth century, it was the Wu dialects (吳) - the vernaculars of Shanghai, Ningbo, and Suzhou - which developed most as written languages.' He continues that the Wu dialect, which first appeared in literature in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), became popular around the turn of the 20th century appearing in a number of novels; but the written form then declined and disappeared.

According to Snow (2004: 35-40), the only other Chinese dialect which has a written form is Taiwanese. However, the written language does not have a long history, having been developed by intellectuals in the twentieth century for nationalist and political reasons. There is no standardized form, and it is therefore difficult for writers and readers and it has not enjoyed commercial success.

The situation with written Cantonese is entirely different. It has roots going back 300 years or more, is fairly standardized, and at least in Hong Kong is widely used in certain restricted areas. In fact, this is the only place in China, apart from Macau, where non standard Chinese characters can be seen. The first publications in written Cantonese, so called wooden fish books, which contained the lyrics to popular songs, appeared in the late Ming, and were widely available and read until as late as the 1950s. In the nineteenth century, another type of song genre appeared: Cantonese love songs, which were widely published in newspapers and magazines and were later included in Cantonese operas. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, text books for teaching spoken and written Cantonese appeared for foreigners (especially missionaries) and for Chinese speakers of other dialects. Cantonese opera, whose golden period was between approximately 1920 to 1936, was important in the development of written Cantonese, since it enjoyed wide popularity among the lower classes and hundreds of scripts were published and read. However, over all, the use of written Cantonese was only acceptable in certain types of texts: those for light entertainment or for oral performance, and often for a lower class audience. Classical Chinese or *Baihua* (written Mandarin based on the spoken language) remained the language for most serious or formal uses.

For a few years after the second world war this situation was challenged by a group of writers in Hong Kong who participated in the Hong Kong Dialect Literature Movement. This was linked to the situation in China, where the communists were favourable to literature in local dialects as a means to reach the masses. However, after the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, the government in Beijing started promoting the national language in the interest of unity and, both in China and Hong Kong, the Dialect Literature Movement came to an abrupt end. In Guangdong the use of written Cantonese was thenceforth restricted and after 1951 no longer appeared in newspapers. In *laissez-faire* Hong Kong, on the other hand, spoken Cantonese continued to be the *lingua franca* of the Chinese population and the written form enjoyed growth.

As mentioned above, written Cantonese has been reserved for certain specific domains, and indeed it has been considered vulgar and low class. In Hong Kong, school teachers make great

efforts to prevent students using it. The spoken language, on the other hand, does not suffer this discrimination, though it is considered by most speakers as merely a dialect, and many believe that it does not even have a grammar. It is very widely used, and since 1974 has official status in Hong Kong along with English, such that it is used by nearly all Chinese speakers in the Legislative Council. It is also taught in schools, in the sense that students learn how to pronounce standard Mandarin Chinese characters with Cantonese pronunciation. Most radio and television broadcasts in Hong Kong are also in Cantonese, and Cantonese pop music has a huge audience as do Cantonese movies (though in decline in recent years). It might be added that there are also Cantonese radio and television broadcasts in Guangzhou and Shenzhen, but apparently Cantonese is not allowed for news broadcasts. The spectacular economic growth of Hong Kong over the last 40 years has given added prestige to the spoken language. However, this prestige has only slowly influenced growth in the use of the written language. Beginning in the 1970s, Cantonese started to be used in publications for middle class audiences, and for younger readers. One genre where it appeared regularly was in “odd opinion” columns (short, lighthearted essays) in newspapers. Furthermore, scripts of radio, television, and film productions were written in Cantonese which increased the skill of writers of the language. From the 1970s to the present time, there has been a slow growth in the use of Cantonese in Hong Kong newspapers, though mainly in the mass market press starting with the defunct *Tin Tin Daily* in the 70s and 80s, to the present-day *Apple Daily*. The growth was paralleled in Hong Kong’s magazines, especially those aimed at the youth market, and those dealing with entertainment and pop culture. Paperback books known as “pocketbooks”, which made their appearance in the early 80s, were light in content, written entirely in Cantonese, and met with unusual market success. The most well-known of these was *Diary of the Little Man* by Chan Hing-Kai. A recent development which will help enhance the status of both spoken and written Cantonese is the increased attention that scholars have given to the language during the last decade, resulting in new grammar books, dictionaries, academic works, and conferences.

2. Written Cantonese in Advertisements

This paper examines one area where written Cantonese is now widely used: in advertising; specifically advertising in the MTR (Hong Kong’s Metro). This is one area where the audience is huge and where the impact on the language must be considerable. The adverts illustrate some of the differences between Cantonese and the national language, and show the various means by which Cantonese words for which there are no standard characters are written. The advertisements are also revealing in the sense that they are for products or services from some of the world’s leading brand name companies, and cannot but fail to enhance the status of Cantonese.

The text below is from a large and prominent series of twelve advertisements in Hong Kong’s Central MTR station, for AXA Insurance Retirement Investments. Half of the adverts were in English, the other half in Chinese.

- (1) “我 唔 想 7 0 歲 仲 要 趕 車 返 工”
 ngo5 **m4** soeng2 cat1 sap6 sei3 **zung6** jiu3 gon2 ce1 **faan1 gung1**³
 I not want seventy years still rush bus
 return work
 I don't want to still be rushing to work when I'm seventy

The second word *m4* (唔) is a negative marker in Cantonese, and is the equivalent of *bu4* (不) in Mandarin. The character used to represent it is non-standard, and it illustrates one of the mechanisms by which Cantonese syllables can be written, namely giving a new meaning to a character that already exists with the same or similar sound, a strategy named 'phonetic borrowing' by Don Snow. In this case, there is an existing standard character with the same tone as *m4*, namely *ng4* (吾) an archaic word which means 'I, me'. The radical for mouth (口) is added to the left of the standard character indicating that it is a Cantonese dialect word. Mandarin speakers although not familiar with the character would guess that it had the same pronunciation as 吾 i.e. *wu2* and could also guess from the context that it was a negative marker. It should be noted that the 'mouth' radical does not always indicate that the character represents a Cantonese word, since many standard characters are also classified under this same radical.

