UNIVERZA
V LJUBLJANI

FF
Filozofska
fakulteta

LINGUISTICA LXIII/1-2

SOCIOCULTURAL CHANGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF VERNACULAR LANGUAGES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Družbenokulturne spremembe in razvoj evropskih vernakularnih jezikov v zgodnjem novem veku

Ljubljana 2023

CONTENTS – SOMMAIRE – KAZALO

SOCIOCULTURAL CHANGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF VERNACULAR LANGUAGES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE: INTRODUCTION[1]

Scope of the thematic issue

The Early Modern period – here defined broadly as c.1400–c.1800 – was witness to major political, social, economic and cultural changes which in turn influenced the development of languages and their literatures. Many vernacular European languages experienced a remarkable functional (and in some cases also geographical) expansion during this period, to which a variety of factors contributed, including cultural change (the Renaissance), social and economic change (demographic and economic growth, the rise of mercantile classes), technological change (for example, the development of printing), religious change (the Reformation, Bible translation, increased use of the vernacular for religious worship) as well as political change (imperial and colonial expansion, codification and promotion of vernacular languages). As part of this functional expansion, vernacular languages came to be used in new text types and literary genres not previously attested in native vernacular prose traditions. At the same time, associated with a progressive increase in literacy and linguistic democratisation, we see a dramatic increase not only in the volume of textual production but also in its sociolinguistic variety.

This thematic issue of *Linguistica* explores the interaction between sociocultural change and the development of vernacular languages in Early Modern Europe. Its scope is deliberately broad in the range of topics, languages as well as in the time span covered from, at one end, the transition from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern period in the 15th century to, at the other end, the transition from the Early Modern to the Late Modern period in the 18th and 19th centuries. The leitmotiv of the issue – the development of vernacular languages – is explored from different perspectives, for different languages and at different periods. The languages covered include not only languages which were official or hegemonic in emerging European nation states – English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch – but also peripheral languages such as Slovene, Irish, Welsh, Scots, Low German, Catalan and Franco-Provençal. Several of the articles in this issue also focus on more than one vernacular language, exploring competition or contact between Latin and vernacular languages or between different vernacular languages and cultures. The approach is necessarily interdisciplinary in that it explores the interaction between social, economic and cultural change, on the one hand, and language development, use and change, on the other. The different aspects of the development of vernacular languages covered include the functional expansion, elaboration and standardization of vernacular languages; the development of new domains of use, text types and literary genres in vernacular languages – through language

and cultural contact or as a result of sociocultural change – as well as the linguistic changes associated with the use of the vernaculars in new text types and domains; the development of language ideologies and the ways in which language ideology is in turn influenced by the wider political and cultural context; the expansion of vernacular literacy and increased use of writing by more sections of the population, such as women and lower socio-economic classes, as well as their patterns of language use; and finally, the expansion of vocabulary in line with socioeconomic and cultural change and the development of new concepts.

Since the topics covered by different contributions overlap and are interconnected, there is no single logical way of structuring the thematic issue. Broadly, the aim has been to order the articles so that there is, as far as possible, both a coherent chronological and thematic progression.

The development of vernacular languages: functional expansion, elaboration, language contact and sociocultural change

The most obvious and prototypical form of the functional expansion of vernacular languages, especially at the beginning of the Early Modern as well as in the late medieval period, involved *vernacularisation*: the use of the vernacular instead of Latin in domains which had hitherto been the exclusive preserve of Latin (Voigts 1996: 813). This is the subject of the first article of this issue by Anna Havinga, which investigates the increase in use of vernacular languages at the expense of Latin in documentary legal records in two different European cities: Aberdeen (1398–1511) and Lübeck (1430–1451). Havinga identifies when the vernacular first starts to be used in the respective civic records and examines how the use of the vernacular increases over time – more gradually in the case of Scots in Aberdeen and more rapidly in the case of Low German in Lübeck – and also shows how the use of Latin and multilingual practices involving Latin and the vernacular (for example bilingual texts, code switching) persist throughout the period investigated. Setting the Aberdeen and Lübeck documentary legal records in a wider European context, Havinga notes that the increase in use of the vernacular is consistent with a more general trend towards vernacularisation and that in these two cases it seems to reflect bottom-up linguistic practices by the scribes themselves rather than top-down language planning. It is difficult to pinpoint specific reasons for such changes in language practices in the absence of direct testimony, though certain broader sociocultural changes may have contributed to them: for example, a possible decline in Latin literacy in some scribes and increase in vernacular literacy, as with economic growth and the expansion of civic administration more people were affected by and needed access to written texts.

Tino Oudesljis's article "Scribal networks and the language of urban administration: variation and change in sixteenth-century Coventry" also deals with language use in civic administrative records – indentured, that is legal contractual texts written in the English city of Coventry between 1499 and 1600 – though after vernacularisation had been completed. Civic administrative records are an under-researched text type in Early Modern English and Oudeslijs shows how they can shed light on some

significant socioeconomic, cultural and linguistic changes at the time, such as the expansion of local urban administration and record keeping (in turn reflecting economic growth), an increase in lay literacy, the development of English legal discourse, and the spread of supralocalised linguistic forms both geographically and in different text types. Oudeslijs specifically examines the diachronic development of the periphrastic DO construction in affirmative declaratives (e.g. "do go") and shows that there is an increase in the use of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives in the Coventry administrative texts in line with the general trend in most other text types in the Helsinki English corpus, which in turn seems to reflect a superlocalised pattern of usage. In the 17ᵗʰ century, however, the usage of the Coventry texts is divergent – even from that of comparable contemporary legal texts – as there is a continued increase in periphrastic DO in contrast to a general decline elsewhere. Oudeslijs suggests that the conservative nature of the scribal networks maintaining the Coventry records may have contributed to their divergent usage, "slow[ing] down the general trend of a more supralocal/standardised variety of English in which periphrastic DO in affirmatives became increasingly restricted to emphasis" (p. 56, this volume), as in Present-Day English.

The functional expansion of European vernacular languages into new domains is closely associated with their (functional) elaboration and also, though not necessarily, their standardisation. In Haugen's model of language standardisation – both the original and revised versions (Haugen 1972 [1966], 1983, 1987) – elaboration is considered to be part of a language standardisation process. Haugen variously presents elaboration as the third of the four stages of standardisation in his original model – "(1) selection of form, (2) codification of form, (3) elaboration of function, and (4) acceptance by the community" (Haugen 1972 [1966]: 252) – and as the fourth of the four stages – (1) selection, (2) codification, (3) implementation and (4) elaboration (functional development) in the 1987 revision of his model (Haugen 1987: 64) – though, as noted by Ayres-Bennett (2021: 30), Haugen stresses that the different stages of standardisation are "not necessarily successive and that they may be simultaneous or even cyclical". Since elaboration is understood, adapting the definition of Swann *et al*. (2004: 92), as the "terminological, grammatical and stylistic development of a language to meet the demands of" new communicative or social functions, the interrelationship between functional expansion and elaboration would seem to be natural and straightforward. Indeed, Swann *et al*'s definition describes elaboration as "two different but interrelated aspects of language standardisation", that is functional expansion and "terminological, grammatical and stylistic development" (Swann *et al.* 2004: 92). However, the interrelationship between the historical functional expansion and elaboration of languages, on the hand, and standardisation, on the other, does not seem to be as straightforward, since functional expansion and elaboration can take place without necessarily being part of a standardisation process or at least a *planned* standardisation process. In Haugen's model, standardisation is understood as a form of language planning, i.e. a deliberate and coordinated process. The expansion of a language into new functional domains and communicative roles and its elaboration for these new domains and roles in a language planning process would, thus, be part of an overall goal to develop a standard

language ("a relatively uniform variety of a language which does not show regional variation, and which is used in a wide range of communicative functions", Swann *et al* 2004: 295). Functional expansion and elaboration, as well as the development of language standards, can, however, also happen as a more organic, unplanned process – what Joseph (1987: 60) terms *circumstantial* as opposed to *engineered* standardisation. Functional expansion and elaboration may, thus, take place as part of a deliberate and systematic process to promote and cultivate a language or may happen spontaneously in a more piecemeal manner. Equally, functional expansion and elaboration may or may not result in the emergence of a language standard.

The next seven articles in this special issue all deal with aspects of the interplay between the functional expansion and the elaboration or standardisation of different Early Modern languages. The first three of the contributions – Christine Elsweiler's article on French pragmalinguistic influence on the development of official letter writing in Early Modern Scots, Carlotta Posth and Sonia García de Alba Lobeira's article on, *inter alia,* French influence on the narrative style of 15-th and 16th-century English prose romances and Santiago del Rey Quesada's article on the influence of Erasmus' Neo-Latin dialogues on discourse traditions in the Early Modern Romance languages – explore the role of language and cultural contact in functional expansion and elaboration. The articles by Alenka Jelovšek on competing language standards in 16-th and 17th-century Slovene manuscript texts and by Mícheál Hoyne on the choice of an appropriate linguistic variety and register for the first printed Irish-language books in the late 16th and early 17th centuries explore the question of the selection of linguistic varieties used in (at least potentially) canonical texts (Bible translations, catechisms and language primers) and the extent to which they became (if at all) linguistic models for later writers and in turn for the emergent language standards. A further key element of the elaboration of Early Modern vernaculars was the development of more complex prose styles, in part because of the increased use of vernaculars for learned texts and in part because of the humanist emulation of the Classical Latin (Ciceronian) periodic sentence. Erich Poppe's article examines syntactic and stylistic complexity in Early Modern Welsh prose, analysing how Welsh 16th-century writer and humanist Gruffydd Robert adopts the Ciceronian Latin periodic sentence in Welsh; Poppe also proposes a tentative empirical framework for measuring syntactic complexity in order to facilitate the comparative analysis of prose style. Lucia Assenzi's article, which focuses on Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen's (1619) translation from Italian into German of Giovan Battista Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio* and his adaptation of the Italian language debate (*questione della lingua*) to promote the cultivation of the German language and its use in learned and scientific texts, examines both 17th-century discourses on the promotion and elaboration of German and Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen's actual linguistic and stylistic practice.

The articles which deal specifically with the functional expansion and/or elaboration of vernaculars mostly seem to describe circumstantial instances of functional expansion or elaboration. Assenzi's article, on the other hand, which examines the promotion of vernaculars in contemporary discourse as well as by language academies

– particularly the German language academy *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, founded in the 17th century on the model of the Italian *Accademia Fiorentina* – describes a notable case of (attempted) planned functional expansion and elaboration. Similarly Antonella Amatuzzi's article on the language situation in the 16-th and 17th-century Duchy of Savoy – where Franco-Provençal dialects co-existed with the official and prestige languages of French and Italian on the western and eastern sides of the Alps respectively – also mentions the founding in 1607 of the *Académie Florimontane* in the Duchy of Savoy on the model of Italian language academies, and also describes the significant role played by certain Savoyard writers in the *Académie Française* and in the French normative tradition.

Latin as well as vernaculars which enjoyed particular prestige – such as French in 15-th and 16th-century Scotland and England, as discussed in Elsweiler's and Posth and García de Alba Lobeira's articles – and which had more developed discourse traditions in particular domains could also provide stylistic models for other vernaculars which expanded into these domains. Elsweiler sets the development of official letter writing in Scots in 16th-century Scotland in the wider context of the functional expansion of Early Modern Scots to an increasing number of text types – administrative, legal, historical, literary as well as epistolary – noting that "[i]n order to be fit for these new communicative functions, the emerging Early Modern Scots standard variety was gradually elaborated, developing in a trilingual setting with well-established discourse traditions primarily for Latin and to a lesser degree French" (p. 63, this volume). Elsweiler further argues that Scots letter writers, some of whom had been educated in France or even, as in the case of the Scots queens Madeleine de Valois and Mary of Lorraine, were themselves French, took "French discourse structures and formulae as a model for their vernacular letters" (p. 64, this volume), adopting in particular request formulae from the French letter-writing tradition. Posth and García de Alba Lobeira's article, like that of Elsweiler, explores *inter alia* the influence of French discourse traditions on 15th-century English in the literary genre of prose romances. Posth and García de Alba Lobeira specifically examine "a number of linguistic devices used to convey narrative coherence in the *chanson de geste* tradition and what happens to these patterns when the matter is transposed from verse into prose and across languages, from French into English" (pp. 119-120, this volume).

The functional expansion of vernacular languages was not, however, a straightforward one-way process of the displacement of Latin in the late medieval and the Early Modern periods. Latin remained a language of prestige throughout the Early Modern period not least because of its important role in secular and religious learning: in schools, in universities, in scholarly publishing and as an international learned *lingua franca* (Armstrong 2011: 125; Reisner 2011; Knight 2015; Ogilvie 2015). Indeed, the use of Latin in the Early Modern period did not simply represent a continuation in reduced form of earlier medieval practice (where Latin had been more dominant), but also a renewed (humanist) cultivation of the language (Sidwell 2015). In a sense, just as with the vernacular languages, Latin also underwent a functional expansion both in terms of the output of Neo-Latin texts – especially printed works – and in terms of

stylistic development. The extent to which the development of vernacular languages in the Early Modern period is intertwined with the development of Neo-Latin is explored in Santiago del Rey Quesada's article on "the contribution of Erasmus to the development of Romance languages in the Early Modern period". Del Rey shows how Erasmus (1466-1536) sought – in response to the decline in the use of Latin and its restriction to specific domains such as liturgy, science, learned literature and international diplomacy – to encourage its renewed use as a means of oral communication amongst Europe's cultivated youth and published his *Colloquia familiaria*, a practical conversation manual, to help them master conversational Latin. Del Rey argues that while Erasmus did not succeed in reviving conversational Latin to the extent that he had hoped, his dialogues had a significant influence on the shaping of literary dialogue and discourse traditions in the Early Modern Romance languages, in particular Spanish.

While not focusing on contact between Latin and the vernacular languages, the articles by Erich Poppe, Lucia Assenzi and Aatu Liimatta *et al* also shed interesting light on different aspects of the enduring importance of Latin and its influence on vernacular languages throughout the Early Modern Period. Poppe discusses the Welsh translation of a Neo-Latin text – Diego de Ledesma's *Doctrina Christiana* – and analyses the periodic prose style of a 16th-century Welsh author, which was itself influenced by Classical Latin models. Lucia Assenzi's article, though focusing on the influence of the Italian *questione della lingua* and language academies in 17th-century Germany, also reveals the continuing importance of Latin in the 17th century. Assenzi notes that "[i]n the 17th century, Latin was still the language of culture in the German-speaking world, and it dominated church and state administration, as well as science and literature" and shows that the functional expansion of German into new genres required the active promotion and conscious stylistic elaboration of the language as well as "contend[ing] with the widespread prejudices about the German vernacular being unsophisticated and uncouth" (p. 213, this volume). Aatu Liimaata, Jani Marjanen, Tuuli Tahko, Mikko Tolonen and Tanja Säily's article focuses on a different domain in a different language at the very end of the Early Modern period – on the development of English economic vocabulary in the 18th century – and also shows the continuing cultural and linguistic prestige of Latin, reflected in its influence on English vocabulary.

In the domain of religion, a major factor in the functional expansion of vernacular languages at the expense of Latin was the Protestant Reformation, a key tenet of which was to give people access to the word of God in their own language. The articles by Mícheál Hoyne, Alenka Jelovšek and Erich Poppe all focus on religious texts. Mícheál Hoyne's article investigates the earliest printed, Protestant Irish-language texts in 16th and early 17th-century Ireland and Gaelic-speaking Scotland – John Carswell's 1567 translation of Knox's *Forme of Prayer and Ministrations of the Sacraments*, Seaán Ó Cearnaigh's 1571 primer of the Irish language and catechism translation and the 1602 Irish translation of the New Testament – focusing on the selection and elaboration of an appropriate form and register of the Irish language for these first three printed books in Irish. Alenka Jelovšek's article investigates the question of language standardisation in Slovene-language manuscript texts from the second half of the 16th and early 17th cen-

tury, examining to what extent Catholic manuscript texts adopted the existing "Protestant language standard" based on Primož Trubar's and Jurij Dalmatin's late 16th-century Bible translations and other works from the period. Erich Poppe investigates the prose style of the Welsh Catholic recusant writer Gruffydd Robert in his introductory paratext to fellow Welsh Catholic recusant writer Morys Clynnog's 1568 Welsh-language manuscript *Athravaeth Gristnogavl* ('Christian Doctrine'), an adaptation of Diego de Ledesma's Latin *Doctrina Christiana,* examining how Gruffydd Robert recreates the complex Ciceronian Latin periodic sentence in Welsh – which was in fashion in much contemporary Neo-Latin and vernacular humanist prose (Adolph 1968). Paradoxically, Hoyne and Jelovšek's articles investigate the linguistic impact and importance of vernacular Protestant texts, in particular Bible translations, in two cultures – Irish and Slovene respectively – which were predominantly Catholic, while Poppe's article investigates a Catholic recusant text in a predominately Protestant culture, that of Wales. All three articles, however, show explicitly or implicitly the enduring linguistic impact of the Protestant Reformation. Not only did the Protestant Reformation encourage the use of the vernacular in the religious domain in Protestant cultures, but it also spurred the production of vernacular religious texts more generally, including counter-Reformation Catholic learned and polemical works as well as practical religious texts such as catechisms.

The production of canonical vernacular texts such as Bible translations and catechisms could, moreover, contribute to the development of language standards based on these texts, because of their exceptional authority and wide diffusion, and could also in turn contribute to the spreading of such standards, as they often provided a means, before schooling became more widely accessible, for the wider population to acquire literacy (Burke 2004: 103; Currie 2022; Nevalainen 2014: 124; 2020). This was indeed the case in Wales, where the 1620 revised Bible translation provided the basis for an emerging Early Modern Welsh literary standard (Currie 2022). However, the outcome in Ireland, as demonstrated by Hoyne's article, was somewhat different. Hoyne shows that, as a result of the decline of the Irish language under the English conquest of Ireland as well as the failure of the Protestant Reformation to take hold amongst the native Irish-speaking population, "[t]he vernacular register developed for the Irish New Testament by 1602 had been outpaced by far-reaching sociolinguistic changes before it had a chance to attain anything like canonical status or exert long-term influence on the development of the Irish language" (p. 192, this volume).

Language and cultural contact – like the functional expansion and elaboration of vernacular languages – is a golden thread which runs through this thematic issue, as it was a key factor influencing the development of vernacular languages in the Early Modern period, and is a primary or secondary focus of many of the articles. In those already discussed above, language and cultural contact was itself a factor in functional expansion and elaboration of vernaculars: in the competition between Latin and vernaculars (Havinga), as a source for the introduction of new text types or discourse traditions (Posth and García de Alba Lobeira, Del Rey Quesada), as a source for models for functional elaboration (Elsweiler) as well as a source of inspiration for the vernacular

language debate (Assenzi, Amatuzzi). In the articles by Antonella Amatuzzi, Vicente Lledó-Guillem and Brenda Assendelft and Gijsbert Rutten, however, language and cultural contact is discussed more in a context of language(-ideological) conflict.

Vicente Lledó-Guillem's article examines language ideological discourse in the Catalan work *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* ("Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa"), originally written in 1557 by Cristòfol Despuig, and analyses it in the historical and sociolinguistic context of the contemporary Spanish Empire. Prior to being subsumed in the Spanish Empire, the Catalan-speaking area – including both Catalonia and Valencia – had been part of the Catalan-Aragonese Empire, in which Catalonia had had a dominant role, particularly in relation to its Valencian neighbour. Lledó-Guillem argues that in Despuig's Colloquy the Catalan language is instrumentalised for political purposes to defend "the memory of the historical importance of the Catalan-Aragonese Empire" (p. 234, this volume). Despuig, thus, asserts Catalonia's superiority over Valencia by arguing that the variety of Catalan spoken in Catalonia is superior to that spoken in Valencia – for instance, on the grounds of its origin and on the grounds that, unlike Valencian, it had not been contaminated by Castilian. Despuig also erases the literary achievements of Valencia in the Catalan language, expressing "a clear association between language and political power in which literature does not play an important role in the value of a language". Lledó-Guillem's study of Despuig's Colloquy provides an insight into the conception of the relationship between the perceived value of languages and power in contemporary discourse.

The functional expansion and elaboration of vernacular languages is perhaps the most salient aspect of the development of vernacular languages discussed by the articles in this thematic issue and is most typically associated with the transition from the medieval to the Early Modern period in the 16th century and with the increasing use of vernacular languages instead of Latin in different domains as well as with the emergence of vernacular language debates. Functional expansion and elaboration are, however, characteristic of the whole of the Early Modern period. Different processes contributed to functional expansion and elaboration; it is not only a question of language choice, a decision to use the vernacular instead of Latin, or indeed one vernacular instead of another, in an already existing domain such as administration and religion, but it also involved the development of new domains and text types as a result of sociocultural, scientific or economic change. Further, an increase in literacy led to an increased use of the vernacular in written texts by a wider cross-section of society as well as to new writing practices. Eleonora Serra's and Anne-Christine Gardner's articles both explore the effects of increasing literacy at opposite ends of the Early Modern period and at almost opposite ends of Europe: Serra examines the private family letters of a patrician woman writer in 16th-century Florence, and Gardner analyses pauper letters in 18-th and 19th-century England.

Like Elsweiler's study in this thematic issue of the development of Early Modern Scots correspondence, Eleonora Serra's article also investigates the use of epistolary formulae in 16th-century letter writing, though in Italy and in private communication as opposed to official correspondence, focusing on the previously unstudied letters

in the Florentine State Archive of a Florentine patrician woman, Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli. Serra sets the writing practices of Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli in her letters to her sons in the broader context of the increased practice of letter writing by women in 16th-century Italy, in turn reflecting an increase in literacy. Noting that Lucrezia started writing quite late in her life and probably had a limited level of writing experience, Serra investigates Lucrezia's use of epistolary formulae over her life span and seeks to understand what this use may reveal about how she learned to write, about her changing level of writing experience and about the functions the formulae might have had in her writing process. Serra argues that epistolary formulae can act as prefabricated units which make it easier for inexperienced writers to compose letters. Her analysis of Lucrezia's language shows a frequent, often stereotyped use of such formulae as well as a relative fixity in their use over time, suggesting that for her, as an inexperienced writer, formulae could have provided an important support for her letter writing.

Anne-Christine Gardner's article examines at the very end of the Early Modern and beginning of the Late Modern period (1730–1834) the emergence and development of a new text type – English pauper letters, petitions for financial support written by the labouring poor to their local parish – which emerged in the specific legal and socio-economic context of 18-th and 19th-century England. Gardner explains in detail the social context of pauper letters and provides an analysis of their recurring key structural and communicative features, which facilitates both a categorisation of the letters as a new text type and an analysis of linguistic and stylistic variation between different writers. To an even greater extent than the women writers in 16th-century Florence who are the subject of Serra's article, the English paupers had limited literacy and writing experience and, moreover, were of a low social status, yet the letters could be an important means for them to obtain much needed financial support. Gardner's analysis shows that "there is significant stylistic variation and that the writers employ strategies, in particular self-reference, to index their social roles of applicant and parishioner or to highlight the difficult circumstances in which they find themselves" (p. 335, this volume). Gardner analyses paupers' use of formulae and conventional expressions and shows that it is possible on the basis of such an analysis to shed light on how they might have acquired their (limited) literacy skills.

The final two articles in the thematic issue by Brenda Assendelft and Gijsbert Rutten on Dutch and by Liimatta *et al.* on English both explore how socio-cultural and socio-economic change influenced the development of vocabulary. Assendelft and Rutten's article on "the rise and fall of French borrowings in postmedieval Dutch" explores the history of French loanwords in Dutch from 1500 to 1899 in the broader context of the development of anti-French and pro-Dutch discourse, in particular from the 18th-century on, when standard language ideology emerged. Despite the fact that French and Dutch, as contiguous languages, have been in contact for centuries and despite the prominence of anti-French and pro-Dutch discourses, Assendelft and Rutten note that the history of contact between French and Dutch is still poorly understood because of a lack of empirical linguistic research. Assendelft and Rutten investigate empirically the supposed "Frenchification" of Dutch and show that "both words and suffixes borrowed from French show a

gradual increase from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and a remarkable decrease from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century" (pp. 350–351, this volume). Assendelft and Rutten's findings reveal the significant and protracted influence of French on Dutch during the Early Modern period and at the same time "an unanticipated 'Dutchification' in more recent times", which they relate to "the national language planning efforts emerging in the eighteenth century, following the rise of the standard language ideology from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards" (p. 351, this volume).

Aatu Liimatta, Jani Marjanen, Tuuli Tahko, Mikko Tolonen and Tanja Säily's article on the development of English economic vocabulary in the 18th century sheds light on how broader economic, political and sociocultural change not only gave rise to new text types and discourses but also to new concepts, which is in turn reflected in the expanding vernacular vocabulary and terminology. Using Oxford English Dictionary metadata, the study analyses the source language of new words (lemmas) in the English lexicon in the category of "trade and finance" and provides an insight into how the influence of two prestige languages – Latin and French – on English economic vocabulary changed over time. They show that in the 14th and 15th centuries "French was the most prolific foreign source of new words in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries", which reflects its political and cultural prestige both in Britain and in Europe at the time. In the seventeenth century, though, Latin was "the most common non-English source language […] at a time when [it] was still a popular publishing language, but vernacular publishing had already surpassed it in Britain and was starting to grow substantially" (p. 362, this volume). Liimaata *et al*'s analysis of the English economic vocabulary of the 18th century, which is the focus of the article, further shows the continuing importance of Latin in this domain, "f[inding] that the incoming economic vocabulary is largely Latin or French in origin, whereas the stable and outgoing economic vocabulary tends to be either of native English Germanic origin or older loans from e.g. French or Dutch, with dominant non-economic meanings" (p. 370, this volume). Liimaata *et al* also identify a broad semantic change in English economic vocabulary during the course of the 18th century, observing that more abstract terms tended to be added to the English vocabulary at the end of the century in contrast to more concrete terms at the beginning of the century, suggesting "a specialization of economic discourse that is related to the emergence of political economy as a field for intellectual theorizing" (p. 373, this volume).

While vernacular languages in the Early Modern period have been relatively intensively researched in historical sociolinguistics, this thematic issue seeks to make an original contribution to the field in its broad and interdisciplinary approach, embracing linguistic, philological, literary, and cultural perspectives, and focusing not only on major and more widely studied languages (such as English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch), but also peripheral and less-researched languages (such as Catalan, Slovene, Low German, Scots, Irish, Welsh and Franco-Provençal).

Oliver Currie

References

ADOLPH, Robert (1968) *The Rise of Modern Prose Style*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press.

ARMSTRONG, Kate (2011) "Sermons in performance." In: P. McCullough/H. Adlington/E. Rhatigan, (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 120–136.

AYRES-BENNETT, Wendy (2021) "Modelling language standardization." In: Wendy Ayres-Bennett/John Bellamy (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Standardization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 27–64.

BURKE, Peter (2004) *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe. The 2002 Wiles Lectures Given at the Queen's University, Belfast*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CURRIE, Oliver (2022) "The role of the Bible in language standardization processes: the case of Welsh." *Jezik in slovstvo* 67/1–2, 27–47.

HAUGEN, Einar (1972 [1966]) „Dialect, language, nation." In: Anwar S. Dil (ed.), *The Ecology of Language*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 237–254.

HAUGEN, Einar (1983) "The implementation of corpus planning: theory and practice." In: Juan Cobarrubias/Joshua A. Fishman (eds.), *Progress in Language Planning: International Perspectives*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 269–289.

HAUGEN, Einar (1987) *Blessings of Babel: Bilingualism and Language Planning. Problems and Pleasures. Contributions to the Sociology of Language*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter .

JOSEPH, John E. (1987) *Eloquence and Power. The Rise of Language Standards and Standard Languages*. London: Frances Pinter.

KNIGHT, Sarah (2015) "University." In: S. Knight/S. Tilg (eds), 233–248.

KNIGHT, Sarah/Stefan TILG (eds) (2015) *The Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press,

McCULLOUGH, Peter/Hugh ADLINGTON/Emma RHATIGAN (eds) (2011) *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (2014) "Norms and usage in seventeenth-century English." In: Gijsbert Rutten/Rik Vosters (eds), *Norms and Usage in Language History, 1600–1900. A sociolinguistic and comparative perspective*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 103–128.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (2020) "Early mass communication as a standardizing influence? The case of the Book of Common Prayer." In: Laura Wright (ed.), *The Multilingual Origins of Standard English.*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 239–266.

OGILVIE, Brian (2015) "Science and Medicine." In: S. Knight/S. Tilg (eds), 263–278.

REISNER, Noam (2011) "The preacher and profane learning." In: P. McCullough/H. Adlington/ E. Rhatigan (eds.), 72–86.

SIDWELL, Keith (2015) "Classical Latin – Medieval Latin – Neo-Latin." In: S. Knight/S. Tilg (eds), 13–26.

SWANN, Joan/Ana DEUMERT/Theresa LILLIS/Rajend MESTHRIE (2004) *A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

VOIGTS, Linda Ehrsam (1996) "What's the Word? Bilingualism in Late-Medieval England." *Speculum* 71/4, 813–826.

LANGUAGE

Anna D. Havinga
University of Bristol
Anna.Havinga@bristol.ac.uk

VERNACULARISATION OF DOCUMENTARY LEGAL TEXTS IN NORTHERN EUROPE: A COMPARISON OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCOTS AND LOW GERMAN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY*

1 INTRODUCTION

Research on vernacularisation, defined as "the movement of vernacular languages into domains of written language that were formerly the exclusive preserve of Latin" by Voigts (1996: 813), allows us to address some fundamental questions of historical (socio)linguistics: how and why does language use change over time? To what extent is language choice shaped by social contexts? Analysing vernacularisation through a comparative approach can contribute answers to these broad questions. As a Europe-wide development, vernacularisation is a particularly suitable phenomenon to study cross-linguistically. The study presented in this article offers such a first, comparative account of vernacularisation processes in two documentary legal texts: the *Aberdeen Council Registers* (1398–1511) and the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (1430–1451). While limited in scope, the focus on specific sources allows us to situate language choice in particular social contexts and evaluate their impact on language use.

In contrast to previous research on vernacularisation, which has largely focussed on English, this article explores languages that have attracted less scholarly attention when it comes to the replacement of Latin, namely Scots (like English, a descendant of the Anglian dialect of Old English)[1] and Low German (which is closely related to Dutch and High German).[2] Both of these Germanic languages can be described as what Smith (2012: 8, original italicisation), in reference to Scots, calls "*elaborated* language, i.e. a variety that could be used in more than one register, including writing as well as speech" in the period under investigation here (1398–1511). Von Polenz (2021: 291)

---

1 As Smith (2012: 8) notes, Scots was not viewed as distinct from English before the late fifteenth century. Until then, the term *Inglis* was used to refer to Scots while *Scottis* referred to Gaelic (Smith 2012: 8). Today, linguists consider Scots to be a language distinct from English.

2 Note, however, that the histories of both languages have been studied extensively by linguists (for Scots, see, for example, *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language*, edited by Jones (1997); for Low German, see the bibliography of the *Verein für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung* [Society for Low German Studies], which is regularly updated and available here: http://www.vnds.de/de/niederdeutsche-bibliographie.html).

explains that Low German had developed into a "vollgültige Schriftsprache" ['fully valid written language'] in the thirteenth century, with prestige extending to medieval Scandinavian society, according to Mähl (2008: 26). From the sixteenth century onwards, however, both languages were replaced by other vernaculars in written contexts (Scots by English and Low German by High German).[3] Rather than focussing on these languages' decline in usage, this article examines their rise in status to languages that could compete with Latin, the lingua franca across much of Europe at the time. The purpose of this study is to show when, how, and why this rise in status happened in documentary legal texts. Analyses of vernacularisation processes in Scots and Low German sources and their comparisons to existing research on English will allow us to ascertain to what extent previous findings can be generalised beyond specific language contexts. At the same time, such analyses reveal the riches of textual materials in Scots and Low German, along with aspects of medieval culture and heritage.

The following section outlines previous research on vernacularisation; the research questions are presented in Section 1.2. Section 2 deals with the sources and their contexts, before the analytical approach is described in the methods section (Section 3). The findings are presented in Section 4. The discussion and conclusion in Section 5 relate these findings back to the research questions and chart directions for future analyses.

1.1 Research on vernacularisation

Vernacularisation has recently become a more popular research topic. While, as Schendl (2002: 51) notes, earlier studies had focused on monolingual texts to investigate changes in the role, function and status of different languages, more emphasis has been placed on multilingual or "mixed-language texts, i.e. […] texts which show alternation and mixing of languages in various forms" (Schendl 2002: 51) since the 1990s.[4] This more recent work has shown that code-mixing is a common phenomenon in the later Middle Ages and that languages are not necessarily separable or distinct (*cf.* Voigts (1996), Wright (1998, 2000), Schendl (2002), Peersman (2014), Kopaczyk (2018), amongst others). While many of these studies have focused on Britain, vernacularisation "characterizes all of late-medieval Europe", as Voigts (1996: 113) puts it. One recent volume on the rise of vernacular languages in the Middle Ages that goes beyond Britain and even Europe is Kössinger et al.'s (2018) edited volume *Origin Stories: The rise of Vernacular Literacy in a Comparative Perspective*. However, the inclusion of a variety of languages and the contributors' diverse approaches to the topic make comparisons between them rather difficult, as the editors themselves admit:

> Looking back on the contributions, a central observation seems to be the impression of heterogeneity as a connecting element: Languages and their literatures are not easily comparable due to their very different frames of reference

---

3   See, for instance, Corbett et al. (2003: 9–15) for a concise account of the replacement of Scots by English, and Sodmann (2000) for a description of the replacement of Low German by High German in writing and printing.

4   See, for example, the contributions in the volume on *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain* edited by Trotter (2000).

and conditions. The results pertaining to a certain area of study cannot be trans-ferred to others without further considerations. Even in their approaches, the individual contributions differ in part substantially from each other. (Kössinger *et al.* 2018: 7–8)

Irrespective of this comparability issue in the volume as a whole, the contri-butions are, of course, valuable in themselves as each chapter provides informa-tion about vernacular literacy in certain contexts; so are many other studies that have focused on specific languages, text types, and/or domains. One domain that has received a fair amount of attention is science and medicine, which comprises a variety of text types, including recipes.[5] In the introduction to her edited volume on *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine*, Schleissner (1995: ix) raises questions about "the function and importance of vernacularization" in medieval medical texts. In her contribution to the volume and in her subsequent work, Voigts (1995, 1996) responds to these questions, noting that "the process of vernacularization [in texts of science and medicine from England] can be traced from about 1375 and can be described as largely complete by 1475" (Voigts 1996: 814). Voigts (1996: 814) also states that code-mixing of Latin and English was "a widely exploited and often ef-fective discourse strategy", providing several examples that support this statement. Taavitsainen and Pahta's (2004) volume on *Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English* also includes references to vernacularisation. In her contribution to the volume, Carroll (2004), for example, found that Middle English recipes were vernacularised in the fourteenth century.

Another domain that has been explored in some detail is administration. Burke (2004: 10) notes that "Latin was replaced by some vernaculars in the early fifteenth century […], in the fourteenth century, or even, in the case of the chancery of Castile, in the thirteenth century" in the domain of administration. Stenroos (2020) offers a more detailed analysis of the vernacularisation process in local administrative writing in England by investigating records from *A Corpus of Middle English Local Docu-ments* (MELD), a corpus of administrative texts and letters spanning the years 1399–1525. She focusses on administrative texts produced "outside the central government offices: the records of cities, churches, manors, local courts and private transactions" (Stenroos 2020: 39) in order to uncover when and to what extent Latin and French were replaced by English.[6] Based on the collection of systematic data of the "main language"

---

5   Vernacularity and multilingualism have also been investigated in the religious domain; see, for instance, Lutton (2011) and Hume (2013), amongst others. The scope of this article does not allow for further elaboration on this domain.

6   Stenroos (2020: 43) defines administrative texts as being "written for a specific, practical purpose, such as requesting an action or conveying information". This links to the definition of documentary texts used in MELD, i.e. texts relating "to a specific situation at a specific point of time, involving specific people, whether or not all of these are explicitly stated" and having "a pragmatic function – transferring values, recording a decision, communicating information or whatever – not an aesthetic or scholarly or didactic function" (Stenroos 2020: 43). This definition distinguishes documentary texts clearly from literary, scientific, and religious sources and can be applied to the texts under investigation in this article.

(Stenroos 2020: 48) of texts in archival collections that were considered for the MELD corpus and an exploration into the functions of these three languages, Stenroos (2020: 47–55) draws several important conclusions. Firstly, Latin remains dominant and English "a minority language" (Stenroos 2020: 67) in local administrative texts from 1399 to 1525. Secondly, texts in French are rare and can mostly be encountered between 1400 and 1420. This is due to English taking "the functional slots that had been occupied by French: the text types which required an understanding of the contents by lay people, and that were not predictable" (Stenroos 2020: 55).[7] Highly formulaic texts with predictable content, on the other hand, continued to be written in Latin, some of them (such as quitclaims and bonds) even until an Act of Parliament decreed the use of English "for all official information in the law courts" in 1731 (Stenroos 2020: 55). Because most texts in the domain of administration were highly formulaic, it is to be expected that Latin remained dominant (Stenroos 2020: 67). In summary, while there was a trend of English becoming more frequent, this was neither a sudden shift nor a unidirectional process (Stenroos 2020: 50). Stenroos' research highlights the importance of distinguishing between processes of vernacularisation, i.e. the replacement of Latin by a vernacular, and language shift from one vernacular to another. In the archival collections analysed by Stenroos, vernacularisation is a slow, gradual process, whereas the language shift from French to English is completed over a shorter period of time (Stenroos 2020: 55). A similar observation was made by Dodd (2011, 2019), who, in contrast to Stenroos, focuses on branches of central government. Dodd (2019: 26) explains that English replaced French in chancery bills and parliamentary petitions between 1420 and 1450 and adds that this shift "may […] have increased the accessibility of this type of legal process to participants" (Dodd 2019: 27). Latin, on the other hand, remained the foremost "language of the legal written record […] throughout the Middle Ages" and was only replaced by English in 1731, according to Dodd (2019: 17).

Schipor (2018), too, analysed administrative texts from England, more specifically municipal, manorial, and episcopal documentary texts from the Hampshire Record Office dated between 1400 and 1525. She observes that the shift to English was not driven by language policies from above but instead resulted from the language practices of members of the rising middle class, who increasingly needed literacy skills for daily tasks. This conclusion is based on the finding that code selection correlates with domain and text type, with texts in mixed code only occurring in the Winchester City Archives collection and English texts being "proportionally more frequent in manorial texts than in either municipal or episcopal texts" (Schipor 2018: 251). This use of English for daily business was seen in various locations, indicating that it was not restricted to specific places or communities of practice (Schipor 2018: 251). Episcopal texts, on

---

7   Stenroos (2020: 45) explains that French had become a learnt (rather than native) language and that only English can be viewed as the language "used by all parts of the population" in late medieval England. While French may have ceased to be acquired as a native language, it "continued to thrive as a second vernacular" in medieval England and replaced Latin in certain functions, such as letter writing, record keeping, and the law, according to Putter (2016: 135). Putter (2016: 135) further states that "knowledge of French remained a necessity for anyone going to court", even after the Statute of Pleading (1362) "permitted English to be the spoken language in royal and baronial law courts".

the other hand, were almost exclusively written in Latin, which also dominated in the municipal domain (Schipor 2018: 251).

This section provided a mere overview of some of the research on vernacularisation and, more broadly, historical multilingualism. The wide range of studies suggests that these are fruitful topics for further investigation. The analyses presented here will add a new comparative dimension to this field, addressing the research questions listed in the following section.

1.2 Research questions

The research findings outlined in the previous section show that the process of vernacularisation happened at different times and/or a different pace depending on the domain, text type, and region. Consequently, comparisons between different domains, text types, and regions or language contexts are problematic, particularly when research approaches differ. To overcome this issue, this article restricts itself to one domain (law) and one text type (documentary legal texts), using the same quantitative method to investigate the same time period (mainly the fifteenth century). By focussing on two distinct urban centres (Aberdeen and Lübeck), regional sociocultural and socioeconomic conditions can be considered. While my analyses are limited in scope, they offer a first detailed comparison across languages in their local contexts and allow us to address the following research questions:

1. When, how, and why was Latin replaced by vernaculars in the *Aberdeen Council Registers* (1398–1511) and the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (1430–1451)?
2. What similarities and differences in this vernacularisation process can be observed in the two sources?
3. Was the expansion of vernacular languages in these sources initiated by bottom-up language practices (by scribes) or prescribed from above (e.g. by the city council)?

The answers to these questions will provide insights into the development of vernacular languages at the very beginning of the early modern period and expand our understanding of the reciprocal impacts between language and society.

2 SOURCES AND THEIR CONTEXT

This article is based on analyses of two sources: the first eight volumes of the *Aberdeen Council Registers* (1398–1511) and one volume of the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (1430–1451). Both sources are multilingual documentary legal texts, recording various local matters in bound volumes of individual entries.[8]

The *Aberdeen Council Registers* (ACR), "essentially, the records of the burgh's judiciary and government" (Blanchard *et al.* 2002: 137), are the oldest and most complete

---

8   See footnote 7 for a definition of the term "documentary". Both sources belong to the "administrative" domain of urban centres. More specifically, however, they are principally legal records, which is why the term "documentary legal texts" is used here.

run of Scottish civic records. Due to their significance, the first eight volumes (covering the years 1398 to 1511) were inscribed on the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register and transcribed as well as annotated as part of the *Law in the Aberdeen Council Registers* (LACR) project.[9] These first eight volumes contain almost 30,000 entries, which provide records of the town council, the head, guild and bailie courts,[10] documenting, for example, disputes between citizens, property transfers, rentals of burgh lands, elections of office bearers, cargoes of foreign vessels, and tax rolls. The majority of entries are either written in Latin or Scots, or a combination of the two (mostly in the form of intersentential and intrasentential code-switches). Further details on language use in the ACR are provided in Section 4.

Aberdeen was an important centre for trading in the Middle Ages. It had a unique position in Scotland: relatively "insulated" due to its geographical location in the north-east, but controlling a vast hinterland, with few towns of comparable size that could have been competitors (Dennison *et al.* 2002: xxv). Due to its location, its port on the North Sea, and its trading links across northern Europe, it was considered "one of the 'four great towns of Scotland'" by the fourteenth century, despite its relatively small population (Dennison *et al.* 2002: xxvi).[11] Despite its local significance in Scotland, Aberdeen was certainly less influential than Lübeck in medieval times.

Jahnke (2019: 1) describes medieval Lübeck as "the largest city in Northern Germany and the Baltic Sea region, if not the whole of Northeastern Europe". Dollinger (2012: 26–27) explains that Lübeck quickly rose to the most active, most populated,[12] and one of the most significant towns in northern Europe in the thirteenth century, trading across the Baltic and North Seas with Russia, Scandinavia, and England. Its history is closely linked to that of the Hanseatic League – an association of north German merchants and towns, which reached the height of its prominence around the mid-fourteenth century before declining in significance from the fifteenth century onwards (Dollinger 2012: 76, 103). Indeed, Dollinger (2012: 587) starts his outline of the history of the Hansa with the foundation of Lübeck in 1143 and notes that no

---

9   Further details on the project can be found on the project website: https://aberdeenregisters.org/project/ (Armstrong 2016). The transcriptions can be accessed alongside scans of the original documents via https://sar.abdn.ac.uk/ (Frankot et al. 2019).

10   In the *Dictionaries of the Scots Language*, the term *bailie* (or *baillie*, amongst other spelling variants) is defined as "[a] town magistrate corresponding to an alderman in England" (https://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/baillie_n_1) and a bailie court is described as "[a] local court held by a bailie" (https://www.dsl.ac.uk/entry/dost/baillie_court).

11   Dennison et al. (2002: xxvi) provide the following population estimates for Aberdeen, noting that the slow increase is due to outbreaks of plague and that the population was probably higher in 1300 than in the following century: 1400: c. 3,000; 1570s: c. 5,500; 1640s: c. 8,300 (comparison to Edinburgh: 1400: c. 4,000; 1570s: c. 13,500; 1640s: c. 20,000).

12   Dollinger (2012: 150–151) provides the following population statistics for Lübeck, making it the biggest town of the northern German area after Cologne: 1300: c. 15,000; 1400s: c. 25,000 (comparison to Hamburg: 1300: c. 5,000; 1400s: c. 16,000). Dollinger (2012: 150–151) notes that Lübeck's prominent status was due to its location (between Rhenish and Prussian towns and with direct access to the Baltic and North Seas) and its relation to Hamburg, which complemented Lübeck's economy.

other town (apart from Cologne) had such a significant place in the Hanseatic League (Dollinger 2012: 159). "As the permanent secretariat and later as the head of the Hanseatic League", Lübeck was also a central hub for the exchange of information (Jahnke 2019: 1). Insights into everyday life of this important town can be gained from the *Lübecker Stadtbücher*.

Stadtbücher (lit. 'town books') or *libri civitatum* are town records kept by the municipal council that record legal transactions, in which the town, the council or households were directly involved (von Seggern 2016: 60).[13] They also record transactions between two people, which were settled before the council for legal certainty (what is known as "voluntary jurisdiction" today) (von Seggern 2016: 60). *Stadtbücher* are, therefore, comparable to council registers. In Lübeck, a general *Stadtbuch* was first created in 1226, but this book of 'mixed contents' was divided into an *Oberstadtbuch* and a *Niederstadtbuch* at the end of the thirteenth century (von Seggern 2016: 65). The *Oberstadtbücher* recorded payment obligations related to real estate and properties (von Seggern 2016: 78); all other obligations were listed in the *Niederstadtbücher*, which can be considered the most significant of all *Stadtbücher* from the late Middle Ages in Germany, according to von Seggern (2016: 53).[14] The analysis presented here focuses on one of the 348 volumes of the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (LNB), covering the period 1430 to 1451, which shows the transition of record keeping from Latin to Low German.

3 METHODS

To trace vernacularisation processes in both sources, quantitative analyses of the main language of entries, i.e. the dominant language in an entry, were carried out. Following Schipor (2018) and Stenroos (2020), the term 'main language' is used here to highlight the fact that the entries under consideration are not necessarily monolingual. This term thus captures both monolingual entries and entries with short intrasentential or intersentential code-switches (e.g. place names in the vernacular within a Latin entry or Latin headings in a vernacular entry). Entries were classified into three categories: 1) entries with Latin as the main language, 2) entries with a vernacular (Scots or Low German) as the main language, 3) entries in multiple languages. If there were clearly more words in Latin, the entry was categorised into group (1); if a clear majority of words in an entry were Scots or Low German, the entry was assigned to category (2). The third category was only used when it was not possible to determine the main language of an entry, i.e. when the entry contained about the same number of words from both languages.

---

13 Von Seggern (2016: 58) notes that *Stadtbuch* is a modern term but does not mention what terms were used for the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* in the Middle Ages. It is, however, clear that various terms were employed for different *Stadtbücher*, depending on the time period, language, individual towns, and their purpose or content. On the title page of the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* of 1608, for example, the expression *Liber inferior civitatis Lubencensis* is used (while the volume analysed here does not contain a title page). Further research would be necessary to draw up a list of terms that refer to the *Niederstadtbuch*.

14 Interestingly, a similar split happened in Aberdeen in 1484, when a so-called *Sasine Register*, which mainly but not exclusively dealt with property, was introduced to separate these matters from others recorded in the ACR (see Havinga (2021: 90–91) for further details).

This approach of categorising entries based on the language of individual words is not unproblematic, given that abbreviations and loan words do not always allow for a clear division between languages (*cf.* Wright 2000). Typically, however, the dominant language of entries is clear, as the following examples from volume 7 of the ACR show.

(1)   Category 1: entry with Latin as the main language
       Andreas andirsone recipitur in liberum burgensem et fratrem gilde prestito
       solito Juramento et soluet xxx[ti] s' (ARO-7-0039-05)[15]

This entry in Latin documents Andreas Andirsone's admission as a burgess and brother of the guild by swearing the usual oath and in exchange for payment.

(2)   Category 2: entry with Scots as the main language
       statutum farine   the samyn day it was ordanit be the aldirman and
                                    consaile that nay landman sale gif straik of meile
                                    in tyme to Cum And' the tollar' sale haue euere
                                    Reddy firlot pek and demi pek (ARO-7-00012-02)[16]

In this entry, the note in the margin summarises the content of the entry (a statute about flour) in Latin. The rest of the entry is written in Scots, which justifies the classification of this entry as "Scots".

(3)   Category 3: entry in multiple languages
       Consilium
       Alexander chamer de murchill   Dauid menyeis
       Alexander menyeis   Dauid mathesone
       Robertus blinsell   Androw murray eldar
       Alexander Rede   James Colisone
       Johannes Cullane   Robert crag
       Johannes Colisone   Alexander gray
       Thomas prat   Williame blinsele
       Johannes Wormet   Williame futhes
       Alexander chamer filius
       gilbertus menyes
       (ARO-7-0759-03)[17]

Lists of council members like the one presented in example (3) are often annotated as entries in multiple languages. Due to the fact that some first names are latinized whereas others are not (*cf. Robertus blinsell* versus *Robert crag*) and there are additions in both Latin and Scots (*cf. filius* and *eldar*), this entry was annotated as an entry in multiple languages.

---

15   Go to https://sar.abdn.ac.uk/doc/show?p=39&v=7 to view the original manuscript for this entry.

16   Go to https://sar.abdn.ac.uk/doc/show?p=12&v=7 to view the original manuscript for this entry.

17   Go to https://sar.abdn.ac.uk/doc/show?p=759&v=7 to view the original manuscript for this entry.

The ACR are transcribed in a machine-readable format and annotated using XML, including tags that identify the language of individual entries, which allows for quick quantitative analysis using XQuery (a language for querying XML documents) via the "Search Aberdeen Registers" platform (Frankot *et al.* (2019); see Havinga (2021) for further details). The LNB, on the other hand, has not been transcribed and was, therefore, analysed manually, i.e. the dominant language of each entry in the rubrics for the years 1430, 1435, 1440, 1445, and 1450 was determined while reading the manuscript in the archives, following the same approach of language annotation as the one used for the ACR. The findings of these quantitative analyses are presented in the following section.

4 FINDINGS

In both sources, an increase in the use of the vernacular (Scots in the ACR; Low German in the LNB) can be observed in the period under investigation. It is important to note that the results presented here do not capture multilingualism in the form of intersentential and/or intrasentential code-switching within individual entries (unless they are categorised as entries in multiple languages).[18] Instead, the results show the increase of the vernacular as the main language of individual entries over time. The quantitative analyses presented here thus have limitations in that they do not fully reflect the multilingualism found in individual entries. Detailed qualitative analyses of multilingual practices and their functions (as exemplified by Havinga 2021, Schipor 2022, and Wright 2000, amongst others) can counter these limitations and complement the findings presented here. The quantitative methods employed in this paper are, however, sufficient to address the research questions posed in Section 1.2. In the following sections, the findings of the ACR are discussed first (Section 4.1), then results of the analysis of the LNB are presented (Section 4.2), before comparing vernacularisation processes in the two sources and offering conclusions in Section 5.

4.1 Vernacularisation in the *Aberdeen Council Registers*

For the ACR, the main language of each entry was determined during the transcription process of the manuscript and the subsequent editing of the transcription, following the approach outlined in Section 3. In addition to entries in Latin/Scots/multiple languages, two entries in Dutch can be found in the ACR (one in 1446 and one in 1481).[19] Once the languages of each entry were annotated, XQuery was used to quan-

---

18   See Havinga (2021) for an analysis of code-switches within individual entries, including a qualitative analysis of code-switches in volume 5.2 of the ACR. With regard to the LNB, von Seggern (2016: 86) notes that the Low German legal language contains Latin phrases, emphasising that Latin influences on the legal vernacular language of the *Niederstadtbuch* make it markedly different from everyday Low German language use of the time: "[…] hinter dem Mittelniederdeutsch des Niederstadtbuchs verbirgt sich ein Latein. Dieses ist ein weiteres Indiz dafür, dass es sich nicht um eine Alltagssprache handelt, sondern um eine juristische Fachsprache". Furthermore, Low German names and place names occur frequently in Latin entries in the volume under investigation here.

19   See Havinga (2020) for further information on these entries and language contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in late medieval Aberdeen more generally. Putter (2021: 101–102) analysed one of these entries in more

tify the number of entries with Latin/Scots/Dutch as the main language as well as entries in multiple languages.[20]

Figure 1 illustrates the results of these queries. In Volumes 1 and 2 (1398–1414) the vast majority of entries are in Latin, with only seven and nine entries in Scots respectively (equating to under 1 % of the entries). In 29 entries, the dominant language could not be determined. These entries (15 in Volume 1 and 14 in Volume 2) were, therefore, categorised as entries in multiple languages. Such entries in multiple languages remain rare in the ACR: five in Volume 4, thirteen in Volume 5, one in Volume 6, three in Volume 7, and one in Volume 8. Volume 3 is missing and can, therefore, not be included here. From Volume 4 (1433–1448) onwards, a gradual and relatively slow increase in the use of Scots can be observed, with the 205 Scots entries accounting for 5.7 % of entries in Volume 4. In Volume 5 (1441–1471), this percentage increases to almost 10 % (542 entries). In contrast to previous volumes, Volume 5 was split into two volumes, with Volume 5.2 (1441–1471) dealing with guild court business while all other burgh business was recorded in Volume 5.1 (1448–1468).[21] While Latin clearly remains the dominant language in both Volume 5.1 and 5.2, it is interesting to note that a considerably higher percentage of entries are written in Scots in Volume 5.2 (21.7 %) than in Volume 5.1 (7.1 %). This suggests that the content of the entries was, at least to some extent, a factor in the scribes' language choice, with Scots being used more frequently for guild court business. More specifically, Gemmill (2005), who provides an edition of the Aberdeen Guild Court records (1437–1468), notes that Latin was the preferred language for "the more routine business, such as the admission of new guild members and burgesses and the prosecution of forestallers" (Gemmill 2005: 4–5), while Scots tended to be used to record one-off decisions by the council, e.g. about trade and privileges (Gemmill 2005: 5). This further indicates that the content of the entries was one factor influencing the scribes' choice of language. Volume 6 (1466–1486) sees another increase in the use of Scots, with 2,033 entries (33.4 %) being predominantly written in the vernacular. The first volume in which entries in Scots outnumber those in Latin is Volume 7 (1487–1501), with 2,726 entries in the vernacular (54.4 %) and 2,280 in Latin. Another increase in the use of Scots can be observed in Volume 8 (3,320 entries) but Latin remains the main language of 36 % of the entries between 1501 and 1511.

---

detail. There could also be Dutch entries in the LNB, though none are mentioned by von Seggern (2016), who provides the most comprehensive analysis of the LNB to date (although only a short section is dedicated to the language of the LNB and the more detailed analysis focusses on the period 1478–1495).

20   The following XQuery was used (replacing the language and specific entry IDs for each volume accordingly): for $i in //ns:div[@xml:lang="sco"] [@xml:id >"ARO-1-0001-00"] [@xml:id <"ARO-1-0328-02"] return $i.

21   Volume 5 is presented as one volume on the Search Aberdeen Registers platform (Vol. 5.1 ends on p. 644 and Vol. 5.2 starts on p. 645). To ensure transparency and verifiability of the results, Volume 5 is presented as one volume in Figure 1.
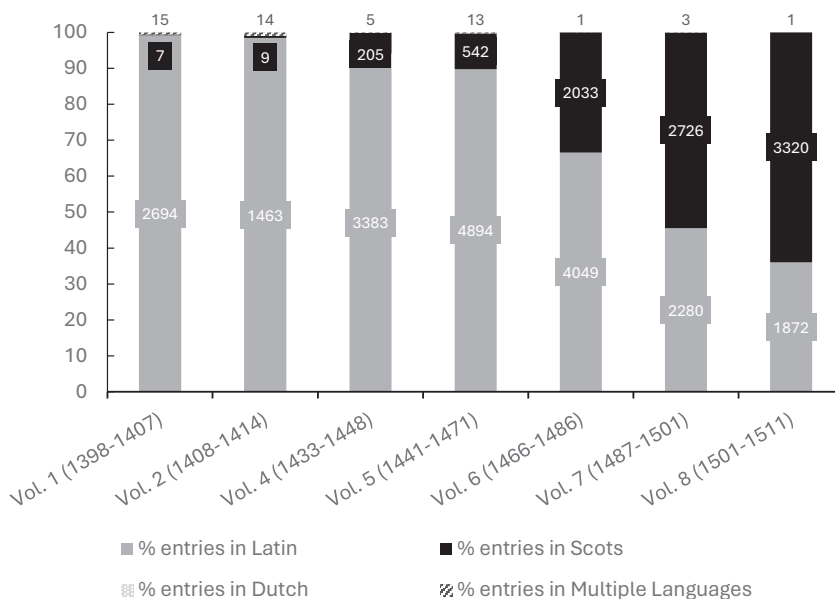
Figure 1. Main language of entries in the ACR (1398–1511)[22]

Overall, it is in the late fifteenth century that Scots becomes the variety more frequently used as the main language in the ACR. The move from Latin to Scots takes over 100 years and is not completed by the end of the period under investigation. Even in the sixteenth century, over a third of the entries in the ACR were written in Latin, many of which were formulaic in nature (e.g. the admission of the burgesses continued to be recorded in Latin). This suggests that Latin remained an important language to record certain burgh business, even if the vernacular gained traction. In comparison to the LNB, the vernacular process in the ACR can be described as slow and gradual, as the following section will illustrate.

4.2 Vernacularisation in the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch*

Since the LNB has not been transcribed and is not available in machine-readable format, the quantitative analysis was carried out manually in the archives in Lübeck,

---

22 Note that the raw numbers for entries in multiple languages are provided above each bar. The results presented here are based on analyses carried out on and prior to 22 April 2022. They, therefore, differ slightly from the results presented in Havinga (2021), which were based on analyses that were completed before the editorial process of the transcriptions was finished. Differences are mainly due to the grouping of entries rather than categorising them into different languages. The biggest differences can be seen in volume 6, where the total number of entries was reduced from 9,047 to 6,084 in the editing process. However, the proportion of Scots to Latin entries remained similar (32.70 % of Scots entries pre editing versus 33.42 % post editing). The proportional differences were even smaller for the other volumes (with a maximum difference of 0.14 % for Scots entries in volume 4). On the whole, these differences can be considered insignificant.

taking the same approach as the one used for the ACR (see Section 3).[23] Due to this time-consuming process, only entries ordered in five yearly rubrics (1430, 1435, 1440, 1445, and 1450) were analysed. Despite not offering a full account of vernacularisation processes in every year covered by this volume of the LNB, this snapshot provides interesting insights into the shift from Latin to Low German.

Particularly striking is the fact that the vernacularisation process was completed within approximately 30 years in the LNB if the first entry in Low German (dated 1418) is taken into account. As Figure 2 shows, only five entries in the year 1430 had Low German as the main language (1.8 %), compared to 269 entries in Latin (98.2 %). In 1435, the number of entries with Low German as the main language had increased to 25 entries (7 %). In these two years, there were no entries for which the main language could not be determined (see raw numbers above each bar in Figure 2). In the year 1440, two such entries in multiple languages can be found, but Latin remains the dominant language, with 309 entries (71.5 %) categorised as entries in Latin, compared to 121 entries in Low German. Another increase in Low German entries can be observed in 1445. While the raw frequency only increased by two in comparison to 1440, the frequency of Low German entries in relation to entries in Latin (n=190) and multiple languages (n=1) increased from 28 % in 1440 to 39 % in 1445. Between 1446 and 1450, vernacularisation seems to have proceeded rapidly, resulting in no Latin entries in 1450. This, however, does not mean that Latin disappeared completely from the LNB – dates in headings continued to be written in Latin and code-switches into Latin occur within Low German entries in 1450. In fact, the volume closes with a short statement in Latin in 1451 (see footnote 23).
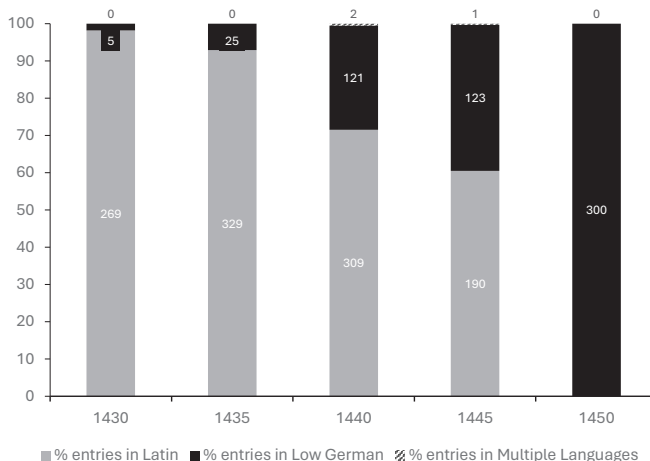
Figure 2. Main language of entries in the LNB (1430, 1435, 1440, 1445, 1450)

23   The *Referenzkorpus Mittelniederdeutsch/Niederrheinisch (1200–1650)* contains the first Low German entry of the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (from 1418; 982 tokens of which 790 are in Low German). Additionally, von Seggern (2016) has transcribed and published a number of entries in print, but only one of them is from the volume covering the years 1430–1451. This entry closes the volume in Latin: *Illos libros continuavit postea socius meus magister Johannes Bracht, anno 51 Petri ab vincula* [1. Aug. 1451]. *Johannes Hertze manu propria* (von Seggern 2016: 118). There is, however, no full transcription of the LNB covering the years 1430 to 1451.

Another interesting observation is that the entries in Low German are not distributed evenly across the year 1440, as Figure 3 illustrates. This graph shows the raw frequency of entries with Low German and Latin as the main language on the y axis and the pages on the x axis (the two entries in multiple languages – one on p. 668 and one on p. 704 – are shown in pattern print). The majority of entries in Low German appear from p. 671 to p. 685. In fact, there is not a single entry with Latin as the main language on and between these pages. One explanation for the change in the main language may be a change in scribe. However, while a change in hand can be observed between p. 670 and p. 671 as well as between p. 685 and p. 687 (p. 686 is empty), the Low German entries between these pages were not written by one scribe alone. Several different hands can be identified on those pages, revealing that it was certainly not just one scribe choosing to write the entries in Low German. There also does not seem to be a change in the person who checked the entries' contents, with von Seggern (2016: 118) listing Hermen vame Hagen as the secretary responsible for the *Niederstadtbuch* from 1434 to 1449 and noting that it was deputies of the secretaries who wrote the entries from 22 July 1434 onward. Another explanation could be that the content of the entries determined the scribes' language choice. However, the most common type of entry – what von Seggern (2016: 142–143) calls "persönliche Bekenntnisse", i.e. quite formulaic entries that record the personal statements of people who step in front of the book and acknowledge some sort of commitment, e.g. to pay someone a certain amount of money – appears in both Latin and Low German in the year 1440. Nevertheless, this explanation deserves further attention through a comprehensive qualitative analysis, which will be carried out in the next stage of the project.

Figure 3. Distribution of Low German/Latin entries on pages 642–723, LNB (1440)

In summary, the vernacularisation process in the LNB happens relatively quickly. Within approximately 30 years, Latin is almost completely replaced by Low German. Furthermore, more temporary shifts to Low German can be observed between 1430 and 1450, as the analysis of the year 1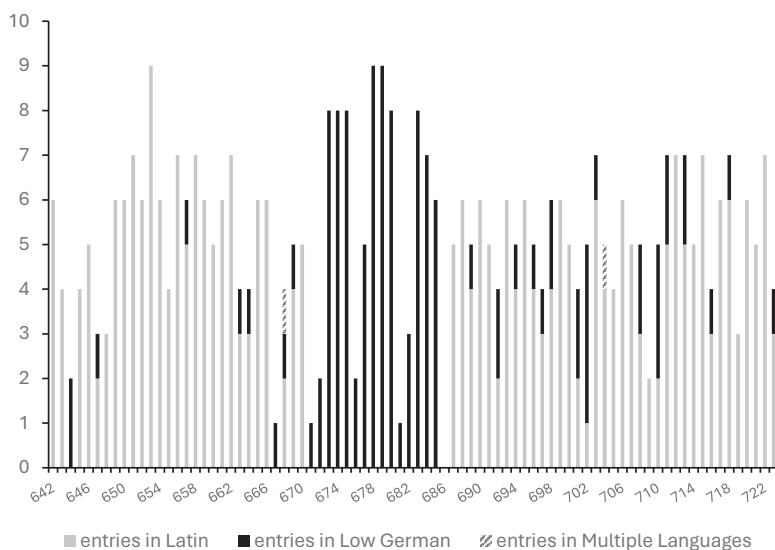440 has shown. While further research is needed to provide explanations for these shifts, the results presented here offer valuable insights into vernacularisation processes in documentary legal texts. The following section compares these results to those of the ACR and offers some initial conclusions.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Using the same method to analyse the same types of texts belonging to the same domain allows us to draw comparisons across different language contexts, revealing similarities as well as differences in the replacement of Latin. In both the ACR and the LNB, vernacularisation processes can be observed in the fifteenth century. However, the vernacularisation process is considerably slower and more gradual in the ACR than in the LNB. In the former, we can find the first entry in Scots at the end of the fourteenth century, but the vernacularisation process is far from complete by 1511, with over a third of the entries still being classified as Latin at the end of Volume 8. In contrast, the first entry in the vernacular in the LNB is from 1418 (see footnote 23) and the use of Low German remained sporadic in the years 1430 and 1435. After that, however, a rather rapid shift to the vernacular occurred and Latin was replaced as the main language of entries by 1450. Nevertheless, Latin remained visible in the LNB. Dates in rubric headings continued to be written in Latin and code-switches into Latin within vernacular entries remained fairly common in the LNB, as they did in the ACR. These code-switches highlight the multilingual nature of both sources and show that scribes could move comfortably between Latin and the vernacular, both within and between individual entries. Yet, comparatively few entries have been classified as entries in multiple languages, i.e. entries where it was not possible to determine *one* main language. This indicates that, in the majority of cases, one language provided the framework for an entry, even if the other language was then used for individual phrases or expressions, such as Scots street names within Latin entries. Interestingly, Schipor (2018: 150) found that texts with a clearly defined main language (Latin, English or French) outnumbered texts in a mixed code (equivalent to what has been called "entries in multiple languages" in this paper) in the fifteenth-century Hampshire Record Office material she analysed. This suggests that scribes of documentary texts distinguished between languages, used them for different functions, and generally avoided code-mixing.

Another similarity between the ACR and the LNB that links to Schipor's (2018) findings (see Section 1.1) is that the increase in the use of the vernacular seems to be driven by bottom-up language practices, i.e. initiated by scribes and/or the people mentioned in particular entries, rather than top-down language policies. Decrees from the councils prescribing the use of either Latin or the vernacular were neither found for the ACR nor the LNB. However, such a decree does exist in the *Lübecker Oberstadtbuch*, i.e. the town book that contained payment obligations relating to properties and real estate (see Section 2). In 1455, i.e. at a time when the *Niederstadtbuch* was already kept

in Low German, the Lübeck Council prescribed the use of Low German instead of Latin in the *Oberstadtbuch* (Fol. 1r Oberstadtbuch 8a *Jakobi*, 1455–1480).[24] While there were clear guidelines for the *Oberstadtbuch* that were also stringently implemented (Rehme 1895: 16–17, Kuhn 2019), no such decree seems to exist for the *Niederstadtbuch*. Similarly, the gradual and rather slow increase of Scots in the ACR suggests that there was no prescription from above about language selection in the Scottish source. That language policies were not the driving force for vernacularisation and that the replacement of Latin happened gradually is also noted by von Polenz (2021: 288) with regard to German.

While the analyses presented here allow us to identify when and how Latin was replaced by vernaculars in these documentary legal texts, it is more difficult to determine reasons for this change. To establish why scribes shifted from Latin to vernaculars, the sources need to be considered in the context of a more general development towards vernaculars in the fifteenth century – a time when vernaculars were not just employed as spoken but also as written languages. Already in the thirteenth century, Low German was used for important legal texts, such as the *Sachsenspiegel* (c. 1224), the most important book of Saxon customary law, and the so-called *Bardewiksche Codex* (c. 1294), which codified Lübeck law. Furthermore, the Lübeck town charter was translated from Latin into Low German in the thirteenth century (Stedje 2007: 134) and from 1369, the outcomes of meetings between representatives of Hanse towns at the so-called *Hansetage* were written in Low German (Dollinger 2012: 343). A similar, although later development can be observed in Scotland, where the Acts of Parliament of Scotland were recorded in Scots from 1390 and earlier Latin Acts were translated into Scots in 1425 (Corbett *et al.* 2003: 8). These developments indicate changes in the status of and attitudes towards vernaculars in both contexts.[25] Scots and Low German began to be placed on a par with Latin, which was not seen as the sole language of law and administration anymore, even if it retained important functions and continued to be used for specific purposes for years to come. The allocation of languages for specific functions suggests a high level of awareness of separate language varieties; as Burke (2004: 15) notes: "[t]he fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in particular, were a time of increasing linguistic awareness" across much of Europe. He believes that the expansion of vernaculars "was an act, or succession of acts, of symbolic importance, signalling the rise of new communities or new conceptions of community" (Burke 2004: 75). Whether there were any specific sociocultural changes that led to these acts, the increase in linguistic awareness, and the positive attitudes towards vernaculars remains to be explored.

It is likely that pragmatic reasons played a role in the shift to vernaculars too. Using the vernacular would have broadened the accessibility of documentary legal texts to those unfamiliar with Latin. Schipor (2018: 254) notes that "the literacy skills or

---

24 See Rehme (1895: 16–17) for a transcription of this 97-word paragraph prescribing the use of Latin.

25 *Cf.* Peersman (2014: 647, original italicisation), who states the following about the use of vernaculars vis-à-vis Latin in the Middle Ages: "In order to oppose the *auctoritas* and prestige of the Latin tradition, it is clear that a change in language attitudes was required both towards literacy in general, as well as to the vernacular languages in particular."

linguistic preferences of the persons involved in the production and receptions of the texts" may have influenced code selection in the documentary texts from England she analysed, while Peters (2000: 1411) argues that inadequate Latin skills of classes directly affected by an increasing use of written language drove the replacement of Latin by Low German:

> Die Verschriftlichung weiter Lebensbereiche bewirkte den Schreibsprachenwechsel vom Lateinischen zur Volkssprache. Aus den Schreibbedürfnissen der von der Verschriftlichung betroffenen Schichten heraus, die nicht über ausreichende Lateinkenntnisse verfügten – niederer Adel, Kaufleute, Handwerker –, entstand neben der lat. eine Schriftlichkeit in nd. Sprache. Das Lat. wurde langsam in immer mehr Funktionsbereichen durch die Volkssprache zurückgedrängt. (Peters 2000: 1411)

> The textualization of large areas of life led to a change in the written language from Latin to the vernacular. The writing requirements of the classes affected by this textualization, who did not have sufficient proficiency in Latin – the lower nobility, merchants, craftsmen –, resulted in the development of a written vernacular language alongside Latin. In an increasing number of functions, Latin was slowly replaced by the vernacular. (Peters 2000: 1411, translated by ADH)

While Peters' assessment may oversimplify matters to some extent, pragmatic reasons need to be taken into account when explaining vernacularisation processes. Peter's (2000: 1413) conclusion that Low German replaced Latin in the second half of the fourteenth century in the domains of law, administration, and trade needs to be reevaluated too.[26] While this may be a valid generalisation for many text types from a range of domains, the analysis of the *Lübecker Stadtbücher* has shown that Latin was still the dominant language in this particularly text until the mid-fifteenth century. It remains to be seen whether the *Lübecker Stadtbücher* constitute an outlier in their use of Latin in the Low German context. In the wider European realm, Latin seems to remain an important language in documentary texts from the fifteenth century and beyond, as the results from the *Aberdeen Council Registers* as well as those from Schipor's (2018) and Stenroos' (2020) analyses indicate.

The findings presented here can add to and, in some cases, refute previous statements concerning vernacularisation, but further analyses are necessary to come to more definite conclusions. This research project will investigate the immediate context of the ACR and the LNB further to determine whether the vernacularisation processes in these documentary legal texts are in line with wider developments in their respective geographical areas. Furthermore, qualitative research on the contents of individual

---

26 German quotation: „Erst in der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jhs. hat sich in der Schriftlichkeit das Mnd. [Mittelniederdeutsche] ganz durchgesetzt" (Peters 2000: 1413). Peters (2000: 1412–1413) provides a range of examples, such as the *Stadtbücher* of Wismar, Aken, and Halle (all written in Low German from the mid-thirteenth century) and charters, in which this statement applies.

entries will be carried out to determine to what extent the subject matter influenced the scribes' choice of language. The names mentioned in entries will be investigated too as their use may reveal whether these people had a say in the choice of language for recording their legal matters. While many questions remain unanswered at this stage, this article will hopefully give further impetus to the study of vernacularisation in medieval and early modern Europe.

References

Primary sources

ARCHIV DER HANSESTADT LÜBECK. Kanzlei. Niederstadtbücher, *Pantaleonis*, 1430–1451.

ARCHIV DER HANSESTADT LÜBECK. Kanzlei. Oberstadtbuch 8a, *Jakobi*, 1455–1480.

FRANKOT, Edda/Anna HAVINGA/Claire HAWES/William HEPBURN/Wim PETERS/ Jackson ARMSTRONG/Phil ASTLEY/Andrew MACKILLOP/Andrew SIMPSON/Adam WYNER (eds) (2019) *Aberdeen Registers Online: 1398–1511*. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen. https://www.abdn.ac.uk/aro [accessed on 22 April 2022].

Secondary sources

ARMSTRONG, Jackson (2016) "Law in the Aberdeen Council Registers 1398–1511: Concepts, Practices, Geographies." https://aberdeenregisters.org/project/ [accessed on 20 April 2022].

BURKE, Peter (2004) *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BLANCHARD, Ian/Elizabeth GEMMILL/Nicholas MAYHEW/Ian D. WHYTE (2002) "The Economy: Town and Country." In: E. P. Dennison/D. Ditchburn/M. Lynch (eds), 129–158.

CARROLL, Ruth (2004) "Middle English recipes: Vernacularisation of a text-type." In: I. Taavitsainen/P. Pahta (eds), 174–191.

CORBETT, John/J. Derrick MCCLURE/Jane STUART-SMITH (2003) "A brief history of Scots." In: John Corbett/J. Derrick McClure/Jane Stuart-Smith (eds), *The Edinburgh companion to Scots*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1–16.

DENNISON, E. Patricia/David DITCHBURN/Michael LYNCH (eds), *Aberdeen before 1800: A new history*. East Linton: Tuckwell Press.

DENNISON, E. Patricia/David DITCHBURN/Michael LYNCH (2002) "Preface." In: *Ead.* (eds), xxv–xxviii.

Dictionaries of the Scots Language. Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd. https://dsl.ac.uk/ [accessed on 20 July 2023].

DODD, Gwilym (2011) "The rise of English, the decline of French: supplications to the English Crown, c. 1420–1450." *Speculum* 86, 117–146.

DODD, Gwilym (2019) "Languages and Law in Late Medieval England: English, French and Latin." In: Candace Barrington & Sebastian Sobecki (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Law and Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 17–29.

DOLLINGER, Philippe (⁶2012) *Die Hanse*. New edition by Volker Henn und Nils Jörn. Stuttgart: Kröner.

GEMMILL, Elizabeth (2005) *Aberdeen Guild Court Records 1437–1468*. Edinburgh: Scottish History Society.

HAVINGA, Anna D. (2020) "Assessing the intensity of language contact between Middle Dutch and Scots in late medieval Aberdeen." In: Johanna Kopaczyk/Robert McColl Millar (eds), *Language on the move across domains and communities. Selected papers from the 12ᵗʰ triennial Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster, Glasgow 2018*. Aberdeen: FRLSU, 251–278.

HAVINGA, Anna D. (2021) "The vernacularisation of the Aberdeen Council Registers (1398–1511)." In: Jackson W. Armstrong/Edda Frankot (eds), *Cultures of Law in Urban Northern Europe: Scotland and its Neighbours c. 1350–c. 1650*. London/New York: Routledge, 80–102.

HUME, Cathy (2013) "Lewd Language: English and its Others in Late Medieval Versions of Scripture." In: Judith A. Jefferson/Ad Putter, with assistance of Amanda Hopkins (eds), *Multilingualism in medieval Britain (c. 1066–1520): Sources and Analysis*. Turnhout: Brepols, 273–292.

JAHNKE, Carsten (2019) "Introduction: 'The Queen of the Baltic Coast'." In: Carsten Jahnke (ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Lübeck*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 1–17.

JONES, Charles (ed.) (1997) *The Edinburgh History of the Scots Language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

KOPACZYK, Joanna (2018) "Administrative multilingualism on the page in early modern Poland: In search of a framework for written code-switching." In: Päivi Pahta/Janne Skaffari/Laura Wright (eds), *Multilingual Practices in Language History: English and Beyond*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 262–284.

KÖSSINGER, Norbert/Elke KROTZ/Stephan MÜLLER/Pavlína RYCHTEROVÁ (eds) (2018) *Origin Stories. The Rise of Vernacular Literacy in a Comparative Perspective*. Paderborn: Fink.

KUHN, Dominik (14.03.2019) Private correspondence about Niederstadtbücher. Archiv der Hansestadt Lübeck.

LUTTON, Rob (2011) "'Love this Name that is IHC': Vernacular Prayers, Hymns and Lyrics to the Holy Name of Jesus in Pre-Reformation England." In: Elisabeth Salter/Helen Wicker (eds), *Vernacularity in England and Wales, c. 1300–1550*. Turnhout: Brepols, 119–145.

MÄHL, Stefan (2008) *Geven vnde screven tho deme holme. Variablenlinguistische Untersuchungen zur mittelniederdeutschen Schreibsprache in Stockholm*. Uppsala: Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för svensk folkkultur.

MELD = A Corpus of Middle English Local Documents, version 2017.1 (December 2020) Compiled by Merja Stenroos/Kjetil V. Thengs/Geir Bergstrøm. University of Stavanger. http://www.uis.no/meld [accessed on 22 April 2022].

PEERSMAN, Catharina (2014) "Written Vernaculars in Medieval and Renaissance Times." In: Juan M. Hernández-Campoy/J. Camilo Conde-Silvestre (eds), *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 639–654.

PETERS, Robert (2000) „Soziokulturelle Voraussetzungen und Sprachraum des Mittelniederdeutschen." In: Werner Besch/Anne Betten/Oskar Reichmann/Stefan Sonderegger (eds), *Sprachgeschichte: Ein Handbuch Zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Ihrer Erforschung*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 1409–1422.

POLENZ, Peter von (³2021) *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart. Band 1: Einführung, Grundbegriffe, 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Claudine Moulin in collaboration with Maria Backes/Natalia Filatkina. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.

PUTTER, Ad (2016) "The linguistic repertoire of medieval England, 1100–1500." In: Tim William Machan (ed.), *Imagining Medieval English: Language Structures and Theories 500–1500*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 126–144.

PUTTER, Ad (2021) "Materials for a Social History of the Dutch Language in Medieval Britain: Three Case Studies from Wales, Scotland, and England." In: *Dutch Crossing*, 45/2, 97–111.

REFERENZKORPUS MITTELNIEDERDEUTSCH/NIEDERRHEINISCH (1200–1650) (2021) *Liste der Texte*. https://www.slm.uni-hamburg.de/ren/korpus/texte.html [accessed on 22 April 2022].

REHME, Paul (1895) *Das Lübecker Ober-Stadtbuch. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Rechtsquellen und des Liegenschaftsrechts*. Hannover: Helwingsche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

SCHENDL, Herbert (2002) "Mixed-language texts as data and evidence in English historical linguistics." In: Donka Minkova/Robert Stockwell (eds), *Studies in the History of the English Language: A Millennial Perspective*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 51–78.

SCHIPOR, Delia (2018) *A Study of Multilingualism in the late medieval material of the Hampshire Record Office*. [PhD Thesis.] Stavangar: University of Stavanger.

SCHIPOR, Delia (2022) "Multilingual Events in Late Medieval Personal Documentary Texts from the Winchester Diocese Collection in 1400–1525." In: Karen Bennett/Angelo Cattaneo (eds), *Language Dynamics in the Early Modern Period*. New York/London: Routledge, 21–39.

SCHLEISSNER, Margaret R. (ed.) (1995) *Manuscript Sources of Medieval Medicine. A Book of Essays*. London/New York: Routledge.

SCHLEISSNER, Margaret R. (1995) "Introduction." In: M. R. Schleissner (ed.), ix–xii.

SEGGERN, Harm von (2016) *Quellenkunde als Methode: Zum Aussagewert der Lübecker Niederstadtbücher des 15. Jahrhunderts*. Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau.

SMITH, Jeremy (2012) *Older Scots. A Linguistic Reader*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Text Society.

SODMANN, Timothy (2000) "Die Verdrängung des Mittelniederdeutschen als Schreib- und Druckersprache Norddeutschlands." In: Werner Besch/Anne Betten/Oskar Reichmann/Stefan Sonderegger (eds), *Sprachgeschichte: Ein Handbuch*

Zur Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache und Ihrer Erforschung. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 1505–1512.

STEDJE, Astrid (⁶2007) *Deutsche Sprache gestern und heute: Einführung in Sprachgeschichte und Sprachkunde*. New edition Astrid Stedje/Heinz-Peter Prell. Paderborn: Fink.

STENROOS, Merja (2020) "The 'vernacularisation' and 'standardisation' of local administrative writing in late and post-medieval England." In: Laura Wright (ed.), *The Multilingual Origins of Standard English*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 39–85.

TAAVITSAINEN, Irma/Päivi PAHTA (eds) (2004) *Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

TROTTER, D. A. (ed.) (2000) Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer.

VEREIN FÜR NIEDERDEUTSCHE SPRACHFORSCHUNG (2023) *Niederdeutsche Bibliographie*. http://www.vnds.de/de/niederdeutsche-bibliographie.html [accessed on 23 August 2023].

VOIGTS, Linda Ehrsam (1995) "Multitudes of Middle English Medical Manuscripts, or the Englishing of Science and Medicine." In: M. R. Schleissner (ed.), 183–195.

VOIGTS, Linda Ehrsam (1996) "What's the word? Bilingualism in late-medieval England." *Speculum* 71, 813–826.

WRIGHT, Laura (1998) "Mixed-language business writing: Five hundred years of code-switching." In: E. H. Jahr (ed.), *Language change: Advances in historical sociolinguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 99–118.

WRIGHT, Laura (2000) "Bills, Account, Inventories: Everyday Trilingual Activities in the Business World of Later Medieval England." In: D. A. Trotter (ed.), *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 149–156.

Abstract

VERNACULARISATION OF DOCUMENTARY LEGAL TEXTS IN NORTHERN EUROPE: A COMPARISON OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCOTS AND LOW GERMAN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

At the transition from medieval to early modern Europe, vernaculars became more commonly used in writing in various domain, including administration and law. In the late Middle Ages, vernaculars seem to gain status and start to be regarded as suitable languages for recording municipal matters. But how did this vernacularisation progress in such documentary legal texts? When and why was Latin replaced by vernaculars? To answer these questions, this article presents diachronic quantitative analyses of the language choice in individual entries of two documentary legal sources: the first eight volumes of the *Aberdeen Council Registers* (1398–1511) and one volume of the *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (1430–1451). The comparative approach to these multilingual texts allows us to trace vernacularisation processes across two language contexts, uncovering similarities and differences between them. In the council registers from Aberdeen,

Scots replaced Latin slowly and gradually – a process that took over a century and was far from finished by 1511. In the text from Lübeck, on the other hand, the shift from Latin to Low German was largely completed within about 30 years. In both cases, language practices of the scribes rather than top-down language policies seem to have driven this development. The scribes' language choices will have been influenced by the use of vernaculars in other texts, including those in the domain of law, pragmatic considerations, and more general socioeconomic developments. By investigating vernacularisation processes in two sources, this article offers a first comparative account that allows for generalisations beyond individual language contexts and serves as the basis for further research in this area.

Keywords: vernacularisation, language choice, historical multilingualism, documentary legal texts, fifteenth century, Scots, Low German

Povzetek

VERNAKULARIZACIJA URADNIŠKH PRAVNIH BESEDIL V SEVERNI EVROPI: PRIMERJAVA RAZVOJA ŠKOTŠČINE IN NIZKE NEMŠČINE V 15. STOLETJU

V Evropi so se na prehodu iz srednjega v zgodnji novi vek ljudski jeziki vse splošneje uporabljali v pisnih besedilih z različnih področij, vključno z upravo in s pravom. V poznem srednjem veku so ljudski jeziki statusno napredovali in zdeli so se primerni za zapise v zvezi z lokalnimi zadevami. Toda kako se je vernakularizacija razvijala v tovrstnih uradniških pravnih besedilih? Kdaj in zakaj so ljudski jeziki nadomestili latinščino? Da bi lahko odgovorili na ta vprašanja, predstavljamo diahrono kvantitativno analizo izbire jezika v virih z uradniškimi pravnimi besedili, in sicer prvih osem zvezkov zbirke *Aberdeen Council Registers* (1398–1511) in en zvezek *Lübecker Niederstadtbuch* (1430–1451). Primerjalni pristop k tem večjezičnim besedilom nam omogoča, da process vernakularizacije zasledujemo v dveh jezikovnih okoljih ter spoznavamo podobnosti in razlike med njima. V registrih aberdeenskega mestnega sveta je škotščina nadomestila latinščino počasi in postopno, process je trajal več kot stoletje in je bil do leta 1511 vse prej kot zaključen. Drugače pa je z besedilom iz Lübecka, kjer je bil prehod od latinščine k nemščini dokončan v približno tridesetih letih. V obeh primerih je ta razvoj usmerjala predvsem jezikovna praksa pisarjev, ne pa ukepi nadredne jezikovne politike. Na jezikovne izbire pisarjev so verjetno vplivali raba ljudskih jezikov v drugih besedilih, vključno s pravnimi, nato pragmatične okoliščine in splošnejši družbenoekonomski razvoj. Prispevek proučuje proces vernakularizacije v dveh virih in tako ponuja okvirno primerjalno razlago, s pomočjo katere je mogoče priti tudi do širše veljavnh generalizacij in ki služi kot osnova za nadaljnje raziskovanje.

Ključne besede: vernakularizacija, izbira jezika, zgodovinska večjezičnost, uradniška pravna besedila, 15. stoletje, škotščina, nizka nemščina

Tino Oudesluijs
University of Manchester
tino.oudesluijs@manchester.ac.uk

SCRIBAL NETWORKS AND THE LANGUAGE OF URBAN ADMINISTRATION: VARIATION AND CHANGE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY COVENTRY[*]

1 INTRODUCTION

Research on Early Modern English (1500–1700) often highlights the importance of the printing press, increased education, the Reformation, and the Revolution in relation to language change during this period, in particular related to processes of supralocalisation[1] and standardisation (Nevalainen 2000, Nevalainen/Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2006, Nevalainen/Raumolin-Brunberg 2017: 30–43). Besides these important developments and events, however, England also saw the continued expansion of pragmatic lay literacy in the form of increased urban administration, which had started in the late medieval period (Rees Jones 2014). The need for trained lay literates in the form of scriveners, town clerks, etc. grew, evidenced by the fact that we observe a significant increase in text production related to record keeping and general administration on both local and national level in sixteenth-century England (Bishop 2016: 114). This undoubtedly had an effect on the English language, but, in contrast to the Late Middle English period (see e.g. Alcolado Carnicero 2017, Stenroos/Thengs 2020), local administration from the Early Modern English period has thus far not received much attention. Instead, researchers have focused more on ego-documents (chiefly letters and diaries) and printed material, which both witnessed an exponential increase after 1500. Furthermore, the few existing studies on comparable text types from the early modern period only consider printed works from the London area, most notably the Statutes of the Realm (Rissanen 1999a, 2000).[2] Two of the main reasons for this are that 1) most local administration was not printed (and as such is now more difficult to access), and 2) it (arguably) carries less value from a socio-historical viewpoint compared to for example private correspondence, as little is often known about the scribes involved (Gordon 2017: 188, 310).

---

[1]   In this paper I follow Britain (2010: 193) in his definition of supralocalisation, namely "the process by which, as a result of mobility and dialect contact, linguistic variants with a wider socio-spatial currency become more widespread at the expense of more localised forms".

[2]   As discussed in more detail by Baker (1999), in the early modern period statutes were only printed, and "no manuscript statute-books were made after 1500 (Baker 1999: 422; see also the first volume of Dawsons of Pall Mall edition from 1963: xxi–xxviii). Moreover, for his studies on the Statutes of the Realm, Rissanen (1999a; 2000) uses later editions from the nineteenth century (reprinted in 1963 by Dawsons of Pall Mall), which had been included in the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts.

However, when scrutinising early modern urban administration in its proper local socio-historic context, much can still be learned from how English was used in different places across the country during a time in which a more supralocal/standardised variety became increasingly discernible (*cf.* Gordon *et al.* 2020). On the one hand, urban administration was chiefly meant for a local audience, and can thus reflect local linguistic characteristics (*cf.* Stenroos 2020), whereas on the other hand scribes – who were often part of a larger network of scribes, scriveners, and clerks (Cuenca 2018, see also Sections 2 and 3 below) – also picked up new forms and phrases from elsewhere as this text type evolved (Oudesluijs 2019: 301–310), making urban administration a highly interesting source from a supralocalisation/standardisation perspective. Furthermore, administrative texts are official, often concern legislation, and their language favours invariance, lacks affect, and, in the early modern period, were considered more prestigious than many other text types (Rissanen 1999a: 191). As such, when appropriately contextualised, local urban administration constitutes an invaluable resource when it comes to better understanding how a more supralocal form of English developed during the early modern period.

As mentioned above, investigating early modern administration in its proper socio-historical context can be difficult due to the anonymity of most scribes working on this text type. One method that has proven successful for scrutinising comparable data from the Late Middle English period concerns social network theory (Alcolado Carnicero 2017; *cf.* Hartrich 2017). Although this model is usually applied to data written by known authors (e.g. Bergs 2005), its principles and mechanisms can still be successfully applied to communities of largely anonymous writers, especially when they form a so-called community of practice. This concerns "a collection of people who engage on an on-going basis in some common endeavour" (Eckert 2006: 683), such as members of a specific society, a study group, or – in this case – a group of professional scribes. Members of such communities often have shared repertoires, including linguistic elements, as a result of active participation (Eckert/McConnell-Ginet 1999: 185). As such, the aim of this paper is twofold: first, to highlight and substantiate the potential of early modern local administration with regard to better understanding the supralocalisation and development of (Standard) English in the sixteenth century, and second, to demonstrate the benefits of applying the principles of social network theory to mostly anonymous scribal communities and networks in relation to language change in the early modern period.[3] To achieve this, I closely scrutinise the use and development of periphrastic DO – a well-researched feature for this period (see e.g. Denison 1985, Nevalainen 1991, Rissanen 2000, Söderlund 2017) that has already been discussed in relation to standardisation (e.g. Stein 1990, Stein/Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1994) – in a collection of 35 indentures from sixteenth-century Coventry, both in the relevant local urban and scribal contexts, as well as in light of the developing supralocal variety (see also Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022).

---

3   This paper concerns a case study based on work I carried out for my doctoral dissertation (Oudesluijs 2019) within the framework of the Emerging Standards project. See https://wp.unil.ch/emst/home/project-description/ for more information.

First, I discuss urban administration and scribal networks in early modern England (Section 2), followed by an overview of the situation in Coventry (Section 3). I then consider the language of administration (Section 4) before presenting the data (Section 5) and the case study on periphrastic DO (Section 6). In Section 7, I conclude this paper by returning to the aims set out in the introduction and providing some final thoughts.

2 EARLY MODERN ENGLISH URBAN ADMINISTRATION AND SCRIBAL NETWORKS

Besides the development of schools and education across the country in the first half of the sixteenth century (*cf.* Orme 2006), the early modern period in England also saw the continued expansion of pragmatic lay literacy in the form of increased administration in towns and cities, which had started in the late medieval period. This involved the "production, uses, and preservation of records for the purposes of municipal administration" (Mostert and Adamska 2014: 4). These activities are also sometimes grouped under the term 'institutional literacy' or 'civic literacy' as they were primarily exercised by municipal institutions. The latter term was proposed by Rees Jones (2014: 220), who defines civic literacy as the capacity of urban governments to generate both records and archives as part of their processes of self-government, and also the uses of that writing in creating a sense of identity and purpose within a civic community. As pointed out by Mostert and Adamska (2014: 4), the 'legal setting' of an urban community played an important role in this development, as a growing amount of legal records were required for municipal administration. In contrast to merchants who became increasingly familiar with reading and writing skills (*cf.* Stenroos 2017), civic literacy concerns pragmatic literacy associated with trained professionals like town clerks and scriveners, who were employed by civic institutions such as guilds and city councils (Cuenca 2018: 3).

Town clerks were civic administrators familiar with local customs and law, and they often copied, compiled, changed, and sometimes even authored different kinds of texts (Cuenca 2018: 3–4). They often had a background as scrivener,[4] and as such they "read and wrote and performed secretarial and administrative duties that traditionally included composing legal instruments" (Bevan 2013: 30). Town clerks often had multiple roles within city councils, meaning that they not only narrated many events that took place, but also often played a role in those events (Bishop 2016: 129). Since town clerks were almost completely in charge of the collections of documents in their respective archives, they "were able to shape and control the narrative that was told through

---

4   The term 'scrivener' refers to the profession under which many town clerks, recorders (see Section 3), and secretaries would have fallen. Scriveners have been called many things by historians up to this point, including scribe, notary, copyist, secretary, and clerk, which reflects the different offices that scriveners frequently took from the thirteenth century onward (Bevan 2013: 29–30). Besides being apprenticed to a scrivener, some (town) clerks would have been trained at university level, although the available evidence to back this up is patchy (Cuenca 2018: 9). Other means of education included business schools in Oxford, where scriveners trained boys in legal administration, accounting, letter writing, etc. (Bevan 2013: 201). Before becoming a town clerk, many scriveners often worked as a so-called underclerk (Cuenca 2018: 8), i.e. clerks working for other (town) clerks, where they could become acquainted with local customs and writing practices.

their archives" (Bishop 2016: 119–120). As a result, town clerks, as well as their teams of scribes and scriveners, can increasingly be considered literary agents and political actors in early modern England (Bishop 2016: 113–114).[5]

Like many merchants and various town officials, town clerks did not work in a social vacuum, but in a network spanning multiple cities and towns wherein they compiled "their town's histories, customs and traditions" (Cuenca 2018: 22). Many provincial towns interacted with each other on a civic level, and town clerks would have been very active members of such networks. Related to this, Rees Jones (2014: 222) points out that, despite the general tendency towards centralisation in late medieval England, there were still widely disparate regional cultures in the language, form, and use of civic writing. Rees Jones (2014: 223) also observes "regional groupings in the cultures of English towns" as many provincial towns interacted with each other on a civic level. Recent research by Hartrich (2017) on charters and inter-urban networks, as well as by Cuenca (2018) on town clerks and the authorship of custumals, confirms this. These studies show that "borough customary law was not always a reflection of urban practice rooted in specific places, but could be a copy of traditions from older, more prominent towns" (Cuenca 2018: 15), and that "urban elites were frequently in contact with wealthy merchants and civic officers from other towns" (Hartrich 2017: 224). Considering that the urban elite was often in charge of a town's government (Dobson 2000: 280), as well as responsible for its administration, English towns became part of inter-urban networks. London was of course often a prominent part of such networks, and clerks working in other towns frequently based new registers and compilations on writings from London, e.g. in King's Lynn, Bristol, and Exeter (Cuenca 2018: 15–16).

As with the language of individuals and speech communities in a social network, the language used by people in different urban centres would have undergone change in an inter-urban network, i.e. through contact with individuals from other towns. In brief, social network theory tells us that linguistic innovations often flow from one community to another by means of accommodation and through what are usually called 'weak' network ties or links (Milroy/Milroy 1985, Nevalainen 2000, Bergs 2005). Such ties exemplify the relation that people commonly have with their acquaintances – who tend to come and go during one's lifetime – rather than with their friends and families – who are exemplified by strong ties and tend to form more close-knit networks. Individuals who belong to or move between multiple social networks (and tend to act as weak ties between them) can act as bridges and linguistic innovators, "channelling new or required information between different networks" (Alcolado Carnicero 2017: 43). Generally speaking, individuals who maintain stronger social ties in more close-knit networks tend to resist language change, whereas those who maintain weaker ties can induce it (Nevalainen 2000: 255). Despite having been developed for investigating

---

5   Bishop's 2016 study on the London Goldsmith's company in the sixteenth century is an excellent example of the influence and power of clerks within companies, and she emphasises that, rather than the straightforward compilation of factual events, "record-keeping was always a creative process, involving the construction of narrative and storytelling" (Bishop 2016: 127). For other studies on the increasingly important role of town clerks in the late medieval and early modern periods, see Clanchy (2013 [1979]), Bevan (2013), Rees Jones (2014) and Cuenca (2018).

language change in speech communities, social network theory has successfully been applied to historical – i.e. written – data (e.g. Bergs 2005). However, in the case of town clerks and scribes basing their writings on documents from other towns, it becomes more difficult to point to an individual and/or weak tie to help explain attested change. Instead, the lasting quality and portability of physical texts become the means by which language (including potential innovations) spreads from town to town, rather than through an individual's speech, which, due to its ephemeral nature, requires their physical presence in a particular place and time. There are still linguistic agents involved of course, namely the writers of the texts that are being copied, the copying scribes, and (indirectly) those who transport the texts from town to town. Additionally, town clerks and recorders (see Section 3) often travelled around after their education, and ended up working for various institutions across the country. They therefore would have acted as weak ties between different communities of scribes as their linguistic and writing practices travelled with them.

All the above-described elements would have, over time, encouraged uniformity across the different written varieties, and by sharing and adopting different writing practices, the language used in administrative texts and civic records can be expected to become more identical over time, potentially fostering supralocalisation processes (*cf.* Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022). Unfortunately, at present there is not enough data available to confirm such developments, especially for the early modern period, though projects such as the Emerging Standards project[6] are working towards filling this gap. By creating more (specialised) corpora for individual towns it is likely that such patterns will become increasingly apparent, and the development of urban literacy, in particular the establishment of inter-urban networks, may prove to be of great importance to better understand the underlying supralocalisation and standardisation processes of Early Modern English.

3 URBAN ADMINISTRATION AND SCRIBAL NETWORKS IN SIXTEENTH CENTURY COVENTRY

The effects of religious reform in sixteenth-century England – including the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the subsequent suppression of guilds and chantries – on cities and towns was substantial, especially regarding administration. As pointed out by Stephens (1969: 264) when discussing Coventry's local government in the sixteenth century:

> in 1574 the mayor's council was strengthened […] by the city's acquisition of much of the property of the dissolved religious houses and all the property of the dissolved guilds and chantries. The later development of local government in Coventry was largely determined by these events which brought wider powers and greater revenue. The council had to handle many more lands, tenements, and rents than before, and had to administer the rectories of St. Michael and Holy Trinity together with a number of charities. The activities of the mayor and his council thus became numerous.

---

6   See https://wp.unil.ch/emst/home/project-description/ for more information.

As a result of such developments, which took place across England (Tittler 1998: 59–73), the need for trained lay literates in the form of scriveners, scribes, town clerks, company clerks etc. increased, evidenced by the fact that we observe an increase in text production relating to record keeping at both local and national level in sixteenth-century England (Bishop 2016: 114).

In Coventry, the effects of the Reformation on its local government and administration were significant. When Edward VI continued England's religious reform in 1547 with an act of Parliament ordering the suppression of guilds and chantries (Stephens 1969: 217), many more buildings and lands were confiscated, sold, and demolished. Coventry's city council managed to acquire many of these lands and properties (Stephens 1969: 264, 275, 398, 403), which were subsequently let and as a result provided a yearly income. The council also sold some of the lands, allowing for investments in other properties, including the old guildhall, which became the new Council House. Such investments in lands helped the city through difficult times (McGrory 2003: 125), but also added to the local government's workload as the council had to handle many more lands, tenements, and rents than before.

As in many other English urban centres, in Coventry the local town clerk and a team of scriveners and scribes worked on the increased administration during this time. Coventry's town clerks working between 1400 and 1700 are for the most part known by name (Harris 1913: xvi; see also Oudesluijs 2019: 183), and we know of their tasks and responsibilities, but less is known about their private lives.[7] From 1481 onward, the office also included that of steward of the city (Templeman 1944: 15), which carried the "responsibility for the recording of apprentices' names, renewal of feoffments, and care of records" (Stephens 1969: 266). Coventry's town clerks were thus expected to take on more duties as time went on, including those of clerk of the peace (Templeman 1944: 15), for which increased legal knowledge was required. As mentioned in Section 2, town clerks often had a background as scrivener, but some of Coventry's town clerks had (additional) experience in other positions before becoming the town clerk, such as John Boteler and Thomas and Arthur Gregory, who had been trained as lawyers before their appointments in 1481, c.1550, and 1573 respectively (Templeman 1944: 15, Carter 2011: 12). As town clerk, Boteler had his routine duties such as keeping the mayor's register and acting as clerk of the peace, but he also did much to increase the relevance of this office, e.g. by representing the town in Briscowe's case in London (1481) and in Ludlow (1482), probably due to his legal training. In 1496, Boteler was nominated to be one of the corporation's proctors in the dispute with Laurence Saunders that took place in London, and in 1498 he was there again on the matter of the prior's murage (Templeman 1944: 16).

The town clerk frequently worked together with the recorder, a position that most likely evolved out of the office of town clerk (Bevan 2013: 61). The recorder acted as

---

7   Thomas Gregory and his son Arthur are notable exceptions here. Together they held various offices within Coventry's local government from the 1530s until c.1580, including that of town clerk, and over time they accumulated both business and personal letters in their own hands. As a result, much documentation on their lives and business survives to this day. See for more information Carter (2011: Ch. 1).

the town's lawyer and foremost legal advisor (Musson 2001: 66–67), whereas the town clerk would handle the "secretarial aspect of scrivening" (Bevan 2013: 61 fn. 146), and the two would often work together (Cuenca 2018: 10). Recorders often held other official offices elsewhere in the country, most notably in parliament (Whitley 1894; see also a list of Coventry's coroners between 1423 and 1541 in Templeman 1944: 170–171), and whereas little is known about most of Coventry's town clerks, more is known about its recorders, chiefly as a result of their presence in Parliament. For example, we know that many of Coventry's recorders came from outside the city, like Anthony Fitzherbert (c. 1470–1538), a judge and legal writer from Norbury, Derbyshire (Baker 2015), William Shelley (c. 1478–1549), who came from a family of London mercers and aldermen (Whittick 2013), and Sir Edward Coke (1552–1634), who had been a recorder in Norwich, London, Orford (Suffolk) and Harwich before taking up the office in Coventry (Thrush/Ferris 2010). Most of these recorders held the office in Coventry for a period between 7 and 15 years (Templeman 1944: 170), with the exception of Henry Boteler, who held the office for 35 years, and a few others who held it only for one, two or three years. This was most likely because they often also occupied official positions elsewhere at the same time, and the recorder of Coventry was required to live in the city (Templeman 1944: 12, 14).

Even though we can mostly speculate about the professional networks of Coventry's town clerks, we know that they often worked with high-ranking officials within local governments, some of whom, such as the town recorder, often travelled and worked in other parts of the country. As mentioned above, town clerks did so as well on occasion (e.g. John Boteler). We also know that many of Coventry's town clerks and recorders had ties to the local guilds, most notably the Trinity Guild, of which the recorders John Weston, Henry Boteler, and Edmund Knyghteley, as well as the town clerk John Boteler were members (Templeman 1944: 15, 170). Coventry's town clerks were furthermore almost always housed within the Trinity guild (Templeman 1944: 15), and since most, if not all, city officials were members of a local guild, it seems likely that the anonymous scribes and scriveners working for the town clerk were as well. As such, it appears that a professional network of town clerks, recorders, and their team of scribes and scriveners had strong ties within Coventry's local community on the one hand, and weak ties with officials from other towns and cities on the other. As discussed in Section 2, the latter can be expected to lead to the adoption of different writing practices – including linguistic innovations – from elsewhere, and in this process the language of civic records can be expected to become more invariable over time, potentially fostering supralocalisation (and in turn standardisation) processes.

4 THE LANGUAGE OF ADMINISTRATION

Different realisations of language are often considered to lie on a cline with a highly formal register at one end and a highly informal register at the other (see e.g. Koch/Oesterreicher 2012, Elspaß 2015). Private correspondence between friends, for example, can then be placed more towards the informal end of this spectrum, with urban administration more towards the formal end, much like laws. These last two text types are,

of course, different in some ways – most notably regarding their audience[8] – but they also share many characteristics, chiefly the fact that both were legally binding.[9] With an increasing amount of legally binding records required for municipal administration (*cf.* Cuenca 2018: 3–4), laws and administration could potentially be called upon by any official with regard to various matters. Moreover, regardless of the exact composition of the contemporary audience for certain laws and administration in early modern England, both text types were also written for a future audience as they were registering official procedures that should also be followed by individuals at a later point in time or otherwise expanded on by future officials.

Scholars frequently point out the conservative nature and compliance with tradition of both the people working in law and the language they use (Mattila 2006: 90, Gotti 2012: 52–53). In this regard, the objectives of legal language have changed very little over time, and can be described as to "transmit legal messages with absolute clarity and without ambiguity" (Mattila 2006: 66; see also Gotti 2012: 52, Hiltunen 2012: 39, Kopaczyk 2013: 21) in order to provide legal certainty with the intention "to have an effect on the understanding, rather than the feelings, of the reader or listener" (Mattila 2006: 74). As pointed out by Kopaczyk (2013: 21), the way in which laws and regulations were and are communicated should not only be clear, unambiguous, authoritative, and transparent, but also solemn and formal. As such, accuracy and precision are of fundamental importance in legal texts, and this is often achieved by using certain linguistic features as well as being consistent regarding their structural organisation. This in turn often results in the use of fixed formulae on the sentence and phrase level, and legal texts frequently contain "ready-made sentences and petrified phrases" (Mattila 2006: 81–82), instead of more recently coined words or phrases (Gotti 2012: 52).[10]

One of the most well-known linguistic characteristics of legal texts concerns vocabulary, chiefly the use of legal jargon and specific terminology (Mattila 2006: 4–5, Mattila 2012). Legal language also tends to contain more compound nouns, archaic words, and foreign (i.e. Latin and French) phrases (Mattila 2012: 31–34). On the syntactic level we often find longer sentences and more textual complexity (Gotti 2012: 53), which is chiefly acquired through the organisation of clauses in patterns of parataxis (coordination) and hypotaxis (subordination) (Hiltunen 2012: 41). Legal texts also tend

---

8   (Legislative) administration is generally meant for those who work in a particular professional environment that at some point in the future might warrant some degree of examination as to what exactly happened in the past, whereas laws are generally intended for a much larger audience. For example, many of the regulations written down in the Coventry Leet Books (Harris 1907–1913) applied to everyone living within the city walls, whereas an indentured lease only concerned the parties involved.

9   See Bhatia (1987) and Moessner (2018) for more on models and classifications of legal documents and their language.

10   Aiming for clarity and avoidance of ambiguity often leads to repetition and verbosity in legal texts, particularly when the reference relations of the texts are made as explicit as possible. However, it is not only due to the desired clarity and unambiguousness of legal texts that repetition and verbosity are some of its key characteristics. Another reason for this lies in its oral origins (Kopaczyk 2013: 15–20), as oral cultures valued formulaic language use because repetition was key in not losing (i.e. forgetting) important information. To a large extent, "writing meant fixing what used to be rather fluid" (Kopaczyk 2013: 18), and over time an increasing amount of legal and administrative texts were put into writing.

to avoid "grammatical ties across sentence boundaries" (Hiltunen 2012: 41) and as such include more anaphoric references preceding a noun such as 'the said [NAME]' rather than using a personal pronoun, as well as conjunctions (Rissanen 1999a: 192, Mattila 2006: 66, Gotti 2012: 54–56). Furthermore, legal language places less emphasis on verbs than ordinary language (Mattila 2006: 91), which is partly explained by the notion that nouns can give more objective impressions than verbs, notably in cases involving findings of fact. As a result, legal language often contains many fixed noun phrases as well as compound nouns.[11] Considering verbs, legal language frequently contains passive constructions, which "brings the object of the action into the foreground" (Mattila 2006: 73; *cf.* Hiltunen 2012: 41).

During the early modern period, according to Rissanen (2000: 120), who investigated the Statutes of the Realm,[12] neutrality and generality remain key characteristics of legal language, as are avoiding subjective and personal attitudes, and strong regional marking. He furthermore states that to "ensure correct and unambiguous transmission of information, it must be conservative in its choice of structure and lexis and hostile to stylistic variation. It aims at maximum disambiguation in its text and discourse structure" (Rissanen 2000: 120). This makes the language of legal texts repetitive and complex on the one hand, but also "innovative in some aspects of syntactic and lexical usage" on the other (Rissanen 2000: 120–121). Concerning spelling, Rissanen (2000: 121) notes that "it seems that in spelling the standardising model offered by documents [i.e. administrative texts] and statutes had a strong influence on other genres of writing", indicating that legal records played a part in the ongoing supralocalisation of certain spelling forms. Concerning syntax and lexis, Rissanen (2000: 121) argues that legal texts seemed to have adopted forms from other genres and subsequently decontextualised and deregionalised them, thus marking them as part of a more supralocal written variety. Rissanen (1999b) also hints at this role of legal language in relation to standardisation processes by means of its invariance, lack of affect, generality, and prestige (Table 1).

Table 1. Genres and features important in the development of the standard (Rissanen 1999a: 191).

	Invariance	Lack of affect	Generality	Prestige
Documentary and statutory texts	+	+	+	+
Scientific texts	-	+	+	+
Religious texts	-	-	+/-	+
Fictitious texts	-	-	-	+/-

---

11   Also alluded to by Mattila's (2006: 96) use of the term 'noun sickness'.

12   Rissanen used the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (Rissanen et al. 1991) for his research, which includes sections from the Statutes of the Realm (Dawsons of Pall Mall 1963) from the following periods: 1488–1491, 1509–1512, 1542–1543, 1598–1604 and 1695–1699.

The overview provided in Table 1 does not represent a fixed or exact framework, but instead Rissanen's (1999b: 191) "attempt to illustrate the occurrences of features characterising standardisation in various genres of writing". Related to this, Gotti (2012: 60) emphasises that "[t]extual standardization occurs in all disciplinary fields but it is stronger in legal genres, particularly when a text is not free-standing but is an adaptation of an earlier text, incorporating all data reflecting the new conditions". Given these remarks, as well as the role of legislative texts with regard to standardisation processes in the Late Middle English period (Schaefer 2012: 530), Rissanen's overview provides an interesting framework for similar texts from the early modern period. As his research was based on small case studies that only considered selected entries from the Statutes of the Realm (Rissanen 1999a, 2000), it will be interesting to investigate legal records from other urban centres in that period and compare the attested language variation and change to the developing supralocal variety.

5 DATA

For this paper I investigate a collection of 35 indentures (28.517 words) written in Coventry between 1499 and 1600.[13] An indenture (or chirograph as they were known in the medieval period, see Clanchy 2013 [1979]: 66, 89–90) concerns an agreement between multiple parties that has been indented, i.e. cut in a wavy or indented way, to prevent potential forgery and falsification (Streutker 2016: 6).[14] Different kinds of agreements could be indented, including various types of leases,[15] feoffments, bargains, sales, or mortgages. Given this variety, it can be argued that 'indentures' cannot be considered to be a specific text type. However, besides the fact that they all concern administrative and/or legislative agreements of some sort between multiple parties, the collection from Coventry comprises only leases that all concern land and property transactions (both regarding ownership as well as letting) between multiple parties. Moreover, they were created and kept by Coventry's local urban administrative bodies, and as such lend themselves well for the purposes of this paper.

As regards the chronological distribution of the texts, they are unfortunately not evenly distributed across the sixteenth century, with the majority of the data being from

---

13 This collection is part of the *Emerging Standards Project Corpus, Coventry sub-corpus*, accessed August 2022. Compiled by Anita Auer, Moragh Gordon, Femke van Hilten, Mike Olsen and Tino Oudesluijs. Utrecht University, NL and Université de Lausanne, CH. https://wp.unil.ch/emst.

14 The text was written twice (or sometimes three or four times) on the same piece of parchment and subsequently cut in the middle so that each party had a copy of the text (with each copy being authenticated with the seal of the other party). Initially the cuts were straight and divided up the word *chirographum*, which would be used to verify whether the copies were indeed once written on the same sheet by aligning the cut letters, but as the practice grew more common across late medieval England chirographs became more intricate and an increasing amount of security measures were taken (e.g. personal signatures and more detailed personal seals). As a result, the inclusion of the word *chirographum* on the indented cut was no longer customary by the start of the sixteenth century (Streutker 2016: 8).

15 The catalogue descriptions are not helpful in this instance. They mention 31 leases, three demises and one grant, but these all denote the same type of document; a lease, sometimes referred to as a demise, concerns a grant of property. This is further confirmed in the language used in the documents, which all include the verbs *demise* and *grant* in their opening statements.

the period 1540–1580 and the 1590s (see Figure 1). This uneven distribution is primarily due to 1) a general increase in the production of indented texts in Coventry from the middle of the sixteenth century onward (see also Section 3), and 2) the fact that the indented texts from the first half of the sixteenth century were mostly written in Latin.
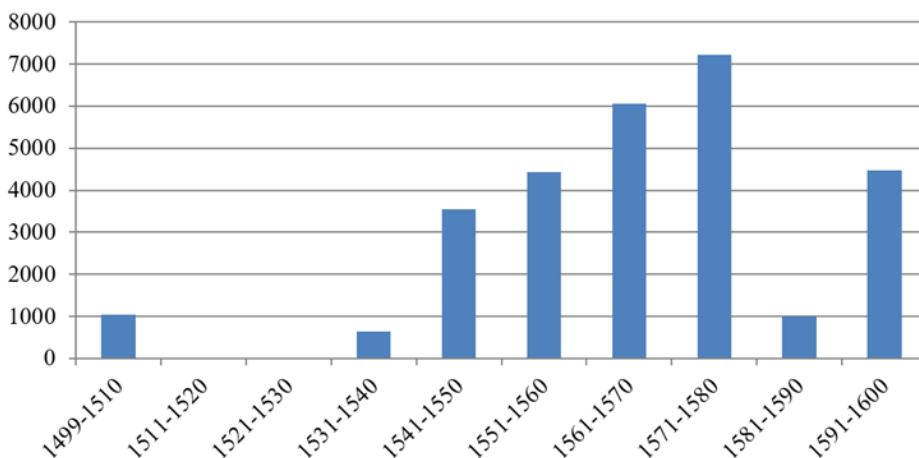
Figure 1. Distribution of the collection of indentures by number of words over time.

It is almost impossible to be completely sure of the authorship of the documents as the signatures do not match the main body of text in terms of handwriting, indicating that a trained scribe most likely wrote the documents and subsequently had them signed by the parties in question. There is a high chance that the town clerk and/or recorder were involved given their legal expertise (see Section 3), although the texts seem to indicate that more than a few different hands worked on them over the sixteenth century. As pointed out earlier, Coventry's town clerk and recorder were very likely working with a larger team of scribes and scriveners to distribute the workload, similar to what seems to have been the case for other administrative and legislative texts that they created and kept in this period (Oudesluijs 2019: 172–173). As for the possibility of potentially dealing with later copies rather than originals (see Oudesluijs 2018 for an example of this from Coventry's urban administration), there is no reason to assume that the indentures were written in years different from those mentioned in their opening statements. They were furthermore written on separate pieces of parchment or paper, which is in contrast to books wherein multiple texts (originally written on separate pieces of parchment or paper) were accumulated over time by copying them (Oudesluijs 2018). Multiple versions of the same indented text can thus only be found on multiple pieces of parchment or paper when they were written on the same page before it was cut in order to provide each party with an official copy of the text, which is the case with only four indentures in this collection that contain different versions of two different texts.

6 LINGUISTIC CASE STUDY: PERIPHRASTIC DO

The main reasons for scrutinising periphrastic DO in this paper are that its general development in the sixteenth century has both been well-documented and is largely agreed upon in the literature (Denison 1985, Nevalainen 1991, Rissanen 2000, Söderlund 2017), and that it is a well-known and widely studied feature that has previously been discussed in relation to the standardisation of English (Stein 1990, Stein/Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1994). It therefore allows me to situate my findings in the appropriate linguistic context relatively easily and focus on the external factors under scrutiny in this paper, i.e. text type and scribal networks. Furthermore, after first occurring in the late medieval period, periphrastic DO spread at an increased rate in the sixteenth century whilst still showing much variation in use, making it more susceptible to the above-mentioned external factors. In contrast, the seventeenth century marks the beginning of the regulation process that would result in the present-day use of periphrastic DO in Standard English (Nurmi 1999: 15). Below I first provide a brief overview of the development of periphrastic DO in Early Modern English (Section 6.1), followed by my case study (Section 6.2).

6.1 Periphrastic DO in Early Modern English[16]

In present-day Standard English, DO-support (or 'dummy do') can be used as the '(empty) operator' in various verbal constructions that lack one (Denison 1993: 255, Nurmi 1999: 15). It is used in finite clauses showing negation (*she did not go* vs. *she went not*), inversion (*does he run*? vs. *runs he*?), post-verbal ellipsis, also known as code (*she wrote a book and he did too* vs. *she wrote a book and he wrote a book too*), and emphasis (*he did see it* vs. *he saw it*).[17] Three of these constructions are periphrastic since DO takes a full lexical verb: negation, inversion, and emphasis. Between 1500 and 1900, however, periphrastic DO was used in four constructions: affirmative declaratives and imperatives (nowadays mostly connected to emphasis), questions (inversion), and negative sentences (Rissanen 1999b: 240–248).

The use of periphrastic DO only began to spread during the fifteenth century in affirmative declaratives, with the most significant increase between 1460 and 1500 in sermons and mystery plays (Rissanen 1991: 332, based on the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*). The spread of periphrastic DO continued at a higher rate in the sixteenth century, including a noticeable increase in negative declaratives and inversion/questions (Nurmi 1999: 23). Rissanen (1985: 165, 177) notes that periphrastic DO seems to have had two main uses in this period: a structural function in texts closer to written language (e.g. legal texts) and a more emotional one in texts closer to speech (e.g. private correspondence). The former could be used to create a sense of textual cohesion, and the latter to emphasise particular actions or strengthen arguments (Nurmi 1999: 16). The relatively high frequency of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives in trials

---

16   This brief overview serves to highlight the general development of periphrastic DO in Early Modern English, and as such is by no means exhaustive. For more extensive overviews I refer to Denison (1985, 1993), Nurmi (1999) and Rissanen (1999b).

17   These constructions together are often called the NICE qualities (Negation, Inversion, Code, and Emphasis).

between 1500 and 1570 seems to further confirm this difference in function (Table 2). Other text types in which periphrastic DO was increasingly used during the sixteenth century include diaries, educational writing, and scientific works.

Table 2. Frequency of periphrastic DO per 1,000 words in affirmative declaratives between 1500 and 1700, based on the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (modified from DO per 10,000 words from Rissanen 1991: 325).

Text type	1500–1570	1570–1640	1640–1710
Trials	8.8	2.3	2.8
Science	3.4	5.3	1.1
Education	3.1	4.6	1.1
Diaries	2.8	4.2	4.2
Sermons	2.5	4.3	1.0
Comedies	2.3	0.8	0.2
Handbooks	1.1	3.0	0.4
Letters, off.	1.1	4.8	2.6
Fiction	1.1	1.0	0.9
Laws	0.8	1.3	1.2
Biographies	0.6	4.6	1.1
The Bible	0.6	1.2	(no sample)
Letters, priv.	0.4	3.3	1.3
Travelogues	0.4	3.7	0.3
History	0.1	1.5	0.3
Philosophy	(no sample)	3.2	(no sample)

The seventeenth century marks the beginning of the regulation process that would result in the present-day use of periphrastic DO in Standard English, i.e. in questions, negated sentences, and affirmative declaratives for emphasis (Rissanen 1999b: 243). Its use in unemphasised affirmative declaratives decreased and was eventually considered non-standard (*cf.* Klemola 1996). The moment when periphrastic DO in this context started to decrease differs per text type (similar to its initial spread and subsequent use, see also Table 2), and dates ranging between 1570 and 1650 have been argued for by different scholars working with different datasets (e.g. Ellegård 1953, Rissanen 1991, Nurmi 1999, Söderlund 2017). When considering the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*, a general decrease in use can be observed in most text types between the periods 1570–1640 and 1640–1710 (Table 2), although its use in trials, diaries, fiction, and laws appears to have been relatively stable during this period.

6.2 Periphrastic DO in urban administration from sixteenth-century Coventry

In administrative sources from sixteenth-century Coventry,[18] periphrastic DO was mostly used in affirmative declaratives, with only four instances in negated sentences (Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022).[19] Compared to most text types (see Table 2), its frequency in affirmatives was relatively low in the early modern sections of the first Leet Book (1500–1554) – only 0.19 per 1000 words – and comparable to law texts in the collection of indentures up until 1572: 0.81 per 1000 words (Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022). From 1573–4 onward, however, a significant increase can be observed in the indentures (see Figure 2), and the second Leet Book, which starts in 1588, seems to follow suit (Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022). To help explain the sudden increase in the use of periphrastic DO in the indenture collection, I identified five sub-periods (see Figure 2), based on the changing practices related to verbal inflections and the inclusion of new fixed phrases in the documents (Oudesluijs 2019: 269).
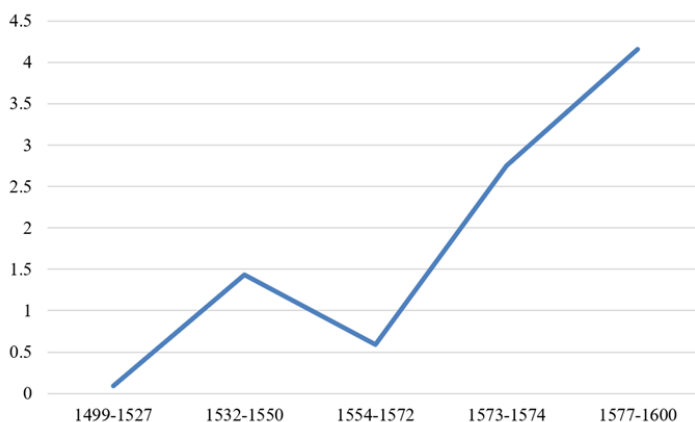
Figure 2. Frequency of periphrastic DO per 1,000 words in affirmative declaratives in the collection of indentures (1499–1600).

