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## The rise of right periphery *either* in English

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## The rise of right-periphery *either* in English

### Abstract

The history of *either* as a clause-final, right-periphery marker has seen little intensive research, apart from a few isolated studies such as Rullmann (2002) and Gast (2013). This is surprising, given the recent interest in parenthetical discourse items and the controversies surrounding their development (grammaticalisation vs. pragmaticalization, and other debates). In the present study, it is first questioned whether right-periphery *either* (RP-*either*) could be categorized as a bona fide example of a discourse marker, and second, how a hypothesis emerged that 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century prescriptivism motivated its sudden shift to become a post-negation, clause-final item, replacing the now non-standard, right-periphery *neither* (e.g. Jespersen 1917, Fitzmaurice and Smith 2012). The present study builds on the previous accounts, suggesting that the use of *either* as a clause-final additive focus marker had grammaticalised from a resumptive quantifier, post-posed in apposition and gradually renovating the former functions of clause-final *neither* in strong negative polarity contexts by a process of grammaticalization following co-optation (Heine 2013). The social stigmatization of right-periphery *neither* (RP *neither*) as an example of negative concord at the time must therefore have been due simply to its resulting association with recessive, dialectal or non-standard usage, as RP-*either* rapidly increased its earlier range of functions to take over those of the ousted RP-*neither* in strong negative polarity contexts during the 19th century.

### 1. Introduction

The present article deals with the historical development of *either* as illustrated with a contemporary example in (1). This use of *either* will be called ‘right-periphery *either*’, abbreviated as ‘RP-*either*’.

(1) We’re not going to LA, and we’re not going to New York, either. (Rullmann 2002: 111)

The use of the term ‘right periphery’ to describe the function of *either* is based on Traugott (2016: 30) in which it is understood as a position occurring outside the core clause (presumably on the right edge) and serving as a marker of topic and focus. (Lewis (2018: 137) refers to the term periphery as a “structural slot” held in relation to an utterance or turn. The latter definition seems to allude to the presence of an a-priori syntax; the use of the term ‘right periphery’ in the present study assumes a more descriptive approach, and will refer to the right periphery of a clause, phrase, or any constituent as the data dictates. The term is rejected by Haselow (2016: 83) who suggests that it invokes a visual view of language based on written language structure, but given the fact that diachronic analysis must, of necessity, refer to written forms, it is a convenient term to use in the present study. It is differentiated from a final position marker which bears a function more related to discourse management; i.e., assisting in regulating speech planning and production (Haselow 2016: 78).

As a right-periphery item, then, *either* marks focus on a constituent in its ‘host’ proposition, the focused constituent being marked phonologically with a pitch accent, as explained in Rullman (2003: 370). Rullmann also maintains that as an additive particle, it does not affect the truth conditions of a sentence (2003: 335), and that its additive function is only that of adding a presupposition to the host sentence, whose focused property applies to another entity in the context. Thus, in (1) the addition of *and we’re not going to New York* presupposes the property of ‘another city’, already understood in *LA*.

In earlier as well as recent accounts of the sociohistorical development of RP-*either*, there has been a general tendency to consider the diachronic development of *either* to be linked to the constraints of the prescriptivist grammatical teachings of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

century, in which it appears to have been consciously selected to “replace” *neither* as a sentence-final focus marker (see for instance Einkenkel 1904, Jespersen 1917, Fitzmaurice 2012, Fitzmaurice and Smith 2012). The social history of RP-*either*, however, is clearly not the entire story, as will be seen below, and various other factors should be taken into consideration. A number of questions also arise concerning its development. RP-*either* is a negative polarity item in the scope of negation, but also has a retrospective scope in terms of its focus. Many similar markers followed a general pattern of right-dislocation in the recent history of English, and it may be questioned whether *either* can be considered alongside the established categories of other discourse markers. However, unlike many such markers appearing in the right periphery, the negative polarity of RP-*either* also implies a certain structural dependency, and this immediately raises the question of its status alongside other right-periphery discourse markers, such as *though*, *anyway*, etc.

The present paper first takes up the questions raised by Rullmann (2002) in a pioneering study of the development of RP-*either*, which was based on a small corpus of selected examples from the Early Modern English period onwards. Given the availability of larger corpora nowadays, it is possible to examine his hypotheses a little more closely; thus the progress of RP-*either* will be investigated on the basis of data taken from a number of corpora, the CEMET, the Helsinki corpus (Early Modern English part), and the CLMET(EV) corpus, in order to provide a quantitative overview of the relationship between right-periphery *neither* (RP-*neither*) and RP-*either*. There is also a great deal of current research interest in the rise of peripheral discourse markers (see, e.g. Brinton 2008, Traugott 2012, 2015, 2016, Hancil, Haselow and Post 2015 and Haselow 2016, to name just a few recent studies), some focusing in particular on whether or not they are the product of grammaticalisation. The present study examines some of these arguments and applies them to the case of RP-*either*, to offer a hypothesis explaining the role of semantic and functional continuity in its history, a factor associated with grammaticalisation which is often not accounted for. It will also question the inclusion of RP-*either* within the same category of right-periphery discourse markers discussed in earlier studies. The hypothesis of selective replacement resulting from prescriptivist stigmatization is less than convincing in the face of more robust explanations which rely on evidence of semantic and functional continuity throughout history.

The study first discusses some of the previous research on RP-*either* in Section 2. Section 3 presents a review of some of the previous literature discussing discourse functions in the right periphery, and considers the situation of RP-*either* against the findings of these studies. Section 4 discusses the historical and sociohistorical factors that led to the rise of RP-*either* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Section 5 contains a presentation of quantitative evidence from the three corpora (listed above), investigating the degree to which the rise of RP-*either* and the fall of RP-*neither* correlate. Section 6 presents an analysis of the diachronic situation and offers a theoretical explanation, based on Heine (2013) and Heine et al (2017), for the possibility that RP-*either* was first co-opted to the right periphery, and then grammaticalized as part of the syntactic structure of its host clause, resulting in its reinterpretation as an additive focus marker. Section 7 summarises the findings.

## 2. Previous studies on the history of RP-*either*: An overview

The present-day function of RP-*either* is generally assumed to be a final focus particle, or an additive focus particle occurring in negative polarity contexts and “alternating with *too* which occurs in positive ones” (Rullmann 2002: 111; cf. also e.g. König 1991). As a focus particle, its semantics are held to “make crucial reference to the intonation of the sentence” (Rullmann 2003: 335). This could be problematic in investigating written data, and the syntactic arguments also vary, as pointed out by König (1991) who refers to previous alternative descriptions of such particles as ‘sentence adverbs’. *Either*, though, is not derived from an

adverbial source, but that of a quantifier (König (1991: 21) admits, however, that English focus particles make up a diverse taxonomy). Occurring in strong negative polarity contexts, RP-*either* adds negated focus to a negated set of (usually) dual alternatives expressed in its retrospective scope. RP-*either* is thus regarded as the negative counterpart of additive particles such as *also* and *too*, and these elements are actually often used to replace RP-*either* in many international dialects of English, such as Indian English (Fuchs 2012), Singapore English (Ziegeler 2017), or Welsh English (Trudgill & Hannah 2017).<sup>1</sup>

The diachronic development of RP-*either* has been traced in early studies such as Einkenkel (1904) and Jespersen (1917, Ch. 10), and more recently by Rullmann (2002). Space does not permit a more complete consideration of the early historical development in the present study, which will focus on the later stages of development, as its appearance at the end of a (main) clause is relatively recent; Jespersen (1917) dates it to around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (However, the present study finds evidence for earlier appearances.) As the earlier studies have shown, it seems clear that RP-*either* resulted from rightward movement of historically older uses of this element. Rightward movement in studies of discourse markers has been attributed to at least two possible causes in recent studies: cases such as *anyway* discussed in Haselow (2015), in which an adverb functioning in medial position is reinterpreted as a right-periphery marker in certain ‘critical’, ambiguous contexts; a similar ambiguity is discussed in Lewis (2018) for the connectives *in fact* and *after all*. Lewis also mentions the other possibility for rightward movement of discourse markers, discussed in Thompson and Suzuki (2011) in which a medial connector (e.g. *but/but still*) has been left ‘stranded’ at the end of an utterance as a result of an ellipsis of the subsequent unit of the conjunction. In the case of RP-*either*, a further possibility for right-periphery movement will be considered against the data obtained, and discussed below in 6.

In order to understand the development of RP-*either*, we thus need to consider the other functions of this element as well, from both a synchronic and diachronic point of view. Rullmann (2002) distinguishes two further functions for *either* in present-day English, in addition to its use as a focus particle: (i) Disj[unctive] *either*, as in (1),<sup>2</sup> and (ii) Det[erminer] *either*, as in (3).

(2) Disj *either*

We’re either going to LA or New York City.

(3) Det *either*

We’re not going to either city.

A third type mentioned by Rullmann (2002) is a pronoun use, but he prefers to categorise this as a determiner with an “empty” noun, cf. (4).

(4) We’re not going to either.

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of Welsh English, there is no recourse to the Welsh substrate to explain the use of negative polarity *too*, as Welsh has a final additive focus particle used only in the scope of negation (*chwaith*) (King 1996), and Welsh English still uses *too* in negative scope, as in *I can’t do that too* (Trudgill & Hannah 2017: 41).

<sup>2</sup> Disj *either* has been analyzed by Hendricks (2001), who does not address its uses at the right periphery. Hendricks (2001) points out that Disj *either* resembles *only* in its semantics through exhaustivity of a given set (*either X or Y* excludes all other elements from the set, focusing only on X and Y). In this way, she maintains, it does not behave in the same way as simple disjunction, nor in the same way as ‘exclusive *or*’, but assumed the function of a focus particle, which makes it similar to RP *either*.