The seventh word *zung6* (仲) illustrates a second strategy by which a Cantonese word may be written, namely giving a new meaning to an existing standard character. In this case, the standard meaning of the character is 'in the middle, between two entities', but in Cantonese it also means 'still', which in Mandarin is a completely different word, *hai2* (還). The use of the character *zung6* illustrates another point, namely that Cantonese characters are not standardized. Often, *zung6* 'still' is represented by another character with the same sound and same tone, meaning 'heavy' (重).

The last two words *faan1 gung1* (返工), literally 'return work', are a Cantonese expression meaning 'to go to work' and are the equivalent of Mandarin *shang4 ban1*. In this case, the individual characters are standard with standard meanings, but in combination the meaning is not standard. In Mandarin, the expression actually means 'to do a piece of work again'.

It is sometimes possible, as in this sentence, to read the Cantonese characters with Mandarin pronunciation, but it may not be understandable to a non-Cantonese speaker (2).

- (2) wo3 **wu2** xiang3 qi1 shi2 sui4 **zhong4** yao4 gan3 che1 **fan1 gong1**

Standard Mandarin for the sentence would be as follows (3).

- (3) 我 不 想 7 0 歲 還 要 趕 車 返 工

³ Romanization for Cantonese is in *gyut ping*, the scheme used by the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong. Mandarin is romanized in *pinyin*, the standard system in China. For this paper, extensive use was made of the online Cantonese-Mandarin-English Dictionary, *CantoDict Project* (<http://www.cantonese.sheik.co.uk>) established in November, 2003. Another online dictionary for Mandarin with Cantonese pronunciations, *The MDBG Chinese-English Dictionary*, was also consulted (<http://www.xuezhongwen.net/chindict/chindict.php>) as was *Zhongwen zui xin ciyu cidian*, Zhonghua Shudian Gongsu, Hong Kong, 2008, ed Kang Shiyong, Liu Hairun and others, a dictionary of around 10,000 neologisms from the early 1990s to the present.

wo3 **bu4** xiang3 qi1 shi2 sui4 **hai2** yao4 gan3 che1 **shang4 ban1**

This would be the normal written form for Cantonese speakers also, since they speak Cantonese but read and write in Mandarin. However they would read out the Mandarin sentence using Cantonese pronunciation, even though it would sound very stilted in everyday spoken language (4):

(4) ngo5 **bat1** soeng2 cat1 sap6 seoi3 **waan4** jiu3 gon2 ce1 **seong5 baan1**

This text also illustrates that Cantonese speakers are not always sure whether a particular expression is in fact Cantonese and they seem to err on the side of caution, avoiding its use in writing if they are not sure. In this case several informants felt that *gon2 ce1* (趕車) ‘to rush by bus’ was a Cantonese expression whereas in fact it does also occur in everyday speech in Mandarin.

Finally, this advertisement is typical of adverts which contain Cantonese in that it also contains more formal text in Mandarin as well as English. However, it was unusual in that the same adverts were juxtaposed in English and Chinese. Many adverts in the MTR contained three languages, a few in Central Station in the main business area used just English (e.g. Qantas Airlines, Marks and Spencer), while most adverts were in Chinese, though nearly all contained some English to some extent.

The next advert was for Sony.

(5) Bravia 啲, 靚 多 啲
Bravia **di1**, **leng3** do1 **di1**
Bravia more, beautiful much more
More Bravia is much more beautiful

Di1(啲) is a Cantonese comparative suffix, similar to English, *-er*, and again is a phonetic borrowing. It is similar in sound to and has the same tone as the possessive marker *dik1* (的), and the radical for mouth indicates that the word is dialectal. It is sometimes also written as 'D', romanization being a third, though fairly uncommon way, that non-standard words can be written. *Leng3* (靚) is a Cantonese word meaning 'beautiful'.

The following text appears in the same advertisement and, as is often the case, reproduces oral language. Representation of actual speech, especially colloquial, in written Cantonese is more acceptable than using Cantonese characters in more formal texts.

(6) “你 上 電 視, 靚 好 多 啲”
nei5 soeng5 din6 si6, leng3 hou3 do1 wo4
you go up television, beautiful much more *wo4*
When you appear on television, you are much more beautiful

In this text, the Cantonese final particle *wo4* (啲) indicates surprise. The character is a phonetic borrowing based on any of several standard Chinese characters but with the radical replaced with the mouth radical.

The origin of the Cantonese character *leng3* ‘beautiful’ is unclear. It does not usually appear in Mandarin dictionaries with an equivalent sound and meaning, though it does appear with the pronunciation *jing4* ‘to paint the face’. I found it in just one dictionary, with the pronunciation *liang4*, and meaning ‘beautiful’, and an indication that it was dialectal. The character is also listed in the two recent online dictionaries mentioned in footnote 2, with the Mandarin pronunciation *liang4*, and with the meaning ‘beautiful, pretty’; as well as in a recently published dictionary of neologisms in Mandarin (Kang Shiyong, et. al. 2008). An informant from Shanghai said that northerners would not know the character and that it was not Mandarin. However, two other informants said they had heard the word used in Mandarin, and one of them, a Mandarin speaker who cannot speak Cantonese, wrote, “it is pronounced as ‘liang’ in Mandarin and it is a common character in Mandarin. It means ‘beautiful’ ... ‘liang’ is more common in writing because it is more poetic. A lot of parents used this character to name their daughters wishing them to be beautiful and have a good temperament after they grow up.” The other informant wrote, “It’s an ancient word used more commonly in old Chinese opera lyrics.”

It would appear that *leng3* is an archaic character which has survived in Cantonese but only has a very restricted use in Mandarin. Indeed, many dialect words once had written forms which have since died out in the standard language, and some scholars are now going back to ancient texts to rediscover the original characters. Making use of these archaic characters would represent a fourth way that Cantonese words could be written, though it is a strategy which has not been adopted. Interestingly, *liang4* has recently been exported back into standard Chinese and given new life by the younger generation in such expressions as *liang4 hao4* ‘a nice number for cars or cell phones’, *liang4 nü3* ‘a pretty girl’, *liang4 zhao4* ‘a nice photo’.

The following was an advertisement for the MTR, which uses Cantonese extensively in its advertisements and signs:

(7) 想 知 道 IFC 嘅 秘 密?
 soeng2zi1 dou6 IFC **ge3** bei3 mat6?
 want know IFC *ge* secret?
 Do you want to know IFC's secret?

即 刻 換 購 今 期 嘅 印 章 啦!
 zik1 hak1 wun6 kau3 gam1 kei4 **ge3** jan3 zoeng1 **laa1!**
 immediately exchange buy current *ge* seal *laa!*
 Please immediately redeem the current seal!