From this, it becomes clear that one text, dated 1573–4 and written in a single hand, is responsible for the sudden increase in use of periphrastic DO in affirmatives.[20] After this document, periphrastic DO was used significantly more in the indentures created

---

18   These include sections from the first and second Leet Books (Harris 1907–1913) and the aforementioned indenture collection (Oudesluijs 2019: Ch. 6).

19   As such, as well as for comparability purposes with previous research (see Table 2), I will not consider periphrastic DO in negations for this paper.

20   DR429/93a and its counterpart DR429/93b. See their entries on the National Archives for more details: https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/. The text is dated 1573-4 because the year is described as 'the Syxtenethe yeare of the raingne of oure Soueraingne Ladye Elizabethe', which is technically 1573 but could well mean 1574 as she became Queen relatively late in the year, i.e. 17 November 1558. As such, 1559 could have been considered her 'first year' as Queen.

by city officials, as the frequency went up from 2.75 per 1000 words in 1573–4 to 4.16 per 1000 words in the period 1577–1600.

Taking into account the changes in urban administration that happened in Coventry during the second half of the sixteenth century, particularly in the 1570s (see Section 3), it seems that one of three things happened: 1) new writing practices were introduced by officials such as the town clerk or recorder, or by the local scribes/scriveners working for them, 2) there was a change in city officials and/or their team of scribes/scriveners, potentially including new people from outside Coventry's government to deal with the growing administration during this time, which introduced new writing practices, or 3) a combination of both. Regarding a change in city officials, we know that the office of recorder saw no change at this point,[21] but around the time of the 1573–4 document Coventry's town clerk Thomas Gregory died (1573), and his son Arthur Gregory took over. Both this change and the city's acquisition of much of the property previously held by various religious houses, guilds, and chantries in 1574, seems to have had an effect on the language of the indentures. Unfortunately, no direct connection between these developments and the observed change in language can be made as the authorship of the texts cannot be verified at this point, but given the context in which the sudden increase in use of periphrastic DO occurred, it seems likely that either a weak link in, or change to Coventry's scribal network resulted in the increased use of periphrastic DO. In a comparable case study for the late medieval period, Alcolado Carnicero (2017) links instances of language shift from French to English in publications of the Mercers' Company to changes in personnel, with members with weak ties acting as bridges between mercantile communities. Similarly, when Arthur Gregory took over from his father in 1573, it may have influenced the language of Coventry's indentures, including the use of periphrastic DO, be it as a result of his personal writing practices or a change in the scribal community working for him.

Regarding why periphrastic DO in particular underwent a change during this time, this can tentatively be linked to an increase in formulaic language use and fixed phrases (*cf.* Nurmi 1999: 92–93), many of which include coordinating verb constructions such as DO *covenant and grant*, DO *demise*, *grant*, *set and let farm*, and DO *appear*.[22] As mentioned above in relation to the five sub-periods, there were various changes with regard to verbal inflections and the inclusion of new fixed phrases in the indentures over the course of the sixteenth century, and it seems likely that, over time, the scribes involved changed their preferences in how to account for all possible (legal) scenarios that often needed to be addressed in legislative texts, be it because a new local town clerk instructed them to, or as a result of new scribes introducing new practices. Denison (1985: 57) also notes that "a number of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century examples of periphrastic DO are also followed by coordinated verbs", and points out that, even though periphrastic constructions comprise more words, there would be fewer inflections.

---

21   John Throckmorton I held the office of recorder from 1553 until his death in 1580.

22   These examples account for 30%, 20%, and 13% respectively of all occurrences of periphrastic DO in affirmative verbal phrases in the indenture collection (Oudesluijs 2019: 302–303).

Looking at the bigger picture, the increase in use of periphrastic DO in sixteenth-century administration from Coventry aligns with the general trend in most other text types (e.g. official letters, laws, history; see Table 2), indicating that this text type contributed to the supralocalisation of this feature in Early Modern English. However, it is often argued that the decline of periphrastic DO in unemphasised affirmatives started in the period 1570–1640 (Section 6.1), but in Coventry's administration the increase in use seen in the collection of indentures continues well into the seventeenth century in the second Leet Book (1588–1700) (Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022), which does not occur in any other text type, including laws (see Table 2). In this case the more conservative nature of urban administration seems to have slowed down the general trend of a more supralocal/standardised variety of English in which periphrastic DO in affirmatives became increasingly restricted to emphasis.

7 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Coming back to the aims of this paper (Section 1), the above case study indicates that, much like for the late medieval period (*cf.* Stenroos and Thengs 2020), early modern urban administration can be a valuable source for linguistic investigation. Moreover, due to the nature of scribal communities and inter-urban networks (Section 2), the principles of social network theory can be applied to better understand how certain features spread in this text type, which in turn informs us how a more supralocal/standardised form of English developed in the early modern period. In the above case study, the increase in use of periphrastic DO in affirmative declaratives is in line with its development in many other text types across the country. Both this result and the nature of legislative texts in this period as described by Rissanen (1999a: 191, 2000:121; see also Section 4) strengthen the latter's claim that legal texts seemed to have adopted forms from other genres and subsequently decontextualised and deregionalised them – thus marking them as part of a more supralocal written variety. However, as shown in Oudesluijs et al. (2022), the increased use of periphrastic DO in unemphasised declaratives in Coventry's administration continued well into the seventeenth century, going against the general trend in other text types. This is perhaps due to the more conservative nature of administration (Section 4), and scribes may have only adopted supralocal features that contributed to ensuring the "correct and unambiguous transmission of information" whilst aiming at "maximum disambiguation in its text and discourse structure" in this text type (Rissanen 2000: 120). The more restricted use of periphrastic DO in affirmatives for emphasis may have compromised the neutrality, clarity, and generality of legal language. As such, urban administration may have both contributed to and hampered the developing supralocal/standardised variety of English in the early modern period, though more research into different variables and from different urban centres is needed. A first look into the use of periphrastic DO in the local administration from early modern Bristol reveals a different development altogether, as it initially declined in the sixteenth century before slightly increasing again in the seventeenth century (Oudesluijs *et al.* 2022: 18; *cf.* Gordon 2017). Regarding different variables, initial research into the third person indicative present tense markers (singular and plural)

reveals that different urban centres – in this case Bristol, Coventry, and York – each reveal a unique distribution pattern in the adoption of supralocal -(V)*s* singular and plural zero form between 1500 and 1700 (Gordon *et al.* 2020), indicating that the development of a supralocal variety of English was anything but straightforward.

References

ALCOLADO CARNICERO, José Miguel (2017) "Bridges of innovation and change: the English language around the networks of the Mercery of London." In: Esther-Miriam Wagner/Bettina Beinhoff/Ben Outhwaite (eds), *Merchants of Innovation. The Languages of Traders*. Berlin/Boston: Mouton De Gruyter, 40–67.

BAKER, J. H. (1999) "The books of the common law." In: Lotte Hellinga/Joseph Burney Trapp (eds), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. III: 1400–1557*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 411–432.

BAKER, J. H. (2015) "Fitzherbert, Sir Anthony (c. 1470–1538)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9602 [accessed on 14 August 2022].

BERGS, Alexander (2005) *Social networks and historical sociolinguistics: Studies in morphosyntactic variation in the Paston letters (1421–1503)*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

BEVAN, Kitrina Lindsay (2013) *Clerks and scriveners: Legal literacy and access to justice in Late Medieval England*. [PhD Thesis.] Exeter: University of Exeter dissertation.

BHATIA, Vijay K. (1987) "Language of the law." *Language Teaching* 20/4, 227–234.

BISHOP, Jennifer (2016) "The Clerk's Tale: Civic Writing in Sixteenth-Century London." *Past & Present* 230/1, 112–130.

BRITAIN, David (2010) "Supralocal Regional Dialect Levelling." In: Carmen Llamas/Dominic Watt (eds), *Language and Identities*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 193–204.

CARTER, Thomas James (2011) *The Civic Reformation in Coventry, 1530–1580*. Oxford: Oxford University doctoral thesis.

CLANCHY, Michael T. (2013 [1979]) *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307* (3rd edn). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

CUENCA, Esther Liberman (2018) "Town clerks & the authorship of custumals in medieval England." *Urban History* 46/2, 180–201.

DAWSONS OF PALL MALL. 1963[1817]. *The statutes of the realm printed by command of His Majesty King George the Third in pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of Great Britain*, Vol. I.

DENISON, David (1993) *English Historical Syntax: Verbal Constructions*. London/New York: Longman.

DENISON, David (1985) "The Origins of Periphrastic Do: Ellegård and Visser Reconsidered." In: Roger Eaton/Olga Fischer/ Willem Koopman/Frederike van der Leek (eds), *Papers from the 4th International Conference on English Historical Linguistics*, *Amsterdam, April 10–13, 1985*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 45–60.

DOBSON, Barrie (2000) "General Survey 1300–1540." In: David M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History, Volume 1: 600–1540*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 271–290.

ECKERT, Penelope (2006) "Communities of Practice." In: Edward Brown (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*. Amsterdam/London: Elsevier, 683–685.

ECKERT, Penelope/Sally McCONNELL-GINET (1999) "New generalizations and explanations in language and gender research." *Language in Society* 28/2, 185–201.

ELLEGÅRD, Alvar (1953) *The Auxiliary do. The Establishment and Regulation of Its Use in English*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

ELSPAß, Stephan (2015) "Private letters as a source for an alternative history of Middle High New German." In: Anita Auer/Daniel Schreier/Richard Watts (eds), *Letter writing and language change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 35–52.

GORDON, Moragh (2017) *The Urban Vernacular of Late Medieval and Renaissance Bristol.* Utrecht: LOT.

GORDON, Moragh/Tino OUDESLUIJS/Anita AUER (2020) "Supralocalisation Processes in Early Modern English Urban Vernaculars: New Manuscript Evidence from Bristol, Coventry and York." *International Journal of English Studies* 20/2, 47–66.

GOTTI, Maurizio (2012) "Text and genre." In: Peter M. Tiersma/Lawrence M. Solan (eds), 52–66.

HARRIS, Mary Dormer (1907–1913) *The Coventry Leet Book or Mayor's Register, Parts I–IV* (Early English Text Society [Old Series] 134, 135, 138, 146). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd.

HARTRICH, Eliza (2017) "Charters and inter-urban networks: England, 1439–1449." *English Historical Review* 132/555, 219–249.

HILTUNEN, Risto (2012) "The grammar and structure of legal texts." In: Peter M. Tiersma/Lawrence M. Solan (eds), 39–51.

KLEMOLA, Juhani (1996) *Non-standard periphrastic DO: A study in variation and change*. Colchester: University of Essex dissertation.

KOCH, Peter/Wulf Oesterreicher (2012) "Language of Immediacy – Language of Distance: Orality and Literacy from the Perspective of Language Theory and Linguistic History." In: Claudia Lange, Beatrix Weber/Göran Wolf (eds), *Communicative Spaces. Variation, Contact, and Change – Papers in Honour of Ursula Schaefer*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 441–473.

KOPACZYK, Joanna (2013) *The Legal Language of Scottish Burghs. Standardization and Lexical Bundles 1380–1560*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

MATTILA, Heikki E.S. (2006) *Comparative legal linguistics.* Transl. by Christopher Goddard. Aldershot: Ashgate.

MATTILA, Heikki E. S. (2012) "Legal vocabulary." In: P. M. Tiersma/L. M. Solan (eds), 27–38.

MCGRORY, David (2003) *A History of Coventry*. Chichester: Phillimore and Company Limited.

MILROY, James/Lesley MILROY (1985) "Linguistic change, social network and speaker innovation." *Journal of Linguistics* 21, 339–384.

MOESSNER, Lilo (2018) "Old English wills: A genre study." In: Peter Petré/Hubert Cuyckens/Frauke D'Hoedt (eds), *Sociocultural dimensions of lexis and text in the history of English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 103–124.

MOSTERT, Marco/Anna ADAMSKA (2014) "Introduction." In: Marco Mostert/Anna Adamska (eds), *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy I*. Turnhout: Brepols, 1–10.

MUSSON, Anthony (2001) *Medieval Law in Context: The Growth of Legal Consciousness from Magna Carta to the Peasants Revolt*. Manchester/New York: Manchester University Press.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (1991) "Motivated archaism: the use of affirmative periphrastic do in Early Modern English liturgical prose." In: Dieter Kastovsky (ed.), *Historical English Syntax*. Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 303–320.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (2000) "Mobility, Social Networks and Language Change in Early Modern England." *European Journal of English Studies* 4/3, 253–264.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (2000) "Processes of supralocalisation and the rise of Standard English in the early Modern period." In: Ricardo Bermúdez-Otero/David Denison/ Richard M. Hogg/Chris B. McCully (eds), *Generative Theory and Corpus Studies. A Dialogue from 10 ICEHL*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 329–372.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu/Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade. 2006. "Standardisation." In: Richard Hogg/David Denison (eds), *A History of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 271–311.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu/Helena RAUMOLIN-BRUNBERG (2017 [2003]) *Historical Sociolinguistics. Language change in Tudor and Stuart England*, 2nd edn. London/ New York: Routledge.

NURMI, Arja (1999) *A Social History of Periphrastic DO*. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.

ORME, Nicholas (2006) *Medieval schools: From Roman Britain to Renaissance England*. Newhaven: Yale University Press.

OUDESLUIJS, Tino (2018) "Scribes as Agents of Change: Copying Practices in Administrative Texts from Fifteenth-century Coventry." In: Margaret Tudeau-Clayton/ Martin Hilpert (eds), *The Challenge of Change*. Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 223–248.

OUDESLUIJS, Tino (2019) *Language Variation and Change in Late Medieval and Early Modern Coventry*. Unpublished doctoral thesis: University of Lausanne.

OUDESLUIJS, Tino/Moragh GORDON/Anita AUER (2022) "Urbanisation, supralocalisation and the development of periphrastic DO in early modern England." *Journal of Historical Syntax* 6/13–18, Special issue: *Cross-disciplinary approaches to linguistic variation in Early Modern West Germanic*.

REES JONES, Sarah (2014) "Civic Literacy in Later Medieval England." In: Marco Mostert/Anna Adamska (eds), *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy I*. Turnhout: Brepols, 219–230.

RISSANEN, Matti (1985) "Periphrastic do in affirmative statements in early American English." *Journal of English Linguistics* 18, 163–183.

RISSANEN, Matti (1991) "Spoken language and the history of do-periphrasis." In: Dieter Kastovsky (ed.), *Historical English Syntax*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 321–342.

RISSANEN, Matti (1999a) "Language of law and the development of Standard English." In: Irma Taavitsainen/Gunnel Melchers/Päivi Pahta (eds), *Writing in Non-standard English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 189–203.

RISSANEN, Matti (1999b) "Syntax." In: Roger Lass (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 187–331.

RISSANEN, Matti (2000) "Standardisation and the language of the early statutes." In: Laura Wright (ed.), *The Development of Standard English 1300–1800. Theories, Descriptions, Conflicts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 117–130.

RISSANEN, Matti/Merja KYTÖ/Leena KAHLAS-TARKKA/Matti KILPIÖ/Saara NEVANLINNA/Irma TAAVITSAINEN/Terttu NEVALAINEN/Helena RAUMO-LIN-BRUNBERG (1991) *The Helsinki corpus of English texts: diachronic and dialectal.* University of Helsinki. https://varieng.helsinki.fi/CoRD/corpora/HelsinkiCorpus [accessed on 13 August 2022].

SCHAEFER, Ursula (2012) "Middle English: Standardization" In: Bergs, Alexander/Laurel J. Brinton (eds), *English Historical Linguistics*. *An international handbook.* Vol. I. Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 519–533.

SÖDERLUND, Anders (2017) "Periphrastic do in English Witness Depositions 1560–1760." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 16/1, 244–277.

STEIN, Dieter (1990) *The Semantics of Syntactic Change: Aspects of the Evolution of do in English*. Berlin/ New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

STEIN, Dieter/Ingrid TIEKEN-BOON VAN OSTADE (eds) (1994) *Towards a Standard English 1600–1800.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

STENROOS, Merja (2017) "Like the coins when currencies are combined: contextualizing the written language of fifteenth-century English merchants." In: Esther-Miriam Wagner/Bettina Beinhoff (eds), *Merchants of innovation: the languages of traders*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 19–39.

STENROOS, Merja (2020) "Land documents as a source of word geography." In: Merja Stenroos/Kjetil V. Thengs (eds), *Records of Real People. Linguistic Variation in Middle English Local Documents.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 175–202.

STENROOS, Merja/Kjetil V. THENGS (eds) (2020) *Records of Real People. Linguistic Variation in Middle English Local Documents.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

STEPHENS, W. B. (ed.) (1969) *The Victoria County History of the County of Warwick, Volume VIII. The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick*. London: Oxford University Press.

STREUTKER, Ken (2016) *Legal Land Legacies of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: An Introduction to the Early Indentures Held at the University of Victoria*. Victoria, BC: University of Victoria MA thesis.

TEMPLEMAN, Geoffrey (1944) *The Records of the Guild of the Holy Trinity, St. Mary, St. John the Baptist and St. Katherine of Coventry.* Vol. II. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

THRUSH, Andrew/John P. FERRIS (eds) (2010) *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1604–1629*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

TIERSMA, Peter M./Lawrence M. SOLAN (eds) (2012) *The Oxford handbook of language and law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

TITTLER, Robert (1998) *The Reformation and the Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c. 1540–1640*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

WHITLEY, T. W. (1894) *The parliamentary representation of the city of Coventry from the earliest times to present date*. Coventry: Curtish & Beamish.

WHITTICK, Christopher (2013) "Shelley, Sir William (1478/9–1549), lawyer." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25315 [accessed on 14 August 2022].

Abstract

SCRIBAL NETWORKS AND THE LANGUAGE OF URBAN ADMINISTRATION: VARIATION AND CHANGE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY COVENTRY

This paper considers Early Modern English urban administration in light of the developing supralocal/standard variety. Previously, research scrutinising the language of administration has focused on Middle English rather than on Early Modern English, where studies have thus far mostly focused on private correspondence and printed texts. To shed more light on the language of this under-investigated text type for this period, in this paper I investigate a collection of indentured texts written in Coventry between 1499 and 1600 and explore its language. More specifically, I analyse the use of periphrastic DO, which I subsequently contextualise both in Coventry's local civic history – focusing on the people involved in creating the documents, e.g. the town clerk and his team of scribes – as well as in the general development of periphrastic DO with regard to the emerging supralocal/standard variety of English. The analysis reveals that periphrastic DO was used to a different extent compared to other text types from the period, most notably that it did not show a decline in the second half of the sixteenth century after what can be described as a 'slow start' in the first half. This change in use can be tentatively attributed to a variety of factors in Coventry's civic history, particularly in the 1570s, but more data from other urban centres is needed to better contextualise this.

Keywords: Early Modern English, urban administration, Standard English, Coventry, legal language

Povzetek
ZGODNJA MODERNA ANGLEŠČINA KOT JEZIK MESTNE UPRAVE: RAZNOLIKOST IN SPREMINJANJE V COVENTRYJU V 16. STOLETJU

Prispevek obravnava zgodnjo modern angleščino v mestni upravi v luči razvoja nadregionalne/standardne različice. Doslej so se raziskave o upravnem jeziku osredotočale predvsem na srednjo, ne na zgodnjo modern angeščino in se zato v veliko večji meri nanašale na zasebno korespondenco in na tiskana besedila. Pričujoči članek, ki predstavlja poskus osvetlitve te v obravnavanem obdobju slabše raziskane besedilne zvrsti, se ukvarja z jezikovnimi značilnostmi zbirke kirografov, napisanih v Coventryju med 1499 in 1600. Analizirana je raba perifrastičnega glagola DO, ki je nato obravnavana tako z ozirom na krajevno zgodovino mesta Coventry – upoštevaje, kdo so bili tisti, ki so dokumente pripravili, se pravi mestni uradnik in njegovi pisarji – kot z ozirom na splošni razvoj perifrastičnega DO glede na nastajajočo nadregionalno/standardno različico angleščine. Analiza je pokazala, da se je perifrastični DO v obravnavani besedilni zvrsti uporabljal v drugačnem obsegu kot v drugih besedilnih zvrsteh iz tega obdobja, predvsem pa, da njegova raba po "počasnem začetku" v drugi polovici 16. stoletja ni upadla. To spremembo bi morda lahko pripisali raznim dejavnikom v zgodovini mesta Coventry, predvsem v 70. letih 16. stoletja, čeprav za boljšo razlago potrebujemo več podatkov.

Ključne besede: zgodnja moderna angleščina, mestna uprava, standardna angleščina, Coventry, pravni jezik

Christine Elsweiler
Universität Innsbruck
Christine.Elsweiler@uibk.ac.at

THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH PRAGMALINGUISTIC PATTERNS ON THE REQUESTIVE STYLE IN 16TH-CENTURY SCOTTISH LETTERS

1 INTRODUCTION

In the 16th century, Early Modern Scots[1] was an incipient standard variety, going through a similar standardisation process as the emerging London-based Southern English Standard. In terms of Haugen's four-step model, the Scots variety of Edinburgh was selected and accepted as a "*potential* standard" from the late 14th century onwards (Bugaj 2004: 23, original emphasis). Scots came to be used in legal texts alongside Latin as early as the second half of the 14th century (Kopaczyk 2020: 487). Particularly during the 15th and early 16th century, the communicative functions of Scots were gradually being expanded (Görlach 2002: 26, Millar 2020: 74–75). On the one hand, a sophisticated literary tradition developed in Scots, showcasing a wide variety of verse styles (Aitken 1983: 19–25, Görlach 2002: 141). On the other, the vernacular is attested in a growing number of prose text types, comprising, among others, administrative, legal, historical, and literary genres as well as both private and non-private correspondence (Bugaj 2004: 24–26).

In order to be fit for these new communicative functions, the emerging Early Modern Scots standard variety was gradually elaborated, developing in a trilingual setting with well-established discourse traditions primarily for Latin and to a lesser degree French (Schaefer 2012: 529–531, Millar 2020: 74). This was, for example, the case for late medieval Scottish legal and administrative records, whose writers operated within multilingual discourse communities (Havinga 2021, Kopaczyk 2021). In legal texts, for instance, which were written in both Latin and Scots, Latin formulaic language represented discourse traditions "accumulated through centuries of legal practice" (Kopaczyk 2021: 59). Latin models were progressively adopted for the vernacular in legal and administrative texts, so that Scots could assume the same functions as Latin (Havinga 2021: 96, Kopaczyk 2021: 71).

For correspondence, the switch to Scots is attested in a similar timeframe. In the 13th and 14th centuries, official letters were written in Latin and French, as examples from the *Douglas Book* (Fraser 1885) demonstrate, such as the letter by Robert Bruce, Earl of

---

[1] In the context of this paper, the period label Early Modern Scots is chosen over other established labels such as Older Scots or Middle Scots (see Aitken 1985: xiii, see also Smith 2012: 6). As Kopaczyk (2013) convincingly argues on both linguistic and extralinguistic grounds, 16th-century Scots should not be perceived as 'middle'. Scots was, for instance, more advanced than Southern English in the reduction of verb morphology from the earliest records and Renaissance culture was flourishing in 16th-century Scotland (Kopaczyk 2013: 246–248).

Carrick, and other addressors from 1297 and the letter by William, First Earl of Douglas and Mar, from 1376 (Fraser 1885: 52–58). At the beginning of the 15th century, the first official letters in Scots are attested, written to King Henry IV of England, who, however, was still being addressed in French in other official letters (Fraser 1885: 61–66, McClure 1994: 31). A comparison of the Scots and English letters shows clear parallels in the formulae used, for instance, at the beginning of the letter and in the closing part, see Examples (1–4).

(1) *Excellent et trespuissant prince, plaise votre tresnoble haultesse a sauoir*
'Excellent and most mighty Prince. May it please your most noble Highness to know'[2]
(Archibald 4th Earl of Douglas to King Henry IV of England, 1401)

(2) *He, excellent and rycht mychty prince, likit to zour henes to wyte*[3]
'High, excellent and right mighty prince, may it please your highness to know'
(James of Douglas, Warden of the Marches to King Henry IV of England, 1405)

(3) *Sie prie notre seigneur excellent et trespuissant prince qu'il vous ait [en sa] sainte garde.*
'I pray our Lord, excellent and most mighty prince, that he may have you in his holy keeping.'
(Archibald 4th Earl of Douglas to King Henry IV of England, 1401)

(4) *Excellent, mychty, and noble prince, the Haly Trinite hafe yhow euermare in kepyng.*
'Excellent, mighty and noble prince, may the holy trinity have you evermore in keeping'
(James of Douglas, Warden of the Marches to King Henry IV of England, 1405)

These parallels suggest that 15th-century Scottish writers took the French discourse structures and formulae as a model for their vernacular letters. This orientation towards established norms in French, and Latin, is also manifest with respect to pragmatic strategies as I have shown for early modern Scottish letters (Elsweiler 2021). Letter-writers in the early modern period, who mostly belonged to the highest ranks of society,[4] typically acquired and practised their letter-writing skills through the medium of Latin (Brown 2000: 186–187, Daybell 2012: 54–63). Members of the higher Scottish nobility additionally often received an education in France to prepare them for administrative or diplomatic service or a military career (Brown 2000: 191–192, MacLeod 2011: 243) and were thus used to corresponding in French (see Section 3.1). John Maitland, 1st Lord Maitland of Thirlestane (1543–1595) is a case in point. He wrote official letters in Scots,[5] but to international correspondents also in French, as is evidenced by his letters included in the *Memorials of the Earls of Haddington* (Fraser 1889: 203–205).

---

2   The Modern English translations of Examples (1) and (3) are taken from Fraser (1885: 62–63).

3   Translations or glosses are provided for Scots passages and words deemed difficult.

4   See, for instance, the auxiliary databases on male and female informants in the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence, 1540–1750* available at https://www.kielipankki.fi/corpora/scotscorr/.

5   See his correspondence in Add MS 23241 containing "Letters of James VI of Scotland, and others" available as digitised images at https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_23241.

The strong links between Scotland and France are a consequence of the *Auld Alliance*, a military and political pact between the two countries first established in 1296 and renewed several times up until 1558. In the earlier 16th century, this connection was moreover furthered by King James V's two French marriages. Following the death of his first wife Madeleine de Valois just months after their wedding, the widowed King James V married Mary of Lorraine in 1538 (Thomas 2004). Although her husband died in 1542, the Queen Dowager decided to stay in Scotland to further the dynastic interests of her infant daughter Mary, Queen of Scots (Ritchie 2002: 13–16). During the phase of the Anglo-Scottish Wars known as the *Rough Wooing*, Mary of Lorraine sought French military assistance. As a consequence of the Treaty of Haddington in 1548, contracting the future marriage of Mary, Queen of Scots, to the French dauphin François, the French king Henri II agreed to defend Scotland like his own realm (Marshall 2004). When Mary of Lorraine became Queen Regent in 1554, she assigned important public offices to Frenchmen. During the Wars of Congregation, the Queen Regent again relied on French military support in her attempt to keep Scotland Catholic (Ritchie 2002: 219–220). Throughout Mary of Lorraine's time in Scotland, the links with France were not only manifest in the political and military domains. The French connection also extended to trade, craft and architecture, among others. She sent, for example, for French masons to implement a French architectural style at Falkland Palace and Stirling Castle and called for miners from Lorraine to extract minerals at Crawfordmuir (Marshall 2004).

The various facets of Mary of Lorraine's French connections are documented in her foreign correspondence edited in two volumes by Marguerite Wood (1923, 1925). Beside correspondence with her family in France, it contains letters written in French by Scottish writers as well as letters written by French correspondents in Scotland, testifying to an epistolary discourse community stretching across the two countries (see Section 3.2). Correspondents writing and receiving letters in both languages were likely to transfer discourse structures and formulae from one language into the other. In a previous study, I could show, based on the analysis of individual examples, that frequent pragmalinguistic patterns in Scottish letters, e.g. performative request strategies such as *I beseech you that…*, which are typically mitigated through a grounder, i.e. a justification in the shape of a purpose clause with *may*, e.g. *that I may escape…*, may well have been modelled on French examples such as *Je vous supplye treshumblement, Madame, y voulloir aviser et leur donner moyen qu'ilz puissent vivre* 'I most humbly beseech you, Madam, to consider this and to give them the means that they may live' (Monsieur de la Chapelle to Mary of Lorraine, 1547/48) (Elsweiler 2021: 129–130).

The present study aims to explore in more detail to what extent French letter-writing norms and conventions influenced requestive patterns in 16th-century Scottish correspondence. I will therefore systematically compare the range and distribution of request strategies in French and and Scottish correspondence. The analysis will be based on a selection of French letters by Scottish writers as well as French people writing in Scotland included in Wood's editions of the foreign correspondence of Mary of Lorraine as well as letters from her Scottish correspondence (Cameron 1927).

This paper is organised as follows. Section 2 takes a closer look at the influence of discourse traditions on the textualisation and standardisation of Scots and English in the late medieval and early modern periods. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 will then zoom in on the epistolary discourse tradition in Scotland in its multilingual context and the discourse community operating within this tradition. The criteria for the selection of the French corpus material as well as the Scots correspondence corpus will be described in Section 3.3. The analysis applies the categorisation scheme of the *Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realisation Project* (*CCSARP*) (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989), which will be presented in Section 4. Then, in Section 5, the degree of influence of French request patterns on the Scots requestive style will be assessed by comparing the realisation strategies found in the French letters to the Scottish ones. Finally, Section 6 will offer some concluding remarks on the conservational as well as innovative role of epistolary discursive practices.

2 THE INFLUENCE OF DISCOURSE TRADITIONS ON LANGUAGE STANDARDISATION

The standardisation of vernacular varieties across late medieval and early modern Western Europe, and Scotland in particular, may be enlightened if viewed not from the perspective of the individual vernaculars but in the context of the communicative space in which these processes came under way (Schaefer 2006: 13). As was outlined in Section 1, the communicative space in late medieval Scotland was shaped by educated multilingual speakers and writers, who, beside Scots, also competently mastered the high varieties Latin and French (Havinga 2021, Kopaczyk 2021, Smith 2003).[6] Up to the 14th century, the vernacular was employed for a limited number of communicative functions. Latin and French, by contrast, boasted a longstanding tradition for a wide range of conceptually written genres, or, as Schaefer puts it, "the literate languages Latin and French were firmly tied to specific discourse traditions" (Schaefer 2006: 17). Discourse traditions are textual patterns, schemes and models representing the historically evolved norms and rules underlying the production of discourse, thus constituting the habitualised knowledge of speakers and writers (Oesterreicher 1997: 20, Aschenberg 2003: 7, Lebsanft 2005: 32). Such discourse traditions may be situated at different levels of complexity. They range from overarching classes such as the domains of literature or science, via text genres, such as heroic epics, scientific treatises or letters, to formulaic phrases and speech acts such as greetings, promises or requests as textual building blocks. These traditions and discursive patterns are, however, not static but leave room for variation, which eventually leads to innovations (Wilhelm 2001: 468–471). Importantly, discourse traditions are not linked to the norms and rules of individual languages. Thus, when producing discourse, late medieval and early modern speakers and writers, acting in a multilingual communicative space, would have primarily considered themselves as practitioners of a particular discourse tradition.

---

6   As in late medieval Scotland "Gaelic had many speakers but was (…) increasingly divorced from the government and central economic system of the country" (Millar 2020: 73), this paper places the focus on Scots in Lowland Scotland.

They would therefore have been guided in their choice of language by its discourse traditional appropriateness and efficacy (Koch 1988: 343). This explains why, up to the 14th century, the high varieties Latin and French were clearly associated with specific discourse traditions in Scotland.

From the late medieval period onwards, though, Scots made inroads into the conceptually written discourse domains. This did not mean that Latin and French were suddenly displaced by the vernacular, but rather this gradual functional, or extensive, elaboration was attained "with the help of those languages that had already achieved a more or less long institutional standing as carriers of literate discursive practices" (Schaefer 2006: 12). The extensive elaboration is thus matched by an intensive elaboration within the vernacular, i.e. an extension of their inventories on various linguistic levels to make them fit for these new communicative functions (Koch/Oesterreicher 1994: 589, Oesterreicher 2015: 114–115).[7] This is evident, for instance, in lexical borrowings from the high varieties (Smith 2012: 9), but also, for example, in the adoption of high-style French constructions with post-modifying adjectives such as *power infinite* or *ressoun naturall* in 15th-century Scots poetry (Smith 2003: 205–206). In this way, discourse traditions, although they form independent structures from individual languages, further innovations and encourage the diffusion of forms (see Oesterreicher 2015: 117). Extensive and intensive elaboration thus work hand in hand to equip vernaculars with "the structural means that were appropriate for the written medium" (Lange 2012: 1001) and therefore were important steps in their incipient standardisation processes.

This section has considered the role of discourse traditions in general in the emerging standardisation of the Scots vernacular. Section 3 will focus in more detail on the discourse tradition of letter-writing in the early modern period.

3 LETTER-WRITING IN EARLY MODERN SCOTLAND IN A MULTILINGUAL CONTEXT

3.1 The epistolary discourse tradition

The vernacular epistolary norms of the early modern period have their roots in the classical rhetoric of Cicero, Quintilian and Aristotle and are further indebted to the *ars dictaminis*, a set of rigid formal and stylistic guidelines, which had developed in the Middle Ages (Perelman 1991: 98, Nevala 2004: 33–34, Daybell 2012: 63). The *ars dictaminis* offered fixed epistolary structures and formulae, reflecting the protocols of social hierarchies in medieval society. These principles were propagated through dictaminal treatises and formularies including model letters, such as the French and Latin model letters comprised in the teaching materials of Thomas Sampson, a business teacher at Oxford, which date from the later 14th century (Davis 1965: 240–241, Camargo 2007: 68–69).

---

7   Extensive elaboration according to Koch/Oesterreicher (1994) and Oesterreicher (2015) corresponds to Haugen's functional elaboration of a standardising variety (Haugen 1966: 933). Their concept of intensive elaboration, by which a vernacular is equipped with the formal means to fulfil an extended range of communicative functions, is only implicitly included in Haugen's four-step model.

From the 15th century onwards, more and more letters were written in the Scots vernacular, while French and Latin nevertheless remained established languages for the epistolary discourse of the elites (Meurman-Solin 1995: 58–62, Brown 2000: 187 and e.g. the example of Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane in Section 1). As Examples (1–4) in Section 1 illustrate, the discourse structures and formulae in French letters will have provided a template for the vernacular letters.

Educated letter-writers became acquainted with the epistolary discourse tradition mainly as part of their classical education. As early modern Scottish grammar schools implemented a curriculum which was familiar across Europe, pupils were instructed in rhetoric, with teachers drawing, for instance, on Cicero as a model. As part of this instruction, they had to write letters in Latin (Ewan 2015: 45–47).[8] Furthermore, evidence from England shows that pupils acquired phrases, translated Latin letters into the vernacular and were exhorted to imitate Latin letters in their own compositions. The study of humanist letter-writing manuals such as Erasmus of Rotterdam's *De conscribendis epistolis* was also encouraged. (Mack 2002: 24).[9] This may well have applied to Scottish early modern grammar schools, too.

Beside Latin humanist texts, a 16th-century list of works deemed useful for Scottish grammar school pupils contains "ane A B C for Scottismen to rede the French toung with an exhortatioun to the nobles of Scotland to favour their ald freindis" (Ewan 2015: 47). Many noble students were moreover educated at French universities, including leading figures such as Cardinal Beaton and Gavin Dunbar (Brown 2000: 190–192, MacLeod 2011: 243–244), where they became acquainted with French letter-writing conventions. Overall, this educational and cultural background exemplifies one way in which the established French and Latin epistolary traditions helped the intensive elaboration of the vernacular letter-writing genre both on a structural and a formulaic level. Writing and receiving official letters in both French and the Scots vernacular would additionally have furthered the transfer of discourse structures and formulae. To explore this in more detail, section 3.2 will zoom in on the multilingual context of the early modern Franco-Scottish epistolary discourse community with Mary of Lorraine at its centre.

3.2 The early modern Franco-Scots epistolary discourse community

The marriage of James V to the French noblewoman Mary of Lorraine reinforced the existing alliance between Scotland and France on various levels. This is evident both from Mary's French and from her Scottish correspondence, as these letters provide excellent insights into the political, cultural and economic links between Scotland and France, covering various topics ranging from politics and the French military presence in Scotland to trade.[10] A large part of the French correspondence consists of letters from

---

8   See also Williamson (1982: 54–61) on the role of Latin in early modern Scottish grammar schools.

9   In addition to formal instruction, letter-writers acquired letter-writing skills by consulting formularies, i.e. collections of model letters and formulae, or manuscript miscellanies (Nevala 2004: 34, Daybell 2014).

10   Wine trade with France was for instance a flourishing business. In fact, many Scots entrepreneurs set up business in France, e.g. in Bordeaux or the duchy of Guyenne. Apart from wine, trade with France also extended to finery such as gowns and embroidery.

her family in France. In addition, there is a range of French non-private letters written by Scots or by French people in Scotland. These letters, in particular, testify to the multilingual character of this epistolary discourse community in the largest sense, stretching across Scotland and France. The letters in French are complemented by Mary of Lorraine's Scottish correspondence, which also frequently deals with the transnational links between Scotland and France.

Discourse communities may be defined as "sociorhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals" (Swales 1990: 9). In the case of the Franco-Scottish discourse community, most of the writers belong to the social and political elites in Scotland and France, including, for instance, members of the queen's household, military leaders, high-ranking politicians and diplomats. They broadly share the goal of ensuring the "common welth" of Scotland (Sir George Douglas, 26 May 1544) and furthering the links between Scotland and France – on a political, military and economic level. Many letters indeed revolve around the joint defense against the English attack on Scotland during the *Rough Wooing* (see Section 1). The members of this discourse community have "mechanisms of intercommunication" (Swales 1990: 25, 2016: 8) as they exchange letters with Mary of Lorraine and with other participants. While only one letter by the queen is in fact included in the selection, receipt of her letters is frequently mentioned by the correspondents. The letters are used to share information and to suggest or request action to be taken, but oral communication is preferred to convey more sensitive information, as the frequent reference to messages to be passed on by *berars* ('letter-bearers, messengers') indicates. The letters moreover mention some of the other correspondents, for instance John Campbell, the queen's stewart, or George Douglas, thus testifying to the intercommunication between the members of the discourse community (Swales 1990: 26, 2016: 8–9). These moreover used specific lexis (Swales 1990: 26–27, 2016: 9) – an example of which is the vocabulary related to the *berars* who orally convey information – and in fact employed specific discourse patterns developed within the discourse tradition of formal official correspondence (see Section 3.1).

In the following, some more information will be given on the members of the Franco-Scottish discourse community. Mary of Lorraine surrounded herself with some Frenchmen in her household in Scotland, for instance her controller Astier. However, she also employed Scotsmen, for instance, a certain "Jehan Campbell", probably Sir John Campbell of Lundie, Lord High Treasurer under James V (Warden 1884: 268), who refers to himself as "maistre d'hostel Campel" in his letter to the queen about her garrisons at Dunbar (Wood 1925: 292). A further correspondent is the French ambassador to Scotland, Henri Cleutin, Seigneur d'Oisel. His wider role in Scottish politics is evident from his mention as *ambassadour of France* by some correspondents represented in Mary of Lorraine's Scottish correspondence, for instance, in Example (5) from Sir Adam Otterburn's letter to the queen.[11]

---

11 Further writers mentioning d'Oisel are Marion, Lady Gray, Patrick Hepburn, 3rd Earl Bothwell and Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Caithness.

(5)   *Madame, plesit ('may it please') your grace that efter the closin of my letter*
      *the **ambassadour of France** send ther ('these') letteris quharby ('whereby')*
      your grace may persaiff ('perceive') that I did deligence, as I have done at
      all tymes.
      (Sir Adam Otterburn to Mary of Lorraine, 1547)

Otterburn was a high-ranking diplomat sent on a mission to England to negotiate a treaty with Henry VIII. Although no French letters by him are included in Mary of Lorraine's French correspondence, the opening passage from his letter in (5) suggests that he could read the French ambassador's letters. This is further supported by the fact that he was called upon to write a welcome speech in French to mark the arrival of Mary of Lorraine in Edinburgh (Finlay 2004). It therefore seems justified to assume that he was familiar with French correspondence. This will also have applied to other Scottish correspondents who wrote to the queen in Scots. Alexander Gordon, bishop of Caithness, for instance, studied at the University of Paris from 1537 to 1538. He was moreover sent on a diplomatic mission to France in 1541, as is evident from a list of incoming and outgoing missions compiled at the University of St Andrews (Morgan 2008). Another Scottish correspondent, Robert Maxwell, 5th Lord Maxwell, vice-regent of the Scottish realm, was sent to France to act as proxy for King James V in his marriage to Mary of Lorraine (MacGladdery 2004). In addition to the aforementioned writers, there is one correspondent for who it is in fact known that he wrote both letters in Scots and in French: David Panter was a leading political agent during the reign of James V as well as during the regency of Mary of Lorraine, who was sent on four diplomatic missions to France between 1544 and 1554 (Gould 2004, Morgan 2008). The queen's French correspondence includes three letters written by him as well as eight addressed to him, among others by the French ambassador Seigneur d'Oisel, and her Scottish correspondence contains one letter by him to George Forrester, baillie of Leith. David Panter is thus a true practitioner of a formal epistolary discourse tradition that transcends individual languages (see Section 2) and a key member of the Franco-Scottish epistolary discourse community. Although for other Scottish writers either only letters in French or in Scots are included in the two collections, based on their education at French universities, their active involvement in Franco-Scottish politics and, for instance, reference to correspondence with high-ranking Frenchmen, it may be assumed that they were also immersed in this multilingual epistolary discourse tradition.

The letters contained in Mary of Lorraine's French and Scottish correspondence generally have an informative function, but moreover regularly contain pleas and requests, which makes them an ideal resource for a study of the impact of French request patterns on requestive practices in Scots non-private letters. Speech acts like requests as well as formulaic phrases have been categorised as manifestations of a discourse tradition on a low level of complexity (Wilhelm 2001: 469–470, see Section 2). They lend themselves to a cross-linguistic comparison and will therefore be in the focus of this study.

3.3 Corpus material

For the study of the influence of request patterns in 16th-century French correspondence on the Scots requestive style, a corpus of French letters drawn from the two-volume *Foreign Correspondence with Marie de Lorraine Queen of Scotland* (Wood 1923, 1925) was put together, representing the Franco-Scottish epistolary discourse community described in Section 3.2. All the letters in the custom-designed corpus are of a non-private nature, i.e., relate to official, political and military matters, as well as trade, and have the common broader goal of furthering the links between Scotland and France. They are, moreover, representative of writers operating in a multilingual space. This material was compared to a selection of letters in the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots* (*HCOS*) drawn from the *Scottish Correspondence of Mary of Lorraine* (Cameron 1927). The French corpus assembled for the purposes of this study comprises 32 letters, totalling 7,998 words. It covers the period between 1538 and 1557, with the bulk of the correspondence being dated to the 1550s. The letters included in the custom-designed corpus were selected according to the following criteria: they had to be (a) written by Scottish letter-writers, (b) by French correspondents in Scotland or (c) they had to be composed by or addressed to leaders in Scottish politics and military affairs. The corpus thus includes letters from merchants, military leaders, members of the queen's household and key political figures such as the French ambassador Henri Cleutin, Seigneur d'Oisel and David Panter (see Section 3.2). The latter's correspondence comprises a substantial part of the corpus, running to a total of 3,042 words. While the majority of letters are addressed to Mary of Lorraine, some are addressed to other recipients.

The requestive patterns retrieved from the French corpus will be compared to those found in a selection of Mary of Lorraine's Scottish correspondence included in the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots (HCOS)*, which forms part of the 'Official Correspondence' sub-component (1500–1570). The sub-corpus used for this study contains letters written by Scottish magnates and leading political figures, and, additionally, the petitionary letters by Marion Haliburton, Lady Home and Lady Gray, which also deal with Franco-Scottish relations.[12] This material was supplemented by the only Scots letter by David Panter in Mary of Lorraine's Scottish correspondence, which was taken from the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence, 1540–1750*. The combined Scots correspondence data comprise 28,770 words in total and cover the time period between 1542 and 1551.[13] They are thus directly comparable to the French letters in terms of the participant relationship between the correspondents, with most of the letters being addressed to Mary of Lorraine or other recipients by social inferiors, and in terms of their general subject matter, with many letters containing petitions.

---

12   The petitionary letters addressed to Mary of Lorraine by other women, which also form part of the 'Official Correspondence' sub-section in *HCOS*, are not concerned with aspects of the Franco-Scottish relations and are therefore not included in corpus for this study.

13   Eight letters included in *HCOS*, totalling 3,703 words, which are taken from the *Douglas Book* (William Fraser (ed.) 1885) have been excluded from this study. Since they date from the early sixteenth century and partly manifest different participant relationships between the correspondents, they do not form as good a match with the French correspondence as the letters drawn from the *Scottish Correspondence of Mary of Lorraine*.

4 CATEGORISATION OF REQUESTS

For the analysis of the distribution of request strategies in the French and Scots letters, the classification scheme for requests developed by the *Cross-cultural Speech Act Realisation Project* (*CCSARP*) (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989) was applied, as in my previous studies (see Elsweiler 2021, 2023). This scheme was designed in the 1980s to allow for present-day cross-linguistic comparative analyses of requests and contains request strategies found across different languages. The scheme has already been successfully applied to historical data, with slight adaptations (e.g. Culpeper/Archer 2008, Moessner 2010, Elsweiler 2023). In the following, I will describe the *CCSARP* scheme using Scots examples.

The scheme distinguishes between three global levels of directness for requests: direct requests, conventionally indirect requests and non-conventionally indirect requests. Within these three global directness levels, requesters have the choice between different request realisation strategies, which are listed in descending order of directness and explicitness in the original scheme. While all strategies in the direct category, viz. imperatives, performative requests, obligation statements and want statements, are also attested in the 16th-century Scots data (see the examples in Table 1), the conventionally indirect category necessitated some modifications. The common present-day English indirect request strategies, viz. questions of the type *Could you…?* and *Would you…?*, orienting towards the preparatory conditions of ability and willingness, are not attested in 16th-century Scots. In fact, they only emerged in English from the late 18th century onwards (Culpeper/Demmen 2011). Moreover, suggestory formulae of the type *How about…?*, which are typical of present-day spoken informal interactions, are not evidenced in the historical Scots data, either, since these represent a formal epistolary style. Instead, other strategies orienting towards conditions for requests, e.g. possibility statements such as *thairfoir your graice may labour with your honour therintill ('in that affair')* (Patrick Hepburn, 3rd Earl of Bothwell, to Mary of Lorraine, 1547), orienting towards the preparatory condition of possibility, and prediction statements such as *I dout nocht bot ('doubt not that') your grace well ('will') caus all to be payit ('payed')* (Marion Haliburton, Lady Home, to Mary of Lorraine, 1549), orienting towards the propositional content condition "future act of the addressee" (Searle 1969: 66) are attested. An overview of the request strategies in the respective global directness categories is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Request strategies by global directness level, illustrated by examples from the 'Official Correspondence' section of *HCOS*

Direct realisation strategies	**Imperatives**, e.g. *Avice ('advise') herupon* **Performatives**, e.g. *Quairfore ('therefore') humilie ('humbly') I beseke ('beseech') youre grace to consult with thir ('these') said gentilmen in all thir caiss ('cases')* **Obligation statements**, e.g. *Thairfoir your grace man ('must') tak the mair ('more') labour to gif ('give') gude counsale.* **Want statements**, e.g. *I wald ('would') your grace caussit ('caused') the Franch men to cum to this plas ('place').*
Conventionally indirect realisation strategies	**(Hedged) prediction statements**, e.g. *I dout nocht bot ('doubt not that') your grace well ('will') caus all to be payit ('payed').* **Possibility statements**, e.g. *thairfoir your graice may labour with your honour therintill ('in that affair')* **Conditional clauses**, e.g. *And gyf ('if') yowr grace pleis ('please') lat me knaw ('know') yowr will and mynd* **Impersonal constructions**, e.g. *quhairto it will pleis ('please') your grace gif ('give') credence and ane answer*
Non-conventionally indirect requests	**Hints**, e.g. *the clarke off the register can make it veille ('well') and he ville ('will') at commendement off the qwein ('queen') gar ('cause') vrayt ('write') it.*

In the present study, the requests, which were manually retrieved from both the French and the Scots corpus material, were classified according to this scheme. The French data were checked using Frank's diachronic study of requests in French (Frank 2011) and French historical grammars to make sure that they were identified and classified correctly.

5 REQUEST STRATEGIES IN 16TH-CENTURY FRENCH AND EARLY MODERN SCOTS LETTERS

To be able to assess the degree of influence of French requestive patterns on the realisation of requests in Scots non-private correspondence, the analysis will first delineate the pragmalinguistic patterns found in the French correspondence (Section 5.1) and then the Scottish patterns (Section 5.2). In a last step, a comparison of the two will establish the likely degree of influence (Section 5.3).

5.1 Request strategies in French letters

The French letter-writers evince a slight predilection for direct strategies over conventionally indirect strategies (see Figure 1). The letters did not contain any non-conventionally indirect requests.
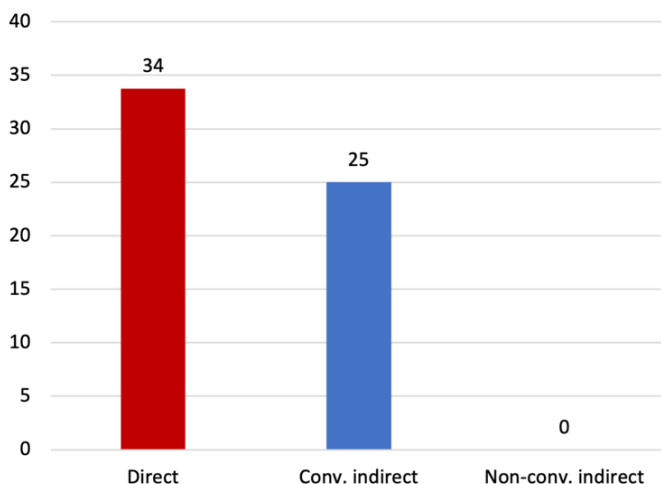
Figure 1. Distribution of requests by directness, French correspondence (1538–1557), (normalised frequencies per 10,000 words)

Direct requests

The distribution of direct request strategies shows a clear picture. Imperatives are rare with only two instances,[14] e.g. (6).

> (6) *n'ey vollu failhir vous escripre l'arryvee d'ung navyre charge de la plus belle canelle et plus avantaigeuse que vous veites james, et si aves envye que je vous en face provision **mandes moy** le calibre que vous volles car il y a a choysir.*

---

14   For the discussion of the results in the text, raw frequencies are given.

'I did not want to fail writing to you about the arrival of a ship charged with the most beautiful and most exquisite cinnamon that you have ever seen. And if you want that I provide you with it, tell me the size you would like because there is a choice.'[15]
(Captain Faucher to Lady Livingston, 1554?)

The remaining 25 direct instances are performatives, accounting for 92.6 per cent of all direct requests. They are almost invariably realised with the performative verb *supplier* 'to beseech, to implore' (N=21), as in (7), which is mostly complemented by infinitives.

(7) ***Vous suppliant, Monseigneur, me commander*** *au surplus vos bons plaisirs esquelz me congnoistrez apte a vous faire service*
'Beseeching you, your lordship, to moreover command me your pleasure in which you will find me ready to serve you'
(Rasseteau to the Bishop of Ross, 1552)

The other performative requests are realised with *prier* (N=4), see (8), which, according to Frank, was a frequently employed performative verb from the 14th to the 16th century (Frank 2011: 263).

(8) *et **vous prye y vouloir si bien besongner** que je puisse estre en esquipaige tel qu'il m'est deue pour de meilleure volunte faire service a mon maistre.*
'and I pray you to labour in such a way towards this that I can be equipped as I need it to serve my master with better determination.'
(James, Earl of Arran,[16] to David Panter, Bishop of Ross, 1552)

Apart from the limited number of requests with *prier*, the vast majority of performatives follow a formulaic pattern that became established in the course of the medieval period for correspondence and witnessed increasing popularity also in other text types during the early modern period (Frank 2011: 438). Performatives with *supplier*, a speech act verb with addressee-oriented semantics, signal deference towards a superior. This deferential attitude was regularly heightened through the use of mitigating devices such as the adverb *humblement* 'humbly' and the use of honorifics such as *Monseigneur* as address titles (Frank 2011: 439). This deferential toolkit is also in evidence in the French correspondence corpus. 13 out of the 21 performatives with *supplier* evince the use of honorific address titles and 16 manifest adverbial mitigation with *humblement*, see e.g. (9) and (10).

---

15   All translations from French are mine.

16   The writer of this letter is the son of James Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Arran and Duke of Châtelherault, former governor of Scotland. He was promised a French bride and educated at the court of the French king Henri II after his father had agreed to a French royal marriage for Mary, Queen of Scots. This may explain why this letter sent from Compiègne to his fellow countryman David Panter was written in French.

(9) *Je **vous supplye treshumblement, Madame**, y voulloir aviser et leur donner moyen qu'ilz puissent vivre.*
'I very humbly beseech you, Madam, to advise thereupon and to give them the means that they can live.'
(Monsieur de la Chapelle to Mary of Lorraine, 1547/48)

(10) *je **vous supplieray, Madame, tant et si tres humblement qu'il m'est possible qu'il vous plaise me faire ceste grace de croire que**, a jamais, je me tiendray vostre tenu, oblige et fidelle serviteur.*
'I would beseech you, Madam, in the most humble manner possible to me that it will please you to do me the favour of believing that I will forever count as your most devoted, obliged and loyal servant.'
(General Apestegny to Mary of Lorraine, 1550?)

Both (9) and (10) show that the adverb *humblement* may be intensified, often by *tres* 'very' but sometimes even by superlative constructions such as *tant et si tres humblement qu'il m'est possible* 'in the most humble manner possible to me'. The request in (10) in fact evinces further syntactic mitigation. Through the use of the future in *je vous supplieray* the request is presented as less immediate and therefore less imposing. Moreover, by interposing *qu'il vous plaise me faire ceste grace de croire* in front of the actual request, the focus is placed on the addressee's will rather than on the requested action (Frank 2011: 353). This is an example of a submissive request showing the full panoply of deferential devices.

Conventionally indirect requests

The analysis of conventionally indirect requests shows that the writers also exhibit a clear preference for one pragmalinguistic pattern, *viz.* impersonal constructions with *plaire* in the *future simple*, as e.g. in (11) and (12), which account for 11 out of 20 conventionally indirect requests.

(11) ***Il vous plaira, Madame, me faire*** *ce bien de me mander la reception de tou ce par ce present porteur.*
'It will please you, Madame, to be so good as to confirm the receipt of all of this by this bearer'
(Timothee Cagnioli to Mary of Lorraine, 1552)

(12) ***il vous plaira me faire*** *envoyer l'autre qui fut dernierement depesche,*
'It will please you to have the other one sent to me, which was recently dispatched.'
(François du Feu to Mary of Lorraine, 1543?)

Such impersonal requests make a prediction statement about the requestee's consent to the requested action. So, formally, they request the addressee's will to carry out an action in the future, rather than the performance of the action itself (Frank 2011:

353), which makes them less imposing. By means of this indirect strategy the requester can avoid a direct and more face-threatening request, for example, by employing an imperative.

Moreover, impersonal constructions with *plaire* are also attested, for instance, in conditional clauses or in the subjunctive form, as is illustrated in Example (13) (see Buridant 2000: 333–334).

> (13) *Laquelle lettre **vous plaise resevoir** et de m'en mander vostre voloir*
> 'It may please you to receive this letter and to let me know your pleasure in this'
> (Jehan (=John) Campbell to Mary of Lorraine, no year)

In addition to impersonal constructions, there are two prediction statements in the *future simple*, see (14).

> (14) ***me semble, Monsieur, qu'il sera bon*** *le gratiffier de quelques belles acquenees ou autre chose a vostre discretion.*
> 'It seems to me, Sir, that it will be good to reward him with some beautiful hackneys or something else at your discretion.'
> (Jehan Chesnyn to David Panter, 1550)

Although in French, according to Frank, the requestive force of predictions is often equivalent to imperatives (Frank 2011: 239–240), this prediction statement is hedged by the matrix clause *me semble que* 'it seems to me that', which softens its force so that it reads like a mere suggestion.

To sum up, the requests in the French correspondence corpus are overwhelmingly realised by two pragmalinguistic patterns: (a) performative requests, mostly with the addressee-oriented verb *supplier*, which are frequently mitigated by further softening devices such as the adverb *humblement* and honorific address titles, and (b) impersonal constructions with *plaire*, mostly in the *future simple*. Both pragmalinguistic patterns attest to the deferential nature of the requests and the letters in general, which is further confirmed, for instance, by the frequent addition of variations of the so-called health formula *je prieray le creatuer vous donner en perfecte sancte tres bonne et longue vie* 'I will pray the Creator to grant you a very good and long life in perfect health' and the almost mandatory use of the commissive letter-closing formula *votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur/servante* 'your very humble and very obedient servant'.

5.2 Request strategies in Early Modern Scots letters

The Scots correspondence of Mary of Lorraine is also characterised by a preference for direct over indirect requests. As Figure 2 illustrates, 53 per cent of the requests are realised using direct strategies, while conventionally indirect strategies are chosen in 43 per cent of instances and 4 per cent are non-conventionally indirect.
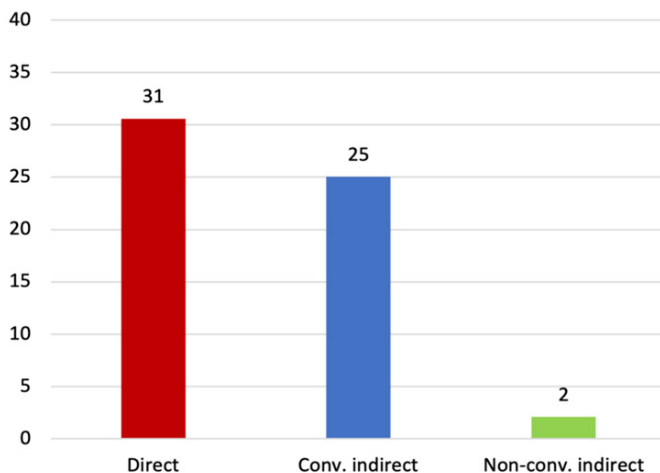
Figure 2. Distribution of requests by directness, Scots correspondence (1542–1551), (normalised frequencies per 10,000 words)

Direct requests
As regards the distribution of direct request strategies, like in the French correspondence, performatives are the dominant realisation strategy, accounting for 62.5 per cent (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Distribution of direct request strategies, Scots correspondence (1542–1551), (normalised frequencies per 10,000 words)

The most common pragmalinguistic pattern in the Scots letters seems to be modelled on the French deferential performative template with the humiliative verb *supplier*. In the Scots data, *beseik* 'beseech' (N=24), which has the same semantics as *supplier*, is employed in 43.6 per cent of performatives. These are regularly further mitigated by other deferential and distancing devices such as adverb phrases with *humilie* 'humbly' as head and the use of honorific address titles such as *your grace*, see (15).

> (15) most **humbly beseking your grace to give ferme credence** to ('firmly believe') this berar ('messenger') as to my self and I war present ('as if I were present')
> (George Douglas to Mary of Lorraine, 1544)

Syntactically, the performatives generally also follow the same complementation patterns as the French performatives, since most of them are complemented by an infinitive. In a few cases, they are complemented by content clauses in which generally modal auxiliaries such as *will* are employed, as in (16).

> (16) **I wald** ('would') **besik your grace** as I haif ('have') done afore **that ye will stand** my maist gracious lady in the helpin of me to my releif...
> (Lord Maxwell to Mary of Lorraine, 1543)

Unlike in the French corpus, *pray* (N=23), a performative verb of French origin (< OF. *prier*), is also widespread and is used in 41.8 per cent of the performative requests. Interestingly, in the French corpus, performatives with *prier*, whose semantics are more speaker-oriented and less submissive than *supplier*, are not only much rarer but do not evince the same deferential character as performatives with *supplier*, either. In the Scots data, by contrast, performatives with *pray* manifest the same formulaic deferential patterns as those with *beseik*, as is exemplified in (17).

> (17) quhairfor **hwmillye** ('humbly') **I pray your grace** now in my neid ('need') **to support me with this said money** quilk ('which') my servand suld ('should') have ressavit ('received') in Frans ('France'),
> (Patrick Bothwell to Mary of Lorraine, 1548–1549)

The same is true of *desire* (N=6), a French-derived verb (< OF. *desirer*) with speaker- rather than addressee-oriented semantics.

While performatives, though generally exhibiting the same deferential pattern as the French performative requests, are the dominant realisation strategy in the Scots data, they are not quite as pervasive as in the French corpus. Imperatives (14.8 per cent), see (18), and obligation statements (14.8 per cent), frequently realised by means of the Scots modal auxiliary of obligation *man* 'must', see (19), represent alternative options for the Scottish writers.

(18) now **reconsaill** ('reconcile') this caus
(Henry Methven to Mary of Lorraine, 1549?)
(19) *Thairfoir your grace **man tak** ('must take') the mair ('more') labour to gif*
('give') gude ('good') counsale.
(Adam Otterburn to Mary of Lorraine, 1546–47)

Indirect requests

The French conventionally indirect requestive pattern involving impersonal constructions with *plaire*, mostly in the *future simple*, is reflected in the Scots correspondence, too. Impersonal constructions with *pleis* (N=28) (< AN/MF *plais-*/*plaire*) are the most frequently utilised indirect strategy, representing a share of 38.9 per cent of indirect requests (see Figure 4). However, most of them can be attributed to two letter-writers, who show a particular predilection for them, Patrick Hepburn, 3rd Earl of Bothwell, with a total of 14 instances and Henry Stewart, 1st Lord Methven, with nine instances.
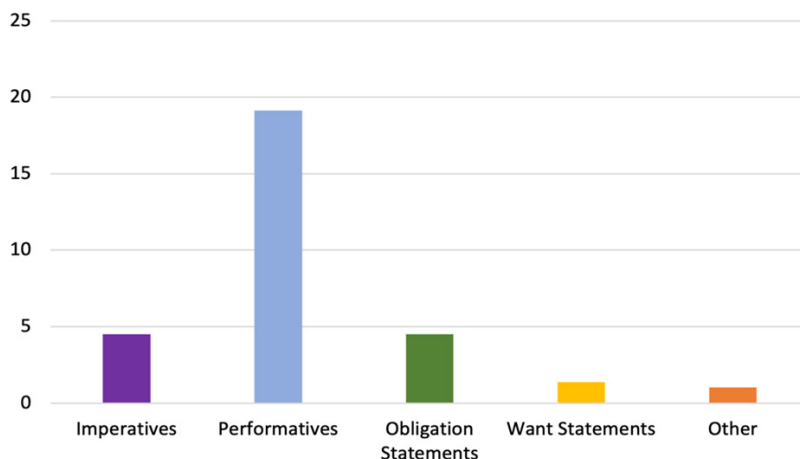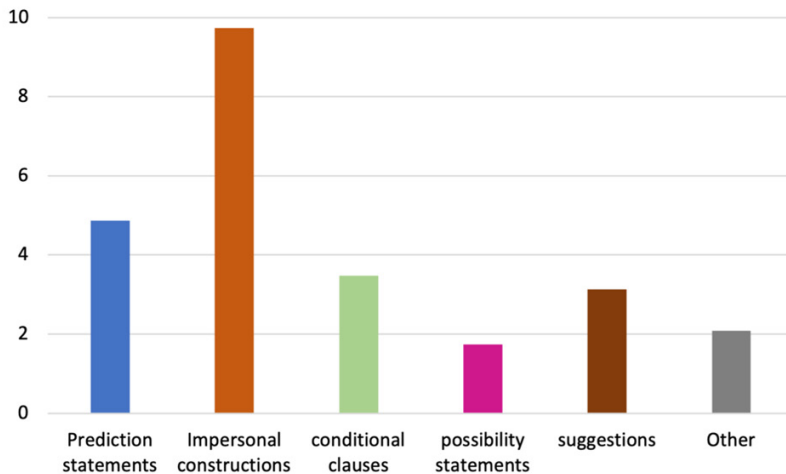

Figure 4. Distribution of conventionally indirect request strategies, Scots correspondence (1542–1551), (normalised frequencies per 10,000 words)

These impersonal constructions, which orientate towards the addressee's consent to the requested action, invariably combine with honorific address terms, thus fitting into the same deferential mould as performatives. The impersonal verb *pleis* is either used in the subjunctive (see 20) or with the predictive modal *will*, patterned on the French future form *plaira* (see 21).

(20) ***plesit*** *('it may please') your grace to remember to heste ... off yowris ('yours')*
avay with the fyrst schipe in France
(George Douglas to Mary of Lorraine, 1544)

(21) *And it **vill pleis** your graice deliver tham to the berar.*
     (Countess of Montrose to Mary of Lorraine, 1547 or earlier)

Beside impersonal constructions, Scots letter-writers further made use of a range of other conventionally indirect strategies (see Figure 4) not attested in the French corpus. Among these, prediction statements, which present the requested action as a future prediction, are the most common one, accounting for 19.4 per cent of the conventionally indirect requests. When the addressee is the subject of the verb, *will* moreover transports a volitional meaning so that the addressee's willingness to perform the action is also implied. Most prediction statements are preceded by subjectivisers, most commonly *I dout nocht bot* ('I doubt not that'), see (22), and *I traist* ('I trust').

(22) ***I dout nocht bot your grace well caus*** all to be payit ('payed').
     (Marion Haliburton, Lady Home, to Mary of Lorraine, 1549)

5.3 The influence of French requestive patterns on the requestive style of 16th-century Scots correspondence

The corpus of French letters written by Scottish writers and by French writers in Scotland is clearly dominated by two request strategies: deferential performatives with *supplier* and impersonal constructions with *plaire*. The Scots letters exhibit the same deferential tone as the French letters and submissive performative requests and impersonal constructions with *pleis* are also dominant, however, not to the same degree.

When zooming in on the Scots performative requests, some variations in the pattern come to light. While in the French letters, only the performatives with *supplier* combine with other submissive downtoners such as *humblement* and honorific address terms, in the Scots data, all the requestive verbs, irrespective of their semantics, fit into the deferential mould and combine with submissive and distancing downtoners.

Moreover, for French, Frank noticed a conventionalisation or semantic bleaching of *supplier* from the 16th century onwards, so that this performative verb became available for requests addressed to social superiors but also for requests addressed to equals, thus being used in the same contexts as performatives with *prier* (Frank 2011: 264). My own previous analysis of Scottish non-private correspondence written between 1570 and 1700 indicates, though, that this is not the case with *beseik* in Scots (Elsweiler 2023: 22–23). Performatives with *beseik* or the anglicised variant *beseech* are few and far between after 1570. In fact, my analysis detected a decline in the use of performatives with addressee-oriented semantics such a *beseik*/*beseech* and a marked increase of performative verbs with speaker-oriented semantics, particularly with *desire* in the 17th century (Elsweiler 2023: 26–27). To further check on the quantitative development of performatives with *beseik*/*beseech*, *pray* and *desire*, I consulted the entire database of the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence, 1540–1750*, which includes not only non-private letters, but also private ones exchanged between family members and friends. This check confirms that the frequency of *beseik*/*beseech* declines over time, whereas *pray* and *desire* prove far more

popular. In the first half of the 17th century, for instance, performative requests with *beseik/beseech* (N=30) are of moderate frequency. Performatives with *pray* and *desire*, however, are each nearly four times as frequent.[17] The letters addressed to King James VI, by contrast, show the inverse ratio: *beseik* (N=11) is twice as frequent as *pray* (N=5) and nearly three times as frequent as *desire* (N=4). This corroborates that *beseik/beseech* generally remained restricted to requests addressed to social superiors, i.e. to contexts of power imbalance.

Impersonal constructions with *pleis/please* also see a considerable decline in the 17th century. In fact, as *please* was reanalysed as a personal verb, modally modified passive constructions such as *you may/would be pleased* came to be employed as syntactic downgraders for performative requests, as in (23).

> (23) *Sir **I desire you may be pleased** to lett me know if you have gott notice of that - money which was to be hade against the Tearm;*
> (Marie Douglas to Patrick Home, later 1st earl of Marchmont, 1684)

Both the example of performative requests and of indirect requests with *pleis* thus indicate the influence of the French epistolary discourse tradition on requestive practices in Scots non-private correspondence by elite writers connected to Mary of Lorraine. However, their development from the later 16th century onwards in a broader set of correspondence also shows that this discourse tradition evolved in the Scots context. This is further corroborated by the fact that these two established pragmalinguistic patterns were joined by other requestive patterns in the Scots correspondence. Although performatives remain popular with Scottish letter-writers after 1570, not just in non-private letters but also in private ones, my previous studies have shown that imperatives and prediction statements are also prevalent in the 17th century (Elsweiler 2022). This happens as part of a general simplification of the requestive style during the early modern period, which relies less on lengthy formulaic downgraders (see Elsweiler 2023: 34).

6 CONCLUSION

This contribution sought to explore to what extent Scots requestive practices as evident from 16th-century Scots non-private correspondence in the circle of Scotland's French queen Mary of Lorraine evince influence from the French epistolary discourse tradition. In the 16th century, Early Modern Scots was an emerging standard whose communicative functions had gradually been expanding to include a range of genres with established discourse traditions in Latin and French. As has been argued, to begin with the external elaboration of the vernacular did not happen at the expense of the high varieties Latin and French, but rather with their support (see Section 1). Letter-writing is a case in point, as many 16th-century elite letter-writers in Scotland operated in a multilingual communicative space. The French correspondence of Mary of Lorraine, which, among others, includes French letters by Scottish writers and letters by French people written in Scotland, testifies to this. A comparison of the requestive patterns found in the French corpus with

---

17   These counts exclude letters addressed to King James VI.

those attested in the Scots correspondence of Mary of Lorraine, representing the communication of a Franco-Scottish epistolary discourse community, showed that the two prevalent French requestive patterns are also the dominant ones in the Scots letters. The deferential and humiliative requestive style evidenced in both the French and the Scots letters was, in fact, common across early modern Europe as part of a shared epistolary tradition (Ebert 1990: 226, Burke 2000: 44). Scots, as other vernaculars, thus adopted this established discourse tradition, which lead to the internal elaboration of its pragmalinguistic repertoire. However, discourse traditional conventions as well as the norms of the individual languages are not static but leave room for variation. Thus, discursive practices may evolve after being adopted in the vernaculars (Wilhelm 2001: 471). This is also true of the Scots requestive patterns, as is evident from later Scots letters, both non-private and private ones, which reflect a broader range of correspondents from the nobility and the gentry. In particular, the use of performatives evolved from a humiliative style in correspondence with social superiors, still in evidence after 1570 in letters addressed to King James VI, to a default request strategy which relied less on lengthy formulaic downgraders. The existence of common epistolary discursive practices across Western Europe, attested in Latin and French as well as in the developing vernacular standard varieties, thus testifies at the same time to the conservative and to the innovative role of discourse traditions in the early modern period.

References

Primary Sources

CAMERON, Annie (ed.) (1927) *Scottish Correspondence of Mary of Lorraine: 1543–1560*. Edinburgh: Scottish History Society.

FRASER, William (ed.) (1885) *The Douglas Book. Vol. 4: correspondence*. Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable.

FRASER, William (ed.) (1889) *Memorials of the Earls of Haddington. Vol. 2: correspondence and charters*. Edinburgh: Printed by T. and A. Constable.

MEURMAN-SOLIN, Anneli (comp.) (1995) *The Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots*. Helsinki: Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki.

MEURMAN-SOLIN, Anneli (comp.) (2017) *The Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence, 1540–1750*. Helsinki: Research Unit for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English (VARIENG), Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki. http://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:lb-201411071.

WOOD, Marguerite (ed.) (1923) *Foreign Correspondence with Marie de Lorraine Queen of Scotland: from the originals in the Balcarres Papers. 1537–1548*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

WOOD, Marguerite (ed.) (1925) *Foreign Correspondence with Marie de Lorraine Queen of Scotland: from the originals in the Balcarres Papers. 1548–1557*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Secondary Sources

AITKEN, A.J (1983) "The languages of Older Scots Poetry." In: D. McClure (ed.), 18–49.

AITKEN, A.J (1985) "A history of Scots." In: M. Robinson (ed.), ix-xvi.

ANDERSON, Robert/Mark FREEMAN/Lindsay PATERSON (eds) (2015) *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

ARMSTRONG, Jackson/Edda FRANKOT (eds) (2021) *Cultures of Law in Urban Northern Europe. Scotland and its Neighbours c.1350–c.1650*. London and New York: Routledge.

ASCHENBERG, Heidi (2003) "Diskurstraditionen – Orientierungen und Fragestellungen." In: H. Aschenberg/R. Wilhelm (eds), 1–35.

ASCHENBERG, Heidi/Raymund WILHELM (eds) (2003) *Romanische Sprachgeschichte und Diskurstraditionen. Akten der gleichnamigen Sektion des XXVII. Deutschen Romanistentags*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

BAZERMAN, Charles (1991) *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: historical and contemporary studies of writing in professional communities*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.

BERGS, Alexander/Laurel BRINTON (eds) (2012) *English Historical Linguistics: an international handbook*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.

BETTEN, Anne (ed.) (1990) *Neuere Forschungen zur historischen Syntax des Deutschen: Referate der Internationalen Fachkonferenz Eichstätt 1989*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

BLUM-KULKA, Shoshana/Juliane HOUSE/Gabriele KASPER (1989) "The CCSARP Coding Manual." In: *Ead.* (eds), *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.273–294.

BROWN, Keith (2000) *Noble Society in Scotland: wealth, family and culture, from reformation to revolution*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

BUGAJ, Joanna (2004) "Middle Scots as an emerging standard and why it did not make it." *Scottish Language* 23, 19–34.

BURIDANT, Claude (2000) *Grammaire nouvelle de l'ancien français*. Paris: Sedes.

BURKE, Peter (2000) "A civil tongue: language and politeness in early modern Europe." In: P. Burke/B. Harrison/P. Slack (eds), 31–48.

BURKE, Peter/Brian HARRISON/Paul SLACK (eds) (2000) *Civil Histories: essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CAMARGO, Martin (2007) "If you can't join them, beat them: or, when grammar met business writing (in fifteenth-century Oxford)." In: C. Poster (ed.), 67–87.

CANNADINE, David (ed.) (2004) *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CORBETT, John/J. Derrick McCLURE/Jane STUART-SMITH (eds) (2003) *The Edinburgh Companion to Scots*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

CRUICKSHANK, Janet/Robert McCOLL MILLAR (eds) (2013) *After the Storm: papers from the Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster triennial meeting, Aberdeen 2012*. Aberdeen: Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ireland.

CULPEPER, Jonathan/Dawn ARCHER (2008) "Requests and directness in early modern English trial proceedings and play texts, 1640–1760." In: A. Jucker/I. Taavitsainen (eds), 45–84.

CULPEPER, Jonathan/Jane DEMMEN (2011) "Nineteenth-century English polite-ness: negative politeness, conventional indirect requests and the rise of the indi-vidual self." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 12/1–2, 49–81.

DAVIS, Norman (1965) "The *litera Troili* and English letters." *The Review of English Studies* 16/63, 233–244.

DAYBELL, James (2012) *The Material Letter in Early Modern England: manuscript letters and the culture and practices of letter-writing, 1512–1635*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

DAYBELL, James (2014) "Early modern letter-books, miscellanies, and the reading and reception of scribally copied letters." In: J. Eckhardt/D. Starza Smith (eds), 57–72.

DURKIN, Philip (2014) *Borrowed Words: a history of loanwords in English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

EBERT, Helmut (1990) "Bemerkungen zur Syntax frühneuhochdeutscher Bittbriefe." In: A. Betten (ed.), 224–238.

ECKHARDT, Joshua/Daniel STARZA SMITH (eds) (2014) *Manuscript Miscellanies in Early Modern England*. Farnham: Ashgate.

ELSWEILER, Christine (2021) "Divergence in two historical varieties: the use of modal auxiliaries in commissive and directive speech acts in Older Scots and Early Modern English letters." *Anglistik* 32/1, 109–132.

ELSWEILER, Christine (2023) "Modal *may* in requests: a comparison of regional pragmatic variation in early modern Scottish and English correspondence." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics*. Online First, 1–37.

EWAN, Elizabeth (2015) "Schooling in towns, c.1400–c.1560." In: R. Anderson/M. Freeman/L. Paterson (eds), 39–56.

FINLAY, John (2004) "Otterburn, Sir Adam (d. 1548), Lawyer and Diplomat." In: D. Cannadine (ed.), https://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed on 27 July 2023].

FRANK, Barbara/Thomas HAYE/Doris TOPHINKE (eds) (1997) *Gattungen mittel-alterlicher Schriftlichkeit*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

FRANK, Birgit (2011) *Aufforderung im Französischen: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte sprachlicher Höflichkeit*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

GÖRLACH, Manfred (2002) *A Textual History of Scots*. Heidelberg: Winter.

GOULD, J.A. (2004) "Panter, David (d. 1558)." In: D. Cannadine (ed.), https://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed on 27 April 2022].

GÜNTHER, Hartmut/Otto LUDWIG (eds) (1994) *Schrift und Schriftlichkeit/Writing and its Use*: *Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch internationaler Forschung/an interdis-ciplinary handbook of international research.* Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

HASPELMATH, Martin/Ekkehard KÖNIG/Wulf OESTERREICHER/Wolfgang RAI-BLE (eds) (2001) *Language Typology and Language Universals/Sprachtypologie und sprachliche Universalien/La typologie des langues et les universaux linguis-tiques: an international handbook/ein internationales Handbuch/manuel interna-tional*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter.

HAVINGA, Anna (2021) "The vernacularisation of the Aberdeen Council Registers (1398–1511)" In: J. Armstrong/E. Frankot (eds), 80–101.

HOLTUS, Günter/Michele METZELTIN/Christian SCHMITT (eds) (1988) *Lexikon der Romanistischen Linguistik*. Tübingen: M. Niemeyer.

JUCKER, Andreas/Irma TAAVITSAINEN (eds) (2008) *Speech Acts in the History of English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

KOCH, Peter (1988) "Externe Sprachgeschichte I/Storia della lingua I." In: G. Holtus/M. Metzeltin/C. Schmitt (eds), 343–360.

KOCH, Peter/Wulf OESTERREICHER (1994) "Schriftlichkeit und Sprache." In: H. Günther/O. Ludwig (eds), 587–604.

KOPACZYK, Joanna (2013) "Rethinking the traditional periodisation of the Scots language." In: J. Cruickshank/R. Millar (eds), 233–260.

KOPACZYK, Joanna (2020) "Textual standardisation of legal Scots *vis a vis* Latin." In: L. Wright (ed.), 487–513.

KOPACZYK, Joanna (2021) "The language of medieval legal record as a complex multilingual code." In: J. Armstrong/E. Frankot (eds), 58–79.

LANGE, Claudia (2012) "Standardization: standards in the history of English." In: A. Bergs/L. Brinton (eds), 994–1006.

LEBSANFT, Franz (2005) "Kommunikationsprinzipien, Texttraditionen, Geschichte." In: A. Schrott/H. Völker (eds), 25–43.

LYNCH, Michael (ed.) (2011) *The Oxford Companion to Scottish History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MACK, Peter (2002) *Elizabethan Rhetoric: theory and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MCGLADDERY, C. A. (2004) "Maxwell, Robert, Fifth Lord Maxwell (c. 1494–1546), Magnate." In: D. Cannadine (ed.), https://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed on 27 July 2023].

MACLEOD, Morag (2011) "France: 'the Auld Alliance'." In: M. Lynch (ed.), 243–245.

MARSHALL, Rosalind K. (2004) "Mary [Mary of Guise] (1515–1560), Queen of Scots, Consort of James V, and Regent of Scotland." In: D. Cannadine (ed.), https://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed on 27 April 2022].

McCLURE, Derrick (ed.) (1983) *Scotland and the Lowland Tongue: studies in the language and literature of Lowland Scotland*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

MEURMAN-SOLIN, Anneli (1995) "A new tool: The Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots (1450–1700)." *ICAME Journal* 19, 49–62.

MILLAR, Robert McColl (2020) *A Sociolinguistic History of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

MOESSNER, Lilo (2010) "Directive speech acts: a cross-generic diachronic study." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 11/2, 219–249.

MORGAN, Hiram (2008) "Scotland in Renaissance Diplomacy, 1473–1603: Scotland to France." http://xml.ucc.ie/chronicon/scottishdiplomats/FRANCE.pdf [accessed on 2 August 2023].

NEVALA, Minna (2004) *Address in Early English Correspondence: its forms and socio-pragmatic functions*. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.

OESTERREICHER, Wulf (1997) "Zur Fundierung von Diskurstraditionen." In: B. Frank/T. Haye/D. Tophinke (eds), 19–41.

OESTERREICHER, Wulf (2015) "Le concept de 'formalisation discursive' – dynamiques des innovations, options stylistiques et transformation dans l'espace variationnel d'une langue historique." In: E. Winter-Froemel/A. López Serena/Á. Octavio de Toledo y Huerta/B. Frank-Job (eds), 113–136.

PERELMAN, Les (1991) "The medieval art of letter writing: rhetoric as institutional expression." In: C. Bazerman (ed.), 97–119.

POSTER, Carol (ed.) (2007) *Letter-Writing Manuals and Instruction from Antiquity to the Present*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press.

RITCHIE, Pamela (2002) *Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548–1560: a political career*. East Linton: Tuckwell Press.

ROBINSON, Mairi (1985) *The Concise Scots Dictionary*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

SCHAEFER, Ursula (2006) "The beginnings of standardization: the communicative space in fourteenth-century England." In: *Ead.* (ed.), 3–24.

SCHAEFER, Ursula (2006) (ed.) *The Beginnings of Standardization: language and culture in fourteenth-century England*. Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang.

SCHAEFER, Ursula (2012) "Middle English: standardization." In: A. Bergs/L. Brinton, 519–533.

SCHROTT, Angela/Harald VÖLKER (eds) (2005) *Historische Pragmatik und historische Varietätenlinguistik in den romanischen Sprachen*. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen.

SEARLE, John (1969) *Speech Acts: an essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SMITH, Jeremy (2003) In: J. Corbett/J.D. McClure/J. Stuart-Smith, 197–209.

SMITH, Jeremy (2012) *Older Scots: a linguistic reader*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Text Society.

SWALES, John (1990) *Genre Analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SWALES, John (2016) "Reflections on the concept of discourse community" *ASp* [Online] 69, 1–12. http://journals.openedition.org/asp/4774 [accessed on 3 August 2023].

THOMAS, Andrea (2004) "James V (1512–1542), King of Scots." In: D. Cannadine (ed.), 27 July 2023. https://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed on 3 August 2023].

WILHELM, Raymund (2001) "Diskurstraditionen." In: M. Haspelmath/E. König/W. Oesterreicher/W. Raible (eds), 467–477.

WARDEN, Alex. J. (1884) *Angus or Forfarshire, the Land and People, Descriptive and Historical.* Vol. IV. Dundee: Charles Alexander and Co.

WILLIAMSON, Keith (1982) "Lowland Scots in education: an historical survey – part I." *Scottish Language* 1, 54–77.

WRIGHT, Laura (ed.) (2020) *The Multilingual Origins of Standard English*. Berlin: de Gruyter Mouton.

Abstract

THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH PRAGMALINGUISTIC PATTERNS ON THE
REQUESTIVE STYLE IN 16TH-CENTURY SCOTTISH LETTERS

16th-century Scots was a developing standard variety that was being elaborated to as-
sume new communicative functions hitherto fulfilled by Latin and French – both lan-
guages with well-established discourse traditions. The elaboration of Scots happened
by adopting these discursive practices into the vernacular, thus innovating new struc-
tures and patterns. This study, which focuses on the epistolary discourse tradition, aims
to explore to what extent requestive patterns in 16th-century Scots letters were influ-
enced by French pragmalinguistic models. A comparative analysis of French letters in
the foreign correspondence of Mary of Lorraine with letters from her Scots correspond-
ence shows that the French requestive models had a clear impact on the Scots reques-
tive repertoire. It further indicates that the discursive practices did not remain static but
evolved in the Scots context.

Keywords: Epistolary discourse tradition, French correspondence, Early Modern
Scots, requests, 16th-century Scottish correspondence

Povzetek

VPLIV FRANCOSKIH PRAGMALINGVISTIČNIH VZORCEV NA SLOG PRO-
ŠENJ V ŠKOTSKIH PISMIH 16. STOLETJA

V 16. stoletju je bila škotščina razvijajoča se standardna različica, ki so jo dodelovali z
namenom, da prevzame nove komunikacijske funkcije, kakršne sta dotlej opravljali la-
tinščina in francoščina – jezika s trdno uveljavljenimi dirkurznimi tradicijmi. Škotščina
kot vernakularni jezik se je razvijala s prevzemanjem teh diskurznih praks, s čimer je
pridobivala nove strukture in vzorce. Namen te razprave, ki se osredotoča na pisemsko
diskurzno tradicijo, je proučiti, do kakšne mere so na vzorce prošenj v škotskih pismih
16. stoletja vplivali francoski pragmalingvistični modeli. Primerjalna analiza franco-
skih pisem znotraj tuje korespondence Marije Guiške s pismi iz njene škotske kore-
spondence kaže, da so imeli francoski modeli prošenj očiten vpliv na nabor sredstev za
izražanje prošenj v škotščini. Razvidno je tudi, da diskurzne prakse niso bile statične,
temveč so se v škotskem kontekstu spreminjale.

Ključne besede: pisemska diskurzna tradicija, francoska korespondenca, zgodnja mo-
derna škotščina, prošnje, škotska korespondenca v 16. stoletju

Carlotta Posth
Universität Würzburg
carlotta.posth@uni-wuerzburg.de

Sonia García de Alba Lobeira
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
sonia.garciadealba@anglistik.uni-freiburg.de

COHERENCE-MAKING STRATEGIES IN THE *RENAUT DE MONTAUBAN* TRADITION: FROM FRENCH VERSE TO ENGLISH PROSE*

1 INTRODUCTION

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the prose romance became one of the most popular vernacular literary genres in French literature and, from there, travelled to many other European literatures, including English. This tradition began with the adaptation of verse epics and romances (*chanson de geste* and *roman[1]*) into prose. French productions from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were translated into English starting in the late fifteenth century and influenced the emergence of the new genre in English literature. Despite this fact, narrative conventions in English prose romances have seldom been studied from a translingual perspective that considers their French sources.

Drawing from a narratological perspective that aims to link literary and linguistic studies, this paper examines coherence-making strategies and their diachronic, intergeneric, development from Old French (OF) to Middle English (ME). In our study, we will analyse linguistic features—such as word order patterns and narrative formulae—used to establish and manage narrative coherence in the story of Renaut de Montauban. Our understanding of the term *coherence* is twofold: On the one hand, we view coherence as a linguistic property of texts, which stems from the concept of *cohesion* developed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). This understanding of coherence as cohesion refers to the text's "internal properties", that is, to the way in which sentences are linked together to create sense and meaning (Eggins 2004: 29). This can be realised grammatically, at a micro level, "through a series of cohesive devices such as conjunction, ellipsis, substitution and reference, and relies on the reader's ability to make the necessary linkages between the two (or more) elements that are semantically tied together"

---

1 On the thematic and formal differences between these two genres see Winter-Froemel/Posth (2022: 442–443). Yet they are not clearly delineated categories and there are fluid transitions between them in both verse and prose, see e.g. Suard (2014).

or, lexically, through the repetition of certain words or collocations or the repeated use of specific narrative formulae (Canning 2014: 47). On the other hand, we also view coherence as a feature pertaining to the macro organisation of texts, that is, their overall structure, and how this is understood and interpreted by audiences according to cultural practices, cognitive scripts, and schemata (Toolan 2013). This is similar to Eggins's concept of "generic coherence" which relies on a "predictable generic or schematic structure" (2004: 29), in this case, the conventional structure of medieval romance. In the latter sense, coherence is also linked to narrative progression, i.e. the intelligible transition from one narrative segment to another following an expected generic pattern. Furthermore, it is worth emphasising that the elements that create a coherent story are situationally bound and largely dependent on contextual features such as the audience's expectations, their prior knowledge of the narrative, and the context of reading or performance. In short, while coherence understood as *cohesion* is more concerned with linguistic and syntactic structures, coherence understood as *textual structure* considers aspects in the realm of literary genre conventions and pragmatics, such as the context of production and reception, and how these influence the text. Both approaches to coherence, from a micro and macro perspective, are necessary to gain a nuanced understanding of the different strategies deployed in the texts that we aim to study. As Toolan (2013: Section 10) notes:

> [w]e should not overstate the contrast between those who study coherence as a linguistic property of texts and those who focus on the discourse reception and the addressee's attributing of coherence to a text [...] there is often no fundamental opposition between the two approaches, but rather a division of labour and of disciplinary interest.

Drawing from this dual understanding of coherence, in the following sections we analyse how coherence-making strategies are deployed at a micro and macro level in three different versions of the *Renaut de Montauban*. We will begin by looking at the earliest version of the text, the OF poem, then turn to its prose adaptation in Middle French (MF) and, finally, compare this with the ME prose translation. Our main focus throughout will be to examine the linguistic features (primarily, variation in sentence initial word order used to foreground information) and framing patterns (narrative formulae, particularly *entrelacement*), used to manage thematic shifts and scene changes in all three versions. Our aim is to determine how the strategies used to establish overall textual coherence, at a macro-structural level, are dependent on or supplemented by linguistic strategies at a micro level. This will allow us to assess the specific patterns of coherence-making particular to each of the texts and, finally, compare these findings to determine how changes in the linguistic form (verse or prose) and in the context of reception might prompt changes in syntactic and framing patterns.

It is important to note that word order and framing narrative strategies—our main subjects of interest—are influenced by diachronic linguistic changes which would have affected verb position and word order in general. Therefore, we also take into account

the historical development of the grammar of the linguistic structures studied, which interest us primarily from a narratological perspective.

2 CORPUS

For our analysis, we have chosen three versions of *Renaut de Montauban*, also called *The Four Sons of Aymon*/*Les quatre fils Aymon*, due to its popularity in medieval and early modern Europe. The story was first written in French verse sometime in the thirteenth century and numerous adaptations in prose emerged from the fifteenth century onwards. The rewritings in prose were composed not only in French, but also in English, Dutch, German, and Italian, which attest to its popularity in the early modern world.

The *Renaut* tells the story of the eponymous protagonist and his three brothers who are involved in a lasting conflict with their king, Charlemagne. For our analysis, we have selected the first part of the *Renaut*, usually referred to as the "Beuves d'Aigremont episode" (Thomas 1962: 143–145). This section, often considered an extended prologue to the tale, focuses not on Renault and his brothers but rather on the tensions between their uncle, the Duke Beuves of Aigremont, and the king, which eventually lead to the war against King Charlemagne. The episode begins on the day of the feast of Pentecost when Charlemagne's court is assembled in Paris. On this occasion the king is reminded that his vassal, Duke Beuves, was not present at a particular military encounter—which led to great losses on their part. Charlemagne then decides to send his son, Lohier, to give the duke an ultimatum: either he returns the next summer to his service or he shall besiege him at Aigremont. At the court of Beuves, a heated exchange between Lohier and Beuves quickly turns into a fight. Lohier and his retinue are far outnumbered by Beuves and his men. The duke finally kills Lohier and sends the few survivors from Lohier's retinue back to Charlemagne with the corpse. The story then shifts to Aymon, one of Beuves's brothers, who, in the meantime, is at Charlemagne's court with his four sons—the eldest of whom is Renaut. The duke Aymon asks the king to take his sons into his service, unaware, still, that his brother Beuves has killed Lohier. Charlemagne assents and swears in the four brothers as knights. When news arrives that Beuves has killed the king's son, Charlemagne swears revenge and gathers supporters for a counterattack. Aymon and his sons flee the court out of loyalty to their kinsman and fear of punishment. Before Charlemagne can leave for Aigremont, he receives news that Beuves and two of his brothers, Gerard de Roussillon and Doon de Nantuel, are besieging the city of Troie (Troyes, in France). Charlemagne then travels to Troie and a bloody battle ensues between the armies of both parties. The king gains the upper hand, whereupon Beuves apologises and offers to return to his service. Charlemagne accepts the apology on the condition that Beuves appears on his next court day. The latter agrees, but Charlemagne breaks his word by allowing the Earl Guenes, his nephew, to set forth with a company of men and ambush Beuves on his way to Paris. Beuves is finally slain by Guenes in this encounter. The episode ends with news of the king's treachery reaching Aigremont' and Maugis, the son of Beuves, plotting revenge with his uncles and cousins.

The striking number of manuscripts and prints in which the prose adaptations of *The Four Sons of Aymon* have survived shows that this tale was read by a very large audience and was most likely regarded as a favourite amongst the epic romances dealing with Charlemagne.[2] In English, *The Right Plesaunt and Goodly Historie of the Foure Sonnes of Aymon* (1489), as it was titled, became, alongside *The Ystorye and Lyfe of the Noble and Crysten Prynce Charles the Gret* (1478),[3] one of the few romances dealing with the Matter of France printed in Britain after the fifteenth century.[4] Both of these romances were translated and printed by William Caxton, who introduced the printing press to England in 1476 (Blake 1991: 57, Sánchez-Martí 2009: 5–8). It must be noted that this is considerably late compared to the advent of the printing press on the continent, where movable type printing had been in use for more than twenty years prior to the time printing began in England (Hellinga 2010: 1). The fact that English prose romances appeared only shortly before the printing press meant that this nascent genre was mostly disseminated through the new print medium—and largely by Caxton himself, who had a particular interest in them (Cooper 2004: 216). As a result, the presentation and the structural makeup that would become trademarks of the English prose romance were set and popularised by Caxton, and later emulated by his successors, namely, Wynkyn de Worde, Robert Copland, and William Copland (Meale 1992: 283–298). This phenomenon emerged as part of the new, printed format in the European book market, where narrative strategies were supplemented with editorial and paratextual features to guide the reader and emphasise the changes in scenes already marked by coherence-making features in the text itself.

Before we come to our main discussion, some remarks regarding the editions used are necessary since the tradition of the *Renaut* is extremely wide-ranging and complex. As stated above, we have chosen three texts: a French verse version from the thirteenth century, a French prose adaptation from the fifteenth century, and Caxton's English translation of the French prose, which also dates back to the fifteenth century. We have been able to verify that the English version is a close translation of the French prose text preserved in an incunabulum printed in Lyon in 1497 by Jehan de Vingle. Since Caxton's translation dates from 1489, we must assume that Vingle's edition is an unaltered reprint of an earlier incunabulum from the 1480s, which served as the model for the English translation. For this reason, we use the Lyon 1497 incunabulum for the comparison between the French and English prose versions. This print derives from the "traditional version" of the versified *Renaut* (Thomas 1962: 146–180; the other branch of the *Renaut* manuscript tradition is called the "aristocratic version"). The prose version from the Lyon 1497 incunabulum shows a particular closeness to the verse version in one particular manuscript, the MS Z (Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, 192), except for the beginning, up to the return of the body of Lohier, which is closer to the version

---

2   For complete lists of manuscripts and prints see Baudelle-Michels (2014: 699–708 and 710–712).

3   The romance was translated into English from the French prose *Fierabras* (1478), attributed to Jean Bagnyon.

4   Some manuscript copies of the Charlemagne romances dated to c. 1450 survive but it is believed that they became less well-known after the fifteenth century. The lack of prints other than Caxton's suggests they were not consumed as widely. For a full list of printed Middle English texts see Lewis et al. (1985).

handed down in MS D (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 121) (Suard 2000: 253). In the comparison of verse and prose, we have mainly worked with the edition by Geipel (1913) (*laisses* 25–66), which renders the version of Z, and used the edition by Thomas (1989) (*laisses* 1–26), which is based on D, only for the opening section.[5]

The English prose romance survives in four prints, the first one, by Caxton, from 1489, is missing part of the Aigremont episode. The second, from 1504 by Wynkin de Worde, is fragmentary. The third edition, which was printed by William Copland sometime in the first half of the sixteenth century, survives only in fragments that make impossible an exact dating. The fourth and final pre-modern edition was also printed by Copland in 1554 and is the only complete version of the English text. A comparison between the surviving prints reveals that all are reproductions of Caxton's translation with minor alterations, namely in spelling. They all included his original prologue, table of contents, and chapter headings as far as it is possible to compare them. Only one modern edition exists. This is a transcription by Octavia Richardson (1885) for the Early English Text Society and is a reproduction of the 1489 edition by Caxton, supplemented, where lacking, by the 1554 print by Copland. In our analysis, we will be quoting solely from the Copland 1554 reprint, which is available as a facsimile. We have kept in view Richardson's modern edition as a reference where the facsimile proved unclear.

Following current academic practices, we have silently expanded all abbreviations, marked ornate initials in bold, and normalised spelling for *u* and *v*, as well as for different renderings of *s* when transcribing and quoting text from the early modern prints. We have also kept all original punctuation markings. The translations into English provided for the French *Renaut* are our own.

3 COHERENCE-MAKING STRATEGIES IN THE VERSE RENAUT

The *chansons de geste* are known for their formulaic style (*style formulaire*), which also characterises the verse *Renaut*. Stereotypical expressions denote a limited set of motifs that are repeated throughout the epic poem. In a seminal essay originally published in 1955, Rychner (1999: 126–146) has listed and analysed common motifs (e.g. armament of the knights, duel with lance or sword) and formulae (e.g. *Le destrier broiche* '[He] spurs on his warhorse') in the *Chanson de Roland* and eight other *chansons de geste*. According to Rychner (1999: 127), these motifs and the corresponding formulae were the traditional 'tools' of the *jongleurs*, the professional musician-poets who performed the *chansons de geste*:

> le jongleur va traiter son thème de façon presque entièrement traditionnelle, grâce à des motifs, stéréotypés sur le plan du récit aussi bien que dans l'expression ; sur le plan du récit, ces motifs isoleront certains moments, toujours les mêmes, et, dans l'expression, ces moments seront rendus de façon analogue par les mêmes formules. Les motifs sont essentiels à la composition et à la mémorisation des chansons.

---

5   The counting of the *laisses* does not correspond exactly in the two manuscripts. The *laisse* 25 in MS Z roughly matches the *laisse* 27 in MS D.

Rychner thus links the formulaic style to the oral composition of the *chansons de geste*. The latter has been discussed very controversially in research (e.g. Calin 1981 and Duggan 1981). However, there is a broad consensus that the *chansons de geste* were traditionally sung by *jongleurs* and were thus the object of collective reception. For our narratological question regarding coherence-making strategies, the level of reception is important. Research on the *chanson de geste* has so far examined the formulaic style mainly at the level of production. If we look at reception, it becomes relevant to consider whether the formulae contribute to creating a coherent narrative and, if so, how. It does not seem far-fetched that some formulae in the *chansons de geste* fulfil narrative functions that contribute to coherence-making. If one compares the results of (non-narratological) research taking into account the formulaic style of the *chansons de geste* (e.g. Boutet 1988, Gittleman 1967, Heinemann 1993, Rossi 1975, Rychner 1999, Subrenat 1974) with narratological studies, one finds that some of the formulae observed in the *chansons de geste* correspond to linguistic expressions identified in narratological studies as elements of narrative structure. For example, both Rychner and Fludernik discuss subject-verb inversion. While Rychner (1999: 72) is concerned with the poetic function of subject-verb inversion within the structure of the *laisse*, Fludernik (2000: 237) identifies it as a marker used in the episodic structuring of narrative texts. The narratological research on discourse markers (DMs) and word order patterns that foreground narrative structure has been conducted primarily in English studies and therefore has focussed on English texts such as Malory's *Le Mort D'Arthur* (Hopper 1979, Enkvist/Wårvik 1987, Fludernik 1995 and 2000, Brinton 1996 and 2010; for French see Fleischman 1991). The latter and other ME texts are adaptations from OF and so their use of narrative formulae and DMs could be influenced by these sources, although research is still lacking on this question. By examining narrative functions of certain formulae and DMs in the *Renaut* tradition from OF through MF to ME, we take a first step in this direction. We will focus on copula constructions with initial intensifiers (INTs), on narrative DMs and their ME equivalents—starting with *or* and *lors* in this section—, and on the narrative formula commonly referred to as *entrelacement* in French, which, in English, is often referred to as *interlacement*.

We begin with copula constructions with initial intensifiers. Copula constructions are clauses in which a copula verb[6] connects the subject of a clause with a complement, as in *The house*(SUBJ) *is*(CV) *big*(COMP). The function of the complement in OF (and MF) can be taken by different types of words, including qualifying adjectives (quADJ) (e.g. *big, beautiful*), which can be preceded by intensifiers (INTs) (e.g. OF *mout granz* 'very big') (Marchello-Nizia/Prévost 2020: 1168). We have examined the narrative segments[7] of the *Beuves d'Aigremont* episode and found that in copula constructions, the initial position is most frequently filled by an INT. Therefore, we focus our analysis on this pattern. The quADJ to which the INT refers is usually preceded by the copula

---

6   OF and MF copula verbs are *estre* 'to be', *devenir* 'become', *rester* 'stay', *paroistre* 'appear', and *sembler* 'resemble' (Marchello-Nizia/Prévost 2020: 1159).

7   We have excluded direct discourse (DD) as this belongs to the level of character speech and not of narration proper.

verb. The subject follows at the end, resulting in the structure 'INT + CV + quADJ + SUBJ'.[8] The examination of all occurrences of this copula construction with an initial INT, twelve in total, has shown that it is linked to a specific vocabulary and content. The latter can be divided into three types: (1) crowd, (2) mourning, and (3) fight. Below, we give the textual evidence according to these three types.[9]

(1) Crowd

(a) *Mult* *fu* *grant* *li* *barnage* *quant il fu asenblé.* (23,819, MS)[10]
Very was big the assembly of barons [when it was assembled]

(b) *Molt par* *fu* *grans* *li* *pueples* *qui illuec assambla,* (31,1189, MS)
Very much was big the people [which he assembled]

(c) *Molt fu* *tres* *grans* *la* *cors* *en la sale pavee,* (32,1199, IT)
Very was much big the royal assembly [in the paved hall]

(d) *Molt par* *fu* *grans* *la* *presse* *et la* *procession.* (66,2264, MS)
Very much was big the crowd and the procession

(2) Mourning

(a) *Molt par* *fu* *grans* *li* *deul* *a Paris la cité* (30,1148, IT)
Very much was big the mourning [in the city of Paris]

(b) *Molt fu* *grans* *la* *dolors* *pardedens Aigremont,* (66,2223, IT)
Very was big the pain [inside Aigremont]

(3) Fight

(a) *Molt est bone la* *terre* *et* *aussi* *la* *gaaigne* (39,1407, MS)[11]
Very is good the battleground and also the earnings

(b) *Molt fu* *fors* *li* *estors, et la bataille engraigne.* (39,1423, CT)
Very was strong the fight [and the fight gets fiercer]

(c) *Molt fu* *li* *estors* *fors et dure l'envaïe,* (41,1446, IT)
Very was the fight strong [and hard the attack]

---

8   Some of the text passages given below show slight variations of this basic pattern through intensifying adverbs (e.g. 1b and 1c) or through the quADJ being in the final position (3c).

9   There are two examples for copula constructions with initial complements instead of initial INTs in the studied section of the verse *Renaut*:

Morz fu *li* *filz* *Karlon,* *le buen vassal Loher* (21,776, IT)
Dead was the son of Charlemagne, [the good vassal]

Fiére *fu* *la bataille* *et gravaine a soffrir.* (59,2084, IT)
Fierce was the battle [and heavy to bear]

The second one clearly falls into category (3) fight. The first one can be associated with (2) mourning but does not match it entirely. All the passages listed here have in common that they focus on collective action or the effects that an action has on a collective.

10   The first number indicates the *laisse*, the second number refers to the verse, and the acronym gives information on the position of the text passage inside of the *laisse* (IT: intonation tone, MS: middle section, CT: conclusion tone). We have translated Rychner's (1999, 68–74) established terminology (*timbre d'intonation* and *timbre de conclusion*) into English. According to Rychner, both the first and the last verse of each *laisse* (intonation and conclusion) get musical (and linguistic) emphasis to signal the *laisse*'s boundaries.

11   In this passage, the words *terre* and *gaaigne* are metaphorically used to describe the battle in terms of agriculture. The verse immediately preceding reads: *Les ·II· os s'entreviennent en milieu d'une plaine* (39,1406, 'The two armies attack each other in the middle of a field.').

(d)	*Molt fu*	*fiere*	*la*	*presse et la bataille grans.* (45,1601, IT)
	Very was	fierce	the	crush [and the battle big]
(e)	*Molt fu*	*grans*	*la*	*bataille et pesans a soffrir.* (48,1723, IT)
	Very was	big	the	battle [and heavy to bear]
(f)	*Molt fu*	*grans*	*la*	*bataille et dure l'envaïe,* (60,2115, IT)
	Very was	big	the	battle [and hard the attack]

The position of the initial INT is always taken by *molt*, which can be further intensified by the adverb *par* as in (1b), (1d), and (2a). The quADJ also does not show much lexical variation. The most common is *grant*, sometimes intensified by the adverb *tres* (1c). In the context of fight, we also find *bon* (3a), *fort* (3b,c), and *fier* (3d). While sentences that begin with a copula construction with an initial intensifier are not very frequent in the studied part of the verse *Renaut*, the given text passages show that when this pattern appears, it is within formulae related to a limited set of plot elements (crowd, mourning, fight). We assume that this word order was marked and that it was an element for establishing narrative coherence in the verse *Renaut*. The current state of historical grammar on the copula constructions supports this assumption: In the *Grande Grammaire Historique du Français* (GGHF), Marchello-Nizia (2020: 1169–1170) has shown that in OF texts from the tenth to the thirteenth century, copula constructions with initial INTs were frequent, but that even then, the prevailing pattern was *X est mout granz* with the subject in the initial position. She describes a reorganisation of the verbal group, which is visible in the fact that from the thirteenth century onwards, *moult/molt* and other intensifiers lost their ability to refer to the predicate (CV + ADJ) and were placed directly before the ADJ. We can thus assume that in the verse *Renaut* manuscript tradition from the thirteenth century, the copula construction with the initial INT *molt* was already becoming archaic. It possibly survived in the verse *Renaut* because it was part of a narrative formula with idiomatic character. This narrative formula could convey coherence by evoking stereotypical plot elements, which in the studied section of the verse *Renaut* are the gathering or movement of a crowd, mourning, and fight. An informed audience, familiar with the formula, could quickly recognise these recurring elements of the plot and thus anticipate its progress. The narrative formula present in our text sample indeed establishes a limited number of settings that always signal narrative progression: either the setting concludes a previous event or chain of events or it introduces a new event or chain of events. In other words, the formula seems to function as a connecting link between narrative episodes. Episodes as defined by van Dijk (1982: 177) are

> […] characterized as coherent sequences of sentences of a discourse, linguistically marked for beginning and/or end, and further defined in terms of some kind of 'thematic unity'—for instance, in terms of identical participants, time, location or global event or action.

In the section of the verse *Renaut* we studied, the setting invoked by the formula ensures the transition from one episode to another.[12] We will use two examples from our sample to illustrate this function.

The text passage in 3b) is the last verse of *laisse* 39, in which we learn that the troupes of Girart de Rossellon and Charlemagne clash in front of Troie and that Girart kills one of Charlemagne's knights. 3b) concludes this episode or chain of events by returning to 'the big picture' of the battlefield. Its narrative effect is that of zooming-out.[13] After we have zoomed-in on individual interactions within the battle, the formula prompts us to zoom out and transition to a bird's eye view, which comes with a change in narrative tempo, leading to a pause. In the following *laisse* (40), a new action starts: we zoom in again on further duels. Those are then concluded in *laisse* 41 by the text passage given in 3c), which furthermore signals a new action that is about to happen in *laisse* 41 and which consists in yet another duel. Thus, our example 3c) both concludes a previous action and introduces a new one.

Our second example comes from the first content type, the gathering of a crowd. In *laisse* 31, we learn that Charlemagne is annoyed because Aymon and his sons have left the court, and that he eats very little in the dining hall. In the middle section of the *laisse*, we find 1b) establishing that there are a lot of people gathered in the hall. 1b) thus evoques a zooming-out from the close-up on Charlemagne to a bird's eye view on the crowd gathered in the hall. By doing so, the narrative formula signals that a new action is about to happen. This is the case: Charlemagne stands up and begins a speech to his people, condemning Beuve's crime. As in the context of combat, the narrative formula here serves to foreground the transition between episodes, thus ensuring narrative coherence. When we look at the position inside of the *laisse* where our narrative formula occurs, we see that it is not limited to beginning, middle or end (IT, MS, CT): it appears seven times in the IT, once in the CT, and four times in the MS. This shows that the structuring of the narrative episodes in the verse *Renaut* does not correspond to the structure of the *laisse*. Nevertheless, it is noticeable that the narrative formula occurs twice as often in positions with musical emphasis (IT, CT) as in unmarked ones (MS). This suggests that the poetic design of the verse *Renaut* was also used to emphasise the narrative structure at certain points.

We now come to narrative DMs, also commonly referred to as pragmatic markers (Schiffrin 1987, Brinton 1996). They are short words or phrases (e.g. *now*, *then, in fact*) which occur at a high frequency in oral communication but lack lexical and

---

12   We cannot go into detail here about different types of episodes, such as micro- and macro-episodes, and their internal structure. On this topic, see Labov's seminal essays on oral narrative (Labov/Waletzky 1967 and Labov 1972: 354–398; for a compact account of both essays see Toolan 1991 [1988]: 146–182). Contributions focussing on episodic structure in medieval narrative texts are Fludernik (1996: 53–91, and 2000: 233–235) and Clover (1969: 59–63).

13   This narrative effect corresponds to what Brinton (1996: 43) names "a change from general to specific, or the reverse" in her typology of "points of change" that signal episode boundaries. We prefer the zoom metaphor because of its visual emphasis. In research on the *chanson de geste*, the role of the narrator or presenter of the story has been compared to that of a sports commentator who comments on what is to be seen (Carruthers/ Marnette 2007). The alternation between the battlefield as a whole and individual duels also primarily evokes a widening and narrowing of the field of vision.

propositional meaning. According to Brinton (1996: 6), DMs serve several key functions, some of which concern the organisation of narratives, e.g. marking scene shifts or narrative segmentation. Drawing from foregrounding theory (Hopper 1979), DMs that serve these specific organising functions have been qualified as *narrative* by Fludernik (2000: 231–232) and can be observed not only in oral but also in written narratives. This also holds true for the verse *Renaut* and its prose adaptations. From several lexemes that can act as DMs, we have chosen to discuss *or* and *lors*, which show an interesting diachronic development.

The OF temporal adverbs *or* (also *ore*, *ores*, 'now') and *lors* ('then') derive from the same Latin etymon, the noun *hōra* ('hour'), and they both express concomitance: *or* indicates the concomitance of an action with the moment of utterance whereas *lors* is commonly used to signal the concomitance of two actions that lie in the past (Marchello-Nizia/Prévost 2020: 915 and Badiou-Monferran *et al.* 2020: 1634). Narratological studies on Old English (OE) and ME texts have shown that the corresponding English temporal adverbs (*þa* 'then', *nū/nu* 'now') can act as DMs with diverse functions that also regard narrative structure (e.g. marking narrative segmentation and peaks in the narrative, shifting the topic, introducing meta-comments that show textual progression; for a concise overview see Brinton 2010: 287–290). If *or* and *lors* are also used as narrative DMs in the verse *Renaut*, they must have text-connective functions that assist in structuring the narrative. *Or* and *lors* as narrative DMs would thus be ambiguous due to homophony with the temporal adverbs they derive from lexically, but with which they do not share the same pragmatic functions. This also means that their DM functions would be distinct from the meanings of their lexical homophones, although they may retain traces of these original meanings (Norrick 2000: 850, Brinton 2010: 286). When we look at *or* and *lors* in the verse *Renaut*, we see a parallel syntactic behaviour: they occur in sentence-initial position and can cause subject-verb inversion, as can be seen in the following examples that we have chosen from a total number of eleven occurrences of *or* and five occurrences of *lors* in the *Beuves d'Aigremont* episode.[14]

(4)	*or*						
(a)	*Or*	*chevauchent*	*li*	*mes*	*de la*	*terre absolue.* (10,407, IT)	
	Now	ride-3PL-PRES	the	messengers	of the	blessed land.	
(b)	*Or*	*oiez*	*que*	*fist*	*Bués*	*belement*	
	Now	hear-2PL.PRES/IMPERA	what	do-3SG.PAST	Beuves	stealthily	
	a	*celee* (19,721, MS)					
	in	secret					
(c)	*Or*	*vos*	*lairons*	*de*	*ces*	*qui*	
	Now	you-2PL	leave-1.PL.FUT	from	these	who	
	ont	*grant*	*marison* (66,2225, MS)				
	have-3PL-PRES	big	sorrow				

---

14 Again, we have excluded DD. All instances of *or* are: 5,190, 10,407, 19,721, 23,816, 27,1072, 31,1187, 37,1365, 55,1940, 56,1961, 63,2167, and 66,2225. All instances of *lors* are: 27,1055, 31,1181, 44,1598, 46,1631, and 61,2148.

(5) *lors*

(a) *Lors*   *descent*   *del*   *ceval*   *et*   *Names*
     Then   dismount-3SG.PRES from the horse   and   Naimes

     li   *gentis* (27,1055, MS)
     the   noble

(b) *Lors*   *a*   *maudite* *l'*   *ore*   *que Renaut*
     Then   have-3SG.PRES accursed the   hour   that Renaut

     adoba (31,1181, MS)
     knight-3Sg.PAST

(c) *Lors*   *cria*   *'Aigremont'*   *hautement* *a* *cler* *ton* (46,1631, MS)
     Then   cry-3SG.PAST 'Aigremont'   loudly   in clear sound

Yet it turns out that *or* acts as a DM in the verse *Renaut*, but *lors* does not. The three examples we chose for *or* are representative of its DM functions. The text passage in 4a) is the first verse of *laisse* 10 (IT) and refers to Lohier and his men, who are on their way to Beuves. In the previous *laisse*, they had stopped and Lohier and one of his men had a conversation. Our example 4a) signals the beginning of a new episode, which begins with the messengers' departure. The introduction of a new episode by *or* is reinforced by its positioning at the marked beginning of the *laisse*. In 4b), *or* introduces an address to the audience, which informs them about what they are going to hear next. This is to be seen as a meta-comment indicating narrative progression. A similar function has been described for ME *nu* (Brinton 2010: 288). Finally, in 4c) *or* is part of an interlacement formula that serves to address the audience (*vos*) and announce a scene shift (from the court in Aigremont to the court in Paris). Consequently, *or* also serves as a meta-comment in 4c), signalling a specific type of narrative progression (scene shift). In all examples, *or* as a narrative DM helps to organise the narrative, and thus also to create coherence.

In contrast to *or*, we could not find evidence for uses of *lors* in the verse *Renaut* that would suggest it functioned as a narrative DM. In 5a)–c), we have given three of the five incidences of *lors* we found. In all of them, *lors* indicates concomitance, i.e. the consecutive character of an action in relation to a precedent action in the plot. It thus expresses a close temporal connection between two actions, but it does not contribute to orienting the recipient inside the narrative. Consequently, in the verse *Renaut*, *lors* is present as a temporal adverb with a rather low frequency, which receives almost no poetic emphasis: *lors* always appears in the MS of the *laisse*, except for one incidence where it is in the CT (61,2148).

The last element we will discuss is interlacement (*entrelacement*). This narrative technique, first described by Ferdinand Lot (1918: 17–19), is now widely regarded as a defining feature of the narrative organisation of medieval romances. It is used to handle the transitions from one setting and group of characters to another, and broadly follows the structure: "Now we leave *x* and turn to *y*" (Vinaver 1971: 68–98, Ryding 1971: 24–27, Häsner 2019: 86–118). Vinaver describes interlacing as a literary strategy that privileges "acentric composition". This is achieved through the act of "weaving

together" multiple plot strands to establish significant links between seemingly unrelated narrative themes to create a "tapestry" of interwoven plots—which ultimately convey a coherent story (1971: 68–73). Using this technique, the narrator[15] can handle the movement between episodes in two ways: either 1) they can introduce a new episode and setting, which may or may not be simultaneous to the actions previously described, or 2) they can return to a previous setting to provide background information and continue with the development of a particular episode which was interrupted. Furthermore, each of these distinct forms of interlacement is usually accompanied by specific linguistic markers and narrative formulae, which provide cognitive cues that prompt the audience to anticipate a change in topic. In the verse *Renaut*, there is one interlacement formula that either introduces a new setting or returns to a previous one: '*or* + personal pronoun + verb *laissier* + preposition *de* + nominal phrase / *si* + verb *dire* + preposition *de* + nominal phrase.' The example in 6a) is representative of all interlacement formulae in the verse *Renaut*.

(6) Interlacement
(a) *Or   vos   lairons   de   ces   qui   ont   grant marison,*
     Now   you-2PL   leave-1PL.PRES from   those   who   have   big sorrow

     Si   dirons   de Griffon de   son fil   Guenelon
     and   tell-1PL.FUT   of Griffon of   his son   Guenes

     Qui vindrent   a   Paris ou   fu   li   rois
     who come-3PL.PAST   to   Paris where be-3SG.PAST   the   king

     Charlon. (66,225–227, MS)
     Charlemagne

It is interesting that the interlacement formula is used in the verse *Renaut*, because it is a narrative technique that has primarily been associated with the genre of romance (in the sense of the French *roman,* meaning the *matière de Bretagne*), and not as much with the *chanson de geste* (*matière de France*). Considering that the manuscripts containing the verse *Renaut* are dated to the thirteenth century—a period in which the boundaries between *roman* and *chanson de geste* become increasingly blurred (Colombo Timelli *et al.* 2014: 8–9)—it seems possible that the interlacement formula was imported from the romance tradition into the verse *Renaut*.

After we have given the *status quo* of the described narrative formulae and DMs in the verse *Renaut*, we will describe their development in the French and English prose in the next sections.

---

15 There is an ongoing debate regarding the validity of using the term "narrator" in a medieval context. We have chosen to use it here for practical reasons to refer to the voice in the text and to distinguish it from the author or translator. For a discussion of the author-narrator issue in medieval literature see Spearing (2015) and Kragl (2019: 82–93).

4 FROM VERSE TO PROSE: NARRATIVE ORGANISATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING GENRES

By the early thirteenth century, vernacular literature in prose was on the rise in the French context. The shift to writing literature in prose—which had been previously reserved for historical works, legal documents, and religious texts—, was not a mere accident but rather "the inevitable consequence of the emerging view that prose was essential for the presentation of truth" (Lacy 2000: 167). This emerged from the idea that authors writing in verse or their translators often compromised the veracity of their texts in favour of accommodating the demands of metre and rhyme, which might call for a particular word and result in unconventional syntax. Furthermore, prose soon became the ideal medium to harness increasingly long and complex narratives that spanned the entirety of the protagonists's life. As a result, although literature in verse continued to enjoy prestige and diffusion, prose became increasingly common, particularly for popular and widely-read vernacular genres like romances.

In this context, adaptations of *chansons de geste* and other well-known epics also made their way into prose and influenced some of the conventions of prose romances as they migrated to this new form. The *Renaut* was turned into a prose romance sometime in the first half of the fifteenth century and began to appear in print between 1482 and 1485. The change in genre, context of reception, and format naturally brought with it structural changes which are also visible at the level of coherence-making strategies. These shifts are reflected both at a micro (linguistic) level and a macro (structural) level in the MF prose *Renaut*.

When we compare the use of copula constructions with initial INTs in the MF verse and prose *Renaut*, we must consider the historical evolution of this word order pattern as well as the history of *molt*. As already stated, copula constructions with initial INTs had become less common in the thirteenth century and were increasingly rare in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Moreover, the INT *molt* had been in competition with the new expression *beau coup* since the fourteenth century. Starting in the middle of the fifteenth century, a sharp decline in the use of *molt* can be seen, and in the sixteenth century, the lexeme was very rare before disappearing altogether in classical French (Marchello Nizia 2020: 921). Considering this, it seems unlikely that the authors of the prose version reproduced the word order pattern used in the verse *Renaut*. In fact, we see a strong quantitative decline: While there were twelve instances of copula constructions with the initial INT *molt* in the verse *Renaut*, we only find two in the prose version:

(7) *moult*

(a) *Moult estoit grant le peuple qui la estoit.* (24)
Very be-3SG.PAST big the people that there be-3SG.PAST

(b) *Moult fut grant et merveilleux lestour et*
Very be-3SG.PAST big and great the fight and
la bataille fiere. (p. 26)
the battle fierce

101

Both instances are quite literal renderings of the passages in the verse *Renaut* and they fulfil the same functions, i.e. to signal changes between narrative events (episodes) or between narrative levels.[16] Against the background of the historical evolution of copula constructions with initial INTs and of the lexeme *molt*, it must be surprising that they can still be found at all in the MF prose *Renaut*. We assume that the construction could survive as part of a formula that was seen as a stylistic element of the *chanson de geste* and whose archaic character was a welcome signal of authenticity. At the same time, we witness a linguistic adaptation of the word order pattern in three other uses of the formula: the initial INT is replaced by the adjective attribute in the form of *fiere* and *grant*.

(8) *fiere*

(a)	*FIere*	*fut*		*la*	*bataille*	*grande*	*et*	*merveilleuse* / (27)[17]
	Fierce	be-3SG.PAST		the	battle	big	and	great

(b)	*FIere*	*fut*		*la*	*bataille*	*et*	*moult*	*dure*	*a*	*souffrir* / (p. 31)
	Fierce	be-3SG.PAST		the	battle	and	very	hard	to	bear

(9) *grant*

(a)	*Grande*	*fut*		*la*	*noise*	*le*	*bruyt*		*et*	*le*	*tourment*
	Big	be-3SG.PAST		the	noise	the	clamour		and	the	torment

	qui	*adoncques*	*fut*		*au*	*palays*	*daigremont* / (17)
	That	thereupon	be-3SG.PAST		in the	palast	of Aigremont

By removing the initial INTs, the author(s) of the prose *Renaut* could preserve the formula and its narrative functions while linguistically adapting it to the state of MF. This approach testifies to a great effort to transfer conventional coherence-making strategies from epic poetry to the new form of prose. The quantitative decrease of copula constructions with initial INTs (or adjective complements) in comparison with the verse version can be explained by the process of condensation of the story material since the prose version omits many of the repetitive battle scenes present in the verse. The transition from a collective, oral reception to an individual, written one made the repetitions unnecessary. It is therefore remarkable that the archaic formula continued to be used as a structuring element in the condensed narrative. It is possible that it fulfilled a double function: on the one hand, it contributed to the creation of narrative coherence, on the other hand, it functioned as a stylistic element of epic storytelling.

