

## ON SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE IN ENGLISH

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In many grammar-books it is asserted that the constructions of the kind "I suggest that I go" which were widely used in earlier English (Karsten 1914, Sonnenschein 1916) are archaic in present-day English and are met mostly in a high-flown style (Curme 1929, 1966, Poutsma 1926, Kruisinga 1931, Whitehall 1956, Cannon 1959, Close 1962, Kaushanskaja, Kovner 1963, Xalemskij 1963, Xaimovich 1967). The other approach on the contrary considers that the above-mentioned constructions are quite frequent in modern English and are found in various styles and genres (Hirtle 1964, Foster 1968, Potter 1968, Zandvoort 1969). It is also worth noting that the constructions in question occur in present-day British English (BE) more frequently than before (Barber 1964, Onions 1971). This fact is accounted for either by fashion or by the influence of American English (AE) (Barber 1964) since the synthetic form has always been considered current for the latter (Evans 1964, Shveicer 1963, 1971). As to the frequency and peculiarities of usage of the given form in Canadian English (CE) and Australian English (Austr. E) there have been no special investigations of the subject till recently. The assumptions concerning the realization of Subjunctive I in BE and AE were based on rather limited material and this led to the fact that the assertions either were not serving as a proof or were to a great extent problematic, the more as they were often based on theoretical premises. Thus, in earlier works the revival of the synthetic form of Subjunctive I in BE and its general use in AE were explained, on one hand, by reapproachment of British and American literary norms, i.e., by an external phenomenon, and, on the other hand, by interlinguistic factors typical of the varieties of the English language, namely, by a great proportion of the analytical form with *would* (Šour 1968, 1969, 1969 a). As the scholars assume, the latter is used more frequently than the construction with *should* which is being ousted by the "would-construction", the two being equivalent. From the fact that the construction "*should* + in-

infinitive" is a synonym of the synthetic form of the Subjunctive (Khlebnikova 1971), it follows that it served as an internal factor for the synthetic Subjunctive to come into wider use, at least in BE. In AE, on the face of it, the frequent use of "would+infinitive" (Ščur 1969) entails the common use of *will* for all persons in the future tense. The latter is characteristic of Austr. E and BE as well (Ščur 1969a, Turner 1966: 125). It is conditioned in its turn by the connection of the future tense with the Subjunctive Mood which is typical of all Germanic languages and of some other Indo-European languages (Ščur 1963, 1964, 1964a, 1971).

It seems that the above statement is valid for the peculiarities of the analytical forms of the future but it cannot justify the correlation of the synonymous forms of Subjunctive. The problem is that in English there exist several subjunctives, the form "would+infinitive" being relevant for the Conditional Mood.

In consequence of this the increase of frequency of the form under consideration depends upon the frequency of the types of sentences where it is used but not upon the decrease of occurrence of the construction with *should* which is mostly found in subordinate clauses depending upon verbs *suggest*, *demand*, *insist*, etc. and is equivalent to the synthetic form. Owing to this fact, the above forms are regarded as not systemic and not belonging to the Subjunctive at all (Khlebnikova 1971). Such an interpretation does not seem to be justified but it requires a deeper discussion some other time.

Thus, from the foregoing it follows that the wide occurrence of *would*, typical of the Conditional Mood, has nothing in common with the peculiarities of usage and frequency value of the synonymous forms of Subjunctive I (synthetic and analytical with *should*) and that the latter is determined by some other cause. Thus, the study of the given forms in different variants of the English language testifies to the fact that the synthetic form is by no means archaic in modern English and that its frequency value is conditioned by the style and genre rather than by the type of the syntactical constructions where it is found since the synonymous form with *should* is met in the same constructions.

It follows that of a paramount importance are interlinguistic factors. Sociolinguistic factors reveal themselves in peculiarities of language norms of different territorial variants of English. It is precisely the liberal (loose) norm of AE which leads to the richer variability, namely of a grammatical form, than BE, that explains a considerable predominance of the synthetic Subjunctive. It is also precisely the liberal (loose) norm of a modern literary English language and the influence of AE in addition to it, that explains the revival or at least the increase of occurrence of the given form in a modern British English.

Specific geographical-historical conditions of Canada and its relations with

Great Britain, on one hand, and the USA, on the other, result in regional variations of Canadian English (CE) — in some areas American patterns prevail, in others British usage is current (Orkin 1970).

As far as Austr. E goes, it resembles BE rather than AE. The data stated below show how Subjunctive I is used in the mentioned varieties of the English language.

#### BRITISH ENGLISH (BE)

The analysis of frequency value and peculiarities of the synonymous forms in British newspapers *Daily Worker* and *Morning Star* for the last ten years assumes the synthetic Subjunctive is in general use in present-day newspapers. It is worth noting that the form is found not only in a highflown or official style but in articles of various genres and styles. The highest rate of occurrence is stated in object clauses after the verbs denoting "demand, insistence", etc. (Latman 1972).