Ge3 (嘅), which occurs twice, is a Cantonese grammatical possessive marker, the equivalent of *de* (的) in Mandarin. The written character is a phonetic borrowing, similar in sound to *gei3* (既), ‘since, already’ in standard Chinese, with the addition of the mouth radical. The final particle *laa1* (啦), a particle expressing politeness, is also Cantonese, and the character is again a phonetic borrowing, identical in sound and tone to the character meaning ‘to pull’ (拉), with the addition of the mouth radical.

The next advertisement, again for the MTR, contains three Cantonese characters:

(8) 無 論 嘅 邊 道
 mou4 leon6 **hai2** **bin1** **dou6**

no matter at which place
It doesn't matter where you are

The preposition *hai2* (喺) 'at' is the Cantonese equivalent of Mandarin *zai4* (在), and the character is a phonetic loan. *Bin1 dou6* (邊道) is a Cantonese compound meaning 'which place, where', but in standard Chinese the written characters mean 'edge' and 'road', respectively, and are meaningless in combination. Another character meaning 'degree' in standard Chinese (度) is sometimes also used to represent *dou6* in this expression.

In the next advertisement for Ulferts furniture, most of the text is in Mandarin, while the speech quotes are in Cantonese, and the branding is in English:

(9) 咁 著 數,
gam3 **zoek6 sou3**
So advantageous

唔 好 俾 佢 停 呀"
m4 **hou2 bei2 keoi5** ting4 **aa3** (particle for emphasis or surprise)
not good allow him stop *aa3*
Don't let him stop

(10) “咪 執 輸”
mai5 zap1 syu1
do not miss out
Don't miss out on this opportunity

The character for *gam3* (咁) 'so' is a phonetic loan based on the standard Chinese character for 'sweet', pronounced *gam3* in Cantonese, with the addition of the mouth radical. *Zoek6 sou3* (著數) 'favourable' is a Cantonese compound using standard Chinese characters but with a non standard meaning. In Mandarin, 著 (*zhu4*) means 'to make known / to show / to prove / to write / outstanding', and 數 (*shu4*) means 'a number', but the two characters in combination are meaningless. In the second sentence, *m4 hou2* (唔好), literally 'not good' in Cantonese means 'do not'. The character for *m4* (唔) has been discussed above, while that for *hou2* (好) is a standard Chinese character. The third character *bei2* (俾) 'to allow, to let' means 'to cause, to enable' in Mandarin while the fourth character *keoi5* (佢) 'him', is a phonetic borrowing from the standard Chinese word for 'big, enormous' (巨) (*geoi6* in Cantonese) with the addition of the person radical. The standard word for 'he, she' in Mandarin is *ta1* (他). In the third sentence, the character for Cantonese *mai5* (咪) 'do not' is a phonetic loan from the standard Chinese character *mai5* (米) 'uncooked rice' with the addition of the mouth radical indicating that it is Cantonese. This modified character is by chance identical to the standard Chinese character which means 'a cat's meow' (*mail* in Cantonese, *mi1* in Mandarin) and also includes the mouth radical, but the latter indicates sound and not any dialectal origin.

The next advertisement was for Panadol:

- (11) 冇 晒 M 痛, Special Moment 一 日 都 唔 會 Miss!
mou5 saai3 M tung3, Special Moment jat1 jat6 dou1 **m4** wui5 Miss!
 There is not entirely M pain, Special Moment one day even not will Miss!
 The monthly pain disappears completely. You won't miss even a single day!

幾 時 都 咁 快 樂 啦!
gei2 si4 dou1 gam3 faai3 lok6 **laa1!**
 Always so happy *laa* (particle makes phrase more polite)
 You will always feel so happy!

Mou5 (冇) 'there is not, there is no' is Cantonese for Mandarin *mei2 you3* (沒有). The character illustrates the fifth though rarely used way that Cantonese sounds are represented in the written language, namely by the creation of a new character. However, such creations are nearly always based on pre-existing characters. In this particular case, an existing character *jau5* (有) 'there is, there are' has been modified by the deletion of two strokes. The second character *saai3* (晒) means 'entirely' in Cantonese in this context, and is a phonetic borrowing, the standard meaning being 'to dry in the sun' (also pronounced *saai3* in Cantonese). It is also sometimes written with the addition of the mouth radical (晒) to indicate that it is Cantonese. *M* does not represent a Chinese word, but it does show how capital letters are sometimes used in a specifically Chinese way to represent English words, in this case 'monthly, menstrual'. It is possibly used to avoid the use of the Chinese term in a rather conservative society, similar to the use of Latin in English for some sexual terms. The further use of the English word 'miss' is intended to give the impression that the advert is aimed at western educated open-minded people. The three words *gei2 si4 dou1* (幾時都) mean 'always' in Cantonese, but in Mandarin mean literally 'a few, how many', 'time', and 'all.'

In the next advert for the MTR, there are two Cantonese words, *ni1* (呢) 'this' and *me1* (咩) 'what':

- (12) 究 竟 呢 張 龍 床 有 咩 秘 密 呢?
 gau3 ging2 **ni1** zoeng1 lung4 cong4 jau5 **me1** bei3 mat6 ne1?
 in fact this *zoeng* (classifier) dragon/emperor bed has what secret *ne*
 In fact, what is the secret of this emperor's bed?

The character for *ni1* (呢) is a phonetic borrowing (*nei4* 'a Buddhist nun') with the addition of the mouth radical, while the character for *me1* (咩) 'what' has the same sound as the standard Chinese character meaning 'bleating of sheep'. The mouth radical in this case already exists in the original character indicating a sound. The final particle *ne1* (呢) is not Cantonese but it illustrates that a character can often be pronounced in more than one way. In this sentence, *ni1* 'this', and *ne1* are both written with the same character.

