Ship English

Sailors' speech in the early colonial Caribbean

Sally J. Delgado

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6 Verb phrases

This is the second linguistic chapter with a focus on the salient markers and characteristics of Ship English. This chapter on verb phrases begins with the simplest realization of any verb constituent as a single word and continues with the expansion of the verb phrase as it incorporates tense, modality and aspect. Subsequently, §6.1, verbs in Ship English, opens with a discussion of how the variety favors a [non-specific verb + specifying nominal complement] construction in which the syntactic verb serves to introduce a nominal form in the direct object position which expresses the core event of the sentence.[1] This sections then presents data on phrasal verbs and negation markers. The second section, 6.2 on tense, discusses present and past tense variation and features a discussion of the potential role of the Northern Subject Rule, [2] and the manifestation of Narrative Present in performative speech in addition to the presentation of potential linguistic constraints on salient zero-inflection and the use of infinitive forms. The third section, 6.3 on the copula and auxiliary "be", presents data on variation in the inflectional paradigm and discusses how the verb "be" is used and omitted in various contexts including those with aspectual meaning. The last section, 6.4 on auxiliaries, presents data on inflectional variation and uses of auxiliary verbs such as "have" and "do" as they are used in interrogative, indicative, and conditional modalities with details on how they express aspectual meaning.

[1] Also know as a light verb construction.

[2] The Northern Subject Rule, described by de Haas (2006) as a unique variation in verbal endings specific to Northern dialects of British English that involves variation in verbal endings according to type and position of the subject. She explains, "Finite verbs adjacent to a pronominal subject (excepting 2SG thou and 3SG, which always take -s) take a zero ending, whereas finite verbs adjacent to a nominal (Determiner Phrase or DP) subject or not adjacent to any subject take an -s ending" (de Haas 2006: 111).

6.1 Verbs in Ship English

6.1.1 The [non-specific verb + specifying nominal compliment] construction

As discussed in chapter 5, the data indicate that Ship English favors heavy nominalization. This section shows how verbal constructions promote this perception by relying on [non-specific verb + specifying nominal complement] constructions, in which verbs retain their syntactic function, but nominals carry more semantic load compared with prototypical "heavy" verb constructions. For example, "the first man they gave torment to" [HCA 1/9/16] rather than "the first man they tormented", and "[they] Spyed a Sayle and gave him chase" [HCA 1/9/13] rather than "they spied a sail and chased him". Furthermore, this usage is found in sea shanties and so speaks to the frequency and salience of the construction in cultural forms of expression, e.g., "Give ear unto the mariners" (shanty in Hugill 1969: 6). Other verbs such as "use" and "offer" are used with similar syntactic function that favor the description of the event in nominal form as the direct objects, e.g., "he used some threatenings" [HCA 1/99/22] rather than "he threatened", and "any one that offered any hurt or violence to Clarke he would make him suffer" [HCA 1/9/51] rather than "any one that hurt…Clarke". The use of nominals, most frequently in the position of the direct object, to express events means that speakers can rely on semantically less-specific verbs. This consequently means that the original direct object is demoted to another nominal position, for example an indirect object, e.g., "to have satisfaction made him" [HCA 1/99/1], "Would not return him any answer" [HCA 1/52/133], and "to make him dishoner" [HCA 1/9/8]. The pronoun "him" in all three examples above might be expressed as the direct object of a verbal form which is semantically specific enough to actually denote the central event of the sentence on its own, e.g., "to satisfy him", "to answer him" and "to dishonor him". However, "him" is expressed as the syntactic indirect object in all three Ship English examples because the direct object position is already occupied by the nominal forms specifying the central event of the sentence, i.e., "satisfaction", "answer", and "dishonor". Similarly, in the example "the prisoner was put commander of the small sloop" (meaning that he was given command) [HCA 1/99 New Providence 1722], the use of the semantically non-specific verb "put" necessitates that the direct object position be occupied by a nominal form that specifies the actual central event of the sentence "command" which forces "the small sloop" (what is commanded) into the position of the object of the preposition in an adverbial phrase. In short, sailors' preference for the [non-specific verb + specifying nominal complement] construction means that

the sentences they used favor relatively non-specific verbs and make ample use of event nominalizations.

The verb "make" is the most commonly used verb in [non-specific verb + specifying nominal complement] constructions in the corpus. It often denotes that an event comes to pass or is caused to happen, and this event is subsequently expressed in nominal form , e.g., "in order to make trade" [HCA 1/99/4], "he made a resistance with a cutlass" [HCA 1/99/9], "make information against them" [HCA 1/99/7], "Freebourne made answer" [HCA 1/9/6], and "Letts goe and make an end of the fellow" [HCA 1/9/51]. Here the events "trade", "resist", "inform", and "answer" are expressed in nominal form in the direct object positions following the usage patterns discussed in the previous paragraph. Yet the verb "make" is worthy of individual discussion as it not only permits a noun phrase object, but also a prepositional phrase indicating a direction or manner of movement, e.g., "she made away from him" [HCA 1/9/18], "the informant made to her" [HCA 1/52/124], and "this examinant made for Cape Charles" [HCA 1/9/13]. Indeed, this sense of movement may explain the idiomatic usage in the corpus that associates the verb "make" with travel, transit and arrival, e.g., "we made the Island" [1045.f.3/1/16], "he made the best of his way" [HCA 1/98/254], "they made what saile they could after them" [HCA 1/53/12], "he designs to make his escape" [HCA 1/99/51], and "Make all the dispatch you can" [HCA 1/101/553]. These sample clauses with the verb "make", whether they are expressed with nominal or prepositional complements, all illustrate the preference for the [non-specific verb + specifying nominal complement] construction in Ship English and is a salient feature of the corpus.

6.1.2 Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs in the corpus show a tendency to be expressed as fixed expressions, in which the verb and the particle need to be adjacent. These expressions resist the insertion of an object noun phrase or pronoun between the main verb and the satellite particle. The majority of phrasal verbs occur without separation of the verbal particle(s) and satellite particle(s), e.g., (with emphasis added) "by *breaking downe* her misson mast" [ADM 106/288/40], "[he] was presently *sent for up* by the said Taylor" [HCA 1/9/39], and "when they *got up* the anchor" [HCA 1/99/6]. A few examples show that it was permissible to insert a direct object noun phrase between a verb and a satellite particle, for example the separation of "fetch out" in the example, "he *fetch'd* the captain's charts *out*" [HCA 1/99/7]. Indeed, when the direct object of a transitive phrasal verb is a pronoun, we would anticipate it to be expressed in a position separating the verb and the satellite particle, e.g.,

"they *whipped* him *up* again" [HCA 1/99/7]. Yet phrasal verbs in Ship English appear to resist even this type of separation. Instead, the direct object is more commonly expressed after the complete phrasal verb, regardless of whether it is a noun phrase or a pronoun, e.g., (with phrasal verbs italicized and direct objects in bold for emphasis) "*call abroad* **him**" [E134/34Chas2/Mich36], "*took away* out of his packett **his Sealed ring**" [HCA 1/9/18], and "they *let go* **her anchor**" [HCA 1/52/2]. Thus, although phrasal verbs permitted separation of the verb and the satellite particle, it was common to keep both or all parts of the phrasal verb together without separating them with either a nominal or pronominal direct object.

6.1.3 Negation

Negation can be marked in a variety of ways in Ship English, the most common of which was the use of the negative particle "not" after a finite verb.[3] Modern day speakers of English are accustomed to the particle "not" used with "be" used as an auxiliary verb, and this type of modern-standard usage was evident in the corpus (all examples emphasized), e.g., "Our Ankor *was not* no sounder" [T/70/1215], "the country and his colonies *was not* under his command" [CO 5/1411/101], and "the Prisoner was not only never on Board" [HCA 1/99/156]. Standard modern usage also requires "do-support" in the negation of verbs expressed in the present tense indicative mood, e.g., "he *does not* / *doesn't* work", and this type of standard usage was also evident in the corpus, e.g., "he *did not hear* it" [HCA 1/99/5], "The English *did not row*" [HCA 1/13/96], "he *did nott thinks* itt convenientt" [ADM 52/2/3], and "Porter complained that they *did not work*" [HCA 1/99/8]. The verb "do" is also used as an auxiliary with indicative verbs despite the fact that the conjugation of the auxiliary, particularly with third person singular subjects, does not always align with modern-day standard usage, e.g., "Capt Rigby *doe not* nor shall *carry off* this land any Persons" [HCA 1/9/7], "Captain Sharp *don't forget* to Speak for us" [HCA 1/99/30], "he *don't know* that the prisoner had any money" [HCA 1/99/10], and "[he] *do's not know* what ship" [HCA 1/99/99].[4] However, this type of negation using "do support" and the "not" marker for simple verb

[3] The most common pre-verbal usage of the negating marker "not" occurred in phrases headed with "being", e.g., "he did not Duty *not being well*" [HCA 1/99/108] and "the merchant ship *not being gon* into York river" [CO 5/1411/702].

[4] The use of "doth" in negation is rare in the corpus and mostly seems to derive from the speech acts of judicial representatives in court records and not the sailors themselves, e.g., "he doth not know of any corespond[ance]" [HCA 1/14/140], "Doth not know the ships name" [HCA 1/14/140], and "whose name he doth not remember" [HCA 1/14/203].

phrases in the negated indicative mood had a low frequency in the corpus and may only reflect recent changes in the direction of Early Modern English. Much more salient was the use of the particle "not" immediately after the verb and without any auxiliary marker. Examples of this type of negation appear in logbooks, e.g., "wee *weighd nott*" [ADM 52/2/6], and "But [we] *found not* A man in har [i.e., her]" [T/70/1215]; in journals, e.g., "I *hope not* so" [445f.1/26], and "I *got not* in till the next Day" [1045.f.3/1/22]; and in private correspondence, e.g., "they *had not* those termes" [CO 5/1411/39], and "I *doubt not*" [BL/74/816/m/11/36/1]. Yet, it was most common in witness testimony, e.g., "he *intended not* to sell the said rope" [HCA 1/101/224], "She *remembers not*" [HCA 1/9/51], "He *cared not* what the master did" [HCA 1/9/139], "I sent for him aboard but hee *came not*" [HCA 1/9/4], and "he *had not* opportunity of getting away" [HCA 1/99/165]. This type of negation was even more pronounced with the verb "know", which showed up in negated statements repeatedly in the corpus in both past and present tense, e.g., "he *knew not* the design of the others" [HCA 1/99/5], "he *knew not* when he would return" [HCA 1/14/151], "he *knew not* but that he might prosecute him" [HCA 1/52/46], "He *knowes not* of any Nutmeggs or Cloves" [HCA 1/12/78], "whose names I *know not*" [BL/74/816/m/11/36/3], "I *know not* of any methods" [CO 5/1411/655], and "He *knows not* nor ever heard" [HCA 1/9/51]. However, negation with the "not" marker was versatile and permitted syntactic variation; for instance, it occurs in a position separated from the verb by a pronominal direct object (emphasized in bold), e.g., "wee *saw* **him** *not*" [HCA 1/12/2], "yet [we] *made* **him** *not* Bear for our company" [T/70/1216/13], "he *has* **it** *not* for himself" [HCA 1/99/51], and "They *found* **it** *not* safe to hazard" [ADM 51/4322/4]. Indeed, "not" was the most versatile and the most common negation marker in the corpus, and based on a sample of 204 items (see Figure 6.1), accounts for more than half of all negated verb phrases. In sum, although the salient "not" negation marker was used in a manner comparable to modern-day usage of the verb "be" and with "do-support", it was more frequent in a variant post-verbal position without any auxiliary marker. [5]

The second most common negation marker in the sample was the word "never" which was used both to mark categorical denial over time (as in standard modern usage) and to mark the negation of a simple verb form with no aspectual meaning. Given that the term "never" derives etymologically from the negative particle "ne" (meaning "no") and the adverb "ever", the most transparent meaning of the negative marker is one associated with a durative aspect and the most logical context is with a situation of zero-possibility with a cumulative quan-

[5] Negation using "not" with auxiliaries of conditional modality also feature in the corpus, but are discussed in §6.4.3 Modal Auxiliaries.