The study of usage of the given forms in fiction testifies that the frequency value of the synthetic form increased in a post-war period at 7,4%. The results are tabled below.

Table 1  
(Latman 1971: 105)

Periods	Synth. forms	Analyt. forms
Pre-war	36,0	64,0
Post-war	43,4	56,6

The more detailed analysis of the occurrence of the forms under investigation in different types of speech — bookish-colloquial and familiar-(everyday) colloquial — gives the following results:

Table 2  
(Latman 1971a: 58 - 61)

Types of speech	Pre-war period		Post-war period	
	synth. f.	analyt. f.	synth. f.	analyt. f.
Bookish-colloquial	1133	609	1262	660
Everyday colloquial	995	578	531	691

In a scientific style the synthetic form is found in all types of sentences but mention should be made that the rate of its occurrence here is not as high as in newspapers and in fiction. The analytical form is twice as frequent as the synthetic one. The table 3 shows how the forms are distributed among different types of sentences.

Table 3  
(Latman, Scur 1968: 85 - 96)

Types of sentences	Synth. f.	Analyt. f.	Modal verbs + Infinitive	Indicative
Object	16	19	6	3
Subject	4	30	—	3
Predicative	—	6	—	—
Attributive	4	5	—	—
Conditional	2	—	—	—
Purpose	—	—	—	—
Simple sent.	2	—	—	—

From the above data it is possible to conclude that it is hardly valid to call the synthetic Subjunctive archaic, the latter competing with the analytical form in certain styles and certain types of sentences. Even a brief survey shows that it is a living form of BE.

#### AMERICAN ENGLISH (AE)

In AE the synthetic form is more current than in BE. As the investigation of the problem shows it is in general use in three functional styles — documentary, journalistic prose and scientific prose. To this it must be added, however, that the form displays a different frequency value in different styles. Table 4 testifies to it.

Table 4  
(Kleinenberg 1971: 27)

Functional styles	Number of synthet. f.	Number of analyt. f.
Journalistic	78%	22%
Scientific	74%	26%
Documental	40%	60%

According to the figures the highest rate of frequency of the form is fixed in newspapers, the lowest — in documental style.

The findings of the similar study in fiction are tabled in table 5 (in %).

Table 5  
(Kleinenberg 1972: 137)

Prose		Drama		Poetry	
Synth. f.	Analyt. f.	Synth. f.	Analyt. f.	Synth. f.	Analyt. f.
52	48	94	6	83	17

Of importance are the results of the study in different types of speech in AE which assume that in written AE the analytical form prevails (71% : 29%) whereas in spoken AE the synthetic form displays a considerable predominance (82% : 18%) (Kleinenberg 1973:18 - 19).

In conclusion it seems reasonable to present a table which shows the changes in usage of the forms in hand in various functional styles of AE since the beginning of the 20th century till the present time.

Table 6  
(Kleinenberg 1972: 150)

Functional styles and genres Periods	Newspaper prose		Scientific prose		Fiction	
	synth. f.	analyt. f.	synth. f.	analyt. f.	synth. f.	analyt. f.
Pre-war	48	52	42	58	46	54
Post-war	70	30	81	19	74	26

#### CANADIAN ENGLISH (CE)

In CE a similar investigation was attempted with the result that the synthetic form is not only current in CE but is more widely used than its morphological variant with *should*. The table 7 testifies to its high rate of frequency in three functional styles of the language — newspapers, scientific prose, and fiction.

Table 7  
(Kasatkina 1973)

Types of styles	Number of pages	Number of forms of Subj. I	Number of synth. forms	Number of anal. forms	Correlation of the forms (in %)
Journalistic	1000	173	130	45	75 : 25
Scientific	3000	128	101	27	78,9 : 21,1
Fiction	2000	107	79	28	73,8 : 26,2
In total	6000	408	310	98	76 : 24

It is worthwhile to point out the uniform use of the synthetic form in different states of Canada, i.e., the use of the form under consideration is not characteristic of regional differences that seem to be more or less marked in lexis and phonology. This assumption is confirmed by the results of the study of the subject in two newspapers of different provinces of Canada of which one shows the prevalence of American patterns, the other — of British ones (see tables 8 and 9; Kasatkina 1973 a.)

