

The Manufactured Homespun Style of John Bunyan's Prose¹

Early commentators characterized Bunyan's language as *homespun*, *natural*, *unpolluted*, *simple*, *plain* and *direct*.² Although modern critics have found Bunyan to be a sophisticated manipulator of rhetoric, metaphor and allegory,³ early appraisals of other aspects of his written style remain largely unchallenged.⁴ Later readers have, however, celebrated Bunyan's linguistic authenticity and explained his preference for plain speech as an expression of his religious convictions.⁵ This paper argues that, for all his apparent plainness of style, Bunyan made skilful use of the grammatical and syntactical variation inherent in the English of his contemporaries according to the different genres in which he was writing. It also argues that Bunyan's written style developed through the course of his career.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, the grammatical and syntactic flexibility of early Modern English (eMnE) was beginning to give way to the linguistic prescriptivism that was to dominate discussions of language from the eighteenth century onwards. However, English still retained a great deal of variability in word order and grammar in this period. For example, Bunyan uses both *have* written in full, and also the reduced form *a*; both *my hand* and *mine hand*; both *he comes* and *he cometh*. The distribution of variant forms like these allows us to quantify changes in Bunyan's language and to chart these changes in order to determine whether they are chronological, stylistic, or a secondary result of other variations or developments.

The analyses of Bunyan's language that follow are based on the earliest available editions of *The Life and Death of Mr Badman* (Mr B), *The Holy War* (HW), *Grace Abounding* (GA) and the First and Second Parts of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (PP1 and PP2).⁶ The introductory verses to PP1 and PP2 have been set aside to ensure comparability of form, though the short verses integrated into the narrative were

included in both parts. Text files were downloaded from *Project Gutenberg* and *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) and corrected against EEBO document images.⁷ Alan Reed's *Simple Concordance Program* 4.0.7 facilitated the analysis,⁸ but it is based upon examination of individual contexts rather than mechanical counts.

An earlier analysis has found marked variation between the first and second parts of *The Pilgrim's Progress* with respect to a number of grammatical and syntactical features.⁹ This paper explores some of these variations in light of their occurrence in three of Bunyan's other major prose works, ranging from the spiritual autobiography *Grace Abounding* and the moral dialogue of *Mr Badman* to the allegorical *The Holy War*, in which stately proclamations and diplomatic exchanges are at odds with the homely conversations of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The publication of these five works spans an eighteen-year period (1666 to 1684). As readers of this journal will know, in 1666 Bunyan was an obscure Bedfordshire preacher from a poor family, with a history of imprisonment for his obstinate nonconformity. However, not long after the publication of the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, 'the threat of imprisonment abated when James embraced a policy of toleration',¹⁰ and during the last years of his life, Bunyan drew large crowds as a preacher. The eleven editions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* that appeared during his lifetime pay testament to the contemporary popularity of his writing. It would be surprising if these changing life experiences were not reflected in Bunyan's written language.

It is necessary, when considering potential changes in usage, to take into account linguistic factors that condition the distribution of possible variant forms. An apparent chronological or stylistic trend may be an accidental by-product of other factors. An example of this is found in the construction of Bunyan's (plu)perfect tenses. Old English (OE) used *have* for transitive verbs, but tended to employ *be* for intransitive verbs. In contrast, Present Day English (PDE) generally forms all (plu)perfect tenses using *have*, as shown below. The transition between these two systems took place over several centuries, with *be* still used alongside *have* for verbs of motion into the nineteenth century with much greater frequency than today.¹¹

	GA		PP1		Mr B		HW		PP2		total
have + walk	n/a		n/a		n/a		1	100%	n/a		1
have + speak	2	100%	4	100%	5	100%	1	100%	5	100%	17
have + see	23	100%	9	100%	6	100%	16	100%	22	100%	76
have + give	5	100%	9	100%	18	100%	24	100%	11	100%	67
have + eat	1	100%	1	100%	n/a		n/a		2	100%	4
be + do	1	3%	n/a		n/a		n/a		n/a		1
have + do	29	97%	23	100%	45	100%	52	100%	25	100%	174
be + run	n/a		n/a		2	40%	n/a		n/a		2
have + run	n/a		3	100%	3	60%	n/a		2	100%	8
be + enter	n/a		n/a		1	50%	n/a		2	50%	3
have + enter	n/a		n/a		1	50%	2	100%	2	50%	5
be + go	9	43%	11	34%	31	40%	22	49%	15	38%	88
have + go	12	57%	21	66%	46	60%	23	51%	25	63%	127
be + come	5	45%	22	49%	17	46%	68	49%	65	47%	177
have + come	6	55%	23	51%	20	54%	70	51%	73	53%	192
total	93		126		195		279		249		942

Table 1: (Plu)perfects formed with *be* and *have* (rows are omitted for constructions that do not occur)

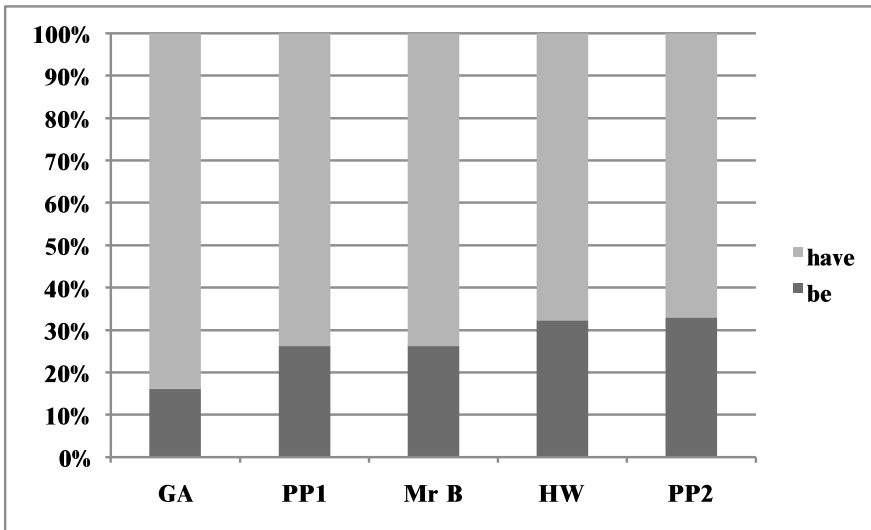


Figure 1: (Plu)perfects formed with *be* and *have*

	transitives	intransitives	verbs of motion
OE:	<i>he hæfde gesewen him</i>	<i>he wæs gespecen</i>	<i>he wæs gegan</i>
19th century:	<i>he had seen him</i>	<i>he had spoken</i>	<i>he was/had gone</i>
PDE:	<i>he had seen him</i>	<i>he had spoken</i>	<i>he had/was gone</i>

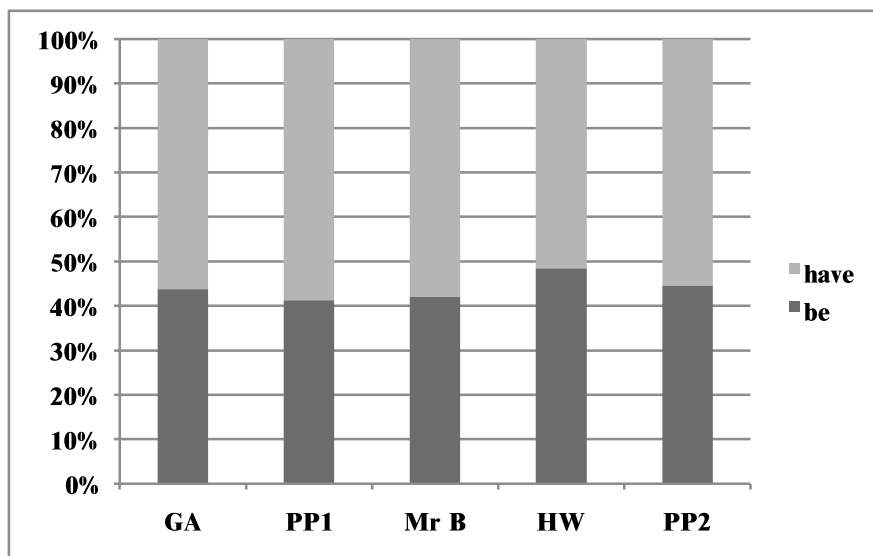


Figure 2: (Plu)perfects formed with *be* and *have* for selected verbs of motion (see Table 1)

Bunyan uses both *be* and *have* in forming (plu)perfects, with an increasing tendency to use *be* through time, as shown in Figure 1, which is based on a sample of frequently found verbs (see Table 1). For example:

I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I tempted the Devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart, that I cannot repent. (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, p. 29) [EEBO image 20]

However, if we isolate verbs of motion (see Figure 2), this apparent trend disappears. There are no significant differences between the five texts' use of *be* and *have* in forming (plu)perfects for verbs of motion, and only one example of a *be* (plu)perfect for any other type of verb, which means that this apparent chronological trend is actually a predictable side-effect of Bunyan's greater use of verbs of motion in the depictions of journeys and battles in his later allegorical works. Statistical data can thus be misleading without sufficient reference to diachronic variation or literary context.