For present purposes, the case illustrated in (4) can be categorised as a pronoun, since it is unclear from the diachronic accounts whether the pronoun gave rise to the determiner use, or the determiner gave rise to the pronominal form via ellipsis: For both the source forms of *either* and *neither*, there are pronominal and determiner uses co-occurring in the same time periods as far back as Old English (cf. Eienenkel 1904, Gast 2013).

A final type distinguished by Rullmann (2002) is labeled ‘FP-Disj *either*’ (Focus-particle Disjunctive *either*). Both this type and that illustrated in (1) (‘FP-*either*’ – Focus Particle *either*) can be regarded as sub-types of RP-*either* in the present study. An example is given in (5).

(5) FP-Disj *either*

If John had said so, or William either, I could believe it. (Rullmann 2002: 112)

FP-Disj *either* is semantically similar to FP *either* when the disjunction occurs in the scope of negation, cf. (6).

(6) We’re not going to LA, or to New York, either.

There seems to be little difference between (1) above, illustrating FP-*either*, and (6), apart from the fact that in (6) the (retrospective) scope of *either* is restricted to a phrasal level, while in (1) the scope extends across the entire clause. It is also questioned why Rullmann has used a comma indicating a pause preceding *either* in (1) and (6). However, this is not to suggest that punctuation is a reliable guide to interpreting the discourse function of such items (see below).<sup>3</sup> According to Rullmann (2003) *either* at the right periphery does not have retrospective scope, but only falls within the scope of a negative polarity licenser preceding it. As an additive focus particle, though, it may be seen to possess a retrospective scope in relation to the host clause, where ‘scope’ in this instance is defined as the pragmatic functions of focusing on a selected phrase in the host clause. Rullmann (2003) identifies two types of scope: one in which *either* has scope over negation in the host clause (wide-scope), and one in which negation has scope over *either*. He argues that the latter type is a more reliable analysis because, amongst other things, there is a necessity to postulate two “salient alternatives” in the preceding discourse. However, the syntactic retrospective scope of RP-*either* may also be seen in the diachronic data to have widened over time, from phrase-level to clause-level.

Rullmann (2002, 2003) finds early examples of FP-Disj *either* dating back to the time of Shakespeare, cf. (7) from *Twelfth Night*.

(7) Wilt thou set thy foot o’ my neck? Or o’ mine **either**?

1601, Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*.

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<sup>3</sup> The two Old English sources of *either*, according to Gast (2013), are described as dual quantifiers occurring in pre-posed, correlative uses, one meaning ‘both’ co-occurring with a conjunction and the other, meaning ‘either’, co-occurring with a disjunction; e.g. (from Alfred’s *Orosius* 238, 14; c. 893):

(i) se was ægðer, ge heora cyning, ge heora biscop  
 det was both conj their king conj their bishop  
 ‘He was both their king and their bishop.’

They are marked as followed by a clear comma pause in the examples given, suggesting that the quantifier may not have been realized in the text at the time as a fully grammaticalized pre-determiner, its present-day function here.

In the original text, three speakers are indicated, and there are two occurrences of RP-*either*:

- (8) Fabian: Heere comes my noble gull catcher  
 Sir Toby: Wilt thou set thy foote o'my necke  
 Sir Andrew: Or o'mine **either**?  
 Sir Toby. Shall I play my freedome at tray-trip, and becom  
 thy bondslaue?  
 Sir Andrew: Ifaith, or I **either**?

CEMET (Shakespeare, 1616, First Folio 15).

Clearly, RP-*either*, in such early examples, does not appear in the scope of negation. According to Rullmann (2002), the role of *either* as a right-periphery focus marker appears to extend from those cases in which it occurs at the right periphery of the second member of a disjunction, with the entire disjunction in the scope of a negative polarity licenser (FP-Disj *either*, e.g. (6), to those cases in which it occurs at the right periphery of a conjunction or isolated clause, with the negation repeated in the second member of the conjunction, as in (1) (FP-*either*). However, the presence of negation in the host constituent appears not to have been obligatory, at least in examples like (7). Accordingly, the emergence of FP *either* could be represented as shown in (9).

- (9) either A or B  $\rightarrow$  A or B, either  $\rightarrow$  not A or B, either  $\rightarrow$  not A and not B, either

In the present survey, we see the appearance of another stage, as in (10):

- (10) a. A and not B, either,  
 or  
 b. A and not A, either

suggesting that the presence of negation only in the host phrase or clause was sufficient to licence the use of *either* as a focus particle. The last step in (9) is semantically plausible, as it corresponds to De Morgan's law, though the structural configurations are different.<sup>5</sup> Whether *either* appears at the end of a disjunction in the scope of negation, or following a conjunction of negated propositions, its semantics of minimizing (dual) quantity under negation are the same in both cases.

In many cases it is not just the preceding clause that supplies the antecedent proposition, but a preceding turn or chunk of discourse, as seen in many of the examples to follow. This is illustrative of increased scope expansion from phrasal to clausal and is typical of many cases of grammaticalization, as shown in Tabor and Traugott (1998), and Himmelmann (2004), described in the latter account as 'host-class expansion'. It was hypothesized in Rullmann (2002) that the development of RP-*either* diachronically was from phrasal host-classes to clausal ones, and this hypothesis will be borne out by the results of our investigation. The accompanying functional shifts to the marking of text-based relations in FP *either* is also accordant with the hypothesis of grammaticalization as host-class expansion and syntagmatic scope increase, as indicated by Tabor and Traugott (1998: 262).

The development shown in (9) above does not require reference to normative pressure, a factor emphasized by Eienkel (1904) and Jespersen (1914), among others. *Neither* is not

<sup>5</sup> De Morgan's Law is defined in Horn (2001 : 222) as the interdefinability of the binary connectives under negation :  $\sim (p \wedge q) \equiv \sim (p) \vee \sim (q)$  ;  $\sim (p) \vee \sim (q) \equiv \sim (p \wedge q)$  ; i.e. *not (p and q)* is logically equal to *not-p* or *not-q* ; and *not-p* or *not-q* is logically equal to *not (p and q)*. Horn adds that De Morgan (1847) was not the first to derive such equivalences.

even in the picture. In an alternative scenario, FP *either* developed out of post-focal or parenthetical *neither*, as illustrated in (11), and according to this scenario, RP-*either* developed as shown in (12). The change from *neither* to *either* could be seen in analogy to similar cases of “n-drop” in the domain of indefinites (e.g. van der Auwera et al. 2006).

(11) I don't like tea nor coffee, neither. (Rullmann 2002: 123)

(12) neither A nor B → not A nor B, neither → not A and not B, neither → not A and not B, either

Rullmann (2002: 123) speculates that both scenarios sketched above might have played a role: “Rather than insisting on a single historical origin for FP *either*, [...] there may have been two separate routes along which this construction may have developed – one via FP *neither* and the other via FP-Disj *either* – which converged and reinforced each other.”

It must also be borne in mind that Rullmann's comments on the negative licensors of the focus particle *either* are clearly related to the scope tendencies pointed out above: a dislocated disjunctive coordinator moved to the RP will be licensed by any negative polarity context, and it is apparent from the diachronically earlier examples that *either* in the FP-Disj function can be found in some weak negative polarity contexts which are rarely found today, such as conditional clauses and interrogatives, while as a clause-final focus particle, it is restricted mainly to clausal negation or N-words to license its appearance, i.e. strong negative polarity contexts. The question thus arises why *either* is no longer licensed in some weak negative polarity contexts, i.e., why the full range of functions for FP-Disj *either* has been reduced.

Israel (2006: 710) defines negative polarity items as, broadly, those that are sensitive to the expression of contradiction, contrariety, or reversal, and most often occur in such contexts. Amongst such contexts he includes, as well as the scope of negation, and the scope of negative quantifiers such as *never*, *nobody*, or *nothing*, those that are weakly negative containing adverbs like *hardly* or *rarely*, quantifiers such as *few*, and the complements of adversative predicates like *be surprised/amazed* or *doubt*, the antecedents of conditional constructions, the restriction of a universal or generic quantifier, the nuclear scope of *only*, the focus of a *yes-no* question, rhetorical information questions, comparative and equative constructions, and subordinate clauses introduced by *before* and *long after*. Israel does not distinguish weak contexts from strong contexts, but Eckardt (2012: 306) defines weak negative polarity items as those that are found not only in the scope of negation, but also in the scope of adverbs such as *rarely*, *hardly* and in conditional clauses. Strong negative polarity items are those that are restricted to negative scope. Jaeger (2010: 788) also includes adverbs like *rarely* and *hardly* as weak negative polarity licensors, as well as questions, the standard of comparatives, conditionals, clauses dependent on negated matrix clauses, adversative matrix verbs such as *regret*, *deny*, etc. and restrictive clauses of universal quantifiers. In the present study, Jaeger's definitions will be used to define ‘weak’ contexts, with ‘strong’ contexts referring only to those expressing clausal negation or containing an N-word (see Laka 1990).<sup>8</sup>

Taking Rullmann's (2002) speculations as a point of departure, the present study explores the diachronic relationships between the two types of FP *either* and FP *neither*, as well as FP-Disj *either*, using a broader empirical basis. We pursue the hypothesis that RP-*either* resulted from a secondary grammaticalisation (see, e.g. Breban 2014), following co-

<sup>8</sup> N-words (Laka 1990) may be described as negative indefinite pronouns or adverbs that have fused with their negation, such as *nobody*, *nowhere*, *never*, etc. Nevalainen (2006) has described such fusion as negative incorporation and compounding.

optionation (Heine 2013, 2017), and subsequent integration into the clause structure. Irrespective of the specific type of development ((9) or (12)), it seems clear that RP-*either* resulted from a process of right-dislocation. At a general level, this type of process, where structural slots come to be associated with specific functions and then “attract” new elements, has been described as movement to “attractor positions” (e.g. Bisang 1998, Lehmann 2017). Grammaticalisation is assumed to take place in specific positions in a construction type, and the positions can attract new items into a new grammatical function by analogy with existing items in the same position (Bisang 1998: 16, Fischer 2011). Thus in such cases it is the position in the clause which determines the function, as much as the lexical source of the item. This possibility would entail that clause-final particles would always carry a similar function.

