

Knowing our contextualized (hi)story means being able to understand ourselves and how the world works. This kind of knowledge is key to self-awareness and self-empowerment, which also have a close connection with how we use language to communicate, to develop social interactions, to build relationships and to project our identity.

The diachronic evolution of languages is therefore a crucial part of a social being's historical situatedness. The account of this evolution, i.e. historical linguistics, has traditionally focused on formal aspects of language as a grammatical system, investigating changes affecting or reflected in orthography, phonetics-phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary. More recently, however, scholarly attention has broadened its scope to include functional aspects of language use, such as strategies and conventions of communicative practices over time, thus giving rise to historical pragmatics. In this special issue, the contributions encompass three main areas within historical pragmatics: language use in earlier periods (pragmaphilology), the development of language use (diachronic pragmatics) and causes of language change (discourse-oriented historical linguistics). In particular, the papers offer complementary insights into communicative affordances, examining interactional strategies in classical languages, politeness phenomena in grammar and discourse, the evolution of discursive practices, the pragmatic use of lexemes and the teaching of sociopragmatics.

Significantly, the issue presents a cross-linguistic approach, since it considers pragmatic phenomena in English, Korean, Italian, Slavonic languages, Ancient Greek and Latin, thus helping us understand how current discursive forms are in fact both unique and comparable in several languages and cultures.

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Doing things with words across time. Snapshots of communicative practices in and from the past

a cura di
Sara Gesuato
Marina Dossena
Daniela Cesiri

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LINGUE E LINGUAGGI

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SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “Language use across time: What you didn’t know you’ve always wanted to know about historical pragmatics”

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CHAPTERS



INTRODUCTION

IRMA TAAVITSAINEN, SARA GESUATO
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*To be ignorant of what occurred
before you were born
is to remain always a child.
For what is the worth of human life,
unless it is woven into the life
of our ancestors by the records of history?*
(Marcus Tullius Cicero
“Orator”, 46 BCE, chapter 34, section 120,
H. M. Hubbell “Cicero: Brutus, Orator”, 1939,
Engl. trans. p. 395).

Not knowing where one comes from, in the family or society at large, means being unable to understand oneself or how the world works. This is because a person’s contextualised history is the fabric and substance of their identity, through which they can fully act in the world. Knowing one’s history means making sense of one’s present and developing foresight to face the future.

The diachronic evolution of languages is one manifestation of our historical situatedness. Indeed, through language we build relationships and project our self-image. The account of this evolution in historical linguistics encompasses the description of communicative practices in the past (pragmaphilology) and over time (diachronic pragmatics), as well as the explanation of causes of change in patterns of language use. These fields are nowadays mostly studied with the methods of corpus pragmatics combined with discourse-oriented qualitative analyses and the evolution of social norms informing communicative practices (historical sociopragmatics). All these strands of research are present in this volume.

This special issue results from the collective work of three co-editors – Sara Gesuato, Marina Dossena and Daniela Cesiri – whose research has always focused on pragmatics and sociolinguistics, not least in a historical perspective. It offers a selection of internationally peer-reviewed articles in historical pragmatics by well-established senior as well as more junior scholars. Most originate from presentations given at the international conference “Language use across time: what you didn’t know you’ve always wanted to know about

historical pragmatics”, held at Padua University on 16-17 February, 2018. The main aim was to explore what the present state of the art in historical pragmatics is by inviting accounts on how and why our current communicative practices have their present form. Another aim was to have a broad view of historical pragmatic studies by casting the net to scholars of different languages. As a consequence, the contributions to this volume highlight varied historical pragmatics topics, such as interactional strategies, politeness phenomena in grammar and discourse, the evolution of discursive practices, lexemes and phraseology. The scope of data is wide, ranging from spill cries in American English to politeness phenomena in Russian historical texts, from linguistic features in classical Greek drama to private correspondence in English, from minutes of Quaker meetings through language teaching materials to paradigm changes in Korean sentence types. Although the articles have their foci in specific languages, a cross-linguistic perspective is present in most (i.e. Korean, Italian, Slavonic languages, Ancient Greek and Latin with relevance to developments in English).

The largest group of contributions, six in all, deals with developments in English, in accordance with the fact that the majority of studies in historical pragmatics have focused on English. This can be explained by the fact that the first electronic corpus on historical data, the *Helsinki Corpus* of half a million words (see Kytö 1991), was comprised exclusively of English texts. It gave an important incentive to study language history in a new way through pragmatic phenomena (see Jucker 1995). But it was just the beginning, and subsequent decades have seen the expansion of digital materials to different dimensions with “big data” that is constantly growing and can encompass billions of words today (see Suhr *et al.* 2019). Besides English, corpus compilation has been active in other languages as well.

The opening contribution by **Andreas H. Jucker** (University of Zurich) is called **“Oops, I forgot, sorry”. The spill cries *oops* and *whoops* in the history of American English**. It focuses on two interjections with primarily emotive and exclamatory functions produced semi-automatically. They show an interesting pathway of development that can be traced with the help of digital corpora. These forms were first attested in the early twentieth century in studies on corpus data of American English. These spill cries are often associated with apologies in Present-day English, co-occurring with the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device *sorry*, but have come to function as informal apologies in their own right. A diachronic corpus analysis, including collocational analysis, reveals that surprise is foregrounded in early examples, while the elements of dismay and regret with strong suggestions, or explicit formulations, of an apologetic intent are more prominent in later examples. This article provides a solid application of corpus pragmatics, which is the

main trend in English historical pragmatics at present (see Taavitsainen, Jucker, Tuominen 2014)

Corpus linguistic studies are also conducted in other languages. The contribution by **Annick Paternoster** (University of Italian Switzerland) deals with a politeness formula in Italian, *fare la carità di* ‘to be so good as to (give)’. Her article, **From requesting to alms-seeking. The politeness formula *fare la carità di* in nineteenth-century Italy**, reconstructs the meanings and contexts for the use of this formula in two electronic corpora of nineteenth-century Italian based on conduct books, dictionaries and novels. The article first looks at politeness metadiscourse and examines advice for requests in a corpus of 51 nineteenth-century Italian conduct books. The analysis combines qualitative and quantitative methods. The findings show that the formula *fare la carità di* is used in two contexts, namely when making a (sometimes forceful) request and when begging for material help. These uses appear in roughly equal proportions until the end of World War II, after which the phrase disappears from conduct books completely. The author suggests that its loss may be due to the fact that conduct books have a negative attitude towards and fiercely criticise almsgiving to the undeserving poor, thus giving a societal explanation to the change.

The sociopragmatic trend within historical pragmatics is represented by **Judith Roads’s** (University of Birmingham) diachronic study **Some pragmatic aspects of historical minute-making. The distinctiveness of the Quaker approach**. She relies on discursive analytic methods and investigates the practice of administrative minute-writing among the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) over three centuries. A quantitative assessment for an overall description of the situation is followed by a qualitative analysis of selected illustrative examples in Quaker minute books, which are also compared with corresponding data from other historical institutions. The main line of argumentation shows how present-day Quaker minute-writing methods first developed in the late seventeenth century with commissive and directive speech acts. The prominent formulaic expressions in them leads the author to call minutes a special text type.

Corpus methods continue in **Daniela Cesiri’s** (“Ca’ Foscari” University of Venice) paper, entitled **Discursive practices in feminist speeches. A diachronic analysis from the Late Modern period to the present day**. She traces the evolution of discursive practices from the Late Modern English period to the present day in the light of twelve speeches, each delivered by a different feminist activist. Together they represent the three waves in which the feminist movement is commonly divided. All mark the general commitment of the feminist movement to women’s empowerment, but their lexical analysis shows that each wave reflects an interest in more specific socio-political issues that varies in time. Additionally, the speakers’ age

correlates with discursive practices so that more mature speakers favour terms denoting more general concepts, while the younger speakers refer to more tangible concepts and actual events. This article employs lexical and collocational analyses and is in accordance with the trend that moves at the interface of semantics and pragmatics. It also illustrates an application of the method to an ideological study that very much resembles Critical Discourse Analysis.

Vernacular correspondence can offer valuable insights into language use of past eras seen from below. **Kirsten Lawson's** (University of Bergamo) article examines data from private letters dating back to the First World War. The title is revealing **“Just a few lines to let you know”. Formulaic language and personalization strategies in Great War trench letters written by semi-literate Scottish soldiers**. Her analysis, which combines a Discourse Historical Approach with Critical Discourse Analysis and also relies on corpus-driven methods, illustrates how more conventional components alternate with more spontaneous and speech-based elements in private war correspondence. The findings show how opening salutations are followed by formulaic expressions that create a bridge between greetings and the main contents. Variation in their realization is found to correlate with the different intended recipients of the letters as well as the nature of the writers' relationship with the addressees.

The sixth paper also adheres to the sociopragmatic trend that pays attention to the intended target groups. **Polina Shvanyukova's** (University of Bergamo) article **“How am I to answer this in English?”. Pragmatic fluency in a nineteenth-century English-language teaching text** broadens the scope of the volume to applied linguistics. It discusses the pragmatic dimension of a late nineteenth-century English phrasebook for Italian learners, entitled *Friends at Home and Abroad; or, Social Chat*, by Theophilus C. Cann. The article relies on qualitative data and identifies specific learning goals that were associated with the acquisition of pragmatic fluency with the help of this book. The uses of the text in the teaching and learning of English are considered, and related to the type of learners who were supposedly the intended primary audience.

Next, attention is turned to Slavonic languages with two papers which focus on changing sociopragmatic uses of politeness formula and address terms. This section pertains nicely to the trend of contrastive diachronic pragmatics, which has received scholarly attention with digital corpora becoming more readily available than before.

The article by **Victoriya Trubnikova** (University of Padua) is entitled **“Please”, “Thank you”, “Excuse me” — “Why can't you behave naturally?”. Linguistic politeness in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia**. It outlines manifestations of linguistic politeness in post-revolutionary Soviet

Russia, when massive societal changes greatly affected the definition of linguistic etiquette and the use of formulaic expressions. The change is clearly manifested in social deictics (e.g. address terms like *tovarisch* ‘comrade’ and *gospodin* ‘sir’). The study is based on fictional dialogues in Michail Bulgakov’s satirical novel *The Heart of a Dog* with two characters who represent different archetypes: one of the old tsarist era and the other of an emerging Bolshevik regime. They are in a constant clash at the verbal and nonverbal levels, and although fictional, the data can be taken as an indication of how, in the transition period under investigation, politeness formulas and address forms were under constant negotiation, reflecting changing interactional pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic norms.

The diachronic line extends to earlier periods in the next article, written by **Marco Biasio** (University of Padua and University of Novi Sad): **The etiquette of aspect. How and why *prositi* stopped worrying and entered a pair.** It considers Old and Middle Russian sources to investigate the absence of pre-verbed proto-perfective first person non-past forms of *prositi* ‘to ask (for)’ in directive speech acts up to the second half the eighteenth century. On the basis of linguistic and extralinguistic data, the author argues that the phenomena under scrutiny can be related, on the one hand, to the semantic properties of verbs of communication, and on the other, to the lack of a *Tu-Vous* distinction in pronoun usage, consistent with the etiquette of hierarchically oriented social relationships. Thus this article moves at the intersection between semantics and pragmatics.

The two following papers deal with the pragmatics of classical languages. They focus on discourse features in drama, which, however, typify everyday real-world communicative practices. These articles show how several western socio-interactional practices have their roots deep in ancient sources.

Severin Hof’s (University of Zurich) article, entitled **Talking about lament in ancient Greek drama. Historical metapragmatics and language ideology in Sophocles’ *Ajax*,** discusses Sophocles’ tragedy *Ajax* as challenging the ancient Greek notion of lament being a genuinely feminine, and thus inferior, speech act. By using the sociolinguistic concept of ‘language ideology’, the author shows how Sophocles deconstructs this notion by juxtaposing Ajax’s metalinguistic utterances with the linguistic behavior of a female character, his slave Tecmessa. The discussion is contextualised within the genre of tragedy and the ancient Greek discourse on language. This article serves as an example of work with a literary slant, carried out at the interface between language and literature.

Another article similarly based on classical sources is **Closing conflicts. Conversational strategies across Greek and Roman tragedies,** written by **Federica Iurescia** (University of Zurich) and **Gunther Martin** (University of

Zurich). It deals with closing sequences in ancient tragedies, where conflicts hardly ever find peaceful resolutions, and conversations often end without an agreement being reached. In fact, the non-negotiated and unmediated end affirms the non-cooperative nature of the dialogue. This paper looks specifically at how the close of dialogues is managed in the absence of negotiation, mediation or cooperation, in an approach that considers both the specificity of the individual situation and broad diachronic developments.

The final paper, by **Hyun Jung Koo** (Sangmyung University) and **Seongha Rhee** (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies), is entitled **From self-talk to grammar. The emergence of multiple paradigms from self-quoted questions in Korean**. On the basis of historical corpus data, the article traces the grammaticalisation processes affecting self-quoted questions in Korean (i.e. those with no linkers to the host clause). The authors show how these constructions were reinterpreted as modal markers and connectives, and triggered the development of multiple forms in other paradigm changes through analogy by virtue of their semantic and morphosyntactic resemblances. The final chapter is in accordance with the increasing interest in historical pragmatic studies in Asia and its applications to new languages with pragmatic studies making use of corpus data.

The above summaries show that topics in historical pragmatic studies vary, but have a great deal in common, too. The analyses are based on solid methods often combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, and some rely on discourse analytical methods. All articles make use of genuine empirical data and show a firm socio-historical anchoring to their multi-layered contexts. Some deal with micro-level features, which are, however, related to larger issues in language use. Others deal with macro-level phenomena, revealing how changes of language-internal features always reflect changes in the external world either explicitly or more implicitly. In sum, the articles in this volume give evidence of the versatility of the field in asking new research question, adopting novel angles and applying triangulation with several methods. More generally they show, in a cross-linguistic perspective, how histories of people's social lives reflect on language use.

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Irma Taavitsainen is Professor Emerita of English Philology at the University of Helsinki and a founding editor of the *Journal of Historical Pragmatics*. Her research focuses on historical pragmatics, corpus linguistics, genre and register variation and scientific thought styles. Her most recent co-edited volumes are *Developments in English: Expanding Electronic Evidence* (CUP 2015), *Diachronic Developments in English News Discourse* (Benjamins 2017), Special Issues of *Studia neophilologica* (2017) and *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* (2017), plus *From Data to Evidence in English Language Research* (Brill 2019) and *Late Modern English Medical Texts* (Benjamins forthcoming 2019).

Sara Gesuato earned her PhDs from Padua University and the University of California at Berkeley. She is associate professor at Padua University, where she teaches English language and linguistics. Her research fields include pragmatics, discourse and genre analysis and corpus linguistics. Her publications examine the structure and wording of initiating and reacting speech acts, the phraseology and rhetorical structure of academic genres and the temporal and aspectual meanings of catenative motion verb constructions. She has co-edited two volumes on pragmatic issues in language teaching and learning, and is investigating pedagogical applications of the analysis of oral and written speech acts.

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“OOPS, I FORGOT, SORRY” The spill cries *oops* and *whoops* in the history of American English

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Abstract – Interjections and other elements of spoken language have always been a particularly fruitful area of historical pragmatic research. In this paper, I focus on the interjections *oops* and *whoops* that have been described as spill cries by Goffmann (1978, p. 801). They show a high level of interjectionality (Stange 2016, p. 16), that is to say, they are primarily emotive and exclamatory, they do not require an addressee and are produced semi-automatically. *Oops* and *whoops* do not have a long history. As interjections, they are first attested in the early twentieth century both in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and in the *Corpus of Historical American English*. In Present-day English, they are often associated with apologies. They co-occur with the apology IFID *sorry*, or they can even function as apology IFIDs in their own right. A diachronic corpus analysis, including a collocational analysis, reveals that this association has only developed over time. In the early examples, the element of surprise is foregrounded, while later examples more often display elements of dismay and regret with strong suggestions, or explicit formulations, of an apologetic intent.

Keywords: interjections; spill cries; historical corpus pragmatics; American English; apologies.

1. Introduction¹

Historical pragmatics has always been interested in linguistic elements that are typical of spoken language, in spite of the fact that historical evidence of language use has come down to us in written form only, except for the very recent past. It is in particular elements such as pragmatic markers and interjections that have attracted the attention of historical pragmaticists. Taavitsainen (1995), for instance, provided a pioneering study of interjections in Early Modern English, in which she showed how they are distributed across the different genres of the *Helsinki Corpus*. Brinton (1996) traced a range of pragmatic markers in the history of English, such as Old English *hwæt*, Middle

¹ The title quote is taken from the fiction section of the *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA) and is dated 1998. See extract (20) below.

English *gan*, and Middle and Early Modern English *anon*. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) carried out an analysis of what they called “pragmatic noise” in Early Modern English dialogues, i.e. items, such as *ah*, *ha*, *oh*, *um* or *hum*, which do not have homonyms in other word classes and which do not have propositional or referential meaning (Culpeper, Kytö 2010, p. 199). And more recently, Jucker (2015a, 2015b) looked at hesitation phenomena, such as *uh* and *um*, which he calls planners, in the history of American English.

The present paper continues this work on elements at the margins of linguistic sentence structures and focuses on the histories of what Goffman (1978, p. 801) has called “spill cries”, i.e. the elements *oops* and *whoops*. These elements have recently received some increased attention as emotive interjections (Stange 2016) but also, and in particular, as elements that may accompany, intensify or indeed perform an apology (e.g. Holmes 1990; Ogiermann 2009; or Lutzky, Kehoe 2017). However, so far very little is known about their historical development. The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides first attestations of *oops* and *whoops* as interjections in 1921 and 1937, respectively. The *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA) contains some slightly earlier examples, but they confirm that the textual evidence of the history of these elements starts in the early twentieth century.

It is the aim of this paper, therefore, to trace the history of spill cries in American English and to assess the historical evidence. In particular, I want to highlight some of the differences between *oops* and *whoops* and to show how their association with apologies only developed toward the end of the last century. In the early examples, the association is more tenuous and in many cases clearly absent. In the following, I will first give a brief overview of how spill cries have been analysed and categorised (section 2). In section 3, I shall outline the problem of tracing spill cries in large corpora, and I shall also provide some comparative statistical evidence of *oops* and *whoops* in other relevant corpora. In section 4, I will zoom in on the historical evidence of these two spill cries in COHA and show how they developed in twentieth-century American English and how they increasingly became associated with apologies. Section 5 briefly concludes this paper.

2. Previous work on spill cries and their histories

Goffman (1978) analysed *oops* and *whoops* as one particular type of response cry. Response cries, according to Goffman (1978, p. 800), are “exclamatory interjections which are not full-fledged words.” They are regularly emitted in response to events in the world around us and often appear to be addressed to ourselves as much as to any possible nearby listeners. He provides a large range of different types of response cries (Goffman 1978, pp. 801-805), including not only spill cries (*oops!* and *whoops!*) but also the threat startle (such as *EEK!*)

or *yipe!*), revulsion sounds (*eeuw!*), the strain grunt (emitted when lifting or pushing something heavy), the pain cry (such as *oww!* or *ouch!*), the sexual moan (accompanying "sexually climactic experience"; Goffman 1978, p. 804); the audible glee (to express pleasure at an appetising meal just being served); or the triumph call (Goffman mentions Tarzan's cry when besting a lion as an example).

Spill cries, according to Goffman (1978, p. 801) are "emitted to accompany our having, for a moment, lost guiding control of some feature of the world around us, including ourselves." He provides the examples of a woman accidentally choosing the wrong door and backtracking her steps and of a man dropping a piece of meat through the grill. In both cases, the accident, or loss of control, is relatively minor. The cry may also serve as a warning to others, as for instance when we slip on ice; or they may even be uttered as a response to somebody else momentarily losing control. Goffman (1978, pp. 801-802) surmises that they are "as much (perhaps even more) the practice of females as males" and at the same time that "men seem more likely to *oops* for another when that other is a child or a female." He does not provide any empirical evidence for these claims, but they indicate that spill cries may be felt to be gender-specific. The sources investigated in this paper do not allow an investigation of this issue because they do not include demographic speaker information.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the interjection *oops* as "expressing apology, dismay, or surprise, esp. after an obvious but usually minor mistake" (OED, Third edition, *oops int.* and *n.*) and lists its first occurrence in 1921.

- (1) 1921 Washington Post 1 Nov. 21/4 Oops, muh dear, it's in the last where the dirty work takes place.

The interjection *whoops* is similarly defined as "an exclamation of dismay or surprise, usually upon stumbling, or realizing an obvious mistake" (OED, Second edition, *whoops int.*). The date of the first quotation is in 1937 in a letter by Ezra Pound. For the etymology, the OED refers to *oops*.

- (2) 1937 E. Pound Let. Jan. (1971) 287 Whoops! And do I envy you. I do.

As derivatives, the OED mentions *whoopsie* and *whoopsie-daisy*.

However, the form *whoop* has a much longer history. As a verb it goes back to Middle English, and according to the OED it means "To utter a cry of 'whoop!' or a loud vocal sound resembling this; to shout, hollo (as in incitement, summons, exultation, defiance, intimidation, support, or mere excitement)" (OED, Second edition, *whoop, v.*). It is first attested at around 1400 with the following example.

- (3) a1400 *Parl. 3 Ages* 233 (Text B) And [the falconer] whopis hem [sc. the hawks] to whirry... He wharris & whotes hem & whopes ful lowde.

Here it is a falconer who gives commands to his hawks by whooping to them. The noun *whoop* also goes back much further than the interjection. The OED's first quotation is dated 1602.

- (4) 1602 W. Watson *Decacordon Ten Quodlibeticall Questions* 3 All with one voyce,..with whoopes, whowes and hoobubs, would thrust them out.

The meaning of the noun is given as “an act of whooping; a cry of ‘whoop!’, or a shout or call resembling this; *spec.* as used in hunting, esp. at the death of the game, or by N. American Indians, etc. as a signal or war-cry” (OED, Second edition, *whoop*, *n.1*). The OED also recognizes a much more recent meaning of the noun *whoop*, i.e. “A bump or (occasionally) dip on an off-road racetrack or rally course” (OED, Second edition, *whoop*, *n.2*), for which it provides the following first attestation.

- (5) 1982 Dirt Bike Rider May–June 30/2 Over some of the notorious Hawkstone whoops it went straight as an arrow.

Thus, it is important in corpus searches to distinguish carefully between the interjection *whoops* and the plural form of the noun *whoop* and the third person singular form of the verb *to whoop* (see section 3 below).

In a recent monograph, Stange (2016, p. 17) analyses *oops* and *whoops* as examples of emotive interjections. Interjections, according to Stange (with reference to Nübling 2004, p. 18), can be placed on a continuum of interjectionality (see Figure 1). She distinguishes between emotive, cognitive, conative and phatic interjections, which differ in their degree of interjectionality (see also Ameka 1992). The highest degree of interjectionality is characterised by the following criteria (Stange 2016, p. 17):

1. It is primarily emotive
2. It is exclamatory
3. It does not require an addressee
4. It is produced semi-automatically

Emotive interjections, such as *ow!*, *ouch!* or *yuck!* exhibit all four features. They express the speaker's emotions and sensations, they do not necessarily need an addressee, and they are semi-automatic in the sense that they are often spontaneous and unplanned, and triggered by the sudden occurrence of external events. Cognitive interjections express the speaker's state of knowledge, which may just have changed prior to its emission. Examples are *ah!* and *aha!* Conative interjections are directive. They try to get the addressee's attention and often demand some action or response. The request to others to be quiet by uttering *shh!* is a relevant example. And, finally, elements like *u-huh* or *mhm* are classified as phatic markers. They function as feedback in an ongoing conversation and show a low level of interjectionality (see Ameka 1992; Stange 2016, pp. 11-12).

| highest degree of interjectionality | | | lowest degree of interjectionality |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Emotive <i>Ow!</i> | > cognitive <i>Ah!</i> | > conative <i>Shh!</i> | > phatic <i>uh-huh</i> |
| primarily emotive exclamatory no addressee required semi-automatic | | | primarily phatic non-exclamatory addressee required intentional |

Figure 1
Continuum of interjectionality (Stange 2016, p. 17).

According to this categorisation spill cries clearly belong to the emotive category and show a high degree of interjectionality. They are exclamatory, they do not require an addressee and they may be a spontaneous and semi-automatic reaction to some minor accident or mishap.

As reactions to accidents or mishaps, spill cries have some similarities to apologies, which in their prototypical form can be seen as utterances with which speakers take responsibility for an offence, and, in fact, several scholars have noted that *oops* is often associated with apologies. Holmes (1990, p. 160), for instance, lists *oops* as one of a possibly infinite number of ways of performing an apology, and Ogiermann (2009, pp. 124-125) lists *ups* (sic) and *whoops* as elements that occur in her data to intensify an apology. Lutzky and Kehoe (2017) focus specifically on *oops* as an illocutionary force indicating device (IFID) of apologies. Initially, they discovered that *oops* was one of the unique collocates of the apology IFID *sorry*, that is to say, that it regularly co-occurs with *sorry* in their data, but it does not appear in the list of top collocates of any of the other apology IFIDs that they checked. As data for their investigation, Lutzky and Kehoe (2017) used a 181-million-word subcorpus of the Birmingham Blog Corpus (BBC), containing material from the WordPress and Blogger hosting sites (Lutzky, Kehoe 2017, p. 29). In addition to *oops*, they also found a large number of spelling variants, such as *oooops* with more than just two "o"s, and *woops* or *whoops* with a preceding "w" or "wh". They acknowledge that *whoops* also occurs as a noun in their data, but they maintain that this is very rare. A collocational analysis reveals that *oops* and its spelling variants very regularly occur together with words that suggest an apologetic context. The top collocates according to the z-score are *forgot*, *meant*, *sorry*, *mean*, *I*, *typo*, *wrong*, *say*, *missed* and *supposed*. These expressions indicate what the blogger apologises for (*forgot*, *meant*, *typo*, *wrong*) or they re-enforce the apology (*sorry*). A particularly frequent combination seems to have been *Oops, I forgot....* Lutzky and Kehoe (2017, p. 34) suggest that such phrases may have formulaic and medium-specific functions. Bloggers or commenters use them to introduce information that they accidentally failed to provide earlier.

While spill cries appear to be connected with minor mishaps, apologies have a much broader range of applications. In Deutschmann's (2003, p. 46) well-known definition, apologies comprise four basic components, i.e. an offender who takes responsibility for the offence, the offended who perceives himself or herself or is perceived by the offender as offended, an offence, which may be real or imagined and a recognition of the offence by the offender together with an acceptance of responsibility. In a similar way, Lutzky and Kehoe state that

an apology implies that some wrongdoing or offence has occurred which, in accordance with social and cultural norms, requires remedial action. By uttering an apology, the speaker acknowledges this breach of norms and, according to the definitional criteria of an apology, must take responsibility for the offence and express regret. (Lutzky, Kehoe 2017, p. 28)

Against this background, the question suggests itself whether the association of spill cries with apologies has existed throughout the history of their attestations in COHA or whether it is a more recent phenomenon. In a recent paper devoted to the diachronic development of apologies, Jucker (2018) has shown that the overall frequency of apologies increases steadily and substantially over the two hundred years covered by COHA. The basis for this claim was both the increase of the frequency of apology IFIDs and a similar increase of passages in which fictitious characters explicitly talk about apologies, i.e. passages retrieved with a metapragmatic expression analysis. Jucker (2019) suggests that the increase in the frequency of apologies goes along with a gradual decrease of their weight. What used to be sincere appeals to an interlocutor for forgiveness turns into an expression of regret and finally into a token acknowledgement of some minor infraction or mishap. Such token apologies might be particularly good candidates to combine with spill cries to express a momentary irritation about a minor mishap perpetrated by the speaker. Whether or not this is perceived as an apology, as I will show below, depends on the extent to which the addressee was inconvenienced by this mishap and the degree to which the speaker intends to display any regret for what has happened.

But before I turn to the diachronic investigation of spill cries in COHA, I want to explore their manifestations in a range of different corpora. It is plausible to assume that spill cries are particularly frequent in spontaneous spoken interactions. It is less clear where exactly they might show up in the written registers of COHA. Moreover, it is necessary to test and evaluate the reliability of the corpus retrieval.

3. Corpus methods and preliminary corpus evidence

COHA, the main corpus used for this study, is part of a range of corpora that are available through the website run by Mark Davies (<https://www.english-corpora.org>). They are all fully tagged for word categories and should, therefore, allow specific searches for interjections. However, a closer analysis reveals that for the COHA, the tagging in this specific case is not very reliable. There are a total of 399 hits of the string *whoops* in COHA. 82 of them are tagged as interjections and can be retrieved by the search string *whoops_uh**. The remaining 317 instances are tagged as nouns and can be retrieved by *whoops_nn**. None of the 399 instances of *whoops* are tagged as verbs. A careful check of all 82 instances that are tagged as interjections reveals that 14 of them are actually verbs and six are nouns, which means that almost a quarter of the cases that are tagged as interjections have been given an incorrect tag. Extracts (6) to (9) are relevant examples. They were all retrieved with the search string *whoops_uh** and must therefore have been tagged as interjections.²

- (6) Presently the air was filled with yells and whoops (COHA, 1873, FIC)
- (7) Whoops and laughter echoed off the bedazzled towers, until the noise startled Topsy. (COHA, 2002, Fic)
- (8) If he whoops you, he'll crow over you as long as he lives (COHA, 1908, FIC)
- (9) sells confetti until the pedestrian swims in it – and then whoops it up for a week. (COHA, 1916, NF)

In extracts (6) and (7), *whoops* is a plural noun; and in extracts (8) and (9), it is a verb with a third-person-singular *-s*. As can be seen from these examples, the incorrect tags are spread over the entire period of the COHA, but most of them occur in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In fact, the first clear example of an interjection can be found in 1922.

- (10) Whoops, my dears! Fifty dollars a month and almost nothing to do! (COHA, 1922, FIC)

All 15 examples that are attested before 1922 are nouns or verbs. A cross-check of a random sample of 100 instances of *whoops* that are tagged as nouns reveals a better rate with only nine cases that have been misidentified by the tagger. Seven of them should have been tagged as verbs and two as interjections. Extracts (11) and (12) are relevant examples.

- (11) Somebody whoops and throws an empty beer cup onto the field (COHA, 1999, FIC)
- (12) Mulford, author of *Keys to Successful Stepmothering*, refers to this as the "Whoops! I forgot to have kids. Let me get a ready-made family" syndrome (COHA, 1999, MAG)

The form *whoops* in example (11) is clearly a verb, while in (12) it is an interjection. A similar check of corpora of contemporary English on the

² Tags cannot be made visible in the corpora on the English-Corpora website.

website created by Mark Davies (<https://www.english-corpora.org>) yields better results. Random samples of one hundred instances of *whoops* tagged as an interjection revealed one error in the *British National Corpus* (BNC) and no error at all in the *Corpus of American Soap Operas* (SOAP) or in the *Corpus of Canadian English* (Strathy). The *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) had a slightly higher error rate, with six out of a random sample of 100 hits. The situation for the spill cry *oops* is better. On the basis of similar sample checks, it appears that in all these corpora, it is always correctly tagged as an interjection.

As a consequence of these spot checks, the figures for *whoops* have been manually corrected for COHA. For the comparison corpora, the figures reported here are uncorrected because the deviations are relatively minor, but it must be stressed that they are no more than relatively accurate approximations.³

The interactive nature of spill cries strongly suggests that they must be particularly frequent in text types that record spontaneous interaction, such as everyday spoken conversations. For historical periods we have only indirect evidence of everyday spoken interaction. The COHA, which comprises 400 million words from the 1810s to the 2000s, draws its texts from four different genres: fiction, magazines, newspapers and non-fiction books. Mark Davies, the compiler of COHA, stresses the fact that it is a balanced corpus across the decades, that is to say, each decade contains roughly equal amounts of data from each of the four genres. Diachronic developments across the decades can, therefore, more confidently be claimed to be indicative of diachronic change rather than a result of different frequencies in different genres (see in particular Davies 2012). Thus, the material in fiction accounts for roughly fifty per cent of the corpus for all the twenty decades. And, in fact, it is in the fiction material that the spill cries occur most frequently. I have, therefore, decided to focus on the fiction material of COHA in this investigation in order to have a more coherent database with a reasonable likelihood for spill cries to occur.

In order to be able to make sense of the frequency figures attested in COHA, I have compared the frequency figures of spill cries in the last two decades of COHA with several corpora containing material of Present-day English. Such a comparison sets the figures in perspective, and it gives an indication whether the attested levels are large or small in a more comprehensive context. These alternative corpora are COCA, SOAP, BNC, and Strathy. COCA contains 570 million words of American English from 1990 to 2017 in five different genres; spoken, fiction, magazine, newspaper and academic. SOAP contains transcripts of American soap operas from the early 2000s and amounts to 100 million words. According to the English-

³ It is for this reason that in the following I prefer to report rounded and approximate figures rather than precise ones, which would likely insinuate an unrealistic level of precision.

Corpora website, it is particularly useful as a resource for very informal language, but, obviously, transcripts of soap operas consist largely of constructed dialogues, not naturally occurring ones. The BNC material was originally compiled in the 1980s and 1990s, and it contains 100 million words of British English in the genres spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, non-academic, academic and miscellaneous. Strathy, finally, is a product of the Strathy Language Unit at Queen's University and contains 50 million words of Canadian English in the genres spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, non-fiction, academic and miscellaneous (all information on these corpora from <https://www.english-corpora.org>)⁴.

In order to contextualise the figures for COHA Fiction, I searched for the spill cries *oops* and *whoops* in the alternative corpora in the sections spoken and fiction. In the case of COHA, I restricted the search to the 1990s and the 2000s in order to provide roughly the same time frame as for the other corpora. Figure 2 plots the result of this investigation. Spelling variants, such as *oooops*, *whooops* or *woops*, were also included.

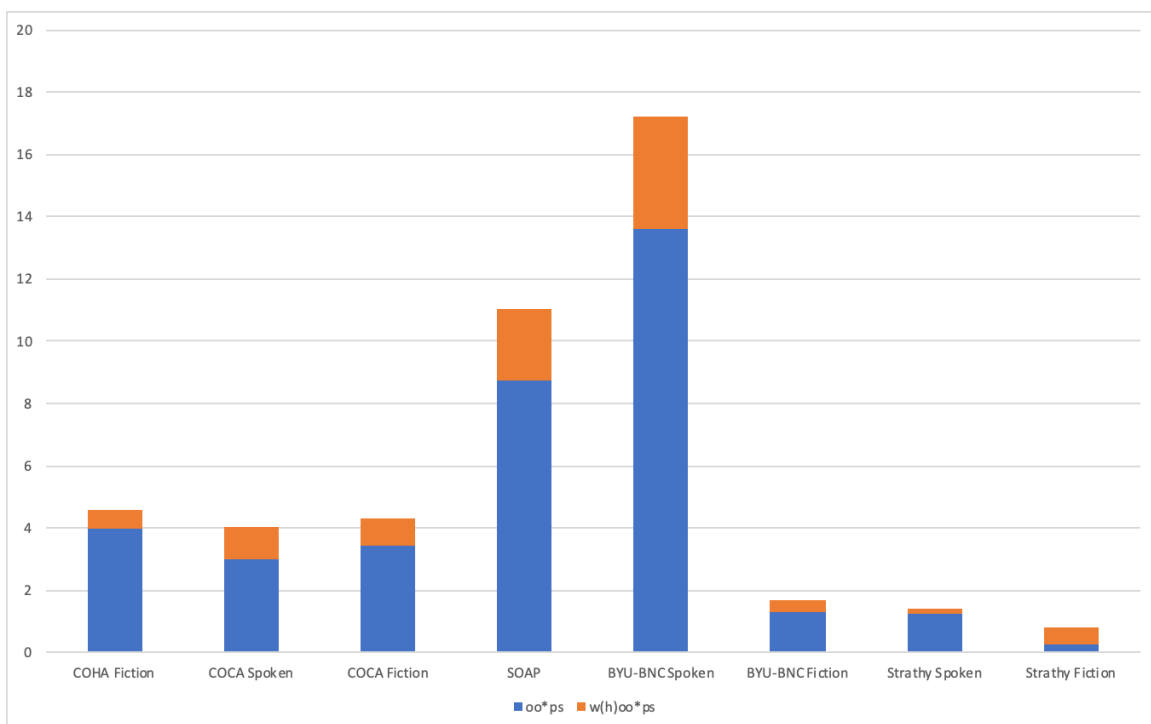


Figure 2
Frequency of *oops* and *whoops* (including spelling variants)
as interjections in several big corpora (per million words).

⁴ The English-Corpora website does not specify the time range of the material in Strathy. According to the Strathy website (<http://www.queensu.ca/strathy/corpus>), the corpus contains material from 1970 to 2010, but a search for some common words (e.g. *table*, *chair* or *sun*) also retrieves hits from a text that is dated 1924.

Figure 2 provides some unexpected results. It shows that in COCA the frequency of spill cries is roughly the same both in the spoken material and in the fiction material. There are about four instances per million words. And this figure coincides with the last two decades of the COHA fiction material. In Strathy, spill cries are rare both in the spoken material and in the fiction material. But in the BNC the picture is very different. Here the combined frequency of *oops* and *whoops* reaches more than seventeen instances per million words in the spoken material in contrast to less than two instances in the fiction material. The American soap operas shows the second highest frequency with about eleven spill cries per million words.

Differences between COCA, BNC and Strathy might, of course, reflect differences between American, British and Canadian English. COHA conveniently fits into this picture. The frequency of spill cries in the two most recent decades is roughly the same as in COCA, and the higher frequency in SOAP, which also contains American English, makes intuitive sense because of the nature of soap operas. Situation comedy depends on numerous twists and turns in the interaction with surprises and minor accidents and mishaps that are likely to provoke spill cries. In Canadian English, spill cries appear to be less frequent, and there is again not much difference between the spoken and the fiction material. However, the situation in the BNC asks for an explanation. It appears that the differences are not, in fact, linked to the different national varieties, but more simply to the composition of the spoken part of these corpora.

The spoken part of COCA contains transcripts of unscripted conversations of a wide range of radio and TV programs (according to the information given on the English-Corpora website). The spoken part of the BNC, on the other hand, consists of about 10 million words, half of which used a demographic approach, that is to say, individual speakers of British English were sampled according to standard demographic parameters and then asked to record their everyday interactions with a portable tape recorder. The other half used a context-governed approach and contains interactions in the contextually based categories educational, business, public/institution and leisure (see Crowdy 1993, 1995). It is highly plausible to assume that conversations in the more formal contexts of discussions on radio or television contain fewer spill cries than spoken interactions in everyday situations, such as, perhaps, animated dinner table conversations or lively chats in a pub.

If this interpretation is correct, a further explanation suggests itself as to why there is no appreciable difference between the fiction material and the spoken material in COCA, which otherwise might seem counterintuitive. Fictional texts often represent casual interactions, in which spill cries are likely to occur. This leads to a sizable frequency in spite of the written nature of the material and in spite of the fact that fiction also contains non-conversational material. The spoken section of COCA, on the other hand, consists of formal

conversations in which spill cries are far less likely than in less formal contexts, and the two effects appear to lead to very similar frequencies in the two contexts.

What this preliminary investigation also shows is that the two most recent decades of fiction material in COHA appear to be comparable to the fiction material in COCA. It is clear that they differ from the more natural and spontaneous spoken language in the BNC. The similarity of the frequencies to the spoken material of COCA, however, may be entirely coincidental. In the next section, I am now ready to explore how the spill cries developed in COHA in order to find out when they make their first appearance in COHA, how they have developed since then, and at what point they started to associate with apologies.

4. The diachrony of spill cries In COHA

As mentioned above, spill cries are not particularly frequent in the fiction material of COHA but significantly more frequent than in the other genres contained in this corpus. In the last two decades, the 1990s and 2000s, they reach about four instances per million words (see Figure 2 above). Except for Strathy fiction, *oops* is substantially more frequent than *whoops* in all the corpora investigated above, accounting for between 75 and almost 90 per cent of the combined frequencies. A look at the earlier decades reveals a slightly different picture. Originally, *whoops* was somewhat more frequent than *oops*, but the frequency of *whoops* does not change very much over the decades, while *oops* increases more or less continually starting from their earliest attestation in the corpus. Figure 3 plots the diachronic development of *oops* and *whoops* in COHA Fiction. The figures for *whoops* are manually adjusted to exclude false hits (see section 3 above). Figure 3 starts with the 1900s because spill cries are not attested in the nineteenth century. The details of these developments should not be overestimated as the figures are relatively small. They rely on no more than a handful of hits per decade except for *oops*, which is attested more regularly from the 1960s onwards and reaches a total of 63 hits in the 2000s.

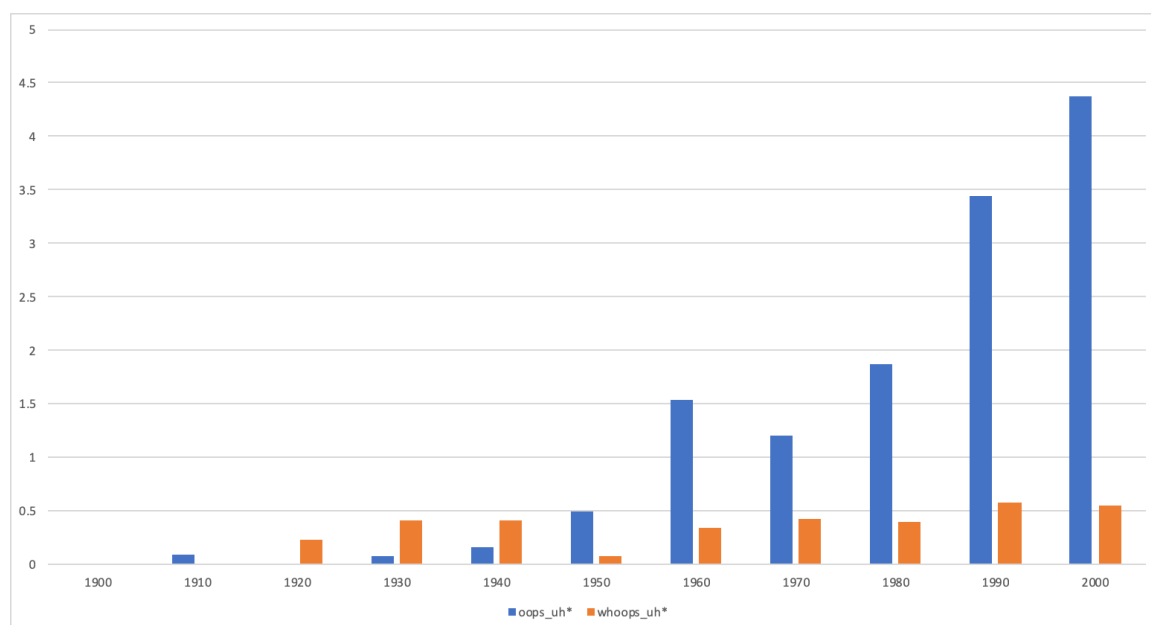


Figure 3
Frequency of *oops* and *whoops* (as interjections) per decade in COHA Fiction.

As mentioned above, the OED's first attestation of *oops* dates from 1921, and the first attestation of *whoops* as an interjection from 1937 (see examples in section 2 above). In both cases, COHA has examples that are somewhat earlier. They predate the first OED examples by four and fifteen years, respectively.

- (13) "I could listen to you all day." "Oops, Horace; he loves me!" mocked the lady's voice. (COHA, 1917, FIC)
- (14) Whoops, my dears! Fifty dollars a month and almost nothing to do! (COHA, 1922, FIC)

After having established the development of *oops* and *whoops* over the course of the twentieth century in COHA, I now turn to the question of its association with apologies. As pointed out in section 2 above, the OED defines the interjection *oops* as "expressing apology, dismay, or surprise, esp. after an obvious but usually minor mistake" (OED Third edition, *oops* *int.* and *n.*). It is interesting to see to what extent these instances are connected to apologies, and whether the connection has always been equally strong. In order to investigate this question, a collocation search has been carried out to reveal those words that regularly associate with *oops*. A collocation search with the span of four words to either side of the node yields eight lexical collocates that collocate three and more times with the node *oops* (see Table 1).

| Collocate | Frequency of collocate in COHA | Frequency of collocation | MI score |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| <i>sorry</i> | 39,425 | 22 | 6.86 |
| <i>button</i> | 6,528 | 3 | 6.58 |
| <i>forgot</i> | 14,379 | 6 | 6.44 |
| <i>mistake</i> | 19,615 | 3 | 5.00 |
| <i>guess</i> | 40,510 | 5 | 4.69 |
| <i>goes</i> | 64,984 | 6 | 4.27 |
| <i>wrong</i> | 57,965 | 5 | 4.17 |
| <i>saying</i> | 62,667 | 3 | 3.32 |

Table 1
Collocations of *oops* in COHA (span 4; lexical
collocates only; sorted according collocational strength).⁵

Of these *sorry*, *forgot*, *mistake* and *wrong* are strongly suggestive of an apology because they denote entities that typically occur in apologies. The collocates *button*, *guess*, *goes* and *saying*, on the other hand, are more neutral in this respect. Due to the relatively small number of *oops* in the corpus all these collocations are rare, except perhaps for *sorry*. The examples involving *goes* are spread out over the decades from the 1930s to the 1980s. All other examples show a clear preference for the 1990s and 2000s. The following are relevant examples. The node *oops* and the collocates from Table 1 are highlighted in bold.

- (15) **Oops** – there **goes** another one. (COHA, 1934, FIC)
- (16) **Oops** – **sorry**. Didn’t mean to splash you. (COHA, 1953, FIC)
- (17) She thanked Nailles and Nellie, got into her Chesterfield, went out the door and then returned **saying**: “**Oops**, I nearly **forgot** my bumbershoot.” (COHA 1969, FIC)
- (18) “**Oops**, there she **goes** again.” She took his hand and replaced it on her stomach. (COHA, 1971, FIC)
- (19) She laughs and pushes another **button**. “**Oops**, **wrong** tape. I’m trying to improve my Japanese (COHA, 1993, FIC)
- (20) My period came back, innocent, **saying**, “**Oops**, I **forgot**, **sorry**,” (COHA, 1998, FIC)
- (21) Wait a minute, I think I hear someone laughing. **Oops**, my **mistake**, that was someone gagging in the next booth. (COHA, 2003, FIC)
- (22) “**Oops**. **Guess** I was a lil off, huh?”. (COHA, 2006, FIC)

These examples are typical of all the 53 hits extracted from COHA of collocations of one of the eight collocates mentioned above with the node *oops*. In the early years, the examples indicate mostly surprise. In (15) the speaker has lost some hairpins and while bending down to pick them up loses another

⁵ The frequency of the collocate indicates how often a particular word, e.g. *sorry* occurs in the corpus. The frequency of the collocation indicates how often this particular word occurs in the vicinity of the node, here *oops* (within the given span of words; here four to either side of the node). The MI score is an indication of the likelihood of this combination. The higher the score, the less likely it is that the co-occurrence of the node and the collocate are just random.

one, and in (18) the speaker feels her unborn child move in her belly. Example (17) is less clear because COHA does not provide enough context, but from the context that is given, it is unlikely that it is an apology. The only clear apology in the early decades is extract (16), in which the speaker apologizes for having splashed the addressee. This is, in fact, the earliest example in this sample of a clear apology. The later examples, and in particular those from the 1990s and 2000s almost invariably accompany an apology.

The situation for *whoops* is more difficult to assess. COHA does not allow a collocation search of *whoops* as an interjection that excludes hits with erroneous tags. An uncorrected search for the collocates of *whoops_uh** does not yield any lexical collocates with more than five collocations (with a span of four). The only clear collocate is an exclamation mark. The expression *yells* shows four collocations with *whoops*, and *whoops* itself shows three. All other lexical collocates only collocate once or twice with *whoops*. The following are some relevant examples from across some of the decades of COHA in which *whoops* is attested.

- (23) There is a cook and a cleaner-by-the-day, and the new maid-companion, so she should be reasonably well looked after. **Whoops**, my dears! Fifty dollars a month and almost nothing to do! This is the Promised Land! Joyfully, JANE. (COHA, 1922, FIC)
- (24) That is how these things happen. I believe in love... **Whoops**, said Gurlie. I'll bet you do. Wait till you try it. (COHA, 1937, FIC)
- (25) "**Whoops**, I'm late," said the girl, craning to look at her watch. (COHA, 1962, FIC)
- (26) "What's a cop supposed to seem like?" "**Whoops**. Did I say the wrong thing? Is cop' an offensive word? (COHA, 1983, FIC)
- (27) Then he made a sudden show of looking at his watch. "**Whoops!** Class dismissed!" he cried, grabbing up his bookbag. (COHA, 1991, FIC)
- (28) I realized after a moment that she had just then recognized my insignia. "**Whoops**," she said, "sorry, I didn't realize," (COHA, 2004, FIC)
- (29) "Have you taken your medication today?" "**Whoops**," she said, grinning. (COHA, 2006, FIC)

Even the expanded context provided by COHA for each individual hit is not always enough to ascertain the precise function of *whoops* in all these cases. However, these examples only partially fit the OED definition mentioned above that the interjection *whoops* is "an exclamation of dismay or surprise, usually upon stumbling, or realizing an obvious mistake". They seem to have in common a clear element of surprise, but the element of dismay is often absent, and the surprise does not always involve a mistake or there does not seem to be any case of stumbling in these examples. Example (23) from 1922 appears to be an extract from a letter in which the writer expresses surprise at the luxurious living conditions she encountered. *Whoops* appears to be a rhetorical device in the course of her narrative introducing the joyful conclusion of her description at the end of her letter. In example (24) from 1937, *whoops* is used as a response to another speaker's declaration that they

believe in love. The character named Gurlie expresses both surprise and scepticism at that declaration. Neither of these two examples gives the impression of speaker dismay. The speakers do not respond to a "mistake" in the sense of the OED definition, and they do not appear to be apologizing for any wrongdoing. This is different in the examples (25) and (26) from 1962 and 1983, respectively. Here the speakers become aware of the implications of their own actions, either of being late or of having said something slightly inappropriate. There is no explicit indication that the spill cry *whoops* is meant as an apology in these cases, but they appear to have some apologetic overtones. In the more recent examples, there are similar hints of an apology. In the case of (28), the apology follows in explicit form. In the cases of (27) and (29), it is possible to infer an apology from the context (for having kept the class too long and for not having taken the medicine), but in both cases, the apology – if it is really meant as an apology – seems to be either somewhat insincere or ironic. In (27) the speaker is described as making a sudden show of looking at his watch, which might indicate that expression of surprise was somewhat exaggerated. And in (29), the speaker's *whoops* seems to indicate that the question about her medicine suddenly reminded her of the need to take it. *Whoops* may indeed be argued to indicate surprise and dismay, but her grinning suggests that she was neither surprised nor sorry for not having taken her medicine.

The following examples from the most recent decade of COHA reinforce this interpretation.

- (30) When he ran his hands down my hips and cupped my backside he said, "You're not wearing panties." I said, "Oops. Got dressed too fast." (COHA, 2001, FIC)
- (31) He smiled at Liz again and reached for the challah, and she saw there was only one piece left. She said, "Oops, sorry, I'll get some more of that." (COHA, 2007, FIC)
- (32) Drew went from mad to amused in two seconds. She laughed and threw Elissa's comb at Kyle. It bounced off him and landed in the dirt. "Oops, sorry," she said as she retrieved it, wiped it off, and handed it back. (COHA, 2007, FIC)
- (33) "Elizabeth is in love with me?" he says. Just on principle, he never believes anything that Karl says. But if it's in a book, maybe it's true. "Oh, whoops," his mother says. "I really didn't want to say that. (COHA, 2007, FIC)

All these examples have in common that the spill cry occurs in an apologetic context. Either there is an explicit apology IFID or some other element that is typical for an apology (in the sense of Blum-Kulka et al. 1989, pp. 290-294; see also Rieger 2017, p. 559). In (30), *oops* is accompanied by an expression of responsibility, i.e. the speaker acknowledges her own responsibility for the cause of her interlocutor's reproach. Example (31) contains both the apology IFID *sorry* and an offer of repair; the speaker promises to get more challah. In (32), there is again the IFID *sorry* together, this time, not with an offer of repair but a non-linguistic repair itself; she retrieves the misguided comb, wipes it and hands it back to Kyle. And in (33), the speaker uses *whoops* and indicates a lack of intent, which is one of the substrategies of taking on responsibility.

In all these cases, the surface diagnostics of an apology are clearly present, but the level of regret and the sincerity seem to vary somewhat. They do not appear to be very high in any of these examples, but in (30) and perhaps (32), they appear to be particularly low. This interpretation is obviously based on a somewhat subjective evaluation of the limited context that is provided by COHA, but the use of the spill cries *oops* and *whoops* clearly adds to the impression that the apologisee regards the mishap as relatively minor, if it is a mishap at all.

5. Conclusion

The diachronic analysis of spill cries presented in this paper cannot claim more than a preliminary status. The *Corpus of Historical American English* – in spite of its impressive dimensions – contains only 175 instances of the interjection *oops* and 44 instances of *whoops* (including spelling variants and excluding false hits). And the apologies with which the spill cries tend to correlate in the more recent decades often have an uncertain status. Even the extended context that is provided for each hit in COHA often proves insufficient for an adequate interpretation of the nuances and subtleties of character attitudes and their sincerity or facetiousness in issuing an apology.

However, on the basis of the collocational analysis provided above and a careful reading of the available contexts of the selected examples, a relatively clear line of development can be discerned for both spill cries and their association with apologies. The early examples are characterised by a speaker expressing their surprise about an unexpected turn of events either in the current situation or in something said by an interlocutor. Elements of dismay or regret, as suggested by the OED definitions for both *oops* and *whoops*, are either not in evidence or they are very much backgrounded. In the later decades of the twentieth century, this situation changes. Spill cries become more frequent and they seem more and more regularly associated with the speech act of apology. In particular *oops* frequently collocates with the apology IFID *sorry*, and it often works as an apology IFID in its own right. *Whoops* is equally attested in apologetic contexts, but several examples have shown that the apology is not entirely serious. In fact, spill cries may be an indication that the weight of the apology is increasingly reduced (cf. Jucker 2019). Spill cries seem to have turned into useful devices to acknowledge the speaker's sudden awareness that a minor mishap has occurred. It stresses the accidental and non-intentional nature of the mishap, which therefore does not require a request for forgiveness or a humbling display of regret, and it minimises the potential of face loss that is inherent in a sincere apology. The mishap is presented as accidental, unintended and perhaps even surprising to the speaker him- or herself.

More research on the interaction between spill cries and apologies along the lines of Lutzky and Kehoe (2017) and Jucker (2019) is clearly called for. It should be particularly interesting to explore the corpus evidence of larger corpora containing spontaneous spoken interaction and – if possible – with a diachronic dimension covering material from the middle of the last century up to today. It would also be interesting to further explore the social dimension of spill cries, e.g. the question whether they are used more frequently by men or by women. For this, large size corpora of demographically coded interactions would be necessary. However, in spite of what looks like an explosion of available mega corpora, demographic information, as it is available, for instance, for a small subpart of the BNC, is still rare. It is to be hoped that this will change in the near future.

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FROM REQUESTING TO ALMS-SEEKING The politeness formula *fare la carità di* in nineteenth-century Italy

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Abstract – This contribution focuses on one particular politeness formula for requests, *fare la carità di* ‘be so good as to (give)’. The aim of the paper was to reconstruct the meanings and contexts for the usage of *fare la carità di* in nineteenth-century Italy. The following sources were used: conduct books, dictionaries, novels and diachronic corpora. The essay first looked at politeness metadiscourse and examined the available language advice for requests in CGIO, a corpus of 51 nineteenth-century Italian conduct books. However, as there is none available for *fare la carità di*, three nineteenth-century dictionaries were consulted. These findings from the metadiscourse were then read against those from a qualitative analysis covering all the examples found in two of the most influential novels of that period, Alessandro Manzoni’s *I promessi sposi*, ‘The Betrothed’, 1840, and Carlo Collodi’s *Pinocchio*, 1883. Finally, quantitative data from the historical corpora DiaCORIS and MIDIA were provided. This combined analysis (using metadiscourse alongside qualitative discourse analysis and quantitative data) produced the following results: the formula is used in two contexts, to make a (sometimes forceful) request and to beg for a handout. Both appear in roughly equal proportions until the end of World War II. After that, *fare la carità di* disappears from DiaCORIS. The paper tentatively concludes that the absence of the formula from the advice on requests in conduct books may be partly explained by its use as a specialised marker for alms-seeking, given that conduct books fiercely criticise almsgiving to the undeserving poor.

Keywords: CGIO; DiaCORIS; MIDIA; *I promessi sposi*; *Pinocchio*; request; alms-seeking; conduct books; Italy; nineteenth century.

1. Introduction

This contribution focuses on one particular politeness formula for requests, *fare la carità di* ‘be so good as to (give)’, examining its meanings and contexts of use in nineteenth-century Italy. The study takes its cue from the apparent mismatch between the formulaic character of the request – that is, the “conventionalised linguistic expression” (Culpeper 2011, p. 120) *fare la carità di* – and (as far as I know) its absence from contemporary conduct books. The study aims to explain this discrepancy.

That *fare la carità di* is absent from politeness advice in contemporary conduct books — notwithstanding its inclusion in dictionaries, its usage in novels and its presence in historical corpora — has consequences for the use of conduct books as sources to study the conventionalisation processes of linguistic politeness expressions. Culpeper (2017) and Paternoster and Saltamacchia (2017), for example, provide inventories of politeness rules in Italian conduct books, respectively, for the sixteenth and the nineteenth century. Paternoster and Saltamacchia (2017) found a wide range of rules and formulae, going from excuses to requests, the expression of agreement and disagreement, pre-emptive offers of assistance, the use of address pronouns, titles, etc. However, conduct books appear to be selective: conventionalised expressions may be missing from the metadiscourse. Therefore, it is useful to supplement the analysis of conduct books with other metasources, such as dictionaries, and frequencies of micro-usages in literary sources, reference corpora, etc. In fact, this is the method recommended within so-called third-wave politeness approaches: the two ways that are seen to be “methodologically sound” to study linguistic politeness conventions are, precisely, frequency counts and metadiscourse (Terkourafi, Kádár 2017, p. 190). The current study attempts to combine both, frequency counts and metadiscourse (on conduct books as sources within historical pragmatics, see also Paternoster, Fitzmaurice 2019, pp. 21-23).

Sections 2, 3 and 4 analyse *fare la carità di* in conduct books and dictionary entries, which constitute politeness metadiscourse. Politeness metadiscourse contains “reflexive *social discourses* on politeness”, which determine “*a persistent frame of interpretation and evaluation*” (Kádár, Haugh 2013, p. 187, original emphasis). Section 2 examines the language advice for requests in the *Corpus dei galatei italiani ottocenteschi*, or CGIO, the ‘Corpus of Nineteenth-Century Italian Conduct Books’, which comprises 51 texts. After a short digression in Section 3, which explores the available metadiscourse for a similar expression *per carità* ‘for the love of God’, in Section 4 three nineteenth-century dictionaries are consulted in order to look for evidence of the conventionalised status of *fare la carità di*. In Sections 5 and 6, the prescriptive findings are contrasted with actual language usage within a qualitative approach applied to two influential novels, *I promessi sposi* ‘*The Betrothed*’, 1840, and *Pinocchio*, 1883, both key texts in the nation-building effort. These particular novels were chosen for their didactic message, which was delivered with conspicuous editorial success: because of their influence they are assumed to have contributed to conventionalisation processes regarding this particular formula. Finally, Sections 7 and 8 provide a small quantitative setup to study uses of *fare la carità di* in the historical corpora DiaCORIS (1861-2001) and MIDIA (1692-1947). Not only does this enable the search to be extended to other genres; it also allows one to look at

occurrences in the twentieth century. Section 9 looks for reasons that may justify the absence of *fare la carità di* from conduct books. Finally, in Section 10, some concluding remarks are offered.

2. Requests in Italian nineteenth-century conduct books

In the nineteenth century, Italy was inundated with conduct manuals and etiquette books. Between 1800 and 1920, Tasca (2004) counts 186 original titles, resulting in at least 450 different editions. This boom can probably be explained by the fact that the emerging bourgeoisie was looking to replace the aristocratic ceremonial with a new, more rational and utilitarian code of conduct. CGIO comprises the 51 most representative sources (i.e. the ones having most reprints) of the long nineteenth century (i.e. from 1800 to 1920).¹ CGIO contains just over 2,300,000 words (tokens).

The rules and formulae for requests in CGIO offer a mixed picture, since Paternoster and Saltamacchia (2017) found deferential formulae, reminiscent of an *ancien-régime* type of politeness, next to more strategic ones. In Table 1, the conditional mood in *pregherei* ‘I would pray’, *bramerei* ‘I would desire’ and *avrei piacere* ‘I would have the pleasure’ expresses optionality and announces the present-day politeness model. However, most features in Table 1 still emphasise hierarchical differences by means of speaker denigration and addressee elevation. The sources divide requests into two classes: requests between equals use the address pronoun *voi* ‘you’, which is less formal than *lei* ‘you’ or *vostra signoria* or *V. S.* ‘your lordship’, used with a superior recipient. Molinelli explains how *voi* expresses “affective distance”, i.e. respect, in “symmetrical and reciprocal relationships”, whilst the third person expresses “social distance”, that is, deference, in the case of an “asymmetrical, non-reciprocal relationship” (2018, p. 52). For both groups, the bare imperative, even when using respectful 2nd person plural and deferential 3rd person verb forms, is considered *impolite* (the case of requests towards inferiors is not considered). What makes the request polite, then, is the use – according to Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) – of two categories: hedged performatives (‘I beg’) and want-statements (‘I would wish’), as shown in Table 1.

¹ CGIO was compiled by A. Paternoster and F. Saltamacchia within the research project *The Reasons for Politeness. The Birth of Contemporary Politeness in the Behavioural Treatises of Nineteenth-Century Italy*, financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation, Project no. 100012_153031, September 2014-January 2019.

| | Soave 1809 [1788] | Gattini 1870 [1869] | Cortinovis 1889 |
|--|---|---|--|
| With superiors (with the deferential 3 rd person pronoun <i>Lei</i>) | La prego (I pray you) | Pregherei la S. V. (I would pray your lordship) | Pregherei V. S. |
| | La supplico (I beg you) | - | - |
| | Mi faccia il favore o la grazia (do me the favour or the grace) | Mi faccia il favore o la grazia | Mi faccia la grazia od il favore di |
| | Abbia la bontà (have the goodness) | Abbia la bontà | Abbia la bontà |
| | Si degni (deign) | - | - |
| | Si compiaccia (deign) | Si compiaccia | Si compiaccia |
| With equals (with the respectful 2 nd person pronoun <i>Voi</i>) | Vi prego (I pray you) | Vi prego | Vi prego |
| | Bramerei (I would desire) | Bramerei | Bramerei |
| | Avrei piacere (I would have the pleasure) | Mi farete piacere (you will do me the pleasure) | - |
| | - | - | Fate grazia (do the grace) |
| | - | Siate compiacente di (be obliging) | - |

Table 1

Formulae to make polite requests in CGIO. Reproduced, with minor changes, from Paternoster and Saltamacchia 2017, p. 281.

Culpeper and Archer treat “verbs such as *beg*, *plead*, *crave* and *beseech*” as performative verbs. These verbs “semantically” modify the “requestive force” (2008, p. 72) because they are used to realise a directive and name it at the same time. In fact, according to Fraser, these verbs “share the inherent property that the speaker is ‘requesting’ from a position of powerlessness, relative to the hearer” (1975, p. 197). These are impositives, direct, explicit formulations of requests: “The politeness formulae are elevating the benevolent, gracious, obliging hearer, who is deigning to stoop low to the level of an undeserving servant [...]” (Paternoster, Saltamacchia 2017, p. 281).² Requests could be a more conservative area, which is resistant to

² Paternoster and Saltamacchia (2017) compare their results with Gudrun Held’s study of official petitions in fourteenth-century Northern Italy. Frequent verbs are “supplicare” and “domandare

change. These results are in line with those found by Fedriani and Ghezzi (2018). Studying two theatre plays of the sixteenth, the eighteenth and the twentieth century respectively, they find that, in the sixteenth century, performative verbs are by far the most frequent way to make requests. In the eighteenth century this category still dominates, although other categories (such as modal verbs, impersonal verbs, diluted ‘we’) are now gaining ground. The eighteenth century already shows a mixed picture, whilst in the twentieth century all the categories shrink to the advantage of the politeness markers *per favore* and *per piacere*, ‘please’.

Table 1 does not include *fare la carità*. Neither does Demartino (1897 [1888]), a precious source, since it includes an ‘Appendix of most frequent ways to express oneself in civil life’, *Appendice che contiene i più frequenti modi di esprimersi nella vita civile*, a list of politeness formulae divided into six sections. Section 2 is called *Del pregare*, ‘on requesting’. The appendix contains 22 paradigms. Four of them express mitigation by means of the conditional (Paternoster, Saltamacchia 2017, p. 282), the others mainly use performative verbal locutions of the type listed in Table 1, but no mention is made of *fare la carità di*. In fact, no other conduct book in CGIO (other than the 30 ones used at the time for Paternoster, Saltamacchia 2017) treats it as a politeness formula.

Held (2005, pp. 298-299) mentions *carità* ‘charity’³ as a noun often found in eighteenth-century politeness formulae, alongside *grazia* ‘grace’, *piacere* ‘pleasure’, *favore* ‘favour’ and *cortesia* ‘courtesy’.⁴ Fedriani (2019, p. 236) finds that, in her corpus of eighteenth-century drama, *per carità* ‘for the love of God’ is actually the most frequently used prepositional phrase to make a request, far ahead of *in/per cortesia* ‘out of courtesy’ and *per favore* ‘as a favour’ (*per piacere* ‘as a pleasure’ returns zero results). Not unsurprisingly, in CGIO, *carità* ‘charity’ represents an important aspect of the conceptualisation of politeness. As discussed by Paternoster and Saltamacchia (2017, pp. 269-272), *cortesia* ‘politeness’ is mainly defined as

gracia” introducing the subordinate clauses “piaccia a X/a X debba piacere, X si degna” ‘supplicate’ and ‘demand special grace’ that it might ‘please’ X/that X ‘deigns’ to (Held 2010, pp. 209-210). This is exactly the semantic field at work in the nineteenth century.

³ I purposely use the English term ‘charity’ here in the archaic and religious meaning of ‘love of mankind’, which is the prevailing meaning in the nineteenth-century data. Correct translations represent a major challenge (in any academic paper written in English on non-English data, and especially so for historical documents). I considered it good practice to consult the three historical dictionaries quoted in Section 4, alongside careful weighing of the co- and context of the examples.

⁴ Arguably, all these terms have particularly rich meanings, the exploration of which falls outside the scope of this study. I refer to Held 2005 for a comprehensive overview. Although a one-to-one association between the Italian and English lexemes is, admittedly, reductive here, for each term I try to show the most literal translation.

love of one's 'neighbour,' since Catholic ethics inform most of the sources. The call for politeness as fraternal love is often backed by the second of the Gospel's Great Commandments, "love thy neighbour as thyself" (the first one being "love the Lord", Matthew 22:35-40 and Mark 12:28-34): 'do to others as you would have them do to you and do not do to others as you would not have them do to you' is a quote that returns time after time. First and foremost, *carità* 'charity' represents the love of God and the love of others, anchored in the love of God. As such it acts as a synonym for *cortesia* 'politeness'. Chiavarino, a priest, often uses *carità* next to good manners: "la buona creanza e la vera carità"; "colla carità fraterna, colla onestà Cristiana"; "un'oncia di dolcezza e di carità" (1897, p. 19, p. 57, p. 61).⁵ Conduct books sometimes dedicate entire chapters to charity, like chapter II, *Carità*, in Rossi, 1921 [1878], where it is treated as the third of the theological virtues, besides faith and hope. Other chapters, Bruni 1870, Ch. VII, *Carità beneficenza gratitudine*,⁶ and Cajmi 1869 [1865-7], Vol. II, Ch. X, *La carità*, discuss the concept as love for people who suffer, with the narrower meaning of compassion and, secondly, of almsgiving. The fact that *carità* is a central concept for the values and rules informing nineteenth-century Italian politeness metadiscourse is demonstrated with a frequency count (using AntConc 3.4.3m). In the 51 sources in CGIO, the search string *carit** – which captures terms like *caritatevole*, *caritatevolmente*, *caritativo*, 'caring', 'caringly', 'charitable', old Italian *caritate* and *caritade*, and Latin *caritas* – returns 424 hits. The verbal locution *fare la carità* is used eight times (search term *fa* la carità*), mainly in discussions on material assistance to the poor:

Le buone madri di famiglia possono in questa bisogna farvi da maestre; esse hanno nel **fare la carità** un tatto finissimo; [...]. (Gallenga 1871, p. 411)⁷

And elsewhere in the same book:

Volete esser certi che la vostra carità vada a sollievo della vera miseria? procurate per quanto ve lo permettano le vostre occupazioni di **fare la carità personalmente**. (Gallenga 1871, p.419, original emphasis)⁸

⁵ 'Good manners and true charity; with fraternal charity, with Christian honesty; an ounce of kindness and charity.' (Here and elsewhere, translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.)