Bunyan's written style did develop through time, however. A clear example of chronological change is to be found in Bunyan's use of *-s* and *-eth* inflections for the third person singular, where PDE always uses *he comes*. For example:

The Prophet *Jeremiah* thus describes it, *A Wilderness, a Land of desarts, and of Pits, a Land of drought, and of the shadow of death, a Land that no Man (but a Christian) passeth through, and where no man dwelt.* (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, p. 75) [EEBO image 43]

In the example above, the *-eth* inflection is not found in the King James Bible ('a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt' (Jeremiah 2:6)), but its use may function as a signal for listeners, complementing the marginal note and italics for readers, that the message is Biblical.¹² However, Bunyan also uses *-eth* inflections in passages that do not quote from or allude to the Bible. For example, Christian visits the Armoury in preparation for the continuation of his pilgrimage:

He being therefore thus accoutred, walketh out with his friends to the Gate (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, pp. 64–5) [EEBO image 38]

Many of the *-eth* inflections were already archaic for Bunyan's contemporaries, though they survive in serious religious discourse to the present day, as well as in jocular representations of religious discourse. In texts from the seventeenth century, an *-eth* inflection might have represented or been realised by either pronunciation,¹³ though the *-s* inflection was undoubtedly more common in speech.¹⁴

Based on *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) quotation searches from this period, excluding Bunyan's own texts, it is clear that the forms *hath*, *doth* and *saith* continued in use at higher frequencies than the *-eth* forms of most other verbs (see Table 2). Table 3 and Figure 4 indicate that Bunyan's use of the older forms of these high frequency verbs decreased dramatically across the course of his writing career. This was not in keeping with the contemporary publications cited in the *OED*, where the decline is much more gradual (see Figure 3). The *hath*, *doth* and *saith* variants occur significantly more frequently in *Grace Abounding*, the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and in *Mr Badman* than in the

	1665-1669		1670-1674		1675-1679		1680-1684		total	
	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s
talk	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	12
have	336	164	335	172	375	261	251	212	1760	990
walk	0	19	0	16	1	10	0	8	1	75
say	11	24	12	17	30	14	10	27	86	98
give	2	38	1	41	2	40	2	35	16	196
do	159	83	107	77	214	104	100	111	789	517
come	1	72	2	60	5	57	6	68	18	314
go	2	36	1	26	3	31	4	30	17	147
see	0	3	1	7	2	11	1	14	6	46
make	6	99	3	99	9	135	10	110	34	594
think	1	17	0	20	0	14	2	18	4	91
know	3	15	1	14	3	35	3	17	12	97
tell	0	21	0	9	0	14	0	16	1	74
take	3	21	3	32	6	31	6	42	20	153
hear	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	13
begin	2	26	0	16	3	18	1	18	9	97
total	526	644	466	610	653	778	396	730	2775	3514

Table 2: -s and -eth inflections for a selection of high-frequency verbs in *OED* quotations (excluding those from Bunyan) [30/5/14]

contemporary texts cited in the *OED* ($p=0.01$). Bunyan's declining use of these variants brings him into a temporary equilibrium with contemporary usage in *The Holy War*, but the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* uses the -eth variants significantly less frequently than the contemporary texts cited in the *OED* ($p=0.01$). Bunyan is clearly archaic in his use of -eth inflections in the earlier works analysed here.¹⁵ Having been 'empowered to write because through Foxe and through the English Bible he discovered a history which belonged to him, in which the destinies of working men and women were inseparable from the language which they used: the vernacular of the translated Bible',¹⁶ Bunyan progressively found his own voice as a writer.¹⁷ Through the course of his writing career, in this respect at least, he moved towards a closer representation of the spoken English of contemporary working men and women than is found in works from the same period cited in the *OED*.

For the other high frequency verbs represented in Tables 2 and 3, the -eth variants were considerably less frequent than for *hath*, *doth* and

	GA		PP1		Mr B		HW		PP2		total	
	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s	eth	s
talk	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	2
have	55	0	63	19	96	68	70	68	23	136	307	291
walk	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	2	2	5	5
say	0	0	14	3	41	33	4	3	8	2	67	41
give	0	0	1	4	5	5	2	2	3	6	11	17
do	18	1	27	3	66	19	29	15	39	5	179	43
come	2	8	7	11	3	23	2	12	0	16	14	70
go	1	0	2	3	4	19	0	10	4	5	11	37
see	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	3	1	2	1	13
make	1	0	3	6	2	24	1	6	2	8	9	44
think	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	4	0	4	3	10
know	1	6	1	12	1	17	1	12	0	10	4	57
tell	0	1	0	6	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	10
take	0	1	1	0	3	6	1	6	2	5	7	18
hear	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
begin	0	2	0	1	0	7	1	2	0	5	1	17
total	78	19	126	71	223	236	111	145	85	206	623	677

Table 3: *-s* and *-eth* inflections for a selection of high-frequency verbs in Bunyan's works

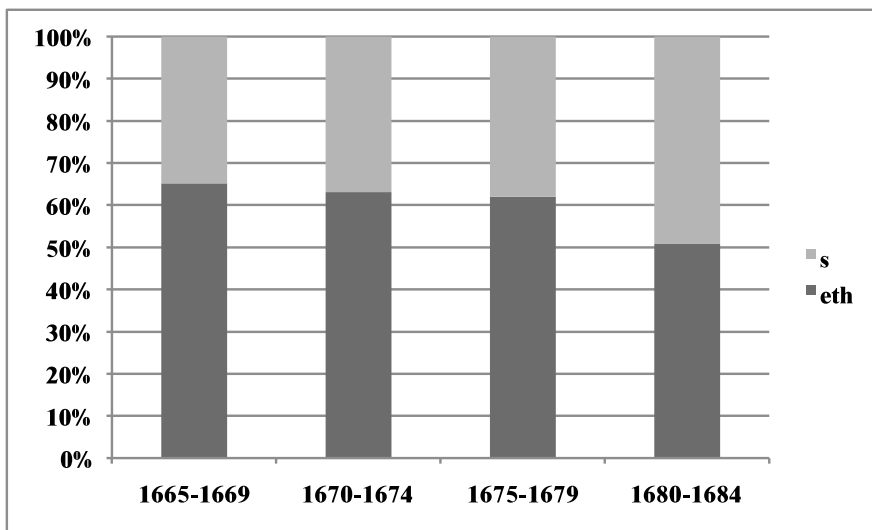


Figure 3: *-s* and *-eth* inflections for the verbs *have*, *do* and *say* in OED quotations (excluding those from Bunyan), based on Table 2 [30/5/14]

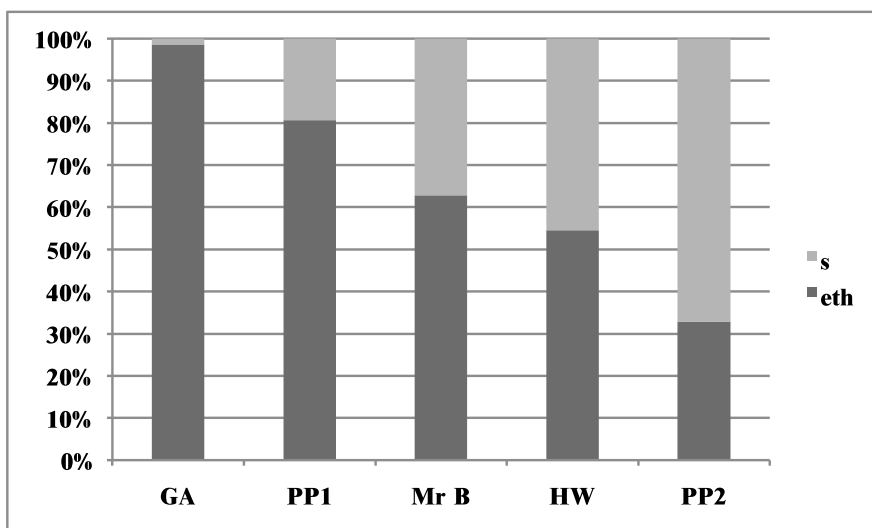


Figure 4: -s and -eth inflections for the verbs *have*, *do* and *say* in Bunyan's works, based on Table 3

saith. However, Figures 5 and 6 show that there is not the same neat decline in -eth forms for these verbs, either in Bunyan's work or in the contemporary works cited in the *OED*. This may be, in part, because of the smaller sample size: 3206 3rd person singular forms of *have*, *do* and *say* in *OED* citations as opposed to 1597 for the other verbs; 928 forms for *have*, *do* and *say* from Bunyan, as opposed to 372 for the other verbs. The chronological fluctuations may, therefore, be a by-product of this smaller sample size, which may explain why the distribution of -eth and -s forms in *Mr Badman* and *The Holy War* is statistically equivalent to the distribution in the contemporary texts cited in the *OED*. However, -eth forms occur with significantly higher frequency in *Grace Abounding* and in both parts of *The Pilgrim's Progress* than in contemporary texts cited in the *OED* ($p=0.01$). There is no neat chronological decline in -eth forms for these verbs in Bunyan's work or in contemporary citations. In Bunyan's work we could attribute the variation to generic differences; the increase in -eth forms in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* may represent an incomplete attempt to recreate this stylistic feature of the first part, suggesting that, despite