When we compare the use of narrative DMs between the verse and prose *Renaut*, we can see an overall tendency to rely more heavily on the use of narrative DMs in the prose. The most prominent are *lor*s, *adonc*, *or*, and *si*. Although all can be generally classed as adverbs, we argue that in the prose *Renaut* they operate as DMs and help establish a sense of narrative coherence by signposting the transitions between different episodes or narrative levels.[18] Beginning with *lors*, we witness the functional transfor-

---

16 In narratological terms, the difference between narrative levels refers to the distinction between story-level (the events that are recounted) and the discourse-level (how these events are narrated).

17 All quotes from the French prose are from a facsimile of the inculabulum from Lyon (1497) digitised by the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Only page numbers will be given henceforth.

18 All these adverbs have unstable meanings that depend on their context of use and function. When acting as

mation of a temporal adverb into a narrative DM in the transition from the verse to the prose *Renaut*. While *lors* was used little in the verse *Renaut* (five occurrences), it is by far the most frequent narrative DM in the prose version (59 occurrences). It is often used to signal the end of an episode or the beginning of a new one. The former is usually achieved by stating the result of a particular set of actions (10, 11) and the latter by shifting the narrative perspective to new characters (12, 13).

(10) **Lors marcha**   **lohyer** *tout*   *le*   *premier et*   *apres*   *luy*
Then walk-3SG.PAST   Lohier all   the   first   and   after   him

       ses gens par   *bonne*   *conduite* (19)
       his men by   good   guidance

(11) **Lors**   **prindrent**   **le**   **corps**   *et*   *le*   *leverent*
Then   take-3PL.PAST   the   corpse   and   him   raise-3PL.PAST

       davec   *les aultres*   *mortz*   *dont*   *il yavoit*
       from with   the other   dead-PL   of whom   there be-3SG.PAST

       grant   *nombre /* *et*   *le*   *mirent*   *dedens une*   *byere /* (32)
       big   number   and   him   put-3PL.PAST   inside   a   coffin

(12) **Lors**   **se**   **trayt**   **auant**   *ung*   *cheualier nomme gaultier* (19)
Then   himself   drag-3SG.PRES   forward   a   knight   named Gaultier

(13) **Lors vint**   *sur le*   *conte daigremont*   *le*   *conte guenes*   *si*
Then come-3SG.PAST   on the   count of Aigremont   the   count Guenes   and

       le   *va*   *si*   *durement*   *frapper*   *que la*   *lance*   *luy*
       him   go-3SG.PRES   so   hard   hit-INF   that the   lance   him

       mist   *parmy le*   *corps et*   *tomba*
       put-3SG.PAST   inside the   body and   fall-3SG.PAST

       mort le   *duc*   *daigremont /* (32)
       dead the   duke   of Aigremont

In example (10) above, Lohier marches on to Aigremont to fulfil his father's errand, which concludes the discussions at the court in Paris and begins the new episode that will culminate in the death of Charlemagne's emissaries. In (11), lors introduces the ending of the fight against the Duke of Aigremont when his corpse is lifted from the battlefield and carried away. Similarly, here lors marks a transition to the battle's aftermath and the mourning of his kinsmen. Examples (12) and (13) both introduce new characters to an established setting and with this further the plot. In (12), the knight Gualtier is introduced at Aigremont's court and the romance narrates his attempt to persuade the duke to listen to Lohier. When the negotiations fail, the conflict between Charlemagne's men and Aigremont's ensues. In (12) the duke Guenes appears in the battlefield suddenly and strikes down the Duke of Aigremont, which leads to his death.

---

discourse markers, their lexical meaning becomes secondary to their overall function as a coherence-making device (see discussion of Norrick (2000) and Brinton (2010) above in section 3). This is further emphasised by the inconsistent translations found in the English prose, which alternates between translating these terms as *then, when,* and *so*, depending on the narrative effect sought. This will be dealt with in detail in the next section.

Additionally, *lors* is also used to manage narrative focalization by handling the switch between the narrator's unrestricted overview of the events as they unfold and close-up descriptions of the characters' internal emotional responses to the events they experience. Examples 14–17 show this strategy at work:

(14) **Lors   fut   le   roy   charlemaigne   moult   doulent   et**
Then   be-3SG.PAST   the   king   Charlemagne   very   suffering   and

courrouce. *Et   le   roy   iura   sainct   denis que*
angry   and   the   king   swear-3SG-PAST   saint   Denis that

le   pays   du   duc   beuues seroit   gaste   et   destruitz (16)
the   land   of the   duke   Beuves be-3SG.COND   devastated   and   destroyed

(15) **Lors se   reconforta   le   roy   charlemaigne et**
Then himself   console-3SG.PAST   the   king   Charlemagne and

cogneut   bien que naymes le   conseilloit   loyaulment..(23)
recognize-3SG.PAST   well that Naimes him   advise-3SG.PAST   loyally

(16) **Lors cuida   gerard   yssir   du   sens** / *et*
Then think-3SG.PAST   Gerard   depart-INF   from the   sense and

envoya   tost   querir   le   duc   beuves   son frere /
send-3SG.PAST   quickly   search-INF   the   duke   Beuves   his brother

lequel   le   vint   tantost   secourir
who   him   come-3SG.PAST   immediately   save-INF

comme   vaillant   et   preux   quil   estoit. (26)
as   brave   and   strong   as he   be-3SG.PAST

(17) **Lors   fut   moult   esbahy   le   duc   daigremont   lequel**
Then   was   very   astounded   the   duke   of Aigremont   who

cogneut   bien que sans   mourir   eschapper   ne
recognize-3SG.PAST   well that without   dy-INF   escape-INF   not

povoit   si   alla   frapper   ung des   gens   de guenes
can-3SG.PAST   and   go-3SG.PAST   hit-INF   one of the   people   of Guenes

tellement   quil   labatit   tout   mort / (31)
so much   that him   him knock down-3SG.PAST   all   dead

In the examples above, we see the narrative focus on the immediate emotional responses triggered by the events told. In (14), Charlemagne has been made aware of the Duke of Aigremont's disobedience, and so, in his anger—*moult doulent et courrouce*—, he swears to destroy him. In (16), Gerard de Rousillon has just watched his nephew being killed by a member of Chalemaigne's army, which makes him lose all sense (*yssir du sens*). Instead of retreating, as his brother suggests, Rousillon calls his other brother, the Duke of Aigremont, and together they decide to retaliate.

These shifts from a wider perspective to a restricted description of a character's feelings, as seen in the examples (14) to (17) are often instrumental in furthering the plot since they appear at moments of change. They present the reaction to a series of previously-described actions and serve to begin a new episode. Furthermore, by

allowing the audience a glimpse into the inner motivations of the characters through the description of emotions, a sense of causality is created since the feelings motivating the ensuing conflict are made clear.

Adonc, the second most common DM in the prose *Renaut* appears nineteen times in the corpus and has a similar function to *lors*—it is predominantly found marking the beginning of episodes:

(18) ***Adonc   commenca   terrible   et   cruelle   bataille*** (26)
       Then   begin-3SG.PAST   terrible   and   cruel   battle

(19) ***Adonc vint***   *le   duc   beuues   daigremont   en*
       Then   come-3SG.PAST the   duke   Beuves   of Aigremont   in

       poingnant   terriblement   son destrier et   frappa   engueran (26)
       spur on-PART   terribly   his charger and   hit-3SG.PAST   Engueran

(20) ***Adonc fut***   ***moult   esbahy*** *le   duc   beuues*
       Then   be-3SG.PAST very   astounded the   duke   Beuves

       quant ainsi par   terre   se   vit. (27)
       when so   by   ground   himself   see-3SG.PAST

In the examples above, we see it signal the beginning of the battle at Troyes between Charlemagne's people and the brothers of Aymon. This example explicitly uses the verb *commenca* (began) and marks a clear shift in the narrative from the assembly of troops to the actual description of the battle. Example (17), like (12) and (13) above, marks the arrival of a new character in the field of battle and the beginning of a new duel. Finally, (18), similar to examples (12–15) shifts the narrative focus to the emotion *esbahy* 'astonishment' experienced by the Duke of Aigremont when his horse is slain and he finds himself fighting on foot.

Or, which is sometimes translated as 'now', occurs nine times in the French prose text, and seems to be reserved for particularly important shifts in the narrative. It appears also to predominantly express the results of an episode.

(21) ***Or***   ***est***   *oultrageusement   tue*   *le   bon   lohier*
       Now be-3SG.PRES   outrageously   kill-PART   the   good   Lohier

       filz   aisne   du   roy   charlemaigne. (20)
       son   eldest   of the   king   Charlemagne

(22) ***Or   est***   *le bon   et   vallant   duc   daigremont   trespasse*. (32)
       Now   be-3SG.PRES the good   and   brave   duke   of Aigremont pass-PART

In (21) and (22), we see *or* is used to signal the deaths of Lohier and the Duke of Aigremont, respectively. Both of these deaths are the tragic result of violent encounters between the factions and have far reaching consequences. The death of Lohier leads to Charlemagne's assault on Troyes and Aigremont to avenge his son and results in the eventual death of the duke. Aigremont's death, in turn, leads to the overall conflict that will unfold between the sons of Aymon (his nephews) and Charlemaigne's knights throughout the rest of the romance.

Or is also deployed in conjunction with interlacement formulae and can signal a major shift in setting and characters as seen in the examples below:

(23) ***Mais ores vous lairrons a parler/des** messagiers **et vous dirons du** roy charlemaigne qui estoit a paris avec grant mul/titude de seignourie qui la estoient assemblez.* (21)
But now we will cease to talk to you about the messengers, and we will tell you about the king Charlemagne who was in Paris with a great number of lords who were assembled there.

(24) ***Or lairons cy a parler du** bon roy charlemaigne et de son filz lohyer/**et vous dirons du** bon duc aymon et de les enfans qui estoient a paris.* (23)
Now we will cease here to talk about the good king Charlemagne and about his son Lohier, and we will tell you about the good duke Aymon and about his children who were in Paris.

In (23) the narrative shifts from speaking of the messengers that return bearing Lohier's corpse and turns to speak of Charlemagne, who is yet unaware of his son's death. Here, *or* (in the form *ores*) is deployed alongside *mais* ('but'), which can also act as a DM. This grouping of narrative DMs to form clusters is not uncommon in French (or in English) and could, at times, have an intensifying quality. Example (24), which occurs not long after, leaves the mourning Charlemagne and turns the narrative focus to Aymon and his sons, which now must flee Paris in fear of the king's vengeance and to fight alongside their kinsmen.

As stated in the previous section, interlacement was already a feature in the verse *Renaut*. In any case, it is significant to note that, when it occurs in the verse, it can also be found in connection to *or*. In the prose versions, interlacement came to acquire a particularly prominent place and was reserved for important shifts in the plot. Although the French version already anticipates the conscious use of this strategy to highlight significant points of change in the narrative, we see this foregrounded even more in the English prose version, which combines this formulae with typographical and paratextual features. This will be examined in detail in the next section.

Finally, the use of *si*, which is often translated as 'so', is similar to *or* in that it is used mostly to emphasise the results of a particular exchange or series of episodes. In the French prose, *si* occurs eleven times. We have chosen three examples:

(25) ***Si**   *se*   *teust*   *la*   *duschesse / et dist*
So   herself   silence-3SG.PAST the   duchess   and say-3SG.PAST

que iamais ne   *luy*   *en*   *parleroit.* (17)
that never   negPart   him   advPron   speak-3SG.COND

(26) ***si leva***   *le*   *duc*   *son branc et*   *frappa*   *Lohier*
So raise-3SG.PAST   the duke his sword and hit-3SG.PAST   Lohier

si durement	*sur*	*son*	*heaulme*	*quil*		*le*	*fendit*
so hard	on	his	helmet	that he		it	split-3SG.PAST

iusques	*aux*	*dens et*	*le*	*tomba*		*mort devant luy*. (20)
until	to the	teeth and	him(?)	fall-3SG.PAST		dead before him

(27) ***Si*** | ***monterent*** | ***tost*** | *a* | *cheval* | *le* | *bon* | *duc* | *aymon*
| So | climb-3PL.PAST | quickly | on | horse | the | good | duke | Aymon |

et les	*quatre*	*chevaliers*	*ses enfans / et*		*narresterent*
and	the four	knights	his children and		not stop-3PL.PAST

aulcunement		*iusques a*	*ce quil*	*furent*		*a*	*Caen* (23)
at all		until	that they	be-3PL.PAST		in	Caen

In example (25), the duchess decides to remain silent after the Duke of Aigremont refuses to listen to her counsel. In (26), the duke finally slays Lohier and in (27), the narrative focuses on how Aymon and his sons flee the court on horseback. The function of *si* as a resulting marker is crucial for establishing coherence in the narrative since it signals a clear end to an exchange between characters, in the case of (25), or the result of a series of actions and decisions, as in (26) and (27), and prepares the audience for a shift in perspective or topic.

All in all, it can be said that the general tendency in the prose *Renaut* is that narrative progression and coherence is increasingly managed by DMs. Interestingly, as most of the examples above evidence, the DMs are also supplemented by a change in the word order pattern with the verb in second position followed by the subject. This is, however, not always the case and the combination of initial INTs or adjective complements with a copular verb—the preferred formula for forgrounding narrative shifts in the verse *Renaut*, becomes secondary in relation to the sheer proliferation of changes in narrative level signalled by DMs. Furthermore, the use of *lors* and *adonc*, which can both mean 'then', serves to emphasise linear narrative progression and, when used to introduce a shift to a character's emotions, also provide insight into the motivations behind the ensuing actions. This effectively creates a sense of causality and strengthens the links between actions and their results by allowing the audience a glimpse into the character's feelings. There is also a concern with actively foregrounding the results of events, as evidenced by the use of *or* and *si*, and providing a definite boundary between the end of an episode and the beginning of the next.

5 FROM FRENCH TO ENGLISH: NARRATIVE ORGANISATION IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSLATION

The final part of our analysis will focus on comparing how coherence-making strategies were transposed from the French prose *Renaut* to its English prose version. The influence of French romance in the English tradition has been abundantly studied (Lacy 2000, Tomaryn Bruckner 2000, Cooper 2004) and it is undeniable that most of the prose romances that circulated in print in the fifteenth century were translations or adaptations of French sources. As Lacy remarks, even when the English translators aimed to distance themselves from their sources, "[...] their own romances frequently

betray a decided Gallic influence in their use of the structures and conventions of romance, their borrowing of popular motifs or characters, or their rhetorical procedures" (2000: 167). This is amply evident in the case of many of the books published by Caxton, even those that were not directly adapted by him such as Malory's *Le Mort D'Arthur* (1485).

Furthermore, a lot has already been said of the particular vocabulary and syntax employed by William Caxton, the man responsible for bringing the printing press to Britain and for spearheading the translation and circulation of prose romances in England (Blake 1991). Caxton, who was simultaneously printer, editor, and translator, was greatly influenced by the style and conventions of the continental courts. From the evidence we have in his prologues and epilogues, it is clear that he had something akin to a modern editorial project and he aimed to act as an arbiter of taste and culture in his country (Hellinga 2010). We can detect traces of his vision and legacy in many of the printers and distributors of romance in England, who often reprinted his editions—with little to no emendations—, well into the sixteenth century.

Caxton's translation, *The Foure Sons of Aymon,* is very close to the original French prose. There is barely any condensation of the plot and, at most, Caxton adds a short phrase here or there to add nuance to a particular passage (see example 40 below). However, one striking difference found pertains to the organisation of the tale. Caxton is very deliberate in his translation of DMs from the French and adapts them to the expectations of the English public. It is clear from his translation choices that Caxton understood the importance of this strategy. Example (13), quoted above, clearly exemplifies this.

This section is translated by Caxton as:

(28) ***but sodaynly came there*** *upon him the erle Guenes that sat upon a good courser the which smote the duke Benes of Aygremounte with his speare such a stroke, that he shoued hym through & through his body,* ***and thus fell downe dead*** *the duke Benes of Aygremount* ***and than*** *the duke Griffon the father of the said Guenes came to the Duke benes of Aygremount that lay dead upon the sande & shaued his swered in to his foundement.* (fol. xii v, 56)[19]

Although *lors* is usually rendered as *then* in Caxton's translation, here he opts for the use of *but sodaynly came there*. This construction emphasises the surprise factor of the event leading to Aygremont's death—one of the crucial moments in the narrative. Furthermore, where the French reads "et tomba mort le duc daigremont", the English adds "and thus fell downe dead the duke Benes of Aygremount", where *thus*, also a

---

19   All quotes from the English prose version are form the Copland's 1554 reprint of Caxton's 1489 edition. The Copland print is the one digitise be EBBO and available in their online repository. We have also added the corresponding page of Richardson's 1885 edition of the Caxton print which was prepared for the Early English Text Society since this text was used when the 1554 print proved illegible. When referencing the text, we will first give the folio of the 1554 print followed by the page from Richardson's edition.

common DM in English, signals the final result of the exchange of blows. While the lexical choice changes, the linguistic formula of *DM + verb + subject*, and the resulting foregrounding function, remains.

A similar deviation from the French prose occurs when Charlemagne finally sees his son dead. The French and English prose versions render this moment as follows:

> (29) ***Si descendit*** *a pie et leua le tapis qui estoit sur la byere/**et vit son** filz lohyer qui avoit la teste couppee et le visage tout detranche. (23)*

> (30) ***he [Charlemagne] descended*** *from his horse a foote. & tooke up the cloth that was upon the biere and behelded his sonne Lohier.* ***Than saw he*** *the head that was smytten off from the body and the face that was all to hewen.* (fol. vi v, 35)

In (30), the initial DM *si* from the French is omitted and Caxton, instead, substitutes *and* for the DM *than* to emphasise the horrible sight that greets Charlemagne when he lifts the cloth covering his son's body. It is evident that this is a crucial moment in the narrative and this scene is immediately followed in both versions by the king's laments and anger at Lohier's killing. In this example, like in the one above, a clear concern with marking resulting sections explicitly is observed. Even when the original French prose forgoes completely with marking, Caxton is prone to add a DM to signal the end of an episode. This is particularly noticeable in examples like the one quoted below, which occurs after one of the duels held at the siege of Troyes:

> (31) *Les troys freres sen retournerent en leurs tentes moult courroucez (27)*

> (32) ***And soo wythdrewe the thre bretherne*** *abacke unto theyr Tentes with much wrath* (fol. x r, 46)

Whereas the French example presents no marking and is syntactically simply a SV construction, the English, to signal the conclusion of the exchange, turns to using the DM *and soo* followed by the verb *wythdrewe* and, finally, the subject.

The instances where *or* is used are also of note in the English translation. Although this DM is usually rendered as *now*, in English it holds a particularly forgrounded position as a resulting marker and it often appears alongside interlacement formulae.[20] This use is already visible in the French prose (see examples 21 and 22) but it becomes even more prominent in the English version. In *Aymon*, Caxton usually only translates *or* as *now* when it is found in a particularly significant resulting section or when it is used to shift between major plot lines alongside interlacement. Otherwise, Caxton renders *or* as *then* or *when*:

---

20 For a discussion of the narrative functions of the DM *now* in Middle English prose see the forthcoming chapter: García de Alba Lobeira, Sonia. "Late Middle English Prose Romances". *Narrative Structure from 1250 – 1750: A Genre by Genre Analysis*. Ed. Monika Fludernik. London / New York: Routledge (in preparation).

(31) ***Or furent appaisez*** *les barons avec le roy charlemaigne* (29)

(32) ***Whan²¹ were peased*** *the barons with the king Charlemanye* (fol. xi, 50)

(33) ***Or sen retourna*** *le roy charlemaigne vers paris/et les troys freres sen re-tournerent moult ioyeulx cascun en son hostel/* (29)

(34) ***And than returned*** *kynge Charlemayne towarde Parys, and the bretherne went agayne right gladde each of theym towarde hys place* (fol. xi r, 51)

The choice of *then* or *when* instead of *now* in examples (32) and (34) uses common DMs in English and signals a change in topic. *Now*, as stated above, is reserved for presenting new information and major points of change in the plot. Example (19) above, which states that Lohier has been slayn after the battle at Aigremont clearly demonstrates this:

(19) ***Or est oultrageusement tue*** *le bon lohier filz aisne du roy charlemaigne.* (20)

(35) ***Now is outrageously slyane*** *the good Lohyer the eldest sonne of kinge Charlemayne.* (fol. vii r, 35-36)

Here, the use of *now* emphasises the importance of the news and prompts the audience to expect to learn about the consequences of Lohier's murder. Additionally, the DM *now* is also used to switch between narrative levels and often heralds the appearance of metanarrative commentary as we see in (19/35), where the narrator qualifies "good" Lohier's murder as "outrageous". Similarly, in examples (36/37), we see the narrator address the audience directly and prepare them to change to a new setting and group of characters:

(36) ***Or sachez que*** *le roy estant a paris devers luy vindrent le conte guenes/son nepveu alorry/foquet de morillon/hardre et berenger* (30)

(37) ***Now shall ye here*** *how the kynge, beynge in Parys/came towarde hym the erle Guenes his neuewe, Aorlyfoulquet of Moryllon, Hardes and Berenger,* (fol. xi v, 51)

Taavitsainen and Hiltunen have argued that "both metatextual passages and *now* as a text-structuring device commonly occur at topic shifts or indicate particular steps in larger stretches of discourse [...]" in medical writing. As seen above, the same use can be observed in literary writing, where "*now* functions as a watershed between old and new information" (2012: 183).

Furthermore, in the English translation, the DM *now* is also sometimes combined with interlacement formulae, which anticipate a major change in topic and explicitly show the voice of the narrator addressing the audience.

(38) ¶ ***But nowe we shall heere leauve*** *to speake of the messangers **and shall tell you*** of the kynge Charlemayne that was at Parys.* (fol. v r, 30)

---

21   Caxton translates this *or* as *then* but Copland chooses to use *when* instead.

(39) ***Nowe shal we leue*** *heare to speake of them of Aygremount that ben in great*
lamentacion and weepinges for the death of their lorde: **and shal returne** *to*
tel of the traytoures Griffon & of Guenes his sonee that with theyr folke were
gone agayne to Parys. (fol. xiii r, 58)

The first (38), corresponds with example (21) above, which begins with "Mais ores
vous lairrons a parler/des messagiers" (p. 21), and (39) begins with "Maintenant[22] vous
laisserons a parler de ceulx daigremont" (p. 32). Example (38) introduces a new setting
as the narrator leaves the messengers carrying back Lohier's body to Paris and turns to
speak of Charlemagne, who is yet unaware of his son's death. Here the formula "and
shall tell you" is used to directly address the audience and thus secure their attention.
In contrast, example (39), marks a return to a setting and characters that were previ-
ously mentioned to continue where the story left off. Example (39) occurs at the very
end of the Aigremont episode and turns from the characters mourning the death of the
Duke of Aigremont to focus on the traitors that orchestrated his demise. It is evident
that interlacement formulae and DMs work together to establish coherence in the text
by emphasising continuity and, at times even simultaneity, between the episodes as the
narrative shifts from one setting and group of characters to the next. Furthermore, both
the DM *now* and interlacement foreground the narrative voice which is used to provide
additional commentary on the characters' actions as well as to guide the listeners or
readers from one episode to the next, particularly in important segments of the tale.

While interlacement was present in the verse *Renaut*, it is not a particularly sali-
ent strategy compared to the use of sentence-initial INTs. Heinemann (1993) states
and our analysis confirms that in the *chanson de geste*, interlacement tends to occur in
the middle of a *laisse* and not at the beginning or end of this structure where it would
have a foregrounded position. Furthermore, it is up for debate whether the interlace-
ment formulae, which are a feature more strongly associated to the French romance
than the *chanson de geste*, could have been interpolated at a later date. However, when
interlacement appears in the verse it does serve the function of breaking up the cycles
of repetition common in the *laisses* (Rychner: 74–88). Instead of enabling the recapitu-
lation of content and thematic overlapping typical of the *chanson de geste's* structure,
interlacement in the verse, much like in the prose, marks a definitive shift from one
action and setting to another, and thus enables plot progression in a narrative structure
that otherwise favours a different pattern linked to mnemonic cues and audience en-
gagement in an oral context.

In the French and English prose versions, the role of interlacement as a strong
boundary marker becomes even more apparent thanks to the use of other typographical
features like visual breaks between paragraphs, chapter headings, and large initials or
initials with woodcuts. These were a result of the emerging practices associated with
the printing press and varied from printer to printer. Although the use of these features
was already present in the 1497 edition of the French print, they become even more

---

22 *Maintenant* functions like *or* in this example. In OF *maintenant* still meant *suddenly*. In MF, the meaning
evolved to encompass *now* which is the sense retained in Modern French.

salient in Caxton's translation. In *Fig. 1* the interlacement formula appears unmarked in the middle of the paragraph while in *Fig. 2* we see the beginning of the interlacement formula signalled by an ornate initial.

Figure 1. The interlacement formula appears unmarked. Example (21), French prose, p. 21.
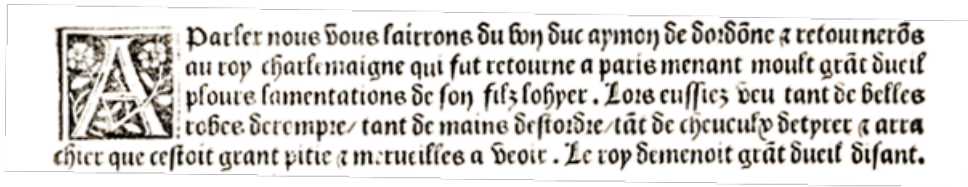
Figure 2. The interlacement formula begins with "A parler nous vous lairrons du bon duc aymon…" appears alongside an ornate initial. French prose, p. 24.[23]

In both Caxton's 1489 and Copland's 1554 editions, the use of interlacement to mark clear narrative breaks is rendered even more emphatically than in the Lyon edition from 1497 by the incorporation of the pilcrow as an additional signalling element as seen in *Fig. 3*, which corresponds to example (38).

Figure 3. Here the interlacement formula is separated from the main paragraph and signalled with a pilcrow sign. This is then followed by an enlarged initial. Example (38), Cop. fol. v r.

---

23   The full quote reads: "A parler nous vous lairrons du bon duc aymon de dordonne et retournerons au roy charlemaigne qui fut retourne a paris menant moult grant dueil plours lamentations de son filz lohyer."

Figure 4. The interlacement formula is signalled by an enlarged initial. Corresponds to Fig. 2. Cop. fol vii v.[24]

Despite how close the French and English editions are in both typographic and linguistic matters, there are some notable differences in how the text is presented. If we compare *Fig. 1*, which has interlacement unmarked by any additional typographical feature with *Fig. 3*, we find that both English editions separate the interlacement formula from the main body of text and follow this with a new paragraph. The new section begins by repeating "Charlemaigne that was atte Parys" to reestablish the setting as a new episode begins. Although the repetition itself could be attributed to a printing error, the fact that it survives in both English editions and that there is a deliberate division of the text signalled by the combination of a pilcrow, paragraph break, and initial establishes a strong association between interlacement, visual boundaries, and cognitive narrative boundaries.

Furthermore, in the English edition, we find a combination of interlacement with narrator commentary that is absent in the French edition. In Caxton's text we find:

> (40) ***We shall leue heere to speake of*** *the good king Charlemayne that was moch sori of his sonne Lohier* ***as ye haue heard***, ***and shall tell you*** *of the good Duke Aymon of Reynawde, his sonne, and of his three bretherne that were at Parys.* (fol. vii r, 35–36)

This is the translation given for the text quoted above in example (22) which reads "**Or lairons cy a parler du** bon roy charlemaigne et de son filz lohyer/**et vous dirons du** bon duc aymon et de ces enfans qui estoient a paris" (23). In (40), we see the narratorial remark, "as you have herde", used within the interlacement formula. This evokes the oral setting where these tales were transmitted and creates a pause in the narrative action while explicitly drawing the audience's attention to the events that just transpired. Effectively, this serves to reinforce narrative shifts and the boundaries between episodes and prompts the audience to reflect on the narrative episode that they have just finished reading or listening to. Then, the narrator prepares them to hear new

---

24   The full quote reads: "To speake of the good Duke Aymon of Dordonne and of his wife the duchesse and of theyr sonnes: we shal heere leue, and shall returne to speak of kynge Charlemayne that was come agayne to parys, making great sorowe for his sonne Lohier."

information by following with the second part of the interlacement formula: "and shall tell you of [...]". This technique thus serves to engage the audience by drawing attention to the act of storytelling and narrative progression which ultimately create an overall sense of coherence in the tale.

While interlacement is still a fairly common narrative strategy in the incunabla and early prints we analysed, this strategy was eventually replaced by shorter formulations in French prints from the sixteenth century onwards (*cf.* Baudelle-Michels 2006: 126). This is different in the English tradition, where interlacement remains as a technique in use and is even foregrounded at least well into the mid-1500s, as the Copland reedition attests. This could be due to the fact that many of the early prints in English were translations of earlier French texts. Be that as it may, interlacement as a narrative coherence-making technique was prevalent enough that we find this strategy expanded and parodied already towards the end of the sixteenth century, for example, in texts like Sydney's *Old Arcadia* (1581), which borrows and transforms many of the narrative conventions of medieval romances (Davies 1978: 21–24). While texts like the *Arcadia* hint at the refunctionalisation and replacement of this feature by typographical forms and other narrative strategies in the late 1500s, our fifteenth and sixteenth-century editions suggest that interlacement and typographical coherence-making strategies, which emerged in the context of the new print medium, continued to coexist throughout the early modern period and worked together to structure the text.

6 CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have sought to provide an insight into the variety of linguistic and narrative strategies deployed to create narrative coherence as well as a sketch of how these behave as the story migrated from an OF *chanson de geste* to a MF prose romance and, finally, to a ME prose translation. In the verse *Renaut*, we have seen that the narrative formula '*molt* + copula construction' must be considered not only as a stylistic element but also as a coherence-making strategy implicated in the management of the transition from one episode to another. Another narrative formula, interlacement, is also found in the verse *Renaut*, although it is primarily linked to the tradition of romances. Its presence in the thirteenth century epic poem might indicate that we witness a blurring of genre boundaries in the verse *Renaut*. In the prose versions, both narrative formulae survive, but there is a decrease in the use of the copula construction with initial *molt*, which is accompanied by a significant increase in the quantity and variety of narrative DMs. We see that *lors/then*, *adonc/then, or/now*, and *si/so* in sentence initial position followed by the verb are used to signal narrative progression by introducing new characters, a change of setting, or a shift in perspective that allows for the audience to learn about the characters' emotions and interior motivations. In this context, epic narrative formulae like the copula construction with initial *molt* seem to be slowly losing importance for the creation of narrative coherence and to be increasingly used as stylistic elements.

Additionally, the prose versions enhance and supplement the use of DMs and interlacement using markers like ornate or enlarged initials, pilcrows, and paragraph

divisions which emphasise the boundaries between episodes and provide additional visual guides for the reader to follow. Ultimately, the subtle changes in the use of word order patterns, discourse markers, and interlacement in the *Renaut* tradition draw attention to the continuation but also refunctionalisation of narrative strategies in the emerging vernacular prose genre. As new typographical forms emerged and new printing practices influenced the presentation of texts, we begin to see older narrative strategies evolve and combine with some of the new elements to enhance their functions and establish coherence in novel ways. This preliminary incursion into a comparative study of verse and prose epic romances in different linguistic traditions demonstrates how structuring and coherence-making narrative patterns travelled across linguistic boundaries. Further studies are necessary to write a more comprehensive history of narrative practices in the late medieval and early modern European context.

References

Primary Sources
Early Prints
DE VILLENEUVE, Huon (?) (1497) *Les quatre fils Aymon*. In: Jehan de Vingle (ed.), Lyon. Incunabulum conserved in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Réserve des livres rares, Res Y2 366, 23 June 2022. ark:/12148/bpt6k87133046.

COPLAND, William (ed.) (1554) *The Right Plesaunt and Goodly Historie of the Foure Sonnes of Aimon the which for the excellent endytyng of it, and for the notable prowes and great virtues that were in them: is no less pleasaunt to rede, then worthy to be known of all estates bothe hyghe and lowe*. London. Early English Books Online, ProQuest LLC. 7 July 2022. https://www.proquest.com/books/right-plesaunt-goodly-historie-foure-sonnes-aimon/docview/2264208689/se-2.

Modern Editions
GEIPEL, Ernst (ed.) (1913) *Der zweite Teil des Buef d'Aigremont (Streit zwischen Renaut und Bertolais). Nach den Hss. MZ, M der Quatre Fils Aimon.* Greifswald: Buchdruckerei Hans Adler.

RICHARDSON, Octavia (ed.) (1885) *The Right Plesant and Goodly Historie of the Foure Sonnes of Aymon. Englisht from the French by William Caxton, and Printed by Him about 1489* (The English Charlemagne Romances 10, 11). London: The Early English Text Society by N. Trübner & Co.

THOMAS, Jacques (ed.) (1989) *Renaut de Montauban. Edition critique du manuscrit Douce* (Textes littéraires français). Genève: Droz.

THOMAS, Jacques (ed.) (1962) *L'épisode ardennais de 'Renaut de Montauban'. Édition synoptique des versions rimées*. Vol. 1: *Introduction et texte du ms D*. Brugge: De Tempel.

Secondary sources

BADIOU-MONFERRAN, Claire *et al.* (2020) "Chapitre 40: Les relateurs." In: Ch. Marchello-Nizia *et al.* (eds), 1615–1678.

BAUDELLE-MICHELS, Sarah (2014) "Renaut de Montauban ou Les quatre fils Aymon (prose vulgate)." In: Maria Colombo Timelli/Barbara Ferrari/Anne Schoysman/François Suard (eds), *Nouveau Répertoire de mises en prose (XIVe–XVIe siècle)*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 699–715.

BAUDELLE-MICHELS, Sarah (2006) *Les Avatars d'une chanson de geste. De 'Renaut de Montauban' aux 'Quatre Fils Aymon'*. Paris: Champion.

BOUTET, Dominique (1988) *'Jehan de Lanson'. Technique et esthétique de la chanson de geste au XIIIe siècle*. Paris: Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure.

BLAKE, Norman Francis (1991) "Caxton's Language." In: *Id., William Caxton and English literary culture*. London: The Hambledon Press, 137–148.

BRINTON, Laurel J. (1996) *Pragmatic Markers in English. Grammaticalization and Discourse Functions*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

BRINTON, Laurel J. (2010) "Discourse Markers." In: Andreas H. Jucker/Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Historical Pragmatics*, Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 285–314.

BURIDANT, Claude (1999) "L'ordre verbe-sujet en ancien français et son évolution vers le français moderne. Esquisse de comparaison avec les langues romanes." *Linx* 11. https://doi.org/10.4000/linx.901 [accessed on 28 June 2022].

CALIN, William (1981) "L'Épopée dite vivante: Réflexions sur le prétendu caractère oral des chansons de geste." *Olifant* 8/3, 227–237.

CANNING, Patricia (2014) "Functional Stylistics." In: Michael Burke (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*. New York, NY: Routledge, 45–67.

CARRUTHERS, Janice/Sophie MARNETTE (2007) "Tense, Voices and Point of View in Medieval and Modern 'Oral' Narration." In: Emmanuelle Labeau/Carl Vetters/Patrick Caudal (eds), *Sémantique et diachronie du système verbal français.* Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 177–202.

CLOVER, Carol (1974) "Scene in Saga Composition." *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 89, 57–83.

COLOMBO TIMELLI, Maria *et al.* (2014) "Avant-propos." In: Maria Colombo Timbelli *et al.* (eds), *Nouveau Répertoire de mises en prose (XIVe–XVIe siècle)*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 7–16.

COLONNA, Saveria *et al.* (2014) "Effect on Comprehension of Preposed versus Postposed Adverbial Phrases." *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* 43/6, 771–790.

COOPER, Helen (2004) *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

DE BEAUGRANDE, Robert-Alain/Wolfgang U. DRESSLER (1981) *Einführung in die Textlinguistik*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

DUGGAN, Joseph J. (1981) "La théorie de la composition orale des chansons de geste: les faits et les interprétations." *Olifant* 8/3, 238–255.

EGGINS, Suzanne (2004) *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics.* New York, NY: Continuum.

ENKVIST, Nils E./Brita WÅRVIK (1987) "Old English *tha*, Temporal Chains and Narrative Structure". In: Anna Giacalone Ramat/Onofrio Carruba/Giuliano Bernini (eds), *Papers from the 7th International Conference on Historical Linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 221–37.

FLEISCHMAN, Suzanne (1990) *Tense and Narrativity. From Medieval Performance to Modern Fiction*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

FLEISCHMAN, Suzanne (1991) "Discourse Pragmatics and the Grammar of Old French: A Functional Reinterpretation of *si* and the Personal Pronouns." *Romance Philology* 44/3, 251–283.

FLUDERNIK, Monika (1995) "Middle English tho and other narrative discourse markers." In: Andreas Jucker (ed.), *Historical Pragmatics.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 359–92.

FLUDERNIK, Monika (1996) *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology*. London/New York: Routledge.

FLUDERNIK, Monika (2000) "Narrative discourse markers in Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 1/2, 231–262.

GITTLEMAN, Anne Iker (1967) *Le style épique dans 'Garin le Loherain'*. Genève: Droz.

HÄSNER, Bernd (2019) *Erzählte Macht und die Macht des Erzählens. Genealogie, Herrschaft und Dichtung in Ariosts 'Orlando furioso'*. Stuttgart: Steiner.

HEINEMANN, Edward A. (1993) *L'Art métrique de la chanson de geste. Essai sur la musicalité du récit.* Genève: Droz.

HELLINGA, Lotte (2010) *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*. London: The British Library.

HOERBURGER, Felix ([1998] 2016) "Refrain. Der Refrain in der Volksmusik". In: Laurenz Lütteken (ed.), *MGG Online*. Kassel/Stuttgart/New York: Bärenreiter/Metzler/RILM. https://www.mgg-online.com/mgg/stable/46122 [accessed on 22 July 2022].

HOPPER, Paul J. (1979) "Aspect and Foregrounding in Discourse." In: Talmy Givón (ed.), *Syntax and Semantics*. *Vol. 12: Discourse and Syntax*. New York/San Francisco/London: Academic Press.

KRAGL, Florian (2019) "Autor und Erzähler – Mittelalter." In: Eva von Contzen/Stefan Tilg (eds), *Handbuch Historische Narratologi*e. Berlin: Springer, 82–93.

KRUEGER, Roberta (ed.) (2000) *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

LABOV, William/Joshua WALETZKY (1967) "Narrative Analysis: oral versions of personal experience." In: June Helm (ed.), *Essays in the Verbal and Visual Arts.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 12–44.

LABOV, William (1972) *Language in the Inner City. Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

LACY, Norris J. (2000) "The evolution and legacy of French prose romance." In: R. Krueger (ed.), 167–182.

LEWIS, R. E./N. F. BLAKE/A. S. G. EDWARDS (1985) *Index of Printed Middle English Prose.* New York/London: Garland Publishing Inc.

LOT, Ferdinand (1918) *Étude sur le Lancelot en prose*. Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion.

LUGOWSKI, Clemens (1976) *Die Form der Individualität im Roman. Mit einer Einleitung von Hans Schlaffer*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp.

LUTZKY, Ursula (2012) *Discourse Markers in Early Modern English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

MARCHELLO-NIZIA, Christiane/Bernard COMBETTES/Sophie PRÉVOST/Tobias SCHEER (eds) (2020) *Grande Grammaire Historique du Français*. Vol. II. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.

MARCHELLO-NIZIA, Christiane (2020) "Chapitre 32.4: Les adverbes". In: Christiane Marchello-Nizia *et al.* (eds), 912–929.

MARCHELLO-NIZIA, Christiane/Sophie PRÉVOST (2020) "Chapitre 34: Expression et position des constituants majeurs dans les divers types de propositions". In: Christiane Marchello-Nizia *et al.* (eds), 1055–1219.

MEALE, Carol M. (1992) "Caxton, de Worde, and the Publication of Romance in Late Medieval England." *The Library* XIV/4, 283–298.

MÜLLER, Jan-Dirk (1999) "Der Prosaroman – eine Verfallsgeschichte? Zu Clemens Lugowskis Analyse des 'formalen Mythos' (mit einem Vergleich)." In: Walter Haug (ed.), *Mittelalter und Frühe Neuzeit. Übergänge, Umbrüche, Neuansätze.* Tübingen: Niemeyer, 143–163.

NORRICK, Neal R. (2000) "Discourse Markers in Oral Narrative." *Journal of Pragmatics* 33, 849–878.

ROSSI, Marguerite (1975) *'Huon de Bordeaux' et l'évolution du genre épique au XIIIᵉ siècle.* Paris: Champion.

RYCHNER, Jean (1999) *La chanson de geste. Essai sur l'art épique des jongleurs.* Genève: Droz.

RYDING, William W. (1971) *Structure in Medieval Writing.* Paris: Mouton.

SCHIFFRIN, Deborah (1987) *Discourse Markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SCHNEIDER, Christian (2020) *Logiken des Erzählens. Kohärenz und Kognition in früher mittelhochdeutscher Epik.* Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.

SCHULZ, Armin (²2015) *Erzähltheorie in mediävistischer Perspektive. Studienausgabe*. Edited by Manuel Braun/Alexandra Dunkel/Jan-Dirk Müller. Berlin/München/Boston: De Gruyter.

SPEARING, A.C. (2015) "What is a Narrator?: Narrator Theory and Medieval Narratives." *Digital Philology* 4/1, 59–105.

STUCK, Elisabeth (2007) "Kohärenz." In: Klaus Weimar *et al.* (eds), *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft. Neubearbeitung des Reallexikons der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*. Vol. 2. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 280–282.

STURM-MADDOX, Sara/Donald MADDOX (1996) "Introduction: Cyclicity and Medieval Literary Cycles." In: Sara Sturm-Maddox/Donald Maddox

(eds), *Transtextualities. Of Cycles and Cyclicity in Medieval French Literature*. Binghamton/N.Y.: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1–14.

SUARD, François (2000) "Le *Beuves d'Aigremont* dans la version des incunables et dans les manuscrits en vers." In: Miren Lacassagne (ed.), *Ce nous dist li escris… Che est la verité. Études de littérature médiévale offertes à André Moisan.* Aix-en-Provence: CUERMA, 253–261.

SUARD, François (2014) "Les proses épiques. Difficultés et intérêt du classement." In: Maria Colombo Timelli (ed.), *Pour un nouveau répertoire des mises en prose. Roman, chanson de geste, autres genres.* Paris: Classiques Garnier, 11–33.

SUBRENAT, Jean (1974) *Étude sur 'Gaydon', Chanson de geste du XIIIᵉ siècle*. Aix-en-Provence: Éditions de l'université de Provence.

THOMAS, Jacques (1961) "Les Mises en Prose de *Renaut de Montauban*. Classement sommaire et sources." In: *Fin du Moyen Age et Renaissance. Mélanges de philologie française offerts à Robert Guiette*. Anvers: Nederlandsche Boekhandel.

TOMARYN BRUCKNER, Matilda (2000) "The shape of romance in medieval France." In: R. Krueger (ed.), 13–28.

TOOLAN, Michael (1994 [1988]) *Narrative. A Critical Linguistic Introduction.* London/Oxford: Routledge.

TOOLAN, Michael (2013) "Coherence." In: Peter Hühn *et al.* (eds), *The living handbook of narratology*. Hamburg: Hamburg University. https://www-archiv.fdm.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/node/69.html [accessed on 20 October 2023].

VINAVER, Eugène (1971) *The Rise of Romance*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

WINTER-FROEMEL, Esme/Carlotta POSTH (2023) "Discourse traditions in the history of French." In: Esme Winter-Froemel/Álvaro S. Octavio de Toledo y Huerta (eds), *Manual of Discourse Traditions in Romance.* Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 435–466.

WITTIG, Susan (1978) *Stylistic and Narrative Structures in the Middle English Romances*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Abstract

COHERENCE-MAKING STRATEGIES IN THE *RENAUT DE MONTAUBAN* TRADITION: FROM FRENCH VERSE TO ENGLISH PROSE

In the transition from the late Middle Ages to the early modern period, the vernacular prose romance became popular throughout Europe. This new genre brought about the functional expansion of vernacular languages into the realm of prose, which had previously been primarily the preserve of Latin. This paper discusses coherence-making strategies in prose romances from a diachronic perspective. In a case study of the *Renaut de Montauban*, also called *The Four Sons of Aymon*, we explore a number of linguistic devices used to convey narrative coherence in the *chanson de geste* tradition and what happens to these patterns when the matter is transposed from verse into prose

and across languages, from French into English. We focus on copula constructions with initial intensifiers, the discourse markers *lors, adonc, or* and *si* (and their English counterparts), as well as the narrative formula commonly referred to as *entrelacement* or interlacement. By combining linguistic observations with a narratological framework borrowed from literary analysis, we aim to shed light on further research possibilities into the realm of comparative medieval literature which considers new generic (prose), material (print), and linguistic (French-English) contexts. Our results show that the change in form from verse to prose causes word order patterns with sentence-initial intensifiers to decline in favour of a general preference for discourse markers. These became the preferred way of establishing coherence in long prose texts. Their varied use in French and the English translation of the *Renaut* show a definite awareness of the significance of this resource for plot progression and the management of shifts between narrative levels. Furthermore, the combination of discourse markers with other narrative formulae, like interlacement, and typographical features underscore the deliberate use of these linguistic features as coherence-making elements in the prose *Renaut* tradition.

Keywords: *chanson de geste*, prose romance, narrative coherence, Middle English, Old French

Povzetek

STRATEGIJE USTVARJANJA KOHERENCE V BESEDILIH TRADICIJE *RENA-UTA DE MONTAUBANA*: OD FRANCOSKEGA VERZA DO ANGLEŠKE PROZE

Na prehodu iz srednjega v zgodnji novi vek so prozne romance v vernakularnih jezikih postale priljubljene po vsej Evropi. Novi žanr je privedel do funkcijske širitve teh jezikov na prozna besedila, ki so bila pred tem pretežno v domeni latinščine. Prispevek se ukvarja s strategijami vzpostavljanja koherence v proznih romancah z diahrone perspective. Ob besedilu o *Renautu de Montaubanu,* imenovanem tudi *The Four Sons of Aymon,* proučujemo razne jezikovne mehanizme, ki se v tradiciji *chanson de geste* uporabljajo za doseganje pripovedne koherence, in opazujemo, kaj se zgodi s temi vzorci, kadar se vsebina prestavi iz verzov v prozo in iz francoskega v angleški jezik. Osredotočamo se na zgradbe s kopulo, ki se pojavljajo skupaj z začetnimi intenzifikatorji, na diskurzne označevalce *lors, adonc, or* in *si* (skupaj z njihovimi angleškimi ustreznicami) ter na pripovedno formula, znano kot *entrelacement* oz. preplet. S kombiniranjem jezikoslovnih opažanj in naratološkega modela, izposojenega iz literarne vede, skušamo nakazati nadaljnje raziskovalne možnosti za primerjalno proučevanje srednjeveške književnosti, ki upošteva nov žanrski (proza), materialni (tisk) in jezikovni (francosko-angleškega) kontekst. Dobljeni rezultati kažejo, da je sprememba iz verzne v prozno obliko povzročila upad rabe besednorednih vzorcev z intenzifikatorji na začetku povedi in nasploh prevlado diskurznih označevalcev, ki so postali najpogostejše sredstvo vzpostavljanja koherence v dolgih proznih besedilih. Raznolika raba

diskurznih označevalcev v francoščini in v *Renautovem* angleškem prevodu nedvomno kaže na zavedanje o pomenu tega sredstva pri zgodbenem razvoju in pri obvladovanju prehodov med pripovednimi ravnmi. Poleg tega kombiniranje diskurznih označevalcev z drugimi pripovednimi sredstvi, kot so zgodbeno prepletanje in tipografske značilnosti, priča o zavestni rabi teh jezikovnih značilnosti kot elementov, ki vzpostavljajo koherenco v proznih besedilih *Renautove* tradicije.

Ključne besede: *chanson de geste*, romance v prozi, pripovedna koherenca, srednja angleščina, stara francoščina

Santigo del Rey Quesada
Universidad de Sevilla
sdelrey@us.es

THE CONTRIBUTION OF ERASMUS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD*

1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The work presented here is based on the theoretical and methodological assumptions of German Variational Linguistics, which have a strong Coserian imprint. Three models, within this framework, acquire special relevance in the context of the present paper. On the one hand, the model of the linguistic-historical variational space between *communicative immediacy* (*Nähe*) and *distance* (*Distanz*) proposed by Koch and Oesterreicher (1990 [2007]: 15–19). For these authors, the variational space of any historical language (in the sense of Coșeriu 2007: 140) is understood as a *continuum* between the poles of conceptual orality (= communicative immediacy) and conceptual scripturality (= communicative distance), communicative domains determined by various parameters of an extra-linguistic nature (for instance, physical proximity of conversational partners, degree of familiarity, degree of emotional implication, possibility of participation in the conversation, deictic relationships between interlocutors etc.). In other words, the authors advocate overcoming the dichotomous distinction between *oral* and *written* on the medial plane and replacing it with a cline that refers to the type of discourse–medially oral or medially written– which is different according to different communicative parameters. In this sense, a medially written text may contain numerous features of orality or communicative immediacy (such as a WhatsApp message to a friend) just as a medially oral text may contain numerous features typical of scripturality or communicative distance (for example, the solemn speech at the investiture of an honorary doctorate).

On the other hand, German Variational Linguistics has also successfully exploited the model of *Discourse Traditions* (*Diskurstraditionen*), a term first used by Koch (1987) in his unpublished habilitation thesis and developed theoretically and analytically by numerous authors within European and Latin American Romance Linguistics (*cf.* Del Rey 2015a; Vincis/Miotto 2016; López Serena 2007, 2011, 2021, 2023; Kabatek 2018, and Cano Aguilar 2022, among others). The concept alludes to the traditional aspect that should be considered in any historical language (*cf.* Koch 1997: 45) in order to

understand how it functions, given that there are not only idiomatic rules in a language (referring to phonetics-phonology, morphosyntax and lexicon) but also discourse rules that enable a speaker's linguistic competence to be recognised. The idea of evocation is central to the definition of discourse tradition, since certain elements in texts can function as discourse-traditional marks that evoke particular discourse zones (*cf.* Kabatek 2018: 220) within texts, genres, textual sequences or particular conceptual profiles –by conceptual profile I mean the place a text occupies in the *continuum* between communicative immediacy and distance.– Thus, for instance, the sequence *once upon a time* has the power to evoke the beginning of a tale (even if the author's intention is not to tell a tale, by using that sequence he/she is evoking that specific discourse zone of that type of discourse with the communicative purpose he/she has set for him/herself). Likewise, the abundance of subordinate sentences and syntactic complexity in a text makes it possible to evoke the conceptual profiles of communicative distance.

Thirdly, a concept proposed by Kloss (1978) within the field of German Studies has proved to be particularly fruitful in Romance Linguistics research in recent decades and will be equally important in the arguments I will defend in the following pages. I refer to the concept of *elaboration* (*Ausbau*). Kloss (1978: 25) employs the term *Ausbausprache* or *Ausbau* languages referring to languages that are configured in such a way that they can serve 'als standardisierte Werkzeuge literarischer Betätigung' 'as standardised tools for literary expression.' The *Ausbau* i.e. *elaboration* processes of Romance languages consist of two complementary aspects of linguistic development (*cf.* Koch/Oesterreicher 1990 [2011]: 225). On the one hand, extensive elaboration (ibid.) refers to the ability of a language to occupy the domain of conceptual scripturality used in discourse traditions that are typical of communicative distance, in short, in all kinds of textual domains that characterise the languages of culture. And on the other, intensive elaboration refers to the development of specific linguistic mechanisms which enable a language confined up to a certain moment to communicative immediacy to achieve the communicative domain of distance, i.e., mechanisms that lead to extensive elaboration. Languages that have not yet been scripted (*cf.* Frank-Job/Selig 2016) adopt a specific orthography; in the case of Romance languages, recourse to the Latin alphabet was the most consistent solution. Moreover, elaboration also leads to an increase in the number of nexuses and forms of expression of syntactic relations, as well as an expansion of vocabulary, including the development of a technical lexicon. These mechanisms directly affect elements of the linguistic system. According to Kloss (1978: 28), in order to determine whether a given dialect or *Abstand* language has attained the status of an *Ausbau* language, the widespread use of that dialect or language as a vehicle for the expression of instructional, technical and scientific texts[1] – among which could be included discourses that are often considered characteristic of specialised languages[2] – is more important than the proliferation of literary texts.

---

1   An *Abstand* language, a term coined by Kloss (1978: 25), is a language that differs from another language by its immanent qualities (phonetic-phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical system).

2   A discussion of this controversial term is given in Del Rey (2018: 343–350).

2 LATIN AND ROMANCE IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Throughout the European Middle Ages, numerous Romance languages or in Coseriu's terminology "primary Latin dialects"[3] (Coseriu 1981: 14), which had been restricted to oral use for centuries, developed the mechanisms needed to become languages of culture, i.e. languages capable of transmitting knowledge and producing works of literary creation through writing.

Elaboration mechanisms represent a crucial stage in language standardisation processes (Haugen 1966, Milroy/Milroy 1985[2012], Maas 2014). The essential model for elaboration processes during the Middle Ages was the classical, postclassical and medieval Latin scriptural production, fundamental material in the *acculturation* (Bossong 1979) of the neo-Latin languages. Therefore, the translations from Latin into the vernaculars that were created to disseminate knowledge and Roman case law (a symptomatic example is that of *Fuerzo Juzgo* in the Iberian Peninsula, a translation of the visigothic *Liber Iudiciorum*, *cf.* Kabatek 2005, Castillo Lluch 2018), especially in medieval times, were considered a key tool in the development of these elaboration processes (*cf.* Albrecht 1995: 2017). Both the lexical-semantic and the syntactic-discursive levels have been cited on several occasions as proof that translation represents a catalytic force of linguistic elaboration, based primarily on the interference of the Latin models over the Romance models (*cf.* Fernández-Ordóñez 2004, Del Rey 2021b).

The consolidation of the Romance languages as languages of culture goes hand in hand with the progressive retreat of Latin in the legal-administrative and aesthetic-literary spheres. A paradigmatic case is that of 13th-century Castile in the period between the rule of Ferdinand III (1217–1252) and Sancho IV (1284–1295) (*cf.* Sánchez-Prieto 2004: 424–426). However, this does not mean that Latin declined in importance as a model of elaborated language.[4] Even in the Early Modern Period, Latin, which had been refined during the Age of Humanism, was still considered a more eloquent, concise and elegant language than the vernaculars, as can be seen from the reading of numerous prologues to the *romanceamientos* (translations from Latin into the vernaculars) produced during this period (*cf.* Del Rey 2020). Boscán himself, in his translation of *Il Cortegiano* by Baldassare Castiglione – a translation that became a style guide in the Spanish Renaissance – complains about the terrible translators of Latin and justifies his translation by the fact that it is not precisely a *romanceamiento* but the translation from one vulgar language into another vulgar language.

The Early Modern Period, heir to humanism, continued to revere Latin as the most valued language for the transmission of knowledge. In order to carefully re-establish the texts of classical antiquity, the humanists sought to interpret them correctly, based on a rigorous knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the classical languages (Hebrew, Greek, Latin), but also on complementary disciplines such as geography, history,

---

3   Primary Latin dialects correspond to the direct evolution of Latin in the different territories of the Romance-speaking world, while the secondary dialects are an evolution of the primary dialects themselves (for example, while Castilian is a primary Latin dialect, Andalusian and its varieties can be regarded as a secondary dialect).

4   By *elaborated language* I mean any Romance language that has been developed according to the procedures of intensive and extensive elaboration and is therefore suitable for use in the field of communicative distance.

sociology, religion, etc., specific to the ancient civilisations they admired (*cf.* Flórez Míguez 1994: 348). This scientific fixation with classical languages (Latin, Greek and Hebrew) led Renaissance humanists in Catholic areas to question the truth inherited by tradition, and even the Bible was subjected to an exhaustive scrutiny in which Hebrew and Greek sources were crucial for determining the original meaning of the Gospels in Latin. Thomas More, Nebrija and Erasmus are clear examples of this intellectual stance of which Latin was the vehicle of expression.

By the 15th and 16th centuries, the European vernaculars had reached a considerable level of elaboration. In the official sphere, Latin was still mainly used as a lingua franca in international diplomacy, although creative literature and other manifestations of written culture continued to produce texts in Latin, especially among Europe's intellectual elite. The humanists, however, saw an unparalleled opportunity in Latin to promote the knowledge of antiquity, and to discuss problems that were of considerable concern to Europe's cultured elite. Erasmus is perhaps the figure who best embodies this humanist ideal that placed hope in Latin to unite a Europe separated by languages and particularistic interests which often escalated into wars and diplomatic conflicts of various kinds. In his excellent biography of Erasmus, Zweig states:

> Languages, which had hitherto formed an impenetrable wall between nation and nation, must no longer separate the peoples. A bridge would be built by means of a universal tongue, the Latin of the humanists. At the same time the concept of a fatherland for each nation would have to be proved untenable because it formed too narrow an ideal. It should be replaced by the European, the supranational ideal (Zweig 1934 [2015]).

Given his strong leaning towards Latin, one might think that Erasmus' influence on the vernacular languages was minimal. However, nothing could be further from the truth, as I will try to demonstrate in the following two sections.

3 ERASMUS: DISSEMINATION OF HIS WORK AND STYLISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

Erasmus of Rotterdam is probably the most decisive figure of European humanism and one of the most influential personalities in the field of culture and literature of the Early Modern Period. Erasmian humanism has been defined as a 'Christian humanism', understood as an intimate connection between 'Christian wisdom and classical culture: classical education and ethics illuminated, modified, or corrected by Christian truth' (Thompson 1965: xvi, n. 4).[5] Erasmus was a critic and interpreter of the Bible, and his particular form of evangelism found a fertile ground in Europe for the initiatives and reforms of Luther in Germany and Cisneros in Spain (*cf.* Pérez 2013: 12), with notable differences

---

5   The Spanish humanist Antonio de Nebrija also occupies a privileged place in this field. Bataillon (1966 [2007]: 25) says of him that he embodies, on the threshold of the Spanish sixteenth century, the autonomous effort of humanism to restore integral, profane and sacred antiquity and that, as far as Christian humanism is concerned, Nebrija is not only the forerunner of Spanish Erasmism but anticipates Erasmus himself (*id.*).

in both cases. His reputation as a humanist earned him esteem in academic circles and his works began to be widely translated into Romance languages. The Kingdom of Castile took the lead in this endeavour; in fact, Bataillon (1966 [2007]: 279) describes the proliferation of translations on Spanish soil as a veritable 'Erasmian invasion'.[6] The *Colloquia familiaria*,[7] the author's most famous and most translated work in the whole European continent during his lifetime, helped, as Prosperi notes, to spread

> un tipo di moralità fondata sui Vangeli e sulla sapienza antica, che si oponeva in tutto alla religione dei frati. Le dispute teologiche, l'ossessiva insistenza su voti, pelegrinaggi, culto dei santi, digiuni, la concezione della castità femminile, la pratica della confessione e degli altri sacramenti erano realtà viste da Erasmo come superstizioni, sopravvivenze pagane o ebraiche, lontane dalla pietas cristiana a cui si dovevano educare i giovani lettori dei Colloquia. (Prosperi 2002: XLIII)

> [a type of morality founded in the Gospels and ancient wisdom, which was opposed in every way to the religion of the friars. Theological disputes, the obsessive insistence on vows, pilgrimages, the cult of saints, fasting, the concept of female chastity, the practice of confession and other sacraments were all seen by Erasmus as superstitions, pagan or Hebrew leftovers, far removed from the Christian piety in which the young readers of his *Colloquia* were to be educated.]

The linguistic question was not alien to the concerns of humanism and was manifested in two somewhat contradictory attitudes. Erasmus, who stated *Ego mundi civis esse cupio* 'My own wish is to be a citizen of the world,' showed a universalist attitude which was materialised in his attempt to revive Latin as a language of effective

---

6   Burke (2010: 43) highlights that Erasmus' reformist ideas had more impact in Europe through his translations than through his original works.

7   Translations of the *Colloquia* in Castile began with the version of the *Uxor mempsigamos* by Diego Morejón in 1527, of which a new anonymously revised version appeared in 1528. From the same year date the translation of the dialogue *De rebus ac vocabulis*, also anonymous, and that of the dialogue *Proci et puellae*, written by Luis Mejía. The first collection of translated Erasmian colloquies was also printed in 1528. This collection consists of the Spanish versions of the *Pietas pueriis*, the *Colloquium senile* and the *Funus*. However, the most widespread volume of colloquiums of the time is the one published in 1529, which includes eight versions by Alonso Ruiz de Virués (*Puerpera*, *Pietas puerilis*, *De visendo loca sacra*, *Uxor mempsigamos*, *Convivium religiosum*, *Militis et carthusiani*, *Abbatis et eruditae* and *Franciscani*), Mejía's translation of *Proci et puellae* and two anonymous translations (*Senile* and *Funus*). A new anonymous translation of the *Funus* was printed in Seville in 1529 in a collection that also incorporated earlier versions already published in collections or in an exempt form. We have to wait until 1550 to find a new translation of the *Uxor mempsigamos*, not presented as such, in Pedro de Luján's *Coloquios matrimoniales*. The last known Castilian translation of a colloquy by Erasmus in the Golden Age is that of the *Charon* (manuscript of 1617), by Juan de Aguilar Villaquirán. Italian translations are later: in 1537, Antonio Brucioli included a partial version of the *Uxor mempsigamos* in his *Dialogi*. Ortensio Lando was the first to translate and print this complete dialogue in Venice in 1542. In 1545 the first integral translation of the Erasmian *Colloquia* appeared, the work of Pietro Lauro, who reprinted this collection in 1549 with some notable modifications in the versions. In French, we know the verse translation of the *Uxor mempsigamos* attributed to Berthélemy Aneau (1541). On the Erasmian tradition of the *Colloquia* in Castilian and other Romance languages, cf. Del Rey (2017, 2020).

communication in Early Modern Europe. A humanist concerned with the teaching of Latin to young people, he understood that the language of the classics was no longer a forever fixed, static language, but a dynamic one, still susceptible to change and development. In short, a vibrant language that should be presented as such to the literate youth of Europe. Thus, as an educator, he ventured to write formulae aimed at offering numerous strategies to students for linguistic interaction (greetings, offers, expressions of good wishes etc.), based primarily on exercises in synonymy and verbal abundance (Bierlaire 1977: 21), which would help the interlocutor to converse in fluent Latin. This is how he conceived his *Colloquia*, to which, in the successive editions published between 1518 and 1533, scenes and passages were incorporated where the moralising content became more and more explicit. So much so in fact, that in the March 1522 edition, the volume already indicated the author's guiding purpose: *non solum ad linguam puerilem expoliendam, verum etiam ad vitam instituendam* 'not only to perfect the language of boys, but also to prepare them for life'. Consequently, from the earliest years, the *Colloquia* were conceived as 'un manuel latin, pour apprendre, à la fois, les bonnes manières et le beau langage' 'a Latin manual to learn good manners and beautiful language at the same time' (Halkin/Bierlaire/Hoven 1972: 5).

Erasmus recognised that Latin was becoming an increasingly obsolescent language even among the European intelligentsia of his time. Indeed, throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, a Latin proper of conceptual scripturality continued to exist (*cf.* § 1) but it hardly went beyond the domain closest to the pole of communicative distance within its own variational space, in other words, it was a language which, even when used in oral contexts within cultivated circles, was alien to the familiar and informal spheres for which Romance languages were reserved. At the other extreme, the Vulgar Latin of both antiquity and the Middle Ages offered greater possibilities for variation in usage; however, it would never cross the conceptual spheres close to immediacy, as would be the case in early Romance texts. As explained in Section 2, Romance, while continuing to be a vehicle of communication in communicative situations of communicative immediacy, progressively increased its presence in other areas of the continuum until it entered the domain of communicative distance by virtue of the processes of extensive and intensive elaboration (*cf.* Section 2). This was largely owing to the influence of Latin models at the other end of the variational spectrum, on the continuum between communicative immediacy and communicative distance. Although increasingly weaker in Europe since the 16th century, Latin would continue to exist as a language of distance near the end of the continuum until around the 17th–18th centuries. However, also in the 16th century, Erasmus began a process of counter-elaboration (*cf.* Del Rey 2015b) to consciously make Latin a language capable of not being exclusively associated with the sphere of communicative distance, to which it had been limited throughout the Middle Ages, in order to move towards the domain of communicative immediacy. However, this 'new Latin' proposed by Erasmus for conversation was not intended to produce texts characterised by the presence of linguistic elements marked by low diastratic – i.e. motivated by the social affiliation or cultural level of the speakers – and diaphasic – motivated by

the specific communicative – components, but rather by elements corresponding to the standard variety as specified in Del Rey (2021a). In other words, Erasmus' conversational Latin was envisaged as a language that was not marked conceptually – i.e. a type of Latin at the centre of the *continuum* between communicative immediacy and distance – and, therefore, able to function at any point on the continuum between communicative immediacy and communicative distance.[8]

Erasmus' attempt to revitalise a spoken Latin that would be suitable for use even in informal situations, and to restore an everyday Latin to the European intelligentsia, unfortunately fell on deaf ears. Throughout the Middle Ages, Latin had been the common, everyday language of science and intellectuals in European universities. However, Pérez (2013: 81) states that by using the language in such professional realms it was transformed into a jargon full of words and turns of phrase that only masters were able to understand. Aware of this transformation, Erasmus took it upon himself to revitalise Latin. Notwithstanding, according to Pérez most humanists were, in general, very strict in censuring the degeneration of the language of Virgil and Cicero in the hands of the scholastics and took great pains to restore Latin to its pristine dignity (ibid.), though they forgot the communicative capacity of the Latin colloquy that Erasmus emphasised in his work. As a result, many humanists turned Latin into what it is said to be today: a dead language (ibid.).[9]

However, literary creation in vernacular languages was also flourishing. Works such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) and *Don Quixote* (1605/1615) in Spain, authors such as Antonio Brucioli (1498–1566) and Pietro Lauro (*c.* 1510–1568) in Italy, and Rabelais (1494–*c.* 1563) and Montaigne (1533–1592) in France were exponents of a type of natural language that spread as a stylistic model throughout Europe.[10] Especially in 16th-century Spanish and Italian Literature, prose aspired to the ideal of 'writing as one speaks', although the interpretation of this aspiration is controversial. In his famous work *Il cortegiano*, Baldassare Castiglione makes the following statement: 'e dico aver scritto nella mia (lingua), e come io parlo, ed a coloro che parlano come parl'io' 'and I say I have written in my [language], and as I speak, and to those who speak as I speak' (*apud* Gauger 1996: 342). It should be noted that Castiglione does not seem to allude here to a stylistic question (diaphasic in Coseriu's terminology 1957 [1968]), but rather seems to take sides in the debate concerning the *questione della lingua* (question of language), showing his preference for the variety that is common to him as a user of a regional form of Italian (*cf.* Gauger 1996: 342).

---

8   On Renaissance Latin and, specifically, on the Latin of Erasmus, cf. Thompson (1965), Thomson (1970), Fontán (1974), Chomarat (1981), Ijsewijn and Dirk Sacré (1998) and Tunberg (2004), among others.

9   As one of the best Latinists of the Castilian 16th century, Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas (known as *El Brocense*), stated: *latine loqui corrumpit ipsam latinitatem* 'speaking Latin corrupts Latinity.' Cf. also Zweig (1934 [2015]): 'even Latin, the language of a united Europe, the language of Erasmus's very heart, was dead. Die thou, likewise, Erasmus!'

10 On the influence of Erasmus on Italian Renaissance rhetoric, cf. Cotugno (2019) and Cotugno/Sgarbi (eds.) (2022). The wake of Erasmism in France has recently been studied in the volume coordinated by Perona and Vigliano (eds.) (2017). For Spanish, the work of Marcel Bataillon (cf. Bataillon 1966[2007], 1977) remains a reference.

Juan de Valdés' (1982 [2003]: 233) famous maxim, which embodies his own linguistic ideology, 'el estilo que tengo me es natural, y sin afetación ninguna escrivo como hablo' 'the style I have is natural to me and unaffected. I write as I speak' constituted a precept of style that shaped the Spanish Golden Age of literature decisively. Indeed, this quotation has given rise to various interpretations of not just the writer from Cuenca's stylistic ideal but also that of many other authors from the first third of the 16th century onwards. As Bustos (2011), Oesterreicher (1996), Gauger (1996, 2004) and Rivarola (1998) observe, the affirmation 'escrivo como hablo' 'I write as I speak' cannot be understood in isolation from the cultural context in which it appears, the rhetorical currents in force since the dawn of Humanism, and the variational reality of the texts that evolved into diverse discourse traditions (*cf.* n. 2). I believe that the importance of Erasmus of Rotterdam's writings in Europe regarding the conception of the prevailing style in the first third of the 16th century has not yet been given the importance it deserves. Although, from an ideological point of view, authors such as Bataillon (1966 [2007]) and Seidel Menchi (1987) have already given well-founded reasons to underline the debt owed by the European intelligentsia to the Early Modern Period, its influence on the theories of style and rhetoric has been less frequently contemplated, despite studies such as those by Chomarat (1981) and López Grigera (1986).

In the same way that Juan de Valdés' precept 'escrivo como hablo' 'I write as I speak' is considered fundamental as a statement that presupposes the cultivation of speech itself in accordance with the humanist ideal (*cf.* Gauger 1996) or, conversely, as an ideal of style that requires speech to reflect a natural form of writing (*cf.* Bustos 2011), the importance of Erasmus of Rotterdam also needs to be highlighted. This question has already been understood and highlighted by other scholars (*cf.* for example, Cano Aguilar 1991: 50) who recognise his influence in the shaping and success of this stylistic maxim. They highlight the figure of Erasmus not only as a hugely influential literary author on the history of European ideas, but also as a master of natural style who was followed by many other writers in later centuries, as well as a genuine inspiration for the precept that should be discussed in more detail in the light of his work. He wrote in one of his epistles:

> Ego nec hos probo qui neglectis in totum praeceptionibus, ex autoribus petunt loquendi rationem, nec hos qui praeceptis addicti non versantur in euoluendis autoribus. Praecepta volo esse pauca, sed optima: quod reliquum est arbitror petendum ex optimis quibusque scriptoribus, aut ex eorum colloquio qui sic loquuntur vt illi scripserunt (OEDER: number 1115 –Letter from Erasmus to George Halewin, 21 June 1520–, lines 28–34, page 290).
> [I do not agree with those who, totally unconcerned with the precepts, seek the art of speaking in the authorities, nor with those who, abandoned to the precepts, do not stop to read the authorities. I want the precepts to be few, but the best; what remains, I consider, is to be sought in the best writers or in the conversation of those who speak as they wrote.]

It is not, therefore, a matter of careless or informal speech, but the conversational ideal rests on a model of everyday Latin that demands dialectical effort and careful discourse awareness. I said above that this was a frustrated and unfulfilled endeavour in Erasmian idiosyncrasy, but his stylistic concern for careful conversation, for elaborated orality (*cf.* Del Rey 2019), did find wide acceptance in the Romance languages, as we shall see below. It is in this sense that I consider that Erasmus contributed to the development of Romance languages, by promoting strategies for the textualization of orality that had an enormous impact on the writing of the time and on the rooting of discursive techniques that contributed to the representation of orality in writing in a much more advanced manner than that which had taken place during the Middle Ages.

4 TRANSLATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE PRECEPT OF NATURAL STYLE

The important impact that Erasmus' works had on the European milieu of his time, not only through his works originally written in Latin but also through his translations into the different vernacular languages, explains why his worldview became so deeply rooted among Erasmian intellectuals in the 16th and 17th centuries. Bataillon (1966 [2007]) already emphasised the importance of the Dutch scholar's writings among the reading public. Erasmus himself was not opposed to translations into the Romance language as long as they led to piety and put an end to people's ignorance (Bierlaire 1978: 111). The case of the vulgarisation of Erasmus' works in the Iberian Peninsula is particularly striking for its precocity and intensity (*cf.* Burke 2010: 28). Although Erasmus proposed a programme of translations for the Spanish public giving priority to his devout works to appease the exalted spirits of his Hispanic detractors, the public wanted more, and the Spanish versions of the *Colloquia* soon came to light (Bataillon 1966 [2007]: 279–315). Before 1527, some *Colloquia* manuscripts (perhaps by the hand of Alonso de Virués) passed from hand to hand among the literate public, and between 1527 and 1532 at least six single *Colloquia* and six compilations of *Colloquia* were published (Bataillon 1966 [2007]: LII-LIII). This was undoubtedly made possible through the help of the powerful people at the court of Charles V, who were followers of Erasmus's ideas. Donnelly (1979: 137) notes, 'at a period when, in other countries, the *Colloquia* in Latin were heavily under attack, or even under censure, in Spain versions in both Latin and Spanish were in free circulation'.

Erasmus realised early on that his works were beginning to penetrate the literate society of the Iberian Peninsula, which is why he was determined to write his *Apologia adversus articulos aliquot per monachos quosdam in Hispaniis exhibitos* 'apologia against several articles presented by certain monks in Spain' in an attempt to defend his work against the fierce attacks of the Church. One of Erasmus' objections to his detractors was their dismissive attitude towards the literary character of his work, given that he was usually held responsible for everything that appeared in the *Colloquia*, without his critics considering whether what was said was in jest or in earnest, or who the speaker was (*cf.* Augustijn 1986: 181).

However, from 1532 onwards, the Inquisition became more stringent than in previous years, and the *Colloquia* did not go unnoticed under its gaze. In Spain, as in the rest of Europe, there was opposition to the fact that questions of great philosophical weight, which were in fact normally discussed within universities (Prosperi 2002: XLIV), were presented to students of grammar (*grammaticulis*). There was also opposition to the topics that were presented in different *Colloquia*, such as criticism of monks (*monachatus non est pietas* 'the condition of monasticism is not synonymous with piety,' Erasmus states in his *Enchiridion* of 1505), criticism of the vows, criticism of the nobility, the defence of sexual pleasure as a means of love, the defence of work (it should be remembered that both monks and nobles scorned manual labour).

Some of the worst propaganda against Erasmus of Rotterdam concerned his alleged ideological affinity with Luther's theses. As Bataillon (1966 [2007]: 159–160) highlights, the Dutch scholar was considered a staunch Lutheran, which led to the name of Erasmus becoming associated with the risk of heresy, which contributed to increased suspicion of and hostility towards him in the following decades (*cf.* Pinto Crespo 1986: 290). This was, however, based on an unwarranted misperception of Erasmus, who never departed from the Catholic Church, despite the criticism received from the most anti-Erasmian section of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. Moreover, the relationship between Luther and Erasmus had been profoundly damaged by the publication of the *Colloquia*, a work that the German theologian described as impious. As his last wish, he even forbade his children to read them. Despite this, the Latin manual became well established in Lutheran Europe and achieved huge success.[11]

Be that as it may, the accumulation of misgivings and fears about the alleged Erasmian heterodoxy meant that the *Colloquia* was the first of the author's texts to be banned in Spain, which happened in January 1536 (Donnelly 1979: 138); its reading in Latin was, further, condemned in 1537. Thus, throughout Europe, the *Colloquia* became a 'cursed book', which would remain on the index of banned books until the 19th century (Bierlaire 1978: 302), along with other translations and works by the Dutch scholar.

This did not prevent the *Colloquia* from shaping European dialogical literature in such a way that it became a model of natural style and conversational verisimilitude (*cf.* Del Rey 2015a, Vian 1988) in the vernacular languages through translations. Thus, Spanish, Italian, French and other Romance languages developed mechanisms for the construction of literary dialogue which had been unheard of before the decisive contribution of Erasmus.[12] The Dutch scholar had incorporated numerous conversational strategies – most notably turn-initiation formulas (*cf.* Del Rey 2016) – that were already

---

11   His influence in schools was equally strong. Burke (1989: 8) recalls that the *Colloquia* were performed by pupils in the classroom as a pedagogical tool that enabled the conversational formulas of his work to be put into practice.

12   The translation from one Romance language to another (what Folena (1991) calls *horizontal* translation, as opposed to vertical translation, which refers to the translation from Latin into Romance languages) also contributed to the consolidation of the natural style that prevails in the literary dialogues of the time. In this way, Erasmus' stylistic guide was also disseminated indirectly through the Romance translations of his *Colloquies* and other Renaissance dialogues that were widely circulated at the time (cf. Del Rey 2022b).

found in Plautus and Terence but had never been exploited, or very little, during the Middle Ages. Fragments, such as the one below, demonstrate the perfect union between the scathing criticism of ecclesiastical institutions, typical of Christian humanism, and the spontaneous, almost colloquial style in which Erasmus, and subsequently his translators, presents such criticism. The extract comes from the colloquy *Senile*, in which a group of elderly men meet to talk about their life experiences, which Erasmus uses to present different models of morality and religiosity at the time. At the end of the colloquy, the carriage where the old men have been talking along on their way to Antwerp meets another carriage head-on, a circumstance that allows the coachmen to exchange light-hearted words. The text (1a) corresponds to the Erasmian original, (1b) to an anonymous Spanish translation in 1528 and (1c) to the Italian translation in 1545 by Pietro Lauro, amended by the same translator in 1549.[13]

(1a)
HVGVITIO AVRIGA. Vnde tam miseram sarcinam nactus es, lusce?

HENRICVS AVRIGA. Imo quo tu defers istud lupanar, ganeo?

HV. Debueras istos frigidos senes alicubi effundere in vrticetum, vt calescerent.

HE. Imo tu istum gregem cura vt praecipites alicubi in profundam lamam, vt refrigerentur. Nam calent plus satis.

HV. Non soleo praecipitare sarcinam meam.

HE. Non? Atqui nuper vidi te sex Cartusienses deiecisse in coenum sic, vt pro candidis emergerent nigri. Tu interim, quasi re bene gesta, ridebas.

HV. Nec iniuria. Dormiebant omnes ac multum ponderis addebant carrui meo.

HE. At mei senes egregie subleuarunt currum meum, per totum iter perpetuo garrientes. Nunquam vidi meliores.

HV. Non soles tamen talibus delectari.

HE. Sed hi seniculi boni sunt.

HV. Qui scis?

HE. Quia per eos ter bibi per viam ceruisiam insigniter bonam.

HV. Ha ha he. Sic tibi boni sunt (*Colloquium Senile*, lines 437–456, *apud* Halkin/Bierlaire/Hoven 1972: 387–388).

'HUGO COACHMAN: Where did you get such a miserable load, old one-eye?

HENRICO COACHMAN: Likewise, where are you taking that whorehouse, you libertine?

HU: You ought to throw those cold, old men into a nettle patch for them to warm up.

HE: Likewise, you should rather throw those cattle into some deep swamp, so that (they) can cool off. For they are warmer than would be sufficient.

HU: I don't usually dump my load.

HE: Don't you? For not long ago I saw you throw six Carthusians into the mud

in such a way that from white they came out black. You, meanwhile, as if it were something well done, laughed.

HU: And rightly so: they were all asleep and weighing down my carriage.

HE: In contrast, my old men have lightened my carriage to perfection, chatting non-stop all the way.

HU: But you don't usually have a good time with such men!

HE: Yes, but these old men are good people.

HU: Why do you say that?

HE: Because thanks to them, I've drunk some really good beer three times on the road.

HU: Ha ha ha! That's why you think they're good people'. [My translation]

(1b)

H: ¿Adónde hallaste tan miserable carga, tuerto?

En: ¿Mas adónde llevas tú esa putería, frecuentador de tabernas?

H: Debieras echar estos fríos viejos en algún ortiguero para que calentasen.

En: Más ten tú cuidado de despeñar ese ganado en un hondo lodo, para que se resfríen, porque están mas calientes de lo que es menester.

H: No suelo despeñar mi carga.

En: ¿No? No ha mucho que te vi echar en un cieno seis frailes de la Cartuja, de tal manera que de blancos salieron negros y tú reíste y estabas gozoso como de hecho muy señalado.

H: No sin causa; dormíanse todos y acrecentaban mucho peso a mi carro.

En: Mis viejos notablemente aliviaron mi carro parlando por todo el camino: nunca los vi mejores.

H: ¡No sueles tú deleitarte con los tales!

En: Sí, mas estos viejos son buenos.

H: ¿Cómo lo sabes?

En: Porque a su causa bebí tres veces en el camino cerveza muy buena.

H: ¡Ha, ha, he! Y por eso te parecieron buenos (Anonymous, *Colloquio de viejos*, 1528, f. 29r).

(1c)

Hugutio carettiere: Óve hai pigliato si tristo peso, ò losco?

Henrico: E tu óve hai tolto coteste meretrici?

Hu: Dovevi gittare cotesti freddi vecchi nelle ortiche, che si scaldassero.

He: Anzi sia meglio, che tu gitti in qualche profonda acqua cotesta greggia, acciò che si raffreddi, perché sono le meretrici troppo calde.

Hu: Non sono avezzo di precipitare il mio carico.

He: Io poco fa ti vidi precipitare nel fango sei Certosini, i quali riportarono neri gli habiti candidi, et tu smasciellavi delle risa, come se havesti fatto qualche buona opera.

Hu: Io ne haveva ragione, perché dormivano tutti, et gravavanmi il carro.

134

He: Questi miei vecchietti sono venuti ragionando piacevolmente: non mai ho
   veduto i megliori.
Hu: Non ti sogliono piacere tai cose.
He: Questi vecchietti sono da bene, e mi hanno fatto bene tre fiate per viaggio.
Hu. Ha, ha, he: per questo sono da bene (Pietro Lauro, *Colloqui famigliari*, 1549,
   f. 213).

The style is fast and lively, an effective manifestation of a spoken everyday Latin, suitable for informal situations, which was Erasmus' dream. Numerous strategies contribute to exploiting the conversational verisimilitude of the fragment in Latin and in the corresponding Romance versions. The vocatives *lusce, ganeo/tuerto*, *frecuentador de tabernas/losco*, are used with humorous intent; the discourse units, like Henrico's question that initiates the turn *Non?/No?* affects, by repetition, an element of the previous intervention in order to question it, presupposing the falsity of what has been said; the counter-argumentative markers typical of conversational discourse, such as *imo/más/anzi*; the interjective units such as *ha ha ha!*, which refers to a specific extralinguistic context in which the interlocutor is provoked to laughter and which, therefore, increases the degree of expressiveness and spontaneity of the communication (parameters c) and i) which Koch/Oesterreicher (1990 [2011]: 7) ascribe to communicative immediacy, *cf.* n. 1), and, in general, the speed of turn-taking, which enhances the level of dialogism (parameter h)). Moreover, in the colloquy as a whole, the episode is merely digressive and functions as a textual colophon. Thus, in part, it contributes to the thematic deviation that had remained uniform during the dialogue of the elders (parameter j). However, a comparison of the Spanish and Italian translations shows that the Spanish prose is more permeable to assimilating these types of strategies, which were consolidated in later dialogic literature, not only in translated texts.[14]

In some previous works (*cf.* Del Rey 2016, 2022) I have investigated numerous conversational formulas at the begining of the dialogical turn in Castilian, Italian and French that are closely related to Latin formulas used in Erasmus' *Colloquia*. Among them, for the 16th century I have found the link between Sp. *Yo te lo diré*, It. *Dirollo/Dirotelo/Te lo diro*, Fr. *Ie le diray* and Lat. *Dicam* 'I will tell you' as a presentational cataphoric formula; between Sp. *Qué (es lo que) oigo*, It. *Che odo io/Che cosa chiodo*, Fr. *Qu'est ce que i'entendz?* and Lat. *Quid (ego) audio* 'What do I hear?' as an expression of surprise; between Sp. *Verdad dices*, It. *Tu di(ci) il vero*, Fr. *Tu dis (bien) vray/la verité* and Lat. *Verum narras/praedicas* 'You speak the truth' as a formula of acceptance; between Sp. *(Muy) Bien dices*, It. *Rettamente ammonisci*, Fr. *Tu dis tres bien* and Lat. *Recte mones* 'You advise well' with the same sense, or between Sp. *Mira (bien) lo que dices*, It. *Non dire cosi/Non parlare in tal guisa*, Fr. *Hé parle mieulx* and Lat. *Bona verba* '(Say) good words' with recriminative intention on the part of the interlocutor. The tradition of this type of formulas, motivated by the exercise of translation in the

---

14   Note the absence of the initial interrogative *Non?* in Italian or the elimination of the rude and/or offensive vocative *ganeo* (meaning 'glutton') in Pietro Lauro's text. This translator also eliminates the reference to the alcoholic beverage at the end of the fragment.

first half of the 16th century, is documented in later dialogical works which do not respond to the exercise of translation and which show the trail of Erasmian influence in the writing of Renaissance dialogue.

5 CONCLUSION

As is evident from the arguments and examples given in the previous section, writers in the Early Modern Period preferred (although not always) to employ Erasmian stylistic potential when writing dialogues in the vernacular to reach a wider readership. In other words, Erasmus' frustrated attempt to revitalise conversational Latin led not to its revival but to the specialisation of dialogic discourse in the vernaculars. Indeed, mechanisms leading to textualisation of orality were adapted with astonishing dexterity in the Romance languages. These mechanisms affect various planes of discourse construction (selection of verbs of utterance and perception, use of dialogical formulas and conversational markers, exploitation of politeness strategies etc.) which, as far as the writing of *elaborated orality* to which I have referred in this paper is concerned, will have enormous currency in Romance literature until well into the Modern Age (*cf.* Del Rey 2019). Natural style can be conceived as a translinguistic precept that fits perfectly with the humanist ideal that evolved in literature towards the individualisation of the dialogical *I* and *you*, as well as communicative context. This evolution is fundamental in explaining the 'qualitative leap' that occurred between medieval and Renaissance dialogues concerning the mechanisms used for textualisation of orality, according to Bustos (2007: 208). This is one of Erasmus' major contributions to Romance literature, which increased its potential for the construction of an elaborated orality with a secular validity. Erasmus' everyday Latin, the frustrated dream of a humanist who was opposed to frontiers of any kind, even linguistic ones, did somehow remained alive through the dialogic discourse in Romance and in the precept of natural style, which is one of the literary hallmarks of the Early Modern Period throughout Europe.

References

ALBRECHT, Jörn (1995) "Der Einfluss der frühen Übersetzertätigkeit auf die Herausbildung der romanischen Sprachen." In: C. Schmitt/W. Schweickard (eds), *Die romanischen Sprachen im Vergleich*. Bonn: Romanistischer Verlag, 1–20.

ALBRECHT, Jörn (2017) "Sprachkontakt – schriftlicher Sprachkontakt – Übersetzung (*lato sensu*) – und Übersetzung (*stricto sensu*) als Fakten der Sprachgeschichte und als Gegenstand der Sprachgeschichtsschreibung." In: Sarah Dessì Schmid/Heidi Aschenberg (eds), *Romanische Sprachgeschichte und Übersetzung*. Heidelberg: Winter-Verlag, 41–52.

AUGUSTIJN, Cornelis (1986) *Erasmo de Rotterdam: vida y obra*. Barcelona: Crítica.

BATAILLON, Marcel (1937 [1966]) *Erasmo y España*. Transl. by A. Alatorre. Ciudad de México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.

BATAILLON, Marcel (1977) *Erasmo y el erasmismo*. Transl. into Spanish by Carlos Pujol. Barcelona: Crítica.

BIERLAIRE, Franz (1977) *Érasme et ses Colloques: le livre d'une vie*. Genève: Librairie Droz.

BIERLAIRE, Franz (1978) *Les Colloques d'Érasme: réforme des études, réforme des mœurs et réforme de l'Église au XVIe siècle*. Paris: Les belles lettres.

BOSSONG, Georg (1979) *Probleme der Übersetzung wissenschaftlicher Werke aus dem Arabischen in das Altspanische zur Zeit Alfons des Weisen*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

BURKE, Peter (1989) "The Renaissance dialogue." *Renaissance Studies* 3/1, 1–12.

BURKE, Peter (2010) "Culturas de traducción en la Europa Moderna." In: Peter Burke/ Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia (eds), *La traducción cultural en la Europa Moderna*. Transl. by Jesús Izquierdo Martín/Patricia Arroyo Calderón. Madrid: Akal, 11–44.

BUSTOS TOVAR, José Jesús de (2007) "La textualización del diálogo en textos españoles de principios del Renacimiento." *Rivista di Filologia e Letterature Ispaniche* 10, 201–222.

BUSTOS TOVAR, José Jesús de (2011) "Hablo como escribo". In: José Jesús de Bustos Tovar *et al.* (eds), *Sintaxis y análisis del discurso hablado en español. Homenaje a Antonio Narbona*. Sevilla: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, I, 459–478.

CANO AGUILAR, Rafael (1991) "Sintaxis oracional y construcción del texto en la prosa española del Siglo de Oro." *Philologia Hispalensis* 6/1, 45–67.

CANO AGUILAR, Rafael (2022) "Las tradiciones discursivas desde una perspectiva diacrónica. Tradiciones discursivas e historia de la lengua." In: Steven N. Dworkin/Gloria Clavería Nadal/Álvaro S. Octavio de Toledo y Huerta (eds), *Lingüística histórica del español/The Routledge Handbook of Spanish Historical Linguistics*. London/New York: Routledge (forthcoming). /THE PAPER IS NOT PUBLISHED IN THIS HANDBOOK. PLEASE CHECK AND CORRECT THE REFERENCE./

CASTILLO LLUCH, Mónica (2018) "La historia de la lengua española vuelve por sus fueros." In: María Luisa Arnal Purroy *et al.* (eds), *Actas del X Congreso Internacional de Historia de la Lengua Española: Zaragoza, 7–11 de septiembre de 2015*. Vol. I. Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 129–155.

CHOMARAT, Jacques (1981) *Grammaire et rhétorique chez Érasme*. Paris: Les belles lettres.

Colloquio de viejos (1528) = Anonymous translation of Erasmus's *Colloquium Senile*. In: *En este presente tratado se contienen tres Colloquios*, s. l. Printed document held at Ghent University Library. https://lib.ugent.be/catalog/rug01:001259920 [accessed on 12 April 2022].

COSERIU, Eugenio (1957 [1988]). *Sincronía, diacronía e historia. El problema del cambio lingüístico*. Madrid: Gredos.

COSERIU, Eugenio (1981) "Los conceptos de «dialecto», «nivel» y «estilo de lengua» y el sentido propio de la dialectología." *Lingüística Española Actual* 3, 1–32.

COSERIU, Eugenio (2007) *Lingüística del texto. Introducción a la hermenéutica del sentido*. Edited and annotated by Óscar Loureda Lamas. Madrid: Arco/Libros.

COTUGNO, Alessio (2019) *La scienza della parola. Retorica e linguistica di Sperone Speroni*. Bologna: il Mulino.

COTUGNO, Alessio/Marco SGARBI (eds) (2022) "Nella bottega di Erasmo." *Achivum mentis* 11, 155–364.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2015a) *Diálogo y traducción. Los* Coloquios *erasmianos en la Castilla del s. XVI*. Tübingen: Narr.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2015b) "El «latín cotidiano» como referencia estilística en la conformación del discurso dialógico castellano (s. XVI)." In: Esme Winter-Froemel/Araceli López Serena/Álvaro Octavio de Toledo y Huerta/Barbara Frank-Job (eds), *Diskurstraditionelles und Einzelsprachliches im Sprachwandel*. Tübingen: Narr, 209–230.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2016) "En busca del ideal de naturalidad estilística a partir de las fórmulas de inicio de turno en el diálogo (s. XVI)." *Revista de Filología Española* 96/1, 169–202.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2017) "(Anti-)Latinate Syntax in Renaissance Dialogue: Romance Translations of Erasmus's Uxor Mempsigamos." *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 133/3, 673–708.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2018) "Lenguajes de especialidad, sinonimia y elaboración en la historia de la lengua española." In: Xosé Afonso Alvarez Pérez *et al*. (eds), *Nuevas perspectivas en la diacronía de las lenguas de especialidad*. Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá, 343–365.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2019) "Variantes de la *oralidad elaborada* en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX: dos traducciones coetáneas de *Los cautivos* de Plauto". *Oralia* 22/2, 283–326.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2020) "La traducción de los textos erasmianos en los Siglos de Oro." In: Francisco Lafarga/Luis Pegenaute (eds), *Historia de la traducción en España.* http://phte.upf.edu/hte/siglos-de-oro/rey-quesada/ [accessed on 11 April 2022].

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2021a) "Lo marcado y lo no marcado en la cadena de variedades: apuntes para una nueva propuesta." In: Teresa Gruber/Klaus Grübl/Thomas Scharinger (eds), *Was bleibt von kommunikativer Nähe und Distanz? Mediale und konzeptionelle Aspekte sprachlicher Variation*. Tübingen: Narr, 205–238.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2021b) *Grupos léxicos paratácticos en la Edad Media romance. Caracterización lingüística, influencia latinizante y tradicionalidad discursiva*. Berlin: Peter Lang

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2022) "Convergence et divergence entre espagnol, italien et français. La traduction des *Colloques* de Pedro Mexía (XVIᵉ siècle)". *Vox Romanica* 81, 85–109.

DEL REY QUESADA, Santiago (2023) "Discourse Traditions at the intersection of Romance and Latin in the Early Modern Period." In: E. Winter-Froemel/Á. S. Octavio de Toledo y Huerta (eds), 411–434.

DE VALDÉS, Juan ([1982] 2003) *Diálogo de la lengua*. Edited by Cristina Barbolani. Madrid: Cátedra.

DONNELLY, Paul J. (1979) *A Study of Spanish Translations of Erasmus's* Colloquia *(1525–1536), with Special Reference to the Translations of Alonso Ruiz de Virués:*

together with a Critical Edition of the Versions of Uxor mempsigamos*, Funus*, *and part of* Convivium religiosum. Doctoral dissertation. Oxford: Oxford University.

FERNÁNDEZ-ORDÓÑEZ, Inés (2004) "Alfonso X el Sabio en la historia del español." In: Rafael Cano Aguilar (ed.), *Historia de la lengua española*. Barcelona: Ariel, 381–422.

FLÓREZ MÍGUEZ, Cirilo (1994) "Humanismo y ciencia en Elio Antonio de Nebrija." In: Juan Antonio González Iglesias/Carmen Codoñer Merino (eds), *Antonio de Nebrija, Edad Media y Renacimiento.* Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 347–357.

FRANK-JOB, Barbara/Maria SELIG (2016) "Early evidence and sources." In: Adam Ledgeway/Martin Maiden (eds), *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 24–34.

FOLENA, Giancarlo (1991) *Volgarizzare e tradurre*. Torino: Einaudi.

FONTÁN, Antonio (1974) "El latín de los humanistas". In: *Id., Humanismo romano*. Barcelona: Planeta, 257–272.

GAUGER, Hans-Martin (1996) "'Escrivo como hablo'. Oralidad en lo escrito." In: Thomas Kotschi/Wulf Oesterreicher/Klaus Zimmermann (eds), *El español hablado y la cultura oral en España e Hispanoamérica*. Madrid/Frankfurt a.M.: Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 341–358.

GAUGER, Hans-Martin (2004) "La conciencia lingüística en la Edad de Oro." In: Rafael Cano Aguilar (ed.), *Historia de la lengua española*. Barcelona: Ariel, 681–699.

HALKIN, Léon-E./BIERLAIRE, Franz/HOVEN, René (1972) "Préface." In: *Ead.* (eds), *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami, Ordinis primi tomus tertius: Colloquia.* Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 3–23.

HAUGEN, Einar (1966) "Dialect, Language, Nation." *American Anthropologist* 68/4, 922–935.

IJSEWIJN, Jozef/SACRÉ, Dirk (1998) "Language, style, prosody and metrics". In: *Ead., Companion to neo-latin studies. Part II: Literary, linguistic, philological and editorial questions*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 377–433.

KABATEK, Johannes (2005) *Die Bolognesische Renaissance und der Ausbau romanischer Sprachen. Juristische Diskurstraditionen und Sprachentwicklung in Südfrankreich und Spanien im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

KABATEK, Johannes (2018) *Lingüística coseriana, lingüística histórica, tradiciones discursivas*. Edited by Cristina Bleortu/David Paul Gerards. Madrid/Frankfurt a.M.: Iberoamericana/Vervuert.

KLOSS, Heinz (²1978) *Die Entwicklung neuer germanischer Kultursprachen seit 1800*. Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann.

KOCH, Peter (1997) "Diskurstraditionen: zu ihrem sprachtheoretischen Status und ihrer Dynamik." In: Barbara Frank/Thomas Haye/Doris Tophinke (eds), *Gattungen mittelalterlicher Schriftlichkeit*. Tübingen: Narr, 43–79.

KOCH, Peter/Wulf OESTERREICHER ([1990] 2011) *Gesprochene Sprache in der Romania. Französisch, Italienisch, Spanisch*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.

LAURO, Pietro (1549) *I ragionamenti, overo Colloqui famigliari di Desiderio Erasmo Roterodamo: Di Latino in volgare già tradotti, ma hora in tanti luoghi racconci.* http://books.google.es [accessed on 12 April 2022].

LÓPEZ GRIGERA, Luisa (1986) "Estela del erasmismo en las teorías de la lengua y del estilo en la España del siglo XVI." In: M. Revuelta Sañudo/C. Morón Arroyo (eds), 491–500.

LÓPEZ SERENA, Araceli (2007) "Mesa redonda I. Las tradiciones discursivas en la historiografía lingüística y en la historia de la lengua española." In: Marta Fernández Alcaide/Araceli López Serena (eds), *400 años de la lengua del Quijote. Estudios de historiografía e historia de la lengua española. Actas del V Congreso Nacional de la Asociación de Jóvenes Investigadores de Historiografía e Historia de la Lengua Española (Sevilla, 31 de marzo, 1 y 2 de abril de 2005)*. Sevilla: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 49–54.

LÓPEZ SERENA, Araceli (2011) "La doble determinación del nivel histórico en el saber expresivo. Hacia una nueva delimitación del concepto de 'tradición discursiva'." *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 62, 59–97.

LÓPEZ SERENA, Araceli (2021) "La tradicionalidad discursiva como *materia* y las tradiciones discursivas como *objeto* de estudio." *Verba* 48 https://revistas.usc.gal/index.php/verba/article/view/6864/10956 [accessed on 24 March 2022].

LÓPEZ SERENA, Araceli (2023) "Discourse Traditions and Variation Linguistics." In: E. Winter-Froemel/Á. S. Octavio de Toledo y Huerta (eds), 59–79.

OEDER (1922) *Opus epistolarum Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami*. Vol. IV: 1519–1521. Edited by P. S. Allen/H. M. Allen. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

MAAS, Utz (2014) "Der Ausbau des Deutschen zur Schriftsprache." *Euphorion: Zeitschrift für Literaturgeschichte* 108/3, 325–363.

MILROY, James/Lesley MILROY ([1985] 2012) *Authority in Language: Investigating Standard English*. London: Routledge.

PÉREZ, Joseph (2013) *Humanismo en el Renacimiento español*. Madrid: Gadir.

PERONA, Blandine/Tristan VIGLIANO (eds) (2017) *Érasme et la France*. Paris: Classiques Garnier.

PINTO CRESPO, Virgilio (1986) "La herejía como problema político. Raíces ideológicas e implicaciones", In: M. Revuelta Sañudo/C. Morón Arroyo (eds), 289–304.

PROSPERI, Adriano (2002) "Introduzione." In: Erasmo da Rotterdam, *Colloquia*. Torino: Einaudi, IX-LVIII.

REVUELTA SAÑUDO, Manuel/Ciriaco MORÓN ARROYO (eds), *El erasmismo en España: ponencias del coloquio celebrado en la Biblioteca de Menéndez Pelayo del 10 al 14 de junio de 1985*. Santander: Sociedad Menéndez Pelayo.

RIVAROLA, José Luis (1998) "El discurso de la variación en el *Diálogo de la lengua* de Juan de Valdés." In: Wulf Oesterreicher/Eva Stoll/Andreas Wesch (eds), *Competencia escrita, tradición discursiva y variedades lingüísticas. Aspectos del español europeo y americano en los siglos XVI y XVII*. Tübingen: Narr, 83–108.

SEIDEL MENCHI, Silvana (1987) *Erasmo in Italia*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri.

THOMPSON, Craig R. (1965) *The Colloques of Erasmus*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press.

THOMSON, D. F. S. (1970) "The Latinity of Erasmus". In: Thomas Alan Dorey (ed.), *Erasmus*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 115–137.

TUNBERG, Terence (2004) "The Latinity of Erasmus and Medieval Latin: Continuities and Discontinuities". *The journal of Medieval Latin* 14, 147–170.

VIAN HERRERO, Ana (1988) "La ficción conversacional en el diálogo renacentista." *Edad de Oro* 7, 173–186.

VINCIS, Valentina/Carla MIOTTO (2016) "Algunas consideraciones en torno al concepto de tradiciones discursivas." In: Chiara Albertin/Santiago Del Rey Quesada (eds), *Hispanica Patavina. Estudios de historiografía e historia de la lengua española en homenaje a José Luis Rivarola*. Padova: CLEUP (Cooperativa Libraria Editrice Università di Padova), 199–215.

WINTER-FROEMEL, Esme/Álvaro S. OCTAVIO DE TOLEDO Y HUERTA (eds) (2023), *Manual of Discourse Traditions in Romance.* Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter,

ZWEIG, Stefan ([1934] 2015) *Erasmus of Rotterdam.* Transl. into English by C. Paul/E. Paul. Lexington, Massachusetts: Plunkett Lake Press.

Abstract

THE CONTRIBUTION OF ERASMUS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD

The influence of Latin, since the Middle Ages, in shaping Romance languages as vehicles for the expression of discourse traditions characteristic of conceptual scripturality (*cf.* Koch/Oesterreicher 1990 [2011]) has been analysed from different perspectives by Romance Linguistics scholars. Elaboration processes (*Ausbau* in German, *cf.* Kloss 1978) are responsible for the development of the mechanisms needed in vernacular languages to access the domain of communicative distance, which remained for many centuries exclusively reserved for Latin. During the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, the use of Latin became increasingly restricted and was already limited in the 16th century mainly to liturgical manifestations, science, learned literature and international diplomacy. As Latin was excluded from oral communicative interactions, Erasmus' Christian humanism advocated the recovery of Latin as an effective instrument of communication among Europe's cultivated youth. The author's most famous work during his lifetime, the *Colloquia familiaria*, was conceived as a manual of conversational formulas and motifs to encourage the use of Latin among the European cultured elite of the early 16th century. Although the Erasmian endeavour did not succeed, the influence of the Dutch scholar on vernacular literatures propitiated the triumph of strategies suitable for the textualisation of orality based on the Erasmian Latin model, which led to a manifestation of the ideal of 'natural style' (*cf.* Del Rey 2015b) that is common to numerous European Renaissance authors. In this paper, we reflect on the importance of Erasmus' influence on the shaping of literary dialogue in the Romance languages of

the Early Modern Period (*cf.* Burke 1989). Important metalinguistic reflections of some of the most relevant authors of the time, such as Baldassare Castiglione and Juan de Valdés (*cf.* Gauger 1996, Bustos 2011), are also considered with the aim of understanding the influence of Erasmus on their writing and, consequently, the importance of the Dutch author in the evolution of style in vernacular languages in Early Modern Period Europe.

Keywords: Erasmus, translation, Romance languages, dialogue

Povzetek
ERAZMOV PRISPEVEK K RAZVOJU ROMANSKIH JEZIKOV V
ZGODNJEM NOVEM VEKU

Vpliv latinščine od srednjega veka dalje na romanske jezike kot izrazna sredstva diskurznih tradicij, značilnih za konceptualno pisnost (prim. Koch/Oesterreicher [1990] 2011), je bil v romanskem jezikoslovju predmet raznovrstnih analiz. S procesi širitve (nem. *Ausbau,* prim. Kloss 1978) vernakularni jeziki lahko pridobijo mehanizme dostopanja v območje komunikcijske distance, ki je bila stoletja dolgo izključno v domeni latinščine. V srednjem veku in v zgodnjem novem veku se je raba latinščine močno zožila in je bila že v 16. stoletju omejena pretežno na liturgične kontekste, znanost, učeno slovstvo in mednarodno diplomacijo. Spričo izključenosti latinščine iz ustne komunikacije je Erazmov krščanski humanizem zagovarjal vrnitev k latinščini kot učinkovitemu sporazumevalnemu sredstvu med kultivirano evropsko mladino. Erazmovo za časa njegovega življenja najbolj znano delo *Colloquia familiaria* je bilo zasnovano kot priročnik s konverzacijskimi vzorci in temami, ki naj bi spodbujal rabo latinščine med evropsko kulturno elito zgodnjega 16. stoletja. Čeprav Erazem s svojimi prazdevanji ni uspel, je njegov vpliv na književnosti v ljudskih jezikih privedel do uveljavitve strategij, primernih za tekstualizacijo ustnosti, ki so temeljile na erazmovskem latinskem modelu. Tako se je izoblikoval ideal "naravnega sloga" (*cf.* Del Rey 2015b), ki je skupen številnim evropskim renesančnim avtorjem. V prispevku razpravljamo o pomenu Erazmovega vpliva na formiranje literarnega dialoga v romanskih jezikih zgodnjega novega veka (prim. Burke 1989). Pomudimo se tudi ob važnih metajezikovnih razmišljanjih nekaterih ključnih avtorjev tega časa, kot sta Baldassare Castiglione in Juan de Valdés (prim. Gauger 1996, Bustos 2011), da bi tako razumeli, kakšen je bil Erazmov vpliv na njihovo pisanje in nato kako pomemben je bil nizozemski avtor za razvoj sloga v evropskih ljudskih jezikih zgodnjega novega veka.

Ključne besede: Erazem, prevajanje, romanski jeziki, dialog

Alenka Jelovšek
ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana
alenka.jelovsek@zrc-sazu.si

THE 16TH-CENTURY SLOVENIAN LITERARY STANDARD AND SLOVENIAN MANUSCRIPT TEXTS FROM THE SECOND HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY AND EARLY 17TH CENTURY

1 INTRODUCTION

The Slovenian literary language[1] was first established in 1550 with the first two Slovenian printed books, *Catechiſmus* and *Abecedarium*, by Primož Trubar and developed over the next four decades by his fellow Protestants, culminating in the publication of the entire Bible translation in 1584 that set the model for the literary production in the following two centuries (*cf.* e.g. Pogorelec 2011: 21, 35). In the 16th and early 17th century, sporadic use of Slovenian also in other (nonreligious) texts types is attested by a handful of preserved manuscripts.[2] In this article, selected Slovenian manuscripts from the second half of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century are studied in light of their adherence to the established (Protestant) standard (see Section 3) of the period or their deviation from it. The main aim of the research is to determine how much influence the Protestant standard had on the non-religious production in central Slovenian area in the analyzed period. The adherence to the standard is assessed on the basis of the orthographical, phonological and morphological features of the texts which are compared to the same features in the works of the dominant Protestant writers and to those in the Catholic *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* 1612.

The article is structured as follows: Section 2 provides a short overview of the ethnographical, political and linguistic situation in Slovenian historical lands before the establishment of the literary language. In Section 3, the question of the standardization of the Slovenian literary language is examined. In Section 4, the research sources and methodology are discussed in more detail. Section 5 presents the findings of the analysis, which are summarized in the conclusion, together with their sociolinguistic implications.

---

1   The term *literary language* is used in Slovenian linguistics to describe the language used in Slovenian printed works (*cf.* Lewaskiewicz 2017, who defines the term even more broadly as language standard, general national language and the language of writings).

2   For an overview of the surviving manuscripts, see Kos et al. 1971, Kološa et al. 1982, Ogrin 2008–2011 and Orel 2017 (with a short linguistic analysis); some short religious writings in Slovenian are also described in Orel 2010.

2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

By the beginning of the 16th century, the majority of what is today Slovenia was a part of the multi-ethnic Habsburg hereditary lands ruled by German-speaking nobility. The lands inhabited by Slovenian-speaking population were divided into various Habsburg duchies: Slovenians formed a majority in the Duchy of Carniola and a significant minority in the Duchies of Carinthia and Styria, and in the lands of the Austrian Littoral (Magocsi 1993: 99). The duchies formed an administrative region known as Inner Austria and in the Reformation period (1550–1598) their predominantly Protestant estates helped finance the literary production in Slovenian to promote the new religion among their Slovenian-speaking subjects (Luthar 2008: 193–211).

Linguistically, Slovenian lands had been included in the Germanic political and cultural sphere even before becoming part of the Habsburg hereditary lands, as much of the upper classes were German-speaking. Due to the political and cultural situation, various languages were used, i.e. predominantly Slovenian and German dialects (in some places also Italian dialects) in spoken communication, and Latin and Middle High German[3] were used as cultural languages. The peasants and their families, who represented the majority of the population, spoke a variety of Slovenian dialects, which differed from one region to another (Lenček 1982: 93–115). While the language of the Catholic church was still Latin, by necessity, they had to adapt to the language of the peasants, as is illustrated in some Slovenian manuscripts preserved from the Middle Ages that contain basic prayers, some hymns and short sermons in Slovenian (*cf.* Mikhailov 1998). The town population was ethnically and linguistically diverse and often bi- or trilingual. However, the Slovenian language was not used in official written communication; from the late 13th and early 14th century German replaced Latin as the official language in municipal administration (Javor Briški 2012: 590–591). The predominant language of the nobility was German, but it is presumed – and for some cases also attested in the historical sources (Grdina 1999: 18, 88; Štih and Simoniti 1996: 138) – that especially lower nobility who had patrimonial jurisdiction on their estates were bi- or even trilingual, speaking German and Slovenian and either Latin or Italian, depending on their provenance and education. Therefore, the ethnic affiliation of those who understood several languages did not entail the use of one single language in all situations and circumstances (Ahačič 2014: 17–18). In intellectual circles, only knowledge of Latin was prized. For those intending to continue their studies at university, the use of the national languages (German, Italian, Slovenian) was merely a »necessary evil« until pupils learned enough Latin to continue their education in it (Ahačič 2014: 23). As a result of such linguistic situation, no writing, let alone literary creativity, took place in any of the numerous dialects of Slovenian before the middle of the sixteenth century, with the exception of the medieval (mainly religious) fragments mentioned above (Cooper 1985: 35).

The borders of the historical Habsburg lands in the today Republic of Slovenia,

---

3   The oldest preserved German literary texts originating from the Slovenian territory were written in the early Middle High German period (Javor Briški 2022: 81).

which roughly overlap with the main dialect groups,[4] are presented in Picture 1; the Central dialects which became the basis of the emerging Slovenian standard are marked 2a (Upper Carniolan), 2b (Inner Carniolan) and 2c (Lower Carniolan).
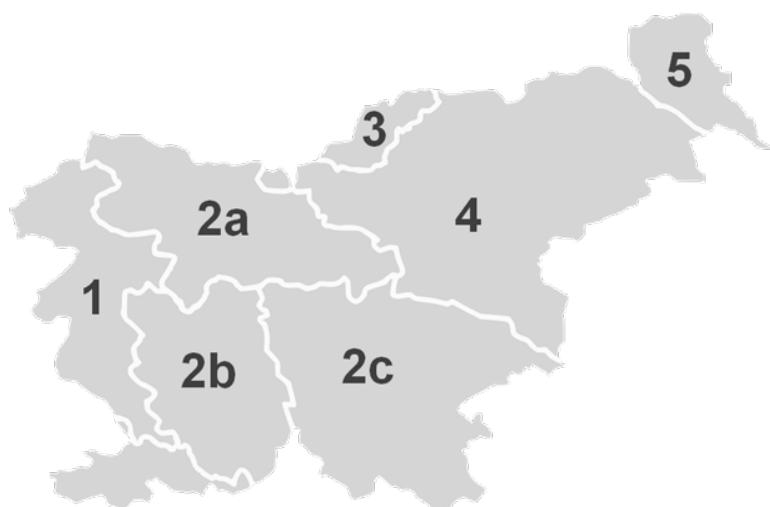

Figure 1. Borders of the Historical Habsburgian Lands in the Republic of Slovenia; https://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pokrajine_v_Sloveniji#/media/Slika:Borders_of_the_Historical_Habsburgian_Lands_in_the_Republic_of_Slovenia.svg (CC BY-SA 3.0); 1 - Austrian Littoral; 2a – Upper Carniola, 2b – Inner Carniola, 2c – Lower Carniola, 3 – Carinthia; 4 – Styria; 5 – Prekmurje.

3 THE 16TH-CENTURY SLOVENIAN LITERARY LANGUAGE

3.1 The establishment and development of the Protestant literary language in the 16th century

In the 16th century, the new Protestant movement spread also to Slovenian lands and resulted in the first printed Slovenian books, published by an exiled Catholic priest turned Protestant, Primož Trubar. He, according to his own words,[5] was not aware of any pre-existing written tradition in Slovenian but wanted to create literary language that would be understood by the speakers of various Slovenian dialects in the Inner-Austrian lands and would enable Trubar to preach the new Reformed faith to them from his exile in

---

4   For a more detailed representation of Slovenian dialects, see Karta slovenskih narečij in the *Slovenian Linguistic Atlas* (https://fran.si/204/sla-slovenski-lingvisticni-atlas/datoteke/SLA_Karta-narecij.pdf). The map in Picture 1 is limited to the territory of Republic of Slovenia and does not represent the Slovenian-speaking territories outside the modern state borders.

5   In 1582 Trubar wrote: »For it is widely known that 34 years ago there was neither a letter nor a register, even less a book, in our Slovenian language, as they held the Slovenian and Hungarian languages too coarse and barbaric to be either written or read« (Luthar 2008: 207).

Bavaria. He opted for a spoken idiom, which he knew from the Lower Carniola region, upgraded with the some Upper-Carniolan features and stripped of some local peculiarities (Herrity 2012: 5). This is how he formed the synchronous linguistic concept, the first supradialectal central Slovenian literary language, which, in his opinion, was generally understood in all the Slovenian-speaking regions.[6] »Trubar's common language is not a precisely defined and well thought-out system, but a useful tool for understanding. It is precisely this general intelligibility that defines Trubar's concept of the common language« (Jesenšek 2008: 7–8; see also Ahačič (2014: 34) who stresses the intelligibility of Trubar's language both in towns and in the countryside). The first two Slovenian books were followed by 47 publications in Slovenian, mainly with religious content, which all adopted (and partially adapted) Trubar's literary language (Lenček 1982: 251–252, Ahačič 2022). »The later Protestant writers recognised the same basis for the literary language, but each slightly modified it in favour of his own dialect or with new ideas on the orthography and the word-stock« (Herrity 2012: 5).

The development of the Protestant literary language, especially its orthography, has been thoroughly investigated in Slovenian linguistics (eg. Rigler 1968, Ramovš 1971, Toporišič 1986, Ahačič 2022). Primož Trubar established the first variant of the Slovenian orthographical standard (Haugen's (1987, cited in Ayres-Bennett 2021: 34) *Graphization* stage of the codification process) and he adhered to it in all his works, despite the changes introduced by other authors during his lifetime. His main aim was to establish a system that would be simple (so even (German-speaking) foreigners could read it well with practice),[7] aesthetic (as few graphemes to a phoneme as possible) and similar to the more common types of script (Latin, German, Italian) (Ahačič 2014: 265–266). Sebastijan Krelj was the first to draw attention to the shortcomings of Trubar's orthography. Krelj sought to assign special letters and grapheme clusters for all phonemes of the language. Among other things he tried to orthographically distinguish voiced and voiceless alveolar (<ſ> for /s/, <s> for /z/) and palatoalveolar (<ſh> for /š/ (IPA: /ʃ/), <sh> for /ž/ (IPA: /ʒ/)) sibilants, a distinction which Trubar did not consider important, because he did not hear the difference between them in German (perhaps even in Slovenian) (Ahačič 2021a: 240). But the complexity of Krelj's system introduced in his *POSTILLA SLOVENSKA* (1567) led to its rejection by other authors,[8] although some of his solutions were later adopted by Jurij Dalmatin, in his translation of the Bible

---

6   That the addressees of his works were speakers of all Slovenian dialects in Inner Austria (with the exception of Prekmurje, since Prekmurje was administratively part of the Hungarian crown), is evident from his introductions in individual works (see Ahačič 2014: 40–41).

7   In the introduction to his collected New Testament translations, published in 1581–1582, he specifically stated: »I have likewise retained my old orthography, for it can be read by anyone not familiar with the Slovenian language and understood perfectly well by any Slovenian peasant through listening« (translation in Ahačič 2014: 49). From other Trubar's texts it can be assumed that he saw German Protestant preachers (and those Slovenian preachers who had forgotten their native tongue during their studies abroad), as well as some noblemen and noblewomen, as potential readers of his texts to illiterate Slovenians (Ahačič 2014: 46–49).

8   As Krelj died shortly after the publication of his *Postilla Slovenſka* in 1567, he was not able to further advocate his proposed changes. Besides the complexity of his orthography, an ideological factor could have contributed to the rejection of it by other Slovenian Protestants, as Krelj was a supporter of a more radical Protestant movement called Flacianism, which other leading Slovenian Protestants rejected (Grdina 1999: 196).

(Dalmatin, *BIBLIA*, 1584), and Adam Bohorič, in his Latin-language Slovenian grammar (Bohorič, *Arcticae horulae succisivae*, 1584), who also reassessed various spelling solutions and established the spelling system later known as *bohoričica* that remained in use until the 19th century (Ahačič 2022: 105–106). The two publications from 1584 represent the pinnacle of Protestant literary achievements. As this brief overview shows, the spelling system was in the centre of the codification attempts of the new language standard (see below). This is in accordance with Milroy/Milroy's thesis (2012) that the spelling system is the most highly regulated domain because only in the orthography can standardization be fully realized; spelling is amenable to control as it is relatively easy to oversee, it is unambiguous and it is straightforward to correct (Ayres-Bennett/Bellamy 2021: 5).

On other linguistic levels, fewer attempts were made to enhance uniformity and each author retained some of his individual characteristics (*cf.* Herrity 2012: 5). Compared to orthography, Slovenian linguists studied other linguistic levels less systematically.[9] The most comprehensive phonological study is Rigler 1968, but it mainly focuses on the development of main vowels. If a source is not stated explicitly, linguistic phenomena analyzed in this article are generally compared to original Protestant material available in digital form (*Korpus 16*, see Ahačič 2019).

3.2 The Protestant literary language as the first Slovenian language standard

Trubar's language in the first two printed books could be characterized as a literary language according to Lewaszkiewicz (2017: 32), who claims the literary language formation process consists of enhancing the general functional and linguistic efficiency of unrefined dialectal substrates and the development of supradialectal language standards. He distinguishes this development from standardization which arises later. As Trubar's literary language was adopted by other Protestant writers of the period (with minor adaptations), it became a *language standard*, as defined by Swan *et al.* (2004). According to their definition, a *language standard* is a linguistic variety which is relatively uniform and functions as a measure (or standard) against which the quality of an individual speech is evaluated, but lacks the overtly prescriptive norms and codification characteristic of standard varieties (Swan *et al.* 2004: 176), as opposed to a *standard language* as a relatively uniform variant of a language which does not show regional variation and tend to observe prescriptive, written norms, which are codified in grammars and dictionaries (Swann *et al.* 2004: 295). In the development of the Protestant standard, the following stages of Milroy and Milroy's model of standardization (2012, cited in Ayres-Bennett 2021: 36) can be identified: selection (Trubar's literary language), acceptance (by other Protestant authors), diffusion (in their published works),[10] maintenance (resistance to Krelj's attempts at reforming orthography), acquisition of prestige (through Dalmatin's Bible translation). There was little elaboration of function

---

9   For an overview of studies carried out up to 2008, see articles by Majda Merše, Andreja Legan Ravnikar, Jožica Narat and Kozma Ahačič in Merše (2008/2009).

10   It should be noted that acceptance and diffusion remained limited because of the socio-cultural conditions of the period (prevailing illiteracy, the prestige role of Latin and German among the educated, etc.).

(mainly religious works, although Slovenian was included in two multi-language dictionaries compiled by the German scholar Hieronymus Megiser (1592, 1603)). The Protestant standard was described in Bohorič's grammar, but the main aim of the grammar was not to codify the language but to show the similarity of its grammatical structure to Latin and therefore to prove that Slovenian is a "cultivated" language (Ahačič 2014: 82). As it was written in Latin, it was intended only for a small circle of the educated elite (Ahačič 2014: 43).[11]

Therefore, the *de facto* standard of the period was the language variety of the Bible translation because of its authoritative status, its diffusion not only in print but also orally, and its influence on other religious works, which ensured its implementation (*cf.* Currie 2022: 27–28). As Dalmatin's translation of the Bible was the only Protestant work officially used also by the Catholic Church in the 17th century, the language standard it established was accepted also by the Catholic writers and remained the model for literary production for the next two centuries (Ahačič 2012: 17), despite its increasing divergence from the spoken varieties, as spoken Slovenian underwent significant dialectal development, which also increased the differences between the various dialects (Lenček 1982: 24).

Such standardization process can be seen as an early-Modern variant of the *standardization from above*, as the main Protestant writers chose the forms that they believed would be most widely understood by Slovenian-speaking population, and not as *standardization from below*, which assumes a *conventionalization* process, with language users accommodating to each other so their linguistic input becomes more alike (Rutten/Vosters 2021: 66–67), by which potentially all members of a language community and all of their forms of verbal interaction have contributed to the standardization process of this language (Elspaß 2021: 94). But as Rutten/Vosters (2021: 67–69) point out, the standardization from above is an eighteen-century phenomenon and the earlier selection and codification practices differed from it by different language ideologies, different targets and the orientation to different target audiences. Their directionality of prescription is primarily horizontal, with certain members of the group suggesting certain forms to other members of the group. The standardization is therefore limited both socially and generically (Rutten/Vosters 2021: 69).

Similar development of a language standard based on the Bible translations can be found in Welsh (Currie, forthcoming), and as for Welsh, Joseph's concept of *circumstantial standardardisation*, where the selection of a variety occurs circumstantially as a by-product of other events (Joseph/Rutten/Vosters 2020; Currie, forthcoming) could be applied also to Slovenian.

The 16th-century Slovenian Protestant standard is usually described as supradialectal (e.g. Herrity 2012: 5). Its establishment could be seen as a result of *supralocalisation* in

---

11   The language of the grammar differed slightly from the language of the Bible, which in itself was not completely uniform, retaining some (dialectal) variation despite revisions. A series of articles comparing Bohorič's grammatical descriptions of specific categories to their realization in other Protestant works, including Dalmatin's Bible, were published in a monograph in 2022: Merše (2022) – verbs, Čepar (2022) – nouns, Jelovšek (2022b) – personal pronouns, Legan Ravnikar (2022) – word formation.

the broader sense, as defined by Nevalainen and Tiecken-Boon van Ostade (2006, cited in Currie (forthcoming)): "the geographical diffusion of linguistic features beyond their region of origin",[12] or of *norm convergence* (Rutten/Vosters 2021: 67). It was a result of a deliberate selection by the leading Protestant authors to achieve the widest possible intelligibility of their works.