⁶ 'Charity, alms-giving and gratitude.'

⁷ 'To learn this task you can take example from dedicated mothers; they have a very fine tact **in giving donations**; [...].'

⁸ 'Do you want to be sure that your charity will relieve genuine misery? Make sure, as far as your occupations allow, **to donate in person**.'

Only once does it occur in a request towards the readers:

Dunque, o lettori, cominciate voi a non adoperarlo [= “quel modo di invitare”] più, e **fate la carità di spiegare e diffondere** queste mie ragioni fra tutti gli ignoranti che non leggono nessun libro. (Rajberti, vol. 1, 1850, p. 9)⁹

This 1850 example shows that the formula *fate la carità di* ‘be so good as to’ acts as a request modifier. The context is the request of the author to ban the formulaic expression *fare penitenza*, ‘do penitence’ used to invite people over for dinner, as in ‘come and do penitence with us’, a usage which Rajberti criticises as being affectatious and hypocritical.

3. *Per carità* ‘for the love of God’

Whilst *fare la carità* occurs only sporadically in CGIO, the expression *per carità* ‘for the love of God’, often accompanied by a comma or an exclamation mark, occurs 51 times. 15 of its occurrences are in Rajberti 1850, who uses it predominantly with imperatives. In the following example, the expression is a prepositional phrase used with scope over the verb. *Per* means ‘out of’, ‘in terms of’:

Giovani, che vi date a tentare la carriera delle lettere, **per carità di voi stessi** non salite sui trampoli dell’idealismo e delle fantasticherie [...]. (Rajberti 1850, vol. 1, p. 52)¹⁰

Here the expression has parenthetical status (that is, if left out of the sentence, the syntax would remain unchanged):

Per carità, guardatevi dal gettarle [= “signore eleganti”] in mezzo a un branco di vecchi funzionarii [...]. (Rajberti 1850, vol. 1, p. 33)¹¹

The prepositional phrase precedes full pragmaticalisation. When fully pragmaticalised, the expression becomes parenthetical: it can move freely in the sentence and has scope over the entire directive act, and not just over the verb (see Fedriani 2019, p. 237 on the similar life cycle of *per favore*

⁹ ‘Therefore, dear readers, be yourselves the first to stop using it [= that way to invite people] and **be so good as to explain and divulge** my arguments amongst all the ignorant people who never read books.’

¹⁰ ‘Young people wishing to attempt a career in literature, **have pity on yourselves**, do not mount the stilts of idealism and dream worlds [...].’

¹¹ ‘**For the love of God**, take care not to throw them [= elegant ladies] amongst a pack of old civil servants [...].’

‘please’). In the second example above the meaning seems boosting, as it conveys urgency.

Ideally, *fare la carità di* should be studied in parallel with *per carità*, especially since Fedriani (2019) demonstrates how a similar politeness marker, *per favore* ‘please’, acquires parenthetical status as late as the 1890s. However, for reasons of space, I shall concentrate on the former, and only briefly discuss *per carità*. Beside the Rajberti example of 1850, CGIO contains an even earlier example of parenthetical *per carità* found in Melchiorre Gioja: “**Per carità**, non dimenticate questo precetto quando scrivete a dei grandi imbecilli che misurano il rispetto col compasso” (1820, vol. I, p. 190 in footnote).¹² Interestingly enough, Fedriani studies *per favore* ‘please’ from the point of view of pragmatic reversal, i.e. the process by which a routine politeness marker becomes impolite, as “insistent reinforcement of impolite acts such as urgent pleas, rude requests, rebuttals, and even insults” (2019, p. 233). In English, for example, ‘please’ can express impatience as in ‘Oh Please! Give me a break!’¹³ Fedriani 2019 analyses impolite *per favore* in a twenty-first-century corpus of web texts. However, already at the beginning of the twentieth century, Fiorentina certainly uses *per carità* with very urgent bans. Here she writes about napkins:

[...] non appenderlo al collo come i bamberotti e, **per carità**, guardati dall’atto istintivo di fregare con esso il piatto, scambiando la nitida domestica mensa per quella d’un albergo: che mortificazione sarebbe per la padrona di casa! (Fiorentina 1918 [1915], p. 103)¹⁴

The term *mortificazione* indicates that this counts as a serious offence against good table manners and Fornari is impatient with offenders. That this polite marker is already conventionalised as impolite – i.e. it is not an occasional ironic use as mock politeness, where inferencing is needed to work out the meaning – is further confirmed by a historical dictionary.

The *Dizionario della lingua italiana* by Niccolò Tommaseo and Bernardo Bellini (1861-1879) is an authoritative dictionary based on literary examples. It discusses *per carità* in §13 of the lemma *carità* ‘charity’ (vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*). For *per carità*, Tommaseo and Bellini list examples, often without comma, where it has scope over the verb as a prepositional phrase:

¹² ‘**For the love of God**, do not forget this norm when you write to big imbeciles who measure respect with a compass.’

¹³ See Ghezzi and Molinelli 2019 on a similar topic, i.e. the use of Italian *scusa* ‘excuse me’ in mixed messages, to express mock politeness and downright impoliteness.

¹⁴ ‘[...] do not tie it round your neck like little children, and, **for the love of God**, make sure you do not instinctively rub your plate with it, mistaking the clean household table for a hotel one. What a mortification this would be for the mistress of the house!’

“Quando ha forma di preghiera e di chiesta, o sia relig. il senso o meram. umano, è sempre buono, o sia supplichevole o riverente o affettuoso; se non porti iron.” (vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*).¹⁵ Tommaseo and Bellini allow here for ironic usages as mock politeness. *Per carità!* with exclamation mark “invoca la carità altrui a giovare col danaro o coll'opera; o almeno a non nuocere” (vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*).¹⁶ However, in § 17 it has a distinct impolite meaning: “Così *Per carità!* è esclamazione d'impazienza e di sdegno.” (Tommaseo, Bellini, vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*).¹⁷ This is the meaning seen above in Fiorentina (1918 [1915]).

Culpeper (2011, p. 174-178) discusses impolite uses of politeness markers, citing examples such as ‘with respect’, ‘no offence’, ‘I hate to be rude but’. These originally express conventional politeness, but Culpeper sees them as routinely conveying a “conventionalised impolite mixed message”, i.e. they have become conventionalised for impoliteness. He adds that this is “likely true” for “certain familiar forms of sarcasm and banter” (Culpeper, 2011, p. 178; see also Fedriani 2019; Ghezzi and Molinelli 2019). *Per carità* is likely to be a similar case, especially because the impolite use is already registered in a dictionary. The pattern followed by *per carità* confirms the analysis in Fedriani 2019, where it is deftly argued that *per favore* is routinised from a prepositional phrase into a parenthetic politeness marker in the 1890s, with examples of pragmatic reversal taken from the twenty-first century. *Per carità* follows a similar pattern, only it happens much earlier, with pragmaticalisation attested since 1820 (at least, in GCIO)¹⁸ and an impolite meaning attested in a dictionary from the 1860s. However, this example taken from Manzoni’s *Promessi sposi*, ‘The Betrothed’, 1840, is also impolite. In ch. XV the innkeeper denouncing Renzo is offended that the police dare suspect him too and he makes a firm rebuttal: ““Io? **per carità!** io non credo nulla: abbado a far l'oste.”” (Manzoni 2002, p. 297).¹⁹ In ch. XVIII the narrator specifies that Agnese uses *per carità!* with a mix of gratitude and impatience: ““Oh **per carità!**” esclamò Agnese, con quel misto di gratitudine e d'impazienza, che si prova a un'esibizione in cui si trovi più la buona

¹⁵ ‘When it has the form of a prayer or a request, it is always good, both with a religious or simply humane meaning, and with a supplicating, a respectful or an affectionate meaning, provided it is not ironic.’

¹⁶ ‘Invokes someone else’s charity to assist with money or actions, or, at least, non to harm.’

¹⁷ In this sense *Per carità!* is an exclamation of impatience and of disdain.

¹⁸ A cursory glance at Carlo Goldoni’s eighteenth-century comedies shows a mixture of *per carità* used with or without a comma. See <http://www.intratext.com/ixt/ITA1289/DF.HTM>.

¹⁹ “I! **For Heaven’s sake**; I think nothing: I only attend to my business.” Manzoni 1909-1914, retrieved from <https://www.bartleby.com/21/1.html>.

volontà altrui, che la propria convenienza: [...]?” (Manzoni 2002, p. 353).²⁰ These 1840 examples express the ‘impatience and disdain’ highlighted by Tommaseo and Bellini. Incidentally, present-day dictionaries, such as the Treccani, also list an impolite use for *per carità*!²¹

4. Historical dictionaries

The Italian nineteenth century has been called the century of lexicography as this is a period when numerous dictionaries are published. Two dictionaries are based on literary examples: the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1863-1923), then in its 5th edition, and the Tommaseo and Bellini (1861-1879) as seen above. A third dictionary by Giuseppe Rigutini and Pietro Fanfani, 1875 (I use an 1893 edition) is based on spoken language. The *Vocabolario della Crusca* includes all the meanings of the noun *carità* ‘charity’ discussed in Section 2. As one of the theological virtues, it also acquires the more specific meaning of compassion – “Affettuosa compassione, Commiserazione, Pietà; e talvolta anche Misericordia” – which then leads to the meaning of “Qualunque atto caritativo” and “in senso particolare, Elemosina; per lo più adoperato col verbo Fare” (*Vocabolario*, vol. 2, 1866, *ad vocem*).²² §VIII considers requests: the term is used for “Piacere o Favore che altri ci faccia di cosa sommamente desiderata; Grazia”,²³ with the following example: “Voi ch’avete paterna autorità Sopra il vostro figliuol grasso e paffuto, **Fateci a tutti un po’ di carità**; Fategli una solenne riprensione ec.”²⁴ (*Vocabolario*, vol. 2, 1866, *ad vocem*). The performative verbal locution is here used as a pre-request. Note that the request expresses urgency, it is ‘highly desired’. On the other hand, the example is slightly ironic.

The meanings of *carità* as a noun are similar in Tommaseo and Bellini (vol. 1, 1861), who also confirm its usage in a verbal locution to make a request. In §12, this example is negatively evaluated as verging on a ceremonious and mocking interpretation: “**Fate la carità d'insegnarmi**” is

²⁰ “**Oh holy patience!**” exclaimed Agnese, with that mixture of gratitude and impatience that one feels at an offer in which there is more good nature than suitableness: [...]?” Manzoni 1909-1914, retrieved from <https://www.bartleby.com/21/1.html>.

²¹ Consulted at <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/carita>.

²² ‘Affectionate compassion, commiseration, pity; and at times also mercy. – Whichever charitable act. – In particular, alms-giving, mostly used with the verb *fare* ‘to do’.’

²³ ‘The pleasure or favour, we ask someone to grant us, of something that is highly desired; grace.’

²⁴ ‘You who have paternal authority Over your chubby and puffy son, ... **Do us all a bit of a favour**; Give him a mighty reprimand etc.’

“Modo fam. che tiene della cerimonia e dello scherzo”²⁵ (Tommaseo, Bellini, vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*). In §14, dedicated to *carità* as “elemosina” ‘handout’, the expression is treated as a formula for begging, but it also has the meaning of a more generic request: “T. Col Di. **Fate la carità d'un quattrino, d'un seccherello di pane.** – Col Di, in altri sensi eziandio: **La carità d'un consiglio, d'un saluto.**” (Tommaseo, Bellini, vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*).²⁶ However, § 17 discusses ironic, that is, mock polite, usages for *fare la carità*:

T. Anche iron. **Fatemi la carità:** ... *tacete... andate via.*

In senso sim. T. **Fatemi la santa carità**...

Col Di e l'Inf., e serio e iron. T. **Fatemi la carità di non parlare di me.** *Quest'è la miglior lode ch'io invochi.* (Tommaseo, Bellini, vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*)²⁷

However, for Tommaseo, “può essere profanazione lo sprecare che in certi istituti pii si fa questa preghiera per mera cerimonia. T. **Fate la carità di darmi quel gomitolo, di porgermi quella pezzuola** (Tommaseo, Bellini, vol. 1, 1861, *ad vocem*).²⁸ In these examples, there is a strong contradiction between very ordinary objects and the religious connotation of the request modifier. The dictionary user seemingly needs to infer that this request formula should be reserved to ask for help in extraordinary circumstances, with an appeal to religious virtues as fraternal love. Overall, although the dictionary lists request and alms-seeking as a meaning for *fare la carità*, exaggerated (overpolite) and ironic (impolite) uses dominate.

Rigutini and Fanfani propose the shortest lemma. They discuss *fare la carità* as a polite request in the meaning of “Favore, Piacere efficace”,²⁹ with the following example of a pre-request: “fammi una carità e portami questa lettera al ministro” (Rigutini, Fanfani, 1893 [1875], *ad vocem*).³⁰

In sum, whereas conduct books do not discuss the formula *fare la carità* to make requests, the three dictionaries do list it as a request modifier, demonstrating its conventionalised nature as a politeness formula; for the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, the request has urgency. Two dictionaries list *fare la carità* in the context of alms-seeking, but for Tommaseo and Bellini the

²⁵ ‘Be so good as to teach me – An informal saying that is partly ceremonious and joking in nature.’

²⁶ ‘With *di* ‘to’, be so good as to give a penny, or a breadcrust. – With *di* ‘to’, also in other meanings: [be so good as to] give a piece of advice, to say hello (The T. stands for Tommaseo as the author of the lemma).’

²⁷ ‘Also ironically, Do me a favour: ... be quiet... go away. In a similar meaning. Do me a blooming [lit. saintly] favour... With *di* ‘to’ and the infinitive, serious as well as ironic. Be so good as to not talk of me. That is the best praise I invoke.’

²⁸ ‘It can be a desecration to waste this request as a mere ceremony, as they do in certain religious institutes. Be so kind as to hand me that boll of string, to pass me that handkerchief.’

²⁹ ‘Efficient favour, pleasure.’

³⁰ ‘Do me a favour and take this letter to the secretary.’

lemma contains quite a few examples of mocking uses, which appear also in the example of the request provided by the *Vocabolario della Crusca*. There is a difference with *per carità*, however. *Per carità* was, as seen in Section 3, already conventionalised as impolite, whereas *fare la carità* is interpreted as mock politeness, that is, the recipient will still need to infer the antiphrastic meaning. In other words, it is not yet fully conventionalised. In fact, the sources only provide one example of ironic *fare la carità* (in Pirandello, see Section 7). In the next two sections, I examine how *fare la carità* is used in two nineteenth-century novels.

5. *I promessi sposi* ‘The Betrothed’

I promessi sposi ‘The Betrothed’ is allegedly the most important novel in nineteenth-century Italian literature (and is probably one of the greatest novels of the nineteenth century *tout court*). The first edition, of 1827, “immediately wins popular acclaim in Italy of the Risorgimento”; the second version, of 1840, written in a “Florentine dialect as it was spoken by the educated classes”, helps to build the Italian identity “by helping to forge its language” (Bermann 2006, p. 1133). In fact, language, communication and dialogue are important topics in the novel: whilst communication among aristocrats is fake and hypocritical, communication among the humble protagonists is a model to be followed, as they are genuinely caring for their fellow men. This didactic aspect regarding communication is important, as it will contribute to the conventionalisation of politeness formulae used by the characters occupying the positive moral pole of the novel.

In this novel, profoundly inspired by Catholic faith, the term *carità* appears no less than 80 times. The expression *fare la carità (di)* appears nine times. Table 2 lists the quotes, with minimal indications about their function as a request or alms-seeking. The concordances were established with <http://www.intratext.com/ixt/ITA0008/>. All quotes were checked against the anastatic edition, Manzoni 2002.³¹ For the translation I quote Manzoni 1909-1914.

| Ch. | Example | Translation | Context |
|-----|--|---|---|
| III | Ma Lucia, richiamatolo, disse: “vorrei un servizio da voi; vorrei che diceste al padre Cristoforo, che ho gran premura di parlargli, e | But Lucia, recalling him, said, “I want you to do me a kindness; I want you to tell Father Cristoforo that we earnestly wish to speak | The marriage of Renzo and Lucia is called off. Via an intermediary, Lucia asks fra Cristoforo to come as soon as possible as they badly |

³¹ Also retrievable from [https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/I_promessi_sposi_\(1840\)](https://it.wikisource.org/wiki/I_promessi_sposi_(1840)).

| | | | |
|-------|---|---|--|
| | che mi faccia la carità di venir da noi poverette, subito subito; perché non possiamo andar noi alla chiesa.” | to him, and ask him to be as good as to come to us poor people quickly – directly; for I cannot go to the church.” | need his help. Request. |
| IX | “E se lei fa questa carità di metterci al sicuro, giacché siam ridotte a far questa faccia di chieder ricovero, e ad incomodare le persone dabbene; ma sia fatta la volontà di Dio; [...].” | “And if you do us the kindness to put us in safety, since we are reduced to the necessity of asking a place of refuge, and of inconveniencing worthy people, (but God’s will be done!) [...].” | Pursued by Don Rodrigo’s men, Lucia and her mother are forced to flee from the village. Lucia arrives with her mother in a convent and asks if they can take refuge. Request. |
| XXI | “Se lei non mi fa questa carità , me la farà il Signore: mi farà morire, e per me sarà finita; ma lei!....” | “If you don’t grant me this mercy , the Lord will do it for me. I shall die, and all will be over with me; but you ...” | Lucia has been kidnapped. She supplicates her captor, a robber baron, to let her go. Request. |
| XXVI | “Pensateci voi, fatemi anche questa carità ; ché voi ci potete pensare.” | “Will you see to this, and do me also this kindness ; for <i>you</i> can think about it.” | Lucia is freed and sees her mother again. In captivity she has made a vow to renounce Renzo if she was saved and asks her mother to inform her former fiancé. Request. |
| XXIX | [...] e vedendo passar qualcheduno, gridava con una voce mezza di pianto e mezza di rimprovero: “ fate questa carità al vostro povero curato di cercargli qualche cavallo, qualche mulo, qualche asino.” | [...] or, seeing some one passing, cried out in a half-crying and half-reproachful tone: “ Do your poor Curate this kindness, to seek some horse, some mule, some ass, for him! ” | Don Abbondio, terrified to be left behind in the village with a looting army approaching, is desperate to have a way out. Request. |
| XXXIV | Ci andò di corsa; e quando fu vicino, “o quel giovine,” disse quella donna: “per i vostri poveri morti, fate la carità d'andare a avvertire il commissario che siamo qui dimenticati.” | He ran towards her; and when he came near, “O young man,” said the woman, “in the name of the friends you’ve lost, have the charity to go and tell the commissary that we are here forgotten!” | Renzo is looking for Lucia in Milan and is hailed by a woman whose house is boarded up for fear of the plague. She urgently needs food as she and her children haven’t eaten for two days. |

| | | | Request. |
|-------|---|--|--|
| XXXIV | “Anche voi,” riprese Renzo, “credo che potrete farmi un piacere, una vera carità , senza vostro incomodo.” | “You, too, I think,” resumed Renzo, “can do me a service, a real kindness , without any trouble.” | Renzo is asking the same woman for directions to a house where he is hopeful to find Lucia. <i>Una vera carità</i> is apposition to <i>un piacere</i> . Request. |
| XXXIV | [...] e mentre quello si moveva per andarsene, “ un'altra carità ,” soggiunse; e gli disse della povera donna dimenticata. Il buon prete ringraziò lui d'avergli dato occasione di fare una carità così necessaria; [...]. | [...] and as the priest prepared to go away, “ Another favour ,” added he; and he told him of the poor forgotten woman. The worthy priest thanked him for having given him this opportunity of conveying assistance where it was so much needed; [...]. | After asking a priest for directions to Lucia's house, Renzo asks him for another favour: take food to the woman he has just met. <i>Un'altra carità</i> is used with ellipsis of the verb <i>fare</i> , which appears in the indirect discourse. Request. |
| XXXV | Dopo qualche momento, comparve un giovine cappuccino, al quale disse: “ fatemi la carità , padre Vittore, di guardare anche per me, a questi nostri poverini, intanto ch'io me ne sto ritirato; e se alcuno però mi volesse, chiamatemi.” | In a moment or two, a young Capuchin appeared, to whom Cristoforo said, “ Do me the kindness , Father Vittore, to take my share, too, of waiting upon patients, while I am absent for a little while; and if any one should ask for me, will you be good enough to call me.” | In the Lazzaretto, fra Cristoforo asks a young friar to look after the sick in his absence. Request. |

Table 2

The verbal locution *fare la carità* in *I promessi sposi*, 1840.

There are nine cases, none of which refer to alms-seeking. In five cases, the expression is part of a pre- or post-supportive move. As a head act, *fare la carità* may or may not have an indirect object and *di* is followed by an infinitive: [mi faccia/fate/fatemi/fate al vostro povero curato] [la/questa] carità [di/d'] [venir/cercargli/andare/guardare]. Some of these are without doubt forceful requests, especially the ones in XXI, XXIX and the first one of XXXIV. They reflect the meaning found in the *Vocabolario della Crusca*, to request something ‘highly desired’. The request by Lucia in XXI has the hallmarks of a supplication, a specific type of directive. This is also recognised by the translator, who opts for the term ‘mercy’. Clark, working

on Homer, defines the speech act of supplication with the following four criteria: it is “a forceful directive” in which the speaker “has an essential and crucial interest in its success” and “the person supplicated has more power than the person performing the supplication”; he also points out the importance of gestures like kneeling (1998, pp. 9-11). In chapter XXI, the four conditions are met. Lucia makes a forceful request with highly emotive rhetoric, her captor has complete power over her, the outcome is a question of life and death and Lucia is on her knees, holding her hands out as in prayer, as shown in Figure 1:



Figure 1

The illustration by Francesco Gonin accompanying Lucia’s supplication (Manzoni 2002, p. 398).

Presumably, in this scene depicting feudal power relationships, Manzoni chooses the politeness modifier to underline Lucia’s religious fervour. Only in chapter XXXIV does the context involve begging for a material good. However, the Milanese woman is forced to beg for food because of highly unusual circumstances, that is, because of someone else’s negligence, and it does not fit the context of regular alms-seeking. Most examples are formulated by the humble protagonists of the novel, Lucia and Renzo, and their spiritual protector Fra Cristoforo. They form the positive moral and religious nucleus of the novel, and their language use is evaluated throughout as being warm, caring and, above all, genuine: a model to be copied (see also Paternoster 2010). There are no instances of an evaluation of overpolite or mock politeness. Overall, *fare la carità di* is used in requests, some of which are quite forceful.

6. *Pinocchio*

About 40 years after the *Promessi sposi*, *Pinocchio* was published in instalments in the children's magazine *Il giornale dei bambini* starting in 1881 and it was published in book format in 1883 (in 1890, the year in which Collodi passed away, the book was already in its fifth edition). A “classic novel of formation”, the stories “could help educate the children of the new Italy unified in 1870 after a long period of struggle” (Adami 2006, p. 486). In fact, after the unification of the country and the swift introduction of compulsory schooling, there was an urgent need for school manuals and reading materials. In *Pinocchio* the didactic message promoting politeness is very explicit. In fact, at the end of the novel, the puppet is transformed into “un ragazzino perbene” ‘a respectable little boy’ (Collodi 1995, p. 526). One of the main values that enable the transformation is the love of work. Two of the occurrences of *fare la carità di* take place on the Island of the Busy Bees (ch. XXIV), where Pinocchio decides to beg for food, dismissing what Geppetto has often told him about real charity:

I veri poveri, in questo mondo, meritevoli di assistenza e di compassione, non sono altro che quelli che, per ragione d'età o di malattia, si trovano condannati a non potersi più guadagnare il pane col lavoro delle proprie mani. Tutti gli altri hanno l'obbligo di lavorare: e se non lavorano e patiscono la fame, tanto peggio per loro (Collodi 1995, p. 449)³²

This vision was reflected in “schoolbooks of the period” (Tosi and Hunt 2018, p. 46). The beggar Pinocchio, however fictional, “reflects the phenomenon of children begging in the Italian streets”; these children were not “picturesque”, instead, “they had become a serious political problem” (Tosi and Hunt 2018, p. 47; see also Prandi 2015). In Table 3 the concordances were established with <http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ITA1150/IDX001.HTM>, accessed 1.3.2019, and checked with the critical edition of Collodi 1995. I based the translation on Collodi 1925, occasionally making it more literal.

³² ‘He had said that the real poor in this world, deserving of our pity and help, were only those who, either through age or sickness, had lost the means of earning their bread with their own hands. All others should work, and if they didn’t, and went hungry, so much the worse for them.’ (Collodi, 1925, retrieved from <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/500/500-h/500-h.htm#link2HCH0024>)

| Ch. | Example | Translation | Context |
|-------|--|---|--|
| XXI | “O Lucciolina, mi faresti la carità di liberarmi da questo supplizio?...” | “Dear little Glowworm, would you be so good as to free me from this torture?” | Whilst trying to steal some grapes, Pinocchio is caught in a weaseltrap. He asks a glow-worm to release him. Request. |
| XXIV | “ Mi fareste la carità di darmi un soldo, perché mi sento morir dalla fame?” | “ Would you be so good as to give me a penny, for I am faint with hunger?” | Pinocchio is very hungry and decides to beg. Alms-seeking. |
| XXIV | “ Fareste, galantuomo, la carità d'un soldo a un povero ragazzo, che sbadiglia dall'appetito? ” | “Good man, would you be so good as to give a penny to a poor boy who is yawning from hunger? ” | After the first refusal Pinocchio makes another attempt. Alms-seeking. |
| XXXVI | “O Pinocchio” gridò la Volpe con voce di piagnisteo “ fai un po' di carità a questi due poveri infermi. ” | “Oh, Pinocchio,” he cried in a tearful voice. “ Give some alms to us poor sick men. ” | Cat and Fox reappear towards the end of the novel. Destitute, they resort to begging, but Pinocchio refuses to give, quoting several proverbs on the topic that ‘ill-gotten gains never benefit anyone’. Alms-seeking. |

Table 3
The verbal locution *fare la carità* in *Pinocchio*, 1883.

Only the first quote is not related to alms-seeking and is a request to obtain freedom from captivity, which is not granted.³³ The two quotes in XXIV show that begging is wrong behaviour: none of the inhabitants of the Island of the Busy Bees donate to Pinocchio. All suggest he do work for them, in order to earn some food. After 20 more refusals he finally accepts to carry someone’s water jug. The hyperbolic condemnation of begging is confirmed in XXXVI where Pinocchio, now close to deserving his transformation into a real boy, criticises other beggars. Out of the four uses, three are related to

³³ To be fair, the conversation is interrupted and the reader never knows if Glowworm would have tried to free the puppet. But given the way their conversation is going (Glowworm lectures Pinocchio on stealing and implies that being caught in a weaseltrap is a just punishment), it is rather unlikely.

begging, but all four attract refusals. Whilst in the head act of a request, *fare la carità di* is followed by an infinitive phrase, in the case of alms-seeking, *carità* can be used absolutely (*fai un po' di carità*), it can be determined by an infinitive (*di darmi*), or by a noun (*di un soldo*). Note the use of the third person as the indirect object in *a un povero ragazzo che sbadiglia d'appetito*, as a way of accumulating reasons to give. More examples of this 'accumulative' indirect object follow in 7.3. No usages are ironic. In fact, in all of these examples, through the co-text of the refusal, *fare la carità* is negatively evaluated. From the point of view of conventionalisation, it functions as a modifier to be avoided by readers aspiring to become 'respectable'.

In sum, in *Pinocchio*, *fare la carità* is mainly used for alms-seeking. The examples are not many, and therefore it is important to extend the search to a reference corpus.

7. DiaCORIS

DiaCORIS is a historical reference corpus elaborated for written Italian produced between 1861 and 2001. It provides a "representative and well balanced sample" (Onelli *et al.* 2006, p. 1212). Representativeness and balance are the two criteria ensuring that findings may be generalised to an entire language (McEnery, Xiao, Tono 2006, p. 124). It is divided into five different time slots (see below), each containing 5 million words. Texts are taken from the following genres: newspapers, prose fiction, essay writing, legal-administrative writing, and miscellanea. The miscellanea include popular novels, children's literature – including *Pinocchio* – serial novels, comic novels, translations, private and public writings like papal encyclicals (Onelli *et al.* 2006, p. 1214). The corpus includes 30% of fiction for 1861-1900; this goes slightly down to 25% in the subsequent slots. Miscellanea make up 15% of the corpus in 1861-1900 and 1901-1922, but this subsequently goes down to 10%. Together, fiction and miscellanea make up between 45% and 35% of the entire corpus, depending on the time slot. It can be assumed that requests or alms-seeking are less likely to appear in the other subcorpora (press, essayistic prose and legal-administrative prose). Also, the fiction section includes novels and short stories (Onelli *et al.* 2006, p. 1214), but, regrettably, no drama. In all, speech-like writing is underrepresented. This is understandable, since the aim of the corpus compilers was to include "written-written" texts (Onelli *et al.* 2006, p. 1213). I include data until 2001, because the data from the twentieth century confirm that the general trend is down.

7.1. 1861-1900

Overall, the search term *carità* appears 431 times. *Fare la carità* has seven occurrences: four in *Pinocchio* and three new ones.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|--|---|---|
| DiaCORIS, fiction, E. De Amicis, <i>Cuore</i> , 1886. | “[...] mi contento di campare di pan nero; ma che possa partir presto, che possa trovare una volta mia madre, fatemi questa carità , del lavoro, trovatemi voi del lavoro, per amor di Dio, che non ne posso più!” | “I am content to live on black bread; but only let it be so that I may set out quickly, that I may find my mother once more. Do me this charity , and find me work, find me work, for the love of God, for I can do no more!” (De Amicis 1895, p. 253) Request. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, G. Verga, <i>Mastro Don Gesualdo</i> 1889. | “Senti, Ninì!... fammi la carità! ...” | “[...] listen, Ninì! – Be so kind to me! ” (Verga 1955, p. 57) Request. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, E. De Marchi, <i>Demetrio Pianelli</i> , 1991 [1890]. | “ Mi fa una carità . Tenga conto del movimento di cassa e basta” | “ Do me a favour . Just look after the cash register, nothing else” Request. |

Table 4
The verbal locution *fare la carità* in DiaCORIS, 1861-1900.

Table 4 contains three requests. All are forceful. In the first example, the speaker, a young boy, is alone in a foreign town without any resources. He actually considers begging, but only to dismiss it vigorously. The second example is a pleading request from a woman to the man she loves. In the third, a man has to rush home because his wife is dying and he asks a colleague to fill in for him. Importantly, this time slot includes the *Pinocchio* examples from Table 3, which were not repeated in Table 4. The results are evenly spread: three instances relate to alms-seeking, four to requests.

7.2. 1901-1922

Occurrences for the search term *carità* are almost halved, at 248. *Fare la carità* returns three results.

In the first example of Table 5 the inhabitant of a remote town is asking a man, who pretends to be a doctor, to attend to his suffering daughter. In the two examples by Grazia Deledda, a woman is asking to take her and her daughter for a ride in a postal coach. It is implied that they do not pay, so this is a form of alms-seeking. In the last example, the same woman is ill with

fever. The person looking after her has begged more than once she go to bed. Oli finally agrees on the condition her nurse does something for her. Like in the previous time slot, both functions of *fare la carità* are present, requests and alms-seeking.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|---|--|--|
| DiaCORIS, newspapers, “Il resto del carlino”, Renato Fucini, <i>Acqua Passata</i> , 1921. | “Dio vi benedica! Venite con me, mi raccomando. Fatemi la carità... No, non è lontano.” | “God bless you! Come with me, I beg you. Do me this favour... No, it is not far.” Request. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, G. Deledda, <i>Cenere</i> , 1904. | “ Vuoi farci la carità di prenderci un po' in vettura?”, disse Oli, mangiando. | “ How'd you like to take pity and let us ride a while in the wagon?” said Oli, eating. (Deledda 2004, p. 44) Alms-seeking. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, G. Deledda, <i>Cenere</i> , 1904. | “Andrò se mi fate una carità ”, disse finalmente Oli. | “I'll go if you'll do me a favor ,” Oli said finally. (Deledda, 2004, p. 198) Request. |

Table 5
The verbal locution *fare la carità* in DiaCORIS, 1901-1922.

7.3. 1923-1945

The occurrences of *carità* are relatively stable at 250. *Fare la carità* occurs five times.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|--|---|--|
| DiaCORIS, fiction, C. E. Gadda, <i>Racconto italiano d'ignoto del Novecento</i> (cahier d'études), 1925. | “Devo morire, se sei un vero Dio, devi farmi questa carità , devi concedermela.” | “I must die, if you truly are a God, you must grant me this favour , you must grant it to me.” Request. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, L. Pirandello, <i>La Giara</i> , 1928. | “Professore, io la ringrazio,” dice, “ ma mi faccia il favore, la carità , di non incomodarsi più per me, ecco!” | “Professor, I thank you,” he says, “ but do me the favour, the very great favour , of no longer troubling yourself over me, won't you?” (Pirandello 1994, p. 137) Request. |
| DiaCORIS, fiction, L. Pirandello, <i>La Giara</i> , 1928. | Lì si mise a dir forte, mica a me, certe parole che io in prima non compresi: “ Fate | Then she started to say loudly, however not to me, certain words that I failed to |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | la carità a questo povero orfanello cieco, abbandonato, solo al mondo!”. | understand at first: “ Give some alms to this poor blind little orphan, abandoned, alone in the world! ” Alms-seeking. |
| DiaCORIS, essay writing, B. Barilli, <i>Il paese del melodramma</i> , 1930. | Era sempre la stessa salmodia sonnolenta: fate la carità al povero cieco. | It was always the same monotonous psalmody: give some alms to this poor blind man. Alms-seeking. |
| DiaCORIS, newspapers, “Marc’aurelio”, Federico, <i>L’altro giorno</i> , 1939. | L’altro giorno ho visto un mendicante con un cartello appeso al collo. C’era scritto: “ Fate la carità a un distinto signore che ha un sacco di quattrini e non è per niente ammalato ”. | The other day I saw a beggar with a sign hung from his neck. It read: “ Give some alms to a distinguished gentleman who is wealthy and not sick at all ”. Alms-seeking. |

Table 6

The verbal locution *fare la carità* in DiaCORIS, 1923-1945.

The first example of Table 6, taken from Carlo Emilio Gadda, is a request. The first Pirandello example comes from the short story *Pensaci, Giacomino!* ‘Think it over, Giacomino!’ (published in the collection *La Giara* ‘The Oil Jar’). It is interesting in that it appears to be ironic, i.e. an impolite meaning expressing the wish to be let alone in a context of controlled anger, which transpires from the previous sentence: “Giacomino si torce su la sedia, stringe le pugna fino ad affondarsi le unghie nel palmo delle mani”.³⁴ The three remaining examples refer to alms-seeking. The last one comes from a humorous newspaper and parodies the ‘accumulative’ indirect object. This would show that the 3rd-person indirect object with a relative clause to refer to oneself is quite conventionalised: the humour would fail if the reader did not recognise this as the ironic reversal of an expression typical of alms-seeking.

7.4. 1946-1967

Overall occurrences of *carità* are slightly down to 207. There are no examples of *fare la carità*.

³⁴ “Giacomino Pugliese writhes on his chair and clenches his fists till he sinks his nails into the palms of his hands” (Pirandello 1994, p. 137).

7.5. 1968-2001

Overall occurrences of *carità* have a big drop from 207 to 84. There is one example of *fare la carità*.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|---|---|--|
| DiaCORIS, essay writing, I. Montanelli, <i>L'Italia del Risorgimento</i> (1831-1861), 1972. | (Mi faccia la carità di aiutarmi) io per parte mia ho sempre fatto quel che ho potuto. | (Be so good as to help me) I, for my part, have always done what I could. Request. |

Table 7

The verbal locution *fare la carità* in DiaCORIS, 1968-2001.

The request in Table 7 occurs in a history essay, however, it is part of a historical document, a letter dated 9th of February 1855, written by the future king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, to pope Pius IX (Pio IX, Vittorio Emanuele II 1980, pp. 155-157).

Overall, any result needs to be considered with caution, given that the examples returned by DiaCORIS are few and far between. Table 8 gives an overview of the functions of *fare la carità* in the 5 time slots:

| | Request | Alms-seeking |
|-----------|---------|--------------|
| 1861-1900 | 4 | 3 |
| 1901-1922 | 2 | 1 |
| 1923-1945 | 2 | 3 |
| 1946-1967 | 0 | 0 |
| 1968-2001 | (1) | 0 |

Table 8

Occurrences of the two functions of *fare la carità* in the 5 time slots of DiaCORIS.

As long as the expression has currency, both functions stay evenly distributed, with eight requests and seven instances of alms-seeking. One request functions as mock politeness and the most recent one actually dates back to 1855 and is put between round brackets. There are no examples in DiaCORIS of *fare la carità* after World War II.

8. MIDIA

The corpus MIDIA, *Morfologia dell'italiano in diacronia* 'Morphology of Italian in diachrony' contains far fewer tokens than DiaCORIS, about 1 million and a half words per time slot. There are five time slots, starting from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The nineteenth century is present in

two time slots, respectively from 1692 to 1840, and from 1841 to 1947. A confrontation with the results from DiaCORIS is useful, because, unlike DiaCORIS, MIDIA does include theatre plays. Balance is achieved by using seven text genres: non-scientific essays (including newspapers), scientific essays, legal and administrative texts, personal writings (letters, diaries, etc.), poetry, literary prose and drama (see <http://www.corpusmidia.unito.it/documentation.php#corpus-organization>).

Every category contains about 14% of the corpus: literary prose, drama and personal writings, all genres where one would expect speech-like writing (and requests/alms-seeking), amount roughly to 45%. As a result, MIDIA contains more speech-like texts than DiaCORIS. Nevertheless, with the search term *carità*, the results for *fare la carità* are not very different.

Only two examples appear in the slot 1692-1840, shown in Table 9, whilst overall the occurrences of *carità* are 85.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|--|--|--|
| MIDIA, personal writings, V. da Filicaia, <i>Lettere inedite a Lorenzo Magalotti</i> , end 17 th century – beginning 18 th century | [...] mi par ora conveniente, anzi necessario, rispondere al secondo con quel che ora v'invio, perché mi facciate la solita carità di correggerlo e di raffazzonarlo. | [...] it appears now important to me, even necessary, to respond to his second [sonnet] with the one I am sending you now, so that you will do me the usual favour of correcting it and putting it in shape. Request. |
| MIDIA, drama, J. Ferretti, <i>La Cenerentola</i> , 1817. | Un tantin di carità. / Accattoni! Via di qua. | A bit of alms. / Beggars! go away. Alms-seeking. |

Table 9
The verbal locution *fare la carità* in MIDIA, 1692-1840.

For the second time slot, *carità* goes up to 169. This is in line with the high number found in DiaCORIS for 1861-1900. For *fare la carità* some usages have already been seen above: the quote from Rajberti seen in Section 2, alongside the quotes from De Marchi and Pirandello found in DiaCORIS, which were all requests. Table 10 lists the four new quotes.

D'Annunzio's example is ironic: the poet-friar is asking a girl for her love, but he uses the formula used by mendicant religious orders. Including the three requests that were already present in DiaCORIS, the outcome from 1692 to 1947 is four requests and three instances of alms-seeking.

| Location | Example | Translation and Context |
|--|---|---|
| MIDIA, drama, P. Ferrari, <i>Baltromèò calzolaro</i> , 1847. | “Piuttosto ch' i me facce una carità . La me moghja e la me figghjola ho una gran paura ch'al sciene all'ultimo della miseria; poere creature!...” | “Rather, give me an alm . My wife and my daughter, I am really afraid, are at an extreme level of misery; poor creatures!...” Alms-seeking. |
| MIDIA, drama, A. Torelli, <i>I mariti</i> , 1867. | “ Fatemi una carità , dottore, osservatemi gli occhi.” | “ Do me a favour , doctor, have a look at my eyes.” Request. |
| MIDIA, drama, F. M. Piave, <i>La forza del destino</i> , 1869. | Coro dei mendicanti: “ Fate la carità , Andarcene dobbiam, andarcene dobbiamo, Andarcene dobbiam, la carità, la carità!” | Choir of beggars: “ Give us some alms , we have to go, we have to go, we have to go, alms, alms!” Alms-seeking. |
| MIDIA, poetry, G. D'Annunzio, <i>Primo vere</i> , 1880. | Ecco un frate poeta e peccatore / che va pe 'l mondo a la cerca d'amore: / fate la carità!... | I am a poet-friar and a sinner, / who goes around the world looking for love: / be merciful!... Alms-seeking. |

Table 10

The verbal locution *fare la carità* in MIDIA, 1841-1947.

The main point to take away from a comparison with DiaCORIS is that in DiaCORIS, from 1861 to 1945, there were 8 requests and 7 instances of alms-seeking and in MIDIA, from 1692 to 1947 are 5 request and 4 instances of alms-seeking. Note that there are fewer results for a far longer time slot (but this might be due to the fact that MIDIA is a lot smaller than DiaCORIS); however, the proportion between the two functions stays the same: requests and alms-seeking are fairly evenly spread.

9. Alms-giving in post-unification conduct books

Conduct books join the debate on alms-giving, and, to finish, I present a handful of extracts showing their involvement in the topic. In the years following the unification there is intense debate on public assistance as the care of the poor was mainly organised, not by the State, but by the Church and charitable organisations (Riall 2009, p. 96). This may well be the reason why *carità* scores higher frequencies in DiaCORIS for 1861-1900 and in MIDIA for 1841-1947. Given the Catholic ethics, conduct books strongly encourage alms-giving, but the key issue is to distinguish between those who are really worthy – the deserving poor – and those who are just lazy. For Bruni (1870), the best form of assistance is to provide work, “questo è uno dei mille mezzi che si possono adoperare e forse il più proficuo quasi

sempre” (Bruni 1870, p. 43).³⁵ His view is identical to the one found in *Pinocchio*: alms-giving should be limited to those who are not able to work: “Se si tratta poi di certi infelici impediti di guadagnarsi la sussistenza o per malattia o per insanabile infermità, oh verso di questi sì che la carità è un dovere strettissimo.” (Bruni 1870, p. 43).³⁶ Likewise, in his chapter on *Lavoro* ‘work’ he rules: “Chi può, deve lavorare” (Bruni 1870, p.49).³⁷ Tramping and begging are fiercely criticised:

Per questo molti si danno a vagabondare, e sudici e cenciosi, indifferentemente stendono la mano senza punta vergogna di rendersi avviliti presso la società! [...] E dire che col lavoro potrebbero essere stimati quanto gli altri! (Bruni 1870, p. 50)³⁸

The longest discussion is found in Gallenga (1871), an influential conduct book, which won a competition launched in Turin by city councillor Baruffi. An award of 500 *lire* (in that year a primary school teacher’s average yearly salary is 433 *lire*, see Gallenga 1871, p. 229) was promised to whoever wrote a conduct book for the people. Gallenga won with *Codice delle persone oneste e civili, ossia Galateo morale per ogni classe di cittadini* ‘The rulebook of honest and civil people, or moral conduct book for every class of citizens’. This 506-page book includes chapters for all sectors of society, civil servants, doctors, solicitors, families, priests, journalists, etc., and the poor. As in Bruni, no alms whatsoever should go to able-bodied unemployed: “[...] vuolsi ad ogni modo schivare la carità inconsiderata che vale soltanto a promuovere l’infingardaggine, il vizio mascherato di una finta o colpevole miseria.” (Gallenga 1871, p. 413).³⁹ This is the start of a six-page rant against the undeserving poor. Of one hundred beggars, “novanta, se non più, sono fannulloni, scioperati, quando non furfanti, manutengoli”;⁴⁰ of one hundred disabled or sick people “novanta almeno sono ipocriti che si fingono poveri e sciancati per sottrarsi al lavoro”⁴¹ (Gallenga, 1871, p. 414):

³⁵ “[...] this is one of the thousand solutions that can be used and perhaps almost always the most productive one.’

³⁶ ‘If we are dealing with certain unfortunate people, who are incapable of supporting themselves or because of illness or because of incurable disability, oh yes, towards these people alms-giving is the most rigorous of duties.’

³⁷ ‘He who can, must work.’

³⁸ ‘For this reason, many become vagrants, and filthy and in rags, they indifferently extend their hand without feeling any shame for becoming society’s dejected! [...] And to say that with work they could be esteemed just like any other!’

³⁹ “[...] one must at all means avoid an indiscriminate alms-giving, which is only destined to promote laziness, vice disguised as a fake or criminal misery.’

⁴⁰ “[...] ninety, if not more, are lazy, unemployed, if not villains or their accomplices.’

⁴¹ “[...] at least ninety are hypocrites who fake being poor and cripple to avoid working.’

Ma quelle disgrazie sono simulate, quelle piaghe, quelle imperfezioni, quelle mutilazioni non sono ordinariamente che altrettanti mezzi per eccitare l'altrui sensibilità. Quei bambini che vedete nelle loro braccia agitarsi e contorcersi per la fame, per le percosse ricevute sono, il più delle volte, bambini d'affitto; quelle povere creature non sono che strumenti di una colpevole industria; e, cresciuti a quella scuola d'ipocrisia e di vizio, diventeranno più tardi complici di quella mendicizia scellerata. (Gallenga 1871, pp. 414-415)⁴²

In one word, this is “frode”, ‘fraud’ (Gallenga 1871, p. 415).

Bruni and Gallenga address adult readers, but the discourse for school-going readers is not very different: alms-giving is an all-important sign of compassion, but not every beggar is deserving. Rodella, who wins the Baruffi competition *ex-aequo* with Gallenga, includes a tear-jerking scene in which the schoolboy Enrichetto, the main character of this conduct novel, protects a blind elderly beggar (Rodella 1871, p. 24). Nevertheless, children too need to be aware that not all beggars are deserving. Pellegrino writes for boys at boarding school:

Guardatevi però dal fare elemosina a quelle persone che proprio non vi pajono poverette, giacché correreste pericolo, sebbene in buona fede, di promuovere il vagabondaggio, l'intemperanza, il sudiciume. (Pellegrino, 1870 p. 12)⁴³

Half a century later his advice is still valid: “Purtroppo c'è qualche mendicante il quale trova più comodo accattare che lavorare: fargli l'elemosina sarebbe favorire il vizio” (Fiorentina 1918 [1915]: p. 227).⁴⁴ Only Cajmi has a more generous view. His argument is that young people may lack the experience to distinguish correctly between fake and genuine sufferers. His motto is: if in doubt, give!

Dunque, direte voi, aiuteremo anche l'ozioso, l'accattone di mestiere? — Nel dubbio, fatelo pure: sarà sempre meno male che si trovi un accattone di più, a condizione che vi sia un egoista di meno. (Cajmi, 1869 [1865-7], vol. 2, p. 51)⁴⁵

⁴² ‘But those accidents are fake, those wounds, those imperfections, those mutilations are usually meant to be as many ways to excite other people's sensitivity. Those children, whom you will see writhe and wriggle because of hunger, because of the beatings they have received, are, most of the time, children who have been hired; these poor creatures are nothing but the tools of a guilty trade; and, educated to the school of hypocrisy and vice, later they will become the accomplices in this wicked mendicancy.’

⁴³ ‘Take care not to give alms to those people who do not appear poor, as you would run the risk, albeit in good faith, of promoting tramping, intemperance, filth.’

⁴⁴ ‘Sadly, there are some beggars who find it easier to beg than to work. Donating to them would mean promoting vice.’

⁴⁵ ‘So, you will say, do we then also help the idle, he who begs for a living? - If in doubt, go ahead: it will always be preferable to have one more beggar, on the condition that there is one less selfish person.’

In sum, the extensive discourse on the intricacies of good and bad alms-giving in conduct books is a telling sign that the larger public debate on poverty is trickling down into instructional writing. Therefore, it is not a surprise that a politeness modifier conventionalised for alms-seeking was not going to be included in the paragraphs that conduct books dedicate to advice on linguistic politeness.

10. Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper was to examine the meanings and contexts of use of the request modifier *fare la carità di* in nineteenth-century Italy. My interest was elicited by its absence from advice on politeness formulae in contemporary conduct books, despite the fact that dictionaries list it as a request modifier, confirming its conventionalised status. Ideological reasons for this absence can be found in the conduct books themselves, although admittedly these only offer broad explanations. Poverty was mainly seen as the fault of the poor themselves, who were encouraged to work.

Despite this, all three of the consulted dictionaries confirmed that *fare la carità* is conventionalised as a request modifier, and two dictionaries included the meaning of begging for a handout. The analysis of two successful literary sources showed that in 1840 *fare la carità* is only used for making a request, in a co-text of positive evaluations, whilst in 1883 it covers one request and three cases of alms-seeking, all in a co-text of negative evaluations. The view on begging in *Pinocchio* is indeed close to the condemnation present in conduct books. The double usage, for request and alms-seeking, was further confirmed by both DiaCORIS and MIDIA, which included requests and alms-seeking in roughly equal proportions till the end of World War II. That the verbal locution has disappeared is in line with the fact that overall the frequency of the noun *carità* is fast diminishing in DiaCoris. Another resource to be exploited is Google Ngram viewer, where the frequency of *fatemi la carità di*, *mi faccia la carità di* (1700-2000) stays high during the nineteenth century, with a first drop in 1900-1920 and a final tapering off after 1920.⁴⁶ One obvious reason for the drop is the growing secularisation of society, where a request formula with a religious connotation becomes less popular than formulae conveying sensorial meanings, such as *per favore*, *per piacere* ‘please’ (whereas *grazie* ‘thank you’ has an aesthetic etymology of ‘grace’). The answer as to why the request modifier is not included in contemporary conduct books can in part be explained by its use as a specialised marker for alms-seeking. Also, as several

⁴⁶ <https://books.google.com/ngrams>.

examples show, it is quite a forceful request, and that, as well as its mock-polite use, well documented by the dictionaries, might have contributed to its exclusion from conduct books.

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SOME PRAGMATIC ASPECTS OF HISTORICAL MINUTE-MAKING

The distinctiveness of the Quaker approach

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Abstract – This paper presents findings from a pragmatic investigation into the historical practice of administrative minute-writing as a text-type developed by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) over three centuries. Why and how have Quakers developed (and still rely on) their unusual decision-recording practice, based as it is on its theological underpinning? Quantitative and qualitative findings are compared with datasets from the historical minute books of some non-Quaker historical institutions. It is evident from this investigation how present-day Quaker minute-writing methods still evince the linguistic usages first developed in the late seventeenth century, notably commissive and directive speech acts, tense usage, and realized with many rich but formulaic expressions. This contrasts with a restricted, narrative discourse favored by the more conventional style found in contemporary organizations of past eras.

Keywords: minute-writing; Quaker; corpus-based; speech acts; orality.

1. Introduction

This paper investigates pragmatic and stylistic aspects of the minute-writing language of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in England between 1676 and 1874. I draw initially on the study by Fitzmaurice (2006) which sees historical business correspondence as a distinctive register in its own right, and with its own characteristics, although I prefer the term ‘text-type’. Fitzmaurice emphasizes that present-day conventions in the production of business and other official correspondence derive from practices that are found in certain distinctive characteristics. Although Quakers have left us a large body of correspondence, there is almost none that is associated with the minutes from their business meetings; the reason for that is that for Quakers in past generations relied entirely on the written minutes to serve as vehicles for transactional or administrative communication between groups and individuals. The research presented in this paper seeks to discover the nature of historical Quaker minutes as a discourse type related to business correspondence. Several distinctive linguistic characteristics are explored

which I argue derive from the unique pragmatic context of Quaker business meetings (henceforth Quaker Business Method or QBM).

The article is organized thus. A brief description of present-day Quaker practice in decision-making meetings (observed first-hand as well as from the literature) is followed by an overview of the structure and theological underpinning of the early Quaker movement in seventeenth-century England – a format which has remained fairly constant since those first years. These details are relevant to pragmatic findings following analysis of the source corpus samples. These concern directive and commissive speech acts and tense usage, as well as stylistic questions in terms of formulaic or semi-fixed discourse. Both Quaker and non-Quaker minuting texts are compared. The central claim is that the distinctive Quaker practice of contemporaneous minute-drafting and collective editing produces an unusual and distinctive discourse – a blend of spoken and written style.

2. Setting the scene

There is a wealth of advice for present-day business English newcomers on best practice for taking administrative minutes (for example, Hawthorne 1993; Baker 2010; Gutmann 2013), but very little offers reflective or evaluative discussion on the actual process. Wolfe (2006, p. 355) in her present-day work-based study divides the minuting styles she has explored into three typical formats: *action-oriented*, *transcript style* and *parliamentary style*. Sanchez (2017) uses a comparative approach for investigating rhetorical strategies in notes and minutes of present-day business meetings conducted in English and in Spanish. This is a rare study using, as the present study does, corpus-based tools. I have adopted an aspect of her approach in analyzing moves within specific minutes in my own Quaker corpus. This dataset will be introduced in Section 3.1.

Muers and Burton (2018) in the section of their article headed *Quaker Business Method: Framing the Issues* (no page numbers) provide a useful overview of scholarly discussions related to Quaker decision-making practices in the present-day. There is some practical advice for Quaker clerks and others attending Quaker meetings for decision-making in a *Handbook* (2018) published by the *Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre*, a British organization that offers training in this work to Quakers. A rare evidence-based study by Mace (2012) discusses observations on current practice in Quaker business meeting. As far as I am aware, no linguistic studies have to date published any investigations into historical minute-writing, either conventional or Quaker.

A word or two needs to be said here about the Quaker movement. Quakers (also referred to as Friends) have and have always had a particular theological basis underlying their approach to decision-making and the recording of decisions in agreed minutes. My paper goes into some necessary detail concerning the Quaker values of integrity and authority and how that informs the language of minuting, and this exploration attempts to respond to why as well as how this usage arose. Quaker usage is different from conventional administrative minutes in the early and late modern periods of English and I argue that the underlying principles and practices found across Quaker communities world-wide are unique to this text-type.

2.1. The Quaker business method (present and past)

From the very start of the organization of the Quaker movement in the mid-seventeenth century, Friends established a distinctive way of holding their business meetings and making decisions corporately. As Edward Burrough advised in 1662:

Being orderly come together, [you are] not to spend time with needless, unnecessary and fruitless discourses, but to proceed in the wisdom of God, not in the way of the world, as a worldly assembly of men, by hot contests, by seeking to outspoke and over-reach one another in discourse as if it were controversy between party and party of men ... not deciding affairs by the greater vote ... but ... determining every matter coming before you, in love, in coolness, gentleness and dear unity. (Burrough 1662, quoted in *Quaker Faith and Practice* 2013, 2.87)

This was written at the time of setting up the first Men's meeting in London at the *Bull and Mouth* inn. The clue to the new way is contained in the phrase "not in the way of the world". This concept is at the heart of the present linguistic exploration. A further important feature of Burrough's advice is the reference to not taking votes. These first Quakers devised a method for arriving at unity of decision-making without recourse to either majority rule or decree by a single person. This is a rare achievement. How was it brought about? The next paragraph describes present-day Quaker practice; internal evidence from the historical minute books shows this was employed from the very start.

Quakerism is based, and has always been based, on the authority of a Quaker group or Meeting; there is no separated priesthood or leaders, no constitution or written rules for making and recording decisions by the group. The only authority, Quakers insist, derives from God and is discerned in the trusting and waiting in silence by the group. One Friend is appointed as clerk, whose task it is to discern the sense of the Meeting in its search for guidance and to offer a minute for each topic on an agenda; this records both the

journey towards a decision as well as the decision agreed and action to be taken. The draft minute offered to the Meeting is often modified and ‘edited’ by the Meeting until there is unity over the exact wording. Thereafter it is the minute that contains the authority to action. There is no majority/minority and no voting. The wording and the content of the minute, therefore, assume prime importance both for the process the group goes through and the decision reached. The text cannot be changed subsequently except by a later Meeting revisiting the decision and considering change. Different present-day Quaker traditions world-wide may vary the practice slightly but the essence remains the same. Mace (2012) describes the oral and written aspects of the QBM as practised in the present-day British context:

At a business meeting, Quakers expect to write a collectively agreed text. To do this, they ask one or two to take on the role of scribing for the group, with the task of producing a wording that may express the sense of those present. The meeting, for its part, is expected to give assent to this, a text they have heard but not yet read visually. When the clerk reads out a draft minute, those present are expected not just to listen, but also to contribute: either by suggesting amendments or by showing their acceptance of what they hear. Reading binds together with writing; as the draft becomes an acceptable finished text, the group takes ownership of it. (Mace 2012, p.108)

This short explanation highlights the nature of an unusual practice that blurs the spoken and the written. Quaker minutes as raw textual material therefore, offer a rich and abundant source of continuous historical material dating back to the last quarter or so of the seventeenth century.

2.2. The historical organizational structure of Quakers in Britain

A brief note of explanation of the underlying structure of a Quaker Yearly Meeting is necessary here. The organization devised and set up by George Fox in the 1660s was called ‘gospel order’. In essence this comprises a set of interconnected circles of meeting structure. The term ‘meeting’ was, and still is, widely used to describe a variety of gatherings for organization and decision-making purposes. Some of these would be seen as committees or councils in the terminology of later centuries. The ‘meeting’ also referred to the local or regional ‘church’ community of Friends who met regularly for ‘Meeting for Worship’ – what in other Christian denominations is called a service.

Although there is no hierarchy of people-status in Quakerism, for administrative reasons there is a system of connections in terms of the communities of Friends’ Meetings. In terms of authority, there was a two-way direction of travel for communication purposes – this will become important when we discuss certain speech acts in Section 4.3. These

Meetings were named either by area or by how often they were expected to meet: the smallest geographical groups were called Monthly Meetings, representatives of Monthly Meetings met in regional groups known as Quarterly Meetings and the whole community was invited to an annual national gathering called the Yearly Meeting. Other Meetings with specific purposes included the national *Second Day Morning Meeting* (a revision and editing committee for texts submitted for publication, set up in 1673); the national *Meeting for Sufferings* (a group of Friends from across the nation who met to record and support those being persecuted, fined or imprisoned for conscience sake) and regional Meetings of ministers and elders who were largely responsible for overseeing acceptable behavior, including marriage procedures, by the members.

In summary, the local Meetings sent reports, epistles and other information “upwards” to the Meetings with greater authorizing power; the Yearly Meeting sent instructions and records of decisions “downwards” to the regions and local Monthly Meetings; national groups also sent and received such minutes to each other. This two-way communication is the broad basis for all the minuting functions to be described in this paper. Historically, this held good from the seventeenth-century until the development of speedier telecommunications, although the instrument of authority throughout the Quaker world is still the agreed minute.

3. Methods used for analysis

This section presents important features of Quaker minuting practice observed through both qualitative and quantitative methods, prefaced by a description of the physical appearance of the MSS minute books and the range of topics covered by the business recorded in the texts. Connections are made concerning the central role of theological principles of Quakerism as evinced by the minutes. Certain discourse functions in the data relate to internal evidence of the behaviors of Quakers in their business meetings. I draw inferences from the internal evidence to make sense of these procedures. The behaviors relate to the underlying Quaker principles of equality of all participants before God, a shared understanding of the search for Truth and a sense of utter honesty and integrity. I further note the effect that rapid drafting and agreeing decisions in real time by a meeting can have on the resulting language, for instance a level of fixity and of indicators of speech-like discourse (also observed by Mace 2012 in the quotation above).

The framework of the study is limited to a 200-year period ending in the mid-nineteenth century. Some of the Quaker-based findings are then compared with the both the contemporary material described in Section 3

below, and reference is also made to some present-day sets of Quaker minutes from across the English-speaking Quaker world.

3.1. *The Quaker corpus*

Historical minutes for administrative affairs are rarely published and printed so the major task is to transcribe as much as is feasible and to rely for the remainder on close reading of a wider selection of material. My historical samples of Quaker minutes (1676 – 1874) are subdivided into three sub-corpora covering three broad periods. Some sets of minutes are complete for a particular date, other sets are shorter extracts. Table 1 presents the details of this dataset together with that of some non-Quaker texts that will be referred to later in this paper.

| | 17 th century | 18 th century | 19 th century |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Quaker, various minute books | (1676-1700) 11,540w | (1734-1789) 5,120w | (1824-1874) 4,720w |
| Royal Society Council minute books | (1660-1700) 970w | (1724-1743) 1,800w | (1822-1852) 1,950w |
| Royal Academy of Arts, London, council and General Assembly minute books | ---- | (1768-1793) 1,350w | (1828-1874) 990w |
| Orphanage Guardians, London, minute books | ---- | (1758-1759) 3,990w | ---- |

Table 1
Corpus datasets – sources of minute-books.

The criteria for selection and inclusion were partly random but also involved judicious omissions. I found that many of the meetings represented by their minutes frequently dealt with very routine business. Two sets of information in this category in particular refer to a prodigious quantity of list of names (those present, those signing at the foot of each set of minutes, those signing reports that were being sent in, and so on), and to a tedious and repetitive procedure known as ‘Answers to the Queries’. So that the sub-corpora were not unduly skewed by these two aspects of the business, I decided to omit many names and to omit for the most part the references to the Queries. Apart from this criterion, the remainder of the corpus is broadly random, although I make no claim for representativeness as the samples are not sufficiently large for major generalizations. Different clerks had different preferred styles but the shared distinctive text-type of Quaker minute-creating is evident across

the range and time periods under scrutiny. The small collection of non-Quaker minute-book sources serves as a homogenic historical comparator. Other sources consulted give confidence that administrative minutes of past eras resemble closely enough the approaches typically found in my transcribed data. A blend of qualitative investigation plus quantitative retrieval of observations serves as my primary evidence base. Concordance software yields useful results regarding lexical frequencies, collocation and grammatical patternings, and close reading enables a greater breadth for the analytical descriptions.

4. Analytical findings

Section 4 presents several approaches to the investigation. We start with the Quaker minute books as artifacts and how clerks from earlier periods laid out their text compared with present-day practice. This is followed by a number of textual characteristics relating to linguistic or discourse features. These will form the basis for my final description of historical Quaker minuting as a text-type and why the unusual contexts of production led to a distinctiveness of pragmatic style.

4.1. Quaker minute-books as artifacts

All the Quaker minute books from which I have transcribed extracts are held in London at the *Library of the Religious Society of Friends*. There is a consistency of formatting across the various Meetings and historical periods. Each minute is recorded and set out separately as opposed to a through-composed stretch of discourse as found in some non-Quaker sources consulted. By the eighteenth century most clerks were adding marginalia summaries adjacent to the minute for each topic under discussion. I found no headings placed at the head of each minute such as is typically found in present-day Quaker minutes. By the eighteenth century they also start to number the minutes sequentially for each set of minutes and are careful to note the day and the month of each meeting although in a Quaker fashion. I return to an example of this practice in Section 4.5.

There is evidence of speed, especially in Monthly Meeting books, where those attending were all local to that area and the procedure for holding the meeting was likely to be fairly informal, and I argue that the practice of drafting and agreeing minutes in the meetings is a reason for the resulting discourse having a sense of orality. These minutes were spoken and heard before a permanent written record was made. This aspect compares with the *post hoc* note-taking narrative style of conventional minuting. Regional and Yearly Meeting minutes were likely to be fair copies of what

was agreed at the time and certainly the handwriting is often clearer, depending of course on the individual handwriting style of each clerk. I was able to compare the original version of sets of minutes from Barking Monthly Meeting in the early nineteenth century with their “fair copies”, as both versions are held in the Library. This contrasts with internal evidence I noted in the Royal Society Council minutes where changes were clearly asked for and amended by the minute-taker after the circulation of minutes. That process is quite distinct from amendments to a version of a minute required to be changed in session by members of Quaker meetings, or indeed mistakes in orthography corrected at the time by the clerk. There is abundant evidence of that in the original Barking Meeting rough minutes books. I therefore conclude that the present-day Quaker practice of not altering or tidying up agreed minutes was already in existence.

The seventeenth-century minutes contain many non-standard spellings and punctuation examples. Even before the more persistent prescriptivism of the eighteenth century, the seventeenth-century Royal Society minutes already demonstrate a uniformity of spelling and inflection that would pass muster in any published eighteenth-century spelling guide. I suggest that the non-standard Quaker spellings, such as, for example:

“desirous”: desierous / desieros / desirous,

“endeavor”: indeivour / endeavor / endeavour,

“burials”: burals / burials / burials, buriing / buriring

are partly the result of haste in getting the agreed wording on paper in real time and partly the uneven levels of literacy found in Quaker trades-people and similar social groups who were taking their turn in serving as clerks at that time. A wealth of creative abbreviations abound in the seventeenth-century Quaker dataset.

4.2 Typical characteristics of Quaker minutes

In this section we consider three linguistic features that deserve closer analysis because they derive from fundamental Quaker practices of decision-making. They are: i) the functional language of giving instructions or stating promises (exemplified by certain speech act verbs) and the particular effect that Quaker theology had on its production, ii) tense usage, and iii) formulaic language that is recognizably different from non-Quaker fixed expressions found in administrative minuting.

4.3 'Instruction' and 'promise' as functions in Quaker minutes

I consider first the Quaker approach to recording actions encoded in instruction language (using directive speech acts), and to decisions recording agreement or promise of action (using commissive or requestive speech acts). Quakers in their business meetings frequently needed to ask somebody or a group of people to go off after a meeting and carry out an action. The minute therefore needed to express that function as an instruction in its broadest sense. The difficulty implied by the Quaker principle of equality arising from an absence of social hierarchy makes instruction-giving problematic. All Friends had equality of social status within the Society, and all meetings or communities structured themselves in the same flat hierarchy. In effect, many of the instructions or orders required the group to instruct *itself*, or to an individual acting on behalf of that group, to take an action. But the agreed minute carried quasi-legal authority, the sense of the meeting being guided as they saw it by God – this was the only authority within the community structure. Stylistically therefore, the wording was couched in a wide repertoire of civility and positive politeness although the illocutionary effect underlying directive verbs is always an instruction. I have analyzed four typical moves found in generic historical minutes thus:

- a) Named individuals (or agentless '*that-*' complement clause) plus a communication verb introduce a situation or a need for decision.
- b) This is followed by a narrative-form description of the ensuing discussion.
- c) Specific instructions or orders using directive speech act verbs then record action that must follow.
- d) Decision(s) by the group, often using commissive speech act verbs, are noted, sometimes with action(s) to be taken, sometimes merely implied.

Moves found in the Quaker texts to some extent match these prototype conventions. However, there are some differences. Firstly, move b) is virtually absent in the corpus data. No description is provided of how the discussion develops during a meeting. The minutes go straight from introductory comments to outcome, whether that be an agreed decision to act (move c) or merely to be noted (move d). Secondly, there is a wider repertoire of both reporting and directive verbs or verb phrases in the Quaker samples than in the conventional ones. More semantic choice seems to be available to Quaker clerks than to the narrower repertoire of the traditional style. Table 2 below summarizes the typical Quaker moves.

| Rhetorical move | Tense | Examples of verbs or verb phrases |
|--|-------------------|--|
| a) Describes or sets out a situation or background information requiring a decision | Variety of tenses | typical ' report ' verbs: reports, a letter/report has been received and read, it is signified to this meeting. |
| b) Stretch of narrative that describes a discussion | ----- | ----- |
| c) An instruction or an order given, leading to action | Present tense | typical directive speech act verbs: agree, desire, order, conclude, recommend, request, it is consented and agreed that... [ellipsis] + 'that' clause. |
| d) Records a decision . Sometimes an agreed action could be taken (and if so, by whom) | Present tense | verbs that record a decision : it is agreed, x is requested to consider, it's the sense of the meeting that ... it's left to x; and if the way opens. |

Table 2
Rhetorical moves found in Quaker minutes.