Sharrock's assertion to the contrary, Bunyan was fully aware of 'the powerfully archaizing tendency in *The Pilgrim's Progress*'.¹⁸

It should be acknowledged that decisions about this and other archaic variants in Bunyan's work might have been taken by the printer

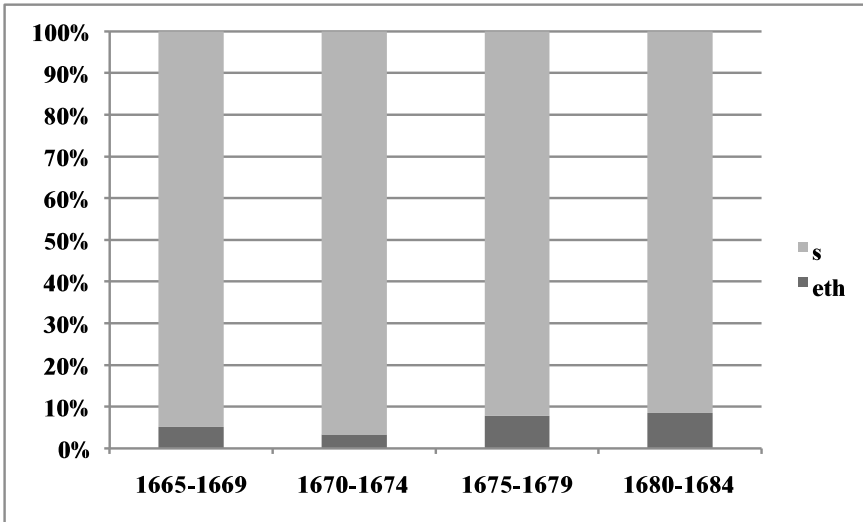


Figure 5: -s and -eth inflections for other high-frequency verbs in OED quotations (excluding those from Bunyan), based on Table 2 [30/5/14]

or publisher rather than by Bunyan himself.¹⁹ If this were the case, we would expect these variants also to be unstable between editions and between publishers. To explore this possibility, the first 25 verbs with -s and -eth inflections were sampled from the first edition of the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and tracked through nine subsequent editions to 1684 available on EEBO.²⁰ For each of the sampled inflections in the first edition, there are nine realisations in these later editions, as shown in Table 4. 92% of the sampled -eth inflections from the first edition are retained as -eth inflections in all later editions. The 17 examples that change are accounted for by two changes of tense, from *saith* to *said* and *hath* to *had*, each found in eight editions, and by one miscopied <both> for *doth*.

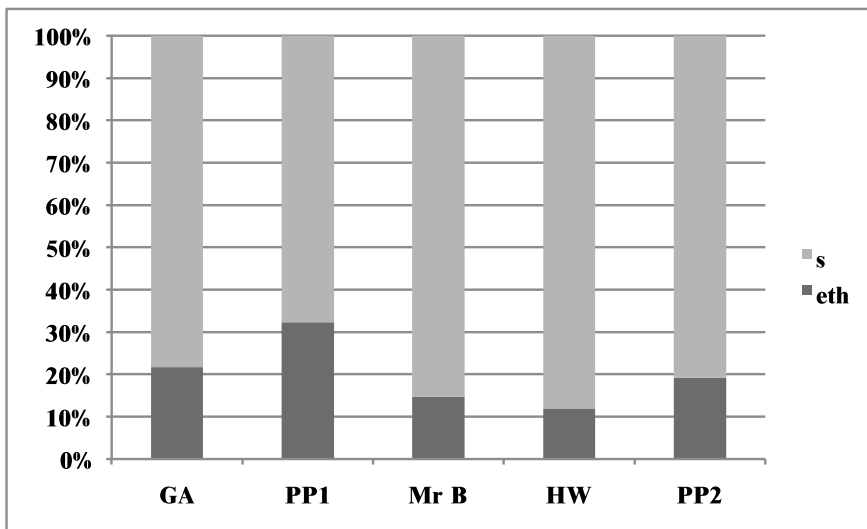


Figure 6: -s and -eth inflections for other high-frequency verbs in Bunyan's works, based on Table 3

There is movement from -s to -eth, however. One example of Christian's repeated question to the Interpreter, '*What means this?*' (p. 19; EEBO image 15), becomes '*What meaneth this?*' in several later editions, perhaps under the influence of a Biblical parallel:

And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another,
What meaneth this? (Acts 2:12)

What this demonstrates is that the inflections of the first edition are remarkably stable. Printers apparently did not feel that there were at liberty to shift between -eth and -s at will, which suggests that it had become more than an orthographic variant: the use of -eth inflections

	Biblical source						No Biblical source						total					
	eth	s	other	eth	s	other	eth	s	other	eth	s	other	eth	s	other	eth	s	other
eth	54	100%	0	0%	0	0%	154	90%	0	0%	17	10%	208	92%	0	0%	17	8%
s	7	10%	65	90%	0	0%	0	0%	153	100%	0	0%	7	3%	218	97%	218	0%

Table 4: Realizations of first edition -eth and -s inflections in later editions of the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

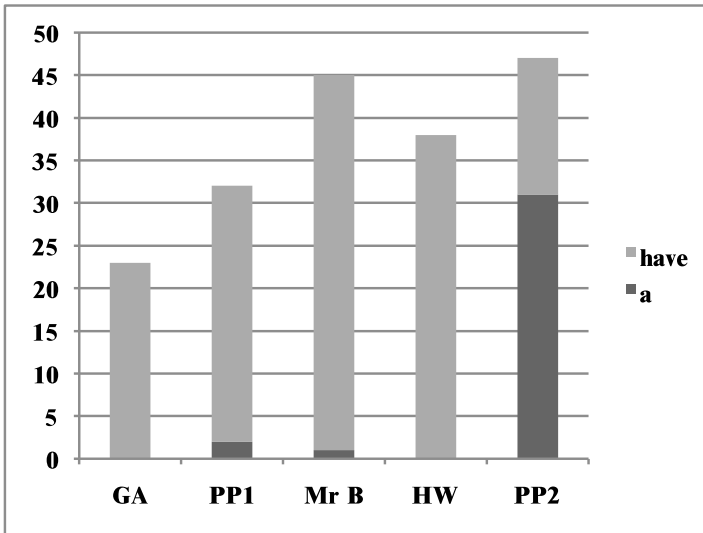


Figure 7: *a* and *have* as a second auxiliary

was a deliberate stylistic choice that a printer would no more tamper with than he would with lexical choices. This implies that the distribution of these variants in the first edition of the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and in the other works discussed here, is closely related to Bunyan's own distribution in manuscript form.

Another respect in which Bunyan moves towards the closer representation of contemporary language is his use of <a> as a contraction of *have* where it is the second auxiliary or occurs in the phrase *would/had like to* [h]a[ve]. For example:

This is the place in which my dear Husband had like to a been smuthered with mud. (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 21) [EEBO image 17]

I thought you would a come in by violent hands. (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 27) [EEBO image 20]

Despite Southey's contention that this contraction is 'almost uniform'²¹ in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *have* is very rarely contracted when it carries tense or meaning.²² For example:

we have been somewhat affrighted (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 33) [EEBO image 23]
 if I should have no heart to strike in with the opportunity (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 14) [EEBO image 14]

For this reason, contexts in which *have* are unlikely to have been contracted are excluded from this analysis.

