

Re: was did

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- *From:* "Peter T. Daniels" <grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Thu, 18 Sep 2008 04:19:27 -0700 (PDT)
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On Sep 18, 2:18 am, John Swindle <jcswin...@xxxxxxx> wrote:

On Wed, 17 Sep 2008 13:28:52 -0700 (PDT), "Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Sep 17, 2:39 pm, John Swindle <jcswin...@xxxxxxx> wrote:

On Wed, 17 Sep 2008 05:32:12 -0700 (PDT), "Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Sep 17, 1:17 am, John Swindle <jcswin...@xxxxxxx> wrote:

...
I grew up in North America
and still live in the United
States
(although not in North
America), and I can tell you
how to construct
those, or how I do it
anyway. Write an e-mail
message. Use a "was"
construction. Go back and
change it to a "did"
construction, but
forget to delete the "was."
Et voila. (Ett VOY-la.) I
can't imagine
that those are anything but
typos. -

Did you "grow up in NA" before 1980?

Re: was did

You claim to live in Hawai`i and that the construction is not used there?

Right on both counts! So far as I know.

It's hard to say that a construction is not used, but "was did" is certainly unfamiliar. I suspect that the examples represent careless writing or editing and that the writers would not use it in their own speech.

You have however heard it widely, and if others have heard it too then I'm obviously mistaken.

Have others heard it too?

The linguists who wrote the AmSp article that analys... found certainly have ...

(is is, not was did)

Sure. But "was did" is something else: a typo.

Of course "was did" could work just fine in a context like "Only when he looked back and saw who it was did he abandon the idea of singing 'The Internationale' at her wedding."—

Of course it's not a typo, or there wouldn't be so many examples so easily findable. And you have no idea how many more examples there are with any other verb and any other sequence of auxiliaries.

And the set of examples included no examples of "who it was did he" literary-style inversions.

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