Marker	No.
Not	104
Never	42
No	25
Nor	17
Nothing	8
Neither	3
No one	3
Prefix <un>	2
	204

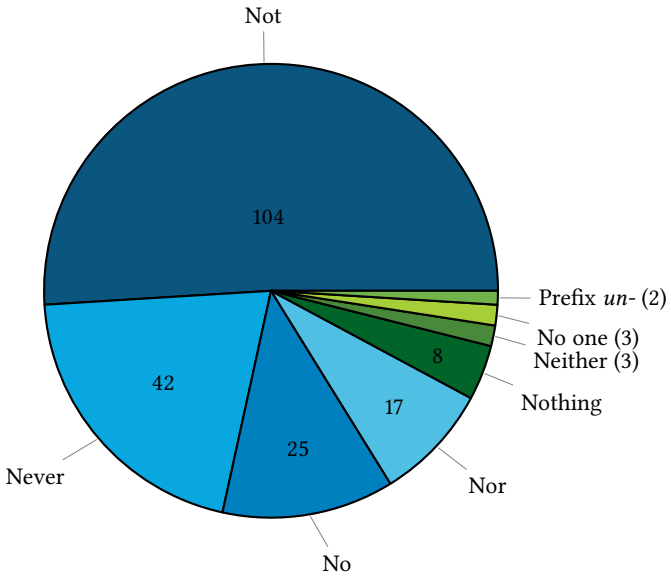

Figure 6.1: Distribution of negation markers used in a sample of 204 verb phrases
Sources: 1045.f.3/1, 445f.1, AC WO 16–16/8–16, ADM 51/4322, 3983, 3954, ADM 52/1, 2, BL/74/816/m/11/36, CO 5/1411, DDB6 8/4, HCA 1/9, HCA 1/11,12,13,14, HCA 1/52, HCA 1/98, 99, 101, Palmer (1986). SP 42/6, T/70/1215.

tification over time, i.e., something that has categorically not happened up to and including the present moment. This meaning is evident in the corpus (all marked for emphasis), e.g., "he did not hear it Read, nor *never* heard that it was read" [HCA 1/99/5], "he had *never* been arrested of any ill action" [HCA 1/99/8], "was *never* till now taken" [HCA 1/13/95], "was *never* before seen by him" [HCA 1/13/92], and "*Never* had any acquaintance or discourse with nor ever saw the said Prock or Richard [...] before" [HCA 1/52/133]. However, less than a quarter of the "never" negation markers in the sample, only 10 of the 42 items sampled, had the meaning "no(t) ever", see Figure 6.1.

The majority of examples of "never" were used with specific durations of time or to negate indicative past tense situations. The marker "never" used to negate specific durations of time and that frequently occurs with adverbs such as "(un)til" or "since" is comparable to negation in perfect aspect or with preterit verbs in modern standard English. For example, "he *never* was at attacking any Ship, Since he has been among them" [HCA 1/99/80] is comparable to perfect aspect negation in modern-day usage, i.e., "he *had not attacked* any ship since he had been among them". In contrast, "he *never* knew the prisoners till taken in the boat" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722] is comparable to preterit negation in modern-

day usage, i.e., "he *didn't know* the prisoners until taken in the boat". Even more common than this, however, was the use of "never" to negate events with little or no evidence of durative aspect, e.g., "[on] July the 16th 1720, [he] owned he helped travessing a Gun but *never* fired" [HCA 1/99/78], "he knew very well he had *never* signed the Articles" [HCA 1/99/62], "he *never* see him Sober Scarce" [HCA 1/99/44], and "Shows [shoes], stocking, which *never* cost about [...] shillings" [SP 42/6]. Some examples of this type of indicative past tense negation are only evident in light of the context of the utterance, e.g. the defendant who claims he "did *never* see any letter" [HCA 1/98/255] is clearly referring to a specific letter at a specific time and not "any" letter at any previous time in his life (as would be implied by the use of "never" meaning "not" + "ever"). Similarly, when John Barefoote, Yeoman of the powder room of the *Antelope* during April of 1663, testifies that he "*never* had any discourse with Nathaniel Paintor Armourer in the *Anthelope* nor with any other person in the said shipps Gunroome" [HCA 1/9/63] he is most likely referring to a specific conversation on a specific day (and hence, preterit negation) rather than the idea that he "never" spoke with the armorer of the vessel nor any other person in the gunroom — an unlikely claim given that his job was to store and manage the gunpowder. Thus, whether it is evident from the linguistic context of the clause itself or the wider socio-historical context of the speech act, the majority of negated statements using "never" appear to denote indicative past negation and not any kind of durative aspect that we might associate with a lexeme that derives from the negative particle "ne" and the adverb "ever".[6]

The third and fourth most common negation markers in the sample were the words "no" and the conjunction "nor", which sampled at 12 and 8 percent of the total number of examples, respectively (see Figure 6.1). The negative marker "no" was most typically used in a prenominal position before a direct object or object compliment and took the function of a zero-marking determiner, e.g., "wee having noe boate" [HCA 1/12/2], "we found noe ground with our hand line" [ADM 52/1/7], "he thought himself no robber" [HCA 1/99/23], "Being able to get no imploy" [HCA 1/13/97], and "He knew of no offense that he had done therefore would ask him no pardon" [HCA 1/52/14]. This method of negation functions in accordance with the previously discussed tendency in Ship English to favor nominalization using light verbs, e.g., "Wee tooke no harme" [ADM 51/3983/1], "The Governour was a board of us but made no stay" [ADM 52/1/8], "but knows of no Sharing they made" [HCA 1/99 New Providence 1722], and "no vessell come-

[6] It is worth noting that this past indicative use of the adverb "never" without durative aspect is still found (in addition to other variant uses with varying degrees of aspectual meaning) in modern-day non-standard English dialects (see Lucas & Willis 2012).

ing that year could make noe prize" [HCA 1/98/262]. The negative marker "nor", instead of being used in a pre-nominal position after an inflected verb, often preceded a non-finite verb, e.g., "he nor seeing them come out nor dealing with the master" [T 70/1/10] and "nor being neither this Deponent" [HCA 1/14/51]. However, the more customary use of "nor" as a negating conjunction frequently occurs in the corpus and often functions to conjoin constituents that already have negation. Such negative concord was a salient feature of sailors' speech that manifests itself in popular songs about life at sea, such as the seventeenth-century song "Another of Seafarers" that includes the line "Nor have no room" (cited in Palmer 1986: 6). The simplest example of negative concord in the corpus is the word "nor" used to conjoin two negated verb phrases, e.g., "He knows not *nor* ever heard" [HCA 1/9/51] and "he …did *not* bye them *nor* had *not* any conferences" [HCA 1/101/221]. In addition to concordant markers of negation occurring in the same phrase, strings of negated clauses are also common in the corpus, for instance, the witness statement "But knows *not* what it was, for he did *not* hear it Read, *nor never* heard that it was read, *nor* knows *not* how the Vessell was fitted out" [HCA 1/99/5] includes 6 negation markers, "not" (used three times both in a post verbal context and with "do support"), "nor" (twice), and "never" (once). The conjunction "nor" functions to join three negated clauses, firstly, "for he did *not* hear it Read", secondly, "*never* heard that it was read", and lastly "*nor* knows *not* how the Vessell was fitted out" and all of these are prefaced by another negated clause "But knows *not* what it was" making a string of four negated clauses. A few times, the negative particle "nor" occurs as part of a correlative conjunction with the word "neither", e.g., "he *neythor* aske any price of the said Sherman for the said goods *nor* the said Sherman never asked him if he would sell them or not" [HCA 1/101/224]. Yet, even in these few instances, the clauses that are conjoined often include negative concord within the conjoined structure, such as in the example, "*nor* the said Sherman *never* asked him if he would sell them or *not*." This type of negative concord may have been a feature of Ship English, but it was not distinctive from other varieties of English. The phenomena of negative concord in non-standard varieties of English is widespread around the modern-day Atlantic (van der Auwera 2016), and (Kortmann & Lunkenheimer 2013) attest to 80% negative concord among global varieties of English . Thus, negative concord, specifically using "no" in a prenominal position and joining negated phrases or clauses with the conjunction "nor", is a salient feature of Ship English, but this is not surprising given its occurrence in Old English and its persistence throughout history up to the modern day in variant negation systems throughout the Anglophone world.

6.2 Tense

6.2.1 Present tense variation

Logbooks, letters and depositions alike show variation in inflection patterns for present tense indicative modality, specifically an absence of inflection with singular third person subjects. The following examples show uninflected finite verbs (emphasized by italics) with singular third person noun phrases (emphasized in bold) "**moderate weather** *blow* fresh" [ADM 52/2/3], "**Our boat** *goe* in to Black Slakes" [ADM 52/2/9], "**all shipping** that *come*" [BL/Egerton 2395/0007], and "**the boat** *want* for wood" [CO 5/1411/712]. One specific witness deposition taken in Grand Bahama Island and dated 1722 shows inflection as a superscript particle (see Figure 6.2) suggesting that the original statement may not have included the inflection but it was added at a later stage in the court clerk's revisions. In addition to the examples of verbs used with singular third person noun phrases, there is also evidence of zero inflection with singular third person pronouns, e.g., "**whoever** *see* one first" [HCA 1/99/143], "He swore that **he** *know* no negroes" [T 70/1/5], "**He** *know* of no commission" [HCA 1/9/10], "**he** *know* not" [HCA 1/101/219], and "**He** well *know* Joseph Passof" [HCA 1/14/150]. Examples appear to connect the zero inflection with negation and specifically the verb "know", suggesting that this variation may be conditioned by linguistic constraints or favored specific lexemes in idiomatic phrases, however, the potential role of the Northern Subject Rule might also affect the selection of zero inflection with third person pronominal subjects (see de Haas 2006).

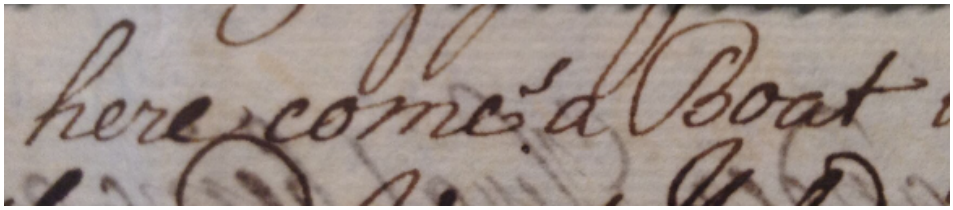

Figure 6.2: Excerpt from a deposition showing superscript inflection with a third person singular noun phrase in present tense indicative modality [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722]

The Northern Subject Rule may also account for examples of atypical inflection with plural third person subjects and when the verb is not adjacent to a subject. In the corpus, some plural third person subjects that are expressed as noun phrases (emphasized in bold) take an inflected verb (emphasized in italics), e.g., "**the barracks** *tooks* fire" [SP 42/6], "**severall papers** which *comes* herewith"

[SP 42/6], and "**which accts** plainly *demonstrates* the tricks" [SP 42/6]. The last two examples show the inflected verb in a position that is not immediately adjacent to the noun phrase subject, and perhaps this was a conditioning factor in the use of inflection with third person subjects. Yet, whether it was due to the Northern Subject Rule, or another conditioning factor, the atypical inflection with plural third person subjects in Ship English — particularly when the verb is not adjacent to a subject — was salient enough to be recorded in seventeenth century sea-songs, e.g., "They cried **Englishmen** *comes*" (from "A joyful new Ballad" cited in Palmer 1986: 16), and "**Brave sailors** that *sails* on the main" (from "Sailors for my Money" cited in Palmer 1986: 31). Thus, although the constraints of the variation within inflectional paradigms are not entirely clear, sailors of the period were known to inflect verbs in ways that did not follow conventional contemporary standards.