Table 3 takes the analysis of move d) further by separating out the "instruction" or "order" move in the Quaker framework and then providing an interpretation of the underlying implications of the two types of speech acts: commissive (promising) and directive (instructing). The underlying illocutionary force for each type is suggested.

| Speech act type | Verb phrase | Illocutionary implication |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| commissive | (It is) agreed that/to .. (It is) seen meete (so to doe) | The meeting undertakes to itself to carry out the action. |
| performative/ declarative | (Friend x) is appointed to + vb | The meeting brings about the action by minuting it. |
| directive | (It is) proposed | Authorised action must follow (by individual Friends or other meetings). |
| directive/requestive | (It is) desired/desirous | Some measure of authority but carrying positive politeness. |

Table 3
Quaker speech act verb types in minutes.

As will be noted, there is a subtle difference where a meeting feels the need to be especially courteous in expressing an authoritative decision. The "requestive" element softens the instruction, nevertheless the underlying force is quasi-legal. That is to say, a verb phrase such as *it is desired* still carries a deontic force of obligation in the sense of an order to be carried out

by someone on behalf of the whole meeting. Example (1) illustrates this by the way in which the two Friends mentioned have in effect been instructed by the community, albeit politely, to carry out certain maintenance jobs in the local meeting house:

- 1) John Squirrel & Wm Cole *are desired* to get the Pales mended & what other little Repairs are Necessary to be done at Epping. (Monthly Meeting at Waltham Abbey, 1st mo, 1748.)

4.4. Tense usage in Quaker minutes

The second linguistic feature that derives from the pragmatic context of Quaker decision-making meetings is that of tense usage. My corpus data indicate that Quakers have for the most part continued into the present day a format first employed in the 1670s or even earlier. Why did Friends from the very start of their organizational practice adopt a different style of tense usage from that used in the wider world, both in the past and through until the present day? The explanation is a result of a meticulous adherence to Truth by Friends, what might today be termed integrity. (The token *truth* occurs 38 times in the Quaker minutes corpus: 1.8 per 1,000 words, and is twice as frequent as the token *God*). If a meeting is recording decisions and the process leading to those decisions in real time, i.e. deictic ‘now’, then the linguistic expression must be in the present or present perfect aspect.

To carry out an examination of the uses of present and past tenses by various Quaker bodies and their clerks, I analyzed the concordance for the auxiliary verbs: *is/are; has/have/hath; do/does/doth* (present) and *was/were; had; did* (past tenses). Perfective and preterite forms are covered by these tokens as are continuous forms. The periphrastic *do* is included. I include the present perfect aspect forms as part of the concept of past actions with effects that continue up to the present time of the text’s creator. A breakdown of the distribution across the three historical sub-corpora shows a distribution of present-tense occurrence of 79%, 75% and 78% for the three datasets respectively, so there appears to be a uniformity in diachronic usage. A further linguistic feature supporting this finding is the set of deictic tokens *now, tomorrow* and *yesterday*. There are four occurrences of *tomorrow* in the corpus (all seventeenth-century) and 27 occurrences (in all three sub-corpora) of *now* in a deictic context. Section 5 will make clear some observed differences between the Quaker style and the more traditional minuting discourse from the non-Quaker world. Figure 1 demonstrates the ratio of present to past tenses as a percentage.

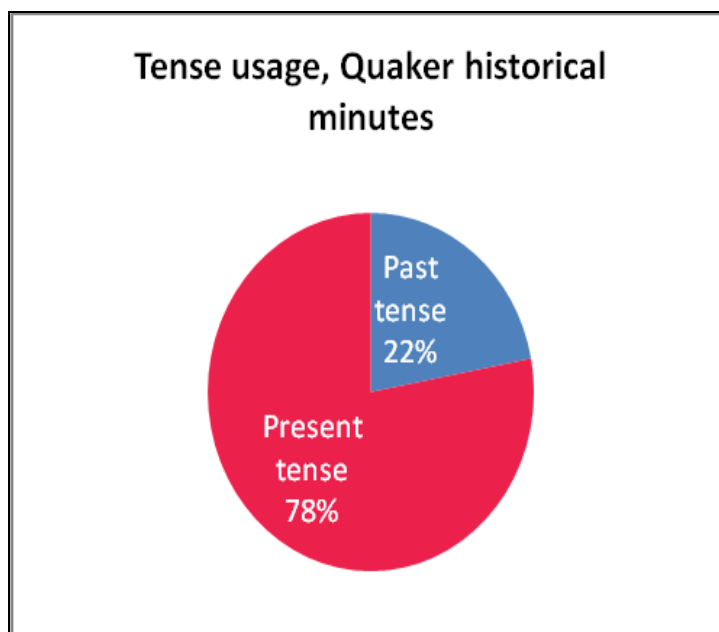


Figure 1
Historical Quaker tense usage.

I return to this topic in Section 5.2, where a comparison between the Quaker and conventional usage is shown in striking contrast.

4.5. Formulaic expressions in Quaker minutes

The third linguistic element that is a consequence of the Quaker principle of making minutes contemporaneously is a discourse strategy that relies on distinctive formulaic phrases or semi-fixed expressions. I argue this to be an additional symptom of the practice of drafting at speed but also an indication that the minutes were drafted prior to being read out. Orality, touched on earlier in this article, is suggested as one explanation for the presence of fixity in discourse (see Wray and Perkins, 2000:3 who also quote Moon 1998). The practice of corporately drafting and editing text, referred to by Mace (2012:xii), is an unusual one and which leads to these particularities of style and usage. She describes the present-day approach thus:

Clerks are scribes, eliciting text from speech, writing from the spoken word. Unlike most scribes, however, their role is to do this not with an individual but with a group. Quaker usage sees clerks as reading the ‘sense’ of the meeting and initiating and developing the draft of what is to become that group’s text: a record of its decisions. (Mace 2012, p.103)

The corpus is a rich trove of characteristic Quaker phrases. Some have dropped out of use over the centuries to be replaced by others, but others have stood the test of time. I argue that because of the requirement for

contemporaneous minutes, speed and fluency were necessary skills for clerks. They were (and still are in the present day) drafting text for approval in the meeting. The practice, therefore, will have arisen of reaching for chunks of language that fit the bill, “buying time” as Wray and Perkins (2000, p.18) put it. Initially, these semi-fixed stretches might have been everyday phrases that occurred to Friends. As the tradition has evolved and standardized, many such phrases have become fixed and quaint-sounding. This section of the present paper falls into two parts: firstly, a description of the practice of written *Answers to the Queries*, and secondly, a look at certain phrases or clusters that stand out in the concordance data.

Rufus Jones (1921, pp.128-145) sets out a comprehensive summary of the now defunct quasi-survey known as *Answers to the Queries*: the practice in seventeenth-century meetings of providing a series of Advices, collected organically over time, and of expecting ‘Answers’ on a regular basis. The aim was initially the regulation of the outward manner of living by members.

At first the Queries were formal questions asked for the sake of securing information in reference to the number of members suffering under persecution ...for the first 100 years answered only once a year to give definite information to the Yearly Meeting, for example: “Does Truth prosper among you?”. (Jones 1921, p.128)

As time went on, this practice became ever more cumbersome as increasing numbers of Queries were formulated and which needed replies. The Yearly Meeting in 1755 revised and enlarged these questions but by 1792 they had developed into a single uniform set, with provision for written answers and for the next hundred years:

Answers were minutely drawn up, scanned, discussed, considered, revised until almost every member knew the Queries off by heart and could forecast the answers with almost unerring precision. (Jones 1921, p.140).

Jones muses that such a formal detailed way of answering the Queries was “almost certainly a mistake.” (ibid, p.140) At any rate, the practice led to the bloating of many sets of Quaker minutes with *Answers to the Queries*. The practice did not die out until well into the nineteenth century.

Here is an example of a set of responses from Barking Monthly Meeting in 1810. The relevant minutes for that meeting are numbered inside square brackets, and glossed below. Example stretches of fixed expressions are shown for present purposes in italics.

Barking Monthly Meeting held at Plaistow the 18 of 9 *mo.*, [1] 1810

Query. Whether any *Removals or Settlements* [2] since last Monthly Meeting?

...

Answers to the Queries [3]

1. Meetings for Worship & Discipline are kept up, many friends attend them duly at or near the time appointed, others are remiss more especially on *First day* [4] afternoons & other days of the week. Our Meetings for Discipline are generally small & those for Worship are not *clear of heaviness* [5]; but little admonition has been given.

3. Friends appear to be *preserved in a good degree of love* towards each other [6]. When differences arise, care is taken to endeavour to end them speedily & we are not aware that *talebearing & detraction prevail*. [7]

Signed in & on behalf of [8] Barking Monthly Meeting held at Plaistow the 18 of 9 mo. 1810. Luke Howard, Clerk this time.

The notes below explain the numbered formulaic phrases:

- [1] *mo* is the standard abbreviation for *month*, used throughout the corpus.
- [2] *removals or settlements* – standard format for responding to the query concerning Friends moving in or out of the meeting's catchment area.
- [3] [*answers to*] *the Queries* – the replies are almost a catechetical exercise.
- [4] *First day* – Sunday. Standard Quaker terminology throughout the historical range of the corpus.
- [5] *clear of heaviness* – free from. *Clear of* ¹ was a favorite phrase with this meaning and used frequently in published material by Quakers. *Heaviness* is harder to interpret and probably referred to an uninspiring or routine quality of the silence in Quakers' religious meetings.
- [6] *preserved in love*. Variants of this cluster occur 6 times in the corpus, *love* and/or *unity* collocating on either side of the node word *preserved*. A formulaic response to Query 2 in the nineteenth-century version.

¹ The Oxford English Dictionary online gives sense 18c as: *quit, rid, free*.

- [7] *talebearing and detraction*. Also a kind of ‘tick-box’ response to Query 2². This is arguably an attempt, albeit a favorite one, to enlarge the bare minimum of response routinely required.
- [8] *signed in (and on/in behalf of)*. Standard ending to a set of minutes that endures into present-day practice. As the minutes were agreed in the meeting, the signature of the clerk, and witnessed by the whole meeting was essential to ensure the future integrity of the agreed text and that nothing could be altered subsequently. The minutes now became the property of the meeting and no longer the clerk’s responsibility. This phrase is still in relatively common use by present-day Quakers.

Figure 2 below provides a glimpse of some favorite binomial clusters that Quaker clerks reached for in their drafting.

| | |
|---|---|
| N | Concordance |
| 1 | that all the Monthly Meetings take care to advise and Admonish such. It is therefore the earnest request |
| 2 | profession & in plainness of speech behaviour and apparel but others are not sufficiently careful in |
| 3 | to make the necessary enquiry into their Conversation & Conduct , and if nothing appears to Obstruct, to |
| 4 | Tottenham Monthly Meeting signifying his Orderly Life and Conversation and clearness respecting marriage. |
| 5 | agree such persons should be dealt with in Love and plainness by the Respective Monthly and |
| 6 | well as heretofore, no unbecoming behaviour. 2. Love and Unity are pretty well preserved except in one |
| 7 | Truth but cannot say any Convincement appears. Love and Unity are well preserved in the General amongst |
| 8 | & inquiring whether he has answered those the Sense and Advice which, in the name of the Lord, that |
| 9 | having solidly considered the subject, feels unity and concurrence with the proposal of our said Friend, |

Figure 2
Selected examples of binomial phrases in Quaker historical minutes.

5. Comparisons with non-Quaker minuting discourse

In order to bring out more clearly the specific traits that the Quaker method has developed, I present now some comparisons with contemporary conventional practices as illustrated by the sub-corpora introduced in Section 3.1. Table 1 is repeated here as a reminder of the metrics for my comparison sub-corpora:

² A corpus instance retrieved from the minutes of Peel Monthly Meeting of Women Friends offers this co-text: “We believe friends are preserved in love one towards another and a care is felt by some amongst us to avoid & discourage *talebearing and detraction* [italics added]”. (Peel MM of Women Friends, 1846)

| | 17 th century | 18 th century | 19 th century |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Quaker, various minute books | (1676-1700) ~11,540w | (1734-1789) ~5,120w | (1824-1874) ~4,720w |
| Royal Society Council minute books | (1660-1700) ~970w | (1724-1743) ~1,800w | (1822-1852) ~1,950w |
| Royal Academy of Arts, London, council and General Assembly minute books | ---- | (1768-1793) ~1,350w | (1828-1874) ~990w |
| Orphanage Guardians, London, minute books | ---- | (1758-1759) ~3,990w | ---- |

Table 1 (repeated)
Corpus datasets – sources of minute-books.

Section 4 considered the three features of interest: rhetorical moves found in minutes, directive and commissive speech acts and tense usage. We revisit this in order to look at how the Quaker practice differed from conventional styles, insofar as these are represented in three non-Quaker sources shown in Table 1.

5.1. *Rhetorical moves in conventional minutes*

All the conventional minutes show similarities synchronically and diachronically. The notes of the meeting typically constitute the minutes; in other words, several topics, decisions and actions are noted throughout and there is rarely a sense of minutes being seen as stand-alone stretches of text such as is found in the Quaker minutes. There is a clear implication that the secretaries (whether paid or voluntary) are the people expected to carry out agreed actions. This contrasts with the Quaker practice where the whole meeting is seen as one entity with one mind and a collective responsibility for future action. The traditional minutes quite often note occurrences previously carried out by individuals in authority. Agreement *post hoc* is not always sought by the meeting. This is not a feature of Quaker process in decision-making as inferred from the internal evidence.

| | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| a) Describes or sets out a situation or background information requiring a DECISION | Narrative past tenses | typical ' report ' verbs: <i>informed, reported, stated, acquainted, communicated, represented, desired x to, gave notice that.</i> |
| b) Stretch of narrative that describes a DISCUSSION | Narrative past tenses | typical meta-discussion verbs: <i>reported, was informed that, a letter was read.</i> |
| c) An INSTRUCTION or an ORDER given, leading to action (and by whom). | Past tenses | typical directive speech act verbs : <i>ordered, commanded, [ellipsis] 'that' clause.</i> |
| d) Records a DECISION , overt ACTION not specified but probably understood. | Past tenses | typical commissive speech act verb : <i>resolved.</i> |

Table 4
Rhetorical moves found in conventional minutes.

There are two comments to make regarding the generic moves shown above in Table 4. Firstly, move b) in which details of the discussions are noted: this move is present in the conventional style but is almost always absent in Quaker minutes. Secondly, there is a more restricted repertoire of instruction verbs – mostly *ordered* or *commanded*. Again, this abrupt style is mostly absent in the different contexts of Quaker business meetings in which agreement cannot be imposed by an individual, whether commissive ('noting' or 'promising') or directive ('action'). Decisions and actions require the Quaker meeting's collective written consent. I mentioned earlier the particular issue of civility in the Quaker minutes; the context of the QBM determines the degree of positive politeness in terms of instruction-giving. Here are three examples of the conventional style, found in the minutes of organizations where carefully treading on eggshells, as it were, seems less necessary. Firstly, we look at directive speech acts carrying the force of definite instruction, examples (2) to (4). The speech act verbs are highlighted in italics.

- (2) *Ordered* that the Visitation of the Royal Observatory be fixed for Saturday the 15th June. (RS Council, May 1822)
- (3) The Amenuensis *was commanded* to have the said Copy ready for him against next meeting. (RS Council, March 1662)
- (4) *That* Mr Day, Treasurer do pay the Servants Wages up to Lady Day last. (Orphanage Guardians, 1758)

Where commissive speech acts are found in the data, the illocutionary force has more the sense of recording a decision than has the 'promissory' nature of the Quaker verbs, as shown in examples (5) and (6):

- (5) The Committee of Guardians *have* this Day *resolved* to receive the eight Girls who were on the Register for Admission. (Orphanage Guardians, 1758)
- (6) The Keeper reported, That he had received a Letter from Mr. Bell, importing that he had sent a Picture ... The Picture not being arrived. *Resolved*, That it be received when it comes, if in time. (RA Council, 1769)

5.2. Tense usage in conventional minutes

The next point of comparison in Table 4 concerns tense usage, referred to above in Section 4.4. It was calculated that most Quaker minutes are expressed in the deictic present tense: approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of all auxiliary verbs carrying a grammatical aspect. When the same query is carried out on both the Royal Society and the Royal Academy samples, the results are strikingly similar, and neatly inverse to the Quaker set, namely $\frac{3}{4}$ of all such auxiliary verbs are cast in the *past* tense. Figures 1 and 3 show this in graphic form:

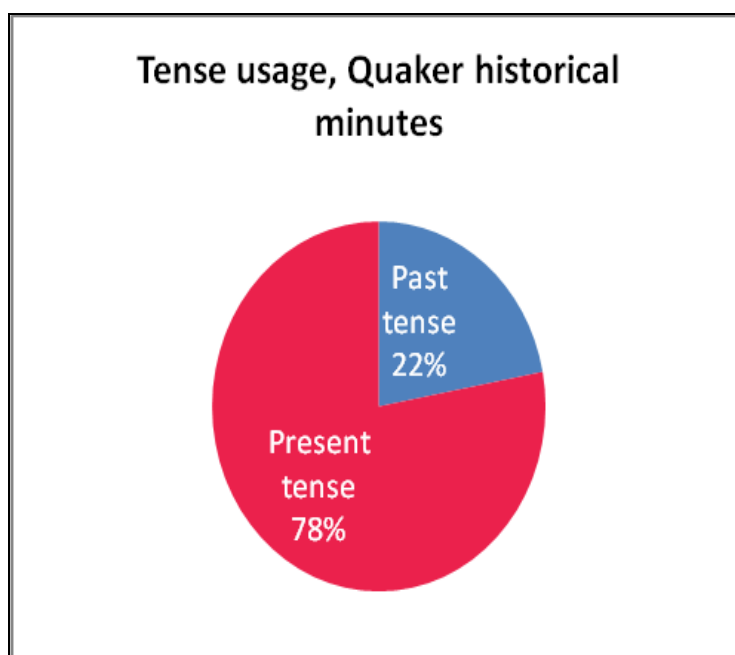


Figure 1 (repeated)
Historical Quaker tense usage.

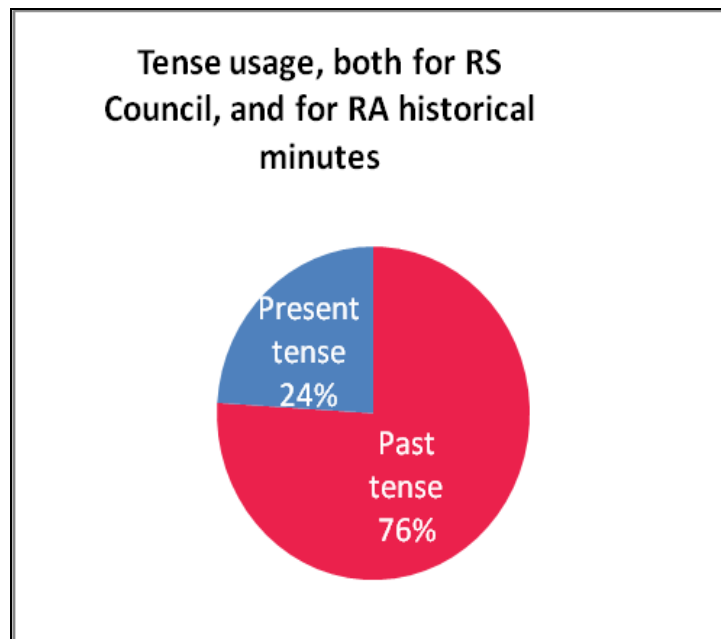


Figure 3
Historical conventional tense usage.

A further comparison with a small corpus of present-day Quaker minutes in English from several countries shows that the trend towards present-tense usage has actually increased, in contrast to conventional usage, as Figure 4 shows.

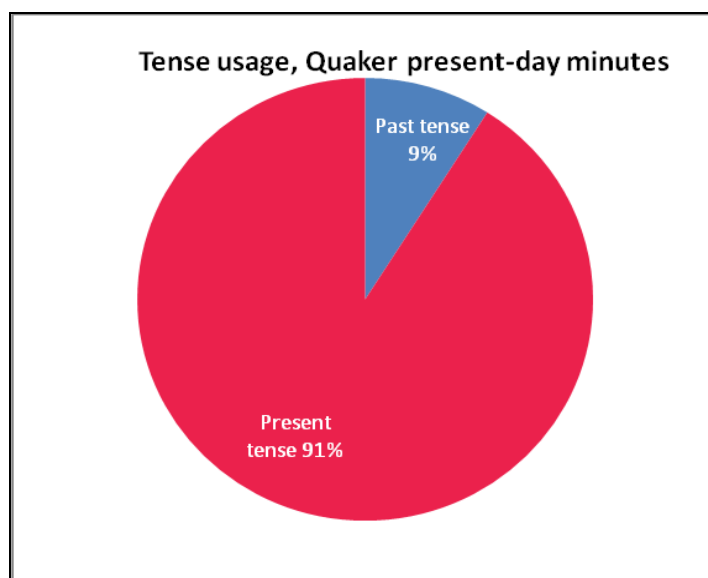


Figure 4
Quaker present-day tense usage.

5.3. Formulaic language in conventional minutes

The non-Quaker sample is relatively very small compared with the Quaker one and computational retrieval of clusters only yields a few instances. More research is needed on a larger sample, however, some initial points can be made here. The first is to observe that the distinctive process of producing Quaker minutes as was described in Section 2.1 is no longer the case with traditional minute-taking. Someone has the responsibility for creating the text after the conclusion of the meeting, and there is little likelihood of a spoken element being included unless verbatim stretches of text are present. Internal evidence supports the assumption that we are considering purely written discourse in the non-Quaker texts. Nevertheless, some two- or three-word clusters are detected. These include:

Three-word clusters

Read and confirmed.

Read and signed.

To be paid.

Ordered that the.

Two-word clusters

Be admitted.

Be granted.

Adjourned to.

Agreed to.

A few longer stretches were found with some frequency, for example:

With power to add to their number.

His majesty was graciously pleased.

The striking aspect of these examples is how few there are compared with what one might find in present-day conventional minute-making, at least in some contexts. A quick search on the Internet brings up many sites offering advice on useful templates and phrases for the inexperienced note-taker, however this side-avenue is beyond the scope of the present article.

6. Conclusion

This study looks at historical minutes generated by members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in England from the perspective of a distinctive discourse text-type. Historical business correspondence has received scholarly attention but to date no substantive study has appeared regarding the language and process of minute-creating. The questions posed in the

present paper have led to an enquiry into the nature of minutes created in past eras and the Quakers' approach because of their unusual methods. Additionally, the minute books themselves provide a rich heritage stretching back over 300 years through to the present time in which diachronic investigations into their physical appearance, language use and style become possible.

The paper devoted space to giving a description of the Quaker Business Method because of the interlinking corporate and governance structure of this religious body that sought to avoid hierarchy. As a practicing Quaker myself with 40 years of first-hand experience of Quaker business meetings, I am in a good position as a historical linguist to make informed inferences based on the written records of the past. This leads me to argue for the continuity of a text production system based on a process of collective drafting and agreeing actions and decisions, as well as the precise wording they are couched in. As I hope I have shown, this leads us into issues of speech-like text in written records, present tense usage, the realization of speech acts for instructing and committing, with the illocutionary force of quasi-legal authority, all combined through expressions of careful courtesy and civility.

The investigation into fossilized language and fixity has resulted in some unexpected findings. Fitzmaurice (2006) found a rigidity and narrowness in historical business correspondence and one might have assumed a similar outcome for minuting discourse. However, although the Quaker data have revealed some distinctive phraseology – jargon even – there was also a surprisingly wide repertoire available to clerks for functional language in their minute-crafting. The non-Quaker comparisons showed a narrower range of lexis and repetitive functional language but not yet at the level often thought of as stultifyingly rigid. This style may be evident in some twentieth-century conventional minuting text, but present-day equivalents although outside the scope of the present research, appear also to have rejected this style as outmoded. Nevertheless, the historical minutes, whether Quaker or not, indicate a distinct text-type in terms of functionality and conventions. The differences observed in the study derive more from the particular purposes of specific organizations or groups represented by the minutes, and the work they were required to carry out.

To conclude, this paper has attempted to respond to the central pragmatic question of why and how Quakers in the past developed (and still rely on) their unusual decision-recording practice, and has provided qualitative and quantitative evidence for the reasons the practice evolved and the linguistic features that make Quaker minuting the distinctive discourse type that it is. The study is arguably the first linguistic investigation into the untapped world of historical minute-writing and has made an important first contribution to the field. More work with larger and wider-reaching datasets now beckons.

Bionote: Judith Roads was awarded a doctorate in 2015 from the University of Birmingham in the combined disciplines of English corpus linguistics and Quaker studies, having held the post of senior lecturer at Middlesex University in London until retirement in 2008. Published articles cover research studies on the language of historical controversy, the distinctiveness of early Quaker lexis, and a reflection on the challenges of undertaking research from an interdisciplinary perspective (the fields of religion and linguistics) into early Quaker prophetic language and corpus-based techniques. Conference papers include appearances at: *SLIN (Storia Lingua Inglese*, Genova 2013), *International Conferences on English Historical Linguistics* (Zurich 2012; Duisburg-Essen 2016) and *Language Use across Time* (University of Padua, 2018 (the genesis of the present article).

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DISCURSIVE PRACTICES IN FEMINIST SPEECHES

A diachronic analysis from the Late Modern period to the present day

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Abstract – The date of birth of the feminist movement is usually set in 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Since then, the feminist movement has been divided into three waves, each of which can be distinguished for both a different focus on women’s rights and a different kind of activism. The feminist propaganda has always used language as a communicative strategy that, through slogans, aims at reaching the collective psyche; it tries to persuade the public opinion of its claims through a specifically designed rhetoric that finds one of its best representations in the speeches delivered during public events. The present study analyzes a corpus of 12 speeches delivered by feminist activists. The speakers are chosen as representative personalities of the three waves into which the feminist movement is commonly divided. The speeches are investigated by means of corpus linguistics methods so as to identify discursive practices. The aim is to establish the diachronic evolution of these practices from the Late Modern period to the present day. Corpus data are analyzed by taking into consideration the variables of the period of time in which the speeches were delivered and the age of the speakers. The findings show that, in the three waves, the speeches are characterized by the use of specific terms which mark the general commitment of the feminist movement to women’s empowerment. A closer look at the individual periods shows that each wave is characterized by specific words that reflect an interest in more specific socio-political issues. Age also appears to be a relevant factor in shaping discursive practices. Indeed, the more mature speakers show a preference for terms denoting more general concepts, while the younger speakers refer to more tangible concepts and real events.

Keywords: feminism; feminist discourse; discourse analysis; corpus linguistics; diachronic pragmatics.

1. Introduction

The present study analyzes the discursive features that characterize feminist speeches. It is meant to identify the linguistic patterns that help the speakers convey their message so effectively that they are regarded as representatives of the corresponding wave into which the feminist movement is traditionally

divided (cf. Mayhall 1995; Phillips-Anderson 2012; Ferree, Hess 2000). In addition, the diachronic analysis considers if and to what extent the practices present in these speeches have changed since the Late Modern period. Using *WordSmith Tools 7.0*. (Scott 2017), both quantitative and qualitative analyses are conducted. The investigation proceeds by means of corpus linguistics methods of analysis: first, a keyword analysis identifies the most frequent terms and expressions used in each speech; then, data are contrasted to the discursive features found in the other speeches; the variables of period of time and age of the speaker are used to interpret the findings.

1.1. The Feminist Movement

Even though the first instances of feminist writings in England can be traced as far back as the Early Modern period (Hodgson-Wright 2006), the proper date of birth of the feminist movement is usually set in 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she suggests that women's education is the only way to overcome female oppression (Freedman 2002). Another shared assumption about the feminist movement, according to feminist studies, is its chronological subdivision into three waves, each of which can be distinguished not only for a different focus on the specific set of women's rights being claimed, but also for a different kind of activism.

The first wave (1830s-1920s) starts several decades after 1792. It will be only in the 1820s-1830s that essays and treatises, mostly written by patronizing men, discuss the pros and cons of a more active role of women in society as distinguished from their traditional role in the domestic sphere (Sanders 2006). The 1830s, in particular, see the surge of an activism that aimed at obtaining practical results in women's conditions, especially as regards their recognition as separate individuals, not legally belonging to their husbands. This is illustrated by the famous *Norton Cases*, in which a woman fought for her right to her child's custody and to ailments after divorce. This case prompted the English Parliament to issue Acts and Bills that filled the gaps in marriage legislation for a more equal standing of women and men against the law (Sanders 2006).

The 1850s generally saw a major resurgence of feminist activity, and was perhaps the most important decade of the nineteenth century for Victorian women. The two Norton cases helped air long-standing concerns about the legal position of married women, while the growing numbers of single middle-class women looking for economic independence as an alternative to marriage drew attention to their limited employment options. Partly through personal networking, and partly through the eruption of individual crises and the discovery of individual needs, a series of important legislative and social changes were introduced over the next decades. (Sanders 2006, p. 20)

The legal cases prompted also a wave of activism that aimed at claiming women's right to self-determination and the fight for the recognition of women's civil rights to achieve gender equality. In this period feminist fights spread on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, with the American activist movement fueling protests in England, and vice versa. Their aim was the recognition of women's "civil liberties" (Sanders 2006, p. 22), which included women's right to private property, accessing education, personal and professional independence.

The second wave of feminism (1960s-1980s) sees a more radical turn. This stage of the movement, which begins around the year of publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) aims to eliminate inequalities in the workplace and gender discrimination, as well as to achieve liberation from the patriarchal system (Spencer-Wood 2017). This also meant a liberation from social stigma and oppression in terms of women's sexuality, relationships, birth control and abortion. The feminist movement in this period is brought forward thanks to organized groups, instead of individual efforts as in the first wave, through

the process of '**consciousness-raising**' – the move to transform what is experienced as personal into analysis in political terms, with the accompanying recognition that 'the personal *is* political', that male power is exercised and reinforced through 'personal' institutions such as **marriage**, child-rearing and sexual practices. (Thornham 2006, p. 26; original emphasis)

The radical turn that characterizes the second wave is symbolized by explicit language in writings, effective slogans in speeches, and public demonstrations, such as assembly gatherings and street protests (Thornham 2006). It is during this period that proper feminist theories are created. They will pave the way to the development of the ideological basis for the movement and subsequent development of the next wave (Thornham 2006) as well as to the creation of lobby-like groups that promoted laws to increase gender equality (Spencer-Wood 2017).

The third wave of feminism (1990s-2000s), a.k.a. *postfeminism* (Gamble 2006), extends the fight to the elimination of discrimination aggravated by ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and social class. Claims for LGBTQ (i.e., 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer people') rights are also included in the third wave. This later development of the movement uses traditional and digital media to spread its message. While the first wave of the movement saw the involvement of intellectuals, and the second wave of political figures and theorists, the 'frontwomen' of the third wave are personalities popular among the general public such as celebrities from the world of music (e.g., The Spice Girls and Madonna; cf. Gamble

2006), cinema (e.g., Emma Watson, who is also the founder of the ‘HeForShe’ movement), and ‘pop culture’ in general. In this wave, support to the feminist agenda is also publicly professed by an increasing number of men who are not afraid to speak out for the feminist cause; these can be influential politicians such as former US President Barack Obama or famous actors (e.g., the late Alan Rickman, Ryan Gosling, etc.). In this third wave, we also find the support of important leading female politicians, such as former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Michelle Obama, former First Lady and well-known advocate for civil rights during her years as a lawyer in Chicago.

It must be said, however, that the present account of the feminist movement has summarized the claims that were found in the European and American ‘branches’. The movement, in fact, is much more complex than this, since it encompasses several branches that aim at vindicating women’s rights all over the world, varying its claims and campaigns according to the specific socio-cultural situation of women in individual countries (such as Indian Feminism, Chinese Feminism, African Feminism, etc.; cf. Ferree, Tripp 2006), or communities, such as the Black Feminist movement, which fights against racial as well as gender discrimination (Hooks 2015), or Islamic Feminism, which claims rights for Islamic women (Kynsilehto 2008).

Much has been written from the political, sociological, and anthropological perspective on feminism and its corresponding political waves, as the references given so far demonstrate. In fact, the amount of literature available on feminism is so astounding that it is not possible to give here a full account of the state of the art. Suffice it to say that studies investigate the relationship between feminism and literature (LeBihan 2006), between feminism and philosophy (Fricker, Hornsby 2000), medicine and biology (Roberts 2007), feminism in the arts (Pollock 2013), feminism and postcolonial theory (Lewis, Mills 2003).¹ Quite scarce, however, is the literature available on the discourse of feminism. It was not possible to trace any relevant study except for Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1995), in which the authors apply discourse analytical tools to psychology from a feminist perspective, and Von Flotow (2016), in which the author discusses the problem of translation and gender in the era of feminism. Certainly, studies on gender-based linguistic variation are numerous, such as the groundbreaking Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003). However, the present author could not trace any investigation on the ‘feminist meta-language’, namely the kind of language and discourse that characterize feminist

¹ This list is only indicative of the literature available on the different sub-topics.

speeches, or writings,² which lay the foundations for the waves in which the movement is divided, and which influence the subsequent writings and speeches typical of each wave. The present study seeks to fill this gap.

2. Corpus and methodology

2.1. Material Analyzed

Generally speaking, the feminist propaganda is known for its slogans, through which it reaches the collective psyche, and also for its rhetoric, through which it tries to persuade the public opinion of its claims. One of the best representations of this rhetoric are the speeches delivered during public events by feminist activists. The corpus collected for the present study is composed of a total of 12 speeches, listed in Table 1:

| Wave 1 | Wave 2 | Wave 3 |
|---|---|---|
| Sojourner Truth (1851), <i>Ain't I a Woman</i> [ST, 54] | Betty Friedan (1970), <i>Call for a Women's Strike</i> [BF, 49] | Hillary Clinton (1995), <i>Women's Rights Are Human Rights</i> [HC, 48] |
| Christabel Pankhurst (1908), <i>Speech after her release from prison</i> [CP, 28] | Gloria Steinem (1971), <i>An address to the women of America</i> [GS, 37] | Emma Watson (2014, 2016), <i>HeForShe Campaign</i> [EW, 24] |
| Emmeline Pankhurst (1913), <i>Freedom or Death</i> [EP, 55] | Germain Greer (1971), <i>Townhall Speech</i> [GG, 32] | Michelle Obama (2016), <i>New Hampshire Speech</i> [MO, 52] |
| Virginia Woolf (1928), <i>A Room of One's Own</i> [VW, 46] | Phyllis Schlafly (1972), <i>What's Wrong with 'Equal Rights' for Women</i> [PS, 48] | Malala Yousafzai (2013), <i>UN Youth Takeover Speech</i> [MY, 16] |

Table 1
List of speeches analyzed *per wave*.³

The activists selected have been officially recognized as representatives of the corresponding wave (cf. Mayhall 1995; Phillips-Anderson 2012; Ferree, Hess 2000). The first wave is represented by the first known activists, such as

² Spoken texts, texts written to be spoken, and written texts are produced for/in different communicative situations and, thus, they contain different linguistic strategies that characterize them. Since this is a field still unexplored in feminist material, the present study will focus only on texts written to be spoken. Future research might focus on the other types of material to identify differences/similarities in terms of linguistic or discursive choices that will allow generalizations on feminist discourse (see Conclusions).

³ In Table 1, the letters in the square brackets are the initials of the speakers, while the numbers indicate the age of the speaker at the time when she delivered the speech.

Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, mother and daughter respectively, who are widely known for their political commitment and for being leaders of the British suffragette movement. Sojourner Truth, an American freed slave, became one of the most famous black women orators thanks to her eloquence despite her complete lack of formal education. She devoted her life to the abolition of slavery and to promoting equal rights. Virginia Woolf's commitment to the feminist cause is known through the speech here analyzed. *A Room of One's Own* is considered a key work in early feminist writing, presenting education as the key to women's emancipation.

Second-wave feminism is represented in the first three speeches listed in Table 1. They were all delivered during public assemblies, and each one of them marked a key moment in the second stage of the movement, since they established significant steps in the future political agenda. Phyllis Schlafly's speech is unusual, in that it advocates against equal rights for women. It was chosen for inclusion in the list of second-wave speeches because it makes it possible to investigate if the discourse of anti-feminism women could vary from that of the pro-feminism activists, or if it used the same discursive choices, but in support of the opposite perspective.

Finally, the third wave of the movement is represented by four speeches that have helped the shaping of the feminist agenda in the 21st century. The speech by Hillary Clinton – delivered when she was First Lady – is considered a landmark moment, since she challenged the traditional non-commitment policy of First Ladies. This speech also set her political agenda that was later developed, in 2000, when she became the first female Senator elected in the State of New York. Michelle Obama's speech has become famous for similar reasons: it was a climatic moment of Mrs Obama's career as a lawyer defending civil rights, but it also set her political agenda as an activist supporting her husband's Presidency agenda. Young actress Emma Watson's speech was chosen, since it is fundamental for the creation of the 'HeForShe' movement (endorsed by the United Nations), which is "an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for a gender equal world" (<https://www.heforshe.org/en>). The last speech, by Malala Yousafzai, was included among the third-wave speeches, since it reports and supports the struggle for equality and against discrimination of girls and women in 'third-world' countries. Malala Yousafzai is the youngest Nobel Prize winner: she was awarded the Prize when she was only 17 years old because of her commitment to women's rights, and after she survived severe injuries after a Taliban attack to prevent her attending school. She had already been known since the age of 11 for her popular blog – also supported by her family, and especially her father, an education activist himself – from which she challenged Taliban's rule in her home country, Pakistan, criticizing in

particular their treatment of girls and women.

The speeches collected were chosen not only for their representativeness of each wave but also according to a generational criterion: they were delivered by leaders or activists (four for each wave) of different ages, two being younger activists, and two more mature speakers. The generational factor was taken into account in order to see whether differences in the speeches are also to be attributed to the age of the speaker, not only to the period in which they live(d). The only variable not taken into consideration is the level of education: except for Sojourner Truth, all the speakers are educated, middle-class/upper-middle class women.

2.2. Methodology

The transcripts of the speeches investigated in this study could all be retrieved online. The second-wave and third-wave speeches are all available on dedicated websites, on the personal website of the speakers, or on the website of the event during which the speech was delivered. As regards the first-wave speeches, in the case of Sojourner Truth's speech, the official transcript available to the public has been cross-checked by several scholars according to the witnesses that provided the first transcripts, and historical resources.⁴ As for the texts of the speeches written by the other three speakers in the first-wave group, they can be found on *The Guardian's Great Speeches of the 20th Century* website for Emmeline Pankhurst's speech, and on *The British Library Archive* website for Christabel Pankhurst's and Virginia Woolf's speeches.

The speeches thus collected were compiled into a corpus which was, then, searched with *Wordsmith Tools 7.0* (Scott 2017) to conduct a keyword analysis. The keyword analysis was chosen because it indicates not only "the 'aboutness' [...] of a particular genre, it can also reveal the salient features which are functionally related to that genre" (McEnery *et al.* 2006, p. 308). The keywords are subsequently analyzed in their context (and co-text) of occurrence to identify recurrent communicative practices common to all speeches, or typical of individual cases. Finally, a qualitative analysis of the keywords, conducted by means of concordances, will help identify possible pragmatic implications in the discursive choices of the speakers.

⁴ See, for instance, the documents available on *Women's Rights National Historical Park* website (<https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/sojourner-truth.htm>), and the dedicated *The Sojourner Truth Project* website (<https://www.thesojournertruthproject.com/compare-the-speeches/>).

2.2.1. Quantitative analysis: stylistic description of the corpus

Table 2 shows the quantitative data that can be used for a stylistic description of the corpus. The FLOB corpus (Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English) and the BNC (British National Corpus) were used as reference corpora. The FLOB is a corpus of general English containing samples from 1991 through 1996, while the BNC comprises samples of written and spoken language for a total of more than 100 million words. It was compiled between the 1990s and 2007 from a wide range of genres collected to be representative of a consistent portion of British English.

| | Feminist Speeches (1851-2013) | FLOB (1991-1996) | BNC (1990s-2007) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Tokens | 68,647 | 1,237,424 | 97,860,872 |
| Types | 7,752 | 45,089 | 512,588 |
| STTR | 41.32 | 45.52 | 42.66 |
| Average word length (characters) | 4.37 | 4.35 | 4.68 |
| Number of sentences | 2,821 | 52,674 | 4,754,513 |
| Average sentence length | 24.30 | 23.49 | 20.59 |

Table 2

Quantitative data of the corpus of feminist speeches, and reference corpora.

Considering the ratios for the two reference corpora, the STTR (Standardized Type-Token Ratio) for the corpus of feminist speeches indicates that this is rich in word use, since “a high type/token ratio suggests that a text is lexically diverse” (Baker *et al.* 2006: p. 162). Mean word length values are similar in the three corpora, and the number of sentences is commensurate to their respective size, as it is also confirmed if we calculate the proportion of the number of sentences with respect to the full size of the corresponding corpus. In this case too, figures are similar in the three corpora. In fact, sentences in the corpus of feminist speeches are 4.11% of the full corpus, while in the FLOB and in the BNC corpora we have the percentages of 4.26% and 4.86%, respectively. The average sentence length is also similar in all the three corpora but, interestingly, in the feminist speeches sentences are longer, indicating that the speeches are constructed with complex sentences, a feature typical of “a more formal style” (de Haan, van Esch 2007, p. 198). These characteristics along with the STTR figure (41.32), which is slightly lower than in the reference corpora, indicates that the texts in the corpus of feminist speeches were written to be spoken, namely that the speakers read from written texts that were constructed to be delivered orally.

3. Keyword analysis

Considering the small size of the corpus of feminist speeches, and the even smaller size of each text composing the corpus, the list of keywords generated for each speech is quite short. As regards the selection of the keywords, only what Scott (1997) calls “key keywords” were included in the present investigation. Key keywords are keywords which occur at least twice in a given corpus and, thus, “a key keywords list reveals how many texts a keyword appears in as key” (Baker 2004, p. 350). Moreover, since the aim was to explore the discursive choices of the speakers with respect to the communicative aim towards their audience, for the present study functional words were excluded from the analysis. The only exception are pronouns, which were included because of the speaker/audience relationship they help establish in the speeches. Tables 3 contains all the lists, subdivided for each speaker, indicated with her initials (see Table 1).

| Wave 1 | Speaker | Keywords |
|--------|---------|--|
| | ST | children, women, woman |
| | CP | women, vote, deputations, Parliament |
| | EP | women, men, suffrage, militant, we, vote, militancy, woman |
| | VW | women, woman, mind, fiction, Brönte, Austen, I, sex |
| Wave 2 | | |
| | BF | women, our, we, oppress, power, us, propose, revolution, awesome, conditions, confront |
| | GS | we, us, people, world, remember |
| | GG | artist, masculine, ego, artists, achievements, our |
| | PS | women, us, rights, equal, American, wife, husband, amendment, marriage, woman, motherhood, laws, support |
| Wave 3 | | |
| | HC | women, rights, families, world, human, violation, lives, children |
| | MO | Hillary, we, women, election, President, Barack, opponent |
| | EW | men, I, gender, women, equality, heforshe, rights, feminism |
| | MY | education, Taliban, sisters, we, rights, brothers, dear, peace, terrorists |

Table 3
List of keywords extracted *per* speaker.

The lists of keywords provided in Table 3 clearly show that the content of the speeches represent the key issues around which the three waves of feminism revolve. In the case of the first wave, in fact, the recurrent keywords in the four speeches are terms such as WOMAN/WOMEN, VOTE, SUFFRAGE that point to the importance of claiming fundamental rights, such as the right to vote. The lexical choices of two speakers in particular are worth detailing, namely Emmeline Pankhurst and Virginia Woolf. In the former case, we find reference to a more politically oriented vocabulary than in the other speeches, considering the presence of terms such as MILITANT and MILITANCY, which reflect Emmeline Pankhurst's commitment as an activist and suffragette. In the case of Virginia Woolf, instead, we notice the presence of literary references (BRONTË, AUSTEN, FICTION), which indicate her main focus on reclaiming female writers' place in the literary panorama at the same level as male writers.

As regards second-wave feminist speeches, the keywords reflect the radical turn and greater political activism of the movement with the recurrence of terms such as OPPRESS, POWER, REVOLUTION, ACHIEVEMENTS. It is also worth noting the presence of words such as PEOPLE, WORLD, ARTISTS which appeal not only to action on a global scale but also to specific categories which might have some influence on society. Moreover, we can notice the use of the inclusive pronouns WE, US, OUR,⁵ a specific, direct reference to women united in sisterhood (Thornham 2006) that are called to act as one, united corp. As already mentioned, Phyllis Schafly's anti-feminism speech was chosen to contrast pro-feminism speeches in a period – like the 1970s – during which, more than in the other waves, the heritage of the patriarchal system was resisting against the more active upsurge of feminist claims. The list of keywords for this speech reveals that terms such as WOMEN, RIGHTS, EQUAL are used, but that they are accompanied by terms which refer to the traditional, domestic role of women (WIFE, MARRIAGE, MOTHERHOOD). The presence of terms like LAWS and SUPPORT is a clear reference to the support given by the institutions to women, thus presenting the needs of women exclusively in relation to the domestic sphere and to their husbands.

The list of keywords for third-wave speeches summarizes the commitment typical of this phase, with specific characterizations that reflect the speakers' individual commitment to the cause. Thus, we find words

⁵ Even though OUR is a possessive determiner, it was included in the group of pronouns because of their function in the noun phrase with respect to communicative aim of the feminist speakers. In fact, as Biber *et al.* (1999, pp. 270-271, italics in the original) put it; “possessive determiners specify a noun phrase by relating it to the speaker/writer (*my, our*), the addressee (*your*) or other entities mentioned in the text or given in the speech situation (*his, her, its, their*). This series of possessive determiners corresponds to the series of personal pronouns”.

common to all the speakers, such as WOMEN and WE, which are also present in the preceding waves. As for the individual speeches, the list of keywords for Hillary Clinton's and Michelle Obama's speeches reflect their political commitment in institutional contexts (RIGHTS, VIOLATION, ELECTION, OPPONENT). The lists for the other two speakers clearly reflect their agendas, more practical, considering their age and life story: in the case of Emma Watson the focus is on her project, HEFORSHE, as well as on the principles on which it is grounded (GENDER, EQUALITY). Interestingly, she is the only speaker in the corpus who directly refers to FEMINISM, which indeed appears in the list of keywords, signifying its 'keyness' in her speech. As for Malala Yousafzai, her keyword list reflects her story: her appeal to PEACE and EDUCATION, in a society whose members she sees in terms of SISTERS and BROTHERS, strikingly contrasts with less positive terms such as TALIBAN and TERRORISM. These two terms are used, in fact, as constant reminders of the forces at work to contrast the claim for equality, peace and right to education which she has endured (and many others still do) since she was a little girl.

4. Concordance analysis

The concordance analysis was conducted on each speech, taking the keywords as node words. Only a selected group of keywords for each wave are here analyzed to show how, even though they use the same word, the speakers manage to give it different connotations and implications, which – as already said in the previous Section – all reflect the particular focus of each wave. The words selected are WOMAN/WOMEN, and personal pronouns. The choice fell on the former because it is the purpose of the feminist speeches in the corpus to talk about women's condition and claims, while the use of pronouns was chosen to investigate how different women, from different age groups and in different periods of time, address their audience while talking about topics that directly involve(d) and touch(ed) both the speakers and the audience itself.

4.1. Woman/women

The word that is obviously used by all the speakers is WOMAN (or in the plural form, WOMEN). The analysis of the concordances generated for the speech reveals that Sojourner Truth repeats this term in contrast to MAN to stress the fact that both women and men equals and, thus, women must have the same possibilities, as in example (1):

- (1) And a'n't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it (SJ_1851).

However, the sentence “when I could get it” is a bitter remark, hinting at the fact that women not only are treated as inferior to men, but they have also more difficult access to food. The same use of the word WOMEN to stress the vindication of women to be treated equally is found in Christabel Pankhurst (as exemplified in 2):

(2) Therefore, women tax payers are entitled to vote (CP_1908).

As we can see, here the reference is on the active role that women play in society. Moreover, WOMEN is used to refer to their actions to claim the vote and on a meta-analysis of their effectiveness:

- (3) The reasons why women should have the vote are obvious to every fair-minded person (CP_1908);
- (4) Meetings have been held and petitions signed in favour of votes for women but failure has been the result. The reason of this failure is that women have not been able to bring pressure to bear upon the government and government moves only in response to pressure (CP_1908);
- (5) They [the Liberal Government] must be compelled by a united and determined women’s movement to do justice in this measure (CP_1908).

In these examples, it is clear that Christabel Pankhurst’s is the speech of a full political figure who is aware of what needs to be done (examples 3 and 5), and what has not been done, to help the cause she is fighting for (example 4). Quite different is her mother’s use of the words WOMAN/WOMEN, as the examples below illustrate (emphases added):

- (6) A good deal of the opposition to *woman suffrage* is coming from the very worst element in the population, who realise that once you get *woman suffrage*, a great many places that are tolerated today will have to disappear (EP_1913);
- (7) Well, I might spend two or three nights dealing with the industrial *situation as it affects women*, with the *legal position of women*, with the *social position of women* (EP_1913).

Examples (6) and (7) are chosen to represent the instances found in the speech, in which WOMAN and WOMEN are used differently. In (6) we see that WOMAN is used to refer to a more abstract concept such as women’s suffrage, whereas in (7) WOMEN is used with more practical connotations to describe the past and current situation of women, and to stress what kind of difference will it make to obtain the right to vote.

A similar differentiation is found in Virginia Woolf’s speech, even though their connotations are different, as in the examples below (emphases added), in which WOMAN is used in descriptions of the conditions of women *per se* (example 8), while WOMEN is used to highlight some contrast or

comparison with men's condition (example 9):

- (8) That, more or less, is how the story would run, I think, if *a woman* in Shakespeare's day had had Shakespeare's genius. But for my part, I agree with the deceased bishop, if such he was – it is unthinkable that *any woman* in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius. For genius like Shakespeare's is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people (VW_1929);
- (9) But it is obvious that the *values of women* differ very often from the values which have been made by the other sex; naturally, this is so. Yet it is the masculine values that prevail (VW_1929).

It was chosen to quote the full part of the speech in which the words occur, since they also symbolize Virginia Woolf's irony about, and insightful remarks into, the condition of women across history and during her time. For instance, example (8) illustrates the main point of her speech, namely the fact that education for women is an essential factor to achieve self-determination. She also pinpoints how no woman can raise to the same glory as Shakespeare until she can access education and improve her social status outside marriage. In example (9), instead, attention is placed on the very modern concept that women's role in society is not determined by their intrinsic worth as persons, but is imposed by male-dominated values. This is a concept that has always been adopted and further developed by the subsequent waves of feminism.

In second-wave feminist speeches, we see that only Betty Friedan and the anti-feminist Phyllis Schlafly use the words WOMAN/WOMEN. In particular, Betty Friedan uses only WOMEN, referring to women as one single group who must stand united to claim their rights (10), while Phyllis Schlafly uses both terms with an important differentiation, as in examples (11) and (12):

- (10) And so we face now the awesome responsibility of this beautiful miracle of our own power as women to change society (BF_1970);
- (11) These laws and customs decree that a man must carry his share by physical protection and financial support of his children and of the woman who bears his children (PS_1972);
- (12) The women's libbers are radicals who are waging a total assault on the family, on marriage, and on children (PS_1972).

In examples such as the one reported in (11), WOMAN is used positively in reference to her position as a child-bearer as granted by religion and patriarchal tradition, without any reference to the woman as an individual or with an active role in family life, while in cases as in example (12), WOMEN is associated with 'libbers' (i.e., "liberationist(s)", OED) and used with negative connotations, in a derogatory sense to mean that women who fight for civil rights, and thus self-determination without a man's help, are a danger to society.

Finally, in third-wave feminist speeches, Malala Yousafzai is the only one that does not mention women, even though she repeatedly addresses the audience with *my dear sisters*. Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama, and Emma Watson use only the term WOMEN to refer to women's rights (examples 13, 14, 15; emphases added):

- (13) If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that *human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights* once and for all (HC_1995);
- (14) Remember this: in 2012, *women's votes were the difference between Barack winning and losing in key swing states*, including right here in New Hampshire (MO_2016);
- (15) I was appointed six months ago and the more I have spoken about feminism the more I have realized that *fighting for women's rights has too often become synonymous with man-hating*. *If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop* (EW_2014).

Even when they generally refer to women's rights, the three speakers manage to set the main point of their respective political agendas: if Hillary Clinton is committed to improving women's conditions on a larger scale (13), Michelle Obama specifically refers to the role that women played to elect her husband, Barack Obama, as 44th President of the USA (14). In so doing, she indirectly encourages women to vote as they too, and not only men, can make a difference in the world. On the other hand, Emma Watson (15) is more focused on the presentation of her project and the benefits that fighting for women's rights can bring to men as well.

Beside using WOMEN to generally refer to women's rights, each one of the three speakers uses the word in a very specific context, adding specific connotations when they describe women's condition around the world; connotations which reflect their personal commitment (examples (16), (17), (18)):

- (16) Women must enjoy the rights to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries, if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure. It is indefensible that many women in nongovernmental organizations who wished to participate in this conference have not been able to attend – or have been prohibited from fully taking part (HC_1995);
- (17) This was a powerful individual speaking freely and openly about sexually predatory behavior, and actually bragging about kissing and groping women (MO_2016);
- (18) Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive. Both men and women should feel free to be strong... It is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum not as two opposing sets of ideals (EW_2014).

In example (16), Hillary Clinton's political commitment – as a politician, not just as First Lady – is even more evident: she is not afraid of mentioning facts that directly involve the organization of the event during which she is delivering her speech. On the other hand, Michelle Obama's interest in

supporting Hillary Clinton as Presidential candidate is evident in example (17), as she refers to the opposing candidate (i.e., Donald Trump) as a danger to women's rights and to what has so far been achieved by American women. Finally, Emma Watson (in example 18) reinforces her ideas about men and women cooperating together to achieve gender equality, which is the *leitmotiv* of her commitment.

4.2. Pronouns

The keyword analysis showed that pronouns in the corpus are not 'key' to all the speakers. In the first wave only Emmeline Pankhurst and Virginia Woolf have a consistent use of pronouns WE and I, respectively. The examples below illustrate their use of pronouns with respect to the communicative purpose of their speech:

- (19) That is what we women have been doing, and in the course of our desperate struggle we have had to make a great many people very uncomfortable (EP_1913);
- (20) It would have been extremely odd, even upon this showing, had one of them suddenly written the plays of Shakespeare, I concluded, and I thought of that old gentleman, who is dead now, but was a bishop, I think, [...] (VW_1929).

In example (19) it is clear that the first person plural pronoun is a clear use of the so-called *inclusive we form*, aiming at creating a sense of shared values, and common struggle, in the fight to obtain women's right to vote. Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, uses the first person singular pronoun, as would be expected considering the nature of her speech, which she was requested to deliver for her socio-cultural role. Thus, she reports her own thoughts, guesses, and impressions while talking about the condition of women across time and how it was reported by male intellectuals across history.

Three out of four second-wave feminists show pronouns in their keyword list. Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and anti-feminist Phyllis Schlafly use pronouns WE, US, and the possessive adjective OUR, but with different communicative intentions, as exemplified in (21) to (24) below:

- (21) We have the power to restructure the institutions and conditions that oppress all women now, and it is our responsibility to history, to ourselves, to all who will come after us, to use this power NOW (BF_1970);
- (22) We are here and around the world for a deep democracy that says we will not be quiet, we will not be controlled, we will work for a world in which all countries are connected. God may be in the details, but the goddess is in connections. We are at one with each other, we are looking at each other, not up. No more asking daddy (GS_1971);
- (23) Or worst of all we were meant to be both, which meant that we broke our hearts trying to keep our aprons clean (GG_1971).

- (24) But let's not permit these women's libbers to get away with pretending to speak for the rest of us (PS_1972).

In the first two examples (21 and 22), the first person plural pronoun is used again with its inclusive function of uniting speakers and audience (women from all over the world) into one group led by a common goal. Similarly, in example (23) the speaker is joining the public but, in this particular case, they are united by a more specific aim, that is combining their feminine nature to the nature of an artist that, historically, has been a profession reserved to men. In example (24), instead, the aim is to divide what the speaker presents as 'the enemy' (the women's libbers already seen in example 12) from the good practice of women who keep themselves into the traditional role of 'domestic angels' (the 'us' found in the speech), of which the speaker herself is an example to imitate.

In the third-wave feminist speeches, only Hillary Clinton's does not have pronouns in the keyword list. As for the others, Michelle Obama and Malala Yousafzai show the use of pronoun WE, while Emma Watson shows a predominance of pronoun I, as exemplified below in (25), (26), and (27):

- (25) And I had the pleasure of spending hours talking to some of the most amazing young women you will ever meet, young girls here in the US and all around the world. And we talked about their hopes and their dreams. We talked about their aspirations (MO_2016);
- (26) It's a good question and trust me, I have been asking myself the same thing. I don't know if I am qualified to be here. All I know is that I care about this problem. And I want to make it better (EW_2014).
- (27) Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty, injustice and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright peaceful future (MY_2013).

In example (25), we notice the complex, but also skillful, way in which Michelle Obama addresses her audience in order to engage their attention as well as their emotional involvement: first, she uses pronoun I to draw attention on something that she has already experienced and the positive emotion that derived from it, then she uses pronoun YOU to challenge the audience's perception on the merits of the women she is talking about and, finally, she uses pronoun WE to indicate that she was fully involved in that very experience that she is now sharing with the public. In example (26), Emma Watson uses the first person singular pronoun to highlight her personal involvement but she also attracts the audience's attention with the invitation 'trust me'. However, she immediately adds 'I don't know if I am qualified to be here' to diminish the directness of her approach to the public, thus avoiding the risk of sounding patronizing and, instead, presenting herself as close to the audience, as one of them. Finally, in example (27), Malala

Yousafzai directly addresses the public with ‘dear brothers and sisters’, which, together with the use of pronoun WE, helps Malala to establish a very close relationship with her public, who becomes part of a ‘family’, which includes the speaker as well.

5. Final remarks and further research

The present study has analyzed feminist speeches that have not yet been analyzed linguistically or discursively, so far. The aim was to ascertain if the speeches, delivered by women of different ages in different periods of time, contained common features as well as if the speakers showed specific communicative strategies to convey their message. The keyword and concordance analyses, in particular, revealed that despite the fact that the speakers use similar discursive choices, even the same words, they construct their speeches in such a way that they manage to reach different communicative results. For instance, even though the speakers use the same kinds of pronouns (I and WE), the resulting effect is different: while the second-wave feminists use pronouns with strategies of *communicative opposition* against the patriarchal system, third-wave feminists use the same pronouns to communicate both a sense of inclusiveness (involving men in the common struggle to achieve equal rights for everyone) and personal commitment, since they present themselves as members of the audience rather than celebrities lecturing the public. Moreover, the speeches analyzed were written-to-be-spoken texts, so they lack the spontaneity of orality. This also means that the speakers’ choice of key words is even more accurate than in spontaneous communication, since it follows a deliberate strategy to attract the audience’s attention and keep it focused on the content of the message that the speaker is delivering.

As regards the diachronic change in the discursive strategies, we have seen that changes across time reflect changes in the activists’ commitment and in the focus of the feminist agenda, rather than following diachronic variation in the language from the Late Modern period to the present day. However, some ‘time-related’ differences were found in the age of the speakers: while relatively older speakers (e.g., Sojourner Truth, Emmeline Pankhurst, Betty Friedan, Hillary Clinton, and Michelle Obama) tend to refer to general values such as family, the world, masculinity vs. femininity, etc., the younger speakers (e.g., Christabel Pankhurst, Gloria Steinem, Germain Greer, Emma Watson, and Malala Yousafzai) refer to more specific elements such as the right to vote and to end the oppression of women. In the particular case of Emma Watson and Malala Yousafzai, the youngest of the speakers in the third-wave group, they ‘dare’ to use more direct and explicit terms such as *feminism* and *terrorism*.

To conclude, one of the limitations of the present study is the size of the corpus which does not allow generalizations on feminism discourse as a whole. At any rate, the results obtained from this study do prompt further research on feminist speeches: for instance, it will be interesting to look into greater detail at the use of discourse markers and how they are semantically and pragmatically related to the statements they connect. Furthermore, a manual search of the speeches could reveal strategies used to address the audience, salutation formulae and any other discursive practice that a computer-driven research cannot detect. More texts and speeches could also be collected to enlarge the corpus and to investigate the presence of systematic discursive practices, which could allow sounder generalizations on the features characterizing the ‘language and discourse of feminism’.

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“JUST A FEW LINES TO LET YOU KNOW”

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Abstract – Historical correspondence has been the object of increasing interest in the field of English linguistics; such research interests, in the case of vernacular letters, offer a valuable insight into language use seen from below. The current article examines a corpus of Great War trench letters written by George Murray and Thomas Clark Russell, two semi-literate Scottish soldiers. The study aims to identify and analyse the formulaic language and personalization strategies used by the soldier letter writers. The letters were transcribed to create a corpus of 94,477 running words. The corpus was examined by using a discourse historical approach (DHA) to critical discourse analysis (CDA). This approach allows an in-depth analysis of the texts, viewed as embedded in the context in which they occur. The letters were divided into segments (i. e. the opening formulae, the text body and the closing formulae) from which frequency word lists and concordances were extracted by using Sketch Engine. Findings show that opening salutations are followed by formulaic expressions, effectively creating a bridge between the salutation and the letter's main content, and that the use of opening salutations and formulaic expressions varied depending upon the intended recipient of the letter as well as on the nature of the encoder's relationship with the addressee. The pronouns identified were examined in context, focusing on their use with modal verbs. The analysis also revealed that modal verbs expressing epistemic modality were the most frequently occurring with pronouns in the corpus.

Keywords: formulaic expressions; personalisation strategies; trench letters; historical discourse analysis; historical pragmatics.

*Letters are among the most significant
memorial
a person can leave behind them*
(J. von Goethe, "Letters and Essays"
1805)

1. Introduction

This article examines a sub-corpus of trench letters that were written during the Great War by two semi-literate Scottish soldiers. The letters were sent from the trenches of the Western Front from September 1914 to November 1916¹ by two soldiers serving in kilted Highland regiments of the British Army. Both soldiers had completed compulsory schooling until the age of 12, as provided for by the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act (Knox 2000). The provision of universal education in Scotland, and consequent improvement in literacy along with letter writing being taught both at school and through letter writing manuals² (Hall, Gillen 2007) facilitated the creation of epistolary discourse by soldiers at the Front who were not fully literate.³

The importance of letters during the Great War has been highlighted by several scholars. For example, Proctor (2014) describes how letters from home were extremely important for the combatants and that they effectively created both a direct sense of connectedness with home whilst also seeking, through the semblance of normality, to create distance from the horrors of the trenches. The mass mobilisation of men into the armed forces during World War I created “a sudden and irrepressible ‘bulimia’ of letter-writing” (Lyons 2013, p. 77), which enabled soldiers to maintain familial bonds with those whom they had left behind, allowing the soldiers to distance themselves from the conflict and ground themselves, instead, in their civilian role, albeit temporarily. Despite the important role played by trench letters in maintaining interpersonal bonds during the conflict, such letters are not easily found in institutional archives.⁴

The aim of the present study is to identify and analyse the repertoire of formulaic expressions and personalization strategies instantiated in the corpus. Both historical letters and the formulaic expressions they contain have been

¹ The letters in the corpus actually cover a longer period; specifically, those written by Murray cover the period from December 1914 to March 1917, while those written by Russell cover a period of 7 months from 4th August 1915 to 30th January 1916. The present study investigates a subcorpus which consists exclusively of letters written by the soldiers while on active service in the trenches of the Western Front. Consequently, the subcorpus covers the period from September 1914 to November 1916.

² Research conducted at the National Library of Scotland, regimental museum archives and the Imperial War Museum archives did not lead to the discovery of any wartime letter writing manuals issued to soldiers. Roper (2009) states that very few letter-writing manuals were published in wartime Britain; consequently, it is likely that letter-writing skills had been acquired during schooling and guidance, when required, was likely to have been obtained from magazines, newspaper articles and from other people (p. 57).

³ Fairman proposes four levels of “letteracies”: mechanically-letterate, partly-letterate, letterate and fully-letterate (p. 193). See Fairman (2007).

⁴ During the author’s research on trench letters, of the 6 regimental archives contacted, only one had letters written by a Scottish working-class soldier in their archives.

investigated extensively (e.g., Nevalainen, Raumolin-Brunberg 2007; Tiekens-Boon van Ostade 1999; Fairman 2000; Nevala 2007).

Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1995) report on the sociolinguistic investigation of address form conventions in Early Modern English letters. Nevala (2007) examined forms of address in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century letters in the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (CEEC) considering their socio-pragmatic aspects. The study highlights how the formulae within the letters are predominantly governed by the relative power present in the relationship between the writer and his/her correspondent.

Other studies have examined salutations as they form the boundaries in spoken conversations and do likewise in epistolary discourse. Austin (2004) examined the survival of opening formulae from a diachronic perspective, examining eighteenth- and nineteenth-century letters. Austin (2004) suggests that opening salutations are followed by formulaic expressions, the latter effectively constituting a bridge between the opening salutation and the main content of the letter.

Sairio and Nevala's (2013) analysis of the influence of letter-writing manuals in private letters written in eighteenth-century England shows that a letter always starts with the recognition of the intended recipient and that it reflects the relationship of the writer with the addressee. Not only do such salutations express the existing relationship between those involved in the epistolary exchange, they are also formulaic (Jucker 2017).

Despite the wealth of studies dedicated to the examination of historical letters, it would appear that, to date, no linguistic study has yet been conducted on Great War trench letters.

The letters sourced by the author were scanned and transcribed, leading to the creation of a corpus of 94,477 running words. The corpus was examined by using a discourse historical approach (DHA) to critical discourse analysis (CDA) viewed through the lens of historical pragmatics. Since its formulation in the 1980s, DHA has come to be considered as one of the 'most prominent' critical approaches to the study of discourse (Reisigl 2017). This is a flexible, interdisciplinary and problem-oriented approach, which makes it possible to analyse texts by considering them not in isolation, but rather as embedded in the context in which they occurred.

The letters were divided into three segments for the analysis, namely: opening, body and closing segments. Each segment was identified based on the following criteria: a) position on the page, b) content and c) rhetorical move. The three aforementioned criteria permitted identification of the opening salutations and formulae, the main content, and the closing salutations and formulae. Each of the segments was subsequently analysed with Sketch

Engine,⁵ leading to the creation of frequency word lists and concordances. Three research questions were formed to guide the research, namely:

1. Which opening salutations and formulaic language are employed by the letter writers?
2. Does the choice of opening salutation and formulaic language used vary depending upon the intended recipient of the letters?
3. What pronouns and modal verbs are used by the encoders as personalization strategies?

The article is structured as follows: Section 2.1 considers epistolary discourse and its unique properties, while Section 2.2 describes trench letters as text sources ‘from below’; Section 2.3 reports on the determining socio-historic factors and the role they played in the epistolary exchange. Section 3 describes the materials used and methods adopted for the analysis, while Section 4 consists of the results and discussion. Finally, Section 5 presents the conclusion of the study and suggests future research avenues.

2. Letter writing

Prior to the advent of modern means of communication, letters had long been an efficient, rapid and cost-effective means to communicate with physically distant family members and friends. By the late nineteenth century, in countries where literacy was well-established, letter writing constituted an accessible means of communication with people from whom the writer was physically separated. Letter writing was, and continues to be, one of the “most widespread form[s] of sustained writing” (Barton, Hall 1999, p. 2).

Historical letters grant the modern-day researcher insights into how language was used in the past; not only in writing but also, in part, in speech as well. The reason is that letters are “as close to speech as non-fictional texts can be” (Elspeß 2012, p. 156), and private letters in particular contain features and patterns that mirror the informal dimension of orality of spoken language” (see Biber 1988). The properties shared between spoken language and familiar letters may be attributed to the interactive nature of the text, to the fact that the letter is addressed to a specific individual in a temporal and physical environment that is familiar to the writer and which, in turn, permits the writer to refer directly to both personal feelings and situations (Biber, Finegan 1989, p. 497). As a discourse type, lower-order letters may represent the vernacular or ordinary language of the writers, thus, for historical linguists they constitute “a possible alternative to the spoken language studied by modern

⁵ Sketch Engine is a corpus manager and text analysis software developed by Lexical Computing Ltd. in 2003. It allows the user to create and store large corpora online and offers a variety of different tools for corpus analysis.

sociolinguists" (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2009, p. 122). Letters can be considered as constituting turns in a succession of interactions between people (Palander-Collin 2010, p. 661); furthermore, letters consist of exchanges which are akin to conversational exchanges as each letter (text) "responds to a previous text, whether spoken or written, and at the same time anticipates new texts" (Fitzmaurice 2002, p. 1). Yet, while letters and conversations share common features, Fitzmaurice states that letters ought not to be considered simply as a "conversation on paper" (2002, p. 233).