In recent years, there has been an upsurge of studies devoted to analyzing items appearing at the right periphery (many of them from English alone), and an attempt to classify them within a single category (e.g. Traugott 2016). Exactly how to describe the category is another matter, but most accounts seem to agree that the position at the right periphery is linked largely to a discourse or pragmatic function rather than a syntactically-dependent one (see section 1). What is not always agreed upon is how items came to end up in the right periphery in the first place, since the kind of shifting across clausal boundaries that is often necessary to explain such appearances is also incompatible with accounts supporting reanalysis and grammaticalisation of syntagmatically adjacent elements. The following section will review just some of the relevant studies in the vast literature discussing such problems.

### **3. *Either and the right periphery***

#### **3.1 *The right periphery in recent discourse studies***

One of the most important recent studies to discuss the use of the right periphery is that of Haselow (2016), who provides a comprehensive account of what he describes as the ‘final field’. He collects both syntax-dependent grammar and discourse-based items into a broader, inclusive description known as ‘macro-grammar’ (as against ‘micro-grammar’, or Heine’s 2013 Sentence Grammar). The macro-grammar approach revises some of the elements of Hopper’s (1987) Emergent Grammar hypothesis, in which grammar is seen as never a fixed entity but always subject to the constantly fluctuating trends of the context. The basis for such comparison is that speakers rarely link the production of an utterance to a perfectly well-formed sentence type in advance, and may ‘dislocate’ elements according to the spontaneous needs of the communicative situation (Haselow 2016: 79). In the same way, *either* may become a contender for the final field as an item dislocated from elsewhere in the discourse, e.g., from its function as a determiner or pre-determiner in noun phrases, functions which can be traced back to Old English (see Gast 2013) as seen above.

According to Haselow (2016: 87), the right periphery or final field is dedicated to items with a loose grammatical connection to the preceding clause. Such items are, in fact, used mainly in spoken discourse, and are defined by additional criteria, such as (i) not contributing to the propositional content of the sentence (having a procedural function, expressing epistemic stance), (ii) not being integrated into the morphosyntactic structure of the preceding clause or sentence, and (iii) having different functions when used elsewhere in the discourse, since, in fact, they are functionally peripheral to the structures they fringe. Above all, Haselow maintains that, although the items appearing in such positions carry illocutionary force, there would be no loss of semantic content were they to be deleted from their position in the right periphery (Haselow 2016: 87–8). Amongst the examples of such items, he includes: *of course, really, yeah, then, though, anyway, mate, and stuff, or something* (the latter two being known more specifically as ‘general extenders’), *I think/believe* (comment

clauses, according to Brinton 2008), *isn't it? can you?* (tags), and *if you like*, and *if I may say so* (independent *if*-clauses) (Haselow 2016: 88).

Traugott (2016) notes the infrequency of finding discourse or other pragmatic markers at the right periphery, suggesting that discourse markers have a clausal function mainly as connectors (e.g. *like, well*), while other pragmatic markers can be found with mainly communicative functions; e.g. those that are involved in meta-textual negotiation, and generally structuring the dialogue of a communicative event (e.g. *I think, no doubt, actually, isn't it?*). Her list includes a set of 'retrospective contrastive final connectors', such as *then, though, after all, anyway, and actually*, which, in such positions, function to revise the status of the preceding text. Examples of these elements can readily be sourced from the ICE-GB:

(13) ICE-GB:S1A-008#71:1:B

But that was one reason why I never wanted to do that again **actually**

(14) ICE-GB:S1A-022#314:1:A

Well I thought that I thought we were going to have coq au vin

ICE-GB:S1A-022#315:1:A

It is chicken **after all**

The frequency of retrospective contrastive final connectors may be testimony to their conventionalization, and even their predictability to a certain extent, though the precise details as to their evolution in terms of pragmaticalization, grammaticalization, or any other means of historical development have not achieved a clear consensus amongst many researchers (Lewis 2011). Traugott (2016: 32) makes the point, though, that their relative integration into the host structure is not, and should not be justified by any allusion to a prosodic pause between the marker and the preceding clause structure.

Traugott's (2016) main conclusions are that the set of retrospective contrastive pragmatic markers are a recent addition to the categories of discourse markers, and that many of them seem to have arisen in Late Modern English (1700–1970), as a "new typology of connectives" (Traugott 2016: 47). Her diachronic survey also provides evidence that for some of the markers at the right periphery, their origins date back to Old English adverbs and adverbial connectors, e.g. *though*, in earlier stages not necessarily appearing at the right periphery. Traugott (2016) also agrees with Lenker (2010) and Haselow (2012) as suggesting that it is the position at the right periphery that seems to be gradually attracting more and more items to it over time.

### 3.2 Co-optation

Heine (2013), Heine et al (2017) and Kaltenböck et al (2011) discuss the rise of a category of 'thetical' markers as distinguished from 'discourse markers' in general, a term which has been used without particular attention, it seems, to its specifically identifying criteria. Heine (2013: 1209) bases his identification of discourse markers on the following criteria:

(15)

- a. They are syntactically independent from their environment
- b. They are typically set off prosodically from the rest of the utterance
- c. Their meaning is non-restrictive
- d. Their meaning is procedural rather than conceptual- propositional
- e. They are non-compositional and as a rule, short.

Only the first three of these criteria are also shared by the category of theticals, while theticals have the additional property that:

- f. Their internal structure is built on principles of sentence grammar but can be elliptic.

Sentence Grammar, according to Heine (2013: 1214), is made up of sentences, clauses, phrasal and morphemic constituents, with the additional mechanism of establishing relations between constituents (though relations between propositions are not outside the boundaries of discourse marker functions, according to Lewis 2014). Thetical Grammar, on the other hand, is designed to account for parenthetical structures, existing outside of Sentence Grammar and including interjections such as *Damn*, imperatives such as *Hold on*, and formulae of social exchange, such as *Good Morning*. Other structures addressed by Thetical Grammar include vocatives, and conceptual theticals, which may have once been categorized as sentential or sentence adverbials (e.g. Quirk et al 1985; Leech et al 1993), such as *frankly*, *unaccountably*, etc., e.g.:

(16) ICE-GB:S1B-015 #11:1:A

Quite **frankly** it's just not really worth our while running them for four people so that you know unless we can find an arrangement the whole class, finds useful.

Examples such as (16) are now viewed by Heine (2013) under the umbrella category of Discourse Grammar, which includes both Sentence Grammar and Thetical Grammar (similar to Haselow's 2016 macro-grammar). Additional members of the thetical group are mentioned in Heine et al (2017: 36): left-dislocated (preposed) topics, non-restrictive relative clauses and nominal appositions, and formulaic theticals, which may all behave in the same way as other theticals, being easily mobile and independent from the Sentence Grammar. Neither of these two last studies deal specifically with the right periphery as an attractor position for any particular discourse element, emphasizing more the need to consider the mobility of the thetical elements concerned as inherent, a process labelled 'co-optation'. This notion is defined in Heine et al (2017: 1, and Kaltenböck et al 2011: 874–5), as “a cognitive-communicative operation whereby some fragment of linguistic discourse is transferred from one domain of discourse to another”. Co-optation does not entail that a particular position in the discourse is more amenable to transfer than any other, as many co-opted items may be found in various positions in the discourse, depending on their particular function. However, Heine's (2013: 1238) hypothesis is that in some cases, the co-opted item is already an item of Sentence Grammar (for example, in the items *indeed*, *in fact*, and *besides*) and it serves a secondary function in its co-opted transfer to another position in the discourse.

In terms of Heine's (2013) criteria for theticals, it is difficult to determine how many of the criteria in (15) could be said to describe the use of RP-*either* in its early stages. (15e) and (15f) seem unproblematic, and (15a) may apply with conditions: it is not syntactically independent of negative scope if an additive focus marker is called for, but, at the same time, tag-questions, which have also been classed as discourse markers, have only partial independence too.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, without suitable spoken diachronic data, it is difficult to prove prosodic separation or non-restrictive meaning as relevant to earlier functions. In fact, in dealing with written evidence, it is not always certain whether prosodic separation can be determined. Heine (2013: 1229), citing Traugott (2012: 14), notes that punctuation cannot be used as a fool-proof means of determining prosodic contours in earlier historical texts, as it

<sup>9</sup> We are grateful to an anonymous referee for pointing this out.

seems to have often been added as a later embellishment. This may then apply to the differences between restrictive and non-restrictive meaning. Traugott (2015: 126) and (2016: 37) disagree with the proposal that boundaries between structural and prosodic units can be established by means of punctuation, and in the latter study, she notes that even in Old English, where punctuation was used prosodically for stylistic purposes, it was not sufficiently detailed to mark the clause-final contours of right-periphery markers. Even in contemporary English, ‘comma intonation’, marking structural or prosodic boundaries, is not necessarily detectable using automatic acoustic analyses, according to Traugott (2015: 126).