In addition to variation in present tense inflection, there is also evidence of present tense use in past contexts. Logbook entries clearly marked for past context make use of verbs inflected for the present indicative tense, e.g., (with italic emphasis), "Last night the wind *proves* Westerly" [ADM 52/2/9]. Witness depositions feature the use of present tense more heavily despite the fact that the statements are marked for past context by the nature of their narrative content and also by the use of other preterit verbs (emphasized in bold), e.g., "Then the Captain *goes* upon the Half-Deck again, and **call'd** to his Man" [445f.1/23], and "the mariner **Lay** and there *talkes* with the men" [HCA 1/101/217]. Indeed, the use of inflected present tense in past contexts in alteration with preterit forms may be a manifestation of the narrative function of witness statements. Fleischman explains, "the NP [Narrative Present] is a spontaneous use of the PR [present tense] that occurs consistently in *alternation* with tenses of the P [past] and is linked to a performative mode of *oral* storytelling" (1990: 258, author's italics). Witness statements are certainly a modality of oral storytelling and in this context, alternation from past to present forms may have helped sailors bring immediacy — and thereby credibility — to their performances in court. The same use of Narrative Present tense features in journal writing, e.g., Angelo and De Carli's published work, "A Curious and Exact Account of a Voyage to Congo in the Years of 1666 and 1667" that narrates events alternating between present tense forms (in italics) and past tense forms (in bold):

> In a little time *comes* the Lieutenant, and *says* to one of them, Go down to thy Quarters; his answer **was**, I *can* Fight no more; The which **was** what he looked for; for he **was** our greatest Enemy. Then he *goes* to the captain, and *makes* the worst of it, saying, Yonder the Quakers be altogether, and

> I *do not know* but they *will* Mutiny, and one *says* he *cannot* Fight; then he **ask'd** his name and **came** down. [445f.1/23]

Although the use of the present tense is understandable in the representations of direct speech in this excerpt, narrative phrases also use present tense to provide immediacy for the reader. So, although we might anticipate that the oral performance of witness testimony be more likely to show evidence of the Narrative Present, examples suggest that sailors also alternated between past and present in logbooks and journals, potentially reflecting their oral and performative culture (discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.6 on shared ideologies and leisure activities).

6.2.2 Past tense variation

Variation in past tense marking was one of the most salient features in the corpus. There are many examples of regular inflection with weak (i.e., regular) verb stems, (emphasized by italics) e.g., "we *stopped* our ship" [ADM 52/2/5], "he *answered* that he does not know" [HCA 1/13/94], and "he came afterwards & *robbed* her" [HCA 1/99/41]. Even with non-standard orthography, many examples of verbs imply pronunciation of the regular past tense suffix <ed>, e.g., "[he] *call'd* to his Man" [445f.1/23], "wee *stopt* the Ebb all the flett *Ankerd*" [ADM 52/2/1], "wee *waid* [weighed] Anker" [ADM 52/2/1], "Both his pistolls *mist* [missed] fire and did not go off" [HCA 1/52/137], and "*kist* [kissed]… *tript* [tripped]" [HCA 1/99/11].[7] However, there were also many examples of weak finite verbs that were not inflected in a regular preterit form despite being contextualized in the past tense (by virtue of their narrative content and/or the past inflections of adjacent verb phrases). Excerpts from depositions illustrate this phenomenon (emphasized by italics), e.g., "he *fetch* some wine and & beer" [CO 5/1411/47], "He *hoyst* sayle & went from that place" [HCA 1/52/41], "The Carpenter… came up, and *answer* to the captaine" [HCA 1/52/41], and "[the men] *board* and *board* in which severall men were killed" [HCA 1/53/3]. Note that in the last three examples the unmarked forms are used in collocation with the preterit forms of strong verbs, "went", "came", and "were", respectively, which not only mark the past context of the excerpt but also show that unmarked forms were not universal in individual speech acts or for individual speakers. Similarly, excerpts from logbooks also

[7] In addition to these accepted regular forms of preterit weak verbs, the use of "-th" inflections were also acceptable in the Early Modern English period, e.g., "who *giveth* him dayly wages" [HCA 1/101/219] and "[he] *saith* hee did" [HCA 1/9/3], although they were not a dominant form in the corpus.

include frequent uninflected weak verbs in the past tense, e.g., from the logbook of the *Pideaux:* "this morning we *lift* him again" and "he *lift* the vessel" [HCA 1/99/53] and from the logbook of the Albemarle: "at 9 at night wee *anker* in 30 fathom water", "in the afternoon we *fetch* 3 boat Loads of Ballast", "at night we weighed & *fill up* the boy", and "We *Bury* overboard another Wounded" [ADM 52/2/1,6,8,9]. Although a number of the examples from logbooks follow prepositional phrases marking time, this is not considered to be a linguistic constraint of unmarked preterit forms as there are also many examples of weak verbs with regular <ed> suffixes in this context. In short, it appears that Ship English permits free variation between regular weak preterit forms and unmarked preterit forms, and this can occur across a range of registers, modalities, and linguistic contexts.

Strong verbs (i.e., irregular verbs) presented the most variation in past tense marking. There are many examples of strong preterit forms in the corpus, e.g., (with italic emphasis) "and [I] *spoke* with him" [CO 5/1411/700], "They *took* and plundered and *took out* some rice & sugar" [HCA 1/52/75], and "he *saw* the prisoner have a Sword" [HCA 1/99/72]. Yet, numerous examples also attest to variant methods of marking the preterit. In some excerpts, past participles are used as preterit forms of strong verbs, e.g., "he *seen* him cut her cable" [HCA 1/99/73], "he *seen* him go on Board" [HCA 1/99/96], and "[we] *Rid* all night" [ADM 52/2/6].[8] Other excerpts show alternative irregular preterit forms, e.g., "I *writ* from Leverpoole" [445f.1/46], "I am informed of a letter you *writ*" [HCA 1/98/66], and "we *kam* to Anankor" [DDB6 8/4].[9] The most common inflected variant however was a regularized form of a strong preterit that was marked with a regular <ed> suffix, e.g., "He should not be *hurted*" [HCA 1/99/9], "[I] *quitted*" [HCA 1/99/12], "he *waked*" [HCA 1/99/4], "she went out and *catched* the Swallow" [HCA 1/99/150], and "[he] *threw'd* the Dept. against the Ladder" [HCA 1/99/152]. The last example is particularly interesting as it marks tense twice, once in the form of the anticipated strong preterit form "threw" and again with the regular inflection "-ed" common to weak verbs. This example appears to corroborate the double tense marking that Bailey and Ross found in logbook entries: "we *bored* the yards"

[8] According to Blake (2002: 95) the preterit and past tense forms were encroaching into each other's syntactic space in the Early Modern English period and so this type of variation may have been common at the time. Furthermore, this usage remains common in some modern non-standard varieties (Cheshire 1994: 125).

[9] The preterit in the example "we kam to Anankor" [DDB6 8/4], is somewhat problematic and depends on the speaker's realization of the orthographic 'a' which appears to be [æ] but could just have likely been realized as the diphthong [ɪ] or another allophonic variant acceptable in contemporary usage.

(1688: Sloane 3671) and "we *tookt* in the Virgins Prises" [ADM 51/4298 1692] (cited in Bailey & Ross 1988: 204). It also potentially corresponds with the type of concordant past tense marking in examples using an auxiliary verb, e.g., "*Did found* Robert Clarke" [HCA 1/9/51] that marks past tense once in the auxiliary verb "did" and again in the strong preterit "found". There were no discernable linguistic constraints that governed selection of past tense realization, and some documents written in the same hand show free variation in similar linguistic contexts, e.g., the journal of mariner and merchant Bryan Blundell (1687–1754) that includes the phrase "[the wind] *blowed* very hard" and also "the wind *blu* very hard" [DDB6 8/4] showing examples of the regularized past tense form and the irregular form by the same author.

Just like their weak counterparts, strong verbs also frequently occur without any past tense marking, and this was the most common variant realization in the corpus for this type of verb. Strong verbs in witness testimony narrating past events frequently show zero marking, (emphasized by italics), e.g., "hee well *know*" [HCA 1/52/1], "*strike* him severall bloes about the head" [HCA 1/11/74], "He left one & *Bring* one to us" [ADM 52/2/9], "he *say* that" [HCA 1/98/24], and "he was a Brisk Fellow […] and *tell* Roberts" [HCA 1/99/132]. Strong verbs in logbook entries relating to recent events in the past tense also show frequent zero marking, e.g., "Longboat in a Violent Gust *break*" [ADM 51/3954], "The wind *blow* fresh" [ADM 51/4322/1], "we *gett* 32 punsh [punch] & 31 butt ashore" [ADM 52/1/8], "wee *give* Our ship" [ADM 51/3797/1]. Although the frequency of zero-marked preterit strong verbs is significant for a range of verbs both in logbooks and witness depositions, there were some trends that suggest a higher usage with specific verbs. The verb "see" was sampled with zero past tense marking 21 times (significantly more than any other verb) throughout the corpus, e.g., "I *see* him put it under his left arm" [HCA 1/99/7], "he *See* him go over the Side" [HCA 1/99/147], "he *see* him cruelly beat to make him go" [HCA 1/99/147], "hee *see* George Freebound" [HCA 1/9/3], and "In Hasting Bay wee *see* Severall French Shipps" [ADM 52/3/7]. Four counts of zero marking with negation imply a possible condition, e.g., "he never *see* them any more" [HCA 1/99/110], "never *see* him in Arms" [HCA 1/99/133], "never *see* any Letter" [HCA 1/98/20], and "Gott about the mast but *see* nothing but three small Topsails" [ADM 52/3/7]. However, there is little evidence that this specific verb is conditioned by any specific factors that select zero preterit marking and the strong preterit form is equally represented in the corpus (including in phrases with negation) e.g., "had never saw a Prize taken" [HCA 1/99/8], "wee saw him not" [HCA 1/12/2], "At two yesterday […] *saw* our fleat" [ADM 52/1/1], "he *saw* the prisoner have a Sword" [HCA 1/99/72],

and "he run away when he saw twas the Kings Ship" [HCA 1/99/96]. Thus, the lexical item itself rather than the linguistic context of its use appears to select a preference for zero marking, although zero marking occurs with a range of verbs and is not restricted to specific lexical items like the verb "see".

The verb "run" was the second most heavily occurring strong verb with an unmarked preterit form, sampled 18 times in the corpus. Every one of the 18 examples occur in the context of a phrasal verb (emphasized in italics) e.g., "he *run up* the shrouds" [HCA 1/99/9], "*Run out* to the buoy" [ADM 52/2/5], "they *run* her *on* ground" [HCA 1/99/10], and "he Saw the Kings Colours he *run down*" [HCA 1/99/78]. As in the last example, many of these unmarked phrasal verbs occur in contexts where other strong preterit forms and weak preterit forms are explicitly marked for past tense (marked in bold), e.g., "when he **Saw** the Kings Colours he *run down*, **Confessed** he had been on Board" [HCA 1/99/78], and "we **shote** his maine yard Down but he *run over* the officer and *run up* Poldard bay […] where he **durst** not follow" [ADM 52/1/1]. The satellite particle "away" used with the verb "run" appears to favor zero past tense marking more than any other satellite particle. This is evidenced by the fact that "run away" composes more than half of the recorded samples using the verb stem "run" (10 of the 18 samples),[10] e.g., "John Hardin who *run* away" [SP 42/6], "one of them who run away with the sloop" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722], "Kenyou *run away* crying what have you done" [HCA 1/99/7], "he *run away* when he saw twas the Kings Ship" [HCA 1/99/96], and "Some men that *Run away*" [HCA 1/13/100]. Yet "run" (with whatever satellite particle it takes) is not the only verb stem in a phrasal verb that is represented with zero marking in the corpus. Various uninflected verbs with a range of satellite particles also select zero marking, e.g., "We *goe away* Before" [ADM 52/2/9], "The Cable *give waye*" [ADM 51/3797/1], "His Company aforesaid and *take away* his said Vesell" [HCA 1/52/133], "At two yesterday […] saw our fleat then we *hall in*" [ADM 52/1/1], "A saile *stand out* of the Ba [bay]" [ADM 52/2/9], "We soon *come up with* her" [ADM 52/2/9], "Watts *take off*" [HCA 1/99/145], and "I *come to* an Anchor" [1045.f.3/1/16]. In short, although "run", specifically used with the satellite particle "away", was the most salient example of unmarked strong preterit forms in the corpus when expressed as a phrasal verb, evidence indicates that Ship English permits zero marking in any phrasal verb composition, although certain lexemes might favor zero marking in idiomatic usage.

