

Charles Sealsfield and Mandative Subjunctive

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In the series of the studies on the mandative constructions in American English, I have traced the types of the mandative construction historically through surveying the best selling books in 1998, 1948, and 1900 and the books published in or around 1850 and 1800. All these surveys have shown that the types of mandative construction change roughly around the year 1900. That is, after 1900, the mandative subjunctive constructions come to be employed more and more frequently and in present American English this subjunctive construction is now the most common and prevalent, as a result of which it has now considered one of the most distinguishing features of American English. It is also shown that the *should*-construction has come to be used less and less after 1900. In other words, the latter construction, which was once referred to as a feature of the British English, was also employed prevalently among American writers in the 1800s.

As is said in the previous two studies, it is not clear why this shift of preference for mandative constructions from *should*-construction to mandative subjunctive construction has occurred around 1900. Was there any restorationism in the literary trend at this time, which led to the revival of older grammatical constructions? There seems no conscious attempt among American writers to go back to older British literary forms and styles, and a cursory survey of several grammar books that appeared around this time also shows there was no such conscious attempt on the side of grammarians to encourage the usage of the mandative subjunctive constructions. Moreover, in general, many grammarians in the 1800s

did not pay much attention to the subjunctive moods. Of the four school grammar books La Verne Lyman calls the most popular in the 1800s, Goold Brown (1856: 212) is the only one who refers to this type of subjunctive, even though very briefly: “A future contingency is best represented by a verb in Subjunctive present NOTE II—verbs of command, desiring, expecting, hoping, intending, permitting, and some others, in all their tenses, refer to actions or events, relatively presenter future.” This is not exactly about the mandative subjunctive only but it shows that he was aware of this usage.

Thus, we need to look elsewhere for its possible causes. In “3.1.2 Revival: where did it start and why?,” Olga Vlasova refers to the suggestion for the causes by Gerd Övergaard (1995: 44-45), according to whom three factors contributed to this shift:

...popular acquaintance with biblical subjunctives, education and social background of American writers and immigration from other European countries. Her data shows that in the beginning of the 20th century less educated writers favored subjunctive more than well-educated ones. The latter, remaining under the influence of British norms, preferred *should*-periphrasis. She also suggests that the choice of the structure depended on the origin of the writer. Those who came from the areas inhabited by German immigrants in the early history of the country seem to prefer the morphological variant. (Vlasova, 2010: 17)

It is true that there arrived immigrants from Europe en masse roughly from 1820 to 1924. After settling in America, they may have influenced on English linguistically. The immigrants of this period are different in the countries of origin from the previous ones. Especially the first wave of immigrants was pioneers and became a part of the backbone of the later American society. They are Irish, Ger-

mans and Scandinavians. Of them, the Germans participated in the society more actively. Their language also has rigid rules regarding the noun clause that follows the word with mandative force. (Sekiguchi, 1941: 169ff) It might be possible that the German immigrants' usage of subjunctive cast some influence on this shift as Övergaard suggests.

Therefore in this study, we will focus on one German-American writer. His name is Charles Sealsfield and he is a mysterious writer. He was born in a small village in Moravia (in present Czech Republic), of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1793 and died in Switzerland in 1864. He "was the renegade monk Karl Anton Postl, who, chafing under the rigid authority of the Catholic Church, broke his vows to the Kreuzherren in Prague and fled to America in 1823." (Davianu 2002: 2) While in America, he must have worked hard at mastering English. He wrote *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika*, which he translated into English as *The Americans As They Are; Described in a Tour Through the Valley of the Mississippi*. Until he died in Switzerland, he "remained secretive and reclusive" (*ibid.*) and even his nationality was not known until his death and is often referred to as "The Great Unknown" (Der Groß Unbekannte). His command of the English language must have been very great, since he was taken to be a British or American, and not Austrian. For example, Theodore Mundt in his *Geschichte der Literatur der Gegenwart* "had dared to place Sealsfield ... above Cooper and Irving as a 'painter of the characteristics of his native land' " (Arndt, 1952: 311) or "The reviewer does not believe that it (= *Austria As It Is*) is the work of an Austrian but 'assuredly one of the most liberal sons of John Bull who has yet dared to write upon the political position of a foreign country'." (Arndt, 1948: 176-177)

It will be, therefore, appropriate to take up this Charles Sealsfield to see whether there is a strong preference for mandative subjunctive in this German-American writer's works and to find support in assuming a possible influence of the language of the German immigrants on the shift of the preference from the

should-construction to mandative subjunctive construction. It is true that there are often found English styles in Sealsfield's writings that do not appear very English, as Donald G. Davinau says, "Certainly, in reading these works, one encounters Germanisms, misspellings, wrong use of prepositions, dangling relative clause and incorrect punctuation, among other mistakes." (2002: 4) Besides these grammatical "mistakes", we will often encounter a very lengthy sentence as follows:

The day had been changeful, like a child just emerging into womanhood, now coquetting behind foggy veils, anon smiling through rainy showers, panting and smirking in sunny rays, undecided and wayward in the feeling of airy and youthful freshness, until wearied with profitless play and half exhausted, it begins, as evening advances, thoughtfully and slowly with swimming eyes to seek its resting place. (*Rambleton*, p. 21 R)

Even with these "mistakes" and non-Englishness or rather because of them, Sealsfield's works are worth being analyzed to see whether we can already see trace of German influence in the mandative constructions.