Heine’s (2013) proposals of co-optation followed by grammaticalization, then, seem to provide the most likely hypothesis to explain the rightward movement of *either*. It is implausible to suggest, in the framework of grammaticalisation processes, that an item, fully grammaticalised elsewhere as a (pre)determiner or a dual indefinite pronoun can otherwise ‘jump’ across constituent boundaries to be given a further grammatical function in the right periphery as an additive focus marker, restricted to following only negative elements appearing up-clause. The conditions for the structural movement of particles to final position have been discussed previously by Haselow (2014: 222-3) as associated with the admission of relatively loosely integrated, paratactic units into a syntactically tighter information structure, found as early as Early Modern English. Haselow (2014: 227) uses the example of sentence-final *though*, and stresses that such movement was related to typological changes from the former discourse-based information structure of English prior to Modern English, giving way to a more structured syntax, which requires particular functions to be grammaticalised into specific syntactic position slots. However, it is doubtful whether the changes in information structuring may apply as a general rule: Chinese and Malay are known for their topic-based, discourse-oriented information structure, and yet they are abundantly endowed with final particles of many kinds. Traugott (2016) also discusses the ‘movement’ to final position or the right periphery of numerous items in the history of English, and notes that some discourse markers have always been found at the right periphery (e.g. epistemic adverbs and epistemic clauses). The data surveyed in sections 5 and 6 will reveal that this may also have been the case with RP-*either*.

#### **4. Sociohistorical claims for the emergence of RP-*either***

Fitzmaurice (2012) provides a concise, sociohistorical account of the use of ‘double negation’ in Early Modern English, and its association, especially at later stages, with less-educated speech. Her account includes a great deal of discussion of the prescriptive grammarians of the day, and of the historical relevance of the feature to the rising importance of a standard variety of English at the time. She notes its appearance in the dialects of lower class or rural characters in plays written in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; and in particular, the use of *neither* in the scope of a preceding negative. There is little discussion on other possible examples of ‘double negation’ (such as *nothing* and other negative quantifiers coordinated with a negated verb), and the study focuses mainly on *either* as an alternative to the outcast *neither* being condemned as a final focus particle with the rising social consciousness of the need for ‘polite’ or educated usage. However, Fitzmaurice also notes *neither*’s earlier appearance in the dialects of more educated speakers, as is also evident in examples from historical literature:

(17) I think our happy situation owing to our constitution, but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part singly, owing in a great measure to what we have left standing in our several reviews and reformation as well as to what we have altered or superadded. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit in guarding what

they possess from violation. I would **not** exclude alteration **neither**, but even when I changed, it should be to preserve. E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 205. (1790)

This is the only example of an apparent ‘double negation’ using *neither* in this entire text, and from a brief search of the first 50 pages or so of the work cited, the writer, Edmund Burke, does not appear to have used any other form of ‘double negation’, indicating that this was not a typical characteristic of his writing.<sup>10</sup> So, according to Fitzmaurice (2012), this usage of the negative additive focus particle became stigmatized, especially during the 18th and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, when it was associated with less-educated dialects. It was, apparently, quickly replaced by RP-*either*, presumably on account of the absence of logic in the use of two negatives which would cancel out each other and create a positive meaning, something also reiterated by Jespersen (1917), in an entire chapter devoted to ‘double negation’. Jespersen, however, did not ignore the fact that certain double negations could be quite well understood not as negatives but as weakened versions of positives, such as *not uncommon*, which is not exactly synonymous with simply *common*, or that negation expressed through more than one element in the clause could merely be seen as a form of reinforcement (‘repeated’ negation).

Jespersen (1917 : 73) also mentions the presence of what he terms “resumptive” negation. This often has the appearance of double negation if the clause boundaries are not taken into account, and he lists *neither ... nor*, and *not even* as typical negative markers involved in this function, e.g. *He cannot sleep, not even after taking an opiate*, where resumptive *not* serves the function of emphasis via repetition, but could well be omitted without affecting truth conditions ; it is optional in such functions. Thus, it is obvious that at the time that Jespersen was writing this work, there was some ambiguity in terms of the difference between resumptive, emphatic repetition of negative elements and their superficial redundancy once integrated into the syntax of the preceding clause structure. His account of the prescriptive replacement of right periphery *neither* with *either* as a consequence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century efforts to eliminate ‘double negation’ as non-standard is slightly less than convincing, as he also alludes to the appearance of RP-*either* as far back as Shakespeare’s time, in weak negative polarity contexts (as also seen in Rullmann 2002). He is, furthermore, not convinced that the appearance in the right periphery of *neither* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was necessarily a predecessor to RP-*either* (Jespersen 1917 : 113), and includes an example from Shakespeare in which RP-*neither* appears after a preceding negative:

(18) Sh. Coos. I. 2. 238 I sawe Marke Antony offer him a crowne, yet ‘twas not a crowne  
**neyther**, ‘twas one of these coronets  
(Jespersen 1917: 114)

The question arises, then, why RP-*either* did not replace RP-*neither* at the time if both RP -*neither* and RP-*either* were used contemporaneously in Early Modern English. Obviously, it would seem there was no prescriptive stigmatization of its use at earlier times. It could also be questioned whether there was also a functional division of labour at the time, with RP-*neither* for the most part appearing at the end of negated clauses, as in (18) above, and RP-*either* mainly occurring in phrase-final positions, as shown in (7). Furthermore, there is still the question whether prescriptivist pressure can actually lead to change; Percy (2012) maintains that prescriptivism follows natural standardization processes, and reinforces them, though other studies have mentioned that the combination of prescriptivism with colloquialization (by

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<sup>10</sup> For example, there were no examples of a negative verb followed by *no* as a determiner, negative verbs were invariably followed by indefinite forms such as *anything/any/a/an*, and *nothing* as an object pronoun was always preceded by a positive verb throughout the entire essay. The negative correlative disjunction *nor*, though, is used prolifically.

which the norms of written usage begin to acquire more colloquial features) may lead to change (Szmrecsanyi 2015). Also to be considered are changes that would have taken place anyway, in any situation, because of the nature of the morphemes undergoing change, as shown typologically (e.g. Nevalainen 2006, see below), and it has been noted that negative concord started disappearing from Late Middle English long before the prescriptivism of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Percy 2012: 449). In order to investigate exactly how the replacement of RP-*neither* with RP-*either* actually did take place, an extensive diachronic survey was used to investigate if there was a correlation between the reduction in use of RP-*neither* and the acceleration in use of RP-*either*, and to determine the possible time-frame in which this occurred, if at all. The results of the study will be presented in the following section.

## 5. Historical data

For our quantitative study, we used the following corpora, the Helsinki Corpus (Early Modern English part), the CEMET (Corpus of Early Modern English Texts) and the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts (extended version)/CLMET(EV) (Diller et al. 2011).<sup>11</sup> The Early Modern English period (1500-1710) was covered by the combined corpora of the Helsinki Corpus, and the CEMET, together having a full word-count of 2,528,797 words. The CLMET(EV) mainly contains fictional works and covers the time-span from 1710 to 1920, thus spanning the precise period in which the use of RP-*either* allegedly started to emerge. For the manual analysis the *OED Online* was used in order to obtain spelling variants and all the corpora were searched using the AntConc concordance.<sup>12</sup> Because of the hypothesized correlation, we searched for *neither* along with *either* to determine whether *either* might have had an independent trajectory, and made its way to the RP anyway, given the trends of conjunctions with similar functions at the time. The examples provided in Gast (2013) clearly reveal that both *either* and *neither* and their antecedent forms were well established as determiners and/or pronouns in Old English, and thus were already grammaticalised in terms of primary grammaticalisation stages (Gast 2013 refers to them simply as quantifiers). The four periods (1500–1710, 1710–1780; 1780–1850, and 1850–1920) were searched, manually, and every instance of RP-*either* or *neither* was recorded and classified for type: Focus-particle Disjunctive (FPDisj), Focus-particle (FP), or ‘other’; the three categories were then sorted into phrase-final (P-F) occurrences, and clause-final (C-F) ones. In the categorization, instances of RP-*either/neither* occurring medially but at the right periphery of a subject NP, or immediately following the verb, were also included in the count. The objective of such classification was to add more substantial quantitative data to the hypothesis proposed by Rullmann (2002) that FP-Disj *either* diachronically preceded FP *either* (it is noted that in the earliest period (1500-1710), some cases classified as possible ‘resumptive’ uses appeared; these are discussed below). The overall results shown in the tables appear to support Rullmann’s hypothesis.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> URL: <https://perswww.kuleuven.be/~u0044428/clmet.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> For the Early Modern English period, the forms searched included *eyther/ether/ayther/ewther: neither/neither* (as listed in the *OED online*, as first accessed 22/03/16). *Eyther* was also searched in the 1710-1780 period.

<sup>13</sup> Distinctions between FP and FPDisj were made, regardless of negative scope, on the basis of whether RP-*either* was found at the right periphery of a disjunctive phrase or clause (co-ordinated by *or/nor*) (FP-Disj), or a conjunctive phrase or clause, which may be co-ordinated by *and* (FP).

Table 1: Absolute frequencies of *RP-either* and *RP-neither*, over four time periods of Modern English.

	Resumptive	<i>RP-either</i> <b>FP-Disj</b>	<i>RP-either</i> <b>FP</b>	TOTAL Res. & <i>RP-</i> <i>either</i>	TOTAL <i>RP neither</i>
1500-1710	7	8	3	18	94
1710-1780	-	18	8	26	220
1780-1850	-	71	78	149	75
1850-1920	-	56	187	243	32

As can be seen in Table 1, there is a decrease of *RP-neither*, in comparison to both types of *RP-either*, from the 18th century period to the last period. Table 2 shows the frequencies of weak negative polarity contexts relative to the gradual increase in strong negative polarity contexts for *RP-either*. There seems to be a significant increase of strong negative polarity contexts in the third period, relative to weak negative polarity contexts, which regress consistently throughout the time periods surveyed.