3. Conclusion

The above examples were drawn from about 50 advertisements or notices. In the sentences examined there were 293 characters of which 72 were Cantonese, i.e. approximately 25%. In

authentic informal Cantonese speech the percentage of Cantonese characters would be much higher than this, reaching 42% according to Ouyang (1993:80-82, cited by Snow, 2004:50). As to the overall use of Cantonese in advertisements in the MTR, these statistics only cover those sentences in which there were Cantonese characters, and such sentences sometimes only represented a small part of the whole advertisement. Moreover, the majority of advertisements did not have any Cantonese at all. In one station, for example, of 147 advertisements and notices (excluding 6 in only English), only 16 had some Cantonese (10.9%). However, there were enough such adverts throughout the MTR system to be quite noticeable, especially as they were often large, prominently positioned and promoted well-known brands (others not mentioned above were Nokia, the Hong Kong Banking Corporation, Wing Hang Bank, Hang Seng Bank, Hang Lung Bank, and the Hong Kong Jockey Club).

As to the grammatical categories of Cantonese in the adverts, about half of the words were of a purely functional nature: negators, particles, and the possessive marker *ge3* (嘅). Among the rest, the most common were adverbs. Verbs, nouns and adjectives were the lowest in frequency. It is well known that grammatical features in a language are the most resistant to change under the influence of other languages and this may be reflected in the Cantonese texts. However, it is also possible that the large percentage of Cantonese grammatical features may simply indicate that the texts do not portray actual authentic speech, as mentioned above, and that these features were simply added to more formal Mandarin texts to make them more vivid and colourful.

Hong Kong is the only area in China where a written form of a dialect is widely used and its growth over the last thirty years is an instructive example of how language change can occur. While it is still looked down on, it has nonetheless attained a much more acceptable status than several decades ago, and the fact that it is now used in the adverts of some of the world's most well known brands cannot but fail to give more prestige to the written form. In Guangdong Province, written Cantonese is not used in the mass media or in adverts, and this situation will probably not change in the future, due to the influx of Mandarin speakers. However, in Hong Kong, where the population is overwhelmingly Cantonese and is likely to remain so for many years, it is probable that written Cantonese will continue to be used. In addition, while Cantonese script may not ever become widely used in Guangdong, the influence of written Cantonese in Hong Kong on the mainland cannot be ruled out now that Cantonese speakers living in China can easily visit Hong Kong, and be exposed to the written form of their language.

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Auxiliary Selection in 16th Century French: Imposing Norms in the Face of Language Change

DOUGLAS L. RIDEOUT

1. Introduction

Auxiliary selection- the choice of *être* or *avoir* - in the conjugation of certain intransitive verbs (i.e. *tomber*) in French has garnered limited attention in the linguistic literature. On the rare occasion when the topic is addressed, authors usually take one of two approaches. The majority of studies on auxiliary selection in French focus on a description of auxiliary use in modern, regional dialects of French, such as Canale *et al.* (1978) on Ontario French, Sankoff and Thibault (1980) on Montreal French, Russo and Roberts (1999) on Vermont French, Willis (2000) on Ottawa-Hull French and Balcom (2008) on New Brunswick Acadian French. The other approach focuses on the “Unaccusative Hypothesis” (Legendre and Sorace 2003, Bentley and Eythorsson 2003). This hypothesis is applied to a cross section of European languages with French sometimes being cited as one language example among others. What is even more rarely addressed, and what is vitally missing in the linguistic literature, is auxiliary selection as seen from a historical perspective.

Historical information on auxiliary selection is not totally nonexistent, but no comprehensive study of the historical nature of auxiliary selection has been done for French. Willis (2000) did address this question briefly, but his main focus was on the contemporary Ottawa-Hull regional dialect so the scope of his historical information is limited. It includes some references for the 17th century, but focuses mainly on the 18th century. Tailleux (2007) studied auxiliary selection in 18th century French, but her study was not a description of auxiliary use in this time period. Her objective, rather, was the application of the “Unaccusative Hypothesis” to 18th century French. Other sources of historical information on auxiliary selection in French are found in works dealing with the history of the French language (i.e. Fournier 1998, Tritten 1999). These works do provide some information on auxiliary selection in a historical context, but again this grammatical point, when addressed, remains very limited.

In this article, I propose to start filling in this linguistic gap by looking at auxiliary selection in 16th century French. More precisely, I will look at i) the state of auxiliary selection - whether it was stable or in transition, and ii) how auxiliary selection was perceived and analysed by early grammarians in their first efforts to standardise the French language.

2. Auxiliary Selection in Contemporary Normative French

In normative French, the conjugation of compound verb forms (*passé composé*, *plus-que-parfait*, etc.) generally require the use of the auxiliary *avoir*, but a limited number of intransitive verbs,¹ or verbs used intransitively,² and reflexive verbs³ require the auxiliary *être*.

- (1) a. Je suis arrivé.
b. Il est descendu.
c. Je me suis promené.

However, it is fairly common to encounter the non-standard use of the auxiliary *avoir* with these same verbs, especially in spoken French.

- (2) a. J'ai resté.
b. J'ai tombé.
c. J'ai déjà allé.
d. Je m'ai dit.

In studies on contemporary French dialects (Canale *et al.* 1978, Sankoff and Thibault 1980, etc.), this non-standard use of the auxiliary *avoir* is frequently attested. These studies show that there is a trend in many dialects of French to favour the use of *avoir* where normative French requires the auxiliary *être*, and not the contrary. *Avoir* appears to be replacing *être* in the conjugation of compound verb forms.

3. Diachronic Trends

The trend toward the increased use of *avoir* in the conjugation of compound verb forms in French is not restricted to the contemporary language (cf. Leeman-Bouix 1994: 111, Brunot 1936: 472-473, Nyrop 1930: 212). According to Grevisse (1993: 1179), certain intransitive verbs that take *être* in standard French are often conjugated with *avoir*. He states that this is due to archaic literary forms or the imitation of popular local vernaculars. The use of the term 'archaic literary forms' leads us to believe that the use of the auxiliary *avoir* was fairly frequent in days of yore, an observation also confirmed by both Fournier and Dauzat. Working on Classical French (17th century French), Natalie Fournier observes the use of both auxiliaries when conjugating such intransitive verbs as *apparaître*, *cesser*, *choir*, *courir*, *croître*, *déchoir*, *demeurer*, *descendre*, *disparaître*, *entrer*, *monter*, *partir*, *rentrer*, *rester*, *retourner*, *sortir* and *tomber* (1998: 256-260). Dauzat (1930: 447) also describes this trend, saying:

¹ i.e. *Aller*, *Arriver*, *Devenir*, *Entrer*, *Mourir*, *Naître*, *Partir*, *Rester*, *Tomber*, *Venir*, *Revenir*.

² i.e. *Descendre*, *Monter*, *Passer*, *Revenir*, *Retourner*, *Sortir*.