Have is contracted only occasionally in the four earliest texts considered here (see Figure 7), but in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan employs the contraction in almost two thirds of its possible contexts. Southey argues that this was because the text 'had not been inspected either in manuscript or while passing through the press, by any person capable of correcting it',²³ but offers no evidence beyond the fact that the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* contains fewer examples of this contraction. The implication appears to be that Bunyan became less humble as a result of his success as a writer and lost sight of the limitations of his 'clownish and vulgar education'.²⁴ More objectively, Sharrock notes that contracted *have* was 'scrupulously regularized by the printer in subsequent editions [of the first part] apparently without the author's protest',²⁵ although this perhaps overstates the significance of the change in 1679 from *a* to *have* in the two contexts in which the contraction occurred in the first edition:

I thought I should a been killed there (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, 100) [EEBO image 56]
 would it not a been so to any of us, had we been used as he (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, p. 168) [EEBO image 90]²⁶

Examination of the contexts suggests that Bunyan contracts *have* as a deliberate stylistic choice. Many of the contracted forms are in direct speech, but it is also found in narrative sections, as in the description of Christiana's crossing of the Slough of Despond:

Yet *Christiana* had like to a been in, and that not once nor twice. (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 21) [EEBO image 17]

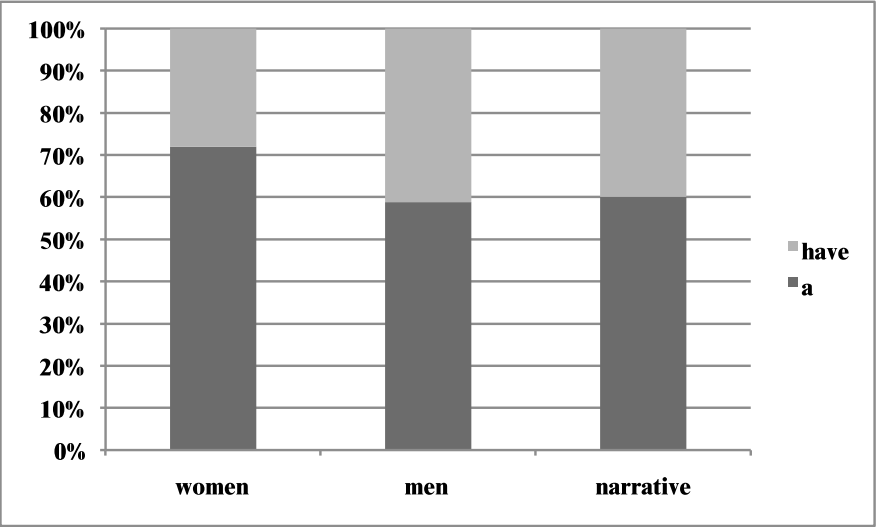


Figure 8: The distribution of *have* contraction in direct speech and narrative in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

A higher proportion of contractions occur in female speech than in male speech or narrative ($p=0.05$),²⁷ which might suggest that *have* contraction indicates lower levels of education or status if it were not that the only male speakers who employ this variant are Mr Great-Heart and Old Honest. *Have* contraction in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is no accident or lapse on Bunyan's part: it is a deliberate stylistic decision by which Bunyan indicates who the plain virtuous folk are. Their relatively low social status and lack of learning are being celebrated rather than treated as an obstacle to piety. To paraphrase Keeble's description of Bunyan's attitude towards his own use of English: '[their] very vulgarity ... [is] a mark of [their] authenticity'.²⁸

Contracted *have* is not the only linguistic variant that appears to signal value judgements in Bunyan's writings. PDE and eMnE use *my* and *mine* in different ways:

	possessive determiner		possessive pronoun
	before vowels	before consonants	before vowels or consonants
eMnE	<i>mine apple</i>	<i>my coat</i>	<i>the apple/coat is mine</i>
PDE	<i>my apple</i>	<i>my coat</i>	<i>the apple/coat is mine</i>

Bunyan’s distribution of *mine*, and also *thine*, is somewhat archaic, in that he sometimes uses these forms as determiners before a vowel. His occasional use of constructions like *mine hand* and *thine heart* may be accounted for by /h/ dropping, which was not stigmatized by Bunyan’s contemporaries. *Mine* and *thine* are never used before consonants other than /h/. There is an increasing use of this archaic variant before vowels until *Mr Badman*, and then a falling off, though the variant remains more frequent than it was in *Grace Abounding* (see Table 5 and Figure 9). Before <h>, the peak in *mine/thine* usage is in *The Holy War*, with a decrease in the second part of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (see Figure 10).

		GA	PP1	Mr B	HW	PP2
before vowels	mine/thine	10	23	24	42	8
	my/thy	52	21	9	26	15
	total	62	44	33	68	23
before <h>	mine/thine	2	3	4	9	3
	my/thy	93	32	35	49	57
	total	95	35	39	58	60

Table 5: Possessive determiners before vowels and <h>

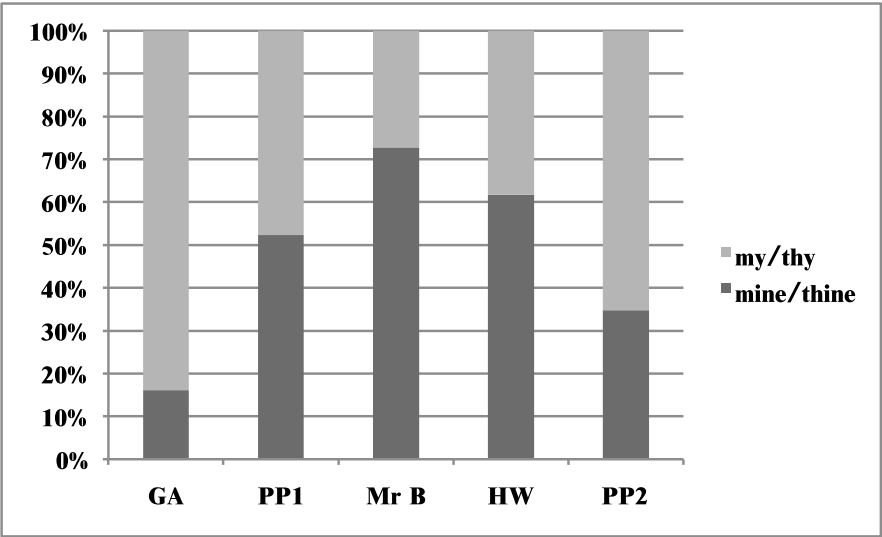


Figure 9: Possessive determiners before vowels

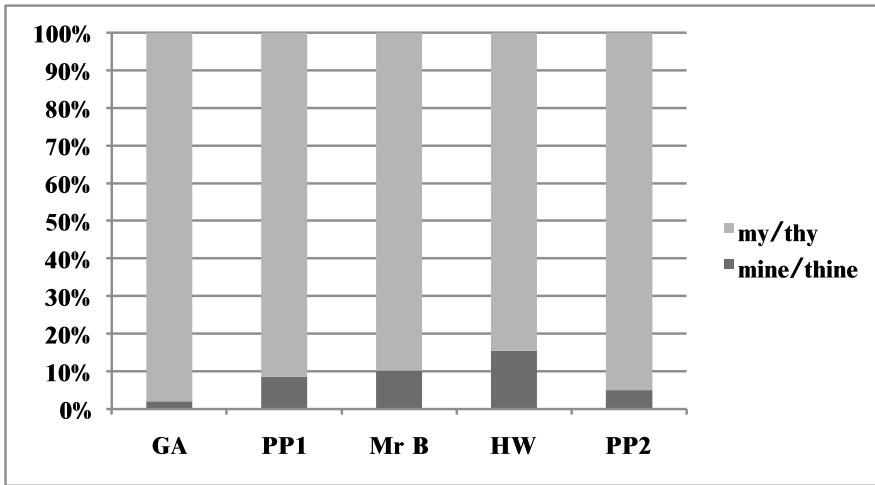


Figure 10: Possessive determiners before <h>

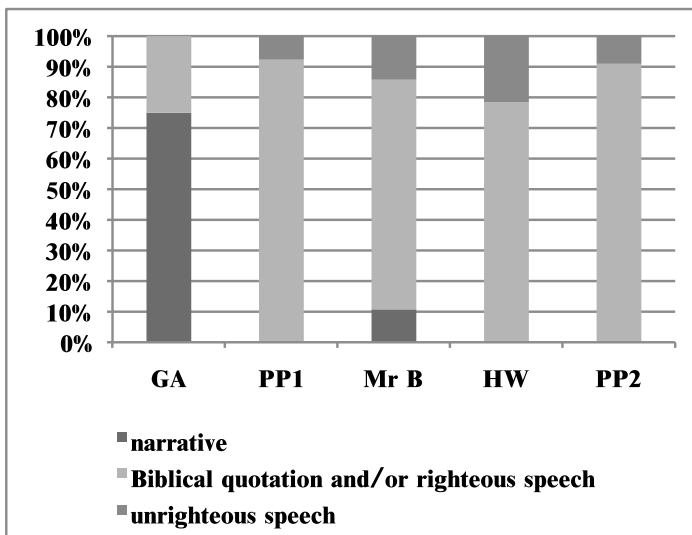


Figure 11: The use of *mine/thine* according to context

However, a closer look at the contexts for the use of *mine* and *thine* as determiners (see Figure 11) suggests that the use of this variant signals the value or truth of a statement. The narrative of *Grace Abounding* uses *mine/thine* as possessive determiners significantly