Table 2: Frequencies of weak negative polarity contexts relative to strong ones for *RP-either*, across all 4 periods.

	Weak negative polarity contexts %	Strong negative polarity contexts %	TOTAL <i>RP-</i> <i>either</i>
1500-1710	50	44.4 <sup>14</sup>	18
1710-1780	34.6	65.38	26
1780-1850	13.33	86.66	149
1850-1920	6.1	93.8	243

Table 3 shows the relative frequencies of *RP-either* and *RP neither*, normalised with respect to total word count of the corpora, showing the anti-correlation between the two forms.

Table 3 : Frequency normalised per million words of *RP-either* and *RP-neither* over all four periods.

Period and word-count	Resumptive	<i>RP-either</i> <b>FP-Disj</b>	<i>RP-either</i> <b>FP</b>	TOTAL <i>RP-either</i>	TOTAL <i>RP-neither</i>
1500-1710 (2.53m)	2.76	3.16	1.18	7.12	37.17
1710-1780 (3.04m)	-	5.91	2.63	8.55	72.36
1780-1850 (5.72m)	-	12.58	13.6	26.22	13.11
1850-1920 (6.25m)	-	8.96	29.92	38.88	5.12

The data shown in Table 3 above would suggest a clear correlation between the rise of *RP-either* and the decline of *RP-neither*: *RP-either* increases in frequency by over 546% and *RP-*

<sup>14</sup> One example, illustrated in (17) was not used in a negative polarity context.

*neither* decreases by nearly 726%. This is something that cannot be ignored in our analysis, and which leads to the hypothesis that RP-*either* was taking over the functions of RP-*neither*, in the genres represented in the corpora. The possible reasons for this change are addressed in section 6.

Tables 4- 5 illustrate the gradually increasing tendency for clause-final (CF) *either* to be gaining ground over phrase-final (PF) *either* in both Focus Particle (FP) functions as well as Focus Particle Disjunctive (FPDisj) ones, with clause-final FP functions rising to almost 64.2% of all uses by the final period.

Table 4: Absolute frequencies of resumptive and RP-*either* in Early Modern English (1500-1920), using the Helsinki Corpus, CEMET, and CLMET(EV) (total word counts for all corpora shown in Table 3, and total tokens of *either* in Table 6).

FPDisj= Focus particle disjunctive; FP = Focus particle; P-F = phrase-final; C-F = clause-final.

	Resumptive	FPDisj <i>either</i>		FP <i>either</i>		TOTALS
		PF	CF	PF	CF	
1500-1710	7	7	1	0	3	18
1710-1780	-	15	3	0	8	26
1780-1850	-	64	7	19	59	149
1850-1920	-	51	5	31	156	243

The category frequencies for RP-*either* may be compared with those of RP-*neither* for the same periods, in Table 5.

Table 5: Absolute frequencies of RP-*neither* in Early Modern English (1500-1920), using the Helsinki Corpus, CEMET, and CLMET(EV) (total word counts for all corpora are found in Table 3, and total token figures for *neither/nether/neither* in Table 6).

	FPDisj		FP		TOTALS
	PF	CF	PF	CF	
1500-1710	33	4	16	41	94
1710-1780	29	4	38	149	220
1780-1850	25	1	13	36	75
1850-1920	9	0	5	18	32

A comparison of the frequency of the total RP-*either* and RP-*neither* out of the total hits of *either* and *neither* for the periods surveyed is provided below.

Table 6. Summary comparison of the relative frequencies of RP-*either* and RP-*neither* as proportions of the total counts of *either* and *neither* over the four periods surveyed.

	Total <i>either</i>	RP- <i>either</i>	Total <i>neither</i>	RP- <i>neither</i>
1500-1710	1,583	1.13%	1,138	8.26%
1710-1780	4,874	0.53%	2,570	8.56%

1780-1850	3,176	4.69%	2,039	3.67%
1850-1920	3,458	7.02%	2,280	1.40%

The probability of finding *either* or *neither* at the right periphery across all four periods is therefore very low at any one time, although it is clearly shown that the frequency of RP-*either* at the most recent period (7.02%) is approaching that of RP-*neither* at the earliest period (8.26%). However, at the same time, the overall frequency of *either* declines between the late 18th century and the early 19th century, despite the increase in word count of the two sub-corpora (from 3.04m to 5.72m), so the more than 4% increase for RP-*either* shown across these two periods may be due to the gradual loss of other functions of *either*, for example, as suggested in the *OED* entry for *either*.<sup>15</sup> If this is the case, then it is more likely that RP-*either* was increasing in a restricted range of functions at that time, rather than expanding its range (this may be demonstrated in the increase of FP *either* relative to FPDisj *either* – Table 4). RP-*either* continues to increase in frequency during the last period (1850-1920), while RP-*neither* rapidly declines in use, in spite of the slight increase in the total number of *neither* (3,176 to 3,458). These changes will be discussed below.

Meanwhile, as noted earlier, previous work has postulated that RP-*either* has emerged as a more ‘correct’ alternative to RP-*neither* in order to avoid the redundant, illogical use of a negative concord in clauses containing strong negative polarity items. If the stigmatization of the previous variant, RP-*neither*, for the benefit of the new, more ‘correct’ variant, RP-*either*, is the main factor at stake, this replacement should be confirmed by the register of the examples in which the two variants appear during the replacement phase. In order to test this hypothesis, we have annotated the entries for RP-*neither* and RP-*either* according to the styles of the texts in which they appear. Based on several criteria, such as the presence of elements typical of colloquial or formal speech, or the complexity of its structure, each example containing RP-*neither* in CLMET(EV) was annotated independently as informal, informal+, formal, or formal+ (higher degrees of formality/informality indicated by + types). The following table illustrates the frequency of the this distribution.

Table 7. Subcategorization of frequency RP-*neither* and RP-*either* in CLMET(EV) (per million words) according to formality of text.

	RP- <i>neither</i>				RP- <i>either</i>			
	Informal+	Informal	Formal	Formal +	Informal +	Informal	Formal	Formal +
1710-1780	4.99	37.34	26.68	3.33	0	3.47	4.43	0
1780-1850	1.89	6.90	3.96	0.34	2.58	11.56	10.86	1.20
1850-1920	2.48	2.17	0.46	0	4.55	15.03	18.37	0.91

Examples include the following:

*Informal+*:

- (19) a. Of course it's a fact. Banns 'ull be oop come Sunday fortneeht. We've not 'idden it **neither**.

(a1911) Harold Brighthouse, *Lonesome-like*.  
CLMET(EV)3-0-3-324

<sup>15</sup> We are grateful to an anonymous referee for pointing this out.

*Informal:*

b. "And will you swear that the goods stolen," said the justice, "are worth forty shillings?"

"No, indeed, sir," answered Booth, "nor that they are worthy thirty **either**."

(1751) Henry Fielding, *Amelia*.

CLMET(EV)3-0-1-24

*Formal:*

c. Lady Glyde, who watched her as attentively as I did, discovered nothing **either**.

(1859-60) Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White*.

CLMET(EV)3-0-3-203

*Formal+:*

d. But, in the former, part and whole cannot be causally connected and the relation which we assert to exist between them may exist even though the parts are not causally connected **either**.

(1903) G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*.

CLMET(EV)3-0-3-311

At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, RP-*neither* was by far predominant and its register was rather standard (slightly informal because final particles are in general more frequent in colloquial conversations than in formal, written English). The tables show clearly that its register evolved through the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries as it is used less and less in formal registers, leading to being mainly used in very informal registers from the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Conversely, RP-*either* emerged in the 1780-1850 corpus in slightly more formal contexts than its dominant competitor RP-*neither*, with a combined frequency in such contexts of 12.06 per million words, as against 4.3 pmw for formal RP-*neither* at the same time period. RP-*either*'s register range has diversified slowly and becomes more informal by the 20<sup>th</sup> century (compatible with all registers, but more frequent in informal contexts).

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Initial analyses : RP-*either*

The correlations shown in the data in Section 5 clearly reflect a general trend for first, an increase in the frequency of FP *either* relative to FP-Disj *either*, and secondly, a significant drop in the use of RP-*neither* at the same time over a period of 200 years from 1710. Such data do suggest the functional replacement of RP-*neither* by negative-polarity *either* in accordance with the earlier studies discussed above. The question is how such a replacement could have taken place, given that RP-*either* and RP-*neither* have both shared some functions in co-existence from the time of Shakespeare. But it is also questioned whether all the functions of RP-*either* and RP-*neither* were interchangeable at that time.

Earlier than that, we see examples which could be labelled 'resumptive', as they appeared to be post-posed, occurring in apposition to the noun or noun phrase immediately preceding them, often reinforcing a preceding quantifier, and followed by a post-modifying prepositional phrase. The following examples are from the CEMET corpus:

(20) Two scholemasters haue set forth in print, **either of them** a booke, of soch kinde of latines,

'Two schoolmasters have set forth in print, *both of them*, a book of such kind of Latin ..'

(1570) Ascham, *The Scholemaster*

(21) Luther wyll saye that he can not conceyue  
Of the whiche I meruayle gretly. Sithen it is manyfest  
that Aaron was called in scrypture. & yf he  
were & Moyses was no whit benethe  
hym. than must they two **eyther of them** be  
one of them vnder another in comparyson of the other  
people.

‘Luther will say that he cannot conceive of that which I greatly marvelled. Since it is manifest that Aaron was called in scripture and if he were and Moses was not beneath him, then must they two, *both of them*, be one of them under another in comparison with the other people.’