[10] The high frequency of "run away" may, in part, be explained by the nature of witness testimony coupled with the number of court cases related to sailors deserting their vessel.

As discussed in the previous paragraphs, past tense variant forms may be conditioned by certain lexemes such as "see" and "run" or they may be conditioned by verbs used in phrasal verb constituents, yet overall there is no convincing evidence that linguistic or socio-linguistic factors play a role in past tense variation. Instead, variant forms occur in the same linguistic contexts, in the same documents, and in the same handwriting across a range of documents with varying levels of formality and stylistic expectations. For example, one witness deposition includes the statement, "They **took** and **plundered** and took out some rice & sugar and some rigging and then *sink* her" [HCA 1/52/75] in which an unmarked preterit "sink" occurs in a coordinated clause structure with the standard inflected weak verb in past tense "plundered" and also the standard form of the strong verb preterit "took". Logbooks also show examples of zero marked preterit forms in coordinated clauses with standard forms of strong verbs, e.g., "severall of the fleet *break* their Cables & we **lost** our Long boat" [ADM 52/2/6], and "every one **came** and *eat* and **drank** with him" [HCA 1/99/59]. Other logbooks show the same verb occurring in standard and preterit forms in a single speech act, e.g., the verb forms "gett" and "gott" in the excerpt, "We *gett* Anchor aboard [...] we *see* severall ships a stern which **Came** into our fleet ... severall of the fleet **made** Sayle and **gott** into [...] harbor" [ADM 52/3/7]. A longer excerpt from a single witness statement taken at the Rhode Island and Providence Plantation on 9 September 1725 shows similar variation among standard and zero-marked forms of strong verbs by one speaker:

> he [the captain] **told** me he would make me Sign and **sent** for two candles in a plate and **made** me eat them. And then *bid* me go to the Devil for he would force no man then I *see* some of them with Sticks in their Hands & Needles through the end of them I **asked** Jonathan Barney a prisoner on Board what they **were** for. [HCA 1/99/5]

Such evidence of wide-ranging yet non-universal distribution of variant forms in the past tense suggests that free variation is a more probable explanation than conditioned variation.

6.2.3 Infinitives

Ship English permits infinitives in non-standard contexts and also permits their omission when standard usage anticipates them. Infinitives are permitted after participle forms of a verb, for instance, present participles (marked in bold) permit subsequent infinitives (in italics), e.g., "**observing** Shaik Joseph *to hold* a Bag

in his hand" [HCA 1/99 Bombay, July 17 1730, 3], and "**finding** the Pink *to sayle* heavy" [HCA 1/98/28]. Yet infinitives after past participles (marked in bold), are more common, e.g., "they mett with a little Dutch shipp **designed** *to go* trade with or among the Spaniards" [CO 5/1411/97], "[he was] **obliged** *to leave* the money he had formerly wrought for (being a carpenter], and was **gone** *to receive*" [HCA 1/99/8 New Providence 1722], "Barbley, about two dayes after **caused** the Saw *to be* brought into his yard" [HCA 1/9/57], "[he was] **promised** *to be* landed in England" [HCA 1/13/97], and "[he] **assisted** *to rob* her" [HCA 1/99/42].[11] Infinitives are also permitted after auxiliary verbs with conditional modality (marked in bold), e.g., "he begged if possible his Ship Mates **cou'd** *to hide* him from the Pyrates" [HCA 1/99/21], "a Lock, and Key which the prisoner **wou'd have** *to belong* to him" [HCA 1/99/30], and "our men **would have** me *to put* them on" [445f.1/45]. Infinitive use after modal auxiliaries also occurs in parallel structures with verbs expressed in their uninflected form (marked in bold), e.g., "for I cannot **doe** what I would *to doe*" [HCA 1/101/423], and "they would **put** the Goods in the Hould [...] and *to send* her in with twelve men" [HCA 1/9/9], suggesting that the uninflected form and the infinitive may have been interchangeable. This suggestion is supported by omission of the particle "to" in some contexts, e.g., "bidding him [*to*] hold his tongue" [HCA 1/9/139], "I humbly thank you for any share you are pleased [*to*] take in my favour" [HCA 1/101/382], "you need [*to*] chuse" [CO 5/1411/658], and "the prisoner bid the deponent [*to*] look for the saw" [HCA 1/99 Williamsburg, Aug 14 1729]. Omission of a complete infinitive form (both the particle and the verb) is permitted when the meaning is evident from context, e.g., "wee met with Shipton again who forced us [*to go*] with him" [HCA 1/99/5], and "believes him [*to be*] one of those who divided his Cloths" [HCA 1/99/140].[12] In sum, and although there were too few examples to make strong claims about the linguistic conditioning of variant infinitives, samples suggest that these verbs without tense were permitted after participle forms and modal auxiliaries but were completely or partially omitted in other contexts; they were also potentially interchangeable with the uninflected form of the verb.

[11] This last example "[he] **assisted** *to rob* her" [HCA 1/99/42] may not be a true infinitive but a manifestation of the commonly collocated "assisted to" expression that is seen elsewhere in the corpus prior to a noun phrase, e.g., "**assisting to** the Robbing of his Ship" [HCA 1/99/42].

[12] The omission of the infinitive "to be" is specifically discussed in a later subsection on usage and omission of "be" in this chapter, see §6.3.2.

6.3 The copula and auxiliary "be"

6.3.1 Inflection

The verb "to be" features most predominantly in past tense, and "was" occurs as the most frequent past tense inflection with all types of nominal and pronominal subjects in first, second, and third person.[13] The standard preterit form "were" is evident in the corpus, but is not common, e.g., "we *were* foresd" [ADM 52/1/7], "they *were* in trenches" [ADM 52/1/7], "the Men out of the *Onflow* were Volunteers" [HCA 1/99/112], and "those who *were* active and were minded to recommend themselves for brave men" [HCA 1/99/94] (all italicized for emphasis). Of these limited examples, the most common occurrence of the inflection "were" occurred in statements marked for subjunctive mood, e.g., "except he *were* dead" [HCA 1/9/51], "If he *were* a Hollander" [HCA 1/9/9], "if all *were* of my mind" [HCA 1/99/36], "asked how he would like it, *were* he a prisoner" [HCA 1/99/30], and "ask'd if any vessel were coming from Barbados" [HCA 1/99/6]. Far more common than "were" in all indicative contexts was the preterit form "was" that appears with first, second, and third person subjects (both with noun phrases and pronouns), in singular and plural contexts (see Table 6.1).

In terms of linguistic conditioning, the most salient use of the preterit form "was" appeared in third person plural contexts with a noun phrase (emphasized in bold), and most examples of these were to be found in witness depositions, e.g., "**those men** […] that *was*n't immediately on board" [ADM 106/300/25], "they met with **two ships** which *was* pirates" [HCA 1/98/47], "there *was* **three** at first" [HCA 1/99/8], "about **tew of them** *was* gone" [HCA 1/99/126], "Four to one *was* **odds**" [HCA 1/9/155], and "to confes, where **their moneys** *was*" [HCA 1/9/18]. Although various examples of third person plural noun phrases used with "was" appear, very few trends of usage suggest any type of internal linguistic conditioning that selected the preterit form "was" over the alternative variant "were". One potential conditioning factor was the use of a compound noun phrase as a subject that is formed with a conjunction (noun phrase emphasized in bold), e.g., "**8 sayle of English & Dutch** *was* drawn out" [ADM 52/2/5], "Where **his money & Gold** *was*" [HCA 1/9/18], "**my Ledger and hauwl** *was* carried a shore" [ADM 51/3954], "**hee and Captaine Thomas Garnett** *was* taken" [HCA 1/9/67], "**the country and his colonies** *was* not under his command" [CO 5/1411/101], and "**Nutmeggs or**

[13] Variation in past tense realizations of the verb "be" is no surprise given the widespread tendency to level the contrast between "was" and "were" potentially owing to the fact that "be" is seen as "a defective verb", with an inflectional paradigm that derives from three distinct and independent verbs in Aryan, Teutonic and Greek (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989, Vol 2: 1).

Table 6.1: Examples of the preterit "was" used for with first, second, and third person nouns and pronouns, both singular and plural

person		Singular	Plural
1st	**Noun phrase**	n/a[a]	"My Self and the rest of the Company under my command *was* entered and Musterd on board" [ADM 51/4170/2]
	Pronoun	"I *was* told, no other Trees fit to build with" [1045.f.3/1/27]	"then he made [out] what we *was*" [ADM 52/1/1]
2nd	**Noun phrase**	n/a[a]	"you also John Jessop *was* lately wicked" [HCA 1/99/170]
	Pronoun	"it may be you *was* not willing at the first" [CO 5/1411/42]	"*was* you [referring to John Houghling, Corneluis Franc and Francois Delaune] on board the pyrate shipp when she was taken" [CO 5/1411/28]
3rd	**Noun phrase**	"the prisoner *was* belonging to Augustino's crew" [HCA 1/99/7]	"those goods *was* to ship" [HCA 1/98/43]
	Pronoun	"after he *was* come on board" [CO 5/1411/99]	"where they *was* carried" [HCA 1/101/220]

[a]Not applicable as reference to self (first person) or addressee (second person) using a noun phrase renders it third person.

Cloves that *was* given away" [HCA 1/12/78]. Yet there is no evidence to suggest that the plural or singular nature of either constituent in the conjoined noun phrases affects the choice of "be" preterit as either "was" or "were" and this may signify that the use of the conjunction itself selected the use of "was" rather than the composition of the conjoined noun phrase. Another potential conditioning factor may have been the use of a first person plural pronoun subject "we" as the subject of the clause in which "was" forms the main verb of the predicate, particularly when directly preceding "be", e.g., "**wee** *was* forced soe neare the shoare" [HCA 1/12/2], "**we** *was* forsed to Stand to the Westward" [ADM 52/1/1], "masking what **we** *was*" [ADM 52/1/1], and "agreeable to you as **we** *was* then got out" [D/Earle/3/1]. The salience of this usage is also highlighted by its inclusion in published sea-songs of the seventeenth century, e.g., "As **we** *was* sailing on the main [...] we was in danger" (cited in Palmer 1986: 51). Yet, despite these two potential conditioning factors for selecting "was" rather than the preterit form "were", the frequency and range of variation in the corpus suggests either free variation or a general tendency to select "was" in all contexts rather than complementary distribution of the "was" and "were" forms.

Present tense and infinite forms of the verb "be" feature less frequently than past tense forms in the corpus, but show similar variation. In the present tense, examples of usage show a tendency to level the contrast between "is" and "are", with "is" appearing more frequently with noun phrase subjects in the singular and plural third person forms. Furthermore, this occurred when the "be" was in pre- and post-subject positions and also when it was either adjacent to or separated from the subject, e.g., "here *is* **2 Merchant men**" [ADM 52/1/8], "**pitch**, which *is* wanting" [5/1411/646], "**The ships** *is* all gone" [HCA 1/101/553], "Give me an account how **all things** *is* in the Contrey" [HCA 1/12/86], "**These** *is* received" [ADM 106/300/12], and "Men which die yearly in those Forts, **whose Substance, Wages, etc.** *is* left for the Company" [BL/74/816/m/11/36/2]. This finding supports Bailey & Ross's (1988) observation that in seventeenth century logbooks "*is* is the predominant plural in many of the logs, with *are* relatively uncommon" (p.201, authors' italics).