more often than the narratives of the other four texts, and the other four texts all use them significantly more often in righteous speech and direct quotation from the Bible. Of the other four texts, *Mr Badman* uses significantly fewer *thine* and *mine* determiners in its narrative than *Grace Abounding*, but still significantly more than are found in narrative in the other three texts (all $p=0.01$). This is a function of the narrative structure in each text, with *Grace Abounding* containing considerably less direct speech than the other four texts. *The Holy War* has a longer introduction than the other allegories, with more narrative and descriptive passages between speeches, so the more frequent occurrence of this variant in narrative in *The Holy War* may be a result of the lower proportion of direct speech in the text.

Given that *mine/thine* determiners are redolent of Biblical usage for Bunyan, any use by the unrighteous is particularly worthy of attention. *The Holy War* is more complex than *The Pilgrim's Progress* in the political and theological messages contained in its allegory²⁹ and also in its significantly higher use of *mine* and *thine* in the mouths of morally dubious characters ($p=0.01$). In this case, the Diabolians' use of these variants signifies that they are pretending to virtues they do not have. For example:

Another part or piece, said Diabolus, of mine excellent Armour is, a dumb and prayerless Spirit ... (The Holy War, p. 48) [EEBO image 30]

Unrighteous characters in *Mr Badman* also employ *mine* and *thine* as determiners when they are justifying immoral positions. This use of quasi-Biblical language foregrounds their hypocrisy and the necessity for individuals to exercise constant vigilance in evaluating moral guidance. For example:

yea, he desperately saith in his heart and actions, I will be mine own chooser, and that in mine own way, whatever happens or follows thereupon. (*Mr Badman*, p. 183) [EEBO image 106]

In contrast with his own uncritical use of this Biblical signifier in *Grace Abounding*, Bunyan employs this variant to characterize libertine

moralizers as unrighteous hypocrites in his later, more complex, works.³⁰

Another reflection of generic differences between these texts can be seen in their use of the variants *yea*, *yes* and *aye*. For example:

Chris. *But Sir, was not this it that made my good Christians Burden fall from off his Shoulder, and that made him give three leaps for Joy?*

Great-Heart. Yes ... (The Pilgrim's Progress Part 2, p. 58) [EEBO image 37]

Then said *Prudence*, and *Piety*, If you will be perswaded to stay here awhile, you shall have what the House will afford.

Charity. Ay, and that with a very good will, said Charity. (The Pilgrim's Progress Part 2, p. 76) [EEBO image 46]

They then went in and washed, yea they and the Boys and all ... (*The Pilgrim's Progress Part 2, p. 51) [EEBO image 32]*

As illustrated by these examples, *yea*, *yes* and *aye* are used with three main functions in the text: in answer to a question, in agreement with a previous statement and for emphasis. Many emphatic uses are in agreement with a statement previously made by the same speaker, and this type of rhetorical agreement is grouped with the other emphatic uses here. *OED* citations suggest that *yes* was current and represented normal usage in all three functions, while *aye* was more colloquial and appears to have been more common in answer to a question than in the other two functions, which the *OED* conflates. *Yea* seems to have been archaic in answer to questions and to have fallen into temporary disuse in agreement with previous statements, but it was still current in its emphatic use.³¹

All five texts generally use *yea* for emphasis (see Table 6 and Figure 12). The first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Mr Badman* and *The Holy War* occasionally also use the more colloquial *aye* in this function, but there is no statistical significance in its distribution. *Yea*, *yes* and *aye* are all used in answer to questions and in agreement with a previous speaker, though no example of either is found in *Grace Abounding*. *Aye* is used marginally more than *yes* in agreement with a previous speaker. *Yea* is only occasionally used with this function, but

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	emphatic					answer					agreement				
	GA	PP1	Mr B	HW	PP2	GA	PP1	Mr B	HW	PP2	GA	PP1	Mr B	HW	PP2
yea	36	33	109	112	30	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	0
yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	13	21	28	0	4	6	0	6
aye	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	2	0	8	0	5	5	4	5
total	36	35	112	114	30	0	38	15	23	37	0	9	13	5	11

Table 6: The distribution of *yes*, *yea* and *aye*

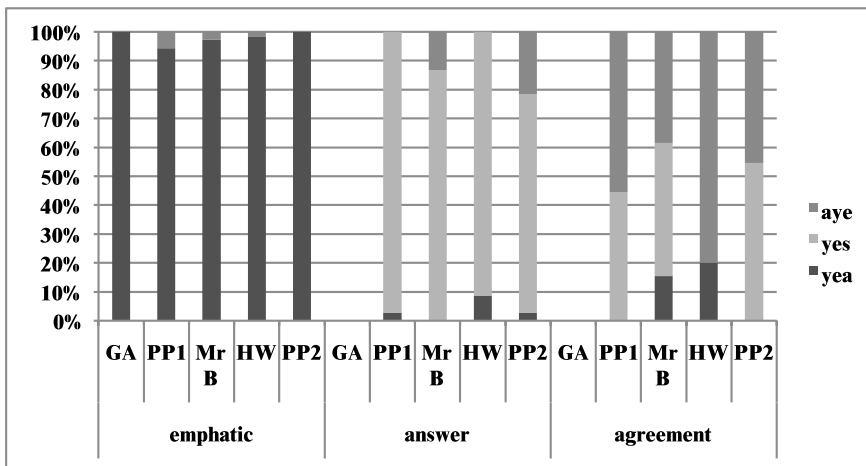


Figure 12: The different functions of *yea*, *yes* and *aye*

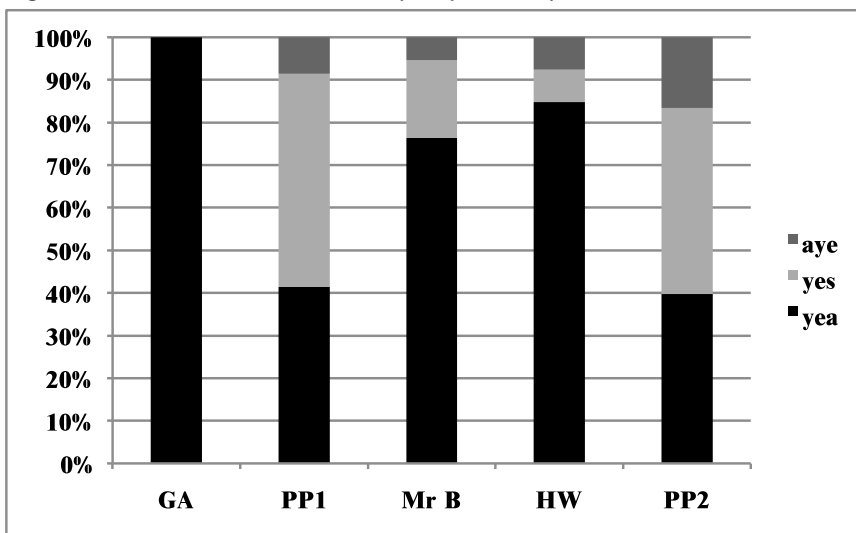


Figure 13: Total use of *yea*, *yes* and *aye*

there is no statistical significance in the distribution of any of the possible forms. The only statistically significant difference in distribution is in the use of *aye* to answer questions. *Yes* is the most frequent affirmative answer to a question, with *yea* the least common. However, the more colloquial *aye* is used significantly more often in this function in the second than in the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* or in *Mr Badman*. With so few examples, *The Holy War* is not significantly different from either group, but the increased use of *aye* for this function and overall (see Figure 13) in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is another indication of Bunyan's closer representation of contemporary colloquial language in this work.