(1500-1570) *Sermons by John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester.*  
Ed. J.E.B. Mayor.

In both such examples, the older, universal meaning of *either*, ‘both’, is retained, but from the disambiguating use of *they two* preceding *either* in (21) it is clear that the existential uses were also possible at the time. In such examples, they are positioned medially, rather than at the right periphery of a sentence. In later contexts, the use of *either* could be ambiguous between a universal meaning and an existential one:

(22) For in them the variation of great parcels of matter alters not the identity : an oak growing from a plant to a great tree, and then lopped, is still the same oak ; and a colt grown up to a horse, sometimes fat, sometimes lean, is all the while the same horse : though, in both these cases, there may be a manifest change of the parts ; so that truly they are not **either of them** the same masses of matter, though they be truly one of them the same oak, and the other the same horse.

(1632), Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

(23) Sec. 221. There is therefore, secondly, another way whereby governments are dissolved, and that is, when the legislative, or the prince, **either of them**, act contrary to their trust.

(1632), Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*

We have already observed that, in terms of its diachronic development, the earlier appearances of the determiner/pronoun *either* are seen as a grammaticalisation from a quantifier in Old English meaning ‘both’ and then acquiring existential meaning ‘either’ by Middle English from its use in non-veridical contexts (Gast 2013). Remnants of the universal meanings of ‘both’ rather than the existential meanings of *either* today are seen to persist into the Early Modern English period, as shown in the examples above. The functions of *either* in such uses are, arguably, those of a resumptive pronominal quantifier (postmodified with a prepositional phrase), as they refer anaphorically to full NP antecedents (an oak tree and a horse, in (22) and ‘the legislative’ or ‘the prince’, in (23)). Such constructions are seen to have preceded the rise of RP-*either*, though there are some examples found in later periods of the corpus as well.<sup>16</sup> It is tempting to suggest that their medial positioning may have led to the right-postposing of *either* to phrase-final or clause-final position, though their lingering occurrence in later examples does not confirm this; the few later examples are always found

<sup>16</sup> These have not been included in the final totals of the later periods as they appear to be of a different category. A total of 15 similar examples (0.13% of all *either* tokens) were recovered from between 1710-1920 in CLMET(EV), followed by the prepositional phrases *of them*, *of us*, and *of you*, and mainly found in colloquial dialogue. Similar examples with *neither* were found also, but not following verbal negation.

medially, with little likelihood of ambiguity with RP-*either*. Only those preceded by negation (e.g. 22) could be said to be interchangeable with RP-*neither*. The following sections (6.1.1-6.1.4) will illustrate some of the types of contexts in which RP-*either* emerged across the three periods of the CLMET(EV) data.

### 6.1.1 *Free-choice either*

In the earliest RP-*either* examples of the 16th and 17th century, the existential meanings are continued in the FP-Disj right periphery uses, as found in the CEMET corpus (24-25):

(24) This Question is thought to be frivolous by all that are of Mr. Badmans way; 'tis also difficult in it self: yet I will endeavour to shape you an Answer, and that first to the matter of the question; to wit, How a Tradesman should, in Trading, keep a good conscience; (A buyer or seller **either**.)

(1680) Bunyan, *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*.

These are the types of RP-*either* that Jespersen (1917: 113) had described as ‘afterthought adverbs’, functioning to emphasise the “existence of alternatives”. However, the scope of *either* remains at phrase-level in (24) with no negation in the preceding clause, though still appearing in a non-veridical context. It could not, therefore, have been substituted with RP-*neither* in such contexts which require a negation or N-word in the host clause, and the early appearance of these examples testifies to the likelihood that RP-*either* emerged independently as a free-choice, indefinite pronominal quantifier (see Gast (2013), post-posed at the right-periphery of a phrasal disjunction.<sup>17</sup>

A later example of the ‘free-choice’ types appears in the 19th century, though these are rare at this stage, as negative contexts are providing the highest frequencies:

(25) You seem surprised, and well you may; but this is the fact. A young fellow who has a pension for life, aye, or an old fellow **either**, will easily get a wife to enjoy it with him, and he will, I'll warrant him, take care that she shall not be old

(1822-6) William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*.  
CLMET(EV) 03-02-114

The use of *either* in (25), pre-verbally, would not be found in present-day uses, and appears to be more reflective of a post-posed quantifier than an additive marker. As such, it could express more a discourse-based, thetical function, and like (7) and (24), (25) is syntactically independent of its host environment and can be omitted without altering the truth conditions. As also in the previous examples, the function remains existential, where *either* is post-posed at the end of a phrase containing two alternative options. In (25) RP-*either* refers to the free choice of the preceding alternatives, *a young fellow* or *an old fellow (either)*, and could not possibly be substituted with RP-*neither*; the appearance of *either* is justified solely by the host disjunction.

### 6.1.2 *Conditionals and comparatives*

Similar uses to (24-25) are found in conditional clauses, another weak negative polarity context. An example of such contexts appears in the 1710-1780 section of CLMET(EV):

(26) so that we were supplied with breakfast-meat for the whole voyage, and full of provisions of one kind or other. In the afternoon there came to us a messenger, to know what I

<sup>17</sup> ‘Free choice’ implies (as in Haspelmath 1997) that referential identity is unimportant – in the present case, the identity of the two antecedent entities with which RP-*either* has co-reference.

would take for the ransom of the town and ship; to which I answered, I would have 10,000 pieces of eight, and those to be paid in twenty-four hours, if they intended to save the town, or ship **either**.

(1773-4) Henry David, *An Historical Account of all the Voyages around the World, Performed by English Navigators* (p. 161)  
CLMET(EV) 03-1-29

The use in (26) would rarely be found in today's English, and the *OED* provides only three such examples. In (26) the 10,000 pieces of eight mentioned earlier would be offered if either the town or the ship were to be saved, a context which overlaps with that of the free-choice examples.

More FPDisj examples of weak negative polarity contexts from the 18th century data include those in the scope of a comparative:

(27) a. I wish not now, at the writing of this, to see even my cousin Morden. O, my blessed woman! My dear maternal friend! I am entering upon a better tour than to France or Italy **either**!--or even than to settle at my once-beloved Dairy-house!-

(1748) Samuel Richardson,  
*Clarissa*.  
(CLMET(EV) 03-1-9)

b. What the devil, is all this for, interrupted the old soldier? Was this harangue necessary, said he, to let us know you were a Christian? I always honoured religion, as much as you, or any scholar of Oxford, or Cambridge, **either**; ay, by as much as the chaplain of our regiment, himself, who, by the Lord, was as honest, and jolly a fellow, as any of the corps.

(1764) Richard Griffith. *The Triumvirate*.  
(CLMET(EV) 03-1-79)

In (27b) it appears that the comma punctuation has been added to disambiguate the scope of RP-*either* as unrestricted to three alternatives: *you, or any other scholar of Oxford, or Cambridge*, though this cannot be ascertained, as it could have been the result of later text-editing (there are many earlier indications of the loss of the dual meaning of *either* in other contexts). If it was intended to show unrestricted scope, it suggests that the meaning of *either* was beginning to lose its dual reference and additive senses were becoming more central to the meaning. It was examples such as these that contributed to the relatively large number of weak negative polarity contexts supporting RP-*either* in the 18th century period, 34.6% of the total RP-*either*, which dropped to 13.33% in the 1780-1850 period, and only 6.1% in the 1850-1920 period. The EME period showed that 50% of the tokens of RP-*either* had been associated with such contexts, while less than half (44.4%) were found in strong negative polarity contexts; thus, it appears that strong negative polarity contexts were on the increase from the 18th century onwards. In accordance with such changes, the majority of earlier uses appeared at the end of a phrasal disjunction, rather than following a clause, as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

### 6.1.3 Direct and indirect negation

Although Table 1 illustrates that FP-Disjunctive *either* (as shown in (24-27)) was more frequent at earlier periods than FP *either*, the latter type was not totally absent in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as seen in *Pepys' Diary* (cited from the CEMET corpus):

(28) After broke up and walked a turn or two with Lord Brouncker talking about the times, and he tells me that he thinks, and so do every body else, that the great business of putting out some of the Council to make room for some of the Parliament men to gratify and wheedle them is over, thinking that it might do more hurt than good, and not obtain much upon the Parliament **either**.

(1667-8) *Pepys' Diary*.

Thus, (28) illustrates that RP-*either* could appear in the context of clausal negation, or strong negative polarity contexts as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> century, though it was not frequent at the time. Early 18<sup>th</sup>-century use of clause-final, FP *either* included the following:

(29) a. You say, "How came I not to see Duc d'Aremberg?" I did once at the opera; but he went away soon after: and here it is not the way to visit foreigners, unless you are of the Court, or are particularly in a way of having them at your house: consequently Sir R. never saw him **either**-we are not of the Court!

(1735-69) Horace Walpole, *Letters*.  
(CLMET(EV) 03-1-44)

Such examples are classified by the presence of direct negation in the host clause, marked either by a negated verb or by the presence of an N-word in the context, as in (26a) (*never*). Also frequent during the 18<sup>th</sup> century were examples of phrase-final, FPDisj uses of RP-*either* in the scope of indirect negation:

(29) b. My dear, you will not offer any violence to your health?--I hope, God has given you more grace than to do that. I hope he has, Madam. But there is violence enough offered, and threatened, to affect my health; and so it will be found, without my needing to have recourse to any other, or to artifice **either**.

1748. Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa*.  
CLMETS(EV)3-01-9

Such examples have been classified as associated with weak negative polarity contexts, as with conditionals and comparatives above. (30) is also in the scope of direct negation (strong negative polarity) and most likely reflects a working-class dialect of the time, that of a housemaid, and.