In addition to preference for "is", Bailey and Ross also recognize the use of the uninflected verb "be" in finite contexts in the logbooks they analyzed, e.g., "they *bee* well sett people" (1988: Sloane 3833) and "the corkers *be* come to Corke" [ADM 52/78], both cited in Bailey & Ross (1988: 200). The usage of uninflected "be" also seems to characterize representations of sailors' speech in publications such as sea-songs, e.g., "Victuals and weapons they *be* nothing scant", "Her flags *be* new trimmed", and "The dangers great on seas *be* rife" (cited in Palmer 1986: 2,

3, & 6, respectively). Seminal literary works related to sailors also show this type of usage, e.g., "*be* it some Object", "he *be* much O glad", and "you teach wild Mans *be* good" in Defoe's (1998) *Robinson Crusoe*,[14] and "Master Billy Bones, if that *be* your name" (part 1, ch 2), "the slight, if there *be* one, was unintentional" (part 2, ch 9) in Stevenson's (1883) *Treasure Island*. However, although usage of uninflected "be" was evident in the corpus, e.g., "if any such there *be*" [CO 5/1411/649], it was not a regular nor salient feature of present indicative statements as claimed by Baily and Ross's scholarship and suggested by literature representing sailors' speech. Instead, the use of uninflected "be" seems to be restricted to the context of subjunctive or imperative modality that equates with standard usage, e.g., "yet one thing I have to advise you of, that you *be* not ensnared" [445f.1/22], and "*be* not afraid" [445f.1/44]. It may be that popular representations of foreign sailors' speech that potentially suggest a maritime Pidgin have influenced the perceived salience of a variant uninflected "be" feature that is not significantly represented in the extended corpus of this study.

6.3.2 Usage and omission

The verb "be" is not frequently used as the principal inflected verb in the corpus in a way that corresponds to how we use the verb in a non-auxiliary manner in standard modern English. Specifically, the use of the copula as a type of linking verb with a predicate adjective, noun, or adverb does appear in the corpus, but this type of usage is not common, e.g., with a predicate adjective (in bold), "John Jessop *was* lately **wicked**" [HCA 1/99/170]; with a predicate noun (in bold), "I considered to strike them that was next [to] me, which *was* **the weakest**" [445f.1/44]; and with a predicate adverb (in bold), "and we *was* **up in the country**" [T/70/1216/10]. The use of the copula as part of an existential clause is also evident but is similarly infrequent, e.g., "*There was* five hundred thousand cheeses" [HCA 1/12/84], "*itt is* a very hey [high] Iland" [DDB6 8/4], "*it was* stolen goods" [HCA 1/101/220], and "*there was not* any Ship or vessell taken by him or any of his Company" [HCA 1/14/205]. Existential use of "there" plus the inflected copula is not common in the corpus given the propensity of sailors to express attendant circumstances with a present participle phrase headed with being, e.g. "And account *being* given to me by you captn John Aldred" [CO 5/1411/665] "but could not speak with them *being* night and hazey" [CO 5/1411/699], and "The capt & Lieut *being standing* together" [HCA 1/9/155]. Even when expletives such

[14] The last two of these three examples from *Robinson Crusoe* are contextualized in the voice of Man Friday and thus potentially aim to illustrate a Ship Pidgin feature rather than a variation inherent to Ship English.

as "there" and "it" are explicit, it is permissible to use a predicate headed by the infinite participle "being" rather than the finite copula, e.g., "weighed [anchor] **it** *being* little wind" [CO 5/1411/694]. In short, linking and existential contexts in which the finite copula might be common in standard usage are evident but infrequent in the corpus of Ship English under study.

In contrast, the finite forms of the verb "be" appear frequently in the corpus as a requisite of passive structures. Sometimes these structures are made explicit by the use of a prepositional phrase of agency (in bold), e.g., "he *was* misused and beat **by the pyrates**" [HCA 1/99/31], "[they] *was* fired at **by a great Spanish shipp**" [HCA 1/9/18], and "the Governers Wife and Daughter of Cuba *were* taken Prisoners **by a Pyrate**" [HCA 1/99/9]. However, more frequently, the omission of such a prepositional constituent obscures the logical subject of the transitive verb that has been rendered in passive form, e.g., "we *are* excused" [HCA 1/99/39], "our Spare Anchor *was* gott aboard" [ADM 52/2/3], "he *was* beat" [HCA 1/99/124], "they *were* not permitted to trade" [HCA 1/9/18]. It is worth noting that "be" in passive structures is subject to the same variation and tendency to level the inflectional paradigm as with any other finite usage (discussed above), e.g., "**[we]** *were* forced on a reife of sand and **[we]** *was* forced to cut away our main mast" [HCA 1/12/2], "**2 ships** that *was* driven from the Virginia Coast" [ADM 52/1/8], and "**they** *was* carried" [HCA 1/101/220]. In addition to inflectional variation, finite "be" omission in passive structures is also a permissible variant, e.g., "Five pounds [was] payd him in money" [HCA 1/9/64], "today [was] Taken out of the George Hoy Tho Harris" [ADM 52/1/5], "found his chest [was] broke open" [HCA 1/99/7], and "they [were] called to go one Boarde" [HCA 1/99/140]. In short, frequent uses of the "be" in passive structures support the general tendency for leveling of the inflectional paradigm but also indicate that "be" omission was an acceptable variation.

The omission of "be", regarding which Bailey and Ross find "zero evidence" in their study of seventeenth century logbooks (1988: 202), manifests itself in a range of contexts in this extended corpus of documents ranging from 1620 to 1750 and composing logbooks, depositions, letters and miscellaneous documents. Interestingly, most of the examples come from logbooks of the late 1600s and early 1700s, e.g., "the wind [is/was] blowing violent & contrary" [HCA 1/12/2], "the wind [is/was] very little or calme" [ADM 52/2/3], "we thought it [is/was] the same" [HCA 1/99/27], "we [are/were] Riding Single till noon" [ADM 52/2/5], "our Long Boate [is/was] employed to fetch water all night" [ADM 52/1/8], "at day light [there is/was] little wind" [ADM 52/2/3], and "fair pleasant we [are/were] excuse[d]; all Drunk" [HCA 1/99/39]. The abbreviated style permitted in log-

book writing may have conditioned "be" omission, particularly in stative contexts when used as the main inflected verb and even more so when the meaning was self-evident or routinely referenced such as talking about wind conditions. Omission of "be" was also evident in other types of documents, e.g., the letter that opens, "It [is/was] appealing to me, that it is for his majestys official service" [CO 5/1411/666], and the testimony that states, "information wee have from one that [was] razed with him" [ADM 106/288/42]. Omission of "be" in its infinitive form (i.e., the satellite particle "to" and the base form "be") occurs in witness depositions, e.g., "believes him [to be] one of those who divided his Cloths" [HCA 1/99/140], "happened [to be] in your way" [HCA 1/99/3/2], and "owns himselfe [to be] and Irishman" [HCA 1/53/3]. And, just like the finite omission in logbooks and letters, this type of infinitive omission in courtroom testimony could also have been conditioned by the function of the verb in contexts where meaning is self-evident or routinely referenced such as giving character descriptions (stative or existential copula function) or indicating places (locative function).

6.3.3 Aspect using "be" auxiliary

Finite "be" auxiliaries and present participle verbs are used to mark progressive aspect in the corpus, however the structure permits variation that is not typical in standard usage. Limited examples show standard usage of the finite "be" verb (in italics) with a present participle verb phrase denoting active process (in bold), e.g., "*Edgar* wch *is* now in **Paying** & hope to dispatch to morrow" [ADM 106/288/30], and "his tobacco *was* **throwing** overboard" [CO 5/1411/58].[15] This usage is standard because the finite auxiliary ("is" and "was", respectively) projects a present participle denoting active process ("Paying" and "throwing") and both events are continuous over a period of time (SIL International 2005).

However, comparable to uses of the progressive aspect with a present participle denoting active process, the corpus includes many more examples of this same structure used with participles of verbs that have a stative meaning, e.g., "the prisoner *was* **belonging** to Augustino's crew" [HCA 1/99/7], "I do not know nor never heard that the Master or any of the Seamen *were* **knowing** of it" [HCA 1/9/51], and "it *was* **being** with some officers upon an island sevrall daies withouth victualls" [CO 5/1411/41].[16] The stative meaning of the participles emphasized in

[15] Note that the example "his tobacco *was* **throwing** overboard" [CO 5/1411/58] is expressed in the passive voice and so a standard version might be rendered "his tobacco *was being thrown* overboard".

[16] The combination of the finite "be" auxiliary with a present participle of a stative verb was (and is) not generally permissible in standard usage but was (and still is) acceptable in certain dialects and contexts, (Römer 2005: 113–116).

bold are more suited to preterit verb use in standard English, i.e., "the prisoner *belonged* to Augustino's crew", "…the Master or any of the Seamen *knew* it", and "it *was* with some officers upon an island sevrall daies withouth victualls" [CO 5/1411/41]. Indeed, for this reason many of the progressive aspect structures in the corpus of Ship English might be more suitably rendered in preterit tense in standard usage. Yet, use of a structure composed of the auxiliary "be" and a stative participle seems to have been a feature of sailors' talk, and the fact that it features in popular sea-songs attests to its salience as a marker of their speech, e.g., the line "They *were* the treasure **possessing**" (cited in Palmer 1986: 55). In sum, when sailors used the progressive aspect they sometimes rendered it with a present participle denoting active process (in accordance with standard usage) but more frequently rendered it with

The use of present participles as the only constituent of a main verb structure implies that "be" may have been omitted when used as an auxiliary in an underlying aspectual structure. Interestingly, this type of omission occurs more often with active verbs that would be more suited to the progressive aspectual structure, e.g., "they [were] whispering and afterwards [were] agreeing one with another" [HCA 1/99/112], "he [was] with his Cutlass spoiling and hacking everything" [HCA 1/99/126], "they [were] abusing him" [HCA 1/99/103], and "we [were] Riding Single till noon" [ADM 52/2/5]. Without any finite auxiliary, these excerpts are reduced to phrases headed with a present participle. Yet, it is possible that these phrases derive from underlying progressive aspectual structures with omitted finite auxiliaries, and that would explain how they appear to function as independent clauses of attendant circumstances rather than as modifications of an antecedent noun phrase. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that many examples of these structures appear in coordination with clauses that have indicative non-aspectual verbs and therefore potentially show a time sequence juxtaposing the progressive duration of one clause with the single time referent of another. To illustrate, the following excerpt from a witness deposition: "they tarrying longer the said Le Fort sailed away" [HCA 1/52/137] can be interpreted as two clauses, the first expressed with progressive aspect and the second with a preterit indicative verb specifically denoting the fact that it occurred later and interrupted the durative event of the first verb, i.e., "they [were] tarrying longer [when] the said Le Fort sailed away". In another example of a letter written by mariner John Morris to his wife, the opening excerpt reads, "Ever Loufing wief these lines is to arkquint you that I Lying more like to die than to lief desiring you to remember my kind love to my three Cussons" [HCA 1/52/51]. If we interpret the two present participles "Lying" and "desiring" to derive from underlying pro-

gressive aspectual structures with omitted finite auxiliaries and the three verb constituents to represent three separate clauses, then the excerpt would be interpreted as: "Ever Loufing wief these lines is to arkquint you that I [am] Lying more like to die than to lief [and I am] desiring you to remember my kind love to my three Cussons". This excerpt then expresses three distinct ideas, firstly, the matrix clause, "these lines is[are] to aquaint you", secondly, the embedded relative clause, "that I am lying more likely to die than to live", and thirdly, the subordinating clause, "[so] I am desiring [I desire] you to remember my kind love". Moreover, this interpretation matches the proposed sailors' standard use of the progressive aspect in standard distribution with active verbs ("I am lying") and also demonstrates their tendency to use a marked variation of the same structures with stative verbs ("I am desiring"). Such examples support the suggestion that present participle phrases may have denoted (or derived from) clauses with progressive aspects in which finite "be" had been omitted but are still manifest in the underlying structure.