Table 8

The use of Subjunctive I in the newspaper *The Montreal star*

Period	Number of forms with Subj. I	Synth. forms	Analyt. forms	Correlation of forms (in %)
1870 - 1879	36	18	18	50 : 50
1880 - 1889	73	47	26	64,4 : 35,6
1890 - 1899	68	54	14	79,4 : 20,6
1900 - 1909	55	30	25	54,5 : 45,5
1910 - 1919	51	45	6	88,2 : 11,8
1950 - 1959	78	50	28	64,1 : 35,9
In total:	361	244	117	67,6 : 32,4

Table 9

The use of Subjunctive I in the newspaper *The Montreal post*

Period	Number of forms with Subj. I	Synth. forms	Analyt. forms	Correlation of forms (in %)
1940 - 1949	125	100	25	80 : 20
1950 - 1959	147	81	66	55,1 : 44,9
1960 - 1969	104	67	37	64,4 : 35,6
In total:	376	248	128	66 : 34

In English-Canadian poetry the synthetic form of Subjunctive I is in general use, it was found in poetry works of various genres during the period of hundred years. The use of the analytical form with *should* becomes more stylistic than grammatical. For the figures see the table 10.

Table 10  
(Kasatkina 1974)

The use of Subjunctive I in English-Canadian poetry of 19-20th centuries

Period	Number of forms with Subj. I	Synth. forms	Analyt. forms	Correlation of forms (in %)
1870 - 1920	183	158	25	85 : 15
1920 - 1945	147	118	29	80 : 20
1950 - 1970	200	158	42	80 : 20
In total:	530	434	96	82 : 18

It may be concluded from the stated above that the synthetic Subjunctive prevails (displays a predominant prevalence) over its grammatical variant — the analytical form with *should* — in all functional styles of Canadian English, the rate of occurrence and the distribution of the form among syntactical constructions being different in different styles.

## AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH (AUSTR. E)

As it may be seen from the data stated below in Austr. E in total the synthetic form prevails over the analytical one. The study of the subject in newspapers of the last 10 years gave the following results:

Table 11  
(Kolovskaja 1971 : 39)The use of Subjunctive I in the newspaper *Tribune*

Period	Number of forms	
	synthetic	analytical
1961	23	12
1962	5	6
1963	9	1
1964	12	12
1965	22	21
1966	18	24
1967	22	15
1968	23	12
1969	19	16
1970	22	16
In total:	175	135
In %:	56,3	43,7

It is remarkable that the rate of frequency of the synthetic form has considerably increased during the last half a century (see table 12).

Table 12  
(Kolovskaja 1973 : 167)The use of Subjunctive I in the newspaper *Australian worker*

Periods	1930 - 1939	1940 - 1949	1950 - 1959	1960 - 1969	1970
Synthetic forms	0,52	0,59	0,55	0,70	0,66
Analytical forms	0,48	0,41	0,45	0,30	0,34

The investigation of the use of Subjunctive I in various styles and genres of Austr. E shows that the proposition of Subjunctive I and the correlation of the forms under consideration varies at different historical periods, the highest proportion characterizing the official-documental style (31%) and journalistic proper (39%), the lowest — the scientific style (3 - 4%) (Kolovskaja 1973: 18). The more or less stable correlation of the given forms has been formed in present-day Austr. E. Thus, the synthetic form is current in newspapers (see table 2), in fiction (prose: 51% - 49%; poetry: 54% - 46%; drama:

85% - 15%) and in some branches of science (mathematics: 54% - 46%, ethnography: 67% - 33%) (Kolovskaja 1973: 19). A dominating role of the analytical form is marked in a documental style, in a journalistic prose proper, in some other branches of science (chemistry, medicine) (Kolovskaja 1973: 19).

The stated above leads to the conclusion that even in brief survey testifies to considerable changes in use of Subjunctive I in Austr. E in the last 30 - 40 years. The synthetic form becomes more current in various styles, even in journalistic prose proper which is characterised by a dominating role of the analytical form.

At the same time in prose the proportion of the synthetic form is decreasing, and in documental style the correlation of forms displays no changes worth noting. Table 13 presents figures showing the stated changes (in %).

Table 13  
(Kolovskaja 1973: 174)

The distribution of the synthetic form of Subjunctive I among various styles at different periods

Periods	Functional styles					
	Fiction (poetry)	Documen- tal	Newspapers and journalistic		Scientific	
			newspapers	journ. prose	ethno- graphy	chemistry
1789 - 1850	81				—	
1850 - 1890	76				46	
1890 - 1899	75				53	
1900 - 1909	75			33	86	
1910 - 1919	75			46	45	
1920 - 1929	65			36	73	
1930 - 1939	65	40	52	47	73	63
1940 - 1949	62	46	52	36	47	58
1950 - 1959	58	53	51	55	41	47
1960 - 1969	50	40	63	50	67	43
1970 - 1972			65			51

The comparison of the results of all surveys mentioned above makes it possible to assume that there is growing a process of the reapproachment of the norms of all territorial variants in question and of the establishment of a uniform English norm.

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