2.1. Epistolary discourse

In recent decades, epistolary discourse has been the object of increasing research interest as attested by the compilation of several relevant corpora.⁶ Dossena and Del Lungo Camiciotti (2012, p. 4) found that epistolary discourse can be identified as distinct from other discourse types due to "certain pronominal and predicative traits that, taken together, constitute what is unique to its language. The particular nature of epistolary discourse is one that sets it apart from other types of discourse as it provides testimony of human experiences. In fact, Lanson (1895) considered letters as being 'incontestable and sole human documents'. The increase in interest in the study of epistolary discourse has been documented with the publication of numerous works relating to letters written during different periods in different countries.⁷

The letter writer, when engaged in the act of encoding a letter, essentially creates an intended recipient for his/her letter; therefore, epistolary is marked by *I* and *You* and by the relation between them. The writer's presence in the letter is achieved through the use of *I* and through the closing signature (Barton, Hall 2000, p. 6). While the encoder is present through *I*, the recipient is referred to by the encoder with *You*. *I* and *You* represent the interpersonal bonds between the correspondent and his reader whilst they are structuring meaning in the letters. In this kind of discourse, the *I* is defined in relation to the *you* to whom the letter has been addressed (Dossena 2012) while the *You* is, in turn, constructed as an intended reader by the writer (Barton, Hall 2000, p. 6) and refers to a specific person within the writer's world. Not only is the definition of *I* bound to the *you* of the letter, but this relation is further characterized by the fundamental requirement of participation of the 'you' who received the

⁶ Such as, for example, The Cherry Valley Chronicles Corpus (see Dennett 1990); The Corpora of Early English Correspondence (CEEC400) (see Nevala and Nurmi 2013); 19CSC: A Corpus of Nineteenth-Century Scottish Correspondence compiled by Dossena and Dury (see Dossena 2004); the Corpus of Oz Early English (COOEE) (see Fritz 2012).

⁷ See for example, in Canada, Dollinger (2008); in Belgium, Vandenbussche (2006); Puttaert (2016); in Finland, Meurman-Solin (2000); Klippi (2013); Nordlund (2007); Raumolin-Brunberg and Nevalainen (2007); in Germany, Elspaß (2007a, 2007b, 2012); in Austria, Mazzon (2012); in Italy, Dossena (2007, 2012); in the Netherlands, Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2012, 2010); van der Waal and Rutten (2013); in Norway, McCafferty (2017).

letter. Without the *you*-recipient's participation in the practice, there can be no meaningful epistolary exchange. It is precisely the reader's response that produces one of the most distinctive features of epistolary discourse, namely the degree to which it is influenced not by one, but rather by two persons and the type of relationship that exists between them (Altman 1982). Indeed, if the '*you*' of epistolary discourse did not participate in the exchange, then the discourse would not differ significantly from a diary entry. Epistolary discourse is also distinguished from other discourse forms due to the temporal relativity which enables the letter writer to invoke two worlds in his texts, namely "the here and now of the writer and the here and now of the reader" (Barton, Hall 2000, p. 6). The 'here and now' constitute a temporal pivot for the encoder. The letter is written in the present, but it is a present from which the writer considers the past. The writer also contemplates possible future events. Altman (1982) states that the relationship of the past and the future to the present is of importance in the unfolding of epistolary discourse, as the writer is anchored in the present at the moment of writing.

2.2. Trench letters as text sources '*from below*'

Until the late twentieth century, language historians favoured investigation of language history '*from above*' (Elspaß 2007). In adopting a '*from above*' approach, the language varieties used by the lower social classes were ignored as they were labelled as 'non-standard' varieties. Instead, language history seen '*from below*' is interested in both the oral and the written language used by the lower and lower middle classes whose texts previously had not made a contribution to language history. In fact, Cowan (2012, p. 164) states that private letters have long been "the preserve it seems of philatelists who all too often have dismembered their materials". With the development of literacy amongst the general population, the lower social classes were able to both produce and consume letters, giving rise to the creation of a range of written texts.⁸

Vernacular writings produced by the "lower classes" have been the focus of interest of numerous scholars resulting in various publications devoted to their analysis, such as those by Auer et al (2015), Hernandez-Campoy and Conde-Silvestre (2012) and Jucker and Taavitsainen (2010). However, in recent years, there has been a growing realization that such letters afford a unique opportunity for the study of language use and literacy in history as they can provide an insight into the language of the lower classes, a social group which has all too often been silenced.

Fairman has conducted extensive research on lower-order letters examining different letter genres. Fairman stressed how writing is essentially

⁸ See Elspaß (2007b) for more detail.

a learning process that cannot be acquired randomly (2007, p. 40). Consequently, lower-class letter writers are likely to have acquired letter writing skills either in school or by means of self-learning through the use of letter-writing manuals.⁹

Ashplant (2018) has proposed the categorisation of lower social class letters into three distinct categories, all of which have been the focus of significant research in recent years. Ashplant's first category is that of pauper letters written to petition for financial assistance; his second category consists of emigrant letters, while the third category is that of soldiers' letters, a category that has been the object of increasing research interest since the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War. Unlike previous research on World War I letters that had a purely historical stance, recent research has seen the involvement of scholars from a range of different disciplines including, but not limited to, Film Studies, Cultural Studies, Literary Studies, Memory Studies and Tourism Studies.¹⁰ The Digital Humanities have also made an important contribution to First World War research through the creation of various online resources relating to the conflict, considering the war from a range of disciplinary perspectives.¹¹

Numerous scholars have studied Great War letters from a historical perspective; such studies have focused on the writing produced by soldiers serving with a number of the belligerent armies; however, such studies have tended to focus on discovering information contained in the letters to further aid understanding of the role of letters in the soldiers' lives.¹² The study conducted by Lyons (2003)¹³ examined letters written by French soldiers during the Great War to reveal the history of the nature of *poilus* letter-writing. It would appear that scholars in the field of linguistics have gradually developed an increasing research interest in the Great War and its letters, especially in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis, as documented by the

⁹ See Shvanyukova (2019); Sairio and Nevala (2013).

¹⁰ For Cultural Studies, see Carden-Coyne (2015); for Film Studies, see Smith and Hammond (2015); for Literary Studies, see Hutchinson (2015); for Memory Studies see Saunders and Cornish (2009); for Tourism Studies see Jansen-Verbeke and George (2015).

¹¹ The 1914-1918 International Encyclopaedia of the First World War is an English-language online reference work on World War One; it is a multi-perspective, public-access resource created by a worldwide network of Great War researchers: <http://www.1914-1918-online.net>. Another collaborative Digital Humanities project has resulted in the creation of a virtual research infrastructure granting access to historical resources across institutional and national boundaries: <http://www.cendari.eu>.

¹² Such as Barkhof (2017) on the writings of German POWs in Japan during WWI; Hallett (2007, 2010) on the writings of First World War nurses and volunteers; Hanna (2003, 2008, 2014), Housiel (2013, 2014); Omissi (1999) on the WWI letters of Indian soldiers; Royle (2014) on the writings of Scottish soldiers in WWI; Stiaccini (2015) on the writings of Italian WWI soldiers; Wilkinson (2017) on the writings of British POWs in Germany; Crouthamel (2014) on the writings of German soldiers of WWI.

¹³ For the past two decades, Lyons has published numerous studies on the history of reading and writing, with a distinctly 'from below' focus. See Lyons (2003, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2013).

research conducted by Housiel (2008, 2013, 2014) and by Vicari (2012, 2014, 2017, 2018); however, to date, such research has predominantly concentrated on letters written by *poilus* while letters written by soldiers serving in the British Army have been overlooked. The lack of research on lower order trench letters may be attributable to the scarcity with which such letters are to be found in institutional archives.

2.3. *Determining socio-historical factors in the epistolary exchange*

Letter writing constituted an accessible means of communication where key factors were present. In addition to widespread literacy, the exchange of private letters required an efficient, reliable postal system.

2.3.1. *Literacy*

Letter writing was an accessible form of communication in countries where the population had well-developed levels of literacy. Scotland fared favourably in terms of literacy amongst the general population in comparison with other nations:

Literacy rates amongst men and women, above average in comparison to European and English counterparts, underwent steady improvement to near universal literacy by 1900. (Finkelstein 2007, p. 432)

The almost near universal literacy rates found in Scotland by 1900 can be attributed to the Scottish education system which originated from the parish schools that were founded in the late 1500s (Holmes 2015).

The Scottish Education system was, in essence, a democratic system that allowed all children irrespective of gender or social class access to instruction without charging fees. A consequence of the principle of universal instruction was an increased level of literacy. It has been stated that literacy tended to be higher in Protestant countries (David 2012) since the Church was active in the teaching of literacy. While it is clear that literacy had an important role in the creation of letters from and to Great War soldiers, the exchange of letters had to be efficiently managed.

2.3.2. *Affordable postal systems*

Letter writing became a democratic means of communication due to the advent of cheap national and international postal services which made sending mail more affordable, even for the working class (see Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2009). Altman (1982) highlights the importance played by the reachability of the addressee in facilitating the exchange of epistolary discourse. If the

addressee cannot be easily reached by the postal service, the epistolary exchange is rendered futile.

Gillen (2013), in her study on the picture postcard in Edwardian Britain, states that the reality of six or more mail deliveries per day in towns and cities led to an experience which was “closer to the synchronicity of the digital communications than vernacular written communications” (p. 488). Such synchronicity in the exchange of written communications would prove to be a challenge to provide to soldiers serving in the trenches given the frequent and often unpredictable movement of troops from one section of the line to another.

The Army Postal Service (APS) was responsible for the efficient management of communications sent to the front, as well as those sent home from soldiers on active service. The APS developed a degree of efficiency that allowed for parcels and letters sent from the UK to reach the front within a week. Letters from home were often treasured possessions, read and reread over time and also handed down from generation to generation, thus allowing for the encoders’ thoughts and feelings to be shared through time (Davies 1983, p. 313).

3. Materials and methods

3.1. *Corpus description*

The materials used in the present study consist of a specially created corpus which was compiled during the author’s doctoral research. The corpus consists of a collection of 250 letters with a total of 94,477 running words written by George Murray and Thomas Clark Russell during their time of Active Service on the Western Front. The letters cover approximately 27 months of the conflict. All the texts included in the corpus were handwritten by both soldiers,¹⁴ the corpus includes letters and postcards, all of which are addressed to members of their immediate families. Table 1 reports the number of running words for the corpus, including the individual running word total for each of the soldiers, while the final row reports the total number of running words in the combined corpus.

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Murray word count | 67,309 |
| Russell word count | 27,168 |
| Total word count | 94,477 |

Table 1
Trench letter corpus - number of running words.

¹⁴ Field postcards, which consist of preformulated texts in which the writer selects the option that best meets the information he wishes to communicate were removed as they do not contain samples of original text written by the soldiers. This decision to remove field postcards did not significantly impact the corpus, as there were just three field postcards altogether in the two collections of letters.

The letters in the corpus do not contain references exclusively to the conflict and life at the front; they also contain instances in which there was a transmission of information from the home front to the trenches, most frequently news of significant events at home. Specifically, the letters in the corpus highlight how the information exchanged in trench letters did not refer exclusively to the sharing of personal information; indeed, the letters contain explicit references to events that had occurred in Scotland and which had shocked the nation, such as the Quintinshill rail disaster¹⁵ as well as the sinking of the HMS Natal.¹⁶

The letters were closely examined, and the contents were segmented, with the creation of distinct segments for the opening formulae, the text body and the closing formulae.¹⁷

3.2. Encoder biographies

Biographical information relating to the encoders of historical ego-documents allows for an in-depth reconstruction of the writers' lives. For both George Murray and Thomas Clark Russell, official archives¹⁸ were consulted and relevant records were accessed. Where information was not available, tentative hypotheses were made. In the present work, the online National Records of Scotland (NROs) archive was used to access records pertaining to the Statutory Registers of births, deaths and marriages; Old Parish Registers of births and baptisms, deaths and burials, and banns and marriages were also consulted.

Information on the soldiers' respective villages was sourced from the online edition of the New Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1845¹⁹ (Gordon 1845) which were compiled by parish ministers entrusted with the task of writing a detailed description of their parish. The entries include data relating to geographical composition, types of employment and industries, and the population (including commentary on their education, character and vices).

¹⁵ A railway accident at Quintinshill in which more than 200 men perished (Routledge 2002).

¹⁶ The sinking of the HMS Natal took place in the Cromarty Firth at New Year; between 390 and 421 people lost their lives (Hampshire 1961).

¹⁷ The opener consists of the date, location and salutations; the text body is the letter section that conveys the actual message, while the closing formulae include final salutations and the signature.

¹⁸ The online archive ScotlandsPeople (SP) was the main archive consulted; it is a partnership between the National Records of Scotland and the Court of the Lord Lyon. It currently holds a total of 90 million digitised records related to Scotland and its people which can be accessed through the site. Records of births and baptisms; banns and marriages; deaths and burials are to be found in the Old Parish Registers which contain data up to 1855 when the Statutory Registers of births, deaths and marriages began.

¹⁹ The Statistical Accounts of Scotland document life in Scotland in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The Old (or First) Statistical Account of Scotland (OSA) was published between 1791 and 1799 and the New (or Second) Statistical Account of Scotland (NSA) was published under the auspices of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland between 1834 and 1845. The first two Statistical Accounts of Scotland are held to be among the best European contemporary records of life during the agricultural and industrial revolutions.

Details regarding both Murray and Russell's military service were sourced from The National Archive; this preserves an extensive collection of World War I records, including military records and private correspondence. Specifically, Medal Index Cards (MICs), Medal Roll Records and, where applicable, the British Army Register of Personal Effects were consulted; all the aforementioned records provide valuable data relating to enlistment, deployment and length of service.

3.2.1. George Murray, Fortrose

George Murray was born in Fortrose on 25 November 1894 (NRS 1894); at the time of his birth, George's father, James, was employed as a Master House Carpenter. According to both the 1891 and 1901 censuses, George Murray attended school between the ages of 6 and 16. The New Statistical Accounts of Scotland (1845, p. 358) record that there were several schools in the parish, none of which were strictly parochial due to the parish school having been merged with the burgh school in Fortrose; unfortunately, school rolls and records for this period no longer exist; however, Murray is likely to have attended the burgh school in Fortrose. In the 1911 census, George was living in Fortrose with his parents and his occupation was given as scholar, aged 16 (NRS 1911). No further census data are currently available,²⁰ however, it has been possible to reconstruct George Murray's life through information obtained from British Army Records and his letters home from the front.

At the outbreak of the war George Murray was a member of the Territorial Force; unfortunately, his attestation papers are not in the National Archives soldier records. However, in such cases, medal records, including the Medal Index Card (MIC) records can provide useful data.²¹ According to George Murray's MIC, he was a member of the 1/4th Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders. He enlisted with the rank of Private and rose to the rank of Sergeant. On the right-hand side of the MIC, a blank space is left for remarks, and there, annotated is the following: "Dis. 11. 8. 14". According to the Silver War Badge records, George Murray results as having enlisted on the 12th August 1914; therefore, it would appear that Murray had been a member of the Territorial Force prior to the war and had undergone the requisite military training. His discharge on the 11. 8. 14 may have been due to his having completed the period of service for which he had initially signed up and by re-enlisting with the 1/4th Seaforth Highlanders, he was able to stay in the same battalion.

²⁰ Census records are not made public until 100 years after the census was taken.

²¹ MIC data provides information on the soldier's battalion, the medals he was entitled to, the theatre of war where he first served and his data of deployment; a blank space is also left for additional remarks.

The 1/4th Seaforths were part of the Highland Division, which was one of the original infantry divisions (MacLeod, Reid 2016, p. 15); the Highland Division was created in 1908 by the establishment of the Territorial Force. From its creation up until the outbreak of war, the 1/4th Seaforths had remained in Scotland following mobilization (French 2016); the battalion was then sent to Bedford in mid-August 1914 (Bewsher 1921, p. 1) where they participated in a period of training. They were inspected by King George V on October 22nd. The 1/4th Seaforth Highlanders joined the 152nd Brigade in the 51st (Highland) Division in November 1914 for service on the Western Front as reinforcements for the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) which had suffered considerable losses and was below fighting strength.

George Murray served with the 1/4th Seaforths²² for the duration of his time at the front; his sisters had tried to encourage him to apply for a transfer home as his skills as a trainee engineer would have enabled him to make a valuable contribution to the war effort; however, his letters suggest that Murray was not entirely keen on the idea. He continued on Active Service on the Western Front and was in action at Festubert and Givenchy-en-Gohelle (spring 1915) participating in the Second Battle of Ypres in May 1915, the Battle of the Somme at High Wood (Jul-Aug 1916) and the Battle of Ancres, also known as the Battle of Beaumont Hamel (Nov 1916).

Murray's Active Service came to an abrupt end in early December 1916 when he received what was initially considered to be a minor wound but was in fact significantly more serious than initially thought.

3.2.2. *Thomas Clark Russell, Dalziel*

Thomas Clark Russell was born on 18th August 1885 in the district of Hamilton, in the County of Lanark. He was the sixth child of David Wright Russell, and Margaret Clark. According to the 1891 census, Thomas was a scholar aged 6 and was living with his parents and five of his siblings (NRS 1891, p. 11). Despite the school-leaving age having been raised to 14 in 1883, Thomas's older brother Moses had already found employment down the mine as a pit pony driver. By the 1901 census, Thomas had finished his schooling and was employed as a Coalminer, as was his younger brother David (aged 13) (NRS 1901). From the data available from the census, given that by the age of thirteen his brothers had ended their schooling and were already employed in the coal mining industry, it is also likely that Thomas Clark Russell completed his education at a similar age.

When Great Britain declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914 following the German invasion of Belgium, Russell was married with two young children under the age of 3. As a coal miner, Russell would have been

²² The correct name of the Battalion is the 1/4th Seaforth Highlanders Battalion; however, the nomenclature used in the present work is the 1/4th Seaforths, as adopted by Murray in his letters.

under no obligation to enlist for two reasons: firstly, the coal industry played a key role in providing essential goods in order to maintain Britain's productive power and, consequently, its workers were required on the Home Front (Martin 1981). Russell is likely to have enlisted having been influenced by several factors; his 'brother' George Allan, a regular with the 1st Gordon Highlanders, had been captured at Le Cateau and was being held as a prisoner in a German camp.²³ The effective wartime propaganda together with patriotic fever (Sanders, Taylor 1982) are also likely to have contributed to Russell's decision to enlist.

Russell's enlistment papers are not among those held at the National Archives; however, the Medal Index Card for Thomas Clark Russell states that he enlisted in the 10th Gordon Highlanders (Service) Battalion with the rank of Private and assigned S/5568 as his service number (WO 372/17). Archival sources for soldiers in the 10th Gordons²⁴ with service numbers similar to that of Russell suggest that he is most likely to have enlisted between the 7th and the 8th of September 1914 and posted to the 10th Gordons between 8th and 10th September 1914, the battalion being part of the 15th (Scottish) Division.²⁵ The 15th Division continued training until early summer 1915 when it was considered to be ready for deployment (Stewart, Buchan 2003). The 10th Gordon Highlanders War Diary records that on 3rd July 1915, while at Parkhouse Camp, Salisbury, orders were received that they were to embark for France on 8th July.

The 15th (Scottish) Division served with distinction on the Western Front for the duration of the war, participating in most of the significant actions, including the Battle of Loos and the first Battle of the Somme. They were considered by the enemy as one of the most formidable divisions of the British Army (Stewart, Buchan 2003). Russell was on Active Service at the Front from July 1915, returning home on leave in December 1915 and was at the Front again by Hogmanay.²⁶ He was killed in action on 11th February 1916 when,

²³ Russell refers specifically to this in his letters stating that he 'wanted to do his bit' to rescue his 'brother'; however, Russell and Allan do not appear to have shared a bond of kinship. Archival sources confirm that Allan was best man at Russell's wedding to Annie Faichen; therefore, it is likely that Russell used the term 'brother' due to his close friendship with Allan.

²⁴ The correct name of the Battalion is the 10th Gordon Highlanders (Service) Battalion; however, throughout the present work, the nomenclature used is that adopted by the soldiers and by Russell in his letters, the 10th Gordons.

²⁵ The 15th (Scottish) Division was raised at Aldershot in September 1914 with a nucleus of men who were surplus to the requirements of the 9th (Scottish) Division (Stewart and Buchan, 2003). Since the public response to Kitchener's call to arms had been so great, a Second New Army was authorized in September 1914. Thus, the men who were surplus to requirements of the 9th (Scottish) Division were soon joined by volunteers from Scotland, creating the 15th (Scottish) Division. The 15th, like all British Divisions, was formed by three Brigades (44th-46th), each brigade consisting of four battalions (Simkins 2007).

²⁶ Hogmanay is the Scots word for the last day of the year and is synonymous with the celebration of the New Year.

according to the War Diaries of the 10th Gordon Highlanders, a mine exploded under a section of the trench occupied by the Battalion (WO/95/1938/2, p. 91). A total of four men were killed by the explosion with only one body being recovered; Russell was one of the three men whose bodies were not recovered.

3.2.3. *George Murray letters*

The Murray letters cover a total period of 30 months, consisting of 27 months at the front and 3 months in military hospitals in Great Britain. Only the letters written from the front, including Murray's time in both field hospitals and military hospitals in France, were included in the corpus for transcription.

Murray wrote a total of 208 letters from the trenches of the Western Front, all of which were addressed to members of his immediate family. Murray wrote most frequently to his two sisters Kate and Alex. Murray wrote six letters to each of the following family members: his father, his mother and his brother Joe²⁷ The Murray letter collection has 67,309 running words, including opening and closing formulaic expressions.

The Murray letters were scanned during a visit to the Fort George archives; they were subsequently printed, put into chronological order and transcribed. The transcription is faithful to the original letters and, consequently, presents occasional errors in terms of grammar and punctuation; actual spelling errors, instead, are very few.

3.2.4. *Russell letters*

A total of 42 letters written by Russell are in the corpus; the 42 letters consist of a total of 27,168 words, covering a period of 7 months from 4th August 1915 to 30th January 1916, written from 'somewhere in France'. Thirty-five letters are addressed to his wife; one to his sister-in-law and six letters to his wife's parents. His letters are written predominantly in English (L1); however, there are instances of use of Scots (L2) lexemes and of French (L3) lexemes.

For transcription, the Russell letters were removed from the envelopes and carefully placed in chronological order before being transcribed. The letters were transcribed without any interference; therefore, errors present in the original letters, incorrect spelling, inaccurate grammar and inconsistent use of punctuation, were transcribed and are present in the corpus, thus allowing the writer's voice to remain as intact as possible.

²⁷ Joe had emigrated to South Africa prior to the start of the war; in his letters home to his sisters, George often requested that the sisters forwarded letters on to each other and to Joe in South Africa once they had finished reading them.

3.3 Method

The transcribed letters were examined by using the Sketch Engine corpus software. The letters were uploaded to the Sketch Engine website both as individual corpora and as a combined corpus. The two sub-corpora permitted the identification and classification of salutation formulae favoured by each of the soldier letter writers. Opening salutations and formulaic expressions were retrieved with the Sketch Engine concordancer.

The opening salutations and formulaic expressions were analysed using the DHA to CDA viewed from a historical pragmatics perspective. This approach was chosen because it appeared to be an appropriate framework for the study of authentic data (Reisigl 2017): it does not only consider features of discourse and context, but also places equal importance on extralinguistic variables related to culture, society and ideology in historical terms (Fairclough, Wodak 1997; Wodak 1996, 2001), in addition to considering discourse as both a form of knowledge and a social practice (Reisigl, Wodak 2009) in both its oral and written modes (Fairclough, Wodak 1997).

A further reason for the application of the DHA is that when working with historical texts, the importance of the historical element of discourse and its role in the DHA cannot be overlooked as the approach considers the synchronic and diachronic connection of a given discourse with other communicative events occurring either contemporaneously or previously to it (Wodak 1995, p. 12).

In this study the DHA three-dimensional model was applied to the analysis of opening and closing salutations and formulaic expressions: "after (1) having identified the specific *contents* or *topics* of a specific discourse, (2) *discursive strategies* are investigated. Then (3), *linguistic means* (as types) and the specific, context-dependent *linguistic realizations* (as tokens) are examined" (Reisigl, Wodak 2009, p. 93; original emphasis).

The second phase of the analysis consisted in the examination of personalization strategies employed by the soldiers in their letters. Personal pronouns and epistemic modals were chosen as they had been selected for examination in previous investigations of other historical letters (see Dossena 2006; Sairio 2013; Moreton *et al.* 2014). The Sketch Engine analysis of the corpus led to the generation of word frequency lists which, in turn, permitted the identification of the most frequently occurring pronouns and epistemic modal verbs which were then analysed.

Instances of opening salutations and formulaic expressions are reported and discussed in Section 4.1, while Section 4.2 reports and discusses the instances of personalization strategies.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Opening salutations and formulaic expressions

All the letters in the present corpus start with text features that can be considered typical of the letter genre; all the letters start with the date of writing, either in an abbreviated form or extended form, in the upper right corner and invariably include the date, month and year. In some isolated cases, the writer also alludes to his physical whereabouts by including information pertaining to his current location at the time of writing; however, it is done so that it would not risk being intercepted by censors for giving away potentially revealing information, as shown in Example (1) below:

(1)

12th April-15
"Trenchland"

Dear Alex,

Finding some spare time hanging on my hands I think it could be advisable if I would make use of it by writing to you.

Murray records the date in the top right corner of the page; in this particular letter, the date is followed by information about his location; however, he gives his location as *Trenchland* which he encloses in quotation marks. Both the use of the term *Trenchland* together with the quotation marks suggest an instance of humour which he employs in an attempt to mitigate the recipient's worry about the danger he currently faces.

The opening salutation that appears in all the Murray letters consists of the lexeme *dear* followed by the diminutive form of his sisters' names (*Alex* or *Kate*); Murray also addresses his brother with the diminutive form of his given name (*Joe*) whereby the use of the diminutive form could be interpreted as an attempt to reduce distance and to represent intimacy with the addressee.

In Example (1), Murray effectively informs the addressee that he is, at the moment of writing, not occupied and his use of *spare time hanging on my hands* could be considered an example of near orality as it is an informal, colloquial expression that would be more likely to be encountered in speech rather than in a written text. By using such an expression, the writer conveys a sense of safety and almost of distance from peril.

When writing to his parents, Murray favours the more formal kinship term of *Father* and *Mother* rather than use of the equivalent Scots lexemes of *Faither* and *Mither*. The use of such terms signals intimacy whilst also incorporating what can be viewed as respect through the use of the formal term, rather than a more familiar term. The lexemes used by Murray to address his parents represent a bond of kinship, stressing the ties that bind despite the physical distance between them, as shown in Example (2):

(2)

4th July – 15

Dear Father,

I received your very welcome letter two nights ago & was glad to see that things with you were as per usual & I may say, that with me it is the same. There is nothing very startling to announce except that we came out of the trenches last night & we are now back in reserve.

In Example (3), we can see how Murray uses the same type of address when writing to his Mother:

(3)

18th June – 15

Dear Mother

I received Fathers welcome letter the other day & yours last night, & was glad to see that you are all in your usual & getting on nicely without Kate, I had a letter from Mrs McKenzie last night & was pleased to see that they are enjoying their holiday. Fortrose will be a change from big London.

The majority of letters written by Russell are addressed to his wife Annie; however, from the limited number of letters addressed to his parents-in-law ($N=6$), we see that Russell modifies the kinship lexemes used to address his in-laws with the possessive adjective *my* followed by the adjective *dear* in 3 letters; Russell also uses the superlative adjective *dearest* to modify the kinship lexemes *father* and *mother* and in doing so, emphasises the emotive bond existing between them. By formulating his opening salutation in this manner, Russell effectively seeks to reinforce the strength of the relationship between them, whilst also signalling intimacy and affection, as shown in Example (4):

(4)

5 November 1915
Retired out of the trenches
Mud up to kilt tops
Awfull

My Dear Father & Mother,

It now give me great pleasure in writing you these few lines to let you know that at this present minute I am clay up to the neck. We have just retired out of the trenches & with the rain & cold we are an awfull looking lot.

Example (4) includes information relating to Russell's current position, instituted by comparing it to the spatial location of the trenches; he further embellishes the information shared with his wife's parents by offering a description of his physical state. By stating '*mud up to kilt tops*' he seeks to share information of his current state which, in all likelihood, would have been beyond the comprehension of those at home. In order to emphasise the

discomfort in which he is to be found, he adds the adjective *awful* to his pre-script. In Example (5), we can observe how he includes non-essential information after the date before addressing his wife:

(5)

27th January 1916

*Kaisers Birthday
very quiet*

*My dearest Wife,
Just a few lines to let you know I am keeping well hoping this finds you & the
children in the best of health.*

Russell shares information about it being the Kaiser's birthday and follows with *very quiet*, effectively using what may be classified as superfluous information in order to reassure his wife of the apparent lack of danger at that particular moment in time. Russell starts his letter addressing his wife with the salutation *My dearest wife*, thus communicating and reinforcing the intimate nature of the relationship between the writer and his addressee. Furthermore, Russell effectively emphasises the nature of closeness and intimacy by modifying the noun with a preceding possessive adjective, creating an in-group made up only of the writer and his addressee, and a superlative adjective. Russell's evident preference for the lexeme *wife* preceded by *dearest* ($N=23$) or preceded by the possessive adjective *my* ($N=9$) serves to evoke social proximity and possibly to bridge the physical distance between them (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Whilst little is known about Russell's time on Active Service, the letters inform us that he returned home on leave in December 1915. In Example (6), Russell starts the letter by informing his wife of his safe arrival in France, recorded in the top left corner of the page; the information is presented in a reduced form and serves the purpose of reassuring his wife. The need for reassurance becomes apparent in lines 2 and 3 of the body of the letter as his wife was refused entry to the station to see off her husband:

(6)

Arrived alright

28 day of December 1915

*Dear Wife
I am really very sorry at having not got the opportunity in not writing you sooner
but never mind. I nearly broke my heart when they turned you at the station
entrance and after all the stupid swine at the station put me in the wrong portion
of the train which caused me being two day late on arriving here.*

The formulaic expressions present in the letters written by Russell, which follow the opening salutations, conform with those described by Davis (1965, cited in Austin 2004). Specifically, the formulaic expressions adopted by Russell communicate:

1. An intimation of the intention to write;
2. A wish for the addressee's health;
3. A statement of the writer's health at the moment of production.

Such expressions are a polite acknowledgment of the addressee's presence and can also refer to a more specific reason for writing. Russell's use of a limited number of formulaic expressions relating invariably to intention to write, a wish for the addressee's health and a statement of his own health at the moment of writing, can be considered, as a limited repertoire that may well be the result of the writer having acquired a more mechanical knowledge of the genre, perhaps due to the limited opportunities of the writer to engage in letter-writing prior to the conflict.

Instead, the formulaic expressions used by Murray do not always follow the abovementioned purposes, and differ from those used by Russell; in fact, the analysis of the Murray letters reveals that Murray favours formulaic expressions that communicate the following:

1. Acknowledgement of receipt of correspondence;
2. Information relating to the writer's current location.

In Murray's letters, it was not possible to clearly identify a third formulaic expression present in the majority of letters in the corpus; the analysis revealed how Murray essentially tailored his use of formulaic expressions in accordance with the type of information he wished to share. In the case of Example (7), Murray adopts a formulaic expression that acknowledges the correspondence he has received:

(7)

24th Aug – 15

Dear Alex,

*Your nice parcel arrived safely last night also one from Kate two nights before.
The "smokies" were greatly enjoyed & made a good breakfast this morning*

The language used by Murray is rather informal and consists of abbreviated phrases that appear almost telegraphic. Murray first acknowledges the parcel sent by the addressee in a move with the purpose of reassuring his correspondent that the parcel and its contents had arrived safely. Murray also acknowledges the parcel received from his other sister. The formulaic expression in Example (7) also permits Murray to communicate his appreciation of the parcel's contents, which he does by stating that the "smokies"²⁸ were 'greatly enjoyed', although he

²⁸ Smoked haddock, typical of Arbroath.

does not explicitly state by whom; the use of quotation marks with the lexeme *smokies* implies that the writer has an awareness of it being a lexeme, the meaning of which is clear to his correspondent but not necessarily to the wider population, unless they were from a similar geographical background.

In several letters Murray uses a formulaic expression that refers to home and the people there, as in Example (8) from a letter addressed to his sister Alex who lived in Glasgow. The expression conveys what could be interpreted as a sense of nostalgia for the peace and quiet of Fortrose; the use of the intensifier *even* with the first person singular subject *I* suggests that the writer had previously not been appreciative of the quiet to be found in Fortrose, but that it was something that he acquired an appreciation of after experiencing city life. Such an expression also serves the purpose of creating an in-group with his addressee who, living in Glasgow, is well aware of how the solitude of Fortrose could constitute a welcome change from city life.

(8)

24th July – 15

Dear Alex

I received your very welcome letter last night & was glad to see that you were all well, also that Joe is well & getting along alright. Apparently Fortrose is very quiet this year. Well it never is very busy, so seekers of solitude will find it there and even I used to find it a welcome change from the city.

A further example of Murray's use of a formulaic expression can be found in Example (9), in which the salutation is preceded by two pieces of information relating to his intention to write and a parcel he expects to receive. It is, however, unknown whether these two statements were added at the beginning of the letter or whether they were added at the end and, consequently, constitute a post-script albeit in a non-standard location in the top left corner of the page. The first superscript provides information on the writer's intention to send a field card²⁹ to his other sister; the second superscript, instead, seeks to reassure the addressee that the arrival of her parcel is to be hoped for the next day.

(9)

Will drop a field card to Alex

Will probably get your parcel tomorrow

Dear Kate

Received your ever welcome letter this morning with Joe's letter enclosed also P. O. for which I thank you very much. Glad to hear you are all well although having terrible weather. We had our share of it too but the weather is settled again now.

Murray acknowledges his reception of mail from the addressee and shows his appreciation for it through his use of the intensified adjective *ever welcome*. The

same utterance is also used to inform of the safe arrival of the Postal Order (P. O.) and Murray also expresses his gratitude. The utterance appears to blend both formal and more informal styles with the writing eliminating first person pronouns in the initial part of the first sentence, but then uses *I* in his expression of gratitude for the P. O. Given the importance of the weather for soldiers in the trenches as their lives could be significantly impacted by adverse conditions, the reference made in Example (9) effectively creates an in-group with both parties having had *terrible weather*; thus, the expression is used to create a sense of intimacy and closeness despite physical distance. All the Murray letters in the corpus start with a formulaic expression thanking the addressee and acknowledging correspondence received; it is the most frequent formulaic expression found and features in approximately 171 letters where it is present immediately after the opening salutation. The formulaic expressions used by Murray when addressing his parents could be considered slightly more formal in terms of register, as shown in Example (10) below:

(10)

22nd May – 15

Dear Father

Your letter to hand today with all the news & it was a change from Kate's usual one, which is usually a bit cheerless but I suppose poor Kate can't get her mind off that strain & it is little wonder especially after what has occurred recently.

The use of language in Example (10) conveys the familial bond between the writer and the addressee; however, the initial phrase of the expression is more formal compared to the expressions used in the letters Murray wrote to his sisters, shown in Examples (7) to (9).

There is only one letter in the Russell collection that was addressed to Bella, one of his wife's sisters; consequently, it is the only letter written by Russell that can be used for a comparison of the salutations and formulaic expressions used to address a sibling. As in other letters written by Russell, after the opening salutation in which he addresses his wife's sister with the lexeme that communicates the kinship bond existing between the writer and the addressee, the writer informs the addressee of his state of health and combines it with a wish for the health of the addressee and other members of the family – see Example (11) below:

(11)

17 January 1916

Dear Sister,

Just a few lines to let you know that I am keeping well, hoping this finds you all well at home keeping well. But I must enquire after Father & Bob. How are they getting along. Father how is he keeping, is he feeling any easier.

From the content of the initial sentences, it is possible to infer that Russell is concerned about the health of both his father-in-law and his brother-in-law. Russell uses the deontic modal *must* in justifying his need to ask after them. As in a number of letters in the corpus, the writer adopts a style of writing that is almost telegraphic and very much to the point, reducing his phrases to almost conversational short bursts of writing in which there is a total absence of conjunctions. Murray uses salutation formulae addressing his sisters with the diminutive form for their given name; instead, Russell opts to use a noun representing the relationship between the writer and the addressee. Both address terms convey the writers' belonging to an in-group consisting of the writer and his addressee. A comparison of the salutations used by both writers reveals a striking difference: Murray never uses a kinship term in his letters to his sisters, whereas Russell only uses kinship terms to address his wife and parents-in-law. Unfortunately, there are no letters written by Russell to other siblings; therefore, his use of salutations when writing to this particular type of addressee cannot be discussed or even hypothesized.

On the other hand, the letters written by Russell demonstrate that he appears to use a different repertoire of formulaic expressions that are located immediately after the opening salutation. The expressions used by Russell seem to follow the categorisations proposed by Davis (1965) more closely than Murray, as shown in Example (12):

(12)

*26 day of October 1915
Sun shining but it is bitter cold*

Dearest wife

Just a few lines to let you know that I am keeping well hoping this finds you and the children well. Nannie I have been out for five days so we go back again today.

The letter starts in the top left corner with information relating to the climatic conditions at his specific physical location; in doing so, Russell uses language to effectively render his wife a participant, at least in terms of knowledge, of the weather he is currently experiencing in France. All of the letters addressed to his wife start with the reason for writing (*just a few lines to let you know*) and is followed by a statement describing the writer's health at the moment of writing which is, in turn, followed by a wish for the recipient's health and that of their children. This formulaic expression is to be found in all the letters in the corpus addressed to Annie Russell. In letters addressed to Russell's wife's parents, he uses the same expressions but with the difference that he does not explicitly express a wish for the recipients' health; instead, he does so implicitly by using the object pronoun *them* which encompasses all the family members in his wishes for health. He then uses a further formulaic expression to thank '*all his sisters*', of whom there were 7, together with his in-laws for the parcel they sent with

foodstuffs. Russell uses both a deontic modal (line 3) and an epistemic modal (line 4). The deontic modal expresses Russell's need to show gratitude to his sisters (in-law) and his parents-in-law for the parcel that they had sent. Russell switches from deontic modality to epistemic modality to express his evaluation of the possibility of informing his addressees of the state of the parcel's contents, but seeks to reassure his addressees that the foodstuffs did not go to waste, as shown in Example (13):

(13)

23 day of Oct 1915

Dearest Mother & Father

Just a few lines to let you know I am keeping well hoping this finds them all well at home & I must thank all my sisters & you also for your nice parcel which I received but I may tell you the cakes were pretty well broken up before I got them[. . .]

The act of reassuring correspondents of the safe arrival of parcels and their contents often appears as a formulaic expression and can be attributed to the expense, both in terms of contents as well as of the costs, involved in sending parcels internationally.

The salutations and formulaic expressions described in this section, while they differ in terms of topics, do however serve the same purpose for both soldier letter writers who use them to realize a range of communicative objectives.

4.2. Personalisation strategies

Private letters, as with other ego-documents, afford an insight into the self-perception of the writer (Sairio 2013) and may also allow us an additional insight into the personalisation strategies the writers use in their letters.

The first category examined in the analysis of personalisation strategies is constituted by personal pronoun use. The corpus was analysed using Sketch Engine which permitted the retrieval and ranking, in terms of frequency, of the pronouns occurring in the corpus. The results of the analysis of pronoun occurrence are reported in Table 2. The four most frequently occurring pronouns in the corpus are: *I*, *you*, *it* and *we*. Nurmi and Palander-Collin (2008) in their investigation on the nature of letters as a text type found that the use of personal pronouns *I* and *you* can be considered features typical of interactive correspondence; therefore, the high number of occurrences of these pronouns is to be expected, as they contribute to the sharing of information regarding the physical and psychological condition of the self (Dossena 2012, p. 50).

| Pronoun | Number of Occurrences |
|------------|-----------------------|
| I | 3,819 |
| you | 1,857 |
| it | 1,394 |
| we | 1,315 |
| your | 783 |
| they | 651 |
| me | 507 |
| he | 480 |
| them | 406 |
| my | 320 |
| our | 292 |
| us | 222 |
| him | 193 |
| her | 193 |
| his | 159 |
| she | 150 |
| their | 112 |
| yourself | 39 |
| one | 31 |
| yours | 28 |
| myself | 21 |
| themselves | 12 |
| its | 12 |
| ourselves | 8 |
| himself | 7 |

Table 2

Personal pronouns and possessive adjectives and pronouns in the GW TLC
(total number of occurrences in the corpus).

Once the personal pronouns had been categorised in terms of frequency, the corpus was examined for instances of the four most frequent pronouns in context by means of the concordance function in Sketch Engine. The pronouns identified were then examined with a particular focus on their use with modal verbs used to express epistemic modality – see Traugott (1989). Epistemic modality refers to the way speakers communicate their doubts, certainties, and guesses; it is essentially the use of language to express the speaker's evaluation of the possibility that a considered hypothetical situation will take place in the present, in the future or in the past (Nuyts 2001). The corpus was examined for occurrences of the nine central modal verbs in English, namely: can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would and shall (Biber *et al.* 1999, p. 483). The most frequently occurring modal verb in the corpus is *will* ($N=1,230$) followed by *can* ($N=276$); *may* ($N=196$); *should* ($N=72$) and *might* ($N=36$). This section will present examples of the three most frequently occurring modal verbs in the corpus.

The modal auxiliary *will* is used with an epistemic value in Example (14), where the writer uses the personal pronoun *you* to interact directly with his addressee and makes a prediction of which he is certain regarding a parcel

received from his sister that had to be left behind when he went into the trenches.

(14) *You **will remember** that I left a parcel in the blankets*

Instead, in Example (15), the use of *will* as an instance of epistemic modality is more ambivalent. The writer is sure that *The Ross-shire*, a local newspaper in Fortrose, will publish an article on the topic of his regiment's experiences in the trenches, but it is also possible that the prediction is in fact an observation based upon the writer's reading experiences, given that his sisters frequently sent newspaper clippings in their letters:

(15) *The "Rosshire" **will give** you an account of our experiences.*

Can is the next most frequently occurring modal in the corpus. In Example (16), *can* is used to give permission to the addressee to forward the letter on to another addressee – most likely, the writer's parents. The writer justifies the giving of permission by preceding the modal with his explanation. However, the modal could also be interpreted as a request made in face-saving mode as the writer is not explicitly requesting that the letter is sent on, but is, instead, giving his permission to do so.

(16) *So as I am not writing home, you **can forward** this on*

In Example (17), the writer uses a familiar style, with features more typical of spoken conversation, in which he uses *can tell you* to communicate that he is in a position to be able to inform his wife of his present situation; in this instance the modal refers neither to prediction nor observation, but rather to the possibility that the writer has to inform his wife of a particular situation.

(17) *Nanni I **can tell** you we are kept busy here*

Example (18) documents the writer's use of modal auxiliary *may*; unlike the majority of instances of modal verb use in the corpus which tends to be used with the first and second singular personal pronouns, here the writer is commenting on Kitchener's 'fine army':

(18) *Kitchener **may say** what he likes about his fine army*

The tone in Example (18) is not overtly positive and could even be considered ironic, since Kitchener's army was formed by civilian volunteers who enlisted despite having no prior military experience. As shown in Fitzmaurice's (2000) analysis of the Cavendish letters, *may* can carry both epistemic and deontic meaning, and here the use of *may* constitutes the writer giving permission to Kitchener to express his opinion on his army; evidently, the situation is only

hypothetical, but through the phrase it is possible to sense the writer's feelings of ire and frustration with Kitchener.

Similarly, in Example (19) the writer is not entirely positive about his experience in the British Army:

(19) *Well this **may be** for country & king but you stand more abuse than kindness*

The writer offers his opinion of his service expressed with **may** representing the epistemic meaning of probability; however, the utterance is unexpected in that the usual collocate would be 'king and country' and not 'country and king'; such an utterance provides us with an insight into the soldier's personal attitude to the conflict, although it may be related to a particular temporal location. However, the soldier expresses negative sentiments by stating that it is more common to encounter abuse than kindness in the army; no attempt is made to mitigate the impact of the utterance.

5. Conclusions

This article analysed a corpus of trench letters with the aim of identifying and analysing the opening salutations, formulaic expressions and personalization strategies used by the encoders. A discourse historical approach to critical discourse analysis, viewed through a historical pragmatics lens, was used in the analysis for several reasons.

The results of the analysis show how the writers' limited schooling had nonetheless imparted a sound awareness and active knowledge of the genre of letter writing. Both letter writers employ the same type of opening salutations which invariably serve the purpose of reassuring the audience of the writers' well-being. Russell and Murray adopt similar salutations with only minor variations between the two writers. The variations can be attributed to the audience to whom Russell and Murray addressed their letters; Murray wrote mostly to his immediate family and specifically to his two sisters, Kate and Alex. Instead, Russell wrote mainly to his wife and favoured opening salutations that embodied the intimacy of their relationship, attempting to maintain emotional bonds despite physical distance. The opening salutations adopted by the letter writers consist predominantly of more formal terms which are mitigated by the authors' use of diminutive forms and by the use of kinship terms in lieu of the addressee's given name, in the case of Russell's letters to his wife.

The formulaic expressions appearing in the letters correspond with the categories proposed by Davis (1965, cited in Austin 2004). In the case of the letters written by Russell, the most common formulaic expressions communicate an intimation of his intention to write, a wish for his audience's

health, and a statement of the writer's health at the moment in which the text was produced. Instead, the analysis of the formulaic expressions adopted by Murray reveal that, differing from Russell, he favoured those that communicated his acknowledgement of receipt of correspondence and the sharing of information relating to his location at the moment of text production. Unlike the analysis of the letters written by Russell, the analysis of the letters written by Murray did not lead to the clear identification of a third formulaic expression recurring repeatedly in the corpus. The analysis did, however, highlight how Murray was able to use a more varied range of formulaic expressions that differed in accordance with the nature of the information he wanted to share with his audience. Both soldiers adopted opening salutations consisting of terms that clearly embody closeness and intimacy in their interpersonal relationships with the addressees.

In terms of the personalisation strategies used, both encoders favoured the use of first-person singular pronouns in their writing thus helping to create the sense of a reciprocal exchange of information with their respective addressees. *I*, *you*, *it* and *we* are the most frequently occurring personal pronouns: *I* ($N=3,819$), *you* ($N=1,857$), *it* ($N=1,394$) and *we* ($N=1,315$). Such pronoun use can be considered typical of correspondence as it reiterates the importance of the *I/you* bond and interaction in the epistolary exchange.

The pronouns identified were then examined in context, with a particular focus on their use with modal verbs. The analysis revealed how the most frequently occurring modal verbs preceded by pronouns express epistemic rather than deontic modality.

It is of course to be admitted that the present study is not without limitations. First of all, it only considers the letters written by two soldiers from similar socio-economic and geographical contexts. Secondly, the entire corpus consists of 94,477 running words, which, when compared with other historical letter corpora, may appear to be rather small. The author hopes to expand the corpus by locating, transcribing and incorporating other trench letters written by semi-literate soldiers from different geographical locations in Great Britain, including, but not exclusively limited to, mainland Scotland.

Despite these limitations, the letters analysed in this study grant the contemporary reader an insight into how the war was experienced first-hand and how such experiences were shared with loved ones at home through the medium of epistolary discourse.

Possible future avenues for research include the analysis of trench letter corpus with regard to identity construction and the role played by English and Scots code-switching and also the analysis of the trilingual code-switching between English, French and Scots viewed from a historical sociolinguistic perspective.

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“HOW AM I TO ANSWER THIS IN ENGLISH?” Pragmatic fluency in a nineteenth-century English-language teaching text

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Abstract – In this contribution, I discuss the pragmatic dimension of a curious little volume entitled *Friends at Home and Abroad; or, Social Chat: A connected tale in a series of imaginary conversations, illustrative of English phraseology and idioms to facilitate the acquirement of English as a living tongue* (1890 [1876]), published by Theophilus C. Cann, a prolific and popular author of English language teaching materials. So far, only a handful of studies have examined the history of English language learning and teaching in Italy and my investigation aims to further our knowledge of how English was taught and learned in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century. More specifically, in my analysis of *Social Chat* I am interested in identifying specific learning goals that were associated with the acquisition of pragmatic fluency, the uses of the text in the teaching and learning of English, and the type of learners who would have been *Social Chat*’s intended primary audience.

Keywords: ELT, EFL, conversation manual, pragmatic fluency, Theophilus C. Cann.

1. Introduction¹

In 1891, school inspectors Francesco Torraca and Gianjacopo Agostini were sent by the Ministry of Public Education to audit examinations held at Primo and Secondo Educandato of Naples,² and the observations they recorded on the pupils’ French and English levels were far from encouraging. Their final report expressed frustrated astonishment at the inability of the second-year pupils to write down simple sentences in French and English as dictated to them

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² *Educandato* was a form of educational institution reserved for girls in post-Unitarian Italy. There were six such institutions in 1866 – one each in Milan, Florence, Palermo and Verona, plus the two educandati in Naples that were considered to be “elite colleges marketed as prestigious educational establishments to the most distinguished families of the new Kingdom” (Franchini 2005, p. 34; my translation here and elsewhere).

(Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 432).³ They concluded that “none of them [the students] were able to write, or even speak fluently or correctly in French or English; indeed, only a handful of them were able to translate promptly and with sufficient accuracy a few brief excerpts into Italian from the textbooks of the syllabus” (Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 433). The main target of the inspectors’ negative comments, found in brief observations on individual teachers at the institutions, became Mrs. Howard, the English teacher at Secondo Educandato, about whom Torracca and Agostini said the following:

Concerning the teaching of English, it will suffice to say that the students in their final year have studied only 120 lessons in Cann’s textbook. Mrs. Howard’s pronunciation is good because she is English, but she is aged and afflicted by domestic pains and does not appear to possess the literary culture, didactic capacities or the energy [required for teaching]. Hers was the most unsuccessful examination. (Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 433)⁴

The bleak picture painted by Torracca and Agostini’s report contains a precious reference to the specific textbook that was adopted (albeit in an apparently futile fashion) in the teaching of English at Secondo Educandato. “Cann’s textbook”, mentioned in the comment on Mrs. Howard, appears to be Theophilus C. Cann’s *The Theoretical and Practical Grammar of the English Language, etc.*, first published in Florence in 1872.⁵ This grammar, whose popularity can be deduced from its longevity⁶ as well as from sources such as Torracca and Agostini’s report, was the first didactic text Cann produced in an effort to supply nineteenth-century Italian learners of English with a rich inventory of English-language teaching (ELT) materials. A member of a conspicuous nineteenth-century Anglo-Florentine community, Cann lived in Florence for at least a quarter of a century until his death on 16 December 1894

³ “[N]essuna è in grado, non che di scrivere, di parlare correntemente e correttamente né il francese né l’inglese; anzi pochissime sono quelle che possono tradurre prontamente e con sufficiente esattezza, in italiano, qualche breve tratto de’ libri di lettura adoperati durante il corso” (Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 433).

⁴ “Dell’insegnamento d’inglese basti dire che le alunne dell’ultimo corso hanno studiato solo 120 de’ temi del Cann. La signora Howard, attempata e accasciata da dolori domestici, pronunzia bene l’inglese, perché inglese; ma non pare abbia né cultura letteraria, né capacità didattica, né energia. Questo esame è stato il più infelice di tutti” (Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 436).

⁵ This is confirmed by Franchini and Puzzuoli in a footnote to the quotation given in fn. 3: “Theophilus C. Cann was the author of numerous texts for the teaching of English to Italians, which were published in Florence and continued to be reprinted for many years elsewhere” (Franchini, Puzzuoli 2005, p. 436).

⁶ A brief description of this textbook, with information on the different re-editions, can be found in Shvanyukova (2018, pp. 130-131). More recently, Andrea Nava (2019) has dealt with Cann’s grammar in a presentation given at the 2019 CIRSIL conference in Varese, Italy.

in his residence in via Ricasoli 5.⁷ His contribution to promoting the teaching of English in nineteenth-century Italy cannot be underestimated. Cann taught English at the Scuola Normale Femminile in Florence, at the same time producing a wide range of ELT materials between 1872 and 1894.⁸

So far, only a handful of studies have examined the history of English language learning and teaching in Italy (see Section 2). Investigating the activities of such a prolific and popular author of ELT materials as Theophilus C. Cann will enable me to offer an insight into how English was taught and learned in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century. My specific focus will be on the ways in which Cann aimed to develop English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' "pragmatic fluency" – i.e., "a dialogic phenomenon that combines both pragmatic appropriateness of utterances and smooth continuity in ongoing talk" (House 1996, p. 228); at the same time, I will highlight some of the strategies employed to familiarise students with conversational patterns and routines in the target language. An increasing number of studies have looked at the pragmatic dimension in historical language learning texts, taking into consideration due methodological caveats (see Culpeper, Kytö 2010, pp.46-48, p. 60; McLelland 2018, pp. 30-32, as well as contributions in Mazzon, Fodde 2012). In this paper, I am concerned with the pragmatic dimension in one of Cann's ELT texts – a curious little volume entitled *Friends at Home and Abroad; or, Social Chat: A connected tale in a series of imaginary conversations, illustrative of English phraseology and idioms to facilitate the acquirement of English as a living tongue* (Cann 1890 [1876]; henceforth, *Social Chat*). In my analysis of *Social Chat* (Section 4), I will address the following three questions:

1. What specific learning goals were associated with the acquisition of pragmatic fluency; i.e., what kind of pragmatic information was intended to be transmitted and taught through the dialogues?
2. How was the text to be used in the teaching and learning of English?
3. What kind of learners were *Social Chat*'s intended primary audience?

Before presenting *Social Chat* in more detail (Section 3), I will provide some background to Cann's activities as an EFL teacher in nineteenth-century Italy.

⁷ I deduced the approximate date of Cann's arrival in Florence from the publication year of his first textbook (Cann 1872), while the year of Cann's death is given in his will, which is available at <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#wills> (accessed in June 2019). He died in December 1894, however, 1895 needs to be entered as the year of death to retrieve the document.

⁸ See Shvanyukova (2018, p. 131; pp. 151-152) for an overview and bibliography of the main ELT materials published by Theophilus C. Cann.

2. Materials for teaching and learning modern foreign languages in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: trends and developments

In a recent paper, Nava and Pedrazzini rightly lament the fact that “[t]he history of language learning/teaching in Italy is to a large extent still uncharted territory” (2019, p. 296). They also point out that “[a]s in other European contexts, a trailblazing role in historical language teaching research carried out in Italy appears to have been played by studies of languages different from English” (Nava, Pedrazzini 2019, p. 295), such as (mainly) French and Spanish.⁹ As far as the most recent period of the history of English language teaching and learning in the Italian context is concerned, Nava and Pedrazzini are in the process of setting up ITALY ELT ARCHIVE. This innovative physical repository, combined with an open access web portal, will contain twentieth-century English language teaching/learning materials produced in Italy and used in the Italian context (Nava, Pedrazzini 2019, pp. 305-311).

Nava and Pedrazzini’s endeavour will hopefully help remedy the deficiency of attention by stimulating scholarly interest in the (yet) unwritten history of English language teaching and learning in the Italian context.¹⁰ At this point in time, Vicentini’s (2012/2015) study of the first grammars of English for Italian learners remains the main point of reference for those interested in the early history of ELT materials in Italy.¹¹ Vicentini meticulously examines six grammars that were published during the eighteenth century, a period in which Anglomania, or “British influence and admiration for things British” (Johns 1998, p. 151) started to manifest itself in Italy (Cartago 1994, p. 730-735), as well as elsewhere on the Continent.¹² The social, political and cultural changes brought about by intensifying

⁹ In the latest issue of *Quaderni del CIRSIL*, the publication of the Centro di Ricerca Interuniversitario sulla Storia degli Insegnamenti Linguistici, <https://cirsil.it/>, where Nava and Pedrazzini’s paper was published, and at the most recent CIRSIL (2019) conference in Varese, a number of papers have also dealt with the history of teaching languages such as Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian and Old Church Slavonic (Cifariello 2019), Chinese (Famularo, Hong 2019), Swedish (Meregalli 2019) and German (Spazzali 2019). Pellandra’s (2004) invaluable introduction to the history of language teaching has to be mentioned here as it provides a general overview of the main stages of Pan-European development and focuses on the history of foreign-language teaching in the Italian context.

¹⁰ These two authors have already taken important steps towards this goal, most recently in Nava (2018a, 2018b, 2018c, and 2019) and Pedrazzini (2018).

¹¹ A handful of other studies were published in the 1980s-1990s (e.g., Del Lungo Camiciotti 1983, Frank 1983, De Michelis 1995). In a more recent monograph Pireddu (2010) discusses a number of English grammars published in Italy in the first half of the nineteenth century.

¹² For instance, in Germany (cf. Klippel 1994, pp. 257-268) and in the Low Dutch area (cf. Loonen 1991, pp. 46-47).

international commercial and cultural networks fostered the Italian public's interest in the English language.

However, Italian readers mostly accessed translations of scientific and literary works written in English, which means that the demand for English instruction and the market for ELT materials would still have been relatively small in eighteenth-century Italy (cf. Loonen 1991, p. 55, on the similar situation in the Low Dutch area). The fact that teaching English was not a particularly lucrative business may help to explain why lack of originality and rigidity and repetitiveness have been identified as key traits of the first ELT materials addressed to Italian learners (Vicentini 2015, pp. 50-68):

- 1) lack of originality: with the exception of one textbook (Giuseppe Baretti's 1762 *Grammar of the Italian Language*), eighteenth-century English grammars for Italians tend to reproduce and recycle materials from two small groups of earlier sources, one represented mainly by seventeenth-century French grammars for English learners and English grammars for French learners, and the other comprising popular grammars of Italian as a foreign language;¹³
- 2) the rigidity and repetitiveness that characterise the formal properties of these early English grammars for Italians means that in their structure, organisation and, to a great extent, their specific contents, these textbooks followed easily recognisable patterns. They start with a chapter on the pronunciation of the letters of the alphabet, followed by a section dedicated to parts of speech and supplementary sections containing vocabulary (in five out of six grammars analysed by Vicentini), familiar phrases (in five out of six cases), dialogues (in three of the six textbooks), etc.¹⁴

At a first glance, Cann's *Social Chat*, published in the late nineteenth century, appears to be a very different kind of textbook when compared to the first ELT materials produced in Italy in the course of the eighteenth century. Composed entirely of dialogues, the book exemplifies a major development in the European tradition of language-learning materials. Klippel (1994, pp. 315-320) and Minerva (1996, pp. 137-156) agree that a rapid increase in the number of

¹³ That the recycling of language learning materials, especially parts extracted from the most popular dialogue collections, was a truly Pan-European phenomenon is confirmed in Betsch's (2019) study of the grammars and textbooks of several West and South Slavonic languages of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Betsch here speaks of adapted and translated versions of pedagogical dialogues whose original material can be traced back to "[s]everal 'families' of dialogue collections [with the most important one] going back to an Italian-French textbook by Veneroni or a French-German textbook by des Pepliers." (Betsch 2019, p. 41) On the contrary, Romanelli (2019) shows how the authority of Giovanni Veneroni/Jean Vigneron and his famous *Maître Italien* (1678) was questioned at the turn of the nineteenth century.

¹⁴ A useful summary introducing four of these six grammars, as well as their authors, can be found in Berti and Pinnavaia (2013).

textbooks published was accompanied by an extraordinary diversification of the range of language-teaching materials produced in the course of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ According to Klippel (1994, p. 320), the phenomenon of diversification of ELT materials in the German context was articulated in three key trends: firstly, new types of textbooks started to reflect their different functions; secondly, individual textbooks could be subsequently combined to constitute a comprehensive multi-part coursebook, and, lastly, these new materials were easy to adapt/to grade and thus satisfy the needs of different target groups. In other words, the prototypical eighteenth-century comprehensive textbook containing separate grammar, reading, dialogue and various supplementary sections – such as the first English grammars for Italian learners analysed by Vicentini – transformed itself into a functional, graded, and structurally differentiated network of textbooks characteristic of the modern teaching system, which later, in the second half of the twentieth century, was further differentiated by integrating new media resources.¹⁶

Similar trends have been observed by Minerva in her examination of French textbooks produced in Italy in the second half of the nineteenth century. She indicates the diversification of textbooks and the addition of new target groups of learners as the main trends in the Italian context (Minerva 1996, pp. 137-156),¹⁷ drawing a preliminary conclusion that

on pourrait évoquer une sorte de sillon qui se creuse, au XIX^e siècle entre deux objectifs, l'apprentissage de l'oral et de l'écrit. La baisse effective des textes comportant des dialogues, d'une part, et la parution des recueils de dialogues, d'autre part, font penser à deux chemins différents parcourus par l'édition, qui vise à se spécialiser, en proposant des outils différenciés. Si donc le poids de la section consacrée aux dialogues dans les manuels diminue sensiblement, l'intérêt pour la conversation ne s'en ressent pas pour autant. Tout au

¹⁵ In the absence of studies surveying the history of ELT materials in nineteenth-century Italy (cf. Shvanyukova 2018, pp. 123-125), here I refer to two different groups of studies in order to be able to contextualise Cann's works: in the first group Klippel (1994) examined the macro-trends in the production of ELT materials and methods in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Germany, while in the second group Minerva (1996, 2002) analysed the production of French textbooks in Italy in the same period. In Section 4 instead I draw on studies which examined the history of the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language (Sánchez Pérez 1987, 1992, 1997; Sáez Rivera 2004) in the Early and Late Modern periods.

¹⁶ "Aus dem Gesamtlehrbuch des 18. Jahrhunderts, das Grammatik, Lesetexte und Gesprächsschulung enthielt, wuchs das funktional, niveaumäßig und strukturell differenzierte Geflecht eines modernen Lehrwerksystems, das dann viel später, in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, noch um integrierte Medien erweitert wurde" (Klippel 1994, p. 320).

¹⁷ Minerva here gives many interesting examples testifying to this expansion of target audiences, such as a textbook addressed specifically to railway employees (*La lingua francese: trattato elementare pratico ad uso dell'impiegato delle ferrovie*, M. Salari, 1878, quoted in Minerva 1996, p. 141). Minerva (2003) provides an extensive survey of the French textbooks for Italians produced between 1861 and 1922.

contraire, il paraîtrait accru, si l'édition s'y adonne avec un si bel élan. (Minerva 2002, p. 107)

As I will show, the production of Cann's *Social Chat* can be contextualised within the larger nineteenth-century developments in the field of language teaching discussed by Klippel and Minerva. I will provide a fuller description of the text under investigation in the next section.

3. Theophilus C. Cann's *Social Chat* (1890 [1876])

*Miss C[hampers]. - It is so nice to be able to
speak two or three languages,
and thus to converse with the people of
different countries,
with that ease which is essential to a true
interchange of thought.
Count [Danesi].- So it is, and the knowledge
of foreign languages,
makes all the world akin.
(Cann 1890, p. 63).*

This brief exchange of thoughts on the importance of learning foreign languages takes place between a young English lady, Miss Julia Chambers, and an Italian aristocrat, Count Danesi, in the eighth chapter of Cann's *Social Chat*. First published in 1876, the book appears to be Cann's fourth ELT publication (cf. Shvanyukova 2018, pp. 130-133 for the full list of Cann's publications). According to the Italian national library database, eleven editions of *Social Chat* were published between 1876 and 1920, and the fifth edition I am referring to in this paper came out in 1890. Thirty-one copies of the book, according to the same database, are presently owned by different Italian libraries.¹⁸

¹⁸ According to *Opac Sbn, Catalogo del servizio bibliotecario nazionale*, <https://opac.sbn.it/opacsbn/opacolib>, nine copies of *Social Chat* are distributed among four larger libraries (The National Library of Florence, The National Library Sagarriga Visconti of Bari, The Sormani Library in Milan and The Cagliari University Library), while the remaining twenty-two copies can be found in the libraries of some of the major Italian cities (Bologna, Genova, Livorno, Napoli, Perugia, Sassari, etc.), in smaller towns (e.g., Assisi, Chieri and San Giovanni in Persiceto), as well as in villages (e.g., Zollino in the province of Lecce). Such territorial penetration of the volume can be taken as an indirect indicator of its popularity. Three copies of the book are owned by the libraries of the secondary technical institutions (e.g., the historical section of the library of the Istituto Secondario Superiore Boselli-Alberti in Savona) and one makes part of the private collection of the Galimberti family in Cuneo (Biblioteca Museo Casa Galimberti), thus testifying to the fact that schools and private individuals alike could be the intended users of the work.

In the preface to *Social Chat* Cann explains that his objective in writing this book “has been to furnish the Foreigner with an insight into the numerous Idioms of English conversation, and to show him how English is generally spoken at the present day” (Cann 1890, p. 7). To realise this goal and solve the learners’ common problem of not being able to speak and understand spoken language, Cann offers his “connected Tale mostly in conversational, familiar dialogues, rendered perfectly English both in thought and expression” (Cann 1890, p. 7). Here “a connected tale” means that the book’s twenty-one individual chapters, written in English only, without a parallel translation into Italian,¹⁹ follow the events in the lives of the same thirteen characters, whose names are listed following the conventions of a dramatic text (Cann 1890, p. 9), with names and brief introductions given (e.g., *William Blake, Esq. A Gentleman of property; The Marchioness Dowager of Rawford.....An elderly lady, fond of scandal, but who does not give credit to all she hears*; etc.). Ten characters are English and three are Italian, and all of them are members of the upper classes. The length of the individual chapters varies between two and twenty pages and the dialogues are enacted in a range of different situational contexts, in which smaller and larger groups of characters are shown in interaction.²⁰

The story opens in Florence in May 1889, when Mr. Preston, an Englishman on a business trip to Italy, chances upon his old friend Mr. Blake. The events are brought to conclusion in London, in January 1890, when Mrs. Charles Preston (formerly Miss Julia Chambers, the young lady quoted at the beginning of this section, now the wife of Mr. Preston) sends a letter to Florence, to her dear friend Mrs. William Blake. In the eleven months between May and January, the group of English and Italian protagonists meet and spend time together in Florence – dining, going to the theatre, taking strolls, interacting at evening parties, etc. (Chapters 1 to 13). Some of them then travel together from Florence to London (Chapter 14 and 15). Once the party reaches England, the story focuses mainly on the two Italian characters, Count Danesi and Marquis Badini. In Chapters 16 to 19, the two Italians are seen sightseeing and making visits to their old acquaintances in London. They also have to deal with a number of practical issues, such as looking for suitable apartments to rent for the Marquis, buying clothes and watches, etc. While exploring London

¹⁹ Four years after its first publication, *Social Chat* was translated and published in the Italian version entitled *Amici in patria ed all'estero, ovvero Colloqui familiari: racconto connesso in una serie di conversazioni immaginarie del cav. Teofilo C. Cann* (Jannel – Cann 1880). However, a discussion of this translation, whose only two copies are found at The National Library of Florence and in Avellino, at Biblioteca Provinciale Giulio e Scipione Capone, is beyond the scope of this contribution.

²⁰ The only exceptions are Chapters 14 and 21, in which there is an epistolary exchange instead of a dialogue.

together, the two noblemen engage in lengthy and heated discussions about the English character and English customs. The final chapters bring the group back together at the Blakes' residence in London, on the eve of their return to Florence.

Social Chat can be read in a number of different ways. If one accepts Cann's suggestion, then the book is best read as a story – or, rather, a dialogue in book form (cf. "das thematisch *bivalente Dialogbuch*", Franceschini 2011, p. 77), where the setting, as well as the specific protagonists involved, change from chapter to chapter. The coherence of the plot is supported, first of all, by its focus on the friendship between the two main English protagonists – Mr. Blake and Mr. Preston. It is further enhanced with a secondary romance plot, whose protagonists are Mr. Preston and Miss Julia Chambers.