³ i.e. *Se promener*.

“Mais très anciennement une tendance [...] a entraîné les intransitifs à prendre l’auxiliaire *avoir*. Le mouvement a atteint les réfléchis dès le Moyen Âge, toutefois à titre exceptionnel [...]; la réaction, surtout littéraire l’a enrayé dans cette direction, mais la langue populaire actuelle est revenue à la charge.”

This observation merits two comments. First, the trend to prefer *avoir* to *être* appears to have existed from early on in the history of French. Second, there would appear to be a conscious counter-movement, especially in the literary realm, to prevent the spread of the use of *avoir* and maintain the use of *être*.

This diachronic trend toward *avoir* is not restricted to the French language, but is part of a larger Romance language trend. The *être / avoir* alternation still exists or has existed in other Romance languages and the preference for *avoir* is clearly attested. Beyond French, modern Italian, Occitan, Sardinian and Rheto-Romance still use both *être* and *avoir* when conjugating certain intransitive verbs.

Other Romance languages, such as Catalan, Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian as well as Picard and Wallon have lost the alternation for intransitive verbs. For Spanish, the loss of the use of *ser* ‘être’ in the conjugation of intransitive verbs occurred toward the end of the 15th century (Green 1988: 102, Vincent 1988: 57). Penny (2000) attributes this loss to dialect mixing and analogical levelling during the *Reconquista* in 15th century Spain. Auger (2003), in her description of the Picard language, states explicitly that one characteristic that distinguishes Picard from French is the general use of *avoir* for the conjugation of intransitive verbs as well as for reflexive verbs. Hendschel (2001) notes a similar trend for Wallon where the auxiliary *avu* ‘avoir’ is used in all compound verb forms, including with verbs for which standard French requires *être*. He adds that the use of the auxiliary *esse* ‘être’ is found at times, but that such a construction is a Gallicism - an influence of French - and is generally considered an error (2001).

Diachronically, for Romance languages that have maintained the *être / avoir* alternation, *avoir* is the auxiliary of choice in non-standard varieties. For the other Romance languages that have lost this alternation, it is always in favour of the use of *avoir*. In non-standard varieties of French, we observe a preference for the use of *avoir*. If we consider Picard and Wallon as regional dialects of French rather than independent languages, we see that the use of *avoir* has been generalised, or almost totally generalised, as the auxiliary of choice for the conjugation of intransitive and reflexive / pronominal verbs.

4.0 The 16th Century

4.1 French in the 16th Century

The beginning of the 16th Century signals a major turning point in the history and evolution of the French language. The language starts the 16th Century radically changed compared to the structure it had in the Middle Ages, but without yet achieving its modern form. During this century the vernacular, especially Francien - the variety of French spoken in the Île-de-France region - takes on more and more the role of a national language, replacing Latin in most, if not all, administrative, scientific, legal and literary texts. It is also the period where we see the first efforts to codify and standardise the language, as well as the publication of the first grammars of the French language.

The grammars published during the 16th Century can be classified in one of two categories. Due to the growing importance of France in Europe, the language was expanding outside her borders and many foreign nationals and the elite were interested in learning French. Thus, many grammars were written and published to teach the language. John Palsgrave (1530a) and Gilles du Wes (1532), for example, both produced grammars of the French language to help them teach the language at the English court. Other authors took more of an academic approach when writing their grammars, arguing and debating what constitutes proper French and what models of French should be used in the standardisation process (i.e. Meigret 1550 and Ramus 1562, 1572).

French grammar during the Renaissance is marked by two significant factors. The first factor is regional and social variation. At this time period, the language varied widely, not only from one region to another, but also between social classes within the same region. With such linguistic variation, one would expect also to see, and one indeed does see, variation in the *être / avoir* alternation (See §5.1). The second factor is the lack of agreement on what constitutes proper French (i.e. the norm) and how to establish it. This debate will be carried on through the century and well into the following century before being settled, though not necessarily always being accepted (See §5.2).

For a diversified language still in transition, creating a standard posed some monumental challenges.

4.2 16th Century Grammarians

For the Renaissance period, 15 grammars, written by twelve different authors, were analysed. They are:

John Palsgrave (1530) *Lesclarcissement de la langue françoise*.

Jacques Dubois or Sylvius (1531) *Grammatica Latino-Gallica*.

Gilles du Wes (1532) *An Introductione for to lerne to rede, to pronounce, and speke Frenche trewly*.

Louis Meigret (1550) *Le tretté de la grammere françoese*.

Jean Pillot (1550, 1561) *Gallicae Linguae Institutio: Latino Sermones Conscripta*.

Robert Estienne (1557) *Traicté de la grammaire françoise*.

Gabriel Meurier (1557) *La grammaire françoise*.

Jean Garnier (1558) *Institutio Gallicae Linguae*.

Gérard du Vivier (1566) *Grammaire françoise* et (1568) *Briefve institution de la langue françoise expliquée en aleman*.

Pierre de la Ramée or Ramus (1562) *Gramere* et (1572) *Grammaire*.

Jean Bosquet (1586) *Elemens ou institutions de la langue françoise*.

Antoine Cauchie (1586) *Grammaire française*.

In the analysis, I attempt to ascertain two points: the model of French the author used for their grammar (regional and / or social) and their treatment of the *être / avoir* alternation in the conjugation of intransitive verbs.

5. Grammatical Analysis

5.1 Regional and Social Variation

The most obvious contrast between regional varieties of French during this period comes when comparing the grammars of John Palsgrave (1530a) and Gilles Du Wes (1532). Not only were both grammars published two years apart, but the authors knew each other personally and both taught French as a second language at the English court at the same time.

Palsgrave was an English scholar who had pursued his studies in science in Paris where he also learnt French (*HLF* II: 126). In this grammar, he states his preference for the French spoken between the Seine and the Loire. At the same time, given his position as the tutor of Mary, the sister of Henry VIII of England, accompanying both her as well as Henry VIII on several sojourns at the Parisian Court, Palsgrave would have needed “to acquire a command of French that was not only grammatically correct and lexically comprehensive, but also socially and situationally adequate and appropriate” (Stein 1997: 347). Palsgrave was aware of dialectal differences in French, but dismissed teaching them, saying that teaching such variation would only confuse the learner (Stein 1997: 113, 116 and 123).