The materials used for the analysis are four books: *The Americans As They Are; described in a Tour Through the Valley of the Mississippi, Austria As It Is; or Sketches of Continental Courts. By An Eye-Witness, Tokeah; or the White Rose*, and *Rambleton; a Romance of Fashionable Life in New York*. Except for the first book, which was translated from the German original by Sealsfield himself, three others were all written first in English by himself. As in the previous studies, these were all read by the present writer and each instance of mandative constructions was collected and analyzed by him.

The mandative constructions are introduced by main words that have man-

dative force, and they are verbs, adjectives and nouns. The following are such words employed in Charles Sealsfield's works:

advise, beg, command, desire, dictate, direct, forbid, implore, insist,
 move, order, persuade, pray, propose, request, require, resolve, suggest,
 urge, want, wish
 anxious, just, natural
 agreement, law, principle, proclamation, will, wish

With these words, eight types of mandative constructions are construed:

1. A. that + should
 B. Φ + should
2. A. that + subjunctive
 B. Φ + subjunctive
3. A. that + periphrastic
 B. Φ + periphrastic
4. infinitive
5. gerundive

All the instances collected from the materials are grouped into 8 types above, but there are two instances that do not belong to any of the types above. That is to say, the verb form itself does not give any hint as to whether the mood is indicative or subjunctive. They are said to belong to the ambiguous type. For example, "It is high time that I again take you under my protection, else you'll squander your money like an ass, and enjoy as an ass, thistles and briars." (*Rambleton*: 148 L) The verb "take" can be indicative or subjunctive present and the form itself cannot tell which. That is to say, the phrase "it is high time" expects to take a

noun clause whose verb is normally subjunctive mood, whether present or past. The verb form, however, cannot tell which, since it can be indicative or subjunctive present. The other is "... the party for a bridging public liberty was ordered to go out on the left: – those who insisted on the prevention of the present order of things, were to draw off to the right." (*The Americans*: 8) The construction is elliptical. "those ... were to draw off" lacks a word that introduces the noun clause, although "ordered" is inferred to be the semantically expected verb for the clause. That is to say, the verb that commands and the clause that introduces the content of the command are not expressed in the same one sentence. Thus, this one is also considered to be of an ambiguous type. These two are naturally excluded from the analysis.

Since I went over only four books to collect mandative constructions, the instances of mandative subjunctive constructions found this time is not great in number. There are only 92 instances. Of these, the infinitive construction is the most preferred type and has 65 instances. As has been shown in my studies, the predominance of the infinitive construction is constant in all the periods of 1800, 1850, 1900, 1948, and 1998. Sealsfield is not an exception and his usage goes together with this same preference of the infinitive construction, but what is to be noted is the very high percentage of his usage of infinitive construction. It is 70.7%. This is much higher than any other period.

After the infinitive comes the *should*-construction. 2A has twelve instances and 2B has two, and this *should*-construction has 14 in total and is 15.2% of all the mandative constructions. The subjunctive construction comes in the third place. 2A has 6 instances and there is no instance for 2B. The subjunctive construction is only 6.5%, being less than half of the *should*-construction. The preference of *should*-construction to subjunctive construction matches with the result of the 1800 and 1850. After the subjunctive construction comes the periphrastic construction and gerundive, with three instances and two respectively. This can be

illustrated as follows:

Table 1: Types and Number of Instances

	Americans	Austria	Tokeah	Rambleton	total
1 A that + should	2	0	2	8	12 (13%)
B Φ + should	0	0	2	0	2 (2.2%)
2 A that + subjunctive	1	0	1	4	6 (6.5%)
B Φ + subjunctive	0	0	0	0	0
3 A that + periphrastic	1	0	3	1	5 (5.4%)
B Φ + periphrastic	0	0	0	0	0
4 infinitive	7	10	17	31	65 (70.7%)
5 gerundive	0	0	2	0	2 (2.2%)
total					92 (100%)

The Table 1 shows Sealsfield's great preference for the non-clause construction to the clause construction. Infinitive and gerundive constructions add up to 67 instances, while clause constructions mere 25 instances. That is to say, about 73% of the mandative constructions Sealsfield uses is of non-clause structure. It is true that the result of the studies on mandative constructions in 1800, 1850, 1900, 1948, and 1998 also show the writers' preference for non-clause constructions, especially the infinitives, but Sealsfield's employment of phrase construction, infinitive construction particularly, is unusually high.