The second reading option is to select individual chapters, which, when stripped of their narrative frame, reproduce the tried and tested format of the earlier compilations of conversational language-learning materials, realised as

sequential passages of natural conversations, containing canonical, routine formulae such as greetings, leave-taking, opening and closing formulae, which serve to familiarise [the learner] with the oral conventions of the time concerning a number of topics: food, home and furniture, commercial activities, arts and professions. (Di Martino 1999, p. 25, my transl.)²¹

Moreover, *Social Chat* can be mined for practical travel information on how to find one's way around London and Florence, on what the top attractions in the two cities are, and on how one travelled from one city to the other in the late nineteenth century. The richness of this information connects *Social Chat* with the tradition of popular tourism phrasebooks (Mączak 2003; Hallett 2017, pp. 223-226). As Becker (2002, p. 275) explains, "dialogues [could....] just serve as pocket guidebooks in the style of those still bought today by tourists willing to acquire at least some rudiments of the language of their destination".²² Furthermore, Cann's male protagonists eagerly demonstrate their erudition with prolonged monologues (resembling lectures, rather than chunks of spontaneous conversations) on various topics connected with English and

²¹ Di Martino describes this format on the example of William Caxton's 1483 *Dialogues in French and English, Adapted from a Fourteenth-Century Book of Dialogues in Frenche and Flemish*. To this list of elements, she also adds prayers and basic rules of conduct aimed at young readers and servants, two elements which are not found in *Social Chat* (1999, p. 25).

²² Klippel (2018, pp. 6-11) discusses the treatment of cultural contents in a number of popular eighteenth-century textbooks of English for German. In Johann König's (1755 [1705] *Der getreue Englische Wegweiser*, for example, we find "six bilingual dialogues, each about five pages long, which take the reader to a great number of London sights and offer him basic facts about England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland" (Klippel 2018, p. 6).

Italian literature, history and politics.²³ *Social Chat* is a treasure-trove not only of encyclopedic information on cultural and historical subjects, which most certainly would have been of interest to at least some Italian learners of English, but meticulously documents more mundane matters as well – thoroughly described menus and contemporary fashions for ladies are two such examples. Finally, as the following excerpt will show, *Social Chat* aims to fulfil the functions of conduct manual as well:

Miss C[hampers]. - Mr. and Mrs. Leechwood also?

Mrs. Blake. - How often must I tell you Julia, that society requires *many* sacrifices and exacts *much* from those who wish to be thought well of. You will understand these things better, my dear, some day, when you are married and have a position to keep up in society. Good bye, Emily and Clara, I shall look for you to-morrow. (Cann 1890, p. 100)

Here the young Miss Chambers is anxious to find out whether the Leechwoods, an English-Italian couple disliked by everyone – introduced as *Mr. Henry Leechwood...A learned Botanist, and a henpecked husband/Mrs. Henry Leechwood...A stuck-up Genoese person, wife of the former, who affects a life of unsullied virtue* (Cann 1890, p. 9, emphasis in original) – will be invited to “a literary conversation” at the Blakes’. Mrs. Blake, her more experienced friend, is quick to impart a lesson on proper conduct in good society, which requires the sacrifice of mingling with people one genuinely dislikes. Giving advice to the rising middle classes on “how they should act, speak, and write” (Mitchell 2010, p. 83) was a feature found not only in conduct manuals proper, but in a much wider range of Late Modern English texts, as Mitchell has shown on the example of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dictionaries. Language learning texts partook in the conduct book tradition by attempting to “[guide] social etiquette, [provide] directives for public behaviours, [act] as a moral compass for readers, especially young women.” (Mitchell 2010, p. 92)

In the next section I focus on the linguistic analysis of the text. I intend to pay specific attention to the presence of basic pragmatic routines and the ways in which Cann aims to develop his students’ pragmatic fluency by familiarising them with these conversational patterns.

²³ Ladies are occasionally allowed to express their opinion on a literary topic as well (Chapter 12, Cann 1890, pp. 102-108). It is more frequent, however, for them to interact (with each other) about topics associated with either love or lace.

4. Conversational routines in Cann's *Social Chat*

With *Social Chat*, Cann acknowledges his indebtedness to the tradition of conversational didactic materials for the study of foreign languages, whose roots can be traced back to antiquity, as shown by Dickey (2016). Among these different types of ancient language-learning materials, a prominent place in the teaching of spoken Latin was occupied by colloquia, i.e. "bilingual dialogues and narratives designed to be used at an early stage of language learning" (Dickey 2016, p. 10). Passages from colloquia, which have been preserved in medieval manuscripts, can be read as "vignettes about daily life in the Roman world; like their modern equivalents in French and German textbooks today, they contain cultural as well as linguistic information" (Dickey 2016, p. 10).²⁴ While the importance of spoken Latin gradually declined, it never ceased to be taught as a language of oral communication. Hence the production of didactic materials, which focused on oral competence by including dialogues, continued with such illustrious examples of later Latin-learning materials as Erasmus's *Colloquia puerilia*, as well as Juan Luis Vives's and Mathurin Cordier's works (Pellandra 2004, pp. 24-25).

In sixteenth-century Europe, "discussion and different views [...] regarding the teaching of foreign languages" (Sánchez Pérez 1987, p. 55) were reflected in two main methodological approaches, as shown in Sánchez Pérez's work (1987, 1992, 1997) on the example of the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language.²⁵ Sánchez Pérez argues that contemporary language-learning materials were representative of two well-defined models. The first model was deductive, grammar-based teaching (i.e., "learning a language through grammar"); however, this method "did not fulfil the expectancies that many learners had when starting with Spanish" (Sánchez Pérez 1987, p. 49). It was the second model, "based on the reading and memorisation of colloquial texts, speaking, learning of vocabulary, understanding of proverbs, sentences...; that is learning from practice (inductive method)" (Sánchez Pérez 1987, p. 49) that gained popularity as many learners of Spanish prioritised the acquisition of communicative skills in the target language. In real teaching/learning practice,

²⁴ Cf. Dionisotti's presentation of medieval Latin *Colloquia* as "exercises in the vocabulary and idiom of everyday life, including dialogue, of course, but only as a component, not as their overall form [...] the hero is a child, other scenes are depicted mainly through instructions to mute slaves, who fetch and carry, get food and clothes, dry one, dress one, reminding us of how much the ancient daily routing could consist of telling others what to do rather than doing it oneself." (Dionisotti 1982, p. 93, quoted in Di Martino 1999, p. 22)

²⁵ Cf. Tom McArthur's (1991) distinction between "a 'marketplace tradition' and a 'monastery tradition' [where the former] refers to traders and travellers learning as much of a foreign language as they need to conduct their business [while the latter] can be seen in the monastic schools and grammar schools, where the classical languages were taught so that the store of knowledge laid down in Latin and Greek writing could be unlocked" (Klippel 2018, p. 2).

these two extreme methodologies, the “grammatical” on the one hand and the “conversational” on the other, must have complemented each other (Sánchez Pérez 1987, p. 55).

Instead of Sánchez Pérez’s “conversational method” label, Sáez Rivera introduces the term “didactic application” (“explotación pedagógica”, Sáez Rivera 2004, p. 796) when discussing the different methodologies implemented in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. Sáez Rivera’s concept of didactic application helps distinguish between the various linguistic levels and the associated range of practical ways in which language-learning materials could be used in teaching:

- 1) the level of phonology (e.g., with the reading out loud of the dialogues to practice pronunciation);
- 2) the level of morphology (e.g., using the texts to translate and analyse different parts of speech, inductively or deductively);
- 3) the level of syntax: even if textbooks of the period did not usually include a dedicated section on syntax, parallel translation provided in columns could help learners parse and distinguish between different syntactic patterns by comparing sentence structure;
- 4) the semantic level, by presenting thematic vocabulary in meaningful situational contexts;
- 5) the pragmatic level, by offering an opportunity to learn conversational routines, such as greetings and leave-taking formulae, inductively, as presented in meaningful situational contexts. (adapted from Sáez Rivera 2004, pp. 796-797).²⁶

The main focus of my investigation into Cann’s *Social Chat*, taken as an (atypical) example of nineteenth-century conversation manuals, will be on its pragmatic dimension (as described by Sáez Rivera above). More specifically, following Watts (1999, p. 217), I will address the following three questions in my analysis of *Social Chat*:

1. What specific learning goals were associated with the acquisition of pragmatic fluency; i.e., what kind of pragmatic information was intended to be transmitted and taught through the dialogues?
2. How was the text to be used in the teaching and learning of English?
3. What kind of learners were *Social Chat*’s intended primary audience?

²⁶ Sáez Rivera also draws attention to the fact that both the grammatical and conversational methodologies are exemplified in the works of those authors whose portfolio of language-teaching materials included grammars (typically representative of the first methodology) and dialogue compilations (typically representative of the second methodology) (Sáez Rivera 2004, pp. 797).

Following Coulmas (1981), House describes conversational routines as “expressions whose occurrence is tied to particular, highly predictable situations, whose meaning is pragmatically conditioned and whose usage is motivated by the relevant characteristics of social situations” (House 1996, p. 225). Cann’s “conversations [...] on ordinary and familiar topics” (1890, p. 7) represent examples of exactly such particular, highly predictable situations, in which conversational routines – or, in Cann’s terms, “the numerous Idioms of English conversation” (Cann 1890, p. 7) – are presented to the learner in the context of a (simulated) meaningful interaction. In what follows, I analyse the inventory of conversational routines Cann introduces in his dialogues. As I will show, this repertoire includes a range of basic and more elaborated routines which a language learner would be required to master in order to be able to communicate efficiently and effectively in the target language.

Due to space constraints, I focus on a selection of such routines which include greetings, health, leave-taking and introduction formulae. I also look at topic-introduction structures and a group of different speech-like elements and structures (Culpeper, Kytö 2010, p. 84-99), as well as strategies of making, accepting and declining polite offers, which are focused on repeatedly in different chapters of *Social Chat*. I am interested here in offering a qualitative analysis of the range of conversational routines Cann presents in his text in order to “make the Reader acquainted with such idiomatic expressions, as are necessary to a complete knowledge of the language” (Cann 1890, p. 8).²⁷

4.1. Basic conversational routines

In a prototypical bilingual or multilingual nineteenth-century conversation manual, the text of the dialogue is given in two or more languages arranged in parallel columns. Such manuals aimed to develop the learners’ pragmatic competence by offering lists of basic conversational routines grouped according to the different communicative situations in which they were meant to be used. For instance, the section dedicated to “Easy Dialogues/Dialogues Faciles” in a popular French-English dialogue collection (Millhouse 1851, pp. 47-87) starts with a list of opening formulae, among which we find greetings and inquiries about one’s health:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Visit. | La visite. |
| Good morning, Mr. Black. | Bon jour, Monsieur Black. |
| Good morning, Sir. | Monsieur, je vous souhaite le bon jour. |
| How do you do this morning? | Comment vous portez vous ce matin? |

²⁷ A discussion of quantitative findings is planned for a later stage in my project.

| | |
|--|--|
| Very well, I thank you, Sir, and how are you? | Fort bien, Monsieur, je vous remercie, et vous-même? |
| Quite well, Sir, I thank you. | Fort bien, Monsieur, je vous remercie. |
| How have you been, since I had the pleasure of seeing you? | Comment vous-êtes porté depuis que je n'ai eu le plaisir de vous voir? |
| I am very glad to see you. | Je suis bien aise de vous voir. |

(Millhouse 1851, p. 47)

Bilingual dialogues such as this one “could be translated from the target language to the learners’ mother tongue, learned by heart, rehearsed as a kind of role play in the classroom” (Becker 2002, p. 275). Cann’s approach, however, is different. Instead of simply providing the learner with a list of fixed expressions associated with a particular topic, the author expected him/her to extrapolate conversational routines from the dialogues, as is shown in the following extract from the first chapter of the book:

(The Meeting. - Mr. Blake and Mr. Preston, two friends who meet unexpectedly, after a long absence.)

Blake.(*)²⁸ - How do you do, my dear fellow? What a time it is since we met! Who *ever* would have thought of seeing you in Florence? What *has* brought you all this distance?

Preston. - Yes, I dare say you are surprised to see *me* of all persons in the world. The fact is, I am just paying a flying visit to Italy on business, and I’m now on my way to Rome.

Blake. - Why did you not write and tell me you were coming? I would have made arrangements to be free and have gone with you to the capital, where we might have spent a day or two together pleasantly.

Preston. - Nothing would have given me greater pleasure, but a week ago I had no idea that I was coming; I received a telegram from Manchester which obliged me to set out at six hours’ notice. And besides, I did not know you were still living in Florence. (Cann 1890, pp. 11-12)

The monolingual dialogues in *Social Chat*, as we can see in this extract, offer an extensive repertoire of formulae a language learner can use to start a conversation, introduce new people or new topics. The results of mining the text for basic conversational routines are given in Table 1:

²⁸ Author’s footnote in the text: “The author does not hold himself responsible for the views expressed on various subjects by the personages introduced, neither does he acknowledge that they are in unison with his own.” (Cann 1890, p. 11).

| Type of formula | Uses | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Greeting formula | Tends to be used in combination with address terms and other formulae, such as <i>how do you do</i> or <i>how are you</i> | a. Good morning, Mrs. Blake, how do you do? b. Good morning, Count, how do you do? |
| 2. Health formula | A more formal way of inquiring about someone's health, realised as a declarative, rather than an interrogative sentence, where the formula is introduced by the main clause containing <i>hope</i> or <i>trust</i> | a. I hope you are quite well, Mrs. Blake. b. I trust Lady Freeman is quite well. |
| 3. Answers to the opening formulae | Can vary in length, from the shortest standard answer, the extended versions of the standard answer, to more creative alternative answers, all testifying to Cann's efforts to familiarise his learners with the widest possible range of basic conversational routines | a. Very well, thanks / Quite well, thank you / All quite well, thank you; b. I am pretty well now, thank you / Thank you, my wife is rather poorly this evening, the children are pretty well [...]; c. Capitally, thank you, my dear fellow/ I am first rate in health, thank you; |
| 4. Introducing new people | Routinised expressions employed to introduce strangers to each other | a. This is my friend, Sir Charles Hannaford, one of the pillars of our commercial community. b. Apropos, let me introduce you to the Count, a very old Italian friend of mine. c. But allow me to introduce you to Miss Chambers, a young friend of my wife's. |
| 5. Introducing new topics of conversation | Ways of starting a conversation or changing the topic by introducing a new one | a. What a delightful journey we shall have! b. What a pleasant evening we are having; are we not? c. What pretty fancy-work that is which you are doing, Julia; what is it? |
| 6. Leave-taking formulae | Simple (examples a-d) vs. more elaborate ways (examples e-i) of bringing | a. Good bye, Count. b. Good bye until to-morrow evening. c. Good bye for the present, my dear |

| | |
|--|---|
| | an interaction to a close fellow. |
| | d. Good night. I shall expect to see you to-morrow. |
| | e. Good bye, mind and take care of yourself in the meantime [...]. |
| | f. And now I must take my leave, for I have promised to join a party at my hotel to go for an evening drive. |
| | g. But in that case I think I must wish you good evening now, as I <i>must</i> write a letter home before I go to bed. |
| | h. We were just going to enjoy our cigars on a Thames boat, so we will leave you to finish your wine. Good day. |
| | i. Good bye, Mrs. Blake, I shall always remember how much I'm indebted to you for all the pleasure I have derived from my visit to Italy. |

Table 1
Summary of basic conversational routines in *Social Chat*.

We see that, for instance, in (4a-c) learners are given three different structures to choose from, including the basic *this is a* construction and two more sophisticated - and challenging from the learner's point of view – structures introduced by *let me* and *allow me to* respectively. Differently, in (5a-c) Cann focuses on a particular construction employed to break the ice in the initial stages of the interaction. More examples (5d-e) of the same *what + adjective + noun* construction are found in *Social Chat* and, by varying the form of the noun (countable/uncountable, singular countable/plural countable), Cann makes sure the learner can deduce the grammatically correct way of using this construction:

- (5) d. What pretty flowers, Leechwood!
e. What splendid fruit!

4.2. Speech-like elements and structures

While “the dialogic format [used as a teaching and learning aid] fulfilled the function of imitating and hence substituting the real language used in everyday situations” (Di Martino 1999, p. 19), these scripted conversations failed to reproduce a number of key elements and structures characterising real spoken language: “the protagonists [in these dialogues] do not need to utter Mhm to indicate that they have understood the message, there are no silent pauses or overlaps [...] no hesitation or mistakes which are immediately corrected” (Di

Martino 1999, p. 19, my transl.). Simon's inventory of elements and structures, whose goal is to "simulate the 'language of immediacy'" (the so called "Gesprächswörter", Simon 2006, p. 13), includes pragmatic boosters, i.e., set phrases and rhetorical questions, structuring signals, interjections, question-answer-sequences, as well as a wide range of greetings (2006, pp. 11-18). In *Social Chat*, Cann's introduces some of these speech-like elements and structures in an attempt to mimic authentic spoken interaction (examples 7a-i):

- (7) a. Ah, how are you, Danesi?
b. Apropos, have you heard [...].
c. By the bye, you said yesterday [...]
d. Dear me!
e. Good gracious!
f. For goodness' sake, Mr. Preston, don't talk *such nonsense*.
g. Oh, well, if I'm late, [...].
h. Well, 'pon my word, [...].
i. Why! it is nearly seven o'clock!

In addition to a rich variety of pragmatic boosters, Cann's inventory includes pragmatic noise items (Culpeper, Kytö 2010, chapters 9-12, Culpeper 2012, pp. 33-35), such as AH (7a) and OH (7g), which, on the one hand, represent "a handy means by which attitudes, thoughts and emotions [of particular characters] can be signalled" (Culpeper 2012, pp. 35), and, on the other hand, remind us that "[l]anguage-teaching texts were not produced for silent readers: they anticipated a kind of 'noisy reading'. They provided language to be used in oral contexts." (Gallagher 2019, p. 66) Cann's occasional use of italics to indicate a prosodic change (e.g., "Count, I know what to send *you*. Miss Chambers, do let me pass you just a little more." 1890, p. 28) seems to confirm his attention to the level of phonology (cf. Section 4).

Speech-like elements and structures that are not reproduced in Cann's text include incomplete sentences and performance errors (Simon 2006, p. 17-18), false starts and self-corrections (Franceschini 2002, p. 145), ungrammatical sequences of words, inappropriate registers and varieties (Di Marino 2000, p. 248) or bad language.²⁹

²⁹ This last feature was not uncommon in early dialogue compilations. For instance, Critten (2015) briefly discusses vulgar language in the group of conversation manuals for the teaching of French in medieval England. In these manuscripts, collectively known as the *Manières de langage* (Kibbee 1991, pp. 78-83, Lambley 1920, pp. 35-40), it is possible to consult "a list of insults that might be drilled individually or practised dramatically as part of a classroom slanging match" (Critten 2015, pp. 929-930).

4.3. Making, accepting and declining polite offers

After successfully acquiring basic conversational routines, which have been described in the previous sub-sections, Cann's Italian learners would be well-equipped to a) start a conversation in English with an appropriate greeting, health or topic-introduction formula and b) bring the interaction to a close using one of the leave-taking options presented in *Social Chat*. How the conversation would develop between point a) and point b) would depend to a large extent on the specific interactional setting or activity its participants would find themselves engaging in. The topic of "Eating and drinking" has been identified as the most frequent activity presented in language learning dialogues in the period between 1396 and 1780, followed by "Small talk", "Sales talk", "Conversation with hosts", "Knowledge/acquisition of foreign languages", "Travelling", "Getting up in the morning/getting dressed", and "Going for a walk" (based on Radkte 1994, p. 134, quoted in Franceschini 2011, p. 73). Partaking of food or drink and the accompanying dinner-table conversations are represented as two important social activities in Cann's text. Two chapters are devoted to dialogues taking place at mealtimes: Chapter Five, where a dinner at the Blakes' is described in detail, and Chapter Eight, with another dinner this time at Mr. Preston's hotel.

In these dinner settings, the key group of formulae focused on is represented by the different strategies of making polite offers, i.e. offering something to eat or to drink to one's guest, and the polite ways of either accepting or declining the offer received. A typical (abbreviated) dialogue in *Social Chat* is shown in example (8) – here the host, Mr. Blake, is taking care of his guest, Miss Julia Chambers, with another guest, Mr. Preston, assisting him in this task:

- (8) (Blake) What soup may I send you, Miss Chambers?
 (Miss Chambers) Thank you, I will trouble you for a little ox-tail, but very little please [...].
 [...]
 (Blake) Miss Chambers, *do* let me pass you just a little more.
 (Miss Chambers) No, I had much rather not, thank you.
 (Blake) Which may I offer you: salmon, trout, or soles? Ah, you prefer soles, I know.
 [...]
 (Mr. Preston) [...] What wine may I offer you?
 (Miss Chambers) I will take sherry, thank you.
 [...]
 (Blake) Which may I send you Miss Chambers, some roast-beef or some of the breast of a chicken?
 (Miss Chambers) I should prefer a little fowl and salad, please.
 [...]
 (Blake) What pastry do you like; apple-pie and custard, rice pudding, or spongecake?

(Miss Chambers) I have made an excellent dinner. I won't take anything more, thank you.

(Blake) At all events, you must let me prevail on you to take a little Cheshire or Gloucester cheese.

(Cann 1890, pp. 27-31)

Cann here insists on the use of *which* or *what* interrogative structures followed by the name of the dish as the main strategy of making an offer. The repetitiveness of the answer formulae, typically realised with a standard set of constructions, is exemplified in (9a-e):

- (9) a. I will help myself to some of these young potatoes. I'll take a little asparagus, too, if you please, it is a plant I am very partial too.
 b. Thank you, I think I should prefer tea.
 c. I will take cream, if you please.
 d. Thank you, I won't take any.
 e. Thank you. I don't feel inclined for anything just now.

Examples of alternative ways of making offers are found in a number of other interactional settings in *Social Chat*. Table 2 provides an overview of the rich inventory of strategies of making offers and suggestions introduced by Cann:

| Constructions used for making offers and suggestions | Examples from <i>Social Chat</i> |
|--|---|
| modal verbs | What [...] may I send you / offer you? Which shall I give you [...]? Will you not [...]? You must [...] |
| imperative sentences | do let me pass you just a little more; Allow me to [...] Let me [...] Permit me to [...] Let us [...] |
| questions | What [...] do you like [...]? What [...] will you take? Which do you prefer [...]? What do you say to [...]? Why not [...]? |
| other types of constructions | I want you to [...] Suppose we [...] You are going to [...] |

Table 2
Ways of making offers and suggestions in *Social Chat*.

As this summary shows, the inventory is exceptionally varied. Whether or not Cann expected his learners to familiarise themselves with all of these strategies, he made the full repertoire available in the dialogues in *Social Chat*.

5. Concluding remarks

As I mentioned in the presentation of the text (Section 3), Cann's main stated objective with *Social Chat* was "to furnish the Foreigner with an insight into the numerous Idioms of English conversation, and to show him how English is generally spoken at the present day" (Cann 1890, p. 7). While it is true that the text could be used to realise other goals, including non-linguistic ones (e.g., extrapolating practical information on travelling or sightseeing), my analysis has shown that Cann went to great lengths in order to ensure that his learners were provided with the most extensive repertoire of basic and more elaborate conversational routines in English, and would thus acquire appropriate pragmatic competence.

A lot of the formulaic language in *Social Chat*, just like the topics presented in the dialogues, had been dealt with in numerous earlier language-learning texts (cf. Section 4.1). In this sense, then, Cann's *Social Chat* is a product of the phenomenon of diversification of language-learning materials, typical of the nineteenth century (cf. Section 2). However, *Social Chat* is also an original piece of work which reworks the endlessly recycled materials of the earlier tradition of disconnected, artificial dialogues between unknown/unnamed characters into an engaging, connected story with a plot. To my knowledge, the only other example of a late nineteenth-century didactic text in which a foreign language (in this case Spanish for German learners) is taught through a series of connected dialogues is a conversation manual entitled *Don Basilio oder Praktische Anleitung zum mündlichen und schriftlichen Verkehr im Spanischen* (Verlag von G. A. Gloeckner, Leipzig, 1890, 2nd edn.). Authored by Julius Schilling, *Don Basilio* comprises twenty-six chapters in which the same group of characters assist the protagonist, Don Basilio, with preparations for a trip to Spain (Sáez Rivera 2012).³⁰

As for the ways in which the text could be used in teaching and learning English, its versatility means that there were multiple possibilities. Most likely, its "didactic application" would depend on the specific teacher's/student's learning objectives: they could, for example, decide to use the dialogues to

³⁰ I would like to thank Prof. Friederike Klippel for drawing my attention to another text, *Englisch per Dampf! Ganz neue Conversations-Methode, um in wenigen Tagen ohne alle Vorkenntnisse geläufig englisch sprechen zu lernen*. Hrsg. von Rob. H. Hoar, Sprachlehrer aus London, 1884, Berlin.

focus on one of the individual linguistic levels described by Sáez Rivera (cf. Section 4). Cann does not give any explicit indications in the preface on the ways in which he envisioned the use of his text - whether it would be more suitable for use in a classroom setting or for individual study, for instance - but handwritten glosses and annotations on the pronunciation of individual words in my second-hand copy of *Social Chat* are a testimony that it was indeed bought and used (at least by one English-language learner). In this particular case, the learner was interested in improving his/her pronunciation and speaking skills. Unfortunately, I have not been able to recover any information as to the identity of this learner. Had it been possible, the generic "Foreigner", whom Cann addresses in the preface as his target user, would have come to life.

In my previous investigation of a different ELT text by Cann, *The Comprehensive Letter-Writer*, etc., (Cann 1878), I observed how extraordinary Cann's linguistic intuitions were when it came to selecting specific linguistic features of the English commercial style of writing which had to be taught to his EFL learners in nineteenth-century Italy (Shvanyukova 2018, p. 150). With *Social Chat*, Cann confirms his credentials as an innovative language teacher by producing an original didactic text, which presents essential pragmatic information in an engaging and entertaining format. Indeed, that the pragmatic dimension had to figure prominently in the learning process is explicitly suggested by Cann himself through one of his Italian characters, Marquis Badini, who is made to ask his friend Count Danesi (Cann 1890, p. 188) for linguistic advice with a telling question, "How am I to answer this in English?". Perhaps ahead of his time, Cann had realized that communicative competence cannot rely exclusively on syntax, lexis, and morphology.

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“PLEASE”, “THANK YOU”, “EXCUSE ME” — WHY CAN’T YOU BEHAVE NATURALLY?”

Linguistic politeness in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia

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Abstract – The aim of this work is to outline the main tendencies in linguistic politeness in post-revolutionary Soviet Russia during the 1920s, when the transformation of social classes and gender politics had a great impact on the definition of linguistic etiquette and formulaic expressions. In particular, the expressions encoding social deixis were largely affected by semantic shifts. For instance, the address terms “tovarisch” ‘comrade’, “gospodin” ‘sir’, “papasha” ‘daddy’ are claimed to be ideologically biased. The study is based on the analysis of fictional dialogues from Michail Bulgakov’s satirical novel *the Heart of a Dog* (2004 [1925]). It is seen as the story of a failed attempt to create a new man, with the absurd name Poligraf Sharikov, undertaken by a prominent Russian professor of medicine, Filipp Preobrazhenskiy. Professor Preobrazhenskiy and an artificially created Sharikov represent the two different archetypes of an old tsarist era and an emerging Bolshevik regime, respectively, in a constant clash at the verbal and nonverbal level. The analysis considers the micro level of conversation dynamics in its pragmalinguistic aspects (address terms, speech act formulas and hypocoristics) and sociopragmatic aspects (distance and power dimensions) and shows the features of the interactional behavioural norms of the chosen period of investigation. During this transition period, politeness formulas and address forms undergo constant negotiation.

Keywords: post-revolutionary Russia; politeness; address terms; speech acts; hypocoristics.

1. Introduction

If someone is asked to mention the most typical Russian word, “tovarisch” may be the first one that comes to mind. Roughly speaking, its use is primarily associated with the period from after the October Revolution in 1917 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It served to show in-group status and was a distinctive language feature of the Iron Curtain popular discourse (Comrie *et al.* 2003).

However, “tovarisch” became outdated in a relatively brief period of time, thus showing that social marking and behaviour norms were evolving according to the changing ideological context and historical period. In Russian linguistics the norms and tendencies of social appropriateness used to be described in an ideologically supportive field of “kul’tura rechi” ‘language culture’ born in the post-revolutionary period. This branch of linguistics linked language conventions to issues of power and authority, while the tendencies of language use were ascribed to specific social groups. Since then, the transformation of social classes and gender politics had a great impact on the definition of linguistic etiquette and, as a consequence, on the use of formulaic and deictic expressions.

The present study belongs to the field of historical pragmatics, which focuses on the relationships between any particular historical language use and its situational context (Culpeper 2010, p. 77). When it describes language use in earlier periods of time, it is based on the analysis of fictional materials (poems, narratives, plays). The importance of historical (fictional) data was proven in the investigation of language variation and change (Denis, Tagliamonte 2017, p. 554). Traditionally, historical pragmatics mainly concerns English language studies (Jucker, Taavitsainen 2010, p. 12-13), but it seems to be a particularly interesting and challenging task to use this framework for the study of Russian in a diachronic perspective. Despite the above-mentioned social and historical changes that affected politeness perception in the beginning of the 20th century, the research in this area still remains rather limited and inconsistent.

The data for this study is provided by the M. Bulgakov’s satirical novel “The heart of a Dog” (2004 [1925]).¹ It is the story of a failed attempt to create a new soviet man (*homo sovieticus*, as philosopher Zinov’ev (1991) puts it) with the absurd name of Poligraf Sharikov, an attempt undertaken by a prominent Russian professor of medicine, Filipp Preobrazhenskiy. The novel cuts a clear distinction between the class affiliations of the characters, as they represent an emerging proletarian class and old tsarist values in a constant clash at the verbal and nonverbal level. Also, the members of the housing committee, on the one hand, and the professor’s assistant doctor Bormental’, on the other, reinforce the contrastive representation of the proletarian and bourgeois conversational styles.

This study aims to contribute to the body of research in historical pragmatics with an analysis of linguistic politeness in the post-revolutionary Russia of the 1920s, which shows how the functional use of language was shaped by social roles. In the paper I will examine social implications of

¹ The novel was written in 1925 (when it was rejected for publication) and was first published in the Soviet Union in 1987.

deictic usage and politeness formulas within the framework of politeness theory (Brown, Levinson 1987), in its two dimensions of positive and negative politeness, the former emphasising people’s common ground and the latter stressing non-imposition of their personal space. My goal is to show how interactional appropriateness is to be described strategically, as it evolves in context, instead of focusing on a content-oriented approach to politeness (Eelen 2001).

To contextualise the study, I will first outline the three areas of pragmatic research it is relevant to. The first one, namely the terms of address, shows how language works in society, especially when the latter undergoes a political change. In the Modern Russian language there are no deferential honorifics, so the most common way to approach unknown people is to refer to their gender (Formanovskaya 2002). However, in the eighteenth century there was a highly elaborated system of address terms on a person’s profession, origin, educational background and age (Comrie *et al.* 2003). Among them there was a group of address terms that codified social class membership. The differences in social status were an inseparable part of one’s identity, and there were many ways in which this could be acknowledged (Nevala 2004, p. 2127). In 1772 Peter the Great introduced the system of ranking called “The Table of Ranks” for the civil and military service, where the rank indicated a man’s status as determined by his title and class (Hassell 1970, p. 283). The social hierarchy and the choice of address terms were dictated by this prescriptive document abolished in 1917. After the October Revolution, the neat stratification between classes ceased to exist, and this caused some significant changes to the encoding of politeness. On the one hand, the kinship terms became widespread and used among soldiers and working class members as a positive politeness tool of “togetherness”, for example when referring to any older man or woman as “father” and “mother” (Comrie *et al.* 2003). On the other hand, “tovarisch” and the loanword *citizen* became official address terms employed by working class members to avoid former gender- or class-specific terms (Comrie *et al.* 2003). Moreover, terms of address not only indicate social roles (titles, professional and kinship terms), but also reveal personal attitude and fulfil a phatic function. Depending on how they are used, they can indicate deference or solidarity, or have a challenging, offensive or downgrading meaning (Mazzon 2010, p. 264).

The second area of pragmatic research this study relates to is that of speech acts. More specifically, it will examine whether the routine formulas of apologies and thanks vary in the described historical period (Blum-Kulka, Kasper, House 1989, Coulmas 1981, Frescura 1987, Greif, Gleason 1980, Liao 2013, Ogiermann 2009, just to cite a few). The metapragmatic cues show the role of politeness rules in the new social order. The citation from

the title “Why can’t we behave naturally?” suggests that they can be perceived in contrast with human nature and spontaneous conduct.

Third, I will examine gender marking in terms of address and reference as the equalising trends in politeness also concerned the use of feminine forms as opposed to gender neutral variants. The relevance of this is due to the fact that the Russian language is characterised by a complex system of diminutive-hypocoristic suffixes, which contributes to an array of different pragmatic meanings (Spiridonova 1999). For instance, the usage of *-k* suffixed proper names is associated with derogative meaning, while the suffix *-ush* is used to show care and concern; thus they can evoke inappropriateness when used without sociopragmatic considerations (Mills 1999).

In the rest of the study I will describe the use of the following pragmalinguistic resources (section 2): address terms including titles, kinship terms, hypocoristics and deferential terms (section 2.1); gender linguistic codification (section 2.2) and politeness formulas and speech act strategies for apologies and thanks (section 2.3). I will then discuss and comment on the findings (section 3).

2. Politeness negotiation: address and kinship terms, gender codification and speech act formulas

2.1. Address and kinship terms

As I mentioned earlier, during the 20s of the 20th century, we can attribute the instability of politeness norms to the drastic changes in the social and political life of the country. In the text considered, the negotiation of address terms can be spotted in the conversations between the members of a newly-established house committee and professor Preobrazhenskiy (here and elsewhere, the citations are from Bulgakov (2004 [1925])); the translation is by Michael Glenny (2013):

- «Вы, господа, напрасно ходите без калош в такую погоду, - перебил его наставительно Филипп Филиппович, - во-первых, вы простудитесь, а, во-вторых, вы наследили мне на коврах».
Тот, с копной, умолк, и все четверо в изумлении уставились на Филиппа Филипповича. Молчание продолжалась несколько секунд.
- «Во-первых, мы не господа», - молвил, наконец, самый юный из четверых. (p. 135)
- ‘You ought not to go out in this weather without wearing galoshes, gentlemen,’ Philip Philipovich interrupted in a schoolmasterish voice, ‘Firstly, you’ll catch cold and secondly you’ve muddied my carpets.’
The young man with a shock of hair broke off, and all four stared at Philip Philipovich. The silence lasted several minutes.

- ‘Firstly, we are not gentlemen,’ the youngest of them, with a face like a peach, said finally.

An awkward silence fell among the speakers, which shows their need to work out and re-establish their positions, as the members of the house committee declined the use of a deferential term “gospoda” ‘gentlemen’.

Further on, Preobrazhenskiy again fails to call them with deferential terms:

- «...а вас, милостивый государь, прошу снять ваш головной убор», - внушительно сказал Филипп Филиппович.
- «Я вам не милостивый государь», - резко заявил блондин, снимая папаху. (p. 135)
- ‘...but I must ask you, dear sir, to remove your headgear,’ said Philip Philipovich imposingly.
- ‘I’m not your dear sir,’ said the fair youth sharply, pulling off his sheepskin hat.

In this case, the inappropriateness of the address term is exacerbated by the tone of imposition and the professor’s intention to teach a member of the house committee some basic etiquette rules. The man acknowledges his authority and follows the order, but remains unhappy with the address term. As the title “gospodin” (plural “gospoda”) or “gosudar” ‘sir’ were used mainly by the members of a privileged social stratum, it clearly became alien to the working class.

The following dialogue takes place between Preobrazhenskiy and Sharikov, when they are openly discussing reciprocal address terms:

- «...если вам угодно, чтобы вас перестали именовать фамильярно “Шариков”, и я и доктор Борменталь будем называть вас “господин Шариков”».
- «Я не господин, господа все в Париже!» – отлаял Шариков.
- «Швондерова работа! – кричал Филипп Филиппович, - ну ладно, посчитаюсь я с этим негодяем. Не будет никого, кроме господ, в моей квартире, пока я в ней нахожусь!» (p. 189)
- ‘If you want us to stop calling you Sharikov, Doctor Bormenthal and I will call you “gospodin” [mister]² Sharikov.’
- ‘I’m not a gospodin [mister] – all the gospoda [mistress] are in Paris!’
- ‘I see Shvonder’s been at work on you!’ shouted Philip Philipovich. ‘Well, I’ll fix that rascal. There will only be gospoda [mistress] in my flat as long as I’m living in it...’

² Here I would prefer to maintain the original word in order to distinguish it from a loanword “mister” also used by Preobrazhenskiy.

Here Preobrazhenskiy uses “gospodin” as a sign of respect for Sharikov, which is also not accepted due to its ideologically wrong connotation. Sharikov alludes to a Russian intelligentsia emigration wave, thus excluding himself from this social group of regime enemies settled in Europe. When doctor Bormental’ joins the conversation, he provokes Sharikov by calling him “Monsier Sharikov” (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 190) and disregards the above statement that “all the misters are in Paris”. Despite Sharikov’s protests, the professor clings to the pre-revolutionary terms of address:

- *«Имейте в виду, Шариков... господин»...* (p. 190)

- ‘Look here, Sharikov... mister Sharikov’...

Finally, he explicitly refuses to accept being called “tovarisch” ‘comrade’, unveiling the ideological background of this address term. His refusal means that he excludes himself from this emerging social group. This title is employed both in order to avoid social inequality and to mark friend-or-foe relationships among equals. The unstable status of this new norm is also shown while a professor’s servant and an old curious woman who came to see “the talking dog” (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 176) still refer to the professor as “gospodin professor” (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 177), thus recognising his high-ranked position.

Kartsevskiy (1923, p. 38-39) noticed that originally “tovarisch” was a synonymous term for a friend or a co-worker which gradually evolved into an ideological marker. He pointed out that it was even perceived as a swearword as referred to a bourgeois member; the irritation of the professor is thus explained by his non-willingness to belong to this ideologically motivated group of people who call each other “tovarisch”:

- *«Да что Вы всё попрекаете – помойка, помойка. Я свой кусок хлеба добывал. А если бы я у вас помер под ножом? Что вы на это возразите, товарищ?»*

- *«Филипп Филиппович! – раздраженно воскликнул Филипп Филиппович, - я вам не товарищ! Это чудовищно!»*

- *«Уж, конечно, как же... - иронически заговорил человек и победоносно отставил ногу, - мы понимаем-с. Какие уж мы вам товарищи! Где уж. Мы в университетах не обучались, в квартирах по 15 комнат с ванными не жили. Только теперь пора бы это отставить».* (p. 170)

- ‘So what if I had to eat out of dustbins? At least it was an honest living. And supposing I’d died on your operation table? What d’you say to that, comrade?’

- ‘My name is Philip Philipovich!’ exclaimed the professor irritably. ‘I’m not your comrade! This is monstrous!’

- ‘Oh, yes!’ said the man sarcastically, triumphantly uncrossing his legs. ‘I know! Of course we’re not comrades! How could we be? I didn’t go to college, I don’t own a flat with fifteen rooms and a bathroom. Only all that’s changed now.’

The interpersonal conflict and further negotiation triggered by the use of “gospodin” and “tovarisch” also applied to other deferential terms, like “sudar” ‘sir’, which could be put into discussion by egalitarian politics. Due to its frequent use, it was subject to reduction, so “sudar” was often expressed by a particle –s added to a verb or a noun form. As it is used both by Preobrazhenskiy (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 171) and by the head of the house committee Shvonder (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 175), it highlights the instability of politeness norms where deferential forms of negative politeness like “gospodin”, “sudar” and an –s particle co-existed with egalitarian forms of positive politeness like “tovarisch”.

“Tovarisch” is also not the only way to express solidarity and in-group membership, as the same function was fulfilled by the address term “grazhdanin” ‘citizen’. Shvonder, similarly to Fyodor, the porter, calls Sharikov a citizen and uses the same term of reference:

«Вы, гражданин Шариков, говорите в высшей степени несознательно».
(p. 174)

‘I’m afraid you seem to be completely lacking in political consciousness, citizen Sharikov.’

«Простите, профессор, гражданин Шариков совершенно прав». (p. 174)

‘I’m sorry, professor, but citizen Sharikov is absolutely correct.’

As Braun (1988) reported, in the French revolution the term “citoyen” was introduced as a general form of address in order to indicate that someone was entitled to claim civil rights. It is not used by professor Preobrazhenskiy or doctor Bormental’, who, as we can see, prefer to implement a deference-based system of address terms.

It is not right, though, to think that the pre-revolutionary address system was lacking mechanisms of positive politeness and was orientated only to the maintenance of social status. Positive politeness could be expressed through emotionally charged adjectives and/or possessive pronouns added to honorifics (“dear sir” cited above), or through names used without titles in order to show affection and establish a bond, as in this exchange between Preobrazhenskiy and Bormental’:

- «Я сегодня вечером не нужен вам, Филипп Филиппович?» – осведомился он.
- «Нет, благодарю вас, голубчик. Ничего делать сегодня не будем». (p. 146)
- ‘Do you (*vous*) need me this evening, Philip Philipovich?’ he enquired.
- ‘No thank you (*vous*), my dear fellow. We shan't be doing anything this evening.’

As we can see, they are on formal terms even though the professor uses an in-group nickname “golubchik” ‘dear fellow’ for his colleague, thus treating him with both affection and respect.

Hypocoristics also play an important role in reducing social distance and in showing affection. Both professor Preobrazhenskiy and Sharikov use an altered version of the maid Zina’s name, but with a different meaning, as in this extract, where Zina was accused by Sharikov of theft:

- «А может быть, Зинка взяла»...
- «Что такое?... – закричала Зина, появившись в дверях как привидение, прикрывая на груди расстегнутую кофточку ладонью. - Да как он...». Шея Филиппа Филипповича налилась красным цветом.
- «Спокойно, Зинуша, - молвил он, простирая к ней руку, - не волнуйся, мы все это устроим». (p. 191)
- ‘Maybe Zinka took it...’
- ‘What?’ screamed Zina, appearing in the doorway like a spectre, clutching an unbuttoned cardigan across her bosom. ‘How could he...’ Philip Philipovich's neck flushed red.
- ‘Calm down, Zinusha,’ he said, stretching out his arm to her, ‘don't get upset, we'll fix this.’³

“Zinka” used by Sharikov shows superiority and arrogance towards the interlocutor, while “Zinusha” is an affectionate and condescending form used for emotionally close people. On the one hand, the arrogance of Sharikov shows that he does not want to be associated with servants of old intelligentsia. On the other hand, by employing “Zinusha”, the professor signals that he wants to take her side in this dispute and protect her from false accusations. (the hypocoristics are also relevant to gender issues, see section 2.2).

While being affectionate with his collaborators, the professor does not allow familiarity when addressed by Sharikov. For instance, he finds the kinship term “papasha” — roughly translated as ‘daddy’ — irritating. The professor finds unacceptable the use of this kinship form perceived as a fake

³ This is a particularly challenging extract to translate, as the English language does not have a direct equivalent to diminutive forms in Russian. I suggest “dear Zina” for “Zinusha” and “the servant” for “Zinka”.

attempt to bond. Instead of being called a dad, the professor demands the use of his name and patronymic. Here is another vivid example of negotiation of an address term, in which one of the parties explicitly asks to be called in a certain manner:

- «Что-то вы меня, папаша, больно утесняете», - вдруг плаксиво выговорил человек.
Филипп Филиппович покраснел, очки сверкнули.
- «Кто этот тут вам папаша? Что это за фамильярности? Чтобы я больше не слышал этого слова! Называть меня по имени и отчеству!» (p. 169)
- 'Don't be so hard on me, Dad,' the man suddenly said in a tearful whine.
Philip Philipovich turned red and his spectacles flashed.
- 'Who are you calling "Dad"? What impertinent familiarity! I never want to hear that word again! You will address me by my name and patronymic!'

In parallel, the professor insists on using the name and patronymic form with doctor Bormental' both as an address and as a reference term:

- «Иван Арнольдович, как по-вашему, я понимаю что-либо в анатомии или физиологии, ну скажем, человеческого мозгового аппарата? Как ваше мнение?»
 - «Филипп Филиппович, что вы спрашиваете!» [...] (p. 193)
 - 'Ivan Arnoldovich, do you think I understand a little about the anatomy and physiology of, shall we say, the human brain? What's your opinion?'
 - 'Philip Philipovich - what a question!' replied Bormental'.
- «Не беспокойтесь, Филипп Филиппович [...]. Водки мне, конечно, не жаль, тем более, что она не моя, а Филиппа Филипповича» (p. 184)
- 'Don't worry, Philip Philipovich, leave it to me. [...]. Of course I don't grudge you the vodka, especially as it's not mine but belongs to Philip Philipovich.'

Since the name and patronymic form is usually co-occurring with V-pronouns, it is associated with situational dimensions of power and social distance. The absence of the patronymic is considered a social equaliser, promoted by a new working class ideology. In Sharikov's attempt to be equally respected by Preobrazhenskiy and Bormental', he tries to imitate pre-revolutionary etiquette rules:

- «Борменталь!»
- «Нет, уж вы меня по имени и отчеству, пожалуйста, называйте!» – отозвался Борменталь, меняясь в лице.
- «Ну и меня называйте по имени и отчеству!» – совершенно основательно ответил Шариков.
- «Нет! По такому имени и отчеству в моей квартире я вас не разрешу называть». (p. 189)

- 'Bormenthal!'
- 'Kindly address me by my name and patronymic!' retorted Bormenthal, his expression clouding.
- 'All right, then you can call me by my name and patronymic too!' replied Sharikov with complete justification.
- 'No!' thundered Philip Philipovich. 'I forbid you to utter such an idiotic name in my flat.'

According to the professor, the chosen name Poligraph Poligraphovich is “a strange name” (Bulgakov 2004 [1925], p. 172), as it denotes a lie detector machine and clearly cannot be a human name. Before the Revolution, the naming convention was based on the church calendar, but once the Christian religion became outlawed and replaced by a new ideology, there was a tendency to invent new names denoting great Soviet achievements or to blend Soviet leaders' first and family names⁴ (Comrie *et al.* 2003, p. 269-272). This satirical episode gives us additional information about earlier and more recent name-giving practices.⁵

Since Sharikov refuses to be called by a deferential term, in an attempt to find an appropriate way to address him, the professor and the doctor call him by his family name, which is perceived as rude and presumptuous behaviour. Doctor Bormental' does not accept this address term for himself and insists on being called with the name and patronymic. Interestingly, though, the family names used in reference does not provoke unpleasant connotations and don't require the negotiation of social role:

«Ну что же, ну Швондер дал. Он не негодяй. Чтоб я развивался». (p. 186)

'Well, Shvonder gave it to me ... so what? He's not a fool... it was so I could get educated.'

Table 1 contains a summary of the address terms usage related to positive and negative politeness. It shows how professor Preobrazhenskiy and doctor Bormental' are resilient to an emerging norm of social equalising and tend to

⁴ For example, the name Vladlen is a blending noun which stands for Vladimir Lenin.

⁵ In the film version of the book this episode was extended into a comic scene where Shvonder baptises new born girls in the name of two far-left wing politicians Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin.

negotiate their social role based on a different system of positive and negative politeness codification.

| Proletarian speech | | Intelligentsia speech | |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Positive politeness | Negative politeness | Positive politeness | Negative politeness |
| <i>Daddy, comrade</i> | <i>Citizen</i> (+family name), family name, negative charged hypocoristics | <i>Dear sir, dear fellow,</i> positive charged hypocoristics | <i>Mister,</i> name + patronymic, <i>monsieur, sir</i> |

Table 1
Address terms.

I would also like to highlight the role of referential meaning in the characters’ descriptions. The extract below shows that “citizen” works here as a default option, while “gentleman” and “tovarisch” are marked variants of the socially opposed groups. Clearly, the terms in question evoke social connotations:

Дверь через улицу в ярко освещенном магазине хлопнула, и из нее показался гражданин. Именно гражданин, а не товарищ, и даже вернее всего – господин. Ближе – яснее – господин (p. 162).

Across the street the door of a brightly lit store slammed and a citizen came through it. Not a comrade, but a citizen, or even more likely - a gentleman. As he came closer it was obvious that he was a gentleman.

Finally, the value of each address term should be considered in direct correlation with pronouns. The use of V pronouns is not negotiated for either category of speakers and is used with all the terms of address. The only usage of the T-form is registered in the conversation professor Preobrazhenkiy has with the maid Zina. This can be accounted for considering that she is younger and has an inferior social position, and, in fact, the professor calls her only by her given name.

2.2. Gender issues

While Sharikov remains particularly sensitive to social equalising issues, trying to be respected by the professor and the doctor, his attitude towards women has a different behavioural pattern. We already saw that he uses the pejorative suffix *-k* when he refers to the maid Zina. He explains his point in the following extract, a behaviour which triggers the professor’s reproach:

- «Спать на полотах прекращается! Понятно? Что это за нахальство! Ведь вы мешаете. Там женщины».
- «Ну, уж и женщины. Подумаешь. Барыни какие. Обыкновенная прислуга, а форсу как у комиссариши. Это все Зинка ябедничает!» Филипп Филиппович глянул строго:
- «Не смей Зину называть Зинкой!» (p. 169)
- 'No more sleeping in the kitchen. Understand? I've never heard of such behaviour. You are a nuisance there and the women don't like it.'
- 'So what? Those women act as though they owned the place! They're just maids, but you'd think they were commissars. It's Zina⁶ - she's always bellyaching about me.'
- Philip Philipovich gave him a stern look.
- 'Don't you dare talk about Zina in that tone of voice!'⁷

Sharikov adopts an imposing and disrespectful behaviour towards women with a low social position and chooses unmitigated address terms to dissociate himself from servants.

While Sharikov thrives to construct his own hierarchal norms, Preobrazhenskiy re-establishes gender divisions in the following dialogue with the members of the house committee:

- «Во-первых, - перебил его Филипп Филиппович, - вы мужчина или женщина?»
- «Какая разница, товарищ?» – спросил он горделиво.
- «Я – женщина», - признался персиковый юноша в кожаной куртке.
- «В таком случае мы можете оставаться в кепке». (p. 135)
- Philip Philipovich interrupted him, 'Are you a man or a woman?'
- 'What difference does it make, comrade?' he asked proudly.
- 'I'm a woman,' confessed the peach-like youth who was wearing a leather jerkin.
- 'In that case you can leave your cap on.'

Here professor Preobrazhenskiy imposes nonverbal aspects of etiquette to his interlocutor by marking the gender of his visitors. On the other hand, the woman uses the term “tovarisch” to signal the irrelevance of gender distinctions to their relationship.

The following extract shows once more how the issue of gender can be made linguistically explicit:

⁶ “Zinka” in the original text.

⁷ The translator adopted a compensation strategy, as the pejorative suffix *-k* was omitted and rendered with a remark about Sharikov's voice.

- «...Только я, как заведующий культотделом дома...»
- «За-ве-дующая», - поправил её Филипп Филиппович. (p. 139)
- ‘Still, as manager of the cultural department of this house...’
- ‘Manager,’ Philip Philipovich corrected her.

Morphologically speaking, the masculine present participle “zavedujuschiy” ‘manager’ used as a noun can easily form a feminine equivalent “zavedujuschaya”. That is what professor Preobrazhenskiy did but what was lost in translation. Here we can therefore spot the tendency to use only the masculine form with higher prestige professions (Comrie *et al.* 2003, p. 237).

2.3. Speech act formulas

In this conclusive part, I would like to look at convivial speech act formulas, which are considered an important manifestation of politeness.

I think that the following extract is one of the most significant from the novel, which gives us some important information about clashes in perceptions of politeness caused by adherence to tsarist social norms vs. new proletarian ones:

- «Вот всё у вас как на параде», - заговорил он, - салфетку – туда, галстук – сюда, да «извините», да «пожалуйста-мерси», а так, чтобы по-настоящему, - это нет. Мучаете сами себя, как при царском режиме».
- «А как это «по-настоящему»? – позвольте осведомиться».
- Шариков на это ничего не ответил Филиппу Филипповичу, а поднял рюмку и произнёс: «Ну желаю, чтобы все...». (p. 182-183)
- ‘You act just as if you were on parade here,’ he said. ‘Put your napkin here, your tie there, "please", "thank you", "excuse me" - why can't you behave naturally? Honestly, you stuffed shirts act as if it was still the days of tsarism.’
- ‘What do you mean by "behave naturally"?’
- Sharikov did not answer Philip Philipovich's question, but raised his glass and said: ‘Here's how...’

Apparently, old etiquette conventions as well as politeness norms have become obsolete for the new Bolshevik regime, as they reflect the intellectual values of the old monarchy. Sharikov intuitively links the upper and middle class behaviour to politeness needs that can be seen as an unwanted imposition on the working class way of expression and their interactional practices. The new social order wants to be free from oppressive rules and challenges the predetermined models of conduct. Sharikov’s evasive response, though, marks the impossibility to bridge the gap that has been

created. At this historical period the old norms were experiencing a crisis and had not yet been replaced by alternative new options.

In the remaining part of this section, I intend to analyse the speech act formulas that were criticised by Sharikov in the extract above. To express gratitude, professor Preobrazhenskiy uses a contemporary Russian word “spasibo” ‘thanks’ or an old-fashioned loan formula “merci”. The latter was commonly used from the times of the widespread learning of the French language by Russian aristocratic circles until the 1930s. It was a neutral counterpart of Russian “spasibo”, although it was soon condemned for its upper class origin. The other way to express gratitude is through the performative verb “blagodarit” ‘express gratitude’, which is used four times by professor Preobrazhenskiy and once by Fyodor, the porter, with the adverb “humbly”, which codifies the interlocutor’s social dominance. In the professor’s speech, the etiquette formula “spasibo” is used twice. Instead, Sharikov does not thank anybody in the novel.

The other convivial speech act mocked by Sharikov is that of apology, which is expressed through the performative verbs “izvinjat” and “proschjat”, approximately translated as ‘excuse’ and ‘forgive’. Both of them are directive speech acts meant to obtain the addressee’s forgiveness. However, their usage conventions are different. “Proschjat” is more emotionally charged (Rathmayr 2003) and less frequent (5 times in the text), although it is used both by the house committee and by doctors. On the other hand, “izvinjat” proves to be the most widespread way to beg for forgiveness used among members of the Russian intelligentsia (13 times). The additional emotional load of “proschat” reinforced by the reiterated use of “izvinjat” is seen in this response to an offended patient:

«Ну извините, извините, голубчик, – забормотал Филипп Филиппович, – простите, я, право, не хотел вас обидеть». (p. 204)

‘Well I’m sorry, I’m sorry, my dear fellow!’ mumbled Philip Philipovich.
‘Forgive me, I really didn’t mean to offend you.’

The other way to express an apology is through the reflexive verb form “izvinyat’sja” (4 times in the text), which was added to the repertoire of the speech act strategies probably due to the influence of Polish (Selishev 2003 [1928]) and was used only by proletariat members. This formula was seen as vulgar and empty, lacking the sincerity of a true apology expression: “the word is uttered, but has no sense” (cit. Gornfeld in Selishev 2003 [1928], p. 41-42). The reflexive verb does not codify either guilt (addressee-oriented expressive act) or a request for forgiveness (addresser-oriented directive act). So while canonical performative verbs can be reinforced by an appeal to the

good will of an interlocutor⁸ or by a profound sense of guilt felt by a speaker, this type of reinforcement cannot be done with reflexive verbs. By now it has simply become a colloquial routine word (Ozhegov, Shvedova 1992) which does not involve remorse:

- «Извиняюсь», - сказал четвертый, похожий на крепкого жука.
- «Извиняюсь», - перебил его Швондер (p. 136)

- 'Excuse me,' said the fourth, who looked like a fat beetle.
- 'Excuse me,' Shvonder interrupted him.

The already mentioned "merci" is used by the professor and the doctor, but is heavily criticised by Kartsevskiy (1923) for having spread over into the Russian language alongside the reflexive form "izvinjat'sja". This linguist seems to be against the fossilisation of linguistic formulas that do not express genuine gratitude or apologies.

Although perceived to be a routine and neutral part of etiquette behaviour, etiquette formulas are heavily influenced by their diastatic origin. Due to the social change which was particularly affected by substandard language elements, the reflexive verb meaning 'to excuse oneself' gradually became a colloquial norm, while the aristocratic French loan "merci" gradually disappeared.

3. Discussion and conclusion

The paper is a brief report on address forms and politeness formulas usage in the interactions between representatives of two opposed social classes on the verge of political and ideological changes in post-revolutionary Russia. The analysis of the dialogues from Bulgakov's novel suggests that the social order influences the speakers' roles and behavioural norms. This requires negotiating interpersonal relationships and face needs. According to Formanovskaya (2002), speech etiquette is made up of socially determined and culturally specific rules of verbal behaviour stipulated according to people's social and psychological roles. Indeed, the prescriptive approach to speech etiquette that dominated the scene of Soviet politeness studies was aimed at establishing a certain set of rules for a specific social group. However, the speaker's perceptions of the interlocutor's reciprocal status can undermine the assumptions underlying etiquette standards.

⁸ The apology can be boosted in the Russian language by an exclamation "radi Boga!" 'for God's sake!', which is a literal appeal to the interlocutor's Christian morality.

After the Revolution, while hierarchy and deferential status are generally maintained through the system of T and V pronouns, new address terms start to emerge. This fact has two important implications. On the one hand, the boundary between superiors and inferiors becomes fuzzier and, on the other hand, the dichotomy between “us” and “them” becomes more evident. Pre-revolutionary terms like *misters*, *sirs* and *gentlemen* not only mark a distinctive social group membership, but also imply, reflect and reinforce the social dominance of this particular group over working class members. This effectively underlines the original semantic meaning of these titles. The way in which the characters in the novel speak suggests that professional roles are stable – and indeed, nobody questions the use of such terms as “doctor” and “professor” – but also that, on the other hand, social roles and the labels used to refer to them constantly undergo the process of negotiation and modification. The above qualitative analysis of dialogues gives insights into the interactive factors that preside over specific choices of address terms (Mazzon 2010, p. 367).

The other interesting point for discussion is the negotiation of gender roles as a consequence of the social equalising language politics. Although the text makes us reflect only on the professional role of women in the post-revolutionary period, it is interesting to notice how the language is particularly sensitive to a slight paradigm shift taking place inside the working class movement. This suggests that in this socialistic world a new gender-neutral norm was being built upon male standards, which in the text involves the use of masculine nouns and address terms, such as “tovarisch”, which has no feminine counterpart.

Last but not least, I should mention the changing role of politeness formulas that become linguistic clues of social class affiliation. Their use is the part of old social conventions, and they are perceived as highly deferential compared to new routine formulas.

Although presenting a limited case study, this paper was meant to contribute to raising awareness on a complex nature of linguistic behaviour in the times of social changes. It worth mentioning that due to the ideological censorship and propaganda, the fiction of that period was heavily biased. It is also the reason why it was challenging to find a novel with clearly outlined social groups described through the lenses of an impartial observer. The text of the Bulgakov’s novel provides illustrative examples for the emerging trends of social role negotiation and serves the purpose to bridge the gap in the studies on Russian politeness within historical pragmatics perspective.

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THE ETIQUETTE OF ASPECT

How and why *prositi* stopped worrying and entered a pair

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Abstract – On the basis of the linguistic and extralinguistic data gathered from a variety of Old Russian (henceforth OR) and Middle Russian (henceforth MR) written sources (the Laurentian Codex of the *Tale of Bygone Years*, the corpus of birch bark letters, Daniel the Traveller's *Pilgrimage*, Afanasij Nikitin's *The Journey Beyond Three Seas*, testaments and treaties signed between princes, Avvakum's *Life*, and other texts retrieved from the OR and MR subcorpora of the Russian National Corpus), this paper explores the possible reasons for the absence of preverbed proto-perfective first person non-past forms of *prositi* 'to ask (for)' in directive speech acts up to the second half the 18th century. It is argued that this restriction can be primarily accounted for on the basis of morphosyntactic and sociolinguistic evidence, namely, on the one hand, the actional properties of verbs of communication and, on the other, the lack of a proper allocutionary pronoun (in the sense of a T-V distinction) consistent with the etiquette of hierarchically-oriented social relationships.

Keywords: aspect; pragmaphilology; sociolinguistics; morphosyntax; performatives.

1. Introductory remarks

During the historical evolution that ultimately led to the standardization of the literary variant of the language here defined as Contemporary Russian (henceforth CR), the category of verbal aspect underwent great structural changes. The gradual grammaticalization of the aspectual system – a process which has lasted for centuries and is still in force – has made the encoding of aspect mandatory and morphologically transparent for every verbal lexeme. Speaking in the most general terms, that means that every verbal lexeme is assigned either to the perfective (henceforth PF) or imperfective (henceforth

IPF) aspect.¹ Morphologically simple verbs are, with few exceptions, IPF (e.g. *čítat* ‘to read’): adding a preverb creates a new PF lexeme, which in turn – following Janda *et al.* (2013, pp. 3-4) – can be labeled *natural* (e.g. *pročítat* ‘to read through’) or *specialized* (e.g. *vyčítat* ‘to proofread’). In the former case the semantics of the preverb, which historically derives from a homographic and homophonic preposition encoding spatial and/or temporal primitive meanings, overlaps with that of the verb, which therefore enters an aspectual pair with the IPF partner.² In the latter case, the preverb adds a semantic component to the lexical basis: in order to form an aspectual pair of its own, the specialized PF resorts to the morphological mechanism of suffixation (*vyčityvat*), which in turn gives rise to a so-called secondary IPF.

The first and by far most important consequence of having such a grammaticalized aspectual system is that the expression of temporal features is often conveyed through aspect (therefore the term *vido-vremennye formy* ‘tempo-aspectual forms’ is frequently used). The most relevant case is represented by the present³ perfective (henceforth NP^{PF}), formerly a non-actual present, which has been reinterpreted as a future tense already from the very first written occurrences of OR (*drevnerusskij*, see again 3.2),⁴ thus overcoming the riddle of what in literature has recently been called *present perfective paradox* (De Wit 2017). Furthermore, transitioning towards CR, the functional sphere of the aspectual system has increasingly been incorporating a wide array of linguistic variables, pertaining to the area of

¹ A couple of points need to be clarified here. I will not take a definite stand on the much-debated question as to whether an independent Aspectual Phrase (henceforth AspP) projection exists in CR. The interested reader is referred to Bailyn (2012, pp. 30-33, 129-139) for further material. I stick to the definition of PF given for East Slavic languages in Dickey (2000, p. 19 ff.), that is, the semantic (cognitive) conceptualization of topologically closed events occupying a uniquely located point in time (with IPF events, on the other hand, not being assigned a unique point in time). As for the description of the CR aspectual system, for the present purposes the framework I am sketching out is obviously oversimplified. We will not deal with such important theoretical questions as aspectual triplets (*vidovye trojki*), *perfectiva* and *imperfectiva tantum*, and biaspectual verbs (Zaliznjak *et al.* 2015).

² This came to be known as the ‘Vey-Schooneveld effect’, from the name of the two linguists that worked separately on a semantic theory of Czech (Vey 1952) and CR preverbs (van Schooneveld 1959) during the 1950s, reaching more or less the same conclusions independently of each other.

³ In this article the term *neprošedšee* ‘non-past’ (henceforth NP) is used, which unifies on the time axis the functions of both present and future tenses as opposed to past ones. Also, in CR two other terms can be used in order to disambiguate the vaguer English ‘present’: the first one, *prezens*, refers to the morphological characteristics of the tense (whose semantic functions can nevertheless imply a future anchorage, as for CR NP^{PF}), while the second one, *nastojasšee* (*vremja*) ‘present (tense)’, refers exclusively to its semantic (tactic, temporal) reference.

⁴ The label *Old Russian* will be used when denoting the language spoken in Kievan Rus’ between the 11th and the 15th century rather than the more common term *Old East Slavic*. Finally, for the sake of simplicity, any reference to dialectal differences or geographical isoglosses – North-Western territories aside – will be disregarded.

pragmatics, sociolinguistics, the organization of discourse, and presuppositions (Israeli 2001; Vimer 2014).

Amidst the pragmatic-conversational factors which have proved relevant for the aspectual choice are the adoption of politeness strategies, the interpersonal distance between the interlocutors, and the degree of illocutionary force carried by the very utterance. These factors do exert a considerable influence on the aspectual properties of linguistic categories of great semantic complexity, i.e. the imperative (Benakk'o 2010) and different types of performative verbs (Slavkova 2014; Vimer 2014).

In recent years, great attention has been devoted to the so-called *verbs of communication* (henceforth VOCs). VOCs represent a semantically heterogeneous class of telic predicates taking either a noun phrase or an entire clause as their direct object; their basic function is to signal the nature of the verbal interaction between the participants to the speech event. It has further been noted that, in directive illocutionary acts (henceforth DIAs), namely requests and orders (following the taxonomy of Searle 1976), the aspectual fluctuation of a small subset of CR *verba rogandi*, such as *prosiit*^{IPF}/*poprosit*^{PF} 'to ask for' or *sprašivat*^{IPF}/*sprosiit*^{PF} 'to ask', when used performatively, is determined not only by the actional features of the verbs, but also by the presence or absence of the aforementioned pragmatic-conversational strategies and circumstances (politeness, distance, authority and the like). It has been suggested, for instance, that the choice of NP^{PF} is widely recommended in formal contexts, while NP^{IPF} is highly preferred in informal communication. In the former case, the participants to the DIA event do not belong to the same social class or, conversely, while belonging to the same social class, strive to display some kind of courtesy based on distance. In the latter case, the participants to the DIA event are likely to be on closer terms (they enter a horizontal or symmetric relationship), otherwise the allocation is perceived improper at best, if not rude (Slavkova 2014).

The expression of a great variety of functions via aspect assignment is thought to be an indication of a refined, highly grammaticalized aspectual system. However, we do not know whether the same pragmatic-conversational nuances could be conveyed through the OR or MR (*staroruskij*)⁵ aspectual systems. To tackle this issue, it would be necessary not only to investigate morphosemantic evidence, but also to understand the nature of power relationships as attested in the language usage of a given time.

⁵ The label *MR* will be used in order to refer to the dominant linguistic variety spoken in the Muscovy between the 15th and the 17th century.

This contribution explores the possible reasons underlying the aspectual distribution of the *verbum rogandi prositi* ‘to ask (for)’⁶ and its derived preverbed forms when used performatively in OR and MR DIAs⁷ so as to explain the differences between the secondary functions (i.e. pragmatic, interaction-oriented) of the CR vs. OR/MR aspectual systems and shed more light on the diachronic evolution of the aspectual system.⁸ In doing so, I will also analyze the structure of the situation of the communicative events represented in the texts, adopting the tools of the scientific discipline known as *pragmaphilology*.⁹

The qualitative-quantitative analysis will be limited exclusively to NP^{PF} and NP^{IPF} 1st p. sing., to avoid the possibility of other morphological forms being (mis)interpreted as futures (in descriptive and reportative function) or exhortatives (typically 1st p. pl.).

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 introduces the theoretical problem, with a general overview of the CR data. Section 3 outlines the method used in choosing and approaching OR and MR textual sources, after which I comment upon the OR data. Section 4 presents a morphosyntactic (4.1), and sociolinguistic (4.2) tentative solution to the problem. Section 5 draws preliminary conclusions.

2. Approaching the problem

In this section I will first approach the core theoretical problem providing a sample of CR data (2.1), before tackling the issue in more detail with a review of the relevant literature (2.2).

⁶ Unlike CR, where the predicates denoting the events of ‘asking (sb.)’ and ‘asking (for sth.)’ are lexically distinguished (cf. the similar difference in Latin between the forms *petō* and *rogō*), OR and MR unified the two notions under the lexeme *prositi*, which was then disambiguated contextually (or, as we will see, via creation of a specialized preverbed form).

⁷ It should be noted that other (semi) performative VOCs partially synonymous with *prositi*, such as *moliti* ‘to ask for’, ‘to pray’, do not posit any problems for this research. They are typically used in stylistically marked (e.g. religious) contexts; thus they tend to be used in fixed constructions and are not subject to aspectual fluctuation (this also applies to CR *umoljat* ^{IPF} ‘to beg’, which does not alternate with the PF *umolit*’ in DIAs; Israeli 2001, p. 82).