The main critique of Palsgrave’s model of French comes from F. Brunot who observes that Palsgrave’s French is based too much on the written form, on books of which several were already considered old at that time (*HLF* II: 126). Consequently, one must wonder how closely his variety resembled the spoken language at that time.

Gilles du Wes was Palsgrave’s rival at the Court of Henry VIII and was the tutor of the king’s daughter, Mary Tudor. What distinguishes du Wes from his rival is that du Wes was a native speaker of French from the Picardy region. His grammar was thus based on his “connaissance naturelle” (Demaizière 1983: 127), not on literary sources. In other words, for du Wes, actual usage took precedence.

By comparing these two grammars, one observes several dichotomies characteristic of the 16th century. There is regional dichotomy (i.e. Parisian region versus the Picardy region), social dichotomy (i.e. general usage versus socially acceptable usage) and code dichotomy (i.e. the written versus the spoken form). The impact of these dichotomies is also seen with regards to the *être / avoir* alternation (see §6) for Palsgrave recognizes the alternation while du Wes does not.

For du Wes, there is no alternation; his dialect of French, from the Picardy region, had already generalised the use of the auxiliary *avoir* for all intransitive and reflexive / pronominal verbs.⁴

Another area where regional variation becomes apparent is the attacks launched against certain period grammarians based on regional origins. These critiques emanate mainly from Henri and Robert Estienne. Robert Estienne criticizes Meigret for his reformed spelling and Jacques Dubois for his picardisms which, according to him, inhibit learners from acquiring mastery of the French language (1557: 3). Henri Estienne criticizes Garnier as one of the authors of whom one must be wary since he is not from the Île-de-France region, having thus a French that is unique to himself (Cullière in Garnier 1558: xxiv). Henri Estienne gives examples of reprehensible French from such authors. He does not identify these ‘authors to avoid,’ but according to Louis Clément (cited by Demaizière in Cauchie 1586: 20), they are Jean Pillot, Jean Garnier, Gérard du Vivier and Antoine Cauchie. In fact, Robert Estienne is not only the first person to publish a grammatical treatise explicitly identifying the Parisian region as the only legitimate variety of French, but he also promotes, as will be seen in the following section, a specific social milieu as representing proper French (Trudeau 1992: 86).

Regional and social variation can be further attested in the auxiliary used to conjugate the verb *être*. The verb *être*, according to standard contemporary French, is conjugated with *avoir*, however this verb is at times conjugated with itself in the 16th century (*HLF* II: 365). Gougenheim (1973: 120) seconds this observation and cites examples from authors such as Nicolas de Troyes, Noël du Fail and Maurice Scève. For Nicolas de Troyes and Noël du Fail, Gougenheim describes this particular usage as a construction of *la langue populaire*, particularly in the more southern parts of France.⁵ As for Maurice Scève, Gougenheim ascribes this use of the auxiliary *être* to Italian; it is an Italianism.⁶

Grammarians in the 16th century (Garnier 1558, Bosquet 1586, Cauchie 1586) also noted and tried to correct this usage. These grammarians recommended avoiding this error, but their comments are vague as to whom they are directed. One must ask if this error was frequent among non-native speakers learning the language or if it was a popular, local variety that is not recognized as belonging to the newly emerging norm.

5.2 Models of Usage

The debate over a norm for the French language in the 16th century turns around two major dichotomies: i) a *modèle savant* or academic model versus a spontaneous norm and ii) general usage model versus approved usage.

The major proponent of an academic model is Dubois (1531). His model becomes clearly visible through his goal of restoring the French language to its original form (Trudeau 1992: 31), a pure state somewhere between Latin and the mosaic of dialects. Dubois thus favours the cross-dialectal characteristics of French that most resemble Latin. Meigret (1550) and de la Ramée (1562, 1572) could also be classified as proposing an academic model, but from a different point

⁴ Auger (2003) and Henschel (2001) also note the generalisation of *avoir* in the contemporary language(s) spoken in this region (see § 3.0).

⁵ Dauzat (1930: 300), states the *être* is conjugated with itself in the languages of Midi (Provençal, Italian, Gascon, etc.).

⁶ The use of *essere* in Italian is more frequent than in French, and Italians conjugate *essere* with itself.

of view. Dubois tries to relate French back to Latin, but Meigret and de la Ramée believe in the independence of French from Latin, that the classical languages - Latin and Greek - have no authority over French. They do, however, promote abstract models based on common usage. Meigret describes his model as a *langage courtisan*, which is not geographically associated with any particular region nor social class, and he acknowledges and accepts a certain level of dialectal variation. De la Ramée calls his model *l'usage vrai* which is an abstract model of common usage, but a usage that is not corrupted by scholars. Contrary to Meigret, de la Ramée does locate his model in the Parisian region, but does not associate it with any social context or class.

Palsgrave (1530a) represents the other end of the dichotomy, choosing and promoting a specific dialect of French as his model and ignoring, or rejecting, dialectal diversity. As seen above, Palsgrave identifies the French spoken between the Seine and the Loire as the most acceptable variety, to which he does tend to favour certain social constraints. R. Estienne (1557) is another author who opts for a spontaneous norm, but whose model is much more precise. He not only favours French as it is spoken in Paris, but the French spoken in certain social circles (see below).

The other dichotomy is common usage versus approved usage. As discussed above, Dubois, Meigret and de la Ramée all incarnate a preference for 'common usage' to various degrees, even if their 'common usage' models are somewhat abstract and academic in nature. The strongest proponent, however, of real common usage is du Wes (1532), who based his grammar on his *connaissance naturelle*. This common usage is highlighted in his use of auxiliary verbs where *avoir* has been generalised as the only auxiliary verb used in compound verb forms.

As early as 1530, in Palsgrave's grammar, one sees the initial stages of a growing importance given to an approved usage. Palsgrave is aware of the importance given to the French spoken in the Île-de-France region, and within this region to a certain socially accepted variety of French, the variety he later tries to teach in his grammar. And with Pillot (1550, 1561), the teaching of Parisian French, especially that of the Court, becomes even more important. When describing two different verb forms, Pillot suggests that learners can learn when to use each form by listening to those with good knowledge of the language rather than through rules (1561: 103-104). If Pillot bases his teaching on actual usage, it is not just any usage. According to Brunot, Pillot strictly promotes the French used at Court (*HLF* II: 147). It is, however, with R. Estienne (1557) that an author comes out explicitly, for the first time, in favour of a specifically approved social variety of French. For R. Estienne, it is royal and state institutions in Paris and 'certain' authors that set the norm.