In line with its preference for *-eth* inflections and *mine/thine* possessive determiners, *Grace Abounding* is also more Biblical in its language than the later texts with regard to its use of *do*, which has a wider variety of functions for Bunyan than in PDE. The use of *do* in questions and negatives represents a relatively small proportion of examples and does not vary significantly across these five texts:

O my Mansoul! will you now desert your old friend, or do you think of standing by me (*The Holy War*, p. 44) [EEBO image 28]
... this sin did not reign in him alone (*Mr Badman*, p. 18) [EEBO image 23]

There is, however, significant variation in the use of *do* in periphrastic constructions. For example:

he did severely threaten me (*Grace Abounding*, p. 7, paragraph 18) [EEBO image 9]

In PDE, these constructions are emphatic, and some might be read as such in Bunyan's writing. It is also possible that *do* marked progressive aspect for Bunyan, though this is generally discussed as a feature of south-western rather than south-eastern dialects.³² A possible example of progressive use is provided by:

... his Ensign's name was Mr. *Sorrow*, he did bear the pale Colours (*The Holy War*, p. 51) [EEBO image 31]

However, the frequent combination of *do* and *use* suggest that Bunyan did not rely on *do* on its own to mark progressive aspect. For example:

Mansoul in former times did use to count that Mr. *Recorder* was a Seer (*The Holy War*, p. 151) [EEBO image 81]

This was the mirth with which the old man did use to entertain his guests. (*Mr Badman*, p. 50) [EEBO image 50]

It thus seems that Bunyan's use of *do* is not progressive and it would be difficult to read it as emphatic every time it occurs. Instead, his use of periphrastic *do* is reminiscent of periphrastic Biblical usage in a trend also apparent in other religious writings of the period.³³ For example:

	GA	PP1	Mr B	HW	PP2	total
lexical or dummy	10	14	14	18	9	13
periphrastic or emphatic	64	15	16	45	27	32
questions	2	12	8	3	5	6
negatives	5	5	6	4	3	5
total	79	45	44	70	44	56

Table 7: *Do* per 1000 words

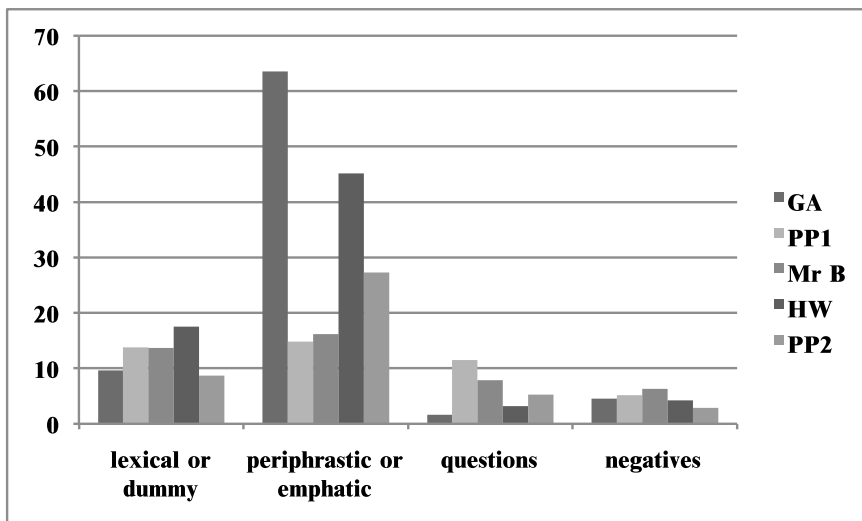


Figure 14: *Do* per 1000 words

if she did prove with Child, he would tell her how she might escape punishment (*Mr Badman*, p. 92) [EEBO image 61]

Given the contents of *Grace Abounding*, it is fitting that Bunyan's spiritual self-reflection should be expressed in Biblicized language. Although *The Holy War* uses periphrastic *do* significantly less often than *Grace Abounding*, it still uses it significantly more often than the other three texts (all $p=0.01$). It is less clear what the function of this variant is in *The Holy War*, since Diabolians and Mansoulans use it alike, but it certainly contributes to the generally elevated tone of the text. The increased use of lexical and dummy *do* in *The Holy War* is accounted for by constructions like:

the Captains and Souldiers resisted so stoutly, and did do such execution with their stones, that they made him, though against stomach, to retreat (*The Holy War*, p. 297) [EEBO image 155]
until he should again have opportunity to do the Town of *Mansoul* a mischief for their thus handling of him as they did (*The Holy War*, p. 207) [EEBO image 109]

The first type is a by-product of increased periphrastic *do*, and this type of construction is also found significantly more often in *Grace Abounding* than in either part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* or in *Mr Badman* (all $p=0.01$).

A striking feature of Bunyan's language for modern and contemporary readers is his frequent use of *thou* and related forms (*thee*, *thy*, *thine*). The historically singular *thou* had been progressively replaced by what were originally plural *you*-forms from the thirteenth century onwards, under the influence of Latin or of French courtly literature.³⁴ By the early Modern English period, *you* was used with sufficient frequency that it is the selection of *thou* that has to be explained, with suggested factors including high versus low levels of discourse or education; religious affiliation; differences in status, age or gender; family relationships; informality; intimacy, affection or heightened emotion; the deliberate selection of a less polite variant with the intention to insult; dialect variation and grammatical context.

Walker used corpus data selected to represent the nearest possible approximation to spoken language in order to examine the evidence for all of these possibilities and found that *thou* is used at a rate of 3% in trials, 33% in depositions and 10% in drama comedy in texts from the period 1640-1679.³⁵ In each context different factors play a role: in trials and depositions *thou* is often used in formulaic contexts such as sentencing and exchanging vows, though Walker found little evidence that grammatical context conditioned pronoun selection except in a limited range of fixed expressions.³⁶ In drama comedy there is a tendency towards *thou* in asides and apostrophe. The high rate of *thou* usage in depositions is explained by the inclusion of texts from *thou*-using dialect areas in this corpus: depositions from the north-east region saw *thou* usage at 59% during this period, but only two examples (3%) were found in the south-east. This indicates that Bunyan's *thou*-forms are unlikely to represent his own dialect. It is also certain that Bunyan is not influenced by Quaker usage in this respect because of his profound objections to Quaker theology.³⁷

In short, Walker's evidence indicates that the singular second person pronoun is found relatively infrequently in texts offering the closest representation of spoken language from Bunyan's period (in the region of 3% to 10%). It is against this background that we must consider Bunyan's use of *thou*-forms (see Table 8 and Figure 15).

Thou is always singular for Bunyan, though *you* can be either singular or plural. There is little consistency in how individuals address one another. For example:

	thou		you		total
GA	94	56%	74	44%	168
PP1	284	41%	409	59%	693
Mr B	339	43%	451	57%	790
HW	803	83%	162	17%	965
PP2	309	52%	282	48%	591
total	1829	57%	1378	43%	3207

Table 8: The distribution of *thou* and *you* (and related forms) in the singular

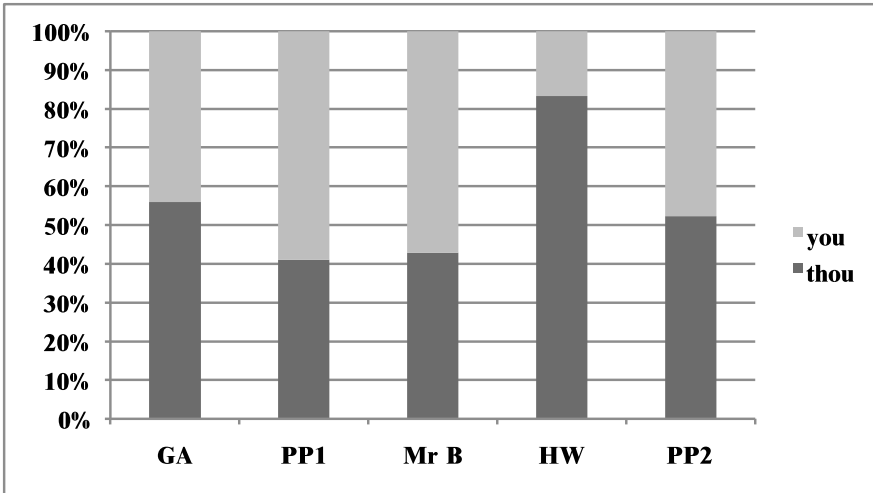


Figure 15: The distribution of *thou* and *you* (and related forms) in the singular

Chris, What was the matter that you did laugh in your sleep to night? I suppose you was in a Dream?

Mercy. So I was, and a sweet Dream it was, but are you sure I laughed?