Variant usage of the verb "be" includes structures that denote completed events and therefore suggest perfect aspectual meaning. These structures are sometimes expressed in the finite present or past tense, e.g., "wee *are* 6 month and 6 days upon our voyage" [DDB6 8/4], "the ship *is* sailed…he *is* run away" [5/1411/646], meaning "we **have been** 6 month[s] and 6 days upon our voyage" and "the ship **had sailed**…he **had run away**", respectively. Other completive events are expressed with the present participle of "be", e.g., "the merchant ship not *being* gon into York river" [CO 5/1411/702], and "news *being* come at that time" [HCA 1/99/9], meaning "the merchant ship **had not gone** into York river", and "news **had come** at that time" respectively. In all of these examples, the verb "be" appears to function the same as the auxiliary "have" does in structures with perfect aspect and suggests that this exchange may have been a variant feature of how "be" was used to denote aspect in Ship English.

6.4 Auxiliaries

6.4.1 The auxiliary "have"

The verb "have" is frequently used to denote perfect aspect in the corpus of Ship English under study, but just like "be", it is prone to inflectional variation. The range of historical forms of this verb available to Early Modern English speakers owes to various dialectal forms derived "largely to weakness and stresslessness of the word in many uses, both as a principal verb and as an auxiliary"

(*Oxford English Dictionary* 1989, Vol 7: 15). However, the four most common to sailors were the two present tense forms "has" and "have" and the past tense form "had" that are still in use today, in addition to the obsolete form "hath" that was familiar to contemporary speakers. The oldest form "hath" (italicized) was used infrequently with a third person subject (emphasized in bold) functioning as an auxiliary verb in perfect constructions, e.g., "**it** *hath* Blowed hard" [ADM 52/2/5], "**our Longboat** *hath* made 3 Tunnes" [ADM 52/2/5], and "**The examinant** *hath* not since seen him" [HCA 1/14/140]. The standard form "had" was more commonly used with all subjects, including third person singular subjects, e.g., "**Bragg** *had* broke two of his ribbs" [HCA 1/53/48], and "[**the quartermaster**] had Iron & Beads stole away from him" [HCA 1/12/2], and "**he** *had* got lame" [HCA 1/99/62]. The inflected form "has" was used with third person singular and plural subjects, e.g., "**he** *has* at time Spoke to him" [HCA 1/99/142], "**this month last past** *has* been such turbulent weather: the like has not been all this Winter" [CO 5/1411/654], and "**Our people** *has* no mind to go to sea" [HCA 1/101/553].[17] The non-standard use of this variant with third person plural subjects appears to have been a marked feature of sailors' speech that was represented in the lyrics of sea-songs, e.g., "**Many** *has* searched" (cited in Palmer 1986: 54), and "*Has* not **men** wished and cried" (cited in Palmer 1986: 57). The last variation, the uninflected form "have", was used most notably with third person singular subjects that require the inflected form "has" in standard usage, e.g., "the said **Frederik Philips** *have* manumitted" [HCA 1/98/72].[18] Yet, many examples of the non-standard usage of "have" with third person subjects derive from perfect-aspect verb phrases using the participle "been", (emphasized) e.g., "**Wm Lilburne** *have been* aiding [...] he have ordered us" [SP 42/6], "**the wind** *have been* at SW" [ADM 52/2/1], "**This evidence** that *have been* already produced" [CO 5/1411/33], and "**John Smith** who is and *have been* as badd" [HCA 1/99 Barbados 1733]. The frequency of uninflected "have" with the past participle "been" in collocation suggests that this may have conditioned the variation regardless of the singular or plural nature of the third-person subject.

[17] The noun "people" as plural referent with a singular third person verb conjugation "has" reflects the arbitrary designation of count noun and potentially reflects similar singular forms in other Romance languages, e.g., "la gente" in Spanish.

[18] Although the word "have" is here discussed as an uninflected form, it is also possible that speakers/writers were using the third person plural form that takes the same form as the uninflected verb i.e., "have". I acknowledge that the variation of this paradigm may therefore be considered as a singular/plural inflectional paradigm rather than a finite/infinite paradigm. My interpretation of the paradigm as a finite/infinite variation owes to the earlier work of Bailey & Ross in which they describe present tense marking and specifically describe "third singular forms are sometimes unmarked [i.e., uninflected]" (1988: 199).

The perfect structures available to speakers of Ship English correlate with standard usage but permit internal variation such as separation of the auxiliary and its associated verb phrase and deletion or substitution of the auxiliary constituent. Sailors made use of different types of perfect structures permitted in standard usage, for instance: perfect aspect with indicative mood, e.g., "if they *had known* the sloop had been fitted out" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722]; perfect aspect with conditional modality, e.g., "they *would have kept* me" [445f.1/27]; perfect aspect with progressive aspect, e.g., "Wm Lilburne *have been aiding"* [SP 42/6]; and perfect aspect with negation, e.g., "they *would not have come* on board" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722]. In perfect structures, Ship English permits the separation of the auxiliary verb "have" and its associated participle verb phrase in contexts such as adverbial placement and negation, e.g., "after he *had* **unfortunately** *fell* into their hands" [HCA 1/99/38], and "he *had* **never** *done* it since he had belonged to them" [HCA 1/99/23].[19] It also permits nominals to separate auxiliary verbs and their associated participle verb phrases, e.g., "We the mariners belonging to His Majesty's Ship *James Galley have* **many of us** *been* desperately sick" (cited in Brown 2011: 49). Another variation was the apparent omission of the auxiliary verb, e.g., "John Hardin who [had] run away from a ship" [SP 42/6], "I thought you would [have] been as you promised me" [HCA 1/12/85], and "one of the people who [had] stole or run away with the boat" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722].[20] Ship English also appears to permit substitution of the auxiliary verb phrase in passive structures, e.g., the use of auxiliary "be" in "after he *was come* [had come] on board" [CO 5/1411/99] and "he *was beine* [had been] at Martinco" [HCA 1/13/95];[21] So, although verb phrases with perfect aspect are used in syntactic constructions that are predominantly aligned with standard usage, they also permit some internal variation that is not typical.

One of the most marked features of variation in perfect verb phrases is not the auxiliary itself, but what verbal particle it is permitted to select in a perfect structure. Standard English requires the auxiliary "have" to select a past partici-

[19] Note that the separation of auxiliary verb and its participle verb phrase was permitted in a range of Early Modern English dialects and continues to be acceptable in modern varieties including standard American English.

[20] It may be that some examples do not have an underlying verb phrase with perfect aspect but instead are manifestations of the preterit forms of verbs without past tense inflection, e.g., the example "John Hardin who run away from a ship" [SP 42/6] might have an underlying perfect structure with a deleted auxiliary, i.e., "John Hardin who *had run* away from a ship" or might be a preterit verb without inflection, i.e., "John Hardin who *ran* away from a ship". In many cases, the context permits both alternatives.

[21] See §6.3.3 for more examples of "be" used as an auxiliary in verb phrases with perfect aspectual meaning.

ple in verb phrases with perfect aspect, and this does sometimes occur in Ship English, e.g., "whether he had not *returned*" [HCA 1/99/52], "We had *been* gone from there aboutt two moones" [T/70/1213], "if they had *known* the sloop" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722], "would have *had* an anchor let goe" [HCA 1/9/155], and "had *heard* it talked" [HCA 1/99/153]. However, much more common was the selection of a variant verbal form such as an irregular formation or an uninflected form (marked for emphasis), e.g., "it hath *Blowed* hard" [ADM 52/2/5], "they had *arrive*" [HCA 1/53/66], "wee have sayled & *Logg* 116 miles" [HCA 51/3983/1], and "he had been misused and *beat* and threatened to be shot" [HCA 1/99/97]. The last example includes the uninflected form "beat" in coordination with the inflected weak verbs "misused" and "threatened" and potentially illustrates the common feature of preterit verbal usage in perfect aspect constructions. In other words, although the word "beat" may be an uninflected form of the strong verb, it is also the form of the preterit, as in the standard usage "he beat the prisoner", and this usage supports evidence that it was the preterit forms of the verbs that were used in collocation with the auxiliary "have" in perfect structures and not a distinct past participle form. This interpretation is complicated by the fact that the past participle forms of weak (i.e., regular) verbs are the same as the preterit form, e.g., "I have *answered*" (perfect aspect) and "I *answered*' (preterit) in contrast to strong (i.e., irregular) verbs that usually have different preterit forms, e.g., "I have written" (perfect aspect) and "I wrote" (preterit). Thus, the weak verbs appear to have standard past participle forms as the preterit is inflected with the morpheme "-ed" just as the past participle is in standard usage. However, the strong verbs appear to show marked variation (see Table 6.2), when in fact they may demonstrate the same inflectional paradigm as the weak verbs.

One interpretation of this inflectional variation is that Ship English permitted a preterit verbal form of any strong or weak verb after the auxiliary "have" in a construction marked for perfect aspect, although this was not universal nor conditioned by any additional internal linguistic constraints. This interpretation is one that appears to have been favored by Bailey and Ross whose discussion of preterit forms of strong verbs recognizes "the use of what are now strong preterits as past participles" (1988: 204). However, the data presented above may also be evidence of a collapsing and simplification of the preterit and past participle paradigm system rather than free variation between preterit and past participle forms in perfect structures. Further evidence of this potential simplification of preterit and past participle forms occurs in the variant usage of verbal forms in passive structures with auxiliary "be", e.g., "his head was *broke*" [HCA 1/52/148], "2 new cables that were *hid*" [HCA 1/99/41], "The Anchor and Cable…is *took* up"

Table 6.2: Sample of 11 verb phrases marked for perfect aspect that permit the preterit forms of strong verbs after the auxiliary "have"

Ship English citation (with preterit form marked for emphasis)	**Standard past participle**	**Source document**
wee have *rid* her	ridden	ADM 52/2/1
he before had *spoke* through me	spoken	445f.1/35
this day we have *took* out	taken	ADM 52/2/5
[he] had Iron & Beads *stole* away from him	stolen	HCA 1/12/2
had never *saw* a Prize taken	seen	HCA 1/99/8
those who had *fell* into their Hands	fallen	HCA 1/99/51
Make him Lye in Irons till he had *swore*	sworn	T 70/1/5
he had *broke* open his chest	broken	HCA 1/99/7
when he had *hid* himself	hidden	HCA 1/99/52
I had *forgot* to write you	forgotten	AC WO 16–16/8–16
I have *wrote*	written	445f.1/46

[5/1411/645], and "he was *beat* and forced among them" [HCA 1/99/54]. It may be that sailors used a simplified paradigm of verbal forms in which the preterit and the past participle (in both passive and perfect structures) were the same. This would certainly have made it easier for foreign language speakers to acquire correct Ship English syntax and may have been a salient feature of sailors' speech in general during the early colonial period, as suggested by the repeated use of such structures in seventeenth-century sea-songs, e.g., "Many persons of good account were *took*" ("A Joyful New Ballad", cited in Palmer 1986: 17) and "[they] Were *drove* out" ("Sailors for my Money", cited in Palmer 1986: 44).

6.4.2 The auxiliary "do"

The verb "do" is frequently used as an auxiliary verb in the corpus of Ship English under study, but is not prone to significant inflectional variation. Although there were a range of inflections available in the Early Modern English period for the verb "do" (see *Oxford English Dictionary* 1989, Vol 4: 901), this corpus suggests that sailors generally used "did" for the past and "do" for the present tense, with a few infrequent cases of "does" occurring in late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century documents, e.g., "[he] *do's not know* what ship" [HCA 1/99/99, c. 1694] and "he answered that he *does* not know" [HCA 1/13/94 1731]. The archaic form "doth" was similarly infrequent and more associated with court usage than sailors, for instance, one sailors' testimony reads "David Czah who there [did] and

still $^{\text{doth}}$ owns himselfe an Irishman" [HCA 1/53/3] in which the words "did" and "doth" are inserted superscript, potentially as corrections to the sailors' spontaneous speech that was transcribed in haste and later revised for accuracy (see also footnote in this chapter for examples of "doth" used by court officials in negated statements). Although sailors did use this archaic inflection of the verb, e.g. "*Doth* believe Really they got their money by pyracy" [HCA 1/98/259], "the other seamen *doth* believe that they were Likewise killed" [HCA 1/101/405], and "He *Doth* suppose that these nine men may have some Riches on board" [HCA 1/98/29], the scarcity of examples of this form in the data suggest that the inflection "doth" was not common. Thus, although the verb "do" appears often in the corpus, it does not demonstrate the same frequency of inflectional variation as other auxiliaries such as "be" or the perfect auxiliary "have".