3.3 The acceptance of the Protestant standard in the 17th and 18th centuries and the language development in the 19th century

With the suppression of the Slovenian Protestant movement in 1598, the printed production in Slovenian was almost completely halted for a century but the public use of Slovenian increased, compared to the pre-Protestant period, as we can see from the preserved manuscripts of the period (see Pogorelec 2011: 317–318). More importantly, the Protestant language standard was preserved in a Catholic edition of a lectionary[13] *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* (1612) based on Dalmatin's translation of the Bible, which became a model for Slovenian religious and secular writers of the 17th and 18th centuries from the central dialectal areas (Ahačič 2012: 17). Therefore, »the trace of Trubar's Carniolan language with some historically founded orthographic improvements and second- and supradialectal phonetic changes lasted until the 19th century« [my translation] (Orel 2010: 414).

In the eastern Slovenian territories, however, the Protestant standard was felt as too different from the local dialects; in the 18th and 19th centuries, two regional standards (in Eastern Styria and Prekmurje) developed (Jesenšek 1992: 175–179). A special regional standard also developed in the Carinthia region at the end of the 18th century and some attempts were also made in the central Slovenian territory to establish a new regional standard closer to the spoken language (Pogorelec 2011: 121–122). In the middle of the 19th century, a new unified Slovenian standard language was proposed by leading Slovenian linguists and accepted for the use e.g. in schoolbooks and newspapers, which was based on the 16th-century Protestant standard but incorporated features of other dialectal groups (Pogorelec 2011: 126–127); a few years before, *bohoričica* was replaced with Gaj's Latin alphabet (*gajica*).

4 RESEARCH SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

As the main aim of the research presented in this article is to determine how much influence the Protestant language standard had on the non-religious (in terms of content) production in central Slovenian region of the period, a selection of existing Slovenian manuscripts[14] with non-religious content, written in the Reformation period (1550–1598) and the three decades following it, was made. The analyzed sources were limited to those written by authors who originated from or lived and worked

---

12 A different definition of supralocalization is used by Rutten and Vosters (2021: 67), who describe it as convergence through accomodation between language users and distinguish it from the standardization from above.

13 A lectionary is a collection of Bible texts appointed to be read in church services on particular days of the year.

14 See note 5.

in central Slovenian dialectal region. This restriction was adopted with the purpose of providing the description of the diffusion of Protestant language standard in the region where its influence on the writing was most likely, due to the same dialectal basis. Among them, special attention was paid to documents from Ljubljana as the centre of the Slovenian reformation, where the Protestant printing house also operated between 1575 and 1581, and the provincial administration seat. Additionally, manuscripts written by priests, who were likely to be acquainted with the Protestant standard, directly or indirectly through the rare Catholic prints of the period (see 3.2), were also included in the research. The aim of such selection is to provide the basis for comparison by which the diffusion of Protestant standard to other regions and social classes can be evaluated.

The selected texts include translations of secular laws or proclamations from German, letters or letter fragments and forms for various municipal oaths (1620–). To illustrate how Slovenian was written before the establishment of the Protestant literary language, a pre- or non-standard[15] manuscript *Prisege kranjskega mesta* (Kranj Oaths, 1531–1558) are also described. As there is no comprehensive corpus of Slovenian manuscripts, various published transcripts of the selected sources were used in the analysis.

The (presumed) authors of the texts include a Protestant preacher, various Catholic priests and official scribes who were not always native speakers of Slovenian. This variety enables some comparison in authors' acceptance of the Protestant language standard according to their ethnic identity and religious affiliation and also level of education.

The adherence to the language standard is assessed on the basis of the orthographical, phonological and morphological features of the texts which are compared to the same features in the works of the dominant Protestant writers (Trubar, Krelj, Dalmatin) and, from 1615 on, to the standard set in the Catholic *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* 1612 (EiL), which in general follows the language of the Protestant era (*cf.* Rigler 1968: 209–216). The most common features are presented in Table 1; some features specific to individual manuscripts are additionaly included in their descriptions.

Table 1. The common language features analyzed in various manuscripts

Orthographical features	spelling of alveolar (IPA: /s/, /z/) and palatoalveolar sibilants (IPA: /ʃ/, /ʒ/)
	spelling of alveolar (IPA: /ts/) and palatoalveolar fricatives (IPA:/tʃ/)
	spelling of *i* and *j*, *u* and *v*
	spelling of consonants *b*, *t*, *k* and *h*

---

15   It is not known whether the Kranj Oaths were written before or after the publication of Trubar's early works, but based on their orthography it is presumed that, even if they were written after the establishment of the Slovenian literary language, the writer was not familiar with it (Golec 2011a).

Phonological features	reflex of *yat*
	reflex of *o* with a long falling tone
	reflex of word-final -*o*
	reflex of palatal *ĺ* (IPA: /ʎ/) and *ń* (IPA: /ɲ/)
	modern vowel reduction (reduction of high vowels, *akanje*, etc.)
Morphological features	pronominal-adjectival endings in oblique cases (SG.M/N)
	nominal endings in oblique cases (INS.SG.M/N, DAT/LOC/INS.PL.M/N)
	forms of the verbs *imeti* 'to have' and *hoteti* 'to want'
	forms of the preposition *brez* 'without' and the conjunction *in* 'and'

5 THE PROTESTANT LANGUAGE STANDARD AND THE SELECTED SLOVENIAN MANUSCRIPTS: RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS

5.1 Kranj Oaths – pre-standard written Slovenian

One Slovenian manuscript, the so-called Kranj Oaths containing four types of oath (marked as KRA-1 (a townsman's oath), KRA-2 (a town councilor's oath), KRA-3 (a town judge's oath) and KRA-4 (a judge's instruction to sworn witnesses)), has been preserved from approximately the time when the Protestant literary language began to emerge.[16] The manuscript is dated to the period between 1531 and 1558 and differs considerably from the emerging Protestant standard, especially in orthography, although phonological and morphological differences are also noticeable. The spelling of the manuscript is strongly influenced by German and is inconsistent:[17] alveolar sibilants /s/ and /z/ are represented indiscriminately by the graphemes <ſ> and <s>, while /s/ is also represented by <ß>, and the palatoalveolar sibilants /š/ (IPA: /ʃ/) and /ž/ (IPA: /ʒ/) are spelled (also indiscriminately) as <ſch>, and in the cluster /št/ in one case also as <st>. The sibilant affricate /c/ is written as <z> or <tz>, and for the palatoalveolar affricate /č/ (IPA: /tʃ/) we find as many as five variants: <tſch>, <zh>,[18] <z> (*rezthj* = reči 'say-INF'),[19] <tzh> and <ztſch>. /b/ is typically spelled as <w> and only in a few cases as <b>. We find also the variation in the graphemes used for other consonants, e.g. <chk> and <kh> for /k/ (*khockher* = kakor 'as'), <ch> and also <g> for final /h/, <th> for /t/. Double consonants are also used, e.g. <tt> for /t/, <ll> for /l/. It should be mentioned that many of the spelling variants (as well as some additional, see Table 1) can also be found in the literary language of Slovenian Protestants, most often in Trubar's works, and that the orthographical differentiation between voiced and voiceless sibilants was introduced by later Protestant authors (see 3.1). Trubar's most important orthographical

---

16 Published e.g. in Pajk (1870), Mikhailov (2001); a detailed overview in Golec (2011a).

17 The quantitative orthographical data can be found in Golec (2011a).

18 As the grapheme <zh> for /č/ is the same as used by Trubar, some researchers have speculated that it indicates familiarity with Trubar's work. But the same grapheme has been used in the Stara Gora manuscript dated to the end of the 15th century (Golec 2011a).

19 The spelling <z> for /č/ could also be considered as an error arising from the reversed order of graphemes: *rezthj* = rečti 'say-INF' (*cf.* Golec 2011a).

contribution compared to the pre-standard written Slovenian are the relatively strict replacement of German multigraphs (multi-letter graphemes) for palatoalveolar sibilants and affricate with digraphs and omission of the use of (German) <w> for /b/.

Table 2. Graphemes for specific consonants in Kranj Oaths compared to Trubar's early works.

	/s/ (IPA: /s/)	/z/ (IPA: /z/)	/š/ (IPA: /ʃ/)	/ž/ (IPA: /ʒ/)	/c/ (IPA: /ts/)	/č/ (IPA: /tʃ/)	/b/ (IPA: /b/)	/k/ (IPA: /k/)	/h/ (IPA: /x/)	/t/ (IPA: /t/)
Kranj Oaths	s, ſ, ß	s, ſ	ſch	ſch	z, tz	zh, z, tſch, ztſch*, tzh	w, b	kh, ckh, ck, c	ch, g, h	t, th, tt
Trubar[20]	ſ, s, ſſ, ß, ſs	ſ, s, z, ſſ, ſs	sh, ſh, ſsh, ßh	sh, ſh, ßh, ſsh, ſch	z, c	zh	b, p, bb	k, c, g, ck	h, ch	t, d, dt, tt

For /v/, in addition to the graphemes <u> and <v>, <w> is also used in Kranj Oaths, and /i/ and /j/ are spelled as <i>, <j> and <y>. An unstable schwa is often written with <i>.

The language of the manuscript shows characteristics of both the Upper-Carniolan and Lower-Carniolan dialects,[21] which led to the assumption that the writer was originally from Ljubljana or its surroundings (Pajk 1870, Golec 2011a). Palatal *ĺ* (IPA: /ʎ/) has reflexes /l/ and /jl/ (*Khreillu* = kralju 'king-DAT.SG'), and voiced palatal nasal *ń* (IPA: ɲ) has reflexes /n/ (*Nich* = njih 'they-GEN.PL = their')[22] and /jn/ (*promoſcheinem* =

---

20   Trubar's spelling variants are cited from the orthographical table in the *Dictionary of the 16th-Century Slovenian Literary Language*, Vol. 1 (SSKJ16: 41–42). The variants (e.g.,<s>, <ſ> and <ſſ>) are often positional and their distribution in Trubar's prints is similar to their distribution in German prints of the period.

21   The Upper- and Lower Carniolan dialects have been for centuries central to Slovenian geographically as well as linguistically in the sense that most of the historical innovations of the Slovenian language which originated in the Slovenian speech territory radiated from here to the adjoining dialects of Styria and the Littoral (Lenček 1982: 146). The vowel system of the Upper Carniolan dialects is characterized by monophthongal reflexes of *yat* and *o* with a long falling tone: in long syllables: *ě > ę̄* and *ô > ǭ*. The unaccented word-final -*o* was presumably maintained in the analyzed period but has been reduced in the course of the modern Slovenian vowel reduction. The reduction has especially strongly affected Upper-Carniolan high vowels. »In the Upper Carniola dialects vowel reduction is strong; every short high vowel in the system has changed, including the schwa, which tends to be reduced qualitatively to 'zero'« (Lenček 1982: 147). Of the other features, the hardening of the palatal *ĺ* and *ń* to *l* and *n*, as well as the simplification of the cluster *šč > š* are relevant for this discussion. The modern Lower Carniolan dialects are characterized by their tendency to dipthongize long vowels. In the 16th century, only the reflex of *yat* was dipthongal (*ě > eị*), while the nasals were still monopthongal and the reflex of the long *o* with a long falling tone was *u*, the same as for *o* in the word-final position (-*o* > -*u*). The vowel reduction is weaker than in Upper-Carniolan dialects, but a tense-lax type of reduction (such as *akanje*, the development of unstressed *o* to *a*) is typical for the modern Lower-Carniolan dialects. Palatal *ĺ* is hardened to *l*, while palatal *ń* still retains palatal pronunciation in certain positions. The consonantal cluster *šč* is not simplified (Lenček 1982: 149).
     The first specific Upper Carniolan dialectal features are attested in *Celovški rokopis* (around 1380), while Lower Carniolan features can first be found in *Stiški rokopis* (1440) (Orel 2017: 256).

22   Although the form *wreſch nich* = brež nih < brez njih 'without them' with the palatalization of the word-final alveolar sibilant /z/ > /ž/ indicates /n/ is at least a functional palatal.

premoženjem 'property-INS.SG'). Accented *yat*[23] has a monovowel reflex /e/, for word-final *-o* we mainly find /u/, but also /o/ (*tho mallu. Jenu tho Velickho = malo in veliko* 'the-ACC.SG.N small-ACC.SG.N and the-ACC.SG.N great-ACC.SG.N); for the *o* with a long falling tone (IPA: /ȏ:/), the reflexes vary, even in the same lexemes (*goſpodj = gos-podu* 'Lord-DAT.SG' : *Tackhu* = tako 'so', *goſpudi* = gospodu 'Lord-DAT.SG' (KRA-1); *gospodi* (KRA-2, KRA-3, KRA-4), *Tackho* (KRA-2); only in the neuter demonstrative pronoun, and the synonymous definite article,[24] *to*, reflex /o/ is consistent. There are few instances of vowel reduction: /i/ is reduced to schwa in the conjunction *ino* = in 'and', which as a result gets a prothetic *j-* (*jenu*); the unaccented *-u* is sometimes reduced to *-o* (*deſchelskhemo* = deželskemu 'provincial-DAT.SG.M') in adjectival endings. The vowel modification *a > e* before *j* is also common but not consistent (*krejlu*[25] = kralju 'king-DAT.SG' (KRA-1, KRA-3 and KRA-4) vs. *krajlu* (KRA-1, KRA-2)). In some cases, the cluster /šč/ is simplified in /š/ (*vošiti* = voščiti 'grant-INF').

Prominent features in which the manuscript agrees with Trubar's characteristics, which his successors did not adopt, are the instrumental form of the reflexive pronoun *ſebo* = sabo/seboj and the forms with a rounded vowel (after the development /a/ > /o/) of *vom* 'you-DAT.PL' and *oli* 'or' instead of *vam* and *ali*.

Among the morphological characteristics, the noun endings with the vowel /a/ in the masculine nominal declension (*peryatelam* = prijateljem 'friend-DAT.PL', *perſtama* = prstoma 'finger-INS.DU') should be highlighted, which, according to Ramovš (1952: 42–43), first appeared in Slovenian in the Carinthian and Upper-Carniolan dialects, and is said to have arisen by analogical expansion of vowel /a/ from nominative plural also to dative and locative plural of neuter nouns, and from there also in instrumental singular; endings with /a/ then became common for masculine nouns as well.[26] In locative singular of the neuter nominative declension, the instrumental ending occurs (*po moyem promoſcheinem* = po mojem premoženju 'by my-LOC.SG.N property-INS.SG'). In the adjectival declension, variant endings with the reflexes /e/ and /i/ (which is standard for the 16th century literary language) are attested (*deželskemo* vs. *deželskimo* 'provincial-DAT.SG.M').

The manuscript also differs from the language of Slovenian Protestants in the use of the preposition form *brez* instead of *pres* 'without' and the form of the conjunction *temeč* instead of *temuč* = temveč 'buť'.

---

23 *Yat* was a common Slavic long vowel, in Cyrillic script written with <ѣ>, which is generally believed to have represented the sound [æ] or [ɛ], a reflex of earlier Proto-Slavic */ē/ and */aj/ (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yat).

24 Slovenian typically does not use definite and indefinite articles, but under the influence of German the demonstrative pronoun *ta* was frequently used in older texts as a loan translation for the German definite article.

25 Examples occuring in various spelling forms are orthographically modernized.

26 Individual occurrences of this form are also found among Slovenian Protestants (*cf.* Ramovš 1952: 43; Jelovšek 2021b: 162, note 99).

5.2 Manuscripts written in the period of the development of the Protestant standard

5.2.1 The proclamation about a new wine tax (1570)

The second extant manuscript from the 16th century, which is also the first known official document in Slovenian, was created in the office of the provincial estates in 1570 and was intended for winegrowers. It is a proclamation about a new wine tax. This manuscript (published and analyzed in Jug 1942) is undoubtedly closely related to the contemporary Protestant literary language, because on the basis of its linguistic characteristics, it can be unequivocally determined that the author of the text was one of the Protestant writers, Jurij Juričič, a native Croat (Chakavian) from Vinodol (today a municipality in the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County in western Croatia),[27] who in the years following Sebastijan Krelj's death was preparing an adaptation of Krelj's translation of the first part and a translation of the second and third parts of Johann Spangenberg's postil (Ioannes Spangenberg, *Auslegung der Epiſtel vnd Euangelien von Oſtern bis auffs Aduent* and *Auslegung der Epiſtel vnd Euangelien von den furnembſten Festen durchs gantze Jar*, 1558), containing passages from the Epistles and Gospels and corresponding homilies for Sundays between Easter and Advent and for some Church Holidays.

The proclamation agrees with Krelj's orthography (*cf.* Rigler 1968: 219–222, Ahačič 2022: 84–88) in the spelling distinction between /s/ (<ſ>, <ſſ>, <ſs>) and /z/ (<s>), and /š/ (<ſh>, <ſ> before <t>) and /ž/ (<sh>), in the distinction between /č/ (<zh>) and /ć/ (IPA: /t͡ɕ/) (<ch>) and the marking of the palatal *ĺ* (*lüdye* = ljudje 'people-NOM', *Deshelian* = deželanov '(provincial) nobleman-GEN.PL', *oblübe* = obljube 'promise-GEN. SG') and *ń* (*poſledniem* = poslednjem 'last-LOC.SG.M'). It differs from Krelj's standard mainly in significantly more frequent use of the grapheme <y> both for /i/ (e.g. *my* = mi 'we-NOM' against Krelj's consistent *mi*) and for /j/ (*kraye* = kraje 'place-ACC.PL'), as well as for the clusters /ij/, /ji/ and /iji/, which Krelj mostly spelled with the digraph <ij>. Such a spelling could perhaps be attributed to the copyist, but we also find a similar distribution of graphemes in Juričič's translation of Spangenberg's postil (Jelovšek 2022a), proving it to be Juričič's idiosyncratic spelling.

In terms of phonological features, the predominant reflex /o/ for the *o* with a long falling tone (*Goſpod* = gospod 'Lord-NOM.SG' vs. *naluſhili* = naložili 'load-PTCP.PL.M') and the preservation of the word-final *-o* (*vto iſto Goſpodſtvo* = v to isto gospostvo 'in that-ACC.SG.N same-ACC.SG.N dominion-ACC.SG') in contrast to (Trubar's) Lower-Carniolan *-u* partly match Krelj's language, but are even more consistent, as they are also found in

---

27 Juričič came to Slovenian lands as a Catholic priest some time before 1561, when he officially joined the Protestants; in addition to his participation in Croatian Protestant press, he soon tried his hand at writing in Slovenian (though his work was notably influenced by his native idiom) and worked as an author and the editor on a Protestant songbook published in 1563, which was not received positively by Trubar and his followers. Juričič's contribution to Slovenian literary language is in a more detailed way described in Jelovšek (2022a). It was not unusual for that period that Croatian priests preached in Slovenian lands, as their lands were part of the same realm and the languages were mutually intelligible; more than one joined the Slovenian Protestant movement, although only Juričič is known to have actively participated in the Slovenian translations, while others, such as Antun Dalmata and Stjepan Konzul, served only as proof readers for Slovenian texts (*cf.* Rotar 1988: 24).

the conjunction *ino* = in 'and', which Krelj consistently wrote as *inu*. Slavko Jug, who published this manuscript in 1952, identified the form *ino* as a feature of the Ljubljana dialect (Jug 1942: 78), but this is not in accordance with Rigler's later theory about the contemporary reflexes of /e/ for *yat* and /u/ for *o* with a long falling tone and word-final *o* in Ljubljana (Rigler 1968).[28] Similarly, we find reflex /o/ for the *o* with a long falling tone in the adverb *okollo* = okoli 'around' against Krelj's *okuli*, which can be attributed to the influence of Juričič's native Croatian language. The same applies to the occasional reflex /i/ for *yat* (*Myſeca* = meseca 'month-GEN.SG', *didinſki* = dedni 'hereditary-NOM. SG.M', etc.) alongside relatively frequent reflex /ej/,[29] the /u/ for nasal *ǫ* (*Sugornikov* = sogornikov 'tenant-GEN.PL of a vineyard', *budeiu* vs. *bodeio* = bodo 'be-FUT-3PL.'), and the forms of the numerals *yedanaiſt* = enajst 'eleven' (Krelj and the other *enajst*) and *ſtirdeset* = štirideset 'forty' (Krelj and the other *štirideset*) also differed from the forms used by other Protestant authors) (Besedje 2011). Juričič's idiosyncrasies are also the unreduced form of the preposition *pry* = pri 'at' (other Protestant writers used reduced form with a secondary schwa *per*) and *prasdnik* = praznik 'holiday' (others: *praznik*), while he used the standard preposition *pres* = brez 'without', as opposed to *bres* in the majority of other analyzed manuscripts; all the mentioned forms can also be found in Juričič's printed work. He also partially deviated from Krelj's example in the morphology, which is characteristically inconsistent: e.g., in the adjectival declension, we find, in addition to standard endings with the reflex /i/ of the secondary *yat* (*vſakateriga* = vs-akaterega 'every-GEN.SG.N'), also endings with /e/ (*poſledniem* **=** poslednjem 'last-LOC. SG.M') and with the Croatian /o/ (*Dunaiſkoga* = dunajskega 'Viennese-GEN.SG.M').[30] On the other hand, similarly to Krelj, Juričič declined masculine nouns ending in -*r* without extension -*j*- (Proclamation: *Vicarom* = vikarjem 'vicar-DAT.PL', *Rihtarom* = rihtarjem 'judge-DAT.PL'; *cf.* Krelj: *Ceſarom* = cesarjem 'emperor-DAT.PL').

When translating the proclamation, Juričič therefore adhered to the orthography established by Sebastijan Krelj, while at the same time showing many individual characteristics on the phonological, morphological and lexical levels; a comparison with his printed work, *Postilla* from 1578, shows that the same characteristics, with the exception of Krelj's orthography, are at least partially preserved in this work, despite attempts to approach the central standard (*cf.* Merše 2013: 129–145) and the revision of

---

28 The form *ino* appears sporadically in the published works of Slovenian Protestants, including those of Trubar (eg. TE 1555: C3a; on the same page, there are 14 occurrences of the form *inu*, indicating that the single form *ino* is probably a mistake) and later in the Bible, but it is found only once in Krelj's works (KPo 1567: XLVI) and also in *Hišna postila* 1595, which was edited by the Ljubljana-born Andrej Savinec and where we find several specific Ljubljana dialectal features, and it does not occur at all in the work of another native of Ljubljana, Janž Znojilšek's translation of Luther's catechism from 1595 (Korpus 16), so it seems unlikely that it really was a feature of the Ljubljana dialect.

29 /ej/ is also used in the adjective *ſloveinſki* = slovenski 'Slovenian-NOM.SG.M' that had almost consistent reflex /e/ in the Protestant works (and of the three occurences of /ei/ in this lexeme, one can also be attributed to Juričič, while the other two are probably errors).

30 Juričič's uncertainty in the use of adjective endings is also shown in the corrections in the manuscript, which Jug (1942: 79) assumes are Juričič's work: thus he corrected *puntarſkega* to *puntarſkiga*, and *deshelskimu* to *deshelskemu*.

one of the other Protestant authors[31] before printing. Both Juričič's manuscript translation and his printed work can therefore be characterized as a "detour" in the development of the Protestant standard (*cf.* Ahačič 2020), while the manuscript differs from other non-literary texts of the period as well.

5.2.2 Gorske bukve (1582) – the translation of the Styrian Vineyard Law from 1543

The next extant manuscript is a translation of the German Styrian Vineyard Law from 1543, prepared in 1582 by the Catholic priest Andrej Recelj.[32] The relatively extensive text (approx. 3,500 words), which is known from a copy thought to have been made at the end of the 16th century (Ogrin 2021), is the oldest extant legal text in the Slovenian language. His orthography largely matches the orthography of Slovenian Protestants, but as with other manuscripts, with the exception of Juričič's, we find many differences, especially in the writing of alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants: /s/ and /z/ are indiscriminately written with <ʃ>, <s> and <ʃs>, /š/ and /ž/ are predominantly spelled as <ʃh> and <sh>, but also as <ʃ> (often before <t> and also <k>), <s>, <ʃs> and exceptionally also with the German trigraph <sch>. The grapheme <z> is used for /c/, which is exceptionally also spelled as <zh> (*Delouzhú* = delavcu 'worker-DAT.SG'). For /č/, the spelling <zh> is dominant, but we also find <z> and <tsh>/<tʃh> (*leʃhetsh* = ležeč 'lying', *ritʃhi* = reči 'thing-GEN.PL'). Digraphs also appear for velars, but some are different from those used in Kranj Oaths (***hkobenimu*** = k nobenemu 'to no-one-DAT.SG.M', *Vnemzhich* = v Nemčih 'in Germans-LOC.PL', ie. in German).

Some Upper-Carniolan features, such as the reflex /o/ for the word final -*o* (which is most common with the demonstrative pronoun of the neuter gender and the synonymous definite article (***to uinu*** 'this/the wine-ACC.SG', ***to iʃtu*** 'the-ACC.SG.N same-ACC.SG.N'))[33] and the dialectal form of the preposition *mih* alongside standard *vmej* = med 'between', could be inserted in transcribing the original text.

In morphology, the noun endings with the vowel /a/ in masculine and neuter nominal plurals (*Shiuotam* = životom 'body-INST.SG', *tergainam* = trganjem '(grape) picking-INS.SG'; *Gospudam* = gospodom 'Lord-DAT.PL') are more frequent than standard endings with /o/ (i.e. *uinom* = vinom 'wine-INS.SG'). The adjectival declension is the same as in the Protestant standard; the dative ending in LOCsg. of masculine and neuter adjectives occurs only once (*ta* [=na] ***timu uinogradi*** = na tem vinogradu 'on the-LOC.

31 The majority of researchers assume that the revisor was Adam Bohorič (for an overview, see Jelovšek (2022a: 116–121); on the other hand, Rigler (1986: 37), based on the retention of Croatisms, believes that the conversion from Krelj's to Trubar's or Dalmatin's orthography was made by the printer Janž Mandelc, while Ahačič (2021b: 178) mentions another Protestant author, Janž Tulščak, as a possible revisor. The revision of Juričič's printed work again proves that the main focus of the Protestant standardization efforts was the orthography (see 3.1), while on phonological and morphological levels a greater degree of variation was acceptable.

32 Published in Dolenc (1940) and in Jelovšek (2021a).

33 It is difficult to determine whether the word-final -*o* in the neuter definitive pronoun *to*, when in the role of a definite article, was stressed or unstressed, but as the reflexes in 16th century Upper- and Lower Carniolan were the same for both stressed and unstressed final -*o* (Upper Carniolan -*o*, Lower Carniolan -*u*), the question is not crucial for this discussion.

SG.M vineyard-LOC.SG'). Demonstrative pronoun *taisti* is generally declined in both parts (*timuiſtimu* = temu istemu/tistemu 'that-DAT.SG.N-same-DAT.SG.N'), but in one case only the final part is declined (*taiſte* = taiste/tiste 'that-same-NOM.F.PL'). The negated verbs *hoteti* 'want-INF' and *imeti* 'have-INF' have only contracted forms (*nima* 'NEG-have-PRS.3SG', *nozhe* = noče 'NEG-want-PRS.3SG') that were not typical for the Protestant literary language (Trubar: uncontracted forms (negation particle + verb) *ne ima* 'not have-PRS.3SG*, *ne hozhe* 'not have-PRS.3SG'; Dalmatin: contracted forms with different vowel reflexes: *nejma* 'NEG-have-PRS.3SG', *nezhe* 'NEG-want-PRS.3SG').

5.2.3 Two Slovenian texts from 1598

The next two analyzed Slovenian manuscript texts were written fourteen years after the publication of the complete Bible, in the year when Protestant preachers were expelled from most of the Slovenian lands, and they also come from Catholic circles. The author of the first is a priest, and the second was supposedly written by a layman, the secretary of the vidame (the deputy governor named by the ruler) of Carniola.

The first is a **Latin letter** interspersed with Slovenian sentences **from priest Nikolaj Koprivec to Bishop Tomaž Hren of Ljubljana**,[34] which was written in Radeče, in the Lower Sava Valley in the Duchy of Carniola on the border of the Duchy of Styria, and is dated to 5 February 1598. Their orthography and language show at least a partial influence of the Protestant standard, especially if we compare them to the Kranj Oaths. Orthographically, the text is quite inconsistent, but basically close to the Protestant spelling: /s/ and /z/ are written indiscriminately with <s> and <ſ>, /s/ also with <ss> and <ſs>, /c/ is written with <z>; the major deviations are among palatoalveolars: /ž/ is written with <sh>, /č/ with <zh> and <z>, /š/ in addition to <sh> under the influence of the German spelling also with <ſch>, and the cluster /šk/ with <sc> (*Scof* = škof 'bishop-NOM.SG').[35] The influence of the German orthography is also discernible in the writing of the final /h/ with <ch>. The language of the writer, who was born in Radeče (and was therefore presumably speaker of the East Lower Carniolan dialect, same as Dalmatin) but spent almost 30 years in the Styrian capital Graz, shows similarities to Trubar's works, such as the use of the possessive pronoun *muj* = moj 'my-NOM.SG.M' (Dalmatin *moj*) and the spelling of palatal *ń* without the indication of palatalization in the personal pronoun *nega* = njega 'he-ACC' (same as Dalmatin until 1584, later *njega*). The predominant reflex /u/ of *o* with a long falling tone in *Gospud* = gospod 'Lord-NOM.SG.'corresponds with the literary (Lower-Carniolan) form and is in contrast with the Styrian form with /o/ (*gospod*), which is found in the last Slovenian passage in the letter; the diphthong reflex for *yat* in lexemes in which even in Trubar's works it was only an exception or did not appear at all (*meiſhati* = mešati 'mix-INF', *neikai* = nekaj 'something-ACC' with a diphthong only twice in Dalmatin in 1575 (*Korpus 16*, see Ahačič 2019)), and /ej/ also for the nasal in *lubeiſni* = ljubezni 'love-GEN.SG.' and *pregleidati* = (s)pregledati 'overlook-INF' shows the opposite tendency to that of the

---

34 Published in the catalogue *Slovenščina v dokumentih skozi stoletja* (Kos *et al.* 1971: 23–24).

35 The same spelling of the word can be found in some of Trubar's works, especially the earliest (Korpus 16).

majority of Slovenian Protestants, who in general tended to avoid the diphthong reflex (*cf.* Rigler 1968, Müller 2001). Koprivec also differed from the Protestant orthography in (inconsistent) spelling of the reduced form of the preposition *pri* 'at' without a secondary schwa written with <e> (*pr* : *per*), and the conjunction *in* 'and' has the same form as in the Kranj Oaths (*ienu*).

Another text from that year, the **translation of Archduke Ferdinand's letter to the vidame of Carniola**[36] presents a significantly different spelling and linguistic image. In it we find some similar spelling features as in Kranj Oaths, e.g. <w> for /b/ (*wodo* = bodo 'be-FUT.3PL'), <ch> for /h/ and <kh> for /k/ are common, as are duplicated graphemes for consonants; however, it differs from it in the spelling of palatoalveolar sibilants: they are predominantly not written with various multigraphs deriving from German orthography, but /ž/ is usually written with the same graphemes as both alveolar sibilants:[37] <s> (*Slusbe* = službe 'job, position-GEN.SG'), while for /š/ digraph <sh> is predominantly used; as in other manuscripts, the grapheme <z> is used for /c/ (exceptionally <zh> in *meszha* = mes(e)ca 'month-GEN.SG), as well as for <č> (*maznu* = močno 'strongly', *Samuz* = samuč 'only'), which is also written as <zh> (*Zhlaueka* = človeka 'man-ACC.SG') and exceptionally with <tz> (*lutz* = luč 'light-NOM.SG'), and <c> indicates /k/ (*uncai* = venkaj 'out'); the peculiarity of the manuscript is the use of <hi> for the word-initial /j-/ (*hieche* = ječe 'prison-ACC.PL'). The language of the manuscript is characterized by a fairly developed modern vowel reduction with the reduction of unstressed *i* > *ə* (*bitte* < *biti* 'be-INF'; *jemeli* < *imeli* 'have-PTCP.3PL.M' : *imal* = imel 'have-PTCP.3SG.M', *ienu* < *inu* 'and' with prothetic *j*-) and *u* > *o* (*nemo* < *njemu* 'he-DAT.SG', *temo* < *temu* 'this-DAT.SG.M'). *Akanje* (development of *o* > *a*) is strongly developed (*dale pastaulen* < *doli postavljen* 'down-set-PTCP.3SG.M, ie. removed from office', *imaia* < *imajo* 'have-PRS.3PL', and occurs also in stressed position: *asmich* < *osmih* 'eight-LOC'); we also find the transition of the preposition *na* 'on' to *ne*. The reflections of word-final *-o* are mixed, we find both /o/ (*to isto* = to isto 'that-ACC.SG.N same-ACC.SG.N', *Vozitno* = očitno 'publicly', *pokorno* = pokorno 'obediently') and /u/ (*taku* = tako 'so', *bellu* = bilo 'be-PTCP.SG.N', *ienu* vs. *ieno* = ino 'and'). Cluster /šč/ is simplified to /š/ (*pokorshina* = pokorščina 'obedience-NOM.SG'). The demonstrative pronoun *taisti* (from ta + isti 'the same') is usually inflected in both parts (*temo istomo* = temu istemu 'the-DAT.SG.N same-DAT.SG.N'), but in one case only in the last one: *hkteistomu* = k taistemu 'to the-DAT.SG.N same-DAT.SG.N'.

On the basis of these characteristics, Rupel (1956: 55) assumes that the vidame entrusted the translation of the German letter to his scribe, who was presumably from the northwestern Slovenian territory and, as the vidame's employee, was certainly not a Protestant. As Rupel concluded: "that's why he only knew the Slovenian writing of the time from afar and, if necessary, wrote in his own dialect. Just as he was not consistent in his spelling, he also did not write a pure dialect, as he also picked up other dialect features in Ljubljana." [my translation] (Rupel 1956: 55)

---

36   Published in Kos (1971: 24–25), with commentary in Rupel (1956), and transliterated in Golec (2007).

37   If we presume that the transcription in Kos et al. 1971: 24–25 is accurate; it is possible that the both <s> and <ſ> from the original texts were transcribed as <s>.

5.2.4 Proclamation about the introduction of a new surcharge (1611)

From the period before the Catholic edition of EiL, there is also a proclamation about the introduction of a new surcharge from 1611, written in the circle of Ljubljana municipal administration. This document, which is missing today, is said to have been written "in German letters", and it was said to have been translated from German at the request of a beadle who used a drum to announce the magistrate's proclamations around the town. "Its creation is completely accidental, as it is just a clumsy translation that was commissioned by a beadle, who probably did not know German" [my translation] (Jug 1942: 74).

Since the text is preserved only in a transcription from 1886 (Vrhovec 1886), which does not distinguish between <ſ> and <s> and uses <s> for both, it is not possible to determine if different graphemes were used for /s/ and /z/ in the original manuscript, as it was typical for the Protestant language standard established in the Bible. In one case (if it is not an error in the transcription), <z> is used for /z/ (*skhazati* = skazati 'show-INF'), which otherwise marks /c/ and /č/ in the text. For /š/, <s> and the German trigraph <sch>[38] are used, /ž/ is also spelled as <s>. For /b/, <w> is used, as well as singular occurences of <v> (*vrati* = brati 'read-INF') and <b> (*nabit* 'nailed (to)'), /k/ is consistently written with the digraph <kh>, and final /h/ with <ch>. The writer's inexperience in writing Slovenian texts is also shown by the spelling <ihe> for *je* 'be-PRS.3SG', which was probably an attempted phonetic representation of the initial palatal approximant *j* in the manner similar to German orthographical representations of the hiatus (e.g., in the word Ehe), instead of the standard <je>.

With regard to phonological phenomena in this short text, we find consistent pre- and occasionally also post-tonal *akanje* (o > e) (*Pred Sehoda* = pred škodo 'from damage-INS.SG'), reduction of final high vowels (*Suetle Först* = svetli first 'esteemed-NOM.SG.m prince-NOM.SG', *na Siuato* < na životu 'on body-LOG.SG., i.e. corporal (adj.)'); it is not clear whether /o/ in the phrase *khakesno Blagu* = kakšno blago 'any-ACC.SG.N goods-ACC.SG' is a result of reduction *u > o* or a reflex /o/ of word-final *-o*, while the reflex of *o* with a long falling tone in the noun *blagu* is /u/, the same as in the literary language), and inconsistent drop of the schwa (*Pakhorn* : *Pakhoren* = pokoren 'obedient-NOM.SG.M'); the reflex of palatal *ĺ* is /l/ (*pella* = pelje 'lead-PRS.3SG', *pastaulenech* = postavljenih 'set-PTCP.LOC.PL.M'), the prefix *raz-* developed to *rez-* (*resumete* = razumite 'understand-IMP.3PL'), while the Lower-Carniolan development of *na-* to *ne-*, which is characteristic of some other texts, is not attested (*nabit* 'nailed-PTCP.NOM.SG.M'). The difference between the imperatives *Pasluschaite* = poslušajte 'listen-IMP.3PL'and *resumete* = razumite (Trubar: *reſumeite* (Korpus16) 'understand-IMP.3PL'), *pauete* = povejte 'tell-IMP.3PL' can be explained as a hypercorrection, which would indicate avoidance of the dipthong reflex /ej/ of *yat*.

---

38 We can also presume that in the words *Sekodo* = škodo, *Sekhoda* = škoda 'damage-ACC./NOM.SG', <Seh> is a spelling error for <sch>.

5.2.5 Another Slovenian fragment

Another Slovenian fragment, dating from 1612, around the time of the publication of the Catholic lectionary, can be found in the **letter of the Polish Jesuit Albert Ocicki**,[39] which he wrote to the pastor of Pilštaj, Adam Aparnik, from Pleterje monastery. He concludes the Latin letter with a few Slovenian sentences, written in an orthography that largely matches the pre-biblical orthography of Slovenian Protestants (e.g. <i> for /j/, <u> for /v/, <s>, <ſ> and <ſs> for /s/, <s> for /z/, <ſh> for /š/; /c/ is not attested, <zh> is generally used for /č/, but the unique spelling *Zhupan* stands out, where this digraph is used for /ž/, which is otherwise also written with <ſh>. The language also partially matches the earlier variant of the literary language of the Protestants (e.g. *muj* = moj 'my' as in Trubar's works; the reflex of *o* with a long falling tone is /u/ (*Goſpud*, *Bug*), which is also a variant reflex of the nasal *ǫ* (*budite* : *bodi*), typical for the Croat Juričič 40 years earlier, and for word-final *-o* we find /-u/ (*inu*) as well as /-o/ (*toliko*); *yat* is consistently written with <e> (*rezhah*, *urednoſti*, *sueſti*), the reflex of palatal *ń* is /n/ (*negoua*[40] 'his-NOM.SG.F') , and the reflex of palatal *ĺ* in the word-final position is /l/ (*priatel* 'friend' – with the preserved prefix *pri-*, which is also found in the verb *priprauite*[41]). In morphology, a special feature is the a-declension ending in the feminine i-declension noun (LocPl *rezhah*). A conjunction *ali* has a variant *ale*, which could be the result of vowel reduction and is also found in Styrian Vineyard Act from 1582, but there are no other signs of reduction.

The preserved letter proves that foreign friars who worked in Slovenian territory learned Slovenian language standard to a higher degree than lay native speakers working as scribes; as it is not clear whether the Catholic edition of the lectionary was published before the letter was written, the language model for the was more probably an earlier work, maybe the lost Pachernecker's catechism.

5.2.6 To summarize

To summarize, the majority of manuscripts written approximately in the period when the Protestant language standard was gradually established show few traces of that standard (see Tables 3 and 4). The exceptions are two manuscripts written by Catholic priests.

---

39   Published in Rupel (1958: 123).

40   Although the language of the letter is reminiscent of Trubars, the possessive pronoun *njegov* appears in the literary language only from Krelj and more frequently in Dalmatin's works (Besedje).

41   While the form *priatel* is more frequent in the majority of Protestant works than the form *periatel* which is tipical for Trubar's works, the verbal prefix *pri-* is much rarer than its reduced variant (Korpus 16). In EiL, only *priatel* is found, and the occurences of the forms *pripraviti* are slightly more frequent than *perpraviti*.

Table 3. Orthographical features in the manuscripts written in the period of the development of the Protestant standard.

	Kranj Oaths	Trubar	Krelj	Proclamation 1570 (Juričič)	Recelj 1582	Dalmatin's Bible 1584	Archduke's letter 1598	Koprivec's letter 1598	Proclamation 1611	Ocicki's letter 1612
/s/	s, ſ, ß	s, ſ, ſſ, fs, ß	ſ, ſſ	ſ, s, ſſ, ſs	ſ, s, fs	ſ, ſſ, fs, (s, ß)[1]	ſſ, ſ, s, ss	s, ſ, fs	[s][2]	s, ſ, fs
/z/	s, ſ	ſ, s, z, ſſ, fs	s, ſ	s	ſ, s, fs	s, (ſ, fs)	s, sh	ſ, s, fs	[s], [z]	s
/š/	ſch	sh, fh, fsh, ßh	fh, sh	fh	fh, sh, ſ, s fs, sch	fh, (sh)	sh, ch, s	S, ſch, fh	[s], [s]ch	fh
/ž/	ſch	sh, fh, ßh, fsh, ſch	sh, fh	sh	fh, sh, ſ, s fs, sch	sh	s, sh	Sh	[s]	fh, Zh
/c/	z, tz	z, c	z, c	z, c	z, zh, ts	z, c	tz, z, zh	Z	z	c
/č/	zh, z, tſch, ztſch, tzh	zh	zh	zh (+ ch = č)	zh, z, tsch	zh	zh, z, tz,	Z	z	zh
/b/	w, b	b, p, bb	b, p	b	b	b, bb, (p)	b, w	b	b, w, v	b
/h/	ch, g, h	h ch	h, ch	h	h, ch	h, ch	ch, h, hk	ch	h, ch	h
/t/	t, th, tt	t, d, tt, dt	t, tt, th, d	t	t, dt, th	t, tt, (d, dt)	t, tt, th, dt	t	t	t
/k/	kh, ckh, ck, c	k, c, g, ck, q	k, c, ch, g, q	k	k, hk, q, c, ch, gk	k, c, (g)	k	k, c	kh, gkh, k	k

161

1 Less frequently used graphemes which are not considered »standard« for a certain phoneme are written in the brackets.
2 Square brackets denote the graphemes used in the transcription that do not necessarily reflect the original orthography.

Table 4. Phonological and morphological features in the manuscripts written in the period of the development of the Protestant standard.

	Kranj Oaths	Trubar	Krelj	Proclamation 1570 (Juričič)	Recelj 1582	Dalmatin's Bible 1584	Archduke's letter 1598	Koprivec's letter 1598	Proclamation 1611	Ocicki's letter 1612
yat	e	e, ej	e, ej	ej, e (+ Croatian i)	e, ej	e, (ej)	e	ej	e	e
o	u, o	u	u, o	o	u, o	u	o, u	u, o	u	u
-o	-u, -o	-u	-u, -o	-o	-u, -o	-u	-o, -u, -a	-u	o	-u
ĺ	l, jl	l, lj	lj, l, jl	lj, l	l, lj, jl	l, jl, lj	l	l	l	l
ń	n, jn	n, jn	nj, n	nj, n	n, jn, nj	nj, n, (jn)	n, jn, j	n	n	/
šč	š	šč	šč	šč	š, šč	šč, (š)	š	/	/	/
pron./adj. endings	-ega, -iga	-iga	-iga	-iga, -ega (+ Croatian -oga)	-iga	-iga	-iga, -oga	-iga	-iga, *-ega (reduction?)	/
nominal endings	-am	-om	-om	-om	-am, -om, -um	-om	-am?	/	/	/
NEG + imeti[1]	/	nejma	nima	/	nima	nema	/	/	/	/
hoteti	/	hoče	hoče, oče	oče	oče	hoče	/	/	hoče	/
NEG + hoteti	noče	neče	noče, neče	/	noče	neče	/	noče	/	/
brez 'without'	brez	prez	Prez	prez	brez, prez	prez	/	/	/	/
in 'and'	jenu	inu	Inu	ino	inu, nu, no, inuj	inu	jenu	jenu	inu	inu

1 All verbal forms in tables 4 and 6 are given in the 3rd sg. present; participle forms are added where their base differs from the present form.

The exceptions are the manuscript written by one of the Protestant authors in 1570, which adheres to contemporary orthographical standard but still retains other linguistic idiosyncrasies of the author, and the translation of the vineyard act from 1582, written by a Catholic priest and Cistercian friar which adheres to the Protestant standard in general but shows greater variation in spelling (showing influences of German orthography that could have been introduced by the transcriber) and in other linguistic features and therefore cannot be described as adhering to any of the variants of the emerging Protestant language standard introduced by various Protestant authors (Trubar, Krelj, Dalmatin's pre-Bible works). Other documents have orthographically more in common with the pre-standard Kranj Oaths than with the Protestant standard (see Table 3), although they diverge from them especially in the less frequent use of German consonant clusters for palatoalveolar sibilants. Among them, the third manuscript written by a clergyman, Koprivec's letter from 1598, also agrees with Protestant language standard (Lower Carniolan), especially on the phonological level.

The occurrence of modern vowel reduction is increasingly reflected in the texts, especially those attributed to lay scribes. Almost all texts show the use of the endings *-am*, *-ami* in the masculine and neuter noun declension which were rare in the standard language, where the endings *-om*, *-omi* were generally used.

5.3 Manuscripts written after the publication of the Catholic edition of *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* (1612)

5.3.1 Archduke Ferdinand's proclamation (1615)

Another translation of an official proclamation, written after the publication of EiL, is Archduke Ferdinand's proclamation to the subjects of the Naklo (Upper Carniola, near Kranj) and Primskovo (Lower Carniola, between Litija and Trebnje) provincial princely offices from 1615[42] that the provincial princely commission was coming to visit, which was supposed to be translated by the scribe of the vidame's office in Ljubljana (NRSS-Ms 105). The spelling of the text, as far as we can conclude from the published transcription,[43] distinguishes between alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants, but not consistently between /s/ and /z/ and /š/ and /ž/, for which the graphemes <s> and <ſ> (for /s/ also <ſs> between two vowels) and <sh> and <ſh> respectively, are used indiscriminately. /c/ is consistently written with <z>, and /č/ mainly with <zh>, while in the indication of the date we also find the trigraph <tsh> (*Tsheterti* = četrti 'the fourth-NOM.SG.M'), as well as <sh>, which is probably a mistake (*oshte* = (h)oč(e)te 'want-PRS.2PL'). As in other similar manuscripts, <kh> is used for the preposition *k* (*khenim* = k enim 'to one/a-NOM.SG.M'). The language mostly corresponds with the established standard, only in one case the *o* with a long falling tone has a reflex /o/ (*Soper* = zoper 'against'), and the cluster /šč/ is developed into /š/ (*pokorſhino* = pokorščino 'obedience-ACC.SG'). There are few signs of modern vowel reduction: only the word-initial /i-/ is reduced

---

42   Published in Kos *et al.* (1971: 25–26).

43   In certain places in the transcription (Kos et al. 1971: 25–26), *gajic* graphemes are used for palatal alveolars, and it is not clear whether they were really used in the original.

and strengthened with a prothetic *j* (*Jemenitnim* < *imenitnim* 'distinguished-DAT.PL.M'), while the masculine form of the demonstrative pronoun *te* = ta 'that-NOM.SG.M' in the date could be used under the influence of the Styrian or Carinthian dialect. The reflexes of palatal *ń* are inconsistent: *Vkranski* = v kranjski 'in Carniolan-LOC.SG.F', *porozheine* = poročenje 'instruction-NOM.SG', *Vporozheniu* = v poročenju 'in instruction-LOC.SG', while palatal *ĺ* is written with <li> (*Volio* = voljo 'will-ACC.SG'), as opposed to *volo* in EiL and predominantly in the works of Trubar and Dalmatin. In morphology, we find consistent use of the ending -*am* for the INS.SG and the DAT.PL of masculine nouns. Similar to other manuscripts and unlike the literary language, the verb *hoteti* 'want-INF' is without the initial *h*- (*oshte* = (h)oč(e)te 'want-PRS.2PL').

Although the orthography is, in some segments, still influenced by German, the spelling and language of the proclamation show more consistency compared to the translation of the Archduke's letter from 1598.

5.3.2 The Ljubljana Oaths (c.1620)

From the book of oaths of Ljubljana townsmen and officials, which also contains seventeen Slovenian oaths created between 1620 and 1727,[44] the oldest seven oaths, which were presumably written around 1620, are analyzed here. They are the oaths of a citizen (LJU-1), a grain measurer (*žitni merčun*) and city watchman (LJU-2), a grain supervisor (LJU-4), a wine measurer (*vinski merčun*) (LJU-6), a city porter (LJU-7), a forest servant (LJU-8) and a short oath for witnesses in judicial proceedings (LJU-10).[45] Despite the fact that they were written in the oath book at approximately the same time by the same hand,[46] the texts show a high degree of intra- and inter-textual variation in spelling, phonology and also morphology. In terms of orthography, the notations for alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants are again inconsistent: as in other similar texts, the graphemes <s>, <ſ>, <ſs> are used indiscriminately for /s/ and /z/, exceptionally also <ſh> (for /s/ also <ſſ> and <sſ>), for /š/ and /ž/ also <sh>, <ſh> (for /ž/ also <ſsh>), also <sch> and <ſch> according to the German orthography, in addition to the same graphemes that denote alveolar sibilants (which are used especially, but not exclusively before /t/). The grapheme <z> is consistently used for /c/, and <z>, <tzh>, <tsh> and <tſch> are also used for /č/ besides the predominat <zh>. Despite the obvious influence of German orthography on individual spellings (in addition to the multigraphs mentioned above, <ch> for /h/ in the middle and at the end of words can be attributed to German, while <c> for /k/ could be used either under German or Latin influence), Golec (2011b) in his analysis of oaths characterizes them as a "product of the era of literary Slovenian" [my translation], since spellings with German multigraphs are more the exception than the rule, and compared to the Carniolan manuscript, the almost complete absence of the grapheme <w> is evident (it appears only in the word *Worste* = boršte 'forest-ACC.PL' (LJU-8). The idiosyncrasy of LJU-4 and LJU-6 oaths

---

44   Published in Golec (2011b), more thorough linguistic analysis in Oblak (1887).

45   The corrections and annotations in these texts, which deviate significantly from the basic notation, were not included in the analysis.

46   According to Golec (2011b), the scribe was born in a Protestant family in Ljubljana.

is an orthographic duplication of initial /v/ (***uuernu*** = vernu 'true~ADV~', ***Vuinski*** = vinski 'wine~ADJ~', ***uuſaki*** = vsaki 'every').

The basic phonology and morphology of oaths match the standard language, but there are many deviations in all texts. In this respect, the oaths LJU-2 and LJU-7 are the closest to the contemporary literary language. For *o* with a long falling tone and final *-o*, we find both Lower-Carniolan (and standard) /u/ and Upper-Carniolan /o/ (LJU-2: *toiſto* = toisto 'that-NOM.SG.N-same-NOM.SG.N' : *drug**u*** = drugo 'other-ACC.SG.N', LJU-8: *Goſp**u**di* : *Gospodu* = gospodu 'Lord/sir-DAT.SG'), and the absence of the diphthong /ej/ for *yat* is noticeable. The occasional /u/ for nasal *ǫ* (LJU-7: *let**u** ſlusbo* = leto službo 'this-ACC.SG.F office/position-ACC.SG', LJU-10: *sto moio Rot**u*** = s to mojo roto 'with this-INS.SG.F my-INS.SG.F oath-INS.SG') is surprising.[47] A reduction of (usually word-final) high vowels (LJU-1: *Vnegoui kuptshie* = v njegovi kupčiji 'in his-LOC.SG.F business-LOC.SG'; LJU-4: *tude* < tudi 'also'; LJU-6: *enimu vslednimo* = enemu vslednjemu 'one-DAT.SG.M every-DAT.SG.M; i.e. everyone', *ubosimo ali bogatimu* = ubogemu ali bogatemu 'poor-DAT.SG.M or rich-DAT.SG.M'; LJU-7: *poſtiti* = pustiti 'let-INF') and a complete drop of schwa (LJU-1: *pocorn* < pokoren 'obedient'; LJU-8: *Touarsha* < tovariša 'comrade-GEN.SG') is attested, as well as frequent *akanje* (LJU-8: *sa tega uol**a*** = za tega voljo 'for that-GEN.SG.N will-ACC.SG, i.e. because of'), in some texts also a change of prefixes and prepositions *na*, *za* > *ne*, *ze* can be found (LJU-6: *per**ne**reien* < prinarejen 'devoted-NOM.SG.M', ***ne**tem inu **ne**unim sveto* < na tem ino na onem svetu 'on this-LOC.SG.M and on that-LOC.SG.M (= another) world-LOC.SG'; LJU-1: *ſevese* < za-veze 'commitment-GEN.SG'), from LJU-6 onward there is also a change of *a* > *e* before *j* (LJU-6,7 *pomag**ei*** : LJU-1,4 *pomag**ai*** = pomagaj 'help-IMP.3SG'). The reflex of palatal *ĺ* is constantly /l/, but for palatal *ń* we find different reflexes even within the same form (e.g. LJU-1: ***n**egoui* : ***ni**egoui* = njegovi 'his-LOC./DAT.SG.F', *sahuale**ni**em* = zahvaljenjem 'thanksgiving-INS.SG'; LJU-4: *kupuua**in**e* = kupovanje 'buying-ACC.SG', ***ni**ech* < njih 'they-GEN'(with reduced /e/ from /i/). We also find some archaic Lower-Carniolan forms, characteristic of Trubar, but not of other Protestant writers, e.g. LJU-1: *mui* = moj 'my-ACC.SG.M': *moio* = mojo 'my-INS.SG.F'; LJU-8: *oli* < ali 'or'.

In the pronominal-adjectival declension, masculine and neuter singular case endings with the vowels /i/ and /e/[48] are used interchangeably (LJU-4 *tega poglauitega meſta* : LJU-8 *tega poglauitiga meſta* = tega poglavitega mesta 'this-GEN.SG.N main-GEN.SG.N town-GEN.SG'); in the LOC.SG of masculine and neuter gender, the ending has not yet become formally identical to the dative (the exception is LJU-1: *per en**imu*** = pri enem 'by one-LOC.SG.M': *vlet**im*** = v letem 'in this-LOC.SG.N'), although we can observe the strengthening of this phenomenon in the last works of Slovenian Protestants, while it appears only exceptionally in EiL.

---

47   It was typical only for the Croat Juričič who translated the proclamation in 1570. Its occurrence in phrases that are repeated in various oaths could lead to speculation that Juričič also translated some oaths that served as a model for the oaths written around 1620, which the variant use of the prefix *naj* instead of *ner* would also corroborate, but there is no other evidence for such claim.

48   The variant endings can be found in cases where old Slovenian pronominal and adjectival endings had the secondary *yat* (e.g., GEN.SG *-ěga* > -*iga*/-*ega*, DAT.SG *-ěmu* > -*imu*/-*emu*).

Like some of the previously discussed texts, the oaths also differ from the contemporary language standard in terms of the form of the verb *hoteti* 'want-INF' without the initial /h/ (*ozhem* = hozhem 'want-PRS.1SG', *nozhem*, also *netshem* = nočem 'NEG-want-PRS.1SG') and in the use of the preposition *brez* 'without'(the Protestant *prez* is found only in one instance in LJU-1); non-syllabic prepositions are often omitted in front of similar consonant (LJU-1: *hudimu pritti* for *k hudimu pritti* 'to bad-DAT.SG.N come-INF, i.e. come to grief'); we also find a superlative with prefixes *nar* and *naj* (LJU-1: **nar** *uetzh* : **nai**uezh = največ 'the most') in the same text; the simplification of the cluster /šč/ to /š/ is also characteristic (*kershanſka* = krščanska 'Christian-NOM.SG.F'). Along the literary conjunction *inu* 'and', the reduced form *yenu* (LJU-4) with a prothetic *j* (similarly *iemena < imena* 'name-ACC.PL' in LJU-8) also appears.

The variation in the writings of the same scribe suggests that, at least in some cases, they are transcriptions of older templates, which were either closer to the earlier language standard of the Protestants (this could explain Lower-Carniolan forms such as *muj, oli, kupuuaine*) or came from pre- or non-literary tradition, such as can be found in the Kranj Oaths or in the beadle proclamation from 1611.

5.3.3 Three Slovenian texts by Catholic priests (1620–1623)

From around the time when the oldest Ljubljana Oaths were written, three Slovenian texts written by Catholic priests are also extant. Although all three authors belonged to the inner circle of the Bishop of Ljubljana Tomaž Hren, who commissioned (and presumably also participated in adapting) the edition of EiL in 1612, the orthography and language of the texts vary considerably.

The first manuscript is **a letter from the Vicar General of the Ljubljana Diocese, Adam Sontner, to Bishop Tomaž Hren** dating from 1620,[49] in which he informs him about the intrigues of the Patriarch of Aquileia, visitator Xistus Carcan and the Archdeacon regarding the right of presentation for a benefice. The letter was written in Slovenian due to the confidentiality of its content (Miklavčič 2013), and the record itself shows that the Vicar General had no experience writing in Slovenian and did not follow the EiL spelling tradition. Thus, for the most part, he did not differentiate between the spelling of alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants, the grapheme <s> is most often used for all of them, /s/ is also written as <ss>,[50] which is used also for /š/ alongside <sch> and <sh>, and he also used the trigraph <sch> for /ž/. /c/ is written with <z>, /č/ with <z> and also the German <tsch>, for /k/ in one case the digraph letter <ch> (*Crainsche* = krajnske 'Carniolan-GEN.SG.F') is used. The basic phonology mostly corresponds to that of the contemporary language standard (/e/ for *yat*, /u/ for *o* with a long falling tone and word-final *-o*), but it shows the results of vowel reduction: in addition to the reduction of high vowels (*Gospudo Tautschero* < gospodu Tavčer(j)u 'Mister-DAT.SG Tavčer-DAT.SG', *nez* < nič 'nothing', *iemel* < imel 'have-PTCP.SG.M' with prothetic *j*-, drop of /i/ in *mel* < imel), *akanje* is

---

49   Published in Kos *et al.* (1971: 26–27).

50   One of the spelling variants for /s/ could also be <sh> in *osesha < ušesa* 'ear-ACC.PL', but as <s> is also often used for /š/ the more plausible form is *ošeša* with the transsylabic assimilation of sibilant and the reduction of the initial /u/.

frequent (*ad* < od 'from', *Vlublana* < v Ljubljano 'to Ljubljana-ACC.SG', *sa Bosia uolia* < za božjo voljo 'for God's-ACC.SG.F will-ACC.SG'), and narrowing of /e/ next to /j/ (*nigoua* < njegovo 'his-ACC.SG.F') and rounding of the schwa next to *ł* (*otekol* < otekel 'swell-PTCP.SG.M') also occur. The palatal *ń* has the reflex /n/ (*nega* = njega 'he-ACC.SG') at the beginning of the word, and /jn/ (*staina* = stanja 'standing-GEN.SG', *uupainæ* = (v)upanje 'hope-ACC.SG') in gerunds, while the reflex of palatal *ĺ* is /lj/ (*uolia* < voljo 'will-ACC.SG'), unlike *volo* in the EiL. In the verb *hoteti* 'want', the initial *h* is preserved (*hozem* = hočem 'want-PRS.1SG'). In terms of morphology, the adoption of the dative ending for locative of the 3ʳᵈ person singular masculine (*per nemu* = pri njem 'at he-LOC.SG') is noteworthy, as well as one occurrence of an ending with the vowel /e/ for the demonstrative pronoun (*letega* 'this-GEN.SG.N') alongside the predominant ending with the vowel /i/ (*sa tiga uola* < za tega voljo 'for that-GEN.SG.N will-ACC.SG, i.e. because of').

The translation of a **Latin breve from 1621**, which was issued concerning Bishop Tomaž Hren's procurement of some indulgences for the diocesan church in Gornji Grad from Pope Gregory XV, presents a very different picture. The breve,[51] which is believed to have been translated by Hren himself or by someone else on Hren's orders, was probably publicly posted in the church itself. The language almost completely matches the contemporary language standard in the EiL, including its spelling, but it is not entirely consistent: alveolar sibilants are consistently distinguished from palatoalveolar sibilants, but the spelling of voiced and voiceless sibilants partially overlap: /s/ is predominantly written with <ſ>, between two vowels with <ſs>, but less often also with <s>, and vice versa /z/ predominantly with <s>, but we also find examples of <ſ>. The same applies to /š/ (<ſh>, <sh>) and /ž/ (<sh>, <ſh>). /č/ is written with <zh>, and for /c/, which is predominantly marked by grapheme <z>, we also find the spelling with capital <C>, which is unique in the manuscripts analyzed. Regarding the consonants, with the exception of rare duplicated graphemes (*Dann* = dan 'day-ACC.SG', *Kimmavza* = kimavca 'August-GEN.SG'), the only divergence from the language standard is the single spelling of /h/ with <ch> in the abbreviation (*S.ᵗⁱᶜʰ* 'S[ain] t.-GEN.PL.M'). In terms of the phonological deviations from the standard established by Slovenian Protestants and adopted by Catholics in the EiL, it is worth mentioning a single occurrence of the reflex /o/ for the *o* with a long falling tone (*kar bi koli* = 'what would any, i. e. whatever would') alongside the usual /u/, the diphthong reflex for *yat* in the negated form of the verb *imeti* (*nejma* = nima 'NEG-have-PRS.3SG'; in the EiL, a form with a monophthong, i.e. *nema*, is used), a presumed reduction of *u > o* in the nominal dative ending (*G. Bogo* < Gospodu Bogu 'L[ord]-DAT.SG God-DAT.SG'), and the development of the cluster /šč/ into /š/ (*Karſhenika* 'Christian-GEN.SG') (which is exceptionally also found in later Protestant works, but in EiL the cluster is mostly preserved). The single reflex /u/ in the verbal ending for the 1PL. *-mo* is probably an error (*tu pervolimu inu naſho oblaſt damo* = to privolimo ino našo oblast damo 'that-ACC.SG.N consent-PRS.1PL and our-ACC.SG.F power-ACC.SG give-PRS.1PL, i.e. we give our consent and enforce it by the power vested in us'). The predominant reflex /jn/ for palatal *ń* in gerunds (*isvelizhajne*, *saſlushejnâ*) corresponds to EiL, which in this respect deviated from Dalmatin's Bible with the reflex /nj/ (*isvelizhanje* = izveličanje 'salvation-ACC.SG', *saſlushenju* = zasluženju 'merit-DAT.SG' (*Korpus 16*, see

---

51   Published in Golia (1958: 134–135).

Ahačič 2019)). In morphology, the locative form of the third person feminine pronoun *v'nje* = v njej 'in she-LOC.SG' (vs. EiL *nji* and *njej*) should also be mentioned.

A greater departure from the Protestant language standard (but at the same time smaller than the contemporary lay texts) is represented by the last fragment, written in 1623: **the Slovenian statements in the investigation of the bishop's commission against the vicar in the parish Sveti Peter pod Gorami** (today Bistrica ob Sotli in eastern Slovenia on the border with Croatia),[52] Gregor Bedal, who had a concubine and gave her part of the parish income. In Slovenian, the statements of the witnesses are written in a somewhat dialectally coloured language, but relatively close to the Protestant standard.

The spelling of Slovenian fragments largely matches the earlier (pre-Bible) literary language of the Protestants, with non-differentiating spelling for voiced and voiceless alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants (<s>, <ſs>, <ss> for /s/, <s> for /z/, <sh> for /š/ and /ž/), <z> for /c/, <zh> for /č/, <l> for palatal *ĺ* and <ni> for palatal *ń* (*niega* = njega 'he-ACC'); the spelling of /i/ and /j/ and their combinations with <ij> (in addition to <i> and <j>) resembles Krelj's orthography (*bilij* = bili 'be-PTCP.PL.M', *moij* = moji 'my-LOC.SG.F', *gornijga* = gornjega 'upper-GEN.SG', *ijh* = jih 'they-ACC') and can probably be attributed to the influence of Latin, while the spelling of the word-initial /v-/ with an apostrophe (*v'uzhiti* = (v)učiti 'teach-INF', *v'zherai* = včeraj 'yesterday') matches Bohorič's orthographical standard introduced in his grammar. "It can be seen that this priest was used to Slovenian writing, as it was cultivated by the Protestants and, after them, the Catholics in Hren's era." [my translation] (Rupel 1958: 127). Besides the use of duplicated <tt> in non-borrowed words (*pritti* 'come-INF'), which can be found in other manuscripts, a special feature is the duplicated <uu> for /u/ in the word-final position (*meſsuu* = meso 'meat-ACC.SG', *takuu* = tako 'so'), which is not attested in any of the texts analyzed in this paper.[53]

Accented *yat* is consistently written with <e>, unaccented with <i> (*vid**i**ti* 'see-INF'), the reflex of o with a long falling tone is predominantly /u/, but we also find /o/ (*nik**u**li* – nikoli 'never' : *nik**o**li*, *sl**u**di* – zlodej 'devil-NOM.SG' : *sl**o**di*), the word-initial vowel i is reduced and has a prosthetic *j-* (*iema* – ima 'have-PRS.3SG'); there are also other traces of vowel reduction (e.g. reduced *i* in *nezh* < nič 'nothing', *be* < bi 'would', reduced *u* in *temeč* < *temuč* – temveč 'rather' (the same form appeared in Kranj Oaths almost a century earlier); for *domov* 'home_ADV' we find *damu* with o > a and assimilation of ov > uv > u, *a* is rounded before *u* (*oku* < ako 'if', *koku* < kako 'how'), the suffix *pri-* is reduced to *per-*, the cluster /šč/ changed to /š/ (*kershovati* – krščevati 'baptize-INF'); the possessive pronoun for the 1st person sg. has the form *moj* as in works of most Protestant writers with the exception of Trubar, the negated forms of the verbs *hoteti* and *imeti* are *nimam* 'NEG-have-PRS.1SG' and *nozhem* = nočem 'NEG-want-PRS.1SG' (vs. the Protestant predominant forms *nemam* 'NEG-have-PRS.1SG' and *ne hozhem* 'not want-PRS.1SG', adopted also in EiL). In the instrumental singular of the masculine noun declension, we find the younger ending *-am*.

---

52   Published in Rupel (1958: 123–127).

53   The similar duplication for the marking of long final *e* is typical for Trubar's works.

Table 5. Orthographical features in the manuscripts written after the publication of the Catholic edition of *EVANGELLIA INU LYSTVI*

	Dalmatin's Bible 1584	Proclamation 1615	Ljubljana Oaths (c.1620)	Sontner's Letter 1620	Breve 1621	Statements 1623
/s/	ſ, ſſ, fs, (s, ß)[1]	s,	ſ, s, ſſ, ſs, ss, sf	s, ss	s, ſ, fs	s, fs, ss
/z/	s, (ſ, fs)	s, fh	ſ, s, sf, fs	s	s, ſ	s
/š/	fh, (sh)	s, sh	fh, sh, fs, ſ, fch, ſsh, sch	s, ss, sch sh	sh, fh	sh
/ž/	sh	fh, sh	ſ, fh, sh, fsh, s, sch, ſch	s, sh, sch	sh, fh	sh
/c/	z, c	z	z	z, t	z	z
/č/	zh	zh	zh, tzh, z, tsh, tſch	z, tsch	zh	zh
/b/	b, bb, (p)		b, w	b	b	b
/h/	h, ch	h, ch	ch, h	h	h, ch	h
/t/	t, tt, (d, dt)	t	t, d, th	t	t	t, tt
/k/	k, c, (g)	k	k, c, ck, hk, kh	k, c, ch	k, q	k

Table 6. Phonological and morphological features in the manuscripts written after the publication of the Catholic edition of *EVANGELLIA INU LYSTVI*

	Dalmatin's Bible 1584	Proclamation 1615	Ljubljana Oaths (c.1620)	Sontner's Letter 1620	Breve 1621	Statements 1623
yat	e, (ej)	e	e	e	ej, e	e
o	u	u, o	u, o	u	u, o	u
-o	-u	-u	-u, -o	-u	-u	-u
ł	l, jl, lj	li, l	l	l	l, lj	
ń	nj, n, (jn)	n, jn, nj	nj, jn, n	n, jn	jn, nj, n	nj
šč	šč, (š)	š	š	š	š	š
pron./adj. endings	-iga	-iga	-iga, -ega	-iga, -ega	-iga	-iga
nominal endings	-om	-am	-om	/	-om	-am
NEG + imeti	nema	/	/	/	/	nima
hoteti	hoče	očem	oče, hoče	če, hotel_PPL	hoče	če, htel_PPL
NEG + hoteti	neče	/	noče	/	/	noče
brez 'without'	prez	/	brez, prez	prez	/	/
in 'and'	inu	inu	inu	inu	inu	inu

---

1   Less frequently used graphemes which are not considered »standard« for a certain phoneme are written in the brackets.

The summarized data for the manuscripts written after the publication of the Catholic edition of *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* can be found in Tables 5 and 6.

6 CONCLUSION

The Slovenian manuscripts written in the second half of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century which have been analyzed show that the Protestant standard had little influence outside their immediate circle. Although the comparison with pre-standard Kranj Oaths shows that, since the establishment of the Slovenian literary language, especially spelling of sibilants and affricates was simplified (see Tables 3 and 5), it rarely achieved even the consistency of Trubar's orthography. With the exception of one late manuscript, the Protestant variant use of the grapheme <c> beside <z> for /c/ was not adopted. After the publication of the Catholic edition of the New Testament texts in *EVANGELIA INV LISTVVI* in 1612, clerics in particular showed a somewhat greater adherence to the language standard established in Dalmatin's Bible translation, though not all, as can be seen in the letter of Vicar General Adam Sontner from 1620. In general, it seems that members of the religious orders had more experience with writing in Slovenian as their secular counterparts, as the comparison between Cistercian Andrej Recelj (Gorske bukve, 1582) and Nikolaj Koprivec (letter to Bishop Hren, 1598) in the 16th century and between Adam Sontner and a foreigner, Polish Jesuit Adam Ocicky in the early 17th century shows. As the author of the only Catholic work printed in the 16th century, Lenart Pachernecker (see 5.2.2), was also member of the Cistercian order, it could be assumed that his work has influenced Recelj, while Jesuits were known for their higher education and also for their catechetical work in Slovenian from the end of the 16th century (Ahačič 2010: 221–222).

It seems that lay authors, clerks and municipal scribes, were not familiar with the works of the Protestants, their spelling was highly inconsistent and often influenced by German orthography: we can find similar spelling variants (e.g. <w> for /b/ in a fragment from 1611) as in Kranj Oaths written before the establishment of the Slovenian literary language. After the publication of EiL the language of the lay scribes was also closer to the language standard preserved in the EiL, although it did not achieve similar level of standardization as the clerical documents.

On phonological and morphological levels (see Tables 4 and 6), similar features can be found in various manuscripts: the variation between Lower-Carniolan /u/ and Upper-Carniolan /o/ is a typical feature, as well as the development of the cluster /šč/ to /š/. The manuscripts also show various degrees of modern vowel reduction that usually correlates with the deviation from the Protestant orthography: the greater the deviation, the more phenomena of vowel reduction are attested in a document. Some specific features that are not prevalent in the Protestant standard also persistently appear throughout the analyzed period, such as the reduced form *jenu* of the conjunction *inu*, the preposition *brez* instead of the *prez* and the forms of the verb *hoteti* without the initial /h-/. The variation of various adjective endings is also a common feature, as well as the prevalence of the endings with the vowel /a/ instead of /o/ in masculine and neuter nominal declension.

The sociolinguistic situation in the second half of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century can therefore be described as *diaglossic* (after Auer 2005, presented in Rutten/Vosters 2021: 73), with the language of the majority of analyzed manuscripts being not distinctly dialectal nor entirely adhering to the Protestant language standard; on the level of orthography, the influence of German spelling conventions is also discernible, especially in manuscripts which show less familiarity with the Protestant language standard. The manuscripts can be described as *hybrid* (Martineau 2013 in Rutten/Vosters 2021: 73), their language combining dialectal reflections with features characteristic of the Protestant standard.

The linguistic data presented confirm the assumption that the Catholic lectionary played a crucial role in maintaining the Protestant language standard in the period after the suppression of the Reformation movement in Slovenian lands, as the language of the clerics was much closer to the Protestant language standard than the language of the lay writers. It is, however, unclear whether the common features that differ from the Protestant language standard can be all attributed to the dialect(s) of the authors or they hint at an existence of a modified language standard in the Catholic circles that was based on the Protestant standard but developed some individual characteristics; it is possible that such variant language standard had existed even before the publication of the Protestant Bible and had been based on the now-lost Catholic catechism of Lenart Pachernecker; the letter of the Polish Jesuit from 1612, which shows some similarities with the translation of the Styrian Vineyard Law from 1582, hints at the possibility that this variant standard still existed in clerical circles around the time of the publication of the Catholic lectionary, which adopted the Protestant language standard of Dalmatin's Bible translation. The question of the role of Pachernecker's lost catechism is connected to the question of the difference in acknowledging and maintaining the established language standard between the members of the Catholic religious orders and secular priests; both topics would merit further investigation.

References

AHAČIČ, Kozma (ed.) (2019) *Korpus 16: Korpus besedil slovenskih protestantskih piscev 16. stoletja*. Različica 1.0. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU. https://fran.si/korpus16/ [accessed on 31 July 2022].

Besedje 2011: *Besedje slovenskega knjižnega jezika 16. stoletja*. www.fran.si.

EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI. Istiskanu v'Némshkim Grádzu: skusi Iuria Widmanstéterja, 1612.

DOLENC, Metod (1940) *"Gorske bukve" v izvirniku, prevodih in priredbah*. Ljubljana: Akademija znanosti in umetnosti.

GOLEC, Boris (2011a) "Prisežni obrazci, najverjetneje iz obdobja med 1531 in 1558." *Neznani rokopisi slovenskega slovstva 17. in 18. stoletja (NRSS)*. In: M. Ogrin (ed.). Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU. https://nl.ijs.si/e-zrc/prisege/html/KRA-1–4.html [accessed on 31 July 2022].

GOLEC, Boris (2011b) "Prisežni obrazci v rokopisnem kodeksu 'knjiga priseg ljubljanskih meščanov in uradnikov' iz obdobja med 1620 in 1726." In: M. Ogrin (ed.) (2008–2011), *Neznani rokopisi slovenskega slovstva 17. in 18. stoletja (NRSS)*. Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovensko literaturo in literarne vede ZRC SAZU. https://nl.ijs.si/e-zrc/prisege/html/LJU-1–17.html [accessed on 31 July 2022].

GOLIA, Modest (1958) "Slovenica I." *Slavistična revija* 11/1–2, 130–141.

JUG, Stanko (1942) "Slovenski 'zapovedni lisť iz leta 1570 in novi vinski davek." *Glasnik muzejskega društva za Slovenijo* XXII, 74–84.

KOLOŠA, Vladimir/Peter RIBNIKAR/Ema UMEK (eds) (1982) *Iz roda v rod: pričevanja o slovenskem jeziku*. Ljubljana: Arhiv SR Slovenije.

KOS, Janez (ed.) (1971) *Slovenščina v dokumentih skozi stoletja*. Ljubljana: Arhiv Slovenije.

"Ms 096. Ukaz nadvojvode Ferdinanda kranjskemu vicedomu." *Register slovenskih rokopisov 17. in 18. stoletja*. http://ezb.ijs.si/fedora/get/nrss:nrss_ms_096/VIEW/ [accessed on 31 July 2022].

"Ms 105. Razglas deželnega kneza podložnikom deželnoknežjih uradov Naklo in Primskovo iz leta 1615. *Register slovenskih rokopisov 17. in 18. stoletja*." http://ezb.ijs.si/fedora/get/nrss:nrss_ms_105/VIEW/ [accessed on 31 July 2022].

OGRIN, Matija (ed.) (2008–2011) *Neznani rokopisi slovenskega slovstva 17. in 18. stoletja (NRSS)*. http://ezb.ijs.si/fedora/get/nrss:nrss/VIEW/

PAJK, Janko (1870) "Stari rokopis Kranjskega mesta." In: *Programm des k. k. Gymnasiums in Marburg*. Marburg: Direktion, 25–43.

RUPEL, Mirko (1956) "Slovenski akt ob protireformacijski epizodi v Vipavi 1598." *Slavistična revija* 9/1–4, 45–64.

RUPEL, Mirko (1958) "Prispevki k protireformacijski dobi." *Slavistična revija* 11/1–2, 122–129.

VRHOVEC, Ivan (1886) "Slovenski listič iz leta 1611." *Ljubljanski zvon* 4/6, 253–254.

Secondary sources

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2010) "Raba slovenščine v šolstvu, cerkvi in začetkih gledališke dejavnosti v 17. in 1. polovici 18. stoletja." In: Jerneja Kavčič/Marko Marinčič (eds). *Musis amicus: posebna številka ob osemdesetletnici Kajetana Gantarja.* Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete = *Keria*, 12/2–3, 219–252.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2012) *Zgodovina misli o jeziku na Slovenskem: katoliška doba (1600–1758)*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2014) *The history of linguistic thought and language use in 16th century Slovenia*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2020) "Razvoj slovenskega knjižnega jezika v 16. stoletju v številkah." *Slavistična revija* 68/1, [3]–19.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2021a) "16. stoletje in jezikovni pouk slovenščine." In: Matej Šekli/Lidija Rezoničnik (eds), *Slovenski jezik med slovanskimi jeziki*. Ljubljana: Zveza društev Slavistično društvo Slovenije, 231–242.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2021b) *Stati inu obstati: prvih petdeset slovenskih knjig*. Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba.

AHAČIČ, Kozma (2022) "Adam Bohorič, Jurij Dalmatin, Sebastijan Krelj in bohoričica." In: M. Jesenšek (ed.), 83–110.

AYRES-BENNETT, Wendy (2021) "Modelling Language Standardization." In: W. Ayres-Bennet/J. Bellamy (eds), 27–64.

AYRES-BENNET, Wendy/John Bellamy (eds) (2021) *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Standardization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

COOPER, Henry R. (1985) "Primož Trubar and Slovene Literature of the Sixteenth Century." *Slovene Studies* 7/1–2, 35–50.

CURRIE, Oliver (2022) "The role of the Bible in language standardization processes: the case of Welsh." *Jezik in slovstvo* 67/1–2, 27–47.

CURRIE, Oliver (forthcoming) "The word of God and the language of the people: standardisation and variation in 17th-century Welsh manuscript sermons." In: Anita Auer/Tino Oudeslijs/Moragh Gordan (eds), *Exploring Supralocalisation Processes: Linguistic Variation in Early Modern Urban and Regional Spaces*. Berlin: Language Science Press.

ČEPAR, Metod (2022) "Sklanjatvene paradigme samostalnikov v Bohoričevi slovnici v primerjavi z dejanskim stanjem v slovenskem knjižnem jeziku." In: M. Jesenšek (ed.), 160–177.

ELSPAß, Stephan (2021) "Language Standardization in a View 'from Below'." In: W. Ayres-Bennet/J. Bellamy (eds), 93–114.

GOLEC, Boris (2007) "Meščanska naselja Vipavske in njihove posebnosti do konca fevdalne dobe." *Kronika* 55, 201–230.

GOLEC, Boris (2021) "Okoliščine nastanka Recljevega prevoda Gorskih bukev." In: A. Jelovšek (ed.), 121–135.

GRDINA, Igor (1999) *Od Brižinskih spomenikov do razsvetljenstva*. Maribor: Obzorja.

HERRITY, Peter (2012) *Slovene: A comprehensive grammar*. London/New York: Routledge.

JAVOR BRIŠKI, Marija (2012) "Slowenien." In: A. Greule/J. Meier/A. Ziegler (eds), *Kanzleisprachenforschung: ein internationales Handbuch*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 589–598.

JELOVŠEK, Alenka (ed.) (2021a) *Gorske bukve 1582: znanstvenokritična izdaja*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU.

JELOVŠEK, Alenka (2021b) "Jezik Recljevih Gorskih bukev." In: *Ead.* (ed.), 137–190.

JELOVŠEK, Alenka (2022a) "Jurij Juričič – Hrvat in slovenski knjižni jezik 16. stoletja." In: Vanja Kočevar (ed.) *Kolektivne identitete skozi prizmo zgodovine dolgega trajanja*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 105–130.

JELOVŠEK, Alenka (2022b) "Osebni zaimki v Bohoričevi slovnici: odraz stanja v slovenskem knjižnem jeziku 16. stoletja?" In: M. Jesenšek (ed.), 178–201.

JESENŠEK, Marko (1992) "Jezikovni sistemi v slovenskem (alpskem in panonskem) govornem območju." *Jezik in slovstvo* 37/7, 173–181.

JESENŠEK, Marko (2008) "Trubarjev gmajn jezik kot podlaga za prvo slovensko knjižno normo." *Slavia Centralis* 1/2 (2008), 5–14.

JESENŠEK, Marko (ed.) (2022) *Novi pogledi na Adama Bohoriča*. Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti.

JOSEPH, John E./Gijsbert RUTTEN/Rik VOSTERS (2020) "Dialect, language, nation: 50 years on." *Language Policy* 19/2, 161–182.

KOS, Janez, *et al.* (1971) *Slovenščina v dokumentih skozi stoletja*. Ljubljana: Arhiv Slovenije.

LEGAN RAVNIKAR, Andreja (2022) "Besedotvorje v Bohoričevi slovnici (1584) primerjalno s tvorjenkami v zgodovinskem Slovarju slovenskega knjižnega jezika 16. stoletja." In: M. Jesenšek (ed.), 135–159.

LENČEK, Rado (1982) *The structure and history of the Slovene language*. Columbus, OH: Slavica.

LEWASKIEWICZ, Thadeusz (2017) "The Role of High Prestige Languages in the Formation of European Literary Languages." *Accents and Paradoxes of Modern Philology* 1/1, 32–41.

LUTHAR, Oto (ed.) (2008) *The Land Between: A History of Slovenia*. Frankurt am Main: Peter Lang.

MAGOCSI, Paul Robert (1993) *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.

MERŠE, Majda (ed.) (2008/9) *Trubarjeva številka = Slavistična revija* 56/4–57/1.

MERŠE, Majda (2013). *Slovenski knjižni jezik 16. stoletja: razprave o jezikovnem sistemu, besedju in prevodni problematiki*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU.

MERŠE, Majda (2022) "Raba glagolov v Dalmatinovi Bibliji in prikaz glagola z oblikami v Bohoričevi slovnici". In: M. Jesenšek (ed.), 111–134.

MIKHAILOV, Nikolai (1998) *Frühslowenische Sprachdenkmäler. Die handschriftliche Periode der slowenischen Sprache (XIV. Jh. bis 1550)*. Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA: Rodopi.

MIKLAVČIČ, Maks (2013): "Sontner, Adam (okoli 1576–1641)". In: *Slovenska biografija*. Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU. http://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi593307/.

MÜLLER, Jakob (2001) "Riglerjeva teza o začetkih slovenskega knjižnega jezika v številkah." *Jezikoslovni zapiski* 7/1–2, 129–162.

OBLAK, Vatroslav (1887) "Trije slovenski rokopisi iz prve polovice XVII. stoletja." In: *Letopis Matice Slovenske za leto 1887*. Ljubljana: Matica Slovenska, 259–315.

OGRIN, Matija (2021). "Rokopis *Deželskosodni, desetinski in vinogorski red kneževine Kranjske*. Kodikološki opis in izvor rokopisa." In: A. Jelovšek (ed.), 107–120.

OREL, Irena (2010) "Kranjski jezik v besedilih 16. in začetka 17. stoletja". In: Aleksander Bjelčevič (ed.), *Reformacija na Slovenskem (ob 500–letnici Trubarjevega rojstva)*. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 401–415.

OREL, Irena (2017) "Pomen starejših slovenskih rokopisov za slovensko zgodovinsko jezikoslovje." In: Aleksander Bjelčevič/Matija Ogrin/Urška Perenič (eds), *Rokopisi slovenskega slovstva od srednjega veka do moderne*. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 253–266.

POGORELEC, Breda (2011) *Zgodovina slovenskega knjižnega jezika. Jezikoslovni spisi I*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete.

RAMOVŠ, Fran (1952) *Morfologija slovenskega jezika*. Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije.

RAMOVŠ, Fran (1971) *Zbrano delo 1*. Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti.

RIGLER, Jakob (1968) *Začetki slovenskega knjižnega jezika*. Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti.

RIGLER, Jakob (1986) *Razprave o slovenskem jeziku*. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Rik VOSTERS (2021) "Language Standardization 'from Above'." In: W. Ayres-Bennet/J. Bellamy (eds), 65–92.

SWANN, Joan/Anna DEUMERT/Theresa LILLIS (2004) *A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

ŠTIH, Peter/Vasko SIMONITI (1996) *Slovenska zgodovina do razsvetljenstva*. Ljubljana/Celovec: Korotan/Mohorjeva družba.

TOPORIŠIČ, Jože (1986) "Bohoričica 16. stoletja." In: Breda Pogorelec/Jože Koruza (eds), *16. stoletje v slovenskem jeziku, književnosti in kulturi*. Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta, 271–305.

Abstract

THE 16TH-CENTURY SLOVENIAN LITERARY STANDARD AND SLOVENIAN MANUSCRIPT TEXTS FROM THE SECOND HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY AND EARLY 17TH CENTURY

In the article, selected Slovenian manuscripts written between 1550 and 1623 are studied in light of their adherence to the established (Protestant) language standard of the period or their deviation from it, with the aim of assessing the diffusion of the Protestant standard to non-religious texts produced in the central Slovenian area in the given period. The adherence to the standard is assessed on the basis of some orthographical, phonological and morphological features of the texts which are compared to the same features in the works of the dominant Protestant writers, especially Dalmatin's *Bible*, and to the standard set in the Catholic *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* 1612. The analysis shows that the sociolinguistic situation in the second half of the 16th century and the first quarter of the 17th century can be described as diglossic, with the language of the majority of analyzed manuscripts being not distinctly dialectal nor entirely adhering to the Protestant language standard, though greater adherence to the established standards is observable in the manuscripts written by priests; in general, manuscripts can be characterized as hybrid, their language combining dialectal reflections with features characteristic of the Protestant standard.

Keywords: history of the Slovenian language, standardization, non-standard varieties, historical linguistics, historical sociolinguistics

Povzetek
SLOVENSKI KNJIŽNI STANDARD V 16. STOLETJU IN SLOVENSKI ROKOPI-SI IZ DRUGE POLOVICE 16. IN Z ZAČETKA 17. STOLETJA

Prispevek proučuje izbrane slovenske rokopise, nastale med 1550 in 1623, glede na njihovo upoštevanje uveljavljenega (protestantskega) jezikovnega standarda tistega časa oz. odklona od njega. S tem poskuša oceniti, koliko se je protestantski jezikovni standard razširil na sočasna besedila s pretežno neversko tematiko, nastala v osrednji Sloveniji. Ocena ujemanja s standardnim jezikom temelji na opazovanju pravopisnih, glasoslovnih in oblikoslovnih značilnosti besedil in primerjave z istimi značilnostmi v delih poglavitnih protestantskih piscev, predvsem v Dalmatinovi *Bibliji*, in v katoliškem besedilu *EVANGELIA INU LYSTVVI* 1612. Analiza je pokazala, da lahko sociolingvistično situacijo konec 16. in v prvi četrtini 17. stoletja opišemo kot diglosično, saj pri večini obravnavanih rokopisov ne gre niti za zapis povsem narečnega govora niti za popolno upoštevanje jezikovnega standarda slovenskih protestantov, čeprav je večje upoštevanje protestantskega standarda opazno pri rokopisih, ki so jih pisali duhovniki. V splošnem lahko rokopise označimo kot hibridne, saj vključujejo tako narečne jezikovne elemente kot značilnosti protestantskega knjižnega standarda.

Ključne besede: zgodovina slovenskega jezika, standardizacija, nestandardne različice, zgodovinsko jezikoslovje, zgodovinska sociolingvistika

Mícheál Hoyne
Trinity College Dublin
mhoyne@tcd.ie

FINDING THE 'RIGHT' IRISH FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT: REGISTER IN THE FIRST THREE PRINTED BOOKS IN IRISH, 1567–1602[*]

1 INTRODUCTION

The Irish language was a comparative latecomer to print, though many Irish speakers would have encountered printed books in other languages prior to the appearance of the first Irish-language printed book in 1567.[1] Efforts to translate the New Testament into Irish went back at least to 1563, when Queen Elizabeth I made funds available for the creation of an Irish font for that purpose; she was concerned to see the project succeed, and by 1567, was threatening to demand repayment if nothing was published (*Cló* 52). She would have to wait longer than she could have guessed to see the final product.

The Irish translation of the New Testament (*TN*) was a natural Reformation project, justified by the desire to spread the Word of God in the vernacular, facilitated by the advent of printing technology, funded (at least initially) by the sovereign and designed to further the state religion (and with it the English state in Ireland). It was enabled, it appears, by an increase in lay literacy in the sixteenth century. Vernacular Irish learning in the sixteenth century was dominated by hereditary learned families of poets, historians and jurists; it is the literature they produced that we find in Irish manuscripts. *TN* was carried out by native speakers of Irish who for the most part were not professional men of letters, but who had nonetheless learned to read and write their own language and had the advantage of a university education. From 1592, they could also count on the institutional support of a native university, Queen Elizabeth's College of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity near Dublin. Aware of rarefied idioms of the language, and in a position to consult experts in them, the translators of the Irish New Testament made deliberate choices to cultivate an accessible, colloquial idiom. Embellishments such as alliteration, which is an extremely common feature of contemporary prose style, had to be foregone in rendering Scripture faithfully, but the resulting translation is nonetheless vivid and idiomatic.

TN did not appear in a vacuum. In 1567, John Carswell's translation of Knox's *Forme of Prayers and Ministrations of the Sacraments* (*FU*) was printed in Edinburgh,

---

[*] I am grateful to the two anonymous readers for generously suggesting improvements to this piece. I alone am responsible for the remaining errors and omissions.

[1] Uilliam Mac an Leagha, for instance, who can hardly have been active after the first quarter of the sixteenth century, made an Irish-language translation of the first (1474) or second (1503) edition of Caxton's *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* (Quin 1939).

the first book printed in the Irish language. This translation was carried out entirely independently of Queen Elizabeth's New Testament project, but it was certainly known to one of those involved, Seaán Ó Cearnaigh: he drew on *FU* in preparing his catechism (*Aibidil*), which, when printed four years later, became the first Irish-language book printed in Ireland and the first to use Elizabeth's Irish font. In seeking to place the register (by which I mean the variety of language appropriate to the particular situation and function) arrived at for the Irish New Testament in context then, we will examine in turn these three books. The central question is: How did those responsible arrive at a register they felt was appropriate for Irish in print and for these works in particular? What decisions did they make and what aspirations and limitations informed these decisions? Discussions of register naturally will overlap somewhat with questions of style and translation technique. Finally, some observations will be made about the legacy of the register created for *TN*.

2 THE FIRST PRINTED BOOK IN IRISH

The first book printed in the Irish language was for the most part a translation of John Knox's *The Forme of Prayers and Ministrations of the Sacraments* (1564) (*Cló* §3). It was printed in Edinburgh in 1567. The translator was John(e) Carswell (*alias* Seón (or Eóin) Carsuel), possibly a native of Kilmartin in Argyll, who was appointed bishop of the Isles in 1565. Carswell was aware he was breaking new ground in translating Knox into Irish and having it printed (*FU* ll 222–223). The second of the book's two epistles addresses no less a readership than all Christendom but speaks especially to the people of Ireland and Scotland. In it Carswell makes a case for printing in Irish, adverting to the advantages of this technology:

> ACHT ATĀ NĪ cheana, is mōr an leathtrom agas an uireasbhuidh atā riamh orainde, Gaoidhil Alban agus Ēireand, tar an gcuid eile don domhan, gan ar gcanamhna Gaoidheilge [*l*. gcanamhain Ghaoidheilge?] do chur a gcló riamh mar atāid a gcanamhna agas a dteangtha féin a gcló ag gach uile chinēl dhaoine oile sa domhan; agas atā uireasbhuidh is mó iná gach uireasbhuidh oraind, gan an Bīobla naomhtha do bheith a gcló Gaoidheilge againd, mar tā sé a gcló Laidne agas Bhērla, agas in gach teangaidh eile ō sin amach, agas fós gan seanchus ar sean nō ar sindsear do bheith mar an gcēdna a gcló againd riamh, acht gē tá cuid ēigin do tseanchus Ghaoidheal Alban agus Ēireand sgrīobhtha a leabhruibh lámh, agas a dtāmhlorgaibh fileadh agas ollamhan, agas a sleachtaibh suadh. Is mōrtsaothair sin rē sgrīobhadh do lāimh, ag fēchain an [*l*. na?] neithe buailtear sa chló ar aibrisge agas ar aithghiorra bhīos gach én-nī dhá mhēd dā chrīochnughadh leis. (*FU* ll 305–320)

> [Great indeed is the disadvantage and want from which we, the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland, have ever suffered, beyond the rest of the world, in that our Gaelic language has never been printed as all other races of men in the world have their own languages and tongues in print; and we suffer from a greater want than any

other in that we have not the Holy Bible printed in Gaelic [*lit.* 'in Irish(-language) print'] as it has been printed in Latin and English, and in all other tongues besides, and likewise in that the history of our ancestors has never been printed, although a certain amount of the history of the Gaels of Scotland and Ireland is written in manuscripts, and in the tabular staves of poets and chief bards, and in the transcripts of the learned. It is great labour to write that by hand, when one considers what is printed in the press, how smartly and how quickly each work, however great, is completed thereby. (*FU* p. 179)]

Carswell's humanism shines through here (Meek 1998: 50–51, 55–56): it is striking that he mentions the printing of Irish-language historical records almost in the same breath as the printing of scripture in Irish. There can be no doubt about Carswell's familiarity with traditional manuscript culture. He goes on to condemn the production – in preference to spiritual reading matter – of manuscripts of tales concerning the Tuatha Dé Danann, the sons of Milesius, and Fionn mac Cumhaill and his warriors (ll 324–328). This condemnation proves at least that he was aware of the kind of texts that were being copied in manuscript, but Carswell had clearly read them too: his own language is redolent of the kind of material we would expect to find in just such manuscripts in this period. His reference to the wax tablets of the poets and the summaries of scholars quoted above (*sgríobhtha a* [...] *támhlorgaibh fileadh agus ollamhan agas a sleachtaibh suadh*), for instance, echoes a formula in *Acallam na Senórach*, the Fenian meta-tale which gathered together tales concerning Fionn mac Cumhaill and his warriors (*FU* 124 n. 317).

Carswell wrote in a literary register of Early Modern Irish. This was the common property of those literate in the vernacular in Gaelic Ireland and Scotland, but it would no doubt have differed dramatically from his own speech. Linguistically, literary Early Modern Irish is far more Irish than Scottish, but Carswell's control of the literary register is impressive. There are only a few linguistic indications here and there of the translator's Scottish origin, particularly in syntax (his failure to clearly distinguish present indicative and future forms, for instance) and lexicon (*I bprionta* 19–20). The orthography, morphology and syntax of *FU* does not differ very significantly from that of an accessible Early Modern Irish text.[2] While some forms Carswell employed would not have met with the approval of Bardic grammarians (such as -*déna* as a dependent future stem corresponding to independent *do-dhéna*),[3] the overall impression is of a high-register text: the first appearance of Irish in print did not represent a linguistic break with 'manuscript Irish'. Though they have the appearance of being mere page-fillers, Carswell cites lines from two Bardic poems on the final page of his work, which he would no doubt have sourced from manuscript (*FU* ll 3966–72, 3979–80).[4] He even

2   For Carswell's language, see *FU* pp xi–lix and Ó Cuív (1977).

3   Carswell's *do-dhéna* is for Classical (and historical) *do-ghéna* with the confusion, ubiquitous in this period, of lenited *d* and *g*. As another non-Classical feature, we may note that the preverb of the compound verb *do-chluin*/ *ad-chluin* 'hears' has been lost in future tense *cluinfidh* (3 sg. absolute) and *cluinfeam* (1 pl.) (*FU* p. xxxi).

4   The second quotation, which is preceded only by the printer's colophon, was cleverly chosen: *Grās Dé 's na thós*

composed his own short Bardic poem in the epistle to the reader and a metrical version of the Pater (ll 401–420, 3905–32) in a loose but perfectly acceptable form (*óglácha*) of the Classical metre *rannaigheacht mhór*.[5]

Much has been made of the fact that in his short poem in the epistle to the reader, in which he speaks directly to the book, Carswell urges it to travel throughout Scotland and on to Ireland (ll 409–412). This has been taken to mean that Carswell intended his translation to be used in Ireland (see, for example, *I bprionta* 16–17, Ó Mainnín 1999: 36–37). Carswell may well have hoped that this first printed book in Irish would be noticed in Ireland and inspire reformers there to produce an equivalent or to advance the printing of Protestant literature in the Irish language further in some other way, but it is by no means certain that he expected his translation to be adopted wholesale outside of his own diocese. The fact that the book is composed in literary Early Modern Irish at all has been taken as further evidence of Carswell's pan-Gaelic ambitions (for instance, see Mac Craith 1993: 143 and Mac Coinnich 2008: 323), but this raises the question: How significant was Carswell's decision – if decision it was – to write in Early Modern Irish? What other registers were available to him in 1567? It is most unlikely that Carswell would have conceived of Scottish Gaelic as a separate language.[6] The manuscripts containing tales of the Tuatha Dé and Fionn mac Cumhaill which Carswell had encountered would have been written in literary Early Modern Irish (or even in earlier forms of the language). Whatever the difficulties they posed, however many differences he might notice between his speech and the written word, for Carswell these manuscripts presumably provided the model for what a substantial piece of Gaelic prose looked like. Had Carswell wished to write in colloquial Scottish Gaelic, he would have had no

---

atámuid, / nī ránuic sé fós fínid, 'We are still at the beginning of God's grace; it has not reached [its] end yet'. It not only allows the text to conclude on an uplifting note; it also quite literally provides a *finit* for Carsuel's text.

5   In Argyllshire tradition he is remembered for persecuting 'the old order of bards and seanchaidhs' as 'stumbling-blocks to the reformed faith' (*FU* p. lxxxv). In what is probably a veiled reference to Bardic poets and other members of the traditional Gaelic learned orders (see below), Carswell refers to the special obligation of those learned in the correct idiom (*ceart canamhna*), composition (*deachtadh*) and pronunciation (*labhairt*) of the Irish language (*Gaoidhealg*) to further the Gospel instead of composing falsehoods against it (ll. 240–5, p. 178). On Carswell's attitude to the traditional learned orders in *FU*, see Meek (1998: 47–51).

6   The reference to *ar gcanamhna* (apparently 'our languages', viz. Irish and Scottish) in the passage cited above is probably a typographical error for *ar gcanamhain* 'our (shared) language' and was translated accordingly by Angus Matheson in the cited translation. There is of course no linguistic definition of the distinction between a language and a dialect; it is ultimately a determination made by speech communities, bound up with sociolinguistic factors (Greene 1972: 168). Though the idea was long dominant in scholarship on Irish and Scottish Gaelic that the language in Scotland did not significantly differ from that in Ireland until after the thirteenth century, there is little doubt that the Irish language began evolving in distinct ways in Scotland, however slowly, even before our written records begin (Greene 1972: 168–9; Ó Buachalla 2002). By the sixteenth century, the Irish spoken in the south-west of Ireland would have differed dramatically in phonology, morphology and syntax from that spoken in the Western Isles, but as Irish was the language of the majority of the country in this period and Gaelic the language of the majority in the Isles, a traveller moving from Carn Í Néid in Cork north to County Antrim and hence to Scotland would not have perceived a sudden linguistic breach as he moved from one region in Ireland to another or from Ireland to Scotland but rather dialects shading gradually one into one another across Gaeldom, as memorably described by Ó Cuív (1951: 47–9) (*cf.* Ó Buachalla 2002: 7; Grant 2004: 94; Mac Coinnich 2008: 313).

models to which to turn.[7] Carswell, whether he was writing with an eye on Ireland or exclusively for the Isles, had little choice in this period and in his cultural area but to write in Irish, which meant writing in literary Early Modern Irish.

In his first epistle (the dedication to the earl of Argyll), his second epistle (his address to the reader) and in an apologia towards the end of the book, Carswell is ostentatiously modest about his linguistic qualifications (*FU* pp lxxiv–lxxv; Meek 1998: 52–53). Addressing his patron, he says his Irish (*Gaoidhealg*) is not very good (l. 228). He acknowledges his great deficiency (*uireasbhuidh mhór*) in Irish usage (*a gcanamhain Ghaoidheilge*) and in composition (*a bfoirm mo dheachtaidh*) (ll 229–231). But he makes an advantage of his supposedly rustic Irish: the Bible is plain in the original and the Word of God does not require 'the fine false colour of the poets' (*dhath breadhdha brēgach na bfileadh*) (ll 235–236; p. 178). This is probably more than a throwaway reference to gilding the lily: Carswell is likely referring here to the Classical register and the rhetorical tricks of the Bardic trade (see also fn. 5 above). He thus makes a virtue out of the simplicity (*simplidheacht*) of his work (ll 265–266). In the epistle to the general reader, he comes across a little more bullish: his translation has only such defects as might be found in any printed work in Latin or English, though he admits it might fall short measured against the standards of Bardic composition and correct usage (*do rēir dheachtaidh nō cheirt na bfileadh*), which are however alien to Scripture (ll 361–366; p. 180). He observes that there are few who have command of the correct idiom of the Irish language (*ceart canamhna na Gaoidheilge*) even in Ireland, except for a small number learned in praise-poetry and traditional lore (*beagān d'aois eladhna mhaith rē dán agas rē seanchus*) and some students (*méid ēigin do mhacaibh maithe lēighind*) (ll 366–370). It would be interesting to know if Carswell meant students in universities (at this period, this would mean universities outside of Ireland) or students in the schools of hereditary learned families in Ireland. Remarkably, Carswell claims not to have studied (*nī dhearrna mé saothar ná foghluim*) the Irish language 'except as any one of the common people' (*acht amhāin mar gach nduine don phobal choitcheand*) (ll 373–374; p. 180). This is a surprising claim given his attainments. If his statement is to be believed (and we must allow for a certain amount of exaggeration), Carswell may be implying that it was not unusual for the 'ordinary person' to learn to read and write Irish in this period. Carswell graduated with a BA and MA from St

---

7   Carswell, of course, had to bear the expectations and abilities of potential readers in mind when making decisions regarding language, register and orthography. As regards orthography, he clearly anticipated members of the traditional learned families might read *FU* (Meek/Kirk 1975: 17; Meek 1998: 47, 59), and these readers would undoubtedly have expected Irish in traditional dress. Given his apparent Gaelicising inclination (discussed below), as well as his indebtedness to traditional manuscript literature, it seems unlikely that Carswell himself would have been attracted to the 'phonetic' spelling based on Scots seen – always in secretary script – in the famous Book of the Dean of Lismore (National Library of Scotland Adv. MS 72.1.37) and elsewhere. (Digital images of the manuscript are available from ISOS with Ronald Black's catalogue description.) In any event, while this orthography was used on a limited scale to represent Gaelic names and short phrases in the likes of memorial inscriptions, legal documents and copies of Scots poetry, as well more extensively in copies of Classical Modern Irish and more vernacular Scottish poetry like the Book of the Dean (Meek 1989; Mac Coinnich 2008: 316, 325–8), I know of no evidence that it was ever employed for a work of prose like *FU*. On Carswell's choice (if choice it was) not to adopt this orthography, see also Ó Mainnín (2002: 410–15) and Mac Coinnich (2008: 323–4, 328–9).

Andrew's in 1542 and 1544 respectively (pp lxxviii–lxxix). He is unlikely to have learnt to write Irish there, but to have pursued studies at this level he would already have learnt to read and write, presumably at home in Argyll, a Gaelic-speaking area. Carswell would hardly have had this book printed had he not counted on there being ministers (and others) capable of reading it (Bannerman 1983: 228, Meek 1998: 51). If his attainments reflect a more general level of Irish-language literacy in the region, the standard of education was high indeed, though Carswell's anticipation of the criticism of the poets reveals his awareness that the professional scholar of Irish might have turned his nose up at such 'school Irish'.[8]

The first appearance of Irish in print was remarkably polished. Roman font was chosen, probably because no Irish font was available at that time. *FU* is – to state the obvious – very 'book-like'. It features catchwords, which are not found in Irish manuscripts before the seventeenth century and were probably introduced into the manuscript tradition from print (see McLaughlin 2021: 69–70). Carswell begins the epistle dedicatory with an explanation of the custom of dedicating a work to a worthy patron (ll 34–42), perhaps suggesting that this is something of a novelty in Irish, but the verbose paeon is thoroughly native in style and idiom (Meek 1998: 42–7). An interesting vernacular feature is the use of the demonstrative formula *and* (or *ann*) *so síos* (or sometimes just *and so*) in place of a simple title or heading, as in *Foirm na nUrrnuidheadh* [...] *and so síos* on the titlepage: 'This below is *Foirm na nUrrnuidheadh* [The Form of Prayers]'. The formula is very common in *FU* (see ll 398, 655, 741, 761, 809, 877 *et passim*),[9] and was likely borrowed from the paratext of Irish manuscripts, in which it was a common way of introducing a text.[10]

Another significant vernacular formula used by Carswell is *X darab comhainm Y*, 'X whose cognomen/alternative name is Y'. He introduces himself on the title-page as *M. Seon Carsuel, Ministir Eagluise Dé a gcrīochaibh Earra Gaoidheal, darab comh-ainm Easbug Inndseadh Gall*, 'Master John Carswell, Minister of the Church of God in the territory of Argyll, who is also known as Bishop of the Isles'. As a good Presbyterian, Carswell should have had no truck with bishops and certainly should have refused to take such a title upon himself, and indeed his decision to accept the bishopric from his patron was controversial (*FU* pp lxxxii–lxxxiv; *I bprionta* 15). The *comhainm* equation is a neat sleight of hand, making presbyter and bishop almost synonyms. The second

---

8   Carswell, in using the phrase *saothar*/*foghlaim do dhéanamh sa nGaoidheilg* 'to study Irish', may have meant only formal education. He may have pursued private studies in the language and so be non-representative of the average lay person with some education in the language. If Carswell is modest about his own grasp of the Irish language, he makes clear in the apologia that the printer in Edinburgh, Robert Lekprevik, had no Irish (or Gaelic) whatsoever (ll 3939–43). On levels of literacy in the Highlands in the sixteenth century, see Bannerman (1983).

9   The first Bardic quotation on the final page is headed *RAND*. The normal meaning of *rann* in connection with poetry is 'quatrain', but here, as one and a half quatrains are cited, it must have the broader sense 'citation'. This use of *rann* is met elsewhere as, for instance, in the sixteenth-century grammatical tracts (see, for example, *IGT* III 244 n. 23, 479 n. 23, 505 n. 5).

10   For examples, see *Catha Cenel Eogain and so* (RIA MS 23 P 2, f. 58v; 15th century); *Fingal Cloinne Tanntail ann so sis* (King's Inns MS 12, 43c14; 15th century); *Dinnshenchas Erenn ann so* (RIA MS D ii 2, 1; 16th century). Images of the manuscripts are available from ISOS.

instance of this formula on the titlepage is more intriguing: *Do buaileadh so i gcló i nDún Edin, darab comh-ainm Dún Monaidh*, 'This was printed in Edinburgh, which is also known as Dún Monaidh'. I do not know what authority Carswell had for giving *Dún Monaidh* as an alternative name for *Dún Éidin* and I have no other example (see *OG* §15003). A *Dún Monaidh* situated in Scotland does occur in a text which Carswell probably read, *Acallam na Senórach* (Stokes 1900: 3090), but it is traditionally taken to be Dunstaffnage in Argyll (Ó Riain, Murray and Nic Chárthaigh 2020, 119, *OG* §15002; *cf.* O'Grady 1892: ii 180). Carswell can hardly have meant that Dunstaffnage and Edinburgh were the same place. It seems likely that *Dún Monaidh*, the name of Scotland's royal seat in earlier literature (see O'Donovan 1842: 46–47, Lehmann 1964: ll 440–441), followed the kings of Scotland to Edinburgh: *Dún Monaidh* is mentioned as the contemporary residence of the Scottish king in another sixteenth-century text (O'Grady 1892: i 279, ii 318). In any event, this equation may be connected with another curious statement on the titlepage: Carswell claims to have translated from Latin and English (*arna dtarraing as Laidin agus as Gaill-Bhērla*), though the evidence is that the translation was based on English sources only (*FU* p. lxviii; *I bprionta* 16). Thomson suggests 'that the reference to Latin was intended to dispose his Highland readers to a more sympathetic attitude towards the book and its contents than if its origin were entirely Lowland and English'. We may speculate that this attitude could also have led him to further 'Gaelicise' Edinburgh/Dún Éidin on the titlepage by giving it an alternative Gaelic name from the distant past.

Carswell has been praised as a translator (*I bprionta* 18; Meek 1998: 55). His style is vigorous and thoroughly natural. He commonly uses strings of alliterating words, which are often more or less synonymous. Alliteration (marked by ° here) is most pronounced in the bombastic dedication to the earl of Argyll, which opens *Don triath* °*chumhachtach* °*cheirtbhreathrach* °*chiūinbhriathrach* [...] *atā M. Séon Carsuel* [...] *ag* °*guidhe agas ag* °*gér-atach Dé go* °*dīochra* °*dūthrachtach* [...], 'For the powerful, right-judging, soft-spoken lord [...] Master John Carswell is [...] praying to and keenly imploring God intensely and fervently [...]'. This piling up of alliteration is common in Early Modern Irish prose texts, and was no doubt designed to appeal to the honorand. Other portions of *FU* are much plainer. Carswell was sufficiently skilled and had enough common sense to modulate his style to accommodate different audiences: the dedication to the earl of Argyll is florid, while the catechism – which was designed for ministers to use in preparing youths for Communion – is written in a much sparer style (*FU* pp. lxix–lxxii; *I prionta* 18–19). As Thomson observes, 'It seems clear from this that Carswell was fully aware of what was stylistically appropriate' (*FU* p. lxxii; *cf.* Meek 1998: 53–54).

FU stands very comfortably on the threshold of the world of manuscript and print. As a printed book, it is well produced (something for which the printer must take some of the credit; Meek/Kirk 1975: 1). The style is native despite both the novel medium (the printed book) and novel text-types (the epistle dedicatory). Carswell was in a position to judge what was appropriate – and feasible – in register and style given both his abilities and limitations and those of his intended readers in the Isles. Though he was

obviously somewhat uncomfortable with the prospect of his Irish being criticised by the custodians of 'correct' Irish (the Bardic order), he provided a rationale and model for 'simple' Irish in print that is consistent with his stated aims as a reformer and humanist. This literary register would be oriented towards – but might legitimately deviate from – more rarefied idioms of the language. On the whole, *FU* marked a self-assured beginning for Irish in print.

3 THE FIRST IRISH-LANGUAGE PRINTED BOOK IN IRELAND

The first item printed in Irish in Ireland was probably the broadside produced in Dublin in 1571, a copy of an apocalyptic religious poem by Pilib Ó hUiginn (d. 1487) (*Cló* §4, *Aibidil* 191–212). This broadside is associated with the printing of the first Irish-language book in Ireland, *Aibidil Gaoidheilge & Caiticiosma* the same year (*Cló* §5). Ó hUiginn's poem was no doubt sourced from a manuscript, though there is now only one extant manuscript earlier in date and it is not the source. The decision to print a Bardic poem is nowhere explained. It may be that it provided a text of reasonable length to serve as a trial-piece to test out the new Queen Elizabeth font, specially designed for printing the Irish language, and the printing operation set up in Dublin. The poem itself contains no sentiments liable to offend reformers. We can speculate too that, just as Carswell was comfortable citing Bardic religious poetry and using a Classical metre in *FU*, the reformers in Dublin may have wished to lay claim to what was acceptable of the earlier vernacular literature and associate themselves in the process with the most prestigious form of Irish-language literature, Bardic poetry.[11]

A translation of the catechism found in the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* in English as revised in 1559 makes up the bulk of the *Aibidil*. The main text is preceded by an epistle to the reader and a short guide to Irish spelling. It is followed by some prayers, translations of articles of religion and quotations from the Bible (presumably *ad hoc* translations as there was no Irish-language translation of the whole Bible available) (*Aibidil* 11–16). The translator was Seaán Ó Cearnaigh, a native of Co. Sligo, graduate of Cambridge and minister in the reformed church. He was one of those involved in the efforts to translate the New Testament and was probably based in Dublin when the *Aibidil* appeared (pp 3–4).

Linguistically, the *Aibidil* (like *FU*) is noteworthy for the first known appearance in the Irish language of many words. Some of these 'may have been current in administrative and ecclesiastical circles in Dublin' (p. 42).[12] Ó Cearnaigh presumably trusted his readers would understand them.[13] Like Carswell, he did not belong to a hereditary

---

11   The broadside is heading *Duan ann so* [...] (a heading also found in the copy in National Library of Scotland MS Adv. 72.2.14, AD 1584). The demonstrative formula is also used in introducing sections in the *Aibidil* (see pp 58 and 68). By *TN*, it has disappeared altogether in Protestant publications. It reappears in the first Catholic printed book in Irish, Giolla Brighde Ó hEódhasa's catechism in 1611 (second edition 1614) (*Cló* §§13 and 16), but subsequent Catholic publications drop it.

12   *Cf.* Meek's praise (1998: 55) of *FU*: 'the liturgical and canonical sections of the book are an astonishing achievement, mainly because they contain, in one sweep, the Gaelic vocabulary for the worship and ministry of the Protestant church on Knox's model'.

13   I have argued elsewhere that Ó Cearnaigh may have designed his book to be used primarily by schoolteachers

learned family,[14] yet in spelling, morphology and syntax the *Aibidil* adheres for the most part to good literary usage – though not without a few forms that the Bardic grammarian would likely have felt to be 'howlers'.[15] For instance, the negative of 3 sing. future indicative *do-ghéna* 'will do' occurs as *ní ghéna* or *ní dhíoghna* (*Aibidil* 38; *cf.* dependent *-déna* in Carswell, discussed above). Both *ní ghéna* and *ní dhíoghna* may well have represented forms current in Ó Cearnaigh's dialect of Irish at this time, but neither of them would have passed muster with Bardic grammarians, who would only have allowed *ní dhiongna*, *ní dhingnea* or *ní dhingéna*. In fact, Ó Cearnaigh's *ní dhíoghna* is probably a more 'phonetic' rendering of 'correct' *ní dhiongna*, as he would have pronounced it (O'Rahilly 1941: xxi; Ó hUiginn 1994: 591). Though literary Early Modern Irish would have been closer to Ó Cearnaigh's own speech than it would have been to Carswell's, there would still have been a gulf between his own dialect and even the more accessible of literary registers. Most obviously, the standard orthography had not been revised in any significant way to take account of far-reaching phonological changes which would have occurred three centuries or more earlier (Ó Cuív 1951: 40–44; McManus 1994: 350–3, 355–356).[16] In syntax conservatism cannot be ruled out either: for instance, in all of the Protestant books published in the seventeenth century, I have not observed any exception to the rule that a (non-relative) verb will agree with a plural nominal subject in number,[17] but this concordance obligation was already obsolescent at the beginning of the Early Modern Irish period (McManus 1994: 420).

Ó Cearnaigh certainly had some exposure to formal, traditional Irish-language teaching which was heavily influenced by the Bardic schools. The brief guide to Irish spelling at the beginning of the book is steeped in Bardic learning (*Aibidil* 58–67 and the relevant textual notes; Hoyne 2019: 214–220), ending with an appeal to seek instruction from the poets (*fághbhadh fóghluim óna fileaghuibh*) on matters not dealt with, for 'it belongs to their art to explicate [these things] intellectually and knowledgeably and not to mine' (*oír is lé na n-ealádhain bheanas sin do thrāchdadh go hínntleachdach éolusách*). Though this remark is limited to circumscribing the matter covered in his

---

following the 1570 'act for the erection of free schools'. The *Aibidil* would form a kind of primer to introduce students to Irish letters (Hoyne 2019: 219).

14 His was a clerical family and we would therefore expect a high level of literacy among them.

15 Unlike Carswell, however, Ó Cearnaigh retains the preverb in forms of *do-chluin* where appropriate.

16 In 1639, the Jesuit Theobald Stapleton set out to print Irish in roman font using a more phonetic version of Irish orthography in a catechism printed in Brussels which anticipated many of the spelling reforms formalised in the twentieth century (Hoyne 2019: 221). He did not find any imitators. Stapleton was extremely critical of the native learned classes for obscuring the language (Ó hUiginn 2013: 103–4, Hoyne 2019: 224).

17 E.g. *Do thuigeadar* [3 pl. preterite of *tuigidh*] *na breitheamhain* [nom. pl. of *breitheamh* 'judge'] *agas na rīghthe* [nom. pl. of *rí* 'king'; Classical nom. pl. *rígh*] *deaghchreidmheacha do bhī ar Chloind Israhēl an nī-se do labhramar romhaind*, 'The pious judges and kings who were set over the children of Israel understood what we have mentioned above' (*FU* ll 83–5, p. 174) and *ní bhfuilid* [3 pl. dependent present indicative, substantive verb] *anmanna* [nom. pl. *ainm* 'name'] *oghuimh aca innte*, 'they do not Ogamic have names in it' (*Aibidil* 58–9). The plural verb may also be used when the subject is grammatically singular but semantically plural: *adubhradar* [3 pl. preterite of *a-deir* 'says'] *Cland* [nom. sg.] *Israhēl go minic* [...], 'the children of Israel often said' (*FU* l. 212, p. 177); *Créúd do rinneadar* [3 pl. preterite of *do-ní* 'does'] *do lucht* [nom. sg.] *gabhāla in tan-sin ar do shon?* 'What did your godparents do then on your behalf?' (*Aibidil* 70–1).

brief 'alphabet' of the Irish language, Ó Cearnaigh's attitude towards the Bardic order and its hegemony in linguistic matters is not unlike Carswell's: on the one hand, he acknowledges that the poets are the supreme authorities of the Irish language; on the other, he excuses himself from having to imitate them too closely. As with Carswell, the possibility at least existed that the first printed books in Irish might adhere strictly to the Classical idiom; Carswell openly rejects this option, and Ó Cearnaigh sidesteps it. Though Ó Cearnaigh clearly respected the Bardic order, he does not follow its usage slavishly. In his 'alphabet' he departs from normal Bardic teaching in several ways. For example, though he retains the traditional Bardic names for letters, the alphabet follows the standard Latin ordering (*A ailm*, *B beth*, *C coll*) rather than the Bardic (*B beth L luis N nion*), a reorganisation also seen in the primer compiled by his Cambridge contemporary, William Nugent, perhaps on the occasion of a visit by Queen Elizabeth to Cambridge in 1564 (*Aibidil* 14 n. 44; Hoyne 2019: 215). Ó Cearnaigh brings in comparisons to other linguistic traditions also, as when he writes, *Mar atá dioptóngón ag an ngrēgach & ág in laidnoír, atád coimhcheanguil ag an ngaeidhelg*, 'As the Greek [scholar] and the Latinist have a diphthong, Irish has *coimhcheangail*' (*Aibidil* 62–63, Hoyne 2019: 219–220).[18]

This international perspective reflects not only his own university education but also a sense, again shared with Carswell, that Irish was joining other European languages in print. Of course, Irish had made its debut in print four years earlier – and Ó Cearnaigh certainly knew about and even borrowed material from *FU*, as was proven by de Bhaldraithe (1958) – but he nowhere mentions his predecessor. As has already been noted, *FU* was printed in roman font. Ó Cearnaigh emphasises the fact that Irish now has its 'own special font like every other language in Christendom' (*in teanguidh ghóidhelge do chur ann a cló dhíleas fén mar tá gach teanguidh ele sa Chríosduigheachd*) (*Aibidil* 66–67).[19] For Ó Cearnaigh, Irish was not truly 'in print' unless in Irish font. The font in question of course had been paid for by Queen Elizabeth back in 1563, four years before Carswell's book appeared. Ó Cearnaigh may have desired to magnify the significance of the first appearance of an Irish book in irish font; it helped him downplay – or rather ignore – the fact that dithering in Dublin had allowed a rival Protestant tradition to steal a march, but there may genuinely have been a sense that Irish in print should look like Irish did in manuscript, that there should be a continuity from minuscule to font.[20]

In style, however, Ó Cearnaigh is far less 'literary' than Carswell, and the *Aibidil* does not show the influence of vernacular literature in any obvious way. Ó Cearnaigh's style has been called 'inelegant', though Williams feels that this assessment is rather unfair (*I bprionta* 26). Whatever about his qualities as a translator and writer, Ó Cearnaigh had less scope than Carswell to show off different styles. He occasionally embellishes with some alliteration, as when he addresses the reader with *Ag sin agud*

18   The usual Bardic term for 'diphthong' is *deafhoghar*, not *coimhcheangal*.

19   The final page of the book consists of errata, another first in Irish-language printing.

20   For Queen Elizabeth's irish font, see McGuinne (2010: 4–22) and *Cló* 55–7.

a lēughthōir céd ᵒtairthi & ᵒtoírrcheas na hóibre ᵒmaithi ᵒmór-shaothair úd, atám do ᵒthairring & do ᵒthriall chugad lé fada, 'There you have, o reader, the first fruits and progeny of that good and very laborious work which I have been producing and devising for you for a long time' (*Aibidil* 12, 52–53), but on the whole the style is plain and the translation workmanlike. We have seen that the creation of the Queen Elizabeth font was to have facilitated the publication of the New Testament in Irish. Ó Cearnaigh's name is associated with the early stages of that project. In assessing him as a translator and stylist in the *Aibidil*, we should bear in mind that he may already have begun to work on translating the Bible and may have been honing a method and style of translation that prioritised fidelity to the original rather than naturalness or flair. How much of Ó Cearnaigh remains in the New Testament as eventually published is impossible to know for sure.[21]

4 THE NEW TESTAMENT (1602)

Elizabeth I's desire to have the New Testament printed in Irish had obviously not been met by the publication of the *Aibidil*, though at least Ó Cearnaigh had made a start in Irish printing in Dublin and made good her investment in an irish font. The authorities printed a proclamation in English and Irish against the Earl of Tyrone, Aodh Ó Néill, in 1595, but as no copy of the Irish text is known to survive nothing can be said of it (*Cló* §9).