Over the course of the century, the scope of this debate will be narrowed and a specific model of French will start to emerge and to be recognized as the norm. This new model will be a spontaneous and socially approved norm. It will be based on the social and political elite of Paris, and diverging quite significantly from the language of the common people outside this limited social circle. This model will come to dominate the grammars of the first half of the 17th century and will be confirmed and crowned supreme in 1647 with the publication of Vaugelas' *Remarques sur la langue françois*.

5.3 Latin Grammatical Model and Verb Conjugation

With the emancipation of the French language in the 16th century, the only model of grammatical analysis available was the model for Classical Latin. It is therefore not surprising that period grammarians would requisition and apply it to French. The use, however, of the Latin model on French is problematic, and two major problems become clearly visible when attempting to deal with the *être / avoir* alternation.

The first problem deals with the mask that a Latin model applies to the French language. With such a mask, the true nature of French grammar is often hidden or deformed and the use of *être* and *avoir* in the conjugation of compound verb forms is a good example. Since this grammatical point did not exist in Classical Latin, when analysing French using a Latin model, a grammarian's attention would not necessarily have been drawn to this new and different grammatical behaviour. Grammarians in the 16th century were focused more on other areas of the French language, such as the discrepancy between spelling and pronunciation. The dominance of certain 'burning issues' in the language assigns other interesting grammatical issues, like auxiliary selection in the conjugation of compound verb forms, to the background, if not to total oblivion.

In the analytical model for Latin, verbs are classified as active, passive, neuter or deponent. Using this model for French then sends grammarians of French looking for the same sort of verbs, whether they exist or not in French. Here lies the second problem - the inability to clearly distinguish grammatical notions such as voice from the concept of conjugation. In Classical Latin, the passive voice is expressed morphologically through the verb's desinence (*amo* 'I love', *amor*, 'I am loved'). This morphological characteristic of the Latin verb gives rise to the concept of a *passive verb* which is conjugated. In French, the passive voice is expressed syntactically (*être* + past participle), not through the verb's morphology. Although many 16th century grammarians (i.e. Palsgrave 1530a: 348 and 508, Dubois 1531: 331 and 350) acknowledge that there is no 'passive verb' as such in French, the French passive voice is still described and illustrated as a **conjugation** of the verb. R. Estienne (1557), for example, qualifies the *être* + past participle structure as a passive verb, and the detailed conjugation that he provides for the passive verb *aimé* clearly shows that he perceives it as a conjugated verb (78-82). Bosquet (1586), also, treats the passive voice as a conjugation of the verb, stating that "[I]on ne pourra faillir de **conjuguer** toutes sortes de verbes personnels, tant actifs, que passifs, avec la discrétion, et faveur de ces deux auxiliaires [*être et avoir*]" (98) (emphasis added) and sets out the full conjugation of the passive verb *aimé* (108-110).

Over the course of the 16th century, grammatical voice starts to be distinguished from the conjugation of the verb. From a grammatical concept that is morphologically marked on the verb in Classical Latin, it will become a syntactic structure independent of conjugation in French. Yet, during this time period, the grammatical voice is still closely linked to the conjugation of the verb. If the passive voice is expressed with the auxiliary *être*, this would lead to confusion when one speaks of auxiliary selection in the **conjugation** of verbs in 16th century grammars.

5.4 Verb Structure and Transitivity

Another characteristic of Renaissance French is flexibility in a verb's transitivity; a single verb is often used transitively, intransitively and pronominally. Such movement is not unknown in contemporary French, but was much more frequent in the 16th century and this had an influence on auxiliary selection in compound verb forms.

The syntactic structure for verbs in the 16th century had not yet been solidly established and when a verb is at times used transitively and at other times intransitively, a difference in meaning is often “*délicate à saisir*” (HLF II: 436). What is important is the recurrence of this flexibility and its impact on auxiliary selection.

The auxiliary *avoir* is always used with transitive verbs, but when the verb is used in an intransitive context, *être* is sometimes attested. The change in auxiliary, in a specific context, sometimes leads to confusion. Dauzat (1930: 447) states that:

“[I]orsqu’un même verbe s’emploie tantôt transitivement, tantôt intransitivement, les deux constructions *il a monté la côte* et *il est monté sur la côte* arrivent à se contaminer dans la langue populaire pour donner *il a monté*.”

The use of both auxiliaries without any clear nuance in meaning leads to a possible contamination and ends in uncertainty or a hesitation in auxiliary selection.

One sees a similar situation with verbs that are used both intransitively and pronominally. At the end of the Middle Age (14th and 15th centuries), there was a tendency to add the pronoun *se* to intransitive verbs (HLF II: 435). This led to an increased number of reflexive verbs in French. The trend slowed in the 16th century and, at some point, stopped. For certain verbs, the trend even reversed, but not all pronominal verbs regained their intransitive form (HLF II: 435). When an intransitive verb, conjugated with *avoir*, begins to be used pronominally, is it conjugated with *être* or does it maintain the use of *avoir*? Likewise, if a pronominal verb regains its intransitive form, will it still be conjugated with the same auxiliary as in its pronominal form?

Incertitude is also seen when a verb has a transitive and pronominal use. Transitive verbs are conjugated with *avoir* while pronominal verbs take *être*. Yet, the use of *avoir* in compound verb forms of pronominal verbs is attested, such as *Je m’ai lavé* (Nyrop: 1930, 212-213). This type of example is not rare and continues to be found in compound verb forms in popular contemporary French (Kukenheim 1967: 65). However, after the Middle Ages, this use of *avoir* disappeared from the written, literary language (Nyrop 1930: 215).

The loss of the use of *avoir* with pronominal verbs in ‘literary’ language leads one to assume that limiting this particular usage came from an external, non-linguistic influence on the language; a conscious decision to favour one auxiliary over the other.

5.5 Reflexive Pronoun *SE* and Auxiliary Selection

Another characteristic of French in the 16th century affecting auxiliary selection is the syntactic placing of the reflexive pronoun *se*. Like other aspects of French during this period, flexibility is common and variation is encountered as illustrated in the following example:

- (3) a. Il veut se lever.
b. Il se veut lever.