Christiana. Yes, you laughed heartily; But prethee Mercy, tell me thy Dream? (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 74) [EEBO image 45]

In this example, the switch to *thy* may have been motivated by *prethee* or by the increased level of intimacy represented by the enquiry about the content of Mercy's dream.³⁸ Individual conversations tend to use one or the other form as a singular with internal consistency, so there are some long stretches of text in which *thou* is used, followed by stretches that use *you*.

Differences in status, age or gender sometimes explain the use of *thou* or *you*, but these are not consistently observed. For example, when Prudence catechizes Joseph and Samuel they always address her with *you*-forms, but she uses mixed pronouns in return:

Good Boy, *Joseph*, thy Mother has taught thee well, and thou hast harkened to what she has said unto thee.

Then said *Prudence* to *Samuel*, who was the eldest but one.

Prudence. Come *Samuel*, are you willing that I should Catechise you also?

Sam. Yes, forsooth, if you please. ...

Prudence. Why wouldst thou go to Heaven? (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 2, p. 78) [EEBO image 47]

In this case, perhaps Prudence speaks politely to Samuel in recognition of his position in the family, but switches to *thou* when he accepts her authority to catechise him. However, although differences in rank and issues of politeness might predict that Apollyon would use *thou* to Christian and he would use *you* in return, there is no consistency in their dialogue:

Apol. Whence come you, and whither are you bound?

Chr. I come from the City of *Destruction*, which is the place of all evil, and am going to the City of *Zion*.

Apol. By this I perceive thou art one of my Subjects, for all that Countrey is mine; and I am the Prince and God of it. How is it then that thou hast ran away from thy King? Were it not that I hope thou maiest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground.

Chr. I was born indeed in your Dominions, but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on, for the wages of Sin is death; therefore when I was come to years, I did as other considerate persons do, look out, if perhaps I might mend my self.

Apol. There is no Prince that will thus lightly lose his Subjects; neither will I as yet lose thee. But since thou complainest of thy service and wages, be content to go back; what our Countrey will afford, I do here promise to give thee.

Chr. But I have let my self to another, even to the King of Princes, and how can I with fairness go back with thee? (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, pp. 67–8) [EEBO images 39–40]

It may be that Apollyon's first use of *you* is polite and the switch to *thou* takes place when he recognizes Christian as one of his subjects. However, although Christian sticks with *you* for longer, he too switches to *thou* at the end of this extract. If we want to explain each *thou*-form as a contextually determined, we would have to interpret this as a

deliberate attempt to insult Apollyon and provoke him to anger. However, later in the dialogue, Christian reverts to *you* in a much more confrontational exchange:

Apol. Then *Apollyon* broke out into a grievous rage, saying, *I am an Enemy to this Prince: I hate his Person, his Laws, and People: I am come out on purpose to withstand thee.*

Chr. *Apollyon*, beware what you do, for I am in the Kings High-way, the way of Holiness, therefore take heed to your self. (*The Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, p. 71) [EEBO image 41]

Although contextual factors may play some part in Bunyan's pronoun-selection, an over-arching stylistic decision must be invoked to account for his anachronistically high rate of *thou* usage. The use of *thou*-forms would have been reminiscent in Bunyan's time, as it is now, of the King James Bible in which *thou* and *you* are preserved in their archaic singular and plural distribution.

Of these five texts, *The Holy War* uses *thou*-forms for significantly more of its singular second person pronouns and possessive determiners than the other four. The interpretation of individual contexts is complicated in this text by the fact that Mansoul is addressed with both *thou*- and *you*-forms. For example, Captain Boanerges addresses Mansoul:

'Be it known unto you, O unhappy and rebellious *Mansoul*! That the most Gracious King, the great King *Shaddai* my Master, hath sent me unto you with Commission (and so he shewed to the Town his broad Seal) to reduce you to his obedience. And he hath commanded me, in case you yield, upon my Summons, to carry it to you as if you were my Friends, or Brother; but he also hath bid, that if after Summons to submit, you still stand out and rebel, we should endeavour to take you by force.'

Then stood forth Captain *Conviction* and said, (*his was the pale Colours, and for a Scutcheon he had the Book of the Law wide open &c.*) 'Hear, O *Mansoul*! Thou, O *Mansoul*, wast once famous for innocency, but now thou art degenerated into lies and deceit . . .' (*The Holy War*, p. 63) [EEBO image 37]

You-forms addressing Mansoul are interpreted here as plural references to the inhabitants or representatives of the town rather than singular references to the town itself, and this may account for the apparent decrease in singular *you*. However, it is also possible that the choice of *thou*-forms in contexts like these is intended to nudge the reader towards an allegorical interpretation of the literal narrative: to consider Mansoul as a single entity, the soul of a man, rather than as a group of individuals living in a town.

The first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Mr Badman* use *thou*-forms significantly less frequently than both the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Grace Abounding*. Although Bunyan used *thou* in his writing at a higher rate than contemporary writers or speakers did, he was not consistent in this. If he had been, we might consider the possibility that he was reflecting idiosyncratic spoken usage among his Dissenting peers. Since he is not, we have to conclude that Bunyan's *thou*-usage is another stylistic artifice.

This paper has shown that Bunyan used six linguistic variants to Biblicize his language: *-eth* inflections, *mine/thine* before vowels, *mine/thine* before consonants, *yea* in place of *yes* or *aye*, periphrastic *do* and *thou* singulars. These variants are used differently across the texts, with some variants increasing or decreasing chronologically (e.g. the use of *hath*, *doth* and *saith*) and others conditioned by genre or tone (e.g. the use of *a* as a contracted form of *have*). By combining the percentages for each of these variants, we can obtain an impressionistic sense of the degree to which each text echoes the language of the Bible. Figure 16 indicates that *The Holy War* is the text whose language is most influenced by the language of Bible as Bunyan repeatedly signals that a more elevated interpretation underlies the literal story. *Grace Abounding*, in which Bunyan engages in painful self-analysis with reference to Biblical texts, is also highly Biblicized in language. Of the texts considered here, the first and particularly the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* are the least reflective of the language of the Bible. The focus on women and children may have provided a further motivation for Bunyan's shift towards the representation of colloquial language in the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, though the linguistic influence of the Bible remains strong in both of these texts.

Knott has observed that this fusion creates ‘a narrative that is realistic enough to be entirely credible and yet at the same time uncannily surreal’.³⁹

I have argued elsewhere against Lewis’s assertion that ‘any unlearned author of Bunyan’s time would be bound to remind us of the Bible whether he had read it or not’.⁴⁰ Chronological proximity to the King James Bible does not account for Bunyan’s use of grammatical constructions that are archaic in PDE, because many of them were also archaic for Bunyan’s contemporaries, as they were for the compilers of the King James Bible. It is not surprising that a writer so well-versed in the Bible should quote and echo its contents in his own work, but this paper has demonstrated that Bunyan also employed Biblicized language for distinct stylistic purposes. We have seen, for example, that *yea* and *thine/mine* determiners are used to signal moral certainty and to condemn those whose moral certainties are misguided. Bunyan also used Biblicized language to elevate the tone of his works and to emphasize the necessity of allegorical interpretation, particularly in his use of *thou* and periphrastic *do* in *The Holy War*.

Acting alongside the influence of Biblical language, and sometimes in tension with it, was the influence of contemporary spoken

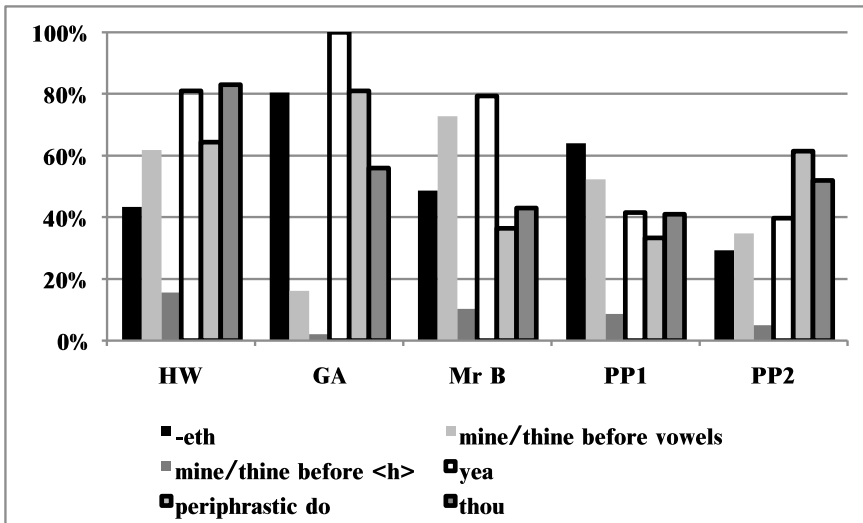


Figure 16: The influence of Biblical language

English. The second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is set apart from the other texts discussed here in a number of respects, particularly its increasing use of *aye* and of <a> in contraction for *have*. It might be expected that Bunyan would represent these features of contemporary spoken English more in texts that include a higher proportion of everyday dialogue, but this analysis demonstrates that he also became more skilful in doing so. Although the second part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* continues to use archaic and Biblicized linguistic features, its dialogue also represents the most effective approximation of contemporary spoken English of any of the texts considered here.