The story of *TN* has been told elsewhere (*Cló* §10, *I bprionta* 27–34, Ó Fearghail 2004).[22] Unlike its two predecessors, *FU* and the *Aibidil*, this publication was a team effort. The translation was begun by Nicholas Walsh (d. 1585), a graduate of Cambridge, from 1571 chancellor of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin and from 1578 bishop of Ossory, and Seaán Ó Cearnaigh of the *Aibidil*, who was treasurer of St Patrick's from 1570. It is presumed Walsh's connection with the translation ceased when he was appointed bishop; Ó Cearnaigh died around 1587. The translation project may have started in earnest in the 1570s, but the work does not seem to have advanced very far before the foundation by Elizabeth of Trinity College in 1592. There the project was overseen by Uilliam Ó Domhnaill, *alias* William Daniel, from Co. Kilkenny, one of the first three Scholars of the College and from 1593 a Fellow. Other leading figures in the translation were Fear gan Ainm Ó Domhnalláin (d. 1609), a native of Galway and scion of a Bardic family and yet another graduate of Cambridge, from 1595 archbishop of Tuam, and Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha, a practising Bardic praise-poet from Co. Clare. Somewhat later, and perhaps in place of Ó Domhnalláin and Mac Bruaideadha, Ó Domhnaill could call upon the assistance of Domhnall Óg Ó hUiginn, who may have been a native of Cill Chluana (Kilclooney) in Co. Galway; the Uí Uiginn were a distinguished family of Bardic poets and they kept a school at Cill Chluana. The Gospels had been rendered into Irish and as far as Luke 6 had already been printed on the grounds

---

21   His translations from the Bible at the end of the *Aibidil* (152–5) differ significantly in wording from those eventually published in *TN*.

22   There is no academic edition of any of the Irish-language Protestant works published in the seventeenth century. A copy of *TN* can be accessed from EEBO and a digital transcript from HIC.

of Trinity College by 1597. A quarrel with the original printer contributed to delays. Queen Elizabeth may have seen an 'advance copy' shortly before her death, but *TN* was not actually published until James VI of Scotland had become James I of England.

The translation itself was carried out from the Greek Textus Receptus, but the translators had the benefit of Latin and English translations also. Both Williams (*I bprionta* 34) and Ó Fearghail praise the easy and idiomatic style of the resulting text. Ó Fearghail instances the translation of 1 Tim. 3:8, an exhortation that deacons not be 'double-tongued': *gan a dteanguidh dho bheith liom leat*, which could fairly literally be rendered 'that their tongue not be with-me with-you'. *Teanga liom leat* is still a current idiom meaning 'double-talk'. It is striking to see such a colloquial expression in this context. Though idiomatic, like the *Aibidil*, there is nothing evocative of 'manuscript Irish' here.

When it came to finding the 'right' register, all of those involved in making the translation were native speakers of the language, and besides this natural fluency, Walsh, Ó Domhnalláin and Ó Domhnaill had pastoral experience in Irish-speaking communities: we can expect that they had a good idea of the linguistic capacity of ministers and their congregations. From 1592 the Irish New Testament project had the expertise of an accomplished member of the poetic guild on staff. Carswell and Ó Cearnaigh must have had some exposure to Bardic teaching, as we have seen, but to our knowledge there was no direct involvement by a member of the native learned classes in their work. While none of the other members of the project were professional men of Irish letters, at least so far as we know, all but Ó Domhnaill (and before him Walsh) probably grew up in a Bardic milieu. The driving force behind the translation and publication, however, remained a 'layman', and Ó Domhnaill makes special mention of the linguistic qualifications of Mac Bruaideadha and Ó hUiginn in his address to the reader at the beginning of *TN*: he refers to Mac Bruaideadha as *duine iúlmhar sa teanguidh ghaoidheilge sa gColáisde nuádh láimh ré Baile atha Cliáth*, 'a knowledgeable man in the Irish language in the new college near Dublin', and he acknowledges Ó hUiginn's work in writing out the text after the Gospels *do réir óghuim & cirt na gáoidheilge*, 'according to the orthography and correct usage of Irish'. This may suggest underlying drafts in less 'correct' Irish which were then given a grammatical and orthographical touch-up by Ó hUiginn. If our Ó hUiginn is the 'Donell Oge O Higgen of Kilclony' mentioned in a pardon of 1590, he probably did not himself practise the family trade, for he is there described as a 'gentleman' (not a 'rhymer' or poet) (Knott 1922/26: ii 312), but he was clearly regarded by Ó Domhnaill as an authority on correct orthography and usage, and it would not be surprising if he had indeed received training in the Classical idiom in his family's Bardic school at Cill Chluana, even if he did not go on to be a professional panegyrist.

There was some danger inherent in involving a member of the Bardic order or someone expert in the Classical idiom in the work of translation: in many respects the Classical idiom was more conservative than most varieties of literary prose (*cf.* Ó hUiginn 2013: 100). To take one instance: *An bhfuil tú sgáoilti ó mhnáoi? ná hiárr bean* (1 Cor. 7: 27), 'Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife'. The dat./acc. sg. form *mnáoi*, triggered by and lenited after the dative preposition *ó* 'from', is quite

188

different from the nominative singular form *bean* 'wife'. In the example above, *bean* is the direct object of the 2 sing. imperative verb *íarr*. In the Classical register, a direct object in the singular which has an accusative form distinct from its nominative should take this distinctive accusative form when it comes immediately after the verb that governs it: thus *mhnáoi* and not *bean* would be 'correct' after *íarr*. To use the nominative singular *bean* here in a Bardic poem would be to incur the fault of *ainréim* 'non-inflection' (*IGT* V §16). But the very fact that a Bardic grammarian needed to point this out – in a tract found already in the fourteenth century – proves that this rule was obsolete in the spoken language.[23] **Ná hiárr mhnáoi* would have been arcane in 1602, and the translators of *TN* were targeting their work at a broader readership than those who had mastered the Classical idiom.[24]

Be that as it may, there are a few forms which might raise eyebrows. In Mt 21:28 we find *Agus ar bhfreagra dhó-san a dubhairt sé: ní dhiongan*, 'And he answering said: I will not'. *Diongnan* is a synthetic dependent 1 sing. future indicative form of *do-ní* 'does'. One wonders how colloquial this form was. It is certainly not a form a Bardic grammarian could quarrel with (*IGT* III §1).[25] The dependent future stem *diongn-* seen in *ní dhiongnan* is used 'correctly' throughout the Gospels (e.g. Mt. 19:18), alongside the more innovative form *dén-* (Mt. 5:27) (already met with in *FU* and the *Aibidil*). In the Epistles and Apocalypse, however, we also find *diongn-* generalised as a dependent stem outside of the future, as in 1 sg. present indicative *ní dhiongnuim* 'I do not' (Rm. 7:19) for expected *ní dhéanaim* (seen in Rm. 1:9 and 9:1, as well as in Mt. 21:27), and 1 sing. present subjunctive *dá ndiongna mé* 'if I do' (1 Cor. 14:14).[26] These are certainly not forms a Bardic grammarian would have approved of. It is interesting to note that the generalised use of the *diongn-* occurs only in sections translated and transcribed after 1597.[27] *Diongn-* here probably represented spoken **dʹiːn**, as found today in Connacht Irish (*cf.* Ó Cearnaigh's *díoghn-*),[28] and we likely have to do here with a feature

---

23 This particular example is found in that portion translated after 1597, but note, from the earlier translated portion, *do bhéra bean eile* (Mt. 19:9), 'he shall marry another', lit. 'he will take another wife', where *bean* occurs immediately after *do-bhéra* (3 sing. future indicative of *do-bheir*). In Carswell, the direct object is sometimes distinctively accusative, but these instances appear to be set phrases; one anomalous instance in verse (*nid* from *nead* 'nest') is probably nom. pl. for acc. pl. rather than acc. sing. (*FU* xxi–xxii).

24 It was arcane in 1616 when the Franciscan Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire, a member of a famous poetic family, published his *Desiderius* in Louvain (*Cló* §17). Ó Maoil Chonaire marks the direct object of the verb accusative several times (O'Rahilly 1941: xxiv), as in *claoiim an mnaoi* (l. 1371) for colloquial **claoiim an bhean* 'I overthrow the woman'.

25 It may be significant that *ní dhiongnan* in Mt. 19:18 is a responsive. Even in Modern Irish dialects which do not normally use synthetic verbal forms, synthetic forms can be found as responsives (Greene 1972a: 62–5). On the use of the analytic construction (with an independent subject pronoun) in preference to the synthetic construction in the New Testament, see Ó hUiginn (2013: 101–2).

26 See also Rm. 13:10; 1 Cor. 4:7, 13:4–6; 2 Cor. 9:2, 10:13, 11:12, 11:18; 2 Ts. 3:4; 1 Tm. 2:7; 2 Tm. 1:3; Jam. 3:6; Ap. 9:19.

27 As I have noted this feature before, I will mention here that future indicative forms of *do-chluin* are found without its preverb, where in conservative Irish it should be present, in Luke 12:32 and later (John 5:25, 7:51, 16:13; Acts 17:32, 25:22, 28:26; Apoc. 18:22), though the preverb occurs in Luke 21:9, Acts 21:22 and Apoc. 11:12. The preverb is found in Mt. 13:14, 24:6 and Mark 13:17.

28 The generalised use of *diongn-* is also found in Ó Maoil Chonaire's *Desiderius* (O'Rahilly 1941: xxi). For the

of Domhnall Óg Ó hUiginn's dialect of Irish. This would explain its sudden appearance in those portions not translated and transcribed by 1597. Ó Corráin (2013: 90–92) has already noted changes in syntax between the two phases of translation. The constructions exemplified by *atá* [it-is] *arna* [after-its] *sgríobhadh* [writing], 'it is written' (Mt. 4:7) and *atá* [it-is] *sgríobhtha* [written] (Mt. 4:10) occur more or less an equal number of times in the pre-1597 portion, but the second variant dominates in the rest of *TN* to the near total exclusion of the first. In the early seventeenth-century grammar of Irish associated with the Franciscans, *Rudimenta Grammaticae Hibernicae*, which reflects to a significant degree the teaching of the Bardic schools, the construction with the verbal adjective (*sgríobhtha*) is said to be disapproved of by the learned, which we can take to mean representatives of the traditional learned class (Mac Aogáin 1968: ll 1765–75; Ó Corráin 2013: 91 n. 10). A full linguistic analysis of the Irish New Testament might reveal other such 'textual heteroglosses' between those sections translated and transcribed by 1597 and those which followed.[29]

Slight as these indicators are the impression gained is that the New Testament translation became somewhat more colloquial – and more regional – in register after 1597. It seems unlikely that a decision was made in this regard. It is much more likely that this had to do with the fact that Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha and Fear gan Ainm Ó Domhnalláin were no longer on hand to check – whether consciously or unconsciously – the drift towards more colloquial and regional forms. When Ó Domhnaill took up the task of translating the Book of Common Prayer into Irish in 1605, he was granted leave from Trinity and went 'into the province of Connaught to have the assistance of such as he shall think fit there' (McNeill 1932: 376; *Cló* §11). Mac Bruaideadha had died in 1602. It has been suggested that Ó Domhnaill went to Connacht to consult Fear gan Ainm Ó Domhnalláin, who had been translating the Book of Common Prayer before he became archbishop of Tuam in 1595 (*I bprionta* 35; *Cló* 63–64). Perhaps significantly, when *LUC* appeared in 1608 (available on EEBO, HIC), the *atá arna sgríobhadh* construction was back with a vengeance,[30] but the generalised use of *diongn-* still occurs.[31] Once again, a fuller linguistic analysis of both *TN* and *LUC* would be required to take these observations any further, but it would be tempting to draw some conclusions about the preferences of Ó Domhnalláin and Mac Bruaideadha from this data: we might speculate that Ó Domhnalláin (and perhaps also Mac Bruaideadha) had a soft spot for the more literary *atá arna sgríobhadh* type construction (though not to the exclusion of the more colloquial *atá sgríobhtha* variant), while it was the influence of Mac Bruaideadha, a Bardic poet and Munsterman, which checked the spread of the regional use of *diongn-* as a dependent stem outside of the future. In any event, these forms and the textual issues they raise highlight the fact that the register arrived

---

position today, see Ó hUiginn (1994: 591).

29   These linguistic points need not necessarily contradict Williams' impression that the translation as a whole is consistent (*I bprionta* 32).

30   In the entire *TN* after the Gospels, there is only one example of the *atá arna sgríobhadh* type. On pp iv–xiv of *LUC* (a translation of the Act of Uniformity and a proclamation of James VI/I) there are six examples.

31   See, for instance, *ní dhiongann* (*LUC* p. 14).

at for the *TN* was not a matter only of decisions made by the translators headed by Ó Domhnaill. It was also the product of the available pool of talent with their own speech varieties, linguistic preferences and abilities in their native language.

5 RESPONSES TO THE REGISTER OF THE IRISH NEW TESTAMENT

By 1608, Irish Anglicans had brought out a catechism, the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer in the vernacular. Three years later, the Irish Franciscans in Antwerp would respond with their own catechism (*Cló* §13, Ó Fearghail 1976). Whereas the 'authors' most associated with the early decades of Protestant printing in Irish (Carswell, Ó Cearnaigh, Ó Domhnaill) were 'outsiders', bearing surnames not associated with the production of traditional Irish literature in manuscripts and belonging to families with no hereditary connection to the world of Irish letters, the two figures associated with the early years of Counter-Reformation printing in Irish (Giolla Brighde Ó hEódhasa and Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire), first in Antwerp and then in Louvain, were members of distinguished Bardic families. Giolla Brighde Ó hEódhasa was a master Bardic poet as well as a member of the Order of Friars Minor. His catechism, first published in 1611, alternates prose and Classical verse. Ó hEódhasa justifies using a simple style in this catechism but, even as he does so, he advertises his qualifications in the Bardic art and 'correct' Irish in a poem written in strict verse (*dán díreach*): the unmistakable message (directed at his fellow elite men of letters) is that he could make more extensive use of the prestigious idiom, if he chose to (Ó hUiginn 2013: 97–98). The register of the early Franciscan publications is noticeably less colloquial than that of their confessional rivals and predecessors in print (Ó hUiginn 2013: 98–103), and the Franciscans were undoubtedly aware of this. In 1618, Aodh Mac Aingil published a treatise on the sacrament of penance in Louvain (*Cló* §18). Mac Aingil's preface gives us some sense of how the Franciscans viewed the Protestant publications from Dublin, not only in doctrinal matters but also as regards 'correctness' of language. Mac Aingil calls the Book of Common Prayer *Leabhar Iffrinn Eiriceachda* 'Heretical Book of Hell' (playing on *Leabhar Aifrinn* 'Missal') (Ó Maonaigh 1952: l. 87). Of the 'heretics' in Ireland he writes: *Do chuirsead an leabhar-sa & mórán don Bhīobla a nGaoidhlig, & as lór a neimhchirti sgrīobhthar iad*, 'They translated this book and much of the Bible into Irish, and they are written most incorrectly' (ll 88–89).[32] He therefore feels justified in writing his Counter-Reformation treatise *go simplídhe go neimhcheart Ghaoidhilge* 'simply, in incorrect Irish' (l. 93).[33] Be that as it may, Mac Aingil's Irish is less colloquial than that of the *TN*: the 3 pl. preterite ending -*s(e)ad* in *do chuirsead* 'they put', for instance, was a purely literary morpheme. In *FU*, the *Aibidil* and *TN* this ending does not occur; normal -(*e*)*adar* is employed (as in *do chuireadar*, Mt. 21:7). Given the presence of Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha on the staff of the Irish New Testament project, we cannot imagine that those responsible for *TN* were unaware of such

---

32   The use of the passive here (*sgríobhthar*) strikes me as odd. One might have expected a perfect construction like **is lór a neimhchirte atáid siad sgríobhtha/arna sgríobhadh.*

33   Mac Aingil was happy enough to quote from *TN* elsewhere in his book, though without giving his source (*I bprionta* 41).

literary forms; they deliberately chose to cultivate a more colloquial register. Among the Franciscans meanwhile the spirit of the professional literary men of the old order was dominant, even if certain concessions had to be made to popular usage to better pursue the goals of the Counter-Reformation project.

How did Protestants greet *TN*? No contemporary response is recorded. James VI/I felt it necessary to command the use of both the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer among Irish-speaking congregations in 1624, an order which implies that *TN* was not being widely used at that point (*I bprionta* 39). The print run was only 500, but copies could still be had in 1628, when twelve were donated for the use of Irish-speaking students in Trinity (Stubbs 1889: 58; *I bprionta* 34). *TN* seems to have excited little enthusiasm, even among the Protestant minority in the country. This is probably – at least partially – a symptom of the general failure of the Reformation in Ireland and the failure of the Church of Ireland to commit to the vernacular of the majority population of the island. It may also be connected with the wider decline of the Irish language in this period: as the seventeenth century wore on, the order of hereditary families which had dominated Irish learning since the thirteenth century collapsed, and Irish ceased to be a language of public life. Carswell, Ó Cearnaigh and Ó Domhnaill were university men who, though not brought up in a Bardic milieu, had learned to read and write Irish and had some contact with traditional Irish learning. They could make careers in the established church, and it was an advantage in that career to have fluent Irish. In contrast, the English scholar Narcissus Marsh, shortly after being appointed provost of Trinity in 1679, found that, though most of the 'native' Scholars in the College could speak Irish, none could read or write it (Ó Moghráin 1945: 94–95). They obviously felt no need to acquire this skill, as Irish was no longer a language for promotion or preferment in the Church of Ireland.

When the 1602 New Testament was reprinted in 1681 at the behest of Robert Boyle, an Irish aristocrat in London (and not himself an Irish-speaker), some – mostly cosmetic – revisions were felt necessary, including the substitution of more common words and expressions (*Cló* §49; *I bprionta* 78). As would be the case with the Irish Old Testament, which was finally printed in 1685, having languished in manuscript for more than four decades (*Cló* §51), it seems there was little demand for copies. The vernacular register developed for the Irish New Testament by 1602 had been outpaced by far-reaching sociolinguistic changes before it had a chance to attain anything like canonical status or exert long-term influence on the development of the Irish language. A new edition of the Irish Bible (including *TN*) in roman font for the Scottish Highlands in 1690 included a glossary for those unfamiliar with 'the refined idiom of Ireland' (*snasdha chanamhain na Héire*) (*Cló* §56). The so-called 'Highland Bible' was not well received or well understood in the Highlands (*I bprionta* 101–102; *cf.* Meek 1998: 58–62). The gap between Irish and Scottish Gaelic, which Carswell had perceived as a matter of register, had become one of language. In Ireland, there was in effect no readership for a (Protestant) Bible in the vernacular. In Scotland, the demand existed, but it was demand for a Bible in Scottish Gaelic.

Abbreviations

Aibidil = Ó CUÍV, Brian (1994) *Aibidil Gaoidheilge & Caiticiosma: Seaán Ó Cearnaigh's Irish Primer of Religion published in 1571*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

Cló = SHARPE, Richard/Mícheál HOYNE (2020) *Clóliosta*: *printing in the Irish language, 1571–1871 – an attempt at narrative bibliography*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

eDIL = *Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language*. dil.ie [accessed on 3 March 2022].

EEBO = Early English Books Online. proquest.com/eebo [accessed on 3 March 2022].

FU = THOMSON, R. L. (1970) *Foirm na n-Urrnuidheadh: John Carswell's Gaelic translation of the Book of Common Order*. Edinburgh: Scottish Gaelic Texts Society.

HIC = Historical Irish Corpus/Corpas Stairiúil na Gaeilge 1600–1926. corpas.ria.ie [accessed on 3 March 2022].

I bprionta = WILLIAMS, Nicholas (1986) *I bprionta i leabhar: na Protastúin agus prós na Gaeilge 1567–1724*. Dublin: An Clóchomhar.

IGT = BERGIN, Osborn 'Irish Grammatical Tracts', supplements to *Ériu* 8 (1916), *Ériu* 9 (1921–3), *Ériu* 10 (1926–8), *Ériu* 14 (1946), *Ériu* 17 (1955).

ISOS = Irish Script on Screen. isos.dias.ie [accessed on 3 March 2022].

LUC = *Leabhar na nUrnaightheadh gComhchoidchiond agus Mheinisdraldachda na Sacrameinteadh* [...] (1608). Dublin: Seón Francke.

OG = HOGAN, Edmund/Donnchadh Ó CORRÁIN, *Onomasticon Goedelicum*. 3 March 2022. dias.ie/celt/celt-publications-2/onomasticon-goedelicum.

TN = *Tiomna Nuadh ar dTighearna agus ar Slanaightheora Iosa Criosd* [...] (1602). Dublin: Seón Francke.

References

BANNERMAN, John (1983) "Literacy in the Highlands." In: Ian B. Cowan/Duncan Shaw (eds), *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland: essays in honour of Gordon Donaldson*. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 214–235.

de BHALDRAITHE, Tomás (1958) "Leabhar Charswell in Éirinn." *Éigse* 9/1, 61–67.

GRANT, James (2004) "The Gaelic of Islay, a North Channel dialect?" In: Cathal G. Ó Háinle/Donald E. Meek (eds), *Unity in diversity: studies in Irish and Scottish Gaelic language, literature and history*. Dublin: School of Irish, Trinity College, Dublin, 69–96.

GREENE, David (1972a) "Responsives in Irish." In: Herbert Pilch/Joachim Thurow (eds), *Indo-Celtica: Gedächtnisschrift für Alf Sommerfelt*. München: Hueber, 59–78.

GREENE, David (1972b) Review of Jackson (1972). *Studia Hibernica* 12, 167–170.

HOYNE, Mícheál (2019) "Brief rules for reading Irish found in printed books, 1571–1853." *Celtica* 31, 213–297.

JACKSON, Kenneth (1972) *The Gaelic notes in the Book of Deer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

KNOTT, Eleanor (1922/26) *The Bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn (1550–1591)*. I-II. London: Irish Texts Society.

LEHMANN, Ruth (1964) *Fled Dúin na nGéd*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

MAC AOGÁIN, Parthalán (1968) *Graiméir Ghaeilge na mBráthar Mionúr*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

MAC COINNICH, Aonghas (2008) "Where and how was Gaelic written in Late Medieval and Early Modern Scotland? Orthographic practices and cultural identities." *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 24, 309–356.

MAC CRAITH, Mícheál (1993) "The Gaelic reaction to the Reformation." In: Stephen G. Ellis/Sarah Barber (eds) (1995) *Conquest and Union: fashioning a British state, 1485–1725*. London: Longman, 139–161.

MAC RAGHNAILL, Fearghal (1976) *An Teagasg Críosdaidhe*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

McCONE, Kim/Damian McMANUS/Cathal Ó HÁINLE/Nicholas WILLIAMS/Liam BREATNACH (eds) (1994) *Stair na Gaeilge in ómós do Phádraig Ó Fiannachta.* Maynooth: An Sagart.

McGUINNE, Dermot ([2]2010) *Irish type design: a history of printing types in the Irish character*. Dublin: National Print Museum.

McLAUGHLIN, Roisin (2021) "Text run-over imagery and reader's aids in Irish manuscripts." *Ériu* 71, 69–116.

McMANUS, Damian (1994) "An Ghaeilge Chlasaiceach." In: K. McCone/D. McManus/C. Ó Háinle/N. Williams/L. Breatnach (eds), 335–445.

McNEILL, Charles (1932) "Harris: *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*." *Analecta Hibernica* 6, 248–449.

MEEK, Donald/James KIRK (1975) "John Carswell, superintendent of Argyll: a reassessment." *Record of the Scottish Church History Society* 19, 1–22.

MEEK, Dòmhnall Eachainn (1989) "Gàidhlig is Gaylick anns na Meadhon Aoisean." In: William Gillies (ed.), *Gaelic and Scotland/Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 131–145.

MEEK, Donald E. (1998) "The Reformation and Gaelic culture: perspectives on patronage, language and literature in John Carswell's translation of 'The Book of Common Order'." In: James Kirk (ed.), *The Church in the Highlands*. Edinburgh: Scottish Church History Society, 37–62.

Ó BUACHALLA, Breandán (2002) " 'Common Gaelic' revisited." *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* 1, 1–12.

Ó CORRÁIN, Ailbhe (2013) "On the language of the Irish New Testament of 1602." In: Ailbhe Ó Corráin/Gordon Ó Riain (eds), *Celebrating sixty years of Celtic Studies in Uppsala University: proceedings of the eleventh symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica.* Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 77–98.

Ó CUÍV, Brian (1951) *Irish dialects and Irish-speaking districts*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

Ó CUÍV, Brian (1977) Review of *FU. Celtica* 12, 201–203.

O'DONOVAN, John (1842) *The Banquet of Dun na n-Gedh and the Battle of Magh Rath.* Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society.

Ó FEARGHAIL, Fearghus (2004) *The Irish Testament of 1602*. Dublin: National Bible Society of Ireland. [nationalbiblesocietyofireland.ie/the-bedell-boyle-lecture-2003–the-irish-testament-of-1602–by-rev-fearghus-o-fearghail]

O'GRADY, Standish Hayes (1892) *Silva Gadelica.* I-II. London: Williams and Norgate.

Ó hUIGINN, Ruairí (1994) "Gaeilge Chonnacht." In: K. McCone/D. McManus/C. Ó Háinle/N. Williams/L. Breatnach (eds), 539–610.

Ó hUIGINN, Ruairí (2013) "Transmitting the text: some linguistic issues in the work of the Franciscans." In: Raymond Gillespie/Ruairí Ó hUiginn (eds), *Irish Europe, 1600–1650: writing and learning.* Dublin: Four Courts Press, 85–104.

Ó MAINNÍN, Mícheál B. (1999) "'The same in origin and in blood': Bardic windows on the relationship between Irish and Scottish Gaels, *c.* 1200–1650'." *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 38, 1–52.

Ó MAINNÍN, Mícheál B. (2002) "Gnéithe de chúlra Leabhar Dhéan Leasa Mhóir." In: Máirtín Ó Briain/Pádraig Ó Héalaí (eds),*Téada Dúchais: aistí in ómós don Ollamh Breandán Ó Madagáin*. Indreabhán: Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 395–422.

Ó MAONAIGH, Cainneach (1952) *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridhe*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

Ó MOGHRÁIN, Pádraig (1945) "Pól Ó hUiginn." *Béaloideas* 15, 87–101.

O'RAHILLY, T. F. (1941) *Desiderius*. Dublin: Stationery Office.

Ó RIAIN, Pádraig/Kevin MURRAY/Emma NIC CHÁRTHAIGH (eds) (2020) *Historical dictionary of Irish placenames/Foclóir stairiúil áitainmneacha na Gaeilge: fascicle 8/fascúl 8 (Druach-Duthaire)*. Cork: Department of Medieval and Early Irish, University College Cork.

QUIN, Gordon (1939) *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás*. London: Irish Texts Society.

STOKES, Whitley (1900) "*Accalam na Senórach.*" *Irische Texte mit Wörterbuch* 4/1, 1–438, ix–xiv.

STUBBS, John William (1889) *The history of the University of Dublin*. Dublin: Dublin University Press.

Abstract

FINDING THE 'RIGHT' IRISH FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT: REGISTER IN THE FIRST THREE PRINTED BOOKS IN IRISH, 1567–1602

An Irish translation of the New Testament was published in Dublin in 1602. This publication, and the translation work which underlay it, did not appear in a vacuum: two earlier printed books in Irish had paved the way, viz. John Carswell's translation of Knox's *Forme of Prayer and Ministrations of the Sacraments*, published in Edinburgh in 1567, and Seaán Ó Cearnaigh's primer of the Irish language and catechism translation, published in Dublin in 1571. This paper seeks to shed light on the process by which an appropriate register was arrived at for Protestant printing in Irish, and in particular for the New Testament, through an examination of some of the linguistic and stylistic features of these texts, with regard both to decisions made by the individual translators and to

sociolinguistic factors which may have limited their room to manoeuvre. These factors include contemporary conceptions of and attitudes to different language varieties, the lack of alternative models, and the nature and level of education received by individual translators. This paper builds upon the pioneering research of Ailbhe Ó Corráin (2013) to show that linguistically that portion of the Irish New Testament completed after 1597 has a more colloquial and dialectal quality than that which preceded it. This is tentatively connected with specific changes in the team responsible.

Keywords: Early Modern Irish, translation, register, dialect, literacy

Povzetek

ISKANJE 'PRAVE' IRŠČINE ZA NOVO ZAVEZO: JEZIKOVNI REGISTER V PRVIH TREH TISKANIH KNJIGAH V IRŠČINI, 1567–1602

Irski prevod Nove zaveze je izšel v Dublinu leta 1602. Ta objava in prevajalsko delo, ki jo je omogočilo, se nista pojavila v vakuumu. Pot sta tlakovali dve zgodnejši tiskani knjigi v irščini, in sicer prevod Knoxovega dela *Forme of Prayer and Ministrations of the Sacraments,* ki ga je pripravil John Carswell in je izšel v Edinburgu leta 1567, in knjiga, ki vsebuje osnove irskega jezika in prevod katekizma izpod peresa Seaána Ó Cearnaigha, objavljena v Dublinu leta 1571. V prispevku poskušamo osvetliti proces izbire registra, ustreznega za protestantsko tiskano knjigo v irščini in še posebej za Novo zavezo. Pri tem proučujemo nekatere jezikovne in slogovne značilnosti obravnavanih besedil, tako z ozirom na odločitve posameznih prevajalcev kot glede na sociolingvistične dejavnike, ki so te odločitve utegnile omejevati. Ti dejavniki vključujejo sočasna pojmovanja o različnih jezikovnih variantah, pomanjkanje alternativnih modelov ter vrsto in stopnjo izobrazbe posameznih prevajalcev. Članek izhaja iz pionirskih raziskav, ki jih je opravil Ailbhe Ó Corráin (2013), in skuša pokazati, da je v jezikovnem pogledu narava dela irske Nove zaveze, ki je bil dokončan po letu 1597, bolj pogovorna in narečna v primerjavi s predhodnim delom. Domnevamo, da bi to lahko bilo povezano s posebnostmi skupine prevajalcev, odgovorne za novejši del prevoda.

Ključne besede: zgodnja moderna irščina, prevajanje, register, narečje, pismenost

Erich Poppe
University of Marburg
poppe@mailer.uni-marburg.de

BETWEEN THE IMPRESSIONISTIC AND THE ARITHMETIC: THINKING ABOUT CRITERIA FOR THE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF EARLY MODERN WELSH PROSE[*]

1 RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

This article is an exercise in empirical historical stylistics. It proposes to reflect on methodologies and criteria for a stylistic analysis of Early Modern Welsh prose, i.e., of works written in the Welsh language roughly between 1500 and 1700. Style is a concept difficult to define; it refers to phenomena of the linguistic organisation of a text's surface, in the view of Biber/Conrad (2019: 16) specifically to the 'distribution of linguistic characteristics [which are] frequent and pervasive in texts of the variety' and to 'features [which] are not directly functional; they are preferred because they are aesthetically valued'. For the historical period under scrutiny here, 'Ciceronianism' may be one such culturally dominant aesthetic preference. In the strict sense this means the imitation of Cicero's periods, but in a looser sense a penchant for long and complex layered sentences (see, for example, Monfasani (1999), Robert (2011), Marsh (2013) – the literature on this topic is vast). This stylistic preference has already been noted for Welsh authors, for example by Davies (1995: 73) for Gruffydd Robert (*c.* 1527–1598), the writer in focus in this article.[1] Proper Latin Ciceronian periods have a specific structure of *cola* and *commata* (Hofmann/Szantyr 1972: 732, Mueller 2007). The transfer of this concept to Early Modern 'periods' can be problematic since they may not necessarily follow the same rules and be simply 'long', as pointed out, for example, by Lorian (1973: 159) for some sixteenth-century French writers and by Robinson (1998: 105–119) in a spirited critique of much of sixteenth-century English prose: 'The real English monster sentence is a sixteenth-century phenomenon, caused by the unsuccessful grafting of Latin syntax on to English' (Robinson 1998: 112).

This article intends to provide some descriptive data for the reconstruction of the stylistic practice of an Early Modern Welsh writer, Gruffydd Robert, as a preliminary point

1   An anonymous reviewer kindly alerts me to the possibility that 'Robert' is probably a patronym and not a surname.

of reference for future larger-scale intertextual comparisons. It is based on the micro-stylistic analysis of his introduction to a catechism, which belongs to the larger text type of introductory paratexts. It has the methodological advantage of being manageable in size for a detailed exploratory investigation. The domain of micro-stylistics is the sentence. Sowinski (1999: 89–101) gives a helpful catalogue of linguistic features relevant for such micro-stylistic analyses: sentence length, sentence form (simple, complex, reduced/elliptic; interruptions in sentence construction such as appositional and parenthetical phrases), order of constituents, sentence type (declarative, imperative, optative, interrogative), and variation of grammatical categories. Further sub-categories are the number of constituents in a sentence, the internal structure of constituents, and the number of coordinated and subordinated phrases, as well as the patterns of arrangement of main clauses and subordinate phrases relative to each other (see similarly Mehler (2005: 339–340) for the perspective of quantitative stylistics). Such criteria overlap with criteria for the measurement of syntactic complexity (which is different from, for example, lexical complexity for which the choice and register of words would be considered). Based on Rescher's (1998: 1) general definition of complexity – 'Complexity is first and foremost a matter of the number and variety of an item's constituent elements and of the elaborateness of their interrelational structure' – Pallotti (2015: 118) specifies 'structural complexity' in linguistics as 'a formal property of texts and linguistic systems having to do with the number of their elements and their relational patterns'. Thus, micro-stylistic analyses as well as measurements of syntactic complexity both refer to the number and arrangement of elements in a sentence and are therefore, at least in part, amenable to an arithmetic approach.[2] On the other hand, empirical historical stylistics is a methodologically challenging field since it 'perhaps inevitably combines the impressionistic and the arithmetic' (Guillory 2017: 63) – the former derived from readers' response to a close reading of texts and the latter from counting elements in texts and sentences (for a survey of the complexities of statistical stylistics or stylostatistics proper, see Tuldava 2005). Analysts therefore face the challenge in their presentations and interpretations of how to combine these two perspectives in order to be able to make meaningful statements about the style of a text.

2 GRUFFYDD ROBERT AND MORYS CLYNNOG

This micro-study is based on Gruffydd Robert's introduction to *Athravaeth Gristnogavl* ('Christian Doctrine'), Morys Clynnog's adaptation of Diego de Ledesma's Latin *Doctrina Christiana* (text: [Clynnog] 1568: [ii]-[vi], Lewis 1948: 4–6 with modernised spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation; background and sources: Bryant-Quinn 1998: 7–19, 2000: 21). Robert prepared it for publication and printing in Milan in 1568 and contributed the paratext in the form of an address to Clynnog. In it, he highlights the importance of his work for the religious instruction of the Welsh, since such works had so far been lacking ([Clynnog] 1568: [ii]-[iv], Bryant-Quinn 2000: 25–27). Robert and his uncle Clynnog (c. 1520/21 – in or post 1581) spent most of their lives as Catholic exiles in Italy (Bryant-Quinn 2019, 2000, Williams/Bryant-Quinn 2019). In their view,

---

2   For a discussion of syntactic complexity in Maurice Kyffin's *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* (1595), see Poppe (2022).

the Welsh language was the crucial medium for counter-reformation activities in Wales and for the education of its people, and this provides the background for the production of the *Athravaeth* (Price 2019: 188–189).

The choice of Robert's paratext for this study is motivated by two factors: first by its shortness which allows not only a comprehensive analysis, but also its comprehensive documentation, and second by the fact that Robert is considered in modern scholarship to be one of the Catholic writers of the time who, as highlighted by Bowen (1999: 22), were 'interested in the influence of the Renaissance on language and style' and whose works would therefore follow advanced contemporary stylistic conventions and expectations in their application to Early Modern Welsh prose.[3] This is also reflected in his reputation as a Ciceronian, as a writer who was able to write in a Ciceronian style, which derives first of all from the fragment of his translation of Cicero's dialogue *Cato Maior de Senectute*, transmitted in what is now extant of the sixth booklet of his Welsh grammar (probably printed some time after 1584) and intended as a stylistic inspiration for contemporary Welsh prose authors. Davies (1995: 73) wrote of this incomplete translation (see also Griffith 1953–58: 20, 1966: 287):

> Enough, however, survives to make clear the way in which Gruffydd Robert sought in his translation to capture the periodic style of Cicero's Latin with its finely balanced correspondence of phrases and subordinate clauses.

Even more instructive in our context is his assessment of the style of a sentence he quotes from the introductory non-technical dialogue in the first booklet of Robert's grammar, published in Milan in 1567, the year before the publication of the *Athravaeth*, which in his view 'illustrate[s] Gruffydd Robert's Ciceronian sense of style and periodic cadence in his own Welsh writing' (Davies 1995: 75).[4]

3 SOME ARITHMETIC: SENTENCE LENGTH AND SYNTACTIC DEPTH

The corpus of this study consists of the sentences of Robert's introductory paratext ([Clynnog] 1568: [ii]-[vi]). These are given in the appendix, sentence by sentence, each sentence numbered and accompanied by an English translation. The overall number of sentences in the paratext and the problems with their demarcation are discussed below, as are the details of the notation for their schematic presentation.

A first impression a reader may take away from Robert's paratext is probably one of 'complexity'. Features which would contribute to this impression are the length of some sentences, some layered subordination, and repeated use of parallelism, i.e., of syntactically equivalent elements in two or more consecutive parts of sentences

---

3   For Robert's ideas about the necessary improvement of Welsh, see Griffith (1953-58) and Bryant-Quinn (2000). For the ideas of another Catholic author and translator, Robert Gwyn, who was not influenced in the same way by humanist and Renaissance ideals, see Bowen (1999: 28-42), Poppe (2019), and Parina/Poppe (2021).

4   Bowen (1999: 13) suggests that the translation of extracts from St John Chrysostom's Homilies, in [Clynnog] (1568: 3-4), 'are most likely Gruffydd Robert's work': these require separate linguistic analysis.

(compare Ostrowicz 2003). However, it needs to be acknowledged that any such sub-jective reactions and the constitution of style in reception (compare Wesche 2015: 383) are shaped by the reader's background and linguistic experiences and perhaps distorted by the historical distance between the early-modern text and the modern reader.

The arithmetic approach on the other hand would aim to establish a more objective, quantitative analytic framework. Sentence length, the number of words in a sentence, and syntactic depth, the number of subordinate phrases in a sentence, may be strong parameters in the context of sixteenth-century Ciceronianism. The former quickly comes up against a methodological challenge, namely of how to demarcate relevant sentences, or sentence-like units.[5] 'Sentence' in the modern linguistic sense is probably not the appropriate unit to capture Robert's (and his contemporaries') perception of the building blocks of texts. This has been forcefully argued for (most) Early Modern English prose by Robinson (1998) – see also Croll (1966: 231) – and also for Early Modern German prose on the evidence of its punctuation, for example by Stolt (1990). Evidence from Robert's grammar of Welsh indicates that he thought in terms of traditional rhetorical units (for these, e.g., Rinas 2022: 118–121), rather than of grammatical ones. He introduces the concepts of the *rhessụm cyflaụn*/*perphaith* ('complete utterance', corresponding to *oratio*/*sententia perfecta*), whose beginning is defined by a capital letter and whose end by a *punctus* (Robert 1939: 18, 65). Its sub-units are marked by a *colon* and a *comma* respectively: 'Gụahannod […] a dẹngys ressum megis hanner perphaith. Rhagụahānod syḍ […] yn arụyḍo bod yn y ḷe hụnnụ uahā, ond amherphaith' (Robert 1939: 65, 'A *colon* […] marks an utterance as half-complete. A *comma* […] shows that in this place is a break, but [an] incomplete [one]'). His example proves that a complete *rhessụm* does not necessarily correspond to a modern sentence: this is a couplet which consists of an asyndetic sequence of three main clauses: 'Ti yu'r gụan, taụ ar y guir: ar-rian da a ụrandeụir.' (Robert 1939: 65, 'you are the weak one, speak not the truth: good money is heeded.').[6] The couplet represents the period, and *Ti yu'r gụan, taụ ar y guir* its first *colon* and *arrian da a ụrandeụir* its second; *Ti yu'r gụan* and *taụ ar y guir* respectively are *commata*. In this poetic example, the length of the period and the presence or absence of subordinated phrases are not an issue. The rules on capitalisation and the use of the *punctus* suggested by Robert, and thus his implied understanding of the nature of syntactic units, have an important bearing on syntactic analysis and on its arithmetic presentation when the sentence is a relevant unit of analysis (see below). But it needs to be taken into account that these may have been only imperfectly implemented in his introduction to the *Athravaeth* – probably partly due to the Italian typesetters. Eight sentences are demarcated by an initial capital letter and closed by a *punctus* or a question mark – these are sentences (1), (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), (9), and (12) in the schematic

---

5   There is the further issue of what constitutes a word; for example, is *iụ* 'to their', the combination of the preposition *i* 'to' and the possessive pronoun 3rd plural (modern spelling *i'w*), to be analysed as one word or as two words? For the purpose of this paper, a word is provisionally defined as a typographical unit and *iụ* therefore as one word between spaces.

6   A variant of this couplet is attested in a poem by Iorwerth Fynglwyd (*fl.* 1485–1527) addressed to Rhys ap Siôn o Lyn-Nedd: 'tydi'r gwan, taw di â'r gwir—/arian da a wrandewir', see Jones & Rowlands (1975: 14).

presentation below and in the appendix. Sentence (5) begins with a capital letter, but is not closed by a *punctus*, i.e., the capital initial of (6) is not preceded by a *punctus*, so ignoring capitalisation, (6) could be read as a main clause coordinated with (5). Lewis (1948: 5) in his normalized edition of the text opts for a new main clause. There may be an internal *punctus* in (5) followed by a small letter – Lewis (1948: 5) inserts a comma in this position, and this interpretation is provisionally followed here as well. Sentence (8) begins with a small initial after a question mark and is closed by a *punctus*. Sentences (10) and (11) are the most problematic ones. (10) begins with a small letter after a *punctus* and the conjunction *canys*, so ignoring the *punctus* it could also be read as a coordinated main clause belonging to sentence (9).[7] There is an internal semi-colon in (10) which separates a subordinate clause from the preceding text to which it semantically belongs. Probably on semantic criteria, Lewis (1948: 6) inserts a comma instead of the semi-colon and places a full stop after the subordinate clause, and he begins not only a new sentence, (11), but also a new paragraph. The closing *punctus* at its end is in the text. Alternatively, (10) and (11) could be read a long rhetorical unit with two complex *cola*, perhaps even connected to sentence (9). Lewis (1948: 4–6) divides the text into 12 sentences, and this is the internal structure provisionally accepted here. However, sentence (5) could be taken as two separate main clauses; sentence (6) could be joined to sentence (5) to form a rhetorical unit consisting of three coordinated main clauses (or of two, if (5) is divided up); sentences (10) and (11) could be read as one unit, perhaps even in conjunction with (9). This leaves modern readers with considerable uncertainties about Robert's intentions and also introduces fuzziness in the attempt to measure 'sentence-length'.

Robert's paratext contains 575 words and can tentatively be divided into 12 (or 13 or fewer) 'sentences', depending on readers' balance of semantic or syntactic criteria and their interpretation of punctuation.[8] Based on a division of the text into 12 sentences, sentence-length varies from 24 to 91 words. If sentence (5) is separated into two main clauses, the shortest sentence will contain 13 words; if sentences (9), (10), and (11) are taken as one unit, they will contain altogether 103 words. The average number of words per sentence, based on 12 sentences, is about 48 words; the median is about 43 words. Both values hide text-internal variety. For the question of authors' 'Ciceronianism', the attested maximum values of 91 in two sentences are perhaps more revealing. Here, the first two sentences stand out for their length (unless (9), (10), and (11) are accepted as a rhetorical unit with 103 words).

Prototypical Ciceronian sentences are not only long, but also layered. The internal structure of sentences in the paratext is another issue of interest, specifically their syntactic depth, i.e., the number and arrangement of subordinate finite and non-finite phrases below the level of a main clause. The following schematic presentation is

---

7   The issue of the status of the causal conjunction *canys* as coordinating or subordinating needs further scrutiny; it is here provisionally taken as a coordinating main-clause conjunction, in accordance with its classification in grammars of Modern Welsh, compare Thomas (1996: 461, 466).

8   In a further step of refinement, account could be taken of the ratio of different sentence-types, i.e., declarative, interrogative, optative, exclamative.

intended to give an overview of syntactic depth in Robert's paratext, based on its division into twelve sentences. This explicit format is, however, practical only for short texts. The word-count for each sentence is given in parentheses. The main clause is marked '0', numbers identify clauses and phrases on each syntactic level, syntactic siblings are distinguished by subscript numbers. Robert's sentence 11 is analysed in detail below. In order to explain the system of notation, I present first the first sentence in full and then the schematic presentation with explication:[9]

(1)

[1_1] VEdi ymy ḍarlain ych ḷyfr, o'r athraụaeth Gristnogaụl, a chanfod ynḍo me-
gis egin pob pụnc hyles i gristion ụrtho, i gadụ'r enaid,

[2] a ḍarfu i ḍuụ i ụneuthur ar i lun, ai ḍelụ: ag a rybrynnoḍ Crist ai ụerthfaụr
ụaed:

[0] e laụenychoḍ fynghalon

[1_2] ụrth ụeled tryssor mor ụ[e]rthfaụr yn yr iaith gymraeg:

[X] a maint

[$X1_1$] syḍ o eissie cyfrụiḍid ar phorḍ Grist, yn gyphredinol ymysc gụyr yn gụlad:

[X] a'r plant yn crio am fara

[Y] (mal y mae'r prophụyd yn ḷefain)

[X] heb fod neb,

[$X1_2$] ai tyrr iḍynt ag ai rhyḍ heb i ụenụyno

[After I had read your book on Christian doctrine, and found in it as it were in a nut-
shell every point necessary in order for a Christian to preserve the soul which God
has made in His image and His likeness, and which Christ bought with His precious
blood, my heart rejoiced to see such a precious treasure in the Welsh language: con-
sidering how great is the general need for guidance in the way of Christ among the
men of our country, and the children crying out for bread (as the prophet exclaims)
while there is none who breaks it for them and gives it without poisoning it.]

(1) 1_1–2–0–1_2–(X–$X1_1$–X–Y–X–$X1_2$)   (91 words)
(X = parenthetical observation; Y = parenthetical source marker)

This summarizes the following information: The main clause 0 is preceded by a subordinate phrase 1_1, on which another subordinate phrase 2 depends; syntactic depth in the field preceding the main clause is 2. The main clause is followed by a subordinate phrase 1_2 and by a complex parenthetical observation X into which a further syntactically unconnected parenthetical remark Y is inserted. Syntactic depth in the field following the main clause is strictly speaking 1, to which the parenthetical phrase adds another layer. The phrases at level 1 before and after the main clause constitute syntactic siblings; coordinated syntactic siblings of the same syntactic class are ignored

---

9   All quotations from Gruffydd Robert's text are reproduced diplomatically from the digital facsimile with all
printing errors uncorrected and unmarked.

for the purpose of this presentation, but will impact on syntactic complexity and stylistic effect (see below).

(2) $0-1_1-2_1-1_1-2_2-X-0-1_2-2_3-3_1-2_3-3_2$ (91 words)
(connective in sentence-initial position; X = parenthetical explanation)
(3) $0-2-1$ (24 words)
(4) $0-1-2$ (40 words)
(5) 0_1-1-0_2 (32 words)
(alternatively, two coordinated main clauses: 13 + 19 words, or (5) + (6) = 67 words)
(6) $0-1$ (35 words)
(7) $0-1-2_1-2_2-3$ (45 words)
(8) $0-1_1-2_1-2_2-2_3-0-1_2-0$ (53 words)
(connective in sentence-initial position)
(9) $X-0$ (25 words)
(X = left-dislocated)
(alternatively, (9) + (10) = 57 words, (9) + (10) + (11) = 103 words)
(10) $0-1$ (32 words)
(alternatively, (10) + (11) = 78 words)
(11) $0-1$ (46 words)
(12) $0-1_1-2_1-0-1_2-2_2-2_3$ (61 words)
(connective in sentence-initial position)

There is some variation in syntactic depth in this short text, with main clauses plus one subordinate phrase in (6), (10), and (11), and a main clause plus a left-dislocated phrase in (9), besides more layered sentences as in (1), (2), (7), (8), and (12). The maximal syntactic depth in the field preceding the main clause is 2 in (1); in (2), (8), and (12), subordinated phrases with a syntactic depth or 2 and 3 respectively are inserted between a sentence initial connective and the rest of the main clause. The maximal syntactic depth in the field following the main clause is 3 in (7). Subordinate phrases frame the main clause in (1) and *mutatis mutandis* in (2), (8), and (12), the four sentences which also rank highest with regard to their word count.

A focus on syntactic depth, however, potentially hides other significant micro-stylistic features of individual sentences on the level of constituents, for example their number and the patterns of parallelism and coordination, partly reflected in the low value of syntactic depth in relation to the number of words, as will be seen in the next section in the discussion of sentence (11), with a syntactic depth of 1 and a length of 46 words. There is the further complication that a schematic presentation cannot easily present syntactic ambiguities when more than one syntactic analysis appears possible, briefly mentioned above with regard to the status of *canys* as subordinating or coordinating in (6) and (10).

4 SOME MICRO-STYLISTICS IN ACTION

Robert's sentence (11) with its syntactic depth of 1, a conditional clause attached to a verbless main clause, looks deceptively simple:

(11)

[0] gụyn i byd trụy gymru,

[1] pe parent ymhob eglụys ụrth aros y gụasanaeth, ne ar osteg ypheren, gartref
ymysc tylụyth y ty i difyrru'r amser ag ymhob cyniḷeidfa i diḍanu'r bobl,
ḍarlain hụnn ne'r cyfryụ ymadrodion a gadel i phorḍ henchụedlau coegion,
a choụydau gụenheuthus, celụdog.

[It would be a great blessing throughout all Wales if they [the Welsh people]
made a habit, in every church while waiting for the service to begin, or during low
Mass, at home among the household to shorten the time, and in every assembly
to comfort the people, of reading this book or similar material and have done
with old, false legends and flattering, lying cywyddau. (Translation adapted from
Bryant-Quinn 2000: 26)[10]]

A closer look reveals two micro-stylistic features which are concealed by simple measurements of words per sentence and syntactic depth. The first is the repetition of syntactically equivalent elements in two or more consecutive parts of sentences, akin to the rhetorical figure known as compar or parison, the use of similarly structured phrases or clauses (McDonald 2007: 39). Relevant instances in this sentence are *ḍarlain … a gadel* 'reading and having done with', *henchụedlau coegion, a choụydau gụenheuthus, celụdog* 'false old legends and flattering, lying *cywyddau*', and the long sequence of adverbial expressions spanning *ymhob eglụys … i diḍanu'r bobl* with further internal parallelism of *i difyrru'r amser* 'to shorten the time' and *i diḍanu'r bobl* 'to comfort the people'. Another noteworthy feature is the separation of two syntactically closely related elements, the finite verb *parent* and its objects *ḍarlain … a gadel*, by the intervening long adverbial sequence (underlined).

A search for parison and separation in other sentences of the paratext reveals that these features are not restricted to sentence (11). Parallelism in some form occurs in all sentences and contributes to their overall length. In sentence (1), for example, two coordinated verbal-noun phrases are contained in phrase 1_1 and two coordinated relative clauses in both 2_1 and X_1 – altogether amounting to 52 of the 91 words of the sentence. In (2), phrase 2_2 consists of a sequence of four coordinated indirect questions (22 words) involving contrast; in (7), phrase 4 consists of a sequence of six coordinated indirect questions (32 words); in (8), a sequence of three coordinated objects in the main clause express semantically related concepts: *ai diogsụrth eisteḍach, ai bustlaụl sertheḍ, ag ai smala gyfeḍach* 'their tardy lolling about and their foul obscenity and their vain merriment'. Here, parallelism overlaps with synonymia, the repetition of

---

10   *Cywydd*, pl. *cywyddau*, a Welsh metrical form which consists of rhyming couplets.

(near-)synonymous words (see Adamson 2007). Other examples occur, for example, in sentences (1), *ar i lun, ai ḍelụ* 'in his own image and his likeness', and (2), *gasclu yn grynno, a dosparth yn drefnus, ag yn eglur* 'assembled compactly and arranged orderly and clearly'. A separation of syntactically closely related elements by sometimes extended adverbial phrases is found in altogether four sentences. In sentence (6), for example, the finite verb *gaant* and its object *y pethau* are separated by an adverbial phrase of 16 words (underlined):

> (6)
> [0] Canys yn ycḥ ḷyfr chụi yma nhụy a gaant <u>oi ḍysgu yn haụd, meụn ychydig o amser, a thrụy ychydig help, a ḷai o gost</u>, y pethau
> [1] syḍ angenrheidiol iụ gụybod, i hen ag ifanc.

> [Since in this book of yours they will find, to teach them easily, in little time and with little help and less cost, the things that are necessary to know for old and young.]

This adverbial phrase could have been placed at the end of the sentence. In other cases, probably no alternative slots were easily available for the placement of the adverbial phrases, but at the same time their length, resulting from the accumulation of parallel elements, is the author's stylistic decision – resulting in the concomitant wide separation of syntactically closely related elements.

5 SOME CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In the two preceding sections, two approaches to the micro-stylistic analysis of Early Modern Welsh texts 'between the arithmetic and the impressionistic' were exemplified, the quantitative analysis of sentence length and syntactic depth and the 'impressionistic' qualitative analysis of individual sentences in search for distinctive stylistic features. Sentence length and syntactic depth varies in the paratext, and the resulting variety may be another feature that could be productively explored. For the question of Welsh Ciceronianism, the attested maximal value of 91 words in two sentences is probably more instructive than the overall variation: Robert produced long sentences, but did not do so consistently. Significantly perhaps, his first two sentences are long and fairly complex, as if he wanted to signal his ability to inscribe himself into a contemporary valued stylistic register. In a similar paratext, Roger Smyth's introduction to *Crynnodeb o aḍysc Cristnogaụl* (1609)*,* his adaptation of the catechisms of the Jesuit Petrus Canisius, the first two sentences are among the three longest ones.[11] Because of

---

11 An analysis of the syntax and style of Smyth's paratext by Raphael Sackmann and myself is forthcoming in Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie. The question of whether specific stylistic conventions existed for different parts of texts needs to be reserved for further comparative research. I can offer here Weiser's observations on the style of John Jewel's English sermons: he points out that Jewel employed a specific style for the beginning of his sermons, which he describes as 'the rather complex, Ciceronian syntax which in Jewel's time was thought to be the sure sign of a learned man' (Weiser 1973: 79) – according to Weiser, parallelism has 'but a small place in the Ciceronian style' (Weiser 1973: 18), it is employed specifically in what Weiser (1973: 121) calls the high persuasive style of emotional appeal in Jewel's sermons.

uncertainties of the demarcation of Early Modern 'sentences', sentence length is a numerically less reliable 'arithmetic' criterion than it appears to be. Other features susceptible to arithmetic analysis, for example the number of constituents in a sentence, will require future testing. However, results may potentially hide other significant micro-stylistic characteristics of individual sentences, and this approach was therefore complemented by a qualitative micro-stylistic analysis. This set out to find features which in a second step might then be identified as frequent and pervasive in the text, and thus as stylistically significant. At this point, the impressionistic and the arithmetic necessarily and productively overlap. In the specific case under scrutiny here, synonymia, parison, and a wide separation of closely related elements by stylistically expanded phrases emerged as recurrent devices. Synonymia is a distinctive feature of Smyth's paratext.[12] More importantly, synonymia and parison have been described by Adamson (2007) and McDonald (2007) as pervasive features of early-modern English writing, so by using these figures Robert inscribes himself into a contemporary paradigm of an aesthetically valued and prestigious discourse.

Not much fine-grained information is currently available about stylistic features of Early Modern Welsh prose works. In order to eventually arrive at a map of relevant features, this paper argues for a text-by-text bottom-up procedure which builds on the analysis of individual texts, or text samples, and combines quantitative and 'impressionistic' interpretative perspectives in order to identify notable recurrent micro-stylistic traits. It reflects on criteria for a stylistic analysis and on difficulties of their application, and it highlights a range of options Robert had to structure his text within a culturally transmitted set of expectations and norms. More general issues at the back of this article concern the applicability of the label 'Ciceronian' and the understanding of dominant modes and models of prose writing in Early Modern Wales. Due to the small textual corpus on which it is based, it is very much a methodological exercise in empirical historical stylistics, an invitation to apply and develop the criteria suggested here, and to detect further distinctive stylistic traits of Early Modern Welsh prose. Historical stylistics is a research area which has much to offer for its understanding. Gruffydd Robert, for example, attempted to expand the functional and stylistic range of Welsh against a background of Renaissance and humanist ideas regarding the advancement of the vernacular; he was aware of foreign-language models for a refined style of Welsh prose, if, as is likely, we are correct in accepting his translation of Cicero as intended as a model, and these larger concerns are arguably reflected in the minutiae of his stylistic practice, even when he writes an introduction to a catechism.

---

12   It is, for example, also a feature of Pierre Boaistuau's *Théâtre du Monde, ou il est faict un ample discours des miseres humaines* and of his *Bref discours de l'excellence et dignité de l'homme*, of their Welsh translation by Roger Smyth as *Gorsedd y byd* (1615), and of Smyth's paratexts to the translation.

References

Primary sources

[CLYNNOG, Morys] 1568 *Athravaeth gristnogavl, ļe cair ųedi cynnųys yn grynno'r hoļ brifbynciau syḍ i gyfarųyḍo dyn ar y phorḍ i baradųys.* Milan. [digital copy available on the ProQuest platform, https://www.proquest.com]

GRUFFYDD ROBERT (1939) *Gramadeg Cymraeg gan Gruffydd Robert. Yn ôl yr argraffiad y dechreuwyd ei gyhoeddi ym Milan yn 1567.* Ed. by G. J. Williams. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru. [digital copy of the original edition available on the ProQuest platform, https://www.proquest.com]

JONES, Howell Ll. Jones/E. I. Rowlands (eds) (1975). *Gwaith Iorwerth Fynglwyd*, Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru. LEWIS, Henry 1948 *Hen Gyflwyniadau*. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.

SMYTH, Rosier (1609) *Crynnodeb o aḍysc Cristnogaųl, a Dosparth catholic [...]*, Paris. http://hdl.handle.net/10107/5440771

Secondary sources

ADAMSON, Sylvia (2007) "Synonymia: or, in other words." In: S. Adamson/G. Alexander/K. Ettenhuber (eds), 17–35.

ADAMSON, Sylvia/Gavin ALEXANDER/Katrin ETTENHUBER (eds) (2007) *Renaissance Figures of Speech*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BIBER, Douglas/Susan CONRAD (2019) *Register, Genre, and Style*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BOWEN, Geraint (1999) *Welsh Recusant Writing*. Cardiff: University of Wales.

BRYANT-QUINN, Paul (1998) *'Cymaint Serch i Gymru': Gruffydd Robert Morys Clynnog a'r Athrawaeth Gristnowgawl (1568).* Aberystwyth: Canolfan Uwchefrydiau Cymreig a Celtaidd Prifysgol Cymru.

BRYANT-QUINN, Paul (2000) "To preserve our language: Gruffydd Robert and Morys Clynnog." *Journal of Welsh Religious History* 8, 17–34.

CROLL, Morris W. (1966) *Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm*. Edited by J. Max Patrick/Robert O. Evans with John M. Wallace/R. J. Schoeck. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

DAVIES, Ceri (1995) *Welsh Literature and the Classical Tradition*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

GRIFFITH, T. Gwynfor (1953–58) "Italian humanism and Welsh prose." *Yorkshire Celtic Studies* 6, 1–26.

GRIFFITH, T. Gwynfor (1966) "Italy and Wales." *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* 75/2, 281–298.

GUILLORY, John (2017) "Mercury's Words: The End of Rhetoric and the Beginning of Prose." *Representations* 138, 59–86.

HOFMANN, J.B./Anton SZANTYR (1972) *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik*. München: C.H. Beck.

KÖHLER, Reinhard/Gabriel ALTMANN/Rajmund PIOTROWSKI (eds) (2005) *Quantitative Linguistik: ein internationales Handbuch – Quantitative linguistics: an international handbook*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

LORIAN, Alexander (1973) *Tendences stylistiques dans la prose narrative française au XVIᵉ siècle*. Paris: Éditions Klincksieck.

MARSH, David (2013) "Cicero in the Renaissance." In: Catherine Steele (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Cicero*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 306–317.

McDONALD, Russ (2007) "Compar or parison: or, measure for measure." In: S. Adamson/G. Alexander/K. Ettenhuber (eds), 39–58.

MEHLER, Alexander (2005) "Eigenschaften der textuellen Einheiten und Systeme." In: R. Köhler/G. Altmann/R. Piotrowski (eds), 325–340.

MONFASANI, John (1999) "The Ciceronian controversy." In: Glyn P. Norton (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 393–401.

MUELLER, Janel (2007) "Periodos: squaring the circle." In: S. Adamson/G. Alexander/K. Ettenhuber (eds), 61–77.

OSTROWICZ, Philipp (2003) "Parallelismus." In: Gert Ueding (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik.* Vol. 6. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 546–552.

PALLOTTI, Gabriele (2015) "A simple view of linguistic complexity". *Second Language Research* 31/1, 117–134.

PARINA, Elena/Erich POPPE (2021) "'In the Most Common and Familiar Speech among the Welsh.'" In: Regine Toepfer/Peter Burschel/Jörg Wesche (eds), *Übersetzen in der Frühen Neuzeit – Konzepte und Methoden/Concepts and Practices of Translation in the Early Modern Period*. Berlin, Heidelberg: J. B. Metzler, 79–100.

POPPE, Erich (2019) "Beyond 'word-for-word': Gruffudd Bola and Robert Gwyn on translating into Welsh." *Studia Celtica Fennica* 16, 71–89.

POPPE, Erich (2022) "How much syntactic complexity could sixteenth-century Welsh cope with? The case of Maurice Kyffin's *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* (1595)." *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 69/1, 227–260.

PRICE, Angharad (2019) "Welsh Humanism After 1536." In: Geraint Evans/Helen Fulton (eds), *The Cambridge History of Welsh Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 176–193.

RESCHER, Nicolas (1998) *Complexity: A Philosophical Overview*. New Brunswick/London: Transaction Publishers.

RINAS, Karsten (2022) "Vom genormten Satzbau zur genormten Interpunktion. Zur Funktion der Zeichensetzung in älterer und neuerer Zeit." In: Paul Rössler/Peter Besl/Anna Saller (eds), *Vergleichende Interpunktion – Comparative Punctuation*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 109–134.

ROBERT, Jörg (2011) "Die Ciceronianismus-Debatte." In: Herbert Jaumann (ed.), *Diskurse der Gelehrtenkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit. Ein Handbuch*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1–54.

ROBINSON, Ian (1998) *The Establishment of Modern English Prose in the Reformation and the Enlightenment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

SOWINSKI, Bernhard (1999) *Stilistik*. Stuttgart/Weimar: J.B. Metzler.

STOLT, Birgit (1990) "Redeglieder, Informationseinheiten: *Cola* und *commata* in Luthers Syntax." In: Anne Betten/Claudia M. Riel (eds), *Neuere Forschungen zu historischen Syntax des Deutschen. Referate der internationalen Fachkonferenz Eichstätt 1989*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 379–392.

THOMAS, Peter Wynn (1996) *Gramadeg y Gymraeg*. Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru.

TULDAVA, Juhan (2005) "Stylistics, author identification." In: R. Köhler/G. Altmann/R. Piotrowski (eds), 368–387.

WEISER, Daniel K. (1973) *The Prose Style of John Jewel*. Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, Universität Salzburg.

WESCHE, Jörg (2015) "Stilistik." In: Rüdiger Zymner (ed.), *Handbuch Literarische Rhetorik*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 381–398.

WILLIAMS, G. J./Paul BRYANT-QUINN (2019) "ROBERT, GRUFFYDD (c. 1527 - 1598), priest, grammarian and poet". *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. https://biography.wales/article/s12–ROBE-GRU-1522.

Appendix: Corpus ([Clynnog] 1568: [ii]-[vi])

Gruphyḋ fab Rhobert yn annerch yr hyparch brelad, ai ḋibal gynheiliad M. Morys Clynoc: ag yn erchi iḋo gan ḋuụ, gynnyḋ, ras a deḋụḋụch enaid, a chorph

Gruffydd Robert greeting the venerable prelate and his constant patron, M. Morris Clynnoc, and asking for him from God blessing, grace, and felicity of soul and body

(1) [1₁] VEdi ymy ḋarlain ych ḷyfr, o'r athraụaeth Gristnogaụl, a chanfod ynḋo megis egin pob pụnc hyles i gristion ụrtho, i gaḋụ'r enaid, [2] a ḋarfu i ḋuụ i ụneuthur ar i lun, ai ḋelụ: ag a rybrynnoḋ Crist ai ụerthfaụr ụaed: [0] e laụenychoḋ fynghalon [1₂] ụrth ụeled tryssor mor ụ[e]rthfaụr yn yr iaith gymraeg: [X] a maint [X1₁] syḋ o eissie cyfrụiḋid ar phorḋ Grist, yn gyphredinol ymysc gụyr yn gụlad: [X] a'r plant yn crio am fara ([Y] mal y mae'r prophụyd yn ḷefain) [X] heb fod neb, [X1₂] ai tyrr iḋynt ag ai rhyḋ heb i ụenụyno

After I had read your book on Christian doctrine and found in it as it were in a nutshell every point necessary in order for a Christian to preserve the soul, which God has made in His image and his likeness and which Christ bought with His precious blood, my heart rejoiced to see such a precious treasure in the Welsh language: considering how great is the general need for guidance in the way of Christ among the men of our country, and the children crying out for bread (as the prophet exclaims) while there is none who breaks it for them and gives it without poisoning it.

(2) [0] Am hynny [1₁] gen ḋarfod i chụi gasclu yn grynno, a dosparth yn drefnus, ag yn eglur cymaint o flodeuau, a phynciau iachusaụl, i hyphorḋi vn [2₁] a chụennychai ụybod sụyḋ, a rhann Cristion perpheithgred, [1₁] i ḋyscu [2₂] beth a enniḷ nef, beth a dafl ḋyn i vphern, beth

a rhynga boḍ i ḍuụ, a pheth a ụna iḍo sorri: [X] brynti pechod, odidoụgrụyḍ rhinụeḍ: [0] ni eḷais ar fynghalon $[1_2]$ na pharụn i brintio: $[2_3]$ fal y gaḷo eraiḷ $[3_1]$ syḍ ag eissie y cyfryụ ymborth ysprydol arnynt, $[2_3]$ fod yn gyfrannol o'r ụleḍ $[3_2]$ a ḍarfu ichụi i harlụy.

Therefore, because you have assembled compactly and arranged orderly and clearly so many flowers and wholesome articles in order to instruct the one who would wish to know the duty and the share of a Christian of perfect religion, to teach what will win heaven, what will cast man to hell, what will please God, and what will make him displeased: pollution of sin, excellence of virtue: I did not have the heart not to bring about its printing so that others who lack such spiritual sustainance could partake in the feast you have prepared.

(3) [0] Gobeithio [2] pan ḍelo i ḍuylaụ y crefyḍgar gymru, [1] y gụna laụer o les iḍynt, trụy i hụylio i baradụys, ai troi o phorḍ uphernaụl.

Let's hope that when it comes into the hands of the pious Welsh, it will do them much good, by directing them to paradise and turning them from the infernal road.

(4) [0] E fyḍ tostur fynghalon [1] pan feḍyliụyf faint [2] syḍ o blant trụy dir cymru, odidaụg i athrylith, a darpar gụyr arḍerchaụg, yn methu ag yn cymryd ḷuybr annụyiaụl eisiau cael oi mebyd i hypho[r]ḍi meụn dysc, ai meithrin meụn moessaụl gampau.

It wounds my heart when I think how many children throughout Wales, magnificently talented and potentially splendid people, fail and take the road of ungodliness lacking to get from their youth guidance in doctrine and education in moral development.

(5) $[0_1]$ Yr achos fụyaf o hynn yụ diphig ḷyfrau [1] a draethant o'r cyphelib ystyr (.) $[0_2]$ ond yroụron e ḍarfu i chụi meụn ychydig o ḍolennau roḍi cymorth, a help iḍynt rhag yr eissiau hynn

The foremost reason for this is a want of books which set out such contents, but now you have given them in a few pages succour and help against this deficiency.

(6) [0] Canys yn ych ḷyfr chụi yma nhụy a gaant oi ḍysgu yn haụd, meụn ychydig o amser, a thrụy ychydig help, a ḷai o gost, y pethau [1] syḍ angenrheidiol iụ gụybod, i hen ag ifanc.

Since in this book of yours they will find, to teach them easily, in little time and with little help and less cost, the things that are necessary to know for old and young.

(7) [0] Canys pụy yụ hụnnụ [1] a eiḷ ḍoedyd $[2_1]$ i fod yn gristion, $[2_2]$ oni ụyr [3] pa foḍ y mae credu yngrhist, beth syḍ oi obeithio gentho, a pheth a orchmynoḍ ef i gadụ; beth a ụaharḍoḍ i ụneuthur, beth a ennil obrụy, a pheth a hauda gosp?

Since who is the one who can say that he is a Christian if he does not know how one believes in Christ, what is expected by him, and what he commanded to keep, what he forbade to do, what wins reward and what incurs punishment?

(8) [0] fely $[1_1]$ pan ystyrio'r cymru $[2_2]$ syḍ yn caru i heneidiau, $[2_3]$ mor anhepcor ydyụ'r rhain, ag mor hauḍ i dyscu ụrth ḍarlain y traethiad yma: [0] nhụy a 'madaụant ai diogsụrth

eisteḍach, ai bustlaụl sertheḍ, ag ai smala gyfeḍach ([1₂] onid ydynt ụedi boḍi meụn brynti pechod) [0] ag a 'mroḍant i ḍyscu pethau sprydol, buḍfaur i'r enaid.

Thus, when the Welsh who love their souls, contemplate how necessary these are and how easy to learn by reading this treatise, they will renounce their tardy lolling about and their foul obscenity and their vain merriment (unless they have been submerged in pollution of sin) and apply themselves to learn spiritual things, beneficial for the soul.

(9) [0] A hynn nis caant meụn mann araḷ yn y byd mor fyrr, mor drefnus, mor eglur oi deaḷt ag yn y ḷyfr yma i chụi.

And these [i.e., the spiritual things], they will not find them in any other place at all as briefly, as orderly, as clearly to be understood as in this book of yours.

(10) [0] canys amhossibl oeḍ gynnụys meụn ḷai o erriau, a dosparth yn oleuach, a chyfleu yn ụeḍeiḍiach gynnifer bynciau, a chyn ḍyfned i 'styriaeth; [1] fal y gaḷo y plant a'r gụrageḍ i deaḷt,

For it would be impossible to contain in fewer words, and to structure more clearly, and to arrange more suitably, so many subjects – and so deep their meaning – so that the children and the women may understand them.

(11) [0] gụyn i byd trụy gymru, [1] pe parent ymhob eglụys ụrth aros y gụasanaeth, ne ar osteg ypheren, gartref ymysc tylụyth y ty i difyrru'r amser ag ymhob cyniḷeidfa i ḍiḍanu'r bobl, ḍarlain hụnn ne'r cyfryụ ymadrodion a gadel i phorḍ henchụedlau coegion, a choụydau gụenheuthus, celụḍog.

It would be a great blessing throughout all Wales if they [the Welsh people] made a habit, in every church while waiting for the service to begin, or during low Mass, at home among the household to shorten the time, and in every assembly to comfort the people, of reading this book or similar material and have done with old, false legends and flattering, lying cywyddau.

(12) [0] Ond [1₁] ar hydr y rhyḍ yr yspryd glan ras iḍynt hụy i gymryd dysc, [2₁] megis y roes i chụi oi scrifennu attyn; [0] mi danfonaf yrhain yn i mysc, [1₂] dan erfyn ar ḍuụ ymhob gụeḍi [2₂] a ụnelụyf [2₃] ar ụrtheithio hono i calonnau nhụy i ḍerbyn aḍysc, a rhoi nerth i chụithau i scrifennu chụaneg er ḷes i'r Gristnogion, a gogoniant i duụ.

But in the hope that the Holy Ghost will give them grace to accept teaching, as it gave it to you to write to them, I will send these to them, entreating God in every prayer I pray that he equips their hearts to receive instruction and that he gives strength to you to write more for the benefit of Christians and God's glory.

Abstract

BETWEEN THE IMPRESSIONISTIC AND THE ARITHMETIC:
THINKING ABOUT CRITERIA FOR THE STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF EARLY
MODERN WELSH PROSE

Empirical historical stylistics is methodologically a difficult field since it 'perhaps inevitably combines the impressionistic and the arithmetic' (Guillory 2017: 63). For lesser researched languages or periods, the problems are aggravated because even impressionistic assessments on which further hypotheses and comparative work could be built, are rare. Early Modern Welsh (c. 1500 – c. 1700) is a period to which this qualification applies. This article will discuss some methodological issues and parameters for a micro-stylistic analysis of Early Modern Welsh prose, i.e., on the level of individual sentences. Its approach is bottom-up, taking as its point of departure the introductory paratext to Morys Clynnog's catechism *Athravaeth Gristnogawl* ('Christian Doctrine', 1568) by its editor Gruffydd Robert. It argues that in the case of lesser research languages, empirical historical stylistics will need to proceed from the analyses of individual texts or text samples which combine quantitative and 'impressionistic' interpretative perspectives in order to identify notable recurrent micro-stylistic traits.

Keywords: empirical historical stylistics, Early Modern Welsh, Gruffydd Robert, Ciceronianism

Povzetek

MED IMPRESIONISTIČNIM IN ARITMETIČNIM: KAKŠNI NAJ BI BILI KRITERIJI ZA STILISTIČNO ANALIZO ZGODNJE MODERNE VALIŽANSKE PROZE

Empirična historična stilistika je v metodološkem pogledu težavno področje, glede na to, da se tu "morda neizogibno srečujeta impresionistično in aritmetično" (Guillory 2017: 63). Pri manj raziskanih jezikih ali obdobjih je težava še večja, saj so v zvezi z njimi redke celo impresionistične ocene, na katerih bi lahko temeljile nadaljnje hipoteze in primerjalne študije. Takšen primer je zgodnja moderna valižanščina (pribl. 1500 – pribl. 1700). Pričujoči članek obravnava nekaj metodoloških vprašanj in parametrov za mikrostilistično analizo zgodnje moderne valižanske proze, in sicer na ravni posameznih povedi. Uporabljen je pristop "od spodaj navzgor", kot izhodišče pa služi uvodni paratekst h katekizmu *Athravaeth Gristnogawl* ('Krščanska doktrina', 1568) Morysa Clynnoga, ki ga je napisal urednik Gruffydd Robert. Članek skuša pokazati, da bo pri manj raziskanih jezikih empirična historična stilistika morala najprej analizirati posamezna besedila ali odlomke besedil in opazovane značilnosti razložiti ob upoštevanju tako kvantitativne kot "impresionistične" perspektive, s ciljem prepoznavanja pomembnih ponavljajočih se mikrostilističnih značilnosti.

Ključne besede: empirična historična stilistika, zgodnja moderna valižanščina, Gruffydd Robert, ciceronizem

Lucia Assenzi
Università di Innsbruck
Lucia.Assenzi@uibk.ac.at

TRANSLATION, THE VERNACULAR DEBATE, AND THE EVOLUTION OF LITERARY WRITING STYLE BETWEEN ITALY AND GERMANY: PRINCE LUDWIG VON ANHALT-KÖTHEN AND HIS TRANSLATION OF GIOVAN BATTISTA GELLI'S *CAPRICCI DEL BOTTAIO*

1 INTRODUCTION

In the 17th century, Latin was still the language of culture in the German-speaking world, and it dominated church and state administration, as well as science and literature (von Polenz 2000: 828). At that time, the functional expansion of German to new genres had to contend with the widespread prejudices about the German vernacular being unsophisticated and uncouth. Supporters of the German vernacular had to defend their position against the growing prestige of French as the emergent international language of culture and communication, while also having to deal with late Humanists who considered Latin to be the only suitable language for science (and literature) and who continued to publish scientific texts in Latin until well into the 18th century (von Polenz 2000: 828, von Polenz 2013: 54–62, Riecke 2016: 165–166).

This situation was common throughout Europe. After the centuries-long dominance of Latin as a cultural language, all European vernaculars had to prove themselves worthy of substituting Latin in literature and science. In Italy,[1] a heated debate about the validity and norms of the vernacular, known as *Questione della Lingua*, had already taken place in the 16th century (Marazzini 2002: 257ff.). In Germany, the vernacular debate begun in the first half of the 17th century with the founding of academies such as the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* ('Fructifying society'), which received the arguments in favour of the vernacular circulating in Europe and applied them to the German-speaking context. The influence of the Italian vernacular debate was particularly evident: not only were German academies inspired by Italian ones, but Italian texts concerning linguistic topics also circulated in Germany through Latin and German translations.

This article discusses the contact between the Italian and German vernacular debates by using a concrete example: the translation of Giovan Battista Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio* (1546) by Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen (*Anmutige Gespräch*, 1619), the co-founder and patron of the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*.

---

1   'Italy' and 'Germany' are anachronistic terms, as neither Italy nor Germany existed as national entities until the 19th century. I will sometimes speak of 'Italy' and 'Germany' for shortness; the terms are to be understood as the 'Italian-speaking area' and the 'German-speaking area'.

2 TRANSLATION AS *SPRACHARBEIT* IN THE *FRUCHTBRINGENDE GESELLSCHAFT* (1617–1680)

The *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* (FG) was founded in Weimar in 1617 with the intention of creating a space in which to promote the theoretical discussion on the German vernacular as well as practical activities aimed at improving its stylistic qualities (Ball 2008, Conermann 2008). The FG was the first and most influential German 'language academy' and served as a model for the establishment of several other 'language societies' that came into being in the German-speaking area after the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1638).

In contrast to later academies such as the *Deutschgesinnte Genossenschaft* ('German-minded Cooperative') (Hamburg, 1642/43–1708) or the *Pegnesischer Blumenordnen* ('Pegnitz Flower Society') (Nuremberg, 1644), which were founded by non-noble poets and intellectuals (von Polenz 2013: 122), the FG was established by a group of protestant noblemen from Anhalt and Weimar and was led until 1650 by one of its cofounders, Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen (1579–1650).

The influence of the Italian linguistic reflection on Prince Ludwig and, consequently, on the FG is well known in the research literature (Bircher 1985, Ball 2008: 403, Conermann 2008: 21–22). As was customary for young noblemen in the 17th century, in his youth Prince Ludwig travelled across Europe to further his education. His travels brought him to the Netherlands, England, Switzerland, France and Italy, where he remained from 1598 to 1602. Prince Ludwig spent most of this time in Florence, where he perfected his knowledge of the Florentine vernacular under the tutoring of Bastiano de' Rossi (Ball 2008: 401). At the time, de' Rossi was the secretary of the *Accademia della Crusca*, the oldest language academy still in existence today. Thanks to de' Rossi's support, in 1600 Prince Ludwig became the first German member of the *Crusca* (Lange 2002: 92).

Prince Ludwig was interested in linguistic questions even before his journey to Italy (Conermann 1985: 145), probably after coming into contact with Stefano Guazzo's *Civil Conversazione* ('Civil Conversation') (Brescia, 1674), a very influential treatise that postulated the central role of courtly conversation in teaching virtues and moral costumes (Quondam 1993: XXX).[2] Ludwig's stay in Florence and his participation in the activities of the *Crusca*[3] later gave him the idea of founding a similar academy in Germany. It is a well-known fact that the *Crusca* served as a model for the FG, in which, just like in the *Crusca*, members had society names and emblems consistent with the overall symbology of the society (Bircher 1985: 124, Conermann 1992: *8, Ball 2008: 400–401). It is, however, through the contact with texts of Florentine authors of the previous century that Prince Ludwig developed the strategies for legitimising and improving the German vernacular that became common practice in the FG, especially in the first years after its inception (Conermann 2008: 21).

---

2   The interconnections between correct language use, courtly conversation and moral virtues later became one of the focal points of Prince Ludwig's thought and one of the highest aims of the FG (Ball 2008: 401; Herz 2009: 165–169).

3   For example, Ludwig contributed to the *Crusca* vocabulary, the first ever dictionary of the Italian vernacular, published in 1612 (Conermann 2008: 20).

Not until after 1638 did members of the FG begin producing theoretical works, grammars, and orthography books. In the early years of the society, members of the FG dedicated themselves to tangible *Spracharbeit* ('language work') (Hundt 2000: 108), which mostly took the form of translations from Italian and French (Dünnhaupt 1978: 521ff.). Prince Ludwig was himself a fairly active translator. In 1619 he translated two of Giovan Battista Gelli's works, *I Capricci del Bottaio* and *La Circe*; after the Thirty Years' War followed more translations from French and Italian, of both prose and poetry works. Moreover, he actively encouraged and supported family members and members of the FG in the translation of Italian and French literature. Under his guidance, a group of eight of his younger relatives translated the Italian *Novellino*, probably around 1624 (Assenzi 2020c). In the earliest years of the FG, Tobias Hübner, Wilhelm von Kalcheim and Diederich von dem Werder were prolific translators from French and Italian.[4]

Not only did Prince Ludwig encourage translation; all member of the FG had to send him their works before publication (Dünnhaupt 1988: 181). He then proceeded to revise them himself and send them to other members of the FG for discussing and reviewing (Hundt 2000: 111–113), as attested in the close epistolary exchange between members of the FG (Conermann 1992–2019). On the practical side, translating was seen as a tool for improving the stylistic qualities of the German vernacular, for which viable linguistic models were still lacking. Prince Ludwig and some of his closest collaborators in the FG, for example the grammarian Christian Gueintz, repeatedly quoted the language of Luther and of the Saxon Chancery as linguistic authorities (Conermann 2008: 25, Moulin 2008: XVII). Both models were mentioned primarily for programmatic reasons, however, that is in order to legitimise Prince Ludwig's belief that the East Central German variety should become the basis for the German literary and scientific language (Conermann 2013a: 30). In fact, neither Luther nor the language of the Saxon Chancery were feasible models for the literary language.

In many ways, and particularly in its spelling, Luther's language was already outdated in the 17th century. Christian Gueintz, who in his *Deutsche Rechtschreibung* (1645) ('German Orthography') mentions Luther as a linguistic authority, often uses quotes from Luther's Bible to exemplify German orthography. These however all come from 17th century editions of Luther's Bible and have a significantly updated spelling (Moulin 2008: XXII). Chancery language was no less problematic, particularly because of its highly formulaic, syntactically overcomplex style, which was difficult to read and was not flexible enough for use in literary texts (Ball 2008: 406).

Prince Ludwig was convinced that translating works of literature from other vernaculars such as Italian and French – in which a more conversational style had already been achieved (see note 9) – could help modernise the literary quality of the German vernacular style, while also expanding the boundaries of German culture by importing and disseminating new literary genres and scientific contents in the German-speaking area (Ball 2008: 398–399). At the same time, it was a common view amongst FG translators such as Prince Ludwig, Diederich von dem Werder or Philipp Harsdörffer, that a

---

4   For a list of all translations by members of the FG, see Lange (2002: 98).

good translation which matched the stylistic level of the original text could legitimise the arguments of those who wanted to affirm German as a literary language (Dünnhaupt 1978: 521, Hess 1992).

Moreover, the translation of texts containing arguments that sustained the legitimacy of the vernacular as a cultural language contributed to advance the theoretical discussion on the state of the German vernacular. Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio* were such a text.

3 A CASE STUDY: PRINCE LUDWIG'S TRANSLATION OF GELLI'S *CAPRICCI DEL BOTTAIO*

3.1 Gelli and the *Capricci del bottaio* (1546)

Giovan Battista Gelli (1498–1563) was a self-educated man of the Florentine middle-class who pursued his interest in philology whilst never abandoning his profession as a shoemaker (De Gaetano 1967: 132). He was an influential member of the *Accademia degli Umidi*, established in Florence in 1540 by a group of twelve men of letters. One year later, the academy was renamed *Accademia Fiorentina*, as Cosimo I de' Medici took it under its wing and made it an official institution of the Republic of Florence (Marazzini 2002: 278).

Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio*, first published in Florence in 1546, comprises ten dialogues between the Florentine cooper Giusto and his Soul. In the dialogues, the Soul tries to educate Giusto on different philosophical and philological matters. Coming himself from the middle-class, Gelli was animated by a "spirit of defiance of both Humanistic authority and of the over-subtleties of scholasticism" (De Gaetano 1967: 132). In his works, he didn't address the learned Humanists of his time. Instead, he wrote primarily for a middle-class audience. For this reason, even when dealing with the finest philosophical arguments, Gelli's writing – in the *Capricci* and elsewhere – remains "smooth and […] conversational" (De Gaetano 1967: 141), often humoristic, and comprehensible to the broader public (Cassiani 2006: 25).

Thanks to their lively style, the *Capricci* were an immediate success and were reprinted five times between 1546 and 1551 in both Florence and Venice. The *Capricci* even enjoyed a certain European success. Already before Prince Ludwig's translation into German in 1619, a French translation (*Les discours fantastiques de Justin tonnelier* by Claude de Kerquifen) appeared in 1566; an English version by William Bake, *The fearfull fansies of the Florentine cooper*, followed in 1568.

In the fourth and fifth dialogues, Gelli uses Giusto's Soul to voice his own arguments in favour of the vernacular (De Gaetano 1967: 141, Puliafito 2011). Gelli, and the *Accademia Fiorentina* in general, maintained that the Italian literary language should be based on the contemporary cultivated Florentine vernacular, that is the language spoken at the Medici Court (Marazzini 2002: 278). Gelli thus rejected the Classicist position of Pietro Bembo, who wanted to restrict the canon of exemplary authors to Petrarca and Boccaccio (Marazzini 2002: 264), as well as the 'courtly language' proposal of Baldassarre Castiglione, who claimed that the koine of different cultivated dialects that had evolved spontaneously at the court of Rome should be considered as the Italian

language (Marazzini 2002: 266). Gelli not only sustained the primacy of contemporary Florentine as a candidate to become the basis for the Italian literary and scientific language, but he also contradicted many of the criticisms promoted by Humanists who considered the Italian vernacular a degradation of Latin – an imperfect language not suitable for literature and science (De Gaetano 1967: 141, Puliafito 2011).

Other than the defence of the Florentine vernacular, Gelli's arguments legitimising the use of the vernacular as a cultural language were not specifically tailored for the Italian debate. They were in fact universal and could easily be applied to other vernaculars as well. Through an analysis of such arguments, and of Prince Ludwig's commentaries to them, it is possible to precisely reconstruct how ideas about the vernacular entered the German discussion through direct contact with Italian works and ideas.

3.2 Prince Ludwig's commentaries

In 1619, Prince Ludwig published Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio* in the original language alongside the German translation *Anmütige Gespräch* in his own printing house in Köthen.[5] Ludwig did not just translate Gelli's text; he also commented on it extensively in the appendix to the translation. In his commentaries, Prince Ludwig expands on some of the points Gelli makes in favour of the vernacular, applying Gelli's reasonings to the German context (Conermann 1992: *28). Many of the arguments Prince Ludwig takes up again in the appendix became central points in the theoretical reflection and in the *Spracharbeit* of the FG.

In more than one passage from the *Capricci del Bottaio*, Giusto's Soul states that all languages are equally adequate for expressing any kind of content. Latin is thus not superior to the vernacular:

> A: O perche no: non è la lingua vulgare cosi ben atta a manifestare i concetti suoi come la latina, e l'altre che son tenute belle e buone? (*Capricci* 1619: 52)
> [S: Why not, then? Isn't the vernacular just as capable of expressing its concepts as Latin and the other languages that are considered to be good and beautiful?]

The Soul proceeds to demonstrate this with concrete examples. It mentions the philosopher Francesco de' Vieri, who held public lectures on Aristotelian philosophy and switched from Latin to the vernacular as soon as he noticed a man in the audience who did not understand Latin. Because de' Vieri could express even the most complex philosophical concepts in the vernacular, it follows that the vernacular is just as good as Latin for philosophy (*Capricci* 1619: 52). In the appendix, Ludwig emphasises that no language is per se unfit for *die Künste* ('the Arts'):

> Ob zwar eine Sprach für der andern mehr zu den Künsten geschickt/jedoch ist keine für sich selbst untüchtig/das man darinnen die Künste nicht solte lehren können. (*Gespräch* 1619: 226)

---

5   For this reason, in this paper I will not quote from the first Florentine version of the *Capricci*. Instead, I will use the Köthen version, as this is most likely the source text Prince Ludwig used for his translation.

[Even though a language may be more suitable for the Arts than others, no language is per se so inadequate that one should not be able to teach the Arts in it.]

He then applies de' Vieri's example to the German context, affirming that if it is possible to talk about philosophy in one vernacular, it should be possible to do so in any vernacular – that is, explicitly, also in German:

> Weil *Francisco Verin*. in welscher Sprach das 12. Buch *Arist*. der Wesenkündigung außgeleget: Jst hierauß abzunehmen/daß es auch nicht unmüglich/solches in teutscher Sprach ins werck zusetzen […] (*Gespräch* 1619: 226)
> [Since *Francesco de' Vieri* has expounded the 12th book of Aristotle's Metaphysics in the Italian vernacular, it follows that it is not impossible to do this in German as well […]]

Similar considerations resonate in later writings of the FG – for example, in the *Kurtzer Bericht* (1622), the first programmatic writing of the FG.[6] Whereas Prince Ludwig confines himself in his commentaries to comparing the status of the vernacular in Italy and Germany without any claim to a presumed superiority of the German language (Conermann 1992: *28), in the *Kurtzer Bericht* we do find expressions of linguistic patriotism: not only can German express any kind of content; it is even better at it than any other language:

> […] weil unsere weitgeehrte hochdeutsche Muttersprache/so wol an alter/schönen und zierlichen Reden/als auch an überfluß eigentlicher und wolbedeutlicher Wort so jede sachen besser als die frembden recht zu verstehen geben können/einen nicht geringen vorzug hat […] (*Kurtzer Bericht* 1628: Aii[r])
> [For our widely honoured High German mother-tongue has no small advantage because of its ancientness, its beautiful and graceful expressions and its abundance of appropriate and poignant words which can express anything better and more fittingly than any foreign language can […]]

The legitimation of the German vernacular as a cultural language was evidently a long process. In 1641, Christian Gueintz wrote – under Prince Ludwig's strict supervision – the *Deutscher Sprachlehre Entwurf*, the first official grammar of the FG. More than 20 years after the *Anmutige Gespräch*, Gueintz still feels the need to repeat Gelli's old argument: there is nothing that cannot be adequately expressed in German:

> Die Völligkeit der Deutschen sprache ist so gros/daß auch fast nichts kan gefunden werden/welches man in dieser sprache nicht nenne könte (*Sprachlehre* 1641: 11)
> [The fullness of the German language is so big that it's almost impossible to find anything which cannot be named in this language]

---

6   The *Kurtzer Bericht* is quoted here from a later, but essentially identical, 1628 edition.

Giusto later repeats the preconception that the vernacular cannot become a scientific language because its scientific terminology is less rich than Latin's. The Soul replies that this is actually a nonissue, as it is always possible to create new terms – especially technical terms – in any living language (*Capricci* 1619: 66). The argument must have resonated with Prince Ludwig, who wrote a commentary on this passage just to further emphasise the concept. Moreover, as will be shown in Section 3.3, he himself created new words in his translation to render some of the technical terms he found in the *Capricci del Bottaio*:

> Das vergönnet sey/newe Wörter und zwar Kunstwörter (*technica*) zuerfinden/ bejahet die Seele recht […] (*Gespräch* 1619: 231)
> [The Soul rightly affirms that it is legitimate to create new words, and in particular technical terms […]]

In order to convince Giusto that Latin is not inherently superior to the vernacular, the Soul explains that Latin vocabulary is only rich because it was expanded by its authors. The Soul further affirms that no language is perfect in its beginnings, but it can become so through the dedication and work of its authors. Once again, the Soul demonstrates this with an example: even Cicero and Boethius created a new term whenever they lacked a Latin expression for a Greek philosophical concept (*Capricci* 1619: 68). Although Ludwig does not comment on this passage, these ideas became part of the FG's arsenal of pro-vernacular arguments and resurfaced years later in Gueintz's *Sprachlehre*. There, Gueintz makes the same argument as Gelli: just as Latin was initially *heslich und ungereumet* ('ugly and disorderly') and was then made better, German can also be improved:

> Und gleich wie erstlich […] die Lateinische heslich und ungereumet gewesen […] Also verhelt sich es auch mit der Deutschen/weil ihre hoheit und richtigkeit ist langer verborgen gelegen […] (*Sprachlehre* 1641: V^v– VI^r)
> [And just as Latin was ugly and disorderly in its beginnings, this also applies to German because its greatness and rightness has long remained hidden […]]

Just like Gelli, Gueintz mentions that even Cicero introduced new terminology in Latin, as a legitimising argument for doing the same in German:

> Der Entwurf der Kunstwörter/wie von andern angefangen/ist ferner daß sie Deutsch sein können versuchet. Ein versuch aber in sothanen dingen ist nicht zu tadeln […] Und hat Cicero in seiner sprache die Kunstwörter verlateinert (das ich so reden mag/oder in das Lateinische übergesetzet) was ist dan strafwürdiger/ dergleichen fleis in gleicher sache anwenden? (*Sprachlehre* 1641: IV^v)
> [An attempt was made to create technical terms – as others did before – so that we can have them in German. But an attempt in such things is not to be blamed. Didn't Cicero also latinise (so to speak, or translate into Latin) technical terms? What is reproachable in applying the same zeal in the same matter?]

In the fifth dialogue, Giusto objects that, as all scientific books are written in Latin, knowledge of Latin is still indispensable in order to learn the sciences. In this passage, the Soul once again points out that this has nothing to do with some presumed superior qualities of Latin, and seizes the opportunity to criticise the Tuscan people for not having translated enough scientific works into their mother tongue:

> G. E però non si può egli essere dotto senza intender la lingua Latina, dove elle son tutte, che vuoi tu imparare nella nostra?
> A. Mercé de' Romani che ve le tradussono, se la lingua Latina ne è ricca; e colpa de Toscani, che non hanno mai fatto conto della loro, se ella ne è povera. (*Capricci* 1619: 66)
> [G. But still it is impossible to become a person of learning without understanding Latin, in which all [sciences] are written. What do you want to learn in our own [language]?
> S. If Latin has plenty [of scientific texts], it's only thanks to the Romans who translated them into Latin. And it's the fault of the people of Tuscany if there are none in their language, because they never took care of their vernacular.]

The Soul's remark can also be understood as indirect praise of the activities of the *Accademia Fiorentina*, whose members translated Latin and Greek classics to make them accessible to "intellectually ambitious Florentines" (Sherberg 2003: 28).[7]

In the appendix to his translation, Ludwig expresses a similar complaint: German people have long been 'unthankful' towards their own native language, as hardly anyone has ever tried to write or translate philosophical and scientific texts in German. It is for precisely this reason that many people think German is unsuitable for science and literature:

> Auß diesen ist auch abzunehmen/woher man gemeiniglich darfür helt/als sey die teutsche Sprache nicht zu den wissenschafften und andern gemüthsfertigkeiten tüchtig/denn biß anhero fast niemands gewesen/welcher einig stuck der *Philosophi* recht teutsch zu geben sich unterstanden hette/welches wol eine verachtung/ ja ein undanck gegen unsere Muttersprache mag genennet werden. Denn solte man am rechten orth es angreifen/würde sichs befinden/daß sie es vielen andern gleich/wo nicht zuvor thun würde. (*Gespräch* 1619: 230)

---

7   At the same time, the words of Giusto's Soul and the overall spirit of Gelli's work, for whom a more democratic access to the sciences was crucial, fit perfectly as arguments in favour of the reform of the Köthen and Weimar school system Ludwig was working on between 1618 and 1624 (Herz 2009: 161). The reform, which was conceived by the educational reformer Wolfgang Ratke, involved teaching the pupils in their own native language instead of in Latin (Ising 1959: 10–18; Dünnhaupt 1988). For this purpose, Ludwig founded his own printing house in the Köthen castle, in which parallel editions of scientific, philosophical, theological and literary texts in the Latin or Greek original and in German translation were published. Following Ratkes ideas, the pupils had to read the texts firstly in their own native language in order to understand their content properly, and only afterwards in the classical languages (Dünnhaupt 1988: 177–178). Although the educational reform was not a project of the FG but rather a private enterprise of the regents of Köthen and Weimar, the contact points with the ideas behind the *Spracharbeit* of the FG cannot be denied (Herz 2009: 161).

[From this passage it can be gathered why it is commonly thought that the German language is not well suited for scientific and intellectual purposes, for until now hardly anyone has tried to write pieces of philosophy in proper German, which may well be called contempt, or even ingratitude towards our own mother-tongue. For if one were only to attempt this the right way, it would become clear that German can do that just as good as other languages, if not even better.]

The solution for Ludwig is clear. German people should begin to practice the arts in their own mother tongue (*cf. Capricci* 1619: 227). This became the aim of the *Sprach-arbeit* of the FG: to cultivate the German language, also through translations, in order to legitimise its use for science, philosophy, and literature.

Giusto's Soul then clarifies that the first aim of a translation is to faithfully express the content of the source text. However, in order to be an effective form of language cultivation, translations should also result in a text that is pleasant to read in the target language. The fact that many in the past neglected this aspect has given translations a bad reputation (*Capricci* 1619: 73–74). Ludwig underlines this point in his commentaries:

> In verdolmetschung der wissenschafften ist vor allen dingen (*primario*) auff den verstandt zusehen […] Hernach aber auch auff der Rede zierde und wolstand. (*Gespräch* 1619: 235)
> [When translating the sciences, attention must be paid first and foremost to the meaning, but then also to the ornament and quality of the language.]

It does not then seem a coincidence that in the translations of the FG, the faithful transposition of the meaning of the source text was always paired with the striving for a translation that respected the spirit of the *puritas sermonis*. This concept, which was adopted by the German metalinguistic reflection of the 17th century from classical Latin rhetoric (Conermann 2013b), postulated that the criteria for good language use went above and beyond its grammatical and orthographical correctness. A good, 'pure' writing style was one which also obeyed the pragmatic and idiomatic rules of the German language and which avoided unnecessary foreign words as well as obsolete and regional expressions (Conermann 2013a: 17, Assenzi 2020a: 117–120, Assenzi 2020b: 231–234).

Through his translation of the *Capricci*, Ludwig introduced new arguments in favour of the vernacular to German intellectuals and gave practical indications about how to improve the German language. At the same time, with his *Anmutige Gespräch*, he provided a concrete example of what a language-cultivating translation had to look like.

3.3 Linguistic features of Prince Ludwig's translation

As stated in Section 2, improving the stylistic qualities of the German vernacular implied finding an alternative model to the syntactically overcomplicated chancery style. In the FG, this was pursued by choosing texts for translation that were written in a lively and conversational style rather than by forcibly simplifying the syntax of the source texts. Since no other translation by members of the FG has been studied in detail yet, this assumption must remain provisional. Still, this was certainly the case with the collective translation of the *Novellino* (s. Assenzi 2020c: 35–37) and with Ludwig's translation of Gelli's *Capricci*.

Prince Ludwig makes almost no changes to the syntactic structure of his source text. When he does, he aims at improving readability through simplification. For example, he sometimes replaces subordinate clauses with nominal phrases – as in (1), where the adverbial dependent clause (iv) in (1).a is rendered as a nominal phrase in (1).b:

(1)
a. [che [chi è invidioso]$_{ii}$ non merita altro,]$_i$ [che essere scacciato, e fuggito da ogni uno,]$_{iii}$ [come si farebbe una fiera]$_{iv}$ (*Capricci* 1619: 60–61)[8]
    [that [he who is envious]$_{ii}$ doesn't deserve anything else]$_i$ [but being driven out and avoided by everybody]$_{iii}$ [like one would do with a wild beast]$_{iv}$
b. [daß [wer mißgünstig ist/]$_{ii}$ der verdienet anders nichts/]$_i$ [als daß er von jederman möge außgejaget/und [als ein wildes Thier]$_{iv}$ geflohen werden.]$_{iii}$ (*Gespräch* 1619: 79)
    [that [he who is envious]$_{ii}$ doesn't deserve anything else]$_i$ [but that he is driven out and avoided [like a wild beast]$_{iv}$ by everybody]$_{iii}$

Another way Ludwig reduces hypotaxis can be seen in (2); (2).a is a complex sentence containing a single main clause (i), four subordinate finite clauses (ii–v), and two subordinate gerund clauses (α, β). Ludwig decreases the hypotactic complexity of the sentence by translating the gerund (α) as well as the relative clause (iii) as main clauses:

(2)
a. [non vedemmo noi pur ieri quel santissimo e dottissimo vecchio messer Francesco Verino Filosofo di maniera eccellentissimo]$_i$ [che nessuno altro gli pose i piedi innanzi nell'età sua;]$_{ii}$ [che [leggendo filosofia,]$_α$ e [veggendo tal volta venire à udirlo il Capitano Pepe, [il quale non intendeva la lingua latina,]$_{iv}$]$_β$ subito cominciava à leggere in vulgare,]$_{iii}$ [perche e' potesse intender anch'egli;]$_v$ (*Capricci* 1619: 52)
    [Didn't we see just yesterday that most saintly and learned Sir Francesco Verino, such an excellent philosopher]$_i$ [that nobody in his time surpassed him]$_{ii}$ [who [lecturing about philosophy]$_α$ and [seeing at times Captain Pepe [who didn't understand Latin]$_{iv}$ come to hear him,]$_β$ immediately began reading in the vernacular,]$_{iii}$ [so that he could also understand him]$_v$

---

8   In Gelli's text, finite clauses are enclosed in square brackets and numerated progressively with Roman numerals. Infinite clauses containing a gerund are numerated using Greek letters. The same references are used in the translation to visualise how the single clauses were translated.

b. [sahen wir nicht gestern den uberauß alten gelehrten/und in der Weißheit wol erfahrnen Mann/Francisco Verino,]ᵢ [deme es auch niemand bey seiner zeit zuvor gethan /]ᵢᵢ [dieser lase die *Philosophi* oder Vernunfftlehr]ₐ/und [wann zu zeiten der Hauptman Pepe, [welcher doch kein latein verstund/]ᵢᵥ ihn zu hŏren herkam/]ᵦ [hub er bald in der Muttersprach an zu lesen/]ᵢᵢᵢ [damit jener/als ein Zuhŏrer/es auch verstehen mŏchte.]ᵥ (*Gespräch* 1619: 68)
[Didn't we see just yesterday the most old, learned and well experienced in his wisdom Sir Francesco Verino]ᵢ [whom nobody surpassed in his time]ᵢᵢ [He was lecturing about philosophy]ₐ and [when Captain Pepe [who didn't understand Latin]ᵢᵥ came to hear him from time to time]ᵦ he immediately began reading in the vernacular,]ᵢᵢᵢ [so that even Pepe could understand him as a listener]ᵥ

In (2) we can see other recurring characteristics of Ludwig's translation. Ludwig never tries to reproduce syntactic elements which are common in Italian but not in German. Italian gerunds could potentially be translated into German as phrases with a non-inflected present participle as their head. However, since German non-finite participial clauses are not as widespread as gerunds in Italian (*cf.* Assenzi 2021: 141), Ludwig usually translates gerunds as main clauses (α) or subordinate adverbial clauses (β).

For similar reasons, Ludwig avoids reproducing the numerous accusative infinitive (AcI) constructions of the Italian text. The gerund (β) in (2).a contains an AcI. By omitting the verb *veggendo* ('seeing'), Ludwig avoids the AcI in his translation. Another means Ludwig resorts to for bypassing an AcI can be seen in (3), where the infinitive is rendered as a finite object clause:

(3)
a. Consciossiacosa che egli si è veduto infinite volte per ogni huomo della corruzione d'una cosa, nascerne una piu bella, ed una miglior di quella (Capricci 1619: 57)
['Because everybody has seen countless times a finer and better thing grow from the corruption of an old thing']
b. dann man hat unzehlich vielmal von jederman gesehen/daß auß verderbung eines dinges/ein schöneres und bessers/als das vorige/erwachsen (Gespräch 1619: 75)
['Because everybody has seen countless times that from the corruption of an old thing a finer and better one has grown']

In contrast to chancery writers and to some 17ᵗʰ century authors, for example Martin Opitz, Ludwig thus avoids elements such as AcI and participial phrases that were untypical in German and were also commonly associated with a heavily Latin-influenced style (Gardt 1994: 407).

Ludwig further ensures his text bears no trace of foreign syntactic influences by paraphrasing many nominalised verbs that would result in an unnatural German construction if rendered as the corresponding German nominalised verb: *il dire* in (4).a

could be translated as *das Sagen*. However, this choice would lead to an atypical sentence structure in German. In similar cases, Ludwig translates the nominalised verb as a full subordinate clause, as in (4).b:

(4)

a. A. Vo' dire, ch'e' comincia oggi a non servire piu il dire, egli è stato a studio, o e' da opera alle lettere; (Capricci 1619: 55)

['S. I mean that today saying that someone went to a prestigious school or that he has dedicated himself to literature is starting to become useless']

b. S. Ich wil dieses sagen/daß es heutiges Tages nicht viel hilfft/wenn man schon fürgibet/er ist auff einer hohen Schulen gewesen/oder er studieret fleissig (Gespräch 1619: 72)

['S. I mean that today it doesn't help much if someone says he went to a famous school or has been studying diligently']

As Giusto's Soul states in the *Capricci*, the first task of every good translator is that of conveying the meaning of the source text faithfully. This was a common opinion among German authors and translators starting from the end of the 16th century and throughout the 17th and 18th centuries (Gardt 1994: 412–414). It was, however, typical of the translation debate of the FG to underline the importance of creating a text that is stylistically acceptable in the target language. As seen in Section 3.3 writing idiomatically in the target language was just as important to Prince Ludwig and other members of the FG as respecting grammatical correctness. We can see the practical implications of this idea by observing how Ludwig deals with idiomatic expressions in the Italian text.

When he finds an idiomatic expression, Ludwig looks for a corresponding German expression that faithfully conveys the meaning of the original text and that is as idiomatic as possible. In (5).a Giusto uses the idiom *volere la baja* ('to make fun of somebody'). Ludwig translates this as *vexieren*, a word which is obsolete in contemporary German but was very common in this sense in the 17th century (DWB, s.v. *vexieren*).

(5)

a. G. Ah si? tu vuoi la baja (Capricci 1619: 53)

b. I: Ja eben so/du wilt mich vexieren (Gespräch 1619: 69)

['A. Right, you are making fun of me']

Sometimes Ludwig even uses a German idiomatic expression when there is none in the source text: in (6).b Ludwig adds the idiom *jemandem nicht das Wasser reichen können* ('not hold a candle to someone'), since it fits the context perfectly:

(6)

a. ma accorgendosi dipoi […] di non poter appressarsi à Dante, in modo alcuno […] (Capricci 1619: 60)

['but then, realising that he couldn't come anywhere near Dante…']

b. aber nach deme er […] inne worden/daß er dem Dante ganz nicht das Wasser/wie man saget/reichen können […] (Gespräch 1619: 78)

['but after he realised that he couldn't quite hold a candle to Dante, as one says…']

Lastly, Ludwig follows Gelli's hint about the legitimacy of creating new technical terms and translates philosophical and scientific vocabulary in order to enrich the German language of new words. However, as the corresponding Latin loanwords were predominant in German, Ludwig must pair the newly translated word to its Latin counterpart in order for the readers to understand him (*cf.* Conermann 1992: *23). One example for this process can be found in (2).b, in which Ludwig translates *filosofia* as "*Philosphi* oder Vernunfftlehr", as well as in (7):

(7)

matematica (*Capricci* 1619: 51) ['mathematics']	→	Maßkündigung (*Gespräch* 1619:67) verstehe hiedurch *Mathematicam* (ivi: 226) ['measurement-science understand hereby *Mathematicam*']
divina filosofia (*Capricci* 1619: 52) ['divine philosophy']	→	göttliche *Philosophi* oder Wesenkündigung (*Gespräch* 1619: 68) ['divine philosophy or being-science']
disciplina (*Capricci* 1619: 54) ['discipline']	→	Disciplin/oder wolgefaste Geschickligkeit (*Gespräch* 1619:70) [discipline, or well-conceived skill']

None of the technical terms Ludwig coined were adopted by others in the long term – with the exception of *Vernunftlehre*, which was still used as a (rare) synonym for *Philosophie* in the late 17th and in the 18th century. However, it is most likely that the brief popularity of *Vernunftlehre* was due to its use by the philosopher Christian Thomasius rather than to its appearance in Ludwig's translation of the *Capricci*, as Thomasius' works were more broadly received than Ludwig's.[9]

Although avoiding the use of foreign words was a component of the concept of *puritas* and also a programmatic point of the FG (Conermann 2013a: 17), Prince Ludwig himself and the members of the FG near him never expressed strictly purist positions (Conermann 2013b). On the contrary, they allowed for the possibility of using technical terms in the original language and were more in general in favour of continuing to use well established loanwords (Assenzi 2020b: 231–234). After 1640, Prince Ludwig openly criticised Philip von Zesen for what he thought were extreme attempts at translating common loanwords into German (Hundt 2000: 111, Conermann 2013b). It seems therefore that Ludwig did experiment with the Germanisation of technical

---

9   Thomasius used the term in his *Einleitung zu der Vernunfft-Lehre* (Halle, 1691) and *Ausübung der Vernunfft-Lehre* (Halle, 1691). Thomasius played a key role in the process that led to the affirmation of German as a teaching language in German universities (von Polenz 2013: 59–60) and was a central figure in German early Enlightenment philosophy, whose works "would continue to exercise an important influence on German philosophy throughout the first half of the eighteenth century" (Dyck & Sassen 2021). On the other hand, the extent to which Ludwig's translations were received is still unclear but must have been modest in comparison to that of Thomasius' writings. For example, the *Einleitung zu der Vernunfft-Lehre* (Halle, 1691) received two new editions by the end of the 17th century (1694, 1699), whereas Ludwig's translation of the *Capricci* was printed just the one time in Köthen in 1619.

terms in his translation of the *Capricci*, but it is improbable that he carried on with this experimentation in is later translation. Of course, only an analysis of his other works could confirm this assumption.

3.4 *The significance of Prince Ludwig's translation of the Capricci*

The reception of the 'language work' of the FG suffered long from the disqualification of the culture of the Baroque era that was common in the Enlightenment. Well into the 20th century, 17th century German language academies were commonly trivialised as unsuccessful attempts at imposing foreign language purism. While linguistic purism was surely a component of the language work of the FG, it was neither its focal point nor the sole interest pursued by members of the society (s. Note 2; Ball 2008; Herz 2009). Moreover, the purism of the FG is not to be equated with foreign language purism but is in fact identical with that much broader concept of *puritas* described in Section 3.2 (Conermann 2013b).

Because of this long-standing prejudice, the complexity of the linguistic discussion in the FG has long remained unrecognised. This has changed only in recent years with the edition of the letters and documents of the FG curated by Conermann (1992–2019) and by the research done on the FG by Conermann, Ball and Herz. Yet, much work is still to be done on the translations made by members of the FG, on their significance for the history of the cultural contact between Germany and Italy (or France), on their reception and the impact they had on the development of new literary genres and of a new literary writing style in the German-speaking area.

As was shown in Section 3.2, the *Capricci* had a clearly identifiable long-term influence on Prince Ludwig's thought and on programmatic writings of the FG. Moreover, a relatively large number of copies of both Ludwig's edition and translation of the *Capricci* is preserved or attested in several libraries and private archives, while only a few copies were found in Prince Ludwig's library at his death (Conermann 1992: *13). This seems to point to the fact that Gelli's work and its translation did indeed achieve wide circulation and could have well influenced intellectuals inside and outside the circle of the FG.

What is certain is that the new, less complex and convoluted writing style Ludwig experimented with in his translation of the *Capricci* and which he also consistently used in his letters (Ball 2008: 406; Ball 2020) ended up establishing itself and replacing the earlier obscure 'baroque' writing style. What role Ludwig, his translations and the FG more in general played in this process still has to be investigated in detail. Only a more precise and more extensive analysis of the works of FG members and their reception will show in what measure the FG impacted the German translating and writing style and what role it played as a precursor of a change that was then ultimately brought about by the influence of French galant style in the second half of the 17th century.[10]

---

10 Although the ideal of the *civil conversazione* ('civil conversation') and of the necessity of using a clear, pleasant, conversational style for courtly communication originated in the 16th century in Italy with Baldassarre Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (1513–1524) ('The Courtier'), Giovanni della Casa's *Galateo* (1558) and Stefano Guazzo's *Civil Conversazione* (1574), it was through the French adoption of this ideal that the galant, civil

4 CONCLUSIONS

Prince Ludwig's translation of Gelli's *Capricci del Bottaio* perfectly exemplifies the cultural contact between the Italian and German vernacular debates. On the one hand, Prince Ludwig's translation introduced into the German discussion new arguments in favour of the vernacular which originated in the *Accademia Fiorentina*, and which became an integral part of the FG's ideas. Gelli's conception of the equal dignity of Latin and the vernacular(s), as well as his suggestions for language cultivation, resonated not only in the *Kurtzer Bericht*, the first programmatic writing of the FG from 1622, but also later in the first official grammar of the FG, Christian Gueintz's *Sprachlehre* (1641).

On the other hand, Ludwig's *Anmutige Gespräch* provides a tangible example of how a translation can effectively improve the stylistic qualities of the target language and help legitimise the vernacular as a cultural language. In his translation, Ludwig manages to reproduce Gelli's lively and conversational style while always respecting German syntax and idiomaticity. He thus provides an alternative model for literary language that distances itself from the syntactically complex, formulaic and pompous chancery style that was still exemplary at the time. On the long run, this newer, less complex style, for which Ludwig was a precursor, ended up establishing itself. Only a more extensive analysis of the translations of the FG, of their reception and impact will clarify what influence the FG had on the long-term evolution of German writing style.

References

Primary Sources and vocabularies

Capricci = GELLI, Giovan Battista (1619) *I Capricci del Bottaio*. Köthen.

Gespräch = GELLI, Giovan Battista (1619) *Anmutige Gespräch,* Capricci del Bottaio *genandt*. Transl. Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen. Köthen.

Kurtzer Bericht = Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen (1628) *Kurtzer Bericht von der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschafft Vorhaben*. s.l.

Sprachlehre = GUEINTZ, Christian (1641) *Deutscher Sprachlehre Entwurf*. Köthen.

DWB = GRIMM, Jacob and Wilhelm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Wörterbuchnetz – Trier Center for Digital Humanities, https://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB [03.06.2023].

Secondary sources

ASSENZI, Lucia (2020a) "»derhalben ich dan nit so woll stehendt … woll habendt bin.« Die Korrekturen in der Handschrift der *Erzehlungen aus den mittlern Zeiten* (1624) als Quelle zur Erforschung der Spracharbeit der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft." *Muttersprache* 130, 105–123.

ASSENZI, Lucia (2020b) "Übersetzen für die Muttersprache. Übersetzung und Fremdwortpurismus in der barocken Sprachreflexion am Beispiel der Verdeutschung des *Novellino* (1624)." In: Alessandra Petrina/Federica Masiero (eds), *Acquisition*

conversation style spread throughout Europe (Quondam 1993: X–XI).

through Translation. Towards a Definition of Renaissance Translation. Turnhout: Brepols, 225–243.

ASSENZI, Lucia (2020c) *Fruchtbringende Verdeutschung. Linguistik und kulturelles Umfeld der Übersetzung des ›Novellino‹ (1572) in den ›Erzehlungen aus den mittlern Zeiten‹ (1624)*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter.

ASSENZI, Lucia (2021) "*scartabellando il manoscritto*. Italienische komitative und elaborative Gerundio-Adjunkte in deutscher Übersetzung: Eine diachrone Pilotstudie." *Sprachwissenschaft* 46, 143–177.

BALL, Gabriele (2008) "Alles zu Nutzen – The Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft (1617–1680) as a German Renaissance Academy." In: Arjan von Dixhoorn/Susie Speakman Sutch (eds), *The Reach of the Republic of Letters. Literary and Learned Societies in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Vol. II. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 389–422.

BALL, Gabriele (2020) "Der Gesellschaftsbrief der Renaissanceakademie *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*" In: Marie Isabel Matthews-Schlinzig/Jörg Schuster/Gesa Steinbrink/Jochen Strobel (eds), *Handbuch Brief. Von der Frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart. Band 1: Interdisziplinarität – Systematische Perspektiven – Briefgenres.* Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 773–779.

BIRCHER, Martin (1995) "The Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft and Italy: Between Admiration and Imitation." In: *The fairest flower: the emergence of linguistic national consciousness in Renaissance Europe*. Firenze: Accademia della Crusca, 121–132.

CASSIANI, Chiara (2006) *Metamorfosi e conoscenza. I dialoghi e le commedie di Giovan Battista Gelli.* Roma: Bulzoni.

CONERMANN, Klaus (ed.) (1985) *Die Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft. Der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft geöffneter Erzschrein. Das Köthener Gesellschaftsbuch Fürst Ludwigs I. von Anhalt-Köthen 1617–1650*. Vol. II. Leipzig: Edition Leipzig.

CONERMANN, Klaus (ed.) (1992) *Fürst Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen, Werke. 1. Band. Die ersten Gesellschaftsbücher der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft (1622, 1624 und 1628). – Johannis Baptistae Gelli Vornehmen Florentinischen Academici Anmutige Gespräch* Capricci del Bottaio *genannt (1619)*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

CONERMANN, Klaus (ed.) (1992–2019) *Briefe der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft und Beilagen: Die Zeit Fürst Ludwigs von Anhalt-Köthen 1617–1650*. I–IX. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

CONERMANN, Klaus (2008) "Akademie, Kritik und Geschmack. Zur Spracharbeit der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft des 17. Jahrhunderts." *Unsere Sprache* 1, 17−52.

CONERMANN, Klaus (2013a) "Hochsprache und Umgangssprache in der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft. Beobachtungen anläßlich der Neuentdeckung einer handschriftlichen Köthener Sprach-lehr als Grundlage für Christian Gueintz' Deutscher Sprachlehre Entwurf." In: Klaus Bochmann (ed.), *Germanistische Linguistik als Lebensaufgabe. Gerhard Lerchner zum 75. Geburtstag*. Stuttgart/ Leipzig: Hirzel, 14–31.

CONERMANN, Klaus (2013b) "Purismus in der Spracharbeit der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft? Zur Bedeutung von Richtigkeit und Reinheit in der Puritas- und

Decorum-Rhetorik der deutschen Sprachreform im 17. Jahrhundert.” *Muttersprache* 123, 181–205. https://gfds.de/purismus-in-der-spracharbeit-der-fruchtbringenden-gesellschaft/ [03.06.2023].

DE GAETANO, Armand L. (1967) “G. B. Gelli and the Rebellion Against Latin.” *Studies in the Renaissance* 14, 131–158.

DYCK, Corey/SASSEN Brigitte (2021) “18th Century German Philosophy Prior to Kant”. In: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/18thGerman-preKant/ [03.06.2023].

DÜNNHAUPT, Gerhard (1978) “Die Übersetzungen Fürst Ludwigs von Anhalt-Köthen. Ein Beitrag zum 400. Geburtstag des Gründers der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft.” *Daphnis* 7, 513–529.

DÜNNHAUPT, Gerhard (1988) “Alles zu Nutzen! Die Anfänge der neuhochdeutschen Sprachreform und der erste deutsche Schulbuchverlag.” *Philobiblion* 32, 175–185.

GARDT, Andreas (1994) *Sprachreflexion in Barock und Frühaufklärung. Entwürfe von Böhme bis Leibniz*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

HERZ, Andreas (2009) “Der edle Palmbaum und die kritische Mühle. Die *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* als Netzwerk höfisch-adeliger Wissenskultur der frühen Neuzeit.” *Denkströme. Journal der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 2, 152–191.

HESS, Peter (1992) “Imitatio-Begriff und Übersetzungstheorie bei Georg Philipp Harsdörffer.” In: James Hardin (ed.), *Translation and Translation Theory in Seventeenth-Century Germany*. *Daphnis* 21/1, 9–26.

HUNDT, Markus (2000) *‘Spracharbeit’ im 17. Jahrhundert. Studien zu Georg Philipp Harsdörffer, Justus Georg Schottelius und Christian Gueintz*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

ISING, ERIKA (ed.) (1959) *Wolfgangs Ratkes Schriften zur deutschen Grammatik (1612–1630)*. Vol. I. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

LANGE, Winfried (2002) “Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft und Übersetzung im 17. Jahrhundert.” In: Bogdan Kovtyk/Gerhard Meiser/Hans-Joachim Solms (eds), *Geschichte der Übersetzung. Beiträge zur Geschichte der neuzeitlichen, mittelalterlichen und antiken Übersetzung*. Berlin: Logos, 89−107.

MARAZZINI, Claudio (2002) *La lingua italiana: profilo storico*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

MOULIN, Claudine (2008) “Christian Gueintz’ Deutsche Rechtschreibung (1645).” In: Christian Gueintz, *Die Deutsche Rechtschreibung*. Edited by Claudine Moulin. Hildesheim/Zürich/New York: Olms, VII-XLVI.

POLENZ, Peter von (2000) “Die Sprachgesellschaften und die Entstehung eines literarischen Standards in Deutschland.” In: Sylvain Auroux/E.F.K. Koerner/Hans-Josef Niederehe/Kees Versteegh (eds), *Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Entwicklung der Sprachforschung von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart.* Vol. II. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 827–841.

POLENZ, Peter von (²2013) *Deutsche Sprachgeschichte vom Spätmittelalter bis zur Gegenwart. Bd. II: 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*. Edited by Claudine Moulin. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter.

PULIAFITO, Anna Laura (2011) "Filosofia, letteratura e vita civile: Giovan Battista Gelli e il Volgare." *Modernidades* 11. https://ffyh.unc.edu.ar/modernidades/filosofia-letteratura-e-vita-civile-giovan-battista-gelli-e-il-volgare/ [03.06.2023].

QUONDAM, Amedeo (1993) "Introduzione." In: Stefano Guazzo, *La civil conversazione*. Edited byž Amedeo Quondam. Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini.

RIECKE, Jörg (2016): *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache. Eine Einführung*. Stuttgart: Reclam.

SHERBERG, Michael (2003) "The Accademia Fiorentina and the Question of the Language: The Politics of Theory in Ducal Florence." *Renaissance Quarterly* 56, 26–55.