(30) I was scarce dressed the next Morning, when Matilda's favourite Maid enter'd my Chamber and bid me good Morrow. Mrs. Susan, said I, your pleasant Countenance bids me presume that Miss Golding is better. — O, vastly better, vastly better, Sir, I assure you; she slept sweetly all the Night, and did not want for happy Dreams **either**, I warrant.

(1765-70), Henry Brooke, *The Fool of Quality*.  
(CLMET(EV)3-0-1-21)

In all these examples (28-30), while RP-*either* is always licensed either by a negation in the host clause, there is a weak negative polarity licenser in the antecedent clause (e.g. a modal verb in (28)). In (29a) negation also appears in a question earlier in the context: *How came I not to see Duc d'Aremberg?* as well as and in the host clause ( $\sim A + \sim B$  either) – neither the speaker nor Sir R. had seen the Duke of Aremberg. Thus, the negated proposition in both clauses is logically equivalent to the negation of the two focused alternatives in a disjunction :  $\sim A$  or  $\sim B$ , *either*. In (29b) RP-*either* is phrase-final, weakly licensed in the scope of indirect

negation linked to the preposition *without*. In (30) though, there is no negation in the antecedent clause, and the two ‘alternatives’ are that Miss Golding slept sweetly (A) and that she had no lack of happy dreams ( $\sim$ B). With no negation (or negative polarity licenser) in the antecedent clause, these two propositions cannot be considered as free-choice alternatives. Instead,  $\sim$ B is merely an addition to the propositional content of A ( $A + \sim$ B, *either*), and there is no logical interdefinability with a negated disjunctive possible ( $\sim$ A (n)or  $\sim$ B) that could justify equivalence with a negated conjunctive expression. RP-*either* instead serves unambiguously as a marker of added focus at the end of a conjunction, of which only the second member is negated.

The increase in number of RP-*either* in the later two periods of the CLMET(EV) corpus (1780-1850, and 1850-1920) was thus due mainly to the increase in clause-final uses, which would coincide with a rise in strong negative polarity contexts: RP-*either* was gradually grammaticalising from a post-posed quantifier with *or* or *nor* linking two NPs in its disjunctive function (FPDisj), to a final focus particle (FP) of a conjunctive construction in which two clauses are linked, as its scope widened. The broadening of scope from phrase-level to clause-level associated with the development of RP-*either* is not unfamiliar to the grammaticalisation of conjunctions out of prepositions (such as *before*, *after*, and *since*, e.g., Hopper and Traugott 2003), and we have noted above that both Tabor and Traugott (1998) and Himmelmann (2004) have discussed scope-widening as typical of grammaticalisation processes. Heine (2018: 35) also refers to the development of discourse markers as leading to scope extension in the same way. However, the disappearance of many earlier environments of weak negative polarity still requires explanation: grammaticalization is usually cumulative, involving layering of one stage or function over another for a considerable length of time before the former stages disappear, if at all. This will be discussed further below.

#### 6.1.4 *Scalar and contradictory functions*

The shift from FPDisj functions, when RP-*either* appeared at the end of two linked nouns or noun phrases, to FP functions at the end of a conjunction of two clauses, was not entirely abrupt, and examples are found which appear to mark an intermediate stage. Until the second period (1780-1850), FP *either*, which did not occur at the end of a disjunction, had been confined to appearing at the end of clausal conjunctive constructions rather than phrasal; by the later period of the 18th century, a total of 19 tokens were found in which it occurred as a phrase-final marker (see Table 4).

This ‘intermediate’ type, appearing at the end of a conjunctive or co-ordinate phrase, was rare in the earlier data, and only began to appear towards the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. Apart from one or two examples in which the bulk of the clausal material had been simply ellipted, the majority of the FP, non-disjunctive, phrase-final examples were of two types. One type contained an additional piece of ‘afterthought’ information in which a referent occurring in the antecedent clause was commented on, e.g:

- (31) a. One of these fields had been thus ploughed and cross-ploughed in the month of June, and I saw the ground when it was lying in lumps of the size of portmanteaus, and not very small ones **either**.

1822-26, William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*.

CLMET(EV) 02-114

- b. Abarbenel. Not to suppose, but to know it. There are many such as I amongst the priesthood, and not amongst the inferior priesthood **either**;

1842. George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain*.

CLMET(EV) 02-164.

Examples similar to these seem to illustrate a function of an almost scalar nature, in which they could be interchangeable with another focus particle, *even* (*and not even very small ones*), as in (31a). Haspelmath (1997: 157) notes that in many languages, indefiniteness markers are identical to scalar focus particles meaning ‘even’ or ‘also’ the reason being that many free-choice indefinite pronouns share with scalar focus particles the expression of negative and negative-polarity functions; i.e., those that are associated with the lowest endpoint on a pragmatic scale (1997: 164). They are crucial to the grammaticalisation hypothesis, as, along with examples such as (30), it is at this stage that no traces of the original dual, lexical meaning of the quantifier *either* could possibly be invoked: the two NPs of the conjunction *portmanteaus (and) not very small portmanteaus, either, or the priesthood (and) not the inferior priesthood*, can hardly be placed as alternatives in free choice with one another. Since there is no negation in the antecedent, the conjunctive function ((~A and ~B) is no longer interdefineable with a negated disjunction (~A or ~B), as seen above also for (30). These may be described as ‘isolating contexts’ (see Traugott 2012 ; Diewald 2002), also described in Heine (2002) as ‘switch’ contexts, or a context in which a grammaticalising item becomes incompatible with earlier stages of grammaticalisation. Moreover, as in (30), the licensing of RP-*either* is obtained solely by the presence of negation in the host clause, and the function of *either* has been extended to provide focus on the comment in its host clause, which negates a property attributed to a referent in the antecedent (A + ~ (attr.) A, *either*). Thus the initial function of RP-*either* described by Jespersen (1917) as presenting the ‘existence of alternatives’ is no longer possible in such uses. RP-*either*, now, undoubtedly, serves as only an additive focus particle like *too* in non-negative contexts.

Alongside such examples also appeared other, similar cases in which the host phrase or clause of RP-*either* represented a denial or a contradiction of an earlier proposition, sometimes that of an interlocutor, but also self-contradicting uses; e.g.:

(32) Not now, poor Paul, thou lookest wistful over the Solway brine, by the foot of native Criffel, into blue mountainous Cumberland, into blue Infinitude; environed with thrift, with humble friendliness; thyself, young fool, longing to be aloft from it, or even to be away from it. Yes, beyond that sapphire Promontory, which men name St. Bees, which is not sapphire **either**, but dull sandstone, when one gets close to it, there is a world.

(1837), Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution*.  
CLMET(EV)3- 02-152

(33) 'My dear Dombey,' replied Cleopatra, what a courtier you are! Though I'll not say so, **either**; for courtiers have no heart, and yours pervades your farming life and character.

(1844) Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son*.  
CLMET(EV)3-02-177

These types also start to appear towards the end of the 18th century and in the early 19th century, and often associated with informal dialogue. Such uses are equally incompatible with the former functions of FP Disjunctive *either*, since a contradiction cannot form a meaningful free choice alternative in a disjunction (‘you are a courtier and not a courtier, either’: A or ~A, *either*). Thus, it is clear that in such examples, as well as in those discussed above (31), the function of *either* had developed into a mere additive particle serving to focus on an element in its host clause or phrase, but at the same time restricted to occurrence in (mainly strong) negative polarity contexts, in paradigmatic opposition to the final additive marker *too*.

## 6.2 RP *Neither*

The main differences between RP-*either* and RP-*neither* appearing in our data, apart from the fact that the relative frequency of RP-*neither* is almost the reverse of that of RP-*either* for each period, reveal largely that RP-*neither* is rarely found outside of strong negative polarity contexts, right from the earlier period of Early Modern English (1500-1710). Moreover, unlike RP-*either*, which gradually decreases in frequency in weak negative polarity contexts, or in simple ‘free choice’ disjunctive contexts, extending instead to strong negative polarity contexts, RP-*neither*, found mainly in strong negative polarity contexts, does not reverse this trend and retreat back to weak negative polarity contexts as it is replaced by RP-*either*. Instead, it recedes to mainly non-standard, or regional dialectal use as its former standard functions as an apparent, negative concord item are renovated by RP-*either*. In the EME period, the number of phrase-final, FP Disjunctive to clause-final, FP uses for RP-*neither* is 33 to 41 (respectively) (Table 5) and the proportions of clause-final, FP uses rises dramatically in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by over 300%. However, this figure declines even more dramatically from 149 to 36 (by over 400%) between the periods 1710-1780 and 1780-1850, corresponding with the rise of FP *either* in the same functions. In the earliest period (1500-1710), the total number of RP-*neither* was nearly two-thirds more than that of the last period (1850-1920) (94 as against 32). It is also clear that RP *neither* was already well-established as a final additive marker from the EME period, as examples of the critical, ‘contradictory’ or ‘denial’ contexts are quite frequent in the CEMET corpus (see also (18) above):

(34) Marry, madam, I wish I were worthy to be asked the question by all the fine dancing, dressing, song-making fops in town.' 'And you would yield,' replied Sylvia. 'Not so **neither**,' replied Antonet, 'but I would spark myself, and value myself the more upon it.

(1694), Behn, *Love-letters between a Nobleman and his Sister*.

The use of *neither* in (34) could not logically be read as referring anaphorically to any antecedent propositions (that the speaker neither yield or not yield), and thus the function is purely additive, with focal emphasis on the denial of the previous speaker’s statement. The early appearance of such examples indicates that the grammaticalisation of RP-*neither* as an additive focus marker was well advanced by the time of Shakespeare, and was not competing with most functions of RP-*either* at the time.