⁸ Assuming that the OR and MR aspectual systems were, even to a considerable extent, less grammaticalized than that of CR, the definitions *proto-perfective* and *proto-imperfective* have therefore been adopted (Bermel 1997, pp. 9-10) to refer to the alleged aspectual profile (i.e. aspect marking) of OR and MR verbs.

⁹ Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010, p. 12) define *pragmaphilology* as the pragmatic study of the use of language in earlier periods, thus distinguishing it both from diachronic pragmatics (which focuses on the change in meaning of one or more forms during a definite time span) and historical discourse analysis (which is rather concerned with the application of discourse analysis to language history).

2.1. PF-IPF fluctuation of CR *verba rogandi* in DIAs

As the study of speech acts gained a foothold in the Soviet Union, especially from the second half of the 1970s onward, one of the most debated theoretical questions revolved around the alleged interchangeability between PF and IPF in a performative context,¹⁰ with regard to a small group of lexically heterogeneous predicates, mostly *verba dicendi* (i.e. *povtorjat*^{IPF}/*povtorit*^{PF} ‘to repeat’, *zamečat*^{IPF}/*zametit*^{PF} ‘to remark’, *pribavljat*^{IPF}/*pribavit*^{PF} ‘to add’). Particularly interesting is the case of VOCs (as defined in Section 1).

Let us consider the following DIAs with *prošit*^{IPF}/*poprošit*^{PF}, which could be uttered on a bus by a ticket inspector asking the passengers to show their validated tickets:

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| (1a) Prošu | vaši | bilety. |
| ASK FOR.NP ^{IPF} .1.SING. | YOUR.ACC.M.PL.IN. | TICKET.ACC.M.PL. |
| (1b) Poprošu | vaši | bilety. |
| ASK FOR.NP ^{PF} .1.SING. | YOUR.ACC.M.PL.IN. | TICKET.ACC.M.PL. |

“Tickets, please” (lit. “I ask for your tickets”).¹¹

Aspectual pairs of VOCs such as *prošit*^{IPF}/*poprošit*^{PF} are allegedly regulated by mechanisms which can be only partially identified with the standard semantic criteria influencing aspect (e.g. telicity/atelicity, boundedness/unboundedness etc.). These criteria are generally evoked to justify the aspectual choice for all the verbs belonging to the Vendlerian-based actional classes of accomplishments or achievements. However, for *prošit*^{IPF}/*poprošit*^{PF} the dichotomy of repeated vs. resultative action does not apply,¹² neither does the traditional distinction between an ongoing action (prototypically denoted by IPF) and an action which has reached its internal endpoint (prototypically denoted by PF).

¹⁰ Already at the dawn of Slavic aspectology, straddling the 19th and the 20th century, the problem of the tempo-aspectual characteristics of the performative verbs had been given a great amount of attention, decades before the classic definition of the analytic Oxfordian school was formulated (an accurate historical sketch can be found in Žagar and Grgič 2011). The philosophical issue of performativity will not be considered here.

¹¹ All the translations, except where explicitly stated, are mine. For the sake of brevity, full morphosyntactic annotations are given for CR examples only. Apart from those already mentioned in the text, the following abbreviations are used: SING – singular, PL – plural, M – masculine, F – feminine, N – neuter, NOM – nominative, GEN – genitive, DAT – dative, PR – prepositional, INSTR – instrumental, IN – inanimate, INF – infinitive, COMP – comparative, HYP – hypocoristic (diminutive), INTER – interjection, SH – short form (of adjectives).

¹² This dichotomy is assumed in literature to explain the aspectual behavior of pairs such as *naxodit*^{IPF}/*najti*^{PF} ‘to find’ and the like (here reference is clearly made to a single action for both sentences).

It seems strange, to say the least, to conceptualize the aspectual discrepancy between (1a) and (1b) in terms of the presence and/or absence of the semantic feature of durativity because, even if the event they denote necessarily stretches over a given span of time, it is conceived of as instantaneous in both cases. Although still lacking a systematic definition, that is the reason why several aspectologists – Zaliznjak *et al.* (2015) among others – have proposed to label aspectual pairs denoting events of this kind *semiotic pairs* (*semiotičeskie pary*), e.g. *prosit*^{IPF}/*poprosit*^{PF} (*kogo-libo*) ‘to ask (for sth.)’, *soobščat*^{IPF}/*soobščit*^{PF} [*komu-libo(čto-libo)*] ‘to provide [sb. (with a piece of information)]’, or *zvonit*^{IPF}/*pozvonit*^{PF} (*v dver*) ‘to ring (the bell)’.

The aspectual properties of semiotic pairs – being durative although perceived as instantaneous – have direct consequences on their temporal representation. As already mentioned in Section 1, the default meaning of NP^{PF} in CR is future. In (1b), though, the common futurate reading is not triggered at all. In other words, taking into consideration their temporal anchorage only, (1a) and (1b) are claimed to be synonymous. This is not the case for other types of achievements used outside directives (e.g. *vzryvat*^{IPF}/*vzorvat*^{PF} ‘to blow up’) or for the same aspectual pair *prosit*^{IPF}/*poprosit*^{PF} when employed outside the performative use in the DIAs, as shown below.¹³

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| (2a) Begaem | tam, | bombočki | vzryvaem, |
| RUN.NP ^{IPF} .1.PL. | THERE | BOMB.ACC.F.PL.IN.HYP. | BLOW UP.NP ^{IPF} .1.PL. |
| nu | v | smysle | – xlopuški... |
| INTER. | IN | SENSE.PR.M.SING. | PARTY POPPER.ACC.M.PL.IN. |

[Bela Belousova. Vtoroj vystrel (2000)]

“We run there, we blow up some bombs – I mean, party poppers”.

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (2b) Esli | im | udastsja | raskačat’ |
| IF | THEY.DAT. | SUCCESS.NP ^{PF} .3.SING. | UNDERMINE.INF ^{PF} |
| situaciju | v | Alžire, | èto |
| SITUATION.ACC.F.SING. | IN | ALGERIA.PR.M.SING. | THIS |
| vzorvet | region. | | |
| BLOW UP.NP ^{PF} .3.SING. | REGION.ACC.M.SING.IN. | | |

[Nikolaj Petrov. Islamisty protiv vsej // «Russkij reporter», 2013]

“If they succeed in undermining the situation in Algeria, this will tear the region apart”.

¹³ Here and elsewhere, except where otherwise stated, all the CR examples are taken from the Russian National Corpus (*Nacional’nyj Korpus Russkogo Jazyka*, henceforth NKRJa, available at <http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/>).

- (3a) Pered smert'ju on prosit povernut'
 BEFORE DEATH.INSTR.F.SING. HE.NOM. ASK FOR.NP^{IPF}.1.SING. TURN.INF^{PF}
 ego licom k stene, gde
 HE.ACC. FACE.INSTR.N.SING. TOWARDS WALL.DAT.F.SING. WHERE
 tancuet Terri.
 DANCE.NP^{IPF}.3.SING. TERRY.NOM.
 [Božestvennyj Čarli (2004) //«Ėkran i scena», 2004.05.06]

“On his deathbed, he asks to be turned face to the wall, where Terry dances”.

- (3b) [akinfeev, muž] Uveren, čto kto-to poprosit
 SURE.NOM.M.SING.SH. THAT SOMEONE.NOM ASK FOR.NP^{PF}.3.SING.
 rasskazat' obo vsem popodrobnee, no
 TELL.INF^{PF} ABOUT ALL.PR.N.SING IN DETAIL.COMP.HYP. BUT
 umyšlenno ne stanu ètogo delat'.
 INTENTIONALLY NOT BECOME.NP^{PF}.1.SING. THIS.GEN.N.SING. Do.INF^{IPF}
 [kollektivnyj. Forum: Poxod v cirk (2010)]

“I’m sure that someone will ask (me) to tell everything in more detail, but I will not, on purpose”.

In order to explain effectively why verbs like *prosiť*^{IPF}/*poprosit*^{PF} can alternate in DIAs, apparently without a change in tense, one has to take into account concepts such as politeness, face, and the principle of solidarity. In the following subsection these concepts will be traced back to their origin and then discussed with reference to the present work.

2.2. Aspect, politeness, and the pragmatic turn of the 1980s

The linguistic study of politeness arose within the field of pragmatics from the very beginning of the ‘60s onward, especially with the contributions by Lakoff (1973) and Leech (1983). The Gricean taxonomy of conversational maxims – Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, which are part of the Cooperative Principle¹⁴ – accounts for communicative effectiveness, while politeness theory account for interpersonal appropriateness. For example, Leech’s (1983) Politeness Principle describes perceived politeness on the basis of the interplay of a cost-benefit scale for handling the interlocutors’ rights and duties and a directness-indirectness scale for encoding them. In particular, Leech (1983) posited six further maxims under his Politeness Principle: Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy. Of particular interest is the Tact Maxim, which applies directly, among other things, to DIAs. According to the general principle and this

¹⁴ The principle is formulated as follows: “make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice 1975, p. 45).

maxim, the more beneficial an act is for the addressee, and the more indirectly it is phrased, the politer it will be perceived to be. In parallel, the more costly an act is for the addressee, and the more directly it is phrased, the less polite it will turn out to be. For example, a request for the addressee to answer the phone is necessarily costly to the addressee, but it is politer if phrased indirectly in the form of an interrogative than an imperative. Indirectness in potential offences and directness in benefits are at the basis of the difference between negative and positive politeness, respectively.

Indeed, in their well-known monograph, Brown and Levinson develop their theory of politeness from the socio-anthropological notion of face, that is “the public self-image that every member [of a society, *M.B.*] wants to claim for himself” (Brown, Levinson 1988, p. 61). Face comprises two components: negative face stresses one’s freedom of action and freedom from imposition, while positive face is all about one’s yearning to be socially appreciated and approved of. Similarly, politeness has two components. Positive politeness is oriented towards positive face: it is therefore inclusive (“approach-based”), presuming that the speaker (*s*) and *h* share at least some wants and goals. On the other hand, negative politeness is oriented towards negative face (“avoidance-based”), e.g. it takes for granted *h*’s will not to be constrained and therefore “is characterized by self-effacement, formality and restraint” (Brown and Levinson 1988, p. 70).

The linguistic resources of politeness can be lexical, grammatical, strategic and paralinguistic, as already noted by Brown and Levinson (1988, pp. 91-210). The research on Slavic languages and, more specifically, on CR has been primarily carried out on selected and widely discussed topics, e.g. the imperative and performative verbs (i.e. those self-referential verbs which make explicit the illocutionary force of their utterances, in the sense of Austin 1975). The focus has therefore been on grammatical resources.

Studying the functioning of aspect in the imperative, Benacchio (Benakk’o 2010) shows how politeness is a discrete category encoded in the CR aspectual system. That is, the choice between PF and IPF in the imperative of telic verbs is influenced by conversational strategies such as (positive or negative) politeness, and awareness and recognition of the interplay of social factors such as the interpersonal distance between the interlocutors and their relative social status, which can be symmetrical or hierarchical (Brown, Gilman 1960, pp. 257-262).

PF is considered to be the neutral member of the pair with respect to these factors: it generally displays negative politeness, addressing *h*’s negative face and maintaining the interpersonal distance between the interlocutors, which is perceived as the appropriate choice in formal (or, more properly, non-informal) contexts. On the other hand, IPF displays positive politeness, hinting at the friendly and/or more informal nature of the

relationship between the interlocutors. However, if *h* is not close to *s* the use of IPF is generally improper, if not rude (Benakk'o 2010, pp. 44-64). These pragmatic overtones are contextually derived from the core meanings of each aspect. Using PF, *s* focuses on the final stage of the action they want to be carried out: on the other hand, IPF constitutes a more direct form, as it focuses either on the initial or the intermediate stage of the action, prompting *h* to start or continue doing it. This can be positive or negative, depending whether it is beneficial or detrimental to the addressee (Benakk'o 2010, pp. 23-32).

Not surprisingly, the pragmatic account given on the use of the imperative also holds for performative verbs. Slavkova (2014) studies the complementary distribution of *prošiti*^{IPF}/*poprošiti*^{PF} and the equivalent Bulgarian forms *molja*^{IPF}/*pomolja*^{PF} in DIAs. Unlike CR, Bulgarian has overcome the present perfective paradox by positing a condition of ungrammaticality on the use of NP^{PF} in main clauses: future has therefore been formed by resorting to other lexical sources, namely, the grammaticalization of the lexical verb *šta*^{IPF} 'to want'. This implies that Bulgarian can contrast CR NP^{PF} and NP^{IPF} with three different tempo-aspectual morphological forms (Pres^{IPF} *molja*, Fut^{PF} *šte pomolja*, Fut^{IPF} *šte molja*). Slavkova (2014, pp. 242-249) shows that, while *prošiti*'-*molja* and *poprošiti*'-*šte pomolja* overlap in function (the former signaling the existence of a horizontal relationship between the interlocutors, the latter addressing negative face wants and thus being more appropriate in formal contexts), Fut^{IPF} *šte molja* is a form of calculated artificiality that mixes up the formal register without overtly pointing at the social difference between the interlocutors.

These varied functions can only be encoded in highly grammaticalized aspectual systems. Therefore, similarities and differences between Slavic languages not only give us a chance to measure the level of grammaticalization reached in their aspectual systems; they also allow us to explore how secondary functions, unevenly spread in the Slavic area, have developed from others which are thought to be primary, strictly aspectual. This is what Wiemer (Vimer 2014, pp. 91-92) put forward in a study on the tempo-aspectual properties of Slavic performatives, where he argued that actional functions (e.g. "event", "process", "state") are founding, while discourse functions and presuppositions are reasonably assumed to be newer. The above theoretical considerations form the basis of the following analysis.

3. Sketching the data

3.1. Sources and methodology

The sources from which the data was selected mainly consist of literary texts. Part of the sources were browsed through the OR and MR subsections of NKRJa, a small monitor corpus, to which new, tagged data is constantly being added.¹⁵ The remaining material (which will be analyzed later in this order) comprises:

- The Laurentian Codex of the *Tale of Bygone Years* (*Povest' vremennyx let*, henceforth PVL: PVL 1978). The PVL is the most ancient chronicle written in OR which has survived up to the present day. The Laurentian Codex is named after Lavrentij, the monk who copied it in 1377, at the behest of the then-Prince of Suzdal' and Nižnij Novgorod Dmitrij Konstantinovič (1365-1383);
- The corpus of birch bark letters (DND 2004, NGB 2015), a series of daily life documents (private letters, personal communications, wills and testaments, war dispatches etc.) etched on the inner layer of birch bark and spanning approximately four centuries (11th-15th). They give us a precious insight into the social dynamics of several medieval centres of north-western Russia – Velikij Novgorod, Staraja Russa, Toržok, and Tver' among others;
- Daniel the Traveller's *Pilgrimage* (*Žitie i xoždenie Daniila, Rus'skyja zemli igumena*: XD 1970), one of the first literary examples of a travelogue in the Kievan Rus'. The manuscript we rely on is thought to have been handwritten in 1495, although the travel itself was completed within the first decades of the 12th century;
- Afanasij Nikitin's *The Journey Beyond Three Seas* (*Xoženie za tri morja*: XAN 1986), another travelogue based on the notes of a merchant from Tver', Afanasij Nikitin, who traveled in India between 1466 and 1472. The reference manuscript dates back to 1489;
- Testaments, treaties, and the private correspondence between grand and appanage princes in and around Muscovy, a series of documents covering the time between the 14th and the 16th centuries (DDG 1950), as well as a legal document from Pskov (PSG 1896);

¹⁵ The full list of the OR sources can be retrieved directly at the following link: http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-old_rus.html. No source list has yet been provided for the MR corpus, which is currently under construction.

- Avvakum's *Life* (*Žitie protopopa Avvakuma, im samim napisannoe*: Avvakum 1997), the autobiography of the protopope and fierce opponent of then-Patriarch Nikon Avvakum Petrov, completed in 1672.

Two criteria were followed to select the data to be analyzed. The first one relates to their linguistic features. They all had to pertain to different literary genres, thus displaying different stylistic (and, only for the birch bark letters, dialectal) registers of OR and MR.¹⁶ On the other hand, all the texts exemplifying the Old Church Slavonic language register (which is known to be a target-language that offers little interest to our research) were ruled out first. Thus, for example, no OCR biblical translation from Greek has been included in the final corpus, and several records from the birch bark letters corpus were disregarded as well.

The second criterion takes into account a bundle of relevant pragmaphilological features, such as the number and the role of the participants to the speech act event, the nature of their relationship, their ontological status (e.g. whether they are real persons or fictitious characters), the external circumstances that allowed or hindered the production and/or reception of the text etc. Needless to say, when approaching a textual source with pragmaphilological methods, one needs to bear in mind there is no one-to-one correlation between the form and the function of a given linguistic object, as such it can only be properly understood only with reference to its sociopolitical setting (Taavitsainen, Jucker 2010, p. 12). Such an attempt has been undertaken by Gippius (2004), whose detailed article on the communicative organization of birch bark letters provided a quite complex yet useful taxonomy for the analysis of older OR texts,¹⁷ and has paved the way for even more systematic studies (see, for instance, Dekker 2018).

¹⁶ Orthography, which can often function as a stylistic factor of its own, does not play a relevant role for the present analysis: therefore, the transliteration has been simplified (e.g. all the Greek-oriented ligatures like $\bar{\omega}$ for ω [ot], $\omega y/8$ for y [u] etc. have been undone, orthographic literate variants such as \bar{i} for $\bar{\imath}$ [i] and \bar{o}/w for \bar{o} [o] led back to the current norm) and conformed to the rules of contemporary language. The interested reader is referred to the original source.

¹⁷ For the purposes of this study, I have greatly simplified Gippius's (2004) taxonomy. This defines the six different roles (variously intertwined to each other) of the participants in the so-called "speech act in written form" (*pis'mennyj rečevoj akt*) – that is, the sender of the text, its creator, its writer, the messenger, the reader and the addressee. I only take into account the participants to the speech event, disregarding the other roles.

3.2. Data analysis

This section presents the analysis of the data.

3.2.1. PVL

As reported by Bermel (1997, p. 181), there are 57 instances¹⁸ of the simple verb *prositi* in the Laurentian Codex. Judging from the morphological coding of tense-aspect features and the contexts the verbal lexeme is used in, Bermel (1997, p. 9) states that OR *prositi* shows signs of anaspectuality, that is, “an ability to apply across a range of tenses and functions normally associated with opposing aspects”. However, as the formulation itself reveals and Bermel’s analysis crucially shows, the concept of anaspectuality applies to past tense contexts only (e.g. when one and the same verbal lexeme is conjugated in the aorist and in the imperfect), while the temporal reading of non-past ones is mostly (although not automatically) determined by the aspectual (proto-perfectivity) and actional (telicity) features of the verbal lexeme, i.e. with natural, telic proto-perfective verbs most likely already reinterpreted as aspectual futures (Bermel 1997, pp. 470-474). In non-past contexts, more specifically, the simple *prositi* clearly behaves like a proto-imperfective verbal form, i.e. it has a present deixis.

Out of the total 57 occurrences identified, only two suitable (i.e. performative) contexts were found. In both DIAs shown below, the verb used is the simple *prositi*:

(4) Ona že reče imъ: «Nyně u vasъ něst’ medu, ni skory, no malo u vasъ **prošju**^{NPIPF}: dajte mi ot dvora po 3 golubi da po 3 vorob’i. Azъ bo ne xoščju tjažьki dani vъzložiti, jakože i mužь moj, cego **prošju**^{NPIPF} u vasъ malo».

(PVL 1978, p. 72, ll. 29-33)

“She said to them: «Now you have neither honey nor furs, I ask you for this little thing: give me three pigeons and three sparrows from each house. I do not want to impose a heavy tribute on you, as my husband [did], here’s why I ask you for this little thing»”.

Speaking up in this excerpt is Ol’ga, regent of Kievan Rus’ (945-960) and grandmother of the initiator of Christianity in the realm, Vladimir Svjatoslavič the Great (980-1015). Taking part in the DIAs are also the

¹⁸ Differently from the present study, the number of total occurrences in Bermel (1997) is drawn from the analysis of the Laurentian Codex as reprinted in the *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej* (*Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*), where every gap of the original manuscript is filled by resorting to other, later codices.

addressees, the tribe of Derevljans, who had been overtly refusing Kievan Rus' supremacy to the point they turned against Ol'ga's husband, Igor', and killed him. In order to get her payback, Ol'ga tricks them: after pretending to make peace with them, she orders her soldiers to tie to the birds a piece of sulphur laden tissue, so that, once free to fly back to their nests, they inadvertently set the village on fire, burning it down.

The setting is military-like,¹⁹ the DIA is reported as a dialogic part of the chronicle and Ol'ga is wielding power over the Derevljans (i.e. she is supposed to be in a vertical, asymmetrical relationship with them), which is confirmed by her addressing them with an alleged NP^{IPF} form, the condescending *prošju*.

No preverbed forms were found in similar performative DIAs, although a variety of morphological variants can be recovered from other (descriptive, non-performative) contexts: among them are *isprositi* 'to solicit', *všsprositi* 'to ask' (also in the variant *všprositi*),²⁰ *zaprošati* 'to ask (for)', and *sšuprašati sja* 'to make contact', but not *poprositi*. Interestingly, not all of them are formed from the simple *prositi*: in some cases, the preverb is attached to an already suffixed form, *prašati* (Bermel 1997, p. 185), which is thought to cover actional functions akin to a CR iterative-frequentative Aktionsart.

3.2.2. Birch bark letters and the travelogues

Although *prositi* is featured overall six times, three of which as the NP^{IPF} 3rd p. pl. *prosja(t')* (DND 2004, pp. 269, 684; NGB 2015, p. 105), these occurrences are found in dialogic and descriptive contexts. This may not only indicate that we still lack complete data in the birch bark documents, but also that such explicit performatives are unlikely to be morphologically realized in a DIA and therefore used in everyday language, for they can be perceived as excessively ceremonial in informal communication.

No preverbed forms of any kind were featured in DIAs. However, *prositi* (and its iterative variant *prašati*) do still form a great variety of preverbed proto-perfectives. Among them, except for *všsprositi*, *rasprašati* 'to make inquiries' and the like, an occurrence is found of *poprositi* (as the 2nd p. dual imperative *poprosita*: DND 2004, p. 297) and two different

¹⁹ An anonymous reviewer argues that Ol'ga and the Derevljans appear to be negotiating. However, as the wider communicative situation shows, they are not: Ol'ga has already defeated them in multiple battles and starved them to death in their own villages, so that they are ready to surrender and pay their levy: the Derevljans are simply complying with Ol'ga's orders.

²⁰ More on the historical allomorphy of *všs-* and *vš-* can be found in Endresen and Plungian (2011).

occurrences of *poprašati* (both in the bare infinitive and the conditional m. sing. *by... poprošal*: DND 2004, p. 550).

Not a single occurrence of *prošiti* was found in Daniel the Traveller's *Pilgrimage*. VOCs overall are barely attested, except for the single preverbed *uprošiti*, here used as a reported speech verb in the 1st p. sing. aorist *uprošixъ* (XD 1970, p. 128, ll. 14-15). The same applies to Afanasij Nikitin's *Journey*, where both *prošiti* and *prašati* are absent and the only attested form is *otprošiti* 'to receive (after having asked for)' in the perfect m. sing. *otprosil* (XAN 1986, p. 8, l. 10). Neither *poprošiti* nor *poprašati* are attested in either of the sources.

3.2.3. Other letters

The study of epistolary sources attributable to merchants, nobles, gentry, and (great) princes has always had a prominent role inside Russian (and therefore Soviet) philological tradition, with several volumes edited to this day spanning at least three centuries (14th-16th) and focusing on various geographical territories (Pskov, the Muscovy, Novgorod, and the like). Here only two records have been addressed overall, the first one being a legal document from Pskov, written between 1397 and 1462 (*Pskovskaja sudnaja gramota*, PSG 1896), the second one collecting various official documents written by appanage and grand princes, including such personalities as Ivan I Daniilovič "Kalita" and Ivan IV Vasil'evič "the Terrible" (DDG 1950).

In the first record only two occurrences of *prošiti* were found, none of them in a DIA (an infinitive after the deontic auxiliary *imetъ* 'to have to', a NP^{IPF} 3rd p. sing. *prošitъ*: PSG 1896, pp. 7, 37). Only *oprošiti* 'to inquire' was retrieved among the preverbed forms, both times in an impersonal context governed by an infinitive (the first occurrence shows the variant *oprošitъ*: PSG 1896, pp. 8, 21). The relative association of VOCs with deontic contexts fits well with the authoritative nature of the source, but again it should be noted that no aspectually divergent choice is provided, let alone *poprošiti*.

In the second record the reflexive variant *prošitisja* is mainly attested, as part of the fixed deontic collocation *imet prošiti(sja) na izvodъ* 'if it should be required to show an evidence (to the witnesses)', which seems to be a recurring formula typical of commercial treaties as a literary genre in itself (DDG 1950, p. 42, l. 37; see also p. 188, l. 43; p. 204, l. 8; p. 206, l. 45; p. 298, l. 42).²¹ NP^{IPF} 1st p. sing. is never found, either in descriptive or performative contexts. The plural variant *prosim* is found in an excerpt from the spiritual testament of Ivan IV, written in 1572 (DDG 1950, p. 427, l. 3),

²¹ The modal verb, in two of the examples above (DDG 1950, p. 204, l. 8; p. 298, l. 42), is preceded by the NP^{PF} 3rd p. sing. of the phasal verb *učati* "to begin".

where the czar speaks directly to God, although in a formulaic fashion (it is no coincidence that *prositi* is used in another fixed collocation, *milosti prosim* ‘we beg for mercy’).²² Among the preverbed forms are the NP^{PF} 3st p. sing. of *vsprositi* (DDG 1950, p. 200, l. 52) and the perfect m. sing. form *pereprosila* from *pereprositi* ‘to beg smb. for’ (DDG 1950, p. 163, ll. 26-27). Again, no preverbed forms are featured performatively in DIAs, although the conversational shift towards a highly standardized language would require them, in the spirit of the principle of solidarity.

3.2.4. Avvakum

Dating back to the second half of the 17th century, a transitional period towards the standardization of CR, Avvakum’s autobiography is the most recent source among those considered in this study. *Prositi* is featured at least ten times, three of which performatively in DIAs, where it enters a lexical combination with an abstract direct object marked by the genitive case (*blagoslovenie* ‘blessing’, *proščenie* ‘forgiving’):

(5) Potom ko mne komnatye ljudi mnogaždy prisylany byli, Artemon i Dementej, i govorili mne carevym glagolom: «protopop, vedaju-de ja tvoe čistoe i neporočnoe i bogopodražatel’noe žitie, **prošu**^{NPIPF}-de tvoevo blagoslovenija i s cariceju i s čady, — pomolisja o nas!».

(Avvakum 1997, p. 132, ll. 24-29; p. 133, l. 1)

“Then several times Artemon and Dementej, who were his emissaries, were brought to me and they reported the czar’s words: «protopope, I know for sure that your life is clean, immaculate and godlike, so that the *carica*, our children and I ask you for your blessing – pray for us!»”

(6) Posem u vsjakago pravovernago proščeniija **prošu**^{NPIPF} [...]

(Avvakum 1997, p. 139, ll. 24-25)

“And then I beg every Orthodox for forgiveness”

(7) I egda v Petrov den’ sobral’sja v doščennik, prišel ko mne Feodor celoumen, na doščennike pri narode klanjaetsja na nogi moi, a sam govorit: «spasi bog, batjuško, za milost’ tvoju, čto pomiloval mja. Po pustyni-de ja bežal tret’eva dni, a ty-de mne javilsja i blagoslovil menja krestom, i besi-de proč’ otbežali ot menja i ja prišel k tebe poklonitca i paki **prošu**^{NPIPF} blagoslovenija ot tebja».

(Avvakum 1997, p. 149, ll. 19-27)

²² The NP^{IPF} 2st p. pl. imperative form *prositi* was also found, which is featured in a biblical quote from M 11:24 (Jesus speaking up to the apostles) and therefore, being heavily influenced by Old Church Slavonic, has been disregarded.

“When, on Saint Peter’s Day, I got into the *doščanik* [a flat-bottomed river vessel made of boards, *M.B.*], my Feodor, a wise man, came to me. He kneels down to my feet, in front of all those people, and says: «God save you, my Father, for your mercifulness, that you have showed me mercy. The day before yesterday I was wandering through the waste lands, but you showed up to me and gifted me with the Holy Cross, and the devils fled out of me, so I came to you to kneel down and I ask you again for blessing”

In (5) the czar himself speaks to Avvakum through his emissaries Artemon Matveev and Dementij Bašmakov: in (6), addressing the Old Believers is the same Avvakum; lastly, in (7), the dialogue between the fool for Christ Feodor and his spiritual father Avvakum is described. Despite the difference in context no aspectual variation can be found, whatever the relationship between the interlocutors may be (the czar and Avvakum do not belong to the same social class, neither does Avvakum and the Old Believers coven, let alone Avvakum and Feodor): in every case, *prošu* remains the standard form. Although some preverbed forms are used throughout the text (*otprositi*, the “new” *vyprositi* and *sprositi*, whose meanings are akin to those of CR), they can only be found in descriptive and/or dialogic contexts, mostly in past tense.

3.2.5. OR and MR corpora

Running a search query for the word *prositi* in the OR corpus (with minimal restrictive tags included, such as “present tense” and “1st p. sing.”) we obtain eleven results. Except for those already known (e.g. the PVL), here two of them are adduced:

(8) Moljasja i klanjasja reka tako: bra(t) se boleń esmi velmi, a **prošju**^{NPIPF}
u tebe postrizenija [...]

[Kievskaja letopis’]

“[...] Saying so while praying and bowing down: «Brother, I am terribly ill, I ask you for the monastic tonsure»”

(9) i prošenja jehože azъ **prošju**^{NPIPF} dažъ mi

[Suzdal’skaja letopis’]

“and the request which I ask for, grant me” (Bermel 1997, p. 182)

In (8), Igor Ol’govič begs his cousin and bitter rival, Izjaslav Mstislavič, to set him free from captivity and let him take vows. In (9), Vasil’ko Konstantinovič, the appanage prince of Rostov imprisoned by the Mongolian army, prays to God to protect his children and relieve his pain. No occurrence of *poprositi* (whatever the tags defined) was found overall.

The same applies for the MR corpus, where, from among 211 results on the search query *prošu*, only one occurrence of *poprošu* was found²³ (the source is an embassy ledger recounting the business relationships between the Muscovy and the Nogai Horde, written between 1551 and 1556). However, even this single token should be counted out: not only is it preceded by a negation (which would automatically change the nature of the speech act itself, switching it from directive to commissive), but it is also inserted in a wider context featuring reported speech.

3.2.6. Preliminary findings

The findings so far show the following:

- Both OR and MR show a similar aspectual distribution of performative *prositi* in DIAs. Not a single preverbed form was found in the same performative context, independently of the communicative situation involved (i.e. the power relationship between the interlocutors, the use of politeness strategies etc.).
- *Prositi* seems to join an aspectual network with several forms (preverbed, e.g. *vъsprositi*, suffixed, e.g. *prašati*, and preverbed-suffixed, e.g. *sъuprašati sja*), each one of them carrying a more specific meaning, which restricts and disambiguates the primary one (i.e. they seem to be either *Aktionsarten* or specialized proto-perfectives in Janda *et al.*'s 2013 sense). However, apparently none of them enters a true aspectual pair with *prositi*.
- *Poprositi* is less attested, whatever its morphological features. Its aspectual status with reference to *prositi* remains unclear.

The conundrum of why such great differences have arisen between OR/MR and CR needs explaining both in linguistic (structural) and extralinguistic terms. This is addressed in the next Section.

4. A twofold theoretical proposal

If we run a search in the NKRJa for the word form *poprošu* and compare its distribution in a time span approximately from the beginning of the 11th century to 2014, we get the following picture (see Figure 1 below):

²³ An anonymous reviewer underlines that *poprositi* is attested thirteen times overall in the MR corpus. True as this may be, however, this global quantitative evaluation of *poprositi* does not either address or explain the effective lack of NP^{PF} 1st p. sing. of performative *poprositi* in DIAs.

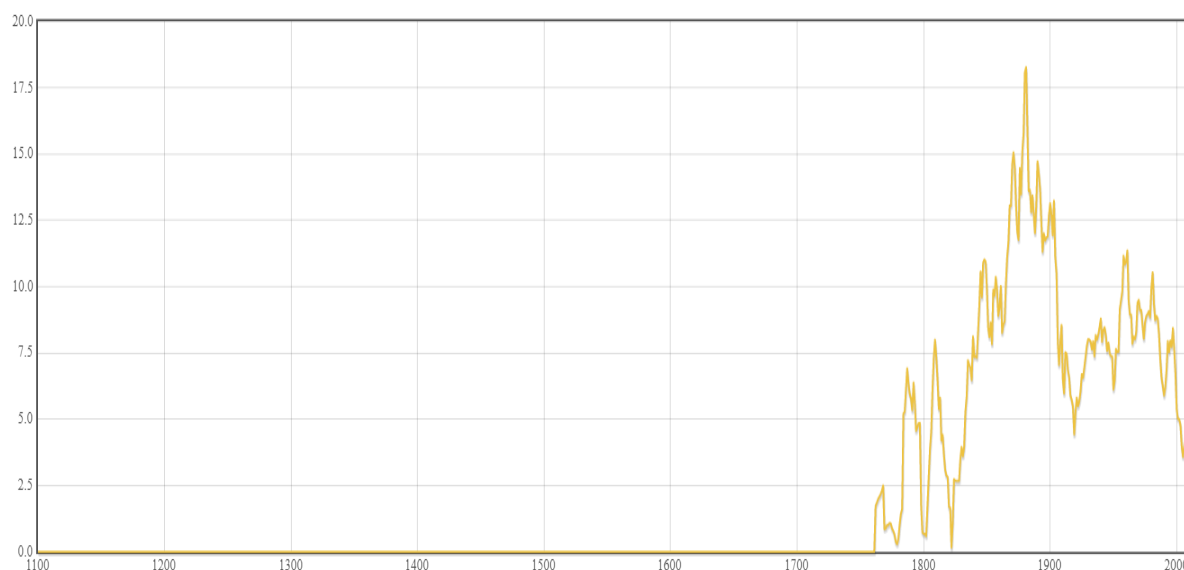


Figure 1

Distribution of *poprošu* from 1100 to 2014. The x axis shows the time progression, the y axis shows the number of tokens retrieved (screenshot taken from NKRJa).

Three main points can be made in this respect:

- NP^{PF} 1st p. sing. forms of *poprositi* are statistically irrelevant at least up to the second half of the 18th century.
- The occurrences of (performative) *poprošu* in DIAs keep growing from the second half of the 18th century onward, the first one allegedly being an excerpt from Sumarokov's comedy *The Guardian* (*Opekun*, 1765).
- While scant at best in OR and MR periods, evidence for the use of NP^{PF} 1st p. sing. forms of performative *poprositi* in DIAs is already much more substantial at the beginning of the CR period (from the beginning of the 19th century onward), with a peak in the second half of the 19th century.

The questions are: what kind of linguistic and/or extralinguistic causes prompted the new rise of the aspectual opposition in DIAs, and why? What factors turned the possibility of an aspectual alternation in the given context, slight as it might have been, into a systematic linguistic tendency? These questions will be addressed next, from two different perspectives: morphosyntactic (Subsection 4.1) and sociolinguistic (Subsection 4.2).

4.1. The morphosyntactic profile of VOC

The diachronic evolution of (East) Slavic aspect is an incredibly complex matter that is still unresolved to this day and cannot even be touched upon here. Essentially, two different phenomena seem to have exerted the greatest influence on the grammaticalization of the aspectual system. On the one

hand, the preverbalization of simple stems with an inherently telic meaning²⁴ leaned towards the creation of aspectual pairs joined by both verbal lexemes (with a contextual shift in temporal reference, although still non-automatic, for the NP^{PF} form). On the other hand, the morphological mechanism of suffixation, especially from the 15th century onward, considerably increased the number of new lexical units from specialized preverbed proto-perfectives: such new IPF forms could express a habitual or repeated action. The aspectual mechanism then permeated the vast majority of the verbal system, becoming more and more grammaticalized²⁵ (Mende 1999). It is commonly believed that the process leveled off between the 17th and the 18th century, with constant but minor changes, which seems to be supported by the data depicted in Figure 1.

VOCs somehow do not entirely fit in the given scheme because of their actional properties (see Section 2). In a recent study, Dickey (2015, p. 271) underlines that in OR, performatives – including VOCs in DIAs – are almost always found as NP^{IPF}, the few exceptions being non-performative verbs occurring performatively (e.g. *pohvaliti* ‘to praise’) in cases of absolute control by the speaker. This is in line with Israeli (2001, pp. 54-70, 78-88) observations on the aspectual oscillation in CR VOCs, both in performative and descriptive contexts. The author points out that PF is used 1) when the hearer *h* is thought to have previously engaged in a communication process with a third party (whether an external pragmatic contract stands between the interlocutors or not) and 2) when the speaker *s* believes *h* to have properly reacted to the communicative situation (thus adhering to an internal pragmatic contract). In both cases, *s* needs to wield a pragmatic feature of authority over *h*, otherwise the aspectual choice is considered infelicitous.²⁶

²⁴ Here the formal definition of telicity proposed by Borik (2006) is adopted, based on the temporal argument of every predicate.

²⁵ In the early stages of OR, when aspectual and temporal reference was split between two different systems, part of the aspectual meanings was conveyed by certain tenses, e.g. the aorist, which most typically expressed an action seen in its entirety. The definitive collapse of the OR temporal system and its coalescence into the aspectual one, which basically led to an internal reorganization of verbal morphology and to the enrichment of aspect functions, played a pivotal role in this process (Dickey 2018b).

²⁶ An anonymous reviewer argues that the aspectual profile of VOCs is effectively influenced only by the (presence or absence of the) authority feature as defined in Israeli (2001), thus questioning the role Slavkova (2014) and, by analogy, Benakk'o (2010) grant to politeness. In my opinion, three points need to be addressed here. First, it is not clear to me why and how the pragmatic parameters of authority and (negative and/or positive) politeness would necessarily clash with each other: a speaker may variously act (un)authoritatively and (im)politely, depending on the given communicative situation, i.e. the variables can combine with each other in different ways and with different effects, along a *gradatum*. Authority does play a role in determining the aspectual choice (I myself stress that, see Section 1), but it is far from being the only peripheral feature (in the post-structural sense of Vimer 2014) which is relevant here. Hardly can we explain the Russian (and Bulgarian) examples exhibiting NP^{PF} in Slavkova (2014, pp. 239-244)

Such a range of heterogeneous properties, although already potentially conveyable in the early stages of OR, appeared in too sporadic a fashion to systematically enter in a bijective function with the respective aspect (in the sense of a one-to-one correspondence between form and function). This correlation was to become stronger only in the following centuries, approaching the drastic mutations Russian society would undergo from the 18th century onward.

4.2. *A window on the West, or the Etiquette of Aspect*

Internally motivated language change is often counterbalanced and completed by externally motivated language change, as discussed in Hickey (2012). If we treat language as “an abstraction over the collective behavior of a speech community” (Hickey 2012, p. 390), the study of language becomes part of the study of a whole cultural system and its manifestation in a given spatiotemporal framework. Resorting once again to the differences in the distribution of *poprošu* as displayed by Figure 1, it comes as no surprise that such a linguistic innovation characterizes a time span, the second half of 18th century, which first greatly benefited from the radical cultural reforms of Peter the Great (Živov 2002, pp. 381-435).

Although some substantial cultural advancements had been reached even before his advent to the throne, what Peter did was speed up the pace of these transformations, in accordance with both the internally motivated language change observed in the previous subsections and the innovations

resorting to authority alone. Moreover, one of the counterexamples adduced by the reviewer, reported below as (10), does not reveal much on the presence of effective (i.e. non self-proclaimed) authority, as it features abusive and grotesque slang register, which is by its own nature exceptional:

- (10) – Vsta-a-at’! Ja **poprošu**^{NPPF}! Ja tebe tak **poprošu**^{NPPF}, gad! – I vdrug, zakusiv gubu, on razmaxnulsja i prjamo-taki vsadil sapog emu v koleno.
 “«Up! This I request! From you this I request, asshole!». And suddenly, having bitten his lips, he swung his arm and stuck his boot in [Zybin’s] knee”
 [Ju. O. Dombrovskij, Fakul’tet nenužnyx veščej, čast’ 2 (1978)]

Second, aside from authority Israeli (2001, pp. 74-78, 81-94) lists consequentiality and new information among the relevant parameters for VOCs’ aspectual choice. The features of authority, consequentiality and new information stem naturally from the semantics of (East Slavic) PF (Dickey 2000, p. 19 ff.), which would also explain why in more recent work Dickey (2018a) sees the effect of authority as an effect of temporal sequencing. This leads to the third point: temporal sequencing can be reduced in turn to the expression of the speaker’s positive epistemic stance towards the situation described (“full and instant identifiability”, using the terms of De Wit *et al.* 2018), then hinting at the covert modal properties of performative tempo-aspectual grammemes. Again, not only is the feature of authority only one of the parameters involved, but it can also be brought back (and explained through) the semantics of PF aspect.

(mostly contact-induced or contact-borrowed) spreading from the highest to the lowest social classes. The sociocultural reforms of Peter the Great overtly aimed at bringing the Russian Empire closer to the European countries and, consequently, to their social habits (thus overcoming the strict and frozen division in the distribution of social roles, typical of a medieval-like society).

A massive innovation affected the allocutive forms of the pronominal referential system, which, starting from the first decades of 17th century, had been undergoing radical changes. The standard allocutionary pronoun, at least up to early MR (15th century), was the 2nd p. sing. *ty*, independent of the characteristics of the specific communicative situation and the social status of the communication participants. Examples (4)-(9) show that *s* addresses their conversation partner without regard to the social differences existing between them. This allocutionary mode is regularly accompanied, in a DIA, by a NP^{IPF} form of *prosi*, without any room left for aspectual choice. Still, it would be unreasonable to assert that every *ty* serves the same semantic and pragmatic functions: at least three different tokens of *ty* can be isolated – the first one displaying condescendence, as in (5), the second one total subordination, as in (7), and the third one a sort of mutual, deferential recognition, as in (8).²⁷ In the first two cases, we are dealing with a hierarchical relationship: in the last one, the relationship between interlocutors is rather symmetrical.

Things changed when the ceremonial 2nd p. pl. *Vy*, previously restricted to courtyard environments, began to penetrate and actively circulate in everyday language use. Studying the dating of a late MR tale, the *Tale of Frool Skobeev* (*Povest' o Froole Skobeeve*), Benacchio Berto (1980) asserts the existence of two different types of *Vy*. The first one, asymmetrical, has a distinct reverential flavor. The second one conforms to the principle of solidarity, being used mostly by interlocutors who share the same social class (nobles, gentry, and the like). As a further development, it was also employed by other social classes to address negative face, so as to signal the interpersonal distance between the interlocutors.²⁸

This last innovation is particularly impressive, for it witnesses a substantial shift towards the adoption of a conversational etiquette, typical of

²⁷ Frequent, in this respect, are examples from the corpus of birch bark letters (e.g. № 157: cf. DND 2004, p. 666), where peasants address their landlord with a formulaic incipit (most notably *bit' čelom*, lit. 'to beat one's head' in the sense of 'to express a humble greeting') with the pronoun of overt subordination *ty*.

²⁸ That the process was just at the beginning and needed some time to spread properly, however, is signaled by the frequent missing syntactic agreement between the verb and the reverential pronoun *Vy* (Benacchio Berto 1980, p. 15).

hierarchically oriented social relationships.²⁹ The following examples, which appear to date back to the second half of the 18th century onward, are revealing in this respect,³⁰ as well as for the variety of literary genres and the communicative situations they pertain to – from the mockery of religious (formulaic) language in (11) to private correspondence in (12), from the conversation between business partners in (13) and lovers in (14) to the fictitious dialogue between the writer and his readers established in (15):

(11) Ja čelovek samoj grešnoj, i bezzakonija prevzydoša glavu moju; tak ja, ne upovaja bol'she na miloserdie božie, xotja i kajusja, ugodnikov božiix **poprošu**^{NPPF}, čtoby oni za menja slovo zamolvili.

[A. P. Sumarokov, Opekun (1765)]

“I am a great sinner and my sins have overtaken me; so, not hoping anymore for God’s mercy, although I do repent, I ask for God’s pleasers to put in a good word for me”.

(12) Lučše poželaju vamъ vsjakago blagopolučija, **poprošu**^{NPPF} vamъ byt' uvěrennymi vъ moemъ kъ vamъ iskrennemъ počitanii, i ostajus' navsegda vašъ pokornějšij sluga Aleksandrъ Šiškovъ.

[A. S. Šiškov. Pis'ma Ja. I. Bardovskomu (1816)]

“I wish you every kind of prosperity, I ask you not to doubt that I hold you in sincere esteem, and I remain forever your most humble servant, Aleksandr Šiškov”.

(13) Teper' že ja **poprošu**^{NPPF} vas uvolit' moj dom ot vašix poseščenij; smeju vas uverit', čto daže progulki vaši po zdešnej ulice budut naprasny i tol'ko vam že mogut nanesti neprijatnosti.

[O. M. Somov, Vyveska (1827)]

“And right now, I ask you to dispense with your visits to my property; I can assure you that even your strolls along this street will be vain and could do harm only to you”.

(14) «Za iskrennost' moju ja **poprošu**^{NPPF} tebja byt' iskrennym. Skaži mne tol'ko odno, knjaz' Dmitrij Jur'evič: pravda li, čto kramol'nik bojarin Ioann teper' naxoditsja u tvoego roditelja?».

[N. A. Polevoj, Kljatva prig robe Gospodnem (1832)]

²⁹ In this respect, a non-marginal role might have been played by the German cultural paradigm, which at the time exerted the strongest influence over intellectuals and the czar himself. Suffice it to say that the first handbooks where the new conversational rules were propagated, including the reconstructed allocutionary system, were mostly Russian translations from German (Benacchio Berto 1980, p. 13).

³⁰ Full annotations are not given because of space limitations.

“«For me to be sincere I ask you to be sincere as well. Tell me just one thing, prince Dmitrij Jur’evič: is it true that the rioter boyar Ioann is now by your parents?»”.

(15) Ja **poprošu**^{NPPF} svoego ili svoix ljubeznyx čitatelej perenestis’ voobraženiem v tu maluju lesnuju dereven’ku, gde Boris Petrovič so svoej oxotoj osnoval glavnuju svoju kvartiru, naxodja ee centrom svoix operacionnyx punktov.

[M. Ju. Lermontov, Vadim (1833-1834)]

“I ask my gentle reader, or readers, to flee with their imagination to that small woodland village, where Boris Petrovič, following his desire, established his main quarters as the center of his operative stations”.

Borrowing Niculescu’s (1974) taxonomy, the choice of the most appropriate allocutionary pronoun seems to be based equally on social, internal (strictly linguistic, structural) and psycho-individual ground.³¹

This might also explain why, in Figure 1, the percentage of the total occurrences of *poprošu* is still barely curving upwards at the beginning of the 18th century. If we begin to assign the new PF form new pragmatic-conversational functions akin to those we find in CR, e.g. the expression of negative politeness, authority, and the like, it is not difficult to notice the connection between the occurrences of NP^{PF} VOCs and the reorganization of the pronominal referential system. In other words, if there was no need for OR and MR morphosyntax to encode the pragmatic notion of interpersonal distance – if it was present, it was so ample that it would have been redundant even to mark it – the cultural shift encouraged by Peter’s reforms created a new sociolinguistic environment which did demand a proper adjustment of verbal (aspectual) and pronominal morphology.³²

This leads us to the issue of the choice of the perfectivizing preverb, which, for many simple VOCs entering an aspectual pair via prevervation, tends – although needs not – to be *po-* (cf. *poprosit’* with *poblagodarit’*^{PF} ‘to thank’, *poobeščat’*^{PF} ‘to promise’, *posovetovat’*^{PF} ‘to suggest’, *poželat’*^{PF} ‘to wish’, *poxodatajstvovat’*^{PF} ‘to solicit’ etc.). *Po-* has been shown to play a

³¹ It has been argued that the relation between the speaker and the addressee (and, in a broader sense, the pragmatic roles of discourse participants) may be also encoded in the syntactic structures of the single languages, as recently proposed for Korean by Portner *et al.* (2019).

³² The reason why the curve, having reached its peak at the beginning of 20th century, sharply decreases in the following decades and remains stable until then may be found in two considerations. The first one revolves around the language policy pursued by the Bolsheviks, which overtly aimed at dismantling pre-revolutionary linguistic capital, including conversational manners and the etiquette (all men had to be considered equal even in the most trivial communicative situation). The second one echoes Brown and Gilman’s final remark (1960, p. 280): “We have suggested that the modern direction of change in pronoun usage expresses a will to extend the solidary ethic to everyone”.

pivotal role in the grammaticalization of the East Slavic aspectual system, especially with reference to its abstract (empty) perfectivizing nature³³ (Dickey 2005: 45-48). Should this assumption be true, to enter a new aspectual pair, VOC like *prositi* would have rather relied on partners whose preverb functioned as a neutral marker of perfectivity, not displaying any sign of semantic autonomy³⁴ (unlike, for instance, the specialized proto-perfectives listed in Section 3). This, however, is only a tentative suggestion. The question of the interaction between *po-*, VOCs, and East Slavic aspectual system lies beyond the scope of the present research.

5. Conclusions

In this paper the theoretical proposal has been put forward that the aspectual restriction on Old and Middle Russian verbs of communication (VOCs) such as *prositi* ‘to ask (for)’ used performatively in directive speech acts (DIAs) – namely, the absence of a proper preverbed proto-perfective form, akin to Contemporary Russian *poprosit’* – can be accounted for on two different linguistic levels: 1) morphosyntactic (the actional properties of VOCs) and 2) sociolinguistic (the lack of a proper allocutionary pronoun consistent with the etiquette of hierarchically-oriented social relationships).

To check the validity and the accuracy of the present account, a wider range of *verba dicendi* must be looked at. Also, a more detailed study of the syntactic expression of pronominal subjects and the syntactic-semantic interaction between preverbs and verbal lexemes should be undertaken, with special reference to the so-called empty preverbs. Lastly, a more thorough overview of the textual sources must be carried out, providing additional new data, so as to conduct a more extensive contrastive analysis.

³³ An anonymous reviewer underlines that, on the basis of the data available from the NKRJa, the alleged spread of *po-* as a marker of perfectivity from the 18th century onward affected not only VOCs, but also other classes of lexical predicates (among the adduced examples are *porabotat*^{PF} ‘to work for a while’ and *pogovorit*^{PF} ‘to have a conversation’). In these cases, however, *po-* is not a neutral marker of perfectivity, for it is added to atelic verbs (Vendlerian activities), which gives consequent rise to the delimitative reading (in the sense of *Aktionsart*) of the resulting lexical (perfective) verb. The diachronic evolution of delimitative *po-*, with particular reference to verbs of motion, is sketched out in Dickey (2005). More formal considerations on the syntax and semantics of *po-* in various Slavic languages can be found in Biskup (2019, pp. 127-157).

³⁴ As correctly pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, some verbs (e.g. *blagodarit*^{PF}) happen to have more than one perfective partner (e.g. *otblagodarit*^{PF}), although in this case *ot-* has not fully undergone semantic bleaching, retaining part of its original semantics (the lexical component *bounce*, i.e. ‘make an action in return’, of Janda *et al.* 2013).

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TALKING ABOUT LAMENT IN ANCIENT GREEK DRAMA

Historical Metapragmatics and Language Ideology in Sophocles' *Ajax*

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Abstract – In this paper, after a theoretical introduction, I will first reconstruct ancient Greek notions of female speech, in particular that of lament. This reconstruction will show that female speech was considered to be genuinely more emotional and less controlled than, and thus inferior to, male speech, and that, accordingly, lament was considered to be a genuinely feminine speech act. I will then discuss the tragedy *Ajax* by Sophocles (performed probably around 455 BC in Athens) as critically engaging with and challenging these notions of female speech by pointing out their ideological character. This play does indeed present Ajax as a character who very much adheres to the notion of lament being a genuinely feminine, and thus inferior, speech act. However, instead of confirming this notion, Sophocles deconstructs it by juxtaposing Ajax's metalinguistic utterances with the linguistic behavior of a female character, his slave Tecmessa. In order to show how Sophocles does that, I will make use of the sociolinguistic concept of 'language ideology'. The challenge presented by the *Ajax* to the traditional notion of lament being genuinely feminine will then be contextualized within both the genre of tragedy and the ancient Greek discourse on language.

Keywords: Historical Metapragmatics; Language Ideology; Criticism of Ideology; Ancient Greek Tragedy; Sophocles.

1. Introduction

1.1 Historical metapragmatics

Pragmatics is notoriously hard to define; two strands, however, can be quite clearly identified: A 'broad' and a 'narrow' understanding (see e.g. Taavitsainen, Jucker 2010, pp. 4f.). The 'narrow' understanding, often called 'Anglo-American', starts with the premise that the meaning of a particular utterance (what it 'does' in its communicative context) cannot be sufficiently understood when only looking at the dimension of syntax and semantics; consistently, it concentrates on phenomena like speech acts, implicature,

presupposition, and deixis. The ‘broad’ strand, often called ‘European’, goes beyond this focus – but in doing so necessarily becomes fuzzier – by understanding pragmatics as a ‘general functional (i.e. cognitive, social and cultural) perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in the form of behaviour’ (Verschueren 1999, p. 7). In spite of the unavoidable fuzziness this choice entails (for criticism, see e.g. Hübler, Bublitz 2007, pp. 5f.; Huang 2014, p. 4), I will make use of this ‘broad’ notion in the present paper.

With the emergence of pragmatics as a linguistic discipline, a related subfield has emerged, that of metapragmatics. As the prefix ‘meta-’ indicates, metapragmatics is ‘beyond’, but also ‘about’ pragmatics (cf. Caffi 2006, p. 83; Hübler and Bublitz 2007, p. 1). Generally speaking, the concept of metapragmatics is based on the fact that people, when they speak, show awareness of the pragmatic dimension of language (cf. Verschueren 1999, pp. 188-199, and Verschueren 2004 on the concept of ‘metapragmatic awareness’). They are able to do so at three different levels (see Caffi 2006): firstly, they can discuss pragmatics as a discipline, as I have done in the previous paragraph; secondly, pragmatic phenomena themselves can become the focus of attention, e.g. if speakers discuss how to use language correctly or appropriately; thirdly, speakers always ‘manage’ the current discourse, either by implicit means (e.g. the choice of a particular register or particular prosodic features, i.e. by ‘contextualization cues’ in the sense of Cook-Gumperz, Gumperz 1976) or by explicit means, namely metapragmatic utterances like ‘I’ll be brief’, ‘Say it again, please’ or ‘That was not funny’ (see Bublitz, Hübler 2007). In this paper, I will focus on the second level of metapragmatics, the discussion of language use.

I will discuss ancient Greek notions of a particular form of speech, *viz.* female speech, or more precisely, lament, a social phenomenon characteristic of the time. I want to clarify that I want to read the *Ajax* as a self-contained discussion on gendered language use and not to extract data documenting authentic language use: my focus is on the historical *metapragmatics* of gendered speech.

I chose the *Ajax* because, among extant tragedies, it is the most complete demonstration of the ideological character of classical Greek notions about female speech. I reached this conclusion by scanning the extant tragedies for utterances made by characters about female language use and by looking at how these utterances are embedded in the context of the play in which they were found. By applying the sociolinguistic concept of ‘language ideology’, I checked whether the overall picture the play presents confirms or deconstructs the characters’ attitudes.

In this paper, I will proceed in the following way: I will first reconstruct classical Greek notions of female speech, in particular lament (subsection 1.2);

after presenting the concept of language ideology (subsection 1.3), I will read the *Ajax* as critically engaging with and challenging these very notions, and thus as opening up a meta-discourse on the topic of female speech (section 2); I will then contextualize my reading within both the genre of ancient Greek tragedy and the intellectual environment of classical Greece (section 3).

1.2 Female speech and classical Athens

Let us start by trying to reconstruct classical Greek notions of female speech. Male Greeks in classical Athens had a clear picture of female speech: if one peruses the relevant sources from the fifth and fourth century BC – mainly drama and rhetoric, but also philosophical dialogue – one will repeatedly find that one trait was regarded as central to female speech – its emotionalism. Women were considered to be less controlled, focused, and intelligent than men, and so was their speech; accordingly, lament was considered to be a paradigmatically feminine speech act. It is important to remark that the understanding of female speech as emotional was not a neutral assessment: Being rational and reasonable was considered an ideal, and female speech was thus considered inferior. Consistently with this perception, men who were considered to lament excessively were often accused of effeminacy; the following examples (taken from Dover 1974, pp. 98-101) illustrate these points:

- In Xenophon's dialogue *Symposium* (ch. 2,9), after having seen a clever girl juggler, Socrates remarks the following: 'In many other things, gentlemen, as well as in what this girl does, it is clear that female nature is no worse than man's, but lacks in understanding and in strength.' The message is clear: Although a woman can be taught demanding tasks (mind, however, that Socrates is talking about juggling), her intelligence remains inferior.
- In Aristophanes' comedy *Lysistrata* (vv. 1ff.), the heroine, who has summoned the Athenian women to share her plan to end the Peloponnesian War with them, complains that they would have come in great numbers if a feast had taken place; now, however, only one woman has joined her, while all the other women are sitting idly at home.
- In Euripides' tragedy *Andromache* (vv. 93-95), the heroine states that women are always fond of lamentation and are, by nature, prone to always talking about their misfortunes.
- In the tragedy *Medea* by the same author (v. 909), the character Jason says that women tend towards unrestricted anger.
- In Sophocles' tragedy *Trachinian Women* (vv. 1071-1075), Heracles, terribly wounded, states that he becomes 'female' by being forced to 'weep like a girl'.

- In a speech against Demosthenes (2,179), the rhetor Aeschines accuses his rival of having an ‘unmanly and womanish temper’ due to lacking the capability to quell his anger.
- In Euripides’ tragedy *Heracles* (v. 1412), king Theseus admonishes Heracles not to lament his fate so that no one may see him ‘being womanish’ (lit., and more starkly, ‘being female’).

While it is, of course, true that one needs to be aware of the particular nature of these sources – the fictional character of drama and philosophical dialogue and the rhetorical character of speeches – they yield such a homogenous picture of the inferiority of female speech due to its emotionalism that this perception should be considered the *communis opinio* of the Athenian citizens.¹ This is even more probable since both drama and rhetoric were agonistic genres that needed to win the approval of their audience, as did philosophical dialogues, albeit maybe less directly.

1.3 Language ideology

Critically engaging with *communes opinionones* about language means pointing out that they do not provide as precise a picture of the linguistic reality as they are taken to do by the people who hold them. Such communally held beliefs about language that, to a certain extent, distort the reality they are held to represent – and thus act back on that very reality – are called language ideologies (on language ideology, see e.g. Kroskrity 2000; Coupland, Jaworski 2004; for a bibliography, see Irvine 2012). In order to pinpoint the ideological character of a belief about language, the sociolinguists Gal and Irvine (1995, 2000) developed a catalogue of three criteria: Iconization, recursivity, and erasure:

- ‘Iconization’ involves considering a certain linguistic form or style a transparent depiction of a certain social group or its members (i.e. when such a feature is supposed to have not an indexical, but an iconic relationship to the group in question).
- ‘Recursivity’ consists in transposing a difference from its original area into another area of social interaction (i.e. when a linguistic characteristic distinguishing one group from another serves for internal differentiation *within* a group).
- ‘Erasure’ means that ‘data’ is ignored that does not fit the picture and contradicts the simplifying dichotomies supposedly structuring reality.

¹ It very much fits the picture that barbarians were considered to be prone to lament as well, as is shown e.g. by the profuse lament of the male Persian chorus in Aeschylus’ tragedy *The Persians* – barbarians were, like women, opposed to male, Greek ‘normality’ (cf. Hall 1989; I thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion).

In order to exemplify these quite abstract criteria, I will consider an instance where Gal and Irvine saw them at work: In a Senegalese village, inhabited by Wolof people; they write:

1. There [in the Wolof village, *S.H.*] an ideology of language represented linguistic differences as manifestations of social rank. Of the many social categories on the Wolof scene, the ideology picked out two, 'nobles' and 'griots' (praise-singers), as typifying high and low rank where talk is concerned. Supposedly possessing very different temperaments and prototypical levels of affectivity, nobles and griots were contrasted on multiple cultural dimensions, including styles of speaking. Nobles were expected to speak in a laconic, controlled style that was congruent with their flat, restrained emotionality; griots were expected to show volatile, even frenetic affect, and it was appropriate for them to speak fast, with high pitch and great expressivity. Thus, categories of people were linked iconically to their styles of speech [...] [iconization]. The noble style and the griot style were [...] reproduced recursively whenever two interlocutors engaged in establishing rank differences between each other [...] [recursivity]. Although differences within the griot and noble ranks were important [...], the ideology itself tended to deny such differences and to ignore the existence of other social categories [erasure]. Thus, we argue, the linguistic differentiation was a central part of a much larger ideological system that organized rank and motivated the reproduction of the linguistic differences. (Gal, Irvine 1995, pp. 975f.)

The criteria outlined above are of great importance for the discussion presented in section 2. There I will show how Sophocles presents a character (Ajax) who very much adheres to traditional notions of female speech, but also that his presentation in the play does not confirm his attitude. Rather, Sophocles shows Ajax's attitude to be marked by the three mechanisms of iconization, recursivity, and erasure, thus deconstructing Ajax's stance and showing to the audience its ideological character.

1.4 The plot of the Ajax

Before making this point, it is necessary to briefly sketch out the plot of the *Ajax*: The tragedy is set in the Greek camp before Troy, after the death of the Greeks' greatest warrior, Achilles. On the occasion of Achilles' burial, funeral games had been held with his armor as the prize, and this had been given not to the Greek hero Ajax, who proclaimed that he alone deserved it, but instead to Odysseus. This caused great resentment in Ajax who, the night after the games, underwent a fit of mad anger, took his sword, went out to the camp and strived to kill as many Greeks as possible – a goal he would have achieved, had not the goddess Athena intervened by clouding his perception and making him attack and slaughter the Greeks' cattle instead, making him think that they were his enemies. Later, back in his hut, Ajax comes to his senses and realizes

what he has done. He reacts to his failure with the desire to commit suicide. Up to this point, the story does not unfold ‘on stage’, but is narrated by people other than Ajax in flashbacks, while he remains in his hut. The most important narrator is Ajax’s slave and concubine Tecmessa, who is also the mother of his young son. After her report to the chorus about the events of the night, Ajax steps out of his hut, still in a suicidal mood. His plan to commit suicide is then challenged by Tecmessa, but he holds on to it; after a discussion with her, he reenters his hut, obviously in order to carry out his plan. Surprisingly, however, he comes back alive and announces that he has changed his mind, but this announcement then turns out to have been insincere, and Ajax does commit suicide. The second half of the play presents a quarrel between Ajax’s half-brother Teucer and the leaders of the Greek army who have forbidden the burial of Ajax’s corpse because of his attack against the Greeks. A resolution of this conflict is then brought about by Odysseus, who succeeds in securing Ajax’s burial, with which the play ends.

2. Language ideology and the *Ajax*

In the following section, I want to argue that, in the *Ajax*, Sophocles points out the ideological character of the popular notion of lament being a genuinely feminine speech act, and that the way he does so can be understood in light of the criteria established by Gal and Irvine (1995, 2000). In order to do so, I will discuss all the meta-linguistic utterances of the character Ajax (texts 2, 3, and 4), the first of which can be found in Tecmessa’s report, to the chorus, of an exchange with Ajax when he was leaving his hut during the night (translations are adapted from Lloyd-Jones 2014):

2. Since you have a share in it, you shall learn everything that happened. At dead of night, when the evening lamps no longer burned, he took his two-edged sword and made as though to start out, for no reason. And I objected, saying, ‘What are you doing, Ajax? Why are you starting on this expedition unbidden, when you have not been summoned by messengers nor heard any trumpet? Why, now all the army is asleep!’ But the words he spoke to me were few and hackneyed: ‘Woman, silence makes a woman beautiful.’ Hearing this, I ceased, and he sped off alone. (vv. 284-294)

This text allows two conclusions. Firstly, Ajax’s answer that ‘silence makes a woman beautiful’ makes it clear that he considers female speech inferior; secondly, by calling this statement *hackneyed*, Tecmessa shows that she perceives this attitude not as Ajax’s idiosyncrasy, but as a conventional opinion. In which sense, however, should this conventionality be understood? Is his opinion conventional only in the fictional world of the drama, or should the spectators here see an allusion to their own attitudes? That is not yet clear.

The first utterance by Ajax specifically concerning lament is reported when Tecmessa tells the chorus what happened after his nightly expedition: As he returned to the hut and realized what he had done, he, Tecmessa says, started lamenting in an unprecedented fashion, in a way inconsistent with what he had been saying about lament all along.²

3. And he at once lamented with dreadful lament-cries, such as I had never before heard from him. For he always used to teach that such weeping was the mark of a cowardly and spiritless man; but he would groan like a bellowing bull, with no sound of high-pitched wailings. (vv. 317-322)

After Tecmessa has completed her report, Ajax steps out of his hut, and in the course of the ensuing conversation, he makes it clear that he firmly intends to kill himself. Tecmessa, however, tries to persuade him to stay alive, but at the end of their exchange, he clearly states that he is still determined to commit suicide and rudely tells her to take away their child (who has been brought out onto the stage) and not to complain:

4. Come, now speedily take the boy, and bar the doors, and make no weeping in front of the hut; surely women are something prone to lamentation! (vv. 578-580)

It is therefore twice that we hear things Ajax said or says regarding lament. In the past, Tecmessa says in text 3, he habitually attributed it to a 'cowardly and spiritless man', while, in text 4, he calls it a typically feminine speech act.³ In spite of his talking about lamenting men in text 3 and lamenting women in text 4, these two passages show a consistent attitude towards it, for the attribution reported in text 3 is made in *feminine* terms: Ajax called the lament-cries he despised *kokymata* (v. 321), derived from the verb *kokyo*, which is almost exclusively used for female lament and is, as here, often accompanied by *oxys*, 'shrill' (see McClure 1999, pp. 42f.). This shows that, for Ajax, the 'cowardly and spiritless' character of a lamenting man as expressed in text 3 consisted in that man's behaving like a woman, since women, as he says in text 4, are 'prone to lamentation'. Ajax's attitude as revealed by text 3 and 4 taken together is not idiosyncratic, but entirely consistent with the *communis opinio* as reconstructed above. Not only does Ajax consider lament genuinely feminine (text 4); he also regularly exploited this notion, in the past, to disparage other men by charging them with effeminacy (text 3). This shows how the conventional character of Ajax's negative attitude to female speech as expressed in text 2 should be understood: it is indeed conventional not only in

² The extraordinary character of this behavior is underscored by the *figura etymologica* in 'And he at once lamented with dreadful lament-cries' (I thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion).

³ Note that he uses, in a quasi-scientific way, the neuter ('something prone to lamentation').

the fictional world of the play, but also the spectators should see Ajax's notion of female speech as *their own* conventional attitude.

Ajax's conventional attitude towards female speech, however, does not go unchallenged in the play. Rather, Sophocles shows Tecmessa, the woman, behaving very differently when trying to dissuade Ajax from his plan to commit suicide: She does not lament but rather argues rationally. For Ajax feels utterly humiliated by the failure of his attack which, he supposes, would have enabled him to reclaim his honor as a hero, hence suicide is the only remaining option in the present situation. *Vis-à-vis* this concept of heroism, however, Tecmessa tenaciously holds on to an alternative opinion. For she argues that Ajax – precisely by committing suicide and thus letting down his son, Tecmessa, and his parents, hence the people close to him – would lose his honor and not live up to the standards of a hero. She makes this point with skilful rhetoric and great 'emotional intelligence' (Hesk 2003, pp. 66f.), as can be seen, for example, in the following exchange: first, Ajax sums up his stance:

5. When a man has no relief from troubles, it is shameful for him to desire long life. What pleasure comes from day following day, bringing us near to and taking us back from death? I would not set any value upon a man who is warmed by false hopes. The noble man must live with honour or be honourably dead; you have heard all I have to say. (vv. 473-480)

Then Tecmessa closes her response with the following statement:

6. Come, show regard for your father, whom you are deserting in bitter old age, and for your mother, heiress of many years, who often prays to the gods that you may return home alive.