Abstract

TRANSLATION, THE VERNACULAR DEBATE, AND THE EVOLUTION OF LITERARY WRITING STYLE BETWEEN ITALY AND GERMANY: PRINCE LUDWIG VON ANHALT-KÖTHEN AND HIS TRANSLATION OF GIOVAN BATTISTA GELLI'S *CAPRICCI DEL BOTTAIO*

The aim of the present paper is to shed light on the cultural contact between the Italian and German vernacular debates in the 17th century, and to show how this cultural contact introduced new legitimising arguments in favour of the vernacular in the German-speaking context while also providing a renovating impulse to German literary style. The paper investigates one exemplary case of such cultural contact: Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen's *Anmutige Gespräch* (1619), the translation of Giovan Battista Gelli's dialogue *Capricci del Bottaio* (1546). Gelli was an influential member of the *Accademia Fiorentina*, a 16th century Florentine language academy. In his *Capricci*, Gelli debates the legitimacy of the Florentine vernacular as a scientific and literary language. Through an analysis of Prince Ludwig's commentaries to his translation of the *Capricci*, the paper shows how Prince Ludwig applied Gelli's arguments in favour of the vernacular to the German context, and how these arguments resonated even years later in the writings of the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, a German language academy led by Prince Ludwig from 1617 to 1650. As translation was seen as a form of 'language work' both by the *Accademia Fiorentina* and by the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, the most salient linguistic features of Ludwig's translation is analysed in the paper in order to show how the theoretical discussion on translation was implemented in the translation process. This investigation shows how translating from Italian promoted a more conversational literary style that distanced itself from the pompous, formulaic chancery language that was still seen as exemplary of good language use in 17th century Germany.

Keywords: translation, vernacular debate, Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft, Accademia Fiorentina

Povzetek

PREVAJANJE, RAZPRAVLJANJE O VERNAKULARNIH JEZIKIH IN SLOGOV-
NI RAZVOJ LITERARNEGA JEZIKA MED ITALIJO IN NEMČIJO: PRINC LUD-
VIK ANHALT-KÖTHENSKI IN NJEGOV PREVOD BESEDILA *CAPRICCI DEL
BOTTAIO* GIOVAN BATTISTA GELLIJA

Članek skuša osvetliti kulturne stike med italijanskim in nemškim svetom v zvezi z
razpravami o vernakularnih jezikih v 17. stoletju in obenem pokazati, kako so ti stiki
prispevali nove argumente v prid vernakularnemu jeziku v nemško govorečem konte-
kstu ter dali nemškemu literarnemu slogu prenovitveni vzgib. Kot nazoren primer tovr-
stnega kulturnega stika je obravnavano delo *Anmutige Gespräch* (1619) princa Ludvika
Anhalt-Köthenskega, ki je prevod dialoga *Capricci del Bottaio* (1546) Giovan Battista
Gellija (1546). Gelli je bil vpliven član *Accademie Fiorentine,* ustanove, ki se je v 16.
stoletju posvečala vprašanju jezika. V omenjenem dialogu Gelli razpravlja o upraviče-
nosti rabe florentinskega vernakularnega jezika kot jezika znanosti in književnosti. Na
osnovi analize komentarjev princa Ludvika k njegovemu lastnemu prevodu Gellijeve-
ga dela pokažemo, kako je princ Ludvik Gellijeve argumente v nemški situaciji upo-
rabil v prid vernakularnemu jeziku in kako je bilo te argumente čutiti še leta pozneje
v spisih ustanove *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft,* nemške jezikovne akademije, ki jo je
od 1617 do 1650 vodil princ Ludvik. Upoštevaje, da sta tako *Accademia Fiorentina*
kot *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* prevajanje imeli za "jezikovno dejavnost", prispevek
proučuje najvažnejše jezikovne značilnosti Ludvikovega prevoda, da bi videli, kako je
bilo teoretsko razpravljanje o prevajanju upoštevano pri samem prevodnem procesu.
Iz raziskave izhaja, da je prevajanje iz italijanščine spodbujalo bolj pogovorni literarni
slog, ki je bil drugačen od bombastičnega, formulaičnega pisarniškega jezika, kakršen
je v Nemčiji 17. stoletja še vedno veljal za zgled dobre jezikovne rabe.

Ključne besede: prevajanje, razpravljanje o vernakularnem jeziku, Fruchtbringende
Gesellschaft, Accademia Fiorentina

Vicente Lledó-Guillem
Hofstra University
Vicente.LledoGuillem@hofstra.edu

DEFENDING THE CATALAN LANGUAGE: CRISTÒFOL DESPUIG AND THE DESCRIPTION OF THE VALENCIAN OTHER

1 INTRODUCTION

In 1556, Philip II was crowned King of Spain, having inherited "the largest global empire that had ever existed" (Dandelet 2014: 133). The following year, his troops defeated the French in the Battle of San Quentin, and with the subsequent treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) the Spanish Crown gained control over Naples and Milan, one of the wealthiest parts of the Spanish Empire (Dandelet 2014: 149–151). The empire was an example of a so-called composite monarchy in which most of the territories were united by means of a system known as *aeque principaliter*, according to which the different territories maintained "their own laws, *fueros* and privileges" (Elliott 1992: 53).[1] This was the case with the Kingdom of Aragon, the Kingdom of Valencia, the Principality of Catalonia, and the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, all of which constituted the Crown of Aragon. However, the Spanish possessions in America followed a different system: the accessory union, by which these territories were parts of the Kingdom of Castile and supposedly had the same Castilian laws and rights (Elliott 1992: 52). At the center of the monarchy was Castile, and this imbalance of demographic, economic, and military power became a point of contention, especially during the second half of the sixteenth century. The issue of how to organize the Spanish Empire became more relevant with the establishment of Madrid as the capital in 1561,[2] the tense political atmosphere during the Catalan Courts of 1564 (Rubiés 1995–1996: 248–249), as well as the initial trust that Philip II vested in the Duke of Alba in 1567 to control the anti-Spanish revolt in the Netherlands – also part of the Spanish Empire. During this time, the Prince of Eboli, Ruy Gómez de Silva, the Valencian humanist Fadrique Furió Ceriol, and the Aragonese secretary Antonio Pérez all suggested that a better balance of power could be established through a federalist option, similar to the *aeque principaliter* model, in which there would be no hierarchies (Elliott 1990: 257–261).[3] Also at this time, Cristòfol Despuig (1510–1574), a knight from the Catalan city of Tortosa, wrote *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* (*Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa*).[4]

---

1   *Fueros* refer to regional codes of laws, privileges, and exemptions.

2   Before 1561 the emperor had practiced a peripatetic kingship without a permanent capital (Elliott 1992: 254).

3   A Castile-centered Spanish Empire was supported at Court by the Zapata and Alba families.

4   Most scholars agree that Despuig wrote this work in 1557. However, according to Rubiés, Despuig's *Colloquy* must have been written around 1562 (Rubiés 1999: 222). Rubiés suggests that the work was revised between

Highly illustrative of the genre of Renaissance dialogue in the Catalan-speaking lands (Querol and Solervicens [1557] 2014: 15) – though not published until 1877 –[5] Despuig's *Colloquy* differed from other contemporary defenses of Romance languages such as those written by Bembo, Speroni, Du Bellay, Barrros, and Valdés, in that it did not focus exclusively on language (Duran 1981: 38, Chabrolle-Cerretini and Narcís Iglésias 2021: 55). However, in the book's first dialogue, which is the longest of the six that Despuig presents, the topic of language features prominently. The dialogues take place between three characters: Lívio, a knight from Tortosa who is "the most critical voice in the work" (Querol and Solervicens 2014: 15); Fàbio, who is a citizen from Tortosa; and don Pedro, a knight from Valencia. The first dialogue focuses on the past and present of the Catalan language, with particular emphasis on the expansion of Castilian in the Catalan-speaking lands. According to the Catalan knight Lívio: "most Castilians actually dare to say out loud that this province of ours isn't Spain and that, therefore, we aren't true Spaniards, and the blessed sinners don't realise how wrong and how ignorant they are […] for the province isn't just Spain: it's the best Spain, and it's always been held up as such by every nation that has reached our shores" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 80). The *Colloquy* does not place Catalonia in opposition to the Spanish Empire. Rather, it demands respect towards the Crown of Aragon and the memory of the medieval Catalan-Aragonese Empire, led by the Principality of Catalonia, which is in danger of being erased by a Castilian-centered conception of the Spanish Empire (Rubiés 1995–1996: 247–248). In Despuig's text, defending the Crown of Aragon by exalting the Catalan language meant defending the Catalan nation, and, ultimately, praising the Principality of Catalonia. It could be argued that Despuig's work opposed the political historians at the service of the Crown of Castile, who would use any rhetorical device or fictional element to exalt Castile at the expense of the Crown of Aragon. Thus, the lack of fictional elements in the historical narrative would run counter to patriotism (Duran 2004: 110–111).

In this article, I argue that Despuig's *Colloquy* raises the topic of Catalan language to mount a defense of the memory of the historical importance of the Catalan-Aragonese Empire. This defense emphasizes the leadership of the Principality of Catalonia among the Catalan-speaking lands of the Crown of Aragon. The central role of Catalonia in the work appears based upon a hierarchy of varieties of the Catalan language, in which, for the first time, there is an explicit statement of the superiority of the variety spoken there. Despuig's linguistic hierarchy reflects an ideology of origin, namely: the variety of the Principality of Catalonia is superior because the language finds its roots there, and thus the language is most appropriately designated *català* or

---

1558 and 1562 and that Despuig might have used a fictional earlier date for his work (Rubiés 1995-1996: 248). There is only one remaining manuscript of the work: B-20, copied in the eighteenth century and kept at the *Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona* (González 2012: 322; Duran 1981: 43). For a discussion of the date and different editions of the work, see González (2012: 333-335), Querol and Solervicens (2011: 20-26), and Duran (1981: 43-49).

5 By Fidel Fita (Despuig (1877/1975). Despuig's enmity with the bishop Ferran de Loaces, evident in the first dialogue of the *Col·loquis*, might explain why Despuig's work was not published until the nineteenth century. Loaces had a great influence on the Spanish Crown and the Inquisition (Querol y Solervicens 2014: 10).

llengua catalana.[6] The degree of resemblance with the variety used in the Principality of Catalonia will determine the value of other varieties spoken beyond Catalonia. This ideology reflects a Platonic point of view, which opposes the classical evolution of language and empire found in the works of Nebrija or Aldrete. Importantly, I suggest that, in mounting his defense, Despuig intentionally portrays the Valencian other as a palimpsest in which the Kingdom of Valencia was colonized first by Catalans and later by Castilians. The Valencian language variety and its concomitant linguistic ideology evidence a process of Castilian substitution and colonization, which can be contested.[7] This process is revealed in four principal aspects of the *Colloquy*, each having important political implications:[8] the Castilian name of the Valencian character don Pedro; this character's ostensible lack of awareness that Catalan had been a courtly language during the House of Barcelona Dynasty; his acknowledgement that the Catalan variety spoken in Valencia was contaminated by its contact with Castilian; and finally, the erasure of the literary achievements in Catalan of the Kingdom of Valencia during the Trastámara Dynasty. In this final aspect, Despuig's *Colloquy* suggests that the value of a language does not reside in literary cultivation, but merely in the political power associated with a language. In what follows, I explain the significance of each one of these four aspects of the *Colloquy* in terms of the linguistic ideology that was prevalent at the time. First, however, I consider the question of linguistic origins.

2 THE CONCEPT OF THE CATALAN NATION BASED ON LANGUAGE: THE IMPORTANCE OF ORIGINS

In the first dialogue, the Valencian knight, don Pedro, and the Catalan knight, Lívio, compare the different varieties of the Catalan language:

> DON PEDRO: What I mean is that we Valencians came from Catalonia, and we regard those families that didn't come from Catalonia as inferior. And we use the language of Catalonia, even though it's been badly affected by the fact that we are so close to Castile […]
> LIVIO: There's no two ways about it. And the same goes for Majorca, which was also conquered by King James, as well as Menorca and Ibiza when they were conquered. That's why Catalan came to be spoken on all those islands, and still is, just as it was at the beginning. They had no need to change it, as they did in Valencia or in Sardinia. (Despuig [1557] 2014: 46–47)

---

6 We must bear in mind that in this context the term "varieties" does not correspond to the current dialectal differentiation of the Catalan language based mainly on eastern and western Catalan, but rather to hypothetical linguistic blocks that Despuig established. These linguistic blocks were based on geographical and political criteria: variety of the Principality of Catalonia, variety of the Kingdom of Valencia, and variety of the Balearic Islands.

7 I use the terms "Castilian" and "Spanish" synonymously.

8 I apply John Joseph's definition of the political "to any situation in which there is an unequal distribution of power, and where individuals' behaviour reflects the play of power, or is guided (or maybe even determined) by it (2006: 2).

Here the two characters refer to the conquests of Majorca (1229), Eivissa (1235), and the Kingdom of Valencia (1238–1245) by King James I the Conqueror (r. 1213–1276); the conquest of Minorca (1287) by Alfonso the Liberal (r. 1285–1291), and the occupation of the Sardinian city of l'Alguer (1354) by King Peter the Ceremonious (r. 1336–1387). All these areas are treated as Catalan-speaking lands. With regards to the Aragonese participation in the conquest of the Valencian lands, don Pedro explains that the main forces were nearly all Catalan and "that's why the language that's spoken in there is Catalan, not Aragonese," although the Valencian knight acknowledges that some noble Aragonese families settled there (Despuig [1557] 2014: 46). The text erases the presence of the Aragonese language in the Kingdom of Valencia, which could be explained by the fact that the most populated and richest areas of the Kingdom of Valencia were Catalan-speaking.[9]

This passage considers the Catalan-speaking lands a unified linguistic community, which reminds us of the concept of *nació catalana* as an ethnocultural concept that comprises all the Catalan-speaking Christians of Hispania, although, in this case, it also includes the Catalan-speaking territory of Sardinia.[10] Although the term *nació catalana* does not appear explicitly in the passage, the idea of a linguistic community is very clear. Despuig uses the term *nació catalana* on several occasions, but in most cases, it refers exclusively to the Principality of Catalonia (Duran 1981: 36–37). The term *pàtria* most clearly describes the Catalan-speaking territories in one specific passage, when Lívio states: "I do condemn and denounce its everyday use [of Castilian] amongst ourselves, because that could lead to our language being gradually uprooted from our land (*pàtria*), and that would make it look as if we'd been conquered by the Castilians" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 48). As Mas i Forners explains, the use of the term and the idea of a Catalan nation based on a common language and religion had been prevalent among the elites of the Kingdoms of Valencia, Majorca, and the Principality of Catalonia until about the middle of the fourteenth century. However, once King Peter the Ceremonious (r. 1336–1387) incorporated the Kingdom of Majorca into the Crown of Aragon in 1343–1344, the idea of a dynastic nation or nation of the king, comprising the whole Crown of Aragon, spread and overshadowed the ethnocultural linguistic notion of a *nació catalana* (2020: 138–139). From the beginning of the fifteenth century onwards, the concept of the nation of the king coexisted with the notion of *nació catalana* in its linguistic and ethnocultural sense, and with more restricted labels such as *nació valenciana* and *nació catalana*, which referred exclusively to the Kingdom of Valencia and the Principality of Catalonia respectively (Mas i Forners 2020: 152–158). When Despuig writes his *Colloquy*, the former ethnocultural and linguistic concept of *nació catalana* was used when it was considered appropriate. It appears in Despuig's first dialogue, although not explicitly, to describe the historical expansion of the Catalan language and to emphasize the central role of the Principality of Catalonia.

9   Lívio also explains that not all Sardinians speak Catalan (Despuig 1557/2014: 47).

10   This idea of nation responds to the Thomist concept: "linguae seu nationes" by which languages determined the existence of nations (Sanchis Guarner 1980: vii).

In the passage mentioned above, there is a clear hierarchy of the different varieties of the Catalan language, which constitutes an ideological interpretation of linguistic difference.[11] Lívio explains that the Catalan language has remained unchanged in the islands of Majorca, Menorca, and Ibiza, contrary to the alterations undergone in Valencia and Sardinia. Don Pedro indicates that the changes occurred in Valencia are due to Castilian influence. From these statements, it can be inferred that the variety of the Principality of Catalonia represents an original and perfect state of the language. Don Pedro's comment about the superiority of the Valencian families who are of Catalan origin could be read as supporting this idea. The variety used in the Balearic Islands constitutes the second-best state of the language inasmuch as it is the closest to the original variety of the Principality of Catalonia. Finally, the Valencian and Sardinian varieties would be at the bottom of the pyramid because the original language would have been modified by contact with other languages. This hierarchy is underlined by the exclusive use of the term *llengua catalana* fifteen times throughout the book to refer to the language of the Catalan-speaking lands. Other common terms used during the period, such as *llengua valenciana* or Valencian language, *mallorquí* or Majorcan language, and *llengua llemosina* or Limousin language,[12] are never mentioned (Querol and Solervicens 2014: 21, Lledó-Guillem 2008: 149, Duran 1981: 37). When Despuig wrote his *Colloquy*, the name *llengua valenciana* or *valencià* commonly referred to the Catalan variety of the Kingdom of Valencia. It was first documented in 1395 in Antoni Canal's translation of Valerius Maximus' *Dictorum factorumque memorabilium*. After 1458 the term was dominant in Valencian society in administrative contexts, in public and private correspondence, and in literature (Ferrando Francés 1980: 86). Moreover, in 1409 a document describes the payment made to Ramon Soler for a translation from Castilian into *mallorquí* (Mas i Forners 2020: 76). While these various names for linguistic varieties did not deny the unity of the Catalan language, they underlined the juridical identity of the Kingdoms of Valencia and Majorca and questioned the central role of the Principality of Catalonia. In fact, the expression *llengua catalana* started to be used to refer to the variety of the Principality of Catalonia.

Furthermore, in 1521 we find *llengua llemosina* in Joan Bonllavi's translation of Ramon Llull's *Blanquerna* (BITECA manid 2167), to refer to the language of this thirteenth-century medieval Catalan work (Ferrando Francés 2018: 184). Before 1521 the term *llemosí* or *llengua llemosina* denoted the Occitan language used by the troubadours, whereas *català*, *llengua catalana*, or *catalanesch* made reference to the Catalan language that was used mainly in prose. Nonetheless, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the meaning of *llemosí* had changed and it designated all the medieval literature written in Catalan and Occitan. Germà Colon believed that the origin of this confusion originated in the Kingdom of Valencia (1978: 51), whereas Ferrando Francés

---

11   As Gal and Irvine explain, any discourse about linguistic differences, even if it is a mere contrast, represents an example of linguistic ideology because it carries with it the political naturalization of a hierarchy of domination. Language ideologies are not completely true or false but "they are positioned and partial visions of the world." Therefore, they can be contested because although they pretend "to account for everything and everyone in the word," they defend the interests of certain parts of society (2019: 12-13).

12   With its different variants: *llemosí, lemosí, lemozí*.

thinks that it may have originated in Castile in the second half of the fifteenth century (1980: 74). According to this new meaning, *llemosí* was the old language of the medieval Catalan lands that no longer existed and that had been divided into Catalan, Valencian, and Majorcan.[13] Despuig avoids the use of this term because it denies the continuity of a unified language that corresponds to a unified political entity, the Catalan nation, represented by the Principality of Catalonia.

We must bear in mind that the expression *llengua valenciana* could have a double meaning. While in its origins it may have referred to the Catalan variety used in the Kingdom of Valencia, potentially it could evolve and refer to the common language of the Catalan-speaking lands. By the end of the Catalan Civil War (1462–1472), the Kingdom of Valencia became the strongest area politically, culturally, and economically in the Crown of Aragon (Ferrando Francés and Nicolás Amorós 2011: 189). Since the reign of King Alfonso the Magnanimous (r. 1416–1458), Valencians began to play an important role in the Royal Chancellery, or *Cancelleria reial*, which had been dominated until then by the urban elites of Barcelona. The *Cancelleria reial* was created by King James I (1213–1276) and since 1291 it played a dominant role in the "standard" use of the Catalan language in official documents. After the dynastic union of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon in 1479, the Royal Chancellery was substituted by the Council of Aragon in 1494 (Ferrando Francés 2018: 224), which meant the end of an institution that had created one of the most unified written languages in the Romance area.[14] Yet once the use of the printing press started in the city of Valencia in 1473, a highly uniform written language was developed in the Catalan-speaking lands until the beginning of the eighteenth century based on Valencian criteria for linguistic modernization (Ferrando Francés 2018: 224–225). While we witness certain divergences starting in the middle of the seventeenth century, the prestige of the Valencian variety would remain until the first half of the nineteenth century. This prestige led to the possible use of the term *valencià* or *llengua valenciana* to refer to the common language of the *nació catalana* (see Ferrando Francés 2018: 228–230). In Castile we find examples of the use of *lengua valenciana* or *valenciano* as the common language of the Catalan-speaking lands: Ferrando Francés mentions, for example, Cervantes's *The Travails of Persiles and Segismunda* (*Los trabajos de Persiles y Segismunda*) (1617).[15] Bartolomé Jiménez Patón indicates in *Spanish Eloquence in Art* (*Elocuencia española en arte*) (1604) that "in Spain there are five other [dialects], which are Valencian, Asturian, Galician, and Portuguese, which derive from our first language and main language: the fifth and original Spanish language, which is different from Basque" ([1604] 2006: 283; my translation). Naming the common language "Valencian" questioned the legitimacy of the Principality of Catalonia as the origin and location of the prestige variety of the language of the Catalan nation, which Despuig meant to defend.

---

13   For the political implications of this change of meaning, see Lledó-Guillem (2018: 112-167).

14   According to Joan Coromines, Catalan was the most unified Romance Language in the Middle Ages in the written mode (1971: 276-277).

15   "According to Cervantes, the Valencian language is "such a gracious language, and so sweet and pleasant that only Portuguese can compete with it" (Quoted in Ferrando Francés 2018: 228-229). My translation.

Despuig's judgement of the Valencian, Balearic, and Sardinian varieties according to their degree of resemblance to the language of the Principality of Catalonia, implied an ideological criterion of origin for the appraisal of language varieties, i.e., the original is the purest or best. This stance opposed the imperial topos "linked to the idea that everything on earth goes through a sequence of stages, from beginning to end, or from childhood to an old age" (Burke 2004: 22). This topos appears in Antonio de Nebrija's *Grammar of the Spanish Language* (*Gramática de la lengua castellana*) (1492): "language was always a companion to empire. Thus, the former followed the latter in such a way that they started, grew, and thrived together, but they also declined together" (Nebrija [1492]1980: 97; my translation). We find another example in Bernardo de Aldrete's *On the origin and beginning of the Castilian or Romance language* (*Del origen y principio de la lengua castellana ó romance*) (1606): "languages are like empires. Once they reach the peak, they end up falling and they never recover" ([1606]1975: 185; my translation). Despuig is not referring to the value of the language as a whole as in Nebrija and Aldrete. His judgement depends on the variety. Lívio complains about Castilian taking over Catalan in certain areas of the Principality of Catalonia: "I do condemn and denounce its everyday use amongst ourselves, because that could lead to our language being gradually uprooted from our land, and that would make it look as if we'd been conquered by the Castilians" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 48). However, there is never a direct cause-effect relationship between the loss of territory and the value of the language. There is simply a language substitution. In the Balearic Islands there is no problem whatsoever but in Sardinia, and, especially in the Kingdom of Valencia, the original essence of the language has been 'corrupted' by contact with other languages. Consequently, the value of the different varieties will depend upon the degree of proximity to the language of the original territory: the Principality of Catalonia. There is no process of birth, growth, prosperity, and decay because the highest degree of perfection is already in the origin, which is Catalonia. This idea is closer to Neoplatonism and the different degrees of proximity to the perfect One, which would be the origin. A Neoplatonic interpretation would match the concept of a *nació catalana* and a Catalan Empire led by the territory where the language originated and where its real essence is maintained: the Principality of Catalonia. To support this stance, Despuig describes the Kingdom of Valencia as the colonial other.

3 THE CATALAN VARIETY OF THE VALENCIAN COLONIAL OTHER: THE TRUE CATALAN KINGS

Don Pedro's comments can be interpreted as a colonial construction of the Valencian other by the Catalans from the Principality of Catalonia. Valencians are represented as colonial subjects who were first "conquered" by the Catalans and now are in the process of being "conquered" again by Castile in a vertical way, i.e., by erasing the previous linguistic identities. Valencians are "others," with a lower-case letter, because they are dependent, colonized, and they construct their own identity and their vision of the world by gazing at the imperial "Other," with a capital letter (Ashcroft *et al.* 2007b: 155–156). In the Valencian case, there have been two imperial Others: first Catalonia and later Castile

(see Fuss 1994 and Boons-Grafé 1992). The process of being colonized by the Castilians can be compared to a manuscript in which the original text, the Catalan dominion, has been erased and a new text, the Castilian one, has been written. Yet the erased text can be recovered in the form of a palimpsest by highlighting the memory of the medieval Catalan Empire. The memory remains among the Catalans of the Principality of Catalonia, who present the Valencian other as a historical superposition of two colonial influences— the Catalan and the Castilian—which Johannessen (2012: 873) metaphorically refers to as an excavation site.[16] We observe this phenomenon in four linguistic aspects of the text:

3.1 The Castilian name of the Valencian knight: don Pedro

At the beginning of Despuig's *Colloquy*, Fàbio recognizes the Valencian don Pedro in two stages. Before identifying him, Fàbio realizes that the man in the distance is Valencian: "I could tell by the way he holds himself and by his lively demeanour that he was a Valencian, but I didn't realise it was Don Pedro" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 45). Thus, don Pedro is described as the Valencian other, even though Fàbio and Lívio, who are both Catalans from Tortosa, treat him as a close friend. One of the most striking features of the Valencian other is his name: don Pedro. This is a Castilianized name that corresponds to the Catalan *En Pere*, which would have been the expected proper name in a dialogue between Catalan speakers. The Castilian name connotes the Valencian identity as the colonized other in the metaphorical sense of a manuscript that offers the possibility to read the previous texts that were written on it. Although don Pedro speaks in Catalan with Fábio and Lívio, his name suggests the process of Castilianization of the Kingdom of Valencia. On the one hand, the use of "don", equivalent to "Mr." or even "lord," highlights this Castilianization since, although it could be interpreted as a sign of nobility, the lack of a similar form of address for Lívio, who is a Catalan noble, emphasizes the otherness of don Pedro as a character who gazes at the imperial Castilian Other to construct his identity. This signifier of nobility in don Pedro's name may be interpreted as a sign of arrogance and corresponds to the negative characterization of Castilians provided by Lívio in the second dialogue: "they believe that everything they have is the best, and that what other people have is the worst. It's as if they'd dropped from heaven, and the rest of mankind had crawled out of the mud" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 70). On the other hand, the negative connotations of using *Pedro* instead of *Pere* are strikingly highlighted by the name that don Pedro himself uses to refer to Tomás de Villanueva: *Tomàs de Vilanova* (Duran 1981: 78),[17] a Castilian prelate who was archbishop of Valencia from 1545 to 1555. It could be argued that using a Castilian name for a Valencian knight who speaks Catalan and a Catalan name for a Castilian archbishop creates a significant contrast that underlines the Castilian colonization of the Valencian other. Nonetheless, this contrast also proves that don Pedro's Valencian

---

16 "Imperial discourse brings the colonized space 'into being', the subsequent rewritings and overwritings, the imaging of the place in the consciousness of its occupants, all of which constitute the contemporary place observed by the subject and contested among them" (Ashcroft et al. 2007: 159).

17 "DON PEDRO: Maybe he's following the example of our archbishop, Tomàs de Vilanova, who died not very long ago" (Despuig 1557/2014: 60).

identity is not simply a substitution of a Catalan colonization with a Castilian one. The Catalan colonial influence on don Pedro is still there and can be retrieved as though it were a palimpsest, i.e., a text or identity that has been erased but can be recovered. The use of a Catalanized name, *Tomàs de Vilanova*, to refer to the Castilian Tomás de Villanueva, shows that don Pedro, despite the obvious Castilian influence that we observe in his name, can still rewrite his own Valencian identity by gazing at and behaving as the Catalan Other. Had Lívio or Fàbio, the characters from the Principality of Catalonia, used a Catalan version of the Castilian archbishop's name, the result would have been completely different because they would not have underlined the possibility of don Pedro's remembering or recovering his colonial Catalan past. It is obvious that the Catalan influence on don Pedro's identity as a Valencian other is still there.

3.2 The anonymity of the Catalan language spoken by the kings of the House of Barcelona

Don Pedro expresses his belief that Catalan is not a prestigious language. When Lívio indicates that in Sardinia "Catalan is the language of prestige," don Pedro responds: "Actually, I don't see why. After all, Catalan isn't held in such great esteem. In fact, Aragonese is thought to be superior, because it's closer to Castilian." The Valencian knight's surprise when he is told that Catalan is the language of prestige in Sardinia suggests that he believes that Catalan is mainly a marker of identity. In other words, for him Catalan is an authentic language because it shows a more intimate relationship between the language and the community that it represents (Woolard 2007: 136). Therefore, Catalan would not be a good candidate to become an anonymous language, i.e., the language of no one in particular and the language of everyone at the same time (Woolard 2007: 136). Castilian is valued as an effective and practical language of communication rather than a special marker of identity, bestowing it more potential as a language of anonymity. However, Lívio tells don Pedro that not only is Catalan prestigious in Sardinia now, but in the "olden days" it was considered far superior and more prestigious than Aragonese, as it was the language used by the kings of "the male line of the counts of Barcelona." (Despuig [1557] 2014: 47). Lívio mentions that even the last king of the House of Barcelona, King Martin the Humane (r. 1396–1410), spoke Catalan. The text implies that there is a linguistic division between the two main royal dynasties of the Crown of Aragon: the House of Barcelona-Aragon and the Trastámara Dynasty. The first dynasty reigned from Alfonso I the Chaste (r. 1164–1196) to Martin the Humane (r. 1396–1410). After a two-year interregnum (1410–1412), with the Compromise of Caspe (1412), the Castilian Trastámara Dynasty was established in the Crown of Aragon from Ferdinand I (r. 1412–1416) to Ferdinand II (r. 1479–1516). From Despuig's reference to Martin the Humane it can be inferred that the House of Barcelona-Aragon considered Catalan to be the royal and familiar language. The text does not indicate that he was the last king to speak Catalan, but it does state that he was the last monarch of the House of Barcelona, which has important connotations. In fact, while Catalan was a royal language and it was cultivated during the reign of the Trastámara Dynasty, the familiar language of the monarchs was Castilian.

Moreover, Lívio highlights the fact that King Peter the Ceremonious (r. 1336–1387) wrote a chronicle in Catalan describing the feats of his predecessors: "he penned [the chronicle] with his own hand" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 47). Thus, the Catalan language, both spoken and written, is associated with the royal dynasty of the House of Barcelona-Aragon, with Peter the Ceremonious' chronicle as the peak of this cultivation of the Catalan language. The implications of the centrality of Peter the Ceremonious from a linguistic point of view lie in the political power of this monarch. First, Catalan becomes the prestigious language of several kings. This was not the case when Despuig writes his *Colloquy*, since after the dynastic union of the Crown of Castile and the Crown of Aragon in 1479, the Court had moved to Castile and the Castilian language had become dominant in the royal environment. However, during Peter the Ceremonious' reign, Catalan was indeed a royal language that was also anonymous because it had spread to different territories and had embraced different identities. It can be argued that Peter the Ceremonious had been the epitome of imperial power as far as the House of Barcelona-Aragon is concerned. Having conquered the Kingdoms of Valencia and Majorca, King James I (r. 1213–1276) had divided his dominions between his two sons: James II of Majorca (r. 1276–1286) received the Kingdom of Majorca. James I's elder son, Peter the Great (r. 1276–1285), received the Hispanic territories of the Crown of Aragon. During his reign, Peter the Great occupied Sicily in 1282 and defeated the French in 1285. Peter the Ceremonious (r. 1336–1387), whom Lívio mentions, was able to add the Kingdom of Majorca to the Crown of Aragon (1343–1344). Moreover, as Nadal and Prats indicate, Peter the Ceremonious reigned during a period of political balance in Europe and the Mediterranean due to the One Hundred year's War between England and France, and the crisis of the Papacy. The monarch created a powerful Mediterranean confederation (1982: 425), in which he was even able to control the Duchies of Athens and Neopatras in the eastern Mediterranean.

Highlighting the importance of Peter the Ceremonious with regards to royal writing in Catalan, was also related to his reform of the Royal Chancellery, the *Cancelleria reial.* His Palatine Ordinances (1344) institutionalized the figure of the protonotary, who would be in charge of the formal correctness of the three languages used in the Chancellery: Catalan, Aragonese, and Latin. As a result, a Catalan *koiné* was created, highly influenced by Latin and the *sermo urbanus* of Barcelona, although it did not coincide with any spoken variety (Ferrando Francés 2018: 220–221).[18] During the House of Barcelona Dynasty and, particularly, during the reign of Peter the Ceremonious, the Principality of Catalonia was the political, economic, and cultural center of the Crown of Aragon (Ferrando Francés and Nicolás Amorós 2011: 95). It was thus quite easy to associate the exaltation of the House of Barcelona-Aragon with the praise of the Principality of Catalonia, the center of an imperial project of the Crown of Aragon in the fourteenth century. Certainly, the kings of the Trastámara Dynasty such as Alfonso the Magnanimous (r. 1416–1458), John II (r. 1458–1479), and Ferdinand II (r. 1479–1516) were also exalted, but never from a linguistic point of view and always emphasizing the positive qualities of the Principality of Catalonia. For example, the conquest of Naples

18   See note 14.

carried out by Alfonso the Magnanimous is described in the second dialogue as being possible due to the courage of the Catalans (Despuig [1557] 2014: 77–78). We must bear in mind that during the Trastámara Dynasty, the economic, political, cultural, and linguistic power of the Kingdom of Valencia increased dramatically and, especially after the Catalan Civil War, it became the center of the Crown of Aragon and the Catalan-speaking lands. Consequently, defending the linguistic anonymity and prestige of the Catalan language during the Dynasty of the House of Barcelona-Aragon implied placing the Principality of Catalonia as the true center of the Catalan nation versus the Castilianized Valencian other.

3.3 The Castilian influence on the Catalan variety of the Kingdom of Valencia

Don Pedro himself acknowledges that the Catalan spoken in Valencia has been "badly affected by the fact that we are so close to Castile" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 46). He refers to a process of linguistic change rather than the linguistic substitution mentioned by Lívio, who appears concerned that the everyday use of Castilian could lead to the language "being gradually uprooted from our land, and that would make it look as if we'd been conquered by the Castilians" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 48). Lívio denounces the use of Spanish among the Catalan nobles: "I do condemn and denounce its everyday use [of Castilian] *amongst ourselves*, because that could lead to our language being gradually uprooted from our land (*pàtria*)" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 48, emphasis mine). While this process had been more extreme among the Valencian nobility in the sixteenth century (see Cahner 1980), don Pedro's comment refers to the transformation of the Catalan language due to Castilian influence. Before Despuig's testimony, we find two texts that mention a differentiated Valencian variety: in chapter XVIII of his *Chronicle* (ca. 1328), Ramon Muntaner explains how En Conrado Lansa and Roger de Luria "came very young to Catalonia and, in every place in Catalonia and in the Kingdom of Valencia they acquired what was best and most beautiful in the language" (ca. [1328] 2000: 39–40). This is perhaps a description of what nowadays is known as dialectal leveling, which implies that the Catalan of the region of Valencia was already differentiated (see Lledó-Guillem 2018: 62–63). Another explicit reference to the Valencian variety, in which it is placed in a superior position, appears in Francesc Eiximenis' *Regiment of the Republic* (*Regiment de la Cosa Pública*) (1383) when he describes the Valencian region: "the thirty-second beauty of this land is that its language is made out of the different languages around. It has taken the best of each one and it has discarded the roughest and most vulgar words and has taken the best ones" (1383/1972: 19, my translation). As this text is known in an incunabulum printed in Valencia in 1499 (Ferrando Francés 1988: 411), this exaltation of the Valencian variety is a legitimation at the end of the fifteenth century, and not a fourteenth-century stance (Rafanell 2000: 41–42). Yet this testimony contrasts with don Pedro's negative view of language contact. Don Pedro's comment is brief and it may respond to two different phenomena: first, the existence of a variety in the Kingdom of Valencia that differed from the popular and formal oral register of Barcelona, but not very different from the Catalan spoken in Tortosa, as is still the case

nowadays.[19] The Catalan variety spoken in Valencia had been the result of the dominant migration of Catalan-speakers from the Western part of Catalonia, with important influences, especially in vocabulary, from the Aragonese language (Ferrando Francés/ Nicolás Amorós 2011: 130–132, 219; Ferrando Francés 1989). The *sermo urbanus* of Valencia became the prestige variety during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Catalan-speaking lands (Ferrando Francés 2018: 224–234). However, *Apitxat*, another subvariety of Catalan, had been developing in the central area of the Kingdom of Valencia, which was the result of mass migratory flows from Castile and Aragon in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The devoicing of the sibilants [z] and [dʒ] became a feature of the variety of Catalan "along the Palància, Túria, and Xúquer Basins" (Rasico 1989: 470) in a narrow strip with the city of Valencia as the center (1989: 461),[20] the outcome of dialectal leveling. However, this subvariety was not prestigious either in the city or in the Kingdom when Despuig writes his *Colloquy.* As Rafanell explains, its prestige nonetheless increased in Valencia in the seventeenth century and became fashionable in the writing of the eighteenth century (2000: 37).

3.4 Literature plays no significant role in the value of a language: erasing fifteenth-century Valencian literature

Focusing on the House of Barcelona-Aragon Dynasty, with the corresponding political and linguistic centrality of the Principality of Catalonia, implied erasing the literary achievements in Catalan of the Kingdom of Valencia during the Trastámara Dynasty. Literature as a criterion to improve and value a language is not important in the *Colloquy*. The only exception appears when Lívio mentions King Peter the Ceremonious and his chronicle (Despuig [1557] 2014: 47–48). This reference mainly supports the idea of Catalan being a courtly and prestigious language as we saw above. Several writers are in fact mentioned: the Valencian authors Ausiàs March (1400–1459) and Saint Vincent Ferrer (1350–1419) appear in the first dialogue (Despuig [1557] 2014: 51 and 55). Curiously, Iñigo López de Mendoza, Marquis of Santillana, (1398–1458), a Castilian poet, is the author who is mentioned the most: three times ([1557] 2014: 62, 69, and 148). However, the word "poet" is only applied to Ausiàs March, and Lívio calls him "the excellent Catalan philosopher and poet." It could be argued that the word "Catalan" may refer to the language used in his poetry, as he is considered to be the first poet from the Catalan-speaking lands to use Catalan instead of Occitan to write lyric poetry (see Lledó-Guillem 2018: 109–167). Yet avoiding the demonym "Valencian" to refer to one of the most famous European poets of the fifteenth century and erasing the names of other Valencian literary authors of the fifteenth century such as Joanot Martorell, Sor Isabel de Villena, Joan Roiç de Corella, among others, was consistent with the description of the Valencian other. Highlighting the quality of the fifteenth-century Valencian authors who wrote in Catalan could question the central role of the

---

19   For a very good study of current Catalan dialectology, with very useful historical additions, see Mar Massanell (2020) and Joan Veny and Mar Massanell (2015).

20   See Lledó-Guillem 2018: 171-176. In *Apitxat* Valencian *casa* (house) would be pronounced ['kasa] instead of ['kaza]; *junts* (together) would be pronounced as [tʃuɲts] instead of [dʒuɲts] or [ʒuɲts].

Principality of Catalonia with regards to the Catalan language and the Catalan nation. Moreover, the quotation attributed to the Valencian Saint Vincent Ferrer is written in Latin (see Despuig ([1557] 2011: 51).

The three authors, including the Marquis of Santillana, are mentioned because of their didactic messages, not because they are models for improving or elevating the language. In this regard, literature does not play the same role as in, for example, Valdés, Speroni, or Du Bellay's works written in the first half of the sixteenth centuries. For these latter three authors, literature plays a fundamental role in the value of a language. Indeed, the cultural context was different and the Catalan language did not have the royal or ecclesiastical support that the French language had, for example (Chabrolle-Cerretini and Iglésias 2021: 57). Defending Catalan by encouraging its literary cultivation was not the main objective of the *Colloquy*. The work intended to emphasize the role of the Catalan nation in the Spanish Empire and demand respect for the memory of a former powerful Catalan-Aragonese Empire. Yet that empire could only be remembered with respect and, consequently, the Catalan language had a grim future, according to Fábio: "I reckon there isn't much that can be done about it" (Despuig [1557] 2014: 48), simply because language was mainly associated with political power. Fortunately, time would demonstrate that Catalan would remain strong in the future.

4 CONCLUSION

While Cristòfol Despuig did not see his *Colloquy* published in his lifetime and while his book did not focus exclusively on the Catalan language, there is no doubt that his work was very significant from the point of view of linguistic ideology. His interpretation of linguistic difference naturalized the superiority of the Catalan linguistic variety used in Catalonia, and in turn stressed the leading role of the Principality of Catalonia in the former Catalan-Aragonese Empire at the expense of the Kingdom of Valencia. The defense and construction of the memory of this empire implied an underlying desire to recover it (see Rubiés 1995–1996), with language playing an important role in this desire. However, Despuig's book posed questions that went beyond the Catalan-speaking context. For example, the lack of importance of literature in Despuig's work invites us to adopt a comparative approach. The role that literature could play in the recovery, maintenance, or construction of an empire by means of language, was a common topic in Early Modern Europe. What was more important in determining the value of a language: the political power that this language represented or its literary achievements? Was there a real dichotomy between the two criteria (see Lledó-Guillem 2008)? Moreover, with the expansion of the printing press, was there any hope for those languages, such as Catalan, that could not compete on equal terms according to the laws of the market (see Anderson 1983)? In the process of imagining communities in Renaissance Europe, Despuig constitutes an example of resistance, but were there similar examples in Europe at that time, and if so how did the Catalan situation compare to other 'minoritized' languages? This is why Despuig's *Colloquy* should be studied alongside other works that explicitly focused on the defense of different languages in the sixteenth century.

References

Primary Sources

ALDRETE, Bernardo José de ([1606] 1975) *Del origen y principio de la lengua castellana ò romance que oi se usa en España*, Vol. I. Edited by Lidio Nieto Jiménez. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.

DESPUIG, Cristòfol ([1557] 1877) *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa fets per mossèn Cristòfol Despuig*. Edited by Fidel Fita. Barcelona: Imprenta de la Renaixença.

DESPUIG, Cristòfol ([1557] 2014) *Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa*. Edited by Eric Querol/Josep Solervicens, transl. Henry Ettinghausen. Barcelona/Woodbridge: Barcino/Tamesis.

EIXIMENIS, Francesc ([1383] 1972) *Regiment de la Cosa Pública*. Edited by Manuel Sanchis Guarner. València: Societat Bibliogràfica Valenciana.

MUNTANER, Ramon (ca. [1328] 2000) *Chronicle*. Transl. Lady Goodenough. Cambridge/Ontario: In parentheses. http://www.yorku.ca/inpar/muntaner_goodenough. pdf [accessed on 28 February 2022].

NEBRIJA, Antonio de ([1492] 1980) *Gramática de la lengua castellana*. Edited by Antonio Quilis. Madrid: Editora Nacional.

Secondary sources

ANDERSON, Benedict (1983). *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.

ASHCROFT, Bill *et al.* (eds) (²2007a) *Post-Colonial Studies*. London/New York: Routledge.

ASHCROFT, Bill *et al.* (²2007b) "Other." In: Bill Ashcroft *et al.* (eds), 154–156.

ASHCROFT, Bill (²2007c) "Palimpsest." In: Bill Ashcroft *et al.* (eds), 158–160.

BOONS-GRAFÉ, M.-C. (1992) "Other/other." Transl. Margaret Whitford. In: Elizabeth Wright (ed.), *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary*. Oxford: Blackwell, 296–299.

BURKE, Peter (2004) *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CAHNER, Max (1980) "Llengua i societat en el pas del segle XV al XVI. Contribució a l'estudi de la penetració del castellà als Països Catalans." In: J. Bruguera/J. Massot i Muntaner (eds), *Actes del cinquè col·loqui internacional de llengua i literatura catalanes. Andorra, 1–6 d'octubre de 1979*. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 183–255.

CHABROLLE-CERRETINI, Anne-Marie, and Narcís IGLÉSIAS (2021) "Una Europa de les llengües al Renaixement." In: Anne-Marie Chabrolle-Cerretini and Narcís Iglésias (eds), Narcís Iglésias (transl), *La defensa i il·lustració de la llengua francesa*, by Joachim Du Bellay. València: Afers, 7–66.

COLON, Germà (1978) *La llengua catalana en els seus textos*. Barcelona: Curial, 39–59.

COROMINES, Joan (1971) *Lleures i converses d'un filòleg*. Barcelona: Club Editor.

DANDELET, Thomas James (2014) *The Renaissance of Empire in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DURAN, Eulàlia (1981) "Introducció." In: Cristòfor Despuig, *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* [1557]. Edited by Eulàlia Duran. Barcelona: Curial, 9–49.

DURAN, Eulàlia (2004) *Estudis sobre la cultura catalana al Renaixement*. València: Eliseu Climent, 109–126.

ELLIOTT, John Huxtable (1990) *Imperial Spain: 1469–1716*. London: Penguin.

ELLIOTT, John Huxtable (1992) "A Europe of Composite Monarchies." *Past & Present* 137, 48–71.

FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni (1980) *Consciència idiomàtica i nacional dels valencians*. València: Universitat de València, Institut de Ciències de l'Educació, Institut de Filologia Valenciana.

FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni (1988) "Llengua i literatura" In: Ernest Belenguer (ed.), *Història del País Valencià*. Vol. II. Barcelona: Edicions 62, 379–424.

FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni (1989) "La formació històrica del valencià." In: *Id.* (ed.), *Segon Congrés Internacional de la Llengua Catalana (1986)*. València: Universitat de València, 399–428.

FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni (2018) *Fabra, Moll i Sanchis Guarner. La construcció d'una llengua moderna de cultura des de la diversitat*. València: Universitat de València.

FERRANDO FRANCÉS, Antoni/Miquel NICOLÁS AMORÓS (2011) *Història de la llengua catalana.* [Nova edició revisada i ampliada.] Barcelona: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya.

FUSS, D. (1994) "Interior Colonies: Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Identification." *Diacritics* 24/2–3, 20–41.

GAL, Susan/Judith T. IRVINE (2019) *Signs of Difference. Language and Ideology in Social Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

GONZÁLEZ, JOAN ANTONI (2012) "La transmissió de *Los col·loquis de la insigne Ciutat de Tortosa*, de Cristòfol Despuig, i altres notes sobre l'obra." *Recerca* 14, 315–338.

JIMÉNEZ PATÓN, Bartolomé ([1604] 2006) "Elocuencia española en arte." In: Encarnación García Dini (ed.), *Antología en defensa de la lengua y la literatura españolas*. Madrid: Cátedra, 279–85.

JOHANNESSEN, Lene M. (2012) "Palympsest and hybridity in postcolonial writing." In: Ato Quayson (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Postcolonial Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 869–902.

JOSEPH, John (2006) *Language and Politics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

LLEDÓ-GUILLEM, Vicente (2008) *Literatura o imperio: La construcción de las lenguas castellana y catalana en la España renacentista*. Newark, Del.: Juan de la Cuesta.

LLEDÓ-GUILLEM, Vicente (2018) *The Making of Catalan Linguistic Identity in Medieval and Early Modern Times*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

MAS i FORNERS, Antoni (2020) *Llengua, terra. pàtria i nació. L'evolució de la consciencia lingüística i etnocultural entre els cristians de l'illa de Mallorca (segles XIV-XVII)*. Palma de Mallorca: Documenta Balear.

MASSANELL, Mar (2020) "Variation and Varieties." In: Joan A. Argenter/Jens Lüdtke (eds), *Manual of Catalan Linguistics*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 371–396.

NADAL, Josep M./Modest PRATS (1982) *Història de la llengua catalana. Volum 1. Dels orígens al segle XV*. Barcelona: Edicions 62.

QUEROL, Enric/Josep SOLERVICENS (2011) "Introducció." In: Cristòfor Despuig, *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* [1557]. Edited by Enric Querol/Josep Solervicens. Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 5–26.

QUEROL, Enric/Josep SOLERVICENS (2014) "Introduction." In: Cristòfor Despuig, *Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa* [1557]. Edited by Enric Querol/Josep Solervicens, transl. Henry Ettinghausen. Barcelona/Woodbridge: Barcino/Tamesis, 7–25.

RAFANELL, August (2000) *El català modern. Set estudis d'història cultural*. Barcelona: Empúries.

RASICO, Philip D. (1989) "The formation of Valencian *Apitxat*." *Hispanic Review* 57/4, 457–475.

RUBIÉS, Joan-Pau (1995–1996) "The Idea of Empire in the Catalan Tradition from Ramon Muntaner to Enric Prat de la Riba." *Journal of Hispanic Research* 4, 229–262.

RUBIÉS, Joan-Pau (1999) "La qüestió imperial en el pensament polític de la Catalunya moderna: història d'una absència." *Manuscrits* 17, 207–235.

SANCHIS GUARNER, Manuel (1980) "A tall de Pròleg. La consciència comunitària i el nom gentilici". In: Antoni Ferrando Francés*, Consciència idiomàtica i nacional dels valencians*. València: Universitat de València, Institut de Ciències de l'Educació, Institut de Filologia Valenciana, v-xvii.

VENY, Joan, and Mar MASSANELL (2015) *Dialectologia catalana. Aproximació pràctica als parlars catalans*. Barcelona/Alacant/València: Universitat de Barcelona/Universitat d'Alacant/Universitat de València.

WOOLARD, Kathryn (2007) "La autoridad lingüística del español y las ideologías de la autenticidad y el anonimato." In: José Del Valle (ed.), *La lengua, ¿patria común? Ideas e ideologías del español*. Madrid/Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 129–142.

Abstract

DEFENDING THE CATALAN LANGUAGE: CRISTÒFOL DESPUIG AND THE DESCRIPTION OF THE VALENCIAN OTHER

This study focuses on the work *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* [*Dialogues. A Catalan Renaissance Colloquy Set in the City of Tortosa*] by the Catalan knight Cristòfol Despuig. While it was written around 1557, it was not published until 1877. My analysis demonstrates that the issue of language is raised in the *Dialogues* to defend the memory of the Catalan-Aragonese Empire in which the Principality of Catalonia has always been the dominant part, especially in the Catalan-speaking lands. The prestigious position of the Principality of Catalonia is supported by an explicit hierarchy of the varieties of the Catalan language in which the Catalan used in the Principality of Catalonia is considered superior. This explicit hierarchy implies two important ideological aspects: first, the idea of origin as the main criterion to value the different varieties of the language. Second, the description of the Valencian other as a palimpsest, since while Valencians were colonized first by Catalans and then by Castilians, the Catalan colonial presence can still be recovered. The otherness of the Valencian identity is represented by four linguistic aspects of the text: first, the Castilian name of the Valencian character: don Pedro. Second, don Pedro's lack of awareness that Catalan was a courtly language. Third, don Pedro's acknowledgement that the Catalan spoken in the Kingdom of Valencia has been contaminated by its contact with Castilian. Finally, the erasure of the literary achievements in Catalan in the Kingdom of Valencia during the reign of the Castilian Trastámara Dynasty in the Crown of Aragon (1412–1516). This erasure supports the superiority of the House of Barcelona-Aragon over the Trastámara Dynasty. Moreover, it supports a clear association between language and political power in which literature does not play an important role in the value of a language.

Keywords: Cristòfol Despuig, *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa*, Catalan, Principality of Catalonia, Kingdom of Valencia, language ideology, Castilian, Spanish Empire, Catalan dialectology, colonialism, nationalism

Povzetek

OBRAMBA KATALONSKEGA JEZIKA: CRISTÒFOL DESPUIG IN OPIS VALENCIJSKE DRUGOSTI

Razprava se osredotoča na delo *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* katalonskega viteza Cristòfola Despuiga. Čeprav je bilo napisano okoli leta 1557, je izšlo šele leta 1877. Pričujoča analiza kaže, da se jezikovno vprašanje v tem delu pojavi v obrambo spomina Katalonsko-aragonskega cesarstva, v katerem je bila Katalonija zmeraj občutena kot glavni del, predvsem na katalonsko govorečih območjih. Prestižni položaj Katalonske kneževine potrjuje tudi izrecna hierarhija različic katalonskega jezika,

med katerimi katalonščina, ki se uporablja v Katalonski kneževini, velja za višjo. Ta izrecna hierarhija je odraz dveh pomembnih ideoloških vidikov – najprej predstave o izvoru kot najvažnejšem kriteriju za vrednotenje različnih jezikovnih variant. Drugič, hierarhija je povezana tudi s prikazom valencijščine, ki je drugačna od katalonščine, kot palimpsesta, kajti čeprav so Valencijance kolonizirali najprej Katalonci in nato Kastiljci, se je do katalonske kolonialne prisotnosti še mogoče dokopati. Drugačnost valencijske identitete predstavljajo štiri jezikovne značilnosti omenjenega besedila, in sicer: kastiljsko ime "don Pedro" valencijskega junaka; don Pedrovo nezavedanje o tem, da je bila katalonščina dvorni jezik; don Pedrovo priznanje, da je katalonščina, ki se je govori v valencijski kraljevini, kontaminirana zaradi stika s kastiljščino; izbris literarnih dosežkov v katalonščini v Valencijski kraljevini med vladavino kastiljske dinastije Trastámara znotraj Aragonske krone (1412–1516). Ta izbris kaže na superior-nost barcelonsko-aragonske vladarske hiše v odnosu do dinastije Trastámara, pa tudi na jasno povezanost med jezikom in politično močjo, kjer književnost nima velike vloge pri pripisovanju vrednosti danemu jeziku.

Ključne besede: Cristòfol Despuig, *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa*, katalonščina, Kneževina Katalonija, Kraljevina Valencija, jezikovna ideologija, kasti-ljščina, špansko cesarstvo, katalonska dialektologija, kolonializem, nacionalizem

Antonella Amatuzzi
University of Turin
antonella.amatuzzi@unito.it

LE STATUT POLITIQUE, SOCIAL ET CULTUREL DES LANGUES VERNACULAIRES DANS LE DUCHÉ DE SAVOIE AUX XVI ET XVII SIÈCLES

1 INTRODUCTION

Depuis la formation des langues romanes et leur progressive diffusion au détriment du latin dans les pratiques langagières de la vie quotidienne, le panorama linguistique des territoires sous le contrôle de la Maison de Savoie s'avère riche et articulé, avec la coprésence d'idiomes appartenant à des aires différentes.

La rareté de sources documentaires et de témoignages fiables ne permet pas, pour certains de ces idiomes, de reconstruire dans les détails les phénomènes liés au changement et à leur évolution interne, au moins pour ce qui est des premières phases de leur histoire. Il est néanmoins possible de réfléchir sur leur statut, pour évaluer comment des facteurs externes, de nature diverse, en agissant dans une synergie complexe, ont impacté sur leur développement géographique et leur établissement fonctionnel.

Étant donné que, comme l'a montré Milroy (1998 : 41), « all changes diffuse socially, and it is therefore argued that we need to take into account social factors in addition to intralinguistic factors in order to come close to explanations », l'objectif de ce travail est de s'interroger sur la corrélation entre les processus politiques et sociaux à l'œuvre dans les États de Savoie entre le XVIe et le XVIIe siècle et les destinées divergentes des langues en présence dans le duché en termes de propagation et distribution et même, sur un plan plus intralinguistique, d'attitude face à la variation et au respect de la norme.

Je dresserai d'abord un bref tableau d'ensemble de la mosaïque linguistique bigarrée dans laquelle le duché était morcelé ; ensuite j'arrêterai mon regard sur le côté français des Alpes et j'identifierai successivement des éléments susceptibles d'avoir favorisé ou, au contraire, ralenti l'enracinement et l'expansion des langues dans ces territoires : décisions politiques, événements historiques, conditions sociales et géographiques.

En prenant en compte parallèlement et de manière comparative le français et le francoprovençal, on observera en effet qu'ils s'acheminent vers des directions opposées : le premier s'implante et s'impose rapidement en tant que langue de prestige, alors que l'autre est peu à peu confiné à la sphère de la vie de famille et des activités de tous les jours. Les questions qui guideront ma réflexion sont les suivantes : comment la politique menée par les ducs a contribué à forger les comportements linguistiques de leurs sujets et à dessiner la physionomie linguistique des États qu'ils gouvernaient ? De quelle manière la Savoie a été touchée par l'affirmation que le français connut au XVIIe siècle, à l'échelle européenne, suite à l'hégémonie que la France avait atteint dans les domaines

politique, militaire, économique et culturel (Rey/Duval/Siouffi 2007 : 457–763) ? Peut-on déceler en Savoie des échos de l'action - linguistique aussi bien qu'idéologique - de la standardisation du français, qui visait à fixer le bon usage ? Autrement dit, le français parlé en Savoie respecte-t-il la norme parisienne ou presente-t-il des traits variationnels marqués ? Et encore : est-ce qu'on retrouve chez les auteurs savoyards un sentiment d'appartenance à une communauté ? Et si oui, dans quelle langue s'expriment-t-il ? Et enfin, la production littéraire savoyarde reflète-t-elle le fossé qui existait dans le duché entre la culture populaire et la culture savante ?

J'appuierai mon enquête sur des documents de plusieurs types (textes légaux, correspondance diplomatique, écrits littéraires, ouvrages pédagogiques) et je privilégierai une perspective large, qui tient compte du contexte historique et culturel et qui bénéficie des apports de disciplines telles que l'histoire de la langue, la (socio)linguistique historique, les études littéraires et la stylistique.

2 LES LANGUES HISTORIQUES DU DUCHÉ DE SAVOIE

À partir de 1003, avec Humbert aux Blanches Mains, noble d'origine burgonde originaire de la Maurienne, commence l'acquisition de la part de la Maison de Savoie d'un ensemble de possessions à cheval des Alpes cottiennes, grées et pennines qui, entre le XVIe et le XVIIe siècles, période d'expansion maximale, s'étalaient de Chambéry à Verceil et de Aoste à Nice (*cf.* carte) (Brondy/Demotz/Leguay 1984, Devos/Grosperrin 1985, Ferretti, 2019).

Depuis la délatinisation, dans les territoires du comté et puis du duché de Savoie situés sur le versant italien des Alpes on utilisait une multitude de dialectes gallo-italiques (Regis/Rivoira 2023), ayant une faible dignité littéraire, auxquels est venu se superposer, non sans difficulté, un italien (toscan) parlé de manière hésitante. Claudio Marazzini (1991 : 73–88), qui a étudié l'histoire linguistique du Piémont, fait état d'une "italianità difficile" à travers les siècles de cette région, qui tarde à se conformer à la langue de la péninsule et à l'accepter. En plus, aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles, le français était connu et pratiqué (essentiellement de manière circonscrite aux milieux liés à la cour et à la partie la plus érudite de la population), dans certaines zones du Piémont : la haute vallée de Suse et de la vallée du Chison, qui, à partir de la cession du Dauphiné à la France en 1349 et jusqu'à la Paix de Utrecht en 1713, étaient sous la juridiction française[1] ; les vallées vaudoises près de Pignerol, où le français était la langue de culture, à cause de l'adhésion de la population à la religion protestante dont la doctrine gravitait autour du pôle de Genève (Tron 2004 ; Chioni 2009 ; Rivoira 2015, 2019); le marquisat de Saluces, annexé à la couronne française de 1548 à 1601[2] ; Asti, ville et comté sous la seigneurie des Orléans de 1387 à 1529 (Gabotto 1899, Bordone 1998).

---

1 Elles faisaient partie d'une circonscription territoriale autonome et fédérée, appelée «République des Escartons». *Cf.* Vivier (2002).

2 Les marquis de Saluces acceptèrent la souveraineté de la France pour éviter le contrôle de la maison de Savoie. En 1601 Henri IV céda le marquisat à Charles Emmanuel en échange de la Bresse, du Bugey, du Valromey et du Pays de Gex. *Cf.* Mola (2001).
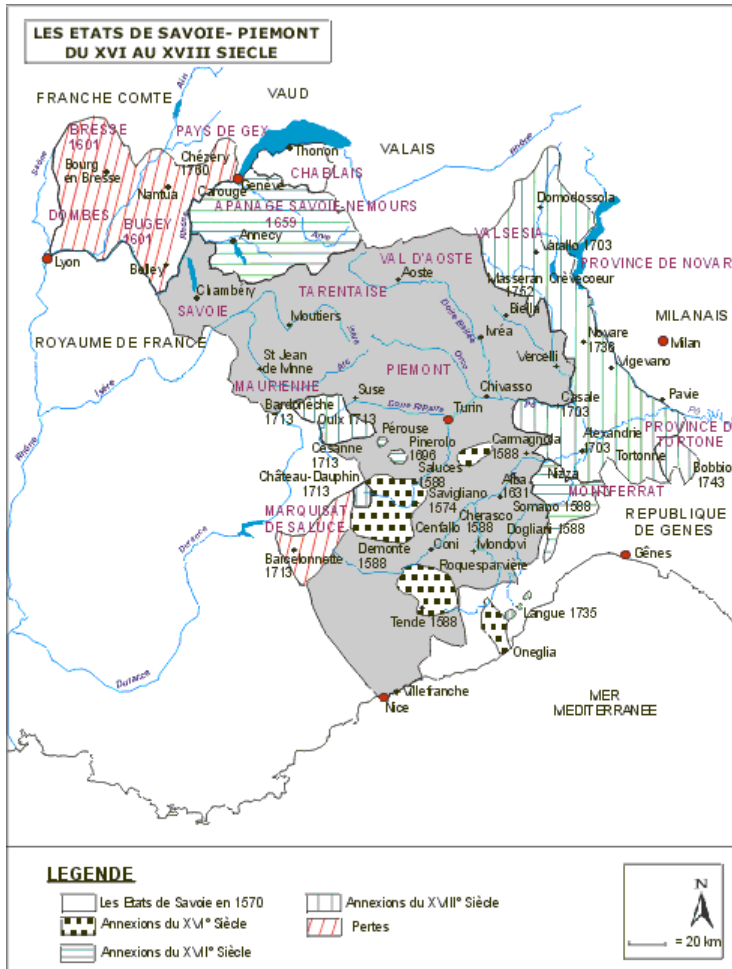
Figure 1. États de Savoie du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle (wikimedia commons: https://commons.
wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1146127)

De l'autre côté des Alpes, les idiomes historiques de la Savoie proprement dite et de
la Bresse (ainsi que de la Vallée d'Aoste, territoire 'intramontain'), étaient le français
et le francoprovençal. Cette langue, non encore classifiée comme ensemble de par-
lers ayant des caractéristiques spécifiques et distinctives[3], s'étendait (et s'étend encore

---

3   C'est seulement au XIXe siècle qu'il a été identifié comme groupe linguistique indépendant par le linguiste
     Ascoli (1878). Les premières attestations de cette langue galloromane remonteraient à des inscriptions
     monétaires mérovingiennes de la fin du VIᵉ siècle (Chambon, Greub 2000, pp.147-182).
     Ses spécificités concernent la conservation du A tonique libre du latin (*pratŭm* > *pra*) et le maintien de certaines
     voyelles atones finales (*porta* > *porta*), ce qui dénote une plus grande proximité avec le latin par rapport au français.
     Sur le francoprovençal, aujourd'hui répertorié dans l'atlas UNESCO des langues en danger dans le monde
     (https://en.wal.unesco.org/) et dans le rapport du parlement européen sur les langues menacées de disparition
     (https://archive.wikiwix.com/cache/index2.php?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eubg.eu%2Fupload%2Ffiles%

aujourd'hui) sur une aire allant approximativement de Fribourg en Suisse aux monts du Forez et du sud du Jura jusqu'à la Drôme française. C'est un espace fragmenté et hétérogène, qui n'a jamais coïncidé avec une entité politique unitaire et, faute d'une autorité centrale qui favorise la création d'une koiné commune et en encourage l'emploi, dès la moitié du XIIIe siècle, le latin est remplacé plutôt par le français, la langue des rois de France (Bichurina/Dunoyer 2021 : 21).

Comme a pu le remarquer Terreaux (1995 : 2) :

> C'est une évidence que la Savoie est de langue française. Elle l'est dès le départ. Le francoprovençal n'est pas parvenu à dominer en tant que langue de culture, faute d'une capitale politique. Lyon et Genève n'ont pas réussi au temps des Burgondes à prendre durablement la tête d'un état qui aurait développé une culture propre.

Globalement donc le duché présentait une situation délicate qu'on pourrait définir de double diglossie : deux langues nationales (l'italien au Piémont et le français en Savoie) qui s'affirment comme variétés 'hautes', en tant que codes réservés à des contextes officiels et formels, coexistaient avec les parlers locaux (gallo-italiques dans un cas et francoprovençaux dans l'autre), consacrés à la conversation ordinaire et informelle.

3 LES ACTES POLITIQUES : UNE OCCASION DE BILINGUISME PERDUE

Compte tenu de ce cadre linguistique, quelles furent les initiatives d'ordre politique mises en œuvre par les ducs et quels effets eurent-elles sur l'essor des langues du duché ?

En 1560, suite à la paix de Cateau-Cambrésis, qui lui restitua les territoires occupés par le roi de France François Ier en 1536, le duc Emmanuel Philibert se trouva dans la nécessité de réorganiser son État et le 11 février, avec l'Édit de Nice, dans le sillage de l'Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts promulguée par François I en 1539, établit officiellement que tous les documents judiciaires devaient être rédigés en langue vulgaire :

> Désirant […] que la justice soit administrée purement, et sincèrement, sans ce que soubs prétexte d'une obscurité de langage, le pauvre Peuple soit induement travaillé, avons par l'advis et délibération des gens de notre Conseil statué et ordonné, statuons et ordonnons, que tant en nôtre dit Sénat de Savoye, qu'en tous autres Tribunaux, et jurisdictions de nos pays, tous procès et procédures, enquestes, sentences et arrests en toutes matiéres civiles et criminelles, seront faites et prononcées en langage vulgaire, et le plus clairement que faire se pourra.[4]

2F669759254_Langues%2520en%2520EU.pdf%2Findex.html#federation=archive.wikiwix.com&tab=url), cf. entre autres, Gardette (1967), Schüle (1978), Stich (1998), Tuaillon (1972, 2001 et 2007), Bert, Martin (2013), Kristol (2016) et Bichurina, Dunoyer (2021).

4   *Édit contenant la confirmation de l'érection du Sénat, Président, Sénateurs et membres icelluy*. In : Duboin, (1826-1868), t. III, v. 3 : 317-319.

Que faut-il entendre par 'langage vulgaire', étant donné que dans le duché on parlait plusieurs langues vernaculaires ? Les 'Ordini Nuovi' (1561 : 1–2) promulgués en mai 1561 expliquent :

> Non saranno admesse alcune supplicationi, libelli o sia dimande, cedule o altre scritture, nelle quali si deduca alcuna cosa in giudicio se elle non sono scritte in bona lingua volgare, cioè Italiana, né nostri stati d'Italia, et Francese in quelli di là de' monti
> [Aucune supplication, libelle ou demande, assignation ou autre document, dans lesquels quelque chose est déduit en justice, ne sera admis s'il n'est écrit dans une bonne langue vernaculaire, c'est-à-dire en italien, dans nos États d'Italie, et en français dans ceux situés au-delà des montagnes]

et l'Édit di Rivoli du 22 septembre 1561 précise

> être chose fort nécessaire et profitable pour le bien et commodité de nos sujets et pays, faire accoutumer et user en tous affaires, tant de justice, que autres, la langue vulgaire, chaque Province la sienne[5].

Les interprétations de ces textes demeurent discordantes. Selon certains chercheurs (par exemple Perret 1985 : 44–45[6]) ils ne représentent que la constatation d'une situation déjà existante et donc une mesure administrative peu significative. Claudio Marazzini (1991 : 38), en revanche, y voit le signe d'une politique adoptée intentionnellement par l'autorité ducale, au moins pour ce qui est de la partie 'italienne' du duché. Il déclare :

> Ritengo che i provvedimenti emanati non fossero una sorta di presa d'atto di una situazione ormai chiaramente ed autonomamente sviluppatasi verso il volgare di tipo toscano, ma anzi costituissero una spinta decisiva per la diffusione dell'italiano in Piemonte.
> [Je pense que les mesures prises n'étaient pas une sorte de reconnaissance d'une situation qui avait désormais évolué clairement et de manière autonome vers le vulgaire de type toscan, mais qu'elles constituaient plutôt une impulsion décisive pour la diffusion de l'italien dans le Piémont.]

Le duc aurait donc incité résolument l'implantation de l'italien au Piémont, qui devint un tremplin pour les intérêts de la maison de Savoie dans la péninsule.

---

5   *Édit de S.A. qui ordonne d'écrire en langue française tous les contrats, instrumens actes et procedures de justice qui se font au Duché d'Aoste.* In : Duboin (1826-1868), t. V, vol. 7 : 844-845.

6   « Les comtes puis les ducs qui se trouvèrent à la tête d'un état où plusieurs langues étaient en usage observèrent le respect le plus absolu des habitudes locales. Le français ne fut pas imposé au Piémont lorsque la capitale était Chambéry et l'italien ne sera pas davantage imposé aux populations des domaines où le français était en usage, lorsque la capitale sera fixée à Turin ».

En tout cas, qu'il s'agisse d'une décision essentiellement symbolique, visant à adapter la langue des institutions aux pratiques réelles des sujets ou, au contraire, de l'imposition délibérée d'un certain usage linguistique, les ducs - eux-mêmes locuteurs bilingues français/italien - n'ont pas eu la volonté de généraliser l'emploi de ces deux langues principales à l'ensemble de leurs possessions, avec une parité de dignité et de diffusion. Selon Louis Terreaux (2011 : 18), Emmanuel Philibert « eût pu obliger ses états à se soumettre au bilinguisme. Il n'y songea pas ».

Cette occasion de bilinguisme perdue empêcha l'unification politique des territoires qui formaient le Duché de Savoie sur des bases linguistiques, au point que Geoffrey Symcox (1985) a jugé la question du rapport entre langues et politique en Savoie "A negative case-study in the politics of linguistic unification". Le duché resta partagé en deux entités séparées, qui ne dialoguèrent guère entre elles ; ainsi il ne sut pas saisir l'opportunité de profiter de sa position géographique stratégique pour jouer un rôle de médiateur entre la culture italienne et la culture française, ni, tout d'abord, à l'époque de la Renaissance, où les modèles provenant de la péninsule nourrissaient les arts et les lettres françaises[7], ni, au siècle suivant, au moment où la maison de Savoie - qui avait toujours jonglé habilement dans une alternance d'alliances entre France et Espagne - entretenait des rapports étroits avec Paris, grâce à la présence à la cour de Turin de deux duchesses d'origine française, désireuses d'introduire l'élégance, le luxe et le style raffiné de leur pays au-delà des Alpes[8].

Qu'en est-il des idiomes locaux, qui restent tout de même couramment répandus parmi la population ? Aucune mention n'en est faite dans les actes et documents émanant du gouvernement ducal. Cette désaffection de la politique à leur égard fait qu'ils suivent une évolution sociolinguistique différente par rapport à celle des deux langues devenues 'nationales'. Dans la partie 'occidentale' du duché, notamment, le français s'affermit, devenant la langue de l'administration et quasiment la seule option pour les usages écrits, alors que le francoprovençal, qui ne bénéficie d'aucun soutien ou promotion politiques, est réduit au statut de langue locale, reléguée presque uniquement au cadre domestique et informel.

4 LE CONTEXTE SOCIAL ET GÉOGRAPHIQUE : MONDE RURAL VS MILIEU URBAIN

L'organisation sociale et la structure géographique des États de Savoie sont des facteurs qui ont contribué au fait que le français et le francoprovençal acquièrent progressivement ces statuts distincts. Dans cet espace alpin, un clivage considérable existait entre la population urbaine et la société paysanne, vivant dans les villages de montagne, profondément enracinée dans le territoire et les valeurs traditionnelles et

---

7   Sur la question complexe de la rivalité qui opposa les langues et les lettres françaises et italiennes à la Renaissance *cf.* au moins Jean Balsamo (1992).

8   Il s'agit de Marie-Christine de France (1606-1663), fille d'Henri IV et sœur de Louis XIII, femme du duc Victor-Amédée Ier, régente du duché de 1638 à 1648 (*cf.* Claretta (1868-1869), Brugnelli-Biraghi, Denoyé-Pollone (1991), *Christine de France et son siècle* (2014), Ferretti (2014)) et de Marie Jeanne Baptiste de Savoie Nemours (1644–1724), femme de Charles Emmanuel II et régente de 1675 à 1684 (*cf.* Brugnelli Biraghi/ Denoyé Pollone 1996 ; Oresko 2004 ; Riva 2017).

peu mobile, aussi bien au plan physique que social. Il y avait bien sûr des occasions de déplacements, comme les foires ou les migrations saisonnières (Bergier 1997, Mitschke 2018/19) mais il s'agissait de mouvements à l'intérieur de l'aire franco-provençale, qui ne pouvaient pas changer les comportements linguistiques de la population rurale. Il y avait donc deux réalités qui n'avaient pas recours aux mêmes codes linguistiques. Les gens résidant dans les villes (surtout les nobles, liés à la cour et à l'administration ducales, les membres des Sénats, qui administraient la justice, le cercle de la diplomatie naissante, les ecclésiastiques et les commerçants) privilégiaient le français, langue des ducs - auxquels ils se sentaient profondément liés - qui est rapidement perçu comme langue de prestige, élitaire, nécessaire pour communiquer dans la sphère publique et permettant l'ascension socio-économique. Les villageois, souvent isolés et sans velléités d'accéder à une érudition livresque, s'exprimaient par contre essentiellement - et presque exclusivement dans la forme orale - dans des dialectes francoprovençaux.

Il est difficile de savoir comment ces parlers étaient effectivement maniés par les locuteurs dans les fonctions de la vie courante dans lesquelles ils étaient cantonnés. Géographiquement variables, ils ne possédaient pas de règles explicitées et aucune tentative de codification – dont, d'ailleurs, on ne ressentait sans doute pas la nécessité ou la volonté, ni de la part des locuteurs, ni de la part de l'autorité ducale - n'est signalée. En revanche plusieurs attestations semblent indiquer que le français appris et pratiqué par les Savoyards instruits était qualitativement de bon niveau et ne laissait déceler de traces importantes de variation diatopique.

Un premier témoignage se trouve dans un document de type diplomatique, la *Relacion de l'audience que j'ay eue de ceste majesté le 19 de mars 1600 en présence de Monseigneur Betton ambassadeur ordinaire de vostre altesse* (*Relacion* 1870 : 90). L'ambassadeur savoyard Berliet (originaire de la Bresse, province sous le gouvernement de la maison de Savoie jusqu'au traité de Lyon de 1601) relate que, en mars 1600, le roi Henri IV (lui qui, selon ses contemporains, n'arriva jamais à éliminer son accent du Béarn natal) l'écouta parler et s'étonna de sa parfaite maîtrise de l'idiome de France :

> Puis me demanda si j'estois Savoysien, me disant qu'à la langue il m'eust tenu par François. Je luy répond que de nature j'estois Savoysien de la province de Bresse, mais que de mon inclination et volonté j'estois premierement Savoysien mais puis Français (*Relacion* 1870 : 90).

Il faut noter que dans sa réponse Berliet, en diplomate avisé, affiche son identité savoyarde, mais ne manque pas de proclamer son attachement à la France.

Une preuve ultérieure de la maitrise des problématiques linguistiques de la part de personnalités originaires de la Savoie est confirmée par le fait qu'en 1635, au moment de la fondation par Richelieu de l'Académie Française, Claude Gaspard Bachet de

Méziriac[9] et Nicolas Faret[10], tous les deux nés à Bourg-en-Bresse, furent appelés à en faire partie et ils donnèrent un apport non négligeable à « donner des règles certaines à la langue française et à la rendre pure, éloquente est capable de traiter tous les arts et les sciences» (Article 24 des Statuts de l'Académie). Les mots que Faret écrit dans une lettre adressée au même Bachet, concernant le talent de traducteur de ce dernier, sont très éloquents :

> Ce que j'en ay dit n'a esté que pour vous representer combien vous estes obligé de cultiver, comme vous faittes, les grands dons que vous avez receus de Dieu et de contribuer tout vostre soin à rendre fameuse nostre petite ville. Vous et Monsieur Vaugelas l'avez desja faict assez voir que pour estre des derniers François, vous ne laissez pas de pouvoir enseigner aux plus anciens le vray usage de leur langue[11].

La contribution que Claude Favre de Vaugelas (1585–1650), lui aussi bressan et académicien de la première heure, donna à l'œuvre de réglementation du français fut en effet décisive : c'est lui qui établit dans ses *Remarques sur la Langue Française* (1647) le 'bon usage'[12].

D'ailleurs, une trentaine d'ans auparavant, en 1607, siècle, deux importantes personnalités savoyardes, François de Sales et Antoine Favre (père de Vaugelas) avaient fondé, à Annecy, sur le modèle des académies italiennes, l'Académie Florimontane (Premat 2016), qui avait pour objectif 'de protéger et d'encourager toute activité scientifique et littéraire' (https://www.academie-florimontane.fr/qui-sommes-nous/), conduisant à une meilleure connaissance des anciens États de Savoie et qui a toujours été uniquement francophone.

Un corpus extrêmement intéressant pour évaluer la réelle qualité de la langue des Savoyards est représenté par la correspondance d'Albert Bailly (1605–1691), religieux barnabite originaire de Grésy-sur-Aix, qui résida à Paris en tant que supérieur du couvent de Saint Éloi de 1649 à 1657 et fut ensuite nommé évêque d'Aoste.[13] Mis à part quelques traits archaïsants, principalement au niveau de l'orthographe et du lexique (par ailleurs très riche et contenant très peu de régionalismes[14]) le français de Bailly observe,

---

9   Mathématicien, poète et traducteur du grec et du latin (1581-1638). Sur lui cf. Kerviler (1880).

10   Homme politique écrivain et poète 1603 1646, Cf. http://www.academie-francaise.fr/les-immortels/nicolas-faret.

11   *Recueil* (1634) 256-257.

12   L'édition de référence est Vaugelas (2018).

13   Sa correspondance, conservée à l'Archivio di Stato de Turin, s'étale de 1643 à 1688 et comprend près de 1000 pièces (400000 mots environ). Cf. *Correspondance (La) d'Albert Bailly* (1999-2010). Les caractéristiques distinctives de ce corpus et son intérêt pour la linguistique historique sont exposés dans Amatuzzi (2018) et (2019). Il est analysé en optique comparative, avec d'autres textes de la même époque qui constituent le Réseau Corpus Français Préclassique et Classique (RCFC) dans Amatuzzi, Ayres-Bennett, Gerstenberg, Schøsler, Skupien-Dekens (2019) et (2020).

14   Mecking (2007), qui a étudié le lexique de Bailly, en récence quatre: *minestre*, *bourrique*, *marmouser*, *mecredy* quatre non directement en rapport avec le francoprovençal.

de manière plus ou moins consciente, les indications contenues dans le texte métalinguistique fondateur de Vaugelas, qui fixe la norme à suivre dans les cas d'hésitations dues à à la variation (sociale, géographique, historique ou stylistique) de la langue. Pour ce qui est de la morphologie verbale, par exemple, il emploie presque toujours les formes recommandées par Vaugelas (58 occurrences pour *prit* vs 0 occurrences pour *print* ; 4 occurrences pour *prirent* vs 0 pour *prindrent* et *prinrent* ; 5 occurrences pour *vinrent* vs 0 pour *vindrent* ; 5 occurrences pour *laissera* vs 0 pour *lairra*). La syntaxe est soignée et linéaire, avec une prédominance de propositions paratactiques, la narration bien organisée et rigoureuse. Bref, Bailly se conforme au 'bon usage' de la cour parisienne et à ses pratiques discursives ritualisées, même s'il ne renonce pas à une certaine spontanéité dans l'expression de ses sentiments et états d'âme, ce qui se traduit parfois dans un style imagé (métaphores, hyperboles, comparaisons, locutions, proverbes) appartenant à un registre plutôt familier, qui ne correspondent pas au niveau de langue auquel on s'attendrait dans des documents administratifs ou diplomatiques. En tout cas, il n'y a pas de traces de variation attribuable à son naissance savoyarde.

Or, le fait que les Savoyards dont il vient d'être question soient 'montés' à Paris, où ils étaient bien introduits dans l'entourage royal, peut évidemment avoir amélioré leur connaissance du français, qu'ils avaient appris dans un contexte provincial (étranger, même). Il est alors opportun de mener un examen comparatif sur des écrits de Savoyards qui ne se sont guère éloignés de leur terre natale. Pour cela j'ai analysé une autre correspondance, celle de René Favre de la Valbonne (1583–1656), frère cadet de Vaugelas. Ils reçurent ensemble la même instruction de la part de leur père, le président du Senat de Savoie Antoine Favre. René vécut tout sa vie à Chambéry, où, après être entré dans la magistrature en 1607, il exerça la charge de Sénateur et de Président du Conseil du Genevois.

L'exploration de ce corpus[15], conduite sur quelques traits saillants de l'orthographe, du lexique, de la morphosyntaxe et du style révèle l'absence presque totale de régionalismes ou dialectalismes, une bonne adéquation aux règles grammaticales qui étaient en train de s'établir[16], et le respect scrupuleux des codes sociolinguistiques préconisées. La seule variation notable par rapport au français standard est de type diachronique : il y a chez Favre une tendance à archaïser. Au niveau de l'orthographe, par exemple, il maintient des graphies désuètes pour ce qui est des groupes vocaliques, pour marquer la durée de la voyelle postérieure (*aage* [l. 7], *aagé* [l. 23], *roole* [l. 18, 29], *persequution* [l. 13, 22], *exequution* [l. 14, 17, 19]) ou il recourt à -z pour indiquer

---

15 Cette correspondance manuscrite, conservée à l'Archivio di Stato di Torino (AST Corte, Lettere particolari F, m. 20, fasc. 79) comprend 84 lettres, concentrées autour des années 1647-1650. Elle a pour sujet la querelle qui se déclencha entre Favre et ses collègues sénateurs suite à la publication, en 1646, d'un ouvrage intitulé *Le Bien public pour le fait de la justice* dans lequel Favre critiquait l'état de la justice en Savoie, dénonçait les corruptions et envisageait des réformes Elle a été analysée par Amatuzzi (2018).

16 Par exemple, pour ce qui est de l'ordre des pronoms personnels complément d'un infinitif régime, très hésitant à l'époque et qui subira un changement au cours du XVIIe siècle (cf. Galet 1971), Favre suit généralement l'ordre Pronom – Verbe régent – Infinitif, préconisé par son frère dans les *Remarques* (*La justice qu'elle seule me peut rendre* [l. 23], *Je le vouldrois voir estably* [l. 76], *Je le luy pourray envoyer ou porter* [l. 8], *On ne se peut garentir* [l. 76], *Je vous puis assurer* [l. 41], *Je ne les ay pas voulu envoyer* [l. 3]).

le pluriel des substantifs oxytons se terminant par -e fermé (*deputez* [l. 40], *degrez* [l. 3], *bontez* [l. 4], *pechez* [l. 18], *costez* [l. 7]) et de la plupart des participes passés des verbes du premier groupe (*piquez et offensez* [l. 19], *arrivez* [l. 43], *comportez* [l. 40] *estonnez* [l. 24], *denigrez* [l. 24]). Pour la morphosyntaxe, la série ancienne de démonstatifs *iceluy, icelle, iceux, icelles*, persiste en alternance avec *ceux, celles* (*J'ay esté ravi que V.A.R. ait ordonné de luy envoyer mes responces car, par icelles, elle verra que je n'ay rien alteré* [l. 32], *Messieurs du Senat n'ont satisfaict à voz ordres, ayant faict tout le contraire de ce qui leur estoit ordonné par iceux* [l. 4]). Le conservatisme de la langue de Favre peut être dû à la distance entre la Savoie et Paris, centre d'irradiation de la norme modèle; cependant on ne peut pas exclure qu'il soit causé aussi par sa formation dans le domaine du droit et par le sujet traité, qui implique parfois des 'termes de Palais'.

Un autre cas digne d'être signalé est celui de Claude Mermet, né à Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey en 1550 et mort en 1620, qui, après des études de droit à Turin, retourna dans son village natal, où il fut nommé principal du collège et, en 1575, notaire ducal. Il écrivit un manuel pour ses élèves intitulé *La pratique de l'orthographe françoise, avec la manière de tenir livre de raison, coucher cedules, et lettres missives, livre tres utile et necessaire à un chacun, specialement aux estrangers qui desirent avoir entrée en la langue françoise, nommément à ceux qui n'ont eu ce bien de connoistre la Latine* (1583 et réédité en 1602, 1606, 1608 et 1612)[17]. Cet ouvrage pédagogique a un but pragmatique : Mermet entend

> suiure mon premier dessain, qui est de me delecter au cultiuage de tant de bons esprits qui croissent parmy ces roches et colines Sainctrambertoises et pour faire sortir vn jour de la bouche des circonuoisins ceste louange: La jeunesse de Sainct Rambert florit aux bonnes lettres. (*La pratique …* : 4)

Il veut donc promouvoir une bonne éducation linguistique dans la jeunesse savoyarde (et saintrambertoise en particulier), instrument essentiel pour être appréciés et valorisés. Faut-il croire que les concitoyens de Mermet ne maîtrisaient pas bien l'orthographe et la grammaire françaises ? Sans doute ils nécessitaient un enseignement efficace pour atteindre un bon niveau et Mermet fait un effort pour simplifier et trouver des définitions aisément compréhensibles. Par exemple, de manière très originale, il parle ainsi des homophones (et non des synonymes, comme il affirme, en se trompant) :

> Les mots à deux endroits, je les nomme ainsi pour plus facile intelligence, d'autant qu'estans prononcez de mesme sorte, ils signifient choses diuerses: je les nommeroy bien equiuoques, ou synonimes: mais pour m'accomoder à ceux qui n'entendent pas vn mot de Latin, ny vn poinct de grammaire, je leur parle souuent par periphrase. (*La pratique …* : 58)

---

17   Sur cet ouvrage, *cf.* Magnien-Simonin (2015).

En plus, dans la deuxième partie de son livre, très concrètement, il propose des modèles de lettres et de documents administratifs et commerciaux (contrats, quittances, missives de plusieurs sortes) conçus pour aider qui se trouverait, dans la vie en société, dans l'obligation de rédiger des textes semblables. Il reproduit ainsi des documents authentiques. En voici un :

> Cedule par prest
> Ie sous signé confesse deuoir à honnorable André Grillier, bourgeois de Sainct Rambert la somme de cent florins monoye de Sauoye par loyal prest, que j'ay receu et m'en contente : laquelle somme de 100.f. je lui promets payer au premier iour de may prochain. Fait audit Sainct Rambert le 16. iour de Feurier 1583. (*La pratique* … : 191)

Ces exemples montrent que les différences existant dans le tissu social de la Savoie peuvent expliquer le fait que le français devienne prédominant dans ces territoires : il est l'apanage des classes les plus élevées et des hommes éduqués, comme c'est le cas des personnalités qui ont été évoquées, qui s'en servent avec soin et rigueur. Par contre le francoprovençal reste la prérogative des communautés les plus isolées et ayant plus difficilement accès à l'instruction ; l'emploi de cette langue étant essentiellement oral, il est difficile d'avoir des témoignages significatifs sur sa réelle portée sociale à l'époque mais elle demeure une langue utilitaire considérée comme impropre aux genres nobles, un « jargon » ou un parler inférieur, celui des travailleurs manuels (Bichurina/Dunoyer 2021 : 23).

5 LA LITTÉRATURE : DEUX PRODUCTIONS PARALLÈLES ?

Comment cette situation diglossique, où le français était réservé à une élite, érudite, et le francoprovençal aux usages vernaculaires populaires, se traduit-elle dans la production littéraire? Est-ce que cette diglossie se retrouve également dans les types de production ? Au Moyen Âge la Savoie n'avait eu ni le potentiel économique ni le potentiel démographique que présuppose le développement d'une grande littérature, que ce soit en français ou en langue locale (Terreaux 2011 : 26). Il existe une production en francoprovençal, qui toutefois n'est pas d'une grande richesse (Tuaillon 2001 : 31 et, pour la Suisse, Kristol 1999 : 12, qui affirme : « À partir du XVIe s., il existe une production littéraire mineure et sporadique en francoprovençal […] Depuis ses débuts toute la littérature romande est d'expression française; dès le XVIe s., c'est le modèle parisien qui s'impose comme forme de prestige incontestée »). C'est donc en français que s'expriment les premiers poètes savoyards (Oton de Grandson[18] et Philippe II de

---

18 (1340-1350). Il composa 6000 vers pour célébrer son amour pour une femme identifiée, avec toute probabilité, avec la reine Isabelle de France, femme de Charles VI. *Cf.* Kosta-Théfaine (2007), Granson (2010) et Corbellari (2021).

Savoie[19]), que se déroulent les premières représentations théâtrales[20] et que les premiers livres sont publiés, à Chambéry, chez Antoine Neyret.[21]

En tout cas, même si au fil du temps, les lettres françaises et les lettres francoprovençales cohabitent, elles n'évoluent pas de la même façon. Deux traditions littéraires parallèles, qui ne répondent pas aux mêmes besoins et ne s'adressent pas aux mêmes publics, semblent se dessiner. Comme l'a constaté Tuaillon (2001 : 270), aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles la Savoie

> appartenait déjà au domaine de la littérature française et l'enrichissait. La littérature en patois coexistait pour un autre public et personne ne songeait à faire prévaloir la littérature française, parce que plus aristocratique et plus brillante, ni d'ailleurs la littérature en francoprovençal, parce que plus propre à traduire l'amour du pays et à parler de la vie quotidienne des gens. Aucun texte ne témoigne d'une querelle de langue, sans doute parce que les deux littératures avaient leur public propre et que, côte à côte, elles vivaient en paix.

La littérature francoprovençale semble avoir eu un but plus social et utilitaire que littéraire : elle sert à transmettre des enseignements religieux et moraux et des valeurs liées à la tradition et à parler « du peuple tel qu'il est, avec son immense peine et ses pauvres réjouissances » (Tuaillon 2001 : 149). Essentiellement en vers, souvent faite pour être chantée ou mise en scène, elle est proche de l'oralité. En effet les genres littéraires les plus répandus sont les vies des saints, les noëls ou les farces.

Il faut signaler deux cas intéressants Nicolas Martin (Tuaillon 2001 : 56–66), originaire de la Maurienne, auteur de noëls, chantés hors des églises pour célébrer la naissance de l'Enfant-Jésus et s'adressant à toute la population. Son recueil *Les Noelz et chansons nouvellement composez tant en vulgaire françois que savoysien dict patois* (Lyon : Bonhomme, 1555) est bilingue et comprend huit textes en français et huit en francoprovençal. Il ne fut pas réédité pendant trois siècles. Plus tard, quand la Bresse est déjà passée à la France (avec le traité de Lyon, en 1601), Bernardin Uchard, né à Pont-de-Veyle, rédige dans son patois francoprovençal *Lo Guémen d'on povro lavory de Breissy su la pau qu'el a de la garra* (s.l. : s.é., 1615 ; traduction en français : Les lamentations d'un pauvre paysan de Bresse sur la peur qu'il a de la guerre) pour présenter les doléances des paysans qui se plaignent des soldats et formuler une prière pour la paix (Tuaillon 2001 : 152–166).

La littérature en français, par contre, s'inscrit pleinement dans l'héritage culturel de la France, dont elle accueille et reproduit les modèles génériques et stylistiques. Elle

---

19 (1438-1497). Fils du duc de Savoie Louis et lui-même duc de 1443 à1497. Entre 1464 et 1466, pendant qu'il était prisonnier à Loches, il écrivit une chanson pour se distraire ou apaiser sa colère. *Cf.* Terreaux (2011 : 71-74).

20 Selon Mugnier (1887 : 4). la première représentation théâtrale connue remonterait à 1446 et serait l'*Histoire de Saint Sébastien et de Sainte Anne* mais Chocheyras (1971:7) affirme que déjà en 1427 on avait mis en scène à Chambéry l'*Histoire de Saint Christophe* et en 1429, à Thonon, la *Passion de Saint Georges*.

21 Il s'agit de *Les expositions des evangiles en romant* e *Le livre de Boudoyn conte de Flandres et de Ferrant, son filz, au roy de Portugal, qui après fut conte de Flandres* qui parurent en 1484.Cf. Dufour, Rabut (1877: 38).

est issue pour la plupart de la noblesse, s'exprime dans une variété soutenue de langue et est destinée à un public cultivé. Évidemment parfois ces modèles peuvent être difficilement déclinés dans le contexte savoyard, qui n'atteint pas le degré de raffinement, d'élégance et de politesse présent à la cour parisienne. Ainsi, pour le XVIIe siècle, Terreaux (2011 : 26–27) affirme qu'

> Il n'existe pas de classicisme savoyard. La littérature classique est une littérature de citadins à l'usage de courtisans formés à un code précis. On ne voit pas que les conditions politiques et sociales eussent été adaptées à ces exigences. La rudesse montagnarde, des conditions de vie presque exclusivement rurales ou du moins d'une grande simplicité ne prédisposaient pas les esprits à goûter une esthétique étroitement liée aux raffinements de la vie mondaine. Le classicisme s'adapte mal à la réalité locale.

Mais est-ce qu'on peut retrouver, chez les auteurs qui écrivent en français, un sentiment d'appartenance et est-ce que la langue locale représente un élément constitutif fondamental ?

Le célèbre poète français Barthélémy Aneau, professeur de rhétorique et recteur du collège de la Trinité à Lyon (Biot :1996), dans la préface au règlement que le nouveau Parlement de Chambéry s'était donné, publié 1553, se réjouit du fait que la justice devait être rédigée en français et non pas en latin parce que, par ce moyen, les gens du pays sont rendus :

> de sauvages humains, de barbares civilz, de rudes politicz, de fiers et mauvais doulx et bons, chassans avec la ferité des meurs la rudesse de la parolle […]. Et tout ce […] induisans par necessité de dire et ouyr droict les Savoisiens à Françoiser comme les Proconsulz Rommains induisoient les Provinciaux à Rommaniser (*Stile et reiglement*: 131)

et il termine son propos par ces vers:

> Exces, tort, crime, impuny malefice
> Estoyent commis (un temps fust) en Savoye
> Ce qu'entendant la Royale Iustice
> A Chambery droictement print sa voye.
> Ou elevée (afin que l'on la voye
> Et que mauvais craignent sa consequence)
> Tient Cour ouverte et de sages frequence,
> Exterminant, par leur conseilz tres meurs
> En Parlement de Françoise eloquence
> Barbare langue et les barbares meurs (*Stile et reiglement*: 132).

Marc-Claude de Buttet, poète né à Chambéry entre 1529 et 1531[22], se sentant offensé par ces mots, se lance dans une vigoureuse défense de sa patrie et du peuple de la Savoie. Il compose l'*Apologie de Marc Claude de Buttet pour la Savoie, contre les iniures et calumnies de Bartholomé Aneau* (1554), dans laquelle il écrit:

> Auec enormes iniures il [Aneau] s'est efforcé de monstrer que par l'institution de ce Senat nous sommes comme en monde nouueau et quasi pareilz à ceux des Isles neuues, qui peu à peu deviennent gens, disant que par elle nous sommes faictz de sauuaiges humains, de Barbares civilz, de rudes politiques, et de fiers et mauuais, doux et bons (*Apologie*: A3r).

Il interpelle ensuite directement Aneau: «Qui t'a mis en teste d'appeler la Sauoie barbare? Est ce pource qu'elle est ceinte de montagnes ?» (A6r-A7r) et réplique : «Si nous sommes entre les montagnes, d'autant sommes nous plus proches des Muses qui là habitent» (A8r). Il ajoute encore :

> Quant à nos moeurs, la ciuilité a esté tousiours à nous propre autant qu'aux autres nations : la magnanimité de courage, la prudence, le scauoir, brief toutes les vertus qui s'emploient à la perfection d'vn païs 1B1v).

Il réfute avec force le rapprochement qu'Aneau avait faite entre barbarie de mœurs et barbarie de langue et réagit jà un jugement de valeur discriminant :

> A t'ouïr parler, on diroit que tu as juré de nous deprimer du tout et que tu en es le medisant à gaiges, non contant seulement de barbariser noz moeurs, mais aussi le parler.
> Qu'appelles tu nostre langue estre barbare, rymailleur que tu es? Est-elle si disgraciée de la nature qu'elle n'ait ses ornemens? Est ce pour ce qu'elle est elognée du françois ? Pour ceste raison aussi bien dirois tu l'Italienne et l'Hespagnolle estre telle, comme si vne langue ne deuoit rien auoir propre à soy. Si elle n'est en tout egale à la françoise, ie t'asseure qu'elle en approche plus que toute langue du monde, gardant encores l'affinité de l'accent françois sans variation de voix, contraction de motz, ny begueement de parolle, retenant encores en soy certains verbes et manieres de parler de l'Italienne sa voisine. Pour faire court, si on ouioit parler quelqu'vn comme les anciens françois parloient, je crois que leur langue seroit plus estrange et moins entendue que la Sauoisienne. Les vieux Romans le monstrent assez mais elle n'est, Dieu mercy, si poure qu'on ne puisse traiter en icelle toute sorte de bonne discipline (A8v-B1r).

---

22 Auteur entre autres d'un recueil de poèmes dédié à Marguerite de France, dont il était secrétaire, intitulé *Le premier livre des vers, auquel a esté ajouté le second ensemble l'Amalthée*, publié en 1560 (Alyn-Stacey: 2006).

La brève description des traits distinctifs de la langue savoyarde dans laquelle But-
tet se lance manque d'exactitude mais elle est admirable car il s'agit d'une véritable
« défense et illustration » du francoprovençal : peut-on y apercevoir l'écho de l'ouvrage
fondamental, publié en 1549 par Joachim Du Bellay (*La Deffence et Illustration de la
Langue Francoyse* 1549) que Buttet avait côtoyé à Paris, où il avait fréquenté le cercle
littéraire de la Brigade? En tout cas Buttet a la perception que la langue savoyarde pos-
sède des caractéristiques propres ('elognée du françois'), qu'elle est une langue à part
entière, et qu'elle contribue à forger un sentiment d'appartenance à la communauté et
d'identité profonde ('nostre langue'). Il reste qu'il exprime ces réflexions en français,
seule langue qu'il utilise pour sa production littéraire.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Le duché de Savoie aux XVIe et XVIIe est linguistiquement partagé : dans le versant
italien des Alpes la langue 'haute' et de l'administration est l'italien, mais la population
utilise couramment les dialectes locaux, gallo-italiques ; le versant français présente,
lui, une diglossie français/francoprovençal que nous avons étudiée. Ces deux idiomes
ne remplissent pas les mêmes fonctions sociales et sont soumis à des rapports de force
qui conditionnent leur devenir.

Le français est la langue élitaire et de prestige et joue un rôle prépondérant pour des
raisons tout d'abord politiques : il est en train de s'imposer au niveau européen grâce à
la suprématie de la monarchie française et subit un important processus de codification
et de standardisation ; des décisions politiques des ducs en ont facilité la pénétration
en Savoie. La structure sociale et géographique des territoires savoyards a également
contribué à y renforcer le rôle du français : il est la langue de la ville et de la partie la
plus cultivée de la population qui se l'approprie, la manie avec une aisance naturelle et
une rigueur admirable. La production littéraire en français est florissante.

Le statut du francoprovençal est indéniablement moins illustre : il n'est pas em-
ployé dans l'administration, il est parlé surtout dans les aires rurales et par les gens
non scolarisés, il est la langue du foyer et des échanges informels et, à la différence de
l'occitan limitrophe, il ne possède pas une tradition littéraire ancienne. Donc, même
si des témoignages montrent qu'il perçu comme marqueur de l'identité savoyarde, il
n'est pas surprenant qu'il n'ait pas réussi à devenir le moyen à travers lequel procla-
mer la spécificité culturelle de Savoie. Son déclin sociolinguistique est commun à
celui des autres langues régionales de France. Il connaîtra tout de même une période
de 'renaissance' au XIXe, lorsqu'il « retrouve son identité de langage populaire et
[est] utilisé par les patoisants dans un but littéraire. On verra alors fleurir une infinité
de compositions en patois où s'exprime le plus souvent l'amour du pays » (Vurpas
1988:179–180).

Bibliographie

Sources primaires

Apologie de Marc Claude de Buttet pour la Savoie, contre les iniures et calumnies de Bartholomé Aneau (1554), In : François, Mugnier (1896), *Marc Claude Buttet poète savoisien.* Paris : Champion, 92–132.

Correspondance (La) d'Albert Bailly. (1999–2010) Aoste: Académie Saint-Anselme, 10 volumes (vol. I, 1643–1648, vol. II, 1649–1650, vol. III, 1651, vol. IV, 1652–1653, vol. V, 1654–1655, vol. VI, 1656–1658, vol. VII, 1659–1663, vol. VIII, 1664–1672, vol. IX, 1673–1676, vol. X, 1677–1688).

DUBOIN, Felice Amato (1826–1868) *Raccolta per ordine di materie e delle leggi, editti, ecc. della Real Casa di Savoia*. Torino : Picco.

FAVRE DE LA VALBONNE, René (1647–1650) Correspondance manuscrite. Archivio di Stato di Torino, Corte, *Lettere particolari F*, m. 20, fasc. 79.

MARTIN, Nicolas (1555) *Les Noelz et chansons nouvellement composez tant en vulgaire françois que savoysien dict patois.* Lyon : Bonhomme.

MERMET, Claude (1583) *La pratique de l'orthographe françoise, avec la manière de tenir livre de raison, coucher cedules, et lettres missives, livre tres utile et necessaire à un chacun, specialement aux estrangers qui desirent avoir entrée en la langue françoise, nommément à ceux qui n'ont eu ce bien de connoistre la Latine.* Lyon : Basile Bouquet.

Huit siècles de littérature francoprovençale et occitane en Rhône-Alpes. Morceaux choisis réunis par Jean-Baptiste Martin et Jean-Claude Rixte. (2010) Lyon : EMCC.

Ordini nuovi. Libro terzo. Della forma e stile che si ha da osservar nelle cause civili. (1561) Vercelli : Pellipari.

Recueil de Lettres nouvelles dédié à Monseigneur de la Mesleraye (1634). Tome 2. Paris : Quinet.

« Relacion de l'audience que j'ay eue de ceste majesté le 19 de mars 1600 en présence de Monseigneur Betton ambassadeur ordinaire de vostre altesse » (1870). In : *Mémoires historiques de la ville de Bourg, extraits des registres municipaux de l'hôtel de ville de 1536 à 1789*. Tome 3. Bourg : Martin-Bottier, 1870, 86–90.

Stile et reiglement sur le faict de la justice, abbréviation des procès et modération des fraiz d'iceux, dressé par la Court de parlement de Savoye... publié en ladicte Court le vingtseptiesme jour de juillet 1553. (1553) Lyon : P. de Portonaris.

VAUGELAS, Claude Favre de (2018) *Remarques sur la langue françoise.* Édition critique par Wendy Ayres-Bennet. Paris : Classiques Garnier.

UCHARD, Bernardin (1615) *Lo Guémen d'on povro lavory de Breissy su la pau qu'el a de la garra*. s.l. : s.é.

Références bibliographiques

Académie Française : https://www.academie-francaise.fr/les-immortels/nicolas-faret.

Académie Florimontane : https://www.academie-florimontane.fr/qui-sommes-nous/.

ALYN-STACEY, Sarah (2006) *Marc-Claude de Buttet: (1529/31–86): l'honneur de la Savoie*. Paris: Champion.

AMATUZZI, Antonella (2005) « Les États de Savoie aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles: deux langues et deux identités culturelles? » *Europe XVI-XVII,* 7, 347–367.

AMATUZZI, Antonella (2011–2012) « La langue française en Savoie au XVIe siècle: défense et illustration chez Claude de Seyssel, Marc-Claude de Buttet et Claude Mermet. » *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles Lettres et Arts de Savoie* XII, 301–320.

AMATUZZI, Antonella (2016) « L'enjeu culturel et politique de la diffusion du vernaculaire dans les États de Savoie au XVIe siècle : une occasion de bilinguisme perdue.» In: Laura Ramello/Alex Borio/Elisabetta Nicola (éds.) *"Par estude ou par acoustumance" Saggi offerti a Marco Piccat per il suo 65° compleanno.* Alessandria : Dell'Orso, 15–32.

AMATUZZI, Antonella (2018) « La valeur linguistique des correspondances diplomatiques du XVIIᵉ siècle : le cas des lettres de René Favre de la Valbonne et de Monseigneur Albert Bailly. » In : Wendy Ayres-Bennett/Sophie Prévost (éds.), *Nouvelles voies d'accès au changement linguistique.* Paris : Garnier, 55–68.

AMATUZZI, Antonella (2019) « Quand les Savoyards montent à Paris : quelques réflexions sur le français (pré-)classique en lisant la correspondance d'Albert Bailly au prisme des *Remarques* de Vaugelas.» In: Patricia Kottelat/Maria Margherita Mattioda/Lorena Novallet/Rachele Raus (éds*.*), *Confluences, liens, rencontres. Synergies d'expression française pour M.B.Vittoz.* Torino : Meti edizioni, 105– 121.

AMATUZZI, Antonella/Wendy AYRES-BENNETT/Annette GERSTENBERG/Lene/ SCHØSLER/Carine SKUPIEN-DEKENS (2019) « Améliorer et appliquer les outils numériques. Ressources et approches pour l'étude du changement linguistique en français préclassique et classique. » In : D. Capin/J. Glikman/V. Obry/T. Revol (éds.) *Le français en diachronie. Moyen français – Segmentation des énoncés – Linguistique textuelle.* Strasbourg : Société de Linguistique Romane/Éditions de linguistique et de philologie, 337–364.

AMATUZZI, Antonella/Wendy AYRES-BENNETT/Annette GERSTENBERG/Lene/ SCHØSLER/Carine SKUPIEN-DEKENS (2020) « Changement linguistique et périodisation du français (pré)classique: deux études de cas à partir des corpus du RCFC. » *Journal of French Language Studies* 30, 301–326.

ASCOLI, Graziadio Isaia ([1874] 1878) « Schizzi franco-provenzali. » *Archivio glottologico italiano* 3, 61–120.

BALSAMO, Jean (1992) *Les rencontres des muses (Italianisme et antiitalianisme dans les Lettres françaises de la fin du XVIe siècle).* Genève : Slatkine.

BERGIER, Jean-François (1997 [1975]) « Le trafic à travers les Alpes et les liaisons transalpines du Haut Moyen Age au XVII siècle. » In: *Id.* (éd*.*), *Pour une histoire des Alpes, Moyen Age et Temps modernes.* Aldershot/Brookfield : Ashgate Variorum, 1–72.

BERT, Michel/Jean-Baptiste MARTIN (2013) « Le francoprovençal. » In: Kremnitz, Georg (éd.): *Histoire sociale des langues de France.* Rennes : PUR, 489–501.

BICHURINA, Natalia/Christiane DUNOYER (2021) « Le francoprovençal en Savoie. Histoire et pratiques contemporaines. » *Dossiers du Musée Savoisien* 7, 1–81.

BIOT, Brigitte (1996) *Barthélemy Aneau, régent de la Renaissance lyonnaise*. Paris : Champion.

BORDONE, Renato (1998) «La dominazione francese di Asti. Istituzioni e società tra medioevo ed età moderna.» In: Giuseppe Romano (éd.), *Gandolfino da Roreto e il Rinascimento nel Piemonte meridionale*. Torino : CRT, 15–45.

BRONDY, Réjane/Bernard DEMOTZ/Jean-Pierre LEGUAY (1984) *Histoire de Savoie : La Savoie de l'an mil à la Réforme, XIe-début XVIe siècle*. Rennes: Ouest France Université.

BRUGNELLI-BIRAGHI, Giuliana/Maria Bianca DENOYÉ-POLLONE (1991) *Chrestienne di Francia Duchessa di Savoia Prima Madama Reale*. Cavallermaggiore: Gribaudo.

BRUGNELLI-BIRAGHI, Giuliana/Maria Bianca DENOYÉ-POLLONE (1996) *La seconda Madama Reale Maria Giovanna Battista di Savoia-Nemours*. Cavallermaggiore : Gribaudo.

BURKE, Peter (2004) *Languages and communities in early modern Europe*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

BURKE, Peter (2013) « Nationalisms and Vernaculars, 1500–1800. » In : Jean Breuilly (éd.), *The Oxford Handbook of History of Nationalism*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 21–35.

CHAMBON, Jean-Pierre/Yann GREUB (2000) « Données nouvelles pour la linguistique galloromane : les légendes monétaires mérovingiennes. » *Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris* 95/1, 147–181.

CHIONI, Cristina (2009) « Francese. » In : Daniele Jalla/Gabriella Ballesio (éds.), *Héritage(s): formazione e trasmissione del patrimonio cultrale valdese*. Torino : Claudiana, 277–281.

Christine de France et son siècle. (2014) *Dix-septième siècle* 262.

CLARETTTA, Gaudenzio (1868–1869) *Storia della reggenza di Cristina di Francia, Duchessa di Savoia con annotazioni e documenti inediti.* Tomes 1–3. Torino : Civelli.

CHOCHEYRAS, Jacques (1971) *Le théâtre religieux en Savoie au XVIe siècle avec des fragments inédits*. Genève : Droz.

CORBELLARI, Alain (2021) *Oton de Grandson.* Leuven : Peeters.

DEVOS, Roger/Bernard GROSPERRIN (1985) *Histoire de la Savoie : La Savoie de la Réforme à la Révolution française*. Rennes : Ouest France Université.

DUFOUR, Auguste/François RABUT (1877) *L'imprimerie, les imprimeurs et les libraires en Savoie du XV au XIX siècle*. Chambéry : Bottero.

FERRETTI, Giuliano (éd.) (2014) *De Paris à Turin. Christine de France Duchesse de Savoie*. Paris : L'Harmattan.

FERRETTI, Giuliano (éd.) (2019) *Les États de Savoie, du duché à l'unité d'Italie (1416–1861)*. Paris : Garnier Classiques.

GABOTTO, Ferdinando (1899) *La vita in Asti al tempo di Giovan Giorgio Alione*. Asti : Tipografia Operaia Bianchi.

GALET, Yvette (1971) *L'évolution de l'ordre des mots dans la phrase française*. Paris : PUF.

GARDETTE, Pierre (1974) « Le franco-provençal, son histoire, ses origines. » In : Gérard Moignet/Robert Lassalle (éds.), *Actes du 5e congrès international de langue et littérature d'oc et d'études franco-provençales, Nice, 6–12 septembre 1967*. Paris : Les Belles Lettres, 294–305.

GRANSON, Oton de (2010) *Poésies.* Édition critique par Joan Grenier-Winther. Paris : Champion.

KERVILER, René (1880) *Claude-Gaspard Bachet seigneur de Méziriac. l'un des quarante fondateurs de l'Académie française. Étude sur sa vie et sur ses écrits*. Paris : Dumoulin.

KOSTA-THÉFAINE, Jean-François (éd.) (2007) *Othon de Grandson, chevalier et poète*. Orléans : Paradigme.

KRISTOL, Andres (1999) « Histoire linguistique de la Suisse romande : Quelques jalons. » *Babylonia* VII/3, 8–13.

KRISTOL, Andres (2016) « Francoprovençal. » In : Adam Ledgeway/Martin Maiden (éds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 350–362.

MAGNIEN-SIMONIN, Catherine (2015) « Un manuel épistolaire français de qualité à l'usage de tous. La pratique de l'orthographe françoise de Claude Mermet (Lyon, 1583). » In : Maria Cristina Panzera/Elvezio Canonica (éds.), *La Lettre au carrefour des genres et des traditions, du Moyen Âge au XVIIe siècle*. Paris : Classiques Garnier, 83–99.

MARAZZINI, Claudio (1991) *Il Piemonte e la Valle d'Aosta*. Torino : Utet libreria.

MECKING, Volker (2007) « La correspondance d'Albert Bailly et son importance pour le français préclassique et classique. » In : Maria Costa (éd.), *Mgr Albert Bailly quatre siècles après sa naissance 1605–2005*, *Actes du Colloque international d'Aoste (8 et 9 octobre 2005)*. Aoste : Imprimerie Valdôtaine, 193–228.

MILROY, James (1998) « Exploring Linguistic Variation to Explain Language Change. » *Sociolinguistica* 12, 39–52.

MITSCHKE, Anja (2018/19) « L'intensité des contacts sociaux dans le domaine francoprovençal au fil des siècles. » *Nouvelles du Centre d'Études Francoprovençales René Willien* 81, 27–81.

MOLA, Alessandro (2001) *Saluzzo: un'antica capitale*. Roma : Newton & Compton.

MUGNIER, François (1887) *Le théâtre en Savoie*. Chambéry : Ménard.

ORESKO, Robert (2004) « Maria Giovanna Battista of Savoy-Nemours (1644–1724): daughter, consort, and Regent of Savoy. » In : Clarissa Campbell Orr (éd.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 16–55.

PERRET, André (1985) « L'usage des langues latine et française en Savoie d'après des documents et des textes littéraires du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance. » In : *Histoire linguistique de la Vallée d'Aoste du Moyen Âge au XVIIIe siècle. Actes du séminaire de Saint-Pierr*e*, 16–17–18 mai 1983, Centre d'Études francoprovençales René Willien de Saint Nicolas*. Aoste : Région Autonome de la Vallée d'Aoste, Assessorat à l'Instruction publique, 31–47.

PREMAT, Bernard (2016) « L'Académie Florimontane, histoire et développement. » *Revue Savoisienne* 156ᵉ, 149–156.

REGIS, Riccardo/Matteo RIVOIRA (2023) *Dialetti d'Italia: Piemonte e Valle d'Aosta*. Roma : Carocci.

REY, Alain/Fréderic Duval/Gilles SIOUFFI (2007) *Mille ans de langue française. Histoire d'une passion.* Paris : Perrin.

RIVA, Elena (2017) « Una reggente di successo. La politica internazionale di Maria Giovanna Battista di Savoia-Nemours. » In : *Ead.* (éd.), *La politica charmante. Società di corte e figure femminili nelle età di transizione. Cheiron* 3/1, 37–89.

RIVOIRA, Matteo (2015) « *Nous avons besoin de ces deux langues comme de nos deux mains*: il francese nelle Valli Valdesi, tra proiezioni ideologiche e realtà dei fatti. » In : Carla Bruno/Simone Casini/Francesca Gallina/Raymond Siebetscheu (éds.), *Plurilinguismo/Sintassi. Atti del XLVI Congresso Internazionale SLI, Siena, 27–29 settembre 2012.* Roma : Bulzoni, 343–360.

RIVOIRA, Matteo (2019) « Le français dans le territoire occitan au XVIe siècle : le cas des Vallées Vaudoises. » *Moyen Français* 84*,* 55–65.

SCHÜLE, Ernest (1978) « Histoire et évolution des parlers francoprovençaux d'Italie. » In : Gianrenzo Clivio/Giuliano Gasca Queirazza (éds.), *Lingue e dialetti nell'arco alpino occidentale. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Torino, 12–14 aprile 1976.* Torino : Centro Studi Piemontesi, 127–140.

STICH, Dominique (1998) *Parlons francoprovençal, une langue méconnue.* Paris : L'Harmattan.

SYMCOX, Geoffrey (1985) « The Savoyard State: a negative case-study in the politics of linguistic unification.» In: *The fairest flower. The emergence of linguistic national consciousness in Renaissance Europe. International conference of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance studies, University of California Los Angeles, 12–13 December 1983*. Firenze : Accademia della Crusca, 185–191.

TERREAUX, Louis (1995) « Aspects de la littérature savoyarde .» *Histoire en Savoie* 117, 2.

TERREAUX, Louis (éds.) (2011) *Histoire de la Littérature Savoyarde*. Montmélian : La Fontaine de Siloé.

TRON, Daniele (2004) « Cenni sulla storia della val Pellice. » *La Beidana* 51, 5–24.

TUAILLON, Gaston (1972) « Le Francoprovençal. Progrès d'une définition. » *Travaux de linguistique et de littérature* X/1, 293–339.

TUAILLON, Gaston (2001) *La littérature en francoprovençal avant 1700*. Grenoble : Ellug, Université Stendhal.

TUAILLON, Gaston (2007) *Le Francoprovençal.* Quart : Musumeci.

VIVIER, Nadine (2002) « La «république des escartons», entre Briançonnais et Piémont (1343–1789). » *Annales du Midi: revue archéologique, historique et philologique de la France méridionale* 114/240, 501–522.

VURPAS, Anne-Marie (1988) « La moquerie patoise au XVIIe siècle à travers quelques textes francoprovençaux. » *Le Monde alpin et rhodanien. Revue régionale d'ethnologie* 16/3–4, 169–180.

Résumé

LE STATUT POLITIQUE, SOCIAL ET CULTUREL DES LANGUES VERNACU-LAIRES DANS LE DUCHÉ DE SAVOIE AUX XVI ET XVII SIÈCLES

Dans cet article, en m'appuyant sur des documents de plusieurs types (textes de loi, correspondances diplomatiques, écrits littéraires, ouvrages pédagogiques) je m'interroge sur comment des facteurs externes à la langue, de nature diverse, en agissant dans une synergie complexe, ont eu un impact sur le développement géographique et la diffusion fonctionnelle des idiomes présents dans les anciens États de Savoie à l'époque où les langues vernaculaires s'affirment et se consolident.

En particulier, je me concentre sur le côté 'français' du Duché pour montrer que, dans ces territoires, la prédominance du français dans la plupart des contextes communicatifs et le confinement du francoprovençal dans la sphère de la vie de famille et des activités de tous les jours dépendent de décisions politiques mais aussi du contexte géographique et du tissu social et économique : le français est l'apanage des classes les plus élevées, qui s'en servent avec soin et rigueur, en prenant les distances non seulement de la tradition latine mais aussi de la culture populaire régionale ou dialectale, alors que le francoprovençal reste la prérogative des communautés les plus isolées et ayant plus difficilement accès à l'instruction. Cette fracture est visible, sur le plan littéraire, par deux traditions parallèles distinctes.

Mots-clés : Duché de Savoie, langues vernaculaires, le français, le francoprovençal, statut politique, social et culturel des langues

Abstract

POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STATUS OF VERNACULAR LANGUAGES IN THE DUCHY OF SAVOY IN 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES

In this paper, based on several types of documents (legal texts, diplomatic correspondence, literary writings, educational works), I examine how factors external to the language, of various kinds, acting in a complex synergy, had an impact on the geographical development and functional diffusion of the idioms present in the ancient States of Savoy at a time when the vernacular languages were asserting themselves and consolidating.

In particular, I focus on the 'French' side of the Duchy to show that in these territories the predominance of French in most communicative contexts and the confinement of Franco-Provençal to the sphere of family life and everyday activities depend on political decisions but also on the geographical context and the social and economic fabric: French is the prerogative of the highest classes, who use it carefully and rigorously, distancing themselves not only from Latin tradition but also from regional or dialectal popular culture, while Franco-Provençal remains the prerogative of the most

isolated communities and those with more difficulty in accessing education. This divide is visible, on a literary level, by two distinct parallel traditions.

Keywords: Duchy of Savoy, vernacular languages, French, Franco-Provençal, political, social and cultural status of languages

Povzetek
POLITIČNI, SOCIALNI IN KULTURNI STATUS VERNAKULARNIH JEZIKOV V SAVOJSKEM VOJVODSTVU V 16. IN 17. STOLETJU

Prispevek se na osnovi več vrst dokumentov (pravnih besedil, diplomatske korespondence, književnih tekstov, del s področja izobraževanja) ukvarja z vprašanjem, kako so razni zunajjezikovni dejavniki s sinergijskim delovanjem vplivali na razvoj po posameznih geografskih območjih in na funkcijsko širitev jezikov, ki so se uporabljali v starih savojskih državah v času uveljavljanja in utrjevanja vernakularnih jezikov.

Razprava se osredotoča na "francoski" del vojvodstva in pokaže, da sta bila na teh ozemljih prevlada francoščine v večini komunikacijskih situacij in omejevanje rabe franko-provansalščine na družinsko in vsakdanje življenje odvisna od političnih odločitev pa tudi od geografskih značilnosti ter od konkretnega družbenega in ekonomskega ustroja. Francoščina je privilegij najvišjih razredov, ki ta jezik uporabljajo pazljivo in konsistentno ter se tako distancirajo ne le od latinske tradicije, temveč tudi od regionalne ali narečne ljudske kulture, medtem ko je franko-provansalščina v domeni najbolj izoliraih skupnosti in tistih, ki jim je izobrazba težje dostopna. Na to dihotomijo na književni ravni kažeta dve različni, vzporedni tradiciji.

Ključne besede: Savojsko vojvodstvo, vernakularni jeziki, francoščina, frankoprovansalščina, politični, socialni in kulturni status jezikov

Eleonora Serra
University of Ghent
Eleonora.Serra@UGent.be

LEARNING TO WRITE LETTERS IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FLORENCE: EPISTOLARY FORMULAE IN THE CORRESPONDENCE OF LUCREZIA ALBIZZI RICASOLI*

1 INTRODUCTION

With historical letters having become the genre of choice in historical sociolinguistic investigations, epistolary formulae – 'formulaic strings found repeatedly in letters, and […] largely restricted to the language of letters', to use Rutten and van der Wal's definition (2014: 75) – have attracted more and more attention cross-linguistically. Not only do they complicate the view of letters as the 'next best thing to speech' (Nevalainen/ Raumolin-Brunberg 2012: 32). They also appear to have been used differently, and perhaps to different purposes, by individuals from different walks of life.

In fact, studies on the history of Germanic languages (Austin 2004; Elspaß 2005; Rutten/van der Wal 2012, 2014) and French (Große *et al.* 2016) have found that epistolary formulae – and in particular, those that were optional – were more used by individuals of low-status compared to high-status, and by women compared to men. Since literacy and schooling, historically, were socially stratified and gender-dependent, these studies have hypothesised that optional epistolary formulae served the primary function of reducing the writing effort: they would have represented a conventionalised 'safe option' (Rutten/van der Wal 2014: 129) that helped less experienced writers to compose a text and verbalise experiences. In this view, more experienced writers (i.e. high-status writers, male writers), who did not have the same difficulties in formulation, would use less formulae and resort to a higher degree of compositional creativity.