Verbs phrases using "do" are common in the corpus of Ship English, but the verb "do", rather than functioning as a requisite constituent of negatives and questions (as in standard usage), composes affirmative statements in the indicative mood, which may or may not reflect standard usage to mark emphasis. It is possible that statements may have included the grammatically redundant auxiliary verb "do" as a marker of emphasis, particularly considering that much of the corpus derives from witness depositions that were made in response to direct questions. For instance, the witness that stated, "he *did* attend upon them" [HCA 1/98/267] may have been responding to the direct question "Did he attend upon them?".[22] However, other examples suggest that emphasis was not intended, such as the comments in logbook entries about daily events, e.g., "[we] have taken a strict and carefull survey, and *doe* find that she wants calking inside and outside" [CO 5/1411/662], "The wind from the SSW to the SW *did* blow" [ADM 52/2/3], and "six violent squails of wind and rain all which *did* continue till this day noon" [ADM 52/2/3]. Letters also include this structure in a way that does not suggest emphatic usage, e.g., "as many have and daily *doe* find" [BL/Egerton 2395/0007], "the Royal Company *do* expend yearly 20000l. Sterling" [BL/74/816/m/11/36/2], and "I *doe* so consider" [HCA 1/101/527]. In addition to these contexts in which the verb "do" serves as a redundant auxiliary marker of emphasis or indicative mood, verb phrases with auxiliary "do" (or "do support") function in standard usage to create negated preterit structures from principle verbs that have no existing auxiliary in the indicative mood; they

[22] The majority of witness depositions are written in continuous prose and do not include the interrogative contributions of a second speaker, it is therefore extremely difficult to assess the validity of this suggestion although it is logical given the context of the court testimony to assume that witnesses were asked questions.

also serve as auxiliary particles that can be moved to mark the interrogative mood. And both standard uses of the auxiliary "do" are evident in the corpus (emphasized), e.g., for negation, "Both his pistolls mist [missed] fire and *did* not go off" [HCA 1/52/137] and for interrogative mood, "where *did* they take this shipp" [CO 5/1411/97]. However, most structures containing the auxiliary verb "do" do not suggest emphatic usage, nor do they mark negatives or questions, instead they are seemingly redundant auxiliaries of the indicative mood expressed in the affirmative, e.g., "we *doe* assure you" [ADM 106/288/30], "I *doe* wonder" [HCA 1/98/57], "our ketch *did* touch our stearn and *did* us some damage" [ADM 52/2/3].[23] Furthermore, this type of usage is marked in representations of sailors' speech in a range of sea shanties and songs, e.g., "now mind what I *do* say" (cited in Hugill 1969: 51), "I *did* dwell" (cited in Palmer 1986: 4), "Their admiral *did* want to be / Aboard" (cited in Palmer 1986: 52), and "What the laws *did* still forbid" (cited in Palmer 1986: 75). In short, the scope and frequency of the auxiliary verb "do" in depositions, logbooks, and personal statements without explicit emphatic meaning suggests that the auxiliary was commonly used as a component of the indicative mood regardless of negation, interrogative modality or emphatic meaning. Indeed, using a default auxiliary verb for all verb phrases would have arguably made Ship English easier to learn for new recruits for whom English was not native as it meant that if they mastered the verb "do" in its present tense and preterit inflections they could use any other verb in its uninflected form in any simple indicative, negated, or interrogative structure.

However, the use of an affirmative indicative verb phrase with the auxiliary "do" often combines at the clause level with a singular principal verb in preterit form, suggesting that the use of the auxiliary marker was not a default but was used in complementary distribution to create contrast in meaning. To illustrate, the following excerpt includes two clauses, the first is expressed with a preterit verb phrase (in bold) and the second is expressed with a verb phrase containing the auxiliary "do" (italicized): "wee **came** where wee *did take in* the Soulders [soldiers]" [ADM 51/4322/1]. If the use of the auxiliary "do" were a default in constructions with affirmative indicative modality then both verb phrases in the sentence would take it, i.e., "wee *did come* where wee *did take in* the Soulders" and if the default were not to use the auxiliary in the indicative mood, then neither clause would use it, i.e., "wee **came** where wee **took in** the Soulders". Yet the

[23] The first two examples: "we *doe* assure you" [ADM 106/288/30], "I *doe* wonder" [HCA 1/98/57] could be interpreted as emphatic usage that may have been customary in formal speech. However, the last example "our ketch *did* touch our stearn and *did* us some damage" [ADM 52/2/3] does not appear to be emphatic and neither do the excerpts from the sea shanties that follow these three examples.

conscious variation within the utterance appears to mark the clauses differently. It may be that the preterit and the verb phrase expressed with an auxiliary are marked for sequence or subordination in the sense that "wee **came**" necessarily occurred first and "wee *did take in* the Soulders" occurred after — and because of — the completed first event. Indeed, this type of subordinating or aspectual interpretation of the complementary verb forms appears to be supported by various examples which express a sequence of events, e.g., "he **was** Drunk when *he did consent*" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722] in which the event of being drunk occurs before (and potentially causes) the event of consenting;[24] and "the wind **[…] came** from Dover and **brought** ten tunns of Watter and *did Returne* this day thither againe" [ADM 52/2/2] in which the event of the wind and water coming is completed before they return. The examples given above include verb phrases that are written in the same sequence as they occur, but even when these verb phrases appear in reverse order, the meaning still favors the completive aspect of the preterit verb before the verb with the "do" auxiliary happens, e.g., "And [I] *did heare* that the captain **took** them" [HCA 1/13/97] in which the taking of prisoners occurs before the witness can hear about it; and "before they *did do* it, he **had expressed** himself extremely glad" [HCA 1/99/20] in which the adverb "before" makes it explicit that the expression of emotion occurs before the unspecified event was performed. It appears that in these contexts, regardless of the order of the clauses, the expression of the verb phrase as either a principal verb in preterit form or a verb phrase in past tense with "do support" communicates subordinating and aspectual information that may reinforce the listener's interpretation of the sequence and causation of events.[25]

[24] Past perfect constructions typically indicate the sequence of events in standard usage by marking the verb that occurred first (i.e., "drunk" would be the verb marked by past perfect as it occurred first, creating the phrase "He had been drunk when he consented".) Note that the excerpt "he was Drunk when *he did consent*" marks the second of the two verbs (i.e., "consent") and thus demonstrates contrast to standard usage in sequential marking on the second event rather than the first event.

[25] This complex interpretation of how "do support" functions to mark aspectual and/or subordinating meaning in affirmative clauses in the indicative mood when used in conjunction with preterit forms does not necessarily negate the conclusive statement of the previous paragraph, i.e., that "do support" may have been a universal in all affirmative verb phrases to aid the process of acquisition for language learners. Instead, the use of "do" may change with any individual speaker's fluency with the language; learners might have defaulted to a universal use of "do support" without aspectual or subordinating meaning, and native/fluent speakers might have used the available structure to mark subtle distinctions in meaning between verb phrases.

6.4.3 Modal auxiliaries

While most of this chapter's analysis is based on the indicative or unmarked modality of verb phrases in Ship English,[26] this section is dedicated to auxiliaries used in the marked interrogative and conditional modalities. The interrogative mood is briefly addressed in §6.4.2 regarding the auxiliary "do", given that the standard method of forming interrogative modalities uses "do support", as illustrated by the prosecutor who asked witness Joseph Wood, "*Did* you heare the Pyrates talk of blowing ther shipp up?" [CO 5/1411/37] (marked for emphasis). However, it is important to recognize there were relatively few examples of sailors using the interrogative modality in the documents composing the corpus, and this is not surprising given that witness depositions, logbooks, and personal communications are predominantly informative in purpose and therefore disposed to indicative modality. Yet, limited examples show that "do support" was used in interrogative contexts such as the tag question in the excerpt, "he took part of the drink *did* he not?" [CO 5/1411/57] and samples of indirect speech in which a question was asked, e.g., "ask him where *did* they take this shipp" [CO 5/1411/97]. Sailors' use of "do support" in interrogative modality is further supported by its occurrence in sea shanties, e.g., "When I passed a whole fortnight atween decks with you, / *Did* I ere give a kiss, lad, to one of your crew?" (voice of a female character in a shanty attributed to John Gay 1685–1732, and cited in Hugill 1969: 17). Thus, although not attested to in many examples, the use of "do support" to form questions was evidently one option available to sailors of the early colonial period.

Sailors employed a variety of structures to form questions and were not restricted to the use of the auxiliary "do" in interrogative modality. One variation that did not require the use of the auxiliary "do" was to move the main verb to a fronted position before the subject to create a verb-subject construction. Subject-verb inversion is typical of standard usage in Early Modern English, yet the distinguishing factor of sailors' syntax is that the verbs undergoing movement are not auxiliaries but the principal inflected verb, e.g., "how *came* you to say you shot the shott that killed the master?" [CO 5/1411/43]. In other words, the interrogative construction "how came you" shows movement of the principal inflected verb "to come" before the subject "you" rather than the insertion and movement of an auxiliary verb as in the modern standard variation "how *did* you come". The same structure could potentially occur with any principal verb, e.g., "what *lack* you" [445f.1/31]. Yet, this type of construction notably occurs with the verb

[26] The subjunctive and imperative moods are addressed briefly in §6.3.1.

"have", e.g., "what colours *had* the pyrates" [CO 5/1411/22] and "*had* you any goods on board" [CO 5/1411/37], suggesting that it may have been conditioned by verb choice, potentially because the verb "have" can function as an auxiliary when used as part of a perfective verb phrase, although it is not doing so in these examples.[27] In these examples, the verb "have" is used as a principal verb meaning to own or possess and thus should therefore be subject to the same paradigm as the other principal verbs for which the "do" auxiliary is inserted and moved. However, the occurrence of the verb "have", immaterial of its function, appears to favor movement of the principal verb rather than the insertion and movement of the auxiliary "do". This potential linguistic conditioning caused by the use of the verb "have" is also suggested by how the structure is used in complementary distribution by court officials in Admiralty trails, for instance, the same prosecutor who asks "what number of English prisoners *had* the pyrates shipp" [CO 5/1411/23] and "what office *had* he" [CO 5/1411/29], showing movement of the verb "have", also asks "*Did* you heare him say any thing" [CO 5/1411/29] and "*did* you leap overboard" [CO 5/1411/30] showing insertion and movement of an auxiliary verb when the principal verb was not "have". The movement of the verb "have" (even when it functions as a principal verb) may have been reinforced by systemic leveling given that this syntax results in the same construction that is used with "be" in interrogative modality (even when used as a principal verb), e.g., "*was* you on board the pyrate shipp" [CO 5/1411/28].[28] Thus, one hypothesis that might be tested with further research is that when forming questions, sailors defaulted to the movement of verbs before the subject if they were verbs that can function as auxiliaries, i.e., "do", "have", or "be", regardless of whether they were used as auxiliaries or as principal verbs.

The standard construction of the conditional mood is common in Ship English but permits verbal omission in ways that are not accepted in standard usage. Ship English incorporates verb phrases marked for modality in conditional sentences that express an event whose realization is dependent on another factor, just like standard usage, e.g., "If he did see any one that offered any hurt or violence to Clarke he would make him suffer" [HCA 1/9/51] and "Terrors of Death (which they said they were sure would be their Position should they refuse)" [HCA 1/99/8]. Most examples of conditional mood occur in the context of a sim-

[27] The fronted verb "have" still occurs in a limited set of phrases such as "Have you no shame/decency/compassion?" which appear to signal a dramatic challenge or critique of a person's actions.