...

Think of me also; a man should remember, should some pleasure come his way; for it is always one kindness that begets another, and if a man allows the memory of a kindness to slip away, he can no longer be accounted noble. (vv. 506-524)

Ajax's stance is that his 'nobility' compels him to commit suicide; Tecmessa, however, says that it is precisely his nobility that should prevent him from doing so; Ajax says that the 'pleasure' he could still have in his current situation is worthless; Tecmessa, however, bases her model of heroism on the social reciprocity of pleasure; Ajax says that 'shame' at his current situation makes life unbearable for him; Tecmessa, however, points out that it would be shameful to let his people down⁴ – so Tecmessa takes up and counters Ajax's

⁴ This point can only be appreciated when looking at the Greek text: Ajax says it is shameful (*aischron*) for a man to desire long life when he has no relief from trouble; when Tecmessa asks Ajax to 'show respect' (*aidesai*) for his parents, the word she uses has the same root as Ajax's 'shameful' and expresses the Greek concept of '*aidos*': The respect for one's social obligations as well as one's reaction if one has been unable to fulfill them (cf. Cairns 1993).

reasoning point for point,⁵ thus not begging him directly to take her perspective into account; she rather argues from *his* perspective that it would be shameful for *him* to let her down. Thus, the picture Ajax draws of women as naturally weepy in text 4 is not congruent with what the play shows;⁶ however, Ajax does not listen to Tecmessa and ignores the power of her arguments.

Now, when one now keeps in mind what has just been said, it becomes clear that Ajax's attitude towards lament exemplifies the three semiotic processes identified by Gal and Irvine (1995, 2000): He called lament a genuinely feminine speech act (text 4: iconization); he denied lamenting men their masculinity based on this iconic understanding, thus transposing the difference between controlled men and weepy women into the 'intra-masculine' area (text 3: recursivity); the action of the play, however, shows a much more nuanced picture, which makes it clear that Ajax's attitude is not based on a neutral assessment of reality, but on ignoring unconsciously (to the extent that it is possible to state this of a theatrical character) possible counterevidence provided by Tecmessa's behavior (texts 5 and 6), whose powerful argumentation he ignores (erasure). The play thus proves the ideological character of his understanding of lament as a genuinely feminine speech act: it enables its audience to see this understanding as the ideologeme it is. In this way, the play critically engages with the popular notion of lament being a genuinely feminine speech act and suggests to its audience that reality – *their* reality – may be more complicated than they might be used to thinking it is.

3. Beyond the *Ajax*

The comprehensiveness with which the *Ajax* demonstrates the ideological character of the popular understanding of lament is quite unique. There are, however, clues that suggest a certain receptivity on the part of the Athenian public to challenges to the popular understanding of lament.

The first point to note in this context is that Sophocles was a very successful poet, who won first place in the tragic competition eighteen or even twenty-four times (see Bergk 1879, p. 298). The placement of the *Ajax* in the tragic competition cannot be reconstructed; yet, it is certain that Sophocles earned with the trilogy of which it was a part either the first or the second place, for the ancient biography tells us he never earned the third place (*Life of Sophocles*, ll. 33f.). The *Ajax* must thus have been quite well received as well,

⁵ About Tecmessa's opposing her alternative concept to Ajax's, see e.g. Easterling (1984); the concept of dialogic syntax can help us appreciate the single steps Tecmessa takes to do so by taking up words previously used by Ajax in order to oppose her stance to his (on dialogic syntax, see Du Bois 2014; on the notion of 'stance', see Englebretson 2007).

⁶ Cf. Hesk (2003, p. 55): '[T]his play helps its audience to see that [Ajax's] "ever-repeated" view that women should keep quiet [cf. text 2 above] is misplaced.'

which suggests, given the analysis above, that the Athenians may have accepted their notions being challenged on the subject of female speech, that they may have been open to the idea that this could be an issue ripe for discussion.⁷

The second point is that lament plays an important role in several other tragedies;⁸ while there are, as said above, no comprehensive demonstrations of the ideological character of the notion of lament being genuinely feminine as in the *Ajax*, these tragedies sometimes challenge the notion of the inferiority of this mode of female speech by displaying how women use their lament as a speech act in the full sense of the word in order to act on their own, thereby sometimes even challenging male domination to which they are subjected. This is shown by the following two examples⁹ (more could be offered):¹⁰

In Sophocles' tragedy *Electra* (performed around 413 BC), Orestes, the son of the murdered king Agamemnon, in disguise, returns from exile, where he has grown up, in order to avenge his father. After a brief appearance in the beginning, Orestes vanishes for several hundred verses. In the meantime, the entire focus is on his sister Electra, who has been living all the years since her father was killed under one roof with his murderers. She has spent these years endlessly lamenting her and her father's fate and thinks, since she has been deliberately left uninformed by her brother about his return, that her situation will never change. The sole focus on Electra, lasting for several hundred verses, allows Sophocles to present the power of her lament: not only does she succeed in persuading the chorus and her sister, who call on her to stop lamenting. By means of her lament, she also puts considerable stress on her mother Clytaemestra, the murderer of Agamemnon, and, without knowing about Orestes' plans, secures the ritual framework for the revenge on her father's murderers by calling down the Furies on them; even after she has met Orestes, it is her lament that makes him give up his disguise and let her participate in the execution of the revenge, where it is her again who, in a prayer to Apollo to support the imminent killings, secures the religious framework (see Nooter 2012, p. 120; cf., on the power of Electra's lament, Kitzinger 1991). Therefore, her lament that the audience follows for a major part of the play is all but in vain; rather, as said before, it is a speech act in its own right.

In Euripides' tragedy *Hecuba* (performed around 423 BC), the spirit of Achilles demands the Trojan princess Polyxena be sacrificed at his grave, otherwise he would not release the Greek navy from Troy. After the announcement of his demand, Polyxena accepts it. In her lament-speech with

⁷ On classical tragedy as a 'questioning' genre, see e.g. Goldhill (2000).

⁸ On tragic lament, see e.g. Foley (2001, pp. 19-56).

⁹ For texts and translations, see Lloyd-Jones (2014: Sophocles) and Kovacs (1995: Euripides).

¹⁰ E.g. the tragedy *Trojan Women* by Euripides, where the captive women's lament stirs up sympathy on the Greek side, and where this lament is likely to have had a particular effect on the external audience (Suter 2003).

which she announces her decision, she claims the heroic character of her intention, and that is exactly what happens (on Polyxena's lament, see Dué 2006, pp. 121-124): after she has been slaughtered on the altar, the Greeks hasten to burn her corpse in a way adequate to a hero and acknowledge her heroic status, while there is no mention of the glory of Achilles anymore, although his spirit had demanded she be sacrificed to him precisely with regard to his heroic glory – the Greeks simply pray to him to release the Greek navy from Troy.¹¹ While male heroism becomes dubious, female heroism is enhanced by the means of lament. Something similar can be said of Polyxena's mother Hecuba: when pleading before Agamemnon against the Thracian king Polymestor, her son's murderer, lament is one of the strategies she successfully employs, thereby securing her revenge on him. The fact that Polymestor, after having been blinded, unsuccessfully appeals before Agamemnon to his martial ties to the Greeks and fiercely condemns the 'female race' (vv. 1132-1182) makes it clear that, with Hecuba, a woman – in her role as mother – has succeeded against the arrogance of the man Polymestor, and one of the means that secured her victory is her use of lament before Agamemnon.¹²

Taking a step back from lament, we can contextualize these challenges to traditional notions of language within the broader framework of ancient Greek intellectual discourse. Beginning with the pre-Socratic philosophers Xenophanes (6th-5th century BC) and Democritus (5th-4th century BC), there is an awareness in Greek thought of the conventional nature of language (see Heinimann 1945, pp. 51f.), i.e. the fact that names do not have an inherent meaning, but are assigned to objects by convention. This thought was expanded on in the fifth century by the powerful intellectual movement called the Sophistic, which stressed, in many areas, the dichotomy between 'nature' and 'custom' (see Kerferd, Flashar 1998, pp. 13-19) and influenced the famous discussion in the Platonic dialogue *Cratylus* (first half of the 4th century BC) on whether words have an inherent meaning or are arbitrarily, by convention, *given* a meaning. The discussions in the *Ajax* and elsewhere in tragedy suggest that, in the fifth century, this question was perceived not only with regard to semantics, but to pragmatics as well – is lament really genuinely feminine, hence an expression of women's 'temperamental essence' (Gal, Irvine 1995,

¹¹ The demand of Achilles' spirit is mentioned several times before the sacrifice; in these places, it is always described with clearly heroic connotations: He is said to demand Polyxena's sacrifice as a 'gift of honour' (vv. 41; 94f.; 115), or is himself called 'worthy of honour' (v. 309); in the prayer before the sacrifice, however, the sacrificer calls Polyxena's blood an 'appeasing libation' to make Achilles release the Greek navy (vv. 534-541), whereas the character of a gift of honour is not mentioned anymore: Achilles' spirit appears there as a demon to be propitiated, not as a hero who, although dead, demands the recognition of his heroic status.

¹² It very much fits the picture that Hecuba's end, which is prophesied at the end of the tragedy, can also be read as a heroization of Hecuba *as a mother* (see Dué 2006, pp. 131-135).

p. 976), or could this just be an ideologeme conventionally imposed on women – and men?

4. Conclusions

This paper presents an exercise in ‘historical metapragmatics’ by showing how a particular tragedy, the *Ajax* by Sophocles, critically engages with generally held notions that considered lament to be a genuinely feminine, and thus inferior, speech act due to women being inherently more emotional and less rational than men. Sophocles challenges these traditional notions by presenting Ajax as adhering to them, but then juxtaposing his behavior to that of his female slave Tecmessa. For this presentation allows the recipients to recognize in Ajax’s stance towards lament three processes – iconization, recursivity, and erasure – that characterize a conception of language as ideological. As has been shown, this challenge can be contextualized within the broader framework both of the genre of tragedy and of the contemporary intellectual discourse on language. The former sometimes questioned – or, more precisely, enabled its viewers to question – the notion of the inferiority of female speech. The latter was characterized by growing awareness of the conventional nature of language, which, this reading suggests, was perceived not only with regard to semantics, but to pragmatics as well. This reading of the *Ajax* thus enriches our picture of the discourse on language use in classical Athens.

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CLOSING CONFLICTS **Conversational strategies** **across Greek and Roman tragedies**

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Abstract – Pre-closing and closing sequences are a standard feature of conversations, permitting a harmonious end to an exchange. As Schegloff and Sacks (1973, p. 289) put it, a conversation “does not simply end, but is brought to a close”. The absence of closing sequences, in turn, is a strong indicator of some irregularity, potentially a conflict between the interlocutors. This paper deals with closing sequences in ancient tragedy. According to the rules of the genre, tragedies deal with conflicts that do not find a peaceful resolution, barring a few exceptions. There is thus a significant number of conversations in which no agreement is reached. Often, the close of the dialogues does not follow the regular patterns. Instead, the non-negotiated and unmediated end affirms the non-cooperative nature of the dialogue. This paper looks specifically at how the close of the conversation is managed where disagreement persists, in an approach that considers both the specificity of the individual situation and broad diachronic developments. It thus offers a contribution to the systematization of termination of dialogue, complementing in particular the wide field of studies on closing procedures with a survey of texts in which these procedures are not observed.

Keywords: closings; conflicts; Greek tragedy; Roman tragedy; conversational strategies.

1. Introduction

This paper deals with conversational closing sequences and their absence in Greek and Roman tragedies. As such, it is situated in the realm of historical pragmatics, in that it applies an approach borrowed from Conversational Analysis – Emanuel Schegloff’s and Harvey Sacks’s groundbreaking work on closings (Schegloff, Sacks 1973) – to ancient theatrical texts dating back to the time span between the fifth century BCE and the first century CE. It aims to offer a diachronic perspective on the issue of closings. More specifically, we shall concentrate on closings in a specific type of conversation, namely conflict dialogues, in which a strong disagreement between the parties is expressed and not dissolved by the time the dialogue ends. It is a particularly striking example

of how tragedy builds on and partly exploits the structures of daily conversation, creating its own forms, to serve its specific purposes of literary, emotional, or characterizing effects.

As Conversational Analysis has shown, regular, real-life conversations do not just end; they are gradually brought to a close by a series of steps (Schegloff, Sacks 1973; Button 1987; Sidnell 2010, pp. 214-221): we as interlocutors signal that we expect the conversation to come to an end by turning to a “closing-implicative topic”. This is followed by one or more rounds of pre-closing items, that is, by adjacency pairs that do not offer much content but rather test the ground to see if there is agreement on ending the dialogue. Finally, we have a farewell formula such as “good-bye”:

Johnson: ... and uh, uh we're gonna see if we can't uh tie in our plans a little better.
Closing-implicative topic

Baldwin: Okay // fine.

Johnson: ALRIGHT? *Pre-Closings*

Baldwin: RIGHT.

Johnson: Okay boy,

Baldwin: Okay

Johnson: Bye//bye

Closing (farewell formulas)

Baldwin: G'night.

(Example borrowed from Schegloff, Sacks 1973, p. 307)

This structure is not only widespread in modern cultures (Laver 1975, 1981; Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1990),¹ but it goes back all the way to antiquity, as we can see from closings in Roman comedies, which offer relatively naturalistic scenes of dialogue in comparison with other scripted dramatic dialogues (Roesch 2002; Roesch 2005; Iurescia 2019). Dialogues in Roman comedies stereotypically end with the question *numquid vis?* ‘Do you want anything?’ (or an equivalent implication of closing), followed by a mutual “farewell”,² as (1) and (2) show:

(1) PARASITUS *numquid uis?* PISTOCLERUS *abeas. celeriter facto est opus.*
PARASITUS *uale, dentifrangibule.* PISTOCLERUS *Et tu, integumentum, uale.*
(Plautus *Bacchides* 604-605)³

HANGER-ON Do you want anything? PISTOCLERUS Yes, go away. You need to do so quickly. HANGER-ON Goodbye, tooth-cracker. PISTOCLERUS And goodbye to you, shield.

¹ L'organisation interne de ces séquences [sc. d'ouverture et de clôture, nda] [...] varie aussi d'une culture à l'autre, mais dans toutes les sociétés, on note l'existence de rituels particuliers pour l'ouverture et la clôture des interactions, qui tient au fait qu'il s'agit là d'opérations importantes, et délicates: il n'est pas si facile de passer du silence à la parole, et de la parole au silence. (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1990, p. 221).

² On greetings and farewell in Latin see Poccetti (2010).

³ All Latin and Greek texts and their translations are borrowed from Loeb editions as listed in the references; departures from these editions are indicated in footnotes.

(2) PARMENO *habes omnem rem. pergam quo coepi hoc iter.*
 PHILOTIS *et quidem ego. nam constitui cum quodam hospite*
me esse illum conventurum. PARMENO *di vortant bene*
quod agas! PHILOTIS *vale.* PARMENO *et tu bene vale, Philotium.* (Terence
The Mother-in-law 194-197)

PARMENO There you have the whole story. I'll go on my way. PHILOTIS So will I. I've an appointment to meet a client from overseas. PARMENO Heaven bless your enterprise! PHILOTIS Goodbye. PARMENO Goodbye to you, Philotis dear.

Such pre-closing and closing sequences that negotiate the termination of the conversation permit a harmonious end to an exchange, so as to continue the relationship between the interlocutors even despite their persistent disagreement. Their absence, in turn, is a strong indicator of some irregularity, potentially a conflict between the interlocutors, as each denies the other the orderly close and the collaboration concerning floor management (Frank 1982; Wardhaugh 1985, pp. 156-160; Vuchinich 1990). It is such kinds of conversation, namely conflicts, or rather, conflicts typically resolved by violence, that lie at the heart of the genre of tragedy. There is thus a significant number of conversations in which no agreement is reached; in such cases the closing process of dialogues does not follow the regular patterns, made up of negotiation and a mutually approved close of the interaction. Rather, as we shall see, conflicts in tragic dialogues tend to show a different kind of closing.

The applicability of the concepts and methods of Conversational Analysis to literary (i.e. scripted), highly formalized texts has been studied extensively and with growing intensity in recent years (for a general overview, see, e.g., Jacobs, Jucker 1995; Jucker, Taavitsainen 2013; Locher, Jucker 2017; for a recent review on previous studies applying a pragmatic approach to Latin literary texts, see Ricottilli 2009; among the most recent monographs see, e.g., Schuren 2015; Barrios-Lech 2016; and Emde Boas 2017). This study aims to contribute to this line of research by applying a conversation analytic approach to classical (ancient) texts.

In order better to appreciate the specificities of ancient tragic dialogue, we take as a corpus all the ancient tragedies that have survived in their entirety:⁴ from the fifth century BCE six Greek plays by Aeschylus and one transmitted under his name (though probably spurious), seven by Sophocles, sixteen by Euripides and (probably from the fourth century BCE) one tragedy wrongly ascribed to him; for Roman tragedy the dramatic works of Seneca (eight tragedies from the first century CE) and two tragedies whose authors are unknown from roughly the same period.

⁴ Single lines or sections of text may have been lost in the course of transmission, but in none of these cases is there a sign that such problems of transmission concern the passages under discussion here. On problematic cases related to the uncertainty of the original text cf. Section 3.1.

A first general observation can be made with regard to the entire set of data under consideration, i.e. the full body of texts: the stylized dialogue in tragedy generally dispenses with the conventions of ordinary life with regard to closings, irrespective of the particular kind of conversation under way and of the existence of conflicts. This may have different explanations: it may partly be due to plot constraints. The specific ongoing events may, for instance, be characterized by urgency, so that the conventions of daily conversation tend to be overlooked. A further motive may be the characterization of the dramatic figures – the abrupt termination of a dialogue, for example, may depict a character as rude or a villain – or, as we would like to show, the emphasis given to the particular kind of conversation being closed. Further observations can be made when one considers the specific kind of dialogue, as outlined above: conflict dialogues without resolution, which we define as two-way dialogues which end in disagreement about the issue under debate, and their closing. We thereby exclude dialogues that continue after the affirmation of disagreement and a change of topic.

We aim to determine patterns in which conflicts fall short of elaborate closings, and why these closings exhibit brevity, or even abruptness, against a standard conversational pattern, especially in relation to techniques of dramatizing conflicts. The analysis will be based on a qualitative approach due to the unfeasibility of defining lexical (or other electronically retrievable) markers (see e.g. Jucker, Taavitsainen 2008), the size of the available sample, and the issue considered, namely closings in conflict scenes. A qualitative approach, which, on a micro-level, uses a fine-grained analysis of linguistic features following the methods elaborated by CA, and, on a macro-level, takes into account the wider context of the plot and narrative settings, allows to appreciate the specificities of that tricky section of the conversation, which closings is.

2. Closing conflict dialogues in ancient tragedies

2.1. Classification of closings in conflict dialogues

As stated above, Greek and Roman tragedies present closings in an abbreviated manner: we never get a terminal element of the “farewell”-kind, and quite frequently there is not even a pre-closing item or a closing-implicative topic. Instead, it often happens that the most blatant reaffirmation of the antagonistic positions is at the same time the end of the dialogue.

We distinguish three types of closings (see Table 1): type A, those in which both parties indicate in some way that the dialogue is coming to a close, that is, as we choose to call it, “fully closed” (or negotiated) dialogues; type B, which we call “semi-closed”, refers to cases in which only one party indicates the imminent close; finally, there is type C, or “unclosed” dialogue, in which the dialogue ends without any previous indication.

| Type A | Type B | Type C |
|--|---|---|
| Fully closed (negotiated) dialogues: Both parties indicate the imminent close | Semi-closed dialogues: Only one party indicates the imminent close | Unclosed dialogues: Neither party indicates the imminent close |

Table 1
Types of closings in conflicts.

This categorization may be further refined by reference to the way in which the dialogue ends: under categories B and C we find three ways in which the irregular termination is brought about (see Table 2). Sub-type a) refers to cases in which one character (or sometimes both) exit(s), often after a last affirmation of their position; then we find sub-type b), where one speaker changes addressees, either turning to someone present or in the form of an apostrophe (Lausberg 1990 [1949] s. v.), e. g. to a deity or absent person. Finally, there is sub-type c), where an external termination is brought about through the intervention or arrival of a person other than the interlocutors.

| Type A | Type B | | | Type C | | |
|--------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Sub-type a) Character(s)' exit | Sub-type b) Change of addressee | Sub-type c) External termination | Sub-type a) Character(s)' exit | Sub-type b) Change of addressee | Sub-type c) External termination |

Table 2
Sub-types of closings.

In order to illustrate how this plays out, type A may be exemplified in (3):

(3) ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ ἄπειμι· καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πύθοιτό τις
 λόγοις κολάζειν ὧι βιάζεσθαι πάρα.
 ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ ἄφερπέ νυν. κάμοι γὰρ αἴσχιστον κλύειν
 ἀνδρὸς ματαίου φλαῦρ' ἔπη μυθουμένου. (Sophocles *Ajax* 1159-1162)
 MENELAUS I shall depart; it would be disgraceful if anyone learned that I was
 chastising with words when I could use force. TEUCER Be off, then, for me too
 it is utterly disgraceful to listen to a futile fellow speaking foolish words.

In the above exchange most elements of the closing procedure are suppressed. What remains is an explicit acknowledgment by both parties that they are not willing to continue the conversation. The announcement of imminent departure – here the formulations “I shall depart.” and “Be off then.” – replaces the “goodbye”.

Type B is illustrated in (4):⁵

(4) ΚΗΡΥΞ ἔλθ', ὥς σε λόγῃ σπαρτὸς ἐν κόνει βάληι.
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ τίς δ' ἐκ δράκοντος θοῦρος ἂν γένοιτ' Ἄρης;
 ΚΗΡΥΞ γνώσῃ σὺ πάσχων· νῦν δ' ἔτ' εἰ νεανίας.
 ΘΗΣΕΥΣ οὔτοι μ' ἐπαρεῖς ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι φρένας
 τοῖς σοῖσι κόμποις· ἀλλ' ἀποστέλλου χθονὸς
 λόγους ματαίους οὔσπερ ἠνέγκω λαβών. (Euripides *Suppliant Women* 578-583)
 HERALD Come and let the Sown Men's spear hurl you into the dust!
 THESEUS What sort of martial fury can come from a dragon? HERALD You'll
 learn by painful experience. You are still young. THESEUS You will not stir
 me up to anger with your boastful talk. Leave the country, and take with you the
 foolish words you brought here! We are accomplishing nothing.
Exit herald by Eisodos B.

As we can see, the herald does not respond to King Theseus' “Leave the country”, a formulation through which the king indicates his will to bring the conversation to an end. He leaves without a word; the closing is implemented solely by the physical departure (i.e. without being verbalised), in silent execution of Theseus' order.⁶

Finally, in (5) we find an instance of type C:

⁵ This is sub-type a). For sub-type b) cf. the examples listed under (7); for sub-type c) cf. the examples under (8).

⁶ No stage directions are preserved in Latin or ancient Greek dramatic texts; adding them for the reader's comprehension is part of the interpreters' task, as in this case the translator does by means of “*Exit herald by Eisodos B*”.

(5) ΧΟΡΟΣ μη ἄλθης ὁδοὺς σὺ τάσδ' ἐφ' ἑβδόμαις πύλαις.
 ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ τεθηγμένον τοί μ' οὐκ ἀπαμβλυνεῖς λόγῳ.
 ΧΟΡΟΣ νίκην γε μέντοι καὶ κακὴν τιμᾷ θεός.
 ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ οὐκ ἄνδρ' ὀπλίτην τοῦτο χρή στέργειν ἔπος.
 ΧΟΡΟΣ ἀλλ' αὐτάδελφον αἷμα δρέψασθαι θέλεις;
 ΕΤΕΟΚΛΗΣ θεῶν διδόντων οὐκ ἂν ἐκφύγοις κακά. (Aeschylus *Seven against Thebes* 714-719)
 CHORUS Don't make this journey to the Seventh Gate. ETEOCLES I am whetted, and your words will not blunt me. CHORUS Yet god respects even an inglorious victory. ETEOCLES That's not an expression that a man-at-arms should tolerate. CHORUS You want to shed the blood of your own brother? ETEOCLES When the gods send evil, one cannot escape.

As we see, there is no unequivocal hint at the end of the discussion. A very intense question implying that the chorus entreats Eteocles not to go and fight his brother is answered by a gnomic statement.⁷ Each party makes their position clear, and that is how the dialogue ends: abruptly and unexpectedly.

Such abruptness is represented in different degrees through the three kinds of sub-types identified, as in (6), (7a) and (7b), and (8a) and (8b), as the following discussion will illustrate.

(6) OCTAVIA *Gravi deorum nostra iam pridem domus
 urgetur ira, prima quam pressit Venus
 furore miserae dura genetricis meae,
 quae nupta demens nupsit incesta face,
 oblita nostri,⁸ coniugis, legum immemor.*

...
 NUTRIX *Renovare luctus parce cum fletu pios,
 Manes parentis neve sollicita tuae,
 graves furoris quae sui poenas dedit.*

CHORUS *Quae fama modo venit ad aures!* (Octavia 257-273)

OCTAVIA Our house has long been burdened with the gods' heavy anger. The first to afflict it was cruel Venus, using the madness of my poor mother, who made an insane, unholy marriage while already married, oblivious to us, her husband and heedless of the law. ... NURSE Forbear from renewing your laments, your tears of devotion – and do not disturb the spirit of your mother, who has paid a heavy penalty for her madness. CHORUS What a rumour has just now reached our ears!

(6) exemplifies sub-type a) (as did (4) and (5)), which ends with the exit of one or both interlocutors. We learn that the dialogue between Octavia and the Nurse

⁷ Proverbial (gnomic) statements “which can be heard as the ‘moral’ or ‘lesson’ of the topic” are viewed by Schegloff, Sacks (1973, p. 306) as possible topic-closing and as such closing-implicative markers. In the example above, however, there is no such concluding notion to be detected (in a logical sense); instead, the *gnomê* gives a one-sided emphasis to Eteocles's position.

⁸ *Nostri* here departs from the Loeb edition, and follows Zwierlein's text; the translation has been accordingly slightly modified by the paper's authors.

is over just because the Chorus' ode starts suddenly, without any transition. As Ferri (2003, p. 205) notes, "There is no exit to signal the end of the scene. Octavia and the Nurse disappear with no reason, however conventional, being given for their departure." It is a very abrupt termination, and it marks a strong break, a sharp divide between the dialogue and what follows.

In (7a) and (7b) we find illustrated sub-type b), which occurs when one character ends the dialogue by addressing someone other than his or her previous interlocutor. The change of addressee may be realised by means of an order to third parties, as in (7a), or by an apostrophe, either to an absent person or to a divinity, as in (7b).

(7a) AGAMEMNON *Nullum est periculum tibimet.* CASSANDRA *At magnum tibi.*

AGAMEMNON *Victor timere quid potest?* CASSANDRA *Quod non timet.*

AGAMEMNON *Hanc fida famuli turba, dum excutiat deum, retinete ne quid impotens peccet furor.* (Seneca *Agamemnon* 798-801)

AGAMEMNON There is no danger for you. CASSANDRA But great danger for you. AGAMEMNON What can a conqueror fear? CASSANDRA What he does not fear. AGAMEMNON My loyal band of servants, restrain her until she throws off the god's influence, lest her wayward madness should commit some offence.

The dialogue between Agamemnon and Cassandra is deadlocked; Agamemnon orders his servants to restrain Cassandra, as he thinks she is in divine frenzy.

(7b) NUTRIX *Defende saltem dexteram, infelix, tuam, fraudisque facinus esse, non nuptae, sciat.*

DEIANIRA *Defendar illic: inferi absolvent ream.*

a me ipsa damnor, purget has Pluton manus.

stabo ante ripas, immemor Lethe, tuas

et umbra tristis coniugem excipiam meum. (Hercules on Oeta 932-937)

NURSE At least vindicate your action, ill-fated woman: let him know the deed arose from treachery, not his wife. DEIANIRA I shall be vindicated there: those below will absolve me at my trial. I condemn myself; let Pluto absolve these hands. O Lethe of oblivion, I shall stand before your banks and wait as a sad shade to greet my husband.

Deianira picks up on the Nurse's words, replying to her "vindicate your action", by "I shall be vindicated there"; then slips into apostrophe, addressing a river in the underworld: "O Lethe ... I shall stand before your banks". The contact between Deianira and the nurse is not re-established; the scene ends.

The way the contact is interrupted here is through an apostrophe to an absent (or sometimes abstract) entity. This is a special form of the change of addressee, which is used particularly frequently in high poetry. Orlandini and Poccetti (2010) subsume the phenomena of address to an absent entity and to a present third party under the concept of 'non-interpellation'. This device may

serve to express different, even opposite intentions on the part of the speaker, and the context is crucial to identify the one in use in the ongoing interaction.⁹ As a special realization of a more general illocutionary intention, even a rhetorical device as apostrophe may then be seen as rooted in the conventions of daily conversation, and contribute to shaping scripted, literary dialogues under the conversational structure shared by all kind of dialogues. (See Section 3 for more details on this.)

In (8a) and (8b) we find instances of sub-type (c), where the dialogue is ended through an event external to the dialogue proper, viz. the arrival of a person other than the speaker, as in (8a), or the interruption of the dialogue by a third person already present, as in (8b):

(8a) NUTRIX *Compesce verba, parce iam, demens, minis
animosque minue; tempori aptari decet.*
MEDEA *Fortuna opes auferre, non animum potest.*
Sed cuius ictu regius cardo strepit?
ipse est Pelasgo tumidus imperio Creon. (Seneca *Medea* 174-178)

NURSE Control your words, give up your threats now, crazy woman, subdue your proud spirit; it is right to adapt to circumstances. MEDEA Fortune can take away my wealth, but not my spirit. But who pounds the palace doors, creaking on their hinges? It is himself, swollen with Pelasgian power: Creon.

In this example the speakers are arguing as one of them hears a noise (the pounding of the doors). The distraction seems merely to interrupt the dialogue, but the subsequent approach of Creon, who then starts to speak, ends the conversation for good.

(8b) ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ καὶ μὴν μέγας <γ> ὀφθαλμὸς οἱ πατρὸς τάφοι.
ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ μέγας, ξυνίημι· ἀλλὰ τῆς ζώσης φόβος.
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ποίας δὲ καὶ γυναικὸς ἐκφοβεῖσθ' ὕπερ; (Sophocles *OT* 987-989)
IOCASTE Well, your father's funeral is a great source of light. OEDIPUS
Yes, I understand; but I am afraid while she still lives. MESSENGER But who
is the woman who makes you afraid?

Here the messenger, already present on stage, interrupts the dialogue between Oedipus and Iocaste, and takes over and speaks with Oedipus for a while (989-1050).

The preceding examples have illustrated the scope of ways in which conflict dialogues can end. For a more detailed view, we shall look at the evidence from a quantitative angle to see whether not only the types, but also the distribution bear similarity to real life.

⁹ “Comme la plupart des actes illocutoires de “macro-pragmatique”, la non-interpellation est une stratégie exploitée dans deux sens: pour s’opposer en rejetant l’autre ou pour mitiger notre agressivité envers lui. Seul le contexte peut enlever l’ambiguïté concernant l’attitude de celui qui choisit la non-interpellation comme de celui qui la rejette.” (Orlandini, Poccetti 2010, § 15).

2.2. Distribution of closing types in conflicts across Greek and Roman tragedies

The tables 3, 4, 5, 6 (see annexes) show the distribution of types and sub-types throughout the corpus. Where the chronology of plays can be ascertained (i.e. in the cases of Aeschylus and Euripides) the arrangement follows this principle; for Sophocles and Seneca we present the plays in the traditional order of transmission. The distribution of (sub-)types permits the following observations and conclusions, which indicate the divergence of the tragic corpus from the patterns of regular everyday conversation, for reasons that may range from personal preference to a special dramatic effect and even to circumstances of performance (see Section 3):

Firstly, the pattern closest to the standard of ordinary conversation – the fully closed type (Type A) – is far less frequent (15 unambiguous¹⁰ instances out of 69 or 21.7%) than the semi-closed (Type B: 23 instances or 33.3%) and unclosed (Type C: 31 instances or 44.9%) types, which are apparently the regular ways to end a scene if the conflict persists. The sub-types are more evenly distributed: sub-type a) has 19 instances (12 with type B, 7 with type C), b) 20 (8 with B, 12 with C) and c) 15 (3 with B, 12 with C).

Secondly, when we go into details, a difference between Greek and Roman tragedy emerges. While they both show a general preponderance to end conflict dialogues without both parties indicating the closing, the patterns in the specific techniques of ending such dialogues differ.

In Greek tragedy on the whole there is great variety. There are no clear trends in Aeschylus' or Sophocles' handling of closings. To some degree Euripides may provide a more interesting set of data: his tragedies seem to show a shift from a proportionally higher rate of fully closed (Type A) and semi-closed dialogues ending with one character's exit (Type B, sub-type a) in his earlier plays to a more even distribution without clear preferences in his later tragedies (see table 3 for the details). The figures may, however, be too small and the patterns too heterogeneous to allow the shift to be considered significant.

In Roman tragedy, by contrast, we find a striking distribution of the most abrupt sub-type a), the termination by an exit, with a conspicuous divergence from one author to another: Seneca makes use of this sub-type in only 3 out of 17 relevant conflict scenes; in all three instances he uses the same technique to mitigate the abrupt exit: the simultaneous entrance by a soliloquizing new character (Sen. *Phoen.* 363, *Med.* 431, *Ag.* 226). For the anonymous author of *Octavia*, who presumably wrote the tragedy not very long after Seneca's death

¹⁰ In this count the two passages Aeschylus *Eumenides* 228–231/234 and Euripides *Hercules* 236–251/274 have been omitted, as the type cannot be determined. Other cases where the tables indicate a second possibility in brackets, only the main option has been taken into account.

(Ferri 2003, pp. 17 and 27; Boyle 2008, pp. xiv-xv), we find the opposite predilection, as this sub-type is the only form of closing he employs. He thus clearly favors such an abrupt break, as he makes the dialogues in all three conflicts end with the unexpected exit of both speakers (and without mitigation as in Seneca's genuine plays). What is more, he increases the strong effect of such a closing by letting it coincide with the end of the act and the emptying of the stage, and in one instance even with a significant shift of time ahead of the next scene. This means that the abruptness of the closing contributes to a neat pause, together with the change of characters on stage. We already saw in (6) the dialogue between Octavia and the Nurse, and how it was followed by the choral song. Passage (9a) follows the same pattern: Seneca tries to persuade Nero to offer mercy to his enemies and to his wife Octavia. He does not succeed, however, as Nero does not change his mind, but rather decides to set the date for his wedding with Poppaea. After that, we suddenly find a monologue by (the ghost of) Agrippina (who had hitherto not been present on stage): again, we have no other indications that Seneca's and Nero's dialogue had been concluded and that they left the stage. Furthermore, this monologue takes place on the following day: a strong shift in time increases the break produced by the unexpected closing and the change of characters on stage.

(9a) SENECA *Excelsa metuit*. NERO *Non minus carpit tamen*.
 SENECA *Facile opprimetur. merita te divi patris*
aetasque frangat coniugis, probitas pudor.
 NERO *Desiste tandem, iam gravis nimium mihi,*
instare! liceat facere quod Seneca improbat.
et ipse populi vota iam pridem moror
 *****¹¹

cum portet utero pignus et partem mei.
quin destinamus proximum thalamis diem.

AGRIPPINA *Tellure rupta Tartaro gressum extuli ...* (Octavia 585-593)

SENECA It fears the great. NERO But carps nonetheless. SENECA It will easily be crushed. You should be swayed by your obligations to your deified father, by your wife's youth, her probity and modesty. NERO Enough, stop pressing the point! You are trying my patience now. Let me act in a way that Seneca disapproves. Indeed I have been delaying the people's wishes for some time ... since she is carrying in her womb a token and a portion of myself. Come, let us set tomorrow as the day for the wedding.

(*exeunt*)

(*time: toward dawn of the next day*)

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA Bursting through the earth I have made my way from Tartarus ...

The third example is at the end of the dialogue between Nero and the Prefect (9b). Here we find, again, a character pleading in vain for mercy, whereas Nero

¹¹ Lacuna in the text.

tells him to execute the orders. Then follows the choral ode: as a matter of fact, we have no explicit closing of the dialogue, instead the features that we have already seen – abrupt closing, change of characters on stage – mark a strong break between the dialogue and what is next to come. To make it even stronger, we may, at this point, also have a change of scenery, as some scholars think that the Chorus' ode is set on the dock in Campania, from where Octavia was historically deported. To be sure, critics do not agree on this question, as this would be the only hint throughout the play at the actual historical conditions of Octavia's deportation (Ferri 2003, p. 383; cf. Boyle 2008, p. 271).

(9b) PRAEFECTVS *Haud quemquam, reor,
mulier*—¹² NERO *Dedit natura cui pronum malo
animum, ad nocendum pectus instruxit dolis.*
PRAEFECTVS *Sed uim negavit.* NERO *Vt ne inexpugnabilis
esset, sed aegras frangeret uires timor
uel poena; quae iam sera damnatam premet
diu nocentem. tolle consilium ac preces
et imperata perage: deuectam rate
procul in remotum litus interim iube,
tandem ut residat pectoris nostri tumor.*
CHORUS *O funestus multis populi
dirusque fauor ... (Octavia 867-878)*

PREFECT I do not think anyone could (incite) a woman – NERO To whom Nature has given a spirit prone to evil, and furnished her heart with trickery for use in wrongdoing. PREFECT But denied her strength. NERO Yes, so she should not be invincible, since her feeble strength would be broken by fear or punishment. And punishment, now overdue, shall crush this condemned criminal of long standing. No more advice or appeals! Carry out your orders. Have her transported by ship to some distant remote shore, and killed, so that the ferment of anger in my heart can finally subside. CHORUS How dire and deadly the people's backing proves to many!

In any case, what we do have in all three cases is a neat break, realized through different means.

3. Interpretation

The evidence presented above gives rise to different conclusions.

First of all, from our typology of dialogue ends it can be seen that the literary dialogues of tragedy in general, and those in the non-negotiated conflict dialogues, which we considered in this paper, in particular, imitate practices of everyday conversations: they offer a range of different techniques to end such

¹² This distribution of the characters' turns departs from the Loeb edition, and follows Zwierlein's text; the Loeb edition has been accordingly slightly modified by the paper's authors, without effect on the categorization of the type of closing.

dialogues. The use of apostrophe shows that even the strict structure of face-to-face addresses can be dissolved, as this rhetorical device finds (one of) its *raison(s) d'être* in the macropragmatics of the conversational structure. The playwrights do, however, dispense with the extended form discovered by Schegloff and Sacks in 1973, which gradually leads to a mutual agreement on closing. Tragedy thus represents closings in a very condensed, often even abrupt, manner. In some way this is in line with the entire practice of writing in ancient drama, which is quite succinct, dispensing with conversational slack. But the case of breaking off conflict dialogues without a sense of closure, at the climax of escalation, goes beyond that general characteristic. Even in the cases of fully closed dialogues, that is, type A, the negotiation is always very brief. We would argue that one major factor for this preference lies exactly in the dramatic effect typical for the literary genre: as tragedy deals mostly with unresolved – and often unresolvable – conflicts, representing even the closings as not negotiated is another way to deal with the problematic interpersonal constellation, which amounts to depicting the topic 'conflict' both on the plot level and on the level of conversational structure.

Furthermore, while several individual types are extant in the corpus, their distribution differs from what one might expect, viz. the predominance of type A, the one closest to everyday conversations, in favor of types B and C. We would like to suggest that it is tragedy as a literary genre which gives rise to this preference. We base this interpretation on the double distinctness we have seen in the genre: not only does tragedy show relative overall coherence in choosing abbreviated forms of closings of conflict scenes without resolution, but it thereby also departs from other genres in the radical reduction of the closing procedure in any type of conversation. For, lighter genres differ in both aspects. As regards dialogue closings in ancient comedy, we rely on Roesch's (2002) research on dialogues' ends in Plautus' comedies. She lists only examples of negotiated closings and demonstrates how pre-closing sequences may be realized, thus evidencing the existence in Rome of closing patterns not found in tragedies from the same culture.

Moreover, from a recent study on quarrels in Roman comedy and the Roman novel, we know that this kind of interaction often ends in fully negotiated closings, even though this type of conversation shows a tendency to emphasize the underlying conflict (Iurescia 2019, pp. 179-181). While a thorough investigation on closing sequences is still outstanding, this data may hint at a particular correlation between the closing procedure, on the one hand, and comic and laughter, on the other: in the lower genres of Comedy and Novel, in which the latter are prevalent, we find a propensity towards negotiated closings – or, in turn, the high genre of tragedy with its focus on lasting and devastating conflicts tends to omit mitigating conversational techniques.

Thus there appears to be a specifically tragic way of handling closings, and this – we argue – has to do with the distinct nature of tragedy: the main reason why tragedy regularly shortens the routine closing sequence, avoiding the negotiation of the end of the dialogue, may lie in the ‘dramatic’ effect, intended to intensify the depiction of conflict: a conflict ending without any agreement, neither on issues being discussed, nor on the termination of conversation, is a very strong realization of a contrast, and it surely had a powerful impact on the audience.

Finally, Roman tragedy apparently exhibits far stronger individual patterns in types of closing, in particular with regard to sub-type a). Seneca apparently avoids the brusque end of a dialogue that is brought about if one or both interlocutors leave without a comment or indication of their departure. When he employs this type, he softens it by a smooth transition to the next scene. By contrast, the poet of the *Octavia* enhances the effect by further dramatic means such as a change of scenery. We would like to suggest that the abrupt closing with both speakers’ exit (Type C, sub-type a) hints at the saliency of non-verbal elements in performance on stage, aimed, in this case, to achieve the effect of a strong dramatic caesura.

3.1. *Special cases: mise-en-scène*

The categorization we have discussed so far describes all cases of dialogue closing in the corpus. However, sometimes the analysis is complicated by the absence in ancient drama of stage directions. In our review of the corpus we found a small number of cases in which there is room for uncertainty about exactly which type or sub-type is best suited to appreciate the nuances of the ongoing interaction.¹³ More specifically, we noted that the interaction may be staged in different ways equally reconcilable with the transmitted text. The ambiguity results in different descriptions along the proposed categories. In what follows we discuss one of these cases in order to elucidate the phenomenon.

A paramount example is in (10), where the realization is open to different options:

(10) ΧΟΡΟΣ ἄρ’ οὐκ ἀφορμὰς τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀγαθοὶ
 θνητῶν ἔχουσι, κἂν βραδύς τις ἦ λέγειν;
 ΛΥΚΟΣ σὺ μὲν λέγ’ ἡμᾶς οἷς πεπύργωσαι λόγοις.
 ἐγὼ δὲ δρᾶσω σ’ ἀντὶ τῶν λόγων κακῶς.
 ἄγ’, οἱ μὲν Ἑλικῶν’, οἱ δὲ Παρνασοῦπτυχᾶς
 τέμνειν ἄνωχθ’ ἐλθόντες ὑλουργοὺς δρυὸς
 κορμούς· ἐπειδὴν δ’ ἐσκομισθῶσιν πόλει,
 βωμὸν πέριξ νήσαντες ἀμφήρη ξύλα

¹³ In the tables the different possibilities of staging are indicated by means of round parentheses.

ἐπίμπρατ' αὐτῶν κάκφυροῦτε σώματα
 πάντων, ἴν' εἰδῶσ' οὐνεκ' οὐχ ὁ καθανῶν
 κρατεῖ χθονὸς τῆσδ' ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὰ νῦν τάδε.
 ὑμεῖς δέ, πρέσβεις, ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐναντίοι
 γνῶμαισιν ὄντες, οὐ μόνον στενάξετε
 τοὺς Ἡρακλείους παῖδας ἀλλὰ καὶ δόμου
 τύχας, ὅταν πάσχη τι, μεμνήσεσθε δὲ
 δοῦλοι γεγῶτες τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος. (Euripides *Heracles* 236-251)

CHORUS LEADER Do not brave men, even when they lack a ready tongue, find good things to say? LYCUS Go on reviling me with the words you are so proud of! I shall pay you back for words with deeds! Come, some of you go to Helicon, others to the glens of Parnassus, and order the woodsmen to cut logs of oak! When these have been brought into the city, pile the wood close about the altar and set alight and burn the bodies of them all! Then they will know that it is not the dead man but I who now rule this land! And you, old men, who oppose my decisions, you will weep not only for the sons of Heracles but for the misfortunes of your own houses when they suffer disaster: you will remember that you are slaves subject to my rule!

The last words of Lycus are addressed to the Chorus, and he closes the dialogue by threatening them 'you will remember that you are slaves subject to my rule'.¹⁴ Then the Chorus leader replies (Eur. *Herc.* 252-274) by alternating apostrophe to the citizen of Thebes – where the story is set – address to Lycus and apostrophe to his (the chorus leader's) own right hand. As in what follows another character speaks with the Chorus (275-315), we can legitimately conclude that Lycus has left by 275. The issue is: when exactly does he leave earshot, and does he hear what the Chorus replies?¹⁵ If he does, it is the Chorus who closes the interaction with Lycus, being the last to address the other. Both interlocutors have made clear that they intend to end their interaction,¹⁶ that is, they produce a closing of Type A.

¹⁴ "You will remember" is the English translation for μεμνήσεσθε δὲ; if this is to be conceived of as an indication of closings, then this passage falls under Ba in the proposed categorization; if not, it would fall under Ca.

¹⁵ "Offspring of earth that Ares once sowed when he had despoiled the fierce jaw of the dragon, will you not take up the staves that prop your right hands and bloody this man's godless head? He is no true Theban, and rules most wrongfully over the citizens since he is an immigrant. But you will never get away with lording it over me, nor take from me what I have worked so hard to get. Go back to where you came from and be high-handed there! While I live you will never kill the children of Heracles: not so deep as that is he buried in the ground, leaving his children behind! O right arm of mine, how you long to take up the spear! Yet because of your weakness your longing has come to naught. Otherwise I would have put a stop to your calling me "slave" and would have done a glorious service to Thebes, in which you are now reveling. Thebes is not in its right mind, it suffers from civil strife and bad counsel. Otherwise it would never have taken you for a master. You have destroyed this country and you now rule it, but Heracles, who did it great service, does not get his due reward. Am I a meddler, then, if I do good to my friends when they are dead, the time when friends are most needed?" (Eur. *Herc.* 252-274)

¹⁶ We take Lycus's words "You will weep ..." as closing-implicative, as it gives a prospect to the events after their conversation has ended without a resolution of their disagreement.

If, on the other hand, Lycus leaves right after his own words, the Chorus replies *in absentia*: it is only one speaker, namely Lycus, who decides to end the dialogue, which means resorting to Type B, sub-type a. The difference results then in different possible realisations on stage.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, a pragmatic analysis of closings in conflict dialogues has brought about a systematic description of their different kinds, and of their distribution across the corpus of texts. At the same time it has also uncovered a particular technique that exploits the expectations from (both ancient and modern) everyday conversations. That technique, viz. the departure from the familiar pattern, serves to highlight the abruptness of the scripted conversations and thus intensifies the emotional impact of the staged conflicts.

The results have thus led to possible explanations for their patterns, which we hope can advance our understanding of both linguistic and literary aspects of these texts. On the other hand, they have shown that the methodology in the use of literary texts needs to be strongly aware of the specific conventions of literary genres and the limitations in inferring historical practices of conversations from their imitations in literature.

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Annexes

| Tragedies | Closing without Agreement | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Type A | Type B | | | Type C | | |
| | | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) |
| Aeschylus | | | | | | | |
| Sept. 718-719 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Suppl. 928-953 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ag. 1652-1653 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Cho. 928-930 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Eum. 228-231/4 ¹⁷ | (228-234) ✓ | (228-231) ✓ | | | | | |
| Eum. 652-673 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Eum. 729-733 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| PV 392-396 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| PV 1001-1035 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Sophocles | | | | | | | |
| Ai. 594-595 ¹⁸ | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Ai. 1159-1162 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| El. 1049-1057 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| OT 444-446 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| OT 629-635 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| OT 987-989 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| OT 1069-1070 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Ant. 523-525 ¹⁹ | | | | ✓ | | | (✓) |
| Ant. 558-561 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Ant. 576-578 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ant. 758-765 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Ant. 1063-1090 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Phil. 1001-1003 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| OC 821-823 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| OC 1348-1400 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Euripides | | | | | | | |
| Alc. 63-71 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Alc. 729-740 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Med. 1402-1405 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Hcl. 67-72 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Hcl. 274-287 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Hipp. 105-108 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Hipp. 520-524 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Hipp. 615-668 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Hipp. 1086-1101 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Andr. 261-272 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Andr. 693-746 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Hec. 400-401 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Suppl. 580-590 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Herc. 236-251/274 ²⁰ | (236-274) (✓) | (236-251) ✓ | | | | | |
| Ion. 1311-1319 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Ion. 1539-1548 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Hel. 1639-1641 | | | | | | | ✓ |

¹⁷ Two different options of staging are brought about by μέτεμι “I shall pursue” (Aesch. *Eum.* 231); if it indicates closings, then the passage falls under Ba; if not, the closings is to be put at 234, resulting in negotiated closings, Type A in the categorization proposed.

¹⁸ This is a case in which one speaker seems to reject the closing implication by the other: Ajax tells his concubine Tecmessa that she has already been talking too much (closing-implicative) and then orders his attendants to shut the door (and thus cut off the conversation). But Tecmessa resists (595 “I beg you to relent!”). Ajax replies one more time, but apparently the door is then shut; the conversation is over.

¹⁹ If Soph. *Ant.* 524-525 “Then go below and love those friends, if you must love them! But while I live a woman shall not rule!” indicates closings, then the passage exemplifies Bc; if not, then Cc.

²⁰ See Section 3.1 above.

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|--|-----|---|-----|
| Phoen. 618-620 ²¹ | ✓ | | | | | | (✓) |
| Phoen. 1681-1682 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Or. 491-525 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Or. 1617-1624 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ba. 509-518 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ba. 1350-1351 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Rhesus | | | | | | | |
| Rh. 83-86 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Rh. 510-526 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Rh. 874-881 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Seneca | | | | | | | |
| Her. F. 319-331 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Her. F. 438-441 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Her. F. 509-515 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Her. F. 1015-1021 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Tro. 349-352 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Phoen. 347-362 ²² | | ✓ | | | (✓) | | |
| Med. 174-178 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Med. 425-430 ²³ | | | | | ✓ | | (✓) |
| Med. 1018-1027 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ph. 574-588 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Ph. 710-718 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Oed. 705-708 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Oed. 1032-1039 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 203-225 ²⁴ | | | | | ✓ | | (✓) |
| Ag. 799-801 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 976-980 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 996-1000 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Hercules Oetaeus | | | | | | | |
| Her. O. 884b-935 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Octavia | | | | | | | |
| Oct. 257-273 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Oct. 588-592 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Oct. 870-876 | | | | | ✓ | | |

Table 3
Closings in conflicts.

²¹ This passage sees several orders to one character to leave and announcements by the same character that he will (593, 613–615), but the conversation continues until it is interrupted by an address to a third party (618–620). Then the original conversation is resumed, but then the conflict is partly resolved as the two parties agree to fight it out by force of arms.

²² If the speaker's words at lines 359-362 "No one shall root me out of these woods. I shall lurk in the cave of a hollowed cliff, or shelter in hiding behind dense brush. From here I shall catch at the words of straying rumors, and hear as best I can of the brothers' savage warfare." indicate closings, the passage falls under Ba; if not, under Ca.

²³ If the arrival of a third party closes the ongoing interaction, this passage exemplifies Cc; if not, and one of the speakers exits before the third party's entry, then it is of the Ca type. Note that the same options in the same conversational situation occur at Sen. Ag. 203-225.

²⁴ As in Sen. Med. 425-430 (see note 23).

| Tragedies | Closing without Agreement | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Type A | Type B | | | Type C | | |
| | | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) |
| Aeschylus | | | | | | | |
| Suppl. 928-953 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Eum. 228-234 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| PV 392-396 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Sophocles | | | | | | | |
| Ai. 1159-1162 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| OT 444-446 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ant. 576-578 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Euripides | | | | | | | |
| Alc. 729-740 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Held. 274-287 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Hipp. 105-108 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Hipp. 1086-1101 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Andr. 261-272 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Herc. 236-274 | (✓) | | | | | | |
| Phoen. 618-620 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Phoen. 1681-1682 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Ba. 509-518 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Seneca | | | | | | | |
| Her. F. 509-515 | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Med. 1018-1027 | ✓ | | | | | | |

Table 4
Type A across Greek and Roman Tragedies.

| Tragedies | Closing without Agreement | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Type A | Type B | | | Type C | | |
| | | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) |
| Aeschylus | | | | | | | |
| Cho. 928-930 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Eum. 228-231 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Eum. 652-673 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Eum. 729-733 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| PV 1001-1035 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Sophocles | | | | | | | |
| Ai. 594-595 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| OT 1069-1070 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Ant. 523-525 | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Ant. 758-765 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| OC 1348-1400 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Euripides | | | | | | | |
| Alc. 63-71 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Held. 67-72 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Hipp. 520-524 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Hipp. 615-668 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Andr. 693-746 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Suppl. 580-590 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Herc. 236-251 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Ion. 1539-1548 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Ba. 1350-1351 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Rhesus | | | | | | | |
| Rh. 510-526 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Seneca | | | | | | | |
| Her. F. 1015-1021 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Tro. 349-352 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Phoen. 347-362 | | ✓ | | | | | |
| Ph. 710-718 | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Oed. 705-708 | | | ✓ | | | | |

Table 5
Type B across Greek and Roman Tragedies.

| Tragedies | Closing without Agreement | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Type A | Type B | | | Type C | | |
| | | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) | Sub-type a) | Sub-type b) | Sub-type c) |
| Aeschylus | | | | | | | |
| Sept. 718-719 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Ag. 1652-1653 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Sophocles | | | | | | | |
| El. 1049-1057 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| OT 629-635 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| OT 987-989 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Ant. 523-525 | | | | | | | (✓) |
| Ant. 558-561 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Ant. 1063-1090 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Phil. 1001-1003 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| OC 821-823 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Euripides | | | | | | | |
| Med. 1402-1405 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Hec. 400-401 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Herc. 236-251 | | | | | (✓) | | |
| Ion. 1311-1319 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Hel. 1639-1641 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Phoen. 618-620 | | | | | | | (✓) |
| Or. 491-525 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Or. 1617-1624 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Rhesus | | | | | | | |
| Rh. 83-86 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Rh. 874-881 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Seneca | | | | | | | |
| Her. F. 319-331 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Her. F. 438-441 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Phoen. 347-362 | | | | | (✓) | | |
| Med. 174-178 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Med. 425-430 | | | | | ✓ | | (✓) |
| Ph. 574-588 | | | | | | | ✓ |
| Oed. 1032-1039 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 203-225 | | | | | ✓ | | (✓) |
| Ag. 799-801 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 976-980 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Ag. 996-1000 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Hercules Oetaeus | | | | | | | |
| Her. O. 884b-935 | | | | | | ✓ | |
| Octavia | | | | | | | |
| Oct. 257-273 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Oct. 588-592 | | | | | ✓ | | |
| Oct. 870-876 | | | | | ✓ | | |

Table 6
Type C across Greek and Roman Tragedies.

FROM SELF-TALK TO GRAMMAR

The emergence of multiple paradigms from self-quoted questions in Korean

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Abstract – Korean has a large inventory of sentence-final particles and connectives whose origins are ultimately traceable to quotative constructions. Certain self-quoted questions which appear in the form of a direct quote, i.e. those without any linkers to the host clause, developed into modal markers in conjunction with adjacent verbs in the main clause, thus becoming far removed from their original quotative function. Most of these modal markers also began to develop into clausal connectives simply by having their collocational sentence enders replaced with connectives. In a more dramatic fashion, the self-quoted questions formed a paradigm of connectives, dramatic in that they appear in bare form with no host verbs. The question markers were structurally reinterpreted as connectives and acquired functions from pragmatic inference in relation to a context. This development is largely due to the role of discursive strategies and also involves functional change, attributable to analogy. The development of these constructions triggered the development of multiple forms in other paradigms through analogy by virtue of their semantic and morphosyntactic resemblances. These constructions grammaticalized into grammatical markers in the semantic domains of evidentiality, epistemicity and emotional stance, such as inferential evidentiality, speaker's tentativeness in volition, evaluation of states of affairs, apprehensive emotion, etc., as well as the more discursive functions of dramatizing a narrative or engaging the audience by means of feigned interactivity, i.e. posing self-raised questions and volunteering answers to these. This paper analyzes the grammaticalization processes based on the data taken from a historical corpus.

Keywords: self-talk; grammaticalization; multiple paradigms; stance; feigned interactivity.

1. Introduction

Korean has a large number of quotative and reportative constructions that have grammaticalized into diverse functions in the domains of text and discourse. In particular, it has a large inventory of sentence-final particles and connectives whose origins are ultimately traceable to quotative constructions. Quotative constructions typically involve complementizers (COMPs) which

introduce a quoted utterance as the complement of a verb. Another type of quotative construction involves self-quotation in the form of direct quotation, i.e. one in which the main clause directly embeds the speaker's utterance or thought as a complement.

Quotative constructions involving complementizers have received considerable attention from linguists mainly because complementizers explicitly occur in a sentence and the complementizers display developmental trajectories in history (Rhee 2008; Sohn 2011; Sohn, Park 2003). In addition to the quotative constructions involving complementizers, there are the quotative constructions involving self-quoted questions by the speaker (SQC, hereafter). The use of questions thus marked characterizes a 'dialogue' between the speaking self and the thinking self. This type of feigned interactivity makes a text more dramatic and vivid as compared to the texts that do not employ such rhetorical devices. Recent research reveals that many instances of grammaticalization in Korean are triggered by the speaker's desire to increase interactivity by making use of rhetorical, thus non-genuine, interaction.

Unlike such quotative constructions involving complementizers, SQCs have not yet received attention to date, presumably because they lack explicit markers, being directly embedded without other linguistic exponents. The quotative function is not associated with a specific form, but rather exists in the configuration of juxtaposed clauses. Therefore, this grammaticalization involves no formal changes but functional reinterpretation of existing forms, with no observable trajectories of change. This research intends to explore this phenomenon.

The objectives of this paper are threefold: to describe how SQCs emerged historically; to exemplify the functions of SQCs across various grammatical categories; and to analyze the role of analogy, pragmatic inference and functional reinterpretation involved in their development.

The research methodology involves using historical data for a diachronic investigation. The historical data are taken from a corpus, the 15-million word historical section of the 20th Century Sejong Corpus, a 200-million word corpus developed by the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the National Institute of Korean Language (1998-2006). The texts in the historical section, dating from 1446 through 1913, are available in the text format, and are searchable with the UNICONC concordance program.

2. Background

2.1. A brief note about Korean

Korean is a language largely spoken in and around the Korean peninsula by about 77.2 million speakers (Ethnologue; Simons, Fennig 2018). It is often considered an Altaic language, but its genealogy is disputed. Recently the language has been included in the group of ‘Transeurasian’ languages, including Japonic, Koreanic, Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic (Johanson, Robbeets 2010, pp. 1-2). Typologically it is an agglutinating, head-final language with an SOV word order, allowing for much freedom in word order due to its pervasive use of case-markers and postpositions that help determine the thematic function of sentential arguments regardless of their surface location. These nominal morphologies may be also deleted, and such deletion may be even preferred in discourse, when the function fulfilled by an argument is contextually straightforward. Typical sentence patterns are exemplified in (1) and the relatively free word order is illustrated by (2), which shows all the possible orderings of the constituents in (1b):¹

- (1) a. *John-i Mary-lul salangha-n-ta*
 John-NOM Mary-ACC love-PRES-DEC
 ‘John loves Mary.’
- b. *John-i Mary-eykey kkoch-ul cwu-ess-ta*
 John-NOM Mary-DAT flower-ACC give-PST-DEC
 ‘John gave Mary flowers.’
- (2) a. *John-i Mary-eykey kkoch-ul cwu-ess-ta*
 b. *John-i kkoch-ul Mary-eykey cwu-ess-ta*
 c. *Mary-eykey John-i kkoch-ul cwu-ess-ta*
 d. *Mary-eykey kkoch-ul John-i cwu-ess-ta*
 e. *kkoch-ul John-i Mary-eykey cwu-ess-ta*
 f. *kkoch-ul Mary-eykey John-i cwu-ess-ta*
 a-f: ‘John gave Mary flowers.’

Complex sentences consisting of two clauses typically make use of complementizers depending on the mood value of the embedded clause, e.g.

¹ For the transcription of the Korean data the Yale Romanized System (Martin 1992) and the Extended Yale Romanization System (Rhee 1996) for Late Middle Korean are used. The following abbreviations are used for interlinear morphemic glossing: ACC: accusative; APPR: apprehensive; COMP: complementizer; CONN: connective; DAT: dative; DEC: declarative; END: sentence ender; FUT: future; INFR: inferential; LOC: locative; NOM: nominative; POL: polite; POSB: possibility; PRES: present; PROG: progressive; PST: past; PURP: purposive; Q: question; SFP: sentence-final particle; SQC: self-quoted construction; TAM: tense-aspect-mood-modality; TINT: tentative intentional; TOP: topic; TRNS: transferentive.

-tako/-lako for declaratives, *-nyako* for interrogatives, *-lako* for imperatives, and *-cako* for hortatives. The point is illustrated in part with the declarative complementizer *-tako* in (3a) and the interrogative complementizer *-nyako* in (3b):

- (3) a. *na-nun ku-ka cengcikha-tako mit-ess-ta*
 I-TOP he-NOM be.honest-DEC.COMP believe-PST-DEC
 'I believed that he was honest.'
- b. *na-nun ku-ka cengcikha-nyako mwul-ess-ta*
 I-TOP he-NOM be.honest-Q.COMP ask-PST-DEC
 'I asked if he was honest.'

2.2. Formal characteristics of SQCs

As briefly hinted at in Section 1, SQCs take the form of direct quote, i.e. without any linkers (such as complementizers); they are directly embedded in the matrix clause with verbs of locution, e.g. *ha-* 'say', *malha-* 'speak', etc.; of volition/cognition, e.g. *siph-* 'want/think/suppose', *sayngkakha-* 'think', *molu-* 'not know', etc.; and of perception, e.g. *po-* 'see', etc., eventually developing into grammatical constructions far removed from their original quotative function.² Regular interrogative sentences and SQCs may be compared in (4) and (5):

- (4) a. Interrogative sentence with Q *-na*
kyay-ka cal cinay-koiss-na
 he-NOM well get.along-PROG-Q
 'Is he doing well?'
- b. SQC with *-na*
na-nun kyay-ka cal cinay-koiss-na molu-keyss-e
 I-TOP he-NOM well get.along-Q(?) not.know-FUT-END
 'I'm wondering if he is doing well.'
 (< Lit. 'I don't know, "Is he doing well?"'))

² The verb *ha-* is a light verb denoting 'say' or 'do'. Its semantic bleaching has proceeded to such an extent that the meaning is often difficult to identify in Modern Korean. The verb *siph-* primarily means 'want' in contemporary Korean, but historically it (and its variants *sikpu-*, *sipu-*, *sipwu-*, etc.) meant 'feel like to think', 'be inclined to think', etc.; these earlier meanings are closer to the modal SQC meaning. An anonymous reviewer suggests its origin to be a construction involving the Sino-Korean **sik* 'form/pattern' and the verb *po-* 'see', but the hypothesis is not historically substantiated. The verb *molu-* 'not know' is a monomorphemic lexeme not morphologically derivable from *al-* 'know'.

- (5) a. Interrogative sentence with Q *-kka*
nayil nol-le ka-l-kka
 tomorrow play-PURP go-FUT-Q
 ‘Should I/ Shall we/ Will she... go to play tomorrow?’
- b. SQC with *-kka*
na-nun nayil nol-le ka-l-kka sayngkakha-koiss-e
 I-TOP tomorrow play-PURP go-FUT-Q(?) think-PROG-END
 ‘I’m wondering if I should go to play tomorrow.’
 (< Lit. ‘I am thinking, “Should I go to play tomorrow?”’)

As shown above, the regular interrogatives in the (a) examples and the SQCs in the (b) examples involve the phonologically identical forms *-na* and *-kka*, respectively. These forms, when functioning as regular sentence-enders as in (4a) and (5a), are clearly markers of sentence-type, i.e. interrogative. However, when they occur in non-final positions as in (4b) and (5b), they are not sentence enders and consequently their function is not to mark an interrogative sentence, since the mood type markers of a sentence, which are invariably verbal morphologies, occur only sentence-finally in this verb-final language. Furthermore, the markers *-na* and *-kka* occupy the sentential position normally occupied by a complementizer *-ci* (originally a nominalizer), which can replace them in the examples without causing any semantic change, a state of affairs clearly indicating that they function as complementizers of some sort. Therefore, these forms in interrogatives and SQCs are in a relation of ‘heterosemy’ (Lichtenberk 1991, p. 476) or ‘genetic polysemy’ (Heine 1997, p. 9).

3. Development of SQC paradigms

3.1. Historical development

A historical investigation reveals that SQCs began to grammaticalize as markers of diverse functions only recently, even though some of the precursor constructions are attested as early as Late Middle Korean (LMK; 15th and 16th centuries). Before the development of complementizers for embedding a sentence, verbatim quotations were embedded. In such sentences with direct embedding, locution verbs usually occurred twice, as illustrated in example (6), in which *nil-* ‘speak’ occurs before the quotation and *ha-* ‘say’ after it.³

³ An anonymous reviewer points to the historical fact that Late Middle Korean had *pangcem* ‘tone markers’. Since their presence does not bear direct relevance to the current analysis they are not indicated in the romanized data. Tone disappeared by the end of the 16th century in Korean (only

(6) [Subject *speak* [Direct Quotation of Question] *say*-TAM/CONN]

api *nil-otAy* *mecun* *kulus-ul* *musuk-ey* *psu-lH-ta* *hA-n-tAy...*
 father **speak**-as ominous vessel-ACC what-at use-FUT-Q **say**-PRES-CONN

“Since his father asks what he would use the ominous vessel for, ...”

(< Lit. Since his father speaks, saying, “What will you use the ominous vessel for?”, ...)

(1481, *Samkanghayngsilto*, *hyo*-13)

In the above example, the underscored part of the sentence is the direct quotation of the question asked by the ‘father’. The quotation in this example is a genuine question. It occurs sentence-medially just because of the syntactic rule that requires the main clause verb to occur in the sentence-final position.

There were, however, though not very frequently, similar constructions containing structures of a different type, in which embedded quotations may not be true direct quotations. This type of constructions interestingly served as the basis of the SQC development. One of the earliest attestations of such cases is in (7), taken from a 15th century LMK text:⁴

(7) [Subject *speak* [[?]Direct Quotation of Question] V-TAM/CONN]

(Buddha) *SALPHATA-ay* *nil-otAy* [when making a residence]

Buddha [name]-to speak-as

moncy *mul-ey* *peley* *is-nAn-ka* *po-tAy...*

first water-LOC bug exist-PRES-Q see-CONN

‘Buddha says to Salphata that when making a residence (one needs to) see first if there are bugs in the well and...’ (< Lit. Buddha speaks to Salphata, “When making a residence, (one needs to) see first, “Is there a bug in the well?” and...”)

(1459, *Welinsekpo* 25:57a)

In (7), the underscored part, an embedded clause, is a question ‘Are there bugs in the well?’, and thus the sentence may seem to be structurally similar to (6). However, it is not likely that the person who is looking for a place suitable for dwelling is truly uttering the question. In other words, the residence seeker is only ‘putatively’ saying it at the moment of examining a well to make sure that it is not contaminated by bugs. Thus the question did not originate from the well-examiner but rather from the speaker, i.e. Buddha. This is immediately reminiscent of the notion of a ‘borrowed mouth’ (Rhee 2009), through which speakers dramatize the description of a state.⁵

weakly surviving in certain dialects), and consequently *pangcem* fell into disuse from the 17th century in writing.

⁴ Following the common practice among Korean linguists, Chinese characters in historical texts are romanized with small capitals with the sound values of Modern Korean (e.g. *SALPHATA* in (7)); thus they may not be historically correct renderings.