It remains to account for the means by which RP-*either* gradually replaced the functions of RP-*neither*. It could be argued that the grammaticalization of RP-*either* could have taken place with no reference to RP-*neither* at all, as suggested earlier, and this is believed to be the case, at least initially. RP-*either*, as an indefinite, dual quantifier, appears to have been following a typical grammaticalization path in which its functions generalized from those in which it could express free-choice, dual alternatives, to those in which it required a negation in the host element to licence its usage. Nevalainen (2006) points out that the shift of indefinite pronouns from weak to strong negative polarity contexts (and from indirect to direct negative functions) is typical of crosslinguistic, typological patterns, and has been illustrated in Haspelmath’s (1997) semantic map model, a model which has been adapted to apply to diachronic situations by Van der Auwera and Plungian (1998), for example. The series of contextual developments illustrated in 6.1.1-6.1.4 (questions (as in (7), free choice, conditionals, comparatives, direct negation and scalar focus) may be readily compared with the contextual generalizations illustrative of indefinite pronouns discussed in Haspelmath (1997). The minimalizing function of indefinite pronouns as end-points on a scale also justifies their progression to scalar functions, as shown in (31) in our data, and in the subsequent grammaticalization to express additive focus.

The generalization of indefinite pronouns from weak, non-assertive negative polarity contexts to stronger, negative polarity contexts in the scope of negation is seen to illustrate a widening of conceptual space of non-assertives (Nevalainen 2006, after Croft 2003: 137). The earlier predominance of RP-*either* in weak negative polarity contexts or disjunctions is thus not unusual, given that RP-*either* may be considered to be in the same category of indefinite quantifiers (Haspelmath makes no clear distinction between quantifiers and indefinite pronouns (1997 : 233)). Thus, we have seen above that the early diachronic picture suggests that RP-*either* was used in free-choice contexts, spreading to weak negative polarity contexts (such as questions, conditionals, and comparatives) following the universal pathway of its paradigmatic companions such as *any* and *ever*, where strong negative polarity contexts licensed the forms later than weak negative polarity contexts (Nevalainen 2006: 275). Thus the generalization and increasing spread to strong negative polarity contexts can be given a universal explanation, and it can be argued that RP-*either*, in its earliest stages, must have been classifiable as an indefinite, appositive, free choice pronoun. However, unlike other indefinite pronouns and quantifiers, *either* at the right periphery did not retain all of its former uses in weak negative polarity contexts, as seen above: some uses in questions, comparatives, and conditional clauses are doubtful licensors for RP-*either* in today's English. The loss of earlier stages is not typical of ordinary grammaticalization paths, or semantic maps either, but a co-opted element may represent a different type of evolution as the normal grammaticalisation paths are broken by an intervening stage in which the item functions as a thetical.

It is likely that the grammaticalisation of the dual quantifier *either* in post-negative, final position would have caused its own disappearance from some non-negative, non-veridical final positions elsewhere, since the strengthened negative polarity contexts would have resulted in a syntactic dependency on verbal negation in such contexts which would be felt to be lacking in other uses in weaker negative polarity contexts and some non-assertive clauses at later stages. This could be explained as a form of hypoanalysis (Croft 2000: 126), in which a contextual semantic or functional property is reanalyzed as a property of a syntactic unit occurring in it. With such a reanalysis, RP-*either* now takes on some of the negative semantics of the contexts in which it is used, which results in a greater restriction of use and its eventual obsolescence in some weaker negative polarity contexts. The pronoun and determiner functions of *either* which are not found at the right periphery continue to appear in weak negative polarity contexts, unaffected by the shifts taking place elsewhere.

The process by which RP-*either* took over and replaced RP-*neither* appears as a process of renovation or renewal in grammaticalization (Lehmann 1995/2015 ; Traugott and Hopper 2003: 122), by which an older formal means of expressing a grammatical function may be replaced by a new form, so ensuring semantic continuity. The gradually-expanding functions of RP-*either* from weak negative polarity to strong negative polarity contexts, and finally to expressing additive focus at the end of a negative clause, had thus obviated the need to maintain such functions with RP-*neither*, after which it then became virtually obsolete, to be used only in dialectal domains and non-standard speech, e.g. (19a). It is quite likely that the stigmatism of its apparent negative concord was coloured by its associations with such recessive, dialectal usage, rather than a deliberate, institutionalised attempt to replace one of the remnants of prolonged, historical usage.

A likely pathway for the development of RP-*either* from the time of Early Modern English, then, can now be schematized in the following:

### **I. Stage 1:**

Co-opted pronominal quantifier, post-posed in phrase-final position as a free-choice indefinite.

## II. Stage 2:

Secondary grammaticalisation as an additive focus marker (FPDisj) in weak negative polarity contexts (RP-*neither* still used in most strong negative polarity contexts)

## III. Stage 3:

Renovation of RP-*neither* with RP-*either* in strong negative polarity contexts;  
Grammaticalisation of FP-*either* as an additive focus marker.

## IV. Stage 4:

Hypoanalysis of RP-*either* in strong negative polarity contexts + subsequent loss in some weak negative polarity contexts.

The following contextual changes summarise observed evidence of the grammaticalization and the accompanying desemanticization of the source meanings of a co-opted, dual quantifier, as it evolved to become an additive focus particle.

Table 8. Contextual changes revealing evidence of the grammaticalization of an additive focus particle from a co-opted, dual quantifier.

	<b>Less grammaticalized stages</b>	<b>More grammaticalized stages</b>
1.	Retrospective scope extends over linked disjunctive NPs (FPdisj), e.g. (24)	Retrospective scope extends over linked coordinate clauses (FP), e.g. (28)
2.	Retrospective focus is on two NP referents (e.g. 26).	Retrospective focus is on two textual propositions (e.g. (29a).
3.	Occurs at the RP of a noun or NP (e.g. (24-27)	Can occur at the RP of other word classes (e.g. (32)
4.	Requires at least two alternative antecedent elements (e.g. (27)	No longer requires alternative elements as antecedents (e.g. 31)
5.	Both alternatives in scope of negative polarity (e.g. 29a)	Negative polarity scope only required in the host constituent (e.g. 31-33)

The stages and changes listed above do not, of course, occur in precise chronological sequence: we have seen above that isolated occurrences of FP *either*, occurring clause-finally, can be found as early as the 17th century, e.g. (28), with strong negative polarity only appearing in the host clause; however, the data shown in Tables 4-5 clearly illustrate a trend indicating that the gradual reanalysis of a post-posed, ‘afterthought’ dual quantifier to become a final additive particle with a function similar to *too* in non-negative polarity contexts was most frequent in the 1780-1850 period, when the frequency of RP-*either* increased by nearly 600% and the frequency of RP-*neither* fell by around 300%. The contextual changes shown in 6.1.1-4 bear witness to the expansion of the focal scope of RP-*either* and its relative decrease in many earlier, phrasal disjunctive functions.

Regarding the prescriptivist hypothesis, it may be said that there was a clear consciousness that RP-*neither* was non-standard, and thus to be avoided, as evidenced in several grammar texts of the day (cited in Fitzmaurice 2012), which must have assisted in its disappearance or demotion to colloquial, dialectal usage. But the gradual shifting of RP-*neither* towards non-standard usage could only have been the end-result of the independent spread of RP-*either* to FP (that is, clause-final) positions, which require a negation of the verb as well (yielding concord with *neither*). RP-*neither*, already found in clause-final positions during Shakespeare's time and perfectly standard, was simply ousted. The renewal took place because RP-*either*, following the semantic development of other indefinite pronouns, had

moved from free choice to weak negative polarity contexts, and finally to strong negative polarity contexts, with the result that there were now two forms expressing one function. It is therefore necessary to balance the sociohistorical argument with the universalist one.

## 7. Conclusions

At least one question remains, though: did the renewal by RP-*either* force RP-*neither* into recessive, stigmatized use? Or did the mere availability of RP-*either* make RP-*neither* appear archaic to speakers of the day, resulting in its less frequent standard use? Although the renewal of RP-*neither* by RP-*either* may have influenced the sociolinguistic demotion of RP-*neither* to non-standard status, it was much later than the earlier disappearance of negative concord in other contexts around the late Middle English times, as noted above. These questions require a much closer look at the sociohistorical facts surrounding other, similarly post-posed quantifiers than is possible within present scope.

The earlier research by Rullmann (2002) has been now extended in the present study to survey a much larger corpus of data from the Early Modern English period until the early 20th century, and another pioneering work on the early history of RP-*either*, Gast (2013) has been developed further to cover the historical stages that it followed subsequent to Middle English times. It is clear from the data surveyed that RP-*either* was co-opted as a post-posed, dual indefinite quantifier, first in weak negative polarity contexts and having scope over a phrasal constituent, before expanding its scope to cover a clausal host with verbal negation and thus a strong negative polarity context. The gradual expansion of the retrospective scope of RP-*either* resulted in its renewal or renovation, in a process of secondary grammaticalization, of the former functions of RP-*neither* which had been used to express negative additive focus at least since Early Modern English. Thus, the theoretical framework of Heine (2013), in which grammaticalization is seen to follow co-optation is clearly apparent in the present study, in which RP-*either*, formerly an optional, free-choice indefinite quantifier in non-veridical contexts (as in (7)), becomes increasingly obligatory to use when an additive focus marker in negative scope is called for. The role of prescriptivism in this replacement is questionable, and remains for further studies to ascertain, as does the likelihood that other post-posed quantifiers may have had similar historical pathways. The present study is only the tip of the iceberg in advancing such areas of research, but nevertheless may open a window for many future endeavours to come.

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