Other studies, however, have underlined the role that epistolary formulae could play in signalling in-group membership (e.g. Laitinen/Nordlund 2012; but see also Rutten/ van der Wal 2014: 185–187), even for writers who had a high level of writing experience (Conde-Silvestre 2016; Evans 2020: 75). In these works, formulae are viewed primarily as social conventions related to specific group practices. This interplay of

writing experience and community practices in the use of formulae is still unclear (Rutten/van der Wal 2012: 195). In this paper, I intend to investigate it in the context of sixteenth-century Florence, by presenting a case study focused on a corpus of letters written by a woman who might well have acquired literacy in adulthood, and whose writing experience was considerably low. Aiming to engage with the cross-linguistic debates that have arisen over the use and social functions of formulae in historical sociolinguistics, this work will also contribute to including women's language in Italian linguistic historiography.

After discussing why sixteenth-century Florence is interesting for investigating the use of epistolary formulae as well as women's language (Section 2), I will present the data and sketch a biographical and letter-writing profile of the letter writer in question (Section 3). The research questions are explicitly formulated in Section 4 and methodological issues are dealt with in Section 5, while the analysis, focusing on the superscription and the epistolary frame, is presented in Section 6. The paper closes with a discussion of the role of formulae for little experienced writers in sixteenth-century Florence and proposes directions for further research (Section 7).

2 LETTER WRITING, EPISTOLARY FORMULAE, AND WOMEN'S LITERACY IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FLORENCE

The context chosen, that of sixteenth-century Florence, offers fertile ground to investigate the social functions of epistolary formulae: in this respect, Renaissance Italy stands out because here vernacular letter-writing was more intensely codified than in other traditions. This is testified by the numerous, widely circulating manuals for vernacular letter-writing – such as Bartolomeo Miniatore's *Formulario*, first published in 1485 and reprinted more than forty times in the sixteenth century – which offered model letters to be imitated and, frequently, lists of formulae to be used in specific situations. 'Real' vernacular epistolaries by famous people also enjoyed immense popularity from the late 1530s, following Pietro Aretino's initiative to print his own letters (1538), while anthologies of letters – not simply conceived as entertainment reading, but also intended as models of good style – were readily compiled by printers and polygraphs from the beginning of the 1540s.[1] What the success of this body of literature proves is that, in sixteenth-century Italy, a desire was felt for norms that would regulate letter-writing practices. Hence, this intensely normative tradition is an interesting one to investigate if we want to understand the relationship between the respective roles of writing experience and social conventions in writers' use of formulae.

Contrary to studies on other linguistic traditions, work carried out in the Italian context has not so far put forward a view of epistolary formulae as a 'safe option' for less skilled writers. If Telve's observation that semi-literate writers were, at times, surprisingly familiar with epistolary conventions (Telve 2019: 246) may be interpreted in this light, scholars in this tradition have usually tended to emphasise the role of formulae as social conventions, related to specific group practices (e.g. Barucci 2009: 10;

---

1   For a seminal discussion of this production, see Quondam (1981).

d'Amelia 1999: 86–87). In a study on the use of a set of discourse-ending formulae in Michelangelo Buonarroti's own letters (Serra 2023), I have proposed that for this writer optional epistolary formulae functioned primarily as in-group conventions, rather than formulation aids, as their use was much more frequent in letters to family members, and did not decrease as the artist's writing experience grew. But does the same hold true if we look at the language of writers who were less experienced than Michelangelo? In this article, I ask whether, in a context where letter writing was becoming increasingly conventionalised, epistolary formulae functioned primarily as aids for formulation for writers with low levels of writing experience.

When it comes to writers of this kind, women are particularly interesting because sixteenth-century Florence was a decisive time in the progressive path towards female literacy. Until the late Middle Ages, laywomen (with a few notable exceptions) had been largely excluded from the writing world (Miglio 2008: 62) but, in the sixteenth century, female literacy increased as a result of political and cultural changes. Locally, these changes have been linked with the establishment of the Medici duchy and grand duchy, under which vernacular literacy gradually became a requirement for patrician girls who aspired to a place at court (Barker 2015: 124–125). More globally, an increase in women's literacy is to be viewed against the background of the expanding printing market (Plebani 2019: 58–63). By greatly reducing the price of books, the printing press had contributed to a democratisation of literacy and had progressively sought to make its products appealing to broader audiences, women included (Sanson 2011: 45–56). The press also launched the phenomenon of women writers in the public arena, which was of a magnitude unparalleled elsewhere in Europe (Kaborycha 2015: 13). While letter-writing manuals, epistolaries by famous authors, and books of letters by both men and women became one of the market's favourite genres, more and more women from the middle and upper classes began to actively participate in the practice of private letter writing, not just by delegating their writing to others – as had previously been the custom – but by taking up the pen themselves. This sharp rise in women's literacy makes letters by women particularly interesting for exploring the relationship between use of formulae and writing experience.

In this respect, while the language of the semi-literate and the selection of oral-like texts have concerned Italian linguists for decades,[2] the role of women in the linguistic history of Italian has attracted less attention. One reason behind this has to do with the difficulty of finding everyday texts produced by women, and this difficulty is greater for medieval and early modern times when the gap in literacy rates was wider (Balestracci [2004] 2010: 52). Documents penned by women also had a minor chance of being preserved. Even those that have come down to us are often invisible (Plebani 2019: 15), buried in family archives that might be summarily inventoried (if at all), and can only be discovered by browsing the actual letters contained in archival collections. Another element that has hindered the study of women's language historically is the difficulty in establishing autography. Authoriality is frequently given

---

2   See, for example, D'Achille (1994) and Fresu (2014) for an overview on the language of the *semicolti* [semiliterate], and Telve (2014) and Serianni (2015: 138-154) on sources used to reconstruct speech.

primacy over autography in the context of historical and cultural studies on women (see, for instance, Kaborycha 2015: 17), but an assessment of autography is crucial for linguistic analyses.

However, over the last few decades several efforts have been made to include women in Italian language histories.[3] As regards the medieval and early modern period, most of this research has focused on the language of women who belonged to one of three major categories: low-ranking women, the most famous example being the autograph confession of the 'witch' Bellezze Ursini (Trifone 1988); religious women, such as Caterina da Siena (Fresu 2011), Caterina Paluzzi, Orsola Formicini (Fresu 2019), Margherita Lambertenghi (Brown 2021); and exceptionally prominent and learned noblewomen, widely known even among their contemporaries, such as the marchionesses Vittoria Colonna (Sanson 2016) and Isabella D'Este (Basora 2017, Vetrugno 2018), and the duchess Lucrezia Borgia (Fresu 2004).

Nevertheless, studies on the language of early modern laywomen from the mercantile patriciate, who were neither exceptional cases of low-status women able to write, nor noblewomen of wide renown, are rare. The most notable exception is represented by the letters of Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi (c. 1408–1471), a Florentine widow who, in the late Middle Ages, corresponded with her exiled sons. These letters were first subject to a linguistic analysis by Trifone (1989) – who used them to discuss the duality of letters as both oral-like and stylistically crafted texts, as well as the relevance that family practice had as a writing 'school' for Florentines – and have recently been studied to track a series of changes that had occurred in fifteenth-century Florentine (Bersano 2022), as well as to ante-date a range of lexical items (Bersano 2023).

Whereas Alessandra Macinghi's letters have attracted interest perhaps because she was one of the first laywomen from the mercantile class to write many letters in her own hand,[4] less attention has been paid to the language of letters by 'ordinary' upper-class and bourgeois women in the sixteenth century – a time when, as I have mentioned, it became more common for women to write in their own hand. My article, therefore, zooms in on one such writer: Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli, a widow from the Florentine elites who started to write quite late in her life, and might have been the first lay woman in her family to do so. Having largely relied on delegate writers in her youth, the first autograph letter I could retrieve by Lucrezia dates to 1539, a time when she was probably approaching her forties. For the next twenty-six years, she would correspond with her sons about a variety of private issues and business matters.

This corpus of correspondence, written by a woman with very little writing experience, but whose involvement in letter writing progressively grew with time, is well-suited for exploring the functions that epistolary formulae served in the first stages of Florentine women's acquisition of vernacular literacy and vernacular letter-writing. The aim of this case study is to assess whether, in the Italian context, epistolary

---

3   For an overview of these studies, see Fresu (2008, 2019).

4   Earlier examples of female letter-writers from a mercantile background include Margherita Datini (c. 1360-1423), the wife of the famous businessman from Prato, Francesco Datini, and her mother Dianora: these letters (on which see Crabb 2007; James 2008) still await linguistic investigation.

formulae functioned as formulation aids for little-experienced writers, as was found to be the case in other linguistic traditions. In order to do this, I assess the extent to which Lucrezia relied on formulae that assisted her in composing a text, examine the degree to which such formulae were fixed, and investigate possible lifespan changes in relation to her progressive increase in writing experience.

3 THE DATA

The data analysed here consist of a corpus of twenty autograph letters written by Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli. The letters are preserved in the fondo Ricasoli, a collection housed in the Florentine State Archive (ASF).[5] I came across this correspondence during my research in Florence, where I was looking for letters by sixteenth-century Florentine women across a number of family archives. I found a total of sixty-seven letters by Lucrezia, scattered across different folders. Since I did not examine all the letters in all the folders, it is possible that further research would yield even more letters.

The great majority of the letters (forty-six) are written by delegate writers. The twenty letters that I have selected and transcribed for analysis – listed in Table 1 – are the autograph ones, making up a corpus of 9321 words (modernising word division). In fact, the last letter (#r22) is only partly autograph:[6] it is begun in Lucrezia's hand but, around the middle, her daughter Maddalena takes over and finishes the letter in her mother's name.[7] For the purpose of this analysis, I have only included the part of the letter written by Lucrezia. In addition, I have found a small piece of paper containing an autograph message addressed by Lucrezia to a worker (ASF Ricasoli Filze 40–I-V, c. 141) but, since the relationship between writer and addressee was very different in comparison to the other letters, I have excluded it from analysis.

Each letter has been assigned an ID number within a bigger dataset that I have built, which from now on I will use to refer to each letter.[8]

---

5   The fondo Ricasoli, once held at the Castle of Brolio in Chianti, is a vast family archive divided into three sections: an old section ('Parte antica'), a modern section ('Parte moderna') and a section ('Carteggio') that includes the correspondence of Bettino Ricasoli (1809-1880), Italy's second prime minister, and other documents that concern him and his brother. The part that concerns us here is the 'Parte antica', which is in turn subdivided into parchments ('Pergamene'), account books ('Libri di amministrazione'), and other documents which include the family's correspondence ('Filze'). This part of the archive is only summarily inventoried, so that only by physically browsing the documents can one learn which letters by which individual are in which folder.

6   As explained later, throughout the article Lucrezia's autograph letters will be cited by the ID numbers given in table 1.

7   There is no indication as to why, but in a culture where delegate writing was frequent, this was not uncommon. In the Ricasoli archive, I have come across other women's letters in which the hand changes without any explanation, for example a 1579 letter by Cassandra Anselmi to her brother-in-law Nicolò Anselmi (Ricasoli Filze 49-I-IV, c. 1), and a 1589 letter by Selvaggia Rucellai to her daughter Cassandra (Ricasoli Filze 49-I-IV, c. 3).

8   These ID numbers mirror the order in which I have catalogued the letters. I am using these numbers to make it easier to refer to the same document across multiple articles.

Table 1. Lucrezia's autograph letters, presented in chronological order. Dates have been modernised according to today's calendar (the Florentine year began on 25 March). The number of words was counted after modernising word division (and excludes the superscription). The label 'Archival location' specifies the letters' location within ASF, fondo Ricasoli, Parte antica Filze. It should be read this way: 46–I-IV means Filza 46, Fascio I, Fascetto IV.

ID number	Date	Addressee	N. words	Archival location
#r511	11/10/1539	Matteo	569	46–I-IV, c. 63
#r221	2/07/1542	Matteo	298	40–III-IV, c. 1
#r224	18/07/1542	Matteo	238	40–III-IV, c. 6
#r237	28/10/1542	Matteo	1857	40–III-IV, c. 38
#r240	20/11/1542	Matteo	921	40–III-IV, c. 45
#r242	4/12/1542	Matteo	427	40–III-IV, c. 48
#r243	14/12/1542	Matteo	574	40–III-IV, c. 49
#r246	2/01/1543	Matteo	1152	40–III-IV, c. 55
#r247	10/01/1543	Matteo	426	40–III-IV, c. 56
#r690	29/10/1549	Braccio	271	41–II-III, c. 72
#r271	1/02/1550	Matteo	470	40–III-VI, c. 37
#r691	13/08/1553	Braccio	379	41–II-III, c. 86
#r302	17/02/1554	Braccio	218	32–I-VI, c. 26
#r335	29/04/1554	Braccio	246	32–II-II, c. 93
#r16	3/09/1565	Matteo	393	40–II-V, c. 46
#r17	5/09/1565	Matteo	316	40–II-V, c. 47
#r18	7/09/1565	Matteo	188	40–II-V, c. 48
#r19	8/09/1565	Matteo	198	40–II-V, c. 49
#r20	8/09/1565	Matteo	89	40–II-V, c. 50
#r22 (partly autograph)	13/09/1565	Matteo	91	40–II-V, c. 52

The twenty autograph letters are all addressed to Lucrezia's sons, Matteo (sixteen) and Braccio (four). This makes them suitable to analyse for epistolary formulae, because the relationship between writer and addressee, which has been shown to significantly affect the amount and type of formulae used (e.g. Clarysse 2017), remains constant. The letters are also written across a time period of twenty-seven years, making an evaluation of lifespan change possible: in particular, I will draw a distinction between the nine letters written between the late 1530s and early 1540s (early block), the five letters written between 1549 and 1554 (middle block), and the six letters penned in 1565 (late block).[9]

As for the writer's identity and her letter-writing practice, Lucrezia was a patrician woman born into a very prominent Florentine family, the Albizzi. Considering that she married in 1513, and that Florentine women married early, she was probably born in

---

9   This distinction was operationalised after inspection of the data, as the autograph letters I found seemed to cluster around particular time periods. The first of these represents a time at which Lucrezia had only recently begun to write letters in her own hand. A 6 year-long timespan separates letters from the early and the middle block, and a 10 year-long timespan separates letters from the middle and late block.

the last decade of the fifteenth century. Her father's name was Matteo (Passerini 1861: table 14), and the Ricasoli archive preserves letters by her mother Nanna[10] and her siblings Francesco,[11] Andrea[12] and Maddalena.[13] Given these clues, her parents must have been Matteo di Andrea degli Albizzi (b. 1459) and Nanna di Niccolò Tornabuoni (b. 1564/5), who, according to Litta (1876: table 2), were married in 1485, although Lucrezia's name does not figure in Litta's family tree.[14]

As was the norm for the Florentine aristocracy, Lucrezia married into another patrician family, the Ricasoli. The Ricasoli belonged to the old Florentine feudal aristocracy, but by the sixteenth century they had largely assimilated to the new ruling, mercantile elite (Moran 2017: 387). They owned vast properties of land in the areas of Chianti, Mugello, and southern Valdarno, and a significant part of their income was based on the exchange of the agricultural goods produced here.

Lucrezia had at least six children: Maddalena, Piergiovanni, Braccio, Matteo, Alessandra and Raffaello (Passerini 1861: table 14). Her married life was not an easy one, as her husband, Filippo di Piergiovanni Ricasoli, was exiled from Florence in 1523. Filippo returned to Florence as the Medici were driven out of the city in 1527, only to die in 1531, a few months after the capitulation of the Last Republic and the restoration of the Medici regime (Passerini 1861: 169). Lucrezia makes vague references to these difficult times in one of her letters, recalling the troubles endured while her husband was alive (#r237). Probably in her thirties at the time of her husband's death, Lucrezia did not remarry, and lived on until 1570.[15]

From Lucrezia's early autograph letters, written between the late 1530s and the early 1540s, it is clear that the family was undergoing financial difficulties. At that time, she was living in Florence with at least two of her younger children, Maddalena and Braccio, while her elder sons, Matteo and Raffaello, resided in Chianti, conducting a fashionable lifestyle that they could not afford and that left the family riddled with debts (#r237, #r243). Lucrezia's long letters repeatedly describe her frustration at having 'tutto el di deditori alucco ora loispelziale ora legrauezze ora labalia ora gouani chorssi ora elsermano ora questo ora quelo' [all day long creditors at the door, now the apothecary, now the taxes, now the wet-nurse, now Giovanni Corsi, now Sermano, now this one, now that one] (#r240).[16] It is at this difficult time that – it would appear – Lucrezia started to pen letters in her own hand.

---

10 Ricasoli Filze 41-II-III, c. 6; 56-I-I, cc. 65, 83, 107, 169, 173.

11 Ricasoli Filze 32-I-VI, c. 2; 40-II-V, c. 2; 40-III-III, cc. 50, 54; 40-III-V, cc. 80, 82, 85; 56-I-I, cc. 24, 172.

12 Ricasoli Filze 56-I-I, cc. 13, 15, 35, 58, 135; 56-I-IV, c. 14.

13 Ricasoli Filze 41-II-III, c. 3.

14 If Litta's inclusion of the names of Francesco, Andrea and Maddalena among the children of Matteo Albizzi and Nanna Tornabuoni were not enough to demonstrate Lucrezia's belonging to this branch of the family, definite proof comes from a 1528 letter by Lucrezia's brother Andrea Albizzi who refers to 'Bancho n[ost]ro zio delli sp[e]t[tabi]ˡⁱ S[igno]ʳⁱ Dieci' [Banco our uncle of the distinguished Ten] (Ricasoli Filze 56-I-I, c. 135). Matteo Albizzi's brother Banco was indeed part of the Dieci di Balia (the magistracy in charge of the conduct of war) during Florence's Last Republic (see, again, Litta 1876: table 2).

15 ASF Ricasoli Amministrazione 275, fol. π1ʳ.

16 On the criteria adopted for transcripton, see Section 5.

Although I can only make hypotheses on the instruction she might have received in her youth, her graphic competence tells us that she had not gone beyond the first stages of education. Her script displays a large size, separate letters, and very few ligatures. There is no graphic variation that would characterise usual or professional levels of graphic execution. Although the lines she traces are fairly straight, and her hand relatively steady, she employs no shading, no punctuation and, contrary to what was common in merchants' letters, no paragraphs: everything, except for the signature, is written in one continuous flow. If we were to apply Petrucci's classification of handwriting into three different levels of graphic execution, Lucrezia's hand would fall into the lowest, called by Petrucci 'elementare di base' (Petrucci 1978: 167–168).

We also know that Lucrezia had real difficulties in reading her son's handwriting. Already in #r224, she apologises for not replying to everything that was asked of her 'perche odimentichato elegere uostre letere' [because I have forgotten how to read your letters]. She also repeatedly asks her son to write more clearly or to have someone else write for him (#r17, #r18). These requests are typical of semi-literate writers: a similar request, for example, is addressed by a semi-literate worker of the Ricasoli family to his employer (Ricasoli Filze 40–III-III, c. 75).[17]

All of this suggests that Lucrezia had not gone beyond the very first stages of graphic learning. As a girl from an elite family, she might have learned basic literacy in her own household, perhaps taught by a family member or by a servant (Sanson 2011: 26–27); or she might have acquired reading skills and some rudiments of writing, along with sewing and other 'virtues', in a convent (Strocchia 1999). Considering the availability of self-teaching manuals at her time (Plebani 2019: 16), however, the possibility that she might have taught herself to write also exists. It cannot be excluded that she learned in her adult life, considering that she apparently relied almost exclusively on delegate writers until around her forties. All but one of the forty-six allograph letters I have found date back to the period 1532–1542. Prior to 1539 – the date of her first autograph letter (Fig. 1) – I could only retrieve few autograph attestations dating from the previous couple of years: two postscripta, one of which added to a letter by the family's worker Jacopo Lapini in 1537 (Fig. 2), and the other added to a letter written in her name, again by Jacopo Lapini, in 1538 (Fig. 3); her signature, added to a 1538 letter by the same delegate writer (Fig. 4); and some notes on the receipt of goods scribbled at the back of a letter she received in the same year (Fig. 5). Over the following years, Lucrezia gradually abandoned the practice of delegate writing, so that from the 1550s and 1560s we have letters in her own hand almost exclusively.

---

17   On similar requests by Margherita Datini, asking her husband to have a clerk copy his letter, see Crabb (2007: 1186).

Figure 1. Lucrezia's first autograph letter, dating 1539 (#r511).

Figure 2. Lucrezia's first autograph postscriptum, added to a 1537 letter signed by Jacopo Lapini (Ricasoli Filze 41–II-III, c. 19).

Figure 3. Lucrezia's autograph postscriptum added to a 1538 letter written by Jacopo Lapini in her name (Ricasoli Filze 32–I-VI, c. 10).

Figure 4. Lucrezia's autograph signature in an allograph letter written in 1538 (Ricasoli Filze 40–I-V, c. 76).

Figure 5. Lucrezia's autograph notes on the back of a letter she received in 1538 (Ricasoli Filze 32–II-II, c. 37).

As discussed earlier, Lucrezia's transition from delegate to autograph writing must be viewed in light of the changes that were taking place in Florentine and Italian society more broadly. However, practical necessities tied to her status as a widow might have also played an important role, as they had for Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi a century before. As would later be the case for her daughter Maddalena,[18] as a widow Lucrezia appears to have had an active role in the family's business. From her house in Florence, she would be the one to receive the Ricasoli agricultural products, coordinate their dispatch and sale, send regular reports to her sons, and make sure the family's workers received their payments. These tasks would obviously be facilitated by being able to write without intermediaries; and perhaps, being able to write was also a means to achieve more agency. Her desire to be more independent is reiterated in several letters, where Lucrezia complains about being kept in *seruit(t)u* [servitude] (#r511, #r237, #r221) and being left in the dark as to the family's economic activities (#r237, #r240).

Her difficult financial circumstances, forcing her to constantly deal with the family's creditors, might have been a further motive to acquire literacy. Lucrezia's letters reveal a constant struggle to keep up appearances, and acute feelings of shame for

18   On Maddalena's involvement in the family business, see Moran (2017).

herself and her family:[19] in this sense, graphic abilities might have exerted an additional appeal, as argued by Strocchia (1999: 25), as an assertion of status.

As to the way Lucrezia might have learned her letter-writing conventions, some means of instruction would have been precluded to her. Clearly, the letter-writing training that was typical for boys from the minor aristocracy (D'Onghia 2014: 93) would not have been an option. From Florentine family books there is some evidence that the writing of vernacular letters was taught even at the level of elementary school (Witt 1995: 106–107), but it is unlikely that Lucrezia had attended school.[20] An influence from vernacular letter-writing manuals and printed letter books cannot be ruled out, as we have seen that this type of literature was flooding the printing market, especially from the end of the 1530s (the very years in which Lucrezia started to write).[21] However, her primary source to learn letter-writing conventions would undoubtedly have been the actual practice of correspondence. In his study on Alessandra Macinghi's letters, Trifone (1989) finds a striking similarity in terms of language and style in the letters by Alessandra and her relatives, which leads him to conclude that letter-writing – just like speech – was learnt within the family nucleus, by actually corresponding with one's family. To this family training, it should be added that Florentine merchant families were used to preserving their personal correspondence in family archives: letters received from outside the household might have also served as models for letter-writing.

4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this article is to explore the functions of epistolary formulae for little experienced writers in the context of sixteenth-century Florence. In particular, by analysing the case study of the correspondence of a semi-literate woman, Lucrezia Albizzi Ricasoli, the paper seeks to assess whether formulae functioned primarily as formulation aids for little experienced writers.

Rutten and van der Wal (2012) argue that it is formulae's holistic nature – i.e. the possibility to retrieve them as a whole from memory, without grammatically analysing them – that made them an ideal tool for less experienced writers: recurring to formulae as single, unanalysed chunks would have reduced the writing effort, just as the use of formulae in speech production has been shown to reduce the processing effort (Rutten/ van der Wal 2012: 182–183). In order to prove that formulae served as *Formulierungshilfe* (Elspaß 2005: 157), therefore, I first need to ask whether the formulae used by Lucrezia were holistic units or are at least compatible with an interpretation that views them as holistic (research question 1).

---

19   These emerge, for example, when she describes having to send a servant to sell rags at the market because she has nothing else to sell (#r237), or when she is forced to be seen at the market buying the salt 'a libbra' [by pound], because 'lanecesita nonaleghe' [necessity knows no law/leagues] (#r246). The old, worn clothes she and her daughter Maddalena have to wear are an additional source of shame (#r237, #r246), as well as a growing cause of concern in relation to Maddalena's marriage prospects.

20   From a much-quoted excerpt from Giovanni Villani's fourteenth-century chronicle, we know that even in medieval Florence there were girls who went to school (Villani 1979: 208), but it seems unlikely that they were many. However, in his discussion of lay vernacular schools in late medieval Tuscany, Black cites the example of four female teachers who taught boys as well as girls (Black 2007: 203).

21   On women's access to texts in Renaissance Italy, see Richardson (2020: 149-224).

According to Rutten and van der Wal (2012: 186), the prefabricated nature of epistolary formulae is revealed by the fact that, in their Dutch letter corpus, these items are fairly fixed, and are combined in a discourse structure whose order also tends to be fixed (although one or more formulae may be left out). Fixedness of the individual formulae and of the larger discourse structure that they form will therefore be taken as evidence of the prefabricated nature of these elements. A range of other criteria can also be used to identify holistic units, including non-compositionality (see Wray 2002: 19–43). One criterion proposed by Hickey for formula identification in child language is that formulae 'may be used inappropriately, either syntactically or semantically' (Hickey 1993: 32). Another is that 'the utterance is grammatically advanced' compared to the rest of the language (Hickey 1993: 32), something also pointed out by Elspaß for epistolary formulae in German letters (Elspaß 2005: 170). These criteria will be used to assess whether epistolary formulae could be learned and retrieved by Lucrezia as prefabricated sequences.

After establishing whether formulae could function as holistic units, and therefore had the potential to facilitate Lucrezia's writing effort, I will assess whether her use of optional epistolary formulae decreased with an increase in writing experience (research question 2). Although Lucrezia's writing experience remained rather low even in her latest letters, it must have increased with time, since, as we have seen, she eventually stopped relying on delegate writers. Hence, if epistolary formulae served the primary function of aids for formulation, then it would be reasonable to expect their frequency to decrease with time, as Lucrezia's writing experience grew. On the other hand, if Lucrezia used formulae as conventions to style her social identity and conform to specific group practices, we would not necessarily expect their number to decrease.

Possible lifespan changes in Lucrezia's use of formulae over time could also reveal whether these elements were used to style her social identity. As mentioned before, an intensely normative pressure – proven by the popularity of printed letter books – increasingly formalised the practice of letter-writing in sixteenth-century Italy. This might have led writers to adopt more formulae, and/or more complex and elaborate ones, as the century went by, and might have led Lucrezia to adopt more formulae, and more complex formulae, as her writing experience grew. My third research question therefore asks whether the formulae used by Lucrezia changed over time and became increasingly more complex and elaborate. A positive answer would suggest that this writer used formulae to signal her belonging to specific group practices and was possibly influenced by an increasingly codified epistolary practice. Complexity, in this context, will be operationalised by relying on the word length of formulae. Szmrecsányi (2004) notes that using length as a proxy for syntactic complexity is probably the most frequently used method, and 'has the obvious advantage that this is a straightforward method which does not even necessarily involve manual coding' (Szmrecsányi 2004: 1033).

In summary, my article addresses the following research questions:

1) Were the formulae used by Lucrezia learned and retrieved as holistic units?

2) Did Lucrezia use more optional formulae in her early letters than in her late ones?

3) Did she adopt different and more complex formulae as the years went by?

Positive answers to the first two questions would lead us to hypothesise that formulae, for this writer, functioned primarily as aids to reduce the writing effort. A positive answer to the third question would instead lead us to hypothesise that, as Lucrezia's writing experience grew, she also relied on formulae to style a letter-writing persona and to signal participation in certain group practices.

5 METHODOLOGY

The twenty autograph letters Lucrezia wrote to her sons were transcribed following conservative criteria. I offered a semi-diplomatic transcription, meant to mirror as close as possible the original text: the only change implemented is a distinction between *s* and *z*, which in Lucrezia's hand are rendered through the same grapheme. Each letter was then tagged with metadata including date, addressee's name, sender's and addressee's location, archival location, along with an identifier that serves to locate the letter within a bigger dataset that I have built.

I chose to restrict the analysis to those formulae that were used in the superscription and in the epistolary frame, leaving out, for the time being, those used in the body of the letter. The term 'epistolary frame' (Bentein 2023: 433) or 'pragmatic frame' (Palermo 1994: 113) refers to the opening and closing, which represent the most ritualised and conventionalised part of the letter. This part is largely made up of fixed formulae and is characterised by a somewhat constrained thematic development, in opposition to the referential content, i.e. the part of the letter where formulae are much less frequent and where the thematic development is free (Palermo 1994: 113–119). This dichotomic structure that sees letters divided into an epistolary frame and a referential part has been adopted to describe the structure of Italian private letters, for example by Antonelli (2003: 59) and Magro (2014: 132–133), and was first proposed to describe Italian merchants' letters by Palermo (1994), who has argued that it would be fruitless to search, in this text type, something similar to the rhetorical subdivisions of *salutatio*, *exordium*, *narratio*, *petitio* and *conclusio* discussed in medieval treatises of *ars dictamini* (Palermo 1994: 113–114). In her study of Cassandra Chigi's sixteenth-century private letters, Fantini has argued the same, identifying the richly formulaic epistolary frame as the only recognisable rhetorical structure (Fantini 1999: 133).

The choice to restrict the analysis to the epistolary frame (as well as the superscription) was not only driven by the formulaic nature of this part. It was also dictated both by reasons of space and by the observation that the most frequent word strings in the body of Lucrezia's letters seemed more a reflection of orality than markers specific to

the letter genre – in other words, they looked like formulae, but not necessarily like epistolary formulae. For example, a very frequent word string used in the body of the letter, 'ui dicho (che)' [I tell you (that)] (forty-four occurrences), might be interpreted as a text-structural formula – i.e. a formula realising the transition from one part of the discourse to another (Rutten/van der Wal 2014: 82) – but is in fact almost exclusively used to convey emotionally charged information.[22]

The formulae used in the epistolary frame and in the superscription were then extracted through close reading and categorised according to their pragmatic function, adopting the classification developed by Rutten/van der Wal (2014: 81–85). This classification distinguishes between text-type formulae – such as signature, address formulae and opening formulae – which identify the text as a letter and are obligatory elements, text-structural formulae, which realise the transition from one part of the discourse to another, intersubjective formulae – such as greetings and health formulae – which focus on the relationship between writer and addresse, and Christian-ritual formulae, which place the writer and/or the addressee under religious protection.

The formulae, extracted and categorised, were then tabulated in an Excel spreadsheet that allowed me to visualise them and to count their occurrences.

6 ANALYSIS

This section reports the results of the analysis for the superscription (Section 6.1), the opening (Section 6.2) and the closing (Section 6.3).

6.1 Superscriptions

As noted by Nevala (2007), superscriptions – formulae placed outside of the letter to identify the recipient and their location – are not private in the same sense that address formulae inside the letter are: they are intended to be read not only by the recipient but by other people too, for example the mail carrier, or other family members. Hence, compared to address formulae inside the letter, these formulae are more likely to display negative politeness strategies, to follow normative schemes more rigidly, and to be influenced by letter-writing manuals (Nevala 2007).

Among the letters by Lucrezia that are entirely autograph, only two bear allograph superscriptions (#r511, #r246). It is probably not by chance that both are letters from the earlier block: while Lucrezia's writing experience was still limited, she might have felt it safer to delegate to others the less private part of the letter.

In those cases where the superscription is autograph, the letters from the early and middle block consistently display the same formula, with the empty slot filled by the name of Lucrezia's son, either Braccio, or Matteo (the latter, as the first-born son and head of the family, is the only one to be constantly attributed the title *messere*):

---

22   See the following examples: 'uidicho che nouolio piuuiuere aquesto ghouerno' [I am telling you I don't want to live like this anymore] (#r237); 'uidicho setenette diquesti modi andrette irouina' [I am telling you if you keep these habits you will go broke] (#r237), etc.

Al (s)uo fig(l)uol(o) charisimo (meser) ____ de richasoli inciant(t)i [To her dear-
est son (messer) ____ de Ricasoli in Chianti]

This lack of variation suggests that this formula was learned holistically and re-
trieved as a whole from memory.

In letters from the late block, we find one instance of the old formula (#r20) and four
instances of a new variant, which slightly increases in complexity through the addition
of the deferential adjective *onorandd(o)*, coordinated with *charisimo*:

Al suo onorra(n)dd(o) e charisimo filiuol(o) meser ____ richasoli inciantti [To
her honourable and dearest son messer ____ Ricasoli in Chianti] (#r16, #r17,
#r18, #r19)

The superscription formula, therefore, shows some evidence of lifespan change to-
wards increasing complexity. This slightly more elaborate formula is, however, once
again used multiple times without any variation, suggesting that, like the previous for-
mula, it was also learned holistically.

6.2 The opening

The opening of Lucrezia's letters is made up of two obligatory, 'text-type' elements,
i.e. the address formula and the opening formula. These formulae are only missing in
one letter from the early block (#r221), which begins *in medias res* ('quando partisti di
qui …' [when you left from here …]) and where the only opening element is a visual
one, i.e. a cross (an ancient epistolary convention that is almost constant throughout
Lucrezia's correspondence).[23] In addition to these obligatory elements, in a minority of
cases the opening formula is followed by another formula which acknowledges receipt
of the information (#r240, #r271, #r16), performs a Christian-ritual function (#r237) or
realises the transition from the opening formula to the body of the text (#r302).

In all cases, the address formula is a two-word string, 'fil(i)uo(l(o)) charisimo' [dearest
son] (19 occurrences), which remains fixed throughout twenty-seven years. In line with
Nevala's (2007) finding that superscriptions tend to be more deferential and more subject
to normative pressure than address formulae inside the letter, Lucrezia's address formula
is more geared towards positive politeness – dispensing with titles such as *messere* or
deferential adjectives like *onorando* – and does not increase in complexity over time.

By contrast, opening formulae are more varied. In their study of French soldiers'
letters from the Great War, Große *et al.* (2016) note that opening formulae function
as a thematic starting point to establish communication and inscribe the letter in the
thread of epistolary exchange. Hence, they consider the sharing of information on mail
or health at the opening of letters as part of the ritual structure of the text. Opening
formulae are distinguished into responsive or declarative, on the basis of whether the
letter constitutes a response or initiates a conversation.

---

23   Petrucci has noted that the *signum crucis* started to appear at the opening of letters between the third and fourth
      century AD (Petrucci 2008: 20).

In Lucrezia's letters, all opening formulae touch on the 'mail' theme – either the means of communication (i.e. the mail carrier), or letters or parcels received or sent. The most common formula that identifies the mail carrier is the following, with the empty slot filled by the name of the carrier:

> e ariuat(t)o (qui) ____ [___ has arrived here] (#r237, #r240, #r246, #r247, #r691, #r302, #r19, #r20)

This formulation – occurring across eight letters – is not affected by lifespan change, appearing in early as well as late letters. In one case, the subject is plural while the verb inside the formula remains singular: 'eariuato qui giouani di domenicho emichele dimateo' [Giovanni di Domenico and Michele di Matteo has arrived here] (#r20). This suggests that this formula might have been memorised as a whole without being subject to analysis, although lack of agreement between verb and post-verbal subject is common in Tuscan varieties today (and not unheard of in old Italian; see Durante 1981).

Reference to the mail carrier is also made by means of other strategies:

> - through the declarative formula 'per ___ ui/ti mand(d)o …' [By ___ I send you…] (#r335, #r17)
> - through the responsive formulae 'per (le man de) ___ se autto' [through (the hands of)___ I have received] (#r242, #r18)

In other cases, what is referred to is the actual mail or goods, rather than the carrier. Most common in this category is a responsive formula acknowleding receipt of the letter (3 occurrences):

> tengho una uostra [I have your letter] (#r224, #r271)
> tengho lauostra ame ghratisima [I have your letter very dear to me] (#r16)

This formula shows some evidence of lifespan change towards increased complexity and conventionalisation: the first instance is used in letters from the early and middle block, the second and more complex one is found in a late letter. This is a widespread formula also found in printed books: 'ho riceuuta una uostra a me gratissima' [I have received your letter very dear to me] is found, for example, in the letters by Saint Osanna from Mantua, published in 1524 inside a devotional book by Girolamo da Monte Oliveto (fol. 147ᵛ).

In one case, reference to a letter received is made through a rather common formula that underlines the success of the communication effort: 'per una tua intenddo quanto di' [through your (letter) I have understood what you said] (#r690). In another, the opening states the receipt of goods: 'essi riceutto granno' [grain was received] (#r511). In another case, a declarative formula makes reference to the letter being sent: 'questa per farui intendere chome…' [This (letter) (is) to let you know that…] (#r243).

In a letter from the late block, the mail is referred to by combining two opening formulae, one responsive and one declarative, through co-ordination: 'oafare risposta adua letere eperdarui auiso chome' [I must reply to two letters and to let you know that…] (#r22). The result does not work syntactically, suggesting that Lucrezia was not analysing these formulae, treating them instead as holistic units.

6.3 The closing

Counting the number of formulae in the closing of Lucrezia's letters yields the results reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of formulae in Lucrezia's letter closings, classified according to type.

ID	Year	discourse-ending	health	greetings	take care formulae	location	date	total
#r511	1539	1	1			1	1	4
#r221	1542	1				1	1	3
#r224	1542	1	1			1		3
#r237	1542	1	1			1	1	4
#r240	1542	1	1			1	1	4
#r242	1542	1	1		1	1	1	5
#r243	1542	1	1			1	1	4
#r246	1543	1	1			1	1	4
#r247	1543	1				1	1	3
#r690	1549	1	1			1	1	4
#r271	1550	1	1			1	1	4
#r691	1553	1	1			1	1	4
#r302	1554	1	1			1	1	4
#r335	1554	2	1		1	1	1	6
#r16	1565	2	1	1	1	1	1	7
#r17	1565	2	1	1		1	1	6
#r18	1565	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
#r19	1565	1	1	1		1	1	5
#r20	1565	1	1	1		1	1	5

Keeping in mind that location and date were obligatory, 'text-type' formulae, visual inspection of this table shows that, in the letter closing, Lucrezia's use of formulae did not decrease with time. In fact it increased, and this increase is mostly accounted for by a duplication of discourse-ending formulae and – to a greater degree – by the addition of intersubjective formulae (especially greetings) in Lucrezia's late letters.

In all letters the closing is marked by at least one discourse-ending formula, i.e. a text-structural formula that realises the transition from the body of the letter to the closing (on which, see Serra 2023). The most ubiquitous discourse-ending formula consists in the two-word string 'ne/non altro' [nothing else], which is always used (eighteen

occurrences), except for #r221 where this is replaced by 'editantto uidicho' [and of this I tell you]. This formula marks the transition to the letter closing, beginning a sequence usually structured as follows:

> **closing-discourse formula** 'ne/non altro' [nothing else] – **health formula** 'ista(tte) sano' [stay healthy] – **location** 'di firenz(z)e' [from Florence] – **date** 'ali/di/adi di' + month + year

This sequence, in turn, is followed by the signature, although in early letters non-formulaic parts often intervene between this sequence and the signature (#r551, #r221, #r224, #r237, #r243), suggesting that at this time Lucrezia's textual planning was still quite limited.

Although a few letters depart slightly from this model,[24] this structure appears quite fixed, both in the individual formulae and in the order in which they are combined. This structure, therefore, represents the basic backbone of the closing of Lucrezia's letters, and this is true for the earliest as well as the latest texts.

However, the closing of Lucrezia's letters is subject to lifespan change. On the one hand, the addition of intersubjective formulae marks a clear distinction from the early to the middle and late block, as intersubjective formulae are rare in letters from the early block, appearing only once ('fateui uezzi' [treat yourself well], #r242). They sometimes appear in letters of the middle and late block in the form of a 'take care' formula, an optional element that is found before the closing sequence:

> abiateui chura situ esirafaello elsi liaatri echosi e bestiami [take care both you and Raffaello and so the others and so the cattle] (#r335)

> ingeniateui di riguardarui e farui uezzi [take care and treat yourself well] (#r16)

> fateui uezzi [treat yourself well] (#r18)

However, the element that marks the most important novelty is the greeting, absent from the early letters, but always present in the late block, where it is expressed by means of a recommendation formula (consisting in the verb *raccomandarsi* [to recommend oneself] + dative):

> a tut(t)i mi rachomando [to all I recommend myself] (#r16, #r18, #r19, #r20)
> eauoi ealaghostansa earafaello eabracco mirachomanddo [to you and to Gostanza and Rafaello and Braccio I recommend myself] (#r17)

---

24 In #r224, the location is missing and the health formula is added after the date, probably as an afterthought. In #r242, an intersubjective element ('fateui uezzi' [take care]) is inserted between the discourse-ending and the health formula. The health formula is missing in two early letters, i.e. #r221 and #r247 (in the former, the discourse-ending formula 'ne altro' is replaced by 'editantto uidicho').

Within the fixed closing structure described above, accommodating these new elements posed some challenges. Their position oscillates, as Lucrezia does not seem quite sure where to place them, and whether these elements should precede, or follow, the closing.

One solution is to duplicate the discourse-ending formulae, so that greetings or other intersubjective formulae become encapsulated between these elements. This is what we find in #r335, where the formula 'ne altro' [nothing else] is repeated twice, and in #r16 and #r17, where the first discourse-ending formula is a much more complex alternative to 'ne altro': this alternative, 'ne saro piu lungha a(lo i)criuere faro fine' [I will not write longer, I will put an end to writing], is stylistically higher than the surrounding text and is in fact a combination of two discourse-ending formulae. However, it is used twice in the same formulation, suggesting that the whole macro-sequence was learned and retrieved as a unit, perhaps under the influence of some written model.[25]

> **ne altro** abiateui chura situ esirafaello elsi liaatri echosi ebestiami **nealtro** istatte sani difirenzze adi 29 daprille 1554 [Nothing else. Take care both you and Raffaello and so the others and so the cattle. Nothing else. Stay healthy. From Florence on the day 29 April 1554.] (#r335)

> **nesaro piu lungha alo icriuere faro fine** ingeniateui di riguardarui e farui uessi (…) **ne altro** atutti mirachomando istate sani di firenze adi 3 disetenbre 1565 [I will not write longer, I will put an end to writing. Make sure to take care and treat yourself well (…) Nothing else. To all I recommend myself. Stay healthy. From Florence on the day 3 September 1565.][26] (#r16)

> **nesaro piu lungha acriuere faro fine** eauoi elaghostansa earafaello eabracco mirachomanddo (…) **ne altro** istate sani di firenzze adi 5 di setenbre 1565 [I will not write longer, I will put an end to writing. And to you and to Gostanza and Raffaello and Braccio I recommend myself (…). Nothing else. Stay healthy. On the day 5 September 1565.] (#r17)

Another solution, adopted in Lucrezia's last three letters (#r18, #r19, #r20), is to accommodate the greetings at the very end of the closing sequence, as in:

> nealtro istate sani di firezze adi 8 di setenbre 1565 **eatuti mirachomando** [Nothing else. Stay healthy. From Florence on the day 8 September 1565. And to all I recommend myself] (#r19)

In summary, the closing of Lucrezia's late letters includes more epistolary formulae in comparison with her early letters: it makes space for intersubjective formulae such as

---

25   This is not surprising, as the semi-literate are known to make use of prefabricated, prestigious formulae, which results in an uneven register (D'Achille 1994: 75).

26   Here, a further intersubjective element – 'atutti mirachomando' – breaks up the closing sequence.

greetings, and frequently contains more than one discourse-ending formula. While not abandoning the formulae she used in her early letters, Lucrezia complements them with alternative, semantically equivalent variants that are grammatically more complex, as seen in the case of the discourse-ending formulae.

7 CONCLUSION

Epistolary formulae mark private, everyday letters as written texts, drawing attention to the existence of genre-specific conventions. Their use – which has been shown to be abundant in texts by semiliterate writers – challenges the view of letters as the best approximation of speech (Elspaß 2005: 156–157).

In many respects, Lucrezia's letters reflect quite closely a language of immediacy. Words are often repeated or left out, the same concept is reprised multiple times, there are digressions and postscripts – all of which attests to a scant level of textual planning. Dialogue is sometimes reported by means of direct discourse (#r240), interjections are frequent, and idiomatic expressions are plentiful, as in Lucrezia's reminder to her son that 'cinosi misura nondura' [who does not measure themselves, does not last] (#r224, #r240). However, my analysis has shown that Lucrezia was not unaware of epistolary conventions. Possibly the first (lay) woman in her family to write a letter in her own hand, she made use of several epistolary formulae when opening and closing her letters.

Returning to the research questions set out in Section 4, I had first asked whether Lucrezia might have learned and retrieved formulae as holistic units, i.e. prefabricated sequences that are not subject to analysis. Indeed, many of the formulae used by Lucrezia are compatible with an interpretation that views them as holistic. First, most formulae were highly fixed, displaying very little internal variation or lexical substitution. For example, the address form used towards her sons remained the same throughout Lucrezia's twenty-seven years of letter-writing. The same holds true for the health formula 'istatte sano', for the discourse-ending formula 'ne altro', and for the formulae used to indicate location and date. As we have seen for the letter closing, the discourse structures in which these formulae were inserted could also be highly stereotypical. With time, as Lucrezia's writing experience grows, we see her adopt more formulae and more complex formulae. However, several of these new formulae – including the superscription, the greetings, the discourse-ending formulae – are also fixed, being repeated time after time with little variation. As seen for the closing, these new formulae needed to be accommodated into the rigid structure that Lucrezia knew, which resulted in a modified, but still stereotyped macro-structure.

Moreover, some of the formulae she used were employed inappropriately within the syntax of the broader sentence and, as seen before, inappropriateness of use is a criterion for the detection of holistic units (Hickey 1993: 32). This was the case for the opening formula 'e ariuat(t)o (qui)___' [___ has arrived here] which did not always agree with its subject (#r20), and for the combination of two opening formulae which yielded a sentence that did not work syntactically: 'oafare risposta adua letere eperdarui auiso chome' [I must reply to two letters and to let you know that…] (#r22). Finally, a further potential characteristic of prefabricated units is that they are grammatically advanced

compared to the rest of the text (Hickey 1993: 32). I found some evidence of this in the discourse-ending formula 'ne saro piu lungha a(lo i)criuere faro fine' [I will not write longer, I will put an end to writing] (#r16, #r17), which appeared to be a case of influence from above.

All of this suggests that formulae could be memorised by Lucrezia as single units and potentially serve her as a 'safe option' to compose a text. Now that it has been established that formulae could represent holistic units for this writer, I will turn to the second research question: given that Lucrezia's writing experience increased in the course of her life, did the number of optional formulae she used decrease with time? In this case, the answer is negative. If anything, the number of formulae slightly increases, mostly in the closing with the appearance of greetings that were absent from the earlier letters, and with a multiplication of discourse-ending formulae. This does not suggest a simple inverse correlation between level of writing experience and use of epistolary formulae, of the type that has been proposed for other linguistic traditions. It suggests instead that formulae might have been more than aids for formulation.

As for research question 3, i.e. whether the formulae used by Lucrezia show evidence of lifespan change and increase in complexity and elaboration, the answer is affirmative. We have seen this in the change of the superscription to a more elaborate formula geared towards negative politeness; in the replacement of the opening formula 'tengho una uostra' with 'tengho la uostra a me ghratissima'; in the adoption of an alternative, longer and 'bookish' discourse-ending formula; and in the writer's attempt to string together different opening formulae. This suggests that, as Lucrezia's writing experience grew, epistolary formulae were also a means by which she attempted to construct a letter-writing persona. In a society where letter-writing was becoming more and more codified, she seems to have relied on formulae more, not less, with the passing of time. This role of formulae as a means to signal participation in certain community practices, however, is not itself incompatible with them having a role also as a 'safe option' for formulation.

To explain these data, I hypothesise that the relationship between (low) writing experience and (high) use of formulae was not necessarily linear. A writer at the beginning of an acquisition process might simply not know many formulae: at extremely low levels of writing experience, a writer's reliance on formulae would thus be limited. This would have been the case for Lucrezia in the late 1530s and early 1540s, a time when she had just started to write: as seen before, her early letters showed evidence of a lower ability of textual planning, and in one of them (#r221) she even forgot text-type formulae that are usually obligatory – i.e. the address formula and the opening formula – beginning the text *in medias res*. The fact that, during these years, Lucrezia sometimes delegated to others the writing of the superscription is a further sign that she was insecure when it came to epistolary conventions. After this first stage, as a writer's experience slightly increases, familiarising them with letter-writing conventions, writers would start to rely on formulae more heavily, using them as a 'safe option' to compose a letter. It is important to stress that Lucrezia remains, until the end of her life, someone with limited writing experience, retaining a low level of graphic competence and

continuing to delegate to her son (Braccio) the writing of her account book (ASF Ricasoli Amministrazione 275). If a writer were to acquire even more writing experience, we might find that their use of formulae would again decrease, in keeping with what has been shown for other linguistic traditions. The formulae themselves might also become less fixed, as the ability to vary formulae has been observed to increase with increasing writing experience (De Blasi 1982: 35). Indeed, while Lucrezia's use of formulae was shown to increase over time, some elements that she added to the closing in her middle and late letters – especially the 'take care' formula – appear more subject to variation. These are hypotheses that I intend to test in future studies, where I will explore formulaic usage across subsequent generations of Ricasoli women who differed in their level of writing experience, thereby extending the analysis to the many letters that have come down to us by Lucrezia's daughter Maddalena and by her granddaughter Cassandra.

In conclusion, the results suggest that many of the formulae used by Lucrezia might have well been prefabricated units, retrieved as a whole from memory. As such, these formulae could have helped this little experienced writer as aids for formulation. However, tracking the use of these formulae over time has revealed that the relationship between the use of formulae and (low) writing experience was not necessarily linear. The fact that Lucrezia used more, and more complex formulae as time went by suggests that these elements also served other functions, related to group practices and social identities.

References

Primary sources

ARETINO, Pietro (1538) *De le lettere* […]. *Libro primo*. Venezia: Francesco Marcolini.
ASF (Archivio di Stato di Firenze), Ricasoli:
- Filze (Parte Antica Filze): 32, 40, 41, 46, 49, 56.
- Amministrazione (Parte Antica Libri di Amministrazione): 275.
GIROLAMO DA MONTE OLIVETO (1524) *Libretto della vita & transito della beata Osanna da Mantua* […]. Bologna: Benedetto Faelli, heirs.
MINIATORE, Bartolomeo (1485) *Formulario di epistole missive e responsive*. Bologna: Ugo Ruggeri.
VILLANI, Giovanni (1979) *Cronica*. Edited by Giovanni Aquilecchia. Turin: Einaudi.

Secondary sources

ANTONELLI, Giuseppe (2003) *Tipologia linguistica del genere epistolare nel primo Ottocento. Sondaggi sulle lettere familiari di mittenti colti*. Roma: Edizioni dell'Ateneo.
AUSTIN, Frances (2004) "'Heaving this importunity': The surviving of opening formulas in letters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." *Historical Sociolinguistics and Sociohistorical Linguistics* 4. https://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/hsl_shl/heaving_this_importunity.htm [accessed on 17 June 2024].
BALESTRACCI, Duccio (2004/2010) *Cilastro che sapeva leggere. Alfabetizzazione e*

istruzione nelle campagne toscane alla fine del Medioevo (XIV-XVI secolo). Pisa: Pacini Editore.

BARKER, Sheila (2015) "Painting and humanism in early modern Florentine convents." *Memorie domenicane* [special issue] 46, 105–139.

BARUCCI, Guglielmo (2009) *Le solite scuse: un genere epistolare del Cinquecento*. Milano: Franco Angeli.

BASORA, Matteo (2017) *"La prima donna del mondo": Isabella d'Este epistolografa tra lettere e arti. Edizione e analisi linguistica di missive autografe e dei copialettere.* [PhD Thesis.] Pavia: Università di Pavia.

BENTEIN, Klaas (2023) "A typology of variations in the Ancient Greek epistolary frame (I-III AD)." In: Georgios Giannakis/Emilio Crespo/Jesus della Villa/Panos Filos (eds), *Classical philology and linguistics. Old themes and new perspectives*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 429–472.

BERSANO, Ottavia (2022) *Studi filologico-linguistici sul fiorentino argenteo. Le lettere di Alessandra Macinghi ai figli esuli Filippo, Lorenzo e Matteo Strozzi (sec. XV)*. [PhD Thesis.] Firenze/Bonn: Università di Firenze/Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn.

BERSANO, Ottavia (2023) "Sulla ricchezza lessicale delle 'Lettere' di Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi." In: Barbara Fanini (ed.), *"La sua chiarezza séguita l'ardore". Studi di linguistica e filologia offerti a Paola Manni*. Firenze: Società Editrice Fiorentina, 17–54.

BLACK, Robert (2007) *Education and society in Florentine Tuscany*. Vol. 1: *Teachers, pupils and schools, c. 1250–1500*. Leiden: Brill.

BROWN, Josh (2021) "Women's literacy in a late medieval religious community: Organisation and memorialisation at Santa Marta in Milan, 1405–1454." *Journal of Religious History* 45/3, 435–454.

CLARYSSE, Willy (2017) "Letters from high to low in the Graeco-Roman Period." In: Jennifer Cromwell/Eitan Grossman (eds), *Scribal repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the early Islamic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 240–250.

CONDE-SILVESTRE, J. Camilo (2016) "A 'third-wave' historical sociolinguistic approach to late middle English correspondence: Evidence from the Stonor letters." In: Cinzia Russi (ed.), *Current trends in historical sociolinguistics*. Warsaw: De Gruyter Open Poland, 46–66.

CRABB, Ann (2007) "'If I could write': Margherita Datini and letter writing, 1385–1410." *Renaissance Quarterly* 60/4, 1170–1206.

D'ACHILLE, Paolo (1994) "L'italiano dei semicolti." In: Luca Serianni/Pietro Trifone (eds), *Storia della lingua italiana*. Vol. 2: *Scritto e parlato*. Torino: Einaudi, 41–79.

D'AMELIA, Marina (1999) "Lo scambio epistolare tra Cinque e Seicento: scene di vita quotidiana e aspirazioni segrete." In: Gabriella Zarri (ed.), *Per lettera. La scrittura epistolare femminile tra archivio e tipografia, secoli XV-XVII*, 79–110. Roma: Viella, 1–32.

D'ONGHIA, Luca (2014) "Michelangelo in prosa: sulla lingua del 'Carteggio' e dei 'Ricordi'." *Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana* 8, 89–113.

DE BLASI, Nicola (1982) *Tra scritto e parlato: venti lettere mercantili meridionali e toscane del primo Quattrocento*. Napoli: Liguori.

DURANTE, Marcello (1981) *Dal latino all'italiano moderno: saggio di storia linguistica e culturale*. Bologna: Zanichelli.

ELSPASS, Stephan (2005) *Sprachgeschichte von unten. Untersuchungen zum geschriebenen Alltagsdeutsch im 19. Jahrhundert.* Tübingen: Niemeyer.

EVANS, Mel (2020) *Royal voices: Language and power in Tudor England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

FANTINI, Maria Pia (1999) "Lettere alla madre Cassandra Chigi." In: Gabriella Zarri (ed.), *Per lettera. La scrittura epistolare femminile tra archivio e tipografia, secoli XV-XVII*, 111–150. Roma: Viella.

FRESU, Rita (2004) "Lettere private di Lucrezia Borgia e di Vannozza Cattanei." *Contributi di Filologia dell'Italia Mediana* 18, 41–82.

FRESU, Rita (2008) "Il *gender* nella storia linguistica italiana (1988–2008)." *Bollettino di italianistica* 1, 86–111.

FRESU, Rita (2011) "La rappresentazione della donna attraverso la lingua degli scritti di S. Caterina da Siena e il problema del gender nei testi antichi." In Diega Giunta (ed.), *La donna negli scritti cateriniani. Dagli stereotipi del tempo all'infaticabile cura della vita*. Firenze: Nerbini, 93–132.

FRESU, Rita (2014) "Scritture dei semicolti." In Giuseppe Antonelli/Matteo Motolese/Lorenzo Tomasin (eds), *Storia dell'italiano scritto*. *Vol. 3: Italiano dell'uso*. Roma: Carocci, 195–223.

FRESU, Rita (2019) "Le scritture femminili nella storia linguistica italiana. Orientamenti teorici, modelli formali, casi paradigmatici." *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome - Moyen Âge*, 131/2, 369–383.

GROSSE, Sybille/Agnès STEUCKARDT/Lena SOWADA/Beatrice DAL BO (2016) "Du rituel à l'individuel dans des correspondances peu lettrées de la Grande Guerre." *SHS Web of Conferences* 27, 06008.

HICKEY, Tina (1993) "Identifying formulas in first language acquisition." *Journal of Child Language* 20/1, 27–41.

JAMES, Carolyn (2008) "A woman's path to literacy: The letters of Margherita Datini, 1384–1410." In: Megan Cassidy-Welch/Peter Sherlock (eds), *Practices of gender in late medieval and early modern Europe*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 43–56.

KABORYCHA, Lisa (2015) *A corresponding Renaissance. Letters written by Italian women, 1375–1650.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

LAITINEN, Lea/Taru NORDLUND (2012) "Performing identities and interaction through epistolary formulae." In: Marina Dossena/Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti (eds), *Letter writing in late modern Europe*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 65–88.

LITTA, Pompeo (1876) *Famiglie celebri italiane: Albizzi*. Torino: Francesco Basadonna.

MAGRO, Fabio (2014) "Lettere familiari." In: Giuseppe Antonelli/Matteo Motolese/Lorenzo Tomasin (eds), *Storia dell'italiano scritto*. *Vol. 3: Italiano dell'uso*. Roma: Carocci, 101–157.

MIGLIO, Luisa (2008) *Governare l'alfabeto: donne, scrittura e libri nel Medioevo*. Roma: Viella.

MORAN, Megan (2017) "From the palazzo to the streets. Women's agency and networks of exchange." In: William Caferro (ed.), *The Routledge history of the Renaissance*. London: Routledge, 386–401.

NEVALA, Minna (2007) "Inside and out. Forms of address in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century letters." In: Terttu Nevalainen/Sanna-Kaisa Tanskanen (eds), *Letter writing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 89–113.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu/Helena RAUMOLIN-BRUNBERG (2012) "Historical sociolinguistics: Origins, motivations, and paradigms." In: Juan M. Hernández-Campoy/Juan C. Conde-Silvestre (eds), *The handbook of historical sociolinguistics*,. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 22–40.

PALERMO, Massimo (1994) *Il carteggio Vaianese (1537–39). Un contributo allo studio della lingua d'uso nel Cinquecento*. Florence: Accademia della Crusca.

PASSERINI, Luigi (1861) *Genealogia e storia della famiglia Ricasoli*. Florence: Cellini.

PETRUCCI, Armando (1978) "Scrittura, alfabetismo ed educazione grafica nella Roma del primo Cinquecento: da un libretto di conti di Maddalena pizzicarola in Trastevere." *Scrittura e civiltà* 2, 163–207.

PETRUCCI, Armando (2008) *Scrivere lettere: una storia plurimillenaria*. Rome: Laterza.

PLEBANI, Tiziana (2019) *Le scritture delle donne in Europa: pratiche quotidiane e ambizioni letterarie (secoli 13.-20.)*. Roma: Carocci.

QUONDAM, Amedeo (1981) "Dal 'formulario' al 'formulario'." In: *Id., Le "carte messaggiere"*. Roma: Bulzoni, 13–157.

RICHARDSON, Brian (2020) *Women and the circulation of texts in Renaissance Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Marijke VAN DER WAL (2012) "Functions of epistolary formulae in Dutch letters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 13/2, 173–201.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Marijke VAN DER WAL (2014) *Letters as loot: A sociolinguistic approach to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

SANSON, Helena (2011) *Women, language and grammar in Italy, 1500–1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SANSON, Helena (2016) "Vittoria Colonna and language." In: Abigail Brundin/Tatiana Crivelli/Maria Serena Sapegno (eds), *A companion to Vittoria Colonna*. Leiden: Brill, 195–233.

SERIANNI, Luca (2015) *Prima lezione di storia della lingua italiana*. Bari: Laterza.

SERRA, Eleonora (2023) "The use of discourse-ending formulae: Exploring intra-writer variation in Michelangelo Buonarroti's correspondence." In: Markus Schiegg/Judith Huber (eds), *Intra-writer variation in historical sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 59–84.

STROCCHIA, Sharon (1999) "Learning the virtues: Convent schools and female

culture in Renaissance Florence." In: Barbara Whitehead (ed.), *Women's education in early modern Europe*. New York: Garland Pub, 3–46.

SZMRECSÁNYI, Benedikt M. (2004) "On operationalizing syntactic complexity." *JADT*, 1031–1038.

TELVE, Stefano (2014) "Il parlato trascritto." In: Giuseppe Antonelli/Matteo Motolese/Lorenzo Tomasin (eds), *Storia dell'italiano scritto. Vol. 3: Italiano dell'uso*. Roma: Carocci, 15–56.

TELVE, Stefano (2019) "Lingua e norme dell'italiano. Alcune considerazioni a partire dalle lettere fra Cinque e Settecento." In: Paolo Procaccioli (ed.), *L'epistolografia di antico regime.* Sarnico: Edizioni di Archilet, 243–359.

TRIFONE, Pietro (1988) "La confessione di Bellezze Ursini 'strega' nella campagna romana del Cinquecento." *Contributi di Filologia dell'Italia Mediana* 2, 79–136.

TRIFONE, Pietro (1989) "Sul testo e sulla lingua delle lettere di Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi." *Studi di lessicografia italiana* 15, 65–99.

VETRUGNO, Roberto (2018) "La lingua cortigiana in Europa: il carteggio di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga con Bona Sforza regina di Polonia." In: Elena Pirvu (ed.), *Il tempo e lo spazio nella lingua e nella letteratura italiana. Atti del VIII Convegno internazionale di italianistica dell'Università di Craiova, 16–17 settembre 2016*. Firenze: Cesati, 259–270.

WITT, Ronald (1995) "What did Giovannino read and write? Literacy in early Renaissance Florence." *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 6, 83–114.

WRAY, Alison (2002) *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Abstract

LEARNING TO WRITE LETTERS IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY FLORENCE: EPISTOLARY FORMULAE IN THE CORRESPONDENCE OF LUCREZIA ALBIZZI RICASOLI

In sixteenth-century Italy, more and more women began to actively participate in the practice of private letter-writing. This contribution presents the analysis of the language of twenty archival letters written in the Florentine vernacular by Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli, a Florentine patrician woman who had a low level of writing experience. Lucrezia began to write quite late in her life and went on to correspond with her sons over the next twenty-six years (1539–1565). Focusing on the formulae she used in the epistolary frame and in the superscriptions, my analysis assesses the degree of fixedness of these elements, discusses the functions they might have played in her letter-writing process, and investigates possible lifespan changes in relation to her progressive increase in writing experience. Drawing from hitherto unknown archival material, this study offers a contribution to the historical sociolinguistic debates on the use and social functions of formulae.

Povzetek

KAKO PISATI PISMA V FIRENCAH V 16. STOLETJU: PISEMSKE USTALJENE ZVEZE V KORESPONDENCI LUCREZIE ALBIZZI RICASOLI

V 16. stoletju je v Italiji vse več žensk začelo pisati zasebna pisma. Prispevek analizira jezik dvajsetih pisem, najdenih v arhivih, ki jih je v florentinskem vernakularnem jeziku napisala Lucrezia di Matteo Albizzi Ricasoli, ženska iz florentinske patricijske družine, ki je imela s pisanjem malo izkušenj. Lucrezia je s pisanjem začela dokaj pozno in si nato naslednjih šestindvajset let (1539–1565) dopisovala s svojima sinovoma. Pričujoča razprava se osredotoča na ustaljene zveze, ki jih je Lucrezia uporabljala v uvodnem in zaključnem delu pisem ter v segmentu, namenjenemu identifikaciji naslovnika. Oceniti skušamo, do kakšne mere so ti elementi ustaljeni, in ugotoviti, kakšne vloge bi lahko imeli pri njenem procesu pisanja. Ukvarjamo se tudi z morebitnimi spremembami, povezanimi z njeno vse večjo izkušenostjo v pisanju. Na osnovi doslej neznanega arhivskega gradiva ta raziskava prispeva k razpravam o rabi in o socialnih funkcijah ustaljenih zvez s stališča historične sociolingvistike.

Anne-Christine Gardner
Université de Lausanne
anne-christine.gardner@unil.ch

ENGLISH PAUPER LETTERS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND BEYOND: ON THE VARIABILITY AND EVOLUTION OF A NEW TEXT TYPE*

1 INTRODUCTION

Text typological studies have long attracted the interest of scholars exploring language variation and change in the history of English. Adopting a multidimensional approach, Biber/Finegan (1989: 512), for instance, show that letters rank among speech-like texts (cp. Culpeper/Kytö 2010: 18) and observe an evolution in letters from the seventeenth to the twentieth century in the shape of a drift from a more literate to a more oral style. While a significant amount of attention has already been paid to the familiar letter (e.g. Fitzmaurice 2002, Dossena/Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2008) and business correspondence (e.g. Dossena/Fitzmaurice 2006), as well as formulaic sequences typical for epistolary writing, also in languages other than English (e.g. Nevalainen/Raumolin-Brunberg 1995; Nevala 2004; Dossena 2006; Laitinen/Nordlund 2012; Rutten/van der Wal 2012, 2014), the primary focus in this article lies on the value of formulaic sequences for the exploration of a new subtype of vernacular correspondence emerging in the eighteenth century, i.e. the pauper letter.

Social change involving the creation and modification of a welfare system brought about the development of this new type of letter. Under the Old Poor Law, originally established in 1601, anyone in distress could appeal to their parish of legal settlement in order to obtain relief, which often took the form of financial aid, to be paid weekly or as a lump sum. Settlement could be gained through, e.g., birth, marriage or a completed apprenticeship (Whyte 2004: 280). Non-resident poor, i.e. those who had migrated to another parish, could also apply for support by writing to the overseers and church wardens, but risked being removed to their home parish where they would be relieved, but had fewer prospects (Sokoll 2000: 24; on migration patterns of paupers see Gardner *et al.* 2022).[1] It was then often more economic for home parishes to grant relief to paupers at their current domicile, so-called out-relief (Sokoll 2000: 24). Letters abound where applicants use this circumstance as a negotiating factor when soliciting relief.

---

1   In this article the term *pauper* is used both in the specific sense of 'a recipient of relief under the provisions of the Poor Law or of public charity', as well as with its broader meaning of 'a very poor person' (*OED Online*).

Only few pauper letters survive from the eighteenth century, starting in the 1730s (Sokoll 2001), but became much more numerous after a legislative change in 1795, as a result of which removal still remained a possibility, yet posed a lesser threat than before (for details see Sokoll 2001: 13, Sokoll 2008: 111–115). A noticeable increase in out-relief applications can also be observed from the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, when many labouring poor found it difficult to make ends meet, for instance after the "Year Without a Summer" (1816) (Brönnimann/Krämer 2016), which resulted in food shortages, and after the Napoleonic Wars (Beardmore 2020: 144).[2] Collecting poor-relief correspondence for Essex, Sokoll finds that fewer than 2% of the letters date to the eighteenth century (13 out of 758 letters), and that there is a "massive concentration of the material in the 1820s and early 1830s" (2001: 19); this serves to highlight the scarcity of pauper letters from the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, pauper letters are a "rich demotic source" (Jones/King 2015: 56) and even as smaller datasets offer valuable findings, as shown by earlier research by e.g. Fairman (2008), Gardner *et al.* (2022), and Auer *et al.* (2023). Pauper letters unlock the voices and experiences of the labouring poor, providing us with a much-needed perspective 'from below' (Elspaß 2005, Auer *et al.* 2015, Timmis 2020: 78–80), which remains under-researched in text typological studies.

The poor had already appealed for financial support in writing long before poor-relief applications were penned. These texts were typically formal petitions by the resident poor addressed to magistrates and dealt with at quarter sessions (Hindle 2004: 408, Healey 2016: 84–6). Jones/King (2015: 76) describe a petition as a "closed question" or "two-way monologue" where the request is either granted or dismissed, whereas a pauper letter initiates a dialogue for negotiating relief through correspondence. Another major difference between petitions and pauper letters is that the former were normally encoded by "highly competent scribes" (Jones/King 2015: 75), while the latter were mostly written by the supplicants themselves or someone from their immediate social circle (Sokoll 2001: 64; Jones/King 2015: 72, 75; King 2019: 36). The historians just referenced refer to poor-relief applications as pauper letters rather than petitions, highlighting differences in the production circumstances and communicative setting, but acknowledge the potential stylistic influence of petitions. According to Sokoll (2001: 57), "pauper letters, in their basic composition, rhetoric and gesture, may be said to be bounded by two contemporary types of epistolary expression: the 'familiar' letter on one hand, and the formal petition on the other". In Sokoll's view, relief applications resemble the familiar letter more than petitions (ibid.), while Jones/King (2015: 73–4) note that the question of "how and why the emphasis shifted so comprehensively from one form of appeal to the other over this period" remains unanswered. In earlier linguistic research, in contrast, the labels 'petition' and 'pauper letter' are sometimes used synonymously (e.g. Laitinen/Auer 2014, Auer 2015). This article sets out to determine empirically, firstly, whether poor-relief applications should be classified as petitions or

---

2   Only following the 1819 Vestry Act parish records were officially required to be kept in order, and increasingly assistant overseers and vestry clerks were paid to manage these records (Sokoll 2001: 23). Further reasons for the uneven diachronic distribution of pauper letters are discussed in King (2000: 414–5), Sokoll (2001: 19) and King (2019: 27).

as letters, and secondly, whether there was indeed a shift from petition style to letter style from the early eighteenth century towards the nineteenth century.

With respect to text classification, differing approaches (e.g. Biber/Finegan 1989, Kohnen 2001, Görlach 2004) have resulted in a "terminological maze" (Moessner 2005) – concerning terms such as 'genre', 'text type' and 'register' –, which has been comprehensively reviewed by Diller (2001). In this article, Kohnen's definition of text types as "dynamic patterns of communication combining aspects of function, context and form" (2001: 198) is adopted, which is able to account for variability and evolution in a text type over time. For the textual classification of pauper letters, five essential features will be investigated (voice, greeting, petition-element, closing formula and self-reference) which serve to distinguish petition-style from letter-style writing. These features have been chosen because they have a text-constitutive function, meaning that "[w]ithout actually having to read the body of the text, the text type is revealed" (Rutten/van der Wal 2012: 178; see also Wray (2002: 101) and Rutten/van der Wal (2014: 82–6)). Such an approach makes it possible to perform a quantitative text type analysis on a larger dataset, meaning that close reading of the texts in their entirety is not required for an initial classification and content is eliminated as a factor determining text type. Coherence across the dataset in terms of content is ensured by focussing on the first application letters surviving from all selected correspondence sets (see also Section 3). Since the five selected features are realised very differently in model letters and model petitions presented in letter-writing manuals, as illustrated in Section 4.1, they provide an immediately discernible contrast between the two writing styles and are therefore sufficient for the purposes of text type classification.[3] Closing formulae (e.g. *in duty bound shall ever pray*) and self-references (e.g. *your humble servant*) are typically composed of formulaic sequences, which can index social relationships and the writer's identity (e.g. Del Lungo Camiciotti 2006; Laitinen/Nordlund 2012). As such they are highly revealing with regard to the social practice of letter-writing (Barton/Hall 2000: 1, Rutten/van der Wal 2012: 194–5), offering insights into how the poor viewed and portrayed themselves in the application process, what kind of education they received, how they acquired formulaic sequences, and to what extent their use of these formulaic sequences differs from that of other social groups such as the better-educated parish officials.

In order to better understand the variability and evolution of pauper letters, inter- and intra-writer variation as well as self-corrections in closing formulae and self-references (as they appear throughout the text as well as attached to closing formulae) will be examined in more detail. Particular attention will be paid to how the linguistic choices regarding the five essential features relate to the communicative setting and the writer's social roles, as well as to the production circumstances of pauper letters, i.e. the question of who encoded the letters, and the educational background of the applicants.

---

3   Follow-up studies may be interested in analysing rhetorical and pragmatic or politeness strategies used in pauper letters with a view to comparing petition-style and letter-style writing. However, earlier research has not identified a differing use of rhetorical strategies in the two writing styles (e.g. Sokoll 2001; King 2019; Timmis 2020), which is a further reason for their exclusion in the present study, while the analysis of pauper letters from a pragmatic point of view lies outside the scope of this article.

While earlier research has touched on the language of pauper letters and the possible influence of petitions and models in letter-writing manuals on the writing of the labouring poor (e.g. Sokoll 2001, Auer 2015, Jones/King 2015, King 2019, Calvo Cortés 2020, Timmis 2020), these studies are based on smaller datasets or letters to different institutions, or they do not incorporate a more fine-grained diachronic analysis of pauper letters from a linguistic perspective; furthermore, a closer examination of intra-writer variation in applications for poor relief has not yet been undertaken.

The following section discusses the (limited) educational opportunities the labouring poor had in order to acquire letter-writing skills, which has a bearing on the linguistic repertoire available to them. Section 3 describes the correspondence material on which this article is based in more detail, i.e. 203 letters written between 1730 and 1834, primarily drawn from a corpus which is currently being compiled as part of the project *The Language of the Labouring Poor in Late Modern England* (LALP). The analysis of the poor-relief correspondence is divided into two parts. Section 4 is concerned with a diachronic investigation of the stylistic impact of petitions on pauper letters, providing a text-type classification for poor-relief applications. Section 4.1 identifies five relevant features (voice, greeting, petition-element, closing formula and self-reference) which can be found in pauper letters and where authors theoretically have the choice of writing in the style of a petition or of a familiar letter. Section 4.2 investigates actual usage patterns in pauper letters regarding these features, with a view to shedding more light on the observation by King/Jones (2015: 73–4) that in terms of preferred writing style there was a shift from petition to letter towards the nineteenth century. Section 5 focuses on the two features where variation in pauper letters is most extensive, i.e. closing formulae and self-references. Inter-writer variation concerning these features will be examined in Sections 5.1 and 5.2, respectively, both within pauper letters and, by way of comparison in order to shed light on social practices of letter-writing, in a sample of letters by parish officials and advocates (e.g. servant, doctor, landlord) who wrote on behalf of poor-relief applicants. In further steps, intra-writer variation (Section 5.3) and self-corrections (Section 5.4) in pauper letters will also be investigated, offering valuable insights into the acquisition and usage patterns of stylistic conventions as exhibited in closing formulae and self-references. Finally, the article closes in Section 6 with a brief summary and outlook.

2 ACQUIRING LITERACY AND LETTER-WRITING SKILLS

Working-class families typically relied on additional income generated by their children in order to make ends meet. With elementary education only becoming compulsory in England in 1880 (up to the age of 10, Stephens 1998: 79), children from poor backgrounds either received no schooling at all or had to abandon their education at an early stage, equipped with reading skills but unable to write, which was usually taught after reading (Stephens 1998: 2). An exception were National Schools run by the Church of England from 1811 onwards, where writing was taught first (Gardner 2023a; Iremonger 1813: 272).[4] Composition (e.g. of letters), a skill which would

---

4   For more information on the limited educational opportunities of the labouring poor see e.g. Timmis (2020: 51–71), Auer et al. (2023) and Gardner (2023a).

have been useful for poor-relief applicants, did not become part of the school curriculum until 1871 (Vincent 1989: 89). In the eighteenth century, working-class children often left school by the age of 8, and even by the mid-nineteenth century rarely received schooling after reaching the age of 10 or 11 (Stephens 1998: 2, Vincent 2014: 274). As a result, many among the labouring poor were unlikely to be more than semi-literate initially.

However, many of the lower classes are known to have continued their education alongside work, either informally by themselves, with their peers or in mutual improvement groups, as well as more formally in Sunday schools (from the 1780s onwards) and evening schools amongst others (Lawson/Silver 1973: 189–95, 238–50, Stephens 1998: 3, 5). Data from Suffolk prison records, for instance, show that among the offenders the most literate are over 40 years old, and the most illiterate under 15. Repeat offenders typically acquired a new skill in prison school or in-between prison sentences, either becoming semi-literate or moving from partial to full literacy (Crone 2018: 182–3). Lifelong learning thus played a significant role in the education of the labouring poor. Yet based on signature literacy, by 1840 still only approximately 27% of unskilled labourers and 21% of miners could read and write, while average signature literacy was at around 67% for men and 50% for women (Vincent 1989: 93, 97).

There is little evidence of poor-relief applicants directly relying on models presented in letter-writing manuals (Sokoll 2001: 59, Auer 2015: 142, King 2019: 36, see also Section 4.1). At the time of publication the letter-writing manuals by Brown (1770?) and Cooke (1770?) cost one and two shillings, respectively, which would have been forbiddingly expensive for most of the labouring poor when the letters in the corpus document the hopes of many of receiving one or two shillings per week (see also (1)) in order to ensure survival. Letters and petitions were also printed in newspapers, which would be more readily accessible to the poor than manuals. However, it must be born in mind that the authors of manuals drew on actual practice (King 2019: 362–3, fn. 15), meaning that the art of writing letters and petitions must have been part of communal knowledge. As Timmis (2020: 80) convincingly argues, literacy should be seen "as a community resource". Even if a person was not literate enough to (read and) write themselves ('possessive literacy'), they would be able to approach someone in their community who was ('accessive literacy') (cp. Timmis 2020: 81). Research has shown that letter-writing could have been taught by family or community members, and received letters could have been used as models (e.g. Whyman 2009: 221, Auer 2015: 143, Timmis 2020: 90–1). Since letters were often read aloud even the illiterate could become familiar with certain formulations typically found in epistolary communication (Timmis 2020: 91). Besides their family, friends and neighbours, other members of the local community could also provide assistance during the writing process, including landlords, employers, creditors, overseers, tradesmen, teachers, clergymen and members of the military (Sokoll 2001: 65, Houston 2014: 81, Jones/King 2015: 67, King 2019: 35). In this vein, Jones/King propose the existence of a "shared linguistic register of appeal […] that cut across social, economic and structural boundaries" (2015: 69) and suggest that pauper letters are "the product of a community of voices that interacted to produce a vernacular of appeal" (2015: 76).

3 DATA

The letters examined in this article were collected as part of the LALP project, which aims to build a corpus of letters written by paupers who applied for poor relief under the Old Poor Law (c. 1795–1834). As a result of opportunistic sampling in archives across England, the project also unearthed letters composed earlier in the eighteenth century, as well as correspondence by parish officials and advocates writing about or in support of paupers. For this article, three different subcorpora were compiled, drawing on a collection of letters which were transcribed by members of the LALP project as close to the original as possible.[5] The first was designed for the diachronic study of inter-writer variation and contains pauper letters written between 1730 and 1834 ('Diachronic Corpus'), the second acting as a 'Supplement' with letters from advocates and officials from the earlier eighteenth century for comparison. The third corpus forms the basis for the analysis of intra-writer variation and is comprised of letter sets by six poor-relief applicants ('Individual Corpus'). The following two subsections elaborate on the sampling principles and make-up of these corpora, including the authorship of the sampled letters. In total, 203 letters containing 39,674 words were prepared for analysis.[6]

3.1 Diachronic Corpus and Supplement

Linguistic choices in letters, especially concerning greetings, closing formulae and self-references, varied depending on the degree of familiarity between writer and addressee (e.g. Nevala 2004). In order to ensure comparability between pauper letters, missives indexing familiarity on a personal level or intimacy (an infrequent occurrence) rather than the social relationship of applicant and parish official were not considered, so that the sample only contains writing produced in a formal setting. In terms of content, the sample was restricted to first applications for poor relief, or, where not available, the earliest re-application for relief obtained from the archives.

Following these principles, the Diachronic Corpus of pauper letters comprises 139 letters (26,509 words) based on the LALP collection, with three letters added from Sokoll (2001: Letters 280, 281 and 707) to supplement data from the earlier eighteenth century.[7] For the diachronic analysis of pauper correspondence in Sections 4 and 5, the material was divided into three subperiods covering 25 to 30 years each (Table 1). The gap of 15 years between Subperiods I (1730–1759) and II (1774–1799) allows for a comparison between the earlier and the later eighteenth century without running the risk of imposing an artificial boundary in a continuous corpus, while Subperiod III (1807–1834) contains only letters from the nineteenth century

---

5   With the LALP corpus still under construction, suitable letters for the current investigation were sampled from 35 of 39 historic counties of England, without any particular regional bias. Limitations in data availability, particularly in the eighteenth century, currently do not permit the investigation of regional variation in the occurrence of stylistic features.

6   Addresses (or superscriptions) providing directions, as well as annotations on the documents in other hands were excluded from the word count and the analysis.

7   The transcription of Letter 281 used for analysis is my own, based on the image provided by Sokoll (2001: Plates XIX–XX).

up to the implementation of the New Poor Law in 1834. To avoid overrepresentation of individuals and thus an imbalance within Subperiod III, only one letter from each pauper was sampled. As a result, the gap between Subperiods II and III had to be reduced to 8 years. However, 85% of the letters in Subperiod III are dated between 1814 and 1834, which means that for most of the material a gap of 15 years to the previous subperiod is in fact observed.

Table 1. Diachronic Corpus (pauper letters)

Subperiod	Years	Senders	Number of letters	Word count
I	1730–1759	Paupers	22	4,166
II	1774–1799	Paupers	17	3,207
III	1807–1834	Paupers	100	19,136
		Total	**139**	**26,509**

The Supplement consists of 14 letters from the earlier eighteenth century by officials and advocates interceding on behalf of paupers (Table 2), and will be used to illustrate inter-writer variation between different social groups in Sections 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 2. Supplement (letters by advocates and officials for Subperiod I)

Subperiod	Years	Senders	Number of letters	Word count
I	1730–1759	Advocates	5	990
		Officials	9	1,537
		Total	**14**	**2,527**

As regards authorship of the pauper letters, a basic distinction is made for the Diachronic Corpus between (a) 'authentic' letters which were probably written by the paupers themselves or by someone from their circle with limited schooling (cp. Sokoll 2001: 65), and (b) 'non-authentic' letters which were probably encoded by someone with significant training and education.[8] These typically boast unusually neat and elaborate handwriting on even lines, sometimes with flourishes on individual characters, as well as careful layout, for instance observing deferential space (Sairio/Nevala 2013). The proportion of non-authentic letters in Subperiod II is much higher than in the two other subperiods (Table 3). However, this is the result of opportunistic sampling and probably also reflects the vagaries of archival survival. There is too little data to warrant the hypothesis that at the end of the eighteenth century paupers took recourse to professional support more often than in the other periods.

---

8   For a more detailed discussion of authorship and authenticity of pauper letters see Gardner (2023b).

Table 3. Authenticity of pauper letters in Diachronic Corpus

Authenticity	Subperiod I (1730–1759)		Subperiod II (1774–1799)		Subperiod III (1807–1834)	
	Letters	Words	Letters	Words	Letters	Words
Authentic	18	3,459	10	1,792	87	16,683
Non-authentic	4	707	7	1,415	13	2,453

The letters by advocates and officials in the Supplement are not examined further with respect to authorship, but are presumed to be authentic, i.e. representative of writings from the respective societal group to which each author belongs. Part of a parish official's duties was to engage in correspondence, sometimes with the support of a clerk, and advocates writing on behalf of the poor are believed to have acted on their own accord.

3.2 Individual Corpus

For the analysis of intra-writer variation in Section 5.3, six individuals were selected who sent a total of 54 letters to receive out-parish relief in the nineteenth century: Charls Ann Green, John Hammont, Sarah Hughes, Robert Kingston, Augustine Morgan and Frances Soundy (Table 4). Owing to the scarcity of available archival records, a comparable study is currently not possible for eighteenth-century writers. However, the findings of this case study are also likely to apply to the earlier material because of the similarities in the limited schooling opportunities of the labouring poor and in the production circumstances of their letters.

Table 4. Individual Corpus[9]

Applicant	Current domicile	Parish of legal settlement	Period	Number of letters (and hands)	Word count
Autographical					
Charls Ann Green	London	Wimborne (Dorset)	1818–1826	8 (same hand)	894
Augustine Morgan	Beaminster	Blandford Forum (Dorset)	1803–1806	6 (same hand)	1,023
Frances Soundy	Battersea	Pangbourne (Berkshire)	1818–1830	20 (same hand)	7,792
Total autographical				**34**	**9,709**

9   Four letters (one each from Green, Hammont, Hughes and Soundy) are also part of the Diachronic Corpus (Subperiod III). 'Current domicile' refers to the parish in which an individual resides at the time of application, i.e. the parish to which they had migrated to, whereas 'Parish of legal settlement' indicates the parish in which they had originally gained settlement (see Section 1).

Applicant	Current domicile	Parish of legal settlement	Period	Number of letters (and hands)	Word count
Non-autographical					
John Hammont	Manchester	Brampton (Huntingdonshire)	1821–1824	4 (4 different hands)	338
Sarah Hughes	London	Pangbourne (Berkshire)	1829–1830	11 (5 different hands)	968
Robert Kingston	Huntingdon	St Andrew the Less (Cambridgeshire)	1820–1821	5 (2 different hands)	432
Total non-autographical				**20**	**1,738**
			TOTAL	**54**	**11,447**

The question of whether the letters by the six applicants are autographical or not, and if non-autographical whether they are authentic or not, is of central importance in the linguistic analysis. In the case of three of the applicants (John Hammont, Sarah Hughes and Robert Kingston), several hands were involved in the composition of their letters over the course of time, and consequently their letters are deemed non-autographical. In other words, the person who penned the actual letter (writer) and the person whose name appears in the signature and who solicits support from their home parish (applicant) are not identical. It would appear that none of the three applicants were even able to write their own name, since the handwriting of the signatures (and even the spelling of the names) varies across the parishrent hands involved. Nevertheless, all non-autographical letters can be considered authentic, i.e. representative of the writing of the labouring poor, on account of the limited training evidenced in handwriting and layout (see previous subsection), with three exceptions: the third letter sent by Kingston and the last two sent by Hughes were clearly encoded by well-educated scribes.

For two other individuals, Augustine Morgan and Frances Soundy, clues in the letters allows us to conclude that missives are autographical, i.e. writer and applicant are identical. The production circumstances which Soundy describes in (1) leave no doubt:

(1) PS Sir I have wrote this un be none to any one But my salf (3_Soundy_1828_3)[10]

Likewise, Morgan must have been able to write as in one letter, not investigated here as it contains only brief instructions on how Morgan's relief should be conveyed, a certain Joseph Barratt acts as a witness to his handwriting. Lastly, Charls Ann Green's letters are also considered autographical. The eight letters sent in her name, and appealing for support for her family, were written by the same untrained hand over a period

---

10 The filenames of pauper letters follow the model 'Subperiod_Surname of applicant_Year'. In the Individual Corpus, several letters by the same applicant from the same year are numbered in temporal sequence with the addition of '_Number' after '_Year'. Non-authentic letters are marked with a superscript N at the end of the filename.

of eight years. Following Sokoll (2001: 64) and King (2019: 37), it is unlikely that the same scribe would have assisted her in the writing of the letters during such a long period of time. An analysis of dialectal features in Green's letters shows that the writer must have had their linguistic anchor in Dorset, where her parish of legal settlement is situated, which gives further support to the assumption that Green wrote these letters herself (Gardner *et al.* 2022).

4 PAUPER LETTERS: CATEGORISATION AND EVOLUTION

This section explores the impact of petitions on linguistic choices in pauper letters, first identifying five features typical for petitions where the authors of pauper letters have the option of adopting these or of writing in the style of a familiar letter (Section 4.1). A diachronic analysis of these features in pauper letters then follows in Section 4.2, with a view to classifying pauper letters as a text type and exploring the evolution of this text type from the early eighteenth to the nineteenth century.

4.1 Petition-style vs. letter-style writing

Both petitions and letters share the same rhetorical roots, having developed from Classical models which were subsequently adapted in medieval times (Sokoll 2001: 57, Houston 2014: 73–5, Jones/King 2015: 59f.). Jones/King (2015: 60) illustrate that the rhetorical tradition of petitions is remarkably uniform across time, space and culture, which leads them to state that "the form of the written petition in history remained [...] consistent over more than 1,800 years". In the eighteenth century, guidance works continued to perpetuate the model of the formal petition. The history and audience of English letter-writing manuals, the first being printed in the mid-sixteenth century, has been well-documented (e.g. Bannet 2005, Fens-de Zeeuw 2008, Auer 2015). The first such guides to specifically offer sections with model petitions appear to be *The Universal Letter-Writer; or, New Art of Polite Correspondence* by Thomas Cooke (1770?) and *The New and Complete English Letter-Writer; or, Whole Art of General Correspondence* by George Brown (1770?). These sections are advertised within the lengthy titles of the works as *Containing great Variety of Petitions on various Subjects, from Persons in low or middling States of Life, to those in higher Stations* (Cooke 1770?) and *The New Universal Petitioner, Comprehending The greatest Variety of Petitions, adapted to every Situation, with Directions for presenting them in a proper Manner* (Brown 1770?). Example (2) reproduces a model petition from Brown (1770?: 195f., original italics), which presents the case of a poor widow applying to her parish for financial support.

(2)   *To the Maſter, Church-Wardens and Overſeers of the Pariſh of --------.*
The humble Petition of A. B.
Sheweth,

That your petitioner's huſband was an honeſt induſtrious man, and lived many years in credit in the pariſh, where he ſerved every office, and paid ſcot and lot; but dying in diſtreſſed circumſtances, owing to his buſineſs having fallen off ſome

years ago, ſhe is left utterly deſtitute. In this unhappy ſituation ſhe has preſumed to addreſs herſelf to you; and as ſhe has a little work to do, when able to go through with it, ſo ſhe ſubmits to you, whether the allowance of two ſhillings per week would not be better than going in to the workhouſe. Your petitioner humbly hopes that her caſe will be taken into conſideration.
And ſhe, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

This case is reminiscent of the difficult circumstances which cause the lower classes to turn to their parishes of legal settlement for out-relief. One such application, by a husband with a large family and a wife who is unwell (1_Breddy_1746), is reproduced in Figure 1 and transcribed in full in (3).

(3)   Poole [ˆSEALˆ]rch 25 1746
ſir
        My necessity att presencs doth oblige
me to trobel you in this afair my family
being Large and my wife Lying ill ſo
Long and my misforten in Lameing my ſelf
for time back have brouft me be hind hand
with my house rent and Except I have not
the money to pay I do Expect my Goods to be
ſold wich I Cannot do with out ſo I hope
that you and the Gentelmen will Consider
the Clamytys I have đ had in my famyly and
if you pleas to ſend me 30 ſhillings it
will keep me from f[ˆ{…} HOLEˆ]ar trobel and I hope
not to trobel you any moore from your
                         ſaruant to Comand
                    John Breddy
as I Cant Come my ſelf I hope my
ſister will apear in my be half

On the basis of the model petition in (2) and a similar petition by a destitute widow in Cooke (1770?) (discussed in Auer 2015: 140–1), as well as the pauper letter in (3) and the other applications under investigation, it is possible to identify five essential features which are prescribed for petitions and to determine their realisation in applications written in the form and style of a familiar letter (Table 5). While petition-style features are fairly uniform across different samples, letter-style writing presents a significant amount of variation. Petitions are typically written in the third person and open with a heading containing the title(s) of the addressee(s) followed by the title of the petition and the sequence *Sheweth, That* across two separate lines (petition-element for short). Letters, in contrast, are normally written in the first person and begin with salutation such as *Gentlemen* or *Sir*, lacking the petition-element. The closing formula

311

expected in petitions is the "prototypical petitionary phrase" (Sokoll 2001: 59) involving a combination of *(as) in duty bound* and *shall/will ever pray*; *your petitioner* is used as a self-reference throughout the text and often also at the very end before the signature. In contrast, in letters there is considerable variation when it comes to closing formulae and self-referential terms (Sections 5.1 and 5.2). Although this list of features (and examples) is not exhaustive, it serves to illustrate major differences between petition-style and letter-style writing, and as such provides as a useful starting point for the analysis of variation in pauper letters in the following section.
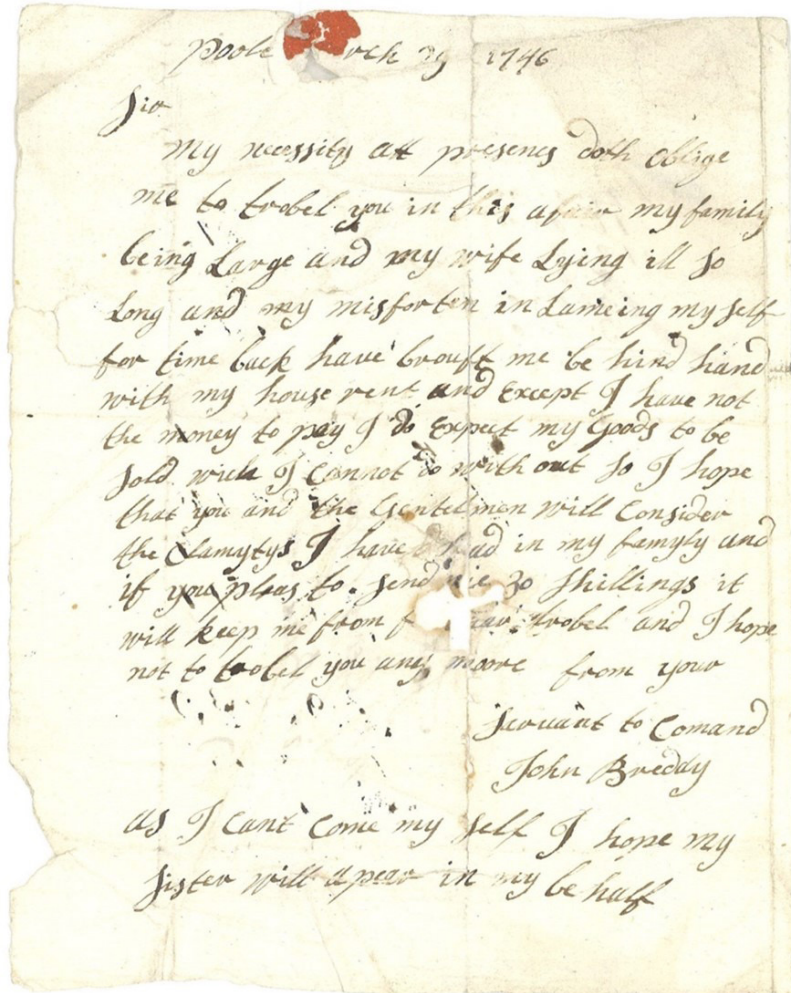
Figure 1. Letter by John Breddy, 25 March 1746, Poole[11]

---

11   This image is reproduced with kind permission of the Dorset History Centre (PE-BF/OV/13/1).

Table 5. Typical features of writing in petition style and letter style

Feature	Petition style	Letter style
Voice	3rd person	1st person
Greeting	Heading[12] (*To the Master/Minister, Church-wardens and Overseers of the Parish of …*)	Salutation (e.g. *Sir, Gentlemen, M[r] NAME*)
Petition-element	*The humble Petition of NAME // Sheweth, // That*[13]	X
Closing formula	*(as) in duty bound shall/will ever pray* (or variation thereof)	e.g. *I remain*, *so no more from*
Self-reference	*your petitioner*	e.g. *your humble servant*

4.2 A continuum of styles

As King/Jones (2015: 73–4) suggest, there was a comprehensive shift in pauper letters from petition style to letter style as the preferred form of epistolary expression in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This section seeks to verify this observation and explore inter-writer variation in pauper letters from a diachronic perspective, considering to what extent these letters contain petition-style or letter-style features. The features under consideration are voice, greeting, petition-element, closing formula and self-reference (Table 5 in Section 4.1).

How many pauper letters in the Diachronic Corpus contain between 0 and 5 petition-style features is displayed in Figure 2 (overall proportions) and Table 6 (detailed diachronic perspective). Although the dataset for the eighteenth century is comparatively small and the results need to be treated with caution, three broader tendencies can be observed. Firstly, relief applications which do not rely on any petition-style features at all are the most dominant. Overall, merely 12 out of 139 pauper letters (8.63%) show more than one petition feature. Secondly, the proportion of letters containing petition-style features is higher in the eighteenth century (c. 41% in both Subperiods I and II) than in the nineteenth century (21% in Subperiod III). Thirdly, there is a decrease in the number of petition features used in pauper letters over time. In the early eighteenth century 22.73% of all applications contain at least two petition features. This proportion appears to drop towards the end of the century (11.76%) and diminishes even further to 5% in the early nineteenth century. The only application boasting all five petition features under investigation dates from the first subperiod (1_Nason_1758). These findings, although based on relatively few letters, seem to confirm the observation by King/Jones (2015) concerning a shift in writing style, but suggests that it could be a gradual development. This may have been encouraged by the change in legislation at the end of the eighteenth century and is more fully in evidence owing to the increase in letter frequency (and therefore source material) in the earlier nineteenth century, as described in Section 1.

---

12   This term is taken from Włodarczyk (2013: 203f.).

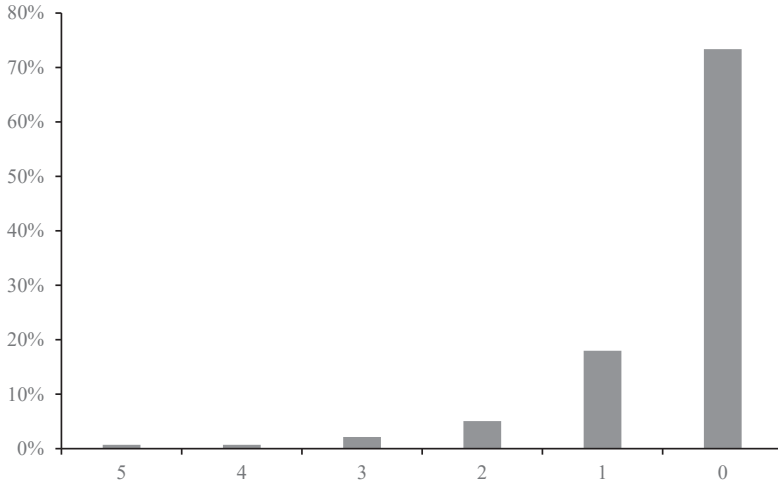13   A double forward slash // indicates a line break.

Figure 2. Proportion of pauper letters containing 0–5 petition features (Diachronic Corpus)

Table 6. Number of pauper letters containing 0–5 petition features by subperiod (Diachronic Corpus)

	Number of petition features					
Subperiod	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
I (1730–1759)	1	0	0	4	4	13
II (1774–1799)	0	0	1	1	5	10
III (1807–1834)	0	1	2	2	16	79
Total	**1**	**1**	**3**	**7**	**25**	**102**
Proportion	**0.72%**	**0.72%**	**2.16%**	**5.04%**	**17.99%**	**73.38%**

petition style   letter style

Figure 3. Continuum of styles in pauper letters

The inter-writer variation in pauper letters regarding the use of petition-style and/or letter-style features can perhaps best be described as a continuum of style, with petition style at one end of the pole and letter style at the other (Figure 3). A relief application containing all five petition features is situated on the petition-style end of the pole, and in opposition a missive without any petition features on the letter-style end of the pole. The more petition features a relief application contains, the further left on the continuum it is positioned.

A model based on a cline is also able to represent relief applications where both petition style and letter style are employed within a single feature. This is most common in closing formulae (10x), followed by the features greeting and voice (both 6x) and self-reference (5x).[14] Example (4) illustrates how one writer, Sary Young, uses both styles sequentially at the end of the letter. She effectively closes the application twice, first in petition style with the self-reference "your poor {patitioner} pertisoner" and the closing formula "will all ways be bound to pray For you all", then in letter style with the closing formula "[I] am" and the self-reference "your most Humble Sarvant to Command".[15] On three occasions the petition-style formula based on *in duty bound* appears in non-conventional places, twice in the running text (3_Elkes_1817, 3_Wood_1827) and once after a signature (1_Jones_1730); in all cases letter-style closing formulae are employed before the final self-reference. Petition style and letter style can also occur together, as in the self-reference in (5) where "petitioner" and "parishioner" are both linked by a conjunction and jointly pre-modified by "your humble". Example (6) exemplifies a combination of styles in the greeting, with the petition-style heading "To the Overseers of Shippon Mallard" followed by letter-style "Sir".

(4) your poor {patitioner} pertisoner will all ways be bound to pray For you all & am your most Humble Sarvant to Command (1_Young_1755)

(5) your humble petitioner and parishsoner (1_Cross_1755)

(6) To the Overseers of Shippon Mallard Sir (3_Sheppard_1829)

A switch in voice from third to first person (petition style to letter style) is presented in (7) and (8), and a change from first to third person in (9). The names mentioned at the beginning of the applications in (7–9) appear again in the signatures, underlining that all applicants refer to themselves in both the first and the third person. Such switches in voice, while infrequent, have also been observed by Calvo Cortés (2020: 200) in petitions to the Foundling Hospital and the Bank of England written between 1785 and 1815. Here the switches were from third to first person, which Calvo Cortés attributes to the introduction of personal circumstances. For 1820 settler petitions Włodarczyk (2013: 215) also records changes in voice, those from third to first person coinciding with a switch in social roles (e.g. from petitioner to mother or wife) and those from first to third person associated with closing formulae, triggered by formulaic phrases. Formulaic phrases and by extension particular words, as well as structural aspects, also seem to have triggered the switches in voice in the Diachronic Corpus, where they are present in both the beginning (7, 8) and at the end of letters (9). The switches do not appear to be content-related, but in three cases there is a switch from third to first person after a letter-element clause containing the verb or noun *petition* (e.g. as a verb in (7)), and one switch is located at the end of the letter with the introduction of a letter-style

---

14   The petition-element is excluded from this list as this is a feature which is either present or absent and has no letter-style equivalent.

15   Curly brackets {} are used to indicate uncertainty in the transcription. The self-correction will be discussed in Section 5.4.

closing formula (8), adding a more personal dimension to the application through ego and topic involvement in "I hope". Conversely, in (9) the letter is opened with an epistolary greeting and formula "I have to inform you that", while for the remainder the petition-style third-person voice is maintained. A final example of an unconventional and only brief switch comes from a non-authentic letter where a run-on formula developing from the previous clause (cp. Bannet 2005: 65) introduced by *who* triggers switch to the third person, which is then not followed through, leading to technically incorrect agreement in first-person *am* (10).

(7) Elizabeth Patchett in the City Of Worcester Petions you being in great distreſs and Oppreſd with a Large family, Craves your Aſtance for Relief as it's not my Wishes to Come with all my family troublesome Wholly on ye [Parish] (2_Patchett_1777N)[16]

(8) this Sheweth that Jane Wildman is at this time in verry Great destreſs […] I hope to heare from you I reman […] (3_Wildman_1826)

(9) Dear Sir I have to inform you that Sarah White your parisher are So bad in health that […] (3_White_1831)

(10) I am Sorry that […] a Distrest widow, Who am with Duty and humble Submiſsion (2_Keely_1799[N])

What reasons could lie behind the general dominance of letter-style writing, the decrease in petition-style features over time, as well as the mixing of both petition and letter styles within individual applications? Paupers seem to have been aware that by applying for relief they would enter into an epistolary relationship with officials from their home parish which would allow them to negotiate relief and re-apply through continued correspondence. At the same time some applicants at least must also have been aware that petitions as a text type existed as well, which were directed at other institutions for different reasons and characterised by a more formal writing style. The diachronic decrease in petition-style features could perhaps, in part, be the result of a dwindling number of pauper letters based on the petition style which could potentially serve as a model for new applicants, with lower-level community knowledge of this form of writing receding over time. Considering the significant numbers of applications in the nineteenth century, it is also possible that word spread that it was not necessary to adopt petition-style features in order to be granted poor relief. However, those writers who did emulate features of petition style were able to increase the formality of their writing, highlighting the social distance and unequal status between applicant (supplicant) and parish official, conveying their respect and deference for those higher up in the social hierarchy who had the power to decide over their fate. With this strategy these applicants probably hoped to better achieve their communicative goal of securing financial support.

Another strategy for indexing formality is to use the label *petition* in an application, which occurs only in five letters (for the use of *petition* as a verb see (7)). While (11) could be interpreted as a shortened and modified version of the petition-element (but

---

16   Examples from non-authentic letters are marked with a superscript [N] after the filename.

is not counted as such), the meaning of "Pettition" in (12) is more general. Rather than referring to a specific type of document used in the context of courts, however, these writers likely relied on the broader meaning of 'a formal written request or supplication […] appealing to an individual or group in authority (as a sovereign, legislature, administrative body, etc.) for some favour, right, or mercy, or in respect of a particular cause' (*OED Online*).

> (11) this with a humble petition to you (1_Robinson_1750)
> (12) my Pettition is that you will only Relieve me a Little from the Severity of the Hard Winter (2_Williamson_1799 [N])

Interestingly, despite the general decrease in the use of petition-style features towards the nineteenth century, it is not the case that particular petition features fall out of use entirely, since all of them are attested in all subperiods. Rather, it seems to be a matter of individual choice which petition-style feature is employed, regardless of whether the letter represents the writing of the lower classes (authentic) or of the better-educated members of society (non-authentic). The findings in this section contradict the seemingly too sweeping claim made by Jones/King (2015: 73–4) concerning a comprehensive shift in style since letter-style writing is shown to be dominant already in the earliest pauper letters. In conclusion, from a text-typological perspective poor-relief applications constitute not a type of petition, but a type of letter. The following section explores inter- and intra-writer variation in more detail, including differences between authentic and non-authentic letters, and focuses on the two features where variation is most extensive, i.e. in closing formulae and self-references.

5 VARIATION IN CLOSING FORMULAE AND SELF-REFERENCES

This section is concerned with variation observable in closing formulae (Section 5.1) and self-references (Section 5.2) in letters by paupers from the Diachronic Corpus, and by way of comparison in letters by advocates and parish officials from the earlier eighteenth century (Supplement). This extended perspective on inter-writer variation within pauper letters and between the different groups of writers will be complemented in Section 5.3 by an analysis of intra-writer variation in pauper letters from the Individual Corpus. Self-corrections occurring in closing formulae and self-references offer additional support for findings concerning the acquisition and processing of formulaic sequences (for a definition of the term see Timmis 2020: 100) and will be examined in Section 5.4.

5.1 Inter-writer variation in closing formulae

In the Diachronic Corpus of pauper letters, 133 instances of closing formulae can be observed, occasionally occurring in combination, while 14 letters contain no formula at all (Figure 4). The two most frequent formulae overall, based on *remain* (13) and *am* (see (4)), do not become dominant until the nineteenth century. By this period *remain* has become associated with business correspondence (Austin 1973: 131, Dollinger

2008: 282, Shvanyukova 2020: 96–7; see also Dossena 2006 for examples), and was also observed to be the most common closing formula in a larger corpus of pauper letters (Timmis 2020: 100). The formula based on *am* was already commonly used by educated writers in the early eighteenth century (Austin 1973: 131), and is also attested in later business correspondence where it "focuses the addressee's attention on […] the explicit presence of the writer" (Shvanyukova 2020: 91). Considering the official nature of poor relief correspondence and, viz. *am*, the need for paupers to be 'seen' in their distress, the two most frequent closing formulae seem appropriate choices in this context. Less frequent, closing formulae based on *oblige* (14) are also attested in business writing (Dollinger 2008: 272–273, Shvanyukova 2020: 91).

(13) iremain you afflickted Servn{t} (1_Rumbell_173X)
(14) and you will much oblige your humble petitioner and parishioner (1_Cross_1755)
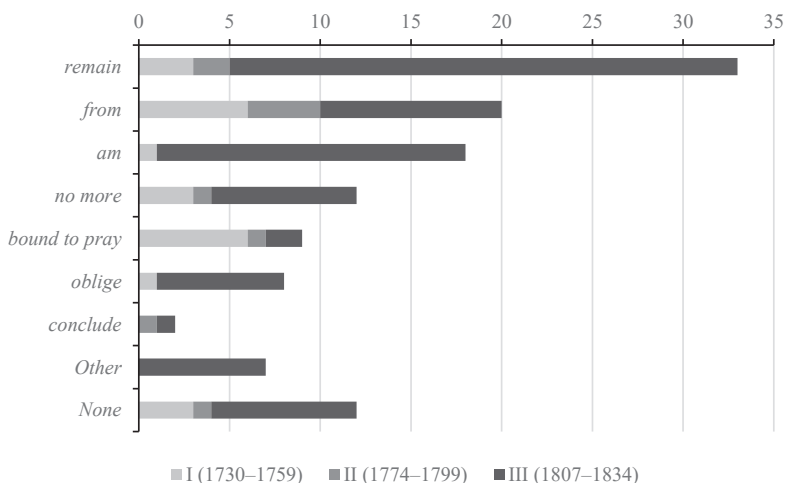
Figure 4. Closing formulae in authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)

The formulae *from, no more* and *conclude*, on the other hand, were firmly associated with the lower classes in the eighteenth century (Austin 1973: 119, 130–1).[17] The fact that the paupers represented in the Diachronic Corpus continue to employ these in the nineteenth century speaks in favour of a generational transmission of epistolary conventions among the labouring poor. At the same time these closing formulae, proportionally especially *no more* (15), remain less common than the two most

17   When *from* follows *no more*, as in (15), this is counted as part of the realisation of the formula *no more*. The formula could also be extended, for instance by adding of *so* before and *at present* afterwards, as illustrated in (17).

frequent choices, which shows that the poor were also able to acquire knowledge of alternative and likely more appropriate forms. Alongside *from*, the petition-style closing formula based on *bound to pray* (see (4)) is proportionally the most frequent in the earlier eighteenth century where half of all occurrences of this formula can be found. This highlights the decline of petition-style features after this subperiod. Sokoll (2001: 59) notes that there are only twelve occurrences of *bound to pray* in his collection of 758 pauper letters from Essex. Timmis (2020: 110) similarly observes only six *bound to pray* formulae (as opposed to 134 examples of *remain*) in his pauper letter corpus, but intriguingly a much larger proportion in a collection of coeval prisoner letters; the formula is also a conspicuous feature in petitions to the Foundling Hospital (Calvo Cortés 2020: 207). Such findings reveal the stylistic variation observable across different pleading genres addressed to different institutions and indicate that the closing formula *bound to pray* was upheld longer in petitions proper than in poor-relief applications. Formulae occurring only once in the Diachronic Corpus are subsumed under 'Other' in Figures 4 and 5 and include, amongst others, *by* (2_Patchett_1777[N]), run-on formulae and phrases with an imperative, as in (16), which is again a strategy also documented in business letters (Shvanyukova 2020: 91).

(15) no mor from A poour poper (1_Jones_1730)
(16) except this my humble patition and believe me to be your very hum{le} servent (3_Stagg_1807)
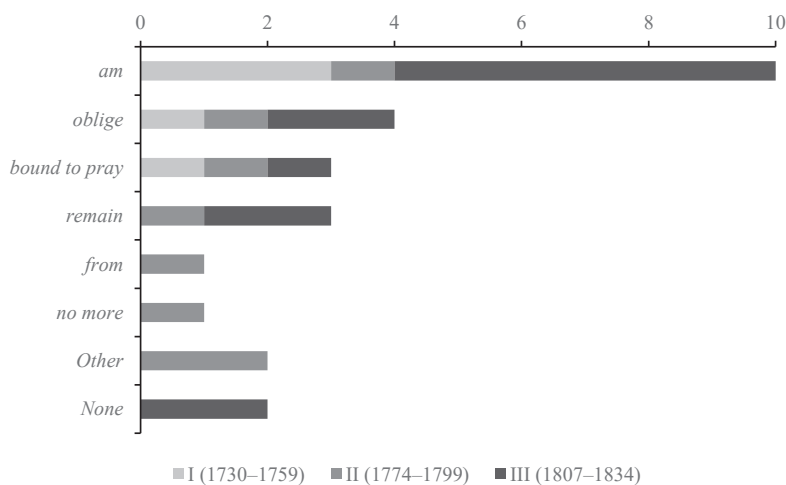
Figure 5. Closing formulae in non-authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)

Although only few non-authentic letters are included in the corpus, what is striking is the preference here for *am* already in the earlier eighteenth century (e.g. (4); Figure 5). Trained encoders of pauper letters seem to have been more aware than untrained writers of the general appropriateness of this closing formula in a formal context. Corroborating this finding, the same preference is shown during this period in letters by those writing on behalf of paupers, whether parish officials addressing their peers (5x) or other advocates (3x), closely followed by not including any closing formulae at all (officials 4x, advocates 1x). The only instance of 'lower-class' *no more* in the Supplement appears in a letter by an advocate from 1758, fittingly by a servant (Merey Williams), who like the pauper Catherine Jones she writes for (both as advocate and as encoder) also belongs to the group of lower-class writers.

5.2 Inter-writer variation in self-references

The most common self-reference in the diachronic pauper letter corpus is a noun preceded by the pronoun *your* and an adjective. In keeping with epistolary traditions of the time, *servant* is by far the most frequent noun (Figures 6 and 7), expressing deference and social distance, particularly in combination with *your humble* (see (4)). However, *petitioner* and *parishioner* also make a noticeable appearance, especially in the earlier eighteenth century, sometimes in combination (see (14)). These nouns are particularly suitable choices in pauper letters in that they allow the writer to draw the attention of the addressee to their social roles of formal applicant and member of their home parish, which entitles them to apply for relief and also instils a sense of responsibility to act in the recipient. The connections between applicant and parish official is strengthened by the pronoun *your*, which according to King (2019: 33) conveys "embodied belonging". The noun *pauper*, employed in two letters (see e.g. (15)), places the focus on the financial distress of the applicant. *Supplicant* expresses a social role akin to *petitioner*, perhaps with a higher level of humility, but unlike *petition* and *petitioner* the Latin borrowing was probably not part of the register-specific vocabulary pertaining to poor-relief applications which the poor would be familiar with – in the Diachronic Corpus at least *supplicant* only occurs in a letter encoded by a well-educated hand (Figure 7).

Again unsurprisingly, in all subperiods the most frequent adjective used in self-references is *humble* (Figures 8 and 9), sometimes preceded by the superlative *most* (8x; see (4)) or the intensifier *very* (3x), and five times occurring in combination with *obedient* (cp. also Timmis 2020: 109). In the eighteenth century, *obedient* was only used in non-authentic letters by well-educated writers, and it was not until the nineteenth century that less-educated paupers followed suit. During this period, *humble* and *obedient* are also regularly encountered in business correspondence, as are expressions of obligation like *obliged* and *obliging*, and the semantically bleached intensifier *truly*, which aptly occurs in a non-authentic letter (Del Lungo Caminciotti 2006: 161, Shvanyukova 2020: 93). *Afflicted*, *poor*, *distressed* and *unfortunate* allude to the struggles and reduced circumstances of the paupers. In (15) *poor* pre-modifies *pauper*, emphasising

the financial difficulties.[18] While *afflicted* can refer to both 'distress' and health issues (*OED Online*), no semantic preference can be detected in the pauper letters. Like *afflicted*, the more unusual *devoted* only appears (after a reflection on suffering and the transience of life) in a letter deemed authentic, but it was written by a hand on the upper hand of the spectrum with more advanced training, and epistolary phraseology can be found throughout the application.
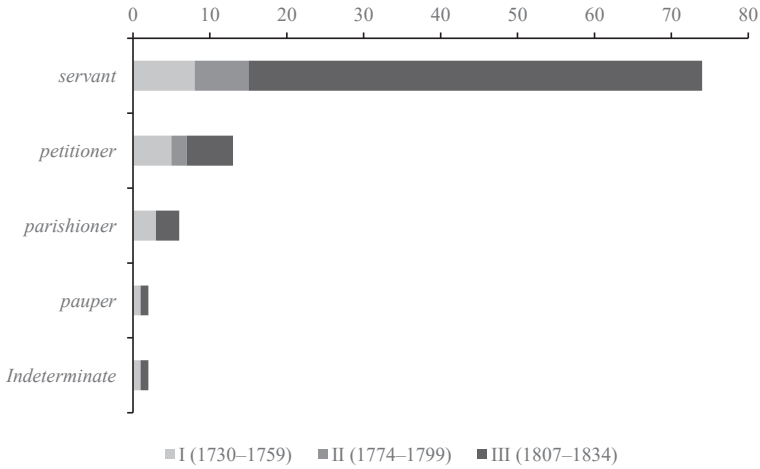

Figure 6. Self-referential nouns in authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)
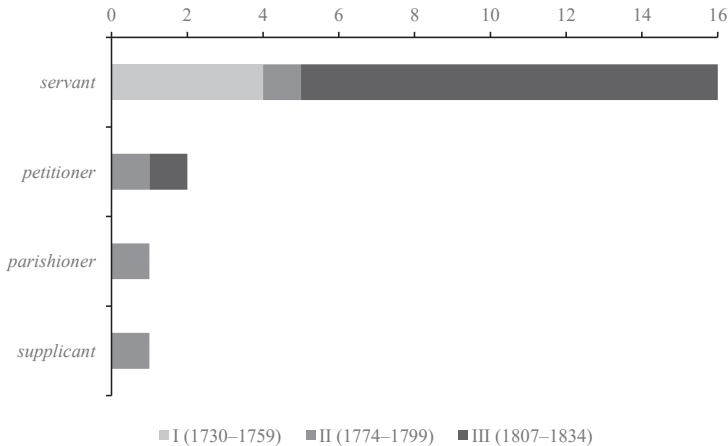
Figure 7. Self-referential nouns in non-authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)

18   This is one of only two instances in the Diachronic Corpus (both in Subperiod I) where an indefinite pronoun is used in place of *your*.
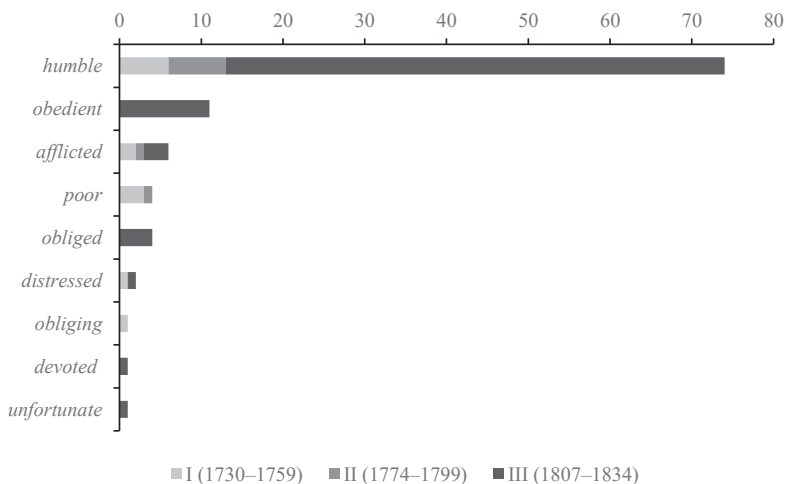
Figure 8. Self-referential adjectives in authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)
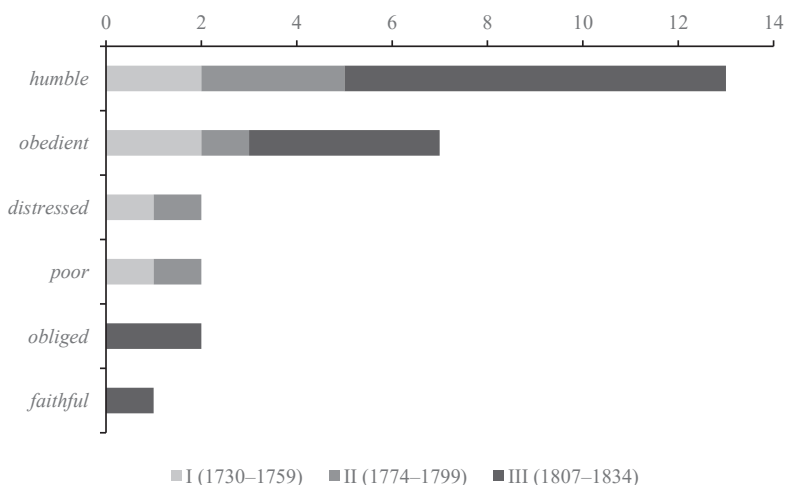
Figure 9. Self-referential adjectives in non-authentic pauper letters (Diachronic Corpus)

Although a self-referential type based on *your humble servant* is most common, some writers do not fill the adjective slot (21x) or the noun slot (5x), and one writer simply concludes with *your* (2_Rosthron_1779[N]). *Yours* is used in only 14 letters and in all except two instances is followed by additional elements such as adverbs or phrases, with a potential diachronic trend towards *yours respectfully*, although frequencies are low overall. Infrequent already in the early eighteenth century, *till death*

was associated with the lower classes (Austin 1973: 135–6) and correspondingly only occurs once in an authentic letter in the earliest subperiod of the Diachronic Corpus (17). Also employed as a post-modifier of *servant* on three occasions in the earlier eighteenth century (see e.g. (3) and (4)), the time-honoured formula *to command* (for examples from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries see Nevala 2004: 95, 145, 153) seems to fall out of use towards the nineteenth century, with two attestations each in the earlier and later eighteenth century. In non-authentic letters, instead, *in distress* occurs once in the later eighteenth century, the former emphasising the pauper's situation (cp. *distressed* above), and *&c* ('etc.') once each in Subperiods II and III. The abbreviation *&c* is used to represent the final self-reference, which according to Dossena (2010: 288–9) points "to the degree of codification that these formulae had achieved: so fixed and invariable were the formulae, that the encoder did not even need to note them down". In authentic letters from the nineteenth century, *&c* is used once as well, alongside one instance of *respectably* and four of *respectfully* (cp. Timmis 2020: 110), which index social distance and respect. Overall, seven letters (all authentic) contain no self-reference formula at all, which means the applicants forgo a final chance in their letter to display respect, deference and submission (cp. King 2019: 235, 345) towards the recipient, which could have increased their chances of success. Four of these applicants also omit the closing formulae, and it seems probable that they were not aware that these were conventionally expected in letters, nor that by engaging with this type of humiliative discourse they would signal their adherence to the "shared set of norms and values" (Shvanyukova 2020: 99; see also Timmis 2020: 102–3) underpinning the poor-relief system.

(17) So no more at presan But I Remain Yover abl[ˆi OVERWRITES eˆ]ging
       Saruant til Deth (1_ChappellH_1741)

With respect to self-references, letters by advocates and officials from the earlier eighteenth century (Supplement) once again mirror majority usage patterns. They rely almost entirely on the formulaic sequence *your (most) humble Servant* or drop the self-reference altogether, in three of five cases the letter starting with a petition-style heading instead of a letter-style salutation. Once a doctor, John Lodwick, writing for "Perrifioner Roice" in 1741 adds "to Command" after the self-reference, in keeping with the temporal trajectory of this phrase indicated by the Diachronic Corpus.