[28] This question does not derive from a sailor but a court prosecutor who addresses it multiple times to different witnesses in the trial of John Houghling, Corneluis Franc and Francois Delaune (Virginia, 13–17th May 1700).

ple modal auxiliary (italicized) and a base verb (bold), e.g., "they *would* **pistoll** him" [HCA 1/101/406], "lest the prisoners *should* **force** him away" [HCA 1/99 Williamsburg, Aug 14 1729], and "he *may* **be** att Liberty" [HCA 1/14/28]. Although some examples suggest that either the modal auxiliary or the main verb could be omitted in contexts where meaning was apparent, e.g., "in case of resistance he [*would*] **compell** him by force so to doe" [CO 5/1411/663], "he **had** [*would* **have**] done it if there had been Powder enough" [HCA 1/99/157], "whether he *would* [**go**] to sea" [CO 5/1411/639], and "The Governor bidding them […] they *would* [**go**] away from thence" [HCA 1/9/18]. Interestingly, various examples of omitted main verbs in conditional structures suggest movement, such as the omission, assumed to be the verb "to go" in the previous examples. The following examples are also assumed to omit verbs synonymous with travel that could also be expressed using the verb "to go" (emphasized in bold), e.g., "you *must* [**head/go**] away 50 Leagues & then you are clear of the sands" [HCA 1/99/22], "Declared that he *would* [**sail/go**] for the North of Cuba" [HCA 1/9/6], and "most of them *would* [**disembark/go**] about noon" [ADM 52/1/7]. In sum, most verb phrases with conditional modality are constructions comparable to standard usage with a single auxiliary and a single main verb, yet either constituent could be omitted, particularly if the main verb expressed movement or travel in a manner synonymous with the verb "to go".

There is little evidence in the corpus to indicate that sailors used expanded modal constructions with either perfect or progressive aspect. Most conditional structures were simple with one modal auxiliary (italicized) and a base verb (in bold), e.g., "we *could* **doe** little good of it" [ADM 52/1/8] and "he *might* **prosecute** him" [HCA 1/52/46]. Rare examples of verb phrases with more than one verbal component after the modal auxiliary include "two or three Passengers…*might* **be heard** to justifie his being forced" [HCA 1/99/85], and "the Purser said he *must **needs*** **goe** a shore himsefle" [ADM 52/1/8]. Yet neither of these examples suggest an expanded verb phrase; the first example, "might be heard", is explained by its passive status and the second, "must needs goe", is explained by the idiomatic use of the expression "must needs" (surviving today in the form of "needs must") with the word "needs" appearing to form part of the modal auxiliary stem. None of the documentary evidence in the corpus indicates that sailors used expanded modal constructions such as perfect conditionals ("I should have gone") progressive conditionals ("I should be going"), or perfect-progressive conditionals ("I should have been going"). However, certain examples of conditional verbal phrases indicate an underlying assumption of aspectual meaning that would suppose a perfect conditional structure, e.g., "any Irregularities he *might* **commit**, was the Drink

that he was a forced man" [HCA 1/99/40]. This example refers to a completed period when the accused was on board an alleged pirate vessel and he wishes to express repentance for any "irregularities" (i.e., crimes) he might have committed in a way that does not incriminate him. However, the perfect conditional "might have committed" is not used, instead the conditional phrase used is "might commit" which suggests that he is talking about potential future events rather than events that are completed. Another example of conditional modality expressed as a simple construction (i.e., auxiliary modal + main verb) yet with completed aspectual meaning in the context of its utterance, is "Harry Gatsby believes he *might* **be forced** at first but since had done as others" [HCA 1/99/93]. This example marks completive aspect with the adverbs "at first" and "since" but does not express the conditional verbal phrase with perfect aspect "might have been forced", instead the construction "might be forced" suggests that the event is extant as opposed to its assumed completive meaning. Other examples show that sailors attempted to express conditional modality and completive aspect in other ways (italicized), e.g., "threatened him in So much that he *had like to have incurid* [would have likely incurred] Some severe punishement about it" [HCA 1/99/93]. The fact that sailors used alternative methods to mark completive conditional modality may suggest that they avoided multiple auxiliaries in verb phrases or may suggest more specifically that the perfect auxiliary "have" was not permitted in coordination with conditional auxiliaries. As a result, most verb phrases with conditional modality are basic constructions with a single auxiliary and a single main verb despite evidence that attests to intended aspectual meaning.

Negation in conditional modality predominantly aligns with the general trends discussed in §6.1, and specifically the section dealing with negation, §6.1.3. The most common negative marker was the word "not" inserted after the conditional auxiliary verb, e.g., "our Ship but *could not* gett her keel out" [ADM 52/1/8], "the captain *would not* wrong me" [CO 5/1411/638], and "what the event is I *cannot* tell" [ADM 52/1/8]. Other negative markers include negation with "no", that was typically placed in a noun phrase constituent or an adverbial phrase (in bold for emphasis) e.g., "I *could* get him **no way** to adhere to me" [445f.1/36], "we *culd* see her **no longer**" [DDB6 8/4], "But *could* get **no more**" [ADM 51/3954], "the Pyrates *would* accept of **no Foreigners**" [HCA 1/99/20], and "[I] *could* see **no sign** of the boat" [HCA 1/99 Bahama Islands 1722]. Less frequent markers of conditional negation include "never" used pre-verbally, e.g., "he **never** *wou'd* go even in his Turn" [HCA 1/99/156] and negative concord using the conjunction "nor", e.g., "The Captain said, I *can***not** sell the King's Victuals. I answered, **Nor** I *can***not** do the King's Work". [445f.1/29], "he *would* do him **no hurt** and **nor** the money in

his pocket *should* be touched" [HCA 1/99/8], and "Capt Rigby doe **not nor** *shall* carry off this land any Persons" [HCA 1/9/7]. Overall, negation in verb phrases marked for conditional modality did not always align with standard usage, but is comparable to trends identified for indicative verb phrases.

6.5 Summary

Sailors' preferences for nominalization are evidenced by a tendency to use non-specific verbs which permit the expression of the main event of the sentence in nominal form in the direct object position. Common constructions using "make" suggest an event (expressed nominally as the direct object) that is brought into being or caused to happen, and idiomatic usage of the verb "make" with travel and transit permits prepositional complements. Phrasal verbs show a tendency to be expressed as fixed expressions in the corpus and resist the insertion of an object noun phrase or pronoun between the main verb and the satellite particle. Examples of negation in the corpus demonstrate significant variation, but the most common negative construction is the use of the negative particle "not" after a finite verb regardless of whether it is an auxiliary or base indicative verb without any auxiliary support. The second most common negation marker in the sample is the word "never" which is sometimes used to mark distinct categorical denial over time (as in standard modern usage), but is more commonly contextualized with specific durations of time or to negate indicative past tense situations with no aspectual meaning. Other common negation markers include the particle "no" after a non-finite verb and the conjunction "nor", both of which often compose or join clauses that already have negation. The resultant negative concord is a salient feature of the corpus.

Inflectional variation in verb forms expressed in indicative modality — specifically zero inflection with singular third person subjects — is potentially conditioned by using certain verbs such as "know", by negation and third person pronominal subjects, and/or by observance of the Northern Subject Rule. The use of present tense in past narrative contexts may have reflected sailors' performance culture, but variation in past tense marking appears to be the result of free variation given the range of forms occurring in the same linguistic contexts, in the same documents, and in the same handwriting across a range of registers and modalities. Preterit forms of weak verbs could be either inflected according to the regular "-ed" paradigm or left in an uninflected form, but preterit forms of strong verbs might be expressed as past participles, variant preterit forms, twice-marked irregular stems with regular inflection, or uninflected verbs. Cer-

tain verbs such as "see" and "run" appear to select a preference for zero marking and phrasal verbs with a range of satellite particles appear to permit zero marking in the preterit form of the associated verb. Variant forms of infinitives occur after present and past participles and after auxiliary verbs with conditional modality but are omitted in contexts of transparent meaning, and there is also some evidence to suggest that the base form of a verb and its infinitive may have been interchangeable.

The scope of variation permitted in form and usage of the verb "be" marks it as one of the most divergent features of Ship English. In terms of inflection, "was" occurs as the most frequent past tense form of the verb with all nominal and pronominal subjects in first, second, and third person, although compound third-person noun phrases and plural first-person pronouns were the most salient contexts that selected this non-standard past tense form. Present tense and infinite forms of the verb "be" show similar variation, with "is" occurring as the most frequently used present-tense form alongside free variation with non-finite variants such as the uninflected form and the present participle. In terms of usage, the copula does not commonly occur as the principal verb of a clause, but "be" occurs frequently in the corpus as a requisite of passive structures. Variation in these passive structures supports the general tendency for leveling of the inflectional paradigm but also indicates that "be" omission was acceptable, and this type of omission is mirrored in contexts when it is used as an auxiliary in structures marked for progressive aspect. In these progressive structures, auxiliary "be" commonly selects a stative present participle rather than the standard default of an active present participle. There is also evidence to suggest that the auxiliary "be" could mark perfect aspect in addition to progressive aspect.

The auxiliary verb "have" is prone to inflectional variation such as the non-standard use of "has" with third person plural subjects, and uninflected "have" in conjunction with the past participle "been" regardless of the subject, and this may have been an indicator of a collapsed inflectional paradigm. Examples of verb phrases marked for perfect aspect also permit separation of the auxiliary and its associated verb phrase, and deletion or substitution of the auxiliary constituent. However, the most salient variation in perfect verb phrases is not the auxiliary itself, but the fact that it often selects a preterit verbal particle or a form resulting from a leveled paradigm of the preterit and past participle forms.

The auxiliary "do" is not prone to significant inflectional variation but is used in affirmative statements of the indicative mood in ways that mirror its insertion in negative and interrogative modality. Although this might suggest emphasis, repeated usage in contexts without explicit emphatic meaning suggests that sailors

commonly used the auxiliary as a component of the indicative mood. Although this may attest to systemic leveling that aided language learners, evidence also suggests that fluent speakers used the auxiliary "do" in juxtaposition to preterit verbs to communicate subordinating and aspectual information. In addition to the standard use of "do support" to form questions, Ship English also permits the movement of the main verb to a fronted position before the subject to create a verb-subject construction common to standard usage. However, the verbs undergoing movement in Ship English are not auxiliaries but the principal inflected verb, and this type of construction is specifically notable with principal verbs that can also function as auxiliaries. Most verb phrases with conditional modality are constructions with a single auxiliary and a single verb form, yet either the auxiliary or the principal verb could be omitted, particularly if the principal verb expressed movement or travel in a manner synonymous with the verb "to go". There is little evidence in the corpus to indicate that sailors used expanded modal constructions with either perfect or progressive aspect, and as such, the conditional mood had a limited scope of usage in Ship English. Finally, negation in verb phrases marked for conditional modality showed variation that was not common to standard usage but is comparable to trends identified for indicative verb phrases.

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Ship English

In this thoroughly researched and brilliantly written volume, Sally Delgado opens up vitally important new avenues for the study of the role of marginalized peoples such as sailors and convicts in the emergence of creole languages and other contact varieties of the colonial era. Since the ground-breaking work of Ian Hancock some decades ago, we have been waiting for a coherent and comprehensive work such as this to establish a framework and data base for making the systematic investigation of Ship English a reality. (Nicholas Faraclas, University of Puerto Rico)

The historiography of creole languages has long included frequent references to maritime English with only sketchy indication of just what this kind of speech was like. Sally Delgado has at last provided a comprehensive survey of a dialect that emerged on shipboard among sailors, which became one element in the new Englishes that emerged worldwide amidst the transatlantic slave trade and beyond. Anyone interested in creole languages, as well as those who would like their acquaintance with sailors' speech in the past to get beyond the likes of "Aye, matey", should consult this new volume. (John H. McWhorter, Columbia University)

While classes on "World English" are increasingly being included in university curricula, they provide little on how that language left the shores of Britain in the first place, and what it was like; until now, research in dialect studies on what was spoken on board ship during the early colonial period has been minimal. Dr. Delgado's book is the first full-length study to address this; in addition to examining the distinctive characteristics of Ship English as an occupational register, it proposes that as the earliest contact variety, it provided the input in the formation of the Atlantic English-lexifier creoles. A groundbreaking study, essential reading for dialectologist and creolist alike. (Ian Hancock, The University of Texas)

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