⁵ For instance, Rhee (2009) provides a large number of adverbs of quotative origin, e.g. *cwukelako* ‘desperately’ from ‘saying, “Die!”’, *cwuknuntako* ‘self-pitifully’ from ‘saying, “I am dying”’,

It is noteworthy that the main verbs in (6) and (7) are different in kind, i.e. the one in (6) is a locution verb, whereas the one in (7) is not. In the history of Korean, most constructions involving the locution verb (as *ha-* ‘say’ in (6) above) combined with the connective *-ko* ‘and’ develop into COMP constructions; and other constructions (as *po-* ‘see’ in (7) above), into SQCs.⁶ These differential patterns can be schematically presented as in (8):

- (8) a. [.....-Q] say-and > COMP
 b. [.....-Q] V... > SQC

3.2. SQC modal sentence-final particles (SFPs)

Throughout history, a number of modal sentence-final particles (SFPs) developed from SQCs. In Korean, SFPs are a constellation of finite-verb morphology indicating tense, aspect, modality, mood, honorification, sentence-type, politeness, etc. organized in a number of ordered slots.

Modal SFPs derived from SQCs normally occupy non-ultimate sentence-final slots (most commonly the penultimate and antepenultimate slots, as in (9) and (10)-(11), respectively) and signal diverse subjective and intersubjective meanings across such functional domains as evidentiality, boulomaicity, epistemicity, emotionality, etc. Grammaticalization of modal SFPs derived from SQCs is observed around the turn of the 20th century. For instance, *-ka po-* (1895, *Chimyengilki*) and *-na po-* (1896, *Toklipsinmwun*) are the earliest attestations, both SFPs signaling inferential evidentiality. Some of such markers are illustrated with examples and their source constructions in (9) through (11), marked as (a) and (b), respectively:

- (9) Evidential (Inferential) *-napo-*
 a. *pi-ka* *o-napo-a*
 rain-NOM come-INFR-END
 ‘It seems to be raining.’
 b. (source construction) *-na po-* ‘-Q see-’
 pi-ka *o-na* *po-a*
 rain-NOM come-Q see-END
 Lit. ‘(I) see (saying,) “Is it raining?”’
 << Lit. ““Is it raining?” (I) see.’

nacalnasstako ‘haughtily’ from ‘saying, “I am great”’, *michyesstako* ‘nonsensically’ from ‘saying, “I am insane”’, etc. These words of subjectified meaning describe an event in a dramatic way. The utterances attributed to an event participant did not materialize in reality; they have been only imagined in the mind of the speaker, whence the term ‘borrowed mouth’.

⁶ A notable exception is the SQC connective *-nahako*, which developed from *-na ha-ko* ‘Q say-and’; see 3.3.

(10) Evidential (Inferential) & Emotional (Apprehensive) *-nasiph-*

- a. *nal-i etwuweci-nasiph-e-yo*
 day-NOM darken-INFR/APPR-END-POL
 ‘{It seems, I’m afraid} it’s getting dark.’
- b. (source construction) *-na siph-* ‘-Q want-’
nal-i etwuweci-na siph-e-yo
 day-NOM darken-Q suppose-END-POL
 Lit. ‘(I) suppose (saying,) “Is it getting dark?”’
 << Lit. ““Is it getting dark?” (I) suppose/want.’

(11) Boulomaic (Tentative intention) *-kkaha-*

- a. *cip-ey ka-l-kkaha-y-yo*
 home-to go-FUT-TINT-END-POL
 ‘I might go home (instead of waiting, etc.).’
- b. (source construction) *-kka ha-* ‘-Q say/do-’
cip-ey ka-l-kka ha-y-yo
 home-to go-FUT-Q say-END-POL
 Lit. ‘(I) am saying, “Shall (I) go home?”’
 << Lit. ““Shall I go home?” (I) am saying.’

As shown in the examples above, SQC modal SFPs are derived from the combination of a Q-ender and the verb in the main clause. As is clear from the comparison between the modal SFP sentences and their source constructions, there is no extensive phonological reduction in form, contra typical cases of grammaticalization in which phonological reduction is a common concomitant. Also notable is the semantics of the main verbs that participate in the formation of SQCs: they are verbs of cognition, perception and locution. Verbs of these categories are among the source lexemes that are most prone to grammaticalizing into clausal linkers across languages (Heine *et al.* 1993; Lord 1993; Frajzyngier 1996; Hopper, Traugott 2003[1993]; Heine, Kuteva 2002; Kuteva *et al.* 2019, among others). As expected, Korean SQCs indeed develop from such verbs, as shown in (12):

(12) SQC modal SFPs⁷

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------|---|
| a. <i>-napo-</i> | [Q.see] | modal, evidential (inferential) |
| b. <i>-kapo-</i> | [Q.see] | modal, evidential (inferential) |
| c. <i>-kkapo-</i> | [Q.see] | modal, boulomaic (tentative intention) |
| d. <i>-nasiph-</i> | [Q.suppose] | modal, evidential (inferential); emotional (apprehensive) |

⁷ As an anonymous reviewer points out, the question markers, especially *-ka* and *-kka*, are historically related. Since they have diverged in form and function in contemporary Korean, they are treated as separate morphemes here without further discussion.

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| e. <i>-kasiph-</i> | [Q.suppose] | modal, epistemic (probability); emotional (apprehensive) |
| f. <i>-kkasiph-</i> | [Q.suppose] | modal, boulomaic (tentative intention) |
| g. <i>-naha-</i> | [Q.say] | modal, evidential (inferential) |
| h. <i>-kkaha-</i> | [Q.say] | modal, boulomaic (tentative intention) |
| i. <i>-namolu-</i> | [Q.not:know] | modal, epistemic (lack of confidence); emotional (apprehensive) |
| j. <i>-kamolu-</i> | [Q.not:know] | modal, epistemic (lack of confidence); emotional (apprehensive) |
| k. <i>-kkamolu-</i> | [Q.not:know] | modal, epistemic (lack of confidence); emotional (apprehensive) |
| l. <i>-cimolu-</i> | [[?] Q.not:know] | modal, epistemic (possibility) ⁸ |

As is common in all grammaticalization scenarios involving multiple forms in the same functional category, individual members of SQCs have differential degrees of constructionalization or ‘entrenchment’ (Langacker 1987, p. 59; 1991, pp. 44-45). Similarly, the verbs that occur in the list in (12) are those with a relatively higher level of entrenchment, though to various degrees, but there are other verbs of cognition and perception that are relatively less productive and less formulaic, but still render SQC interpretations, e.g. *sayngkakha-* ‘think’, *uyaha-* ‘wonder’, *ohayha-* ‘misunderstand’, etc.⁹

3.3. Modal connectives

Most (but not all) modal SFPs also developed into clausal connectives. This development took place simply by having their collocational sentence enders (glossed as END in the examples in (9)-(11)) replaced with connectives (CONNS), some of which, incidentally, are homophonic with the sentence ender (END). Since such a simple syntactic replacement operation can occur at any stage of language change, the development of modal SQC connectives appears to have occurred instantaneously. The earliest attestations occur around the turn of the 20th century. Some of such modal clausal connectives

⁸ The interrogative sentence ender *-ci* is first attested in Early Modern Korean, but it is also used as a connective (Ko 2011, pp. 447-460). Its origin is controversial. Rhee (2003) hypothesizes its connection with the nominalizers *-ki* and *-ti* and Rhee (2012) elaborates on its function of marking epistemic stances such as conviction, self-assurance, prediction and exclamation. It does not exclusively specialize in interrogatives and can be used across diverse speech acts, but when it is used in combination with the present marker *-n* (i.e. *-n-ci*), as in SQCs, its function is strongly associated with the interrogative speech act.

⁹ Incidentally, these mental state verbs are further analyzable as *sayngkak-ha-* ‘thought-do’, *uya-ha-* ‘suspicion-do’ and *ohay-ha-* ‘misunderstanding-do’.

are illustrated with examples and their source constructions in (13)-(15), marked as (a) and (b), respectively:

(13) Epistemic (possibility) (& Emotional (Apprehensive)) -*nahako*

- a. *pyengina-ss-nahako* *yenlakha-yss-e*
 fall.sick-PST-**POSB/APPR** contact-PST-END
 ‘(I) called fearing that (you) might have fallen sick.’
- b. (source construction) -*na ha-ko* ‘-Q say-and’
pyengina-ss-na ha-ko *yenlakha-yss-e*
 fall.sick-PST-**Q say-and** contact-PST-END
 Lit. ‘(I) said “Has (he) fallen sick?” and contacted (you/him..).’
 << Lit. ““Has (he) fallen sick?” (I) say and contacted (you/him..).’

(14) Epistemic (possibility) & Emotional (Apprehensive) -*kkapwa*

- a. *nuc-ul-kkapwa* *setwulu-n-ta*
 be.late-FUT-**POSB/APPR** hurry-PRES-DEC
 ‘(I) hurry fearing late arrival.’
- b. (source construction) -*kka po-a* ‘-Q see-and’
nuc-ul-kka po-a *setwulu-n-ta*
 be.late-FUT-**Q see-and** hurry-PRES-DEC
 Lit. ‘(I) see (=imagine) (saying,) “Will (I) be late?” and hurry.’
 << Lit. ““Will (I) be late?” (I) see and hurry.’

(15) Epistemic (possibility) (& Emotional (Apprehensive)) -*kkasiphe*

- a. *ney-ka* *o-l-kkasiphe* *kitali-ess-e*
 you-NOM come-FUT-**POSB** wait-PST-END
 ‘(I) waited since you might come.’
- b. (source construction) -*kka siph-e* ‘-Q suppose-and’
ney-ka *o-l-kka siph-e* *kitali-ess-e*
 you-NOM come-FUT-**Q suppose-and** wait-PST-END
 Lit. ‘(I) supposed (saying,) “Will (he) come?” and waited.’
 << Lit. ““Will (he) come?” (I) supposed and waited.’

In addition to the CONNs exemplified above, there are others that also originated from SQCs. Such CONNs are listed in part in (16) with the meanings of the component forms and their functions:

(16) SQC Modal connectives

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| a. - <i>nahako</i> | [Q.say.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); (emotional (apprehensive)) |
| b. - <i>kahaye</i> | [Q.say.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); (emotional (apprehensive)) |
| c. - <i>nahaye</i> | [Q.say.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); (emotional (apprehensive)) |
| d. - <i>nasiphe</i> | [Q.suppose.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility) |

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| e. - <i>kkasiphe</i> | [Q.suppose.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility) |
| f. - <i>kasiphe</i> | [Q.suppose.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility) |
| g. - <i>kkapwa</i> | [Q.see.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); emotional (apprehensive) |
| h. - <i>kamolla</i> | [Q.not:know.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); emotional (apprehensive) ¹⁰ |
| i. - <i>kkamolla</i> | [Q.not:know.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); emotional (apprehensive) |
| j. - <i>kkamwusewe</i> | [Q.be:fearful.and] | modal, epistemic (possibility); emotional (apprehensive) |

As shown in the list in (16), the most productive function of these SQC modal connectives is to mark the epistemic stance of possibility together with the emotional stance of apprehensive. This has to do with the close conceptual connection between questions on the one hand and uncertainty, possibility, conjecture and fear on the other hand (Rhee, Kuteva 2018). There are other closely related modal connectives denoting causality, but since they exhibit a peculiarity in terms of their form (i.e. they use question markers only), they are addressed separately in 3.5.

3.4. Discourse connectives

Some SQC connectives further developed to serve distinctive discourse functions. The distinction between the modal SQC connectives illustrated above and the discourse SQC connectives lies in the differences in selection of the participating connectives; that is, the former typically make use of the coordinating connectives *-a/e* and *-ko*, both glossed as ‘and’ (for the subtle functional distinction see Koo 1987), whereas the latter use subordinating connectives such as *-myen* ‘if’ and *-(e/a)se* ‘as, since’. Some of such discourse connectives are exemplified below with their source constructions:

(17) Topic presentation connective *-kahamyen*

- a. *kuke-y mwe-ø-n-kahamyen wancen sinceyphwum-i-ya*
 it-NOM what-be-PRES-TOP completely new.product-be-END
 ‘Speaking of the thing, it is a completely new product.’

b. (source construction) *-ka ha-myen* ‘-Q say-if’

- kuke-y mwe-ø-n-ka ha-myen wancen sinceyphwum-i-ya*
 it-NOM what-be-PRES-Q say-if completely new.product-be-END
 Lit. ‘If (I/one) say “What is it?” it is a completely new product.’
 << Lit. ““What is it?” if I say/one says, it is a completely new product.’

¹⁰ The verb *molu-* ‘not know’ is inflected as *molla* when followed by the linker (or homophonic sentence-ender) *-a*.

(18) Topic presentation connective *-kohani*

- a. *keki-ka eti-ø-n-kohani palo wuli cip yeph-i-ya*
 there-NOM where-be-PRES-TOP just our house side-be-END
 ‘Speaking of the location of the place, it is just next to my house.’

b. (source construction) *-ko ha-ni* ‘-Q say-as’

- keki-ka eti-ø-n-ko ha-ni palo wuli cip yeph-i-ya*
 there-NOM where-be-PRES-Q say-as just our house side-be-END
 Lit. ‘As (I/one) say “Where is that place?” it is just next to my house.’
 << Lit. ““Where is that place?” as I say/one says, it is just next to my house.’

(19) Transferring connective *-kahamyen*¹¹

- a. *pom-i o-nun-kahamyen palo yelum-i-ta*
 spring-NOM come-PRES-TRNS presently summer-be-DEC
 ‘No sooner does spring come than it becomes summer.’

b. (source construction) *-ka ha-myen* ‘-Q say-if’

- pom-i o-nun-ka ha-myen palo yelum-i-ta*
 spring-NOM come-PRES-Q say-if presently summer-be-DEC
 Lit. ‘If (I/one) say “Is spring coming?” it is summer right away.’
 << Lit. ““Is spring coming?” if I say/one says, it is summer right away.’

These discourse connectives are thus named for their characteristic feature of making a description more dramatic and vivid. This is largely due to the fact that they involve a feigned interactive question-and-answer style, as compared to their non-SQC counterparts, e.g. the topic marker *-nun*, the transferring connectives *-taka*, *-teni*, etc. These feigned interactions of asking a question and then answering it can arouse a sense of vividness, and for this reason it has been observed across languages that reported talks are closely related to attitude, evaluation and stance (Aikhenvald 2004; Fitzmaurice 2004; Clift 2006; Clift, Holt 2007; Spronck 2012; Rhee 2016). SQC discourse connectives are listed in (20):

(20) SQC discourse connectives

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------|---|
| a. <i>-kahamyen</i> | [Q.say.if] | topic (elaboration prelude); transferring |
| b. <i>-nyamyen</i> | [Q.say.if] | topic (elaboration prelude) ¹² |
| c. <i>-kohani</i> | [Q.say.as] | topic (elaboration prelude) |

¹¹ The grammatical notion of ‘transferring’ was introduced by Martin (1954, p. 47) for labeling the connective *-ta(ka)* in Korean, which ‘indicates a change or shift of action’ (1992, p. 260). Unlike the connective *-taka*, *-kahamyen* further signals that the change of the scene occurs in a fast (celerative) and unexpected (mirative) way.

¹² The discourse connective *-nyamyen* is a phonologically eroded form of *-nya ha-myen* ‘-Q say-if’.

3.5. SQC causal connectives

The last functional category of SQCs is the paradigm of causal connectives. This development may be said to be dramatic in that the self-quoted utterances appear in the bare form, i.e. with none of the morphological markers that normally license their appearance and with no host verbs such as ‘do,’ ‘say,’ ‘want,’ etc. These connectives mark the clause that denotes the cause of the event or state described by the main clause. Some of such markers are exemplified with their respective source constructions in (21) through (24):

(21) a. Connective (Causal) *-ka*

pi-ka o-nun-ka kkamkkamha-ta
rain-NOM come-PRES-CONN be.dark-DEC
‘It’s dark, perhaps because it’s raining.’

b. (source construction) *-ka* ‘-Q’

pi-ka o-nun-ka kkamkkamha-ta
rain-NOM come-PRES-Q be.dark-DEC
‘Lit. “Is it raining?” it’s dark.’

(22) a. Connective (Causal) *-na*

amwu-to eps-na coyongha-ta
anyone-even not.exist-CONN be.quiet-DEC
‘It’s quiet, perhaps because there’s nobody around.’

b. (source construction) *-na* ‘-Q’

amwu-to eps-na coyongha-ta
anyone-even not.exist-Q be.quiet-DEC
‘Lit. “Is nobody here?” it is quiet.’

(23) a. Connective (Causal & Apprehensive)

motwu-ka cencayng-i na-l-kka kekcengha-koiss-ta
all-NOM war-NOM break.out-FUT-CONN worry-PROG-DEC
‘Everyone is worried that a war might break out.’

b. (source construction) *-kka* ‘-Q’

motwu-ka cencayng-i na-l-kka kekcengha-koiss-ta
all-NOM war-NOM break.out-FUT-Q worry-PROG-DEC
‘Lit. Everyone (saying) ‘Will a war break out?’ is worried.’

(24) a. Connective (Causal) *-ci*

paykakophu-n-ci aki-ka wu-n-ta
be.hungry-PRES-CONN baby-NOM cry-PRES-DEC
‘The baby is crying perhaps because she’s hungry.’

b. (source construction) *-ci* ‘-Q’

paykakophu-n-ci aki-ka wu-n-ta
 be.hungry-PRES-Q baby-NOM cry-PRES-DEC
 ‘Lit. “Is (she) hungry?” the baby is crying.’

As the causal connectives exemplified above have not undergone any change in form, they are not formally distinguishable from those used with the original function of marking interrogative sentences. Despite their formal identity, however, they have undergone changes in their function, i.e. from question marking to causality marking, as well as in their grammatical classes, i.e. from sentence-enders to connectives. A noteworthy aspect of these causal connectives is that they all encode uncertainty of the causal relation, as indicated by ‘perhaps’ and ‘might’ in the translations of the examples. This uncertainty seems to have been inherited from the ‘question’ associated with the source construction, since questions are inherently indeterminate. The pragmatic indeterminacy in the speech act of asking has been semanticized in the development of connectives and thus the strength of causality has been weakened.

4. Discussion

In the preceding section we have seen diverse functions of SQCs that depart from true quotations or questions. There are a number of issues that deserve in-depth discussion from a theoretical perspective. Prominent among them are the notions of sentencehood, structural bondedness, conceptual integration with functional reinterpretation and analogy.

4.1. Sentencehood

The development of SQCs, especially those that signal the causal relation discussed in 3.5 raises the issue of what constitutes a sentence. The markers *-ka*, *-na*, *-kka* and *-ci* illustrated in (21)-(24), for example, are Q-markers in both form and meaning, as they are identical with interrogative sentence-enders, and at a deeper level they mark the speech-act of asking, though self-directed. In Korean, a verb-final language, the indicators of speech-acts such as statement, question, command and proposition occur in the ultimate slot of verb morphologies, and thus the presence of such markers signals the end of a sentence. This state of affairs leads to the logical conclusion that the clauses marked with these exponents in the examples constitute erstwhile sentences. In other words, examples (21)-(24) consist of two complete sentences, one of which may be discontinuous as (23).

The location of these markers in the examples, however, is exactly the location of a connective in Korean complex sentence structures. This is well illustrated by (23), repeated here as (25), in comparison with (26), which is its closest paraphrased counterpart with a regular linker, *-lako*:

(25) (modified from (23a/b))

motwu-ka cencayng-i na-l-kka kekcengha-koiss-ta
 all-NOM war-NOM break.out-FUT-**{Q, CONN}** worry-PROG-DEC
 ‘Everyone is worried that a war might break out.’
 ‘Lit. Everyone (saying) “Will a war break out?” is worried.’

(26) *motwu-ka cencayng-i na-li-lako kekcengha-koiss-ta*
 all-NOM war-NOM break.out-FUT-**COMP** worry-PROG-DEC
 ‘Everyone is worried that a war might break out.’

The peculiarity of (25) is that the two sentences, ‘Everyone is worried’ and ‘Will a war break out?’ are *asyndetically* combined, i.e. they are juxtaposed without any explicit linking device. The single-sentence interpretation of (25), which is applicable to all other SQCs, is forced in part by the fact that the clause denoting ‘Will the war break out?’ occurs as embedded in the other clause denoting ‘Everyone is worried.’ (Note that the latter’s subject and predicate are separated by the embedded clause). The interpretation is also pragmatically motivated by the connection between the two clauses, i.e. ‘the possibility of war breaking out’ as the cause of ‘everyone’s worrying’.

This phenomenon resembles, though remotely, the cross-linguistically common phenomenon variously labeled as ‘comment clauses’ (Brinton 2008), ‘parentheticals’ (Dehé, Kavalova 2007a, and papers therein), or ‘theticals’ (Kaltenböck *et al.* 2011; Heine *et al.* 2012; Heine 2013).¹³ When inserted material appears in the form of fully autonomous clauses, the situation will be similar to that of SQCs, because such forms are “linearly represented in a given string of utterance (a host sentence), but seem structurally independent at the same time” (Dehé, Kavalova 2007b, p. 1), as is shown in the following examples, taken from Dehé and Kavalova (2007b, p. 3 and p. 8, respectively):

¹³ An anonymous reviewer raises a concern that parentheticals are very different from SQCs in function. It is indeed true that the functional similarity is not substantial, but in certain subtypes of SQCs such as the modal connectives as exemplified in (25), the source construction of SQC is not formally integrated into the matrix clause, resembling parentheticals. It becomes a grammatical construction with a modal function only when it becomes a SQC. From this perspective, it can be said that a self-quoted question that began its life as a parenthetical has become a SQC through grammaticalization.

- (27) a. It's been a mixture of extreme pleasure *I've had hundreds of letters from all sorts of people who have enjoyed the book* and considerable irritation because of being constantly interviewed (ICE-GB: s1b-046, #2)

b. The main point - *why not have a seat?* - is outlined in the middle paragraph.

In the examples, the italicized sentences are linearly placed in the middle of their host sentence. The inserted sentence and host sentence do not have any morphosyntactic devices (such as relativizers), a state of affairs similar to that of SQCs. Parentheticals of this kind, however, are different from SQCs in that the former tend to be a product of insertion typically motivated by pragmatics, whereas SQCs perform a function that is integral to the meaning of the utterance as a whole, such as signaling topic, inference, causality, apprehension, etc. in relation to the semantics of the main clause.

The development of structural compacting from multiple juxtaposed, full-fledged sentences into a single sentence, which is common, at least in Korean, points to the fact that language users do not seem to be much constrained, in language use, by the grammatical categories, such as sentence-enders (see Koo, Rhee 2013b for similar states of affairs involving a promissive developing into an imperative, and Rhee, Koo 2015 for a verbal connective developing into a marker of tepidity at various levels of grammar). Such apparent 'frivolity' in language use blurs the notion of sentential boundaries in linguistic analysis.

4.2. Structural bondedness

In much current research on grammaticalization, the degree of grammaticalization is presumed to be inferable from a number of parameters, such as semantic abstraction, increase in token frequency, morpho-syntactic compacting, phonological reduction, etc. When a multi-word construction is involved, the bond between the polylexemic forms tend to become stronger, as is widely explained with respect to the English futurity marker *be going to* into *be gonna* (Hopper, Traugott 2003[1993]).

In the case of SQCs, the polylexemic forms, such as sentence-final particles and clausal connectives, have undergone interlexical bonding to such an extent that they cannot contain intervening forms like degree modifiers inside them, as exemplified in the following with the modal connective *-kkamolla*:

- (28) a. CONN -*kkamolla* modal, epistemic (possibility); emotional (apprehensive)
 << -*kka molu-a* ‘-Q not:know-and’
hoyuy-ey nucu-l-kkamolla thayksi-lul tha-ss-ta
 meeting-at be.late-FUT-CONN taxi-ACC take-PST-DEC
 ‘I took a taxi because I might be late for the meeting.’
- b. Intervening modifier between Q and V
^{??}*hoyuy-ey nucu-l-kka cengmal moll-a thayksi-lul tha-ss-ta*
 meeting-at be.late-FUT-Q really not.know-and taxi-ACC take-PST-DEC
 (intended) ‘I took a taxi truly because I might be late for the meeting.’
 (non-modal interpretation possible) ‘I really didn’t know if I would be late for the meeting and I took a taxi.’¹⁴
- c. Non-intervening modifier
cengmal hoyuy-ey nucu-l-kkamolla thayksi-lul tha-ss-ta
 really meeting-at be.late-FUT-CONN taxi-ACC take-PST-DEC
 ‘I took a taxi truly because I might be late for the meeting.’ or
 ‘I took a taxi because I might be really late for the meeting.’

This non-insertability of modifiers in between the componential formants is applicable across all SQCs. This suggests that SQCs have undergone grammaticalization at the morphosyntactic level.

4.3. Conceptual integration with functional reinterpretation

The development of SQCs begs the question of the role of discourse in grammaticalization (Heine *et al.* 1991; Hopper, Traugott 2003[1993]) and of discursive strategies (Rhee 2016, 2017; Koo, Rhee 2013a). For instance, as briefly hinted at in 3.5, interrogative sentence enders have ‘indeterminacy’ as an inherent semantic feature. Therefore, most SQCs carry, though to different degrees, some nuance of indeterminacy, such as possibility, lack of confidence, tentativeness, inference, etc.

Another noteworthy aspect of the development of SQCs is that the interrogative sentence enders occurring in these constructions are those specializing in self-directed questions. As argued for in Rhee and Koo (2017) in the discussion of ‘audience-blind forms’, these question markers do not display direct *vis-à-vis* interaction with addressees, but their use suggests that the question is only directed to the self, i.e. the speaker poses a question to him/herself. Therefore, the use of questions thus marked characterizes a ‘dialogue’ between the speaking self and the thinking self. This type of

¹⁴ Strictly speaking (28b) is not ungrammatical, since the non-modal interpretation is possible. In the non-modal interpretation, the form denotes a literal, non-grammaticalized meaning such as “I really didn’t know and”, which contrasts with the grammaticalized modal meaning of apprehensive/possibility in (28a).

feigned interactivity brings forth an effect to make a text more dramatic and vivid as compared to the texts that do not employ such rhetorical devices. Recent research reveals that many instances of grammaticalization in Korean are triggered by the speaker's desire to increase interactivity by making use of rhetorical, thus non-genuine, interaction (Kim 2011; Koo, Rhee 2013a; Sohn 2013; Rhee 2016).

Still another aspect of SQCs relates to the nature of the participating verbs. As noted in 2.2 and 3.2, the verbs that serve as a component of SQCs are largely verbs of locution, cognition and perception, e.g. *ha-* 'say', *siph-* 'want/suppose', *po-* 'see', etc. Such verbs constitute a well-known class susceptible to grammaticalization into clausal linkers such as complementizers (cf. *inter alia* Lord 1976; Klammer 2000; Hopper, Traugott 2003[1993]).

The conceptual integration of these semantic features, i.e. 'indeterminacy', 'self-directedness' and 'locution/cognition/perception' triggers the emergence of modal meanings in the epistemic, evidential, boulomaic and emotional domains. The emergence of functions in such domains and the acquisition of membership in a different grammatical class by individual constructions is effected through pragmatic inferencing and analogy ('context-induced reinterpretation', Heine *et al.* 1991; 'invited inference', Traugott, Dasher 2002). The pragmatic inferencing involved in the development of the grammatical concept of 'causality' can be exemplified as follows with example (22), repeated here as (29c) and preceded by its source construction (a) and an analysis (b):

(29) (modified from (22))

a. (source construction) *-na* 'Q'

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <i>amwu-to</i> | <i>eps-na</i> | <i>coyongha-ta</i> |
| anyone-even | not.exist-Q | be.quiet-DEC |

'Lit. "Is nobody here?" it is quiet.'

b. (reinterpretation from pragmatic inferencing)

["Is nobody here?" It is quiet.]

>> [It being so quiet makes me ask myself, "Is nobody here?"]

>> [The quietness is (perhaps) caused by there being nobody.]

>> [It's quiet perhaps because there is nobody.]

c. Connective (Causal) *-na*

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| <i>amwu-to</i> | <i>eps-na</i> | <i>coyongha-ta</i> |
| anyone-even | not.exist-CONN | be.quiet-DEC |

'It's quiet perhaps because there is nobody around.'

In the above, it can be noted how language users pragmatically infer a causal relation from the given juxtaposed sentences, the conventionalization of which eventually led to the grammaticalization of a SQC causal connective.

4.4. The role of analogy in grammaticalization

We have noted in 3.2 that not all constructions involving self-directed questions have undergone comparable degrees of grammaticalization. Only a subset of such constructions with certain collocational patterns of embedded self-quoted questions developed into modal expressions manifesting themselves as verbal morphology, most prominently in the paradigm of sentence-final particles. Their development, in turn, triggered the development of multiple forms in other paradigms, such as modal, causal and discourse connectives. This process seems to be best explained by making reference to analogy.

The role of analogy in grammaticalization, however, has not been well recognized, primarily because grammaticalizationists in general subscribe to the hypothesis that “only reanalysis can create new grammatical structures” (Hopper, Traugott 2003[1993], p. 64), whereas analogy brings forth rule spread and paradigmatic leveling. It is well known that even Meillet (1912, pp. 131-132), naming analogy (*innovation analogique*) and grammaticalization (*attribution du caractère grammatical à un mot jadis autonome*) as two major sources of new grammatical forms, had claimed that analogy is not a primary source, but grammaticalization is, because analogy can only operate when there is a well-established rule; only in such case can an innovative form arise.

Recent research, however, strongly suggests that analogy can play a crucial role in grammaticalization (cf. Fischer 2008, 2011; De Smet 2010; Rhee 2014; Rhee, Koo 2015). For instance, Rhee (2014, p. 597) argues that the paradigm of concomitance connectives, e.g. *-tamyense*, *-lamyense*, *-nyamyense* and *-camyense*, emerged as the declarative-based connective *-tamyense* first developed into a full-fledged grammatical marker; other members followed the trodden path.

The development of SQCs also suggests that it is indeed a process of analogically-motivated paradigm formation. When a paradigm is formed, not all members emerge simultaneously. Instead, the most prototypical member, which is conceptually most salient and thus frequently used, acquires a new grammatical function, and other less prototypical members follow this trailblazer without necessarily being very frequently used themselves. This scenario is also argued for in Rhee (2014) with reference to the development of diverse complementizer-based paradigms. Similarly, the development of SQCs seems to have occurred through analogy by virtue of the semantic and

morphosyntactic resemblances between the forerunner and its followers, which is supported in part by the facts that the members have different frequencies and that they emerged at different times of history. This innovative analogy is triggered by structural and conceptual affinities between the trailblazer and its followers. In the case of SQCs, the relevant affinities with the source constructions are: (i) embedded questions, (ii) self-directed question enders and (iii) locution, cognition and perception verbs in the matrix verb position. The driving force of the shared source characteristics with respect to grammaticalization paths and results can be explained by the source determination hypothesis (Bybee *et al.* 1994). Depending on the grammatical properties of the participating forms, they come to form different, yet related, paradigms.

4.5. Implications for grammar

We have observed that the SQCs exemplified above, which exhibit a range of question particles and connectives, developed into grammatical markers in the semantic domains of evidentiality, epistemicity and emotional stance, such as inferential evidentiality, speaker's tentativeness in volition, causal evaluation of states of affairs, apprehensive emotion, etc., as well as the more discursive functions of dramatizing a narrative or engaging the audience by means of feigned interactivity, i.e. self-raised questions and answers to them (see *inter alia* Koo 2004, 2009; Koo, Rhee 2016 for a discussion of the role played by cognitive forces in the grammaticalization and lexicalization processes of Korean).

The development of individual SQCs shows the emergence of new grammatical forms and new grammatical functions in a local domain. Behind this exemplar-based grammaticalization scenario is a larger change in grammar in general. The local development consequently triggered the reorganization of grammar at a global level, i.e. the paradigms of sentence-final particles, modal connectives, discourse connectives and causal connectives that existed before the grammaticalization of SQCs had to be inevitably reorganized with a functional division of labor with newly arisen members of the class of SQCs. A detailed analysis of such a macroscopic grammatical change, however, should await further research.

5. Summary and conclusion

Korean has a number of sentence enders and connectives that originated from self-quoted question constructions. These SQCs typically involve embedded questions and verbs of locution/cognition/perception, and as a result of

grammaticalization they have strong internal bondedness and behave as single grammatical morphemes. It is argued that the conceptual integration of ‘indeterminacy’ from the question speech-act, ‘self-directedness’ from the use of audience-blind interrogative SFPs and ‘locution, cognition and perception’ from the semantics of the participating verbs triggered the emergence of modal meanings in epistemic, evidential, boulomaic and emotional domains, and that the change was enabled through analogy by virtue of the structural and conceptual affinities with the source constructions. The grammaticalization of certain SQCs involves discourse strategies of dramatizing a narrative or engaging the audience by means of feigned interactivity, i.e. self-raised questions and answers to these. It is argued further that multiple paradigms developed through analogy, pragmatic inferencing and functional reinterpretation.

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Numero speciale

**Doing things with words across time.
Snapshots
of communicative practices
in and from the past**

a cura di

Sara Gesuato
Marina Dossena
Daniela Cesiri

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DISCURSIVE PRACTICES IN FEMINIST SPEECHES

A diachronic analysis from the Late Modern period to the present day

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Abstract – The date of birth of the feminist movement is usually set in 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Since then, the feminist movement has been divided into three waves, each of which can be distinguished for both a different focus on women’s rights and a different kind of activism. The feminist propaganda has always used language as a communicative strategy that, through slogans, aims at reaching the collective psyche; it tries to persuade the public opinion of its claims through a specifically designed rhetoric that finds one of its best representations in the speeches delivered during public events. The present study analyzes a corpus of 12 speeches delivered by feminist activists. The speakers are chosen as representative personalities of the three waves into which the feminist movement is commonly divided. The speeches are investigated by means of corpus linguistics methods so as to identify discursive practices. The aim is to establish the diachronic evolution of these practices from the Late Modern period to the present day. Corpus data are analyzed by taking into consideration the variables of the period of time in which the speeches were delivered and the age of the speakers. The findings show that, in the three waves, the speeches are characterized by the use of specific terms which mark the general commitment of the feminist movement to women’s empowerment. A closer look at the individual periods shows that each wave is characterized by specific words that reflect an interest in more specific socio-political issues. Age also appears to be a relevant factor in shaping discursive practices. Indeed, the more mature speakers show a preference for terms denoting more general concepts, while the younger speakers refer to more tangible concepts and real events.

Keywords: feminism; feminist discourse; discourse analysis; corpus linguistics; diachronic pragmatics.

1. Introduction

The present study analyzes the discursive features that characterize feminist speeches. It is meant to identify the linguistic patterns that help the speakers convey their message so effectively that they are regarded as representatives of the corresponding wave into which the feminist movement is traditionally

divided (cf. Mayhall 1995; Phillips-Anderson 2012; Ferree, Hess 2000). In addition, the diachronic analysis considers if and to what extent the practices present in these speeches have changed since the Late Modern period. Using *WordSmith Tools 7.0*. (Scott 2017), both quantitative and qualitative analyses are conducted. The investigation proceeds by means of corpus linguistics methods of analysis: first, a keyword analysis identifies the most frequent terms and expressions used in each speech; then, data are contrasted to the discursive features found in the other speeches; the variables of period of time and age of the speaker are used to interpret the findings.

1.1. The Feminist Movement

Even though the first instances of feminist writings in England can be traced as far back as the Early Modern period (Hodgson-Wright 2006), the proper date of birth of the feminist movement is usually set in 1792 when Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she suggests that women's education is the only way to overcome female oppression (Freedman 2002). Another shared assumption about the feminist movement, according to feminist studies, is its chronological subdivision into three waves, each of which can be distinguished not only for a different focus on the specific set of women's rights being claimed, but also for a different kind of activism.

The first wave (1830s-1920s) starts several decades after 1792. It will be only in the 1820s-1830s that essays and treatises, mostly written by patronizing men, discuss the pros and cons of a more active role of women in society as distinguished from their traditional role in the domestic sphere (Sanders 2006). The 1830s, in particular, see the surge of an activism that aimed at obtaining practical results in women's conditions, especially as regards their recognition as separate individuals, not legally belonging to their husbands. This is illustrated by the famous *Norton Cases*, in which a woman fought for her right to her child's custody and to ailments after divorce. This case prompted the English Parliament to issue Acts and Bills that filled the gaps in marriage legislation for a more equal standing of women and men against the law (Sanders 2006).

The 1850s generally saw a major resurgence of feminist activity, and was perhaps the most important decade of the nineteenth century for Victorian women. The two Norton cases helped air long-standing concerns about the legal position of married women, while the growing numbers of single middle-class women looking for economic independence as an alternative to marriage drew attention to their limited employment options. Partly through personal networking, and partly through the eruption of individual crises and the discovery of individual needs, a series of important legislative and social changes were introduced over the next decades. (Sanders 2006, p. 20)

The legal cases prompted also a wave of activism that aimed at claiming women's right to self-determination and the fight for the recognition of women's civil rights to achieve gender equality. In this period feminist fights spread on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, with the American activist movement fueling protests in England, and vice versa. Their aim was the recognition of women's "civil liberties" (Sanders 2006, p. 22), which included women's right to private property, accessing education, personal and professional independence.

The second wave of feminism (1960s-1980s) sees a more radical turn. This stage of the movement, which begins around the year of publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) aims to eliminate inequalities in the workplace and gender discrimination, as well as to achieve liberation from the patriarchal system (Spencer-Wood 2017). This also meant a liberation from social stigma and oppression in terms of women's sexuality, relationships, birth control and abortion. The feminist movement in this period is brought forward thanks to organized groups, instead of individual efforts as in the first wave, through

the process of '**consciousness-raising**' – the move to transform what is experienced as personal into analysis in political terms, with the accompanying recognition that 'the personal *is* political', that male power is exercised and reinforced through 'personal' institutions such as **marriage**, child-rearing and sexual practices. (Thornham 2006, p. 26; original emphasis)

The radical turn that characterizes the second wave is symbolized by explicit language in writings, effective slogans in speeches, and public demonstrations, such as assembly gatherings and street protests (Thornham 2006). It is during this period that proper feminist theories are created. They will pave the way to the development of the ideological basis for the movement and subsequent development of the next wave (Thornham 2006) as well as to the creation of lobby-like groups that promoted laws to increase gender equality (Spencer-Wood 2017).

The third wave of feminism (1990s-2000s), a.k.a. *postfeminism* (Gamble 2006), extends the fight to the elimination of discrimination aggravated by ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and social class. Claims for LGBTQ (i.e., 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer people') rights are also included in the third wave. This later development of the movement uses traditional and digital media to spread its message. While the first wave of the movement saw the involvement of intellectuals, and the second wave of political figures and theorists, the 'frontwomen' of the third wave are personalities popular among the general public such as celebrities from the world of music (e.g., The Spice Girls and Madonna; cf. Gamble

2006), cinema (e.g., Emma Watson, who is also the founder of the ‘HeForShe’ movement), and ‘pop culture’ in general. In this wave, support to the feminist agenda is also publicly professed by an increasing number of men who are not afraid to speak out for the feminist cause; these can be influential politicians such as former US President Barack Obama or famous actors (e.g., the late Alan Rickman, Ryan Gosling, etc.). In this third wave, we also find the support of important leading female politicians, such as former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Michelle Obama, former First Lady and well-known advocate for civil rights during her years as a lawyer in Chicago.

It must be said, however, that the present account of the feminist movement has summarized the claims that were found in the European and American ‘branches’. The movement, in fact, is much more complex than this, since it encompasses several branches that aim at vindicating women’s rights all over the world, varying its claims and campaigns according to the specific socio-cultural situation of women in individual countries (such as Indian Feminism, Chinese Feminism, African Feminism, etc.; cf. Ferree, Tripp 2006), or communities, such as the Black Feminist movement, which fights against racial as well as gender discrimination (Hooks 2015), or Islamic Feminism, which claims rights for Islamic women (Kynsilehto 2008).

Much has been written from the political, sociological, and anthropological perspective on feminism and its corresponding political waves, as the references given so far demonstrate. In fact, the amount of literature available on feminism is so astounding that it is not possible to give here a full account of the state of the art. Suffice it to say that studies investigate the relationship between feminism and literature (LeBihan 2006), between feminism and philosophy (Fricker, Hornsby 2000), medicine and biology (Roberts 2007), feminism in the arts (Pollock 2013), feminism and postcolonial theory (Lewis, Mills 2003).¹ Quite scarce, however, is the literature available on the discourse of feminism. It was not possible to trace any relevant study except for Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1995), in which the authors apply discourse analytical tools to psychology from a feminist perspective, and Von Flotow (2016), in which the author discusses the problem of translation and gender in the era of feminism. Certainly, studies on gender-based linguistic variation are numerous, such as the groundbreaking Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003). However, the present author could not trace any investigation on the ‘feminist meta-language’, namely the kind of language and discourse that characterize feminist

¹ This list is only indicative of the literature available on the different sub-topics.

speeches, or writings,² which lay the foundations for the waves in which the movement is divided, and which influence the subsequent writings and speeches typical of each wave. The present study seeks to fill this gap.

2. Corpus and methodology

2.1. Material Analyzed

Generally speaking, the feminist propaganda is known for its slogans, through which it reaches the collective psyche, and also for its rhetoric, through which it tries to persuade the public opinion of its claims. One of the best representations of this rhetoric are the speeches delivered during public events by feminist activists. The corpus collected for the present study is composed of a total of 12 speeches, listed in Table 1:

| Wave 1 | Wave 2 | Wave 3 |
|---|--|---|
| Sojourner Truth (1851), <i>Ain't I a Woman</i> [ST, 54] | Betty Friedan (1970), <i>Call for a Women's Strike</i> [BF, 49] | Hillary Clinton (1995), <i>Women's Rights Are Human Rights</i> [HC, 48] |
| Christabel Pankhurst (1908), <i>Speech after her release from prison</i> [CP, 28] | Gloria Steinem (1971), <i>An address to the women of America</i> [GS, 37] | Emma Watson (2014, 2016), <i>HeForShe Campaign</i> [EW, 24] |
| Emmeline Pankhurst (1913), <i>Freedom or Death</i> [EP, 55] | Germain Greer (1971), <i>Townhall Speech</i> [GG, 32] | Michelle Obama (2016), <i>New Hampshire Speech</i> [MO, 52] |
| Virginia Woolf (1928), <i>A Room of One's Own</i> [VW, 46] | Phyllis Schafly (1972), <i>What's Wrong with 'Equal Rights' for Women</i> [PS, 48] | Malala Yousafzai (2013), <i>UN Youth Takeover Speech</i> [MY, 16] |

Table 1
List of speeches analyzed *per* wave.³

The activists selected have been officially recognized as representatives of the corresponding wave (cf. Mayhall 1995; Phillips-Anderson 2012; Ferree, Hess 2000). The first wave is represented by the first known activists, such as

² Spoken texts, texts written to be spoken, and written texts are produced for/in different communicative situations and, thus, they contain different linguistic strategies that characterize them. Since this is a field still unexplored in feminist material, the present study will focus only on texts written to be spoken. Future research might focus on the other types of material to identify differences/similarities in terms of linguistic or discursive choices that will allow generalizations on feminist discourse (see Conclusions).

³ In Table 1, the letters in the square brackets are the initials of the speakers, while the numbers indicate the age of the speaker at the time when she delivered the speech.

Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, mother and daughter respectively, who are widely known for their political commitment and for being leaders of the British suffragette movement. Sojourner Truth, an American freed slave, became one of the most famous black women orators thanks to her eloquence despite her complete lack of formal education. She devoted her life to the abolition of slavery and to promoting equal rights. Virginia Woolf's commitment to the feminist cause is known through the speech here analyzed. *A Room of One's Own* is considered a key work in early feminist writing, presenting education as the key to women's emancipation.

Second-wave feminism is represented in the first three speeches listed in Table 1. They were all delivered during public assemblies, and each one of them marked a key moment in the second stage of the movement, since they established significant steps in the future political agenda. Phyllis Schlafly's speech is unusual, in that it advocates against equal rights for women. It was chosen for inclusion in the list of second-wave speeches because it makes it possible to investigate if the discourse of anti-feminism women could vary from that of the pro-feminism activists, or if it used the same discursive choices, but in support of the opposite perspective.

Finally, the third wave of the movement is represented by four speeches that have helped the shaping of the feminist agenda in the 21st century. The speech by Hillary Clinton – delivered when she was First Lady – is considered a landmark moment, since she challenged the traditional non-commitment policy of First Ladies. This speech also set her political agenda that was later developed, in 2000, when she became the first female Senator elected in the State of New York. Michelle Obama's speech has become famous for similar reasons: it was a climatic moment of Mrs Obama's career as a lawyer defending civil rights, but it also set her political agenda as an activist supporting her husband's Presidency agenda. Young actress Emma Watson's speech was chosen, since it is fundamental for the creation of the 'HeForShe' movement (endorsed by the United Nations), which is "an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for a gender equal world" (<https://www.heforshe.org/en>). The last speech, by Malala Yousafzai, was included among the third-wave speeches, since it reports and supports the struggle for equality and against discrimination of girls and women in 'third-world' countries. Malala Yousafzai is the youngest Nobel Prize winner: she was awarded the Prize when she was only 17 years old because of her commitment to women's rights, and after she survived severe injuries after a Taliban attack to prevent her attending school. She had already been known since the age of 11 for her popular blog – also supported by her family, and especially her father, an education activist himself – from which she challenged Taliban's rule in her home country, Pakistan, criticizing in

particular their treatment of girls and women.

The speeches collected were chosen not only for their representativeness of each wave but also according to a generational criterion: they were delivered by leaders or activists (four for each wave) of different ages, two being younger activists, and two more mature speakers. The generational factor was taken into account in order to see whether differences in the speeches are also to be attributed to the age of the speaker, not only to the period in which they live(d). The only variable not taken into consideration is the level of education: except for Sojourner Truth, all the speakers are educated, middle-class/upper-middle class women.

2.2. Methodology

The transcripts of the speeches investigated in this study could all be retrieved online. The second-wave and third-wave speeches are all available on dedicated websites, on the personal website of the speakers, or on the website of the event during which the speech was delivered. As regards the first-wave speeches, in the case of Sojourner Truth's speech, the official transcript available to the public has been cross-checked by several scholars according to the witnesses that provided the first transcripts, and historical resources.⁴ As for the texts of the speeches written by the other three speakers in the first-wave group, they can be found on *The Guardian's Great Speeches of the 20th Century* website for Emmeline Pankhurst's speech, and on *The British Library Archive* website for Christabel Pankhurst's and Virginia Woolf's speeches.

The speeches thus collected were compiled into a corpus which was, then, searched with *Wordsmith Tools 7.0* (Scott 2017) to conduct a keyword analysis. The keyword analysis was chosen because it indicates not only "the 'aboutness' [...] of a particular genre, it can also reveal the salient features which are functionally related to that genre" (McEnery *et al.* 2006, p. 308). The keywords are subsequently analyzed in their context (and co-text) of occurrence to identify recurrent communicative practices common to all speeches, or typical of individual cases. Finally, a qualitative analysis of the keywords, conducted by means of concordances, will help identify possible pragmatic implications in the discursive choices of the speakers.

⁴ See, for instance, the documents available on *Women's Rights National Historical Park* website (<https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/sojourner-truth.htm>), and the dedicated *The Sojourner Truth Project* website (<https://www.thesojournertruthproject.com/compare-the-speeches/>).

2.2.1. Quantitative analysis: stylistic description of the corpus

Table 2 shows the quantitative data that can be used for a stylistic description of the corpus. The FLOB corpus (Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English) and the BNC (British National Corpus) were used as reference corpora. The FLOB is a corpus of general English containing samples from 1991 through 1996, while the BNC comprises samples of written and spoken language for a total of more than 100 million words. It was compiled between the 1990s and 2007 from a wide range of genres collected to be representative of a consistent portion of British English.

| | Feminist Speeches (1851-2013) | FLOB (1991-1996) | BNC (1990s-2007) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Tokens | 68,647 | 1,237,424 | 97,860,872 |
| Types | 7,752 | 45,089 | 512,588 |
| STTR | 41.32 | 45.52 | 42.66 |
| Average word length (characters) | 4.37 | 4.35 | 4.68 |
| Number of sentences | 2,821 | 52,674 | 4,754,513 |
| Average sentence length | 24.30 | 23.49 | 20.59 |

Table 2

Quantitative data of the corpus of feminist speeches, and reference corpora.

Considering the ratios for the two reference corpora, the STTR (Standardized Type-Token Ratio) for the corpus of feminist speeches indicates that this is rich in word use, since “a high type/token ratio suggests that a text is lexically diverse” (Baker *et al.* 2006: p. 162). Mean word length values are similar in the three corpora, and the number of sentences is commensurate to their respective size, as it is also confirmed if we calculate the proportion of the number of sentences with respect to the full size of the corresponding corpus. In this case too, figures are similar in the three corpora. In fact, sentences in the corpus of feminist speeches are 4.11% of the full corpus, while in the FLOB and in the BNC corpora we have the percentages of 4.26% and 4.86%, respectively. The average sentence length is also similar in all the three corpora but, interestingly, in the feminist speeches sentences are longer, indicating that the speeches are constructed with complex sentences, a feature typical of “a more formal style” (de Haan, van Esch 2007, p. 198). These characteristics along with the STTR figure (41.32), which is slightly lower than in the reference corpora, indicates that the texts in the corpus of feminist speeches were written to be spoken, namely that the speakers read from written texts that were constructed to be delivered orally.

3. Keyword analysis

Considering the small size of the corpus of feminist speeches, and the even smaller size of each text composing the corpus, the list of keywords generated for each speech is quite short. As regards the selection of the keywords, only what Scott (1997) calls “key keywords” were included in the present investigation. Key keywords are keywords which occur at least twice in a given corpus and, thus, “a key keywords list reveals how many texts a keyword appears in as key” (Baker 2004, p. 350). Moreover, since the aim was to explore the discursive choices of the speakers with respect to the communicative aim towards their audience, for the present study functional words were excluded from the analysis. The only exception are pronouns, which were included because of the speaker/audience relationship they help establish in the speeches. Tables 3 contains all the lists, subdivided for each speaker, indicated with her initials (see Table 1).

| Wave 1 | Speaker | Keywords |
|--------|---------|--|
| | ST | children, women, woman |
| | CP | women, vote, deputations, Parliament |
| | EP | women, men, suffrage, militant, we, vote, militancy, woman |
| | VW | women, woman, mind, fiction, Brönte, Austen, I, sex |
| Wave 2 | | |
| | BF | women, our, we, oppress, power, us, propose, revolution, awesome, conditions, confront |
| | GS | we, us, people, world, remember |
| | GG | artist, masculine, ego, artists, achievements, our |
| | PS | women, us, rights, equal, American, wife, husband, amendment, marriage, woman, motherhood, laws, support |
| Wave 3 | | |
| | HC | women, rights, families, world, human, violation, lives, children |
| | MO | Hillary, we, women, election, President, Barack, opponent |
| | EW | men, I, gender, women, equality, heforshe, rights, feminism |
| | MY | education, Taliban, sisters, we, rights, brothers, dear, peace, terrorists |

Table 3
List of keywords extracted *per* speaker.

The lists of keywords provided in Table 3 clearly show that the content of the speeches represent the key issues around which the three waves of feminism revolve. In the case of the first wave, in fact, the recurrent keywords in the four speeches are terms such as WOMAN/WOMEN, VOTE, SUFFRAGE that point to the importance of claiming fundamental rights, such as the right to vote. The lexical choices of two speakers in particular are worth detailing, namely Emmeline Pankhurst and Virginia Woolf. In the former case, we find reference to a more politically oriented vocabulary than in the other speeches, considering the presence of terms such as MILITANT and MILITANCY, which reflect Emmeline Pankhurst's commitment as an activist and suffragette. In the case of Virginia Woolf, instead, we notice the presence of literary references (BRONTË, AUSTEN, FICTION), which indicate her main focus on reclaiming female writers' place in the literary panorama at the same level as male writers.

As regards second-wave feminist speeches, the keywords reflect the radical turn and greater political activism of the movement with the recurrence of terms such as OPPRESS, POWER, REVOLUTION, ACHIEVEMENTS. It is also worth noting the presence of words such as PEOPLE, WORLD, ARTISTS which appeal not only to action on a global scale but also to specific categories which might have some influence on society. Moreover, we can notice the use of the inclusive pronouns WE, US, OUR,⁵ a specific, direct reference to women united in sisterhood (Thornham 2006) that are called to act as one, united corp. As already mentioned, Phyllis Schlafly's anti-feminism speech was chosen to contrast pro-feminism speeches in a period – like the 1970s – during which, more than in the other waves, the heritage of the patriarchal system was resisting against the more active upsurge of feminist claims. The list of keywords for this speech reveals that terms such as WOMEN, RIGHTS, EQUAL are used, but that they are accompanied by terms which refer to the traditional, domestic role of women (WIFE, MARRIAGE, MOTHERHOOD). The presence of terms like LAWS and SUPPORT is a clear reference to the support given by the institutions to women, thus presenting the needs of women exclusively in relation to the domestic sphere and to their husbands.

The list of keywords for third-wave speeches summarizes the commitment typical of this phase, with specific characterizations that reflect the speakers' individual commitment to the cause. Thus, we find words

⁵ Even though OUR is a possessive determiner, it was included in the group of pronouns because of their function in the noun phrase with respect to communicative aim of the feminist speakers. In fact, as Biber *et al.* (1999, pp. 270-271, italics in the original) put it; “possessive determiners specify a noun phrase by relating it to the speaker/writer (*my, our*), the addressee (*your*) or other entities mentioned in the text or given in the speech situation (*his, her, its, their*). This series of possessive determiners corresponds to the series of personal pronouns”.

common to all the speakers, such as WOMEN and WE, which are also present in the preceding waves. As for the individual speeches, the list of keywords for Hillary Clinton's and Michelle Obama's speeches reflect their political commitment in institutional contexts (RIGHTS, VIOLATION, ELECTION, OPPONENT). The lists for the other two speakers clearly reflect their agendas, more practical, considering their age and life story: in the case of Emma Watson the focus is on her project, HEFORSHE, as well as on the principles on which it is grounded (GENDER, EQUALITY). Interestingly, she is the only speaker in the corpus who directly refers to FEMINISM, which indeed appears in the list of keywords, signifying its 'keyness' in her speech. As for Malala Yousafzai, her keyword list reflects her story: her appeal to PEACE and EDUCATION, in a society whose members she sees in terms of SISTERS and BROTHERS, strikingly contrasts with less positive terms such as TALIBAN and TERRORISM. These two terms are used, in fact, as constant reminders of the forces at work to contrast the claim for equality, peace and right to education which she has endured (and many others still do) since she was a little girl.

4. Concordance analysis

The concordance analysis was conducted on each speech, taking the keywords as node words. Only a selected group of keywords for each wave are here analyzed to show how, even though they use the same word, the speakers manage to give it different connotations and implications, which – as already said in the previous Section – all reflect the particular focus of each wave. The words selected are WOMAN/WOMEN, and personal pronouns. The choice fell on the former because it is the purpose of the feminist speeches in the corpus to talk about women's condition and claims, while the use of pronouns was chosen to investigate how different women, from different age groups and in different periods of time, address their audience while talking about topics that directly involve(d) and touch(ed) both the speakers and the audience itself.

4.1. Woman/women

The word that is obviously used by all the speakers is WOMAN (or in the plural form, WOMEN). The analysis of the concordances generated for the speech reveals that Sojourner Truth repeats this term in contrast to MAN to stress the fact that both women and men equals and, thus, women must have the same possibilities, as in example (1):

- (1) And a'n't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it (SJ_1851).

However, the sentence “when I could get it” is a bitter remark, hinting at the fact that women not only are treated as inferior to men, but they have also more difficult access to food. The same use of the word WOMEN to stress the vindication of women to be treated equally is found in Christabel Pankhurst (as exemplified in 2):

(2) Therefore, women tax payers are entitled to vote (CP_1908).

As we can see, here the reference is on the active role that women play in society. Moreover, WOMEN is used to refer to their actions to claim the vote and on a meta-analysis of their effectiveness:

- (3) The reasons why women should have the vote are obvious to every fair-minded person (CP_1908);
- (4) Meetings have been held and petitions signed in favour of votes for women but failure has been the result. The reason of this failure is that women have not been able to bring pressure to bear upon the government and government moves only in response to pressure (CP_1908);
- (5) They [the Liberal Government] must be compelled by a united and determined women’s movement to do justice in this measure (CP_1908).

In these examples, it is clear that Christabel Pankhurst’s is the speech of a full political figure who is aware of what needs to be done (examples 3 and 5), and what has not been done, to help the cause she is fighting for (example 4). Quite different is her mother’s use of the words WOMAN/WOMEN, as the examples below illustrate (emphases added):

- (6) A good deal of the opposition to *woman suffrage* is coming from the very worst element in the population, who realise that once you get *woman suffrage*, a great many places that are tolerated today will have to disappear (EP_1913);
- (7) Well, I might spend two or three nights dealing with the industrial *situation as it affects women*, with the *legal position of women*, with the *social position of women* (EP_1913).

Examples (6) and (7) are chosen to represent the instances found in the speech, in which WOMAN and WOMEN are used differently. In (6) we see that WOMAN is used to refer to a more abstract concept such as women’s suffrage, whereas in (7) WOMEN is used with more practical connotations to describe the past and current situation of women, and to stress what kind of difference will it make to obtain the right to vote.

A similar differentiation is found in Virginia Woolf’s speech, even though their connotations are different, as in the examples below (emphases added), in which WOMAN is used in descriptions of the conditions of women *per se* (example 8), while WOMEN is used to highlight some contrast or

comparison with men's condition (example 9):

- (8) That, more or less, is how the story would run, I think, if *a woman* in Shakespeare's day had had Shakespeare's genius. But for my part, I agree with the deceased bishop, if such he was – it is unthinkable that *any woman* in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius. For genius like Shakespeare's is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people (VW_1929);
- (9) But it is obvious that the *values of women* differ very often from the values which have been made by the other sex; naturally, this is so. Yet it is the masculine values that prevail (VW_1929).

It was chosen to quote the full part of the speech in which the words occur, since they also symbolize Virginia Woolf's irony about, and insightful remarks into, the condition of women across history and during her time. For instance, example (8) illustrates the main point of her speech, namely the fact that education for women is an essential factor to achieve self-determination. She also pinpoints how no woman can raise to the same glory as Shakespeare until she can access education and improve her social status outside marriage. In example (9), instead, attention is placed on the very modern concept that women's role in society is not determined by their intrinsic worth as persons, but is imposed by male-dominated values. This is a concept that has always been adopted and further developed by the subsequent waves of feminism.

In second-wave feminist speeches, we see that only Betty Friedan and the anti-feminist Phyllis Schlafly use the words WOMAN/WOMEN. In particular, Betty Friedan uses only WOMEN, referring to women as one single group who must stand united to claim their rights (10), while Phyllis Schlafly uses both terms with an important differentiation, as in examples (11) and (12):

- (10) And so we face now the awesome responsibility of this beautiful miracle of our own power as women to change society (BF_1970);
- (11) These laws and customs decree that a man must carry his share by physical protection and financial support of his children and of the woman who bears his children (PS_1972);
- (12) The women's libbers are radicals who are waging a total assault on the family, on marriage, and on children (PS_1972).

In examples such as the one reported in (11), WOMAN is used positively in reference to her position as a child-bearer as granted by religion and patriarchal tradition, without any reference to the woman as an individual or with an active role in family life, while in cases as in example (12), WOMEN is associated with 'libbers' (i.e., "liberationist(s)", OED) and used with negative connotations, in a derogatory sense to mean that women who fight for civil rights, and thus self-determination without a man's help, are a danger to society.

Finally, in third-wave feminist speeches, Malala Yousafzai is the only one that does not mention women, even though she repeatedly addresses the audience with *my dear sisters*. Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama, and Emma Watson use only the term WOMEN to refer to women's rights (examples 13, 14, 15; emphases added):

- (13) If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that *human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights* once and for all (HC_1995);
- (14) Remember this: in 2012, *women's votes were the difference between Barack winning and losing in key swing states*, including right here in New Hampshire (MO_2016);
- (15) I was appointed six months ago and the more I have spoken about feminism the more I have realized that *fighting for women's rights has too often become synonymous with man-hating*. *If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop* (EW_2014).

Even when they generally refer to women's rights, the three speakers manage to set the main point of their respective political agendas: if Hillary Clinton is committed to improving women's conditions on a larger scale (13), Michelle Obama specifically refers to the role that women played to elect her husband, Barack Obama, as 44th President of the USA (14). In so doing, she indirectly encourages women to vote as they too, and not only men, can make a difference in the world. On the other hand, Emma Watson (15) is more focused on the presentation of her project and the benefits that fighting for women's rights can bring to men as well.

Beside using WOMEN to generally refer to women's rights, each one of the three speakers uses the word in a very specific context, adding specific connotations when they describe women's condition around the world; connotations which reflect their personal commitment (examples (16), (17), (18)):

- (16) Women must enjoy the rights to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries, if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure. It is indefensible that many women in nongovernmental organizations who wished to participate in this conference have not been able to attend – or have been prohibited from fully taking part (HC_1995);
- (17) This was a powerful individual speaking freely and openly about sexually predatory behavior, and actually bragging about kissing and groping women (MO_2016);
- (18) Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive. Both men and women should feel free to be strong... It is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum not as two opposing sets of ideals (EW_2014).

In example (16), Hillary Clinton's political commitment – as a politician, not just as First Lady – is even more evident: she is not afraid of mentioning facts that directly involve the organization of the event during which she is delivering her speech. On the other hand, Michelle Obama's interest in

supporting Hillary Clinton as Presidential candidate is evident in example (17), as she refers to the opposing candidate (i.e., Donald Trump) as a danger to women's rights and to what has so far been achieved by American women. Finally, Emma Watson (in example 18) reinforces her ideas about men and women cooperating together to achieve gender equality, which is the *leitmotiv* of her commitment.

4.2. Pronouns

The keyword analysis showed that pronouns in the corpus are not 'key' to all the speakers. In the first wave only Emmeline Pankhurst and Virginia Woolf have a consistent use of pronouns WE and I, respectively. The examples below illustrate their use of pronouns with respect to the communicative purpose of their speech:

- (19) That is what we women have been doing, and in the course of our desperate struggle we have had to make a great many people very uncomfortable (EP_1913);
- (20) It would have been extremely odd, even upon this showing, had one of them suddenly written the plays of Shakespeare, I concluded, and I thought of that old gentleman, who is dead now, but was a bishop, I think, [...] (VW_1929).

In example (19) it is clear that the first person plural pronoun is a clear use of the so-called *inclusive we form*, aiming at creating a sense of shared values, and common struggle, in the fight to obtain women's right to vote. Virginia Woolf, on the other hand, uses the first person singular pronoun, as would be expected considering the nature of her speech, which she was requested to deliver for her socio-cultural role. Thus, she reports her own thoughts, guesses, and impressions while talking about the condition of women across time and how it was reported by male intellectuals across history.

Three out of four second-wave feminists show pronouns in their keyword list. Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and anti-feminist Phyllis Schlafly use pronouns WE, US, and the possessive adjective OUR, but with different communicative intentions, as exemplified in (21) to (24) below:

- (21) We have the power to restructure the institutions and conditions that oppress all women now, and it is our responsibility to history, to ourselves, to all who will come after us, to use this power NOW (BF_1970);
- (22) We are here and around the world for a deep democracy that says we will not be quiet, we will not be controlled, we will work for a world in which all countries are connected. God may be in the details, but the goddess is in connections. We are at one with each other, we are looking at each other, not up. No more asking daddy (GS_1971);
- (23) Or worst of all we were meant to be both, which meant that we broke our hearts trying to keep our aprons clean (GG_1971).

- (24) But let's not permit these women's libbers to get away with pretending to speak for the rest of us (PS_1972).

In the first two examples (21 and 22), the first person plural pronoun is used again with its inclusive function of uniting speakers and audience (women from all over the world) into one group led by a common goal. Similarly, in example (23) the speaker is joining the public but, in this particular case, they are united by a more specific aim, that is combining their feminine nature to the nature of an artist that, historically, has been a profession reserved to men. In example (24), instead, the aim is to divide what the speaker presents as 'the enemy' (the women's libbers already seen in example 12) from the good practice of women who keep themselves into the traditional role of 'domestic angels' (the 'us' found in the speech), of which the speaker herself is an example to imitate.

In the third-wave feminist speeches, only Hillary Clinton's does not have pronouns in the keyword list. As for the others, Michelle Obama and Malala Yousafzai show the use of pronoun WE, while Emma Watson shows a predominance of pronoun I, as exemplified below in (25), (26), and (27):

- (25) And I had the pleasure of spending hours talking to some of the most amazing young women you will ever meet, young girls here in the US and all around the world. And we talked about their hopes and their dreams. We talked about their aspirations (MO_2016);
- (26) It's a good question and trust me, I have been asking myself the same thing. I don't know if I am qualified to be here. All I know is that I care about this problem. And I want to make it better (EW_2014).
- (27) Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty, injustice and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright peaceful future (MY_2013).

In example (25), we notice the complex, but also skillful, way in which Michelle Obama addresses her audience in order to engage their attention as well as their emotional involvement: first, she uses pronoun I to draw attention on something that she has already experienced and the positive emotion that derived from it, then she uses pronoun YOU to challenge the audience's perception on the merits of the women she is talking about and, finally, she uses pronoun WE to indicate that she was fully involved in that very experience that she is now sharing with the public. In example (26), Emma Watson uses the first person singular pronoun to highlight her personal involvement but she also attracts the audience's attention with the invitation 'trust me'. However, she immediately adds 'I don't know if I am qualified to be here' to diminish the directness of her approach to the public, thus avoiding the risk of sounding patronizing and, instead, presenting herself as close to the audience, as one of them. Finally, in example (27), Malala

Yousafzai directly addresses the public with ‘dear brothers and sisters’, which, together with the use of pronoun WE, helps Malala to establish a very close relationship with her public, who becomes part of a ‘family’, which includes the speaker as well.

5. Final remarks and further research

The present study has analyzed feminist speeches that have not yet been analyzed linguistically or discursively, so far. The aim was to ascertain if the speeches, delivered by women of different ages in different periods of time, contained common features as well as if the speakers showed specific communicative strategies to convey their message. The keyword and concordance analyses, in particular, revealed that despite the fact that the speakers use similar discursive choices, even the same words, they construct their speeches in such a way that they manage to reach different communicative results. For instance, even though the speakers use the same kinds of pronouns (I and WE), the resulting effect is different: while the second-wave feminists use pronouns with strategies of *communicative opposition* against the patriarchal system, third-wave feminists use the same pronouns to communicate both a sense of inclusiveness (involving men in the common struggle to achieve equal rights for everyone) and personal commitment, since they present themselves as members of the audience rather than celebrities lecturing the public. Moreover, the speeches analyzed were written-to-be-spoken texts, so they lack the spontaneity of orality. This also means that the speakers’ choice of key words is even more accurate than in spontaneous communication, since it follows a deliberate strategy to attract the audience’s attention and keep it focused on the content of the message that the speaker is delivering.

As regards the diachronic change in the discursive strategies, we have seen that changes across time reflect changes in the activists’ commitment and in the focus of the feminist agenda, rather than following diachronic variation in the language from the Late Modern period to the present day. However, some ‘time-related’ differences were found in the age of the speakers: while relatively older speakers (e.g., Sojourner Truth, Emmeline Pankhurst, Betty Friedan, Hillary Clinton, and Michelle Obama) tend to refer to general values such as family, the world, masculinity vs. femininity, etc., the younger speakers (e.g., Christabel Pankhurst, Gloria Steinem, Germain Greer, Emma Watson, and Malala Yousafzai) refer to more specific elements such as the right to vote and to end the oppression of women. In the particular case of Emma Watson and Malala Yousafzai, the youngest of the speakers in the third-wave group, they ‘dare’ to use more direct and explicit terms such as *feminism* and *terrorism*.

To conclude, one of the limitations of the present study is the size of the corpus which does not allow generalizations on feminism discourse as a whole. At any rate, the results obtained from this study do prompt further research on feminist speeches: for instance, it will be interesting to look into greater detail at the use of discourse markers and how they are semantically and pragmatically related to the statements they connect. Furthermore, a manual search of the speeches could reveal strategies used to address the audience, salutation formulae and any other discursive practice that a computer-driven research cannot detect. More texts and speeches could also be collected to enlarge the corpus and to investigate the presence of systematic discursive practices, which could allow sounder generalizations on the features characterizing the ‘language and discourse of feminism’.

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