To conclude, variability in closing formulae and self-references is much higher in pauper letters than in missives by advocates and parish officials. Much of the variation reflects the need for applicants to invest in their identity construction, outlining their reduced circumstances, as well as specifying their social roles and their relationship with the recipient. On the other hand, this can also be the result of the limited schooling received by applicants who, unlike parish officers and the more educated advocates, might not be sufficiently aware of existing epistolary norms. This will be explored further in the next two subsections.

5.3 Intra-writer variation in closing formulae and self-references

The pauper letters in the Individual Corpus cast an interesting light on the inter-writer variation observed previously: paupers writing their own letters hardly wavered in their linguistic choices. In his six letters Morgan always concludes with the *no more* formula as in (18), three times without the self-reference *a poor* before his signature. Green is consistent in her use of *I remain your humble servant* across seven letters (e.g. (19)), even if the spelling is somewhat variable, only once omitting both formulaic sequences. Soundy unfailingly closes with the *bound to pray* formula in her twenty letters as in (20), variation occurring only in spelling and word order. Also writing on behalf of family members, her preferred self-reference is *your parishioner(s)* (18x), *your petitioner* occurring only twice. In merely three letters she fills the adjective slot with *unfortunate* (1x) and *distressed* (2x), and once the self-reference is lacking; the second and third options do not deviate from typical usage patterns described in the previous section.

> (18) So no mour fro{m} a pour (3_Morgan_1805)
> (19) I Rame your Houmble Servant (3_Green_1820_1)
> (20) your Perrishoners In duty bound will ever Pray (3_Soundy_1823_2)

In non-autographical letters there is a much higher degree of variation. For instance, each of the four letters encoded for Hammont has a different closing formula and self-reference, and each hand involved with the letters by Hughes and Kingston has their own stylistic preference. In line with autographical applications, however, the choices are fairly invariable within the sets encoded by particular hands when deemed authentic, i.e. representative of someone with limited schooling. This can be seen, firstly, in the first six letters encoded for Hughes, all in the same hand, where the closing formula is always based on *remain* and the self-reference on *your humble servant*; and secondly, in the four letters encoded by the same 'authentic' hand for Kingston, where the two features are never realised.

The three non-authentic letters in the non-autographical set yield additional insights. The final two letters encoded for Hughes were prepared by a trained hand, and although the self-reference remains the same (*your obedient Servant*), there is stylistic variation in the closing formula (*am* vs. run-on formula). As Auer (2015: 155) notes "[t]he better the schooling and the writing practice, the greater the stylistic variation will be", which would apply here as well. The third of the five Kingston letters was equally penned by a well-educated hand; its rendering of closing formula and self-reference as "I Remain yours Respectfully" (3_Kingston_1821_2[N]) offers a stark contrast to the four authentic letters (all by the same untrained hand) where the formulae are absent and the text abruptly closes with the signature. This particular case is interesting because the letter by the trained hand is the third of the five Kingston letters and positioned in the middle of a sequence of three letters sent between September and December 1821, with the earlier and later letters encoded by the uncoached hand. This indicates that Kingston, who could not even sign his name (Section 3.2), was probably not aware of the expressions used in the letter by the trained hand and also did not pass on any formulations to

the less experienced encoder. The stylistic variation in the set of letters sent by Hughes, who also could not sign her name, suggests that she was also not involved linguistically in the composition of the letters, at least not concerning the closing formulae. Otherwise, considering her level of schooling and the evidence from the autographical letters, the formulaic phrases would be more homogeneous. The cases of Kingston and Hughes present counterexamples, on a local level, to the "shared linguistic register" stipulated by Jones/King (2015: 69) and provide proof for the final scenario outlined by Sokoll (2001: 66) who proposes "a broad spectrum of possibilities, with some paupers dictating their letters, while others had them written without much say in their composition and still others where the sender dispatched them without ever knowing what had been set down in his or her name".

The evidence from autographical letters, and sets of letters by authentic hands among the non-autographical applications, strongly supports earlier findings on epistolary formulae in writers with limited schooling, also including members of the lower classes from other European countries. The repertoire of formulae is relatively small and fixed (Elspaß 2005: 163, 172, 192), with formulaic phrases being stored as a single unit in the mental lexicon and retrieved as a whole during the writing process (Elspaß 2005: 170, see Timmis 2020: 97–100 for an extensive discussion). Variant spellings observed in closing formulae and self-references by paupers suggest that the writers probably acquired knowledge of formulaic sequences by hearing them rather than seeing them in writing (unless they happened to take a letter with non-standard spelling as a model), and they rendered the formulae in writing according to the spelling principles they were familiar with (cp. Fairman 2008: 206–207; Allen 2015: 211, quoted in Timmis 2020: 101).

Limited schooling and incidental rather than comprehensive (oral) transmission of stylistic norms could also explain why pauper letters do on occasion contain petition-style features, but why different applicants focus on (a varying number of) different features. Furthermore, as a result of an incomplete acquisition of epistolary norms paupers may not have been aware that closing formulae like *from, no more* and *conclude*, or the addition of *till death*, had become associated with lower-class language and would not be used by the officials they corresponded with (Sections 5.1 and 5.2), or that a switch from first to third person after a letter-style element would be considered unconventional as well (Section 4). While the letters examined in this subsection date to the nineteenth century, the findings on the production circumstances of later pauper letters and the influence of limited education on the stylistic repertoire of the writers can likely also be applied to the eighteenth century, when there were even fewer institutional schooling opportunities for the labouring poor.

5.4 Self-corrections in closing formulae and self-references

A number of self-corrections in pauper letters offer additional support for the hypothesis that oral transmission was an important pathway for the acquisition of epistolary formulae. In closing formulae and self-references in the Diachronic and Individual Corpora there are 24 corrections, 18 of which affect the spelling of individual words. 7 self-corrections reveal struggles with the spelling of the verb *remain* in a closing formula,

and the adjectives *humble* (2x) and *obliging*, as well the nouns *servant*, *petitioner* and *parishioner* (1x each) in self-references. Uncertainty concerning the correct vowel representation, for instance, can be seen in exchanged vowels in "abl[ˆi OVERWRITES eˆ]ging" (1_ChappellH_1741), "H[ˆo OVERWRITES uˆ]mble" (2_Keeling_1788) and "pr[ˆea OVERWRITES iˆ]shener" (3_Wall_1821). Such variant spellings can represent reflections of speech (Auer *et al.* 2033, Gardner *et al.* 2022, Gardner 2023b). Particularly revealing in this context is the self-correction in (4) where Young struggles with the standard spelling of *petitioner*, deleting her first attempt "patitioner" and opting for "pertisoner" instead with insertion of non-etymological /r/. This suggests that she had a rhotic accent and spelt phonemically (Fairman 2008: 206) owing to limited schooling and lack of written models. Rhoticity is likewise evidenced in other writers, for instance in the spelling "Pertishoner(s)" (3_Soundy_1823_1; 3_Soundy_1827_1; 3_Soundy_1828_3) by Frances Soundy, who also wrote to a home parish in Berkshire, her likely place of origin, an area in which r-colouring was still attested in the mid-twentieth century (Upton/Widdowson 2006: 42–3). 11 further modifications betray lapses in concentration on the word level when a writer thought ahead and had to supply a character that was omitted (9x), e.g. with an insertion in "Dist͜tesed" (1_Camp_1759), or when a repeated character is deleted by overwriting (2x), e.g. "Se[ˆr OVERWRITES eˆ]vant" (3_Spencer_1815). On the sentence level we find similar concentration lapses or mechanical mistakes (following Fairman 2008: 199) which are due to the (partial) repetition of a previously written word (1x) or thinking ahead (2x). In (21) the writer started with "y[our]", part of the self-reference, but realised "from" was missing from the closing formula, and in (22) the verb "Will" originally appears before the self-reference is complete. With the petition-style closing formula *duty bound* variation in the word order is possible, but in twenty letters Soundy is relatively invariable (Section 5.3) and diverts from her usual order "self-reference + in duty bound will ever pray" (see (20)) merely three times, with "in duty bound" appearing either before the self-reference (1x) or between "will" and "ever pray" (2x). With the self-correction in (22) Soundy establishes her preferred word order.

(21) so no mor [ˆ{y} RUBBED OUTˆ] from your […] (3_Bryan_1829)
(22) your unforchenate [ˆWill CROSSED OUTˆ] Perrishoner in duty bound will
     Ever Pray (3_Soundy_1818_1)

Only three changes register beyond the level of spelling and mechanical errors. In an undated letter (3_Morgan_18XX), Morgan deletes an indefinite pronoun from the self-reference slot, presumably the start of *a poor*, switching to his alternative strategy of not supplying any self-reference at the end of the letter (Section 5.3). However, as previously noted, there is no indication from the contents of his letters as to when he prefers which option, and there is no change in preferences over time either. In a letter sent by Hughes, "Servᵗ" is added above the line after "your Hunble" (3_Hughes_1829_2), which could mean a deliberate change from a self-reference without a noun, but most likely represents an omission since this particular hand writes *your humble servant* in

the self-reference in six different letters for this applicant. Fixedness in the application of epistolary formula probably also accounts for the change in a different letter by the same hand from "yours" to "your" after "i Remain" (3_Hughes_1829_4). It is noteworthy that no correction was made in closing formulae or self-references with the objective of switching from letter to petition style, or vice versa.

In total, 22 of 189 pauper letters investigated are affected by changes to closing formulae and self-references. While this seems to be a comparatively low proportion, especially in light of Fairman (2008: 198) finding 490 decipherable strike-throughs in c. 1,600 pauper letters, further research is required to determine to what extent epistolary formulae are generally subject to modification during the writing process. The relatively low number of self-corrections in the present study is suggestive of the fixedness of formulaic sequences and supports the theory that they are stored and retrieved as a whole from the mental lexicon (Section 5.3). That only three changes rectify mechanical errors on the sentence level – even though Fairman (2008: 208) notes that in his corpus such corrections owing to lapses in concentration ('slips of the pen', i.e. his categories 'jump', 'echo' and 'repeat') are roughly as frequent as spelling modifications – could signify that the effort in retrieval of formulaic sequences is fairly minimal, but also that when drawing on these pre-fabricated chunks the mental load is lighter and the writers are less easily distracted than when they are required to freely compose new sentences. Within formulaic sequences lapses in concentration manifest themselves most commonly at the word level, as shown by the insertion of omitted characters and the deletion of repeated ones.

As a final point of note, self-corrections in closing formulae and self-references were only found in authentic letters, which again highlights the role of education in the acquisition of epistolary formulae. Better-trained writers will either have been able to write an error-free letter straightaway or, provided they had sufficient means, they prepared a clean copy from a draft, being aware of the notion that self-corrections were considered impolite and carried a social stigma. As early as 1756 (and possibly earlier, if earlier editions can be uncovered), self-corrections were described in a letter-writing manual as 'not only a Reflection on the writer, but a Rudeneſs to the Perſon to whom they are written' (Anonymous 1756; on draft writing see also Gardner 2018, 2023a).

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Through the study of five text-constitutive features this article has shown empirically that relief applications written under the Old Poor Law represent letters rather than petitions in terms of form and style, and for the first time offers a text-typological account of pauper letters as a subtype of correspondence which shows stylistic similarities not only with the familiar letter and petitions, but also with business and official correspondence. Within the text type of pauper letters there is significant variation, and a continuum of style can be observed ranging from letter style to petition style. However, in the analysed dataset letter-style writing was already the dominant form of expression in the earliest poor-relief applications. A low proportion of applicants does adopt features typical of petitions, yet mostly only one or two of the five identified here, and

the usage of petition-style features decreases already in the eighteenth century. These observations contradict and offer a more nuanced view on the observation by Jones/King (2015: 73–4) that a shift in stylistic preference took place towards the nineteenth century only. Although the dataset on which the present study is based is comparatively small, owing to the scarce survival of pauper letters from the eighteenth century and limited source availability, the article has uncovered interesting and suggestive diachronic trajectories which merit exploring further in a more extensive collection of letters, but find support in related research, as noted in the earlier sections, and also in Sokoll's study on Essex pauper letters. In a much larger dataset of 758 letters he unearthed only one pauper letter clearly modelled on a petition, written on behalf of Ann Marsh in 1824 by a professional scribe (Sokoll 2001: 48, 193–4). The findings presented in this article corroborate Sokoll's statement that "it cannot be emphasized too strongly that in stylistic terms and from their overall scriptual habitus, most pauper letters do *not* normally follow the contemporary model of the formal petition" (2001: 59, original emphasis).

While inter-writer variation across pauper letters is extensive regarding closing formulae and self-references, letters by parish overseers and advocates exhibit significantly less variation and, similar to letters by the better educated (which includes non-authentic pauper letters), reveal a noticeable affinity with formulaic language evidenced in business correspondence.[19] The findings on intra-writer variation and self-corrections in pauper letters suggest that individuals typically acquired only one formulaic expression each for the slots of closing formula and self-reference, often only through oral transmission. Owing to limited schooling opportunities, stylistic conventions were not always learned entirely successfully as evidenced by self-corrections affecting spelling, the partial adoption of petition-style features and their occasional application in unusual positions.

Although their literacy and epistolary skills may have been limited, the poor-relief applicants nevertheless were competent enough to be able to successfully engage with parish officials in correspondence in an attempt to alleviate their distress. The evidence from pauper letters, particularly concerning the lack of intra-writer variation and the types of self-corrections made, is significant for our understanding of the social practice of letter-writing, as well as how the lower classes acquired literacy and to what degree. The labouring poor emerge as resourceful individuals who penned letters themselves or identified individuals in their social circle who could act as scribes for them (see also Sokoll 2001: 65, King 2019: 36). This could support Vincent's findings concerning household literacy in the nineteenth century, which signifies that at least one member of the household is literate; on the basis of signature literacy documented in marriage registers he determines that in the mid-nineteenth century, i.e. a generation after the latest pauper letter investigated in the present paper and a generation before compulsory elementary education was introduced, "there was literacy in 75% of the new homes" (2014: 275). The concept of household literacy is equally relevant for the earlier periods

---

19   Inter-writer variation in pauper letters with respect to orthographical and phonological features has been examined in e.g. Gardner et al. (2022) and Auer et al. (2023).

investigated in this article, and in fact preceding centuries. Following Hailwood (2023), already in the period 1550–1700 the literacy skills of the lower classes should not be underestimated. Examining whether witnesses left simple strokes, meaningful marks or symbols, initials or signatures in depositions, he argues that gradations between illiteracy and literacy should be recognised, finding that

> [a]rtisans, husbandmen and labourers are all groups that are considered to be overwhelmingly illiterate using traditional signature studies techniques, but here they emerge as subsections of society in which between 50 and 60 per cent of individuals demonstrated more than the most basic writing skills. They could form meaningful and recognizable letters or symbols with a pen in hand. (Hailwood 2003: 59)

Furthermore, Hailwood (2003): 61) maintains that "even a minimal amount of formal schooling could have been sufficient for an individual to acquire 'letteracy': the ability to identify individual letters, if not much more". The writing competencies observed in pauper letters from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are testament to the continued resourcefulness of the lower classes and their access to foundational education at the very least.

The findings of this article and limitations in the amount and type of data analysed have also created new research questions and opened up new avenues for future studies. For instance, why the already infrequent recourse to petition-style features decreased even further over time merits further consideration. After all, these features could usefully be employed to increase the formality of their writing and to show respect towards the socially distant addressees, i.e. the overseers and other parish officials. Perhaps the petition as a model became less popular or available, or, more likely, letters and epistolary style became even more firmly established by convention as the appropriate mode for poor-relief applications. Such applications initiated correspondence with parish officials, in some cases spanning many years, which the poor used to negotiate their case and plead for (continued) support (Sokoll 2001, 2008). It would also be interesting to adopt the framework and methodology by Biber/Finegan (1989) and determine whether the decrease of petition-style features in pauper letters can be linked to the drift towards a more oral style which the two authors observed in letters more generally (1989: 515).

For a fuller perspective on these changes the period of investigation needs to be extended back into the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries as well, requiring extensive archival work (and luck) in order to uncover relevant material from the labouring poor. Further research is also necessary to establish the potential stylistic impact of business and official correspondence on pauper letters, and to determine to what extent overarching norms for official writing can be identified across different areas of letter-writing. A comprehensive diachronic investigation of closing formulae and self-references in different types of correspondence from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century would help elucidate these questions further and also show when certain specific formulaic

expressions may have become restricted to e.g. lower-class writing over time. Once a version with normalised spelling of the LALP corpus of pauper letters is completed, it will be possible to conduct a more extensive analysis of stylistic variation, increasing the number of features and adopting a stylometric approach, to obtain a more comprehensive view of inter- and intra-writer variation in pauper letters, and achieve a more detailed text-typological differentiation between pauper letters, petitions, business and official correspondence, and the familiar letter.

All in all, this article aimed to contribute to current debates in historical sociolinguistics and has showcased pauper letters as a text type in its own right which helpfully contributes to the study of language history 'from below' by documenting the language of members of the lower spectrum of society from whom relatively few linguistic sources have survived and made available so far. The rich findings gained from investigating intra-writer variation and self-corrections in pauper letters invite further research considering a wider range of linguistic features in order to gain a deeper understanding of the social context in which pauper letters were written. Considering the fact that similarly valuable insights have emerged in previous studies on the language of the better-educated (e.g. Gardner 2018, 2023a), analysing intra-writer variation and self-corrections in handwritten documents from the past should become standard in historical linguistic research.

References

Primary sources

ANONYMOUS ([3]1756) *The compleat letter writer; or, new and polite English secretary*. London.

BROWN, George (1770?) *The New and Complete English Letter-Writer; or, Whole Art of General Correspondence*. London.

COOKE, Thomas (1770?) *The Universal Letter-Writer; or, New Art of Polite Correspondence*. London.

Secondary sources

AUER, Anita (2015) "Stylistic variation." In: Anita Auer/Daniel Schreier/Richard Watts (eds), *Letter Writing and Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 133–155.

AUER, Anita/Catharina PEERSMAN/Simon PICKL/Gijsbert RUTTEN/Rik VOSTERS (2015) "Historical sociolinguistics: the field and its future." *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics* 1/1, 1–12.

AUER, Anita/Anne-Christine GARDNER/Mark ITEN (2023) "Patterns of linguistic variation in Late Modern English pauper petitions from Berkshire and Dorset." In: M. Schiegg/J. Huber (eds), 133–156.

AUSTIN, Frances (1973) "Epistolary conventions in the Clift family correspondence." *English Studies* 54: 129–140.

BANNET, Eve Tavor (2005) *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688–1820.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BARTON, David/Nigel HALL (2000) "Introduction." In: David Barton/Nigel Hall (eds), *Letter Writing as a Social Practice*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1–14.

BEARDMORE, Carol (2020) "The Marquis of Anglesey: working and social relationships on a Dorset estate (c. 1812–1844)." *Rural History* 31/2, 135–150.

BIBER, Douglas/Edward FINEGAN (1989) "Drift and the evolution of English style: a history of three genres." *Language* 65: 487–517.

BRÖNNIMANN, Stefan/Daniel KRÄMER (2016) "Tambora and the 'Year Without a Summer' of 1816: a perspective on earth and human systems science." *Geographica Bernensia* G90.

CALVO CORTÉS, Nuria (2020) "Variations from letter-writing manuals: *humble petitions* signed by women in Late Modern London." In: Andreas H. Jucker/Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Manners, Norms and Transgressions in the History of English: Literary and Linguistic Approaches*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 183–212.

CRONE, Rosalind (2018) "Educating the labouring poor in nineteenth-century Suffolk." *Social History* 43/2, 161–185.

CULPEPER, Jonathan/Merja KYTÖ (2010) *Early Modern English Dialogues: Spoken Interaction as Writing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DEL LUNGO CAMICIOTTI, Gabriella (2006) "From *Your obedient humble servants* to *Yours faithfully*: the negotiation of professional roles in the commercial correspondence of the second half of the nineteenth century." In: M. Dossena/I. Taavitsainen (eds), 153–172.

DILLER, Hans-Jürgen (2001) "*Genre* in linguistic and related discourses." In: Hans-Jürgen Diller/Manfred Görlach (eds), *Towards a History of English as a History of Genres*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter, 3–43.

DOLLINGER, Stefan (2008) "Colonial variation in the Late Modern English business letter: 'periphery and core' or 'random variation'?" In: M. Dossena/I. Taavitsainen (eds), 257–287.

DOSSENA, Marina (2006) "Forms of self-representation in nineteenth-century business letters." In: M. Dossena/I. Taavitsainen (eds), 173–190.

DOSSENA, Marina (2010) "'Be pleased to report expressly': the development of a public style in Late Modern English business and official correspondence." In: Raymond Hickey (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century English: Ideology and Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 293–308.

DOSSENA, Marina/Susan FITZMAURICE (eds) (2006) *Business and Official Correspondence: Historical Investigations*. Bern: Peter Lang.

DOSSENA, Marina/Irma TAAVITSAINEN (eds) (2008) *Diachronic Perspectives on Domain-Specific English*. Bern: Peter Lang.

DOSSENA, Marina/Ingrid TIEKEN-BOON VAN OSTADE (eds) (2008) *Studies in Late Modern English Correspondence: Methodology and Data*. Bern: Lang.

ELSPAß, Stephan (2005) *Sprachgeschichte von unten: Untersuchungen zum geschriebenen Alltagsdeutsch im 19. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

FAIRMAN, Tony (2007) "Writing and the 'Standard' 1795–1834." *Multilingua* 26, 167–201.

FAIRMAN, Tony (2008) "Strike-throughs: what textual alterations can tell us about writers and their scripts, 1795–1835." In: M. Dossena/I. Tieken-Boon van Ostade (eds), 193–212.

FENS-DE ZEEUW, Lyda (2008) "The letter-writing manual in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: from polite to practical." In: M. Dossena/I. Tieken-Boon van Ostade (eds), 163–192.

FITZMAURICE, Susan M. (2002) *The Familiar Letter in Early Modern English: A Pragmatic Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

GARDNER, Anne-Christine (2018) "Downward social mobility in eighteenth-century English: a micro-level analysis of the correspondence of Queen Charlotte, Mary Hamilton and Frances Burney." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 119/1, 71–100.

GARDNER, Anne-Christine (2023a) "Petitioning for the education of the poor: self-corrections as stylistic choices in a Late Modern English draft letter." In: M. Schiegg/J. Huber (eds), 157–180.

GARDNER, Anne-Christine (2023b) "Speech reflections in Late Modern English pauper letters from Dorset." English Language & Linguistics 27/3: 491–516.

GARDNER, Anne-Christine/Anita AUER/Mark ITEN (2022) "Language and mobility of Late Modern English paupers." In: Michael C. Frank/Daniel Schreier (eds), *Contacts and Migrations*. Heidelberg: Winter, 45–70.

GÖRLACH, Manfred (2004) *Text Types and the History of English*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

HAILWOOD, Mark (2023) "Rethinking literacy in rural England, 1550–1700." *Past & Present* 260: 38–70.

HEALEY, Jonathan (2016) "'By the charitie of good people': poverty and neighbourly support in seventeenth century Lancashire." *Family & Community History* 19/2, 83–94.

HINDLE, Steve (2004) *On the Parish? The Micro-Politics of Poor Relief in England, 1550–1750*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

HOUSTON, Robert A. (2014) *Peasant Petitions: Social Relations and Economic Life on Landed Estates, 1600–1850*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

IREMONGER, Frederic (1813) *Suggestions to the Promoters of Dr. Bell's System of Tuition with an Account of the Hampshire Society for the Education of the Poor*. Winchester.

JONES, Peter/Steven KING (2015) "From petition to pauper letter: the development of an epistolary form." In: Peter Jones/Steven King (eds), *Obligation, Entitlement and Dispute Under the English Poor Laws*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 53–77.

KING, Steven (2019) *Writing the Lives of the English Poor, 1750s–1830s*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press.

KOHNEN, Thomas (2001) "On defining text types within historical linguistics: the case of petitions/statues." *European Journal of English Studies* 5/2, 197–203.

LAITINEN, Lea/Taru NORDLUND (2012) "Performing identities and interaction through epistolary formulae." In: Marina Dossena/Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti (eds), *Letter Writing in Late Modern Europe*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 65–88.

LAITINEN, Mikko/Anita AUER (2014) "Letters of artisans and the labouring poor (England, c. 1750–1835): approaching linguistic diversity in Late Modern English." In: Simone E. Pfenninger/Olga Timofeeva/Anne-Christine Gardner/Alpo Honkapohja/Marianne Hundt/Daniel Schreier (eds), *Contact, Variation and Change in the History of English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 187–212.

LAWSON, John/Harold SILVER (1973) *A Social History of Education in England*. London: Methuen & Co.

MOESSNER, Lilo (2001) "Genre, text type, style, register: a terminological maze?" *European Journal of English Studies* 5/2, 131–138.

NEVALA, Minna (2004) *Address in Early English Correspondence: Its Forms and Socio-Pragmatic Functions.* Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu/Helena RAUMOLIN-BRUNBERG (1995) "Constraints on politeness: the pragmatics of address formulae in early English correspondence." In: Andreas H. Jucker (ed.), *Historical Pragmatics: Pragmatic Developments in the History of English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 541–601.

OED Online. http://www.oed.com [accessed on 17 June 2022].

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Marijke VAN DER WAL (2012) "Functions of epistolary formulae in Dutch letters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 13/2, 173–201.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Marijke VAN DER WAL (2014) *Letters as Loot: A Sociolinguistic Approach to Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-century Dutch*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

SAIRIO, Anni/Minna NEVALA (2013) "Social dimensions of layout in eighteenth-century letters and letter-writing manuals." In: Anneli Meurman-Solin/Jukka Tyrkkö (eds), *Principles and Practices for the Digital Editing and Annotation of Diachronic Data*. Helsinki: Varieng.

SCHIEGG, Markus/Judith HUBER (eds) (2023) *Intra-Writer Variation in Historical Sociolinguistics*. Bern: Lang

SHVANYUKOVA, Polina (2020) "'With the greatest sincerity': expressing genuineness of feeling in nineteenth-century business correspondence in English." *Multilingua* 39/1, 81–104.

SOKOLL, Thomas (2000) "Negotiating a living: Essex pauper letters from London, 1800–1834." *International Review of Social History* 45, 19–46.

SOKOLL, Thomas (ed.) (2001) *Essex Pauper Letters, 1731–1837*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SOKOLL, Thomas (2008) "Verhandelte Armut: Mobilität, Kontrolle und Selbstbehauptung im englischen Armenrecht, 1780–1840." In: Sebastian Schmidt (ed.), *Arme und ihre Lebensperspektiven in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 85–118.

STEPHENS, William Brewer (1998) *Education in Britain, 1750–1914.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

TIMMIS, Ivor (2020) *The Discourse of Desperation: Late 18th and Early 19th Century Letters by Paupers, Prisoners, and Rogues.* New York: Routledge.

UPTON, Clive/John D. A. WIDDOWSON (1996) *An Atlas of English Dialects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

VINCENT, David (1989) *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750–1914.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

VINCENT, David (2014) "The invention of counting: the statistical measurement of literacy in nineteenth-century England." *Comparative Education* 50/3, 266–281.

WHYMAN, Susan (2009) *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660–1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

WHYTE, Ian (2004) "Migration and settlement." In: Chris Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Malden: Blackwell, 273–286.

WŁODARCZYK, Matylda (2013) "Self-reference and ego involvement in the 1820 Settler petition as a *leaking genre*." In: Marijke J. van der Wal/Gijsbert Rutten (eds), *Touching the Past: Studies in the Historical Sociolinguistics of Ego-Documents*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 201–242.

WRAY, Alison (2002). *Formulaic Language and the Lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Abstract

ENGLISH PAUPER LETTERS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND BEYOND: ON THE VARIABILITY AND EVOLUTION OF A NEW TEXT TYPE

This article explores a new subtype of vernacular correspondence emerging in the early eighteenth century, the pauper letter, providing a textual classification of this new text type and an account of its variability and evolution into the nineteenth century. The study is based on 189 letters sent between 1730 and 1834 by the poor applying for support from their parish of legal settlement, with a focus on the potential influence of the form and language of petitions in the realisation of five features which can be found in pauper letters (voice, greeting, petition-element, closing formula and self-reference). From a diachronic perspective, letter-style writing was preferred already in the earliest pauper letters, and the presence of petition-style features further decreases over time. In consequence, pauper letters should be classified as letters rather than petitions. The analysis of inter-writer variation across pauper letters and different social groups shows that in pauper letters there is significant stylistic variation and that the writers employ strategies, in particular self-reference, to index their social roles of applicant and parishioner or to highlight the difficult circumstances in which they find themselves, as they appeal to the responsibility of the parish officials to offer assistance. In contrast, in 14 letters by parish officials and advocates writing on behalf of the poor formulaic sequences are generally more

uniform than in pauper letters. Stylistic choices by writers with more experience (including paupers) tend to be oriented towards majority usage patterns and show an affinity with stylistic expressions also attested in business correspondence. A study on intra-writer variation reveals that individual encoders have a fixed repertoire of formulaic expressions expected in closing formulae and self-references. Owing to their limited schooling opportunities, paupers typically only acquired incomplete knowledge of conventional expressions and their appropriateness. Self-corrections by paupers in closing formulae and self-references support earlier findings that formulaic sequences were often learned through incidental oral transmission and stored and processed as a whole.

Povzetek

ANGLEŠKA PISMA REVNIH V 18. STOLETJU IN POZNEJE: O RAZNOLIKO-STI IN RAZVOJU NOVE BESEDILNE ZVRSTI

V članku se ukvarjamo s pismom revnih kot novim podtipom vernakularne korespondence, ki je nastal v zgodnjem 18. stoletju. Predlagana je besedilna klasifikacija te zvrsti in predstavljena njena raznolikost in razvoj do 19. stoletja. Raziskava temelji na 189 pismih, ki so jih revni poslali med 1730 in 1834 in v katerih so župnijo, ki so ji uradno pripadali, prosili za podporo. Posebej nas zanima morebitni vpliv oblike in jezika teh prošenj na izraženost petih značilnosti, ki jih najdemo v tovrstnih pismih (slovnična oseba, pozdrav, prošnja v ožjem smislu, zaključna formula in avtoreferencialnost). Z diahronega stališča se avtorji že v najzgodnejših pismih odločajo za pisemski slog, medtem ko prisotnost peticijskega sloga skozi čas še nadalje upada. Zato bi bilo smiselno imeti pisma revnih za pisma, ne za peticije. Analiza variantnosti med posameznimi pisci in različnimi družbenimi skupinami kaže, da so pisma revnih slogovno zelo raznolika in da pisci z uporabo določenih strategij, predvsem avtoreferencialnosti, kažejo na družbeno vlogo, ki jo imajo kot prosilci in župljani, ali pa skušajo poudariti, v kako težkih razmerah so se znašli, ko se sklicujejo na odgovornost župnijskih uradnikov, da nudijo pomoč. Nasprotno pa je za 14 pisem, katerih avtorji so bili župnijski uradniki in zastopniki, ki so pisali v imenu revnih, značilna večja enovitost uporabljenih stalnih zvez kot v pismih revnih. Slogovne izbire bolj izkušenih avtorjev (vključno z revnimi) stremijo k vzorcem prevladujoče rabe in vsebujejo podobnosti s slogovnimi izrazi, ki jih najdemo tudi v poslovni korespondenci. Raziskava o znotrajavtorski variantnosti razkriva, da imajo posamezniki ustaljen nabor stalnih zvez, pričakovanih v zaključnih formulah in na avtoreferencialnih mestih. Spričo omejenih izobrazbenih možnosti revni običajno pridobijo zgolj okrnjeno znanje o ustaljenih izrazih in o ustreznosti njihove rabe. Samopopravljanja revnih, ki jih najdemo v zaključnih formulah in pri avtoreferencialnih izrazih, govorijo v prid

predhodnim ugotovitvam, da so bile stalne zveze pogosto naučene prek naključnega ustnega prenašanja in da so se shranjevale in procesirale kot samostojne enote.

Ključne besede: zgodovinska sociolingvistika, pisma revnih, besedilne zvrsti, formulaični jezik, samopopravljanje

Brenda Assendelft
b.m.e.assendelft@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Gijsbert Rutten
g.j.rutten@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Leiden University

THE RISE AND FALL OF FRENCH BORROWINGS IN POSTMEDIEVAL DUTCH[*]

1 INTRODUCTION

The French and Dutch languages have been in close contact for centuries. In the history of Dutch, this has led to contact-induced changes such as borrowings in the lexicon and the morphology, to bilingual social domains implying language choice as well as to a strong anti-French discourse. This discourse is paralleled by a strong pro-Dutch discourse, particularly from the eighteenth century onwards, when the standard language ideology emerges.

The contact situation with French is still badly understood as there is a lack of empirical research from a linguistic angle. In this paper, we analyze lexical and morphological borrowings from French on the basis of the newly developed Language of Leiden Corpus (LOL Corpus) in order to obtain a more fine-grained and empirically sound understanding of the contact. We are here particularly interested in a possible 'Dutchification' of the language following a previous stage of 'Frenchification'. In a previous study, we discussed the distribution of French-origin loan suffixes in the LOL Corpus (Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a). We found that the token frequency of French-origin suffixes increases over time from the sixteenth century onwards, and peaks in the first half of the eighteenth century. We also found a sharp decrease of these suffixes in the nineteenth century. In the present study, we zoom in on this decrease, while also comparing the distribution of the suffixes to the distribution of loanwords from French across time.

We introduce the sociohistorical situation in section 2. In section 3, we explain our method, after which we first present a diachronic, quantitative overview of the results, and then move on to a discussion of the decrease of French-origin items. Section 4 concludes.

---

2 FRENCHIFICATION AND DUTCHIFICATION

Dutch and French share a long history with various contact effects on both sides of the language border (Peersman/Rutten/Vosters 2015). From the late Middle Ages onwards, French was used in the Low Countries in the context of international trade, diplomacy, administration and literary culture, alongside Dutch and other languages such as Latin (Willemyns 1994, Sleiderink 2010, Frijhoff 2015). In some cases, such as trade and diplomacy, the use of French was a functional choice, while in other cases, such as literature, multilingualism had always been part of cultural production and reception (Sleiderink 2010). There are important differences between the southern and the northern Low Countries, roughly Belgium and Luxembourg on the one hand, and the Netherlands on the other. Whereas both the north and the south were historically multilingual, the south is characterized by extensive societal multilingualism with large French- and Dutch-dominant communities (Vanhecke/De Groof 2007, Willemyns 2015). In the north, the use of French was generally more limited, and French was more often than not a later-learnt language. We will limit ourselves to the northern Low Countries here, zooming in on the city of Leiden in particular (see also section 3).

As an important language in several domains, French entered the Dutch school system, which intensified in the Early Modern period following the arrival of tens of thousands of Huguenot refugees, who established French schools across the Low Countries (Frijhoff 2003, Dodde 2020). It is traditionally said that French also entered the private domain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with elite families adopting French in private writings such as diaries and letters (Frijhoff 1989, Ruberg 2011, van Strien-Chardonneau/Kok-Escalle 2017). The Early and Late Modern Low Countries thus fully participated in the European tradition of Francophonie (Argent, Rjéoutski/Offord 2014). The intensive and enduring contact with French also affected the Dutch language itself, which comprises many borrowed items, particularly at the level of the lexicon and the morphology (van der Sijs 2002: 215, van der Wal/van Bree 2014: 173–174).

A significant metalinguistic effect of the intensive contact situation with French was the emergence of a discourse of Frenchification, according to which influence from French was severely criticized (Frijhoff 1989, Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal 2015). This discourse has roots in the sixteenth century, continues into the twentieth century, and usually locates the peak of Frenchification in the eighteenth century. In this century, the anti-French discourse was accompanied by another one, focusing on Dutchification instead (Rutten 2019). The rise of the standard language ideology in the context of emergent cultural nationalism subsequently led to various language planning proposals in the second half of the eighteenth century. These resulted in the first official codification of Dutch at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This language policy was quite successful, in that the newly codified standard language was implemented in education in the nineteenth century, and adopted in language use, even in private letters and diaries (Rutten/Krogull/Schoemaker 2020). The language policy was restricted to the northern part of the Low Countries.

The policy concerned the spelling and the grammar of Dutch. There were also official initiatives to create a national dictionary, but this was not realized at the time

(Rutten 2019: 146–147). Over the centuries, there had been many private initiatives to the Dutchification of the lexicon. Purist dictionaries were published from the sixteenth century onwards (Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal 2015: 148). In the 1760s, a long debate about a complete dictionary of Dutch began; work on what would become the *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal* 'Dictionary of the Dutch language' eventually commenced in the second half of the nineteenth century (Rutten 2019: 133–164). A focal point in these lexicographical debates was the status of borrowings from languages such as French and Latin, which had to be expelled from the Dutch language according to most commentators (Rutten 2019: 163). Haspelmath (2009: 47) recalls that lexical purism is a common phenomenon in European languages, which has led to the 'large-scale replacement of loanwords by native formations' in 'various central and eastern European languages, from the 18th century through the first half of the 20th century'. Whether this is also the case for Dutch is an empirical question, and one that we aim to start answering in the present paper.

3 WORDS AND MORPHEMES FROM FRENCH IN HISTORICAL DUTCH

3.1 Method

The Language of Leiden Corpus was specifically built to study empirically the phenomenon of the so-called Frenchification through corpus-based analyses of contact-induced changes. Previous research has shown that space is an important factor in this context (Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal 2015). Actual as well as perceptual proximity to the Romance language border appears to have been relevant to historical language users so that we have chosen to build a corpus with data from only one locality, viz. the city of Leiden. Leiden was chosen because it is one of the important cities in the dominant region of Holland, with however a less diversified migration history than the historical metropole Amsterdam. Importantly, Leiden has attracted relatively many migrants from French-speaking areas in the southern Netherlands and northern France (Lucassen/de Vries 2001: 29, 40).

The LOL Corpus is based on two independent variables: period and social domain. The corpus comprises textual data, largely manually transcribed from original sources, from seven social domains relevant in the history of Leiden: Academic life, Charity, Economic life, Literary life, Private life, Public opinion, and Religious life (Tjalsma 1978, Van Maanen/Groenveld 2003). The corpus data are furthermore divided into 50–year periods from 1500 to 1899. For each period and domain, we aimed to have 5,000 words. Table 1 gives the structure of the LOL Corpus. Note that from some periods no archival data were found, while for other periods no data were principally available (indicated by N.A.). The latter applies to Public opinion and Academic life: the first Leiden newspaper dates back to the second half of the seventeenth century, and the university was founded in the second half of the sixteenth century. Table 1 also gives broad genre labels for the documents representing the social domains.

Table 1. Overview of the Language of Leiden Corpus (N.A.= not applicable)

Domain	Public opinion	Private	Academic	Religion	Literature	Charity	Economy
Genre	Newspaper articles	Letters	Minutes	Minutes	Plays	Wills	Ordinances Requests
1500−1549	N.A.	-	N.A.	-	-	5,027	5,072
1550−1599	N.A.	4,449	5,046	5,305	5,116	5,229	5,118
1600−1649	N.A.	5,114	5,124	5,259	5,138	5,131	5,276
1650−1699	5,053	5,032	5,177	5,128	5,143	5,111	5,314
1700−1749	5,111	5,421	5,025	5,153	5,183	5,082	5,189
1750−1799	5,095	5,116	5,067	5,128	5,112	5,290	5,212
1800−1849	5,084	5,145	5,160	5,258	5,173	5,114	5,100
1850−1899	5,088	5,038	5,157	5,271	5,194	5,037	5,052
	25,431	**35,315**	**35,756**	**36,502**	**36,059**	**41,021**	**41,333**
Total word count: 251,417							

In a previous study, we discussed the distribution of French-origin loan suffixes in the LOL Corpus (Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a). Dutch borrowed between 30 and 40 suffixes from French (some may also originate from Latin, or from both languages), including nominal suffixes such as *-aard/-erd* as in *lafaard* 'coward', adjectival suffixes such as *-aal* in *amicaal* 'friendly', and the verbal suffix *-eren* as in *waarderen* 'appreciate'; see Table 2 for the full list of suffixes investigated.

Table 2. Dutch suffixes originating from French (based on van der Sijs 2005: 189−195)

Suffix	Example
Nouns	
-aard, -erd	*lafaard* 'coward', *goeierd* 'good person'
-es, -esse	*prinses* 'princess', *secretaresse* 'female secretary'
-e	*studente* 'female student'
-ette	*misdienette* 'altar girl'
-(en)ier	*aalmoezenier* 'chaplain'
-ist	*communist* 'communist'
-ant	*predikant* 'preacher'
-ein, -een	*Romein* 'Roman', *Hondureen* 'inhabitant of Honduras'
-ees	*Balinees* 'inhabitant of Bali'
-ent	*producent* 'producer'
-eur/euse	*chauffeur* 'driver', *chauffeuse* 'female driver'
-teur/trice	*directeur* 'director', *directrice* 'female director'
-iaan	*indiaan* 'native American'
-iet	*islamiet* 'Muslim'
-ijn	*augustijn* 'Augustinian'
-ade	*blokkade* 'blockade'

Suffix	Example
-age	*lekkage* 'leakage'
-cide	*genocide* 'genocide'
-oïde/ide	*paranoïde* 'paranoid', *hominide* 'hominid'
-(er)ij/(er)ie	*boerderij* 'farm', *pedanterie* 'pedantry'
-ine	*vitamine* 'vitamin'
-isme	*calvinisme* 'calvinism'
-(i)teit	*majesteit* 'majesty'
-lei	*allerlei* 'all kinds of'
-tiek	*boetiek* 'boutique'
-atie	*situatie* 'situation'
-ment	*regiment* 'regiment'
-((a)t)uur	*signatuur* 'signature'
Adjectives	
-aal	*amicaal* 'friendly'
-air	*elitair* 'elitist'
-(i)eel	*financieel* 'financial'
-esk	*soldatesk* 'soldierly'
-(i)eus	*complimenteus* 'complimentary'
-iek	*politiek* 'political'
Verbs	
-eren	*waarderen* 'to appreciate'

We extracted all suffixes from the corpus using the AntConc tool (Anthony 2022), while taking into account spelling variation as well as inflected and conjugated variants (see Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a for further details). For the loanwords, we were forced to adopt an inductive method, since no deductive search method could be established: it is currently not possible to automatically extract loanwords from a historical corpus of Dutch. We identify loanwords strictly as words 'that at some point in the history of a language entered its lexicon as a result of borrowing' (Haspelmath 2009: 36), i.e. on the basis of etymology. This means that we include the entire range from fully integrated words that are not clearly recognizable as loanwords to less integrated and often more recent borrowings. An example of the first type is the noun *kussen* ([kϴsə] or [kϴsən]) 'cushion', borrowed in medieval times and based on Oldfrench *cuisin*. An example of the other end of the scale is *municipaliteit* 'municipality' from French *municipalité*, which was used during the French reign in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Borrowings from French also include borrowings from Picardic, from which many words entered the Dutch language, or other regional varieties of French.

The resulting datasets of loan suffixes and loanwords overlap partially, since many words with a French-origin suffix are loanwords from French, but there are also important differences:

1. Not all loanwords from French have one of the aforementioned suffixes, such as the frequently occurring noun *plaats* 'place'. Research by Stevens (2019) suggests that the number of loanwords exceeds the number of words with loan suffixes.
2. Borrowed suffixes also occur with Germanic stems, for example *waarderen* 'appreciate' has the verbal suffix *-eren* attached to the Germanic stem *waard-* 'value'. Such words are included in the suffix dataset since the suffix *-eren* is considered to be of French origin, but not in the loanword dataset as the verb *waarderen* is not a borrowing from French.
3. Suffixes were judged to be of French origin as a category (see Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a), while loanwords were analyzed individually. For example, the suffix *-ent* was deemed to be of French origin, in accordance with etymological dictionaries, since most words in *-ent* are borrowings from French. Some words ending in *-ent* are actually of Latin origin, but since we focused on the suffix as a morphological category, we included all words in *-ent*. This approach was also taken in the interest of comparability with Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal (2015; see also Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a). For the loanword analysis, however, words in *-ent* borrowed from Latin had to be excluded. An example is the noun *student* 'student', which frequently occurs in the LOL Corpus (in the Academic domain); the word *student* is not included in the loanword dataset, as it is derived from the Latin form *studentem*.

3.2 Diachronic overview

The LOL Corpus has 6,885 words with a French-origin suffix. The verbal suffix *-eren* is the most frequently occurring loan suffix with 2,682 tokens (e.g. *logeren* 'spend the night', *resolveren* 'resolve'). The total number of loanwords from French is 8,767.[1] This means that in the entire LOL Corpus, which counts 251,417 words (Table 1), the share of established loanwords from French is 3.5%.[2]

Figure 1 gives the number of loan suffixes and loanwords per 1,000 words for each of the 50–year periods distinguished in the LOL Corpus. Both loanwords and loan suffixes show the same diachronic trend: there is an increase of French-origin items in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, resulting in a peak in the early eighteenth century, after which a decline sets in, which is particularly clear from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. Across time, the number of loanwords consistently exceeds the number of words with a loan suffix.

---

1   There is an additional dataset of 6,419 loanwords with uncertain etymology; these are all possibly borrowed from French, but another origin is also an option (usually Latin). We will not take these possible borrowings from French into consideration here.

2   Van der Sijs (2009: 350) argues that Dutch comprises 19.1% loanwords, and 6.8% loanwords from French. This leads Tadmor (2009: 57) to conclude that the Dutch language is an average borrower (between 10 and 25% loanwords). The analysis is based on present-day Dutch and departs from 1,460 lexical meanings (Haspelmath & Tadmor 2009: 5); it is not historical nor is it corpus-based. It should be noted that the relevant lexical items in their sample do not comprise the large number of articles, pronouns and conjunctions found in actual language use (Haspelmath & Tadmor 2009: 22-34).

Figure 1. Loanwords from French (black line) and loan suffixes from French (grey line) in the LOL Corpus: token count per 1,000 words and per 50–year period

In Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal (2023a), we also compare the token frequency of French-origin suffixes to the type frequency. The type frequency is much more constant through time (always between 6 and 11 types per 1,000 words), which does however not mean that it is the same set of types: the set changes diachronically, while the type frequency remains relatively stable. In Assendelft/ Rutten/van der Wal (2023b), we show that a similar pattern is found for the type frequency of loanwords, which ranges from 8 to 13 per 1,000 words. The peaks of 11 types (for the suffixes) and of 13 types (for the loanwords) both occur in the first half of the eighteenth century.

The results in Figure 1 are partially in line with the traditional discourse of Frenchi-fication, which often focuses on the eighteenth century. On the one hand, the token peak of French-origin items is found in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, it is found already in the first half of the century, at a point when the steady increase in the use of French-origin items has been going on for centuries. As previously mentioned, here we are particularly interested in the possibly ideological decrease of French-origin items in the context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutchification.

3.3 Changes in lexical choices

In Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal (2023a), we first identified the decrease in French-or-igin items from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, when discussing the diachron-ic distribution of loan suffixes in the LOL Corpus. Taking into account the structure of the corpus, we showed that the use of loan suffixes was particularly prevalent across the centuries in the domains of the Academy and Charity. We examined the decrease of loan suffixes in the nineteenth century and established a range of lexical choices or variables, such as *compareren* v. *verschijnen* 'appear (before a notary)', *revoceren* v.

herroepen 'revoke', *disponeren* v. *beschikken* 'dispose', *resideren* v. *wonen* or *stand-plaats hebben* 'reside', and *ter presentie van* v. *in tegenwoordigheid van* 'in the presence of'. These represent concepts frequently used in administrative and legal prose, for example in wills, and it seems that the Romance option (first mentioned in the pairs) diachronically gave way to the Dutch alternative. Haspelmath (2009: 49) discusses the effects of loanwords on the lexical stock of the recipient language and distinguishes between *replacement* and *coexistence*. Loanwords may take over the meaning of earlier words, after which these latter fall out of use; this is called replacement. In other cases, loanwords and native words with the same meaning remain in use, and thus coexist. In our Dutch case, we have the opposite, viz. native words replacing loanwords, but the effects are similar: in principle, the loanword can be replaced, or it can be maintained alongside the native word.

In this section, we will zoom in on the issue of replacement and coexistence. As the changes appear to be a matter of lexical choice, we will use the loanword dataset here. Since we are primarily interested in loans from French, we will not discuss words with an uncertain etymology or that were borrowed from Latin (e.g. *compareren*, *revoceren*, *disponeren*). In addition, we limit ourselves here to the domain of Charity, which has a considerable proportion of loanwords from French (1,722 tokens out of 8,767 in total). The domain of Charity is among the four domains with the highest number of French borrowings; the others are Academy, Economy and Public Opinion (Assend-elf/Rutten/van der Wal 2023b). Public opinion does not have a history as long as the other three domains. Academy does not display a similar decrease in French loans in the nineteenth century (Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023b); academic life is in fact replete with Romance loans until the present day (*student*, *docent*, *professor*, *assistent*, *promotie*, *oratie*, *dissertatie* and so on). The domain of Economy shows a diachronic pattern similar to Charity. Within the limits of this paper, we chose to focus on Charity.

The domain of Charity covers the whole period from 1500 to 1899 with approximately 5,000 words for each 50–year period. As shown above (Table 1), the texts chosen for this domain are wills. The local system of charity depended to a large extent on donations from individual citizens. These donations were recorded and regulated through wills. Zooming in on these wills related to the Charity domain, Table 3 gives the absolute numbers of loanwords from French across time. The pattern follows the one identified in Figure 1, viz. first, an increase with a peak in the eighteenth century, after which numbers seem to drop again in the nineteenth century.

Scrutinizing the data behind these figures reveals that a number of French loans follow the pattern as in Table 3 and are indeed superseded by Dutch alternatives. An example is *resideren* 'reside', used in wills to describe the address or residence of those who appear before the notary (the 'appearers') and of the notaries themselves. Another example is *presentie*, used to identify witnesses in the expressions *ter presentie van* and *in presentie van* 'in the presence of'. Table 4 gives the results for these two frequent words with their Dutch alternatives.[3]

---

3   Note that in the expression *standplaats hebben* 'have a location, reside', the compound *standplaats* comprises the noun *plaats*, derived from old French *place*, which may not have been recognized as originally French (it's

Table 3. Loanwords from French in the domain Charity: absolute numbers per 50–year period (based on the LOL Corpus)

Time	Number of French loans
1500−1549	82
1550−1599	187
1600−1649	234
1650−1699	276
1700−1749	292
1750−1799	294
1800−1849	197
1850–1899	160
	1722

Table 4. Two French loans and their alternatives in the domain Charity: absolute numbers

	resideren	*wonen*	*standplaats hebben*	*presentie*	*tegenwoordigheid*
1500−1549	0	1	0	0	0
1550−1599	0	3	0	5	0
1600−1649	2	3	0	3	0
1650−1699	12	7	0	5	0
1700−1749	14	9	0	4	0
1750−1799	16	10	0	14	0
1800−1849	17	37	0	2	32
1850–1899	8	28	3	0	58
	69	**98**	**3**	**33**	**90**

Table 4 also shows a diachronic increase in the need to identify witnesses and their residences, suggesting a gradually emerging genre. The French-origin items dominate first and are then accompanied by their Dutch alternatives.

The pattern found for *resideren* and *presentie* can even be established with less frequent items such as *affirmeren* 'confirm', which has only 17 tokens in the corpus, 16 of which occur before 1800, of which 13 in the eighteenth century. Its meaning is taken over by *bevestigen*, which has only 3 tokens before 1800, but 6 in the period 1850–1899. In all these cases, the French-origin item does not disappear entirely from the language. The words *resideren*, *presentie* and *affirmeren* still occur in Dutch. At the level of the Dutch language, coexistence thus seems to be the process in place. At the level of the texts representing this domain, however, and in particular when taking into account the frequency shift towards Dutch-origin items, the process may equally be termed replacement. In this respect, it is significant that *resideren* also increases in frequency until the first half of the nineteenth century. The proportion of

---

still an extremely common word in Dutch), or which in any case sounds significantly less French than *resideren*.

the two variants is the most relevant aspect in our view: despite the increasing use of *residuren*, it proportionally decreases in the first half of the nineteenth century due to the frequency of *wonen*.

Sometimes the introduction of an alternative leads to the temporary coexistence of the French and the Dutch form within one expression. The past participle *gepasseerd* 'passed (before the notary)' (72 tokens) is gradually replaced by *verleden* (23 tokens): this participle *gepasseerd* of the verb *passeren* (from French *passer*) occurs sporadically first, then increases to 12 tokens in 1700–1749, 19 tokens in 1750–1799, and 16 tokens in 1800–1849, after which it drops to 6 in the final period. The alternative *verleden* occurs sporadically throughout the centuries; it has even no occurrences at all in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but then increases to 11 tokens in the final period. In 9 instances, however, the two forms co-occur as in the phrase *verleden en gepasseert*. These cases of coexistence within one phrase are only found in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Other frequent French-origin forms occur throughout the centuries and into the nineteenth century without a remarkable decrease but are accompanied by a Dutch alternative in the most recent period. The nouns *testateur* and *testatrice* (147 tokens together), indicating men and women who make a will, are used interchangeably with the masculine form *comparant* and the feminine form *comparante* 'someone who appears before a notary, appearer' (230 tokens together). In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Dutch alternative *erflater* 'testator' is introduced (1 occurrence), which has 33 tokens in the second half of the nineteenth century, when it is however still outnumbered by *testateur/testatrice* (23 tokens) and *comparant(e)* (45 tokens).

A final example of the gradual rise of Dutch alternatives to French loans also involves a syntactic difference. The adjective *publiek* 'public', often spelt in a French-like fashion such as *publyck* or *publycq*, occurs 56 times in the corpus, of which 53 times in combination with *notaris* 'notary'. Only a handful tokens are found in the first 150 years, but in 1650–1699 there are 14 tokens of *notaris publiek* 'public notary', in 1700–1749 there are 11, in 1750–1799 there are 21, after which the expression entirely disappears. The expression is syntactically remarkable as it has the adjective in postposition, as is common for most French adjectives, though not for Dutch adjectives. The alternative *openbaar notaris* 'public notary' occurs only 27 times in the corpus, sporadically throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but in 1800–1849 there are 10 tokens. All 53 instances of *notaris publiek* have the adjective in postposition, whereas the 27 tokens of *openbaar notaris* have the Dutch word order. This shows that word order patterns not existing in the recipient language may be borrowed along with lexical items, albeit in a supposedly fixed expression.

While many French words were gradually accompanied or superseded by Dutch alternatives, we wish to point out that some French loans simply disappear from the corpus without an alternative being introduced. This applies to frequent words such as *accorderen* 'approve' with 30 tokens, 17 of which occur in the eighteenth century. Another 3 tokens are found in 1800–1849, and none in the final period. The adverb *expres/expresselijk* 'explicitly' occur 15 times in the corpus. 11 of these 15

tokens have the Dutch adverbial suffix *-elijk*. After some popularity in the seventeenth century, there is a single token in 1700–1749, and another one in 1750–1799, after which *expres/expresselijk* disappears. The adjective *solemneel* 'solemn' (7 tokens) occurs 6 times in combination with *testament* 'will'. There is one final token in the period 1750–1799. Here, as above, the French word order with the adjective in postposition occurs once in the period 1700–1749 (*testament solemneel*). The adjective *testamentair* 'testamentary' (20 tokens) occurs only in the expression *testamentaire dispositie* 'testamentary disposition'. The final two tokens are found in 1800–1849. Here, 5 tokens occur with the French word order, i.e. with the adjective following the noun. In all these cases, there are no clear Dutch alternatives introduced. It may be the case that these words were part of larger expressions or genre conventions that disappeared or changed, but this would require a more detailed analysis of the genre in question.

Finally, we do not want to give the impression that French loans were entirely expelled from Dutch. Words such as *som* 'sum' (84 tokens) and *kantoor* 'office' (26 tokens), both already borrowed in the thirteenth/fourteenth century, occur throughout the period of the corpus, and are in fact still widely used in present-day Dutch.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The diachronic trend established for loan suffixes in previous research (Assendelft/ Rutten/van der Wal 2023a) is paralleled by the pattern for lexical loans: the number of words borrowed from French increases in the LOL Corpus until it peaks in the eighteenth century, after which it drops in the nineteenth century. Some loans simply disappear, while others are maintained. Many lexical borrowings are replaced or accompanied by Dutch alternatives, particularly in the nineteenth century. Focusing on the social domain of Charity, we have shown how lexical choices moved from French-oriented to Dutch-oriented in many cases. These trends confirm an increasing influence of the contact language French on Dutch in the Early and Late Modern period ('Frenchification'), and at the same time they also show the effect of nationalistically inspired Dutchification in the nineteenth century, following the recently emerged standard language ideology (Rutten 2019).

In the language contact literature, a conceptual distinction is made between replacement and coexistence (Haspelmath 2009). These two concepts refer to the effect of lexical borrowings on the lexicon of the recipient language. Here, we applied these terms to the opposite situation of native lexical items replacing French-origin items. Most examples we presented would count as coexistence: the native lexemes were naturally already around (they were usually not invented in, say, the eighteenth or nineteenth century), and the French lexemes were not always completely removed from the language as a whole. Nonetheless, at the more specific level of domain and genre-related variation, they proportionally disappeared as can be shown by a variationist analysis, after which they were replaced by Dutch alternatives. More generally, we would argue that processes of replacement and coexistence need to be investigated at the level of concrete discourse traditions.

Some of the lexical loans and the concepts that they signify, discussed in section 3, were not very frequent in the sixteenth century, but then increased in frequency in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This suggests that the genre of the will – our textual source from the domain of Charity – was changing at the time, and stabilized in the seventeenth/eighteenth century, when it included many French-origin items. It probably changed again in the nineteenth century, at least at the level of lexical choice. A topic for future research is therefore the development of the genre of the will through the ages. Another topic for future research is the relationship between phonological integration and avoidance. It is probably not a coincidence that a fully integrated borrowing such as *kantoor* 'office' (< *comptoir*) is still a frequently used word in Dutch. Interestingly, our results have also shown that in certain phrases the French syntactic pattern in which the adjective follows the noun was copied into Dutch. A present-day example where this is still the case, also in English, is *secretaris-generaal* 'secretary general'.

This last observation may suggest that the influence of French on Dutch was pervasive, affecting even syntax, and this is also suggested by the large number of French-origin items in the LOL Corpus (both words and suffixes). At the same time, this wide use of French-origin items across the centuries did certainly not prevent language users later on from identifying many of these words as originating from another language, viz. French, and to avoid them in the nineteenth-century spirit of nationalism.

References

ANTHONY, Laurence (2022) AntConc (Version 4.2.0) [Computer Software]. Tokyo: Waseda University. https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/

ARGENT, Gesine/Vladislav RJÉOUTSKI/Derek OFFORD (eds) (2014) *European Francophonie. The social, political and cultural history of an international prestige language*. Oxford: Lang.

ASSENDELFT, Brenda/Gijsbert Rutten/Marijke van der Wal (2023a) "Tracing Frenchification: a sociolinguistic analysis of French loan suffixes in a historical corpus of Dutch." In: Rita Franceschini/Matthias Hüning/Peter Maitz (eds), Historische Mehrsprachigkeit: Europäische Perspektiven. Berlin: De Gruyter, 37-55.

ASSENDELFT, Brenda.Gijsbert Rutten/Marijke van der Wal (2023b) "Franse woorden in het Nederlands: een corpusanalyse van de lexicale invloed van het Frans op het Nederlands, 1500-1900." Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde 139(2/3): 160-179.

DODDE, Nan (2020) *Franse scholen in Nederland. Ontstaan en ontwikkeling vanaf de vijftiende eeuw tot het midden van de negentiende eeuw*. Oud-Turnhout/'s-Hertogenbosch: Gompel & Svacina.

FRIJHOFF, Willem (1989) »Verfransing? Franse taal en Nederlandse cultuur tot in de revolutietijd.« *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 104, 592−609.

FRIJHOFF, Willem (2003) "Uncertain Brotherhood. The Huguenots in the Dutch Republic." In: Bertrand Van Ruymbeke/Randy Sparks (eds), *Memory and Identity.*

The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 128−171.

FRIJHOFF, Willem (2015) "Multilingualism and the challenge of frenchification in the early modern Dutch Republic." In: C. Peersman/G. Rutten/R. Vosters (eds), 115−140.

HASPELMATH, Martin (2009) "Lexical borrowing: Concepts and issues." In: Martin Haspelmath/Uri Tadmor (eds), *Loanwords in the World's Languages. A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 35–54.

HASPELMATH, Martin/Uri TADMOR (2009) "The Loanword Typology project and the World Loanword Database." In: Martin Haspelmath/Uri Tadmor (eds), *Loanwords in the World's Languages. A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 1–34.

LUCASSEN, Leo/Boudien de VRIES (2001) "The rise and fall of a West European textile-worker migration system: Leiden, 1586–1700." In Gérard Gayot/Philippe Minard (eds), *Les ouvriers qualifiés de l'industrie (XVIe-XXe siècle). Formation, emploi, migrations*. Lille: Université Charles de Gaulle/Revue du Nord, 23–42.

MAANEN, Rudi van/Simon GROENVELD (eds) (2003) *Leiden. De geschiedenis van een Hollandse stad. Deel 2: 1574–1795*. Leiden: Stichting Geschiedschrijving Leiden.

PEERSMAN, Catharina/Gijsbert RUTTEN/Rik VOSTERS (eds) (2015) *Past, Present and Future of a Language Border: Germanic-Romance Encounters in the Low Countries*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

RUBERG, Willemijn (2011) *Conventional Correspondence. Epistolary culture of the Dutch elite, 1770–1850*. Leiden: Brill.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert (2019) *Language Planning as Nation Building. Ideology, policy and implementation in the Netherlands, 1750–1850*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Andreas KROGULL/Bob SCHOEMAKER (2020) »Implementation and acceptance of national language policy: the case of Dutch (1750–1850).« *Language Policy* 19, 259−279.

RUTTEN, Gijsbert/Rik VOSTERS/Marijke van der WAL (2015) "Frenchification in discourse and practice. Loan morphology in Dutch private letters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." In: C. Peersman/G. Rutten/R. Vosters (eds), 143−170.

SIJS, Nicoline van der (2002) *Chronologisch woordenboek. De ouderdom en herkomst van onze woorden en betekenissen*. Amsterdam/Antwerpen: Veen.

SIJS, Nicoline van der (2005) *Van Dale Groot Leenwoordenboek. De invloed van andere talen op het Nederlands.* Utrecht/Antwerpen: Van Dale Lexicografie.

SIJS, Nicoline van der (2009) "Loanwords in Dutch". In: Martin Haspelmath/Uri Tadmor (eds), *Loanwords in the World's Languages. A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 338–359.

SLEIDERINK, Remco (2010) "From Francophile to Francophobe: The changing attitude of Medieval Dutch authors towards French literature." In: Christopher Kleinhenz/Keith Busby (eds), *Medieval Multilingualism: The Francophone World and its Neighbours* Turnhout: Brepols, 127−143.

STEVENS, Emmy (2019) »'Adieu, Vaarwel, groet mijne zo Waarde Ouders': Het gebruik van Franse leensuffixen en leenwoorden in een negentiende-eeuwse familiecorrespondentie.« *Taal en Tongval* 71, 137−156.

STRIEN-CHARDONNEAU, Madeleine van/Marie-Christine KOK-ESCALLE (eds) (2017) *French as Language of Intimacy in the Modern Age*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

TADMOR, Uri (2009) "Loanwords in the world's languages: Findings and results." In: Martin Haspelmath/Uri Tadmor (eds), *Loanwords in the World's Languages. A Comparative Handbook*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 55–75.

TJALSMA, Heiko (1978) "De fysieke structuur van Leiden in 1749." In: Herman Diederiks/Karel Davids/Dirk Jaap Noordam/Heiko Tjalsma (eds), *Een stad in achteruitgang. Sociaal-historische studies over Leiden in de achttiende eeuw* Leiden: Sociale geschiedenis R.U.L, 14−54.

VANHECKE, Eline/Jetje DE GROOF. 2007. "New data on language policy and language choice in 19th-century Flemish city administrations." In: Stephan Elspaß/Nils Langer/Joachim Scharloth/Wim Vandenbussche (eds), *Germanic Language Histories 'from Below' (1700–2000)*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 449–470.

WAL, Marijke van der/Cor van BREE (2014) *Geschiedenis van het Nederlands*. Houten: Spectrum.

WILLEMYNS, Roland (1994) »Taalpolitiek in de Bourgondische tijd.« *Verslagen en Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal - en Letterkunde*, 162−177.

WILLEMYNS, Roland (2015) "Trilingual tug-o'-war: Language border fluctuations in the Low Countries." In: C. Peersman/G. Rutten/R. Vosters (eds), 39−60.

Abstract

THE RISE AND FALL OF FRENCH BORROWINGS IN POSTMEDIEVAL DUTCH

In this paper, we discuss the remarkable decrease in the use of French-origin loanwords and loan suffixes in Late Modern Dutch. We consider both changes to be lexical changes since the decrease in loan suffixes such as the verbal suffix *-eren* appears to result from a shift in certain lexical choices as well (Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal 2015). Our data come from the newly compiled Language of Leiden Corpus (LOL Corpus), developed at Leiden University in the context of a project on the historical Dutch-French contact situation. The main aim of the project is to assess empirically the supposed 'Frenchification' of Dutch in the Early Modern period (Frijhoff 2015). The LOL Corpus comprises data from seven social domains (Academy, Charity, Economy, Literature, Private life, Public opinion, Religion) significant in the history of the city Leiden from 1500 to 1899. Leiden was chosen as it was one of the important urban centers in Holland, attracting many migrants, including French-speaking labor migrants and Huguenots. The results for both words and suffixes borrowed from French

show a gradual increase from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, and a remarkable decrease from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. The results partially confirm the ongoing and intensifying influence of French on Dutch in the Early Modern period, depending strongly however on the social domain involved (Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a). At the same time, the results also show an unanticipated 'Dutchification' in more recent times. We relate these 'Dutchifying' lexical changes to the national language planning efforts emerging in the eighteenth century, following the rise of the standard language ideology from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards. These language planning efforts led to the official codification of Dutch in 1804/1805, which targeted spelling and grammar. Previous research has shown the significant influence of the officialization of Dutch, both on the field of education and on language use (Rutten 2019). In this paper, we argue that the successful language policy had the surprising side effect of inspiring language users to exchange sometimes long-established loans for originally Dutch words.

Keywords: Dutch, French, historical sociolinguistics, lexical borrowing, loan morphology, language contact

Povzetek
VZPON IN PADEC FRANCOSKIH IZPOSOJENK V POSREDNJEVEŠKI NIZOZEMŠČINI

V prispevku se ukvarjano z močnim upadom v rabi prevzetih besed in pripon francoskega izvora v pozni moderni nizzemščini. Obe spremembi imamo za leksikalni, saj se zdi, da je upad v rabi prevzetih pripon, kot je glagolska pripona –*eren,* tudi posledica sprememb v nekaterih leksikalnih izbirah (Rutten/Vosters/van der Wal 2015). Podatke zajemamo iz novega korpusa, znanega kot Language of Leiden Corpus (LOL), ki je nastal na Univerzi v Leidnu v okviru projekta o zgodovini nizozemsko-francoskih stikov. Glavni cilj projekta je empirična oceana domnevnega "pofrancozenja" nizozemščine v zgodnjem novem veku (Frijhoff 2015). Korpus LOL vključuje podatke s sedmih področij družbenega delovanja (akademsko področje, dobrodelnost, gospodarstvo, književnost, zasebno življenje, javno mnenje, vera), pomembnih za zgodovino mesta Leiden med 1500 in 1899. Leien smo izbrali, ker je bil pomembno nizozemsko urbano središče, privlačno za mnoge priseljence, vključno s francosko-govorečimi priseljenci, ki so se sem preselili zaradi dela, in hugenoti. Rezultati tako za besede kot za pripone, izposojene iz francoščine, kažejo postopen porast od 16. do 18. stoletja in nato močan upad od 18.do 19. stoletja. Izsledki deloma potrjujejo, da je bil zgodnji novi vek obdobje intenzivnega vplivanja francoščine na nizozemščino, čeprav v izraziti odvisnosti od posameznega področja družbenega življenja (Assendelft/Rutten/van der Wal 2023a). Obenem je razvidno, da je pozneje prišlo do nepričakovanega "ponizozemljenja". Tovrstne leksikalne težnje povezujemo s poskusi jezikovnega načrtovanja na državni ravni, ki so se začeli sredi 18. stoletja, po vzponu ideologije standarnega jezika.

Ti poskusi jezikovnega načrtovanja so privedli do uradne kodifikacije nizozemščine v času 1804/1805, ki je zadevala pravopis in slovnico. Predhodne raziskave so pokazale, da je imel proces uradne kodifikacije nizozemščine močan vpliv tako v izbraževanju kot v jezikovni rabi (Rutten 2019). V prispevku trdimo, da je bil stranski učinek uspešne jezikovne politike v spodbujanju jezikovnih uporabnikov, da že dolgo uveljavljene izposojenkse včasih zamenjajo z izvorno nizozemskimi besedami.

Ključne besede: nizozemščina, francoščina, zgodovinska sociolingvistika, leksikalno izposojanje, oblikoslovje prevzetih besed, jezikovni stik

Aatu Liimatta
aatu.liimatta@helsinki.fi

Jani Marjanen
jani.marjanen@helsinki.fi

Tuuli Tahko
tuuli.tahko@alumni.helsinki.fi

Mikko Tolonen
mikko.tolonen@helsinki.fi

Tanja Säily
tanja.saily@helsinki.fi

University of Helsinki

DIMENSIONS OF INCOMING ECONOMIC VOCABULARY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

1 INTRODUCTION

The intellectual history of the eighteenth century, characterized by the emergence of the Enlightenment and its platform of modernity, has been increasingly linked to economic improvement in contemporary discourse (see especially Robertson 2005). Some scholars also use descriptions such as "economic enlightenment" (Popplow 2010) or "agricultural enlightenment" (Jones 2016) to foreground the whole period as particularly economic or agricultural. The crux lies not in a conventional definition of Enlightenment's nature, but rather in comprehending the practical evolution of eighteenth-century thought. This interest in the economy is reflected in changes in eighteenth-century vocabulary, which is often pointed out in scholarship (Shovlin 2006: 2–5, McIntosh 2020: 163–165), but not studied rigorously in terms of language use, and only mentioned briefly in e.g. overviews of English historical lexis (Nevalainen 1999). Bi9ber/Finegan (1997) have shown that from the eighteenth century onwards, English registers diverged in their language use: speech-based and popular written registers like fiction became more colloquial, whereas expository 'specialized' registers like academic texts became more literate in style.[1] As the English language underwent significant functional expansion stimulated by various socio-cultural changes during the eighteenth

---

1   "Literate" in this context is to be understood as opposed to "oral" or "conversational"; according to Biber & Finegan (1997: 260), literate registers are "characterized by careful, sustained production circumstances; informational communicative purposes; and minimal interactiveness".

century (Culpeper/Nevala 2012), and considering the contemporary interest in the economy, we hypothesize that this expansion drove the spread of new economic vocabulary both in terms of its frequency of use but also in its application in both concrete and increasingly abstract contexts. The main emphasis of our paper is to utilise a data-driven approach to draw conclusions about economic vocabulary. While we have identified various potential factors that may have influenced its expansion, our goal in this study is to primarily observe and analyze the data, rather than getting involved in a discussion about the underlying reasons. This is particularly the case with regard to potential underlying economic developments that may or may not have influenced the linguistic expressions. While they are interesting, the correlations are difficult to chart due to the difficulty in comparing linguistic and economic data.

In combining linguistic and historical expertise, we make use of novel computational methods and draw on the massive database of *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO) to trace incoming economic vocabulary in British publications dealing with economic matters in the widest sense (about ECCO, see Tolonen et al. 2022). As the starting point of our analysis of economic vocabulary, we focus on the words classified by the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* under the category 'trade and finance'. In order to identify incoming economic vocabulary in particular, we apply a novel method, the Proportional Change Rate (PCR; Nevalainen *et al.* 2020), a measure developed for identifying periods of rapid and slower linguistic change as well as changing linguistic items. Furthermore, in order to gain more insight into the lexical functions and underlying discourses of the incoming vocabulary, we make use of an approach inspired by the multi-dimensional method of register analysis (MDA; Biber 1988) in which we apply the multi-dimensional method to the economic content words instead of the functional features of typical MDA register analyses; this is similar to other recent developments in applying a multi-dimensional approach on content words (*cf.* e.g. Zuppardi/Berber Sardinha 2020). We also combine our textual data with metadata from the *English Short-Title Catalogue* (ESTC), which has been harmonized and augmented by the Helsinki Computational History Group (Lahti *et al.* 2019).

This novel approach does not come without problems, however. As an example, the digitized texts in ECCO have been automatically converted from scanned images into plain text, and this optical character recognition is riddled with errors impacting both precision and recall (Hill/Hengchen 2019). This pilot study aims to be a step towards a systematic quantitative assessment of economic language use based on these large-scale collections, taking a critical view on the prevailing challenges in such analysis. With the combined expertise of the linguists and historians in our group, we will shed new light on the development of economic discourse by producing a description that is better couched in historical linguistics than earlier claims of an "economic enlightenment", and pave the way for further research utilizing historical language data in the digital humanities.

2 BACKGROUND

The increased written use of vernacular languages (as opposed to the cosmopolitan Latin) was an uneven process, in the sense that some local languages became print languages earlier than others and some registers or genres were more prone to vernacularization. In the medieval period, devotional literature comprised the majority of vernacular manuscripts in Europe, and the vernacular sermon, for instance, required the learned to communicate with lay people (Crossgrove 2000, Muessig 2010: 267). The fields of science, technology, and medicine also had a significant vernacular readership already in the Middle Ages (Crossgrove 2000). Religion and medicine, in particular, were areas of life where the educated mixed with the uneducated, which may have in part prompted vernacularization in these domains. Similarly in the eighteenth century, the insight of needing to reach a larger proportion of the population was particularly present in discussions about economic improvement. As states were increasingly seen as being in economic competition with one another (Hont 2005), the application of economic reform demanded bridging academic knowledge with the everyday practices of civic organizations and concrete economic policy. Economic matters became at the same time more specialized as they became the object of increased academic inquiry, and accessible to a broader readership as key actors increasingly saw a need to not only produce new knowledge, but also disseminate it to practitioners outside the sphere of academia.

The specialization of this knowledge is best visible in several chairs containing the word economy in their titles being established at European universities during the course of the eighteenth century (Magnusson 1992: 249–257) and an accentuated theoretical debate with treatises reasons and nature of prosperity in different European countries. Some volumes, like Plumard de Dangeul's *Remarques sur les avantages et desavantages de la France et de la Grand-Bretagne* (1754), very concretely highlighted the economic rivalry between Great Britain and France, making them of great interest to the reading public, but most probably served to disseminate economic vocabulary. As debates about the economy crossed borders, so did the terminology, which is perhaps reflected in the large portion of French borrowings in the new eighteenth-century economic vocabulary in English.

In more practical terms, so-called economic or improvement societies that proliferated all over Europe in the eighteenth century (Stapelbroek/Marjanen 2012) ventured into new avenues to put new knowledge, instruments and models into practice. The Honourable Society of Improvers founded in Scotland in 1723, which is generally regarded as the first of such societies, not only gathered information for discussion among its members, but actively published accounts of how to improve crops and manage farms in the newspapers (Bonnyman 2012: 37–38). Often written communication was not enough. In disseminating knowledge of new technology, The Dublin Society for the Improvement of Husbandry, Agriculture and other Useful Arts (founded in 1731), not only distributed models and drawings of ploughs to be used with different crops and types of soil, but also started promoting ploughing matches to promote efficient new agricultural methods (Livesey 2012: 69).

All this required both new vocabulary and new publication channels through which this new terminology could reach newly relevant strata in society. Overall, the role of the dictionary as a platform for lexical innovation becomes evident from Chambers onwards.. For instance, encyclopaedia entries on economic matters multiplied from Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* from the mid-century to Panckoucke's *Encyclopédie Méthodique* published toward the end of the century (Shovlin 2006: 2–5). Many seventeenth century or early eighteenth century neologisms, such as *political economy*, *commercial*, *consumption*, and *industry*, spread in their use during the course of the eighteenth century (McIntosh 2020: 163–165). Many of these terms expanded the horizon of economic thinking from the practical to the more theoretical and further from local circumstances to a national (or even international) perspective. The remarkable proliferation of eighteenth-century dictionaries listed in the English Short Title Catalogue is striking.

Economic vocabulary also penetrated more popular styles and registers. This can perhaps be seen in the orthography of some words, *economy* being the most obvious case. The form 'economy' overtook the forms 'oeconomy' and 'œconomy' by the end of the eighteenth century, marking a shift from spelling the word in the "classical" to a modern "English" way. Such orthographic changes stemmed from the gradual creation of local standards, printing technology and beliefs of what would serve the public best. In the 1759 book *The abecedarian* John Yeomans argued for dropping the ligature spelling for the word 'economy' and other foreign words as "we refuse to gesticulate the modes of spelling by any nations upon earth" (Yeomans 1759: 48). While some other suggestions, such as writing 'se' instead of 'sea', 'te' instead of 'tea' or 'æful' instead of 'awful', did not catch on, the overall aim of remedying "the present condition of our vulgar tongue" and making "learning easy" (Yeomans 1759: 15) was a driving force in reforming spelling.

The vernacularization of economic language can be seen as taking place in the intersection of new fora, new ideas about how to communicate economic knowledge, and the spread of both new and established economic vocabulary. Our focus lies on the last one of these, but our analysis is grounded in the idea that linguistic innovation was couched in the institutions, publication practices and the interplay between different registers that helped produce new lexical items as well as make them part of everyday language.

3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

3.1 Material

The dataset we employ is based on texts from the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO), which contains full texts of some 200,000 documents as computer-readable texts produced by optical character recognition (OCR). These documents have been linked to corresponding metadata from the *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) by the Helsinki Computational History Group (COMHIS); this metadata has then been further refined and enriched (Tolonen *et al.* 2022). As our focus is on the spread and change of economic language, we have chosen to further focus on a specific subset of documents: records labelled in the ESTC as belonging to the Goldsmiths'-Kress

Library of Economic Literature (GKL), a microfilm collection of economic literature in a broad understanding of "economic" (Whitten 1978).

When building our dataset based on this collection, we only included the earliest edition of any given work, since any reprints of older works will likely include linguistic features characteristic of their original period of publication, and thus may confuse diachronic analyses. Taking also into account the fact that not every ESTC record is represented in ECCO, we ended up with a dataset of roughly 5,000 ESTC records linked to ECCO documents, down from the full 11,000 ESTC record GKL set. Because an ESTC record can map onto multiple documents in ECCO (e.g. in the case of multi-volume works), this set of roughly 5,000 ESTC records corresponds to a set of about 5,200 ECCO documents. Figure 1 shows the number of documents over time divided by type. We can see that the number of pamphlets included in our data is particularly high in the early decades of the century. This is related to the 1707 Union of England and Scotland, which also led to an increase in pamphleteering on economic topics. Although the document count of pamphlets in GKL in the 1710s is high, this did not have an impact on our analysis due to both the low word-count of the pamphlets and, more importantly, the fact that the Union debate did not include the incoming economic vocabulary that turned out to be central for this study.
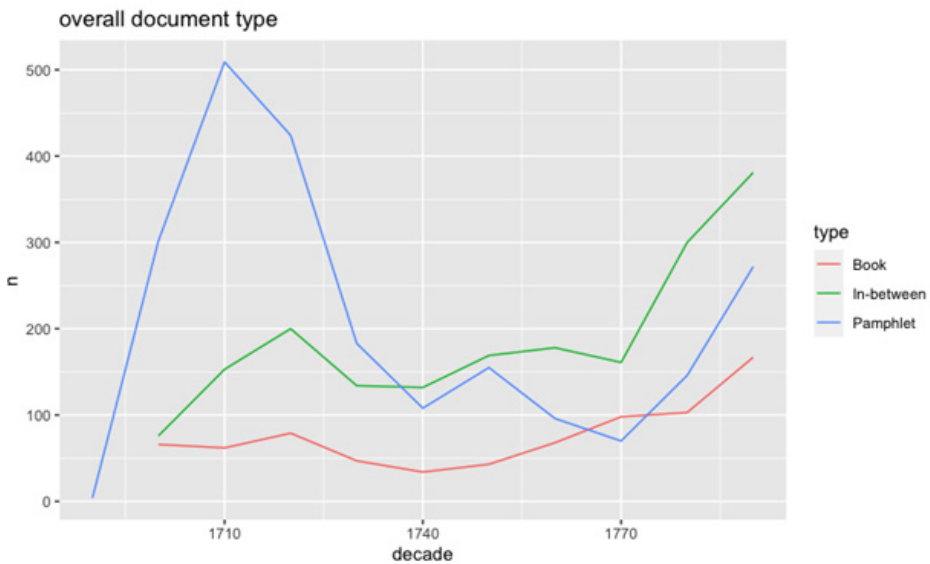
Figure 1. Number of ECCO documents in the GKL over time, divided by document type (pamphlet = <32 pages, in-between = 32–128 pages, book = >128 pages)[2]

---

2   About these different document types, see Mikko Tolonen, Eetu Mäkelä, and Leo Lahti, "Supplementary Information to The Anatomy of Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) article," *Supplement to 'Anatomy of ECCO,'* June 2022. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6683914

As the starting point of our analysis of economic lexis, we take the 'trade and finance' section of the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* (HT). Edited by a team led by Professor Christian Kay at the University of Glasgow, the HT describes the semantic development of English based on the second edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and *A Thesaurus of Old English*. It rearranges the OED by meaning into hierarchical semantic classes under the top-level categories of 'the mind', 'society' and 'the external world'. Out of the 800,000 words and meanings included in the thesaurus, 14,989 distinct lexical items can be found under the category of 'society > trade and finance'.

Thanks to an agreement with Oxford University Press, we have access to local XML versions of the OED and HT. This enables us to easily retrieve not only a list of all words belonging to a HT category but also the lexicographical metadata associated with each word, such as etymology type (e.g. borrowing or derivative), etymon language (e.g. Latin or English), part of speech, year of first attestation, and the specific HT class of the word (e.g. 'society > trade and finance > illegal or immoral trading > trade in (goods) illegally or immorally > smuggle').

Using the OED as a source for first attestation dates in particular is not unproblematic (*cf.* Durkin 2002). Work on the third edition is ongoing, and there are still entries in the dictionary that remain essentially unchanged since the first edition, prepared in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is very probable that some of the entries have been antedated since March 2019, when we acquired the data, or will be antedated in the near future. Nevertheless, our usage of the OED is not dependent on the dating being absolutely correct. We are interested in economic lexis, whether old or new, that was extant in the eighteenth century and that increased in frequency during that century in ECCO. To make sure that we are not missing words with economic senses that were extant in the eighteenth century but that the OED dates somewhat later, we take all words in the HT 'trade and finance' category with an OED first attestation date starting from Old English and ending in 1850. The cutoff of 1850 rather than 1800 accounts for possible antedatings to our OED data. In our investigation of specific lexical items associated with the dimensions of incoming economic vocabulary identified in our analysis (4.1 below), we retrieved the first attestation dates from OED Online in spring 2022. While the same caveats apply, the datings are used as indicative of the relative age of the words, particularly across the different dimensions, and our main findings regarding the dimensions do not rely on exact dates.[3]

The OCR of the ECCO data used is not perfect and causes some self-evident problems in matching strings of characters. In general, the distribution of errors is relatively even so that the results of most of our quantitative analyses are not affected by poor OCR. There are, however, some exceptions to this: the use of the long 's' in eighteenth-century documents, as well as the use of ligatures, both of which often include errors in the machine-readable version (Hill/Hengchen 2019). We manually inspected the OCR

---

3   In analyses which focus more heavily on the dates of introduction of new lexical items, the OED data could be supplemented by e.g. lexical lookups of the full ECCO dataset and other datasets such as the British Newspaper Archive.

quality of the spelling variants 'oeconomy', 'œconomy' and 'economy' in a selection of texts, and could confirm that about a third of the machine-readable strings 'economy' were, in fact, false renderings of the form 'œconomy'. Regardless, our manual inspection shows that the spelling variant 'economy' did become more common in the last decades of the eighteenth century, but any detailed quantitative assessment of spelling variation would not be reliable without manual inspection due to ligatures being exceptionally prone to errors. Based on this inspection, we also note that results with regard to words with the letter 's' potentially include a higher rate of errors.

3.2 Methods

In order to study the changes in economic vocabulary, we make use of a two-phase methodology. In the first phase, we identify incoming economic vocabulary; in the second phase, we identify underlying discourses driving the rise of some of these words.

3.2.1 Incoming economic vocabulary

We start our analysis of economic vocabulary with the set of lexical items classified under 'trade and finance' in the HT. As our focus is on the eighteenth century, we further limit this set to those items which are first attested in the 'trade and finance' category before the year 1850. We set this limit to avoid including items which were used with other meanings in the eighteenth century but which only later developed an economic meaning, but offset the limit by 50 years because it is possible there may be antedatings in our dataset of the first attestations recorded in the OED, as discussed in 3.1 above. We also exclude items whose entries contain parenthetical remarks or alternative constructions, which would not appear in that form in running text. After the set of items was determined, the frequency of each of the 7,079 items remaining in this set was calculated by decade by dividing the total number of occurrences of the item in each decade of our data by the total number of characters[4] in the OCR versions of the documents.

To identify items which rise in frequency relatively consistently throughout the century, we calculated the *proportional change rate* (PCR; Nevalainen *et al.* 2020) of each of the items across the decades. Originally devised to help identify time periods with the highest rate of change, the PCR describes how much of the total change in the frequency of a lexical item happens between each pair of successive time periods. In order to focus on incoming items with relatively constant growth, we excluded all items which had a PCR higher than 10% during any period of negative growth, that is to say, items which had at least one period of decreasing frequency which constituted over 10% of their total frequency changes. To avoid spurious results and statistical noise, we further excluded all items which had fewer than 100 total occurrences throughout our dataset, as well as items which did not appear in at least two decades. In the end, the set of lexical items of potential interest included 73 items. Figure 2 shows that the

---

4   Even though using the word count of the documents as the normalization base would be preferable, we use the character count instead to mitigate the effects of the questionable OCR quality, which makes it difficult to determine the word count of a document.

increase in frequency happened dominantly in the latter half of the century, with the most common words being central in economic vocabulary.
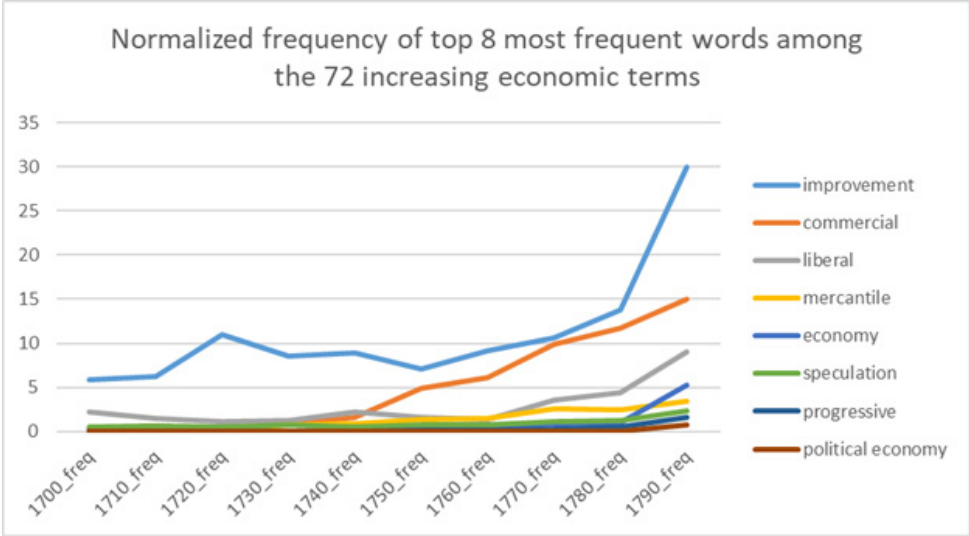

Figure 2. Normalized frequency of top 8 words among the 73 consistently increasing words identified by the PCR analysis

3.2.2 Underlying discourses

In order to identify some of the discourses which may underlie these incoming lexical items, we employ *factor analysis*, inspired by the multi-dimensional method of register analysis (e.g. Biber 1988). Factor analysis identifies "a set of latent constructs underlying the battery of measured variables" (Fabrigar 1999), in our case, a set of discourses underlying the use of certain incoming lexical items. In practical terms, we can use factor analysis to identify groups of lexical items which vary in frequency together, that is, whose frequencies in documents are correlated, so which tend to have a higher frequency in a document or a lower frequency in a document at the same time. The assumption behind the MDA methodology is that there is a functional reason why certain features tend to co-occur in the same documents. In our case, we interpret the co-occurrence of certain items of economic vocabulary to be because of their shared contexts of use, and therefore because of certain underlying discourses (*cf.* e.g. Zuppardi/Berber Sardinha 2020).

The factor analysis as performed here draws heavily on the principles and solutions used by Biber (1988). Factor analysis can be performed using various factoring methods; we use the commonly-used Principal Axis Factoring. In order to make the extracted factors more readily interpretable, the resulting factor solution needs to be rotated, i.e. the axes of the factor space are changed so that separate groups of co-occurring items load more strongly on separate factors. We did this using the oblimin rotation method, which allows for a degree of correlation between the extracted factors.

Allowing potential correlations is desirable because it is not reasonable to assume that the underlying discourses are completely independent from each other. The factor analysis itself was run twice. In the first round, five factors were extracted, which was the highest number of factors that could be extracted without issue, to catch as much of the overall variation as possible. After this round, all items which did not have a loading equal to or higher than |0.2| on any of the factors were removed, as such items were not very important for the description of any of the factors. Only the 28 items left over were included in the second round of the analysis. In this round, the highest number of factors that could be extracted without issue was four. All factor solutions of two to four factors were investigated. In the end, the four-factor solution was chosen because it explains the highest proportion of the overall variation and all four factors appeared readily interpretable.

Next, dimension scores were calculated for each ESTC record in our dataset. First, each lexical item was assigned to the factor(s) it had loadings over |.30| on. Then, the frequencies of each of the items were standardized to their mean and standard deviation. This was done to prevent high-frequency items from drowning out the effect of low-frequency features. After this, the dimension score of each ESTC record on each of the dimensions was calculated by summing the standardized frequencies of the features associated with that dimension within that document.

In our analysis of the functions and underlying discourses of the dimensions, we make use of standard corpus-linguistic methods such as concordance lines and collocation analysis; the results of this analysis are reported in subsection 4.2 below.

4 ANALYSIS

Following the procedure described above, we extracted the four dimensions displayed in Table 1. The items on each dimension tend to be present in the same texts and absent in the same texts, but the different dimensions are free to vary independently from each other. In practice, there is a small degree of correlation between the different factors, varying between 0.08 and 0.37, depending on the pair of factors. In this section, we will first look into the individual items associated with these dimensions in subsection 4.1. Then, in subsection 4.2, we will analyze the dimensions to interpret, define, and label them.

Table 1. The four extracted dimensions and the lexical items associated with them

Dimension	Lexical items
D1	Income, expenditure, incidental
D2	Circulating medium, funded, unfunded
D3	Income, finance, financier, financial, funding
D4	Commercial, liberal, improvement, extent, produce

One thing of note is that, unlike in many multi-dimensional studies, the above dimensions only include lexical items with high positive loadings, and no items with high

negative loadings. The items with positive and negative loadings on a dimension tend to be in a complementary distribution: when the frequency of the positive items is high, the frequency of the negative items is low, and vice versa. In other words, none of these groups of lexical items is associated with a contrasting complementary group of items. The reason for this is largely technical: overall, the items included on these dimensions are relatively rare in the full dataset, which means that the most common frequency for these items in the documents is zero. Due to this, a decrease in the frequency of any set of items can not be easily correlated with an increase in the frequency of any other complementary set of items. However, the co-occurring groups of words in these four dimensions can already tell us a great deal about the kinds of discourses in which these rising lexical items were used.

In subsection 4.1, we will first explore the lexicographical metadata related to the HT 'trade and finance' words more generally. Then, we will focus on the incoming items included in the four extracted dimensions and explore the lexicographical metadata of these items in more detail. In subsection 4.2, we will then analyze the four dimensions, interpreting the discourses underlying the dimensions extracted in the section above using standard corpus-linguistic methods.

4.1 Lexicographical metadata

We combined the HT lemmas from the 'society > trade and finance' category with OED metadata. While the ID correspondences between the HD and OED are not complete, this yielded us a set of 4,084 trade and finance lemmas which could be combined with their metadata. We were thus able to examine the source languages of new trade and finance lemmas in conjunction with the dates of their first attestation. It should be noted that once a word has entered the English language from another language (e.g. *commercial*, dated ante-1687, source language Latin), its subsequent derivatives (e.g. *commercialism*, dated 1849) have English as their source language. Thus English is the source language not only of native neologisms but also of a substantial group of lemmas whose roots may ultimately be in other languages. Of the 4,084 lemmas in this dataset, with first attestations between 601–4 and 1994, 2,498 have English as their source language. The second-largest source language is French (524 lemmas in total), followed by Latin and German (290 and 59 lemmas, respectively). The number of new words per century rises to its highest point in the 1600s (813 lemmas) and actually drops in the 1700s (443 lemmas), but rises again in the 1800s (762 lemmas). French was the most prolific foreign source of new words in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (102 and 125 new lemmas, respectively), which is to be expected, considering the position of French in medieval Europe as "the language of the princely courts and the courts of law, of high culture (secular and religious), and of bourgeois aspiration and trade" (Putter and Busby 2010: 3). Latin reached its peak as the most common non-English source language in the seventeenth century (122 new lemmas), at a time when Latin was still a popular publishing language but vernacular publishing had already surpassed it in Britain and was starting to grow substantially (Marjanen *et al.* Under review).
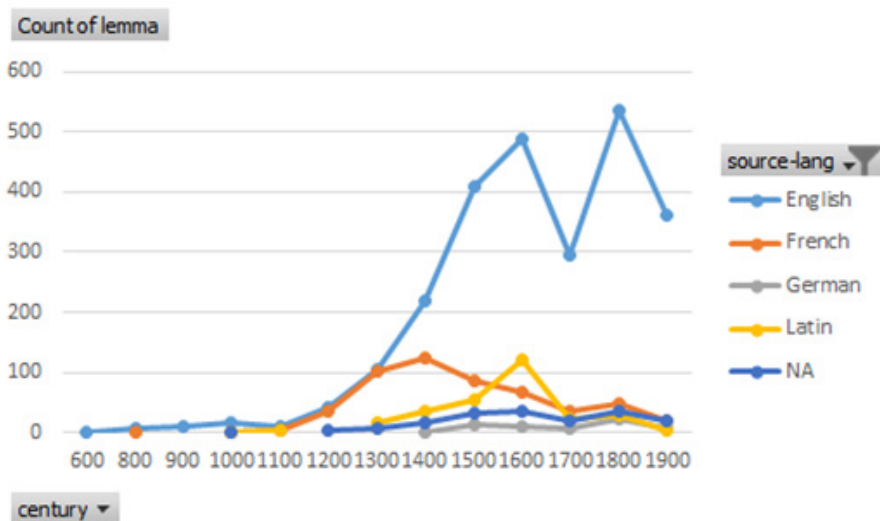
Figure 3. The source languages and first attestation dates of HT 'trade and finance' lemmas in languages with over 50 occurrences based on OED metadata. English lemmas include words that were derived within English from lemmas of foreign origin

We further analyzed the OED and HT metadata on the lexical items associated with each dimension. In Dimension 1, all words belong to the HT class 'society > trade and finance > management of money'. While *income* was first attested in 1601 according to the OED, both *expenditure* and *incidental* (as in *incidental charge/expense*) are new to the latter half of the eighteenth century, first attested in 1769 and 1791, respectively. Both words are somewhat learned derivatives: *expenditure* was derived from Latin *expenditus + -ure*, while *incidental* comes from *incident + -al*, perhaps modelled on French *incidentel*. We may thus expect these items to co-occur in rather specialized registers discussing the management of money, chiefly from the 1790s onwards.

The words in Dimension 2 are found under 'money', 'management of money', and 'financial dealings' within the trade and finance category of the HT. While *funded* and *unfunded* were first attested in the 1760s and 1770s, respectively, the OED gives *circulating medium* a first attestation date as late as 1803, although the compound was clearly in use earlier than that based on our dataset. The noun *fund* was borrowed from Latin (*fundus*); the verb *fund* as well as the adjectives *funded* and *unfunded* were derived within English. *Circulating* likewise stems from the Latin *circulāt*, and *medium* is a direct borrowing from Latin.

Dimension 3 shares the word *income* with Dimension 1; the noun *funding*, first attested in 1735, shares the same root as *funded* and *unfunded* in Dimension 2. The rest of the words in Dimension 3 are interrelated: *finance*, *financier* and *financial* can be traced back to Old French *finance*, although *financier* is a later borrowing of the French word. *Finance* is given various categories and meanings in the HT, with first attestations

ranging from 1439 to 1866. *Financier* is first attested in the 1600s and *financial* in the late 1700s. The Dimension 3 words mostly appear in the 'financial dealings', 'management of money', and 'fees and taxes' subcategories of trade and finance, although *finance* has entries under 'money' and 'payment' as well.

Apart from *commercial*, the words in Dimension 4 have a considerably higher number of meanings in other HT categories than they do in trade and finance. *Commercial*, *improvement*, and *extent* were first attested in the late 1600s, 1400s, and 1300s, respectively, and their first trade and finance senses date back to the same periods. *Liberal*, however, was first attested in the late 1300s but its recorded trade and finance usage only dates back to 1816, even if the OED does give an example of the economic sense of the word developing in the 1770s; *produce* was first attested in the 1400s and had its trade and finance first attestation in 1585. As for the origins of the Dimension 4 words, *produce* was borrowed from Latin and *improvement* partly borrowed from French, partly derived within English, while *commercial*, *liberal*, and *extent* have a mix of French and Latin roots that, in the case of *liberal* and *extent*, date back to the middle ages. Overall, these words are older than the other dimension words, and have more meanings outside the economic.

It seems that the trade and finance vocabulary that increased in frequency during the eighteenth century is comparatively young and of French or Latin origin. The first attestations listed in the OED, whether for the word overall or for a particular usage, are of course not precise and may change when new sources are discovered, but they are a reliable indication of the dates by which the word or usage appears at the latest. We also looked at trade and finance lemmas whose frequency decreases or stays the same over this period and discovered that many of them, in contrast, are inherited from Germanic and date back to Old English – for example *star*, *fly*, and *sit*. However, they also tend to have several meanings that are not directly related to economic topics and somewhat rare or obscure trade and finance usage. A closer look at handpicked stable or decreasing trade and finance related words such as *traded*, *imperial*, and *pay* – the first two of multiple origins and *pay* a borrowing from French – reveals that even the decreasing ones tend to be of mixed origin, but they are typically older borrowings than the increasing dimension words above – *ounce*, for example, is partly a borrowing from Latin and dates back to Old English.

4.2 Analysis of the dimensions

A central means of understanding the dimensions is to analyze how the lexical items associated with the dimension are actually used in context. In practice, this is done using concordance lines and close reading of the texts. To start with, we searched for each of the items in three highly scoring texts per dimension from the 1790s, the period of most change in our data. Dimensions 1 and 3 share a lexical item (*income*) and also share one of the texts in this selection. Of the lexical items of Dimension 2, especially *expenditure* but also the shared item, *income*, were repeated frequently as column headings or labels in tables appended to the texts, which may explain their frequency and characterize this dimension. All three texts inspected for Dimension 1 dealt with income tax

as a means to solving state expenditure and national debt (there was only one instance of the third lexical item, *incidental*, in the three texts). The cause for said debt is also the focus of Dimension 2, in which the bills and debts that are *funded* or *unfunded* are identified as those of the navy in particular, caused by the American revolutionary war (*circulating medium* appears more rarely but is also related to the need to manage state finances). Notably Dimension 2 consists almost entirely of anonymous pamphlets; the texts surveyed here are by known authors.

The topics of Dimension 3 are much the same as 1 and 2 but with a focus on financial measures; *funding* appears repeatedly in the context of "the funding system", also referred to as "the English System of Finance", so this dimension seems to capture an awareness of the systemic change underway. Dimension 4 stands out as the one that deals with commerce, agricultural production, manufacture and industry, and the development of and relationships between particular (often colonial) areas.

Since it seems based on the close reading of a selection of the texts that the dimensions are meaningful and interpretable, we performed a larger-scale analysis of the dimensions using standard corpus-linguistic methods, most importantly collocation analysis and concordance lines. To do this, we created a subcorpus of all of the texts which are in the top 5 per cent on any of the dimensions. We then made use of AntConc (Anthony 2022) to analyze the collocations and concordance lines of all of the words included in the dimensions. Specifically, we searched for collocations within a window of five in both directions, and which appear at least in five separate texts and five times in total in the subcorpus.

This analysis is in line with the findings of the close reading. Dimension 1 appears to deal particularly with public income and expenditure. In the top document subcorpus, the words *income* and *expenditure* collocate with words such as *national*, *taxable*, *annual*, and *public*. *Incidental* is commonly used to refer to additional expenses or situations which may cause them, such as "other circumstances incidental to war"; indeed, *war* appears as a collocate of *incidental* in the analysis. Dimension 2 has to do with public debt. As in the close reading above, *funded* and *unfunded* both overwhelmingly relate to funded and unfunded public debt. Dimension 3 is related to the financial system as a whole, for instance, politics, committees, ministers, reports, and resources related to the financial system. Dimension 4 refers to various aspects of private commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing enterprise. *Commercial* is often used to refer to commercial actors as opposed to e.g. the landed interests, or e.g. commercial treaties; *improvement* is used most commonly in reference to the *improvement* of e.g. an *extent* of land.

To corroborate this analysis of the functions of the dimensions, we also looked at the authors and titles of the ten highest-scoring documents from each dimension. The results of this analysis also closely mirror the above analyses. The documents on Dimension 1 overwhelmingly deal with public finances and income, particularly the income tax. This dimension includes texts such as "Observations on the produce of the income tax, and on its proportion to the whole income of Great Britain" by Henry Beeke and "A review of Dr. Price's writings, on the subject of the finances of this kingdom" by William Morgan. The texts on Dimension 2 either have to do with

public debt and credit, or the state of the nation's finances more generally. These include texts such as "An inquiry into the state of the finances of Great Britain" by Nicholas Vansittart and "Observations on the national debt, and an enquiry into its real connection with the general prosperity" by an unknown author. The titles on Dimension 3 are less focused, but many of them are still in various ways related to the system of finance and national funding, such as "A letter on the present measures of finance" by James Maitland Lauderdale or "A plan for raising the supplies during the war" by an unknown author. Dimension 4 clearly deals with trade, commerce, manufacture, and the improvement of land. These works include titles such as "A representation concerning the knowledge of commerce as a national concern; pointing out the proper means of promoting such knowledge in this kingdom" by J. Massie, and "A dissertation on the chief obstacles to the improvement of land, and introducing better methods of agriculture throughout Scotland" by an unknown author. In general, the evidence suggests the significance of Scottish influence in shaping the development of economic discourse (see Hont 2005). The majority of the authors producing the ten highest-scoring documents for each dimension are Scottish. There is a clear practical element of improvement present also in these texts that can be seen as the dominating aspect of the impact of the Scottish Enlightenment on the economic discourse in eighteenth-century Britain (*cf.* Sher 1985).
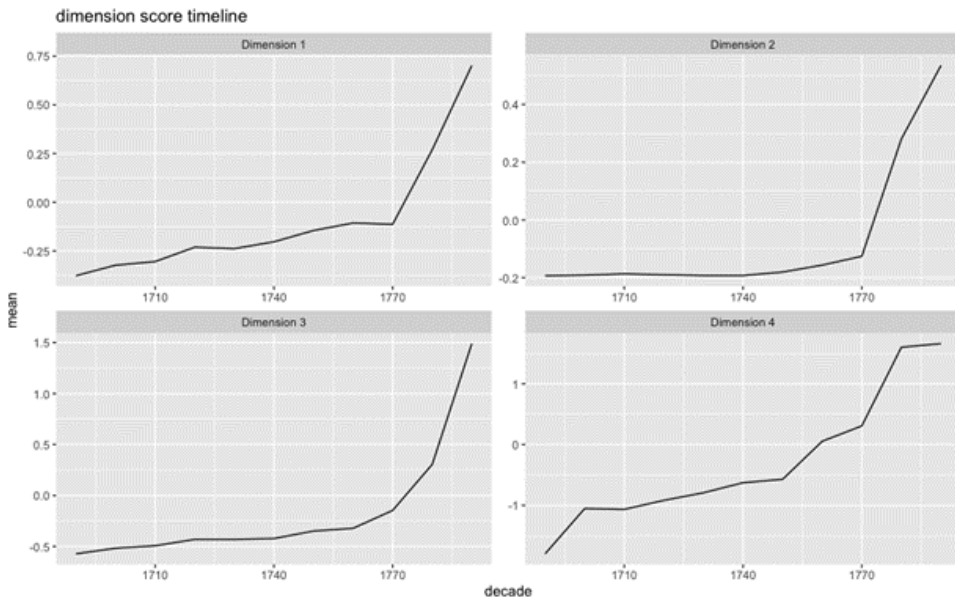

Figure 4. The average dimension scores per decade in the ECCO GKL documents for all four dimensions

However, since we are focusing on incoming lexical items, we may expect there to also be diachronic differences in their contexts of use. Since all of the items included on the dimensions are much more common in the later decades of the century, their frequent appearance may overshadow their use in earlier periods in an analysis which does not take the diachronic dimension into account. Figure 4 shows the average dimension scores of all GKL documents included in ECCO for each decade of the century. This figure shows the effects of focusing on incoming items very well, as the documents in the latter decades of the century have considerably higher average dimension scores than the documents in the earlier periods due to the overall higher frequency of the items towards the end of the century. We can also see in the figure how Dimension 4, which includes the earliest attested words of any of the dimensions, increases throughout the century; on the other hand, Dimension 1 increases slowly first but then rapidly at the end of the century, and Dimensions 2 and 3 are all but nonexistent before the end of the century (*cf.* Table 2).

In order to extend the analysis to the diachronic changes in the contexts of use of the lexical items, we created four additional subcorpora, one for every quarter-century, which included the texts which are in the top 5 per cent on any of the dimensions during that quarter-century. Table 2 summarizes our diachronic findings for each of the dimensions. Based on the analysis of these subcorpora, in the beginning of the century, generally speaking, the items tend to be used with more concrete meanings and in more concrete contexts. Towards the end of the century, their use diversifies, and the use of the items in more abstract and general senses increases alongside the more concrete ones. For instance, *income* on Dimensions 1 and 3 first often refers to the income of certain groups of people or e.g. estates or specific funds. Towards the end of the century, more references start appearing to higher-level and larger-scale issues such as national income and expenditure, including e.g. income tax, which was introduced in the UK around this time. Similarly, in the beginning of the century, *produce* on Dimension 4 often refers to what is produced in concrete terms by estates, lands, or the country. Its use also diversifies over the century, and it too is used more and more to refer to more abstract concepts such as produce of taxes, of the customs, of the state, or of labour. Of course, these patterns are only tendencies: examples of both concrete and abstract uses can be found from all time periods a word appears in. Some manifestations of these observed patterns are illustrated by Examples 1 and 2 below. Example 1 shows the word *income* referring very directly to the income of a certain set of gentry, whereas in Example 2 the words *income* and *expenditure* refer to the financial situation of the country as a whole.

(1) There is hardly one of this new Set of Gentry, from Two Thousand Pound Fortune and upwards that do not spend near half their **Income** in foreign Wines, Linens, Silks, Laces, Tea, Coffee, and an infinite number of other Curiosities.

Anonymous (1720): *Considerations on the present state of the nation*

(2) [H]e has consequently increased all the other property in the kingdom, if not precisely in the same proportion, certainly to a considerable amount: he has not only made the **income** of the country equal to its **expenditure**, but has also procured a surplus of a million per annum, to be employed in the reduction of the national debt.

George Pretyman (1786): *A short answer to Earl Stanhope's observations on Mr. Pitt's plan for the reduction of the national debt*

The word *commercial* on Dimension 4 also starts out as referring mostly to more concrete groups and actors, such as "trading men in the commercial world". As the century progresses, the number of references to the country and its people as a commercial actor increases, including collocates like "a commercial nation", "a commercial people", or "commercial empire", reflecting a view of the nation as a whole basing its identity on commerce. Other higher-level uses of *commercial* increase through the latter half of the century, such as "commercial intercourse", "commercial treaties", "commercial concerns", or "commercial system". These changes start taking place earlier than most of the others, as suggested by the earlier increase in the graph in Figure 4, and they point to the emergence of a more specialized and abstract discourse with regard to political economy. Economic theory addressed commercial activity as increasingly international and was less engaged in private entrepreneurship.

Table 2. A summary of the main diachronic tendencies in the contexts of use of the words associated with the four dimensions

Dimension	Beginning of the century	End of the century
D1 public income and expenditure: *income, expenditure, incidental*	Mostly private income of individuals or companies	Both private and public income and expenditure, and the relationship between the two, e.g. taxation of income
D2 public debt: *circulating medium, funded, unfunded*	Very rare	Mostly funded and unfunded debt, also e.g. funded property or funded taxes
D3 financial system: *income, finance, financier, financial, funding*	Very rare	Various aspects of the financial system and its public uses, including the funding of debts, bills, or the military
D4 private enterprise: *commercial, liberal, improvement, extent, produce*	Commerce, agriculture, manufacturing, etc. as an activity of the people	Commerce also as an international activity and a matter of national interest

In general, these changes appear to reflect the overall development of the system of economy over the century. For example, with the exception of *income*, all of the lexical items associated with Dimension 3 – *finance*, *financier*, *financial*, *funding* – were extremely rare in the first half of the century, with an increasing number of instances from the third quarter of the century onwards.

Furthermore, some of the diachronic differences represent topics which have been of particular interest or importance in specific periods. The most prominent of these is the inclusion of military matters, most importantly "navy" and "war", in economic discourse particularly in the final quarter of the century. This vocabulary mirrors the economic competition that concretely led to war efforts in the years after the American and French revolutions.

5 DISCUSSION

This paper has focused on incoming economic vocabulary extracted from a set of words based on previous lexicographical research. These choices have naturally excluded a number of potentially interesting words whose frequency may not have consistently increased in the dataset as a whole or that may not have been identified as relevant to economic discourse in the sense of the 'trade and finance' section of the HT. There is therefore much to be done in future research on eighteenth-century English economic lexis. One avenue would be to identify relevant words in a more data-driven manner based on the corpus alone. Of course, the GKL itself does not represent all of eighteenth-century economic discourse, so we could also augment the corpus by identifying similar texts in the full ECCO (*cf.* Tiihonen *et al.* 2022). As mentioned in Section 3.1 above, OCR errors are an issue in the data that is yet to be fully resolved, although using the number of characters as the normalization base has mitigated its effects somewhat. Recall could be improved by using fuzzy searches, whereas improving precision could require manual consultation of the document images, as discussed with regard to the spelling variants of *economy* in Section 2.

In the previous section we identified lexical dimensions that grouped together incoming economic vocabulary co-occurring in eighteenth-century texts in the GKL. It would be of interest to relate these dimensions to different registers in the corpus: for instance, parliamentary debates could be an important register in the development of discourses of public economy (dimensions 1 and 2), and legal texts may have helped to spread specialist vocabulary to wider public consciousness. In future research, we aim to generate register information for GKL texts using both Biber's linguistic features and machine learning methods that would identify registers through extrapolation from existing corpora with register metadata. This would also enable us to conduct a more thorough investigation into how Biber and Finegan's (1997) finding of the divergence of popular and specialized registers from the eighteenth century onwards relates to the domain of economy and economic vocabulary.

In general, our analyses showcase how economic vocabulary grew in frequency and went through a lexical diversification. We hypothesized that this development would be related to an expansion of registers and the diffusion of economic discourse to more

popular forums as well as increased intellectual inquiry. However, our analyses only support the latter part of the hypothesis, indicating that economic terms started to appear in increasingly abstract uses and that a more specialized economic discourse emerged during the eighteenth century. The trends of a democratization and a specialization of economic discourses are not mutually exclusive, but perhaps our analysis, with its focus on incoming rather than established vocabulary, is more prone to capture the latter. The specialization is clearly related to the so-called economic bestsellers in eighteenth-century Europe (Carpenter 1975) and the consequent emergence of political economy as a field for intellectual theorizing. The obvious example of this is the lexicalization of the term *political economy* itself.

6 CONCLUSION

We investigated incoming economic lexis and the discourses underlying their rise in the eighteenth century in a collection of economic literature. We analysed the lexical metadata of economic vocabulary and found that the incoming economic vocabulary is largely Latin or French in origin, whereas the stable and outgoing economic vocabulary tends to be either of native English Germanic origin or older loans from e.g. French or Dutch, with dominant non-economic meanings. In order to identify incoming lexical items, we made use of PCR (Proportional Change Rate), a novel method for identifying periods of linguistic change and items of interest.

Using multi-dimensional analysis methods inspired by Biber (1988), we extracted four dimensions of incoming economic lexis. While similar methods have been applied to content words before (e.g. Zuppardi/Berber Sardinha 2020), we used the method for the purposes of identifying incoming economic discourses in historical textual data. We identified four lexical dimensions: public income and expenditure, public debt, financial system, and private enterprise. The development and rise of the lexis related to these dimensions can be linked to the overall development of both the economic system itself and the contemporary economic discourse in the eighteenth century. By analyzing actual usage in a large historical database of texts, our study has contributed new evidence for the hypothesis that lexical change often reflects broader sociocultural change (e.g. Allan 2015).

References

ALLAN, Kathryn (2015) "Education in the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary*: Exploring diachronic change in a semantic field." In: Jocelyne Daems/ Eline Zenner/Kris Heylen/Dirk Speelman/Hubert Cuyckens (eds), *Change of paradigms – new paradoxes: Recontextualizing language and linguistics.* Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 81–95.

ANTHONY, Laurence (2022) AntConc (Version 4.0.5) [Computer Software]. Tokyo: Waseda University. https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software

BIBER, Douglas (1988) *Variation across Speech and Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

BIBER, Douglas/Edward FINEGAN (1997) "Diachronic relations among speech-based and written registers in English." In: Terttu Nevalainen/Leena Kahlas-Tarkka (eds), *To explain the present: Studies in the changing English language in honour of Matti Rissanen.* Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 253–275.

BONNYMAN, Brian (2012) "Agrarian Patriotism and the Landed Interest: The Scottish 'Society for Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture', 1723–1746." In: Koen Stapelbroek/Jani Marjanen (eds), *The Rise of Economic Societies in the Eighteenth Century: Patriotic Reform in Europe and North America*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 26–51.

CARPENTER, Kenneth E. (1975) "The economic bestsellers before 1850: A catalogue of an exhibition prepared for the History of Economics Society meeting, May 21–24, 1975, at Baker Library." *Bulletin of the Kress Library of Business and Economics, Harvard Business School* 11, 1–33.

CROSSGROVE, William (2000) "The Vernacularization of Science, Medicine, and Technology in Late Medieval Europe: Broadening Our Perspectives." *Early Science and Medicine*, 5(1), 47–63.

CULPEPER, Jonathan/Minna NEVALA (2012) "Sociocultural processes and the history of English." In: Terttu Nevalainen/Elizabeth Closs Traugott (eds), *The Oxford handbook of the history of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 365–391.

DURKIN, Philip (2002) Changing documentation in the third edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*: Sixteenth-century vocabulary as a test case. In: Teresa Fanego/Bélen Méndez-Naya/Elena Seoane (eds), *Sounds, words and change: Selected papers from 11 ICEHL, Santiago de Compostela, 7–11 September 2000.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 65–81.

FABRIGAR, Leandre R./Duane T. WEGENER/Robert C. MacCALLUM/Erin J. STRAHAN (1999) Evaluating the use of exploratory factor analysis in psychological research. *Psychological Methods* 4/3, 272–299.

HILL, Mark/Simon HENGCHEN (2019) "Quantifying the impact of dirty OCR on historical text analysis: Eighteenth Century Collections Online as a case study." *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 34/4, 825–843.

HONT, Istvan (2005) *Jealousy of trade. International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

JONES, Peter (2016) *Agricultural enlightenment: Knowledge, technology, and nature 1750–1840*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

KLEINHENZ, Christopher/Keith BUSBY (eds), *Medieval Multilingualism: The Francophone World and its Neighbours*. Turnhout: Brepols,

LAHTI, Leo/Jani MARJANEN/Hege ROIVAINEN/Mikko TOLONEN (2019) "Bibliographic Data Science and the history of the book (c. 1500–1800)." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 57/1, 5–23.

LIVESEY, James (2012) "A Kingdom of Cosmopolitan Improvers: The Dublin Society, 1731–1798." In: Koen Stapelbroek/Jani Marjanen (eds), *The Rise of Economic Societies in the Eighteenth Century: Patriotic Reform in Europe and North America*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 52–72.

McINTOSH, Carey (2020). *Semantics and cultural change in the British Enlightenment: New words and old*. Leiden: Brill.

MAGNUSSON, Lars (1992) "Economics and the Public Interest: The Emergence of Economics as an Academic Subject during the 18th Century." *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 94 (Supplement), 249–257.

MARJANEN, Jani/TUULI Tahko/Leo LAHTI/Mikko TOLONEN (forthcoming) "Book Printing in Latin and Vernacular Languages in Northern Europe, 1500–1800."

MUESSIG, Carolyn (2010) "The Vernacularization of Late Medieval Sermons: Some French and Italian Examples." In: Ch. Kleinhenz/K. Busby (eds), 267–284.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu (1999) "Early Modern English lexis and semantics." In Roger Lass (ed.), *The Cambridge history of the English language, III: 1476–1776*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 332–458.

NEVALAINEN, Terttu/Tanja SÄILY/Turo VARTIAINEN/Aatu LIIMATTA/Jefrey LIJFFIJT (2020) "History of English as punctuated equilibria? A meta-analysis of the rate of linguistic change in Middle English." *Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics* 6/2, str. 1–40.

POPPLOW, Marcus (2010) "Economizing agricultural resources in the German economic enlightenment." In: Ursula Klein/E. C. Spary (eds), *Materials and expertise in early modern Europe*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 261–287.

PUTTER, Ad/Keith BUSBY (2010) "Introduction." In: Ch. Kleinhenz/K. Busby (eds), 1–13.

ROBERTSON, John (2005) *The Case for The Enlightenment. Scotland and Naples 1680–1760*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SHER, Richard (1985) *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

SHOVLIN, John (2006) *The political economy of virtue: Luxury, patriotism, and the origins of the French Revolution*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

TIIHONEN, Iiro/Yann RYAN/Lidia PIVOVAROVA/Aatu LIIMATTA/Tanja SÄILY/ Mikko TOLONEN (2022) "Distinguishing discourses: A data-driven analysis of works and publishing networks of the Scottish Enlightenment." In: Karl Berglund/ Matti La Mela/Inge Zwart (eds), *Proceedings of the 6th Digital Humanities in the Nordic and Baltic Countries Conference (DHNB 2022)*, 120–134. https://ceur-ws.org/Vol-3232/paper09.pdf

TOLONEN, Mikko/Eetu MÄKELÄ/Leo LAHTI (2022) "The Anatomy of Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 56, 95–123.

WHITTEN, David O. (1978) "Democracy returns to the library: The Goldsmiths'-Kress Library of Economic Literature." *Journal of Economic Literature* 16/3, 1004–1006.

ZUPPARDI, Maria Carolina/Tony BERBER SARDINHA (2020) "A multi-dimensional view of collocations in academic writing." In: Ute Römer/Viviana Cortes/Eric Friginal (eds), *Advances in corpus-based research on academic writing: Effects of discipline, register, and writer expertise*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 333–353.

Abstract
DIMENSIONS OF INCOMING ECONOMIC VOCABULARY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN

The eighteenth century is often connected with economic improvement. Considering the significant functional expansion of the English language during this period, driven by various socio-cultural changes, and the contemporary interest in the economy, we hypothesize that this linguistic expansion facilitated the spread of economic vocabulary to new contexts. Combining linguistic and historical expertise, we study vocabulary drawn from the 'trade and finance' section of the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* in economic texts included in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. We identify incoming economic lexis based on its rate of change and apply multi-dimensional analysis to extract four lexical dimensions of economic discourse, which we interpret as (1) public income and expenditure, (2) public debt, (3) financial system, and (4) private enterprise. The lexical items associated with the dimensions are mostly Latin or French in origin, and many of them are neologisms that are first attested in the later eighteenth century, suggesting their widespread introduction into the language around that time. We show that at the beginning of the century, the use of the items that were extant then tends to be more concrete and local, with more abstract and wide-reaching contexts added towards the end of the century. This suggests a specialization of economic discourse that is related to the emergence of political economy as a field for intellectual theorizing.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, historical linguistics, multi-dimensional analysis, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Eighteenth-century studies

Povzetek
ZNAČILNOSTI PREVZETEGA BESEDJA S PODROČJA GOSPODARSTVA V VELIKI BRITANIJI 18. STOLETJA

18. stoletje pogosto povezujemo z gospodarskim napredkom. Ob upoštevanju takratnega močnega funkcijskega razmaha angleščine, ki je bil posledica raznih družbeno-kulturnih sprememb, in sočasnega zanimanja za gospodarske zadeve domnevamo, da je ta jezikovni razmah pospešil razširitev besedja s področja gospodarstva na nove konnekste. Na osnovi jezikoslovnih in zgodovskih znanj proučujemo prisotnost besedja, ki je v delu *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* umeščeno v sekcijo "trgovina in finance", v gospodarskih besedilih, vključenih v zbirko *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Izposojeno besedje s področja gospodarstva prepoznavamo na osnovi njegove hitrosti spreminjanja in s pomočjo multidimenzionalne analize razločujemo štiri leksikalne vidike gospodarskega diskurza, za katere menimo, da se nanašajo na (1) javne prihodke in stroške, (2) javni dolg, (3) finančni sistem in (4) zasebna podjetja. Elementi besedja, povezani s temi vidiki, so večinoma latinskega ali francoskega

izvora, številni so novotvorjenke, ki so prvič izpričane v poznem 18. stoletju, kar kaže na to, da so takrat na široko prodirale v jezik. Pokazati želimo, da je bila na začetku stoletja raba že obstoječih leksikalnih elementov navadno bolj konkrentna in specifična, medtem ko so se v abstraknejših in širših kontekstih tovrstni elementi začeli uporabljati proti koncu stoletja. To kaže na specializacijo gospodarksega diskurza, ki je povezana z nastankom politične ekonomije kot znanstvenega področja.

Ključne besede: korpusno jezikoslovje, zgodovinsko jezikoslovje, multidimenzionalna analiza, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online,* proučevanje 18. stoletja