As to the voice, Sealsfield's usage follows the average usage of the time. Out of 92 instances, 76 are in active voice and 16 in passive voice. The low frequency of the passive voice is understandable, since the mandative construction is basically to express command and is ultimately related to the imperative construction. Since the imperative construction is often to order a person to do an action, the active voice is naturally employed. So, the following would appear formal and not

very colloquial:

“Prudence, indeed, will dictate, “ she continued, “that government long established, should not be changed for lighter or transient causes.”

(*Rambleton* : 96 R)

“... yet, our family connexions required that Rose should be found acceptable to our relations.”

(*Tokeah*, vol. 2 :198)

“The law says, and them papers, that every stranger, traveling within this State, is to be detained, unless he can legitimate himself duly with a passport, ...”

(*Ibid.*: 25-26)

The crestfallen monarch read the petition, ordered his son to be placed under arrest, ...

(*Austria*: 34)

Table 2: Active Voice and Passive Voice

	Active	Passive	total
1. A. that + should	9	3	12
B. Φ + should	2	0	2
2. A. that + subjunctive	0	6	6
B. Φ + subjunctive	0	0	0
3. A. that + periphrastic	4	1	5
B. Φ + periphrastic	0	0	0
4. infinitive	59	6	65
5. gerundive	2	0	2
	76	16	92

In the similar vein, the affirmative predominates over the negative. The former has 82 instances and this predominance of affirmative construction is also

on par with the frequency of other periods. The adverbs used for negation are not many in number. They are only two: “not” and “never”. This is the same with other periods. However, there is one instance of negative construction that does not employ a negative adverb. The verb “forbid” has in itself a negative command and as a result what is commanded does not contain in itself a negative structure as:

“The great Spirit forbids,” said they, “we should kill those who came in peace among us, ...”
(*Tokeah*, vol. 2: 172)

This is also counted as a negative construction.

As to the clause constructions, the presence or absence of the connective *that* needs to be commented here, too. Of the 25 instances of clause constructions, only two are the construction without the connective *that*, while the rest, i.e., 23, are with the connective. The low occurrence of the construction without *that* connective, that is to say the 1B, 2B and 3B types of constructions, is known and was pointed out for 1800, 1850, and 1900 in the previous studies, and it can be said that Sealsfield’s usage is of the same tendency. As suggested in the previous studies, the presence of the connective *that* seems an almost absolute must rule in this period. So, the following must be considered very rare cases:

“... and I reckon, it is but just, he should have a little of it himself.”
(*Tokeah*, vol.2: 34)

“The Great Spirit forbids,” said they, “we should kill those who came in peace among us.”
(*Ibid.*)

From the analysis of the Sealsfield’s works above, we can see that his usage of mandative constructions does not show a very strong preference of subjunc-

tive mood as we expected. The German language has rigid rules as to mandative subjunctive constructions, and there was a great influx of German immigrants in the latter half of the 1800s. They settled in the new country and formed a part of the backbone of America. They were also active in the field of publishing, though in the German language mostly. The shift of the mandative construction from the *should*-construction to the mandative subjunctive construction coincides with the influx of the German immigrants and their rise in the society. Thus, it was expected that an analysis of German writer's works would show the preference of the subjunctive construction. However, this did not turn out to be the case. Sealsfield employs the *should*-construction more than twice as many as the subjunctive construction. This goes together with the usage of the American English of the mid-1800s. A reason that the frequency of the occurrence of the subjunctive construction is not as high as expected may be sought in that Sealsfield attempted to learn and master English in America to have a writing career there. The English he learned and used in his books must be the English currently used by ordinary people in America, especially those in the South and West, and thus it reflects the usage of American English of the time.

Though the study of Sealsfield's mandative subjunctive constructions did not show any strong preference of the subjunctive construction, it does not mean that the shift of preference from the *should*-construction to the subjunctive construction was not influenced by the German immigrants. If we use more materials and more different writers of the German descent, we may have a better picture of the relationship between the shift from the *should*-construction to the subjunctive construction and the German language of the writers of the German descent.

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論文要旨

チャールズ シールズフィールドにおける命令 の仮定法

三間 晶生

およそ 1900 年を境にして、アメリカ英語では義務の表現構文の名詞節において、should から仮定法現在への移行が見られる。この変化を引き起こした誘因と考えられるものとして、アメリカ社会の構成を変化させるに至る 1800 年代に大挙して到来したアイルランド、スカンジナビアそしてドイツからの移民の言語がある。ここでは、義務の表現構文に同じように仮定法（接続法）を使用するドイツ語に注目した。なかでも、この当時にオーストリアから密かにアメリカに入国し、英語を学習して英語で作品を発表したチャールズ・シールズフィールドという作家を取り上げた。彼の作品中に見られる義務の表現構文に、should が主として使われている時代にすでに仮定法がより高い頻度で使われていないか、つまり作者の母国語ドイツ語の影響がそこに見られないかを調査してみた。