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Notes

- 1 Walter Scott, review of '*The Pilgrim's Progress, with a Life of John Bunyan*. By Robert Southey, Esq., LL.D.', *Quarterly Review*, 43 (1830), 469–94 (484) characterizes Bunyan's writing as using 'a homespun style not a manufactured one'.
- 2 These adjective are from the early commentaries in *The Pilgrim's Progress: A Selection of Critical Essays*, ed. Roger Sharrock (London: Macmillan, 1976).
- 3 For example, Roger Pooley, 'Plain and Simple: Bunyan and Style', in *John Bunyan: Conventicle and Parnassus*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 91–110; Michael Davies, *Graceful Reading: Theology and Narrative in the Works of John Bunyan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Roger Pooley, 'The Pilgrim's Progress and the Line of Allegory', in *The Cambridge Companion to Bunyan*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 80–94.
- 4 See Julie Coleman, 'Using Dictionary Evidence to Evaluate Authors' Lexis: John Bunyan and the *Oxford English Dictionary*', *Dictionaries*, 34 (2013), 66–100.
- 5 See N. H. Keeble, "'Of him thousands daily Sing and talk": Bunyan and his Reputation', in *John Bunyan: Conventicle and Parnassus*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 241–63 (p. 263) and Paul Davis, 'John Bunyan and Heavenly Conversation', *Essays in Criticism*, 50 (2000), 215–41 (215).
- 6 PP1 is taken from John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to Come Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream, wherein is Discovered the Manner of his Setting out, his Dangerous Journey, and Safe Arrival at the Desired Countrey* (London: Nathaniel Ponder, 1678); PP2 from *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to Come Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream, wherein is Set forth the Manner of the Setting out of Christian's Wife and*

Children, their Dangerous Journey, and Safe Arrival at the Desired Country (London: Nathaniel Ponder, 1684). Also used were *The Life and Death of Mr Badman, Presented to the World in a Familiar Dialogue between Mr Wiseman and Mr Attentive* (London: Nathaniel Ponder, 1680); *The Holy War Made by King Shaddai Upon Diabolus, to Regain the Metropolis of the World, Or, The Losing and Taking Again of the Town of Mansoul* (London: Dorman Newman, 1682); and *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (London: George Larkin, 1666). Page references are to these editions; EEBO image references are also provided.

- 7 <<http://www.gutenberg.org/>>; <<http://eebo.chadwyck.com>>.
- 8 <<http://www.textworld.com/scp>>.
- 9 See Julie Coleman, 'Bunyan and the English Language', in *The Oxford Handbook of John Bunyan*, ed. Michael Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).
- 10 Richard L. Greaves, entry on Bunyan in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxford.dnb.com>> accessed 22 December 2011.
- 11 Matti Rissanen, 'Syntax', in *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. III, 1476–1776, ed. Roger Lass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 187–331 (p. 215).
- 12 Gordon Campbell, 'Fishing in Other Men's Waters: Bunyan and the Theologians', in *John Bunyan: Conventicle and Parnassus*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 137–51 (pp. 138–9) argues that Bunyan used the sixteenth-century Geneva Bible in his earlier works, but switched to the King James later in life. Because this paper is concerned with the archaisms of Biblical translations in general rather than direct quotation, all references are to the King James Bible without distinction.
- 13 Anthony Warner, 'DO with Weak Verbs in early Modern English', in *Analysing Older English*, ed. David Denison, Ricardo Bermúdez-Otero, Chris McCully and Emma Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 285–305 (p. 301).
- 14 Merja Kytö, 'Third-person Present Singular Verb Inflections in Early British and American English', *Language Variation and Change*, 5 (1993), 113–39 (115).
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Juliet Dusinberre, 'Bunyan and Virginia Woolf: A History and a Language of their Own', *Bunyan Studies*, 5 (1994), 15–46 (27).
- 17 See Roger Sharrock, "'When at the first I took my Pen in hand": Bunyan and the Book', in *John Bunyan: Conventicle and Parnassus*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 71–90 (p. 85) and Roger Pooley, 'Plain and Simple: Bunyan and Style', p. 109.
- 18 Sharrock, "'When at the first I took my Pen in hand'", p. 72.
- 19 Sharrock, "'When at the first I took my Pen in hand'", pp. 88–9 argues that both Bunyan and his printer revised later editions of *Grace Abounding*. However, see Julie Coleman, 'Forensic Lexicography: A Case Study', in *International Handbook of Modern Lexis and Lexicography*, ed. Patrick Hanks and Gilles-Maurice de Schryver (New York: Springer Reference, forthcoming), for an analysis of printers' interventions in a series of editions of an earlier seventeenth-century publication.

- 20 These are the London editions published by Nathaniel Ponder (who also published the first edition) in 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683 and 1684, the Edinburgh editions published by Cairns (1680) and Anderson (1681), and the Boston edition published by Green (1681).
- 21 Robert Southey (ed.), *The Pilgrim's Progress, with a Life of John Bunyan* (London: J. Murray and J. Major, 1830), p. lxxxviii.
- 22 See Coleman, 'Bunyan and the English Language', for an exception.
- 23 Southey (ed.), *The Pilgrim's Progress*, lxxxvii.
- 24 Scott, '*The Pilgrim's Progress*', p. 469.
- 25 Sharrock, "'When at the first I took my Pen in hand'", p. 74.
- 26 Compare John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: Nathaniel Ponder, 1679), pp. 123 and 220, EEBO images 67 and 117.
- 27 The probability of this variation being a result of random variation is less than 5 per cent. Although this is a lower level of significance than is used in the rest of this paper, it does argue against Southey's position.
- 28 Keeble, "'Of him thousands daily Sing and talk'", p. 245
- 29 Richard L. Greaves, *John Bunyan and English Nonconformity* (London: Hambledon Press, 1992), pp. 155–68.
- 30 Davis, 'Bunyan and Heavenly Conversation', p. 227, argues that Bunyan's 'refusal to identify the saved and the damned by making them speak distinct languages' expressed his own anxiety about the difficulties of distinguishing between 'heavenly conversation' and 'worldly chatter'.
- 31 John Simpson and Edmund Weiner, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary*, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000–) <<http://www.oed.com>> accessed 22 Dec 2011.
- 32 Sheri Pargman, 'Do in English Dialects: Another Look at the Evidence', *American Speech*, 79 (2004), 3–32.
- 33 See Terttu Nevalainen, 'Motivated Archaism: the Use of Affirmative Periphrastic Do in early Modern English Liturgical Prose', in *Historical English Syntax*, ed. Dieter Kastovsky (Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991), pp. 303–20.
- 34 Terry Walker, *Thou and You in Early Modern English Dialogues* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2007), p. 39.
- 35 Ibid., pp. 68, 97, 175.
- 36 Ibid., pp. 237–85, 293.
- 37 See Charles Barber, *Early Modern English*, second edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 155–6; and T. L. Underwood, "'For Then I Should Be a Ranter or a Quaker": John Bunyan and Radical Religion', in *Awakening Words. John Bunyan and the Language of Community*, ed. David Gay, James G. Randall, and Arlette Zinck (Newark/London: University of Delaware Press/Associated University Presses, 2000), pp. 127–40. Compare Davis, 'Bunyan and Heavenly Conversation', pp. 223–5, who argues that 'Bunyan's true pilgrim's [do follow] Quaker practice in this regard' (p. 223).

- 38 This data does not include examples of *priethee*, whose history is not consistent with other forms of *thou*. Walker, in *Thou and You*, p. 52, finds a resurgence in the use of *priethee* in the second quarter of the seventeenth century.
- 39 John R. Knott, jr, “‘Thou must live upon my word’: Bunyan and the Bible”, in *John Bunyan. Conventicle and Parnassus*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 153–70 (p. 165). See also Pooley, ‘Plain and Simple: Bunyan and Style’, p. 107.
- 40 C. S. Lewis, ‘The Literary Impact of the Authorised Version’, in C. S. Lewis, *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 126–45 (p. 139); see Coleman, ‘Bunyan and the English Language’.