Vouloir is normally conjugated with *avoir*, but when the reflexive pronoun is positioned in front of *vouloir*, either auxiliary could be found. Gougenheim (1973: 120) notes this particular behaviour and provides these examples from 16th century French:

- (4) a. Il s'est voulu lever.
 b. Il s'a voulu lever.

The apparent ability of one verb 'to impose' a specific auxiliary on another verb is not restricted to reflexive / pronominal verbs. When the verbs *pouvoir*, *vouloir* and *oser* are used in a compound verb form, they are often found conjugated with the preferred auxiliary of the infinitive that follows. Gougenheim (1973: 120) identifies this phenomenon, saying that "ils **peuvent** prendre cet auxiliaire [*être*]" (emphasis added) and he illustrates his comments with an example taken from the literary work *Garganuta*:

- (5) Depuis ce temps caphart quiconques n'est auzé entrer en mes terres.

Two points are worth noting here. First, it is the infinitive that dictates the auxiliary to be used. Second, the infinitive, as Gougenheim shows, does not always nor does it regularly select the auxiliary.

6. Être and Avoir Alternation in 16th Century French

6.1 Verbs Conjugated with *Avoir*

The verbs that form their compound verb forms with *avoir* are almost always identified as *verbes actifs*. The definition of *verbe actif* however varies from author to author. Dubois, Meigret, de la Ramée and Cauchie define it as a transitive verb with a direct object complement whereas Palsgrave and Bosquet define it as the active voice and contrast it with the *verbe passif* (the passive voice).

The definition of this term will have an impact on auxiliary selection. If the term is used to identify a transitive verb with a direct object complement, then the link between this type of verb and the auxiliary *avoir* is accurate without exception. However, if the term is defined in relation to grammatical voice, as being the active voice, then the link between the active verb and the auxiliary *avoir* is weakened due to the many exceptions (i.e. reflexive / pronominal verbs, certain intransitive verbs).

6.2 Verbs Conjugated with *Être*

Grammars from the 16th century associate the use of the auxiliary *être* with three different types of verbs: reflexive / pronominal verbs, *verbes passifs* and *verbes neutres*.

With the exception of du Wes who generalised the use of the auxiliary *avoir* for all compound verb forms, period authors recognize the use of *être* when conjugating reflexive / pronominal verbs. Nevertheless, despite this official recognition, *avoir* is sometimes used in the conjugation of this type of verb. This use, though, is stigmatised as erroneous, dialectal or belonging to 'popular language'.

The auxiliary *être* is also associated with the *verbe passif*, or the passive voice. All grammarians, when addressing the issue of the passive in French, concur that *être* is the only auxiliary allowed.

The term *verbe neutre* is used by many, but not all, authors. Those authors who treat the *verbe actif* as the active voice (i.e. Palsgrave) do not recognize a *verbe neutre*, whereas those authors who define the *verbe actif* as a transitive verb with a direct object complement (i.e. Dubois) define the *verbe neutre* as an intransitive verb. Through the examples authors give for *verbes neutres*, there is an association with the auxiliary *être*, but whether all *verbes neutres* are conjugated with *être*, or only a sub-class of them, is not clearly expressed.

6.3 Verbs Conjugated with Both Auxiliaries

Amongst all the 16th century grammarians consulted, only two make reference to verbs being conjugated with both auxiliaries. Palsgrave (1530b) identifies *advenir* as a verb that is conjugated with both auxiliaries, but specifies that auxiliary selection is structurally based: when used in an impersonal structure, it is conjugated with *avoir*, but *être* when it signifies ‘passion’ (LII V^o - LIII I^o). There is another verb, *venir*, which Palsgrave also conjugates with both auxiliaries in his lists of verbs: *Jay venu en avant, Je suis venu en hault*. Since Palsgrave is not a native speaker, we cannot be sure that this verb is conjugated with both auxiliaries or if Palsgrave made an error.

Meigret (1550) is the other grammarian to identify a verb which can be conjugated with both auxiliaries. In fact, he is the first grammarian to explicitly point out an *être / avoir* alternation for a verb. Preferring current usage over scholarly usage, Meigret often accepts variation in grammatical forms. For the verb *passer*, he notes that usage allows for the use of both auxiliaries (*J’ai passé* and *Je suis passé*) without any distinction or nuance of meaning between the two structures (HLF II 141).

7. Conclusion

There are several conclusions / observations that can be made concerning auxiliary selection in 16th century French.

The language in this period was still unstable and changing fast, with a wide range of regional and social variation. This instability and variation is reflected not only in the critiques levelled against certain grammarians for their regionalisms (i.e. picardisms), but also in the *être / avoir* alternation. French is not exempt from the Romance language trend of replacing *être* with *avoir* in compound verb forms, and within 16th century French, some dialects were further along in this linguistic change than others. While the *être / avoir* alternation still existed in the Parisian dialect, the alternation had been lost in the north and north-eastern regions. In these dialects, *avoir* had already been generalised to become the only auxiliary used in compound verb forms.

In social terms, the 16th century also marks the growing importance of the Parisian region, and in the search for a norm, not only does the Parisian dialect start to dominate even more other French dialects, but a socio-politico-literary class starts to set the standard for the Parisian region. One consequence of this trend is a wider and wider discrepancy between the emerging standard and how the masses actually used the language. We have seen this discrepancy in auxiliary selection where a counter movement in the literary realm took efforts to stop certain linguistic

variations from gaining a foothold in the language. Among these stigmatised grammatical forms is the use of *avoir* in the conjugation of reflexive / pronominal verbs. Being a socially based norm, a degree of conscious effort seems to have been made to control and shape what the norm was. On the question of auxiliary verb selection in compound verb forms, given the social movements of the time period, what other non-linguistic influences were there. Did Italian and Gascon, two Romance languages with a more frequent use of the auxiliary *être*, play any role? More research on the social context is needed.

In the efforts of period grammarians to understand and to fix the rules of the language, especially for the *être* / *avoir* alternation, we have seen how they were hindered in their understanding due to their use of an analytical model based on Classical Latin and an inability to clearly distinguish grammatical voice from the conjugation of verbs. Nevertheless, over the century, there was a growing awareness of the role of auxiliaries, especially in the conjugation of a sub-group of intransitive verbs.

Despite the establishment of a norm, the trend toward replacing *être* with *avoir* will continue into the 17th century, while even more effort will be made to prevent people from conjugating verbs like *tomber* with *avoir*.

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